

Sixteenth Loksabha

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Title: Need to extend army benefits to paramilitary forces

SHRIMATI MEENAKASHI LEKHI (NEW DELHI): As per the rules, next of kin of all regular personnel of the paramilitary forces like CRPF, BSF, CJSF, JTBP, SSB among others get Rs 15 lakh as compensation if one dies in fighting terrorists or Maoists or any adversaries. According to government data, the nine lakh personnel-strong paramilitary forces, with the CRPF being the largest, is currently deployed in more insurgency affected areas than the army. When it comes to fighting terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir, tackling Naxals in dense forests of Chhattisgarh or facing attacks of hardcore insurgents in places like Manipur, the first person to be rushed is either from the Central Reserve Police Force or some other paramilitary force.

While in the Army an officer is entitled to 20 casual leave and jawans are entitled for 30 casual leave, in the CRPF all the personnel are entitled to 15 days casual leave. At entry level, jawans in paramilitary get a gross salary of Rs 21,000 while an Army jawan gets Rs 35,000. A large number of paramilitary forces officers have quit in the last five years due to stagnation and tough working conditions. Around 9,000 personnel quit BSF, CRPF, ITBP, CISF and SSB due to unfavourable working conditions.

The ministry of Home Affairs, through the office Memorandum dated 23.11.2012, directed the state governments that they 'may' extend to these retired people all benefits that they've extended to the retired members of the defence forces. However, through an RTI reply from the MHA, it has been revealed that no state other than Goa, has extended these benefits to the retired paramilitary personnel and this happened because of the non-mandatory nature of the said O.M. After much pressure, the government, on 27.09.2016, announced in the print and electronic media that all the facilities available to the retired Defence personnel shall be extended to the retirees of paramilitary forces as well. But, the same has still not been implemented and as a result of this, some of such retirees have also sent a legal notice to the concerned government departments and Ministries.

There needs to be a policy to extend the army benefits such as canteen facilities or martyrdom status to the paramilitary forces as well. Agreed that the army protects the borders of the country but the paramilitary forces fight the anti-national elements within the country. A fort needs to be defended by the sentries but it also needs watchful warriors who keep an eye

out for insidious traitors within the kingdom. This is exactly what the paramilitary forces do. They too risk their lives for the well being of the citizens just like the army men. When the risk and the devotion is the same, then why this difference in the pay!