



Mains Practice Question

Q. Discuss the role of paramilitary forces in ensuring the internal security of India. (150 words)

01 Apr, 2019 GS Paper 3 Internal Security

Approach:

- Explain the Paramilitary forces.
- Write the role of all the seven existing paramilitary forces in India's internal security.

Answer:

A paramilitary organization is organized like an army and performs either civil or military functions. The Central Armed Police Forces (commonly referred to as Paramilitary forces) play an important role in border security as well as internal security. The Ministry of Home Affairs manages seven central police forces which assist in internal security and law and order.

Role of paramilitary forces in ensuring the internal security

- **Assam Rifles (AR):** Established in 1835, AR is the oldest of all paramilitary forces. AR's job is to counter insurgency and hold border security operations in the North-Eastern areas of India. Since 2002, they are also guarding more than 1,643 km long Indo-Myanmar border.
- **Border Security Force:** Established in 1965, their main role is to keep a watch over international borders against intrusion and to assist the Indian Army during war time, check infiltration on the borders. During the Kargil conflict in May-July 1999, the BSF remained on the heights of the mountains and defended the integrity of the country with all the might at its command in unison with the Army.
- **Central Industrial Security Force (CISF):** CISF's role is to provide security to Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs). It is the largest industrial security force in the world having about 165,000 personnel.
- **Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF):** The CRPF looks after the internal security of every part of India. It counters Left Wing Extremism, assists the State and Union Territories in police operations to maintain law and order. The CRPF guarded the India-Pakistan Border until 1965, after which the BSF was created. In 2001 Parliament attack, it was the CRPF troops that killed the terrorists who entered the premises.
- **Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP):** The ITBP was established after the 1962 Indo-China war for reorganizing the frontier intelligence and security set up along the Indo-Tibetan border and for keeping a check on illegal immigration and trans-border smuggling. In 2004, to achieve "One Border One Force", the entire stretch of India-China Border was assigned to the ITBP for Border Guarding duty and, accordingly, ITBP, replaced Assam Rifles in Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh.
- **National Security Guard (NSG):** It was raised in 1980s to combat terrorist activities and to ensure that states do not witness any internal disturbances.
- **Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB):** Established in 1963, the SSB guards the Indo-Nepal and Indo-Bhutan borders. The 2450 km long Indo- Nepal and Indo- Bhutan border is more challenging because the open border not only provides alluring encouragement to traffickers and smugglers but also offers huge opportunities for militants trained on foreign soil to infiltrate and pose a serious threat to national security.

Conclusion:

These paramilitary forces act as our first line of defence against security threats to India and hence their smooth coordination, communication and functioning is of critical importance, for which government should provide required mechanisms and platforms. Moreover, these forces need to be upgraded and trained to face the new forms of challenges arising like cyberthreats, technological, space warfares, thereby making them ready for any such eventualities.

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