

Assam issues AFSPA order for State

For the first time since 1990, the Assam government issued orders declaring the State a “disturbed area”, imposing the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) for six months.

Such orders were earlier issued by the Union Home Ministry, which recently gave up its power and asked the State government to decide on continuing the enforcement of the AFSPA in the State.

Under Section 3 of the Act, it can be invoked in places “where the use of armed forces in aid of the civil power is necessary”.

Except in the case of Tripura and Manipur, the Centre had been issuing such notifications for Assam, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya.

The decision comes a year after the BJP came to power in Assam in 2016.

Huge powers

The AFSPA gives powers to the Army and Central forces deployed in “disturbed areas” to kill anyone acting in contravention of the law, arrest and search any premises without a warrant, and provide cover to the Armed Forces from prosecution and legal suits without the Centre’s sanction.

An official explained that the Assam government’s notification will not affect the operation of Central forces or the Army deployed in the State.

On August 4, the Home Ministry extended the AFSPA in Assam for 27 days, which expired on August 31.

END

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