

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 29.08.2007

ANSWERED ON

INCREASE IN CASES OF SUICIDE AND PREMATURE RETIREMENT IN ARMY .

1719

SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL

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be pleased to state :-

(a) whether it is a fact that the suicide toll/pre-mature retirement in the Indian Army is increasing day-by-day, as since 2002, more than 450 soldiers have killed themselves and 811 officers sought premature retirement during 2006;

(b) if so, what is the number thereof till the middle of 2007 as per Army records; and

(c) what remedial steps Government propose to take in this regard to solve an array of problems: suicides, fragging, deteriorating mental health, etc. being faced by the world`s third largest army and the most battle-hardened forces of the country?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF DEFENCE

(SHRI A.K. ANTONY)

(a) to (c): A statement is attached.

STATEMENT IN RESPECT OF PARTS (a) TO (c) OF RAJYA SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1719 FOR 29.8.2007 REGARDING INCREASE IN CASES OF SUICIDE AND PREMATURE RETIREMENT IN ARMY.

The details of suicide and premature retirement cases in the Army for the last five years are as follows:

Year	Suicide cases(till 15.8.2007)
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2002	80
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2003	96
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2004	100
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2005	77
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2006	120
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2007	70
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Premature
Retirement
Cases

65

329

278

336

435

371

2. The Government has taken a series of measures to check incidents of suicide, fratricide, etc. in the Army. Some of these steps are:-

(i) Better man management and prompt attendance of grievances at Unit level.

(ii) Improved accessibility of leaders and frequent interaction of

junior leaders with the soldiers.

(iii) Some Junior Commissioned Officers of Army Medical Corps (AMC) have been trained and deployed as psychological counsellors in Northern and Eastern Commands.

(iv) Training of more JCOs and NCOs for acting as counsellors in units.

(v) The NCOs have been educated and sensitised to be alive to the sensibility of the troops.

(vi) Visits by senior staff officers apart from formation commanders to units to assess conditions of employment and living.

(vii) The training capsules on relaxation techniques including Yoga and Pranayam have been introduced.

(viii) Leave policy has been liberalised permitting splitting of annual and casual leave. The troops will now be able to go to their home towns on leave thrice a year instead of twice a year earlier.

(ix) Rotation of units and individuals to minimize exposure to stress.

(x) All Chief Ministers have been requested to make the civil administration more responsive to the problems of serving soldiers and their families.

(xi) A helpline with toll free number has been established.

(xii) Efforts are made for identification and counselling of persons who are at higher combat stress by Regimental Medical Officers, junior leaders and unit commanders.

(xiii) Grant of additional rail warrant to go home or Selected Place of Residence of family to all ranks of armed forces serving in field/counter insurgency/counter terrorist operational areas.

(xiv) Rationalisation of scheme for LTC for both officers and Personnel Below Officer Rank (PBORs) and removal of restriction of 1450 kms for availing All India LTC.

(xv) Grant of High Altitude (Uncongenial Climate) (HAUC) allowance at enhanced rates to troops deployed in more difficult, hazardous isolated areas within the existing HAUC areas.

(xvi) Under the Married Accommodation Project, houses are being built at different Stations to improve the availability of family accommodation.