

Optimal operation of Navy

1425. SHRI S. THANGAVELU : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has asked the Navy to optimally operate and maintain its assets and hardware, as well as train its personnel suitably so that such national resources are optimally utilized and are not fritted away;

(b) whether it is a fact that Government still considers that the loss of 18 crew members on board INS Sindhurakshak on the eve of Independence Day this year as an unprecedented tragedy; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that the Navy has taken a decision to accord top most priority for safety mechanisms and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) : (a) to (c) Optimal utilization of assets and resources is a recurring operational philosophy of Indian Navy. This was reiterated during the Naval Commanders Conference in November 2013. The loss of service personnel onboard INS Sindhurakshak is an unfortunate incident. Adherence to safety mechanisms by Indian Navy is an ongoing endeavour. At the Command level, there is a committee on safety. Each ship and A submarine has a safety officer with safety standardization drills conducted onboard.

Implementation of Supreme Court Judgement on rank pay case

1426. DR. T.N. SEEMA : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Ministry is not interested in the implementation of the Supreme Court's year-old order on rank pay case;

(b) if not, what is the reason that despite the Supreme Court deciding with the two-decade-old rank pay case, the Ministry thinks the Attorney General has to give a final opinion;

(c) what is the reason of a wide disparity between how the armed forces had construed the SC judgement and how the Ministry civilian bureaucracy was implementing it; and

(d) whether Government will implement the Supreme Court's order in the near future and give veterans and war widows their dues?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) : (a) to (d) In compliance of the Hon'ble Supreme Court order dated 04.09.2012 which dealt with the rank pay matter, the Government has issued an order on 27.12.2012 for implementing the order of the Hon'ble Supreme Court.

2840 serving officers and 33814 retired officers of the Army, Navy and Air Force have been paid a total amount of Rs.347 crores as their admissible dues. Additionally, Pension Payment Orders (PPOs) in respect of 12129 Army officers, 2187 Navy officers and 5557 Air Force officers have been revised.

However, the Armed Forces have raised certain issues regarding interpretation of the order of the Hon'ble Supreme Court which are under examination.

Pending amount under NPS with Delhi Cantt. Board

1427. SHRIMATI BIMLA KASHYAP SOOD : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) the total number of employees working under the control of Delhi Cantonment Board who joined service from 1st January, 2004 onwards and covered under New Pension Scheme;

(b) whether all the amount recovered under this scheme as Tier-I and Government share as Tier-II has been deposited with National Securities Depository Limited (NSDL);

(c) if not, the employee-wise and period- wise details of amount of Tier-I, Tier-II lying with Board till date and the reasons therefor; and

(d) who will be responsible for recurring loss to the employees who will not get benefits due to not depositing the said amount with the concerned authorities under this scheme?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) : (a) to (d) 94 employees joined service in Delhi Cantonment Board on or after 01.01.2004 and are covered under New Pension Scheme (NPS). However, NPS was implemented in respect of Cantonment Board employees from 01.04.2011 after obtaining approval of the Central Government. All employees have been covered under Tier-I scheme. Tier-II scheme is optional and no employee of the Board has opted for Tier-II. The Cantonment