

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEFENCE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2147
ANSWERED ON:11.03.2013
VVIP HELICOPTER SCAM
Meghwal Shri Arjun Ram ;Patil Shri A.T. Nana

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that Italy has refused to hand over the documents related to the VVIP helicopter scam and if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the steps taken / proposed to be taken to obtain proof / documents related to the payment of commission in the VVIP helicopter deal?

Answer

MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY)

(a) On the report of arrests of the Finmeccanica Chief, Mr. G. Orsi, who was earlier Chief Executive of M/s Agusta Westland and Mr. Bruno Spagnolini, Chief Executive of Agusta Westland Spa, in reference to financial malpractices pertaining to procurement of 12 VVIP / VIP helicopters for Indian Air Force (IAF), the Ministry of Defence immediately requested our Embassy in Rome on 13th February, 2013 to send factual report pertaining to arrests of the Finmeccanica Chief and Chief Executive of Agusta Westland Spa, nature of charges framed and other relevant details, which in turn, took up the matter with the Judge for the preliminary investigation in Busto Arsizio. The Embassy on February 15, 2013 has forwarded the response of the Judge which states that ' the investigations are at a preliminary stage during which, as per Article 329 of the Code of Penal Procedure, all information are covered by secrecy'. It was also added in the response of the Judge that when the 'Secrecy' obligations are over, his Office would be glad to examine a new request from India.

(b) The matter has been referred to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to conduct an inquiry into the matter. The CBI, after a visit of its team to Italy and on further examination of the documents available, has registered a Preliminary Enquiry (PE) and further investigation is on. Besides, a Joint Team of Ministry of Defence / Ministry of External Affairs officials was sent to Italy to collect formal inputs and relevant documents as far as practicable from various stakeholders. Based on the recommendation of the team, further necessary action has been initiated. A Show Cause Notice was also issued to the firm. Based on the reply received from them, further notices have been sent to them for additional information and documents.