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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE
(2022-23)**

(SEVENTEENTH LOK SABHA)

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

**ASSESSMENT OF WELFARE MEASURES
AVAILABLE TO WAR WIDOWS/ FAMILIES IN
ARMED FORCES**

THIRTY-FIRST REPORT



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

NEW DELHI

December, 2022 / Agrahayana 1944 (Saka)

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(SEVENTEENTH LOK SABHA)

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ARMED FORCES**

Presented to Lok Sabha on 15.12.2022

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 15.12.2022



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

NEW DELHI

December, 2022 / Agrahayana 1944 (Saka)

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COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE (2021-22)

SHRI JUAL ORAM

-

CHAIRPERSON

Lok Sabha

2. Kunwar Danish Ali
3. Shri Nitesh Ganga Deb
4. Shri Rahul Gandhi
5. Shri D.V. Sadananda Gowda
6. Shri Annasaheb Shankar Jolle
7. Choudhary Mehboob Ali Kaiser
8. Shri Rattan Lal Kataria
9. Dr. Ram Shankar Katheria
10. Shri Sridhar Kotagiri
11. Smt. Rajashree Mallick
12. Shri Uttam Kumar Reddy Nalamada
13. Dr. T.R. Paarivendhar
14. Shri Anumula Revanth Reddy
15. Shri Jugal Kishore Sharma
16. Dr. Shrikant Eknath Shinde
17. Shri Prathap Simha
18. Shri Brijendra Singh
19. Shri Mahabali Singh
20. Shri Durga Das (D.D.) Uikey
21. *Vacant**

Rajya Sabha

22. Dr. Ashok Bajpai
23. Shri N. R. Elango
24. Shri Prem Chand Gupta
25. Shri Venkataramana Rao Mopidevi
26. Shri Sharad Pawar
27. Shri Kamakhya Prasad Tasa
28. Dr. Sudhanshu Trivedi
29. Lt. Gen. (Dr.) D. P. Vats (Retd.)
30. Shri K.C. Venugopal
31. *Vacant***

* 1 seat vacant in Lok Sabha.

** Shri V. Lakshmikantha Rao ceased to be Member, Rajya Sabha due to retirement on 21/06/2022.

COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE (2022-23)

SHRI JUAL ORAM

-

CHAIRPERSON

| Lok Sabha | |
|--------------------|---|
| 2. | Shri Nitesh Ganga Deb |
| 3. | Shri Rahul Gandhi |
| 4. | Shri Devaragunda Venkappa Sadananda Gowda |
| 5. | Shri Annasaheb Shankar Jolle |
| 6. | Choudhary Mehboob Ali Kaiser |
| 7. | Shri Suresh Kumar Kashyap |
| 8. | Shri Rattan Lal Kataria |
| 9. | Prof. (Dr.) Ram Shankar Katheria |
| 10.@ | Shri Durai Murugan Kathir Anand |
| 11. | Kunwar Danish Ali |
| 12. | Dr. Rajashree Mallick |
| 13.★ | Shri Reddeppa Nallakonda Gari |
| 14. | Shri Uttam Kumar Nalamada Reddy |
| 15. | Shri Anumula Revanth Reddy |
| 16. | Shri Jugal Kishore Sharma |
| 17. | Dr. Shrikant Eknath Shinde |
| 18. | Shri Prathap Simha |
| 19. | Shri Brijendra Singh |
| 20. | Shri Mahabali Singh |
| 21. | Shri Durga Das Uikey |
| Rajya Sabha | |
| 22. | Dr. Ashok Bajpai |
| 23. | Shri Prem Chand Gupta |
| 24. | Shri Sushil Kumar Gupta |
| 25. | Shri Venkataramana Rao Mopidevi |
| 26. | Shri Kamakhya Prasad Tasa |
| 27. | Dr. Sudhanshu Trivedi |
| 28. | Smt. P.T. Usha |
| 29. | Shri G.K. Vasani |
| 30. | Lt. Gen. (Dr.) D. P. Vats (Retd.) |
| 31. | Shri K.C. Venugopal |

@ Nominated w.e.f 08.12.2022.

★ Nominated w.e.f 16.11.2022.

Dr. T.R. Paarivendhar and Shri Kotagiri Sridhar, MPs, Lok Sabha ceased to be Members of the Standing Committee on Defence w.e.f 16.11.2022

SECRETARIAT

1. Smt. Suman Arora - Joint Secretary
2. Dr. Sanjeev Sharma - Director
3. Shri Rahul Singh - Deputy Secretary
4. Smt. Rekha Sinha - Executive Officer (till date 12.08.2022)

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Defence (2022-23), having been authorised by the Committee, present this Thirty-first Report (17th Lok Sabha) on the subject 'Assessment of Welfare Measures Available to War Widows/ Families in Armed Forces.'

2. The subject 'Assessment of Welfare Measures Available to War Widows/ Families in Armed Forces' was selected for the examination during the year 2021-22 and 2022-23. The Committee took evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Defence on 27th May 2022. The draft Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at their Sitting held on 14th November, 2022.

3. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the officers of the Ministry of Defence for appearing before the Committee and furnishing the material and information which the Committee desired in connection with examination of the subject.

4. For facility of reference and convenience, Observations/Recommendations of the Committee have been printed in bold letters in Part II of the Report.

**New Delhi;
13 December, 2022
22 Agrahayana, 1944 (Saka)**

**JUAL ORAM
Chairperson
Standing Committee on Defence**

Report

PART- I

Introductory

According to the Ministry of Defence, war-widows or 'Veer-Naris' are the women who have lost their husbands in war/military operation. There are several women who had lost their husbands in World War-II, Indo-Pak, Indo-China war and kargil/ Military operations at a very young age. As most women hail from rural areas and are unaware of their rights and entitlements, the department has a vision to make them aware and give necessary facilities not only to Martyred soldiers family but also of all Ex-Servicemen (ESM) and their dependents. However, the jurisdiction of this Report is limited to assessment of welfare measures to family of martyred soldiers and examine the provisions that have been so made to ensure a dignified life to the dependents of those who have sacrificed their lives in the line of duty. The Family of martyred soldier has been addressed as 'veer-nari/Next of Kins (NoKs)' in this Report.

2. The Committee have been given to understand that as per regulation 107 of the Pensions Regulations for Army, Part-I (2008), for the purpose, Family shall consist of the following: -

- (i) Husband/wife lawfully married before or after retirement.
- (ii) A judicially separated wife or husband, such separation not being granted on the ground of adultery and the person surviving was not held guilty of committing adultery.
- (iii) Unmarried son/unmarried daughter actual and legitimate including posthumous/ widowed /divorced daughter.
- (iv) Father
- (v) Mother
- (vi) Unmarried brother
- (vii) Unmarried sister

The above provisions are applicable to three wings of Armed Forces i.e. Indian Army, Indian Navy and Indian Air Force.

Chapter – I

Policy and Structure

The Committee have learnt that there exists a well structured institutional framework in the form of Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare (DESW), and the specialized attached offices of DESW and three Services Headquarters. The Department was established in 2007 and it has nearly 15000 veer-naris. All the welfare services and support required are adequately covered through these dedicated institutions which together implement and administer wide array of schemes and interventions which are required.

1.2. The Department of Ex-servicemen Welfare formulates various policies and programmes for the welfare and resettlement of Ex-Servicemen (ESM) in the country which are implemented through its three attached offices namely, Kendriya Sainik Board (KSB), Directorate General (Resettlement) (DGR) and Central Organization, Ex-servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS). The KSB is responsible for formulating the policy and guidelines for the welfare of Ex-Servicemen and their dependents and also for the administration of welfare funds. The office of Directorate General of Resettlement implements various Policies / Schemes / Programmes on pre and post retirement training, re-employment and self-employment etc. ECHS takes care of the healthcare and medical needs of Ex-servicemen and their dependents.

