CHAPTER - 4
ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA IN INTERNAL SECURITY MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE NORTHEAST
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Introduction –

India has been facing multifaceted internal security challenges which have included left wing extremism, an ongoing proxy war in Kashmir and insurgency in some north east states. The security situation in the North-Eastern States has continued to improve. The activities of certain militant groups who continue to be engaged in building up capabilities are being closely monitored. In view of the external linkages of some of these insurgent groups, it will be necessary to remain alert and prepared to tackle the problem of militancy in the region.

The prevailing security situation in the north east has to an extent stabilised and is under control. Violence levels have subsided significantly as compared to previous years. There is widespread support for peace by all sections of the society thus facilitating progress on developmental projects. Presently, talks/ suspension of operation (SoO)/ ceasefire is underway with 15 major groups. The Army, along with other security forces, has played a pivotal role been in bringing about this welcome change.\(^1\) Some of the important and effective actions taken by the government of India are as follows:-

**North East Division, Ministry of Home Affairs -**

The north east division is responsible for issues pertaining to internal security in the north eastern region. The main issues being handled by the division are;\(^2\)

a) Implementation of the accords.

b) Border disputes between Assam and its neighbouring states to include Nagaland.

c) Scheme of modernization of the state police.

d) Matters relating to national level, sectoral level and joint working group meeting between India- Bangladesh and Myanmar.

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e) Monitoring of the law and order situation.

f) Surrender and rehabilitation policy.


h) Scheme of the civic action programme of army/ central police organisations.

i) Review of suspension of operations/ peace talks with various militant groups who abjure violence and give up arms.

Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region -

The government of India established a ministry dedicated solely for the development of the north east. It is seen as a catalyst in mobilizing focus and efforts in accelerating development in the region which is lacking and is one of the foremost reasons for insurgency. The ministry deals with matters relating to the planning, execution and monitoring of development schemes and projects to include power, irrigation, roads and communications.

North Eastern Region - Vision 2020 -

The Prime Minister had released the north eastern region Vision 2020 on July 2, 2008. It sets up the goals, identifies the challenges and suggests implementation strategies for various sectors for peace and prosperity of the region. Seventeen thematic groups have been constituted to translate the objectives enunciated in the vision document into concrete plans. The North Eastern Council (NEC) played a major role in bringing forth the Vision 2020 document. The NEC performs the following tasks;¹

a) It is an advisory body to the central government and the state governments for economic and social planning, inter- state transport and communication, power or flood control projects.

b) It formulates and puts across the balanced development of the NER in terms of unified coordinated regional plan, prioritization and location of projects and schemes in the areas. All this requires a review and timely action which is carried out by the NEC.

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005 –

The aim of the act is to enhance the livelihood security of people in rural areas by guaranteeing 100 days of wage – employment in a financial year to a rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. This is an important step by the government for employment, more so in insurgency areas so as to ensure that they do not join the insurgent groups because of poverty and un-employment.

Border Area Development Programme –

This programme is under the aegis of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and covers 17 states which share the border with Pakistan, China, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan. Thus, all the states of the north east region are covered by this. It encompasses to meet the special development needs of the people who are living in remote and inaccessible areas near the border. It is a 100 percent funded programme by the government of India. The gram sabhas of the villages are involved in the decision making process. The programme deals with socio-economic and infrastructure development of the villages. The major development projects include pucca road connectivity, electricity, telephone facilities, safe drinking water, school buildings for the primary level and construction of community centers. The plan of the village needs to be integrated with that of the district so as to ensure integration resulting in proper and sustainable development of the remote villages.

Central Police Forces (CPF’S) under the Ministry of Home Affairs -

The MHA is responsible for the internal security in the country. There are seven CPF’s under the MHA namely Assam Rifles (AR), Border Security Forces (BSF), Central Police Reserve Force (CRPF), Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), Indo–Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), National Security Guard (NSG) and Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB).

a) Assam Rifles –

The Assam Rifles was raised in 1835 as the ‘Cachar Levy’, and was tasked to guard the eastern frontier of Assam extending from the Brahmaputra River to Cachar and in addition to carry out punitive expeditions in the hill areas. It is also

\[4\] op. cit. no. 2

\[5\] Ibid.
known as the ‘friends of the hill people’. It has three inspectorate general headquarters, 9 sector headquarters and 46 battalions. It has participated in the two world wars. They also bore the brunt of the Chinese onslaught and have been involved in Sri Lanka and Jammu & Kashmir, combating insurgency, besides their tasks in the north east. The first draft when the Assam regiment was raised was provided by the Assam Rifles. Till 1965, the Assam Rifles worked under the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

The name of Assam Rifles was adopted after the Second World War. Eighty percent of the officers are from the Indian army on deputation and twenty percent comprise of the Assam Rifles cadre. The operational command of the force has always been with the army, though it is under the control of the MHA. The MHA has been making efforts to take over control of the Assam Rifles and bring it under its umbrella like the CRPF, BSF, ITBP and other forces. So far, they have not been successful.

