

12.14 hrs

PETITION *RE*: ENHANCEMENT OF  
RENTAL CHARGES FOR TELEPHONES  
IN BANGALORE CITY

[*English*]

SHRI V.S. KRISHNA IYER (Bangalore South): I beg to present a petition signed by Shri D.Jayaram and other telephone subscribers of Bangalore City regarding enhancement of rental charges for telephones in Bangalore City.

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12.14 1/2 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF  
URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

[*Translation*]

**Tardy Implementation of recommendations made by the High Level Committee on problems of ex-servicemen**

SHRI HARISH RAWAT (Almora): I call attention of the Minister of Defence to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon !

"Tardy implementation of the recommendations made by the High Level Committee set up by the Government of India in 1983 to go into the problems of ex-servicemen resulting in discontentment among them and the steps taken by the Government in the matter."

12.15 hrs.

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

[*English*]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE PRODUCTION AND SUPPLIES IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI): Sir, On behalf of Shri K.C. Pant, I beg to say that Government, have attached great importance to the resettlement and welfare of Ex-servicemen and formulated a wide-ranging package of scheme and facilities for this purpose. A Resettlement Organisation which covers the entire country and goes down to the district level, has been established. Besides the Directorate General of Resettlement and its Zonal Directorates under the Ministry of Defence, there are 29 Rajya Sainik Boards and 282 Zila Sainik Boards in the States and Union Territories, to look after the resettlement and welfare of persons who are released at a relatively young age from the defence forces. There is no other organisation to look after resettlement and welfare of pensioners comparable to the Sainik Boards which are manned by ex-service officers themselves. The revitalisation of these Sainik Boards as recommended by a Committee has been implemented in many States.

In order to review the work done and suggest additional measures Government had set up a High level Committee on Problems of Ex-servicemen under the Chairmanship of the Raksha Rajya Mantri in March, 1984. The report of this Committee submitted to Government in October, 1984 made 68 recommendations. Decisions have been taken on all these recommendations. Fifty recommendations have been accepted in full, 6 accepted partially and 12 have not been accepted. The bulk of the recommendations relating to employment, pensions, code of conduct, welfare and reorganisation of the Directorate General of Resettlement has been accepted. Out of the 12 recommendations not accepted, 4 were to be taken care of through existing schemes and institutions.

Of the 56 recommendations fully or partly accepted, 35 pertain exclusively to the Centre, 11 to the Centre and the States together, 9 pertain to the States only and one to ex-servicemen themselves. All the States

[Sh. Chintamani Panigrahi]

have been addressed and periodically reminded through letters, as well as in meetings of the Kendriya Sainik Board, for a sincere and vigorous implementation of the 20 recommendations where the States also have to take steps.

Implementation of accepted recommendations is a continuous process. Besides issuing orders wherever required, the actual implementation is also pursued with various Departments and Agencies concerned with the implementation. The progress is being monitored and reviewed through periodic returns. As most ex-servicemen take up residence in the States to which they belong, very often in the rural areas, cooperation of the State Governments is very necessary for more effective action in the resettlement and welfare of ex-servicemen. A sympathetic attitude on the part of the State Government will go a long way in solving many problems of ex-servicemen.

Securing gainful employment is the primary need of those released from the Defence Forces. Reservation in recruitment to Group 'C' and 'D' posts in the Central Government and its Public Sector Undertakings has made available about 15,000 vacancies annually. The reservations provided by the States contribute approximately an equal number. The rest have to be assisted to go in for self-employment. Keeping this in view, the objective of the resettlement policy has been

- (a) to assure fuller utilisation of reserved vacancies through effective monitoring ;
- (b) to organise training courses to impart skills which will improve employability or help in self-employment; and
- (c) to promote self-employment ventures through financial and other assistance.

**Reservations in recruitment and spon-**

sorship through the Employment Exchanges have provided employment to about 20 to 25,000 persons every year. Since utilisation of reserved vacancies had been only around 45 per cent, due to various reasons such as mismatch between skills available and skills required, lack of mobility to go to civil jobs far away from homes, etc., Central Government has issued orders for special recruitment drives, greater advance intimation of vacancies, obtaining confirmation from Director General Resettlement before dereservation and carry forward of unutilised vacancies for one year. These measures, which were also recommended by the High Level Committee, when fully implemented, are expected to improve the utilisation of reserved vacancies. We have also requested the State Governments to take similar measures and also establish a review and monitoring system. Further, in order to explore more fully the job opportunities available in the Private Sector, we have also sought the active cooperation of various Federations of Chambers of Commerce and Industry. We have been receiving a favourable response.

In order to improve the employability of Ex-servicemen and impart to them skills needed on the civil side, a large number of training courses are being run all over the country in various institutions. These consist of both per-release and post-release training in technical and vocational trades. Presently, with nearly 400 courses, over 13,000 persons including 1300 officers are being given training every year. This is expected to help them in not only securing employment, but also in taking to self-employment.

