Air Marshal Ashutosh Dixit named next Chief of the Air Staff

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News

Air Marshal Ashutosh Dixit, now Vice Chief of the Air Staff (VCAS), was appointed the 29th Chief of the Air Staff of the Indian Air Force (7 Oct 2026). He takes over on 31 Oct 2026, when Air Chief Marshal Amar Preet Singh retires.

Key facts

Post	29th Chief of the Air Staff; from 31 Oct 2026
Predecessor	Air Chief Marshal Amar Preet Singh (28th)
Commissioned	6 Dec 1986 – fighter stream
Experience	Test pilot; 3,500+ flying hours – Mirage 2000, MiG, Jaguar, Tejas, Hawk, Kiran, IL-78
Operations	Safed Sagar (Kargil 1999), Rakshak, Sindoor
Awards	PVSM (2026), AVSM (2023), VSM (2011), VM (2006)
Training	NDA Khadakwasla; DSSC (Bangladesh); National Defence College

Background

- Constitution: Article 53(2) vests the supreme command of the Defence Forces in the President. Service chiefs are selected by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC – PM and Home

Minister).

- IAF set-up: HQ Vayu Bhawan, New Delhi; 7 commands – Western (Delhi), South Western (Gandhinagar), Central (Prayagraj), Eastern (Shillong), Southern (Thiruvananthapuram), Training (Bengaluru), Maintenance (Nagpur).
- Ranks: Air Chief Marshal is a 4-star rank. The only officer made 5-star 'Marshal of the Air Force' is Arjan Singh (2002).
- Sci-tech: the Tejas light combat aircraft is designed by ADA and built by HAL; Dixit once commanded the flight-test squadron at ASTE, Bengaluru.
- History: 'Operation Safed Sagar' was the IAF's role in the 1999 Kargil war; 'Operation Sindoor' was in May 2025.

Tamil Nadu link: Thanjavur air base hosts the BrahMos-armed Su-30MKI 'Tigersharks' (No. 222 Squadron, 2020); Sulur has Tejas squadrons; Tambaram has the Flying Instructors' School.

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