The Assam Rifles has a dual role of maintaining internal security in the states in the north eastern region and also guarding the Indo–Myanmar Border. Assam Rifles has been deployed for counter-insurgency and border guarding role on this border. Out of sanctioned strength of 46 battalions, 31 battalions are for counter-insurgency and 15 are for border guarding role. Presently, all 15 border guarding battalion’s are deployed along Indo-Myanmar border on company operating base (COB) approach. The companies are deployed on all routes of ingress/egress and are checking infiltration, smuggling of arms, ammunition, drugs, fake currency notes etc.\(^6\)

b) **Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) –**

It was raised in 1939 as the crown representative’s police, and post – independence, renamed as central reserve police in 1949. Till the time the BSF and ITBP were raised, the CRPF also manned the borders. It participated in the operations at Hot Springs in Ladakh prior to 1962 and also participated in the 1965 war. In 2003, it was decided that all counter insurgency operations in the country would be handled by the CRPF.

i. The force is handling a wide range of duties to include law and order and

\(^6\) *Ibid.*
counter insurgency, anti – militancy and anti-terrorism operations. It also plays a key role in assisting states in maintaining public order and countering subversive activities of militant groups. The CRPF is an excellent force for the kind of job it was trained for i.e security during elections, guarding vital installations and buildings to include religious shrines and yatras, dharnas etc.

ii. The shifting of the role to counter insurgency operations is a quantum jump, especially when such a move is embarked upon, without any degree of transformation. The force was not fully trained to handle counter insurgency operations because of which it has suffered and continues to suffer mass casualties. However, training is now being imparted for the counter insurgency role in the existing four Jungle/ Guerilla Warfare Schools at Silchar (Assam), Hazaribagh (Jharkand), Sapri (Himachal Pradesh), and Gwaldham (Uttarkhand).

iii. The CRPF is seconded to the civil administration, and consequently to the state police as well. It therefore implies that if the state administration and the state police do not have a strategy/clear mandate against insurgency, it becomes difficult for the CRPF to produce the results even if it is willing to do so. There is a need for quality leadership in the CRPF which is lacking and also regimentation which will give an impetus to the organization. The Government has set up counter insurgency and anti-terrorism (CIAT) schools in the states of Assam, Bihar, Jharkand, Chattisgarh and Orissa.

c) **Border Security Force (BSF)** –

The BSF was raised in 1965. Its operational responsibility is spread over 6385 Kilometers of international border with Pakistan and Bangladesh. It is also deployed on the line of control (LOC) in J&K under the operational control of the army.

d) **Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB)** –

The SSB was set up in early 1963 in the wake of India –China conflict of 1962 to build up the morale and capability in the border population against threats of subversion, infiltration and sabotage from across the border. It has been given the border guarding responsibilities along the Indo- Nepal and
Indo–Bhutan borders and has 25 battalions and 13 battalions deployed respectively.

e) **Indo–Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)** –

ITBP was raised in 1962 in the wake of India–China conflict. It is deployed from the north-western extremity of the Indo-China border up to the tri-junction of India, China and Myanmar.

f) **National Security Guard (NSG)** –

The NSG was set up in 1984 for specialized and high risk counter hijacking and counter terrorist operations. It has special action group (SAG) comprising of army personnel and the special rangers group (SRG) comprising of personnel drawn from the central police/ state police forces.

g) **Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)** –

The CISF was raised in 1969 to provide security cover to public service units to include domestic and international airports and fire protection cover to establishments.

**Intelligence Network at the Centre and the States** -

**Intelligence Agencies** - The security architecture at the national level consists of political, administrative, intelligence and enforcement elements. At the political level, there is the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS). The administrative element is the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Prime Minister’s office and the Cabinet Secretariat. The intelligence elements are spread over different ministries: there is the Intelligence Bureau (IB) which reports to the Home Minister; there is the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) which falls under the Cabinet Secretariat and, hence, reports to the Prime Minister; there are organisations such as Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC), National Technical Research Organisation (NTRO) and Aviation Research Centre (ARC) which report to the National Security Adviser; and there is the National Security Council Secretariat under the NSA which serves the National Security Council. The armed forces have their own intelligence agencies, one each under the army, navy and air force and an umbrella body called the Defence Intelligence Agency. There are other agencies which specialise in financial intelligence. These are the Directorates in the Income Tax, Customs and Central Excise departments, the
Financial Intelligence Unit, and the Enforcement Directorate. The enforcement element of this architecture consists of the central para-military forces such as CRPF, BSF, CISF, ITBP, Assam Rifles, SSB and the NSG. There is no single authority to which these organisations report and there is no single or unified command which can issue directions to these agencies and bodies.

