

PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU (DEFENCE WING)

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

AIR CHIEF MARSHAL SAREEN TO BE CHAIRMAN CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

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The Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal S K Sareen will be the next Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee. He will succeed the Chief of the Army Staff, General Shankar Roychowdhury, who retires on September 30, 1997. At a function held in South Block here today the Baton of the Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee was handed over to Air Chief Marshal Sareen.

Addressing the function, Gen Roychowdhury expressed satisfaction at the excellent coordination among the three Services. Beginning from Operation Junagadh in 1948, the three Services have time and again shown exemplary devotion to duty in upholding the country's unity and sovereignty. Some of the successful instances of tri-Services coordination have been the Goa Operation, the 1971 war leading to the emergence of Bangladesh as a sovereign nation, operations in Srilanka and the Maldives. Gen Roychowdhury said that the Chiefs of Staff Committee had been playing a major role in evolving a coordinated approach to issues of national security. It has also succeeded in securing a better deal for the Armed Forces personnel in the Vth Pay Commission, he said.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chairman-designate, Chiefs of Staff Committee, Air Chief Marshal Sareen lauded the efforts of Gen Roychowdhury in guiding the Committee and assured him that he would continue to pursue the initiatives made by the out-going Chairman.

The Chiefs of Staff Committee comprises the Chiefs of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force. The longest serving Chief of Staff is appointed as Chairman. All inter service matters affecting the Armed Forces as a whole are discussed at the COSC forum.

The Chairman-designate, Air Chief Marshal Sareen is a Fighter Pilot with immense operational experience having held various key positions in the Indian Air Force including the Senior Air Staff Officer of Central Air Command, Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the South Western Air Command and the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Western Air Command. Under his Chairmanship, Inter Services cooperation is expected to get a major boost.