

**Trial of Arjun Tank**

1772. SHRI V. V. RAGHAVAN:

SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the trial for the armour of the Arjun Tank was conducted in January 2000; and

(b) if so, on the basis of the results of the trial, how much production order would be given?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) After the trials, production order for 124 tanks has been placed in March, 2000.

**Stopping investments in Gun and Shell factory, Cossipore**

1773. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to refer to reply to Starred question 321 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 16th August, 2000 and state:

(a) whether the threat of the Chairman, Ordnance Factory Board, to stop investments in Gun and Shell Factory, Cossipore, has now been withdrawn;

(b) if so, the status of the future investment in the factory; and

(c) the status of absorption of apprentices against permanent vacancies?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) No threat that the OFB would stop investment in the Gun and Shell Factory Corripore (GSF) was made by Chairman, Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) who had merely conveyed his displeasure on the happenings at the factory during the visit of Raksha Utpadan Rajya Mantri (RURM) on 25th March, 2000 and had advised that productivity be improved. OFB has a plan to provide for an investment of Rs. 85 crores for modernization of GSF and machineries worth Rs. 9.94 crores have been ordered during the current financial year.

Taking into consideration the load of the factory and other relevant factors, OFB has recently issued sanction to recruit 50 trade apprentices in GSF. Induction of manpower, in future, will also be considered on need basis.