

**SUICIDES AMONG THE CENTRAL ARMED POLICE  
FORCES OF INDIA: CAUSES, INTERVENTIONS FOR ITS  
PREVENTION AND WAY FORWARD**

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF  
THE REQUIREMENT FOR AWARD OF DEGREE OF MASTER OF  
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## **CERTIFICATE**

This is to certify that Shri M. Subramanian CSS has pursued his research work and prepared the present dissertation titled “Suicides among the Central Armed Police Forces of India: Causes, Interventions for its Prevention and Way Forward” under my supervision and guidance. The dissertation is a record of bona fide work carried out by him and to the best of my knowledge, no part of it has earlier comprised of any monograph, dissertation or book. This is being submitted to the Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA), New Delhi, for the award of Master of Philosophy in Social Sciences, in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Advanced Professional Programme in Public Administration (APPPA).

I recommend that the dissertation of Shri M. Subramanian CSS is worthy of consideration for the award of Master of Philosophy in Social sciences, Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA), New Delhi.

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# **1.0 Introduction**

## **1.1 Facts and Figures about Suicides**

Suicide and attempted suicide are major public health challenges. The World Health Organization (WHO) has estimated that approximately one million people commit suicide every year. This represents one death forty seconds, almost 3,000 deaths every day, and one suicide attempts every three seconds. The majority of suicides (85%) in the world occur in low and middle-income countries. In many countries, suicide is one of the top three causes of death among adolescents and young adults between the age of 15 and 24 years, and one of the top ten causes of death overall. Worldwide, suicide rates have increased by 60% over the last half century.

Non-fatal suicide attempts occur mostly in young persons and are up to 10-40 times more frequent than suicides. Persons with a history of previous suicide attempt are at a high risk of dying by suicide with up to 2% dying within one year and up to 7% within 10 years. For every suicide that occurs, there are 10 to 20 or more suicide attempts. More people die from suicide than from armed conflict and, in many places, from traffic accidents. It is estimated that half a million suicides occur every year and at least 5 million attempt suicide each year in India.

The Suicide-Prevention Multisite Intervention Study on Suicidal behaviors (SUPRE-MISS), launched by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2000, aimed at increasing the knowledge about suicidal behaviors and the effectiveness of brief interventions for suicide attempters in culturally diverse places around the world and Chennai was the centre in India<sup>1</sup>.

Mental and behavioral disorders are estimated to account for 12% of the global burden of disease, yet the mental health budgets of the majority of countries constitute less than 1% of their total health expenditures. The relationship between disease burden and disease spending is clearly disproportionate. More than 40% of countries have no mental health policy and over 30% have no mental health programme. Over 90% of countries have no mental health policy that includes children and adolescents. Moreover, health plans frequently do not cover mental and behavioural disorders at the same level as other illnesses, creating significant economic difficulties for patients and their families. And so the suffering continues, and the difficulties grow<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> *Indian Journal of Psychiatry*

<sup>2</sup> *WHO Reports*



For both scientific and clinical purposes, it is important to distinguish between suicide ideation (i.e., serious thoughts about killing oneself), suicide plans (i.e., formulation of an actual plot to kill oneself), suicide attempts (i.e., performance of self-injurious behavior with some intent to die), and suicide death. These distinctions are important because these outcomes have different base rates, courses, and correlates<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Moscicki, 1999; Nock, Borges, Bromet, Cha, et al., 2008)

It is also important to distinguish between self-injury with intent to die (suicidal self-injury) and self-injury with no intent to die<sup>4</sup>. Non-suicidal self-injury (NSSI) is performed most often as a way of decreasing distressing emotions<sup>5</sup>; however, it sometimes serves as a suicide gesture, in which a person leads others to believe that he has just made a suicide attempt in order to communicate that he is in distress<sup>6</sup> or to influence the behavior of others in some way.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> *non-suicidal self-injury; for more information see Nock, 2009a.*

<sup>5</sup> *Nock, 2009b*

<sup>6</sup> *Nock, 2008; Nock & Kessler, 2006; Tucker & Gorman, 1967*

<sup>7</sup> *Suicide Among Soldiers: A Review of Psychosocial Risk and Protective Factors: Matthew K. Nock, Charlene A. Deming, Carol S. Fullerton, Stephen E. Gilman, Matthew Goldenberg, Ronald C. Kessler, James E. McCarroll, Katie A. McLaughlin, Christopher Peterson, Michael Schoenbaum, Barbara Stanley & Robert J. Ursano*

## **1.2 Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) – An Introduction**

Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) which is under administrative control of Ministry of Home Affairs consists of Border Security Force (BSF), Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) and Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB). These CAPFs are deployed in the States by Centre at the request of the States or constitutional authorities such as Election Commission for providing security during the elections other than border guarding duties<sup>8</sup>. National Security Guard (NSG) is a commando force under the Ministry trained for special operations like counter terrorism and anti-hijacking. Assam Rifles (AR) which is not a part of CAPF but a subsidiary line of Army is also under the administrative control of Ministry of Home Affairs.

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<sup>8</sup> *A report by Committee on Estimates 2017-18*

## **2.0 A brief background about the Central Armed Police Forces including National Security Guards and Assam Rifles and their mandates<sup>9</sup> are as follows:**

### **2.1 Indo – Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)**

The ITBP was raised in the wake of Chinese aggression in 1962. It has evolved with passage of time into a conventional border guarding Force. Today, ITBP guards 3,488 kms of Indo-China Border and is manning 173 Border Outposts. It has a total sanctioned strength of 89,432. ITBP provides medical, communication and security cover to the yatris of Kailash Mansarovar Yatra. ITBP has been designated as the First Responder in the Himalayan region and has established Regional Response Centres in Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh. ITBP has already trained 1032 personnel in Disaster Management including 98 personnel in Radiological and Chemical and Biological emergencies. ITBP has established a National Centre for Training in Search, Rescue & Disaster response at Bhanu, Haryana.

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<sup>9</sup> *A report by Committee on Estimates 2017-18*

ITBP is a multi-dimensional force which primarily has the following functions:

- a) Vigil on the northern borders, detection and prevention of border violations, and promotion of the sense of security among the local populace.
- b) Check illegal immigration and trans-border smuggling.
- c) Provide security to sensitive installations and threatened VIPs.
- d) Restore and preserve order in any area in the event of disturbance to maintain the peace

They have performed excellently in sports activities and mountaineering. ITBP contingents are deployed in Afghanistan to provide security to Embassy of India in Kabul and its consulates. A Formed Police Unit of ITBP has been deployed with United Nations Stabilizations Mission in Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO) w.e.f. 09.11.2015. One ITBP contingent comprising of 140 personnel is deployed for supplementing the United Nations' global peace process in DR Congo. ITBP troops are performing their duties in exemplary manner to ensure implementation of UN Mandate in all spheres of their duties.

## **2.2 Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)**

Raised in the year 1969, Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) is providing security cover to 330 units including 59 domestic and international airports and fire protection cover to 94 industrial undertakings. The Force has a sanctioned strength of 1,44,418 personnel as on 31.12.2016. With globalization and liberalization of the economy, CISF is no longer a PSU centric organization. Instead, it has become a premier multi-skilled security agency of the country, mandated to provide security to major critical infrastructure installations of the country in diverse regions including terrorist and naxal affected areas. CISF is currently providing security cover to Atomic Power Plants, Space Installations, Defence Production Units, Mines, Oil Fields and Refineries, Major Sea Ports, Heavy Engineering, Steel Plants, Fertilizer Units, Airports, Hydro-electric/ thermal power plants, sensitive Government buildings and heritage monuments (including the Taj Mahal and Red Fort) and important Private Sector Units. CISF has also been mandated to provide protection to VIP protects of Z+, Z, Y and X category across the Country besides election duty. They also look after the security of 41 sensitive Government buildings in New Delhi. The CISF Act was amended to enable the Force to provide security, on payment basis, to private/joint venture industrial undertakings, which are vital for the security

and economy of the country. Further, the CISF was inducted in Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) on 15.04.2007 and it is providing security to 155 Metro Stations in India. It has a contingent deployed at the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTH) since 17.08.2008; CISF has been assigned with the prestigious task of providing security to the residence of the President of Haiti. The CISF has been conducting various Humanitarian projects like Blood Donation Camps, Medical Camps, etc. In recognition of the excellent services, the contingent has received various appreciations and commendations.

The CISF provides security cover to 300 industrial units and other establishments located all over India. Industrial sectors like hydroelectric/thermal power plants owned and controlled by Central PSUs, and currency note presses producing Indian currency are protected by CISF. It thereby covers installations all over India straddling a variety of terrain and climatic conditions. In CISF there are some reserved battalions which work with the state police to protect law and orders. CISF plays a major role in Disaster Management, for Disaster Management course the personnel are trained from NISA, Hyderabad. Another unique thing which CISF is having i.e., Fire Wing which helps during fire accidents in Industries where CISF is guarding. Fire wing Induction in the undertaking is not only limited to

providing manpower to fight fire alone and it also ensures availability of proper and adequate devices for fire prevention and firefighting along with the firefighting staff.

### **2.3 Border Security Forces (BSF)**

Border Security Force was raised in 1965. The Force Headquarter is in New Delhi. The sanctioned strength of BSF as on 31.12.2016 is 2,57,363. Its operational responsibility is spread over 6,386.36 km of International Border with Pakistan and Bangladesh. It is also deployed on Line of Control (LoC) in J&K under the Operational control of the Army. BSF is an effective force that has tackled militancy, left wing extremism and has also contributed to prevention of trans-border movement of contraband goods. During this period, 13 BSF personnel laid down their lives and 179 got injured in Operations. During the year 2016 (01.04.2016 to 31.12.2016), BSF was awarded police medals for gallantry/meritorious services and President's Police Medal for Distinguished Service. The BSF is also active in sports activities and has secured medals/positions in a number of national tournaments. The Border Security Force has two formed police units deployed with United Nation Stabilizations Mission Haiti and United Nations Stabilizations Missions in Democratic Republic of Congo. The BSF



troops are performing their duties in exemplary manner to ensure the UN Mandate in all spheres of their duties.

Each SHQ has under its command 4–5 Duty Battalions and presently 186 Battalions are sanctioned to BSF. Five major training institutions and 10 Subsidiary Training Centres (STCs) are imparting ab-initio as well as in-service training to its ranks and other CPOs/SPOs including IPS Probationers.

*BSF is the only Central Armed Police force to have its own Air Wing, Marine Wing and artillery regiments, which support the General Duty Battalions in their operations.*

The BSF also has a national level school for breeding and training of dogs. Dogs from other CPOs and State Police are sent to National Training Centre for Dogs (NTCD) to be trained in infantry patrol, detection of explosives, tracking and the like.

*The BSF maintains a Tear Smoke Unit (TSU), which is unique in India. The TSU is responsible for producing tear gas munitions required for the Anti-Riot Forces. It also exports a substantial quantity to other countries.*

### **BSF's role during peace time**

To promote sense of security among the people living in the border areas; To prevent trans-border crimes, unauthorized entry into or exit from the territory of India; To prevent smuggling and any other illegal activities on the Border; Anti-infiltration duties; To collect trans-border intelligence.

### **BSF's role during war time**

Holding ground in assigned sectors; Limited aggressive action against Central Armed Police or irregular forces of enemy; Maintenance of Law and Order in enemy territory administered under the Army's control; Guarding of Prisoners of War camps; Acting as guides to the Army in border areas; Assistance in control of refugees; Provision of escorts; Performing special tasks connected with intelligences including raids.

Creek Crocodile Commando is the elite commando force of BSF. It is Rann of Kutch (an extensive salt marsh of western India and southeast Pakistan between the Gulf of Kutch and the Indus River delta. It was the scene of major border disputes in 1965 and 1971). Creek (Gujarat): In order to thwart landing of terrorists through the sea route, BSF has formed its first

commando unit - Creek Crocodiles - to man the hostile creek area where India shares a border with Pakistan.

## **2.4 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)**

It was raised as the 'Crown Representative Police' on 27.07.1939 at Neemuch, Madhya Pradesh and the Force was rechristened as Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) after Independence. The CRPF has become the largest Central Armed Paramilitary Force of the country. The Force is presently handling a wide range of duties covering law and order, counter insurgency, anti-militancy and anti-naxal operations. The Force plays a key role in assisting the State Governments and UT Administrations in maintaining public order and countering subversive activities of Naxalites/militant groups/ Insurgents. The Force has a Mahila component also. The strength of the Force is 3,13,678 as on 31.12.2016. It is performing law & order duties, counter-insurgency operations in J&K and North East and Anti-Maoist operations in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected states and other parts of the Country. Besides, CRPF is providing security to some of the vital installations and buildings including the shrine of Mata Vaishno Devi in Katra, Ram Janam Bhoomi / Babri Masjid in Ayodhya, Kashi Vishwanath Temple / Gyanvapi Mosque in Varanasi, Krishna Janam

Bhoomi and Shahi Idgah Masjid in Mathura and the Parliament House. Apart from above, CRPF / RAF coys have also been deployed across the country for maintaining law and order situation from time to time on short notice as well as on long term basis. CRPF has also been entrusted with VIP Security. In 1992, 10 Battalions of CRPF were reorganized and converted into 10 Battalions of 4 coys each of Rapid Action Force (RAF). The personnel in RAF are trained and equipped to be an effective strike Force in communal riots and similar situations. “CoBRA- Commando Battalion for Resolute Action, a specialized Force has been raised to fight Maoists and Insurgents in Jungles. Also known as Jungle Warriors, CoBRA are selected from amongst the CRPF personnel. One contingent (Male) of CRPF is deployed in Liberia under the United Nations Mission in Liberia since February-2016.

## **2.5 Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB)**

It was raised in the year 1962 with motto of being Service Security Brotherhood. The objective of the Sashastra Seema Bal is to guard the Indo-Nepal and Indo-Bhutan Borders. It has 82,000 personnel and 48 battalions, as well as some reserved battalions.

The Special Service Bureau (SSB) was set up in early 1963 in the wake of the Sino-Indian War. The primary task of the force was to provide armed support for RAW. and secondary task was to inculcate feelings of national belonging in the border population and develop their capabilities for resistance through a continuous process of motivation, training, development, welfare programs and activities in the then NEFA, North Assam (northern areas of Assam state), North Bengal (northern areas of West Bengal state), hills of Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, and Ladakh.

The SSB was renamed as “Sashastra Seema Bal” in accordance with its new role and come under the administrative control of the Ministry of Home Affairs in January 2001. This was done after Kargil War when “one border one force concept” was adopted.

SSB is the first border guarding force which has decided to recruit women battalions. It is doing excellent job as Border Guarding Force on INDO-NEPAL and INDO-BHUTAN Border.

SSB is also engaged in Counter Insurgency operations in Jammu and Kashmir and Anti-Naxal operations in Jharkhand and Bihar. It is also performing internal security duties i.e. Election duties and law and order duties in different parts of India.

SSB Battalion having strength of 1172 personnel is commanded by officer of the rank of Commandant who is assisted by officers of the rank of Second-in-Command, Deputy Commandant and Assistant Commandant. Battalion is further divided into Companies and Border Out post (BOP). There are seven Companies in a Battalion and each Company consists of three Border outposts. Company is commanded by Assistant Commandants and BOP is commanded by Sub Inspectors. The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has sanctioned 73 Battalions for SSB for Border duties and Internal Security duties.

## **2.6 National Security Guard (NSG)**

NSG is an elite counter-terrorism unit under the Indian Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). It was raised on 15 October 1984, following Operation Blue Star, Akshardham Temple attack and the assassination of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, for combating terrorist activities with a view to protect states against internal disturbances. NSG is under the authority of Ministry of Home Affairs and is categorized under the uniform nomenclature of Central Armed Police Forces. It has a Special Forces mandate, and its core operational capability is provided by the Special Action Group (SAG) which is drawn from the Indian Army. The

Special Rangers Group (SRG), the police component of NSG, is composed of personnel on deputation from other Central Armed Police Forces and State Police Forces.

The National Security Guard states its mission as:

"Train, equip and keep in readiness a special force capable of swiftly and effectively combating terrorism to live up to its motto Sarvatra Sarvottam Suraksha".

