

## Chief of Defence Staff, India

The Chief of Defence Staff of the Indian Armed Forces is the head and the highest-ranking officer of the Indian Armed Forces. The President of India is the supreme commander of the Armed Forces. The Chief of Defence is the military's chief executive with operational and strategic authority over the defence forces and not its commander.

### Overview of the Chief of Defence Staff

Facts about the Chief of Defence Staff are given in the table below:

#### Chief of Defence Staff (Chief of Defence Staff)

Status	Four-star officer
Member of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Chiefs of Staff Committee</li><li>• National Security Council</li><li>• Defence Acquisition Council</li><li>• Defence Planning Committee</li><li>• Nuclear Command Authority</li><li>• Defence Cyber Agency</li><li>• Defence Space Agency</li></ul>
Reports to	Ministry of Defence
Residence	New Delhi
Appointer	Appointments Committee of the Cabinet
Term of Office	Three years or until the age of 65; whichever comes first
Precursor	Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee
Formation	24 December 2019
First holder	General Bipin Rawat

### History of the Chief of Defence Staff

Although the idea of the creation of the Chief of Defence Staff position has been floated post the independence of India, it was officially suggested through the recommendation of the Kargil Review Committee after the end of the Kargil War (which ended on July 26, 1999). Subsequent commissions such as the Naresh Chandra task force in 2012 and the Lieutenant General D.B. Shekatkar Committee in 2016 had also proposed their own versions of a Chief of Defence Staff position.

On his independence day speech on August 15 2019, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the creation of the Chief of Defence Staff. A formal statement was issued by the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS)

on 24 December 2019 about the creation of the Chief of Defence Staff

## Description of the Chief of Defence Staff

In today's era of hybrid war, the Chief of Defence Staff is a critical position as it will play an important role in increasing coordination and combine overall combat abilities of the Indian Armed Forces. While the Defence Secretary will remain the main defence advisor, the Chief of Defence Staff will be acting as the single-point military advisor to the government and Prime Minister of India.

The Chief of Defence Staff is a four-star officer chosen among the ranks of officers currently serving in the Indian Armed Forces. As stated earlier the Chief of Defence Staff is a one-point military advisor who will not hold any military command. The Chief of Defence Staff will also be the head of all tri-service command structures, assisted by the Vice Chief of the Defence Staff as the deputy.

The Chief of Defence Staff will be responsible for the newly created Department of Military Affairs (DMA), which would come under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Defence

As the Permanent Chairman of Chiefs of Staff Committee, Chief of Defence Staff will perform the following functions:

- The Chief of Defence Staff is described as the 'first among equals among the service chiefs.
- The task of Chief of Defence Staff is to better standardize weapons procurement procedures and combining operations of the Army, Air Force and Navy.
- The Chief of Defence Staff has the authority to create theatre commands as and when needed.
- Command tri-service agencies, organisations, and commands including those related to cyber and space.
- Chief of Defence Staff will be a member of the Defence Acquisition Council chaired by the Minister of Defence and Defence Planning Committee chaired by the National Security Advisor.
- Bring about jointness and ensure optimal utilisation of infrastructure in the three Services.
- Implement a Five-Year Defence Capital Acquisition Plan (DCAP), and Two-Year roll-on Annual Acquisition Plans (AAP), as a follow up of the Integrated Capability Development Plan (ICDP).
- Assign inter-Services prioritisation to capital acquisition proposals.
- The Chief of Defence Staff' salary and perquisites will be the same as the service chiefs. Its details will come under the Right to Information Act.

## Reforms Slated to be Carried out by the Chief of Defence Staff

- Among the initial reforms by the Chief of Defence Staff was much awaited structural change through the creation of theatre commands. following are its key points –
- There are indications for the creation of two to five theatre commands to deal with challenges on various fronts effectively.
- Each command will have units from Army, Navy and Air-force working in synchronisation with each other to produce effective results.
- Each command shall operate independently and thus can act upon the task with agility and in a short time.
- Commands may include a peninsular command which shall include eastern and western command of Indian Navy, a dedicated command for Jammu and Kashmir, a dedicated command for logistics requirement of the three services, and an Air Defence Command among others.