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Title : Need to provide uniform welfare package to all the soldiers who laid their lives for the Country.

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH (ULUBERIA): The 1.13 million Army has sought a uniform welfare package from the government for all battle casualties on a par with the much higher amounts given to the next of kin of the 527 soldiers killed and around 1,400 wounded during the Kargil conflict.

The army has raised this issue in the past also but to no avail, with the government drawing a distinction between casualties in war and those arising out of counter-insurgency operations on the basis of 'different levels of risk' and 'intensity of action'.

The family of a soldier killed during Kargil got around Rs. 19.30 lakh, which included a Rs. 10 lakh ex gratia amount from the Union Government and other special benefits, but in other operations including the relentless counter-insurgency ones in J&K and the north-east, the amount for 'fatal' cases roughly works out to be around Rs. 8 lakh.

The soldiers injured during the Kargil operations got Rs. 3 lakh to Rs. 6 lakh, as ex gratia payment, depending on the percentage of disability, which further went up with special benefits. In other operations, the ex gratia figure stands at Rs. 1 lakh.

I, therefore, urge upon the Government to give order for 'uniform welfare package' to all patriotic soldiers who laid down their lives.