

SECURITY REPORT



Canine Squads of India's Central Police Forces- A Positive Development

Canines have always been mankind's most trusted allies for ages. Through wars and times of peace, they have stood as the most faithful soldiers of their masters. In the fight against terrorism and insurgency, it is no different. While canines have been used in wars elsewhere for long and while Indian Army's Remount Veterinary Corps is exceptionally well known in breeding and training the finest canine warriors for Indian Army, in the recent past India's Central Armed Police Forces have shown greater interest in using the service of certain breeds of dogs in counter insurgency and anti-terror operations. CRPF in particular has been very aggressive in using the services of Belgian Malinois in anti-Maoist operations. The Anti-Maoist operations have always been very tricky since most of the time the Maoists are known to mount ambush and lay death traps through IEDs. The Malinois are experts in not just sniffing out IEDs but also ambush situations. In 2012, it was reported by Times of India that CRPF was making plans for training around 3000 Belgian Malinois. In most of the Maoist dens of Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand Belgian Malinois are now the preferred and most trusted weapon of the CRPF personnel during anti-Maoist operations.

While CRPF has set up its own Dog Breeding & Training School in the outskirts of Bangalore, BSF already has one of India's oldest dog training centres namely National Training Centre for Dogs (NTCD) in Tekanpur, Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh. As per the BSF website, this centre which was set up way back in 1970 has till date trained 3499 dogs in the areas of tracking, narcotic detection, explosive detection, guarding, anti-smuggling, search & rescue, infantry patrolling, poison detection and mine detection.

Meanwhile, not to be left behind and because of the increasing efficacy of dogs in all kinds of security related activities, other Central Police Forces like CISF, ITBP and SSB have also started their own centres for dog training and breeding. While the Sashstra Seema Bal's Dog Training & Breeding Centre was opened in 2013 in Alwar district of Rajasthan, CISF's dog breeding and training centre was started in 2010 in Ghaziabad city of Uttar Pradesh. CISF has deployed a large number of dogs for airport and metro security. Likewise, ITBP's own dog training centre namely the National Centre for Training of Dogs or NCTD near Chandigarh, which is now a declared centre of excellence, has not just been training dogs for itself but also for other forces. Recently, as per news reports, it has trained the canine squad of Special Protection Group or SPG. ITBP's dogs were also deputed for US President Barack Obama's security when he visited India last year. Further, it has also been reported recently that in the aftermath of the Pathankot terror attack in an IAF base, it has started better fortification of the bases and is also deploying trained dogs. In this respect, IAF is taking support of ITBP which is expected to provide trained canines for IAF services.

Further, India's National Disaster Response Force has also recently trained 160 dogs for disaster rescue operations, where trained dogs can play a stellar role in detecting injured victims from rubble. While the Central Police Forces have considerably armed themselves with trained canines, the state level police forces are also trying to do the same. Recent reports indicate that CRPF would be giving 30 trained Belgian Malinois to Anti Naxal Force division of Karnataka Police. Delhi Police also recently inducted 30 dogs to its dog squad.



young Kashmiris. He further used the concept of growing alienation of the Kashmiris as the weapon to fuel young Kashmiri minds. Fighting terrorism has always come with a cost and this incident saw the unfortunate injury of over 1500 security personnel. Central and State Government have approached the opposition and separatist leaders to combat the protest on the streets. Reports explain that this is not the first time that glorification of figure such as Wani has fueled protests in the valley and it is argued to be a new pattern of homegrown Kashmiri militancy

Protest Galore in Valley Post Wani

The valley has been entangled in turmoil ever since Burhan Wani, the 22-year-old “commander” of the Hizbul Mujahideen, was shot dead in an encounter in Anantnag on 8 July, 2016. The aftermath of his death got violent when youth took the fight with the security forces on the streets. The protesters resorted to stone pelting to show their anger and injustice while the police resorted to firing pellet guns. This resulted in loss of 45 lives and injuring over 1000 further curfew was imposed on 10 districts in the state.

Stone pelting has not been a new phenomenon of protest and agitation in Kashmir. With this incident we see a pattern of return of home-grown militancy with religious radicalisation this time. Burhan Wani as described by the media as the poster boy of the militancy in Kashmir operated purely in a home grown resistance. He took support of the social media and other means to attract

The fact that protesters being dispersed with pellets and killing, injuring and blinding civilians cannot be the continued process and the calm with such force is only momentary. The argument that arises here is how prepared is the government to fight such form of militancy and if there are alternate methods the state should restore to fight such incidents. Experts argue that the Army should exercise maximum restraint and not come under the pressure of the “rabble-rousers”. Appropriate outreach to the people along with political unity is necessary to counter such forms of aggression.

Terrorism has taken a global outreach and the locals are fused with grievance with personal experience of discrimination and unemployment. Can the security threats be seen within national borders? There is a need of action to counter ‘glocal’ threats and plan better peacebuilding measures. Stronger management and training should be resorted to counter such incidents and mainstream politics should indulge in deeper interaction with the people in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The measures taken here can be used in tackling similar situations arising in other parts of the country like the recent spate of the killing of 10 CRPF commandos in Bihar Naxal attack on 19th July, 2016.

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