The NSG is a 'Federal Contingency Deployment Force' to tackle all facets of terrorism in the country. As a specialized counter-terrorism force, it is intended to be used "only in exceptional situations" and is not meant to take over the "functions of the State Police Forces or other Para Military Forces". Yet, over the years its role was expanded to provide personal security to influential politicians quite independent of the real threat that they face.

However, in January 2020, the NSG was withdrawn from this task of VIP security to ensure its focus on its original roles as an elite counter-terrorism and anti-hijacking force.

The NSG is trained to conduct counter-terrorist tasks to including counter hijacking tasks on land, sea, and air; Bomb disposal (search, detection and neutralization of IEDs); PBI (Post Blast Investigation) and Hostage Rescue missions.

## **2.7 Assam Rifles**

The Assam Rifles came into being in 1835, as a militia called the ‘Cachar Levy’. With approximately 750 men, this Force was formed to primarily protect British Tea estates and their settlements against tribal raids. Subsequently, all these Forces were re-organized and renamed as the ‘Frontier Force’ as their role was increased to conduct of punitive expeditions across the borders of Assam. This Force significantly contributed in opening the region to administration and commerce and over time they came to be known as the “right arm of the civil and left arm of the military”. In 1870, existing elements were merged into three Assam Military Police Battalions, named as Lushai Hills, Lakhimpur and Naga Hills. The ‘Darrang’ Battalion was raised just before the onset of World War–I. Since Reservists were difficult to be called on short notice and Gurkha Battalions’ soldiers were on leave in Nepal, the Assam Military Police were tasked to take their place. Thus, this Force sent over 3000 men as part of the British



Army to Europe and the Middle East. In 1917, recognizing their work during the Great War, fighting shoulder to shoulder with Rifle Regiments of the regular British Army, the name of the Force was changed to 'Assam Rifles'.

The Post-Independence role of the Assam Rifles continued to evolve ranging from conventional combat role during Sino-India War 1962, operating in foreign land as part of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) to Sri Lanka in 1987 (Op Pawan) to peacekeeping role in the North-Eastern areas of India in the face of growing tribal unrest and insurgency wherein the maintenance of law and order, countering insurgency and reassuring the people of the region became important for the Assam rifles.

Today the Force remains deployed in some of the most remote and under developed areas and provides security to locals. Assam Rifles has grown substantially over the years from 17 battalions in 1960 to 46 battalions at present. The Force also has a Training Centre and a number of Logistics Units. Through its long deployment in the tribal belt, the Assam Rifles has earned the complete confidence of the locals and has helped considerably in bringing the people of this region into the national main stream. The humane, just and ever helpful approach of the men of Assam Rifles has truly managed to win hearts and minds earning the Assam Rifles

the sobriquet of 'Friends of the North East'. Fondly called 'Friends of the North East People', the Force is the highest awarded and decorated Para Military Force of the Republic of India.

## **2.8 Women in the Central Armed Police Forces**

Initially women were not recruited for the Central Armed Police Forces. In 1992 Asha Sinha created history by being the first Woman Commandant of any of the Central Armed Forces in India when she was selected as Commandant, Central Industrial Security Force, for Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited. Earlier the role of Women was allowed but limited to supervisory roles in the Central Armed Police Forces. The Parliamentary Committees of India for women's empowerment recommended greater roles for women in the CAPF. On these recommendations the Ministry of Home Affairs declared reservation for women in constabulary in paramilitary forces, and later declared that they can also be inducted as officers in combat roles in all five Central Armed Police Forces. The Union Home Minister announced that women's representation in the CRPF and CISF would be made 15 per cent while it would be 5 per cent in the BSF, ITBP and SSB. On 5 January 2016, it was decided that 33 per cent of posts at the constabulary level would be reserved

for women in the CRPF and the CISF to begin with, and 14-15 per cent of posts at the constable level in the BSF, SSB and ITBP in a phased manner. In 2016, an IPS Officer Archana Ramasundaram of 1980 Batch rewrote history when she became the first Woman to become the Director General of Police of a Paramilitary Force as DG, Sashastra Seema Bal.

### **3.0 Challenges to Internal Security<sup>10</sup>**

As stated by the Ministry, the range of challenges to internal security in India, emanating from terrorism / insurgency, can be categorised into the following four broad theatres:

- (i) Terrorism in the Hinterland
- (ii) Cross border terrorism in Jammu & Kashmir
- (iii) Left Wing Extremism (LWE) in certain States and
- (iv) Insurgency in the North East

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<sup>10</sup> *A report by Committee on Estimates 2017-18*

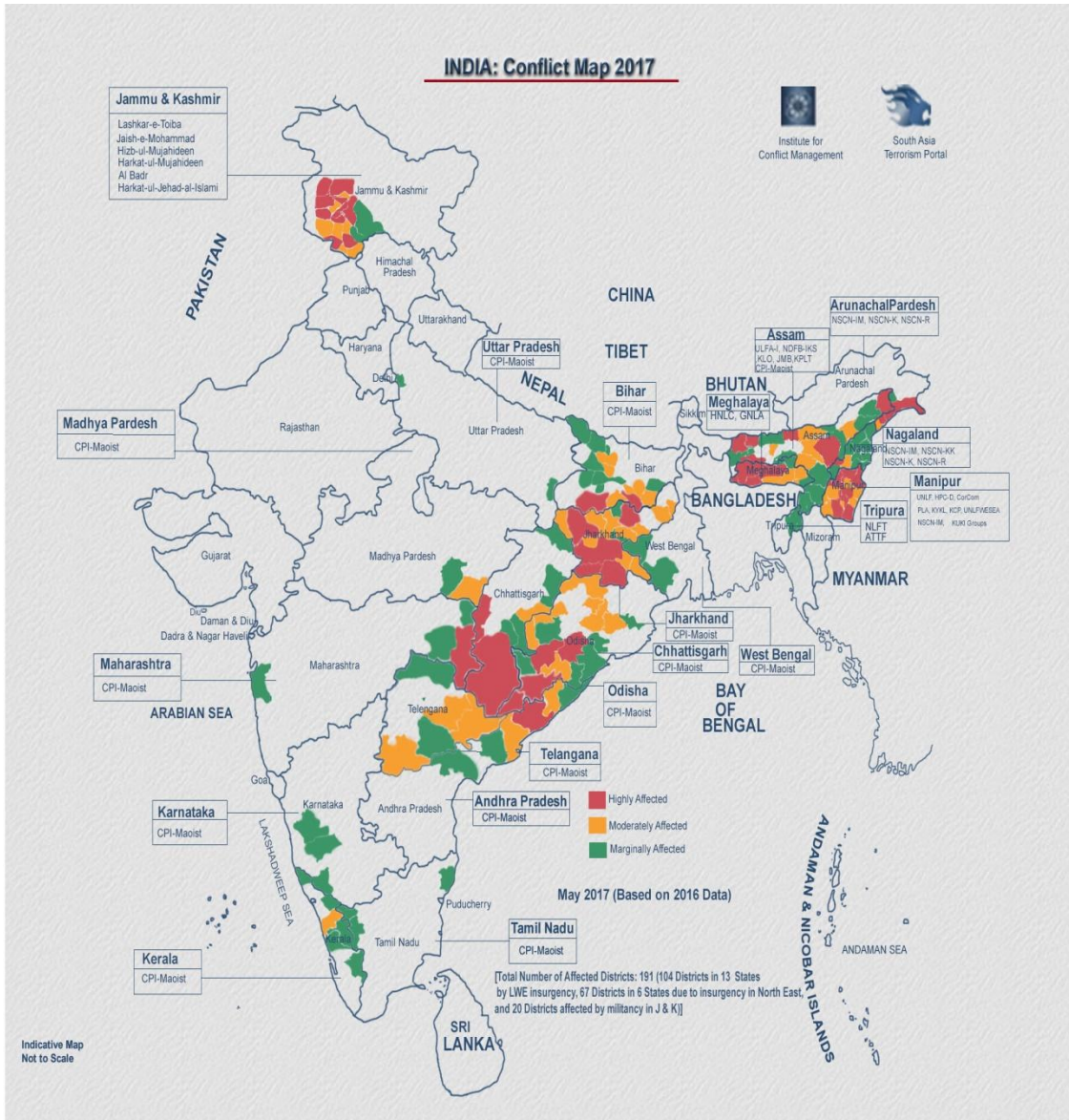


Figure A – Map of India depicting areas affected with Left Wing Extremism (LWE), Insurgency in North Eastern region and Cross-Border Terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir<sup>11</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> <https://satp.org/satporctp/countries/india/database/conflictmapindia.htm>

### **3.1 Terrorism in the Hinterland**

The problem of terrorism in India is largely sponsored from across the border. The Pakistan's ISI has close links with terrorist outfits like Lashker-e-Toiba (LeT), Jaishe-Mohammad (JeM), Hizbul-Mujahideen (HM), Indian Mujahideen (IM), etc. Interrogation of arrested terrorists by the investigation agencies has disclosed that Pakistan Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI) is promoting terror activities in India by providing safe havens, material support, finance and other logistics. The Government has raised the issue of Pakistan's support to various terror outfits in many fora and handed over relevant material/dossiers to the Pakistan Authorities with the request to take appropriate action so as to ensure that perpetrators of terrorist acts are brought to justice. These efforts are being undertaken at all significant bilateral interactions. In the year 2016, one terror attack took place on 2nd January, 2016 at Pathankot in Punjab by the militants coming from Pakistan, wherein 7 Security Forces personnel sacrificed their lives and 37 persons were injured. All the militants were neutralized by the Security Forces. There have also been some developments on the Sikh militancy front. Its commanders based in Pakistan are under pressure from ISI to further ISI's terror plans not only in Punjab but also in other parts of the country. Sikh

youth are being trained in ISI facilities in Pakistan. Interdictions and interrogations have revealed use of jailed cadres, unemployed youth, criminals and smugglers by Pakistan based Sikh terror groups for facilitating terror attacks. Sikh youth based/settled in Europe, US and Canada are also being misguided and instigated against India with false and malicious propaganda. However, the situation is being watched closely by the Central and State agencies and they are taking lawful action, as and when required. As far as the ISIS/ISIL phenomenon is concerned, the Government of India has declared IS/ISIL/ISIS/Daish as a terrorist organization under the UAPA. With respect to the problem of youth joining ISIS, the Government is closely monitoring the situation and has directed the Intelligence and Security Agencies to identify all such elements and keep a watch on their activities. The cyber space is also being closely scanned in this regard. Activities of suspected ISIS sympathizers are constantly being monitored by security agencies. NIA and some State Security Agencies have already registered cases to investigate the alleged links of individuals with ISIS. NIA/State Security Agencies have so far arrested 67 ISIS supporters / sympathizers in these cases, before they could carry out any terrorist attack in the country. The Government has taken all necessary measures including sensitization of the States to counter the incipient threat posed by the ISIS.

### **3.2 Cross Border Terrorism in J&K**

"The Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir has been affected by terrorist and violence, sponsored and supported from across the border, for more than two and half decades. The levels of terrorist violence in the hinterland of J&K are inextricably linked to the infiltration from across the border. The factors affecting the internal security in Jammu & Kashmir are categorized as: (i) Cross border infiltration and terror incidents (ii) Recent law & order incidents."

Government of India in tandem with the UT Governments, has adopted a multi-pronged approach to contain cross border infiltration, which, inter-alia, includes strengthening of the border infrastructure, multi-tiered and multi-modal deployment along international Border / Line of Control, and near the ever changing infiltration routes, construction of border fencing, improved technological surveillance, weapons and equipment for SFs, improved intelligence and operational coordination; synergized intelligence flow and pro-active action against terrorists within the UT.

### **3.3 Left Wing Extremism (LWE) in certain States**

There has been a considerable improvement in LWE scenario in the country. 106 districts in 10 States are affected by LWE out of which 35

districts in 7 States are the most affected. The declining trend, which started in 2011, continued in 2016 as well. The last two and a half years have seen an unprecedented improvement in the LWE scenario across the country. There has been an overall 07 per cent reduction in violent incidents (1136 to 1048) and 30 percent reduction (397 to 278) in LWE related deaths since end-2013. Over the same period there has been an increase of 50 percent in encounters (218 to 328) and an unprecedented 122 percent increase (100 to 222) in elimination of armed Maoists cadres. On the other hand, there has been a 43 per cent reduction (115 to 65) in casualties to Security Forces personnel. The figures are a reflection of the efficacy of operations being conducted by the SF and the capacity building measures undertaken by the MHA. At the same time there has been an increase in the number of LWE cadres shunning the path of violence and returning to the mainstream. Compared to 2013, surrenders by LWE cadres have increased by 411 per cent (282 to 1442) in 2016.

In the year 2016, Chhattisgarh (395 incidents and 107 deaths) was the most affected State followed by Jharkhand (323 incidents and 85 deaths), Bihar (129 incidents and 28 deaths), Odisha (86 incidents and 27 deaths) and Maharashtra (73 incidents and 23 deaths). Chhattisgarh with 38 percent and Jharkhand with 30.5% together accounted for 68.5% of the violence. Bihar



followed by Odisha and Maharashtra accounted for 12.3%, 8.2% and 6.9% of the incidents in the year 2016. Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Telangana together reported less than 4 per cent incidents. Chhattisgarh, despite being the core area for Maoist activity, recorded a decrease of 15% in incidents of violence.

The decline in violence can be attributed to many reasons such as greater presence of security forces across the LWE affected States, the loss of cadres/leaders on account of arrests, surrender and desertions, better monitoring of development schemes in affected areas and insurgency fatigue among the Maoist cadres. However, the LWE are targeting new States and are trying to carve out the base at the tri-junction of Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. They continue to oppose development activities such as construction of roads, bridges etc.

### **3.4 Insurgency / militancy in North East**

The terrains, the state of socio-economic development and historical factors such as language/ethnicity, tribal rivalry, migration, control over local resources and long and porous international borders have resulted in a fragile security situation in the North Eastern States. This has resulted in violence and diverse demands by various Indian Insurgent Groups (IIGs).

The underground militant outfits indulge in violent and terror activities and intimidate people with arms. They maintain safe havens/camps in neighboring counties, get cross-border support, procure arms, recruit and train their cadres and indulge in unlawful activities. Due to intensified security operations in NE Region, some insurgent groups are trying to regroup themselves to achieve their objectives. The Security situation in the North Eastern States improved substantially in 2016. The numbers of insurgency related incidents in the region decreased by more than 15% compared to 2015 (2015- 574, 2016 – 484). The year 2016 witnessed the LOWEST number of insurgency incidents since 1997. Similarly, security forces casualties in the region declined from 46 (2015) to 17(2016). Civilian casualties declined in all States except Assam where it increased from 9 in 2015 to 29 in 2016, thereby leading to an overall marginal increase (2015- 46, 2016 – 48). The number of kidnapping/abduction incidents also declined in the region (2015- 267, 2016 – 168). Counter Insurgency Operation lead to the killing of 87 militants, arrest of 1202 and recovery of 605 weapons in 2016 in the region.

### **3.5 Coordination between Central and State Police forces**

Regarding mechanisms in existence for the coordination between the Central Armed Police Forces and State Police Forces especially in naxal affected States where there is movement of naxal elements across State borders and for sharing and collection of intelligence, it is essential for taking effective action against CPI (Maoist). On initiative of MHA, following mechanism has been established for co-ordination of CAPFs with State Police and Intelligence Agencies.

- United Command has been constituted in Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Jharkhand, and West Bengal headed by CM / CCs which is the highest institutionalized mechanism to ensure co-ordination on security and developmental aspects.
- Joint Command and Control Centre has been established at Jagdalpur for inter-state coordination between Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Telangana, and Andhra Pradesh. This is to facilitate seamless intelligence sharing.
- Joint command and Control Centre have also been established at many border districts of Chhattisgarh with districts of other States, other than Jagdalpur frequent interactions between bordering districts at SP level are also held.

- Multi Agency Centre (MAC) at Centre and State Multi Agency Centre (SMAC) at State Headquarters exist for intelligence sharing.
- CAPF aid and assist the State Police and conduct operations jointly.

