

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU) : (a) to (d) The Cantonment Boards being Statutory bodies governed under the provisions of the Cantonments Act, 1924 undertake development works like roads, drains, water supply etc., from their own resources. Central Government provides only financial assistance to them by way of grants wherever needed. Service charges are also paid to them in lieu of property tax in respect of Defence properties. The Government has released to the Ranikhet Cantonment Board, an amount of Rs. 16,83,000/- in 1995-96 and Rs. 20,00,000/- during 1996-97 as special grants-in-aid for a scheme of conversion of dry type latrines into water borne.

[English]

Submarine 'Sindhu'

776. SHRI L. RAMANA :
SHRI SURESH PRABHU :

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the submarine 'Sindhu' purchased from the Soviet Union have not been found upto the expected standard;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the major deficiencies detected in their performance; and

(c) the remedial steps contemplated by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU) : (a) to (c) No, Sir. Some submarines of the Sindhu Class were acquired from Russia between 1986 & 1990. These submarines have many distinct design features such as a long range sonar, superior hull design, under-water manoeuvrability etc. The shortcomings of the submarines related to our climatic conditions. These problems have been overcome by the Indian Navy through indigenous/inhouse efforts over the last few years.

Air Service to Rourkela

777. KUMARI FRIDA TOPNO : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have any proposal to provide air services to Rourkela to attract business houses for investment in that region;

(b) if so, whether the Airport Authority of India has any proposal to build an airport of International standard at Rourkela;

(c) if so, the details thereof including financial implications and the proposals before the Government to arrange the funds;

(d) whether the World Bank is likely to be approached for financial assistance in this regard; and

(e) if so, the time schedule thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) Airlines are free to operate their services anywhere in the country subject to adherence to route dispersal guidelines as notified by DGCA from time to time.

(b) and (c) The airport at Rourkela belongs to the Steel Authority of India. Runway dimensions are 6000' x 100' suitable for operation of 50 seater class of aircraft. Airports Authority of India has no plans to upgrade the airport.

(d) and (e) Do not arise.

Czech Tank Deal

778. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Russian Government are considering to review its stand on arms trading with Pakistan and a number of other countries if India sign the deal with the Czech republic for the purchase of 500 T-72 MI tanks as reported in the 'Indian Express' on May 22, 1997;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU) : (a) No official communication has been received from Russian Government on this subject.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Cut in Import of Major Defence System

779. SHRI SUDHIR GIRI : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the ways adopted of minimising the import of major defence system in our country;