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PARAMILITARY FORCES

A paramilitary force is a semi-militarized force whose organizational structure, tactics, training, subculture, and (often) function are similar to those of a professional military, but which is not included as part of a state's formal armed forces. Though paramilitary is not a military force, it is usually like military's light infantry force in terms of training, and organizational structure. Paramilitary force like B&F, which is for border guarding, comes under the Army during war and performs some functions of infantry.



Objectives

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- explain the meaning of paramilitary forces and
- describe the different types of paramilitary forces and their specific purposes.

6.1 Paramilitary Forces

Indian Paramilitary Forces refer to three organisations that assist the Indian Armed Forces closely and are led by officers of the Indian Army or Indian Navy. However, any law or rules of the Government have not defined them. Earlier, the term 'paramilitary' forces was used for eight forces:

1. Assam Rifles
2. Special Frontier Force
3. Indian Coast Guard
4. Central Reserve Police Force
5. Border Security Force
6. Indo-Tibetan Border Police
7. Central Industrial Security Force
8. Sashastra Seema Bal

Structure and Role of the Forces



Note

However, from 2011, they have been regrouped into two classes whereby the later six are called Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF).

The first three are the current paramilitary forces of India - Assam Rifles (part of Home Ministry), Special Frontier Force (part of Cabinet Secretariat) and Indian Coast Guard (part of Ministry of Defence).

6.2 Assam Rifles (AR)

The Assam Rifles is the oldest paramilitary force of India. The unit can trace its lineage back to a paramilitary police force that was formed under the British in 1835 called Cachar Levy. Since then the Assam Rifles have undergone a number of changes in its name the Assam Frontier Police (1883), the Assam Military Police (1891) and Eastern Bengal and Assam Military Police (1913), before finally becoming the Assam Rifles in 1917.

Over the course of its history, the Assam Rifles and its predecessor units have served in a number of roles, conflicts and theatres including World War I where they served in Europe and the Middle East, and World War II where they served mainly in Burma. In the post World War II period the Assam Rifles has expanded greatly, as has its role.

There are currently 46 battalions of Assam Rifles with a sanctioned strength of 63,747 personnel. It is under the control of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). The officers required for Assam Rifles is provided by Indian Army. Officers from the Indian Army are selected to serve a deputation duty in the Assam Rifles for a fixed number of years. They perform many roles including the provision of internal security under the control of the army through the conduct of counter insurgency and border security operations, provision of aid to the civil power in times of emergency, and the provision of communications, medical assistance and education in remote areas.

In times of war they can also be used as a combat force to secure rear areas if needed. Since 2002 it has been guarding the Indo-Myanmar barrier as per the government policy of '**one border-one force**'.

Assam Rifles ranks	Indian Army ranks
Director General (Army officer on deputation)	Lieutenant General
Inspector General (Army officer on deputation)	Major General
Deputy Inspector General (Army officer on deputation)	Brigadier
Commandant (Army Officer on deputation)	Colonel
Second in Command	Lieutenant Colonel
Deputy Commandant	Major
Assistant Commandant	Captain

**Note**

6.2.1 Border Security Force (BSF)

The Border Security Force (BSF) is the primary border guarding force of India. It is one of the six Central Armed Police Forces of the Union of India. It was raised in the wake of the 1965 War on 1 December 1965, "for ensuring the security of the borders of India and for matters connected there with". It is a Central Armed Police Force charged with guarding India's land border on western front during peacetime and preventing transnational crime.

It is a Union Government Agency under the administrative control of Ministry of Home Affairs. The BSF has its own cadre of officers but head, designated as a Director-General (DG), since its raising, has been an officer from the Indian Police Service. It also takes officers from IPS on deputation.

The BSF has grown exponentially from a few battalions in 1965 to 186 battalions with a sanctioned strength of 2,57,363 personnel including an expanding air wing, marine wing, intelligence units. It currently stands as the world's largest border guarding force. The BSF has played major role since the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971, including Operation Blue Star and Operation Black Thunder. It has also handled Counter Insurgency operations in Jammu and Kashmir.

6.2.2 Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)

The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) was set up under an Act of the Parliament of India on 10 March 1969 with a strength of 2,800. CISF was subsequently made a para military force of the Republic of India by another Act of Parliament passed on 15 June 1983. Its current active strength is 144,418 personnel. In April 2017, the government raised the sanctioned strength from 145,000 to 180,000 personnel. This force is directly under the Union Ministry of Home Affairs and its headquarters is in New Delhi.

