

Permanent commission to women army officers

4393. SHRI TARUN VIJAY : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the stance of the Ministry on the issue of permanent commission to women army officers;

(b) whether the Ministry has in principle decided to resolve this issue without any detriment to women officers whose fixed tenure under Short Service Commission scheme comes to an end, if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons why the Ministry keeps on issuing letters of release to women officers after they had completed the tenure under SSC recruitment scheme;

(d) whether some women officers had been asked to go on leave after their tenure ends on May 10, 2012; and

(e) how the Ministry explains such delay in decision making and gender bias?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) : (a) The Ministry, after considering the comprehensive policy paper on induction and employment of women submitted by the Armed Forces and keeping in view the role and responsibility of the Armed Forces in defending the nation and protecting the territorial integrity of the country, have issued a Government letter on 11th November, 2011 *inter-alia* laying down policy framework on the subject including grant of permanent commission to women short service commission officers, as under:

- (i) Women Officers may continue to be inducted as Short Service Commission Officers (SSCOs) in Branches/Cadres where they are being inducted presently in the three Services;
- (ii) Women SSCOs will be eligible for consideration for grant of permanent commission alongwith Men SSCOs in specific Branches in the three Services *viz.*, Judge Advocate General (JAG) and Army Education Corps (AEC) of Army and their corresponding Branches in Navy and Air Force; Naval constructor in Navy and Accounts Branch in Air Force, as specified in Ministry's letter No. 12(1)/2004-D(AG)Pt-II dated 26th September, 2008;
- (iii) In addition to the above, in the Air Force, women SSCOs will be eligible alongwith men SSCOs, for consideration for grant of permanent commission in Technical, Administration, Logistics and Meteorology Branches.

The grant of permanent commission will be subject to willingness of the candidate and service specific requirements, availability of vacancies, suitability, merit of the candidate as decided by each Service.

(b) to (e) The matter is sub-judice before the Hon'ble Supreme Court.