

UNITY OF COMMAND

Relevant for: Science & Technology | Topic: Defence related developments

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India will finally have a chief of defence staff (CDS), nearly two decades after the position was first mooted by the Kargil Review Committee. On Tuesday, the cabinet committee on security approved creating the post. Once named, the CDS will be "first among equals" among the chiefs of our armed forces, and will serve as the single-point military adviser to the government.

This would give the country a military advantage. Though the need for such a position has been felt for many years, various interests kept the plan in cold storage. But given the security challenges India faces, its revival was all but inevitable. The country must be prepared for a two-front war, involving multiple theatres. Such warfare requires synchronized action by all armed wings, under political direction. Just as management theorists uphold the idea of a single command-in-chief, so do military strategists. Another need is to prepare for outer space as a potential future theatre of war. The US has already approved a full-fledged force for space combat. It is likely that other big powers will follow suit. China is a significant adversary, and India cannot afford to get left behind.

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