

Reinforcing Stability: CRPF Seeks 20,000 New Troops for Kashmir and Manipur



The Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), India's largest paramilitary force and primary internal security combat unit, has formally requested the Union Home Ministry to approve the raising of 20 new battalions, amounting to approximately 20,000 additional troops. This significant expansion is being sought to address personnel shortages and enhance the force's deployment capabilities, particularly in the strategically vital regions of Jammu and Kashmir and the northeastern state of Manipur. The request underscores the evolving security landscape and the need for robust force presence in these areas.

The CRPF, which currently has a sanctioned strength exceeding 300,000 personnel, is facing a deficit of nearly 26,000 personnel. This shortage impacts its ability to effectively manage the dynamic law and order situations across the nation. A CRPF official, speaking on the condition of anonymity, stated, "The CRPF is struggling to maintain its deployment, considering the evolving law-and-order situation in the country, especially in Manipur and Jammu and Kashmir. We have sought permission to raise 20 new battalions, and the Home Ministry has assured us that approval will be given soon."

The urgency for increased deployment in Jammu and Kashmir stems from a recent surge in terrorist activities, including the April 22 attack in Pahalgam. These new battalions, once sanctioned, are expected to be equipped with sophisticated weapons and tasked primarily with assisting the Indian Army in anti-terror operations, particularly in the Jammu region, which has witnessed a rise in militancy. Furthermore, the CRPF is also in the process of raising a new battalion of its elite anti-Maoist commando unit, the Commando Battalion for Resolute Action

(CoBRA), for deployment in Jammu and Kashmir. This marks the first time CoBRA will operate in the Union Territory, focusing on anti-militant operations in forested areas.

In Manipur, the need for additional forces is driven by ongoing ethnic violence that has persisted since May 2023. The CRPF has already increased its presence in the state, and the new troops will further bolster efforts to restore peace and order. This strategic reinforcement aims to ensure continued stability and counter any emergent threats in these critical areas.

The Union Home Ministry has reportedly given in-principle approval for the 20 new battalions, with financial clearance also secured. This step signifies the government's commitment to strengthening internal security infrastructure. The focus on specialized training for these new battalions, tailored to the unique operational demands of Jammu and Kashmir, reflects a proactive approach to evolving security challenges. As India continues to address internal security dynamics, the augmentation of forces like the CRPF remains a crucial element in maintaining peace and stability across the nation.