

- (ii) Creation of a tiered defence industrial ecosystem in the country.
- (iii) Reducing current dependence on imports and strive to achieve self-reliance in development and manufacture of weapon systems/platforms.

The Policy mandates for Transfer of Technology or enhanced Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) for domestic production in the event of non-availability of manufacturing capabilities in the country.

The policy envisages that Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) should focus on system integration, design and development, and actively engage domestic vendors in the private sector for other assembly work.

Conversion of cantonments into "Exclusive Military Stations"

2083. DR. PRABHAKAR KORE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the army has conveyed to Government that its military areas within cantonments be converted into "Exclusive Military Stations", by excluding civilian areas for exercising absolute control over them; and
- (b) if so, number of cantonments in the country and the reasons for bifurcating civilian areas from military cantonments and the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (DR. SUBHASH RAMRAO BHAMRE): (a) and (b) There are 62 Cantonments, governed by the Cantonments Act, 2006, located in 19 States with a population of about 20.76 lakhs. Cantonments have and continue to play an important role in delivery of services to the inhabitants residing in the Cantonments. Apart from carrying out municipal functions like, sanitation, running of STPs, street lighting, drainage, etc., they also undertake numerous developmental activities. Cantonments with a 250-year history are important institutions that bear testimony to the harmonious co-existence of civilians and defence personnel. The army has suggested excision of civil areas of Cantonments and converting military pockets into Military Stations. No decision has been taken in the matter.

Abolition of Army Cantonments

2084. DR. PRABHAKAR KORE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that Government proposes to abolish Army cantonments across the country to reduce their annual maintenance by creating exclusive military stations out cantonments;