

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEFENCE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1870
ANSWERED ON:26.03.2012
AVALANCHES IN SRINAGAR
Ramasubbu Shri S.

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a number of army jawans and civilians were killed/ trapped in the avalanches occurred in Srinagar recently;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has provided assistance to their families;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether any precautionary steps were taken in advance to prepare against such eventualities and if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY)

- (a) & (b): 19 Army personnel (05 Junior Commissioned Officers and 14 Other Ranks) died in the avalanches that struck the Army Garrison at Sonamarg and Dawar on 22.2.2012.
- (c) & (d): The Next of Kin are entitled to compensation such as liberalized family pension, death gratuity, Army Group Insurance Fund, ex-gratia etc., as per Government orders in vogue on the subject.
- (e) & (f): Measures undertaken to reduce the risk due to avalanches are vacation of High Risk Areas (winter vacated posts) subject to operational requirement, periodic resiting of bunkers, dissemination of avalanches warning generation by Snow and Avalanche Study Establishment (SASE), promulgation of Standing Operating Procedures (SOPs) for operating in avalanche prone areas, training and adequate kitting of personnel deployed in these areas etc.