Anti-Maoist Operations – Army and CAPF

What is the issue?

Appointing army officials as advisers for anti-Maoist operations in the Home Ministry needs a rethink.

What is the popular suggestion made in this regard?

- Whenever the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) personnel suffer reverses, there is immediate hue and cry, particularly from Army veterans.
- They say that training and skills of CAPF personnel need to be made better.
- They also suggest that ex-servicemen from the Army should be inducted into the CAPF.
- But the allegations that CAPF personnel are not well-trained falls flat given the history of the paramilitary forces.

How significant have paramilitary forces been?

- Border Security Force (BSF) and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel were in the battlefront in the 1971 India-Pakistan war.
- As part of the Indian Peace Keeping Force in Sri Lanka, CRPF personnel fought the militants there.
- The CRPF personnel have made record contributions over the years in the war history of India.
- Especially, at Sardar Post in the Raan of Kutch in 1965, a small CRPF contingent repulsed a Brigade strength attack of the Pakistan Army.
- It was highly appreciated as a paramilitary force could inflict heavy casualties on a regular Army Brigade.
- Likewise, if the north-eastern States enjoy peace and tranquillity these days, the credit goes in large measure to the CAPF personnel.
- They are deployed in every State in the region.
- Several operations conducted jointly by the CRPF and the Kashmir Police in J&K are also significant.
- Trained initially by State police officers, the Greyhounds is a specialised commando outfit of erstwhile Andhra Pradesh.
- It was able to inflict heavy casualties on Maoists.

- The elite Commando Battalion for Resolute Action (CoBRA) has played a stellar role in killing some top Maoist leaders.

How valid is the suggestion?

- The Army has never fought against the Maoists, and they lack exposure and experience to combat Maoists.
- The CAPFs in the field, on the other hand, have spent a major part of their lives combating insurgents and extremists.
- The CAPFs have well-established training centres across the country with instructors of high calibre.
- It would thus be absurd to appoint army officials as advisers for anti-Maoist operations.

Source: The Hindu

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