

**Note****18**

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ARMED FORCES IN INTERNAL SECURITY

In the previous lesson you have studied the role of the Armed Forces during crisis like disaster management and peacekeeping operations. The armed forces also plays an important role in dealing with insurgencies / disturbance within the country. What you must understand is that when it comes to assessing the role of armed forces in protecting its respective nation from external threat it is generally common for all nations.

External threat is related to borders whereas internal threat is from the people of the country due to political, ideological reasons like left wing extremism etc. Maintenance of internal security in the responsibility of the Ministry of Home Affairs but Armed Forces are also called in when situation cannot be dealt by CRPF.

In this lesson we will specifically learn about the role of the Indian Armed Forces and the Indian intelligence agencies like the "Intelligence Bureau" (IB) and the " Research and Analysis Wing" (RAW), in the internal Security of India.



Objectives

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- appreciate and explain the role of Indian Armed Forces in internal security;
- know about the special forces tasked to protect India's strategic assets;
- explain the role of Indian Intelligence Agencies IB and RAW in India's internal securities.

18.1 Role of Indian Armed Forces

Our nation has faced the problem of insurgency and terrorism for many years. The state of Jammu & Kashmir (J & K), the Northeastern States are affected by insurgency and terrorism. As a result of the violence caused due to insurgency and terrorism in these regions, many civilians and security personnel have lost their lives.

Our armed forces are playing a very important role in the fight against the insurgents



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and terrorists operating in the region and protecting India's citizens and its integrity. However, the dynamics of the Indian armed forces involvement in these operations are significantly different due to the nature of the origin of the insurgency in these specific regions.

Let us see the figure below to understand the dual role of the Indian Armed Forces in the fight against insurgency and terrorism.

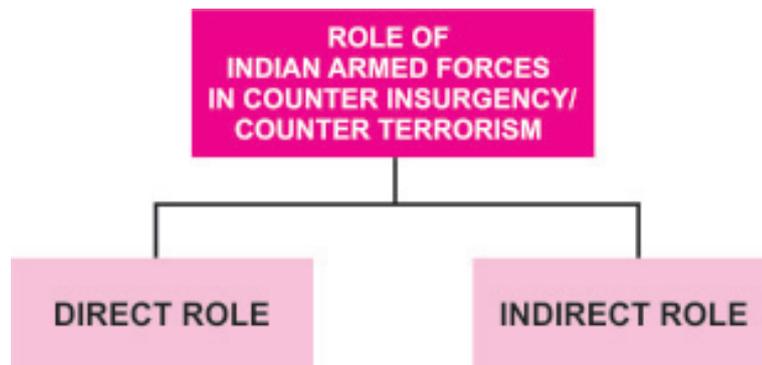


Fig 18.1 Dual Role Indian Armed Forces in Counter Insurgency/ Counter Terrorism

18.1.1 The Direct Role

The Indian Army has been playing a direct role in fighting insurgency and terrorism in J & K and the Northeastern States for decades. This is despite the fact that the Army is a force that is raised and trained primarily to protect India from external threat.

However, the reason for Army's direct involvement in these volatile regions is because there is enormous amount of external involvement in abetting and supporting the insurgency with the intent to cause social unrest in India. The situation is such that the CAPF can not maintain peace & deal with the insurgents. In J&K our hostile neighbour to the west i.e. Pakistan mainly instigates the problem of insurgency and terrorism.

For over three decades the terrorist operating in Kashmir are being provided direct assistance for their activities in J&K. Pakistan has organised terrorist camps situated in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK). Pakistan provides following assistance to the terrorists:

- Training camps for newly recruited terrorists,
- Provide launchpads for carrying out terrorist attacks across the border on the Indian Soil.
- Terrorists are provided arms ammunition communication equipment for their operation in J&K.

Hence, for countering this menace of cross border terrorism in J& K the Army has been taken with bring peace to the state by readucing the violence.