1.3. In addition to above, all the three Service headquarters have their own specialized directorates viz Directorate of Army veterans (DIAV) of Indian Army, Directorate of Air Veterans, and Directorate of Ex-servicemen Affairs (DESA) of Indian Navy, which endeavour towards ensuring a decent life to retired personnel and their dependents, through their schemes/programmes.

1.4. The Committee were apprised by the Ministry that there is no need for a dedicated department to look exclusively after needs of veer-naris/NoKs. With regard to total number of veer-naris in the country, the Committee were informed that the total number of war widows in the country is 15021. However, State/UT wise break-up data was not available. A data about NoKs is shall also be maintained.

1.5. The Committee came to learn that the circumstances in which a soldier has died determine the differences in benefits accrued to their family members. In this connection, the Ministry of Defence had submitted a detailed note as under:

“For grant of pensionary awards to families of Armed Forces Personnel, the circumstances of death of the Armed Forces personnel has been categorized as under:

Category A

Death or disability due to natural causes neither attributable to nor aggravated by military service as determined by the competent medical authorities. Examples would be ailments of nature of constitutional diseases as assessed by medical authorities, chronic ailments like heart and renal diseases, prolonged illness, accidents while not on duty.

Explanation:

The cases of death due to natural causes falling under Category A entitles ordinary family pension (50% of reckonable emoluments at enhanced rate and 30% of reckonable emoluments at normal rate).

Category B

Death or disability due to causes which are accepted as attributable to or aggravated by military service as determined by the competent medical authorities. Disease contracted because of continued exposure to hostile work environments subject to extreme weather conditions or occupational hazards resulting in death or disability would be examples.

Category C

Death or disability due to accidents in the performance of duties such as:

- (i) Accidents while travelling on duty in Government vehicles or public/private transport.
- (ii) Accidents during air journeys.
- (iii) Mishaps at sea while on duty.
- (iv) Electrocutation while on duty etc.
- (v) Accidents during participation in organised sports events/adventure activities/ expeditions or training.

Explanation:

In case of death of Armed Forces personnel falling under Category B and Category C special family pension (@60% of the reckonable emoluments) may be granted to the eligible member of the family of the deceased personnel.

Category D

Death or disability due to acts of violence /attack by terrorists, anti-social elements etc. whether on duty other than operational duty or even when not on duty. Bomb blasts in public places or transport, indiscriminate shooting incidents in public etc. would be covered under this category, besides death/disability occurring while employed in aid of civil power and also while dealing with natural calamities. Unintentional killing by own troops during the course of duty in an operational area. Electrocutions/attacks by wild animals and snake bite/drowning during course of action in counter insurgency/war. Accidental death/injury sustained due to natural calamities such as flood, avalanches, landslides, cyclone, fire and lightening or drowning in river while performing operational duties/movement in action against enemy forces and armed hostilities in operational area to include deployment on international border or line of control.

Category E

Death or disability arising as a result of: -

- (i) Enemy action in international war
- (ii) Action during deployment with a peace keeping mission abroad
- (iii) Border skirmishes
- (iv) During laying or clearance of mines including enemy mines as also mine sweeping operations.
- (v) On account of accidental explosions of mines while laying operationally oriented mine field or lifting or negotiating mine field laid by the enemy or own forces in operational areas near international borders or the line of control.
- (vi) War like situations, including cases which are attributable to/aggravated by:-
 - (1) extremist acts, exploding mines etc, while on way to an operational area.
 - (2) battle inoculation training exercises or demonstration with live ammunition.
 - (3) Kidnapping by extremists while on operational duty
- (vii) An act of violence/attack by extremists, anti social elements etc. while on operational duty.
- (viii) Action against extremists, antisocial elements etc. death/disability while employed in the aid of civil power in quelling agitation, riots or revolt by demonstrators shall be covered under this category.
- (ix) Operations specially notified by the Government from time to time

Explanation:

In case of death of Armed Forces personnel falling under Category D and Category E liberalized family pension equal to reckonable emoluments

may be granted to the eligible member of the family of the deceased personnel.

The details of Central Ex-Gratia Amount paid.

Ex-Gratia Lump Sum Compensation of Death. The compensation is granted is granted at the following latest rates:-

| Ser No. | Circumstances | Rates (in Rs.) |
|---------|---|----------------|
| (i) | Death occurring due to accidents in course of performance of duties. | 25 Lakhs. |
| (ii) | Death in course of performance of duties attributed to acts of violence by terrorists, anti-social elements etc. | 25 Lakhs. |
| (iii) | Death occurring in border skirmishes and action against militants, terrorists, extremists, sea pirates. | 35 Lakhs. |
| (iv) | Death occurring while on duty in the specified high altitude, inaccessible border posts, on account of natural disasters, extreme weather conditions. | 35 Lakhs. |
| (v) | Death occurring during enemy action in war or such was like engagements, which are specially notified by Ministry of Defence and death occurring during evacuation of Indian Nationals from a war-torn zone in foreign country. | 45 Lakhs. |

1.6 The Committee were also informed by representatives of Ministry of Defence as under:

“इसके अलावा कुछ एनजीओज भी हैं, जैसे आर्मी वाइक्स वेलफेयर एसोसिएशन। वह भी करीब **30** हजार रुपये देता है। एजी ब्रांच में एक फंड गठित किया गया है, जो तीनों सर्विसिज के लिए है। यह **Armed Forces Battle Casualties Welfare Fund** है। यह नॉन-पब्लिक फंड है। इसमें विभिन्न इंडीविजुअल्स और कंपनीज द्वारा कॉन्ट्रिब्यूशंस के माध्यम से राशि जमा की जाती है। पिछले साल ही माननीय रक्षा मंत्री महोदय, श्री राजनाथ सिंह जी ने इसमें बढ़ोत्तरी करके इसे आठ लाख का कर दिया है। बाकी छोटे-छोटे डेथ कम लिंकड इंश्योरेस स्कीम्ज हैं। पर्सनल एक्सीडेंट इंश्योरेंस भी है, जिसका सैलरी अकाउंट्स नेशनलाइज्ड बैंक्स के साथ एमओयू, सभी सर्विसिज होती हैं, उसमें भी करीब **50** लाख का मिलता है। यह सारा मिलाकर ऑफिसर्स को **1.83** करोड़ रुपये और जेसीओज/ओआरस को **1.33** करोड़ रुपये का भुगतान होता है।”

1.7 Further it was added by representatives of Ministry of Defence as under:

“एक लाख रुपए तक मैरिज ग्रांट मिलती है, जो डॉटर्स और विडोज रीमैरिज के लिए होती है और ऑरफन सन के लिए भी होती है। वोकेशनल ट्रेनिंग ग्रांट भी करीब-करीब 20 हजार रुपये तक होती है, जो हवलदार रैंक तक के लिए होती है। Concessions up to 75 per cent on railway tickets to widows and complementary card passes to Chakra awardees and their widows की भी सुविधा है। हालांकि, आजकल मोबाइल का जमाना है, लेकिन फिर भी 50 per cent concessions in rental charges to Chakra awardees and war widows को टेलिफोन कनसेशन के रूप में मिलता है। Also, financial assistance to 100 per cent disabled children of ESM, मतलब कोई डिसेबल्ड चिल्ड्रन भी हो तो उसको भी फाइनेंशियल असिस्टेंस मिलता है। पहले एक हजार रुपये था, हाल ही में उसको तीन हजार रुपये किए हैं। अंत में यह जिक्र करना चाह रहे थे कि प्राइम मिनिस्टर स्कॉलरशिप 5500 तमाम सीएपीएफ को भी है और रेलवे प्रोटेक्शन फोर्स को भी है और हमारा ज्यादा कोटा है, हमारा आर्म्ड फोर्सेज का। उसमें पिछले तीन साल में 43 वॉर विडोज को करीब-करीब 12-13 लाख रुपये मिले हैं। इसका 2500 रुपये प्रति माह लड़कों के लिए है और 3000 रुपये प्रति महीने लड़कियों के लिए है। सर, लास्ट स्लाइड में आर्म्ड फोर्सेज बैटल कैज़ुएलिटीज वैलफेयर फंड का जिक्र करना चाह रहे हैं। यह अराउंड 1098 बैटल कुज़ुएलिटीज और उनके किन को करीब-करीब 32 करोड़ रुपये डिस्ट्रिब्यूट किया गया है। यह उसका ईयरवाइज़ ब्रेक-अप है।”

