

New Initiative in Defence Sector

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First batch of five Rafale aircraft has been inducted and operationalised at Air Force Station Ambala. Induction ceremony was conducted on 10th September, 2020.

Short Service Commission (SSC) women officers are being considered for, and granted Permanent Commission (PC) in all branches of the IAF based on cadre vacancies, willingness, suitability, medical fitness and merit as per policies in vogue. As on 1st September, 2020, 372 women SSC officers (excluding Medical/Dental branches) have been granted Permanent Commission.

Since 03.12.2008, Indian Navy has been considering and granting Permanent Commission to women officers (at par with male officers) in certain Branches/Cadres/specialisation viz. Education, Law, Naval Constructor and Naval Armament Inspectorate based on inter-se merit, suitability and vacancies. Short Service Commission officers (both men and women) are also being considered for Permanent Commission in certain more Cadres/Branches/Specialisation as per Hon'ble Supreme Court judgement dated 17.03.2020.

The Government sanction letters for grant of Permanent Commission to women officers in Army have been issued on 25.02.2019 and 19.07.2020.

Indian Naval Ships Jalashwa, Airavat, Shardul and Magar were deployed as part of Operation Samudra Setu to evacuate the stranded Indian Nationals from Iran, Maldives and Sri Lanka during COVID-19 crisis. A Total of 3992 Indian Nationals were evacuated safely to India as part of Operation Samudra Setu.

The following steps have been taken by the Government to tackle the impact of COVID-19 pandemic in defence sector:

Hospital Infrastructure development to tackle 'COVID'

- Beginning in the month of March, 2020 procurement of essential equipment to tackle COVID-19 cases in AFMS hospitals was undertaken. Supply order for ventilators, oxygen concentrators, hand thermal guns, multipara monitors, PPE, Face masks, sanitizers, disinfectants etc, were placed for all AFMS hospitals.
- Emergency procurement powers of the DGAFMS was sanctioned by the Raksha Mantri for procurement of additional equipment like RT-PCR machines and test kits. As on day, there are 27 functional laboratories in the AFMS carrying out molecular testing for COVID using RT-PCR, TrueNat, CBNAAT and GenExpert techniques. Rapid Antigen Tests are available in the periphery for early diagnosis, isolation and contact tracing of cases.
- In line with latest treatment trends at a national and global level, drugs like Favipiravir and Remdesivir have been made available in AFMS Hospitals. Plasma Therapy is also available in two hospitals of AFMS.

Quarantine facilities. Station quarantine facilities have been set up in all military stations where troops are quarantined after returning from leave for 14 days. Any person developing symptoms during quarantine is immediately tested and isolated, if found positive.

Teams for Contact Tracing. Teams comprising of medical and paramedical staff have been trained in tracing high risk contacts of confirmed cases for instituting quarantine measures. Asymptomatic high risk contacts are tested between day 7-10 of exposure.

COVID CARE CENTRES (CCC). These have been set up to augment hospitals where large number of COVID patients are being admitted. Asymptomatic and mild cases are admitted in these CCCs to decongest the hospitals.

Interaction with Armed Forces Medical Services of Friendly Countries. Knowledge exchange and best practices for COVID control being followed by USA, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Sri Lanka have been adopted by the AFMS to optimise patient care.

Liaison with MoHFW and ICMR. The DGAFMS has maintained continuous liaison to ensure that guidelines and policies issued by the apex bodies are implemented to optimise patient care. Multiple guidelines pertaining to control and management of COVID have been issued by the DGAFMS to ensure conformity of care across the three services.

This information was given by Raksha Rajya Mantri Shri Shripad Naik in a written reply to Shrimati Sangeeta Kumari Singh Deo and Dr. Jayanta Kumar Roy in Lok Sabha today.

ABB/Nampi/KA/DK

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