Since about fifty thousand persons are released from the Armed Forces every year, and provision of employment is not expected to cover of them, Government have decided to encourage Ex-servicemen to take up self-employment ventures also. Besides a number of steps taken to provide for reservation/priority in allotment of industrial/commercial plots/sheds and distribution agencies and the schemes of interest subsidy on bank loans and price subsidy on sale of items to Ministry of Defence, new avenues of self-employment in transportation, communica-

tion and security services are also being pursued. More importantly, a scheme 'Self-Employment for Ex-servicemen' (SEMFEX-I) was introduced in 1987 in collaboration with the Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI) to provide for term loans and seed capital assistance for small industrial ventures and transport services on soft terms through the State Financial Corporations. So far, 1768 persons have been sanctioned loans totalling over Rs. 44 crores. Another scheme SEMFEX-II was started in 1988 with the help of the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) to provide loans for agriculture and allied activities through commercial banks, land development banks and regional rural banks. The response to SEMFEX Schemes, particularly SEMFEX-I is encouraging. States like Bihar, Haryana, Karnataka, U.P. Punjab, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu have done quite well under SEMFEX-I. Steps are being taken to make the Scheme more popular in other States. Seminars have been held in Delhi, Lucknow, Almora, Jaipur, Jammu, Srinagar, Leh Trivendrum, Hyderabad and Bangalore to propagate the Scheme. More such seminars in other States Capitals are being held to give boost to this Scheme.

We have also been addressing the State Governments in regard to number of welfare measures. Medical Assistance is being made available through military hospitals and Government hospitals. While we have prepared a Plan to add 1155 beds in phases in military hospitals to augment facilities for ex-servicemen, we have also requested the State Governments to augment medical facilities in civil hospitals by providing additional beds reserved for ex-servicemen, for which the Central Government can meet 50% of the capital cost. Plans have been made for expansion of existing paraplegic homes and establishment of new ones and upgradation of the Artificial Limb Centres in phases. A large number of ex-servicemen are also able to make purchases for many items of daily use at concessional prices at canteen stores. Most States have provided for reservation in houses/house site allotments in their housing schemes. We have

also requested the States for expeditious action for recovery of possession of agricultural land and residential buildings owned by Ex-servicemen by amending the law, if necessary. The Delhi Rent Control Act was also amended recently for this purpose.

While every effort is being made for the resettlement and welfare of ex-servicemen, we are also aware of the demands being made by ex-servicemen, we are also aware of the demands being made by ex-servicemen from time to time. In fact, most of them relate to the recommendations of the High Level Committee which the Government has not found possible to accept. The demand for 'rank for rank pension' irrespective of the date of retirement was considered by the Fourth Pay Commission, but was not accepted by the Commission. The additional relief for those who retired prior to 1.1.86 as recommended by the Forth Pay Commission was accepted by Government. The disability element was also substantially enhanced for all existing pensioners. Government also accepted the recommendation to give relief on pension for increase in cost of living on a graded basis. As a measure of social security the minimum pension was also raised to Rs. 375 per month. However, there is a case on the subject of 'equal rank equal pension' before the Supreme Court and the matter is *Sub-judice*.

Another demand which is voiced is for assured employment upto 58 years of age for all persons released from the Armed Forces. The recommendation of the High Level Committee in this regard was that this should be got examined in detail by the Government of India for working out suitable modalities to introduce a system of provision of alternative civilian jobs to all retiring defence personnel. This was examined by a Committee in the Department of Personnel and Training. The Committee did not find this feasible after examining all aspects of the proposal. Instead the Committee suggested that efforts should be made for increased utilisation of reserved vacancies in the Central Government/State Governments/PSUs and for building up a computerised information

[Sh. Chintamani Panigrahi]

system covering information on personnel due to retire, and the available vacancies, and a trust given to encourage and support self-employment programmes to resettle Ex-servicemen nearer their homes. The recommendations regarding establishment of an ex-servicemen Financial Corporation and Ex-servicemen Industrial Development Corporation were not accepted as the assistance expected through the proposed Corporations can be readily provided through existing institutions. Following on from this, the SEMFEX-I and SEMFEX-II Schemes were launched with the help of IDBI and NABARD respectively. A computer is being installed in the Directorate General Resettlement to develop information and data base which will help in planning and improving the placements of retired personnel.

Three other recommendations which have not been accepted relate to the National Ex-servicemen Resettlement Act, Ex-servicemen Resettlement Commission and constitution of a Parliamentary Committee. These were examined in depth. Keeping in view that executive instructions have the advantage of flexibility while having force of law and the Consultative Committee of the Members of Parliament attached to the Ministry of Defence can and has been deliberating and advising on problems of Ex-servicemen, these three recommendations were not accepted.

I would like to assure the House that the Government would be unsparing in its efforts for the resettlement and welfare of Ex-servicemen. It is a national responsibility towards those who have given the best years of their lives for the defence of the nation. However, this has to be achieved within the various constraints-financial and otherwise-which the country faces. In this endeavour, we need the wholehearted cooperation of all Ministries of the Government of India as well as the State Governments, as the actual implementation of various measures rests with them. I would gladly welcome constructive suggestions in furtherance of our com-

mon objective to utilise this trained and disciplined body of persons in our national developmental effort and resettle them in civil life.

