

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEFENCE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5476
ANSWERED ON:29.04.2013
FIELD FIRING RANGES
Choudhary Shri Harish;Meghwal Shri Arjun Ram

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the field firing ranges of the armed forces in the country, State-wise;
- (b) whether the Government proposes to increase the number of field firing ranges and modernize them and if so, the details thereof along with the funds allocated for the purpose;
- (c) whether several residents of the surrounding villages of these ranges particularly in Rajasthan have become victims of accidents in course of collecting used shells of ammunition after military exercises in these ranges;
- (d) if so, the details of such accidents along with the relief provided by the Government to the said victims during each of the last three years and the current year; and
- (e) the steps taken / proposed to be taken by the Government to prevent such accidents in future?

Answer

MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY)

- (a) There are a total of 66 Field Firing Ranges held with the Army. State wise detail of these Field Firing Ranges is as per Appendix attached.
- (b) Government is considering modernization of most of acquired Field Firing Ranges. The modernization being an ongoing process will be carried out in a gradual manner. The funds will be allocated accordingly.
- (c) There have been very few accidents involving civilians from surrounding villages particularly in Rajasthan while collecting fired shells of ammunition from Field Firing Ranges. Most of the Field Firing Ranges in Rajasthan are acquired ranges and scrap collection is given on contract as per laid down procedure.
- (d) As per the records held with the Army, there has been only one such accident in Rajasthan since last three years in which one civilian, Mr. Banwari, S/o Shri Sukharam, R/o Vill-Kishan Nagar (Rajasthan) died while collection of metal scrap from Pokharan Field Firing Range (PFFR) in Rajasthan. The deceased was an employee of the Civilian Contractor who was awarded the contract for collection of metal scrap for the year as per laid down procedures. No relief was required to be provided by the Government as per terms and conditions of the contract.
- (e) Safety at Firing Ranges is the prime concern during firing. Towards this end, the following is being ensured:-
 - (i) Detailed safety instructions have been put in place in the form of Range Standing Orders for each range, which include detailed Safety Instructions.
 - (ii) Before a unit carries out field firing at a range, prior intimation is given to the civil local administration including police so that the civil population of the area is informed well in advance.
 - (iii) Warning boards are placed at frequent intervals along the range boundary warning people not to enter and not to touch any unidentified object lying or buried within or adjacent to the range area.
 - (iv) During firing, range sentries are placed as given in Range Standing Orders to prevent entry in the range area.
 - (v) A police representative is present throughout the conduct of firing at notified ranges.