**Multi - Agency Centre (MAC) -** Some changes have indeed been brought about after December 1, 2008. The most beneficial change has been the operationalisation of the Multi-Agency Centre (MAC). By an executive order issued on December 31, 2008, the MAC was energised with a broader and compulsory membership and a new mandate. Every piece of relevant information or intelligence gathered by one of the participating agencies is brought to the table. It is analysed and the analysis is shared with the participating agencies. Another beneficial change has been the extension of the reach of MAC to the state capitals and the setting up of the Subsidiary – MAC (S-MAC) in each state capital in which all agencies operating at the state level, especially the special branch of the state police, are represented.⁷

**Intelligence sharing at the State Level** - The intelligence sharing is carried out at various levels in the north east. Every state in the region has an S-MAC which is connected to the MAC in Delhi. In the state, State Intelligence Bureau (SIB) is the nodal agency which is responsible for co-coordinating and conduct of weekly meetings with representatives of various organizations. The unified command structure has the representatives of R&W, SIB in addition to the intelligence agencies of the armed forces, state police and Paramilitary Forces. This has provided a limited mechanism of intelligence sharing, which is meeting only the functional requirements. Through the MAC-SMAC- State Special Branch network, the Intelligence Bureau has been able to pull more information and intelligence from the state capitals. It has also been able to push more information and intelligence into the state security system.

**State Administration -**

**Organisation Setup** - The chief secretary of a state duly assisted by the

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district magistrates of each district is responsible for effective administration of the state in keeping with the directions from the state political leadership. They, in turn, have the state police at their disposal to ensure public order and law and order which is ensured by a network of police stations entrusted with covering the entire state. Each police station has a designated jurisdiction and is the lowest rung at the district level, responsible for ensuring internal security and law and order. A number of such police stations are controlled by a superintendent of police with his headquarters at the district level who in turn is responsible to the district magistrate. Districts are grouped together based on their geographic proximity to form a range which is the jurisdiction of a Deputy Inspector General of police, which in turn falls under the overall ambit of the Director General of Police who is accountable to the Chief Secretary of the state for ensuring internal security and law and order within the entire state. Over and above the state police, each state has an additional organization called State Armed Police.

**Indian Reserve Battalions (IRBs) -** As the name suggests, IRB’s are an armed reserve available at the state level to handle difficult law and order situations such as armed robberies, riots, terrorists and other such internal disturbances including state wide agitations and low level insurgencies which have the potential to disrupt law and order. The Ministry of Home Affairs has allotted 51 IRB’s to the north east, 9 each to Assam, Tripura and Manipur, 7 for Nagaland, 5 each for Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram, 4 for Meghalaya and 3 for Sikkim. Out of the 51 Battalions, 46 have been raised so far. The objective is to create a well trained armed police force in the states.

There are some procedural safeguards to the police and these are that a policeman cannot arrest or search without a warrant, an arrested person must be sent to court within 24 hours and extensive / multilevel supervision of the police work. As regards control over the police – every police action is open to judicial scrutiny; police is answerable to the elected representatives and to Quasi Judicial body like the National Human Rights Commission and is also under the control of the District Magistrate.

The Ministry of Home Affairs is implementing a scheme for the modernization of the state police more so for the new challenges of the internal
security. The Ministry has placed all the states of the north eastern region in category ‘A’ which implies that they will get 100% assistance from the centre to implement their annual approved plans.

**State Police** - It is important to maintain the civil face of the government, even while the armed forces of the union are deployed in aid of civil authority. The state police are the most visible symbol of administrative authority and its failure to effectively maintain law and order has not only eroded the credibility of the government but has also encouraged the criminal elements to persist with their unlawful activities with impunity. There has been political interference in the routine police administration which needs to be nullified and the force should remain apolitical.

With the army, and para military working under the army (like the Assam Rifles, for instance, in many areas), engaged in strength in counter-insurgency operations, the state police in the north east have virtually abdicated their responsibility on the terror front. The police in the states in the region have taken it for granted that it is going to be the Army or the para military that will do the counter-insurgency operations on the ground which involves taking direct action against the rebels.

It has been seen that the police face a psychological and motivation problem while deployed in counter insurgency operations. The police personnel are likely to be part and parcel of that very population to which the insurgents belong. In addition, some of the sympathizers or the insurgents may even be the kith and kin of the police who are looking for them. The police personnel and their families are also involved as they have to live and interact in that very community. Thus, at the end of the day, a main threat that the policemen have to face is the threat of reprisals against their families by the insurgents.

