

The Inter-services Organizations Bill, 2023

Why in news?

Recently, the Inter-services Organisations (Command, Control and Discipline) Bill, 2023 was introduced in Lok Sabha which empowers the central government to constitute Inter-services Organisation.

What is the current setup?

- Presently, the service personnel of Air Force, Army and Navy are governed by
 - The Air Force Act, 1950
 - ∘ The Army Act, 1950
 - ∘ The Navy Act, 1957
- *Only officers of the respective services* are empowered to exercise disciplinary powers over the respective service personnel.
- This has a direct impact on command, control and discipline of the Inter-services Organisations (ISOs) and joint training establishments.
- In simple words, Commander-in-Chief or Officer-in-Command of such ISOs are not empowered to exercise powers over the personnel belonging to other services.

Inter-services Organisations (ISOs) include Andaman and Nicobar Command and Defence Space Agency and Joint training establishments includes National Defence Academy and National Defence College

What are the challenges in the current setup?

- **Parent unit** The personnel serving in the ISOs need to be reverted to their parent Service units for any disciplinary or administrative action.
- **Negatives** This is both time consuming and have financial implications relating to the movement of the personnel.
- Multiple proceedings It results in multiple sets of proceedings when the enquiry involves the same set of facts and circumstances but involves personnel belonging to different services.
- **Standard of discipline** Multiple proceedings demands expeditious disposal of cases which eventually affects the standard of discipline.

What is the Inter-services Organizations Bill, 2023?

• It aims to address these impediments to ensure discipline and faster disposal of cases without disturbing the unique service conditions or amending the service Acts.

Key provisions of the bill

- **Establishment** With the existing ISOs, the bill empowers the Union government to set up ISOs.
- These ISO can include a joint services command comprising personnel belonging to at least 2 of the 3 services.
- **Head of ISOs** <u>Commander-in-chief or the officer-in-command</u> will be the heads of ISOs and it empowers them to exercise command and control over the personnel serving in an ISO or attached to it.
- **Superintendence** The superintendence of these ISOs will be vested in the *Central Government*.
- **Parent Act** Personnel will continue to be governed by their respective service Acts while serving in or attached to an ISO.
- **Impact on theaterisation** The Bill ensure better management of theatre commands once they are operationalised.

Theaterisation of Armed Forces is a concept in which the three services will work as a single entity looking after security challenges in a specified geographical territory under an operational commander.

What are the impacts of the bill?

- Expedite disposal of cases
- Saving of time and public money by avoiding multiple proceedings
- Greater integration amongst armed forces personnel
- Addresses security challenges in a specified geographical territory

Ouick facts

- The 1st tri-service command is the Andaman and Nicobar Command which was formed in 2001.
- Shekatkar Committee is associated with military reforms.

References

- 1. The Hindu | The Inter-Services Organisations Bill 2023
- 2. PIB Shekatkar Committee
- 3. <u>Deccan Herald</u> Andaman And Nicobar Command
- 4. PRS Key Provisions Of The Bill

