STUDY NOTES · BASIC CONCEPT

What is Article 355 and how does it protect Manipur?

Defence & Security

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Article 355 of the Indian Constitution places a duty on the Union (Central Government) to:

- Protect every State from external aggression and internal disturbance
- Ensure that governance in the State is carried on in accordance with the Constitution
- It is a constitutional responsibility (duty), not an emergency power by itself.

How Article 355 helps protect Manipur

- In the context of ethnic violence, firing, bomb attacks, and prolonged unrest in Manipur, Article 355 becomes crucial in the following ways:

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1. Central Intervention for Internal Disturbance

- When violence goes beyond the control of state police, the Centre can step in
- Justifies deployment of CAPFs (CRPF, BSF, ITBP) to assist Manipur Police

2. Centre–State Security Coordination

- Enables intelligence sharing, joint operations, and unified command
- Helps prevent escalation into insurgency or civil breakdown

3. Protection of Constitutional Governance

- Ensures that law and order, civil administration, and citizens' rights do not collapse
- Acts as the constitutional basis for further steps like Article 356, if required (though not automatic)

4. Safeguarding Citizens' Rights

- Central oversight helps ensure protection of life and personal liberty (Article 21)
- Prevents selective or biased enforcement during ethnic conflict

5. Support for Rehabilitation and Peace-building

Enables the Centre to support:

1. Relief camps

2. Rehabilitation of displaced persons
3. Confidence-building and dialogue initiatives

Important Clarification

- Article 355 does NOT suspend the state government
- It is a preventive and supportive provision
- It must operate within constitutional limits and judicial oversight

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