

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.534
TO BE ANSWERED ON 5th February, 2020

PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELLING FOR SOLDIERS

534. SHRI SUMEDHANAND SARASWATI:

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware that mental stress is the biggest challenge for soldiers in discharging their duties;
- (b) if so, whether the Government has taken measures to reduce stress and other problems among the soldiers;
- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the details of facilities being made available to the soldiers for psychological counselling?

A N S W E R

MINISTER OF STATE
IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

रक्षा राज्य मंत्री

(SHRI SHRIPAD NAIK)

(श्री श्रीपाद नाईक)

(a) to (d): Yes, Sir. Various measures taken by the Government to reduce stress and other problems among the soldiers, inter alia, include:

1. Mental Health Programme for the Armed Forces has been prepared in September, 2008 by Director General of Armed Force Medical Services (DGAfMS).
2. An elaborate Mental Health Programme has been formulated and is in vogue since 2009.

3. The issue of stress and strain is being addressed by the Commanders in a comprehensive manner at various levels. Sessions for stress management are organized by Commanders and Psychiatrists at all major stations.
4. Specific measures include sensitization of Commanders on the subject addressing grievances through interactions, implementation of 'buddy' system, welfare measures like provision of adequate married accommodation, good schooling, recreation facilities etc.
5. Personnel at high risk of combat stress (vulnerable) are identified and counseled by unit Commanding Officers, Regimental Medical Officers and Junior Leaders. Any stress marker/warning signs of stress are looked for and motivational talk is rendered to all.
6. Religious Teachers (RT) JCOs, besides preaching religion, are also being trained to augment the availability of psychological counsellors in units.