## **4.0 Statement of the Problem**

***“Pleasure in the job puts perfection in the work.”***

**Aristotle (384 BC - 322 BC)**

The country is facing serious Internal Security challenges from a number of sources such as terrorisms including cross border terrorism, Left Wing Extremism (LWE) and insurgency in the certain areas of North Eastern India. Dealing with internal armed conflict in India is essentially the responsibility of the State governments as the matter of the fact that ‘Police’ and ‘Public Order’ are the State subjects. Central Government supplements the efforts of the State Governments as it has constitutional obligations by providing Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs), sharing of intelligence inputs, arms & ammunition and funds towards capacity building by the States.

CAPFs have been deployed in the all the conflict theatres such as LWE areas, cross border terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir, Law and Order duties in the States on the request of the States concerned, Insurgency in the certain areas of North East, border guarding duties at Indo-Pakistan and Indo-China border areas and other constitutional obligations i.e. Election duty at the request of the Election Commission of India. Continuous posting of force personnel at the conflict theatres increases the work pressures lead to stress.

It is found that almost all CAPF personnel are suffering from high level of work stress and the suicide cases which are reported the highest at the lower rung of CAPF personnel i.e., the Jawans.

WHO (2001)<sup>12</sup> proposed that “mental health is a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.” Stress experienced by police personnel in work place gets transmitted to members of the family (Thompson, Kirk-Brown, & Brown, 1999)<sup>13</sup>.

The number of troopers committed suicide is higher than that killed in action as per the available data which was presented by MHA led by Union Home Secretary before the Parliament’s Committee on Estimates<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> [www.who.int/whr/2001/en/whr01\\_en.pdf](http://www.who.int/whr/2001/en/whr01_en.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> <https://doi.org/10.1037/1072-5245.13.3.309>

<sup>14</sup> <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/army-jawan-suicide>

The highest number of suicides which took place in each force in the given year from 2001 to 2014 as placed before the Parliament Committee on Estimates is tabulated as below:

<b>Sl. No</b>	<b>Name of the Force</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Suicides</b>	<b>In Action</b>
1.	BSF	2001	529	491
2.	CRPF	2012	189	175
3.	CISF	2013	63	1
4.	ITBP	2006	62	16
5.	SSB	2013	32	4
6.	AR	2014	27	33
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2001-14</b>	<b>902</b>	<b>720</b>

As per the data collected and analysed on suicide and attempted suicide by CRPF, it was found that 65 personnel committed suicide from September 2014 to January 2018. Out of these 65 personnel, 18 personnel had domestic/personal problem, 12 personnel had been suffering from psychiatric illnesses and 2 personnel had service related problems. In the rest of the case, no specific cause was found.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Human Behaviour and Mental health published by CRPF

# Chapter II

## 5.0 Literature Review

### 5.1 Classic Psychological Theories of Suicide

#### 5.1.1 Emile Durkhem Theory

Durkheim performed a classic study of suicide and published his conclusions in 1897 on the following reasons of the suicide:

1. Egoistic - Not enough Integration. Due to a looser social network or belief system. For example, Protestants are more likely to commit suicide than Catholics because the belief system is not as tight.
2. Anomic - Not enough regulation. Society doesn't have enough control over individuals. Often in periods of economic depression does this occur. Because of such change people find it very hard to adapt.
3. Altruistic - Too much integration. The person sacrifices their life for the benefit of others. For example suicide bombers or a recent case in the UK was that a family was set to be deported due to immigration however if the mother was a widow then they could stay so the father killed himself for the family's benefit.



4. Fatalistic - Too much regulation. The individual has little freedom as a result of the control of society. For example slaves.

### **5.1.2 Thomas Masaryk Theory**

Masaryk considered that the main basis of morality in society is religion. An increase in irreligiosity deregulates the social organism, makes people feel unhappy and increases social disorganization. Suicide, as well as mental illnesses, can be seen as a measure of societal disturbances: the suicide rates increase observed during the 19th century, for example, is interpreted by Masaryk as a result of increasing irreligiosity. Religion, he says, is a system that makes psychological life coherent because it offers a structured way of thinking. Modern education destroys religious perspective without offering anything similar, because science does not include an ethical component. Without a structured and satisfactory perspective on life, people are more likely to take their lives and are higher exposed to mental sicknesses.

### **5.1.3 Sigmund Freud Theory**

Freud classified suicide as form of built up aggression or tension that causes inward animosity. Or, in other words, it represents a psychological conflict, which cannot be worked out due to the great force of melancholy and depression.

#### **5.1.4 Benjamin Wolman Theory**

Benjamin Wolman, a sociologist who theorized on the “anti-culture” of suicide, blamed estrangement and contemporary societal mechanization and alienation for growing suicide rates. Wolman sums up the sociological standpoint in his statement for the main reasons why so many people now tend to hurt one another and to hurt themselves:

1. The estrangement inherent in our way of life.
2. The decline of family ties.
3. The depersonalization in human relations.
4. The loss of the individual in a mass society.

The ability of people to internalize such aggression and turn it into self-criticism and self-hate is one of the most prominent ties between sociology and psychology. While most psychologists do not hold that society is so exceedingly influential in human development and personal motives, the connection is obviously there.

#### **5.1.5 David Malan Theory**

David Malan, a psychologist, suggests that suicide is the cause of accumulated trauma. Though it sounds extremely simplistic, most

psychologists, to a certain degree, concur with this theory. Many psychiatrists feel suicide is a result of mental and emotional disturbances that are already present and which external circumstances worsen. Rather than outside forces, personality, character, temperament (which is often thought to be inherited, and thus biochemical), and emotional stability are all psychological factors. This shows suicide as being a personal reaction, with external forces merely contributing to the final outcome. Some views stress personality far more than others, however, and the psychological school that seems to have developed the dominant position on suicide is the psychodynamic approach.

#### **5.1.6 Edwin Shneidman Theory**

Edwin Shneidman, in an essay evaluating the psychodynamic view, explains most suicides are marked by ambivalence toward life and death, as well as feelings of hopelessness and helplessness. He explains a type of suicide, termed “egotic suicide,” results from a conflict of internal aspects of self to which the only response is the ending of the personality. Such internal aspects are not always as solitarily self-related as egotic conflict, however.

### **5.1.7 Krauss Theory**

Krauss, in a discussion on psychosocial causes of suicide, explained Freud's view that suicide is often the result of an unachieved goal or dysfunctional relationship, which is similar to the sociological standpoint. Krauss explains, however, in killing oneself one is really killing the internal representation of the unattainable object. The primary dispute between sociology and psychology, then, is whether the external or the internal has more power. Considering the superego is supposedly the internalization of external morals and parental values, all is relative. Internal and external factors are all relevant and the subjectivity is based, again, in terms of "reality".

### **5.1.8 Eric Ericson Theory**

There is a developmental theory from Erik Erikson in which life occurs in stages and when people perceive to be unsuccessful, the overwhelming feeling of guilt exceeds the ability to cope effectively. The hopelessness theory is probably one of the more accepted psychological theories. Hopelessness refers to Aaron Beck's cognitive triad which states an individual has a negative outlook on themselves, the future, and the world in general.

### **5.1.9 Joiner Theory**

Joiner has proposed a theory of why people commit suicide which he believes is more accurate than previous formulations offered by writers like Edwin Schneidman, Ph.D. and Aaron Beck, MD. According to Schneidman's model, the key motivator which drives people to suicide is psychological pain. In Beck's understanding, the key motivator is the development of a pervasive sense of hopelessness. Dr. Joiner suggests that these are correct understandings but are also too vague to be useful for predictive purposes and not capable of offering a complete motivational picture. Joiner proposes that there are three key motivational aspects which contribute to suicide. These are:

- 1) a sense of being a burden to others,
- 2) a profound sense of loneliness, alienation and isolation, and
- 3) a sense of fearlessness.

All three of these motivations or preconditions must be in place before someone will attempt suicide. Psychological pain and a sense of hopelessness correspond roughly to Joiner's concepts of burdensomeness and alienation, and contribute to the content of much suicidal ideation. These are necessary but not sufficient preconditions for a suicide act, however. So

long as a person remains fearful of death and the actions and consequences of the activities that will create death, the actual act of suicide is unlikely.

## **5.2 Review on the study conducted by G.S.Bhinder, DC, BSF**

So far no study on Suicides across covering all CAPFs including National Security Guard and Assam Rifles was conducted by any organization. A study was conducted by G.S.Bhinder, Deputy Commandant, BSF to examine the existing trend of suicidal deaths in BSF and suggest certain preventive measures to improve mental health of the personnel at the work zone and improve overall efficiency of the Force. The scholar analyzed various factors leading to stress such as uncertainty about the future, nurturing System, elongated duty hours, impending issues, voices on leave policy and Pressure Zones.

He concluded the study with the recommendations a good leadership coupled with feeling by good soldiers that they forms a useful member of the unit and their efforts are recognised and appreciated reduces the chances of depression amongst the force personnel; some units adopts a system of early detection of cases of stress and anxiety through the buddy system and arrange for counselling; Helpline number of a most approachable person in the unit for regular interaction; Regulating duty hours to ensure adequate rest and relief; Yoga and meditation classes for better stress management; mental health screening test through questionnaire of all the force personnel returning from leave or from other long term duties etc. The study mainly

analysed the various causes of stress and recommended for Management of Stress & Improving Emotional Intelligence.



### **5.3 Review on study conducted by M.K. Chhabra, Director, BPR&D**

The study on “**Emotional Intelligence & Occupational Stress in BSF**” was conducted by Shri M.K.Chhabra, Director (Modernization), Bureau of Police Research & Development (BPR&D) Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi (2009). The study was conducted to find out if Emotional Intelligence (EI) has any impact on occupational stress levels and to explore the causes of stress and recommend suitable measures to manage stress and improve EI. The study analysed the factors causing mental stress such as family problems, work stress, etc. Further, it was found that BSF personnel are suffering from high occupational stress across all the ranks. The Jawans, however, have highest stress levels. There is an inverse relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI) & Stress i.e. higher EI indicates lower levels of stress. A person with higher EI is able to cope with situations better and therefore is less affected by the stress.

The study was limited to the subject of occupational stress and emotional intelligence and restricted to BSF only. Moreover the study did not talk about other factors which contribute the force personnel taking the extreme steps i.e. committing suicide and mass resignation from service under VRS.

## **5.4 Review on study of suicide cases of State Police Personnel and suggestions to contain such cases by O.P. JINDAL GLOBAL UNIVERSITY**

This study which was carried out by O.P. JINDAL GLOBAL UNIVERSITY with the topic of **Study of Suicide Cases of State Police Personnel and Suggestions to Contain Such Cases** was also reviewed. The study analysed various factors and discussed different variants i.e. Age and Gender, Interpersonal and Family relations, Financial problems, Individual traits, General pressures of the profession, Medical problems which led to the police personnel taking the extreme step. Based on the study conducted, it was concluded that police of lower ranks commit suicide and the main factor contributing to the same was inferred as inaccessibility to mental health care help. Based on the inferences and conclusion that were drawn from the study and literature, it was recommended by the authors that some measures can help in overcoming stress such as creation of awareness amongst the public about the importance of mental health, availing the services of mental health professionals, regular family counselling, creation of the system of promotion and increments based on performance of the individual etc. Keeping in view the specific requirements of police suicides a

‘PSYCHO SOCIAL INTERVENTION MODEL’ for police personnel was also recommended.

The study was mainly concentrated on the issues involved across the States Police Personnel and analysed the contributing factors which lead the personnel are taking the extreme steps. The study neither delineates the problems being faced by the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) nor recommends any remedial measures for them.

## **5.5 Review on the study of stress and psychiatric morbidity in the Central Industrial Security Force: G Prasad Rao, Khaja Moinuddin, P Geeta Sai, Eva Sarma, Angers Sarma, P Srinivasa Rao.**

This study was undertaken at the National Industrial Security Academy (NISA), Hyderabad with the objectives of assessing the psychiatric morbidity and the factors contributing to stress among the CISF personnel. Data was collected by a random stratified sample of 500 subjects including personnel from all ranks such as SI's, Executive officials and constables. The screening was carried out to assess the stress and coping was used. Based on the study, it was concluded that CISF personnel are facing considerable amount of stress and the various factors operating in the family and at work are considered as their causes of stress. The recommendations such as regular screening of mental health along with counselling by psychiatrists, strengthening of interpersonal relationship between the officers and Jawans, regularizing work times and providing timely promotion to the CISF personnel were provided in the study.

As this study was carried out by NISA, Hyderabad is wholly concentrated on the problems being faced by force personnel belonging to CISF, and the

remedies which were suggested herein mainly for them to recover from both mental and physical stress.

**5.6 Review on the study on Suicide Among Soldiers: A Review of Psychosocial Risk and Protective Factors by Matthew K. Nock, Charlene A. Deming, Carol S. Fullerton, Stephen E. Gilman, Matthew Goldenberg, Ronald C. Kessler, James E. McCarroll, Katie A. McLaughlin, Christopher Peterson, Michael Schoenbaum, Barbara Stanley & Robert J. Ursano.**

The research was done on increased suicide rate among members of the U.S. Army over the past several years and now exceeds that of the general population. It reviewed psychosocial which are associated with the increased risk of suicidal behavior in general and described how some of these factors important in understanding suicide among soldiers. The review included other relevant areas additionally relating to prevention of suicide with the aim at (a) better describing when, where, and among whom suicidal behavior occurs, (b) using exploratory studies to discover new risk and protective factors, (c) developing new methods of predicting suicidal behavior that synthesize information about modifiable risk and protective factors from multiple domains, and (d) understanding the mechanisms and pathways through which suicidal behavior develops. The study was finally concluded with remarks that Suicide is notoriously difficult to detect, predict, and prevent due to a multitude of factors, such as its low base-rate, associated stigma, and motivation to conceal suicidal thoughts or behaviors

among those who have them. Above all, the researchers observed on the suicide that a significant progress was made in recent years toward understanding risk and protective factors for suicidal behavior, conceptualizing how they may work together to produce these outcomes, and developing methods of overcoming some of the major obstacles that have faced scientific and clinical efforts in this area.

**5.7 Review on study on Police suicide: prevalence, risk, and protective factors by Mark H. Chae and Douglas J. Boyle, University of Medicine & Dentistry of New Jersey, Newark, New Jersey, USA.**

This study showed that the interaction of multiple risk factors had a cumulative effect in increasing the risk for suicidal ideation. The study identified five prominent aspects of policing were associated with risk for suicidal ideation: organizational stressors; critical incident trauma; operational stressors (shift work); relationship problems (Marital and family systems); and alcohol use and abuse. Study also indicated that protective factors and preventative measures had stress-buffering effects which decreased the impact of police stressors. Based on the research, the authors recommended the need for the development of policies aimed at preventing and treating officers at risk for suicidal ideation.

Various studies were conducted by western countries in this connection such as “*Suicide in the Italian Military Environment (1986-1998)*; *Risk Factors for Fatal Accidents and Suicides in Peacekeepers: Is There an Overlap? on Norwegian Peacekeepers*; *Study on Police suicide: prevalence, risk, and protective factors for US Army personnel*; *Study on Post-traumatic Growth as Protection Against Suicidal Ideation* was initiated after Deployment and



Combat Exposure when there was an upward trend of suicides emerged in the U.S. military, and record of high suicide rates have been reported; *Study on the Potential for Military Diets to Reduce Depression, Suicide, and Impulsive Aggression: A Review of Current Evidence for Omega-3 and Omega-6 Fatty Acids* when there was a report on the high prevalence of psychiatric disorders among the U.S. military which undermined optimal total force readiness and the prevalence of reporting a mental health problem was 19.1% among service members returning from Iraq compared with 11.3% after returning from Afghanistan and 8.5% after returning from other locations; *Development of a Leader Tool for Assessing and Mitigating Suicide Risk Factors, a study on identifying and mitigate suicide risk factors which causes more deaths among the US Army*; *Study on Development of the U.S. Army's Suicide Prevention Leadership Tool: The Behavioral Health Readiness and Suicide Risk Reduction Review (R4)*; *Study on More Than Just Counting Deaths: The Evolution of Suicide Surveillance in the Canadian Armed Forces*". All the studies mentioned above were aimed at reducing the stress level among the security personnel when they were posted at high risk / sensitive place to discharge their duties and distress after the deployment of force i.e. PTSD. In the study, the authors have taken into account the various stress factors such as death of close family members e.g.

spouse or friend, divorce / marital discard / loss of child custody, major physical injury / illness / chronic pain / disability, significant financial loss / hardship, excessive alcohol use or illegal drug abuse etc. After the extensive study / analysis, the authors made the recommendations of some common strategies for managing acute crisis include engagement in enjoyable activities or hobbies, use of distress management skills such as relaxation or mindfulness, distraction activities such as watching movies or going for a walk, and accessing social support networks such as talking with a friend or spending time with a family member. They further concluded that insomnia, agitation, and intrusive dreams / nightmares are important contributors to suicidality and are common in combat zones. Early evidence-based interventions targeting these problems (e.g., cognitive-behavioral therapy, pharmacologic treatments) must be adapted to fit within the deployed context for maximal effectiveness.

