

Offer of Bribe to Army Chief

†2211. SHRI THAAWAR CHAND GEHLOT : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

- (a) the truthfulness of the statement issued by the Army Chief regarding an offer of bribe made to him in a defence deal;
- (b) whether any investigation or action has been taken/to be taken by Government on this grave issue, if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the date on which the Army Chief had informed Government about material shortage for the army and the action taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) : (a) and (b) Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has been requested to conduct a comprehensive inquiry into the alleged report of bribe to the Army Chief. A Preliminary Enquiry (PE) has been registered by CBI on 11.04.2012.

- (c) Modernization of Armed Forces is an ongoing process. Chief of Army Staff apprises the status to the Government from time to time. Further details cannot be revealed due to security reasons.

Damage to LoC due to Avalanche in Kashmir

2212. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

- (a) whether it is a fact that the Line of Control (LoC) in the Kashmir Valley has recently been damaged due to an avalanche;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) what action has Government taken or proposes to take in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) An avalanche struck the Army camp at Sonamarg and Dawar on the 22nd February 2012 at 1645 hours and 2215 hours respectively. One Officer, One Junior Commissioned Officer (JCO) and Six Other Ranks (OR) buried at Sonamarg besides massive destruction including disruption of the communication network. At Dawar Garrison in the Gurez Sector, four JCOs and 25 OR were trapped. Launch of immediate rescue operations resulted in one officer and 4 OR being saved in Sonamarg and 13 personnel were saved in Dawar. Detailed SOPs concerning avalanches exist in all formations. The Army has trained troops besides specialized equipment to minimize the casualty threat due to avalanches/bad weather.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.