

(c) the details of fire incidents in ammunition depots during the last three years along with losses incurred; and

(d) the corrective steps taken by Government to prevent fire in ammunition depots in future?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI MANOHAR PARRIKAR): (a) and (b) Due to delay in procurement/recruitment, the deficiencies of 23 fire fighting trucks and 362 personnel exist in ammunition depots of Indian Army.

Ammunition is stored in permanent accommodation. However, due to operational and other local exigencies, some ammunition is stored in temporary sheds.

(c) The only major fire incident in ammunition depot during last three years has occurred in Central Ammunition Depot, Pulgaon on 31st May, 2016. There were 19 fatal and 17 non-fatal casualties, and the total loss of equipment and stores as per preliminary estimation is approximately ₹ 7.90 crores.

(d) On the basis of the recommendations of Court of Inquiry and subsequent deliberations with all stakeholders, the following has been approved by the Government in order to prevent recurrence of such incidents:

- (i) Disposal of all defective segregated mines (Anti Tank Mines 1A ND) for exudation of TNT, held at various locations will be undertaken by Army Headquarters (AHQs).
- (ii) Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) will replace or repair the defective ammunition within three months.
- (iii) Army Headquarters in consultation with all stakeholders will finalize the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for:
 - (a) Disposal of defective ammunition in fixed time-frame, and
 - (b) Fixing up responsibility for defect and regularization of loss.
- (iv) Department of Defence Production (DDP) in consultation with all stakeholders will prepare a SOP for handholding of production agency by the designer till production stabilizes.
- (v) Army Headquarters will review the security (including surveillance) and fire safety arrangements at all ammunition depots.

Incursions and frictions at country's borders

173. SHRI M. P. VEERENDRA KUMAR: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state what is the Centre's response to the recent frequent Chinese incursions and frictions along the Indo-Pak border?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI MANOHAR PARRIKAR): There have been no instances of incursions by Chinese troops into Indian territory. There is no commonly delineated Line of Actual Control (LAC) between India and China. There are areas along the Indo-China border where both sides have differing perception of LAC. Due to both sides undertaking patrolling upto their perception of the LAC, transgressions do occur.

Government regularly takes up any transgression along LAC with the Chinese side through established mechanisms including flag meetings, border personnel meetings, meetings of working mechanism for consultation and coordination on India-China border affairs and diplomatic channels.

As regard to India–Pakistan border, appropriate retaliation to the ceasefire violations, as required, has been carried out by Indian Army/BSF. In addition, all violations of ceasefire are taken up with Pakistan authorities at the appropriate level through the established mechanism of hotlines, flag meetings as well as weekly talks between the Directorate Generals of Military Operations of the two countries. BSF, too holds talks at various levels with its counterpart *viz.* Pakistan Rangers.

Boosting indigenous defence production

174. SHRI C. P. NARAYANAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Defence Ministry will give a boost to Make in India project in the case of other needs of defence now that the first indigenously made Tejas plane has been successfully inducted into IAF;

(b) whether indigenous defence production will be promoted in other spheres of defence since Indian S&T has proved that it is capable of producing state of the art products; and

(c) whether Government will encourage HAL to produce commercial planes as well?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (DR. SUBHASH RAMRAO BHAMRE): (a) and (b) The Defence Production Policy promulgated by Government of India aims at achieving substantive self-reliance in the design, development and production of equipment, weapon systems, platforms required for defence in as early a time-frame possible; creating conditions conducive for the private industry to take an active role in this endeavour, enhancing potential of SMEs in indigenisation and broadening the defence R&D base of the country.

In pursuance to the aforesaid policy, progressive development of competence level