Chapter – II

Delivery Mechanism for Welfare Measures

The Committee were informed that the data of number of beneficiaries and the amount of grant given against each scheme is analysed on regular basis to measure the impact of all the schemes run by the Ministry of Defence, Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare (DESW), various Service Headquarters and its attached offices. Several modifications in the existing schemes are carried out at regular intervals to ensure the desired impact. New schemes are also added depending on the requirement. The quantum of the benefits have been modified from time to time through the existing administrative channels. A detailed list of financial assistance and other concessions given to the NoK (Next of Kin)/dependents and Veer-Naris of the Battle Casualties is annexed at **Annexure**.

2.2. Further, the Committee were given to understand that the data of number of beneficiaries and the amount of grant given against each scheme is analysed on regular basis to measure the impact of all the schemes run by the MoD, DESW, various Service Headquarters and its attached offices. Several modifications in the existing schemes are carried out at regular intervals to ensure the desired impact. New schemes are also added depending on the requirement. The quantum of the benefits have been modified from time to time through the existing administrative channels.

Welfare Measures Delivery at the State/District level

2.3. The Ministry of Defence has informed the Committee that Kendriya Sainik Board is headed by Hon'ble Raksha Mantri and the Chief Ministers, Administrators of Union Territories are its member. It is a high level board specially created to look after the issues of ESM/dependents. There are 33 Rajya Sainik Boards (RSBs) and 403 Zila Sainik Board (ZSBs) to look after the well beings of ESM/Dependents. As per the existing composition of the ZSB, the President of each ZSB is the concerned District Magistrate/District Collector. The Secretary of ZSB is the Zila Sainik Welfare Officer who is appointed by the State Government in consultation with RSB/KSB. All the necessary help to the ESM/ BCs (Battle Casualty)/ NoK are being rendered by them.

2.4. Further, it was added by MoD that In the last 10 years, number of ZSBs have increased from 220 to 403. This is primarily based on number of ESM and families of serving/deceased service personnel in that area. A new ZSB can be set up by concerned state govt themselves if the population of ESM and families of serving /deceased service personnel is above 7500. In case if the population of ESM is less than 7500 in a district, where no other ZSB is in vicinity, the prior approval of Central Govt is required for setting of new ZSB. Recently four new ZSBs have been sanctioned in Delhi.

2.5. The Committee had desired to be apprised about the accessibility of ZSB to beneficiaries residing in its area of jurisdiction. In response, the Ministry has stated that pro-active measures have been taken by the ZSBs by various means to ensure that all ESM fraternity is aware of the latest facilities and welfare measures which have been slated by the Central and the State Governments. Some of the procedures adopted are publishing booklets, radio and TV board casts in local dialects, using print and electronic media, Notice Boards/ hoardings displaying in prominent places frequented by ESM. Regular visits, rallies, meetings and interaction organized by the ZSB offices/ Welfare Organizer in remote localities which has facilitated large number of ESM and widows having applied for various facilities and welfare schemes. In addition RSB/ZSB meetings are held every year to review the progress on various welfare measures/schemes. RSB in the State are chaired by Governor/Chief Minister. In the last six months Rajya Sainik Board (RSB) and State Managing Committee (SMC) meetings were held at Rajasthan, Assam, Mizoram and Chandigarh (UT) have taken place. Similar regular meetings are also held at ZSB level.

2.6. During deliberations on the subject, the Committee learnt that in addition to ex-gratia given by Central / individual service, ex-gratia payment to veer-nari/NoKs are also being paid by respective State/UT Governments. Being a federal structure in the country, the amount varies from State to State. In this context, the Committee were informed that issue regarding uniformity in payments of ex-gratia amount to the dependents of Martyrs has already been raised and discussed in several meetings at various fora. In this connection it was further informed that, various States have recently increased the Ex-Gratia amount for ex Himachal Pradesh has increased to Rs 20 lakh and Odisha has increased to Rs 10 lakh.

2.7. The Committee were apprised about the methodologies devised for timely delivery of services/schemes channelized for the welfare of veer-nari/next to kins. The Ministry of Defence through a written reply furnished as under:

“System for payments of welfare schemes of Armed Forces Flag Day Fund (AFFDF) to beneficiaries Veer-Nari/ Next of kins have been implemented through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT). The payment /welfare grants are made from AFDDF which is a corpus financed by volunteer contribution from the citizenry and funded by Govt. The updated payment status is being uploaded on the KSB Portal on regular basis.”

Chapter – III

Employment/Resettlement

With regard to compassionate appointments, the Committee were informed that the appointments are being made by concerned Service Headquarters of Army, Navy and Air Force to widows / families of defence personnel. The Ministry had furnished the following details indicating various relaxations etc being given to veer-nari/NoKs:-

“(a) Officer Selection

- (i) Widow of Defence Personnel, who have died in harness will be eligible to apply for Short Service Commission (Non- Tech) and (Tech). They are eligible even if they children but should only have not re-married. A total of 5% vacancies will be earmarked for widows both for SSC (Tech) women and SSC (Non-Tech) women entry. The upper age limit is upto 35 years of age at the time of commencement of training at OTA, Chennai.
- (ii) For SSCW (Non- Tech) entry where UPSC exam is applicable, the requirement for undergoing UPSC is waived for such widows. They are selected through SSB.
- (iii) 10% vacancies are available to Wards (Sons and daughters including legally adopted children) of Battle Casualty for grant of Short Service Commission (SSC) out of fixed vacancies released per course to ‘C’ Certificate holders of NCC. There is no relaxation in eligibility criteria except that condition of holding of NCC ‘C’ Certificate is not mandatory for these vacancies.

(b) JCO/ORs Enrolment.

Instant Enrolment is provided into the Army through UHQ enrolment by respective Regiment/Corps Training Centers as per policy att. Extract of policy on ‘Instant Enrolment’ is as under:-

- (i) One son of fatal battle casualty/ Battle Casualty boarded out. In case underage, he may be enrolled when he attains the age required.
- (ii) When Deceased was unmarried-One real brother of a Battle Casualty.
- (iii) When Deceased’s Widow is Issueless or has no Male Child- One real brother of a Battle Casualty provided the real brother gets married to the deceased widow.
- (iv) When Deceased’s Widow has a Male Child who has not Attained age for enrolment-One real brother of Battle Casualty provided the real brother gets married to the deceased’s widow. In this case the

male child on attaining the enrolment age will not be entitled for instant Enrolment. However, he will get the concession/relaxations for enrolment as applicable to sons of Servicemen/Ex-servicemen.

- (v) When the Battle Casualty has been invalidated out of Service on Medical Grounds-One real son on attaining the age required for enrolment.”