It is the police stations which should be giving actionable and prompt intelligence on internal security, while the state and central intelligence agencies are looking at the macro level. These police stations are in each sub division of the state in the north east, with strength of 15 personnel. In some of the states, there are hills and the plains areas. The hilly areas pose major problems for the police stations as their area of responsibility is vast, the terrain is inhospitable and the
numbers of villages are many. It is also to be kept in mind that they are trained for criminal investigations and not for counter insurgency and more so against the sophisticated arms and ammunition which are used by the insurgents with lethal and powerful ethnic political agenda.

The people will come forward to give the information, if they have faith in the police. It, thus, becomes imperative to closely examine the functioning of police stations and bring forth changes to make policemen truly people friendly. This can only be achieved by community policing, police reforms and use of the latest technology.

During the counter insurgency operations, the local policeman is supposed to accompany the security forces during an operation as he should be the one who provides intelligence and his presence is required as per the forums of law. However, this is not the case, as the policeman is in most of the cases not available due to the other commitments of criminal activities, does not want to get involved as he is not trained for counter insurgency operations, cannot cope up with the security forces due to lack of physical fitness and is also not armed to deal with the insurgent groups. All the official documentation is carried out by the police authorities after the operations are over.

The security forces want complete security of their operations. In fact, even their own troops are sometimes not apprised of the operation till as late as possible. If the police have to be apprised before the operation, then in all probabilities, it will be at the cost of security as they are susceptible to share the information with the insurgent groups being locals of the area and have to survive.8

The constabulary is the mainstay of our police forces, constituting 87 per cent of the total strength. Improving the image of the constabulary is, therefore, critical to building public trust. Police constabulary remains the backbone of police. They should be better trained and inculcated with the right attitude towards the public. The grassroots information and intelligence collection systems that have traditionally been a part of policing have languished or failed into disuse in some places. The role of a vigilant and effective beat constable can be vital in

8 Based on personal interviews.
checking the activities of networks, which otherwise operate under radar. A constable’s job is arduous and hazardous besides the force is overstretched and performs multifarious duties without getting basic facilities.

There is no substitute for the policeman as he is the gatherer of intelligence, the enforcer of the law, the preventer of the offence, the investigator of the crime and the standard-bearer of the authority of the state, all rolled into one. If he is not there, it means that all these functions are not performed. That the failure to perform essential police functions is where the rot began and that is where the rot lies even today. The police stations to an extent are, today, virtually unconnected islands. But because of telephones and wireless, and especially mobile telephones, there is voice connectivity between the police station and senior police officers. However, in the hill areas of the north eastern region, communication is a major problem and thus there is very limited communication between the police stations and the armed forces. There is no system of data storage, data sharing and accessing data. There is no record of crimes or criminals that can be accessed by a station house officer, except the manual records relating to that police station.

There is a need for more focused attention on the training of police officers. This should bring about better human development. But, much more efforts need to be put in the refresher training or for that matter in the reorientation of the cutting-edge police officers and men as it is they who are the ones whom the members of public get in touch with on a daily basis.

It is imperative that the skills of the police are upgraded and there is a change in their behavior and attitude towards the people. This will make the police force people friendly and a professional force. There is a need to project to the public, a high image of the police force and their success. They should also be made to understand the difficulties which the police face while conducting operations in addition to their normal duties to act against the criminal activities in their area of responsibility. The public should realize the inconvenience which they have to undergo by the actions of the police which sometimes cannot be helped. Hence, there is a need to restore the fitness, capacity and morale of the state police forces. The profile of the force level in the region depicts that there is a wide gap of the public-police ratio as compared to the task in an insurgency.
environment.

**North East Police Academy (NEPA) -**

North East Police Academy (NEPA) was established as a “Regional Police Training College” in 1977 at Barapani near Shillong. The aim of the college was to impart police training in the north eastern states. In 1980, it was renamed as NEPA. It conducts induction and in-service courses for the police personnel at all levels of the north eastern states. It also is a repository of information which relates to the north east issues on policing and internal security. It conducts courses in particular in counter insurgency and jungle warfare, disaster management, border management, management of terrorist activities, etc, besides the basic course for police officers of the north east.

**Ceasefire Agreements and Suspension of Operations -**

There has been a paradigm shift in fighting insurgency in the north eastern states. The centre has the responsibility of internal security in the country. The state governments are responsible for restoring law and order and also to fight insurgency with the police and army, have come up with initiatives to bring normalcy. These initiatives are in the form of Ceasefire Agreements and Suspension of Operations (SoO) with the insurgent groups who want to cease hostilities. There are two options available for a ceasefire agreement. Firstly, a statement by a representative of the government, the chief minister of the state is issued for a dialogue. For a response of this statement, any insurgent group which is interested may then overtly or covertly accept the call for the dialogue. Secondly, any interested insurgent group overtly or covertly call for a dialogue and in this case, the state then responds to the call. Thereafter, in both the options, these ceasefire agreements or SoO are signed between the government/state and the insurgent groups or a tripartite agreement between the government of India, state government and the insurgent group.

