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Title: Need to implement one-rank-one-pension scheme in Defence Service.

श्री प्रताप सिंह बाजवा (गुरदासपुर): मैडम, मैं आपका बहुत मशकूर हूँ और सादे हाउस से मुझे यह गुजारिश करनी है कि जीरो ऑवर में यह जो इश्यू है, यह एक्स सर्विसमेन का इश्यू है। कृपा करके, कुछ भी हो, पांच मिनट मुझे दे दीजिए। It is agitating the minds of Ex-servicemen throughout the country.

On the issue of one-rank-one-pension there is a lot of confusion prevailing. I, therefore, wish to draw the attention of the hon. Minister of Defence and also of the Government to this very important issue which is a sore point pestering the Ex-servicemen as many other categories of personnel are getting OROP for lesser service to the nation. The demand of the Ex-servicemen has been that there should be one-rank-one-pension irrespective of the date on which a soldier retired. The existing difference should be completely removed and one should get the same pension.

However, the Government on its part has stated that it has accepted four out of seven recommendations made by the Committee headed by the Cabinet Secretary. It has substantially improved the pensionary benefits of the Armed Forces pensioners known as parity in pensions for the personnel below officers rank and has ignored the officer cadres completely. On the specific issue of one-rank-one-pension the Government has made it clear that it would not be able to meet the demand of the Ex-servicemen due to administrative, financial and legal implications, which is very unfair.

In this context, it is pertinent to mention here that the All India Ex-servicemen Welfare Association, Chandigarh, extended legal help in the case of two Ex-servicemen who approached the Chandigarh Bench of the Armed Forces Tribunal on this issue. While deciding the two cases, that is, of Babu Ram Demang *versus* Union of India and Sohan Singh *versus* Union of India, in its judgment the Tribunal said the grant of unequal pay in the same rank was a violation of the article 14 of the Constitution. It has further stated that the State cannot lay down different criteria for grant of pensions for the same rank officers on the basis of cut-off dates of retirement. The Ex-servicemen feel that whenever successive Pay Commissions enhanced the salaries and subsequently pensions, these are given effect to only prospectively and the gap between the past pensioners and their younger equivalents keep widening with every successive Pay Commissions recommendations. They feel that the disparity has been uncomfortably stark after the recommendations of the Sixth Pay Commission. Therefore, they reiterate that the demand of the OROP is a demand for equity and justice.

I quote the following examples of the unequal pensions prevailing in the Armed Forces personnel even after the so called parity in the pensions given to PBOR. Firstly, a soldier who retired before 31.12.2005 with parity in pension, with effect from 1.1.2006 will get Rs.5523 and arrears are being given with effect from 1.7.2009. A soldier who retires after 1.1.2006 with the same length of service gets Rs.8700 per month. A Havaldar who retires before 31.12.2005 with parity in pension gets Rs.5690 per month, that is, for the same length of service he gets less pension than that of a soldier who retired after 1.1.2006.

In this backdrop, I urge upon the hon. Minister of Defence to kindly reconsider the Government's decision in regard to the OROP and do justice to the Ex-servicemen without comparing them with their civil counterparts as the two are not comparables, be it in terms of service conditions or the risks that they face in everyday life while discharging their duties with pride and honour.

MADAM SPEAKER: Shri Jayant Chaudhary,

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Shri P.L. Punia,

Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal,

Shri Kamal Kishor,

Shri Manicka Tagore,

Dr. Kirit Premjibhai Solanki,

Dr. Sanjay Jaiswal, and

Shrimati Santosh Chowdhary wish to associate themselves with the point raised by Shri Pratap Singh Bajwa.

अध्यक्ष महोदया : श्री एम.बी.राजेश - उपस्थित नहीं।

श्री सुशील कुमार सिंह - उपस्थित नहीं।

श्री तकाम संजय - उपस्थित नहीं।