

TRAINING FOR JOINTMANSHIP

Indian Army plans to speed up the pace of new inductions, major priority would be on increasing the forces' night fighting capability and in promoting jointmanship among the three services.

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INTRODUCTION

1. The statement that "future wars cannot be fought and won by a single service" has been repeated so often on so many diverse platforms that it has now become a 'cliché'. While the importance of jointmanship is understood, there seems to be general lack of impetus when it comes to taking positive steps to ingrain it into our operational systems.

2. The present efforts to cultivate "Jointmanship" are largely driven from the "outside" where even the propagator does not "passionately" believe in the idea and therefore "receptor" acceptance of the concept is also very low. There is thus a need to re-examine firstly as to how really joint the Forces are and secondly what is the method of training/awareness building for this crucial issue. A useful model for tackling this can then be structured.

ENVIRONMENTAL REALITIES

3. Much is being said about "Jointmanship". It is being touted as a battle winning "mantra" for future conflicts. However, at individual service level and in units, formations, stations, ships - in organizations within the service, this remains a vague concept - not understood - not to be talked of and indeed not to be practiced! The hardcore "pongo" or "aviator" or a "sailor" still believes that the other guy does not fully appreciate the capabilities and impact of ones own service.

4 One glaring example of lack of jointmanship is – the war with Pakistan, triggered by the intrusion in Kargil was fought by the three services under three different operational names ! Indeed one cannot even hazard a guess as to how many persons know the name of the Chief of the other service – it would be a very embarrassingly low percentage !

5. Many other examples of lack of “Jointmanship” and may be “Anti Jointmanship” can be cited – be it launch of a military satellite | to evolving common inventories of day to day items of combat support. Whether it be quality of dress, types of rations or for that matter stocking at Canteen Store Department, the three services do not seem to have a common platform – “Jointness”. It may not be “politically correct” to say so – but then this wide chasm between the vision, concepts and practices of the three services is a reality. This has to be faced, understood and accepted head on for only then some progress can be made.

TRAINING FOR JOINTMANSHIP

6. The present package to train our officers in joint operations is rudimentary to say the least. Very little is actually being done at the level of the Personal Below Officers Rank – thus the “teeth” know nothing of jointmanship in combat.

7. As far as officers are concerned, the National Defence Academy is considered a cradle for future jointmanship. A close analysis of the content and method of training will highlight that nothing specific is being done in this regard. There seems to be belief that “front roll” in the Squadrons, Physical Training, Drill, Equitation, Games, Camps Greenhorn and Rover and a

common Passing Out Parade, fosters development of a mind set for future "jointness". Nothing could be far from truth – some lasting friendships may be formed but nothing more. The brief look at environmental realities done above would substantiate this view since most senior service officers have passed out of the National Defence Academy !

8. The next real effort to inculcate awareness for jointmanship and impart some training to ensure implementation is made at the Defence Services Staff College. Here too the content and method is not suitably structured to achieve the desired training objectives . Some of the contents of the joint syllabus are :-

- (a) Research projects.
- (b) Portion of Low Intensity Conflict Operations series.
- (c) Introduction to the service.
- (d) Amphibians series.
- (e) Management Series.
- (f) Lectures by Guest speakers.
- (g) Industrial Demonstration Training.

9. None of these in content, bring out the essential need for future wars – at best the contents make the students aware of the term "Jointmanship".

10. Thus, the efforts to bring in jointmanship have been restricted to semantics and some exchange of general knowledge of the method of operation of each service. What we see, therefore, is that we have not focused our training to achieve the required goal. Jointmanship is not merely about the capabilities of a tank or that of an attack aircraft – it is really a state of mind. There is a need to address this issue. A state of mind will come about from realization. The training structure needs to ensure this.

NEW FOCUS OF TRAINING

11. After a look at our nascent efforts at training for jointmanship, it is felt that there is a need for a new approach. If jointmanship is first and foremost a state of the mind, it is the mind of the receptors that needs to be stimulated. Processes, Standing Operating Procedures, methods and the like details will follow.

Understanding Future Conflicts – The Doctrine.

