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Title: Need to open a Defence Pension Disbursement Office at Kannur, Kerala.

SHRI K. SUDHAKARAN (KANNUR): The Ex-servicemen in Kannur District of Kerala and surrounding districts have a problem in drawing their pensionary benefits. At present they are forced to depend on Nationalised banks for drawing pensions and other pensionary benefits as there is no Pension Disbursement Office available in Kannur, whereas other districts such as Thiruvananthapuram, Quilon, Kottayam, Pathanamthitta, Trichur, Emakulam etc., have their own Defence Pension Disbursement Offices (DPDO). The Malabar Region of Kerala, Palakkad, Malappuram, Kozhikode, Wayanad, Kannur and Kasargode districts have no DPDOs. Kannur is the major Centre of Army in Kerala and has a total strength of about 20000 Ex-servicemen, with an approximate 250 soldiers being added every year. Kannur is the Headquarters of Defence Security Corps, it has one Military Hospital and Record Office, 122 Infantry Battalion of Territorial Army, the largest Naval Academy at Ezhimala, and Indian Coast Guard Academy, the only one in the country. But the absence of a Defence Pension Disbursement Offices (DPDO) in Kannur is causing great hardships to the Ex-servicemen of Kannur as they have to depend on banks and cannot get their complaints resolved. As the Banks are already overburdened, they are dealing with defence pension as a secondary business, as their primary aim being a commercial organisation is to make profits. Also the implementation of Government, orders on fixation of revised pension etc. are getting delayed and sometimes wrong fixation occurs. Hence considering the contribution and importance of Kannur District in the Defence sector and the size of Ex-servicemen population in Kannur, I urge the Government to consider the legitimate demand of the retired soldiers of Kannur for opening up a Defence Pension Disbursement Office at Kannur at the earliest for their welfare which could help in ventilating plethora of their complaints. Also, I would urge the Government to explore the feasibility of opening more and more DPDOs in all the districts of Malabar region of Kerala in a phased manner.