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## **5. Cantonment Boards Gear up to COVID-19 Challenge**

**Prelims Syllabus:** Governance

**Mains Syllabus:** GS-III Disaster and Disaster Management.

### **Why in News?**

- Sixty-two Cantonment Boards spread over 19 States/Union Territories, across the country, with a population of approx. 21 lakh (including military and civil) have geared up to the challenge posed by Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

### **Highlights:**

- Instructions have been issued to all the Cantonment Boards to identify beds in hospitals/health centres and guest houses for any eventuality.
- Presidents and Chief Executive Officers of the Cantonment Boards are in constant touch with civilian authorities in their respective areas and providing required assistance whenever needed. All the advisories issued by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare are being strictly adhered to by all the Cantonment Boards.
- All the Cantonment offices buildings, residential areas, school premises, libraries, parks and markets are being sanitised regularly.
- Task forces have been set up consisting of office staff to ensure supply of essential commodities, food items, etc, especially for poor people residing in Cantonment areas.

### **Cantonment Board:**

- A cantonment board is a civic administration body in India under control of the Ministry of Defence.
- The overall municipal administration of the Cantonment areas comes under Cantonment Boards which are democratic bodies.
- The Cantonment areas were and are primarily meant to accommodate the military population and their installations.
- Cantonments are different from the Military Stations in that the Military Stations are purely meant for the use and accommodation of the armed forces and these are established under an executive order whereas the Cantonments are areas which comprise of both military and civil population.

### **Members:**

- The board comprises elected members besides ex-officio and nominated members as per the Cantonments Act, 2006.

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- The term of office of a member of a board is five years. A cantonment board consists of eight elected members, three nominated military members, three ex-officio members (station commander, garrison engineer and senior executive medical officer), and one representative of the district magistrate.

**Categories:**

- Cantonments are divided into **Four Categories, Namely:**
  - ✓ Category I – population exceeds Fifty Thousand.
  - ✓ Category II – population exceeds ten thousand, but does not exceed Fifty Thousand.
  - ✓ Category III – population exceeds two thousand five hundred, but does not exceed Ten thousand.
  - ✓ Category IV – population does not exceed two thousand five hundred

