



# Justification for Deployment of Sahayaks / Buddies

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The Indian Navy and the Indian Air Force do not have the system of Sahayaks. In the Indian Army, a Sahayak has clearly defined military duties and forms an integral part of the organization structure of a unit and has specific functions during war and peace. During operations in the field areas, he and the Officer / JCO act as buddies in arms. One covers the movement of the other buddy and protects him in operations where support has to be total, whether mental or physical or moral.

A Sahayak, in addition to his normal soldier's tasks, provides essential support to officers / JCOs both in peace and war, which enables them to fully attend to their assigned duties. The buddy also provides an alternate contact with the troops, whereby the officer is made aware of grass root issues, albeit through informal means.

The rapport between officers and the buddies has led to enhancement of the spirit-de-corps in a unit, which is vital during war and peace. As such, this is not expected to have any adverse impact on their morale. Notwithstanding this, exhaustive instructions have been issued from time to time stressing upon the need to ensure that under no circumstances Sahayaks, being combatant soldiers, are employed on menial tasks, which are not in conformity with the dignity and self respect of a soldier.

As already mentioned above, buddies are combatant soldiers and form part of the Army and perform operational tasks as well. Thus, there is no additional cost to Government exchequer.

This information was given by Minister of State for Defence Dr. Subhash Bhamre in a written reply to Shri Sanjiv Kumar in Rajya Sabha today.

**NAMPI/ Ranjan**

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