

Armed forces set to be reduced in northeast

Mr. Singh is likely to meet the Chief Ministers of the northeastern States after the elections in Nagaland, Tripura and Meghalaya. The three States will go to the polls in February.

“A decision has been taken that no more Central forces would be sent to the northeastern States. The State governments will deploy the police for regular law and order and patrolling duties. There is a plan to engage the State police in assisting the Border Security Force also,” the official said.

He said no insurgency-related incidents were reported in Tripura and Mizoram last year. No security persons were killed in Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and Mizoram.

A report presented at the meeting said the abductions were down by 36% in 2017, compared with the previous year. An official said 168 incidents were reported in 2016, and the number fell to 102 in 2017.

As per Section 3 of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, it can be invoked in places “where the use of armed forces in aid of the civil power is necessary.”

Except 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 government to take a decision on continuing the AFSPA in the State.

END

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