12. The first step is to analyse the likely future conflict scenarios that the Nation may face wherein the Armed Forces may have to be applied to further the National interests. This "scenario" analysis must be done by single service participants to arrival at the desirable end state. Some general scenarios could be :-

- (a) Chinese Challenge.
- (b) Energy Security :-
 - (i) Projection of power to safe guard sea lanes.
 - (ii) Projection of power to safe guard surface facilities like pipelines, oil fields away from the homeland.
 - (iii) Securing of own mining rights in remote areas of the globe.
- (c) Security of own territory.
- (d) Security of own population or assets in other countries
- (e) Perception management of inimical countries/forces.
- (f) Proxy wars and counter terrorist operations.

13. If analyzed truthfully, it will inevitably emerge that in each of the above mentioned scenario, a single service can achieve only "this" much and the desirable end state cannot be fully realized by application of single service combat power. (In fact in some cases even a completely synergized and networked application may also not lead to the desired end state – Iraq imbroglio is a case in point) At this stage of "realisation" there is no need to talk "Jointness" – the need will gradually creep in. The participants of the programme will realize that to achieve the desired end state they would need to apply complementary forces of the army, navy and air force, to work together in joint operations, rather than planning and executing military operations separate from each other. The doctrinal dogma will gradually be broken.

Wargaming

14. This step relates to modifying the mindset from "realization" to conceptualization". This process can be played at the single service level or even at intra service sub set level. This deals with a single service syndicate of participants being given a specific task within the general scenarios discussed earlier. The desired end state is also spelt out. The situation is then wargamed in a two sided yet single service game. Detailed plans of force application are worked out and played against the "enemy" force. It needs no military genius to conclude that single service concepts of force application and conflict prosecution will fall short of desirable results.

15. It is now that concepts of fighting in given/likely future combat situations will emerge. The other two services will be accepted as "contributors" if not yet "partners".

War Fighting

16. Having identified the “contributors” and the specific contribution required, the next step in alteration of the mindset is to task single service subsets or syndicates of participants to flesh out the method of fighting. It is now that facets like evolution of a joint aim, equipment required and hence equipment policy, interoperability of platforms and networks, common databases and indeed a common language of war fighting will emerge. Common aims will lead to common “tools” which in turn will imply “Jointness”

17. Participants in the programme will now acknowledge the importance of the interservice/interagency process to include the priorities, capabilities, and resources of other services in war fighting.

ANALYSIS OF PROCESS

18. What has been suggested above is a process of “self realization” – a process to reach a “state of mind” which identifies “Us”: rather than “I”. In this process the “tools” of joint warfighting are the end result rather than the start point. To elaborate, the process does not state – Future war will be network centric and hence we need to do ----- . To the contrary the process brings out – In a future war we will need to achieve - - - - - . To achieve this we will need to be able to do - - - - - . To be able to do - - - - - , we need to be networked.

19. The difference in approach is quite evident. The present emphasis on “tools” rather than “mind” will need to change.

20. The next issue is how does one implement this “philosophical state of mind” but at the functional level ? In most generic terms what is being recommended is to establish a “need” as the first step and then graduate to evolution of methods to meet the felt need. While the process can be done at any level, it is felt that the best organisation to deal with the process is the Defence Services Staff College. This institution has a true tri service character, has a mature faculty and students are of adequate seniority to have understood single service intricacies in war fighting. Furthermore, the duration of the course enable a gradual progression through the process elaborated above.

21. Depending on the level of the participants and the desired outcome the direction, scope and control of the process can be calibrated. To elaborate – to bring out joint application of combat power in the ground battle at the tactical or operational levels, content the scope of the process will be different from an intention to bring out common equipment procurement protocols and standards.

CONCLUSION

22. It needs to be appreciated that “Jointness” is not only about methods, weapons, equipment, data etc – it is a state of mind. The process of evolution mentioned does not suggest ‘Oneness’ which is what is a block to this thought. In fact, the process recommended highlights the diverse capabilities and character of each service best yet leads on to ‘Jointness’.

23. If the process is closely analysed it would also be evident that at no stage has the "commander" mattered, for if the 'need' and 'method' is clear and so is the end state – does the colour of uniform of the 'commander' matter ?

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