Chhattisgarh Maoist Attacks

Why in news?

Recently in Chhattisgarh in a massive security operation 23 jawans got killed in Maoist ambush.

What was the security operation?

- It was a massive operation which included the Special Task Force (STF), District Reserve Guard (DRG) and District Force of the Chhattisgarh Police, the CRPF and its elite COBRA unit.
- About 1,000 personnel were deployed from Bijapur alone where in 10 teams were launched— two from Sukma district and eight from three camps in Bijapur.
- Six of the eight Bijapur teams were launched from the Tarrem camp while the other two were from Usur and Pamed camp.
- Of the six teams, three — one comprising of DRG and STF, another of DRG team and one COBRA team — were launched.
- The operational plan was to travel to Alipuda and Jonaguda, 11 and 12 kilometres south of Tarrem respectively.

How was the intelligence gathered?

- The Chhattisgarh Police said that the operation was launched based on intelligence inputs of the commander of lethal Battalion 1 of the Maoists.
- The operational plan was based on information from the state SIB on the presence of 60 to 70 Maoists in Silger, IB inputs of 40-50 Maoists at Bodaguda and other local intelligence inputs.
- One of the primary sources of information is the intercepts of information from a receiver police who was placed on a hill in Dantewada.
- In Minpa region, the Maoists know forces are listening to their code.

How did the plan fail?

- The two villages that the security personnel passed, Jhiragaon and Teklagudem, were completely empty.
- When the forces didn’t find anything at the original target, they returned back.

- During the course of return, the Naxals covered the forces from all sides and attacked them who had sophisticated weapons and used in abundance.
- The kind of fire which came and the positions the naxals took was well-planned.
- The gunbattle began in Tekulugudam, around 12 km from the Tarrem camp.
- Once driven down the Tekulugudam hill, some of the security personnel seeked shelter in the houses but were attacked by bullets, UBGLs, along with hand grenades.
- Following this, the personnel were chased down the hill into the open plains.

Why it failed?

- The entire concept of large 1,000-personnel-plus operations needs to be relooked as this needs concerted thought which the security personnel haven't done.
- When there are large troop movements in a large operation, senior officers fly in and fly out, travel between camps happen often and it is too unwieldy to be kept quiet.
- So the Maoists had much time to strip the security forces and their weapons.
- In successful operations like the Greyhounds, there were small teams that hit based on solid human intelligence.
- This has to be done in the upcoming operations else the game of death and loss will keep happening.
- Hence there should be deep consideration of Maoist tactics and security forces and not knee-jerk response and ill-planned operations.

Source: The Indian Express

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