Defence Minister Rajnath Singh releases the new 'Land Warfare Doctrine' at the Army Commanders' Conference

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News

At the Army Commanders' Conference in New Delhi (21–23 Oct 2026; an apex forum held twice a year, chaired by Chief of the Army Staff Gen Dhiraj Seth), Defence Minister Rajnath Singh released the revised 'Land Warfare Doctrine' on 23 Oct. It is an overarching framework to prepare the Army for warfare shaped by drones, AI, precision weapons and multi-domain operations; it stresses jointness among the services, manned-unmanned teaming and alignment with 'Defence Forces Vision 2047'. The minister asked commanders to build a strategic vision for the next 20–30 years.

Key facts

Release	23 Oct 2026 – Rajnath Singh, New Delhi
Conference	Army Commanders' Conference, 21–23 Oct; held twice a year
Earlier doctrine	Land Warfare Doctrine 2018 (posted online, Dec 2018)
Key themes	Multi-domain ops, jointness, AI, drones, manned-unmanned teaming, resilient logistics
Army Chief	Gen Dhiraj Seth (since 30 June 2026; Armoured Corps)

CDS	Gen N.S. Raja Subramani (succeeded Gen Anil Chauhan, 31 May 2026)

Background

- A military doctrine is the set of basic principles on how to fight. The earlier 2018 Land Warfare Doctrine dealt with the China–Pakistan 'two-front' threat and Integrated Battle Groups (IBGs). The new doctrine, coming after experiences such as 'Operation Sindoor', puts technology-driven warfare at the centre.
- Polity: the post of Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) was created in Dec 2019; the first CDS was Gen Bipin Rawat (1 Jan 2020). The CDS heads the new Department of Military Affairs (DMA) in the Defence Ministry as its Secretary. The President is the Supreme Commander of the armed forces (Article 53(2)).
- History: on 15 Jan 1949 Gen K.M. Cariappa took over from Gen Francis Butcher, the last British chief, as the first Indian Commander-in-Chief – marked as 'Army Day'. Only two Army officers have held the rank of Field Marshal: Sam Manekshaw (1973) and K.M. Cariappa (1986).
- Gen Dhiraj Seth is the first Armoured Corps officer to become Army Chief since Gen Shankar Roychowdhury (1997); he succeeded Gen Upendra Dwivedi.

Tamil Nadu link: Sam Manekshaw, hero of the 1971 Bangladesh war and India's first Field Marshal, lived at Wellington near Coonoor in the Nilgiris after retirement; he died at the Military Hospital, Wellington, on 27 June 2008 and was buried in the Parsi cemetery at Udhagamandalam. Wellington is also home to the Defence Services Staff College (DSSC).

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