

Jawan's video: BSF orders food test by DRDO lab



BSF jawan Tej Bahadur Yadav had in January last year posted a video on Facebook that showed a meal box comprising a watery soup-like dal, which he claimed had only turmeric and salt, and a burnt chapatti.

NEW DELHI: Faced with questions over the quality of food, the BSF has commissioned an assessment by the DRDO to analyse the quality and quantity of meals being served to jawans and officers of the paramilitary force.

The Border Security Force (BSF) also suggested measures to improve possible shortcomings.

The move comes over a year after a BSF jawan had posted a video on a social media site claiming watery soup-like dal and burnt chappatis were being served to personnel.

BSF Director General (DG) K K Sharma told in an interview that the first-of-its-kind step was taken on the recommendation of a parliamentary panel that took up the issue recently.

"We are getting a study done from a DRDO (Defence Research and Development Organisation) laboratory to analyse the quality of the food being served in BSF messes. These experts are also talking to the personnel who prepare the food, run the unit mess and also those who consume it.

"While a final report is awaited, what we have been made to understand is that both the quality and quantity of our food for jawans and officers has been found to be more than satisfactory as part of the study," the paramilitary chief said.

The DRDO's Defence Food Research Laboratory (DFRL) based in Mysore in Karnataka is conducting the assessment.

The DFRL is a special laboratory to conduct research and development related to dietary and nutritional requirements of security personnel.

A parliamentary panel, in its report, had noted that there was an "adverse report on social media" about the quality of food being served to BSF personnel.

"The committee (members) are of the view that providing good quality food to CAPFs (Central Armed Police Forces) personnel is not only necessary to keep them healthy and fit but also for boosting their morale.

"The committee, therefore, recommended that a mechanism be put in place for testing food items being supplied to CAPFs at the source of supply itself, whereby it is tested and certified in respect of nutritional values, hygiene and labelled as fit for consumption," the report had stated.

Sharma said that an internal inquiry conducted by the BSF after its jawan [Tej Bahadur Yadav](#) posted a video on social media claiming bad food was being served, had found that the quality and quantity of food being served was never an issue among the forces' personnel.

Yadav had in January last year posted a video on [Facebook](#) that showed a meal box comprising a watery soup-like dal, which he claimed had only turmeric and salt, and a burnt chapatti.

The DG said three immediate supervisory officers of Yadav's unit -- a Deputy Inspector General (DIG), a Commandant and a Company Commander (Assistant Commandant)-- of Yadav's unit were shifted after the incident as punishment and on grounds of "failure of command."

The officers did not know that a constable is facing problems and complaining about something, which may or may not be wrong, he said.

"They got to know when the jawan uploaded something (on social media). So, it is the failure of the supervisory officers in having a proper connect with the subordinates. One must know what is happening.

"This was identified as a weakness of the officers and failure of command and they were shifted. This action was not undertaken because the food was bad," Sharma said.

He said the area along the Line of Control where Yadav was posted is under the operational command of the Army and the food is supplied by them at these locations.

"It is largely tinned food at these high-altitude and difficult locations. The entire ration process has been decentralised by us at the International Border (IB) where we have our independent command," he said.

The DG added that Yadav, last year in April, was sacked and charge sheeted for indiscipline and uploading a video in violation of rules.

Such conduct "cannot be tolerated" in a security force and this action was not taken against him for complaining about the quality of food, he said.

The DG added that Yadav, last year in April, was sacked and charge sheeted for indiscipline and uploading a video in violation of rules.

Such conduct "cannot be tolerated" in a security force and this action was not taken against him for complaining about the quality of food, he said.

Sharma reiterated that the BSF, as an organisation, has taken a policy decision that the use of smart phones and social media will not be disallowed despite this incident.

"I feel why should I punish 2.5 lakh people just because the mistake of one man. If they want to enhance their knowledge and keep in touch with their family by using the Internet, then why should I stop them?" the DG said.

