

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HOME AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:273
ANSWERED ON:24.04.2012
WORKING CONDITIONS IN PARA MILITARY FORCES
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Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has recently conducted any study through independent agencies to assess the working conditions of the personnel working in the Central Para Military Services particularly the Border Security Force (BSF) jawans;
- (b) if so, the outcome of the survey;
- (c) whether BSF jawans undergo stressful conditions while serving in border areas without adequate facilities;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the remedial steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to mitigate the hardships faced by the jawans in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI JITENDRA SINGH)

(a) to (e): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 273 FOR 24.04.2012

(a) to (e): No specific study has been conducted by the Government through independent agencies to assess the working condition of the personnel working in the Central Para Military Services particularly the Border Security Force (BSF) Jawans. A study was conducted jointly by Bureau of Police Research & Development (BPR&D) and LNJN NICFS alongwith certain experts, in the year 2005, to identify:

- i. Whether personnel working in different CPMFs of the Union suffer from stress;
- ii. Possible causes of stress;
- iii. Availability of stress coping mechanisms in the CPMFs;
- iv. Factors responsible for the extreme steps taken by personnel identified in the case studies;
- v. Remedial measures to address the problem.

The study confirmed the existence of stress in the CAPFs, including BSF and identified certain general causes of stress, including:

- I. Deployment in difficult isolated areas under adverse climatic conditions;
- ii. Long and strenuous duty hours;
- iii. Excessive/uncertain mobility at a very short notice;
- iv. Poor living and working conditions;
- v. Prolonged separation from families;
- vi. Education of children - disruption due to frequent movement/transfer;
- vii. Financial crisis in the family due to maintenance of more than one establishment;
- viii. Lack of adequate promotional opportunities, etc.

The study also made certain recommendations which will help to manage and contain stress levels. Such recommendations are broadly classified under the following heads and sub-heads:

(i) Organizational:- There were 37 recommendations made under this head.

(ii) Individual:- There were 8 recommendations under this head which include avoid isolation; take part in various activities; communicate with colleagues, family members and friends; keep away from alcohol and drugs; regular exercise and games; yoga meditation; self-education about the cause of stress and how to cope with them etc.

(iii) Governmental:- There were 3 recommendations made under this head.

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) have taken a number of remedial steps/ measures in the recent years to mitigate the hardship faced by the jawans as also to boost their morale and reduce stress amongst them. The important measures taken in this regard are:

(i) Proper Rest and Relief Policy has been introduced in order to ensure adequate rest and relief to the BSF personnel;

(ii) Provision of better communication facilities at places of deployment, particularly in remote areas so that the Force personnel can remain in regular touch with their families and friends;

(iii) Implementation of rational and fair leave policy;

(iv) Regular interaction between Commander and Jawans is being ensured to reduce the stress level ;

(v) Stress Management Capsule courses are regularly being conducted for the troops to mitigate their stress level ;

(vi) Regular Yoga has been introduced in the CAPFs by qualified Yoga Instructors;

(vii) Redressal & Grievances Cells have been set up to sort out the problems of serving personnel;

(viii) Development of adequate infrastructure on Border Out Posts (BOPs) for providing basic amenities to the troops and improve their living conditions;

(ix) Introduction of electronic gadgets and construction of roads, fence and flood lights to reduce physical and mental fatigue to the troops and enhance operational efficiency;

(x) Provision of recreational facilities and introduction of Regimental and Community activities including Sports/Games, etc. at all levels to ensure maximum participation in order to reduce the stress levels;

(xi) Transparency in distribution of duties is ensured to prevent resentment and discontent amongst personnel ;

(xii) Organizing talks by Doctors and other Specialists with the BSF Jawans to address their personal/psychological concerns, etc.