

Sixteenth Lok Sabha

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Title: Need to review the decision to privatise four small arms Factories.

SHRI P. KUMAR (TIRUCHIRAPPALLI): Madam Speaker, I rise to bring the following matter of urgent public importance to the notice of the Government so that corrective action could be taken immediately to save the Ordnance Factories functioning under the Ordnance Factory Board (OFB).

Madam, it was brought to our notice that during the meeting held on 30.05.2017, the NITI Aayog had directed the Department of Defence Production and the Ordnance Factory Board to submit a proposal to privatize four small arms factories under PPP mode, one of which is Ordnance Factory Tiruchirapalli which is in my Parliamentary Constituency.

It is also understood that the Ministry of Defence has categorized about 143 items produced by Ordnance Factories as non-core, which means that henceforth, for these 143 items, orders will not be placed on OFB, which will be forced to wind up.

Madam, Ordnance Factory, Tiruchirapalli (OFT) is one of the 41 Indian Ordnance Factories functioning under OFB, Ministry of Defence.

This was established in 1966 when the need was felt for small arms, after the Indo-Pak war of 1965.

Immediately after one year of its inception, it started production. Now, it manufactures small arms ranging from 0.315 rifles to high calibre weapons, including grenade launchers.

That being so, the decision of the NITI Aayog to privatize OFT came as a rude shock.

To protest against this move to privatize, the OFB Protective Committee had decided to go on an indefinite strike from 24th July 2017.

In view of the above, I request the Govt. of India to instruct the concerned to withdraw the proposal and to hold discussions with the arms factories in the interest of national security.