Reform Measures Undertaken

(1) The Government had constituted a Committee of Experts under the Chairmanship of Lt. Gen. (Dr.) D.B. Shekatkar (Retd.) with a view to ensuring optimum capabilities and capacity enhancement of the Armed Forces so as to address the existing and future threats and to meet our broad national security goals. Based on the recommendations of the Committee certain decisions have been taken.

Insofar as the Indian Army is concerned, in the first phase, 65 out of the total 99 recommendations have been approved by the RM for implementation. This will result in restructuring of posts of different corps of Army, viz., Signals, Electronics and Mechanical Engineers (EME), Ordnance, Army Service Corps (ASC), Remount and Veterinary Corps (RVC), Military Farm and NCC etc. This will free up approximately 57,000 positions of Officers/JCOs/ORs and civilians which will be redeployed to improve the “teeth to tail” ratio of the Indian Army.

(2) As on 21.08.2017, seven Military Farms have been closed and the cattle of these Farms have been transferred to other Military Farms. Further, the closure of six more is in progress. A land utilisation plan is under preparation.

(3) Ministry of Defence (MoD) held an interaction with private industry on the Strategic Partnership policy on 25.08.2017. The first RFI – for fighter aircraft – is to be shortly issued.

(4) In order to ensure better utilization of defence land in Andaman and Nicobar, for inter-service requirements, MoD has sanctioned powers to defence land under holding of the three Services and Coast Guard in Andaman and Nicobar Islands to the Tri-Services Command, Andaman & Nicobar Command under the control of Commander-in-Chief Andaman & Nicobar Command (CINCAN). This is also expected to strengthen jointmanship.

International Cooperation

(5) Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan visited India for attending 6th Inter-Governmental Council (IGC) on August 14, 2017 and met Raksha Mantri. A detailed presentation on defence equipment cooperation was made by Ministry of Defence to the Deputy Defence Minister of Turkmenistan.

(6) A United States Congressional delegation led by Representative of Virginia visited India and met Defence Secretary on August 23, 2017.

(7) General, Commander-in-Chief (Air), Republic of Union of Myanmar visited India and met RM and Defence Secretary on August 21, 2017.
**Delegation of Powers**

(8) With the intent to bring transformational changes in the Border Roads Organisation in order to improve the pace of execution of works and to achieve the desired outcomes as per the requirement of the Armed Forces, the Ministry of Defence on 11.8.2017 has delegated substantial administrative powers to BRO right up to the level of Chief Engineer and Task Force Commander. It is expected that with this significant delegation of powers by the MoD to BRO, the pace of road construction in the border areas would improve and BRO would be able to complete ongoing/new projects in compressed timelines.

**Response to CAG Audit Reports**

(9) As a follow-up of Cabinet Secretary’s meeting of ‘Committee of Secretaries’ on 21.07.2017 to review the progress in submission of ATNs, Ministry of Defence has since been making strenuous efforts to ensure that the directions of the PAC and Cabinet Secretary on the pending audit paras are complied with. A lot of improvement has taken place during the period.

(10) A Workshop on preparation of Action Taken Notes (ATNs) for C&AG audit paragraphs was also organised on 30.08.2017. The officers from the Director General of Audit (Defence Services) were invited to interact with the nodal officers of the Ministry.

**Married Accommodation Project-III (MAP)**

(11) The Married Accommodation Project was undertaken to provide 1,98,881 deficient Married Accommodation to the Defence Services in different parts of the country including far-flung areas in May, 2002. Phase-I with construction of 57,875 Dwelling Units (DUs) has been completed on 31.12.2015. Phase-II for construction of 69,904 DUs is ongoing, of which 39,877 DUs have been constructed upto July, 2017. The planning for MAP Phase-III commenced. In Phase-III 71,102 DUs are required to be constructed. An amount of ₹100 crore, in the first stage towards preparation of DPRs for commencement of the process for MAP Phase-III has been approved.

**War Memorial**

(12) Notice inviting Expression of Interest (EOI) for short-listing of contractors of construction of National War Memorial at New Delhi has been issued on August 29, 2017 by Project Director, National War Memorial and National War Museum HQ IDS.

**ARMY**

(13) Two contracts for procurements of 1746 Commander Thermal Imaging (TI) Sight for T-72 Tanks and 41 Advanced Light Helicopters from M/s Bharat Electronics Ltd. (BEL) and M/s HAL respectively were signed in August 2017.
NAVY & COAST GUARD

(14) Contract for acquisition of 08 Chetak Helicopters along with 02 Spare Engines, associated spares and services for Indian Navy has been signed with M/s HAL, Bangalore in August 2017.

(15) The Offshore Patrol Vessel of the Coast Guard, ICGS Shaurya, was commissioned on August 12, 2017.

(16) Interceptor Boats ICGS C-433 and C-434 built by M/s L&T, Kattupalli for the Coast Guard were inducted on August 16, 2017.

(17) Offshore Patrol Vessel of the Coast Guard ICGS Varuna was decommissioned on August 23, 2017.

(18) Indian Coast Guard Ship Ayush repatriated 02 Sri Lankan fishermen on August 9, 2017. The repatriated fishermen have been handed over to Sri Lankan Ship SLCG 40.

Miscellaneous

(19) The Nation celebrated 71st Independence Day on August 15, 2017. The main event was held at the Red Fort where the Prime Minister unfurled the tricolor. The PM also addressed the nation from the ramparts of the Red Fort. The Prime Minister also launched an online portal dedicated to the gallantry award winners, bestowed since Independence. The domain name of the portal is http://gallantryawards.gov.in. The website provides details of the Chakra series awardees i.e., Param Vir Chakra, Maha Vir Chakra, Vir Chakra, Ashok Chakra, Kirti Chakra and Shaurya Chakra. The portal contains information such as name, unit, year, citations and photographs of awardees till date.

(20) The President and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces approved 112 Gallantry Awards to the Armed Forces Personnel and members of the Paramilitary Forces which include five Kirti Chakras, 17 Shaurya Chakras, 85 Sena Medals (Gallantry), three Nao Sena Medals (Gallantry) and two Vayu Sena Medals (Gallantry). The President has also awarded 40 Mention-in-Despatches to Army/Air Personnel for their significant contributions in different military operations which include two for ‘Operation Meghdoot’, 32 for ‘Operation Rakshak’, four for ‘Operation Orchid’ and one each for the Army Headquarters and the Indian Air Force.

(21) The Minister of State for Defence inaugurated 75th raising day function of the Armed Forces Headquarters (AFHQ) Civilian Services on August 1, 2017. Speaking on the occasion, Minister of State for Defence said that AFHQ civilian personnel have been standing firmly with the Armed Forces, providing them with the essential support and working for the safety of the nation with dedication and commitment, both in times of peace and war. The service cadre came to existence when the office of Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) was constituted in the Ministry of Defence on August 1, 1942 and all the civilians were brought under one Cadre Controlling Authority.

*****