3.2. With regard to the policy on reservation of seats exclusively for veer- nari or their children in State or Central Government services, the Ministry had furnished the following information:

“Central and State Government - The Central/State Govts have provided a number of concessions to promote employment of Ex-Servicemen, widows/ dependents of service personnel killed in action in the civil jobs. The details are as follows :-

- (a) There are reservations in Govt. Departments, PSUs Nationalised Banks and Para Military Forces as follows: -

| | Group 'C' | Group 'D' |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| (i) Central Ministries/Depts. | 10% | 20% |
| (ii) CPSUs/Nationalised Banks | 14.5% | 24.5 % |
| (iii) For the purpose of appointment in Group 'C' and 'D' posts under the Central Govt the following priority is accorded: | | |
| (iv) Disabled Ex-servicemen whose disability is attributable to military services are accorded Priority-I. | | |
| (v) Upto 2 dependents of Armed forces personnel killed in action or severely disabled (with 50 percent and above disability and who have become unfit for employment but disability is attributable to military service) are accorded Priority-II, which included the widow of the deceased soldier also. | | |
| (vi) Most of the State Governments also provide reservations to Ex-Servicemen & the dependents (including widow) in State Government/ State PSU jobs. | | |

- (b) CPSUs/Nationalised Banks 14.5% vacancies in Group 'C' and 24.5% vacancies in Group 'D' are reserved for ESM in Nationalized Banks and CPSUs. This includes 4.5% reservation for disabled ex-servicemen and dependents of servicemen killed in action.
- (c) Widow/son/daughter of Armed Forces Personnel died while in service (death not attributable to military service) are also eligible for compassionate appointment for Group 'C' or 'D' post.”

3.3. Further the Committee found that following number of Compassionate Appointments have been given to widows/families of defence personnel :

“Air Force : 30 (since 2016)

Navy : 35 (since 2014)

Army : The requisite details are not readily available as compassionate appointment are made by concerned Line Directorates.”

3.4. As regards other employment settlement avenues, the Committee were informed that Resettlement of veer-nari/families is limited to the following schemes:-

(a) Oil Product Agency Distributorship.

(b) Coal Tipper Allotment Scheme for Widows.

3.5. It was further added that Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG) has reserved a quota of 8% for distributorship of Oil Product Agency i.e. LPG distributorship and Retail Outlets (Petrol/Diesel). No exclusive reservation for milk booths/kiosks exist for veer-nari or children/parents of martyred soldiers.

3.6. The Committee also desired to find out whether Ministry has formulated any special incentive schemes to develop skills among veer-nari/ NoKs. In this regard, it was informed that Directorate General Resettlement (DGR), an attached office of MoD (Under Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare) is entrusted with the conduct of Resettlement Training Courses for retiring/retired personnel of Armed Forces. The duration of these courses is between one month to nine month, these courses are conducted in multifarious fields such as Management, Security, Retail, Healthcare, Yoga & Fitness and IT Sector etc. These courses are conducted at Central/State Government Institute/Institute run by Government Regulatory Bodies/ Institutes. There are 3% seats reserved for widows /one ward in these courses (in case widow refuses to undergo course).

Chapter – IV

Medical and Educational Facilities

Medical Facilities

The Committee have been informed that ECHS takes care of the healthcare and medical needs of Ex-servicemen and their dependents. War Widows are exempted from paying the one time contribution amount for ECHS membership and can avail cashless and capless medical benefits alongwith their eligible dependents through ECHS.

4.2. The Committee were concerned to find how veer-nari/NoKs are accorded due respect and care at polyclinics. It was informed that veer-nari are being accorded due respect and care in the ECHS Polyclinics. Senior Executive Medical Officers (SEMOs) are being constantly advised to ensure timely procurement of medicines for ECHS Polyclinics to ensure optimal availability. The Formation Headquarters are also being requested to monitor the procurement process through respective medical branches.

4.3. With respect to treatment at private hospitals, the Committee came to know that veer-nari and eligible dependents are entitled to avail medical services of civil Empanelled Health Care Organisations as ECHS beneficiaries.

Educational Facilities

4.4. The Committee sought details of benefits, i.e. exemption in tuition fees, admission in technical or professional college etc., given to the children of veer-nari and children of martyred soldier. The details as furnished to the Committee are as under:

| Sl. No. | Monetary Grant/Scheme | Amount |
|---------|---|--|
| (a) | Educational Concession children of Armed Forces Officers/JCOs/ORs missing/disabled/killed in action (w.e.f. 01.07.2017) | Full reimbursement of tuition fee and bus/actual fare. Full reimbursement of Hostel Charges for those studying in boarding schools and colleges. Books/Stationary : upto Rs 2000/- per annum |

| | | |
|-----|---|---|
| | | Uniform cost where compulsory: upto Rs 2000/- per annum Clothing : upto Rs 700 per annum per student |
| (b) | Higher Education to Widows:- (a) Graduation (b) Post Graduation (c) Professional Courses | Rs. 20,000/- Rs. 25,000/- Rs. 50,000/- |
| (c) | One time Computer Grant (Applicable after 1 st degree course/Graduation & above) | Rs. 35,000/- |

4.5. The Committee enquired whether there is any scheme for facilitating overseas education to meritorious veer-nari or their children. In this connection, it was informed that presently no such scheme is existing.

4.6. With regard to initiatives for facilitating admission of veer-nari or the children of martyred soldier in various deemed/private universities, Ministry of Defence informed that **the** inter-se priority for admission for professional /non-professional courses in various education institutions/ universities is as per MoD/DESW letter No 6(I)/2017/D(Res-II) dated 21 May 2018, wherein the top most priority (i.e. Priority-I) is given to wards/ widow of serving personnel killed in action.

4.7. Specifically with regard to reservation of seats in MBBS course of various universities for veer nari/NoKs, the Ministry informed that a total of 35 MBBS seats approx and 3 seats in BDS courses are allotted by Ministry of Health Family Welfare to KSB for wards of defence personnel as a Government of India nominee. Details of MBBS seats allotted to dependent of personnel killed in action during the period 2019 to 2022 are as under:-

| Academic Year | No of seats allotted to dependent of war widow |
|---------------|--|
| 2019-20 | 11 MBBS Seats |
| 2020-21 | 15 MBBS Seats |
| 2021-22 | 05 MBBS Seats |

There are provisions of Reservation of Seats in Medical/Dental/Professional/ Non professional Courses by States/UTs/Central/State Universities/Autonomous Institutions for wards/widows of ESMs as per the priority laid down by MoD with top most priority towards/widows of personnel killed in action.

Chapter – V

Pensions

The Committee had been informed that some delays have taken place in disbursement of pension due to non-submission of life certificate on time. In this connection, the Ministry further submitted that SPARSH- Web portal has made provisions to issue SMS alerts wherever annual identification is due. Similarly, DPDOs also issues notices wherever a pensioner remains unidentified after a 12 months cycle. However, at present there is no provision to approach Veer-nari or parent of a martyred soldier personally. Further, the Committee also found that full pension is given to orphan children of martyred soldier or parents of unmarried martyred soldier. One Rank One Pension (OROP) scheme is also applicable to Veer-Naris. With reference to mechanism of arriving at rate, it is submitted that as a basic principle after 2006, 50% of last pay drawn is pension. Whereas LFP is last pay drawn. Based on this principle LFP rates under OROP have been arrived by doubling the service pension rates for a particular qualifying service under OROP.

Central Data Base

5.2. An Annual Census is done in the month of April by PCDA (P) Praygaraj to ascertain total number of defence pensioners. This exercise is done by collecting data from Pension Disbursement Agencies (PDAs). Some percentages of payments are also audited by PCDA (P) Prayagraj to verify quantum of benefits. It was informed that PCDA (P) Prayagraj maintains data base of pensioners. However, as informed to the Committee separate data base of Veer-Nari are not maintained by them.

5.3. An Annual Census is done in the month April by PCDA (P) Praygaraj to ascertain total number of defence pensioners. This exercise is done by collecting data from Pension Disbursement Agencies (PDAs). Some percentages of payments are also audited by PCDA (P) Prayagraj to verify quantum of benefits.

