

Committee on pay and rank parity

*25. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 2110 given in the Rajya Sabha on 21st March, 2017 and state:

- (a) whether the three-member Committee appointed by Government to look into the issue of pay and rank parity with regard to the military has submitted its report;
- (b) if so, what are the key findings and recommendations of the Committee;
- (c) whether Government has constituted a new Committee to look into the same issue again; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the timeline for the Committee to submit its report and for the Government to finalise the same?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) No, Sir

- (b) Does not arise.
- (c) No, Sir. No new Committee has been constituted by the Government.
- (d) Does not arise.

Long term policy to tackle the increasing air pollution

*26. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has formulated a long term policy to tackle the increasing air pollution problem across the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (c) the time bound steps taken by Government to introduce a multi-pronged strategy to deal with the deteriorating air quality particularly in metro cities?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (DR. HARSH VARDHAN): (a) and (b) The Government has formulated National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) as a long term time bound national level strategy to tackle the increasing air pollution problem across the country in comprehensive manner. The

overall objective is to augment and evolve effective ambient air quality monitoring network across the country besides ensuring comprehensive management plan for prevention, control and abatement of air pollution. The NCAP focuses on collaborative and participatory approach comprising all sources of pollution and coordination between relevant Central Ministries, State Governments, local bodies and other stakeholders.

(c) The Government has taken several steps to address air pollution which *inter alia*, include notification of National Ambient Air Quality Standards; setting up of monitoring network for assessment of ambient air quality; introduction of cleaner/alternate fuels like gaseous fuel (CNG, LPG etc.), ethanol blending, launching of National Air Quality index; universalization of BS-IV by 2017; leapfrogging from BS-IV to BS-VI fuel standards by 1st April, 2020; notification of Construction and Demolition Waste Management Rules; banning of burning of biomass; promotion of public transport network; streamlining the issuance of Pollution Under Control Certificate; issuance of directions under Section 18(1)(b) of Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 and under Section 5 of Environment (Protection) Act, 1986; notification of around 115 emission/effluent norms for 104 different sectors besides 32 General Standards, special measures for critically polluted areas, etc.

State-of-the-art equipments for defence forces

*27. SHRI RAM KUMAR KASHYAP: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of measures taken to equip the defence forces with latest state-of-the-art weapons, machineries, bullet-proof jackets etc. to enable them to maintain a robust and effective response mechanism to counter emerging threats;

(b) the action taken to upgrade surveillance systems and networks in tracking insurgent elements well in-advance; and

(c) the steps taken to strengthen security of various military establishments across the country?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) and (b) The Government constantly reviews the security scenario and accordingly ensures to induct appropriate defence equipments to keep the armed forces in a state of