

Forces hope for better intel flow now

'With No Political Roadblock, Cops Better Positioned To Provide Info'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Taking politicians out from the equation, Army expects police to be more forthcoming with intelligence that it depends on for carrying out counter-insurgency ops as well as more elbow room to smoke out terrorists holed up in populated areas.

Having already resumed their "pro-active" CASO (cordon-and-search) and SADO (seek-and-destroy) operations after Ramzan in J&K, security forces believe there will be a "much better flow of intelligence" for targeted counter-insurgency operations in the strife-torn state now.

With J&K headed for governor's rule, security officials say the state police without any political encumbrances will be better positioned to provide information against terrorists, their over-ground workers (OGWs) and hideouts to the security forces in real time.

"There is some political patronage to hardliners,

stone-pelting protesters, OGWs and others in J&K. With no politicians in the equation, security forces will have a much freer hand to ...conduct swift counter-insurgency operations to eliminate terrorists. But only a muscular approach will not do," said an official.

There is the hope that postings of "capable" bureaucrats and superintendents of police to critical insurgency-prone areas and districts, in the absence of political interference, can lead to better developmental initiatives at the grassroots while boosting the entire counter-terror machinery in the state.

"At present, several good officers are sidelined in J&K. The entire law and order situation has worsened after the killing of Burhan Wani in July 2016. There was very little political outreach or connect with the people, whose genuine grievances were not being heard or addressed," said another official.



ON TARGET

The security forces, on their part, had reluctantly agreed to the decision to suspend counter-insurgency operations in J&K from May 17 to June 17 during Ramzan because of their assessment that terror outfits would use the respite to regroup, re-arm and further build their underground networks.

The Army, for instance, had stressed the non-initiation of combat operations (NICO) undertaken in 2000-2001 by the then Atal Bihari Vajpayee government had largely failed to achieve any concrete results and led to a spike in violence levels.

3 Jaish ultras killed in first post-ceasefire op

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Srinagar: On a day when the J&K government collapsed following BJP withdrawing support to it, security forces intensified action against militants and eliminated three most-wanted Jaish men in the Tral area of South Kashmir's Pulwama district on Tuesday. In the encounter, two security personnel, including a CRPF officer, were injured.

J&K DGP SP Vaid had earlier confirmed the killing of two militants. "In the ongoing encounter at Hyena Tral, 3 important JeM militants trapped, 2 apparently neutralised. Good luck to our boys fighting," Vaid had tweeted. Later, the third trapped militant was also killed.

This is the first time after Union home minister Rajnath Singh called off the unilateral ceasefire three days ago that forces launched an operation against militants. The cease-

fire was announced in view of the holy month of Ramzan.

A police officer said that a joint team of Army, SOG and CRPF launched a cordon-and-search operation at Hayuna village of Nazneenpora following specific information about the presence of some militants.

As the joint team fired some warning shots, the militants hiding inside the village opened fire, leading to the encounter, the officer said. During the initial exchange of fire, an Army jawan and a CRPF officer suffered serious bullet wounds and were hospitalized, he added.

Meanwhile, one civilian was injured when militants opened fire upon him in the Srigufara area of South Kashmir's Anantnag district on Tuesday afternoon. The injured man has been identified as Javid Ahmad Waza, a vegetable vendor, who has been hospitalised.