

## AFSPA lifted from parts of Arunachal Pradesh

The official said the decision was taken in the wake of significant improvement of the security situation in the State. Except for Tripura and Manipur, the Centre was issuing such notifications for Assam, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya.

Last year, the Home Ministry gave up its power and asked the Assam govt. to take a decision on continuing AFSPA in the State.

The Act is effective in the whole of Nagaland, Assam, Manipur (excluding seven Assembly constituencies of Imphal).

In Arunachal Pradesh it was in force in 16 police stations and in Tirap, Longding and Changlang districts bordering Assam. Tripura withdrew AFSPA in 2015.

The official said 2017 recorded the lowest insurgency incidents and casualties among civilians and security forces during the last two decades since 1997.

While insurgency has been wiped out in Tripura and Mizoram, there has been a marked improvement in the security situation in Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Manipur, the official said.

“In Assam, sustained counter-insurgency operations against NDFB (S) have resulted in the killing of 63 cadres and the arrest of 1,052 cadres/linkmen besides recovery of huge arms and ammunition between December 2014 and March this year,” the official said.

Across the north-east, there has been a reduction of 96% in casualties among the security forces from 289 in 1997 to 12 in 2017.

Civilian casualties also dropped by 96% from 907 in the year 2000 to 37 last year, the official added.

“Insurgency incidents reduced by 85%, from 1,963 incidents in the year 2000 to 308 in 2017. So far as kidnapping and abductions are concerned, there has been a 40% drop from 168 incidents in 2016 to 102 last year,” the official said.

On March 20, Minister of State Hansraj Gangaram Ahir informed the Lok Sabha that the Centre was considering a proposal to make AFSPA more “operationally effective and humane.”

Foreign tourists, except those from Pakistan, China and Afghanistan, would now be allowed to visit Nagaland, Mizoram and Manipur. The Home Ministry has relaxed the six-decade-old Protected Area Permit regime in the three States for five years with effect from April 1.

Under the Foreigners (Protected Areas) Order, 1958, all areas falling between the Inner line and the International Border of some States were declared as protected areas. Citizens from Pakistan, China and Afghanistan, however, continue to be banned from all PAP areas, including Nagaland, Mizoram and Manipur. As per a December 30, 2010 circular of the Ministry, Manipur, Mizoram and Nagaland were excluded from the protected area regime initially for one year from January 1, 2011, subject to some conditions.

END

crackIAS.com