

2. Report on “Functioning of Border Guarding Forces”

Prelims Level: Polity and Governance – Institutional Reforms

Mains Level: GS-III Various Security forces and Agencies and their Mandate

Why in News?

- The Department Related Standing Committee on Home Affairs, currently chaired by Anand Sharma, has submitted a report on the action taken by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) with respect to the recommendations given by the committee in the 214th report regarding the “Functioning of Border Guarding Forces”.

Key Recommendations of the Report:

- It has objected to the overuse of the Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) for rigorous internal security and election-related duties to the extent that even the reserved battalions are deployed not giving them enough time for rest and recuperation.
- To boost the morale of the CAPFs, the committee insisted on limiting deputation of officers from the IPS and the armed forces to CAPFs at 25% and the CAPFs cadres should be given an opportunity to become the Director General of respective forces. However, the MHA, in its response to the panel, said, the 7th Pay Commission and the Committee on Allowance did not agree to such special pay to CAPF.
- The committee insisted on paying paramilitary service pay to the CAPF on par with the defence forces personnel.
- The committee noted that the defence forces personnel are being paid Military Service Pay in view of the risk to life and social and family isolation. So, it recommended that CAPF should also get similar incentive in the form of Paramilitary Service Pay as they also face similar risks and isolation.
- The committee has also noted it was pained to note that the reserved battalions, which are to be used judiciously and provided rest for being in a state of preparedness, are engaged in duties such as internal security and counter-insurgency, which are quite rigorous.
- It urged the Home Ministry to draw a line to allow much required rest and recuperation to the personnel and adhere to the laid down policy on “rest and recuperation”.
- Referring to suicides in the CAPFs, the committee urged the Ministry to put in place an institutional mechanism with representatives of the MHA, the Bureau of Police Research and Development, heads of various forces and experts in public health, mental health, psychology and psychiatry to address the issue.

Action regarding the Recommendations:

- of the 119 recommendations of the Committee made in its 214th Report, the MHA accepted and acted upon 29. The Committee decided not to pursue further action taken in respect of 50 while rejecting the Ministry's replies in respect of 17.

About Central Armed Police Force (CAPF):

- The Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) refers to seven security forces in India under the authority of Ministry of Home Affairs.
 1. Assam Rifles (AR)
 2. Border Security Force (BSF)
 3. Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)
 4. Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)
 5. Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)
 6. National Security Guard (NSG)
 7. Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB)
- Each of the seven has its own cadre of officers, but they are headed by officers of the Indian Police Service.