The ceasefire and the SoO don’t guarantee long lasting peace, as there have been problems which were faced by the state authorities. Some of the groups have used this period for consolidation and reorganization of their cadres, as also simultaneously carry out violence. The prolonged ceasefires and suspension of operations, establishment of the designated camps is not likely to result in
eradicating insurgency and also expect former militants staying in the camps to suddenly disperse and come to the mainstream. This can also lead to a coalition of the willing insurgents resulting in an anti-India exercise from within the region. The agreements, which are signed, do not address the issue of the increasing Inter factional conflict. However, by introduction of these initiatives, there has been a downward trend in the violence. The security forces have been able to concentrate on the counter insurgency operations on those militant groups who have not come up for talks/agreements. All these initiatives are a departure from the AFSPA.

There are issues endangering the peace process because of lacunae’s in the agreements. The insurgents in the camps should not be allowed to leave the designated camps. Even if the weapons are deposited within the camps, there are ample available outside for them to use and carry out acts of extortion and other criminal activities. They thus become legitimate extortionists. They are catering for the individual demands of the leaders which do not go well with the people who at some period were in favour of the larger cause of alienation and development. In addition, they use this period to acquire new recruits, spread their ideologies and attack rival groups and security forces. The moves of these insurgents are covered by the groups on some pretext or the other. Moderates can be easily influenced and are brought to the camps to the think tank under intimidation and coerced. It is imperative that legal actions should be taken against the insurgents of the camps if they are involved in extortion and other unlawful activities. Apart from this, the peace talks should not give liberty to the accused of his cases being written off, as there is a need for imposing certain restrictions. There is a need to carry out proper scrutiny of the cadres and their leaders before they are allowed to become part of the mainstream. To facilitate this, people should be included and only through consensus and local determinants they should be allowed to join the mainstream. It is imperative that the monitoring committee does not become callous in their approach as regards implementing of the ground rules is concerned. If there is any violation, then the accountability must be fixed. As per instructions, if there is any apprehension made by the state/central security forces, it has to be conveyed to the Ministry of Home Affairs immediately on occurrence. It has been seen that a lenient view of the same is taken by the
There have been cases where the police have arrested cadres while they were trying to extort money from the public, and more so in big towns which are miles away from the designated camps. When confronted, the charges are refuted by the cadres on the pretext that they were not carrying out extortion but accepting donations, which is not a violation of the ceasefire ground rules.

There have been a numbers of ceasefire Agreements and SoO signed with various groups in the north east. Their details are as follows;

**Ceasefire Agreements -**
- a) NSCN (IM).
- b) NSCN (K).
- (c)NSCN (Khole).

**Suspension of Operations -**
- a) Faction of United People’s Democratic Solidarity (UPDS).
- b) Dima Halam Daogah (Nunisa Group).
- c) National Democratic Front of Bodoland (P).
- d) Achik National Volunteer Council (ANVC).
- e) Kuki National Organization (KNO).
- f) United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA).
- g) Dima Halam Daogah (J).
- h) Karbi Longri National Liberation Front (KLNLF).
- i) United People’s Front (UPF).  

It is pertinent to mention that there is a case which is a challenge to the implementers of these agreements which has been successful and that was the signing of the memorandum of settlement between the government of India, the state government of Assam and the Bodo Liberation Tigers (BLT) in February 2003, which resulted in laying of the arms by the outfit and joining the main political stream.

Keeping in view the multiplicity of diverse ethnic groups, and the resultant complex situation in the region, the government has been open to talks with such groups which categorically abjure violence. As a result, suspension of operations,

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agreements have been entered into with a number of groups, who have shown willingness to give up violence and seek solutions for their problems peacefully within the framework of the Indian Constitution.

**Implementation of the Ground Rules** –

It is imperative that the ground rules for ceasefire and SoO are enforced by the state government and government of India. This involves institutional and organisational arrangements. Their details are as given below;

(a) **Institutional** -

   (i) **State level** –

   State level Strategy Group is formed under the Chief Secretary. The meetings of the Group are held once in a month or more frequently if the situation so warrants. The functions of the Group are as under:-

   a) Review the security situation including security of VIP’s, vital installations etc.

   b) Frame strategies for implementation of the ceasefire ground rules e.g prevailing upon the cadres to occupy the designated camps.

   c) Discuss modalities for implementing/ enforcing the decisions of the Chairman CFMG/CFSB and dealing with any stand off/potential clashes between various factions.

   d) Consider and suggest options to deal with the situations which are not resolved at the level of the Chairman CFMG/CFSB.

   e) Consider policy options and operational strategy to deal with the groups which have no SoO/ ceasefire with the government of India.