## **Chapter III**

### **6.0 Objectives and Methodology**

The objective of the study is to find out the actual stress factors leading to the force personnel committing suicides and the measures to be suggested to the personnel who undergo physical and mental stress during their deployment in conflict theaters. The personnel deployed in the vulnerable/conflict theatres are more prone to such acts as they are greatly affected by deaths of colleagues during encounter with extremists/terrorists or family distress / disputes, financial instability etc. The study is, therefore, undertaken to find out ways and means to facilitate a conducive and healthy working atmosphere for the security personnel thereby preventing them from taking recourse to suicides. Psychosocial factors are reportedly linked with the increased risk of suicidal behavior among the force personnel and it explains how these matters are important in understanding suicide among them.

According to the surgeon general's report by National Institute of Mental Health, US on mental health (1999)<sup>16</sup>, "Mental health is a state of successful performance of mental function, resulting in productive activities, fulfilling relationships with other people, and an ability to adapt to change and to cope with adversity" whereas "Mental illness is the term that refers collectively to all diagnosable mental disorders. Mental disorders are health conditions that are characterized by alterations in thinking, mood, or behavior associated with distress and/ or impaired functioning (pp. 4- 5)".

The research question of this study is to identify preventive / protective measures in combating both physical and mental stresses for effectively implementation in the security forces in order to reduce the stress level amongst the security personnel and lower the number of suicidal deaths in CAPFs including NSG and AR to zero level and to enhance the emotional strength of the security personnel. Wide-range of population (personnel) needs to be studied upon. However, the limitation is the feedback on questionnaire from force personnel deployed in and around National Capital Region alone was analysed in the instant study. There may be a different

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<sup>16</sup> *Mental Health: Culture, Race, and Ethnicity: A Supplement to Mental Health: A Report of the Surgeon General.*  
*Center for Mental Health Services (US); National Institute of Mental Health (US).*

mind status of the personnel at different points of time hence the actual mental status of the victims will not be known or cannot be ascertained. Physical and Mental Stress experienced by lower level personnel are not shared easily.

The study was based on both Primary and Secondary data which was collected from each Force of CAPF and analysed. Primary data was collected through structured questionnaire distributed to the force personnel posted at Force Headquarters and units in the National Capital Region. The secondary data available with Union Home Ministry (NCRB and BPR&D), Directorates and Units of forces was collected through interaction with the personnel of various ranks. Reports and articles published in Newspapers, Magazines and Web links were also studied.

As per the updated data on Suicides in Central Armed Policed Forces available on the website of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), it is explained that a total of 60 CAPF personnel have committed suicides during 2017. It further says that the cause-wise analysis of suicidal deaths of CAPF personnel reveals that 28.3% (17 out of 60 suicides) and 23.3% (14 out of 60 suicides) of suicides in CAPFs were due to 'Family Problems' and

‘Marriage Related Issues’ respectively. A total of 10 suicides in CAPFs were due to ‘Service Related Issues’ during 2017<sup>17</sup>.

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<sup>17</sup> National Crime Records Bureau on Accidental Deaths & Suicides in India, 2017

## **Chapter IV**

### **7.0 Data Analysis**

Data in connection with the instant study was collected from the force headquarters of all Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) including National Security Guard and Assam Rifles. The primary data was intended to be collected from office of CAPFs, NSG and AR and feedback from force personnel deployed in the unit/battalion in and around NCR region etc. through supplying questionnaires. As a part of the data collection, questionnaire was circulated through DGs of all the forces. Due to corona virus threat and subsequent lockdown implemented by Government of India across India, all the forces expressed their inability to provide the feedback regarding opinion of force personnel deployed in and around National Capital Region. In essence, due to outbreak of corona virus, forces could not provide majority of the data and the detailed analysis could not be carried out.

The secondary data was collected from the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and its attached offices of Bureau of Police Research & Development (BPR&D) and National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) through their web link and discussion with officers dealing with subject

matter. Further, the books written by various authors, articles, magazines published on the subject matter of suicides, mental stress available on web links, google etc. were also used for this study. BSF was also requested to provide the data along with other forces under the command of MHA, but they expressed their inability to provide the required information despite repeated attempt to get the same. Hence the data analysis was carried out with the available data provided by other CAPFs including NSG and Assam Rifles.

As per the data provided by the CAPFs including National Security Guard and Assam Rifles and information provided / available in the web links of MHA and its subordinate offices such as NCRB, BPR&D, it is concluded that the jawans of married age group between 20 and 40 years are at high risk of physical and mental stress due to various factors as described at the preceding paras 4.1 to 4.7 and almost 85% deaths by suicide were committed by hanging self and shooting themselves by pistol. As compared to jawans, the death rate among officers level is very meagre and death of officers by suicide is reported only by CRPF. CRPF is discharging its duties across the length and breadth of the country in hostile, adverse, unpredictable and life threatening conditions such as maintaining Law and



Order in Jammu and Kashmir and other States on their demand, counter insurgency in LWE areas thereby posing physical and mental stress by force personnel. The primary reason for committing suicide by the personnel is “Problem faced by their family members”. The secondary reasons which influenced the force personnel taking the extreme step are financial condition of the family, family pressure, disturbed interpersonal relationship, alcoholism / drug use.

## **8.0 Demographic profile of persons who committed Suicides in CAPFs**

### **8.1 Case study no.1**

The following profile was collected during an interaction held with Deputy Inspector General (Welfare), CRPF as a part of data collection carried out in all the CAPFs and the same is narrated here for better understanding of the case.

Shri Bommidi Divakar Rao, 37 years shot himself when he was posted with the CRPF's 150 Battalion in Dornapal, Sukma. He is survived by his wife and two young daughters residing at Lakhamadiddi village in Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh. He was transferred seven months earlier from the Rapid Action Force battalion based in Hyderabad. He had killed himself the day he reported to duty after taking a month's leave for hernia treatment, and then remaining absent for 10 days without his leave was sanctioned. It was told that he had been taking leaves frequently since February 2015, after his father fell ill since there was no one to take care of his father. When his father was on his deathbed during August 2015, Sh. Divakar Rao had come home on a 10-day leave but did not return for three months. His mother already passed away in 2011. Sh. Divakar Rao was transferred and posted in Sukma, Chhattisgarh in September 2016 and within

three months he was informed about his father's death. He came home for a few days and left a day after the funeral of his father was done. CRPF will provide financial assistance to the jawan's family from CAPF welfare fund to meet the urgent financial requirement and employment to the families of personnel who committed suicide.

This above case explain us if a jawan is posted at conflict theatres i.e. naxal infected area of Sukma district, Chhattisgarh, when he had to face the family problems, how the stress factors play the important role to increase his mental stress level which eventually lead the personnel to take extreme step i.e. death by suicide.

## **8.2 Case study no.2**

During the discussion held with Deputy Inspector General (Welfare), CRPF, it was told that Shri Amit Kumar, Constable, 29 years old who is survived by his wife and four years old daughter hailed from Mattanhail in Jhajjar district of Haryana, shot himself with his INSAS rifle while on sentry duty at 37th battalion in Gadchiroli, Maharashtra on September 15, 2017. During the court of inquiry, it was found that he was on leave for one month before he killed himself. The above case study revealed that the jawan was posted at naxal infected area for counter insurgency operations in Gadchiroli,

Maharashtra and he took the extreme step immediately before he joins the duty after expiry of long leave.

### **8.3 Case study no.3**

The following profile was collected during an interaction held with Commandant (OPS), BSF as a part of data collection carried out in all the CAPFs and the same is narrated here for better understanding of the case.

Shri Naranjan Nath, a BSF jawan, 35 years a native of Bongaigaon district of Assam killed himself on February 14, the day he was to leave home after vacation and was to join duty in Jammu sector. He was on leave for a month as sanctioned by authority. But hours before he was to board a train, his body was found hanging from a tree outside his house. No suicide note was recovered from him. He was survived by his wife and a daughter of four years old. He had been in BSF for about 13 years and in Jammu sector for three years. It was told that he had a lot of family responsibilities and he was also facing financial scarcity to meet their requirements since the pay of jawans is not enough making to meet their end. In the course of court of enquiry, it was told by his colleague that he was homesick and he used to stay alone at the barrack. Many a times, he said that he wanted to resign from the post and go home permanently. This case analysis revealed that the

financial condition of the family coupled with posting of the personnel at the remote areas caused increasing his stress level and eventually he took fatal decision of committing suicide.

## 9.0 Facts & Figures

Figure 9.1

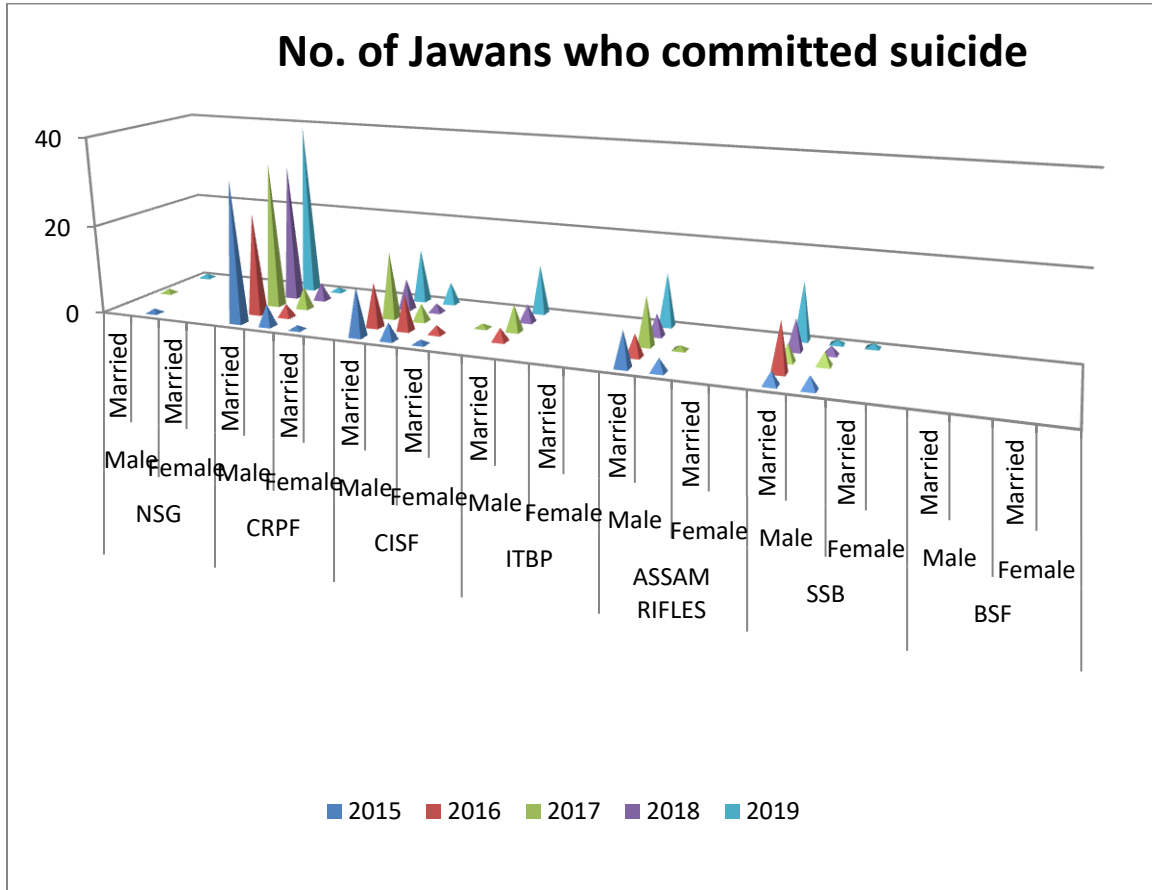


Figure 9.1 shows that the number of jawans who committed suicide across all CAPFs including NSG and AR in the last five years comparatively higher in Central Reserved Police Forces than other forces under the command of Ministry of Home Affairs. It further indicates the number of suicidal deaths reportedly is higher among the married personnel.

**Figure 9.2**

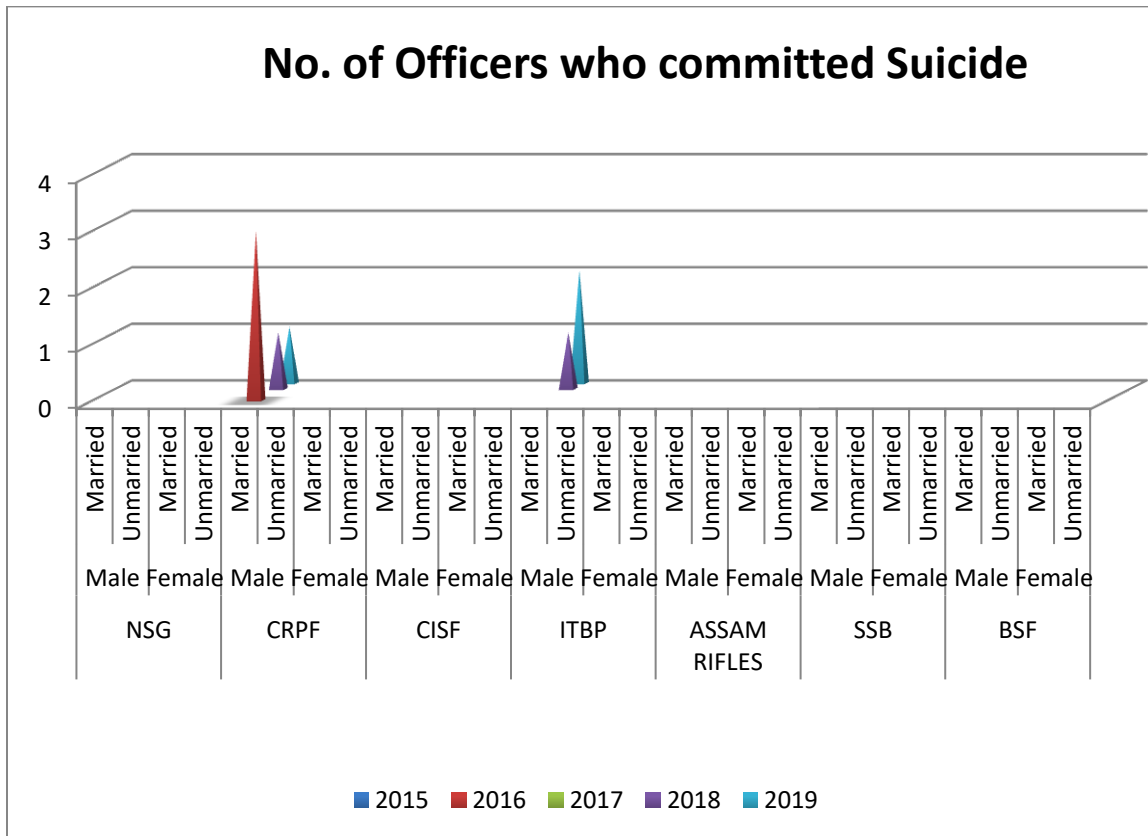


Figure 9.2 provides that suicide of officers reported only by Central Reserve Police Forces and Indo-Tibetan Border Police. The suicidal deaths among the officers are marginally higher in CRPF than ITBP. No other forces under the command of Ministry of Home Affairs have reported any deaths by suicide among the officers level.

