

Chapter 7 **PARAMILITARY FORCES**

The primary task of the three armed forces i.e. Army, Navy & Air Force, which function under the Ministry of Defence is to defend the country from external threats by fighting wars when necessary, these forces are generally not committed during peace time but are kept ready, trained and equipped to fight a war at short notice if required. In times other than war, there is a constant need to have some armed forces for security of the international borders and to maintain internal tranquility and security of sensitive installations such as seaports, airports, railway stations, bridges, power stations, petroleum storage facilities, the coast line etc. To meet these security needs the nation has various Paramilitary forces which are largely under the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), with a few under the Ministry of Defence (MOD). The task of these forces is as follows:-

Role of Paramilitary Forces

- Maintain internal security of the nation.
- Assist the civil administration to maintain law and order when required.
- Protect the nation's coastline.
- Protect the international borders during peace time
- Provide security to important roads, bridge and important places during war.

The forces under the MHA are termed as Central Armed Police Forces; some of these are the Border Security Force (BSF), Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) and Assam Rifles (AR). The Coast Guard (CG) functions under the Indian Navy.

A) Border Security Force (BSF):

BSF came in to being in 1965 under the MHA, it is headed by the Director General BSF. The BSF has a number of BSF battalions under it which are quite similar to army infantry battalions. During peace time the BSF guards the Indo- Pakistan and Indo- Bangladesh borders.



Role:

- (1) During peace maintain integrity of the international border.
- (2) Prevent smuggling, infiltration and illegal immigration.
- (3) Assist the civil administration to maintain law and order when required.
- (4) Prevent terrorist activities from across the border.

B) Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP): Indo-Tibetan

Border Police was raised on October 24, 1962 specifically to guard the Indo – Tibetan Border along India's northern Himalayan region. It functions under the MHA extending from the Karakoram mountain ranges in Ladakh to Himachal and Uttarakhand.



Role:

- (1) Protect the international border and Actual Line of Control.
- (2) Guard the major Himalayan passes in its area of responsibility.
- (3) Prevent criminal activities such as smuggling and illegal border crossing or infiltration.

C) Assam Rifles (AR): The Assam Rifles was raised as Cachar Levy in 1835, it is the oldest Para Military Force in India. It was designated as the “Assam Rifles” in recognition of its commendable performance in World War II. The headquarters of this force is located in Shillong.



Role:

- (1) Protect Indian North East border.
- (2) Control the various tribal insurgencies in various North Eastern states of the nation.
- (3) Assist the civil administration to maintain law and order when required.
- (4) To help North Eastern states to maintain law and order. etc.

D) Coast Guard (CG): The Indian Coast Guard was started in 1 February 1977 and formally established on 18 August 1978. It operates under the Ministry of Defence, it is headed by a Director General. The Indian Coast Guard protects India's maritime interests and enforces maritime law, with jurisdiction over the territorial waters of India, including its contiguous zone and exclusive economic zone by working in close cooperation with the Indian Navy, the Department of Fisheries, the Department of Revenue (Customs) and the Central and State police forces.



Role:

- (1) Guard the two million square kilometers of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) in the seas along the nation's coastline.
 - (2) Prevent smuggling and piracy.
 - (3) Protect Indian fishermen and help them.
 - (4) Protect the marine environment.
 - (5) Protect surface and sub-surface natural resources.
 - (6) Collect marine scientific data for research purposes.

Activities

1. Write the differences between BSF and CG.

2. Interview a member of any Paramilitary force and write what you have understood on the following:-

(a) Name of the Paramilitary person:

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(b) Where he or she is serving?

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(c) Serving since

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(d) Rank or designation

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(e) What was the motive of joining the force?

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(f) What outstanding work he or she did in the services?

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(g) Memorable experiences

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(h) Advise or message to youth

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3. Enumerate the differences between ITBP and AR?

4. Role play (Form four teams, each team to make a presentation on a different paramilitary force). Write experience of your role.



Activities

5. Mark IndoTibetan Border Police Force and Assam Rifles work area in the outline map of India