(ii) **District Level** –

   At the District Level, the district level monitoring group is headed by the Deputy Commissioner of the district comprising of district SP, Commandant Assam Rifles and the civil society representatives of the government of India. The role to be performed by the group is as follows:-

   a) The groups will co-ordinate the response to any situation pertaining to violation of the ceasefire ground rules that may develop in the district.

   b) It will take all necessary pro-active measures to defuse any emerging situation.
c) The Deputy Commissioner as the chairman of the group will keep the chairman, CFMG/CFSB and Chief Secretary/ DGP informed of any developments pertaining to violation of the ceasefire ground rules.

d) The group will take appropriate measures to implement the decisions of the state level strategy group particularly relating to implementation of the ground rules.

(iii) **Unified Headquarters**

The Unified Headquarters came into being in Assam, during Operation Rhino in 1991. This brought out the possibility that the army could work in tandem with the civil administration. There were a number of parleys on a regular basis between them setting out policy objectives. At the district levels, the civil administration, local military and para military forces got involved in co-coordinating operational matters. This concept, however, got finalized only in 1997 by the Ministry of Home Affairs. There is a unified command structure in Assam and Manipur. The organisations of these are at Annexure H and J respectively.10

**Operations Group**

The terms of reference given to the Operations Group of the Unified Command are as under:

a) Synergise the counter insurgency operations conducted by the army, central police organisations and state armed police including deployment/redeployment.

b) Decide on modification of the areas of responsibility between the army and CPO’s.

c) Monitor the proceedings of the sistrict level co-ordination committees.

d) Crisis Management.

**Difficulties/ Limitations faced in Implementation of the Unified Headquarters**

- There are certain difficulties/ limitations which have been experienced over the years. These are as given below:

a) **Sharing of Intelligence** - It is important that the sharing of intelligence is done both vertically and horizontally. Even though there is an intelligence set

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up, it becomes natural for every agency to give information up their channels first and then share, which results in it losing its value and by the time it percolates to the ground level, it is no more actionable intelligence. This is not being ensured and is a serious lacunae.

b) **Co-ordination with the CPOs** - The CPOs have their own agenda resulting in getting orders and clearances from their headquarters/organizations to take timely actions, thereby defeating the very aim of having a Unified Headquarters.

c) **Statutory Powers** - There are no statutory powers and is only a coordinating agency.

d) **Unhealthy Competitions** - In the conduct of counter insurgency operations, there is a need of synergy amongst the forces, thus, the one up-man-ship must be curbed. It, therefore, becomes imperative that the agencies are made accountable to the chairman of the headquarters. This can be achieved if the agencies have adequate responsibility, authority and accountability.

e) **Organisational** - The implementation and extension of the ground rules or code of conduct and the period of the agreement and SoO is reviewed by a joint monitoring group which comprises of the representatives of government of India, state government, security forces and the concerned insurgent groups.

For the success of the Ceasefire’s and the SoO, it is imperative that there is integration between the Ministry of Home Affairs, state governments, security forces and even the willing insurgent groups. The law and order is a state subject, however the Ministry of Home Affairs provides it the requisite support, be it financial, manpower or guidance. State wise security situation during the years 2005-2011 and list of major militant outfits active in the north east are appended as Annexure K and L respectively.\(^{11}\)

**Designated Camps** -

The government has authorized ‘designated camps’ for insurgents/insurgent groups who have ceased hostilities and have become a party to the ceasefire agreements and SoO. These designated camps can be defined as those

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camps which have been authorized and notified by the government as temporary residence for members of insurgent group that has ceased hostilities. The aim of these camps is to keep a vigil on these groups and ensure that they abide by the ground rules to which they are a signatory for ceasefire or SoO. They cannot be interfered by the security forces and the state administration unnecessarily. However, in some cases, because of the lack of involvement and keeping a check, some of the groups while being in the camps resort to anti-social activities to include extortion, violence and even return to their earlier insurgency mode. An example of this is the case of NSCN (IM) which is in a ceasefire agreement mode for last 14 years, has flouted all rules and is running a parallel government. Some of the designated camps are as under;¹²

a) **NSCN (IM) in Nagaland** - Mangalmukh (Hebron), which is the Headquarters. Lilen Kuki is the training area and other camps are at Tsemekhutima, Kopamedzu, Phiro, Mukalimi, Salumi, Kudeh, Ghatashi and New Chungtia.

b) **GPRN/NSCN (Khole group)** - Khehoi, Sampurre and Kopamedzu

c) **NSCN (Khaplang)** - Surohoto and New Phuktong.

d) **NSCN (IM) in Manipur** - There are no designated camps by the government, but there are three camps which are recognised and these are at Oklong, Buning and Phumching.

e) **All Kuki groups under SoO** - Camps allotted to them are at Molvailup, Semasung, Chalap, T. Gamlon, New Phaisat, Akanshu, Nathangjang, Lalon and Mongbung.

