

Army mulling increasing retirement age of jawans

Plans to hike it to 20 years in a phased manner

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The Army is considering a proposal to increase the retirement and pensionable age of jawans in service from the current 15 years to 20 years in a phased manner. This will have a major impact as Other Ranks (OR) constitute most of the rank and file of the 1.3 million army.

As of now Jawans and Lance Naiks retire after 15 years of service, which is also the pensionable service limit with the option of a two year extension.

Dual benefit

The idea is to increase the pensionable service limit in phases to 20 years as the life expectancy has gone up in general since independence



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and soldiers retire relatively young, a defence official said. This will serve the dual benefit of giving longer tenure in service for soldiers while reducing the pension burden for the Army.

On Tuesday, Army Chief General Bipin Rawat held a meeting with the seven Army Commanders to review the progress of the four studies being currently undertaken on Army transformation. The studies by separate

groups of 7 to 8 officers each will look into the restructuring of the Army headquarters; force restructuring, which includes cutting down the strength; cadre review of officers and review of terms and conditions of Junior Commissioned Officers (JCO) and Other Ranks (OR).

Revenue to capital ratio

The Army is facing an increasing burden of revenue expenditure and pensions, leaving very little funds for new purchases and modernisation. In this year's Defence Budget, the Army's share was ₹1,28,076 crore for revenue stream, while ₹26,688 crore was the capital allocation. This does not include pensions. The current revenue to capital ratio is around 83:17. "While the ideal ratio is 60:40, the target is 65:35 which itself will be a great achievement," another defence source said.