

ST Kinetics and through Foreign Military Sales (FMS) route with Government of United States of America. However, the permission for trials was not granted of M/s ST Kinetics as the Firm is named in an FIR filed by CBI. The matter is presently sub-judice.

The field evaluation of Ultra Light Howitzer comprises three parts, *viz.* user trials, DGQA trials and Maintainability trials. Out of these, user trials of the gun proposed to be procured through US Government have been completed. The performance of the gun can be ascertained only after evaluation of all three trial reports.

Acquisition of defence land

199. SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in 1997, Directorate General of Defence Estates (DGDE) had the figure of defence land as 22 lakhs acres;

(b) whether it is also a fact that after 14-15 years now this figure has come down to 17.6 lakhs acres while several thousand acres have been acquired during the last fifteen years; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU): (a) to (c) As on 5.3.1997, as per information available then there was 21.52 lakh acres of defence land scattered all over the country. After reconciliation of the records, the defence land holding was found to be 17.31 lakh acres as on 01.12.1999. The discrepancies occurred as land records were in manual forms. Land records have since been computerized and presently the total defence land holdings are 17.54 lakh acres.

Development of Tejas LCA

200. SHRI TARUN VIJAY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the current status of development and induction of Tejas Light Combat Aircraft;

(b) what steps are being taken by Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. to reduce its manufacturing cost from approximately Rs. 180-200 crore to make its price competitive in international market;

(c) what percentage of total annual budgets of HAL has been apportioned for the development of Tejas in the last 20 years; and

(d) how many squadrons of Tejas does Air Force propose to raise and by when the Ministry proposes to achieve the target goal of raising these squadrons?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU): (a) The Initial Operational Clearance-1 (IOC-1) for the Tejas Light

Combat Aircraft has been achieved on 10th January, 2011. Presently, LCA development activities leading to final operational clearance are in progress. Action for induction of Tejas into IAF has been initiated. IAF has placed orders for 40 aircraft on HAL.

(b) Tejas Mark-I is planned at present for 40 aircraft only. Tejas Mark-II aircraft is under development with an alternate higher powered engine with considerable improvements. Final cost assessment will be available only after the development phase of Mark II is completed. Scope for cost reduction of Tejas Mk-I has been examined and the same is assessed as not feasible in view of limited quantities.

(c) Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) is the nodal organization for the development of Tejas.

Rs. 11845.20 crores have been sanctioned by the Government of India to ADA for the development of Tejas till date and the total expenditure incurred so far is Rs. 5051.46 crores.

(d) IAF plans to induct six LCA squadrons by the end of the 13th Plan.

Helicopters employed in foreign countries

201. SHRI MOHAMMED ADEEB: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of helicopters pressed in service in the foreign countries;
- (b) the time-frame by when these helicopters would come back;
- (c) whether it is a fact that there is a shortage of helicopters with Air Force to help in tackling naxalism; and
- (d) if so, the steps being taken to meet this shortage?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (A.K. ANTONY): (a) and (b) Details of helicopters pressed in service in the foreign countries cannot be divulged in the interest of friendly relations with foreign countries and strategic concerns.

(c) and (d) The Indian Air Force helicopters are assisting in providing logistics support in aid of Ministry of Home Affairs anti-naxal operations.

Delay in defence purchases

202. SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that there have been repeated delays in defence purchases;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether these delays have led to cost escalations;
- (d) if so, the details of major deals in the last three years; and