UNIT 22 MILITARY AND PARA-MILITARY FORCES

Structure

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22.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this Unit, you should be able to:

- define the role and functions of Armed Forces, both in Peace Time and during Emergencies and Enemy Encounters;
- describe the primary role of Para Military Forces and their involvement in National Emergencies and major events; and
- discuss their interaction with each other and contribution during Disaster situations.

22.1 INTRODUCTION

Basically, it is the duty of the civil administration to be prepared for and to manage disasters (natural or manmade) when they occur. There is a structured organisation in which the district administration under the charge of the District Collector plays the vital role. The Police, which is a civilian service, assists in disaster management in the efforts related to law and order, evacuation, search, rescue, wireless communication, disposal of dead, and general security. Non-governmental organisations and community based organisations render help according to their capability and capacity. In most situations, this combined civilian effort is able to manage. However, when the disaster and its effects are of such severity and suddenness that is beyond the combined capacity of civilian agencies, the military and para military forces have to be summoned and they always rise to the occasion.

22.2 ROLE OF ARMED FORCES

The military forces or defence forces or armed forces play a very important role during disaster situation and also in the post-disaster scenario. Their main assets are: discipline, training, professionalism, specialized equipment, resources and above all a minimum response time. Generally, they are called upon to manage the following tasks:

- Evacuation
- Maintenance of essential services
- Distributing of essential supplies in remote and marooned areas.
- Transport of relief material
- Medical aid
- Management of relief camps
22.3 ROLE OF PARA-MILITARY FORCES

In the earlier days, Military i.e., the Armed Forces used to take care of the outside enemies and conventional police used to look after internal security and law and order. With the growth of population and new activities resulting in the need for specialized security services to valuable sectors such as the borders, the industry, vital installations etc., it became necessary to create a variety of paramilitary forces under the Govt. of India. More prominent of these paramilitary forces are:

(a) Border Security Force (BSF)
(b) Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)
(c) Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)
(d) Indo Tibet Border Police (ITBP)
(e) Railway Protection Force (RPF)
(f) Assam Rifles
(g) National Security Guard (NSG)
(h) Coast Guard
(i) Rapid Action Force (RAF)
(j) Territorial Army

Important point to note is that the Police Force is under control of the respective State Administration while all the para-military Forces including the “Civil Defence Organisation” are under the control of Government of India and these are deployed to assist the local police whenever necessary.

Apart from their primary role as their name implies-e.g. BSF guards the borders, CISF takes care of Central Public Sector undertakings including their security and fire fighting, all the Para-Military Forces are deployed in the troubled areas or during major national event like General/State Elections.

The Coast Guard is a special duty force for guarding the coasts and to deal with undesirable activities such as smuggling on the coasts.

22.4 SPECIAL ROLES OF AIRFORCE, ARMY AND NAVY

Armed Forces and para-military forces play important roles in disaster situations as described below:

Special Role of Air Force. During emergencies for heavy troop movement be it Army Personnel or para-military forces - the Transport wing of Air Force is called in, in a big way. The helicopters of Air Force are used for survey and dropping of food packets together with rescuing of stranded people, especially in flood situations. Air Force also has the responsibility of VIP/VVIP movement.

Special Role of Army. The local Army commander, anywhere in the country has orders from Ministry of Defence, to assist the civil authorities during any contingency. For this, however, only the District collector has the authority to requisition the aid of military and that too in extreme emergencies, on a written request. In riot-affected cities, places, Army Flag March - only parading is arranged in order to deter anti-social elements indulging in further trouble and to pacify common population by boosting their morale for peace and assurance of their safety and security.
Disaster Management: Role of Various Agencies

Special Role of Navy: The Navy has a special role in the event of a disaster on the sea or on coasts or in ports. Cyclones, storm surge or oil spill are the most prominent among the disastrous events that could occur in these locations. In discharge of their duties, the Navy is assisted by the Coast Guards.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answers.
   ii) Check your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

1) When are the military forces asked to help in disaster management and by whom?

2) What are the major para-military forces of our country and what are their primary functions?

3) How can the Defence Forces be useful in Disaster Management?

22.5 LET US SUM UP

The Army, Navy and Air Force constitute the Armed Forces. They have been given the main, defence, task of guarding our boundaries, our skies, our seas and thus the sovereignty and integrity of our nation.

With the vast boundaries, vast sea coast and growing external and internal problems and the situations created by natural and manmade disasters, a number of Para-Military Forces have been created like BSF, CISF, CRPF, Coast Guards, NSG, Assam Rifles, and Home Guards.
All the Military Forces have the mandate to aid civil authorities during disaster Management. The para-military forces, too, are sizeable extra help which can be requisitioned for combating large-scale disasters and their aftermath.

The discipline, training, equipment, resources and the quick response time make the military and paramilitary forces very useful in disaster management.

### 22.6 KEY WORDS

**Military**: The nation’s Armed Forces. This is a term with which the common man is familiar and includes all the wings.

**Para-Military Forces**: The forces of a military nature created for specific tasks.

### 22.7 REFERENCES AND FURTHER READINGS


### 22.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

#### Check Your Progress 1

1) Your answer should include the following points:
   - Military Forces are asked to assist the civil administration in disaster management when due to the severity of the situation, the civil administration finds it difficult to deal with the situation.
   - The District Collector is the designated officer authorized to ask for the help of military forces in disaster management.

2) Your answer should include the following points:
   - BSF (Border Security Force) CISF (Central Industrial Security Force) CRPF (Central Reserve Police Force) NSG (National Security Guard), Coast Guard. Their primary functions as their respective name implies, are:
     - To prevent enemy infiltration into the country across the border and prevent any nefarious activities at the border, from within, To guard the installations of Central Public Sector undertaking together with Fire Fighting Role. To provide protection to our seafaring vessels and fishing travellers and thwart any enemy mischief over our waters, etc.
     - In addition, they may be called upon to assist in disaster situations as the need arises.

3) Your answer should include the following points:
   - The Defence Forces have the attributes of discipline, training, special equipment, resources and a very quick response time. These qualities are necessary in disaster management. Defence Forces are especially useful for the following items of work:
     - Evacuation
     - Maintenance of essential services in remote and marooned areas
     - Distribution of essential supplies in remote and marooned areas
     - Transport of relief material
     - Medical aid
     - Management of relief camps