

Punjab's offer to armed forces

NEW DELHI, June 11 (UNI) - Six representatives of agricultural cooperatives and corporations from Punjab met top officials of the Defence Ministry here today with an offer to feed personnel of the armed forces and paramilitary wings countrywide.

The proposal, if accepted, will mean a policy change, the delegation leader and the Punjab Financial Commissioner (Development), Dr Manohar Singh Gill, told reporters.

The proposal seeks to eliminate private contractors from the job of supplying foodstuff to the estimated 2.5 million defence and paramilitary personnel in the country.

Dr Gill said the Defence Ministry officials assured the delegation that the matter would be taken up

at a level "as high as possible."

The delegation, - comprising the Managing Directors of Markfed, Milkfed, Constofed and Agro and poultry corporations, offered to supply cheap and quality wheat, rice, pulses, refined oil, dehydrated and tinned vegetables and canteen provisions.

The Ministry side was led by Additional Secretary N.N. Vohra, a former Punjab Home Secretary.

At present the Ministry invites tenders for the supply of foodstuff, often attracting the services of private contractors.

The federations under him, Dr Gill said, would prefer supplying foodstuff to personnel serving in the western sector but could extend its operations elsewhere if asked to.

He said Punjab could set up "any number of" roller flour mills exclusively for the armed forces and we can have them (representatives), sit there and check the grain."

Punjab was already providing milk for the Army along with certain other marketing federations,

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