Chapter - VI

Awareness Generation and Grievance Redressal

The Committee have been apprised that grievance redressal mechanism with references to educational, medical or any other services in respect of veer-nari have been adopted at ZSB/RSB and KSB level. ZSBs are also being included in Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) Ver 7.0. The grievances of veer-nari are received at various levels i.e. KSB, RSB, ZSBs and some forwarded by other organisations of Central/State. Endeavour is to resolve the grievances at the earliest whereas land and other family disputes take longer times. The data in CPGRAMS does not maintain in particular record like veer-nari. Further, it was added that respective ZSB/RSB maintains a record of the complaints/ grievances received from war widows and their grievances are resolved at the earliest.

6.2. With regard to awareness generation among veer-nari/NoKs about the welfare schemes, the Committee had been informed that all welfare schemes /policies /benefits pertaining to war widows and their families are displayed at the notice boards/premises/offices/ campus of all RSB/ZSBs to facilitate wide publicity and awareness amongst ESM community. Instructions on the above have been issued by KSB Secretariat to all RSB/ZSBs to check this aspect during annual inspection of RSB/ZSB by KSB. In addition, all policies, welfare schemes, procedures etc are also available on KSB website.

6.3. Zila Sainik Welfare officer (ZSWOs)/ Welfare Organizer of concerned state regularly visit/ approach war-widows and their families for needful/ assistance. In addition, records are maintained and updated at all ZSWOs. All the information related to pension, benefits and schemes are displayed/ uploaded on the website of the Service headquarters and the Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare.

Chapter - VII

Recognition of Martyrs and Their Families

The Committee have been apprised that the families of Battle casualties/NoK/Veer-Nari are invited to National War memorial, New Delhi. Consequent to the National War Memorial being dedicated to the Nation by Honourable Prime Minister on February 25, 2019, to honour the martyrs, whose names are inscribed at the 'Tyag Chakra' of the Memorial, a Homage ceremony is conducted by tri Services on different days of every month, in which the NoKs of the battle casualties are invited to lay the wreath at the 'Tyag Chakra'. NoKs are also honoured and invited to various functions from time to time.

7.2. Further, veer-nari /families are invited as special guests at functions/ ceremonies as and when organized at district and State level. In this regard, specially a welfare organizer from respective ZSB/RSB has been detailed to coordinate the same. Veer-nari and their dependents are provided class I accommodation during Veterans Day function held on 14 January every year at New Delhi. Besides these, all Command Headquarters and Local units invite veer-nari and NoKs for functions and ceremonies organized by them. Every ZSB/RSB have their own standing orders for provisioning with regard to allotment of accommodation free of cost and send invitation cards and vehicle provided to inviting veer-naris/families during functions/ceremonies as and when organized. In addition, hot meals are also provided during the visits.

PART- II

Observations/Recommendations

Structural Reforms

1. The Committee take note that various schemes/services meant for the welfare of veer-nari and NoKs are presently administered and come under the jurisdiction of Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare and its attached offices namely Kendriya Sainik Board, Directorate General Resettlement (DGR), Central Organisation and Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS) and there is no exclusively dedicated department/Office or Designated Officers in the Ministry to look after and intervene for the welfare measures of the families of martyred soldiers. The Committee are of the opinion that a separate Department within MoD exclusively responsible for the welfare of Veer Naris/NoKs may be created so that the various issues pertaining to them could be closely examined in a more focussed manner. Such an arrangement would enable efficient delivery of welfare benefits for veer-nari and NoKs.

Maintenance of database

2. The Committee note that statistical data on number of veer-naris and Next of Kins (NoKs) and the amount of grant been given to them under various schemes is analysed on regular basis to assess the impact of all the schemes run by the MoD, DESW, various Service Headquarters and its attached offices. However, the Committee find that State/UT wise break-up data for veer-nari was not available with Ministry of Defence, although, a figure of 15021 representing total number of veer-nari in the country was furnished to them. The Committee

are of the opinion that accurate estimation of number of beneficiaries and regular updation of database would facilitate proper implementation of schemes and the attainment of desired objectives. For instance, if a member ceases to be eligible for grant/benefit the name should be removed from the list. The Committee recommend that a comprehensive state-wise data for veer-nari and also NoKs should be maintained. It goes without saying that the technologies/tools available in the Government Organisation can be used for maintaining and updating the data without any discrepancies.

Ex-gratia Fund

3. The Committee were informed by the Ministry that the circumstances in which the soldier dies determines the differences in benefits accrued to their family members. Further, for grant of pensionary awards to families of Armed Forces Personnel, the circumstances of death of the Armed Forces personnel has been categorized under different categories. Out of these, Category B and C include death or disability due to causes which are accepted as attributable to or aggravated by military service as determined by the competent medical authorities. It also covers various type of accidents during performance of duties. In such cases of death of Armed Forces personnel falling under Category B and C, special family pension @60% of the reckonable emoluments is granted to the eligible member of the family of the deceased personnel. While taking note of the specifics stated above, the Committee are cognizant of the fact that death under category B and C do not fit for liberalized family pension. However, they observe that since the death or disability is attributable to difficult working conditions of the defence personnel, they therefore, recommend that the family

pension may be enhanced to 75 per cent of the reckonable emoluments from the existing 60 per cent. The Committee would like to be apprised of the action taken in this regard at the time of furnishing Action Taken Notes.

4. The Committee note that ex-gratia lump sum compensation of Death is paid to eligible family member of martyred soldier. The Committee were informed by a representative of Ministry of Defence that this amount varies for different categories of death of the soldier. Compensation of Rs. 25 lac is granted in case of death occurring due to accidents or acts of violence by terrorists, anti-social elements while performing duties and a compensation of Rs. 35 lac is paid in case of death occurring in border skirmishes and action against militants, terrorists, extremists, sea pirates etc. Besides, an amount of Rs. 45 lac is granted as compensation in case of death occurring during enemy action in war. The Committee are of the considered view that though loss of life of soldier cannot be evaluated in monetary terms, yet financial grant is helpful in providing a reasonable and respectful life to family members of the soldier. Further, it also acts as an incentive and encouragement for the youth to join the Armed Forces. In view of this notion and considering increase in the rate of inflation, the Committee recommend that Government should seriously consider increasing the ex-gratia fund by Rs. 10 Lakh in each of the above category. The minimum amount under any category will be Rs. 35 lakhs and maximum Rs. 55 lakhs.

Uniformity in ex-gratia funds among States

5. The Committee note that in addition to ex-Gratia given by Central / individual service to next of Kins/family members, the same is also given by

respective State/UT Governments to NoK/family members of martyrs. However, the Committee note that there is wide variation in ex-gratia benefits extended to veer-nari/NoKs by different States which has led to disparities amongst the beneficiaries of the martyrs. For instance, ex-Gratia amount for Himachal Pradesh has been increased to Rs 20 lakhs and Odisha has increased it to Rs 10 lakhs. In this connection, the Committee were apprised that being a federal structure in the country the amount varies from State to State. Since the soldier has laid down his life in the service to nation, the Committee desire that there has to be uniformity to the extent possible in payment of ex-gratia fund by state Governments also and the argument of federal structure should not come in the way. The Committee are not oblivious of the fact that the issue regarding uniformity in payments of ex-gratia amount to the dependents of Martyrs has been raised and discussed in several meetings of the Committee without any positive outcome. Therefore, the Committee, in no unequivocal terms recommend that requisite measures be initiated and should be put in place for sensitizing state Governments to bring in more uniformity in granting ex-gratia fund for families of martyred soldiers.

Welfare Measures Delivery at the State/District level

6. The Committee note that Kendriya Sainik Board is headed by Hon'ble Raksha Mantri and comprising of the Chief Ministers, Administrators of Union Territories as its members, is a high level board specially created to look into the issues of ESM/dependents. Presently there are 33 Rajya Sainik Boards (RSBs) and 403 Zila Sainik Board (ZSBs) to look after the well beings of ESM/Dependents. Further, the Committee note that during last 10 years, number

of ZSBs have increased from 220 to 403. This was primarily based on number of ESM and families of serving/deceased service personnel in that area. The Committee were apprised that a new ZSB can be set up by concerned State Government themselves if the population of ESM and families of serving/deceased service personnel is above 7500. The Committee are of considered opinion that role of Central Government in welfare of NoKs and veer-naris has to be pivotal and it cannot be left to the state machinery. Therefore, meetings of all central boards should be held frequently and at regular intervals so as to have effective monitoring of functioning of state/district Boards.

