

Col AK Yadav

INTEGRATED TRAINING TO ACHIEVE JOINTNESS

Introduction

1. Future wars will be complex, intense and fast paced and to achieve success cost effectively, it would require a very high degree of synergy between the three services. In order to achieve jointness, it is essential to recognise the unique competencies and capabilities of each service, to make each entity interoperable and to utilise the strong points of each combat arm for the combined operational benefit to achieve military objectives. The crux of jointmanship lies in synergizing combat power to achieve force multiplication effect which should be the essential focus of any operational plan. The integration of doctrines, concepts and strategies and synchronized application of combat power cannot occur overnight. It requires integrated training from the inception stage itself to different stages in an officers career.

Future Battlefield Scenario

2. The conflict spectrum that Indian Armed Forces are likely to encounter spans NBC warfare, high to mid-intensity conventional war and low intensity conflicts in the form of insurgency, terrorism and local border skirmishes. Future battles are likely to be short, intense and fought against a nuclear backdrop, with a high tempo of operations enhanced due to both sides using high technology weapons and equipment. Thus, the integration of effective C4I2 systems will enable faster decision-making and quicker responses. Air, with greater lethality, extended ranges, strategic and tactical surveillance means will form an important aspect complementing the land battle. The plains sector is likely to see increased mechanised operations and mountainous sectors would be characterized by increased use of the third dimension for reconnaissance, surveillance, target acquisition, weapon delivery and to provide additional mobility to ground forces.

3. All battle field systems will be heavily technology driven with complete integration so as to enhance situational awareness of own forces; early accurate detection of hostile forces leading to what is popularly known as "Battle Field Transparency" and communication enabled that is speedy, digital, encrypted and voice cum data enabled.

Integrated Military Training

4. To achieve integrated application of the three services to optimize the desired effect, we need to have a detailed campaign perspective, which would pay significant dividends. The campaign perspective would provide a holistic view of warfare and would encompass integrated and joint operations that work towards achieving common objectives. The emphasis therefore needs shift from mutual cooperation to enhanced joint planning and joint execution. To achieve the requisite degree of jointmanship, it requires an effective integrated military training. We need to first change our mindset to trust which is based on the knowledge that one will get the support that one needs at the right time and this needs to be inculcated and driven home to all the officers once they are commissioned into each service.

5. A systemic, integrated and composite military training should ideally be part of an overall jointmanship strategy. The end result aimed should be to train an officer to comprehensively understand the complex whole of warfare and be able to employ jointness in his war fighting strategy at all levels of war. The training process must provide an armed forces' officer with clear understanding of how each service operates and what its strengths and limitations are. The purpose of military training therefore should be to prepare every member to undertake the wartime functions efficiently and effectively by providing them with appropriate knowledge and skills not only of their own arms and service but also that of the other services. This process should have the twin objectives of firstly, developing individual skills appropriate to the job at hand and secondly, to develop skills required not only to take on higher responsibilities but also those that are essential to design operational strategies employing integrated application of the land, air, space, informational and naval forces.

Existing Training System

6. In the armed forces, the leadership development process is executed in a three fold manner; structured, informal and through holding diverse operational assignments. The structured leadership development program includes training academies, unit training and courses of instruction. The courses of instruction are so structured and spaced that an officer constantly upgrades his knowledge commensurate with years in service. However, how much of it is integrated or joint in nature is to be identified. Mostly, the existing training patterns focus on enhancing capabilities required to perform effectively within our own sphere of operations. The main mission of an integrated military training process however should be to train future leaders to quickly grasp the complexities of the emerging situation in a wide range of conflicts and apply appropriate combat

power to achieve the desired outcomes. The appropriate combat power does not imply equal or maximum application of land, air and naval forces, but the required type and mix of force that achieves the desired outcomes in the most cost effective manner without causing unnecessary death and destruction. The focus should be more on capability that is required to achieve campaign objectives rather than on giving equal/proportionate share to the individual services.