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As part of the direct involvement the Indian Army has raised a specialised counter insurgency force named Rashtriya Rifles (RR) which is specifically trained to carry out counter insurgency operations in the high altitude theatre of J & K.

In the Northeast a number of insurgent groups like the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA), National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) and the United National Liberation Front (UNLF) are carrying out their terrorist operations against the Indian establishments by operating across the porous border between India and Myanmar. These terrorist groups have their bases in Myanmar and receive their arms and ammunitions from various Southeast Asian nations.

The border is very difficult to be fenced mainly due to its geographic terrain which consists of mountains, valleys and dense forests. Hence the insurgent groups easily move in and out of India to carry out their terrorist activity. Due to the nature of the border it makes the task of the Indian security forces to patrol and secure the borders extremely difficult.

Assam Rifles

Similar to the Rashtriya Rifles in J & K, in the Northeastern States the Assam Rifles is the specialised force that carries out anti- insurgency operations in difficult terrain of the region. The Assam Rifles raised as Cachar Levy in 1835 is the oldest Central Para Military Force in India. The Force was raised mainly to guard the alluvial plains of Assam from the wild and unruly tribes inhabiting the surrounding hill tracts. This was the earliest embodied unit of what eventually developed into the Assam Rifles.

The Force is a potent organization with 46 battalions and its associated command and administrative back up. It is designated by the GoM committee as the Border Guarding Force for the Indo - Myanmar border and is also its lead intelligence agency. Look at the logo of the Assam Rifles given below.



Fig.18.2 Assam Rifles Logo

So, what functions does the Assam Rifles perform? Some of the specialist functions are -

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- Conduct counter insurgency operations in the north-east and other areas where deemed necessary, under control of the army.
- During peace and 'proxy war', ensure security of the indo-china and indo-myanmar borders.
- During war, rear area security in the area. Act as penultimate interventionist force of the central government in internal security situation, under the control of army; when the situation goes beyond the control of central paramilitary operations.



Intext Questions

18.1

1. Fill in the Blanks:

- (a) The name of specialised counter-insurgency force of the Indian Army in the State of J&K is _____
- (b) The oldest paramilitary force of India comprised fully of Army personnel operating in the Northeastern States is _____
- (c) The Insurgents of the Northeastern States make use of _____ International border to carry out their insurgency activities against the Indian Government.

18.1.2 The Indirect Role

So far we have seen that the Indian Army is playing a direct role in the fight against insurgency and terrorism in J & K and the Northeastern States due to the complex role of external involvement in the nature of the security threat there. However the nature of the security threat in Central India posed by the Naxalite insurgents is very different from that of the situation in the J&K and the Northeast.

The cause of insurgency in Central India is mainly due to the socio-economic problem in the tribal belt of India. The people who are the perpetrators of Naxal insurgency are essentially misled Indians who are lured into carrying arms against the Indian establishments to create a communist government.

Despite the fact that the Naxals are carrying out a violent armed struggle against the Indian establishment and population for decades, the Indian Government has steadfastly refrained from using its Armed Forces directly against the Naxalites. We must understand the fundamental reasons for this. This is due to two factors, namely

- First, the perpetrators of the Naxal insurgency are politically misguided Indians from poor socio-economic background in the tribal belt of India.

- Second, it is a fact that it is taking place in Central India away from our nation's boundary, which reduces the chances for hostile external factors utilizing the Naxal problem as an opportunity to create national security problems for India.

We must understand from the above factors that the Indian Armed Forces which has the fundamental objective of protecting India and its citizens against external threats are not tasked to carry out anti-naxal operations as it would mean that the Indian Government is using armed forces against its own citizen.

