
2. Role of Armed Forces in Coronavirus Outbreak Battle

Prelims Syllabus: Governance

Mains Syllabus: GS-III Various Security forces and Agencies and Their Mandate

Context:

- Army has moved in to take over the COVID-19 quarantine facility at Narela in Delhi. This has brought into focus the role of army in such situations, procedure to be followed and provisions in this regard.

What is the Procedure for Calling the Armed Forces to Help the Civil Administration?

- The procedure for requisitioning armed forces is governed under 'Aid to Civil Authorities' under the guidelines laid in Instructions on Aid to the Civil Authorities by the Armed Forces, 1970, Regulations for the Army and Manual of Indian Military Law.
- Civil administration requests the Local Military Authority for assistance, for the maintenance of law and order, maintenance of essential services, disaster relief and other types of assistance.
- Armed forces can be asked to provide troops and equipment for a flag march, rescue and relief, evacuation, and immediate aid.

Key Facts:

- Providing aid to civil authorities, as and when called upon to do so, is a secondary task for the armed forces. It cannot replace the primary role of ensuring external security and operational preparedness.
- The **National Crisis Management Committee (NCMC)**, headed by the cabinet secretary, is the final authority to decide on the number of armed forces personnel that can be deployed to aid civil authority.

What are the tasks expected to be performed in checking the spread of COVID-19?

- ✓ Maintenance of law and order.
- ✓ Crowd control and curfew in sensitive areas.
- ✓ Evacuation of civilians from affected areas.
- ✓ Provision of essential supply of electricity and water.
- ✓ Restoration of essential services.
- ✓ Emergency feeding and shelter.
- ✓ Prevention of panic, prevention of theft and loot.
- ✓ Guarding quarantine locations and detention centres.

-
- ✓ Surveillance through drones aerial platforms.

Who pays for the Costs Incurred by the ARMED forces in These Roles?

- The civil administration pays the cost of assistance provided by the Armed Forces.
- It is recovered in accordance with the instructions contained in Appendix 'H' to the Pamphlet 'Instructions on Aid to Civil Authorities by the Armed Forces 1970'.

