

[18 August, 2004]

RAJYA SABHA

condition is expected to commence from September, 2007 and would be completed by February, 2008.

(c) Till the new Hawk aircraft are available for the Indian Air Force, as an interim measure, 751 AF pilots will be trained in U.K. in terms of the contract with M/s BAe Systems Limited, UK.

Explosion at Amassa godown of Air Force in M.P.

†1479. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a major explosion has taken place at Amassa based godown of Air Force in M.P. recently;

(b) whether there is a possibility of the involvement of terrorists in the said explosion; and

(c) if not, the reasons for the said explosion alongwith the estimated loss incurred due to the same?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) A major explosion took place on 10th July, 2004 at Amla Depot. A Court of Inquiry is in progress to ascertain the reasons of explosion and to assess the exact loss incurred on this account.

Policy for Defence Procurements

1480. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that henceforth defence procurement policy and programmes can be finalised only after the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC)'s and CAG's nod;

(b) if so, whether the Ministry has finalised the details; and

(c) whether this method will not hamper the smooth procurement process in Defence deals?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) No, Sir.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) and (c) A system for the mandatory and time bound scrutiny of all major procurement cases is in place in the Ministry. All cases above Rs. 75 crores are sent to Comptroller & Auditor General (C&AG), whose reports are further studied by the Chief Vigilance Officer (CVO) of the Ministry from the vigilance angle and recommend to the Government where further enquiries are necessary. In cases where the C&AG recommends further scrutiny from the vigilance/legal angle or the Ministry considers it necessary to do so, the CVO will make a formal reference to CVC, CBI or other agencies as deemed appropriate. This would enhance the level of transparency in the procurement process.

Publication of seniority lists in AFHQ

1481. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the seniority lists of various grades in the AFHQ Civil Service and the AFHQ Clerical Service has not been published for the last five years or more;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) what steps have been taken/proposed to be taken for ensuring their publication within a fixed time-limit; and

(d) by when Government propose to complete the task of publication of annual seniority lists of above services?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The Seniority lists in all the grades in AFHQ Civil & Clerical Services are being regularly issued except in the grades of Assistant, Section Officer and Deputy Director. The seniority list in these grades could not be published due to ongoing litigations on the issue of seniority.

(c) and (d) The Department is in the process of completing the implementation of various Court judgements in an expeditious manner. However, no time frame for publication of seniority lists can be given as the process involves implementation of many Court orders.