"We have just told our personnel that social media and Internet has to be used sensibly and anything that they receive on social media should not be believed without verifying its authenticity," Sharma said.

The BSF is tasked to guard the two important and sensitive Indian borders with Pakistan and Bangladesh and it also renders a variety of internal security duties across the country including undertaking anti-Naxal operations in Chhattisgarh and Odisha.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/jawans-video-bsf-orders-food-test-by-drdo-lab/articleshow/63567276.cms>



Sun, 01 April, 2018

Hike in allocation for defence minimal: Panel

The difference in Budgetary Estimate (BE) 2018-19 and 2017-18 of Rs 7,494.12 crore is "quite minimal" in view of the likely cost escalation due to inflation to meet requirements of Capital acquisition and other works planned for 2018-19, says a report by a Parliamentary panel on Defence tabled in the ongoing Budget session of Parliament which has been hit by adjournments due to uproarious scenes.

In its 97-page report, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence chaired by Major General B C Khanduri (Retd) and including former Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda and veteran BJP leader Dr Murli Manohar Joshi suggested that the Ministry of Defence needs to strongly put its case before the Ministry of Finance for adequate allocation of funds, commensurate with the requirement of the modernisation and acquisition plans for 2018-19.

The committee was told by the Vice Chief of Army Staff (VCOAS) in a candid submission that the marginal increase in capital budget allocation for the Army had dashed their hopes as it was barely enough to meet the rise in expenses on account of inflation, and did not even cater to the taxes.

He told the Committee that allocation for modernisation in 2018-19 was insufficient to cater to committed liabilities, ongoing schemes, 'Make in India' projects, infrastructural development, policy of strategic partnership of foreign and Indian companies and procurement of arms and ammunition.

The committee was particularly alarmed to note from his oral evidence that although the Ministry of Defence had delegated financial powers up to Rs 14,097 crore to the VCOAS towards security related issues, there was no separate allocation for this in the capital budget allocation in 2018-19. Hence, the Ministry is left with no other option but to reduce resources for security of military stations or compromise on other acquisitions.

Besides the Army, representatives of the Navy in their presentation before the Committee, spelt out the impact of low allocations of capital budget for the Navy, viz constrained progress of new schemes and ability to conclude contracts, delay in induction of critical capabilities and attendant cost overruns, impact on progress of infrastructure projects and mitigation of shortage of accommodation, and setback to pace of modernisation of Indian Navy.

Based on the dismal scenario painted by the representatives of the three services, the committee was aghast and urged the Ministry of Defence to ensure that the allocations to the Services be suitably enhanced at the revised estimate stage so as to enable them to meet the requirements of highest level of operational readiness. The committee, in the wake of recent attacks on military stations and accommodations, recommended that separate budget may be provided to the services for ensuring security of military establishments.

The committee noted that an amount of Rs 93,982.13 crore has been allocated to the Ministry of Defence for capital outlay on Defence Services in Budget Estimates (BE) 2018-19.

An amount of Rs 74,115.99 crore and Rs 9,318.05 crore, respectively, has been allocated for capital acquisition (including DGOF supplies) and land and works of the three Services (including Married Accommodation Projects) for 2018-19. An amount of Rs 10,548.09 crore has been granted for Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), Directorate General of Ordnance Factories (DGOF) and other Defence departments for 2018-19.

The allocation at BE for 2017-18 was Rs 86,488.01 crore, which remained same at revised estimates (RE) stage. The difference between BE 2018-19 and BE 2017-18 is Rs 7,494.12 crore.

The Committee said it is deeply anguished to note that with each year, the ratio of revenue to capital outlay is skewed in favour of revenue component of the Budget.

However, this skewed ratio of revenue and capital outlay has ominous foreboding for noble intentions and efforts of modernising the Defence Forces. It recommended that allocations under Capital head need to be augmented suitably for improving the present ratio of Revenue and Capital outlay in favour of Capital head.