The CISF provides security cover to 300 industrial units, government infrastructure projects and facilities and establishments located all over India. Industrial sectors like atomic power plants, space installations, mints, oil fields and refineries, major ports, heavy engineering, steel plants, barrages, fertiliser units, airports and hydroelectric/thermal power plants owned and controlled by Central Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs), and currency note presses producing Indian currency are protected by CISF. It, thereby, covers installations all over India straddling a variety of terrain and climatic conditions.

CISF also provides consultancy services to private industries as well as other organisations within the Indian government. The consulting wing has amongst its clients some of the renowned business houses and organisations of India including TISCO, Jamshedpur; SEBI Hqrs. Mumbai; Vidhana Sabha, Bangalore; Orissa Mining Co.,

Structure and Role of the Forces



Note

Bhubaneswar; Telangana Assembly, Hyderabad; Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corp.; HIL Kerala; IB Thermal plant, Odisha; IARI, Delhi; NBRI, Lucknow and Electronics City, Bangalore.

The scope of CISF's consulting practice includes security consulting and fire protection consulting.

CISF is a unique organisation in paramilitary forces for India, which works for sea ways, airways and some of the major installations in India. In CISF there are some reserved battalions which work with the state police to protect law and order. CISF plays a major role in Disaster Management, for Disaster Management course the personnel are trained at NISA, Hyderabad. Another unique thing which the CISF has is a Fire Wing which helps during fire accidents in Industries where CISF is on guard.

6.2.3 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)

The Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) is the largest of India's Central Armed Police Forces. It functions under the aegis of Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) of the Government of India. The CRPF's primary role lies in assisting the State/Union Territories in police operations to maintain law and order and counter insurgency. It came into existence as the Crown Representative's Police on 27 July 1939. After Indian Independence, it became the Central Reserve Police Force on enactment of the CRPF Act on 28 December 1949.

Besides law and order and counter-insurgency duties, the CRPF has played an increasingly large role in India's general elections. During all the Parliamentary elections the CRPF has played a major role in the security arrangements. Of late, CRPF contingents are also being deployed in UN missions.

With 239 battalions and various other establishments, the CRPF is considered India's largest paramilitary force and has a sanctioned strength of 313,678 personnel. Today, it is actively looking after the internal security of every part of India and has even operated abroad as part of IPKF and the United Nations peacekeeping missions. It is performing a variety of duties ranging from VIP security to election duties, from guarding of vital installations to the counter-Naxal operations.

The Rapid Action Force (RAF) - The RAF is a specialised 10 battalion wing of the Indian Central Reserve Police Force. It was formed in October 1992, to deal with communal riots and related civil unrest. The battalions are numbered from 99 to 108. RAF is a zero repose force which gets to the crisis situation within a minimal time, thus infuses an immediate sense of security and confidence amongst the general public.

Parliament Duty Group (PDG) - The PDG is an elite CRPF unit tasked to provide armed protection to Parliament House. It comprises 1,540 personnel drawn from

various units of CRPF. PDG members are trained in combating nuclear and bio-chemical attacks, rescue operations and behavioural management.

Commando Battalion for Resolute Action (CoBRA)

In 2008 a wing called Commando Battalion for Resolute Action (CoBRA) was added to the CRPF to counter the Naxalite movement in India. This specialised CRPF unit is one of the few units of the Central Armed Police Forces in the country who are specifically trained in counter insurgency warfare. This elite fighting unit has been trained to track, hunt and eliminate small Naxalite groups. There are currently 10 COBRA units. 10 CoBRA units that were raised between 2008-2011 have been trained, equipped and deployed in all LWE/ Insurgent affected areas of the states of Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Odisha, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, as well as Assam & Meghalaya. It is one of the best Central Armed Police in the country trained to survive, fight and win in the jungle.