**Steps to ensure success of Designated Camps** –

There are important steps which need to be taken at various levels to ensure that the concept of designated camps is successful. These are as under;

a) It is imperative that the insurgent groups do not get a chance to regroup after the ceasefire and one of the methods to achieve this is that there are more number of the camps with a strength not exceeding 100 cadres in each of these.

¹² Based on personal interviews.
b) The backbone of the insurgent groups in terms of their battalions and companies should be broken to include their commanders.

c) As of now, there are groups in the ceasefire mode who still have their camps in the neighbouring countries of Myanmar and Bangladesh. This needs to be looked into by the government of India by having cordial relations which can ensure that no support can be given to these groups. These camps in the neighbourhood have the arms and ammunition which is being made use of by the groups even while under ceasefire.

d) As far as possible these camps should be at a reasonable distance from each other, so that the insurgents cannot move from one designated camp to another. If possible, these camps should be away from the economic hub of the state and also the populated areas. This will reduce the chances of extortion and kidnapping.

e) The commercial vehicles find problems in moving on the highways and other important arteries. It is on these that they are harassed by the groups to pay taxes at every nook and corner. Therefore, if these camps are located away from the highways and arteries and into the hinterland, the vehicle drivers will have an easy flow for their business.

f) Where ever possible, the camps should be in the close vicinity or en route of the camps of the security forces. This will help in monitoring the designated camps and the movement of the groups.

Revised Scheme for Surrender - cum - Rehabilitation of Militants in the North East -

The Ministry of Home Affairs, government of India has adopted a scheme for surrender - cum - rehabilitation of militants in the north east with the aim to wean away the misguided youth and hardcore militants that have strayed into the fold of militancy and now find themselves trapped into that net. It also looks at ensuring that the militants who have surrendered do not revert to militancy. This scheme has been revised since 1st April 2005. Copy of the scheme is at Annexure M. Salient aspects of the scheme are as under;

a) It is applicable to those militants who surrender with at least one weapon of the list as enumerated in Para 5 of the scheme. The states have implemented
the same, however, in exceptional and deserving cases, militants who surrender without arms may also be considered for rehabilitation under the scheme.

b) Militants who surrender under the scheme would be initially lodged in rehabilitation camp where they will be imparted training in a trade/vocation of their liking or befitting their aptitude.

c) The inmates of the camp will now be paid a stipend of Rs 3500/- per month as against Rs. 2000/- which was decided earlier as per the scheme.

d) The person will not stay for more than a period of three years in the camp.

e) The agencies which will be involved in the process of identification and rehabilitation of the surrendered militants are Inspector General (Special Branch), army, central para military force, state police / state administration and a nominated NGO.13

As regards surrender policy by the insurgents, it affects the leadership that there is a loss of the cadres, weapons, to some it may be the credibility and in cases the rehabilitation may become a problem. It will also undermine the aim of the cadre with the local population, that it had no strong reasoning for waging insurgency operations. It is important that the government evaluates the personnel who surrender to check whether he is worthwhile or not. The emphasis should be on surrender of the main groups. It has been seen that in some cases of surrender, that the arms and ammunition deposited at the time of surrender are minimal as compared to their level of operations. The net assessment is that these are token surrenders with the aim to dispose off their mercenary elements or those elements who want to avail the monetary benefits and lucrative contracts from the government.

The surrender involves that the personnel are brought in the mainstream and some of them are placed in the rehabilitation camps. The surrender and rehabilitation package as enunciated by the government has been successful to an extent, more so after the amendment which gives more financial support. However, does this package imply that the insurgency is being rewarded? If an individual is being given this kind of financial and other support, then why should

13 http://at www.mha.nic.in/pdfs/NE-III-Revised-Scheme300909.pdf
he not become an insurgent?

The government has been involved in ceasefire agreements, suspension of operations, surrender and killing of the insurgents in the counter insurgency operations. All the above options have their advantages and disadvantages as the after effects vary in the involvement of the government in each case. Whenever, there is a ceasefire or suspension of operations with the insurgents, the government has to cater for fulfilling the demands of the groups who have given up arms with a strategy for delaying the process. In the case of suspension of operations, the aim is to bring about a political settlement between the Government and the insurgent groups, and once achieved, the surrender of the cadres takes place. This political settlement is time consuming, maybe the government doesn’t want to settle the demands or has some other reasons.