**Figure 9.3**

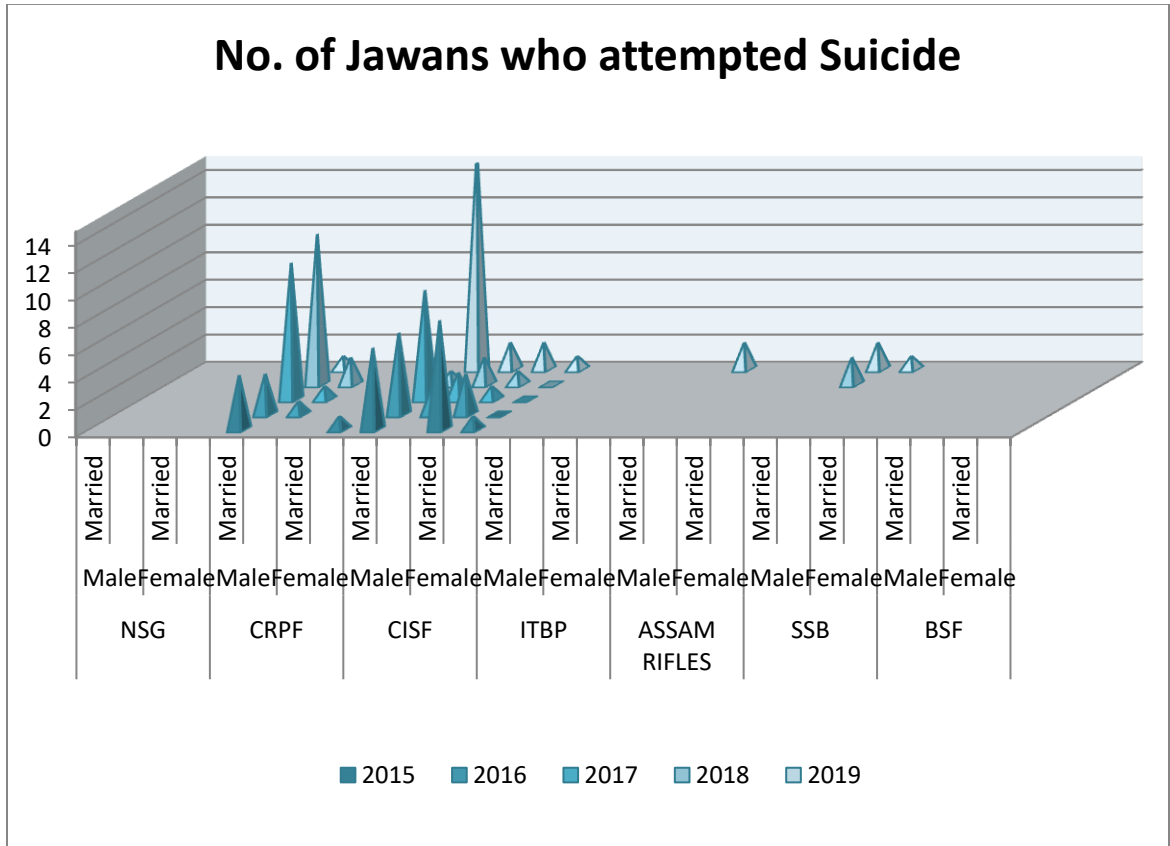


Figure 9.3 shows that the number of attempted suicide is higher in CRPF during the year 2017 and 2018 and in CISF during the year 2017 and 2019 compared to other forces under the command of MHA.



**Figure 9.4**

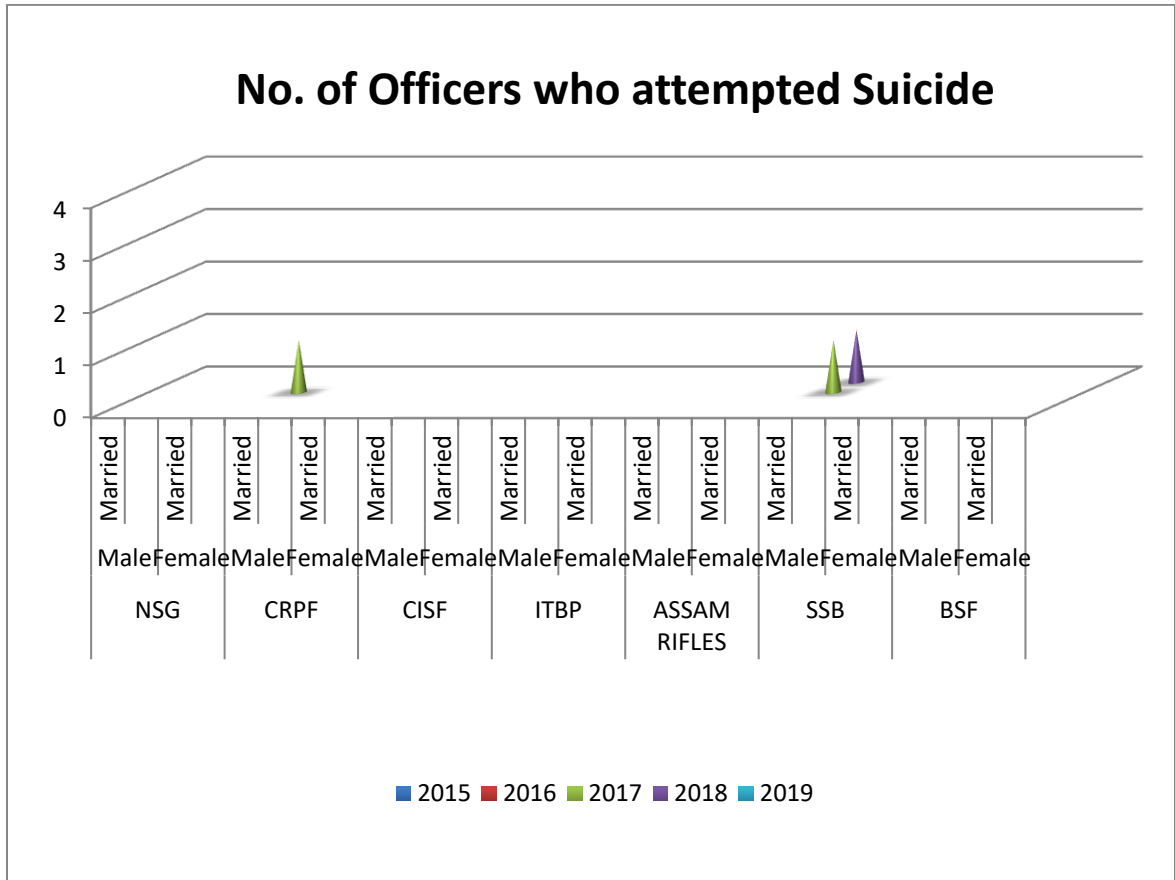


Figure 9.4 shows that only CRPF and SSB reported about the number of Officers attempted to commit suicide during the years 2017 and 2018. The number of attempted suicide in both the forces is meagre compared to the number of Jawans in CAPFs as shown in figure 10.3 above.

**Figure 9.5**

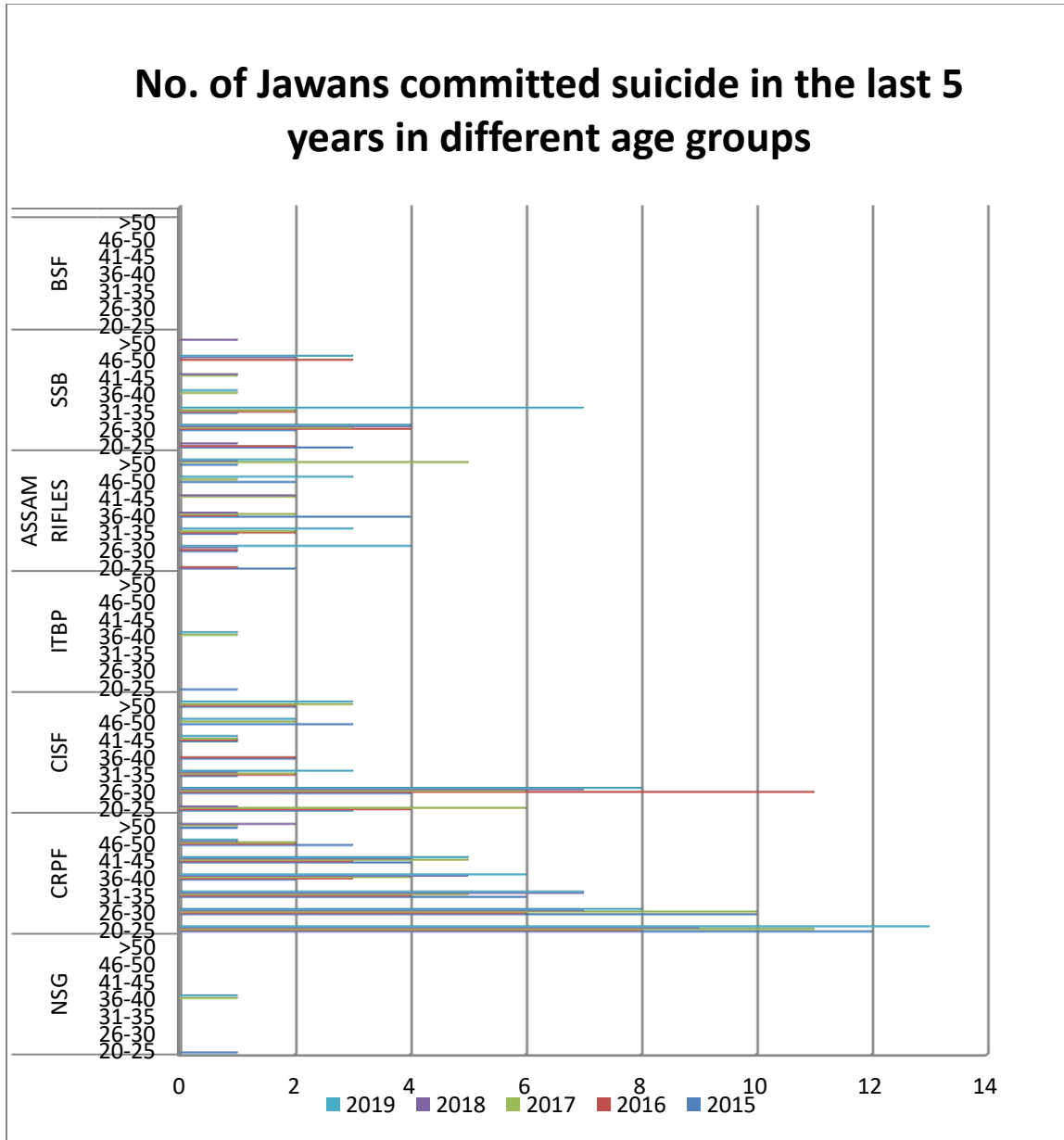


Figure 9.5 shows the number of Jawans in CAPFs committed suicide in different age groups. The vulnerable age group is between 20-35 years across all forces, but CRPF and CISF quite a high degree in the age group of 20-30 years. Assam Rifles is the only force which shows quite a distinct number of Jawans in the age group above 50 years who have committed suicide.

**Figure 9.6**

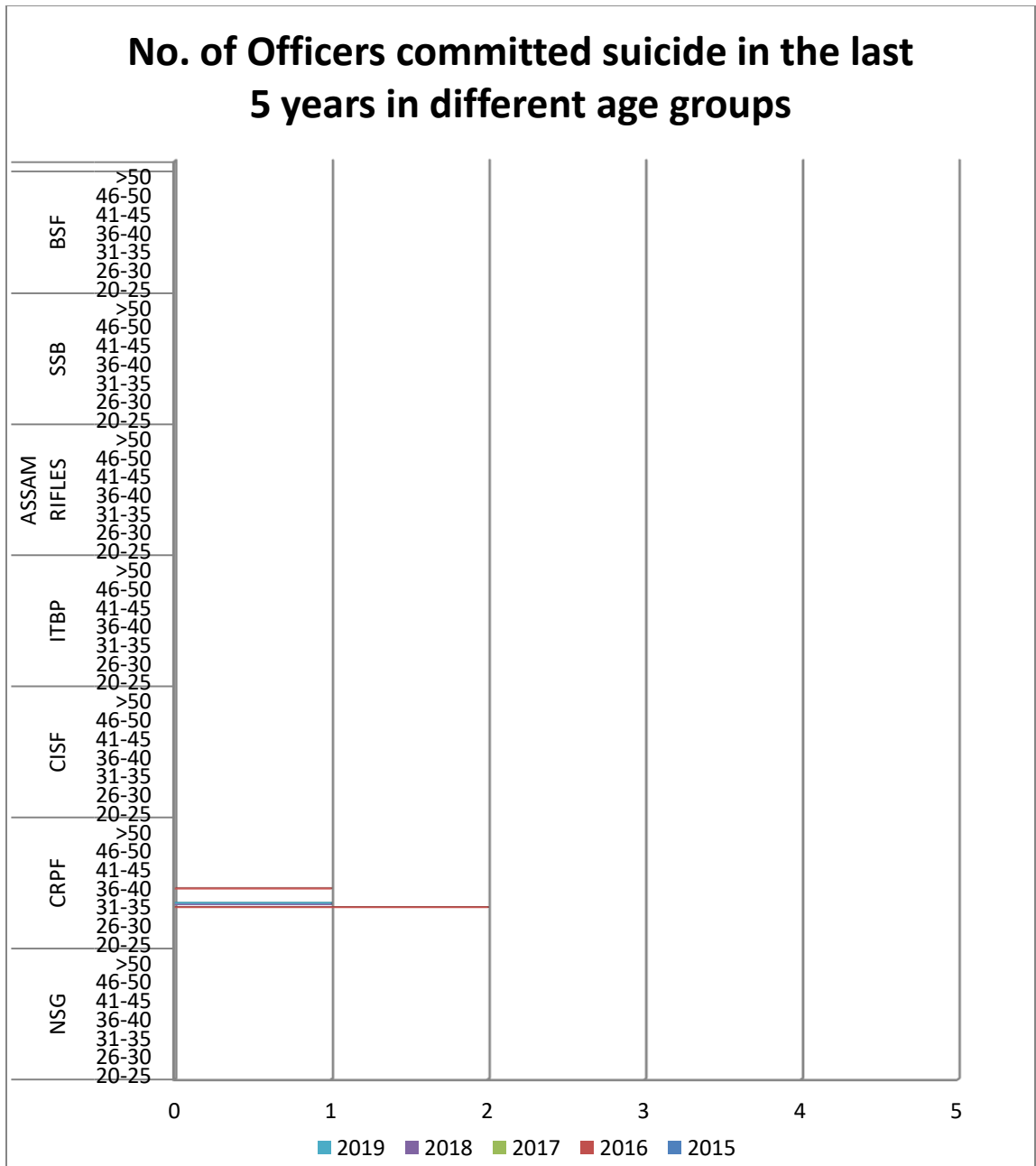


Figure 9.6 shows the number of Officers in CAPFs committed suicide in different age groups. The number of death by suicide between the age group of 30-35 and 36-40 during the year 2018 and 2019 is reported by CRPF only .

