

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) if not, by when this deal will be struck and number of fighter planes planned to be purchased and total estimated price for that?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI MANOHAR PARRIKAR): (a) to (c) As per the India-France Joint Statement issued by the two countries during the Prime Minister's visit to France, Government of India conveyed to the Government of France that in view of the critical operational necessity for Multirole Combat Aircraft for Indian Air Force (IAF), Government of India would like to acquire 36 Rafalejets in fly-away condition as quickly as possible. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Indian and French Government has also been signed on January 25, 2016 in this regard. Negotiations with the French side are currently on.

#### **Preserving of INS Viraat**

533. SHRI AVINASH PANDE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has received proposals from a number of States to utilise the oldest serving warship today and India's second aircraft carrier in the fleet-INS Viraat;

(b) if so, the names of the States which have submitted proposals to preserve the aircraft carrier and the details of the proposals thereof; and

(c) what will be the parameters on which Government plans to select the best suitable plan?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI MANOHAR PARRIKAR): (a) and (b) All coastal State Governments have been requested to convey their firm commitment for preserving Aircraft Carrier INS Viraat and converting into "Aircraft Carrier Museum" post decommissioning. Some of these States have responded and requested for further information / clarification.

(c) The Policy letter on 'Disposal Policy for Ships and Submarines of the Indian Navy and Indian Coast Guard' states that transfer of ships to State Government is to be effected on 'as is where is' basis. The subsequent liability towards establishing the museum would rest with the concerned State Government.

#### **Non-providing of bullet proof jackets to army personnel**

534. SHRI AMBETH RAJAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether all the Army Personnel/ Staff who are entitled to bullet proof jackets have been provided bullet proof jackets, if so, the details thereof;