[*Translation*]

SHRI HARISH RAWAT : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, since it will not be possible for us to discuss the demands of Ministry of defence in the house this year, I would urge upon you to allot more time to the speakers in this discussion. I would like to stress only on two things. The steps taken by the Government for the welfare and rehabilitation of ex-servicemen during the last one and a half decade really deserve full appreciation. These steps have proved very effective in improving the financial condition of the ex-servicemen. State Governments too have contributed their full cooperation in this regard. Secondly, the high level committee on problems of ex-servicemen under the leadership of the Minister of State in the Ministry of Defence in 1984, had submitted its recommendations in record-time in Oct. 1984. On behalf of the ex-servicemen and the House I would like to extend my thanks to the Chairman and members of the committee for their remarkable performance and the Government for accepting most of the recommendations of the committee. The Armed forces personnel get retired comparatively at early age. An army man is used to live in a set life style. He is strong and feels to work in a disciplined manner. That is why, he wants to be absorbed in some gainful employment after he retires from the armed forces. Many of the hon. Members have raised this issue in the House and outside as well. As a result the Government of India amended the terms of reference of the 4th Pay Commission and directed them to examine the issue of pension parity and disability pension of the ex-servicemen. I would like to thank the Ministry of Defence for they have approved more pension to the ex-servicemen than what was recommended by the Pay Commission for the disabled categories. Today, the biggest problem before the ex-servicemen is of one rank one pension. The persons, who retired after 1973,

are getting more pension than those who retired before 1973, and most of them faced both the wars of 1965 and 1971. It means that their juniors are getting more. The question is not only of money, but it hurts their ego also. They think that the Government of India is not properly recognising their services. I can understand the problem of Government also. If the principle of one rank one pension is adopted it will cost 100 crores more every year to the national exchequer. Then civilians will also make such a demand. But it is not in any way justified to place them at par with civilians. If we do it, we will be doing injustice to the soldiers who are ready to sacrifice their lives and which is perhaps the greatest sacrifice for the country. We should take both these cases as different. We need not think about the likely repercussions on civilians. If the Government of India finds it difficult, I can quote cases where the Ministry of Defence have provided ex-gratia relief to some ex-servicemen. There are two orders which have been issued after the committee was constituted. May I know whether the Government propose to accede to the demand of one rank one pension made by the ex-servicemen, by the entire House and by the whole of the country? If there is a problem, of financial gap. What steps you propose to take to fill that gap with ex-gratia relief. Fifty thousand soldiers retired every year. Kindly give the details of the re-employment provided to ex-servicemen every year. How many of them, whom we could not provide re-employment in Government services, have been given employment under self employment scheme? I had attended the workshop on self-employment scheme, which is called Sunfes ' I and II. The hon. Minister of defence had also gone to Almora in this connection. These workshops have proved successful in motivating the ex-servicemen to adopt self-employment schemes. May I know whether will you consider arranging more workshops on block-level, where the density of ex-soldiers is more. Besides, what steps you propose to take to improve the shortcomings mentioned by the ex-servicemen in Sunfes one and two? What steps you propose to take to effect improvement and to make the scheme more practical? Ex-servicemen have made complaints

about the functioning of the directorate of Re-settlement. What steps are you going to take to redress the grievances of the ex-servicemen? There is a lot of suspicion about the working of the members of states and District Sainik Boards. It is seen that the members of District Sainik Boards are practicing discrimination in the matter of extending financial assistance to the ex-servicemen. If the members realise their responsibility and they are committed to the cause, then all the facilities can be made available to the ex-servicemen. But most of the District Sainik Boards are not functioning properly where there is no proper management. I would like to know which states have accepted the recommendations of high powered committee in this regard? What steps are you going to take to see that the recommendations are accepted by those states which have not yet accepted them. There is a provision of reservation under Article 16 (4) of the constitution. I would like to request that you should bring an amendment appending a clause for providing of reservation to the ex-servicemen. This will help the ex-servicemen in getting employment in Government services as well as in public sector units. What steps have been taken by the Government till now regarding the demand of ex-servicemen for setting up a resettlement commission. I would like that the hon. Minister should take a positive decision in this regard.

In the end, I would like to know whether the Government is considering to constitute a work group, which may formulate rules for the welfare of ex-servicemen in regard to recognition of their military service of pre-fixation period and for promotion in civil jobs. The condition of those ex-servicemen, who are war veterans of second world war or those, who were in the Burmese Army is very pitiable and they get a nominal amount as pension. What steps the Government propose to take to provide them special financial assistance?

[English]

SHRI CHANDRA PRATAP NARAIN  
SINGH (Padrauna): Mr. Deputy Speaker,

[Sh. Chandra Pratap Narain Singh]

Sir, the ex-servicemen is an individual who, the nation feels is a hero just after a war or a skirmish, he is eulogized that he has done yeoman's service to nation, slogans of Jai Jawan are raised when he comes back from the battle-field, but after the battle-field, when the time comes for the youngmen to retire, we have many excuses, we have many problems in giving them what they rightly deserve. The Government, needless to say, has done a lot. The late Prime Minister, Shrimati Indira Gandhi, was very keen on the facilities given to ex-servicemen. What happened was that a cadre review was done at that stage and many officers who at a particular level were stagnating began getting promotion, but the resettlement part of it, was later looked into by a Committee, headed by the then State Minister of Defence, Shri K.P. Singh Deo. I personally feel, that these ex-soldiers, ex-servicemen should be given more than us, civilians as they do far more in giving the better part of their life to the service of the nation. These youngmen come from families which are not affluent. Affluent industrialist's son does not join the Armed Forces any more, because the army does not have the glamour the pension, the perks that even the British gave once upon a time. This is a sad reflection. I would like to ask a very simple question. : How many Ministers of Government of India, how many industrialists of the nation, how many Members of Parliament have sons in the Armed Forces? If this could be looked into, we would know what we are doing for the Armed Forces. There must be a reason; that reason unfortunately or fortunately, is not because of financial constraints only .