7. The Committee observe that besides setting up a ZSB, it is also very important that ZSB is accessible to beneficiaries coming under its jurisdiction. Specifically with regard to veer nari and NoKs, as their details are available, RSB/ZSB should be pro-actively involved in overseeing proper implementation of welfare schemes for them. The meetings of these Boards shall be held on regular basis so as to ensure visibility of their working in the zone. It may be ensured that benefits of various schemes are personally delivered to Veer Nari/NOK and they be apprised of the schemes available for them.

Employment/Re-settlement

8. The Committee note that compassionate appointments are being made by concerned Service Headquarters of Army, Navy and Air Force to widows / families of defence personnel, whereby widows of Defence Personnel, who lose their lives while performing the duties are eligible for applying for Short Service Commission (Non- Tech) and (Tech). They are eligible even if they have children

but should not have been re-married. A total of 5% vacancies are earmarked for widows both for SSC (Tech) women and SSC (Non-Tech) women entry. The Committee desire that the criteria of veer-nari being unmarried for employment eligibility should be re-looked into. Further, it has come to notice of Committee that in some cases of compassionate appointments, candidates have to face inordinate delays for getting appointments. Evidently in certain cases, the widows cross their age-limit whilst waiting for announcement of vacancies. The Committee recommend that a suitable mechanism should be formulated so as to ensure that at least eligible and willing veer-nari or NoK be given either employment or a resettlement option in the shortest time period possible.

9. On the issue of resettlement of veer-nari/NoKs, the Committee were informed that various relaxations are being given to veer-nari/NoKs, one such measure is being ten per cent vacancies made available to Wards (Sons and daughters including legally adopted children) of Battle Casualty for grant of Short Service Commission (SSC) out of fixed vacancies released per course to 'C' Certificate holders of NCC. The Committee are surprised to note that instead of having separate pool of vacancies reserved for Veer Narees/NOKs there is no relaxation in eligibility criteria except that condition of holding of NCC 'C' Certificate is not mandatory for these vacancies. The Committee therefore recommend that some fixed percentage of reservation should be made exclusively for wards of martyred soldiers out of general quota.

10. With regard to enrolment as JCO/Other Ranks, the Committee were informed that instant enrolment is done in the Army through Unit Head Quarter enrolment by respective Regiment/Corps Training Centers as per policy. On

gleaning through the extract of policy on 'Instant Enrolment' furnished to the Committee, it was found that for the said purpose, one son of fatal battle casualty/ Battle Casualty boarded out is given consideration and in case of being under aged the person may be enrolled when he attains the age required. When deceased was unmarried, one real brother of a Battle Casualty is considered for employment and in case of deceased's widow is issueless or has no male child or has underaged male child, one real brother of a battle casualty, provided the real brother gets married to the deceased widow is considered for service. The Committee feel that eligibility criteria or the policy for the employment has not been revisited since a long time as eligibility criteria is fixed for the male child only. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the extant policies should be revisited with a view to have gender equality and real sister and female child should also be made eligible/.entitled for service after fulfilment of requisite eligibility criteria for instant employment.

11. With regard to the compassionate appointments of veer-nari/families, the Committee found that presently 30 personnel in Air Force (since 2016) and 35 in Navy (since 2014) were given employment. Surprisingly, Army which is the biggest target of all the forces has not maintained the requisite data, and it is maintained by the Directorate. The Committee desire that data with regard to compassionate appointments to NoK or veer-nari families should be properly maintained by Army and brought to the knowledge of the Committee. The Committee take note of the number of compassionate appointments in Air Force and Navy and find it lesser than expected. However, a comprehensive analysis be made only when total number of NoKs available in the country as well as data in respect of Army is furnished to the Committee.

12. As regards other re-settlement avenues, the Committee note that re-settlement of veer-nari/families is limited to the schemes of Oil Product Agency Distributorship and Coal Tipper Allotment Scheme for Widows. The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG) has reserved a quota of 8 per cent for distributorship of oil product agency i.e. LPG Distributorship and retail outlets (P/D). The Committee wish that the total number of allotments made for veer-nari and NoKs vis-à-vis total allotments be furnished to them along at the time of furnishing Action Taken Replies. The Committee desire that 8 per cent reservation of distributorship of oil products should be adhered to strictly both in letter and spirit.

13. The Committee note that at present there is no provision of reservation for milk booths/kiosks etc for veer-nari or eligible family members of martyred soldiers. The Committee recommend that Ministry of Defence should take up the issue with concerned Ministry/agency for earmarking a fixed percentage of allotment of milk booths and other kiosks which are certainly easy to operate as means of livelihood in comparison to other centres for veer-nari or NoKs.

14. With respect to special incentive schemes to develop skills among veer-nari/ NoK, the Committee were informed that DGR, an attached office of MoD (under Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare) is entrusted with conducting Resettlement Training Courses for retiring/retired personnel of Armed Forces. The duration of these courses is between one month to nine months and they are conducted in multifarious fields such as Management, Security, Retail, Healthcare, Yoga & Fitness and IT Sector etc. Three per cent seats reserved for

widows /one ward in these courses (in case widow refuses to undergo course). In this respect, the Committee recommend that instead of limiting the reservation of seats to three per cent, these training/skilling courses should be made available to all willing veer-nari and eligible NoKs provided they fulfill basic eligibility criteria for the same.

Medical and Educational Facilities

15. The Committee note that Ex-servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS) takes care of the healthcare and medical needs of Ex-servicemen and their dependents. The Ministry have informed the Committee that Veer-nari are exempted from paying one time contribution of amount for ECHS membership and can avail cashless and capless medical benefits alongwith their eligible dependents through ECHS. It has also been informed that veer-nari and eligible dependents are also entitled to avail medical services of civil Empanelled Health Care Organisations as ECHS beneficiaries. The Committee observe that at times some facilities are not available at empanelled hospitals and also their location is very far and not in near vicinity of the place of residence of veer-nari/NoKs. Since, providing healthcare facilities to family members of martyred soldier is nation is responsibility, the Committee feel that Government should issue advisory to all ECHS empanelled private hospitals across the country to provide healthcare facilities to veer-nari and eligible NoKs on priority basis.

16. The Committee note that at present Rs. 700 per student per annum as clothing charges is being given to children of veer-naris studying in colleges which is a very meagre amount in current economic scenario. They therefore

recommend that it should suitably increased. Likewise, Rs. 50000 for professional course is also a meagre amount when compared to the cost of fee for prevailing professional courses in various colleges. Therefore, the Committee recommend that Ministry should take up the issue of for suitably increasing the same. The Committee also note that at present computer grant of Rs. 35,000 is provided to students after degree course. Keeping in view the importance of computers in learning the Committee recommend that it should be granted at level of 10th standard itself.

17. In course of examination of the subject, the Committee were desirous to know about the scheme/ policy for providing overseas education of meritorious veer-nari and eligible NoKs. The representatives of Ministry of Defence were candid to state that at present there is no such scheme. The Committee recommend that to tap the hidden talent of bright students the Government should contemplate formulating a scheme/policy for funding and facilitating overseas education of meritorious and eligible NoKs of martyred soldiers.

