CDS will be a stepping stone to remaking how India aggregates its manpower, deploys its firepower, allocates its funds and prioritises its long-term security goals.

While the entrenched tradition of bureaucratic stasis and pettiness will not vanish overnight, Modi’s momentous decision to form the CDS is a welcome top-down blow to vested interest.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s Independence Day announcement to create a Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) for improving coordination among the army, navy and air force is a historic boost to India’s national security and power projection capabilities. It is a long-due reform of higher military management in the larger national interest, and a forward-looking step for India to keep abreast of international trends in defence modernisation.

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