Sir, as a nation I plead before this Hon. House and request the Hon.Minister that given if the nation has to tighten its belt and the civilians have to cut down a certain amount of their perks and their needs, we should do it in the interest of granting ex-servicemen adequate and honourable pension when they retire.

How many ex-servicemen really do get jobs? Today a Jet pilot who flies an aircraft

worth crores of rupees when he retires gets to be a very frustrated young man because the kind of avenues that are open to him unfortunately are very limited. The golden hand shake of the Air Force once upon a time led to leaving of many excellent air force officers to join Air India and other flying organisations. That means they do feel that crunch of the lack of finance and hence they want betterment. But, Sir, it is our duty to see those young men who used to fly Dakotas which are now an obsolete aircraft, but the Indian Air Force was flying them; There were many flying officers who were flying the AN-32 I think three of them crashed in 1968 and then the Government had to look into it. MIG 21 also had a number of crashes. But those young disciplined officers in their flying machines are forgotten heroes after the Chief of Air Staff writes to their families.

I once again bring to your notice the disparities. A Major General who retired in 1953 gets a pension of Rs 800 whereas a Major retiring in 1979 gets Rs. 875 as pension. That is a Major General 30 years ago gets less than a major retiring 10 years back.

Now, Sir, if you just go back, I am sure there are some here who must know of the pickets in 1947 when the position of the pickets in forward areas was such, that there were no facilities for those officers. The forward areas were something to see. But our brave javans, our brave officers and our brave flying men stayed in those places and fought for our very integrity. Those people unfortunately get less money than the one who retires today, i.e.. who have had a little more comfortable life in the forward areas and in the Armed Forces. Sir, why should a person who retired in those days get less than the person who retires today?

There were skirmishes which after 1971 have ceased because our brave officers and javans gave the enemy a lesson even with the highly sophisticated equipment that they had. Our soldiers and our Air-men are better and are willing to sacrifice their lives for the nation. But does that become a hinderance or does that become a negative point for the

future of these youngmen?

We, Sir, in Parliament have raised our pensions and have raised our emoluments. The Legislative Assemblies have raised their pensions. But what is the pension of a retired officer? When we legislate we must look into this grave injustice to the uniform. Unfortunately, I personally feel that the Uniform is not represented in the Defence Ministry. The Defence Ministry which has everything to do with national security, which reports to the Prime Minister is manned from top to bottom by civilian officers. The resettlement of those brave young people should be looked into not only by us, the civilians, but also by the Uniform. Hence I would request through you that in the Ministry of Defence in senior posts, say at the level of a joint secretary. There should be an officer from the Army, Navy or Airforce for a period of two or three years in rotation to look specially into the grievance of the Armed Forces. Sir, it is a highly disciplined Force, it does not question, it does not joint in *hartals* and it is not vociferous. Hence it is the duty of parliamentarians like us and the head of Government to look into the problems of these mute, quite and disciplined people who give their lives for the security of our nation for the very existence of our nation.

Sir, let me not be misunderstood that I have taken the negative aspect only. The State Minister has been kind enough to give us a brief. I am impressed. He is trying his level best. Unfortunately, the Cabinet Minister could not meet us before this briefing. But he has other important and major things to look into and I do not blame him. But as a member of Parliament, I would once again request the Defence Minister to bring this to the notice of the Cabinet. The area that his great and illustrious father represented sends a major part of its people to the Armed forces and I am sure the hon. Minister will look into this aspect more sympathetically.

SHRI AJAY MUSHRAN (Jabalpur): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the responsibility of the nation towards the gallant soldiers of yester-years was emphasised in the Lok Sabha by the late Prime Minister, Shrimati

Indira Gandhi on the 9th April 1981. She said:

"Finding alternate occupation for the ex-service men is a national responsibility. We should treat this question with a sense of urgency. The State Governments and private sector industries have been urged to take steps for the welfare and rehabilitation of ex-servicemen. There is no reason why many of them cannot be gainfully employed in various development activities.

Sir, that was in 1981 when the urgency was felt and a High Level Committee on problems of ex-servicemen was appointed. This Committee which was appointed on 10th March 1984 did a commendable work and submitted its report in October 1984. Unfortunately, as has been given by the hon. Minister of State for Defence in his statement, the recommendations which have been accepted are basically not of much tangible benefit to the ex-servicemen economically. In fact, some of the recommendations which are accepted, have been hampering the cause of ex-servicemen. I will explain this later.

It will be very improper for me to say that the Minister of Defence has done nothing for ex-servicemen. As a matter of fact from 1981 onwards, the ex-servicemen had been getting the attention of the nation in general and the Ministry of Defence in particular and a lot has been done after these recommendations of this High Level Committee were published in 1984.

