### Major activities of Department of Defence for the month of April & May, 2020

1. **Defence Policy**

   (i) As part of efforts to bring about reforms in Defence sector implementing Shekatkar Committee of Expert recommendation, orders have been issued on 1\(^{st}\) June, 2020 abolishing 9304 posts in MES. This is first such major decision reducing size of bureaucracy in Armed Forces.

   (ii) DoD has made it mandatory that all applications for seeking NoC for aerial survey shall be made online w.e.f. 1\(^{st}\) March, 2020. Earlier the online application portal was launched in January 2020 and both physical and online applications were being accepted.

2. **Atma Nirbhar Bharat in Defence**

   (i) A new squadron of IAF was commissioned with LCA Tejas aircraft, designed by DRDO and manufactured by HAL.

   (ii) One contract for Modernisation of Airfield infrastructure Phase-II for 37 Airfields for Indian Air Force, Indian Navy, Indian Coast Guard and ARC has been signed on 8\(^{th}\) May, 2020 under Buy (Indian) Option Clause with M/s Tata Power for Rs. 1189.44 crore (exclusive of taxes and duties).

   (iii) BRO has developed 190m modular bridge with the help of Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata. Such modular bridges were earlier imported. This bridge has been developed at fraction of cost. Hundreds of these bridges are required for hilly areas/rivers/ravines. First such indigenously made bridge has been installed and tested on Assi Ganga River on Dharasu-Gangotri NH-108 in May, 2020.
3. **Development of Border Infrastructure**

(i) **Early Snow Clearance in the year:** The Manali-Sarchu highway was opened for traffic on 18th May, 2020 after completion of snow clearance. This clearing has enabled early mobilization of forces during the ongoing LAC crisis.

(ii) MoD has approved on 29th April, 2020 special cold clothing for General Reserve Engineer Force (GREF) employees deployed above 12000 ft. Earlier these employees were working in sub minus 20°C weather without such clothing.

(iii) **Inauguration of Bridge:** A 131 mtrs long and 4 mtrs wide Bailey Bridge at Daporijo over the Subansiri river in Upper Subansiri District in the State of Arunachal Pradesh, constructed by BRO, was inaugurated by Hon'ble Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh on 20th April, 2020.

(iv) **Inauguration of Tawangchu Bridge:** Hon'ble Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh dedicated to nation 50 mtrs long Tawangchu Bridge over Tawangchu River in Tawang District and 45 mtrs long Sukha Bridge over Sukha Nallah in West Kameng District on 23rd May, 2020.

4. **Indian Coast Guard**

(i) **Commissioning of ICGS Sachet, C-450 and C-451:** One Offshore Patrol Vessel ICGS Sachet and two Interceptor Boats ICGS C-450 and C-451 were commissioned via video conferencing by Hon'ble Raksha Mantri on 15th May, 2020. ICGS Sachet has been based at Goa, C-450 at Kochi and C-451 at Visakhapatnam.

(ii) **Conduct of SAR Communication Exercise with Foreign Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCCs):** With an aim to enhanced life-saving capabilities through communication protocols, Search & Rescue communication exercise was conducted between MRCC Chennai and MRCC Dhaka as per SOPs on 20th April, 2020.
5. **National Cadet Corps**

(i) During this period, as part of NCC Yogdan, NCC has deployed on an average about 4100 NCC cadets on daily basis in 26 states/UTs across the country as a second line of aid to Corona warriors. NCC has been supporting in activities like traffic management, manning control rooms in police stations & district civil administration offices, manning of CCTV control rooms of civil administration, preparing & packaging and distribution of food and essential items, supply chain management, preparation and distribution of face masks to poor and needy people, social distancing in public places and assistance to senior citizens by delivery of essential items and medicines.

6. **Cantonments and Defence Estate**

(i) All 62 Cantonment Boards have been switched over to accrual based accounting system in place of single entry accounting, on an IT platform with effect from 1st April, 2020. Cantonment Board Account Code, 2020 were notified in the Official Gazette of India as an Extraordinary Notification vide S.R.O. No. 02(E) dated 03.03.2020.

(ii) Draft amendment to Cantonment Act, 2006 was put out in public domain for comments on May 29, 2020. The proposed amendment is expected to streamline existing shortcomings in the Act.

7. **International Cooperation**

(i) **Support to Friendly Foreign Countries (FFCs):** MOD has provided various support to friendly foreign countries during this period. This includes:

   (i) Rapid response medical team in Kuwait
   (ii) Rapid response team in Maldives
   (iii) Medical assistance to Ukraine
(iv) Medical assistance to Nepal Army

(ii) Hon'ble Raksha Mantri had telephonic conversations with his following counterparts during the period:

(i) Japan on 8th May, 2020
(ii) Australia on 26th May, 2020
(iii) USA on 27th May, 2020

(iii) Defence Secretary had a telephonic conversation with his counterpart in Australia on 28th May, 2020

8. Initiative taken for COVID-19 Management

(i) MoD has issued orders that willing employees of MoD, Services, attached offices of MoD, Defence PSUs will give one day salary to PM CARES every month from May, 2020 to March, 2021. Earlier orders were issued w.r.t. one day salary for the month of April, 2020.

(ii) To cater for isolation and treatment (including ICU based care) for COVID-19 cases, orders notifying 50 AFMS hospitals as dedicated COVID hospitals and mixed COVID hospitals have been issued on 31st March, 2020. These hospitals have a combined bed capacity of 9038. Civilian COVID-19 cases would also be admitted in these hospitals as a surge capacity to augment the State healthcare facilities.

(iii) Policy decision on deployment of AFMS Officers and Paramedics manpower: Training activities have been suspended at AMC C&C Lucknow and AFMC Pune. Approximately 650 medical officers undergoing post graduate training at AFMC have been reverted back to units for provision of medical cover depending on the evolving situation in the country. In addition, 100 medical officers from recruiting organizations are being detailed to work in hospitals where COVID wards are being established.
Extension of tenure of all Short Service Commissioned Medical officers, with less than 14 years service has been granted till 31st October, 2020. All officers who have been granted PMR (Pre-Mature Retirement), but not yet proceeded for the same will do so only after 31st October, 2020.

A list of retired AMC officers and paramedical staff has been readied who may be requested to volunteer for working in AFMS hospitals at their current home stations in case the need arises.

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