

Ex-serviceman Association

(Name & Address of Ex-Servicemen Association)

File No : _____

Date : May 2026

To

The Hon'ble Raksha Mantri
Ministry of Defence
Government of India
South Block, New Delhi – 110011

Subject: Representation for Redesignation of the Rank “Havildar” as “Sergeant” in the Indian Army

Respected Sir,

We, the members of the Ex-Servicemen fraternity and representatives of various veteran associations, respectfully submit this representation seeking a review and modernization of the nomenclature of the rank “Havildar” in the Indian Army and its redesignation as “Sergeant,” in line with globally recognized military standards.

The present rank title “Havildar” is historically derived from Persian/Mughal-era terminology and has continued from the British Indian Army tradition. While the rank carries immense honour and battlefield legacy, its nomenclature today often fails to reflect the professional status, leadership responsibilities, and international equivalence of the Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) cadre of the Indian Army. The rank is universally equivalent to “Sergeant” in most armed forces across the world, including the British Army and several Commonwealth militaries.

It is pertinent to mention that the Indian Air Force already uses the designation “Sergeant” for an equivalent rank structure, while the Indian Navy has also initiated reforms in PBOR rank nomenclature in recent years. This demonstrates that modernization of military rank terminology is both feasible and administratively practical.

The issue is not merely symbolic. Thousands of retired Havildars face difficulties in civilian employment, international security assignments, and professional recognition because the designation “Havildar” is not readily understood outside South Asia. In contrast, the term “Sergeant” immediately conveys leadership experience, supervisory authority, discipline, and operational responsibility in both national and global employment ecosystems.

The redesignation would provide the following benefits:

1. Improved Global Recognition:

The term “Sergeant” is internationally understood and respected across military, police, and security institutions.

2. Enhanced Employability of Ex-Servicemen:

Veterans seeking post-retirement employment would receive better recognition of their actual military experience and leadership credentials.

3. **Modernization of Military Identity:**

A contemporary nomenclature aligned with global military standards would strengthen the professional image of Indian Army NCOs.

4. **Uniformity Across Services:**

Alignment with the Indian Air Force nomenclature would bring greater inter-service consistency.

5. **No Financial or Administrative Burden:**

The proposal concerns only redesignation of nomenclature and would not affect pension, pay structure, seniority, service conditions, or other entitlements.

It is also relevant that redesignation and restructuring of ranks have precedent within Indian armed and paramilitary organizations.

In view of the above, we humbly request the Ministry of Defence to:

- Constitute a committee to examine modernization of Army rank nomenclature;
- Consider redesignation of “Havildar” as “Sergeant” and equivalent related appointments accordingly;
- Seek views from serving personnel, veterans’ organizations, and military historians;
- Introduce necessary policy amendments for implementation across the Indian Army.

The Indian soldier has earned unmatched respect globally through courage, professionalism, and sacrifice. Modern and internationally comprehensible rank nomenclature will further strengthen the dignity and recognition of our soldiers and veterans.

We sincerely hope that the Ministry will consider this long-pending demand sympathetically in the interest of the Ex-Servicemen community and the evolving professional image of the Indian Armed Forces.

With highest regards.

Yours faithfully,

(Name & Designation of Signatory)