

(b) if so, what special provisions have been made to improve the combat conditions on both the borders;

(c) whether fighting forces in these areas are being provided with nutritious food and clothing suitable for weather conditions to keep them fighting fit; and

(d) measures Government is adopting to keep the morale of the fighting forces high which has been badly hit by the ill effects of the recommendations of the Seventh Central Pay Commission?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (DR. SUBHASH RAMRAO BHAMRE): (a) and (b) Budgetary allocations are provided to the Armed forces to build up capability and prepare for all eventualities. The Armed forces are suitably equipped, trained and organized to uphold and preserve the unity, integrity and sovereignty of the Nation.

(c) Adequate nutritious food and clothing including special rations and suitable clothing to troops deployed in high altitudes, counter insurgency operations are being provided.

(d) The core concerns of the Defence Services with reference to 7th CPC have already been addressed by the Government.

Loss of jobs for ordnance factory employees

1772. PROF. M. V. RAJEEV GOWDA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Ordnance Factories that will be affected by the proposal to award licences to private players for manufacturing items previously manufactured by the Ordnance Factories (OFs);

(b) whether such a move will lead to job losses for those employed in OFs;

(c) if so, whether Government is taking steps to prevent loss of jobs;

(d) whether unions representing these employees have communicated their objections to the Ministry; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and steps being taken by Government to address them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (DR. SUBHASH RAMRAO BHAMRE): (a) Ordnance Factory will not be directly affected by award of licences to private manufacturers of defence items. However, a decision has been

taken in the Ministry to categorise 275 items being manufactured by Ordnance Factories as Non-core. These items are the items which can be easily procured by the Users from private sector directly.

(b) to (e) No, Sir. There will not be any job losses for employees of Ordnance Factories.

Corporates with NPAS in defence manufacturing

1773. SHRI K. K. RAGESH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any corporates, which have NPAs with banks, are being approved for Defence sector manufacturing; and

(b) if so, the names of such corporate entities which were approved for Defence sector manufacturing?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (DR. SUBHASH RAMRAO BHAMRE): (a) This information is not collected and maintained.

(b) In view of above, question does not arise.

Grant of military service pay

1774. SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH MAHRA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering to grant Military Service Pay (MSP) equally to all ranks in the light of Hon'ble High Court's direction in writ Petition No. 6607/2017 of 'Voice of Ex-Servicemen Society'; and

(b) whether Government contemplates to remove discrimination of MSP being paid at different rates, as MSP is a compensation to Armed Forces personnel as a recognition of special conditions of their service and superannuation of Defence personnel, particularly other ranks of younger age, is also a factor for grant of MSP?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (DR. SUBHASH RAMRAO BHAMRE): (a) and (b) Hon'ble Delhi High Court in its order dated 28th November, 2017 has not given any specific direction to grant Military Service Pay (MSP) equally to all ranks. It may be informed that the Hon'ble Court in its order mentioned that the conduct of the petitioners in withholding material information and at the same time, trying to invoke equities under Article 226 of the Constitution of India is deprecated.