

monitoring of coastal security mechanism is a continuous process. Several measures to strengthen Coastal Security, including improving surveillance mechanism and enhanced patrolling by security agencies following an integrated approach have been put in place. Joint operational exercises are conducted on regular basis among Navy, Coast Guard, Coastal Police, Customs and others. The intelligence mechanism has been streamlined through the creation of Joint Operation Centers and multi-agency coordination mechanism. Installation of radars covering the country's coastline and islands is also an essential part of this process. Deployment of assets is done as per threat inputs/perceptions and requirements.

(d) and (e) 35 stations have already been established along the Indian coastline and operate with both surface and air assets. Further augmentation and modernisation is an on going process.

Army Personnel killed by Snow in Kashmir

1590. MS. SUSHILA TIRIYA : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Army personnel continue to get buried every year in snowing grave in Kashmir;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken to safeguard the lives of these Army Jawans?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) : (a) and (b) Army is deployed in High Altitude areas, which are characterized by rugged terrain and witness harsh climatic conditions throughout the year. Due to heavy snowfall and consequent snow accumulation, posts, patrols and columns are sometimes struck by avalanches in these areas.

(c) Periodic assessment of deployment is carried out to negate the threat of weather casualties without adversely affecting the operational requirements. Detailed Standard Operating Procedures with respect to avalanches are promulgated in all formations. In addition, comprehensive instructions on the movement in these areas and rescue drills & procedures have been formulated. The Army has trained troops in addition to specialized equipment to minimize the casualty threat due to avalanches/bad weather. Measures undertaken to reduce the risk due to avalanches are vacation of High Risk Areas (winter vacated posts) subject to operational requirement, periodic resiting of bunkers, dissemination of avalanches warning generation by Snow and Avalanches Study Establishment (SASE), promulgation of Standing Operating Procedures (SOPs) for operating in avalanche prone areas, training and adequate kitting of personnel deployed in these areas.