7. **Operational/Strategic Level Training.** It is approx thirty years of service that an armed forces officer steps into the operational level and he now has around ten years service left to function at the operational and strategic level. It is of concern that approx 75% of an officer's career is spent at the tactical level. It is because of this reason that his zone of comfort usually extends to the Bde/battalion/unit operations. Further, the tenures at the higher levels are so short that there exists very little time for researching and learning on the job, besides learning about other services. In addition, there is pressure of contributing towards own service requirements. It is at the operational/strategic level that the need for jointmanship is most acute. There is therefore a need for a structured Integrated Leadership Development Initiative to enhance joint operational/strategic skills. This initiative should first identify the core joint areas in which necessary skills need to be imparted and then identify the stage in an officers career when he needs to be exposed to this type of training/skills.

8. **Integrated Training/ Courses.** Some of the officers start their career with National Defence Academy. Thereafter, the other integrated courses they may attend are staff course at DSSC, Wellington, Higher Command Courses at different war colleges and finally an integrated course at NDC. The Higher Command Courses though having officers from the other two services are not truly integrated as different course curriculum and emphasis is followed by each war college, which is appropriate to their sphere of operations. By the time an officer undergoes NDC course, he has already formulated strong opinions, mindsets and perceptions. Thus the only true integrated course that a military officer may actually undergo in his service career is at DSSC. This course too is not mandatory for progression to the higher ranks.

9. **Joint Training & War Fighting Doctrines.** To fight a joint war, there is a need for having Joint Training Doctrines and Joint War Fighting Manuals. The recently published joint military doctrine relates to the strategic level function of "Management of Defence". However, there are no joint manuals that discuss war fighting as a whole with a campaign perspective and integrated application

of the three services as part of a joint plan. There is thus a strong need for having Joint Training & War Fighting Doctrines/Manuals at the operational level.

10. **Methods of Instruction.** Education constitutes two domains of learning; the cognitive and the intellectual domain. Whilst the cognitive domain focuses on theoretical learning and provides knowledge base on appropriate subjects, the intellectual domain is related more to professional logic, analysing problems and identifying innovative solutions. Presently, training academies of the three services are focused more on followership training and memorisation of factoid knowledge. Hence, they focus more on the cognitive sphere, which is essentially related to acquiring domain knowledge. This also implies that they are less likely to provide awareness on integrated joint operations. There is thus a need to focus more on experiential form of learning that promotes identifying innovative solutions to complex problems and developing strategies integrating the application of the three services. The experiential form of learning is based more on interactive discussions, evaluating complex problems and holding joint wargames.

11. **Inter Service Appointments/Postings.** The exposure provided while holding diverse appointments leads to developing joint strategic skills. Presently, it is not mandatory for an officer to hold an inter service appointment. Thus, he may reach the star ranks without ever having to work in an inter services environment. There is a need to ensure that an officer during his entire service career must hold at least one inter service appointment.

Future Strategy

12. To overcome the existing limitations as discussed above, there is a need for an Integrated Leadership Development Initiative that follows a building block approach to develop a joint professional military education and training implementation strategy. The end state in the building block approach should be to develop a strategic leader, who has the ability to understand the complexities of warfare and apply appropriate combat power effectively. The building block approach should be based on the four pillars of integrated military training process; ie Integrated Courses of Instruction, Mandatory Inter Service Appointments, Integrated Training and Self Development.

Conclusion

13. In the highly complex wars in the future we need to innovative operational concepts that integrate the application of appropriate combat power. This would require a clear understanding of warfare as a whole and effective understanding of the strengths and limitations of each service. There is therefore, a requirement today to have an integrated training process as a first step towards effecting increased jointness that works towards providing the correct platform for enhancing the effectiveness of joint military operations.

14. To achieve the desired integrated training at the tactical, operational and strategic levels, there is a requirement to evolve an Integrated Leadership Development Initiative that is supported top down and encouraged bottom up. There is also a need to make it mandatory to attend a few integrated courses and hold an inter service appointment for progression to higher ranks.

Compiled by Col Ak Yadav