

Raksha Mantri virtually inaugurates Department of Military Medicine at Command Hospital (Central Command), Lucknow

The department, as R&D hub & Centre of Excellence, to equip the nation against emerging threats: Shri Rajnath Singh

RM calls for tech-driven preventive healthcare to enhance combat readiness

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Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh virtually inaugurated the Department of Military Medicine at Command Hospital (Central Command) in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh on July 29, 2026. The inauguration marks the establishment of the country's first dedicated academic and operational department exclusively focused on military medicine. The initiative aims to enhance combat medical readiness, advancing research, developing indigenous doctrines and creating specialised expertise for future battlefields & humanitarian contingencies. Established under the aegis of the Directorate General of Medical Services (Army), it marks a significant step in strengthening the operational medical preparedness of the Armed Forces Medical Services (AFMS).



In his address, Raksha Mantri emphasised that while economic and social development are essential aspects of nation-building, the fundamental basis of any nation's sovereignty & progress lies in the strength and the morale of its military. He exuded confidence that the Department of Military Medicine

would strengthen national security by ensuring advanced medical support for the troops, while reinforcing their confidence that they will receive care and support in times of need.

The Department will focus on key disciplines including Military Trauma and Damage Control; Combat Psychiatry & Resilience; Environmental & Operational Medicine; Military Medical Logistics; Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear & Explosive (CBRNe) Medical Response; Emergency Medicine & Critical Care; Disaster Medicine and Humanitarian Assistance & Disaster Relief (HADR) as well as Research, Audit & Data Analytics. It will also foster innovation in technology-enabled battlefield medicine, simulation-based training, telemedicine, prolonged field care and medical decision support.

The Department will be developed in a phased manner, with the initial phase focusing on establishment and commencement of academic programmes, followed by the creation of Centres of Excellence in HADR and CBRNe medicine, and eventual evolution into a nationally and internationally recognised centre for military medicine.

Highlighting the growing importance of military medicine, Shri Rajnath Singh stated that, just as aerospace medicine addresses the challenges faced by pilots and astronauts in low earth orbit, military medicine studies the physical and mental stresses exerted on the human body during war and war-like situations. “Our soldiers are deployed in some of the world’s most complex regions & harshest climates, exposed to diverse challenges. This new department will develop medical protocols tailored for these operational environments,” he said.



Raksha Mantri stressed that, alongside traditional weaponry, the threat of weapons of mass destruction persists in the current era. In such a situation, the department will serve as a hub for research and development, equipping the nation to deal with emerging threats arising out of the rapid technologies advancements, he said.

Shri Rajnath Singh underlined that, as the world’s largest democracy and a responsible power, India is one of the largest military contributors to United Nations peacekeeping missions, and the defence forces remain at the forefront of HADR operations far beyond national borders. This Department of Military Medicine will prove invaluable in enhancing expertise in disaster response, field hospital deployment, mass casualty management, and epidemic control.

This newly-established Department has been conceived as a centre of excellence in military medicine and will serve as the principal academic, research and doctrinal hub for AFMS. It will provide structured education and training in military and operational medicine, facilitate postgraduate programmes in domains such as combat medicine, combat surgery and trauma care, and promote indigenous research tailored to India's operational requirements.

Raksha Mantri expressed hope that the department will act as a training ground for young doctors of the Army Medical Corps in battlefield nursing and advanced trauma life support. “The department will open up a new career pathway for young medical professionals. Students will now be able to pursue super-specialisation in military medicine. This will not only enhance intellectual capital within the military, but also elevate India’s stature in medical research on the international stage,” he added.

Underscoring the critical need for ‘preventive healthcare’, Shri Rajnath Singh asserted that it should be viewed as the first line of defence, prior to actual treatment. He called for developing a system that can identify and mitigate a health risk at an early stage through disease surveillance, vaccination, sanitation, nutrition, physical fitness, occupational health, and regular health screenings. “Preventive healthcare is directly linked to combat readiness and national security. We can leverage technologies such as AI, wearable devices, predictive analytics, and advanced diagnostics to enhance real-time monitoring of soldiers’ health and the early identification of potential health risks,” he said.

Raksha Mantri concluded his address by describing the new Department of Military Medicine as a symbol of a revolutionary shift in the military mindset of the nation. “Together, we must transform this department into the world’s best ‘Battlefield Medicine Research Centre’,” he said.



The event was attended by Chief of the Army Staff General Dhiraj Seth; Defence Secretary Shri Rajesh Kumar Singh; Vice Chief of the Army Staff Lieutenant General Sandeep Jain; General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Central Command Lieutenant General Anindya Sengupta; DG AFMS Surgeon Vice Admiral Arti Sarin; Adjutant General Lieutenant General VPS Kaushik; and DG Medical Services (Army) & Colonel Commandant Army Medical Corps Lieutenant General CG Muralidharan; Additional Secretary, Department of Defence Shri Manish Tripathi; Commandant, Command Hospital (Central Command), Lucknow Major General Alok Bhalla, and other senior officials.

The establishment of the Department aligns with the Government’s vision of strengthening indigenous capabilities and enhancing the operational preparedness of the Defence Forces. It also complements the proposed Global Military Medicine Centre envisioned under the Raksha Strategy Vision 2026-30. The inauguration marks another significant milestone in the ongoing transformation of AFMS into a modern, technology-enabled, operationally relevant and patient-centric military healthcare system, while strengthening India's preparedness for future defence and national security challenges.

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