Major activities of Department of Defence for the month of September, 2017

Assumption of charge by Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman

(1) Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman took over charge as Defence Minister on September 7, 2017 in New Delhi.

'Swachhata Hi Sewa' campaign

(2) Defence Minister, Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman formally launched ‘Swachhata Hi Sewa’ campaign in Delhi on September 17, 2017. The Defence Minister flagged off the new garbage collection vehicles provided to the Cantonment Board under the Swachh Bharat Mission. As part of ‘Swachhata Hi Sewa’ campaign all entities in the Department actively participated in the programme, which included among others, mobilising special teams to clean high altitude mountain garbage, Cantonments being declared ODF etc.

Disability Pension for Defence Forces Personnel

(3) In a recent decision, the Cabinet accepted the following recommendations of the National Anomaly Committee concerning Disability Pension:

a) After detailed deliberation and duly noting the consensus in favour of retaining the percentage-based system for the Defence Forces, the Committee recommended that the parity with civilians for grant of Disability Element, which was granted to the Defence forces under 6th CPC, may be maintained.

b) The Committee also recommended that the Ministry of Defence may take adequate measures to strengthen the internal system and procedures for grant of Disability Element.

(4) For implementation of the Cabinet decision/ approval in respect of 2(a) above, Order No. 17(01)/2017(01)/D(Pension/Policy) dated 4th September, 2017 has been issued revising the disability element of disability pension for Defence Forces pensioners by multiplying the existing rate of disability element as had been drawn on 31.12.2015 by factor of 2.57 to arrive at revised rate of disability element as on 1.1.2016.

(5) In respect of other decision/ approval of the Cabinet, Directorate General of Armed Forces Medical Services (DGAFMS) have been requested to work out the necessary operation details and modalities and notify the same within a period of three months in consultation with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Department of Pension & Pensioners’ Welfare.

Third Cadre Review – Junior Commissioned Officers and Other Ranks (JCO & OR)

(6) With a view to achieving functional efficiency and also to fulfill the legitimate career aspirations of the JCOs/ORs of Indian Army 3rd Cadre Review have been undertaken for these Ranks. With the approval of Ministry of Finance, an order dated 14.09.2017 has been issued
providing for increase in establishment strength in five grades and corresponding decrease in the grade of Lance Naik/Sepoys.

(7) The implementation of the increase in ranks sanctioned above will be spread over implementation period of 5 years, i.e. 30% (in the year 2018), 20% (2019), 20% (2020), 20% (2021) and 10% (2022) respectively in each rank.

**International Cooperation**

(8) A Raksha Mantri led delegation visited Japan from September 5-6, 2017 for attending the Annual Defence Ministerial Meeting.

(9) A Defence Secretary led delegation visited Russia from September 19-23, 2017 to address issues relating to IAF fleet support and maintenance.

(10) US Secretary of Defence visited India from September 25-27, 2017. During the visit, a delegation level meeting was held between Raksha Mantri and US Secretary of Defence on September 26, 2017.

(11) The 10th India – Singapore Defence Working Group (DWG) meeting was held in New Delhi under the co-chairmanship of Joint Secretary (PIC) on September 29, 2017.

**Welfare Measure**

(12) Defence Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman approved a grant of over Rs. 13 crore which will be released for 8685 ex-servicemen, widows and dependents out of the Armed Forces Flag Day Fund. She also approved financial assistance out of Raksha Mantri Ex-Servicemen Fund.

**Miscellaneous**

(13) Raksha Mantri has stressed on the need to become more indigenous in Defence Production. She appreciated the consistent efforts being made by the Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs) and Ordnance Factories (OFs) in this direction. She was speaking on the occasion of handing over of several products developed by DPSUs and OFs to the Central Armed Police Forces in New Delhi on September 7, 2017.

(14) Interceptor Boats ICGS C-433 and C-434 were commissioned on September 19, 2017.

(15) Indian Coast Guard Ship (ICGS) ‘Sarang’ facilitated repatriation of 80 Indian fishermen from Sri Lanka on September 4, 2017.

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