

Ghost army

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In news— Recently, the US President has signed into law a bill titled, “Ghost Army Congressional Gold Medal Act”, essentially providing recognition to the ‘Ghost Army’.

About Ghost Army-

- It is a **tactical deception unit deployed by the US during World War II** which was activated by the US War Department on January 20, 1944.
- Ghost Army **refers to the 23rd Headquarters Special Troops** and the 3133rd Signal Company Special.
- The existence of the ‘Ghost Army’ was unknown for about 50 years after it was formed in January 1944.
- The unit **had a “strange mission”, to keep enemy troops in the dark** about the number and location of American troops.
- **In 1944, this unit was tasked with a mission to put on a show for the German troops** in an attempt to deceive them and manipulate their decisions.
- **Its existence was declassified in 1996**, when the official history, first written in 1945 by Captain Fred Fox—who served as an officer on the unit— also became available.
- **Their deception tactics involved using inflatable dummy tanks, personeel, trucks and sound effects.** The heaviest weapon in their possession was a 0.50 caliber machine gun.
- **Some of the operations they undertook include Operation Brest, when the 23rd Headquarters Special Troops used visual, radio and sonic deception** and one at Bettembourg, where the Ghost Army conducted its longest deception effort.

About Congressional Gold Medal-

- It is the Congress's highest expression of national appreciation for distinguished achievements and contributions.
- The first recipients of the medal were participants of the American Revolution, the War of 1812 and the Mexican War.
- Congress subsequently broadened the scope of the medal to include actors, authors, entertainers, musicians, explorers, athletes, humanitarians and foreign recipients among pioneers in some other fields.