18. With regard to initiatives for facilitating admission of veer-nari or the children of martyred soldier in various deemed/private universities, the Committee were informed that *inter-se* priority for admission into professional /non professional courses in various education institutions/ universities is given to wards/ widow of serving personnel killed in action. The Committee whilst expressing their satisfaction over the endeavors of the Ministry, desire that whenever a case for admission of wards/spouse of personnel killed in action come to notice of Ministry of Defence, efforts should be made at highest level to accord priorities for securing admission in educational institutions. In this

regard guidelines with regard to procedure for securing admission in the private college/universities etc. may be formulated in consultation with the Ministry of Education.

19. The Committee also note that there are provisions of reservation of seats in medical/dental/ courses by States/UTs/Central universities /autonomous institutions for wards/widows of ESMs as per the priority laid down by MoD with top most priority towards /widows to personnel killed in action. With regard to reservation of seats in MBBS course of various universities for veer nari/ noks, the Ministry informed the Committee that a total of 35 MBBS seats and 3 seats in BDS are allotted by Ministry of Health Family Welfare to KSB for wards of defence personnel as a Government of India nominee. It was also informed that 11, 15 and 05 no of MBBS seats were allotted to dependents of war widows during the years 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22 respectively. The Committee would like to know the reasons for reduction in the number of MBBS seats allotted for wards of war widows in the year 2021-22. Since the number of MBBS seats are being increased by Government in various medical colleges/institutions across the country the Committee recommend that correspondingly number of seats earmarked for veer-nari/NoKs should also be increased.

Pensions

20. The Committee learn that there were delays in disbursement of pension due to non-submission of life certificate on time. The representatives of Ministry of Defence have stated that under the SPARSH- Web portal there is a provision to issue SMS alerts wherever annual identification is pending. However, the Committee find that presently there is no practice of personally approaching veer-nari/NoKs for submission of life-certificate. Further, the Committee note that

though PCDA (P) Prayagraj maintains data base of pensioners, no separate data base of veer-naris is being maintained by them. The Committee recommend that in cases where Veer Naris/NoKs are unable to submit their life certificate *suo-moto*, they should be personally approached to enable submission of the same. In this regard if required assistance of concerned district level officer may be solicited. They also recommend that a separate data base for veer-narees and NoKs should also be maintained by the Department.

Awareness Generation and Grievance redressal

21. The Committee were given to understand that grievance redressal mechanism with reference to educational, medical or any other services in respect of veer-nari or NoKs has been set up at ZSB/RSB and KSB level. ZSBs are also being included in Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) Ver 7.0. which is an online platform available to the citizens 24x7 to lodge their grievances. The Committee were also apprised by the Ministry that they endeavour to resolve the grievances at the earliest, although land and other family disputes take longer time. It has also been informed that Respective ZSB/RSB maintains a record of the complaints/ grievances received from veer-nari or NoKs. However, while replying to a related query the Ministry has stated that the record, particularly for war widows is not maintained. The committee are surprised to find two contradictory replies for the similar query. Not going further into these details, the Committee, at this stage can only recommend that data regarding Veer Naris and NoKs should be maintained at ZSB/RSB and KSB levels with proper monitoring at Central level. For this purpose, if need be the Ministry can consider modifying the existing CPGRAMS ver. 7.0 by adding a separate tab/window for the Veer Nari/NoKs.

Recognition of Martyrs and their families

22. During the course of examination of the subject, the Committee desired that awareness among beneficiaries about the schemes / policies meant for welfare of veer-nari/ NoKs should be created. In this respect, the Ministry of Defence informed that all welfare schemes/policies /benefits pertaining to war widows and their families are displayed at the notice boards/premises/offices/ campus of all RSB/ZSBs to facilitate wide publicity and awareness amongst ESM community. Instructions on the above have been issued by KSB Secretariat to all RSB/ZSBs to check this aspect during annual inspection of RSB/ZSB by KSB. In addition, all policies, welfare schemes, procedures etc are also available on KSB website. The Committee have been intimated that ZSWOs/ Welfare Organizer of concerned state regularly visit/approach veer-nari and their families for needful/ assistance. In addition, records are maintained and updated by all ZSWOs and all the information related to pension, benefits and schemes are displayed/ uploaded on the website of the Service headquarters and the Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare. While taking note of the extant mechanism put in place, the Committee would like to recommend that ZSWOs/Welfare Organizer should be held responsible for optimum service delivery to all veer-nari/NoKs. The Ministry of Defence must also ensure that any sort of exploitation/malpractices which may surface should be dealt firmly within the prescribed Rules/Laws, and those found guilty should be penalized.

New Delhi;
13 December, 2022
22 Agrahayana, 1944 (Saka)

JUAL ORAM
Chairperson
Standing Committee on Defence

| <u>ENTITLEMENTS TO THE NOKs OF THE BATTLE CASUALTIES</u> | | |
|---|--|---|
| Ser No. | Monetary Grant/Scheme | Amount |
| a | Ex-Gratia (Central) | Rs 25.00 lacs to Rs 45.00 lacs |
| b | Army Group Insurance (AGI) benefits | Rs. 1.00 crore (Officers) Rs. 50.00 lacs (JCO/ORs) |
| c | AGI maturity | As per contribution accumulated along with compound interest. |
| d | Pension | Liberalized /Special Family Pension 100%/ 60% of last RE (Basic Pay + MSP) |
| e | Death-cum-Retirement Gratuity (DCRG) | Based on length of service and emoluments last drawn by the deceased individual. |
| f | Final Settlement of. Accounts (FSAs). (Including Leave encashment & Defence Services Officers Provident (DSOP)/ Armed Forces Personnel Provident (AFPP) Fund | As applicable. As per contribution accumulated along with compound interest |
| g | Army Wives Welfare Association (AWWA) Grant. | Rs. 30,000/- ex-gratia grant to NoKs of deceased soldiers. |
| h | Armed Forces Battle Casualty Welfare Fund (AFBCWF) | Rs. 8.00 lacs AddIn ex-gratia grant to NoKs of deceased soldiers. |
| j | Ex Gratia (Domicile State Government) | As applicable |
| k | Death link Insurance Scheme DLIS(JCO/ORs) | Rs.60,000/- |
| l | Personal Accident Insurance (Defence Salary Package Account) by Major Public/Private Sector Banks. | Rs. 50.00 lacs |
| | Total Entitlement (approx.) | Rs 1.8 cr (Officers) and Rs 1.3 cr (JCO/ORs) |

OTHER BENEFITS/ CONCESSIONS

| Ser No. | Monetary Grant/Scheme | Amount |
|----------------|---|--|
| a | Educational Concession children of Armed Forces Officers/JCOs/ORs missing/disabled/killed in action (w.e.f. 01.07.2017) | Full reimbursement of tuition fee and bus/actual fare. Full reimbursement of Hostel Charges for those studying in boarding schools and colleges. Books/Stationary : upto Rs 2000/-per annum Uniform cost where compulsory: upto Rs 2000/- per annum Clothing : upto Rs 700 per annum per student |
| b | Higher Education to Widows:- (a) Graduation (b) Post Graduation (c) Professional Courses | Rs. 20,000/- Rs. 25,000/- Rs. 50,000/- |
| c | One time Computer Grant (Applicable after 1st degree course/Graduation & above) | Rs. 35,000/- |
| d | Medical Facilities to the dependents/Noks | ECHS (Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme) provides cashless health care to war-widows/war disabled defence personnel and their NoKs. War Widows are not required to pay the membership fee. |
| e | Marriage Grant | A grant of Rs 1,00,000/- is given for marriage of daughters, widow re-marriage and orphan son's marriage of battle casualties (fatal), physical casualties (fatal). |
| f | Vocational Training Grant | Rs 20,000/- (One time) for Widows Pensioner/ Non-Pen up to Hav.Rank) |
| g | Railway Travel Concession | Ministry of Railways provides concessions (upto 75%) on tickets to widows of martyrs and Complementary Card Passes to Chakra awardees and their widows. |

