



## Common Uniform in Indian Army

**For Prelims:** [Indian Army](#), Uniform Accouterments, Regimental Parochialism.

**For Mains:** Significance of Common Uniform in Indian Army.

### Why in News?

Recently, the [Indian Army](#) has decided that from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2023, all officers of the rank of Brigadier and above will wear **Common Uniform** items irrespective of their cadre and appointment, in order to promote and strengthen common identity and approach.

### What is the Uniform of Senior Indian Army Officers?

- **Current Position:**
  - Different branches of the Indian Army wear **different uniform accouterments**, such as berets, lanyards, and badges of rank, based on their regimental or corps affiliation.
    - Accouterments are additional items of **dress or equipment that are worn or carried, especially by military personnel**, to complete a uniform or outfit.
  - Infantry officers and **Military Intelligence officers wear dark green** berets, armored corps officers wear black berets, and other **corps officers wear dark blue berets**. Officers from the **Corps of Military Police wear red berets**.
  - As of now, all officers from the rank of Lieutenant to General wear uniform accouterments as **per their regimental or corps affiliation**.
- **New Uniform:**
  - All officers of the rank of **Brigadier, Major General, Lt. General, and General** will now wear berets (caps) of the same colour, common badges of rank, a common belt buckle, and a common pattern of shoes.
    - The **shoulder rank badges will be golden for all senior officers**.
      - As of now, officers from the rifle regiments such as Gorkha Rifles, Garhwal Rifles and Rajputana Rifles wear black rank badges.
  - The **headgear, shoulder rank badges, gorget patches, belts and shoes** of senior officers of Brigadier and above ranks will now be standardised and common.
    - There is **no change to the uniform worn by Colonels** and below-rank officers.
  - They will no longer wear regimental lanyards (cords) on their shoulders. They will also not wear any shoulder flashes like '**Special Forces**', '**Arunachal Scouts**', '**Dogra Scouts**', etc.
  - Thus, there will be **no item of uniform that will identify them as belonging to a particular Regiment or Corps**. All officers of these higher ranks will dress alike in the same pattern of uniform.

### What is the Significance of this Decision?

- This decision will help to promote a more cohesive and integrated organizational culture within the Indian Army.

- A standard uniform will ensure a common identity for all senior-rank officers, while **reflecting the true ethos of the Indian Army.**
- By eliminating **regimental parochialism and promoting a sense of common identity** and purpose among senior officers, the Army may be better able to meet the challenges of modern warfare and **adapt to changing strategic circumstances.**
  - **Regimental Parochialism** refers to loyalty towards one's regiment or corps. It is a sense of pride and attachment to one's unit that can sometimes lead to a lack of cooperation or competition with other units within the same organization.
- It may also improve the ability of senior officers to **command troops of mixed regimental lineage.**
  - By presenting a neutral uniform rather than a regimental one, senior officers **may be able to establish a more inclusive and collaborative leadership** style that transcends traditional loyalties and affiliations.

## What is the Tradition in Other Armies?

- In the British army, from where the **Indian Army derives its uniform pattern** and associated heraldry, the uniform worn by officers of the rank of Colonel and above is referred to as the **Staff uniform**, to distinguish it from the Regimental uniform.
  - The wearing of any item of Regimental uniform, particularly headdress, with the Staff uniform is not authorised.
- Among neighbouring countries, the **Pakistan and Bangladesh armies follow the same pattern as the British army.**
  - All regimental uniform items are **discarded beyond the rank of Lt Colonel.** All officers of the rank of Brigadier and above wear similar pattern uniform.

[Source: TH](#)

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