



# Indian Navy Sheds Colonial Legacy

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## Why in News?

Recently, the [Indian Navy](#) has taken significant steps to shed its **British colonial legacies** by renaming **traditional naval symbols** and introducing new insignias.

- This transformation **underscores India's efforts** to redefine its naval identity to reflect its national heritage and aspirations better.

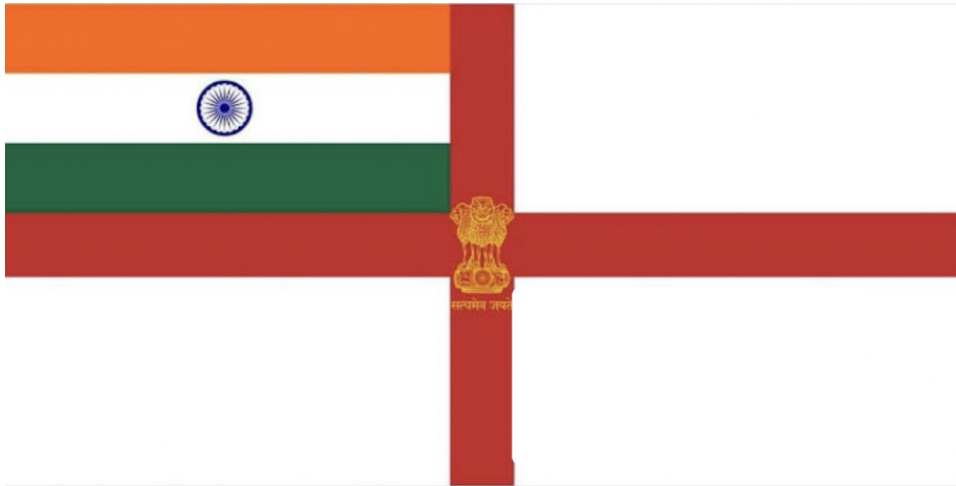
## What are the Recent Changes in Nomenclature?

- **New Nomenclature:** To indigenize and reflect national pride, the Indian Navy has renamed '**Jack**' to '[National Flag](#)' and '**Jackstaff**' to '**National Flag Staff**'.
- **Old Terms and Their Origins:** The terms '**Jack**' and '**Jackstaff**' are deeply rooted in British naval history and have been adopted by navies worldwide, including India, as remnants of British naval practices.
  - '**Jack**' typically refers to a **flag**, and the '**Jackstaff**' is a short pole from which this flag is flown, positioned at the bow of a ship.
- **Regulatory Framework and Legal Amendments:** The change in nomenclature was formalised through an amendment to the "**Regulations for the Navy (Ceremonial, Conditions and Service and Miscellaneous Regulation) 1963**", leveraging the powers granted by the [Naval Act of 1957](#).

## What are Other Symbolic Changes Across the Armed Forces?

- **Changes in Naval Insignia:** In September 2022, the Indian Navy adopted a [new naval ensign](#), discarding the British-inspired George's Cross for a design that includes a blue octagon with twin golden borders, the national emblem, and the motto 'Satyamev Jayate'.
  - This insignia draws inspiration from the **seal of [Shivaji Maharaj](#)**, symbolising the Navy's reach in all eight directions (four cardinal and four intercardinal).