**Figure 9.7**

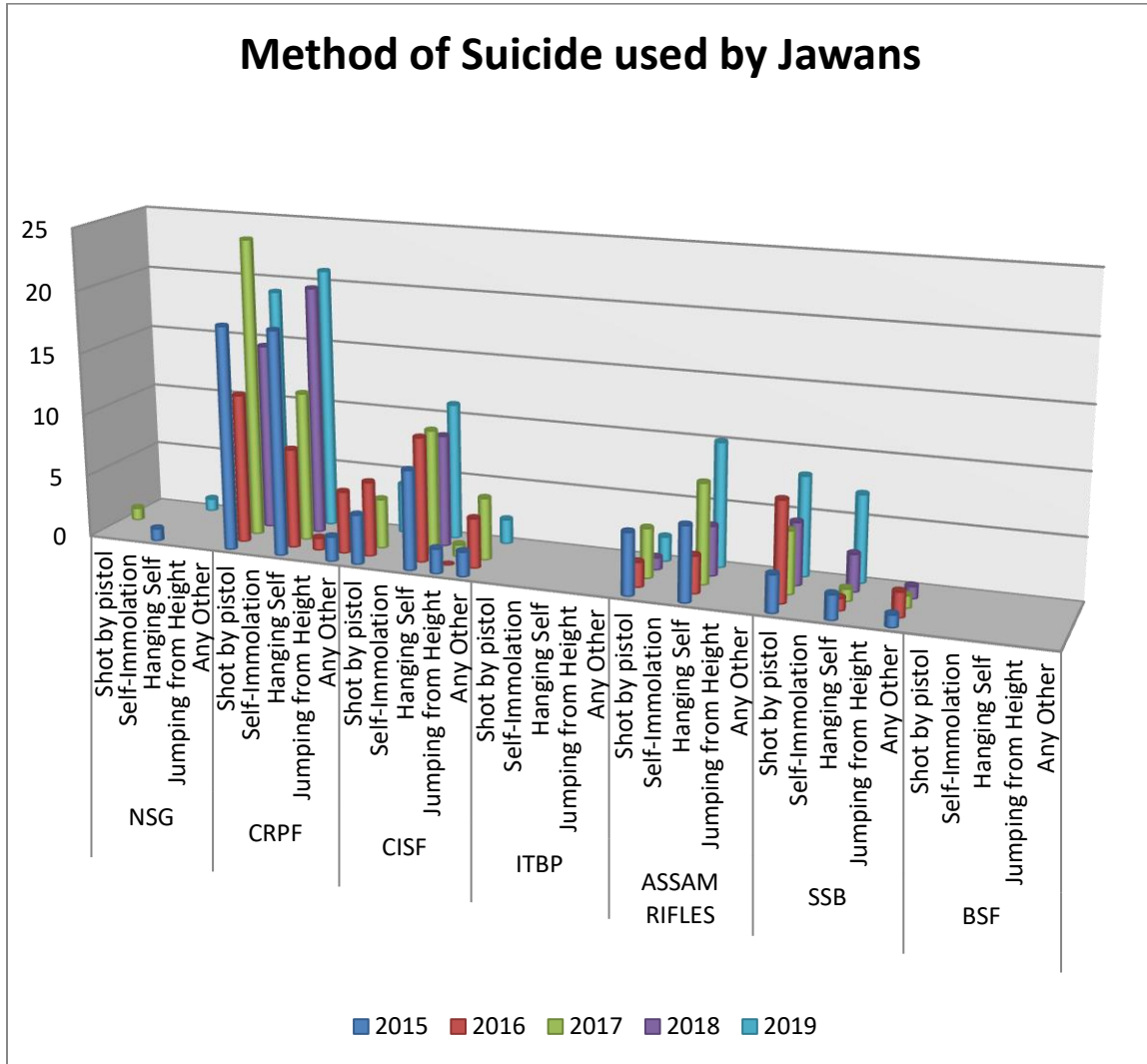


Figure 9.7 shows the method of suicide pitched on by majority of the cases across the forces reported to be higher between the two i.e. “hanging by self” and “shot by pistol”.

**Figure 9.8**

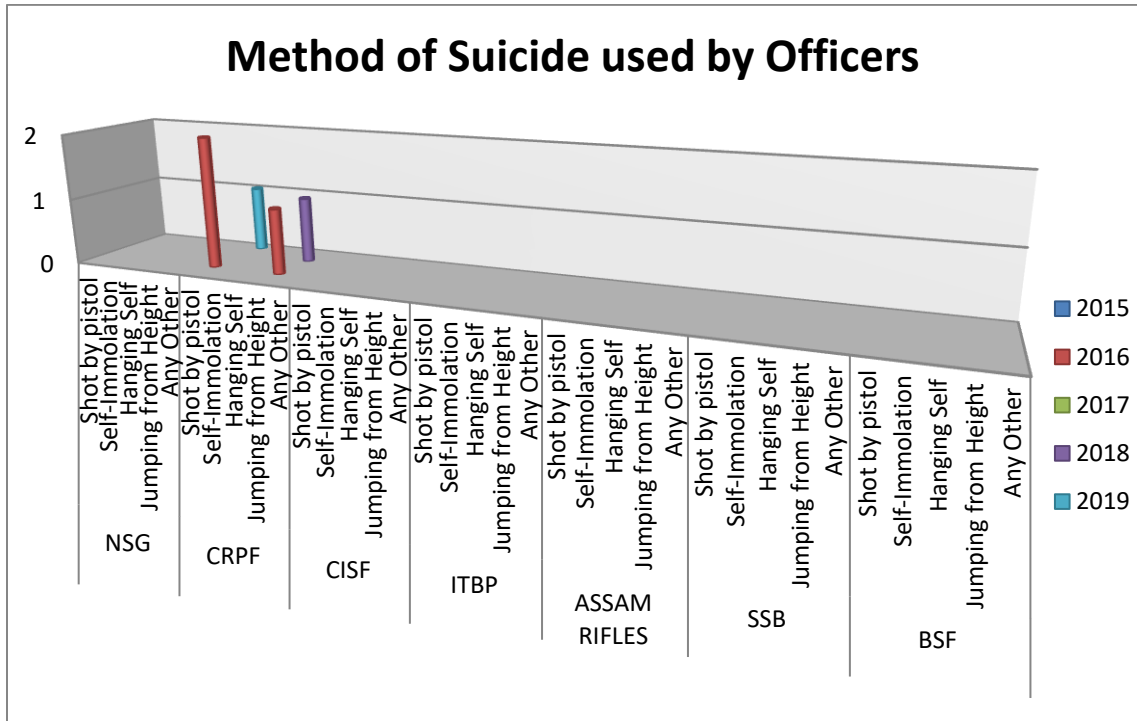


Figure 9.8 shows that only CRPF reported about their officers have chosen the method of “shooting by pistol” to death during the year 2016 and 2019 and “jumping from height” during the years 2016 and 2018.

**Figure 9.9**

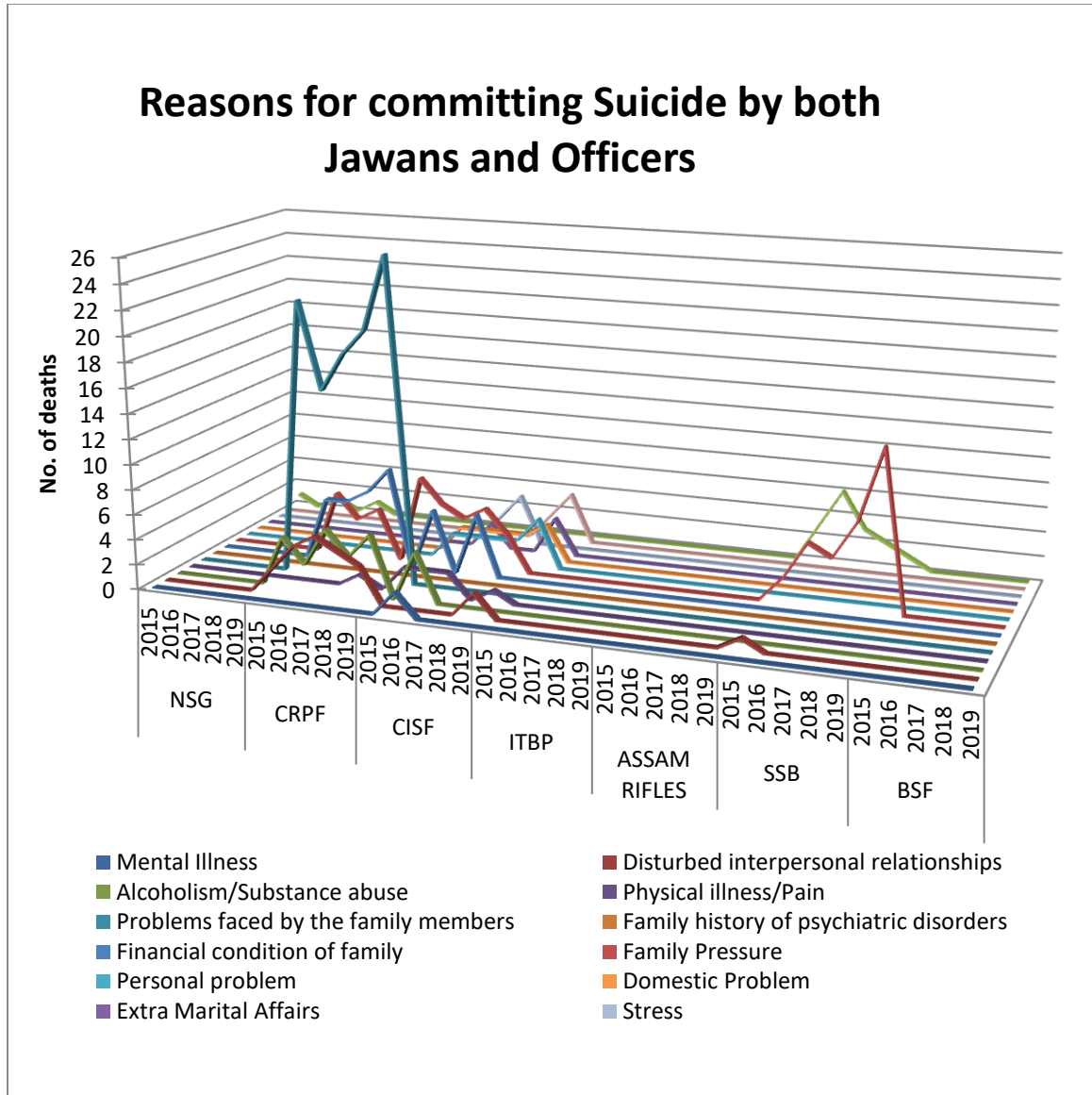


Figure 9.9 shows the main reason which played a major role in pushing the majority of personnel to commit suicide is “The problems faced by their family members”. The secondary reasons which influenced the force personnel taking the extreme step are financial condition of the family, family pressure, disturbed interpersonal relationship, alcoholism / drug use.

## **10.0 Reasons for committing suicide in CAPFs**

The purpose of the study is to bring out all factors which would cause both physical and mental stress among the force personnel by taking into account working environment, family and domestic problems, financial scarcity, leave denial, lack of promotion and these factors would play major role and lead to take the extreme step i.e. death by suicide. Mental health conditions of force personnel are often seen as the cause of suicide, but suicide is rarely caused by any single factor. In fact, many people who die by suicide are not known to have a diagnosed mental health condition at the time of death. In case, these stress factors are not noticed / untreated, this would cause underperformance by the force personnel deployed in the sensitive / border areas and may pose threat to safe and security of the nation. As per information / details collected through primary and secondary data sources and various articles published in the dailies / magazines available in the google and other various online services, the following are the main reasons for the CAPF personnel committing suicide:

### **10.1 Continuous posting in conflict theatres which leads to work stress**

Presence of mental stress among the force personnel is the most consistently reported risk factors for suicidal behavior. Posting of personnel continuously

at the sensitive and demanding areas such as Left Wing Extremism, North East and Jammu & Kashmir areas would increase their mental and work stress. Force Personnel may be forced to kill terrorists/enemies in the action, witnessing their colleagues being injured or killed and facing the near and constant threat of death in the said action / retaliation would also cause mental stress. Deployment of force personnel for prolonged operations at Left Wing Extremists areas, Jammu & Kashmir areas, Extremists infested North Easter Regions and Law and Order duties causing a heavy toll on physical and mental health of the personnel besides, they have to undergo heavy mental stresses for not being able to resolve their family problems faced by them. Moreover, the personnel have to bear the brunt of getting low salary, lack of basic amenities provided at their units / formations, incompetent commander / officer to tackle the issues, humiliation at the hands of their officers and society and the constant fear of death at high risk operational areas and fear of being accused of human rights violations.

Government has to take some measures to check on work stress and curb suicides including, considering the choice of postings as far as possible after the concerned personnel who has served in sensitive and demanding areas for the required period and regular periodical psychological assessment of



the force personnel are required to be done. While men are more likely than women to die by suicide, women are twice as likely to attempt suicide.

Former CRPF DG and then advisor to the Union Home Ministry, K Vijay Kumar<sup>18</sup> , says, “Post Kargil, certain steps were taken, including giving jawans two months of leave along with 15 days of casual leave.” However, he adds, “Stress works differently on different individuals. Many a times, jawans are not able to cope with the high level of discipline and the hostile atmosphere.”

## **10.2 Sleep Deprivation**

The amount of sleep a normal human being needs to have between 6 to 8 hours daily every night. Continuous change of the above duration / condition would lead to mental disorder / illness. Sleep disorder is also reported to be one of contributing factors which compels personnel to take the extreme step. The CAPF personnel deployed at the conflict / sensitive areas are instructed to do their routine works continuously without any sufficient break / rest. As reported, a Jawan would get only 4 / 5 hours a day to take rest/ sleep which eventually increases their mental and work stress. Inadequacy in meeting the needs of the force personnel in terms of their fixed tenure of deploying them in conflict theatres, family and domestic

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<sup>18</sup> <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/army-jawan/suicide>

related issues, financial instability etc. would remain cause of increasing their stress level vis-a-vis sleep deprivation. It is evidently proved from the research study that male personnel who experienced the highest level of stress are having sleep disorder than the female personnel employed by the forces.

### **10.3 Away from Home and Leave Denial**

CAPF Personnel stay away from their homes for around 10-11 months which obviously leads to marital discords and domestic disputes that leads to “lack of stability and loneliness” as stated by the Union Home Secretary before the Parliament Estimates Committee<sup>19</sup>. There will be suspicions and counter-suspicions and allegations by their family members and relatives. The practice of adultery i.e. extra marital affairs of spouse or force personnel which existed prior to his / her marriage is also one of the contributing factor causing mental stress. That also leads to suicide. A Jawan has a compelling situation back home to attend function, but when he is not granted leave on time with the process taking long that they often miss out on the function or occasion. Evidently, CAPF Jawans usually get 15 days Casual Leave (CL) unlike Army Jawans who get 30 days of CL. A CAPF personnel stated on condition of anonymity that many jawans are granted leave after their leave

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<sup>19</sup> <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/army-jawan/suicide>

requirement is over. This has caused to them alienation from family, the only stress reliever for the force personnel. Many jawans in such deprivation are becoming alcoholic which is further worsening their condition. Several courts of inquiry, set up after every such incident, point to how suicides mostly happened soon after personnel returned from leave or around the time their leave was ending.

The absence / collapse of joint family system is one among the cause for creating mental stress for the force personnel. The joint family system which was very much prevalent earlier in the society that had provided moral support and stability during family distress and financial problems does not exist now. The concept of sharing the social and financial problems in the joint family system was very much prevalent and all the family related issues were taken care by the Karta i.e. the head of the family which is normally be given to age old father or mother who is responsible to manage all the affairs of the family and the family members are mostly obedient to the elders. In the joint family system, the jawans who is far away from his home will have mental stress at lesser level and he would concentrate solely on his assigned work without bothering whether the family has a relationship problem, financial problems, children's education, medical issue of the family members. The existence of Nuclear family system in the modern

world where a family is restricted to just 4 members is also one of the contributing factors which lead to increase the mental stress among the Jawans. Earlier, the communication from the force personnel's family used to come periodically. Now in the modern world, the force personnel are being updated on daily basis about their family issues through various mode of modern communication equipment. This would also increases mental stresses of the force personnel. The long standing unresolved property / land disputes between the jawans and his relatives due to his disadvantageous position of long duration posting far away from his home and he is unable to resolve the issue even after coming back home on leave. This would also cause mental stress among the force personnel after returning from the leave. It is stated that the Central Government cannot interfere into the civil disputes of the jawans which took place at his native place since the police, property and law and order are subject matter of States.

As stated by Lt Gen N.K. Parmar, the Director General of Armed Forces Medical Service, it is the problem back at home that makes a soldier feel helpless and drives him / her to suicide than work related stress. In its report of 04 April 2010, Parliament's Standing Committee on Defence pointed out that the inability of the soldiers to solve their family problems due to operational requirements and other constraints within which they have to

work results in enhanced levels of negative stress which leads to behavioral problems<sup>20</sup>. The same analogy is also applicable in the case of force personnel employed in CAPFs, including NSG and AR where the personnel have been undergoing the same problems which cause mental stress lead to behavioral issues.