But unfortunately— we have now brought this Calling Attention in order to draw the attention of the hon. Defence Minister — the implementation has been extremely tardy and I am very sorry to say that. I have no reservation in saying so.

I would like to quote a couplet to bring it to the notice of the hon. Defence Minister as what an ex-servicemen feels today.

"In the times of war and not before, God and Soldier all adored. When wars are

[Sh. Ajay Mushran]

over and everything righted God is forgotten and the soldier is slighted."

This is exactly how an servicemen feels, rightly or wrongly. That is why I will only like to say briefly and quickly as to how the implementation of the High Level Committee has been tardy.

As I said earlier, the inconsequential recommendations which were accepted relate to things like definition of ex-servicemen, improvement in the discharge certificate and some recommendations regarding which the Central Government had only written letters to the States. The States having received these letters have simply filed them and taken no action whatsoever, because there is no legislative or legal compulsion. One of the major recommendation accepted was simplification and uniform application of orders for initial fixation of pay for ex-servicemen who take up Government jobs after retiring from the service. The implementation of these recommendations was slap a on the face of the ex-servicemen. Because of different rules, ex-servicemen had to wait for years to get their initial pay fixed. The new rules framed as a result of this recommendations were fixed at such low levels that they were even below the interim re-employment pay given to the ex-servicemen when they join these civil jobs. In implementing the recommendation, the Government even ordered the recovery of the so-called excess that had been paid to these ex-servicemen over the years. Many ex-servicemen, particularly in the Post and Tele-communication Department had their pay slashed drastically when these recoveries started. My repeated requests to the Government and the Ministry concerned evoked no response at all. Ultimately, some of these ex-servicemen went to Court and obtained stay of the recovery. Even then the Government did not give the benefit of the Stay Orders to all the ex-servicemen but only to those who had gone to the Court. The Government appears to be encouraging its ex-servicemen employees to seek legal shelter. These disci-

plined soldiers who have faith that justice will be done by the Government have been left with no alternative but to go to the Court which is a very costly process. The Central Government wrote to the State Government on several matters like reservation of employment vacancies, reservation of houses and house-sites, Amendment to Rent Control Acts, to enable ex-servicemen to resume possession of their agricultural lands, houses and commercial plots, which may have been rented out while the person was on active service. How many States have implemented or honoured the desire of the Central Government in this regard? Has the Government in a way monitoring the action taken? Because so far as my knowledge goes, there is none. My information is that not a single State has implemented these recommendations *in toto*.

I strongly feel that implementation of these recommendations should be tied to some legislative application on States and the hon. Defence Minister may like to consider the ways and means to legislate a binding application on the State Governments.

The Government has always stated that the problems of ex-servicemen are very close to their heart and I have always submitted that the Government should let this warmth percolate to their pockets. All the recommendations of the High Level Committee which would have provided some financial benefits to ex-servicemen or some funds to help in their re-settlement have not been accepted by the Government. Even the enactment of a re-settlement Act and constituting a Parliamentary Committee to oversee implementation of the recommendations have not been accepted.

Both these recommendations would have helped the Government in monitoring and effectively implementing the recommendations accepted by the Government. Since the Government has been unable to monitor and implement these recommendations effectively why could this job not have been handed over to a Parliamentary Committee?

It will definitely help the Ministry in doing their job on non-government basis. If the Government is sincere about implementing the benefits why the Government cannot enact a law to give itself the powers required for time bound implementation of the accepted recommendations.

The Government has also said that it will take care of information of a National Ex-Servicemen Financial Corporation through plan outlays for resettlement of ex-servicemen. While it is true that two schemes SEMFEX I and SEMFEX II have been started, for which I would like to give more hearty, unqualified and unconditional congratulations to the Ministry of Defence for implementing them very well, though there has been very tardy implementation in some of the other States. These are to be financed through State Financial Corporation. The State Financial Corporations have been very tardy in sanctioning loans under these schemes and a very large number of applications are even pending today. Even when loans have been sanctioned, they have not been disbursed. I know of several cases where loan has been sanctioned, the buildings constructed, machinery installed, but the working capital has not been given to the ex-servicemen under these schemes. I will urge on the hon Defence Minister to use his good offices and persuade the State Governments which are not implementing SEMFEX I and SEMFEX II properly.

The High Level Committee recommendations for a plan outlay of Rs. 350 crores is stated by the Government to be taken care of through existing schemes. This allocation of Rs. 170 crores at the Centre and Rs.180 crores at State level is sought to be given but what part of this has actually been provided; and this part, I am told, is Rs. 1 crore at the moment for SEMFEX I and Rs. 1 crore by the IDBI. Now, what is Rs. 2 crores for a scheme for which Rs 350 crores has been envisaged?

All the major recommendations which would have given genuine relief to ex-servicemen have not been accepted:

- (a) I would like to ask why is it that only uniformed personnel retire at a young age and are not given employment upto the age of 58? Why can't this be implemented?
- (b) The Government accepted recommendation 15.7 for lateral induction into suitable Group I and B posts.

The Prime Minister issued instructions that 15 per cent of all Group A & B vacancies should be set aside for ex-servicemen. A Committee of Secretaries was formed to identify the vacancies which could be filled by ex-servicemen. Four long years have passed and not even one ex-serviceman has been accepted or inducted as directed by the Prime Minister. Is this not tardy implementation of one of the most important recommendations of the High Level Committee?

