

# NAGALAND PROBE REPORT SOON: NARAVANE

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The Army's Court of Inquiry into the botched operation in Nagaland last month will submit its report in a day or two, Army chief General Manoj Naravane said on Wednesday. He said the law of the land is paramount and action would be taken as required.

"The regrettable incident which happened in Oting in Nagaland on December 4 is being thoroughly investigated... The inquiry is in its final stages and the findings would be submitted in a day or two," Gen. Naravane said, addressing the annual press conference ahead of Army Day. "I would like to clarify that the law of the land is paramount and we would always uphold that and take action as required in upholding it."

Fourteen civilians and a soldier were killed in Mon district on December 4. The Army constituted a Court of Inquiry headed by a Major-General rank officer to investigate the incident.

Stressing that the Army remained committed to the security of countrymen, even during the conduct of operations, Gen. Naravane said there were standard operating procedures (SOP) which have been refined over time. "Appropriate action will be taken and corrective measures instituted to further refine the SOPs based on the outcome of the investigation."

## 'Situation under control'

The overall security situation in the northeastern region was under control, and a robust security posture had significantly curtailed the operational space for terrorists, Gen. Naravane said. "We have been able to deinduct two Army divisions from counter insurgency and counter terrorism role which shows how much the situation has improved in the northeast," he added.

On the Indo-Myanmar border, due impetus was being given to the border guarding role by the Assam Rifles. "Here we do intend to progressively increase the number of AR Battalions deployed for guarding of the border," he said.

On the situation along the Line of Control (LoC), the Army chief said it had seen "marker improvement", with the observation of the ceasefire by both sides.

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