#### **10.4 Non-Empathetic / Apathy of Seniors**

Seniors are not trained to empathize with their juniors working under them. Senior Commanders are much reluctant to deal with juniors emotionally and talk about their emotions. Unlike in the West, there are only few trained professionals to deal with trauma in CAPFs. Further, it was reported that there were no recognition of services rendered by the jawans in fighting against the terrorists in the conflict theatres i.e. LWE areas, Jammu and Kashmir, preventing the violent mob from damaging property, life of the civilian in the law and order duties in the States in which some Jawans would lose their lives. Seniors are not ready to hear the domestic and service related issues of their security personnel working under their command. The Jawans nowadays employed by the CAPFs are highly educated and possess better intelligent capacities. The officers under whom the jawans are posted should be sensitized to give due respect to them and to hear their grievances

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<sup>20</sup> Parliament's Standing Committee on Defence dated 4<sup>th</sup> April 2010

and recognize the service rendered by them. They cannot be treated as a mere jawans who do not know anything about the strategy of the operations and ignore their advice during the operational distress.

The CAPF should establish a mechanism or to take a policy decision creating a committee comprising a senior officer as a head of the committee and other officers of their respective unit / battalion headquarter as a member of the committee to hear the personal and service related issues of the jawans working under them at a fixed date to say once in a month and try to solve their issues / grievances.

### **10.5 Non-parity of payroll, untimely promotion and financial crunch**

A study which was conducted earlier internally by the CAPF's revealed that suicides were higher among personnel from poor socio-economic background. Unlike any of the defence forces, the CAPF personnel do not get the same pay scale. In CAPF, a constable gets promoted to Head Constable almost after completing 20 years of service. CRPF and BSF are deployed in almost all the conflict theatres. But unlike any of the defence forces, they do not get the same pay scale, accommodation for families is not on par and they remain constantly on the move. CAPF personnel said that a

soldier in the Army would get three promotions in 13 years, whereas in CAPF, it takes 24 years to reach the same position and finally the force personnel cannot reach to the higher level in the force. This will be always occupied by an IPS officer. The force personnel strongly presumed that the Government only listens to their grievances without providing any redressal mechanism to address them.

## **10.6 Previous history of suicidal behaviour of the Individual and family members**

“Mental illness is nothing to be ashamed of, but stigma and bias shame us all” (Bill Clinton). Suicidal behaviors usually occur in people when they have the problems of bipolar disorder, borderline personality disorder, severe depression, drug or alcohol use, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), schizophrenia, history of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, anorexia nervosa, generalized anxiety disorder, stressful life issues, such as serious financial or relationship problems. In order to have better understanding some of the behavioural problems mentioned above are briefly described here as under:

### **10.6.1 Severe depression**

Severe depression is where a person has severe symptoms of despair and hopelessness that interfere with their life. People with severe depression are 20 times more likely to attempt suicide than the general population.

### **10.6.2 Bipolar disorder**

Bipolar disorder is where a person swings from feeling very high and happy to feeling very low and depressed. About 1 in 3 people with bipolar disorder will attempt suicide at least once, and 1 in 10 people with the condition will take their own life.

### **10.6.3 Schizophrenia**

Schizophrenia is a long-term mental health condition that causes hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that are not real), delusions (believing in things that are not true) and changes in behaviour. It is estimated that 1 in 20 people with schizophrenia will take their own life. People with schizophrenia are most at risk of suicide when their symptoms first begin. The risk reduces as they learn to cope with their condition.

### **10.6.4 Borderline personality disorder**

Borderline personality disorder is characterized by unstable emotions, disturbed thinking patterns, impulsive behaviour and intense but unstable



relationships with other people. It is estimated that just over half of people with borderline personality disorder will make at least one suicide attempt. People with a borderline personality disorder who have a history of childhood sexual abuse have a particularly high risk of suicide.

### **10.6.5 Anorexia nervosa**

Anorexia nervosa is where a person is very anxious about their weight and keeps it as low as possible by strictly controlling and limiting what they eat. It is estimated that around 1 in 5 people with anorexia will make at least one suicide attempt.

### **10.6.6 Generalised anxiety disorder**

Generalised anxiety disorder is where a person has persistent, recurring feelings of stress and anxiety.

A history of suicidal behavior is the strongest predictor of future suicide attempts (Christiansen & Jensen, 2007; Nock, Borges, Bromet, Cha, et al., 2008)<sup>21</sup>. The previous history of suicidal behavior of the individual and their family members is more important at the time of making behavioral assessment of the person after he is employed in the force. The person who

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<sup>21</sup> *Suicide Among Soldiers: A Review of Psychosocial Risk and Protective Factors Christiansen & Jensen, 2007; Nock, Borges, Bromet, Cha, et al., 2008*

had history of frequently unsuccessful trial of committing suicide which is more likely to die and the previous history of such behavior would help their respective office to make an assessment on the future behavioral attitude of those person while in the service and take some precautionary measures including by giving psychiatry treatment or counselling to avoid making such attempt by them.

### **10.7 Other Reasons**

The primary reason of CAPF personnel committing suicide is stress. Unlike in the Army, the CAPF especially CRPF has no peace time. After a tough posting, an Army Jawan gets a peace station where he can stay with this family but in CAPF, there is no such mechanism. The nature of duties performed by CAPF's personnel is stretched – either assigned to election duty or called upon to assist the State Police in maintaining Law and Order. In certain LWE areas, CAPF have almost taken over the frontline from the State Police<sup>22</sup>.

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<sup>22</sup> [https://indianexpress.com/article/india/army-jawan/suicide.\(G.K.Pillai, then Home Secretary\)](https://indianexpress.com/article/india/army-jawan/suicide.(G.K.Pillai, then Home Secretary))

A CRPF jawan posted in Srinagar, speaking on condition of anonymity said “We already work in very stressful conditions, not knowing where the next bomb will go off or when a stone will be pelted your way. What makes it worse is that we are so far away from home. None of these measures (to reduce stress) will work if, say, a jawan has a compelling situation back home, but is denied leave”.

Besides, paramilitary forces find themselves stretched — either assigned to election duty or called upon to assist the state police in maintaining law and order. In certain Maoist-affected areas, CAPFs have almost taken over the frontline from the state police.

In Kashmir, where fewer than 40 companies were deployed before the Burhan Wani encounter in July 2016, the Centre had to send nearly 80 companies once the situation spiraled out of control. The deployment was further beefed up ahead of Amarnath Yatra that year.

The CAPFs Personnel’s suicide issues are comparatively complex to that of the defence personnel (Army, Navy and Air Force). As per the data made available to the parliament by Ministry of Defence on the issue of suicides in

Indian Armed Forces, there were 891 suicides deaths during the last 8 years (2011 to 2018), the highest reported by Army was 707 followed by Air Force(148) and Navy(36). Both CRPF and BSF personnel are deployed in almost all the conflict theatres such as North East region, Jammu and Kashmir, and Left Wing Extremisms (LWE) areas, where threat and risk to life is at higher level which leads to mental stress. This could be one of the reasons for high suicide rate in CAPFs and as such these personnel are more prone to suicides. The study also covers the women personnel employed / posted at all the above mentioned conflict theatres. Women account for only 2% of the CAPF, but committed 40% of the suicides reported.

Various other reasons such as suffering from prolonged illness, access to weapons, psychiatric diseases like depression and psychosis, alcohol abuse, lack of motivation have also been quoted for taking extreme steps of committing suicides by CAPF personnel<sup>23</sup>.

As regards the age group of the suicide victims and their financial background, a psychologist associated with force said that, our understanding is that the magnitude of our struggles with finances, family issues or work-related stress is higher when one is young. With the passage

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<sup>23</sup> *[Knight of steel published on Aug 20, 2018](#)*

of time, one learns to adjust with one's situation. It is in this period that these vulnerable individuals need to be spotted and taken care of.

## **11.0 Corrective Measures taken by CAPFs including NSG and AR**

Various corrective/preventive measures have been taken by all the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) from time to time in order to reduce the suicidal deaths in their respective forces at a minimal level.

### **11.1 Border Security Force (BSF)**

As stated by BSF, more than 2,800 studio apartment-like facilities have been set up, each with bedrooms, kitchen and TV, where newly-wed Border Security Force (BSF) jawans can spend a couple of weeks with their spouses. As it struggles to contain the suicide rate in the ranks of Central paramilitary forces, the government hopes to have found one solution in these “guesthouses” at the border. Earlier, while announcing the plan for the border guesthouses at each of its 186 battalion locations and a few other stations, the then Director-General of BSF Shri K K Sharma said on an average a jawan in the force spent “about five years” at home in a service of 30 years. He also said that while there are guesthouses for officers and sub-officers, there was no such facility for jawans in the constable and head-constable ranks earlier.

Meanwhile, the response to the guesthouses at the border, an attempt to make the atmosphere a little less “hostile”, has been encouraging, says BSF Jodhpur DIG Ravi Gandhi. The facility at Jodhpur, one of 190 such guesthouses, the BSF plans to set up, has six rooms, but “a lot of applications” from jawans. “We will give preference to newly-wed couples. They can stay there for a week or two and then we’ll give it out to others on a rotational basis,” he says<sup>24</sup>.

Former DG of BSF Shri D K Pathak, who studied the rising cases of suicides in the BSF while he led the force between 2014 and 2016, seconds this. “The advent of social media and smartphones helps jawans remain updated about developments in the family, which at times worry them. So in the BSF, we started distributing a documentary to jawans while they are going on leave. We told them to watch it with their families so that their relatives could understand the conditions in which they worked.” There are other such measures in place — from counselling sessions to an app to help deal with stress. Company commanders in the BSF and other forces have

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<sup>24</sup> <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/army-jawan>

been instructed to hold counselling sessions with jawans before they are proceeding on leave and talk to them again once they are back.

BSF introduced a “Mental wellbeing intervention as a measure to reduce Suicide rates for the personnel. Thus it has been made compulsory for all its security personnel to undergo an annual mental health test to determine their well-being. The test aims at assessing the soldiers’ mental fitness and will also try to bring in corrective measures based on their scores. The annual tests that were conducted earlier were only determining soldiers’ physical fitness. However, now this additional test which will be introduced will also look into the mental well-being of the security personnel and will also aim at containing suicides among the security forces.

Ms. Satwant Atwal Trivedi, the then Inspector General, BSF who was a student of clinical psychology and oversaw the psychological project, said that, “Suicides anywhere are tragic, but when a trained soldier commits it, it’s loss of a national asset. We want to do our best and provide the best possible environment and care to ensure our soldiers do not take the extreme step. Until now, the healthcare routine in the forces was not too focused on



mental well-being. We believe if problems are recognised early and taken care of, tragedies can be averted.”

The mental health test and other initiatives were designed after an extensive study and a year-long research. Around 200 BSF security personnel were interviewed and trained by clinical psychologists and psychiatrists from London. The psychiatrists drafted tests based on studies that they did on the pattern of suicides and other mental issues that the security personnel face. The programme conducted by the BSF is called **‘Holistic Well-Being Intervention’**. The training programme will also give guidelines to the security personnel, chart out a good and healthy diet to follow and will also ensure that they get some recreational activity such as games, books, cinema and also television.<sup>25</sup>

## **11.2 National Security Guard**

The feedback received from NSG personnel with regard to the corrective measures such as Yoga / Meditation classes, Programme like “Know your personnel”, Training programme on stress management, Grievance redressal mechanism, organizing events / cultural events exhibiting

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<sup>25</sup> [https:// www.financialexpress.com/defence/bsf-makes.](https://www.financialexpress.com/defence/bsf-makes.)

individual talents / interests so far taken by their organization are helping to reduce the number of suicidal deaths in the force. Majority of them stated that the corrective measures like Yoga /Meditation, Training programme on stress management and grievance redressal mechanism are proved effective in their organization. Only few of them mentioned the above three programme are highly effective to reduce the stress level among the force personnel in their organization. The other two measures such as Programme like “Know your personnel”, and organizing events / cultural events exhibiting individual talents / interests are proved moderately effective in NSG as stated by majority of the personnel. Jawans stated that the above two measures are highly effective to reduce the suicidal deaths in their force.

The feedback on policies framed for the welfare of personnel such as Reduction in number of duty hours of a jawan, Not posting a jawan in conflict area for more than three years continuously, Providing accommodation to family in nearby areas and Assessing their behavior pattern during hard postings at regular intervals are the factors which help in reduction of stress level in Jawans. Most of the personnel stated that the above policies are highly effective in reducing the suicide rate in their

organization. Only few of the personnel mentioned about these policies will be proved moderately effective.

### **11.3 Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)**

Director General of CISF Shri Rajesh Ranjan said that, “They have a combination of measures to identify such problems. Every jawan is assigned a buddy, who is always with him and in a way provides psychological support. We also encourage our troopers to engage in group activities, sports and yoga to mitigate stress levels.”

### **11.4 Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB)**

Inspector General of SSB Ms. Renuka Mishra said that their force has developed an Android application to help deal with stress. “Through the app, MySSB, a jawan can check his transfer profile, deputation, salary, PPF. Soon, jawans will get updates on the status of their leave applications. Another feature introduced recently was Know Your Personnel (KYP). Under KYP, a company commander will interact with all 137 jawans in his company and record their details, including likes, dislikes, problems in family and any ailment. The exercise will help the company commander know his personnel well and help identify any stress or problem in the

jawan's family. For women employees, the SSB has a system where they can lodge a complaint regarding sexual harassment," said Ms. Mishra.

### **11.5 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)**

Director General of CRPF Shri R R Bhatnagar said that they recently came out with a manual (SOP) on how to support Jawan who is undergoing mental hardships. Yet, on the ground and in the barracks, these measures often fall short in the face of undeniably high levels of stress that come with their job, especially when they are posted in conflict regions.

### **11.6 Policy decisions taken by Ministry of Home Affairs**

The Home Ministry spokesperson Shri Prasad said, "All efforts are being made to mitigate the circumstances that compel an individual to take tragic steps. Hardships and risk allowances have been substantially hiked". Based on the recommendation of the Seventh Pay Commission, last year, the hardship allowance for counter-insurgency operations was increased from a monthly Rs. 3,000 - Rs. 11,700 to Rs. 6,000 - Rs 16,900.

However, it was admitted that a lot of ground work still need to be taken to tackle this issue in the security forces. Lack of efforts made by the forces to contain the menace in respect of their forces despite good number of policy

decisions taken by the Ministry of Home Affairs<sup>26</sup> in this connection such as the initiatives taken by the Home Ministry under the able guidance of the **then Union Home Minister Shri Rajnath Singh** who said that the Government is committed to improve the working conditions and quality of life of jawans of the Central Armed Police forces (CAPFs). He was speaking at an event after inaugurating 28 projects covering 5,283 housing units, 71 non-residential buildings and 34 barracks built at a cost of Rs 1,895 crores of various CAPFs, Delhi Police and Central Police Organisations (CPOs).

Appreciating the valour, hard work and contribution of the jawans in providing security to the country and its people, the Home Minister said the Government has implemented several measures to improve various facilities and amenities provided to the CAPFs during the last nearly five years, yet more needs to be done. “Despite our best efforts made for the welfare of jawans, there is still room to do more,” said the then HM Shri Rajnath Singh. He interacted with officers and jawans of various CAPFs during the inauguration from across the country through video link. They were highly appreciative of Home Minister and MHA’s assistance and expressed gratitude to him. Shri Singh, in turn, told them that the country reposes faith

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<sup>26</sup> *PIB.Gov.in dated 13.05.2015*

in them and the CAPFs won this trust through their selfless duty, devotion to work and sacrifices.

The Home Minister listed several recent decisions made by the Government to boost the morale of the CAPF jawans. These include:

Free air travel from Jammu to Srinagar and back on duty/ leave and also on duty from Delhi to Srinagar and back.

Enhancement of existing Risk and Hardship Allowances for CAPF personnel deployed in Jammu and Kashmir, LWE affected districts.