Now I come to the burning question of ex-servicemen that is One Rank One Pension. the hon. Minister of Defence, the hon. Defence Minister of State, the Defence Ministry and the whole nation are fully conversant with this problem. At the moment, as we know, there are five different rates of pension for Defence personnel depending upon the date on which they retire. A senior JCO who retires today earns more pension than a Colonel who retired before 1977. When I go to buy me provisions, the shop keeper does not ask me the date of my retirement and fix his price accordingly. If the Government cannot accept One Rank One Pension, I will urge upon the Defence Minister to get in touch with the Ministry of Food and Civil Supplies to consider opening fair price shops with the prices fixed separately for the different categories of pensions given to various Defence personnel.

Armed Forces personnel are the only group whose pension was not based on the last pay drawn but on rank. Thus a Major with the requisite minimum service get a fixed amount as pension, irrespective of the pay he was drawing. I am confident that you will

[Sh. Ajay Mushran]

agree that a retired Major retiring in 1979 has to live as well or bad as the one retiring later or today.

In a recent judgment the hon'ble Supreme Court has granted equal pension to judges of High Courts and Supreme Court depending on whether they were Chief Justices of the High Court or the Supreme Court and irrespective of their date of retirement. Thus, some Judges today get more pension than the last pay drawn by them. While the judgment states that it is not to be used as a precedent, I think it is an example in statistics and what an example of dispensation of natural justice !

Various figures have been given of the financial repercussions of implementing the 'one rank one pension' benefit. These figures appear to have been manipulated to scare the Government from accepting this recommendation which forms the main demand of more than 54 lakh ex-servicemen in the country and 60,000 following each year.

I wish to submit most humbly to the hon. Defence Minister that I have statistics on good authority that the financial burden on the Government will not be more than Rs. 150 crores for men and officers in uniform of Army, Navy and Air Force, if this 'Same rank same pension' benefit is implemented. The total of this Rs 150 crores will only gradually reduce because the major beneficiaries are people who have retired earlier, who are older, and the number will decline as the time passes. Thus the burden on the national exchequer will gradually decline and when all the pre 1-1-1986 retirees are dead and gone, the burden will be zero.

The main problem is, that today the same rank same pension agitation is gaining ground. I would suggest that the hon. Defence Minister may like to call people from his Ministry, officers from the Defence Accounts and seriously consider our demand of 'same rank same pension' because today

out of all the 68 recommendations of the high level committee of 1984, if only one, the 'same rank same pension' recommendation is accepted, all other recommendations can be forgotten and they will not have such repercussions as this one pending demand. Because, so far as the rehabilitation is concerned, so far also the re-settlement is concerned, what the Government has done after 1980 up to 1989 is something which has not been done in any country of the world. The ex-servicemen are in the focus and the Government is doing a very splendid job. All we require is that the Minister must feather his cap by accepting the demand which is a great financial anxiety to the ex-servicemen.

SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI: I am extremely grateful to the hon. members, Shri Ajay Mushran, Shri Harish Rawat and Shri C.P.N. Singh, that while speaking on this Calling Attention motion they have spoken very kindly as to what we have done, what the Government has done for the last many years for providing employment to ex-servicemen and also in providing many facilities for the welfare and proper rehabilitation. We reciprocate the feeling of our hon. Members.

I am also happy because I am in constant touch with the ex-servicemen and they also meet our hon. Defence Minister whenever there is some difficulty. Honourable members also are very much interested in helping the rehabilitation programmes of ex-servicemen, because they always bring their difficulties to our notice and we also help them.

I am also happy to note that the ex-servicemen also in general respond very well to the service that our hon. members are rendering to them.

I will refer to one or two major points that our friends have not mentioned. Shri Harish Rawat has mentioned about this problem of pension.

Sir, I would like to submit that the Government has gone even beyond the recommendations of the Fourth Pay Commission

to help the ex-servicemen.

Sir, in acceptance of the recommendation of the High Level Committee, the terms of reference of the Fourth Central Pay Commission were amended and for the firsts, the Pay Commission was asked to recommend in respect of past pensioners also with a view to having a proper pension structure for all pensioners.

The recommendations of the Fourth Pay Commission were accepted and in quite a few matters were improved upon, as Mr. Rawat has mentioned. For example, the disability element for 100 per cent disability was improved upon. For the category of officers and honorary Com. Officers, the Pay Commission's recommendation was Rs 600 per month, but the Government has approved Rs. 750 per month. For Junior Com. Officers, the Pay Commission's recommendation was Rs. 450 per month, but the Government has approved Rs. 550 per month. For other ranks, the Pay Commission's recommendation was Rs. 450 per month and we have approved Rs. 450 per month. We have also extended the facilities to the existing pensioners in War Injury cases, where ceiling for 100 per cent disability was raised from Rs. 500 per month to Rs. 100 per month for disability element.

The minimum pension recommended at Rs. 300 per month was improved to Rs. 375 per month. For raising the minimum of the service element of disability pension to Rs. 375 per month, the disability element of pension as well as ex-gratia amounts are not taken into account .

The Government also accepted the recommendations regarding periodic relief for increase in cost of living and on the pension consolidated as on 1.1.1986, periodic relief has been given.