The Government of India has had a long cessation of hostilities for 14 years with the Nagas but the problem eludes a resolution. There has been a widespread of the ethnic insurgencies and religious extremism in almost every corner of the north east which can become a part of global movement and not only an eye on assertion of identity. It is this global movement which seems to be on its way to replace insurgency. Even though the Government is involved in signing of accords, ceasefires and suspension of operations with the groups, the problems are getting compounded.

**Recommendations** –

Some of the recommendations which can ensure that the agreements, dialogues and surrender are successful are as follows;

a) **Mutual Consent** - The signing of the agreements is done after the mutual acceptance of the government and the insurgent groups. Therefore, it becomes incumbent to the insurgent groups to adhere to the ground rules and in turn the appropriate checks by the government monitoring committees are carried out.

b) **Role of the Government** - In spite of the fact that there have been a number of surrenders and agreements, there is still insurgency in the region. The government authorities prolong the negotiations with the aim to wear out the
insurgents and once the battle fatigue sets in, agreements are signed whose provisions are rarely implemented. This gives respite to the state government but alternatively it gives an opportunity to the insurgent leaders to gain power directly or indirectly. It is, thus, the onus of the government to ensure that the agreements are implemented in letter and spirit. The government can adopt measures to wean away the warring groups by exploiting ethnic differences.

c) **Civil Society** - There is a need to incorporate civil society or the citizens to become a part of the agreement framework. This will increase the faith of the population in the system.

d) **Initiatives to be Taken** - Government and the armed forces must generate initiatives to bring about the awareness of the insurgency and the actions being taken to the children in the schools and the colleges.

e) **Development in the Region** - There is a requirement of good governance and capacity building mechanism to bring an end to insurgency which will ensure development in the region.

f) **Modernization of the police** - The modernization of the police in all respects is the need of the day as the insurgents have the latest technology in terms of arms, communication equipment and are well trained to carry out his assigned task.

g) **Rehabilitation** - The government must ensure that the surrendered insurgents get what they are promised to include rehabilitation otherwise they will return to the insurgency mode. There should be a surrender policy in the insurgency ridden states.

h) **Publicity** - The Government must publicize the surrenders which will have a positive effect on the confidence of the public, raise the morale of the security forces and instill doubts in the minds of the insurgents.

i) **Utilisation of the Funds** - The Government must ensure that there is fair utilization of the essential funds and the same must be audited by the concerned agencies.

j) **Legal Actions** - The legal prosecution of the apprehended must be monitored at all levels.
**Reimbursement of Security Related Expenditure (SRE) -**

The government of India is implementing a scheme for reimbursement of Security Related Expenditure (SRE) for the states seriously affected by militancy/insurgency. It is being implemented in all states of the north east region except Mizoram and Sikkim with the aim to cater for the expenditure incurred by the states on various items, including raising of reserve battalions, logistics provided to the central police forces/army deployed in the state, ex-gratia grant and gratuitous relief to the victims of extremist violence, 75% of the expenditure incurred on petrol, oil and lubricants in operations and honorarium paid to village guards/village defence committees/home guards deployed for security purposes, expenditure incurred on maintenance of designated camps set up for groups with whom the central government/state governments have entered into agreement for SoO, is being reimbursed. The remuneration per VDP/VG/SPO which was restricted to Rs. 500 per month has been increased to Rs. 1,500 per month with effect from the 08.12.2010.14

**National Counter Terrorism Centre for India (NCTC) -**

After the Mumbai attacks in November 2008, the government realized that there were intelligence and operational failures. The home minister then chalked out the need for establishing a National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC) which will co-ordinate the anti-terrorism efforts of the centre and the states. Salient aspects of the NCTC are as under;

a) The NCTC would function under the Intelligence Bureau (IB).

b) The intelligence gathered of terrorism and associated criminality will be analyzed.

c) Data bases will be maintained and the appropriate responses will accordingly be developed.

d) Lastly, the NCTC will evaluate the threat assessments and disseminate the same to the centre and state Governments.

The NCTC has not found a positive response from the states and some of the Chief Ministers who are in the opposition. Their main resentment is that they were not made a party to it before being finalized, the organization has been

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empowered to arrest suspects and can undertake searches without it being referred to the state governments and that there is no legislation over the actions of the intelligence agencies. The government on their part has assured the states that there will be a ‘National Standing Council’ which will have representatives from the states, but this too has not found any change in attitude of the opposition.\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{15} P.R. Chari, “National Counter Terrorism Centre for India”, \textit{Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies}, Issue Brief No. 181, March 2012, New Delhi.