

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.6029
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 4TH APRIL, 2018

MENTAL STRESS TO SOLDIERS

6029. SHRI KUNWAR PUSHPENDRA SINGH CHANDEL:
SHRIMATI MEENAKASHI LEKHI:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE j{k k ea=h
be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it has come to the notice of Government that mental stress is a major challenge for the soldiers in their jobs;
- (b) if so, whether the Government has taken measures for reducing stress and other issues among the Indian soldiers;
- (c) if so, the details thereof and the facilities being made available to army personnel for psychological counselling; and
- (d) the steps being taken to raise awareness about post traumatic stress disorder?

	<u>A N S W E R</u>	
MINISTER OF DEFENCE		(SMT. NIRMALA SITHARAMAN)
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(a) & (b): Measures taken for reducing stress among the Indian soldiers are listed at Annexure.

(c) & (d): The service of officers trained in Psychological Counselling Course by Defence Institute of Psychological Research (DIPR) and Junior Commissioned Officers / Other Ranks trained in Psychological Counselling at Command / Corps level and services of civilian psychological counsellors, and service counsellors are being utilised for psychological counselling.

The awareness about post traumatic stress disorders (PTSD) are being covered in general lectures of stress management.

**ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN THE REPLY GIVEN IN PARTS (a) & (b) OF
LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 6029 FOR ANSWER ON 4.4.2018**

A number of steps have been instituted for the management of stress among soldiers in a multi-pronged manner. They include provision of superior quality of clothing, food, married accommodation, implementation of 'buddy' system, travel facilities, schooling, recreation, establishment of grievance redressal mechanism in the States, etc. An elaborate Mental Health programme has also been formulated and disseminated to all concerned for implementation.

Apart from the above, the following numerous steps towards stress amelioration are also being taken:

(I) Training of Medical and Para-Medical personnel in 'Mental Health First Aid'.

(II) Establishment of Community Mental Health Centres (Aarogyadham) in Mumbai, Vishakhapatnam, Kochi and Port Blair, consisting of the following:

- (i) Clinical/Counselling psychologist
- (ii) Social Worker
- (iii) Yoga Teacher
- (iv) Medical sailor qualified in Psychiatric nursing

(III) All Naval training programmes have been modified to include:

- (i) Introduction of 'Keep Your Mate Safe training' i.e. a half day session as part of all training courses for officers and sailors.
- (ii) Incorporation of a session of Stress Management and other issues as part of all training conferences and CO/XOs PCT.

(IV) Training of Medical Officer and medical personnel by Institution of a training session on Mental Health issues for all MOs and medical sailors. Conduct of an annual CME on Mental Health issues as part of Marine Medicine Conference.

(V) Project MILAP and project SAHYOG have been institutionalized by Indian Army in Northern and Eastern Command respectively to reduce stress amongst troops

(VI) Mansik Sahayata Helpline at respective Command HQ have been established to take professional counselling.

(VII) Mental Health Awareness during Pre-Induction Training: In areas of J&K, psychiatrists / trained psychological counsellors conduct talks during Pre-Induction Training on stress related issues, early recognition of signs & symptoms related to stress and measures to cope with these issues.

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(VIII) Studies on causes/issues related to suicide/fratricides are carried out from time to time and suitable educational material including short films are prepared and disseminated for education of troops.

(IX) Personnel at high risk of combat stress (vulnerable) are identified and counseled by unit Commanding Officers, Regimental Medical Officers and Junior Leaders as per Standard Operating Procedure (SOP).

(X) Better man management and prompt attendance of grievances by units and formations

(XI) Buddy system has been expanded from two to four/five Other Rank, to be more effective.

(XII) Liberalized leave policy to attend to domestic problems and authorization of additional railway warrant to personnel deployed in Counter Insurgency/Counter Terrorists Areas.

(XIII) All personnel found to be having any suspected psychological problem are referred to Psychiatrist in nearest service hospital and followed up thereafter.

(XIV) Counselling of ladies suffering from mental stress due to marital discord by senior ladies by AFWWA.

(XV) Setting of telephonic/e-mail helpline.

The following additional steps have been initiated:

- (i) Training of non-medical personnel in 'Mental Health – Keep your Buddy Safe'.
- (ii) Increase in strength of MD (Psychiatry) and starting of new training courses, such as M. Phil in Clinical Psychiatry, M. Phil in Psycho-social Work and Diploma in Psychiatric Nursing in Department of Psychiatry at INHS Asvini under the National Mental Health Programme.
- (iii) A structured programme to promote Marital Harmony.
- (iv) Formation of a Military Psychiatry Treatment Centre at INHS Asvini.
- (v) Embedding medical sailors trained in mental health in large ships.
