

(c) if not, by when Government will take steps to purchase more bullet proof jackets for the use of soldiers; and

(d) if not, reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (DR. SUBHASH RAMRAO BHAMRE): (a) to (d) A contract for capital procurement of quantity 1,86,138 Bullet Proof Jackets (BPJs) has been signed with an Indian vendor on 9.4.2018. Delivery of the BPJs would commence from April, 2019.

Procurement of defence equipment is a continuous process based on threat perception, operational challenges, technological changes and available sources to keep the Armed Forces in state of readiness and equipped with modern weapon systems.

The Defence India Startup Challenge

2726. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has launched "The Defence India Startup Challenge" recently listing 11 problem statements;

(b) if so, details of the response received from various competitors; and

(c) the criteria for selection of startups?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (DR. SUBHASH RAMRAO BHAMRE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Applications from over 500 competitors have been received and the evaluation of the applications is in process.

(c) The broad criteria for screening/selection from amongst competitors would be as follows:-

- (i) Potential for proposed prototype to meet existing Indian defence needs;
- (ii) Potential to deploy an existing technology or patent to meet existing Indian defence needs;
- (iii) An additional but optional parameter would be whether the proposed prototype/product/technology has the ability to reach alternative civilian markets also.