However, the Naxals are armed and therefore require force to stop them. The Government of India is primarily using its paramilitary force Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and the state police of the respective naxal infested States in Central India. So far the Indian Armed Forces have played an indirect role in the fight against Naxalism. Let us see those indirect roles that the Indian Armed Forces is currently playing to fight the naxalites:

- The Indian Army trains the CRPF commandos in the Art of jungle warfare and to defuse the Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) that are predominantly used by the Naxalites in their attacks against the security forces.
- The Indian Air Force (IAF) has employed its helicopters to carry out immediate medical evacuation of wounded paramilitary soldiers from the naxal insurgency hit areas where counter-insurgency operations are taking place. Over the recent years the IAF transport helicopters, the Mi-17 have also been used to transport the paramilitary troops fighting the Naxalitis.

Apart from this, the IAF has also used its unmanned aircrafts to carry out aerial reconnaissance of the Naxal movement and shared the information with the CRPF commandos carrying out operations on the ground.

18.1.3 Protecting India's Strategic Assets

Another important task of the Indian Armed forces in India's internal security protection of India's strategic assets. Before go to the role of Indian Armed Forces in the protection of the strategic assets of India, we must know what are strategic assets of a nation.

The term 'strategic assets of a nation' denotes the important military and civilian infrastructures, which are essential for a nation's security, technological advancement and economic growth.

The strategic assets of India include the following:-

- Military Bases
- Ports and airports
- Oil refineries

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- Nuclear power plants
- National capital - Parliament
- Important bridges across major rivers
- Dams - example BhakraNangal dam
- Offshore oil rigs

These infrastructures are also very essential for the three wings the Armed Forces to operate during wartime. Assets like naval ports and airbases are the most vulnerable because terrorists and other hostile forces may attempt to sabotage them as our powerful warships and aircrafts are the most vulnerable while they are on their respective bases.

The 2016 Pathankot airbase attack is an important example on how the terrorist groups may target an important strategic asset of India. Hence it is the vital duty of the our armed forces to protect their respective strategic assets.

18.2 Special Forces

What the specific divisions of the armed forces that are specially tasked to protect India's strategic assets? These are -

- **The National Security Guard (NSG)** is a special forces unit which derives its manpower from the Indian Army. The primary task of the NSG is to combat terrorism in order to protect states against internal disturbances. The NSG engages in important internal security operations like rescuing hostages from terrorist attacks such as hijacking and eliminating the terrorists who carry out these attacks. You can find many instances where the NSG has performed a brilliant role in rescuing hostages from terrorist attacks.
- **The `MARCOS'** is also a special forces units of the Indian Navy. It is specially tasked to protect the important naval assets and bases. They also engage in conducting amphibious operations against terrorists and antipiracy operations. They are the Navy's version of NSG.

The MARCOS commandos played a vital role during the 2008 Mumbai attacks along with the NSG. MARCOS play an active role in the counter-terrorist operations in J & K.

- **The Garud Commando Force** is the Special Forces unit of the IAF and equivalent to its counterparts in the Army and Navy, which are NSG and MARCOS respectively.

The most important task of the Garud Commando Force is to secure the critical air force bases and other ground installations.

During the 2018 Pathankot airbase attack the Garud Commando Force played

a vital role in eliminating the terrorists who attacked the base.



Intext Questions

18.2

1. What is the name of special force unit comprised of personnel from Indian Army tasked with counter-terrorism and hostage rescue operations?
2. Which is the amphibious special force unit of the Indian Navy tasked with protecting Naval assets and counter terrorism operation?
3. What is the commando unit of the Indian Air Force tasked to secure vital airbases and ground installations of the Air Force?

18.3 Indian Intelligence Agencies and India's Internal Security

Our Intelligence agencies play an important role in ensuring India's internal security. The deadly threat of terrorism can only be prevented through an efficient intelligence mechanism that shall form an essential part of our National Security.

For a Nation like ours, which is faced by multiple varieties of terrorism from both internal and external sources, we have two specialised agencies to collect intelligence from within India and outside India which are diagrammatically represented here for you.