Now, I will come to One Rank One Pension. My friend Shri Ajay Mushran is an ex-service men and he takes great interest in these things. The figures he has given is Rs. 150 crores. But now the total Budget esti-

mate for the Pension 1989-90 in respect of defence pensioners is of the order of Rs. 1350 crores. Of which, pension also will be Rs. 800 crores excluding gratuity and commuted value of pension, which are paid as one time payment...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI AJAY MUSHRAN: Sir, the figure of Rs. 1350 crores has been given in Vol. I of Expenditure Budget, which says: it includes pensions and other retirement benefits of retired personnel of defence service— Rs. 1350 crores, and other civilian departments, railways, and so on and so forth. Then it clarifies in the Expenditure Budget that out of Rs. 1350 crores on Pension, the break-up is: Army Rs. 1279.06 crores; Navy Rs. 19.03 crores; and Air Force Rs. 50.90 crores. And these include the civilians working in these services. What we are discussing here is pure ex-servicemen. We are not discussing the civilian employees, which are paid under this Budget head as given in Expenditure Budget Vol. II at Page 37—Ministry of Defence: Defence Pensions. Then, explanatory note is given. It says:

"The provision in this demand is for the Pensionary charges in respect of retired Defence personnel. It covers payments of gratuities, Casualty Awards such as War Injury Pay, Disability Pensions and Gallantry Awards..."

When we talk of "Same Rank Same Pension" we are only talking of the normal pension, which is given to the people on the ratio 80:40. Before the Fourth Pay Commission, the ratio was 80:30 And the ratio was improved upon by the Pay Commission to 80:40. The existing disparity has been there because of the increase in pay five times. i.e. till 1977, till 1979, till 1982, till 1985 and after 1985 Dec.

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So, the ratio has been accepted as 80:40. But in this amount of Rs. 1350 crores includes a major chunk of civilians also as given in these Explanatory Notes of the Expenditure Budget Vol. I and II.

**SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI:** As I was submitting, the Government, our friends and the country are giving the highest regard, respect and attention to the welfare and rehabilitation of ex-servicemen. Therefore, whatever more we have to strive for the rehabilitation of ex-servicemen we are trying our best to do that. That is why, we had appointed this High Level committee. Mr. Ajay Mushran read out the statement of Indiraji. That shows how much our Government and our leadership are interested in seeing that ex-servicemen are rehabilitated properly and get all the benefits. Therefore, as Indiraji had stated, we take this as a national responsibility.

About the question of one rank one pension, this issue has been taken to the court. Therefore, let us see how the court decides. We cannot dilate on this because it is sub judice.

It is true that this amount of Rs. 1350 crores includes Defence civilians also. But their number is relatively very small—perhaps 2 lakhs or so compared to service pensions who are about 12 lakhs. About the point of disparity in pension in some ranks, disparity in pensions of persons of in same rank retiring at different points of time has always been in existence, and perhaps, it will continue to be so.

**SHRI AJAY MUSHRAN:** Poverty in this country has always been in existence and you are trying to eradicate it. Let us do it in the case of pensioners also.

**SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI:** That is different. We have fixed the minimum pension at Rs. 375 though the Fourth Pay Commission has recommended it as Rs. 300 per month. Because of this increase many persons in lower ranks, who retired at different point of time, were given the same pension from 1.1.86. since the matter is before the court, let us see how it comes out.

**SHRI AJAY MUSHRAN:** For us the High Court is you and Pantji.

**SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI:** As Shri Rawatji has pointed out about 50,000 persons are released from the Armed Forces every year and they come within the definition of ex-service men. The general position is that about 20 to 25 per cent of the persons express that they are not in need of employment when they leave the Defence Forces. Then there are the skilled categories of persons who get jobs on their own and they do not need any assistance from the Government. There are also a large number of persons, who though offered jobs, are unwilling to move far away from their homes. After taking these three parameters into account, we find that about 20,000 to 25,000 ex-servicemen are being provided jobs every year. This is a good achievement. We need not despair about it. About twenty thousand to twenty-five thousand ex-servicemen are provided jobs every year. The number of ex-servicemen retiring every year is about 50,000 and about fifty per cent of them have been provided jobs every year. This is a fairly high percentage...*(Interruptions)*. Therefore what Ajay Mushran Ji has pointed out, is for the States to implement. We have already given directions to them. The Defence Ministry and the Home Ministry are always writing to the State Governments that whatever quota of reservation has been fixed for ex-servicemen in employment they must implement that...*(Interruptions)*

**SHRI AJAY MUSHRAN:** Only writing is not enough. We lost 1,200 vacancies in BSF because of the tardy implementation by the Home Ministry, but nothing was done. I informed the Minister of State for Home Affairs dealing with this case, and I informed the Defence Ministry also. They say that anybody who wants to have a job in BSF, must get absorbed within two years of his having left the Service...*(Interruptions)*

**MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Let him reply, Mr. Mushran. I have already given you lot of concession in allowing you to ask so many questions.

**SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI:** Sir, I am happy that Mr. Ajay Mushran knows all

these things and perhaps out of enthusiasm due to knowing things, sometimes he goes a little beyond the subject.

SHRI AJAY MUSHRAN: Sir, it is after four years that the Ex-servicemen plight is being discussed.

SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI: Sir, he must be knowing that nothing lapses now. Now the order has been passed that it should be carried out. Supposing these 1,200 posts are released, we shall fill up these posts...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI AJAY MUSHRAN: These posts have lapsed because of the tardy implementation.

SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI: Sir this is what we are trying to rectify. Shri Harish Rawat was telling that the Sainik Boards and the Zila Sainik Boards are not working properly. A Committee was there for that and we have sent directions to the State Governments with the request to activate these Sainik Boards and the Zila Sainik Boards. So, that is what the States should do. Besides that, we are organising training courses for imparting vocational skills to nearly thirteen thousand persons every year, which helps them in either getting employment or self-employment. Over 1,700 persons have already been sanctioned loans to the extent of about Rs. 44 crores under Self-employment Scheme No. 1, within a short span of a year and a half. All these major measures will help in the resettlement of ex-servicemen to a large extent. Then, there is the Self-Employment Scheme No. 2, which is also for helping those who are retiring. This is also picking up now and we hope that with more and more interest shown by the Ministry, the Zila Sainik Boards and the Director-General of Resettlement...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Hon. Minister will you please yield for a minute?

*[Translation]*

When you are doing so much and there is complaint that the implementation is not proper, a parliamentary committee should be constituted to supervise the implementation work.

*[English]*

SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI: Sir, I hope an executive order is more effective than even the Parliamentary Committee...*(Interruptions)* This is one of the recommendations. Out of sixty-eight recommendations, we have accepted almost 56 recommendations. Twenty recommendations, as you yourself pointed out, relate also to the State Governments. We are asking the State Governments to implement those twenty recommendations which we have accepted. Therefore, whatever recommendations we have accepted, we are pursuing them.

About training I have already mentioned. About assistance, I have told about the Self-employment Schemes No. 1 and 2. All these things are progressing very well...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI AJAY MUSHRAN: They are not progressing well ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, you carry on.

SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI: If any person is not getting the benefit of Self-Employment Scheme No. 1, you can tell us and we will pursue it.

SHRI AJAY MUSHRAN: I have brought it to the notice of even the Chief Minister, Sir.

SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI: you can write to us also. Sir, under the Self-Employment Scheme, about Rs. 44 crores have already been sanctioned and 1,768 persons have got the benefit. Sir, as far as the parliamentary committee is concerned, I have said that perhaps no pensioner is getting so much attention as the ex-servicemen. So, many Sainik Boards and Zila Sainik

[Sh Chintamani Panigrahi]

Boards have been constituted and in every Board meeting, all these things are discussed and analysed. Friends like Shri Mushran and Shri Harish Rawat have said about this. I think, in every Parliament session, these things are being discussed and because of your efforts, Parliament is discussing this matter for two hours or three hours. So, the Parliamentary Committee will not be a better forum as our friends are discussing the same here in the House. The Defence Minister is sending replies to the letters sent by you, wherever you write a letter to the Defence Minister. Every time when you bring ex-servicemen they meet the Defence Minister and myself. In this way, we have a direct contact with them and we hear them.

SHRI AJAY MUSHRAN: Defence Minister is prepared to meet us in one minute notice. so, meeting the Defence Minister is no problem. But it is the Chief Minister who are not implementing the scheme. What will you do about it?

SHRICHINTAMANIPANIGRAHI: I hope this serves better than the parliamentary committee.

SHRI AJAY MUSHRAN: Why don't you call a meeting of Chief Ministers?

SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI: For the Kendriya Sainik Board meeting let them come. (*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This is not the way of exchanging views here.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI: So far as the training is concerned, I may point out that in 1985-86, we had incurred an expenditure of Rs. 24.61 lakhs in giving training and the total number of persons who have been given training is 7812. In 1986-87, we have given training to 8921 ex-servicemen ; in 1987-88, we have given training

to 10,045 ex-servicemen and in 1988-89, 13, 688 ex-servicemen have been given training. In various vocations. Therefore, Sir, so many people have been given training. About the functioning of the Sainik Boards, we have given directions to the State Governments that they should expedite the matter and they should see that they function properly. Sir, whatever is possible, the Government is giving utmost importance and we are always having contacts with the hon. Members and whenever there are difficulties, ex-servicemen come to us and we we listen to them. If they face any difficulty with the banks also, we help them in removing the difficulty by contacting the banks or by writing to them. Therefore, whatever is possible is being done to help them. But in spite of this if there is any difficulty, since you are always in touch with ex-servicemen, you must guide us, help us and give your suggestion Government is fully conscious to see that they are properly rehabilitated because they are a part of us we feel proud of them for the heroic services they have rendered . Their services cannot be measured in terms of money. Therefore, we always salute them and we shall be doing our best to help them as best as possible.

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13.15 hrs

#### MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

[*Translation*]

(i) **Need to construct bridges on Kamla Balan, Bagmati and other rivers to save villages from floods**

SHRI RAM BHAGAT PASWAN (Roser): Sir, certain areas in my constituency look like islands during floods. There are many rivers like Kamla Balan, Bagmati, Kosi Gandak, Bhutahi Balan etc. in my constituency. as a result, during floods, people of hundreds of panchayats along with Rasiyari panchayat get surrounded by the flood wa-