Note

CRPF Ranks	Police Ranks
Director General (Apex Scale of the Indian Police Service)	Director General of a State Police Force
Special Director General (HAG+ Scale of the Indian Police Service)	Special Director General
Additional Director General (HAG Scale of the Indian Police Service, also available to BSF cadre)	C.P, ADG
Inspector General (IG)	IG/ Joint CP
Deputy Inspector General (DIG)	DIG/ Additional CP
Commandant (CO)	SSP/DCP
Second In Command (2IC)	SP/DCP
Deputy Commandant (DC)	Addl. SP/Addl. DCP
Assistant Commandant (AC): Group A Gazetted Officer	DSP/ACP

**Note**

6.2.4 Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)

ITBP was raised on 24 October 1962, under the CRPF Act, in the wake of the Sino-Indian War of 1962. The ITBP was intended for deployment along India's border with China's Tibet Autonomous Region.

In September 1996, the Parliament of India enacted the 'Indo-Tibetan Border Police Force Act, 1992' to "provide for the constitution and regulation" of the ITBP "for ensuring the security of the borders of India and for matters connected therewith". The first head of the ITBP, designated Inspector General, was Balbir Singh, a police officer previously belonging to the Intelligence Bureau. The ITBP, which started with 4 battalions, has, since restructuring in 1978 undergone expansion to a force of 56 battalions as of 2017 with a sanctioned strength of 89,432.

The ITBP is also trained in disaster management, and nuclear, biological and chemical disasters. ITBP personnel have been deployed abroad in UN peacekeeping missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Sierra Leone, Haiti, Western Sahara, Sudan, Afghanistan and elsewhere. Two battalions of ITBP are deputed to National Disaster Response Force.

6.2.5 Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB)

SSB is one of India's Central Armed Police Forces. It is currently under the administrative control of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Government of India. Prior to 2001, the force was known as the Special Service Bureau (SSB). As of 2017, it has 76,337 active personnel in 67 battalions.

The previous role of the Special Service Bureau was to motivate and mobilise India's border population for national security during times of peace as well as war and to promote a sense of security and brotherhood among the population, in furtherance of national integration. Its present-day role consists of preventing cross-border crime and smuggling as well as other anti-national activities.

In pursuit of achieving this mandated task, the SSB has been conferred with certain powers under the Criminal Procedure Code of 1973, the Arms Act of 1959, the NDPS Act of 1985 and the Passport Act of 1967. The Government of India also contemplates conferring additional powers under the Customs Act of 1962.

These powers are to be exercised within a belt of 15 km in the states of Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Sikkim, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh, running along the Indo-Nepal and Indo-Bhutan borders, as well as in any other area of SSB operation.



Intext Questions

6.1

1. What is meant by Paramilitary Forces ? Explain.
2. Name India's oldest paramilitary force.
3. Describe the eight paramilitary forces.
4. Explain the meaning of CoBRA

6.2.6 Indian Coast Guard (ICG)

The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) 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. The Indian Coast Guard was formally established on 18 August 1978 by the Coast Guard Act, 1978 of the Parliament of India as an independent Armed force of India. It operates under the Ministry of Defence.

The Coast Guard works in close cooperation with the Indian Navy, the Department of Fisheries, the Department of Revenue (Customs) and the Central and State police forces. Missions of Indian Coast Guard include:

1. Safety and protection of artificial islands, offshore terminals and other installations
2. Protection and assistance to fishermen and mariners at sea
3. Preservation and protection of marine ecology and environment including pollution control
4. Assistance to the Department of Customs and other authorities in anti-smuggling operations
5. Law enforcement in territorial as well as international waters
6. Scientific data collection and support
7. National defence during hostilities

Its additional responsibilities cover:

1. Offshore Security Coordination Committee (OSCC)
2. National Maritime Search and Rescue Coordinating Authority (NMSARCA)
3. Lead Intelligence Agency (LIA)
4. Coastal Area Security

The Indian Coast Guard organisation is headed by the Director-General (DG ICG) who is located at Coast Guard Headquarters (CGHQ), New Delhi. At CGHQ, he is assisted by four Deputy Director-Generals of the rank of Inspector-General, and other senior officers heading various staff divisions. Director-General of Indian Coast Guard is equivalent to Vice Admiral of Indian Navy.



Note



Note



ACTIVITY 6.1

Find out the name of the present Director General of the Indian Coast Guard and write 2 lines about his personal achievements.

The Indian Coast Guard operates five regions. Each region is headed by an officer of the rank of Inspector-General. Each of the regions is further divided into multiple districts, typically covering a coastal state or a union territory.

