

CRPF PLANS COUNTER TO VEHICLE-BORNE AMBUSH

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The Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) will strategise its security protocol in Jammu & Kashmir in the wake of the Pulwama attack.

Since this is the first ambush using an explosives-laden vehicle by a suicide bomber in the last 10 years, the force will modernise its Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) in the movement of convoy and security at camps, a senior CRPF official told *The Hindu* on Sunday.

Modern technology

“This is the first attack using vehicle-borne IED in the Valley since 2009. So the focus of security arrangements was more on preventing other types of ambush. Now that this unfortunate incident has happened, we will modernise the SOP by deploying modern technology, including drones, mine-protected vehicles, explosive detectors and jammers,” the officer, who preferred not to be quoted, said.

On questions raised as to why a large contingent of jawans were transported by road, he said about 50,000 CRPF personnel were deployed in Jammu & Kashmir and an average of 5% of them were on leave on any given day. The jawans targeted in the Pulwama attack were all returning to work from leave. The attack came as a rude shock...there was no specific intelligence alert on this terror module.

“About 2,500 personnel report at Jammu camp and move to Srinagar in convoys on a daily or alternate day basis. It is impossible to fly them all to Srinagar. Even if we use extensive flight services between Jammu and Srinagar, which is not practical, transportation by road from the airport to their respective deployment locations has to be by road. Airlifting the jawans is not viable and it doesn't serve the intended purpose of safety,” he said.

He parried questions on the nature and source of explosives since the matter was being probed by the National Investigation Agency and the Jammu & Kashmir police.

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