The CAPF personnel wounded during an operation and admitted to a hospital would be considered on duty during the period of their treatment.

The Operational Casualty Certificate was introduced on October 9, 2017.

Besides, the ex-gratia payable to a CAPF martyr has been enhanced from

Rs.15 lakh to Rs.35 lakh. The then HM said though no amount of monetary

compensation is enough for the sacrifices made by the jawans in the line of

duty, he has ensured that every CAPF martyr's family gets a minimum of

Rs. 1 crore. For this, the Bharat ke Veer Fund has been created which

has already raised huge sums in donations. Besides, private institutions are

also providing scholarships to wards of CAPF martyrs. CAPF martyrs'

dependents are now entitled to preferential allotment of LPG outlets at par with martyrs of the Armed Forces. “A proposal to provide assistance during the period of recovery from injuries in addition to the treatment costs is under active consideration,” he added. He assured that there will be no shortage of money for benefit of CAPF/CPOs personnel as India has enough resources both from Government, Public and Private Sector.

Furthermore, the **then Minister of State for Home Affairs, Shri Haribhai Parathibhai Chaudhary**<sup>27</sup> in a written reply to a question by Prof. M.V. Rajeev Gowda in the Rajya Sabha stated that the following measures were taken by the Government of India to curb the depression amongst the personnel of paramilitary forces (i.e. CAPFs and AR) :

- i) Implementing a transparent, rational and fair leave policy;
- ii) Grant of leave to the force personnel to attend to their urgent domestic issues and social commitments;
- iii) Regular interaction, both formal and informal, among Commanders, officers and troops to find out and address their problems;
- iv) Revamping of grievances redressal machinery;
- v) Regulating duty hours to ensure adequate rest and relief;

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<sup>27</sup> *Ibid*

- vi) Improving living conditions through provision of basic amenities/facilities for troops and their families;
- vii) Government has approved extension of the facility of retention of Government accommodation at the last place of posting for CAPF personnel deployed/posted in Left Wing Extremism affected areas/districts (except State capitals), as notified by the Government of India from time to time, on payment of flat rate/normal license fee. This facility is already being given to the Force personnel in case of posting to NE States and J&K State;
- viii) Motivating the forces through increased risk/hardship and other allowances such as Detachment Allowance, Kit Maintenance Allowance, Washing Allowance, Ration Money Allowance, MARCOS Allowance etc;
- ix) Provision of STD telephone facilities to the troops to facilitate being in touch with their family members and to reduce tension of being in the remote locations;
- x) Officers and Jawans serving in hard area are being given preference for posting to soft/static locations as per their choice to the extent possible;



- xi) Better medical facilities for troops and their families including introduction of Composite Hospitals with specialized facilities;
- xii) Organising talks by doctors and other specialists to address their personal and psychological concerns;
- xiii) Yoga and meditation classes for better stress management;
- xiv) Treatment during the hospitalization period due to injury suffered by CRPF personnel during the course of duty to be treated as duty;
- xv) Adequate steps have been taken in all establishments to provide and upkeep the recreational and sport facilities. Force personnel are encouraged constantly to actively participate in sports and games;
- xvi) Providing welfare measures like Central Police canteen facility to the troops and their families, scholarships to their wards, etc;
- xvii) Giving status of ex-CAPF personnel to the retired personnel of CAPF, which is expected to boost the morale of the existing CAPFs personnel and also expected to provide better identity, community recognition and thus higher esteem and pride in the society to the Ex-CAPF personnel;
- xviii) CAPF Campuses at various locations are renewed and upgraded according to present scenario. Adequate basic amenities like toilets, bathrooms, drinking water points, messing for both male and female

are available. Mobile toilets are also provided to troops for use during operational duty.

- xix) Force campuses are kept clean and sanitation rounds are done by medical officers to monitor and keep up the hygiene status of the campus;
- xx) Schemes have been implemented for facilitating the women personnel i.e. Gender Sensitization, Health care Centre, improvised service, Nutritional care Centre etc;
- xxi) In addition to the above, the female personnel are liberally given Child Care Leave (CCL);
- xxii) Creche is also established at various Group Centres/Units locations to facilitate the female employees;
- xxiii) The air courier service facility has been extended to CAPF personnel deployed in remote areas of North East and Jammu & Kashmir region including Leh as a welfare measure;
- xxiv) Promotions are being released regularly to the eligible personnel as and when vacancies arise in the next higher rank;
- xxv) The financial benefits under Modified Assured Career Progression (MACP) Scheme and Senior Time Scale (STS) Scheme are given in

time as per the rules to the eligible personnel in case they do not get promotion for want of vacancies;

**The Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah** has recently directed the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) like CRPF, BSF and others to undertake a mega manpower planning and ensure that around 7 lakh jawans get to spend at least 100 days with their families in a year, officials said on Thursday. They said, Shah was given a presentation last month about the functioning of the CAPFs in the ministry, following which he directed that the deployment details of the troops of these forces should be "digitized" so that better manpower rationalization can be done. The Union Home Ministry has now asked all the chiefs or Directors General of forces like CRPF, BSF, CISF, ITBP, SSB and Assam Rifles to undertake the exercise and implement a regime where a jawan or a constable gets to stay with his family for about 100 days. This means that the jawans will be posted to their nearest units and they can travel and stay with their families when there are no operational exigencies, a senior official said. In order to achieve this, he said the force chiefs have been asked to assess and prepare reports of their additional manpower so that the over-all deployment of a CAPF unit is not affected. When this data is digitized, as compared to the regular paper file format

prevalent as of now, it will be easy for the force headquarters to rotate and deploy their troops.

This system will also help in ensuring that a large number of grievances of personnel regarding their transfer and posting to a place near to their parents or family home will be addressed up to a limit<sup>28</sup>.

## **11.7 Quality of Food**

Responding to the serious concern of the Committee regarding serving of poor quality of food being served in CAPFs particularly with reference to a news through social media in the recent past, the Home Secretary apprised the Committee of the matter as under:

"Sir, there are two things regarding the video that has been posted and wherein complaint has been made about the quality of food served in BSF. On one hand, some of our officers were found to be negligent in our preliminary enquiry. Action has been taken against some persons.

The process of taking action against erring persons is still going on. DG, BSF would give details in this regard. But the ration provided to BSF is sufficient. Sir, generally I have been assured in this regard and I would

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<sup>28</sup>[https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/ensure-jawans-get-to-stay-with-family-for-100-days-annually-shah-to-capfs/articleshow/71635233.cms?utm\\_source=contentofinterest&utm\\_medium=text&utm\\_campaign=cpps\\_t](https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/ensure-jawans-get-to-stay-with-family-for-100-days-annually-shah-to-capfs/articleshow/71635233.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cpps_t)

request the Hon'ble Members of the Committee too to visit any post of BSF in their area without prior information and they would find the food served there to be healthy and tasty. I would request you to partake it. I also intend to make a visit without prior notice. Although it is a little bit difficult to go there without prior notice but I would try so that I can see that the food served in BSF and other forces is upto standard or not."

### **11.8 Medical facilities to CAPF**

In addition to the medical facilities available to Central Government employees, there are 39 composite hospitals for providing specialty services to the CAPFs personnel and their family members. These composite hospitals are common to all the CAPFs. Government has allowed appointment of doctors on contractual basis to meet the demand of the CAPFs. Apart from above, as and where required, CAPFs personnel and their families can also take treatment from recognized private hospitals, if such specialized services are not available in CAPFs hospitals. CPWD has been entrusted to execute the newly sanctioned Central Armed Police Force Institute of Medical Sciences (CAPFIMs), the country's first-ever medical institute for Central paramilitary forces with a dedicated cadre of doctors on the lines of the Defence-run Armed Forces Medical College (AFMC). It has

a 500-bed general & a 300-bed super specialty hospital, a nursing college and a school of paramedics. Once fully commissioned, the project will be beneficial to approximately 9 lakh CAPF personnel, including retired personnel, and their families for tertiary health care facilities. This will also create in house production of medical professionals, nurses and paramedics to fill up large number of vacancies in CAPFs, as professionals passed out of CAPFIMS will be bonded for 10 years' service in CAPFs. In addition, the scheme of Central Armed Police Force Institute of Medical Science (CAPFIMS) has an outlay of Rs.1300 crore with an objective to provide better medical facilities to CAPFs personnel through construction of Super Specialty Hospital.

## **11.9 Retention of Accommodation**

The facility of retention of accommodation in the last place of posting, as available to Central Government employees, on posting to North East Region and J&K, Government, on 14.07.2010, the Government of India has conveyed sanction for extension of the facility of retention of Government accommodation at the last place of posting for CAPFs personnel deployed/posted in LWE affected areas/districts (except State capitals).

# **Chapter V**

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **12.0 Conclusion**

The current study explored the number of factors which contributed force personnel to commit suicide and its devastating effects and implications on the performance / duties of the CAPFs and their family members which could be severe and far-reaching. Further, the problems of experiencing adverse psychological, sociological and health consequences due to various stress factors among force personnel stipulated the increased attention by psychiatrists, public policy advocates and bureaucrats who will implement the policies in the department in letter and spirit are to be considered by the respective Department / Ministry.

The studies on Suicide of CAPF personnel are also conducted by some forces on their own under the command of Ministry of Home Affairs from time to time. The analysis was carried out by them with the restrictive factors such as domestic / family problems, financial issues, leave denial, mental stress of force personnel deployed at remote places, etc. and the recommendations made based on these studies were also very limited for the

welfare and wellbeing of the personnel of the respective forces under whose direction the studies were conducted.

Based on the above study, it has been concluded that the suicidal ideation and death which mostly occurred amongst the lowest rung of the post i.e. Jawans are widely analyzed in the instant study, despite the fact that suicide deaths among officers in CAPFs which is meagre as per the data provided by CAPFs does not attract much attention here. The data analysis carried out in this study forms a hinge with a wide spectrum of possibility for future study on this subject matter is foreseen. As stated earlier, the actual stress factor varies with case to case which is difficult to ascertain, however various mechanism in handling both mental and physical stress based on the study result could be devised upon.



## **13.0 Recommendations**

This study is focused on need for the development of public policies aimed at preventing / protecting and treating the force personnel who are at risk for suicidal ideation. After an elaborate study and literature review of the cases as discussed in the preceding chapters, the following recommendations are given as below:

1. Appointment of Civilian Psychological Counsellors by the Force Headquarters across all CAPFs including NSG and AR for providing mental health services to the force personnel who are affected with mental stress. This facility should be given to all the units and battalions of the conflict theatres where the force personnel are deployed and exposed to the work stress.
2. Psychologist counsellors should visit all the sensitive units and battalions before and after deployment of the force personnel on regular basis and carry out psychological test / counselling, for the entire group and in person as the case may be.

3. There shall be an improvement of stress management and focus on well-being of the force personnel across all the forces under Ministry of Home Affairs by organizing mental health awareness programmes at all the units/battalions, training to the leaders of the unit / formations to take care the personnel posted under them and to hear the problems being faced by them and try to resolve all the issues by giving utmost priority.
4. Efforts should be made to reduce the stigma attached with mental health of the force personnel and encourage them to come out from the stigma in order to avail the medical facilities provided by the force administration. Promote the awareness of the medical care to the mental illness among the personnel and support them till they are fully recovered from the mental illness.
5. Engage peer group in each unit / battalion to identify those persons with unusual behavioural change, sleep deprivation, isolation from others etc. in the same unit / battalion and report them to the unit commander or the officer under whom the unit is functioning.

6. There should be ban on use of cell phones by the force personnel in operational areas, as these are one of the factor which increases their stress levels by keeping them constantly updated about their family problems as was done in the Army by the Ministry of Defence.
  
7. Create an environment in the units / formations by providing a plenty of measures such as better quality of food, accommodation, travel concessions, wards education, recreation facilities i.e. indoor and outdoor game facilities, television, internet facility etc. for the personnel and their family members within the campus and welfare meeting to be conducted on regular basis etc. to divert / reduce mental stress of the force personnel and spend ample amount of time with their families. Yoga and Meditation may be used as a stress reliever among the personnel.
  
8. Establish “Health Care Speak” an online wellness programme which include Video conversation with mental health experts by the force personnel and their family members and to devise an action plans for further course of action to improve their mental wellbeing and “Ask the Experts” a 24X7 online session which will provide an insight to

help the force personnel for managing their mental health and care for their well-being. The conversation which takes place in the above programmes will be kept confidential.

9. Development of mobile app on mental health learning and self-management to help those personnel undergoing physical and mental stresses due to various reasons such as family / domestic problems, financial instability, operational difficulties, sleep disorder, anger, drug / alcohol abuse including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and for their family members.
  
10. Adopting stringent selection procedures designed to identify / ensure individuals who are possessing the quality of physically fit, mentally well, and psychologically resilient at the time of recruitment. It is evidently proved that majority of mental disorders such as depression; anxiety and drug/alcohol abuse have an onset during the period of childhood and adolescence. These findings / screenings will definitely be useful at the time of recruitment of personnel for security forces. This practice will in furtherance help in reducing suicide rates across all the CAPFs including NSG and AR.

11. Training to the Officers / Commanders in educating to look into how to respond to those personnel who are under distress in the same unit / formation and encourage openness about their mental health problems and remove any stigma of distress attached with them. This would help the personnel with the mental stress to avert the risk of taking the extreme step i.e. suicide.

12. Preparation of a Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) on mental health care, suicide prevention, intervention and postvention policies, procedures and practices at Centre level for those force personnel who are affected with mental, physical and social distresses during discharging their duties and after their retirement for the use of all the CAPFs under Ministry of Home Affairs including Police Officials of the States under State Governments and for their family members.

13. Establishment of Centre for Suicide Prevention and Control for Central Armed Police Forces (CSPC of CAPF) to be headed by SDG/ADG level officer with members from all CAPFs including NSG and Assam Rifles. This centre will have the responsibility to devise all precautionary measures to be taken at the units / formations where the number of reported case of mental illness case are reported

at higher level and preventive measures by employing mental health professionals through direct recruitment and management of wellbeing of the force personnel and their family members by the above centre. The other responsibility of the CSPC of CAPF are listed out as under:

- a. Conducting a systematic multi-disciplinary review of suicides by the force personnel in the last five years;
- b. Assessment of increased suicide risk units / formations and arrangement of safety planning / training for Mental health professionals;
- c. Implementations of mental health care facilities to those personnel who are deployed at conflict theatres after the mental health crisis have been identified at the specified units / formations.
- d. Devise the best practices for screening for mental disorders and suicidal behavior which would be used during recruitment, pre-deployment and post-deployment.
- e. Establishment of an expert group to develop optimal suicide prevention and well-being support strategies specifically for

force personnel who are in transition from security service to civilian life.

There should be a systematic management approaches in all CAPFs to reduce the suicide cases by advocating policies and procedures across all health and behavioural health organisations for focusing on the detection and management of persons who are facing the agony of mental stress with suicide risk for their wellbeing. There should be co-operation and communication between all mental health professionals, patients and families of those personnel who are at suicide risk in a timely manner.

Regulation of media reports on suicide deaths which increases public awareness about the impact of suicide, and gives more attention among policy makers and its impact on suicide behavior among the public in general and security personnel in particular. Suicide prevention guidelines across the country include media guidelines on safe reporting of suicide as an important public health strategy. Media reports should avoid publishing the incident of the suicide like telling an elaborate story in the first page itself and it may report about the link between mental disorders and suicide, highlight that mental disorders are treatable, and most suicides are preventable by portraying the positive side of mental illness.

There should be a strong advocacy for suicide prevention at the policy level. Government's intervention in terms of providing more fund towards improvement of mental health care of the force personnel and a lot of research in mental health and suicide prevention are required. Organising a mental health awareness programmes across all the training centres and units / formations of all the forces where force personnel are deployed at conflict theatres that contributes to their increased work and mental stress, at regular intervals eg. twice in a month by inviting suicide attempt survivors whose narration about his survival from the suicide death would give immense help to the those force personnel who are currently at risk to come out from distress. Active engagement of family members in the treatment process is needed. This would prove more effective in providing clinical care to patients whose suicidal behavior is important especially in crisis situations. There is a need to acquire vital information from family and friends during an acute crisis.



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