Indian Coast Guard Ranks	Indian Navy Ranks
Director-General	Vice Admiral
Special Director-General	Vice Admiral
Additional Director-General	Vice Admiral
Inspector-General	Rear Admiral
Deputy Inspector-General	Commodore
Commandant	Captain
Commandant (Junior Grade)	Commander
Deputy Commandant	Lt Commander
Assistant Commandant (Two year service)	Lieutenant
Assistant Commandant	Sub Lieutenant

6.2.7 Special Frontier Force (SFF)

The SFF is a paramilitary special force of India created on 14 November 1962. Its main goal originally was to conduct covert operations behind Chinese lines in the event of another Sino-Indian War. The force was established under the direct supervision of the Prime Minister, the unit under the operational command of IB and later R&AW, was designated the Special Frontier Force, and was primarily used for conducting clandestine intelligence gathering and commando operations along the Line of Actual Control with China.

SFF was raised with covert operations in mind, mainly along the Indo-China border, however SFF has been fielded by R&AW and the Indian government in various covert and overt operation theatres.

The SFF is also known as 'Establishment 22' or just '22' due to its first Inspector General, Major General Sujjan Singh Uban (Retd.) of Indian Army, who used to be commander of 22 Mountain Regiment during World War II, a Military Cross holder

and a legendary figure in the British India Army. Singh commanded the 22nd Mountain Regiment during World War II in Europe and a Long Range Desert Group Squadron (LRDS) in North Africa.

Based in Chakrata, Uttarakhand, the force was put under the direct supervision of the Intelligence Bureau, and later, the Research and Analysis Wing, India's external intelligence agency.



Note



Intext Questions

6.2

1. Describe the different tasks of Indian Coast Guard
2. What is meant by 'Establishment 22' ? Why is it called so ? Explain.



What You Have Learnt

- Indian paramilitary forces refer to the three organisation that assist the Indian Armed Forces. Earlier this term was used for eight forces - (i) Assam Rifles (ii) Special Frontier Force (iii) Indian Coast Guard (iv) Central Reserve Police Force CRPF (v) Border Security Force (BSF) (vi) Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) (viii) Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB). Nowadays the last six forces are called Central Armed Police Forces.
- Assam Rifles is the oldest paramilitary force of India. BSF guards the borders of the India. CISF provides security to industrial units, government infrastructure and projects. CRPF acts under the aegis of Ministry of Home Affairs and assists in maintaining law and order. ITBP was raised for deployment along the India's Border with China's Autonomous Region. SSB is under Ministry of Home Affairs and its target was to mobilise the India's border population for national security and promote a sense of security and brotherhood.
- Indian Coast Guard works in close cooperation with Navy and protects the artificial islands, fishermen and mariners at sea. Special Frontier Force SFF has the assignment to conduct covert operations behind Chinese Lines in event of another Sino-Indian war.



Terminal Exercises

1. Explain the functions and organisation of Central Industrial Security Force.
2. Explain the functions of the Border Security Force.
3. Explain the tasks of Central Reserve Police Force and provide its rank structure?



Note

Answer to Intext Questions

6.1

1. A paramilitary is a semi-militarized force whose organizational structure, tactics, training, subculture, and (often) function are similar to those of a professional military, but which is not included as part of a state's formal armed forces.
2. The Assam Rifles is the oldest paramilitary force of India. It was raised in 1835.
3. The Eight paramilitary forces are :
 - a. Assam Rifles
 - b. Special Frontier Force
 - c. Indian Coast Guard
 - d. Central Reserve Police Force
 - e. Border Security Force
 - f. Indo-Tibetan Border Police
 - g. Central Industrial Security Force
 - h. Sashastra Seema Bal
4. Commando Battalion for Resolute Action (CoBRA)

6.2

1. Different tasks of Coastal Guard are :
 - Safety and protection of artificial islands, offshore terminals and other installations
 - Protection and assistance to fishermen and mariners at sea
 - Preservation and protection of marine ecology and environment including pollution control
 - Assistance to the Department of Customs and other authorities in anti-smuggling operations
 - Law enforcement in territorial as well as international waters
 - Scientific data collection and support
 - National defence during hostilities.
2. The SFF is also known as 'Establishment 22' or just '22' due to its first Inspector General, Major General Sujan Singh Uban (Retd.) of Indian Army, who used to be commander of 22 Mountain Regiment during World War II, a Military Cross holder and a legendary figure in the British India Army.