| Ser No. | Monetary Grant/Scheme | Amount |
|----------------|--|---|
| h | Telephone Concession | Department of Telecommunication provides full and 50% concessions in rental charges to Chakra awardees and war widows respectively. |
| i | Government accommodation Retention | Retention of Govt married accommodation for two years from the death of the Individual extended by one and a half year with the approval of the Competent Authority. |
| j | Reservation/Priority Defence Housing Schemes | Reservation (upto 3%) / Priority in Army Welfare Housing Organisation (AWHO) and Air Force Naval Housing Board (AFNHB dwelling units for widow/ Parents of Battle Casualties/ Fatal Casualties. |
| k | Reservation in Jobs | 4.5% reservation for disabled ESM/ dependents of Servicemen killed in action already in central public sector enterprises and nationalised banks. |
| l | Resettlement Schemes | There are lot of schemes for resettlement schemes run by Directorate General Resettlement (DGR) like allotment of petrol pumps etc. to ensure proper resettlement of war widows/dependents. |
| m. | Priority / Reservation in Professional /Higher Educational Institutes. | Central Government and various State Govts have provision of reservation of seats in higher educational institutions for children of ESM. Wards/widows of Servicemen killed/ disabled in action are placed in Priority I and II respectively. (top categories) About 38 seats are reserved as nominee candidates by KSB under MoHFW quota for ESM in admission to Medical / Dental Colleges. |

STANDING COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE (2021-22)

**MINUTES OF THE EIGHTH SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON
DEFENCE (2021-22)**

The Committee sat on Friday, the 27th May, 2022 from 1430 hrs. to 1545 hrs. in Committee Room No. 'D', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

SHRI JUAL ORAM

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CHAIRPERSON

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Kunwar Danish Ali
3. Shri D.V. Sadananda Gowda
4. Shri Rattan Lal Kataria
5. Prof. (Dr.) Ram Shankar Katheria
6. Dr. T. R. Paarivendhar
7. Shir Jugal Kishore Sharma
8. Shri Brijendra Singh
9. Shri Durga Das Uikey

Rajya Sabha

10. Dr. Ashok Bajpai
11. Shri Prem Chand Gupta
12. Lt. Gen. (Dr.) D.P. Vats (Retd.)
13. Shri K.C. Venugopal

SECRETARIAT

1. Dr. Sanjeev Sharma - Director
2. Shri Rahul Singh - Deputy Secretary

LIST OF WITNESSES

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

| S. No. | Name | Designation |
|--------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 | Shri B. Anand | Secretary, ESW |
| 2 | Dr. Pudi Hari Prasad | JS (ESW) |
| 3 | Shri Sanjay Kumar | Addl. FA & JS |
| 4 | Dr. PP Sharma | OSD |
| 5 | Lt Gen C Bansi Ponnappa | AVSM, VSM, AG Army Hqrs |
| 6 | Lt Gen PS Shekhawat | SM DG (DC & W) |
| 7 | Air Mshl K Anantharaman | VSM, AOA, Air Hqrs |
| 8 | Air Mshl RK Anand | DG (Administration) |
| 9 | Vice Admiral Suraj Berry | Controller of Personnel Services |
| 10 | AVM Ashok Saini | ACAS (Accts & AV) |
| 11 | Maj Gen N R Indurkar | SM, MD ECHS |
| 12 | Maj Gen Sharad Kapoor | DG (Resettlement) |
| 13 | Cmde H P Singh | Secy, KSB |
| 14 | Cmde Pankaj Sharma | CMD, ESM Affairs |
| 15 | Shri Rajnish Kumar | CGDA |
| 16 | Shri Praveen Kumar | Addl CGDA |
| 17 | Dr. Jeyaraj Naik | Jt CGDA |

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members to the Sitting of the Committee convened in connection with examination of the Subject, 'Assessment of the Welfare Measures available to War Widows/Families in Armed Forces'. Thereafter, the Chairperson welcomed the representatives of the Ministry of Defence and drew their attention to Directions 55(1) and 58 of the Directions by the Speaker, Lok Sabha regarding confidentiality of the proceedings of the Committee.

3. The witnesses through a Power Point Presentation, briefed the Committee on the Subject. Thereafter, the Chairperson and Members of the Committee raised several issues/points, as indicated below and sought clarifications/information from the representatives of the Ministry of Defence thereon:

- i. Provision of educational facilities for war widows/veer-nari and their children which included overseas study, admission in MBBS and technical courses etc.;
- ii. Allotment of resettlement facilities like petrol pump, gas agencies, milk booths, etc. for veer-nari, their children and parents of martyred soldiers;
- iii. Ex-gratia appointment in services on compassionate ground;
- iv. Reserving vacancies and relaxing qualification criteria for employment of veer-nari and their children;
- v. Recommending state governments for bringing uniformity in provision of ex-gratia benefits and employment opportunities;

- vi. Amelioration of hardships being faced in availing medical facilities in ECHS by veer-nari, their children and parents of martyred soldiers;
- vii. Resolution to delay in pension disbursement due to technical issues; and
- viii. Curbing malpractices/pilferages in authorities with regard to allotment/issuing of licences for facilities/benefits targeted for welfare of veer-nari and their children or parents of martyred soldiers.
- ix. Reservation of Children of veer-naris in Sainik Schools.

4. The representatives of the Ministry of the Defence responded to the queries raised by the Members. The Chairperson directed the representatives of the Ministry to furnish written replies/information on the points raised by the Members which were not readily available at an early date, which was assured by the representatives.

The witnesses then withdrew

5. A copy of verbatim record of the proceedings has been kept.

The Committee then adjourned.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE (2022-23)

MINUTES OF THE SECOND SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE (2022-23)

The Committee sat on Monday, the 14 November, 2022 from 1100 hrs. to 1245 hrs. in Committee Room No. 'C', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

SHRI JUAL ORAM

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CHAIRPERSON

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

2. Shri Devaragunda Venkappa Sadananda Gowda
3. Shri Annasaheb Shankar Jolle
4. Shri Suresh Kumar Kashyap
5. Shri Rattan Lal Kataria
6. Dr. Rajashree Mallick
7. Shri Anumula Revanth Reddy
8. Shri Jugal Kishore Sharma
9. Shri Brijendra Singh
10. Shri Mahabali Singh

RAJYA SABHA

11. Dr. Ashok Bajpai
12. Shri Prem Chand Gupta
13. Smt. P.T. Usha
14. Shri G.K. Vasani
15. Lt. Gen. (Dr.) D. P. Vats (Retd.)
16. Shri K.C. Venugopal

SECRETARIAT

1. Smt. Suman Arora - Joint Secretary
2. Dr. Sanjeev Sharma - Director
3. Shri Rahul Singh - Deputy Secretary

LIST OF WITNESSES
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

S.No. Name & Designation

1. Dr. Samir Venkatpati Kamat, Secretary, DDR&D & Chairman, DRDO
2. Shri K.S. Varaprasad, DS & DG(HR)
3. Shri Hari Babu Srivastava, OS & DG
4. Dr. UK Singh, OS & DG(R&M)
5. Dr. Chandrika Kaushik, OS, BDG(PC&SI)
6. Shri Purusottam Bej, OS & Director
7. Shri Vedveer Arya, Addl FA & JS
8. Dr. Ravindra Singh, Scientist 'G' & Director, DPARO&M
9. Dr. Sumit Goswami, Scientist 'F' & Director, DP&C

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members and informed them about the agenda of the Sitting i.e. to consider and adopt the Draft Report on the subject 'Assessment of Welfare Measures available to War Widows/Families in Armed Forces' and briefing by the representatives of the Ministry of Defence on the subject 'A review of the working of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)'.

3. The Committee first took up the draft Report for consideration. After some deliberations, the Committee adopted the Report without any changes/modifications. The Committee authorized the Chairperson to finalise the above draft Report and present the same to the House on a date convenient to him.

4. **** Does not pertain to the Report.

The Committee then adjourned.