

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.3246
TO BE ANSWERED ON 17th DECEMBER, 2021

REHABILITATION OF SOLDIERS

3246. SHRI G.M. SIDDESHWAR:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE
be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware that most of the army personnel are under severe stress and the defence forces are losing more soldiers every year due to suicides, fratricides and untoward incidents on the borders;
- (b) if so, the reasons thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has any proposal to rehabilitate the soldiers; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof along with the number of soldiers rehabilitated during the last three years?

A N S W E R

MINISTER OF STATE
IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

(SHRI AJAY BHATT)

- (a) There have been instances of few suicide cases. A number of measures have been initiated by Indian Army (IA) including conduct of studies by Defence Institute of Psychological Research (DIPR) to curb suicides.
- (b) to (d): (i) Based on the analysis carried out by Defence Institute of Psychological Research, major causes of such incidents identified are as follows:-
 - (a) Domestic & personal problems
 - (b) Marital discord
 - (c) Stress
 - (d) Financial problems.

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(ii) Various steps have been taken to ensure mental health / de-stressing of Armed Forces Personnel:-

(a) Mental Health Programme for the Armed Forces has been prepared and disseminated to the environment.

(b) For management of stress amongst soldiers, Indian Army is continuously evolving measures to improve stress management.

(c) The issue of stress and strain is being addressed by Commanders in a comprehensive manner at various levels. Sessions for stress management are organised by Commanders and Psychiatrists at all major stations. Counselling is an intrinsic component of 22 Psychiatric Centres in the Army, manned by well trained and highly qualified Psychiatrists and Psychiatric Nursing Assistants.

(d) Specific measures have been put in place as part of the multi-pronged strategy to address stress in Indian Army. These include sensitisation 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. Besides these basic measures, more specific actions like screening of personnel for any stress markers, psychological counselling, training of counsellors (Non Medical Officers, Non Medical Junior Commissioned Officers (JCOs) / Other Ranks (OR) and Religious Teachers) are also being undertaken.

(e) Personnel at high risk of combat stress (vulnerable) are identified and counselled by Unit Commanding Officers, Regimental Medical Officers and Junior Leaders. All personnel returning to unit after leave are interviewed, counselled and medically examined by the Regimental Medical Officers. Any stress marker / warning signs of stress are looked for and motivational talk is rendered to all.

(f) Religious Teacher JCOs besides preaching religion are also being trained to augment the availability of psychological counsellors in units.

(g) Other institutional measures are also being implemented.
