

Tri-Services Integration - The Challenges

Why in news?

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- India is aspiring to integrate its defence forces command.
- Recent comments from the high ranking military personnel clearly show their disinterest for such a move.

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How did the controversy brew?

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- Vice Chief of Air Staff, Air Marshal S.B.Deo, recently opined that services integration will affect budgets & resource optimization.
- Also, Army Chief 'General Bipin Rawat' had said that the primacy of the Army in the envisioned joint services should be maintained.
- These developments could unleash another round of inter-service turf war and affect several decisions on services integration.
- This will also delay the commissioning of specialised commands for cyber space and Special Forces.
- Notably, 34 recommendations relating to services integration are pending before the union cabinet currently.

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How is the progress in constituting a CDS?

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- K.Subramanyam committee that was constituted after Kargil, proposed the

creation of the post of “Chief of Defence Staff - CDS”.

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- CDS was envisioned as a full-fledged five star officer who would be senior to the forces chiefs - (The proposal never went through).

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- After much deliberation, consensus has veered towards a Permanent Chairman for Chiefs of Staff Committee (CoSC).

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- The permanent chair is proposed to be a four star officer - who will be equivalent to the three service chiefs.

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- Some voice that this will only enhance the protocol nightmare.

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How does the future look?

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- India’s primary threats are still on land, from the northern and western borders but newer challenges have emerged.

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- The Indian Ocean is becoming a major arena of friction, with increasing Chinese forays.

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- While the threat of war stills exists, conventional full-scale war is not a possibility anymore.

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- Future combats are expected to be majorly short and swift engagements which call swift action by the forces in unison.

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- The recently released ‘Joint military doctrine’ of the Indian armed forces was a welcome move to enhance coordination.

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- A lot of work is needed on the ground to achieve even a fraction of what has been articulated in the doctrine.

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Source: The Hindu

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