# Old Naval Ensign

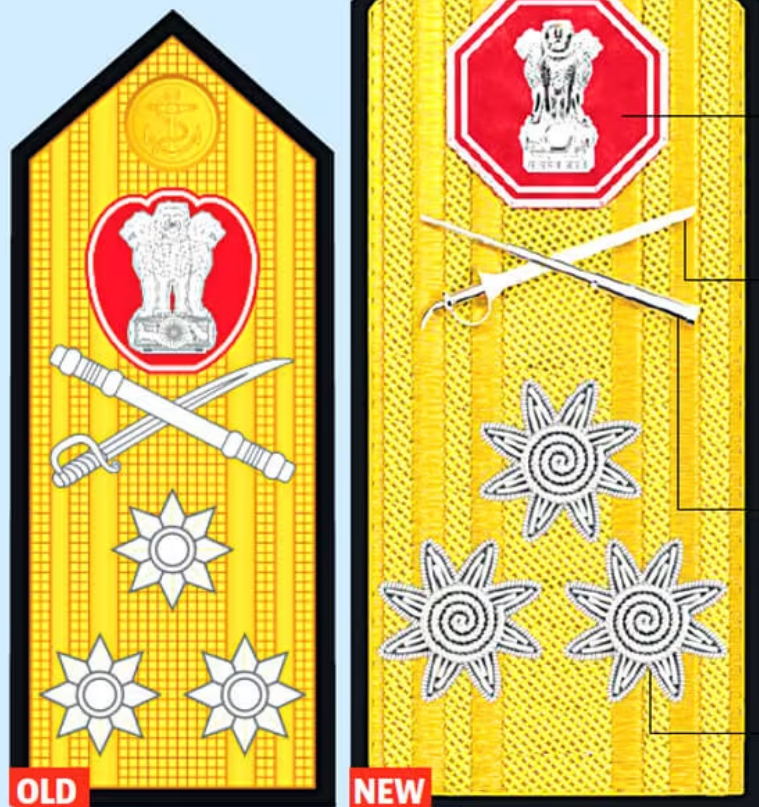


# New Naval Ensign

- **Change in Epaulettes of Naval Officers:** The Indian Navy also unveiled **new senior officers' epaulettes** inspired by Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's seal, symbolising a break from colonial legacies and a **celebration of India's maritime heritage**, with five modifications from the previous design for the navy chief, vice admirals, and rear admirals.

# Decoding the new epaulette

The new epaulettes, to be worn by the navy chief, vice admirals and rear admirals, from January 1, 2024, have five modifications over the previous ones



- 1 GOLDEN BUTTON**  
The golden navy button on the epaulettes no longer features the foul anchor with the nautical rope, associated with the colonial era, and the design has introduced a clear anchor
- 2 SHIVAJI'S SEAL**  
Navy has discarded the Crown-inspired red background on which the national emblem sits and replaced it with an octagon derived from Shivaji's seal
- 3 INDIAN SWORD**  
The generic sword has been replaced by a straight double-edged sword of Indian origin, akin to the Khanda used by Rajput warriors
- 4 TELESCOPE**  
The baton (a symbol of authority) has given way to a telescope symbolising "long-term vision and foresight"
- 5 STARS**  
The new style of stars on the epaulettes has no particular significance other than increasing aesthetic appeal

- **New Dress Code in Messes:** The **Indian Navy** has embraced its heritage by introducing the **Kurta-Pyjama in naval messes**, with senior officers among the first to don the traditional attire.
- **Changes in Indian Army:** The **Indian Army** has also started phasing out **traditional practices** such as **horse-drawn buggies at events**, retirement ceremonies, and pipe bands at dinners.
- **Significance:**
  - Renaming and redesigning naval symbols indicate both **distance from colonial ties and reasserting Indian sovereignty** and maritime heritage.
  - These steps align with India's **Prime Minister's "Panch Pran"** pledges for the nation's development by its 100th year of independence.

## National Flag

- The design of the Indian tricolour is largely attributed to **Pingali Venkayya**, an Indian freedom fighter.
- Arguably the **first national flag** of India is said to have been hoisted on **7<sup>th</sup> August 1906**, in Kolkata at the Parsee Bagan Square (Green Park).
- The National Flag is rectangular with a **length-to-width ratio of 3:2**.
- According to **Article 51A (a)**, it shall be the duty of every citizen of India to abide by the Constitution and respect its ideals and institutions, the National Flag, and the National Anthem.
- A person who is convicted for the following offences under the **Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act of 1971** is disqualified to contest in the elections to the Parliament and state legislature for **6 years**.
  - Offence of insulting the National Flag

- Offence of insulting the Constitution of India
- Offence of preventing the singing of the National Anthem

## **UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)**

### **Prelims:**

**Q. Consider the following statements in respect of the National Flag of India according to the Flag Code of India, 2002: (2023)**

**Statement-I:** One of the standard sizes of the National Flag of India is 600 mm x 400 mm.

**Statement-II:** The ratio of the length to the height (width) of the Flag shall be 3 : 2.

**Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?**

- (a) Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct and Statement-II is the correct explanation for Statement-I
- (b) Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct and Statement-II is not the correct explanation for Statement-I
- (c) Statement-I is correct but Statement-II is incorrect
- (d) Statement-I is incorrect but Statement-II is correct

**Ans: (d)**

**Q. Department of Border Management is a Department of which one of the following Union Ministries? (2008)**

- (a) Ministry of Defence
- (b) Ministry of Home Affairs
- (c) Ministry of Shipping, Road Transport and Highways
- (d) Ministry of Environment and Forests

**Ans: (b)**