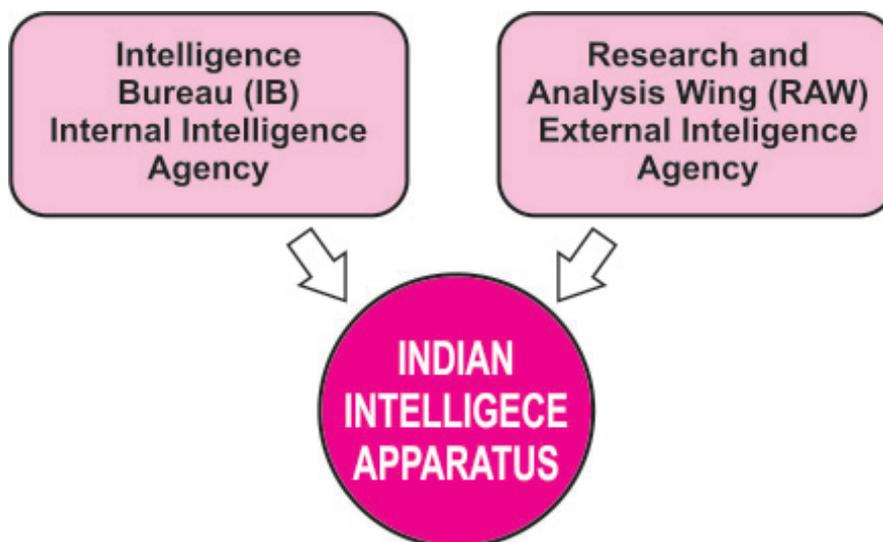


Fig 18.6 - India's Intelligence Agencies

18.3.1 Intelligence Bureau (IB)

IB is India's oldest intelligence agency formed in 1887 during the British colonial era. It is India's internal security agency responsible for managing domestic threats. IB



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technically falls under the authority of Ministry of Home Affairs. IB is responsible for counterterrorism, counterintelligence, and intelligence collection in border areas, infrastructure protection, and anti-secession activities.

Until the 1960's the Intelligence Bureau was tasked with collecting both internal and external intelligence. However after the formation of RAW in 1968, the IB is fully dedicated towards collecting internal intelligence.

18.3.2 Research and Analysis Wing (RAW)

The Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) is our primary foreign intelligence agency. After the intelligence failures of the Sino-Indian and Indo-Pakistani wars prior to 1965, our Government felt the need of dedicated foreign intelligence agency and as a result RAW was established in 1968 under the leadership of Shri Rameshwar Nath Kao. who became its first director.

We should note that within just a few years after its formation the RAW played a vital role in India's astounding success in the liberation of Bangladesh in 1971 and the accession of Sikkim in 1975. Today, RAW is considered as one of the top intelligence agencies of the world. The primary task of RAW is to gather intelligence from India's hostile neighbors, to deduce their plans against our Nation and make them unsuccessful in their intentions to harm India.



Intext Questions

18.3

1. Fill in the blanks:-
 - (a) India's External Intelligence Agency RAW was established in _____.
 - (b) The first director of RAW was _____.



What You Have Learnt

- Role of the Indian Armed Forces in counter terrorism and counter insurgency.
- The Direct and Indirect role of the armed Forces in Internal security of the country.
- Assam Rifles and its role in external and internal security of the country.
- The strategic assets of our country and their protection.
- There are some special forces which employed in safe guarding our strategic assets.

Armed Forces in Internal Security

- Indian Intelligence Agencies with special reference to RAW and IB.



Terminal Exercises

1. Explain the direct and indirect role of the Indian Armed Forces in upholding India's Internal Security.
2. Identify the various special forces of the Indian Armed Forces that are tasked with protecting India's Strategic Assets. Explain their contribution.
3. Explain the importance of intelligence agencies for India's internal and external security.
4. What special functions does the Assam Rifles do?

Answers to Intext Questions

18.1

1. Rashtriya Rifles
2. ASSAM Rifles
3. Indo - Myanmar

18.2

1. The National Security Guard (NSG)
2. The 'MARCOS'
3. The Garud Command Force

18.3

1. a) 1968
b) Shri Rameshwar Nath Kao

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