



KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY
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Army seeks inclusion of additional areas in Manipur under AFSPA

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Context

At a review meeting chaired by the Union Home Ministry on Wednesday, the Army sought the inclusion of additional police station limits in Manipur valley districts within the ambit of the Armed Forces (Special) Powers Act (AFSPA), a senior government official told The Hindu.

On November 14, 2024, out of 19 police stations in seven districts of Manipur, the AFSPA was reimposed in the jurisdiction of six in five districts of Manipur, mostly in the valley, in the wake of ethnic violence in the State that erupted on May 3, 2023.

Armed Forces (Special) Powers Act (AFSPA)

British Ordinance 1942: The Armed Forces Special Powers Act was enacted during WW II to control the Indian independence movement.

Initial Imposition in Naga Hills in 1958 was primarily to address rising insurgencies and to restore order amid violent separatist movements led by the Naga National Council (NNC).

Expansion to Other Northeastern States (1960s-1980s) AFSPA was extended to other northeastern states, including Assam, Manipur, Tripura, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya.

Extension to Jammu and Kashmir in 1990 amid an increase in militancy and separatist movements, particularly with the rise of armed insurgent groups like Hizbul Mujahideen and Lashkar-e-Taiba.

Amendments to the AFSPA in 1972, allowed the central government to declare any area as “disturbed” and to apply AFSPA without consent from the respective state governments.

The AFSPA gives unbridled power to the armed forces and the Central Armed Police Forces deployed in “**disturbed areas**” as specified under the Act to **kill anyone** acting in contravention of law, **arrest and search any premises without a warrant** and ensures **protection from prosecution and legal suits without the Central government’s sanction**.

The **State and Union government can issue notification regarding the AFSPA**.

A disturbed area is one that is declared by notification under Section 3 of the AFSPA. It can be invoked in places where the use of armed forces in aid of civil power is necessary.

An area can be disturbed due to **differences or disputes between members of different religious, racial, language or regional groups or castes or communities**.

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The Central Government, or the Governor of the State or administrator of the Union Territory can declare the **whole or part of the State or Union Territory as a disturbed area.**