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No F.28(1/82/D (Coord)
Government of India,
Ministry of Defence,
New Delhi, the 27th July, 1983.

To

The Chief Secretaries of all State
Governments and Union Territories

Subject : USE OF MILITARY RANKS

Sir,

I am directed to refer to this Ministry's letter No. 2B(1)/76/D (Coord), dated the 19th November, 1976 on the above subject, and to say that the guidelines laid down earlier for the use of Military Ranks by the retired Service Officers, etc. have been reviewed. In supersession of the existing instructions on the subject, it has been decided that, apart from serving officers of the regular Armed Forces, only the following categories of persons are entitled to use Military Ranks with their names in the manner indicated below, in each case :-

(A) Use of Military Ranks by Officers of Regular Armed Forces after Release etc.

(a) Regular/Permanent commissioned officers who retired with pension or gratuity, eg Brig A, AVSH (Retd), Air Cmdr B (Retd), Cmd C, VrC (Retd).

(b) Officers at (a) above who are granted honorary ranks after retirement may indicate their honorary rank in parentheses subsequent to their actual rank, eg Brig (Hony Maj Gen) A, AVSH (Retd) etc. During conversation such officers may be addressed as General or Admiral, etc. as applicable.

(c) Junior Commissioned Officers granted Honorary Commissions on retirement, eg. Sub Maj (Hony Lt) B (Retd).

(B) Use of Military Ranks by Junior Commissioned Officers while in Service.

Sub Maj (Hony Lt) B.

(C) Non-Commissioned Officers.

Non-Commissioned Officers granted honorary rank of Naib Risaldar/Halb Subedar on retirement, eg. Honorary Naib Risaldar/Naib Subedar B (Retd).

(D) (i) Senior Commissioned Officers (Branch List) granted Honorary rank of Lieutenant at the time of retirement eg. Honorary Lieutenant B (Retd).

(ii) Chief Petty Officers granted Honorary rank of Commissioned Officers (Branch List) at the time of retirement, eg. Honorary Commissioned Officers (Branch List) C (Retd).

(iii) Master Chief Petty Officers and Chief Petty Officers granted Honorary Commission while in service or on retirement, eg. A MCPO I (Hony Lt), B MCPO I (Hony Sub Lt) (Retd).

(iv) Master Warrant Officers/Warrant Officers granted Honorary Commissions while in service or Honorary ranks on retirement, ie. NWO/WO (Honorary Flying Officer) A, NWO/WO (Honorary Flight Lieutenant) B and Honorary Flying Officer A (Retd), Honorary Flight Lieutenant B (Retd), respectively.

(E) Use of Military Ranks by Members of Former State Forces.

(i) Officers of the former Indian State Forces who held regular Commission in those forces, eg. Capt A (Retd) (with the name of the State in brackets).

(ii) Officers and others granted Honorary ranks by rulers of former Princely States before their integration with the Union, eg. Honorary Major B (with the name of the State in brackets).

(F) Use of Military Ranks by Members of Territorial Army, National Cadet Corps, Auxiliary Air Force.

Serving Officers of the Territorial Army, Auxiliary Air Force and the National Cadet Corps, eg. Lt Col E(TA); Flt Lt A (Aux AF); Capt E (NCC).

(G) Use of Military Ranks by Members of Reserves.

Officers of the Reserves including Emergency List of Indian Navy, eg. Capt F (Reserve); Lt Cdr D (IN) (Emergency List); Flt Lt D (Reserve).

(H) Use of Military Ranks by Rulers of Former Indian States and Others Granted Honorary Commissions.

(i) Ex-Rulers of former Indian States granted Honorary Commission, eg. Major General G.

(ii) Others granted Honorary Commission, eg. (Hony) Major C.

2. Non-regular officers (eg. those who had held Temporary, Direct Service or Emergency Commission, etc) after release are not entitled to use any military rank. However, retired/released officers of the Territorial Army and Army Postal Services Corps can use their military ranks with the specific permission of Government.

3. Honorary military rank conferred by the foreign Government on an Indian citizen will, save in very exceptional circumstances, not be recognised for official purposes.

4. I am also to request that it should be ensured that the correct ranks are used in official correspondence, communiques and press releases in regard to retired/released officers or officers holding honorary ranks and that in cases where use of rank after retirement etc. is not permissible, the officer is referred to as Shri A. etc. Wide publicity may be given to these instructions so as to prevent misuse of military ranks by non-entitled persons.

Yours faithfully,

Sd/- x x x x

(Rakesh Sahni)

Deputy Secretary to the Government of India
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Copy to:-

All Ministries/Departments of the Central Government.
Military Secretary to the President.
Secretaries to all Governors.
Army Headquarters (AG/CW-2)
Naval Headquarters (DPS)
Air Headquarters (DD Org (Ceremonials))
All Inter-Service Organisations
All Public Sector Undertakings under the Ministry of Defence.

Copy also to :-

- (i) All Joint Secretaries/Directors/Deputy Secretaries in the Ministry of Defence.
- (ii) (i) SO to Defence Secretary.
(ii) PS to Secretary (DP)
(iii) PS to Secretary (DR)
(iv) PS to Addl Secretary
(v) PS to Addl Secretary (S)