

## JOINTMANSHIP-FOREIGN LIAISON

By

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1. 'Jointmanship, Merger' etc. are the new management mantras and encouraged in any organisation due to fiscal pressures, resource depletion, increasing manpower /infrastructures establishment costs etc. In the context of Armed Forces, jointmanship has now come into being in training, hardware/software procurements, logistic management, operating doctrines and so on. We too have made headway in jointmanship through the IDS and succeeded in joint procurement procedures, identification of common equipment, and joint trg syllabus in DSSC/CDM etc. Joint approach on many issues by the three Services is now being implemented.

2. The setting up of the DIA organisation is one another step in 'jointmanship'. Supervision of our DAs abroad was one of the responsibilities stipulated for the DIA by the GoM recommendations. In such an arrangement, the need for 'Joint' perspective in working of our attaches abroad through a single point control is well clear and apparent to any unbiased observer. However, in practice, the Service HQs continue to control their Attaches and the role of the DIA has been restricted to supervision of DAs purely on Int matters. In absence of a true single point control and influence by many 'players', the existing system of controlling DAs has pitfalls such as lack of tri-service coordination , duplication of efforts, inadequate/incorrect analyses and conclusions of events from a broader perspective .

3. There is a need to amalgamate the Foreign Divisions of the three Services and revamp the existing system to achieve complete jointmanship and better objectives.

### AIM

4. The aim of the paper is to examine and analyse the existing system of Foreign Liaison and suggest measures for jointmanship.

### FOREIGN LIAISON SYSTEM

5. The Def Wings abroad forms a very vital component in the Def Int system responsible for establishing appropriate foreign liaison. The Def Attaché (DA) is an important element in the DIA set up. Going by the international conventions the DAs do not get involved in any undercover Int gathering work. However, in course of their duty, they come across openly available useful military information. They attend ceremonial functions, military fire power displays and field exercises, seminars and interact with personnel from different specialised fields, meet DAs from other countries and lot many other activities in the host country offer him an opportunity in understanding the insight of thought process

of that country. The inputs and analysis from the DAs, however rudimentary it may be, helps DIA in making a 'collage' of a country's global and domestic aims, objectives, plans, and compulsions etc. Accordingly, appropriate arrangements for Def cooperation, information sharing, combined exercises, joint operations, procurements etc. can be made.

6. Most of the Western countries have a separate Corps of Attaches/Advisers. The officers drawn from different services are trained to specialise in a particular country/region. Their career progression is limited to this Corps. They are appointed /rotated within the DIA /regions of their specialisation and retire on superannuation.. Many of the foreign DAs in India are on second or even third tenure as DA. "My analysis on Afghanistan sit carry lot of weight in decision making by the Force Commander" has been remarked by one of the Foreign DAs. There are cases of foreign officers being appointed as DA on completion of NDC in India. 'Ever heard of it in our set up', where NDC is a ladder to the flag rank and not for lateral absorption in an Int related job. The western system of DAs highlights their importance in intermeshing in Def Int /Cooperation system.

7. In our set up, there is no separate Corps of Defence Attaches. The billets abroad are service specific and the selection of DA is done by the respective Service independently using their own yardsticks. It goes without saying that a DA appointment is a once –a- life- time achievement and often a reward for excellent performance. The rich experience of working as a DA in an international environment is his personal gain. The experience of the DA is limited to its use during his tenure and hardly used on return after the appointment due to his utility for other directorates or higher appointments

#### The Indian set up.

8. The following are part of foreign divisions:

(a) IDS

- (i) DP&FL (DIA)
- (ii) IDC (CISC)

(b) Army –DGMI

- (i) MIFD
- (ii) MIDC

(c) Navy- FCI

- (i) DNI (FL)
- (ii) DFC

(d) Air Force-ACAS (Int)

- (i) DINT (IDC)
- (ii) DINT (L)

9. Limitations/Grey Areas

(a) Multiplicity of Control/Coordination. The DIA through DP&FL has tried to institute centralised control of DAs. However, the major control is by the parent service for various reasons. In the Def Wings abroad with more than one Attaché, there is no centralised control. Each attaché works independently, exchanges service/general inputs and takes instructions from its parent service. There is variation on inputs, analysis and duplication of efforts. The coordination with the three services by the DIA on issues raised by the DA could also result in delayed /inadequate response/importance due to other priorities of the Services.

(b) Turf Protection. The Service Attaches will continue to be more inclined and 'obliging' to their parent service for their requirements and priorities. In the bargain the issues of other services, even though important, may not get the right precedence. Each service will continue to justify its share in Def representation abroad irrespective of its actual need. The COSC to a large extent has tried to address this issue but the difference of opinion and 'grumblings on acceptance' continue to exist.

(c) Lack of Common Training/ & Procedures of Reporting. There is lack/absence of common training for DAs. The present training programme followed by the three services has large variations and element of joint service issues is missing/less than adequate. The doctrines for monthly Int & event reports are also at variation by the Attachés and need further streamlining.

(d) Overlapping Responsibilities. The responsibilities of the various agencies as foreign Int/cooperation issues are overlapping. The same issues are being handled by different Dtes in bits & parts or on directives from different channels. In some cases, an issue may not be handled by the right Dte due to the presumption that it's not under its purview.

(e) Interaction with Foreign agencies. Each service is free to interact with appropriate foreign agencies but it's seen that during such interactions, the joint/tri-service issues are also deliberated and need tri-service decisions. Planning of IN/Out visits of the Services delegation also lacks elements/concurrence/requirement/feedback etc. from the IDS. It is also seen that the foreign agencies try to push their agenda by approaching different agencies for their proposals and many a time succeed in obtaining their approval/concurrence due to lacunae in the existing system. The Services also hesitate to share the visit proposals/feedbacks by their delegations. Is it competition or lack of confidence / mutual respect for each other's capabilities & cooperation?

(f) Infrastructure/Manpower. A large manpower is required to manage the divisions highlighted above resulting in avoidable wasteful expenditure and effort. About 40% saving in manpower and infrastructure requirements can be achieved by merger of the foreign divisions of the three services.

(g) Lack of Continuity of Expertise. The functioning at the foreign division as a staff at HQ or as a DA is limited to one tenure. On completion the officers are slated for other appointments which may have no relevance with this experience. The DIA set up requires analysts for longer durations for continuity and utility of DAs in this set up will be much more beneficial. The modern warfare is no more restricted to movement of Forces but includes many other factors. The 'economic warfare' is the order of the day resulting in need for mil alliances, cooperations, Int sharing etc. The resource crunch, fiscal pressures, importance of international pressures/intervention, media, exposure, political compulsions and such other factors necessitates need for vertical specialists in foreign Int & related issues. The 'friendship & goodwill' generated by the DA during the tenure could be further exploited for the system if he continues to be part of the DIA set up even after his return.

(h) Beauracatic Channel. There are different Beauracatic channels such as COSC, Service HQs, MoD, MoF and MEA for handling foreign issues of the IDS and the three services. As a result, the processing of the cases is time taking and also at times becoming redundant/irrelevant with changing situation. Simple cases for visit by a delegation to one country would at least require 30-40 days processing time. In case of any observation at any stage, the time delay gets multiplied.

### RECOMMENDED FUTURE MODEL

10. In pursuance of aim to achieve jointmanship in the foreign Int & coop, there is a need to amalgamate the existing structure and create one centralised division at the IDS. All the three services through the COSC could decide on the proportionate allocation of personnel.

11. The new organisation will have the following:

(a) DGDIA as the overall head of the Foreign Division.

(b) The IDC is merged with the DIA as another Div to handle def coop issues. Army, Navy and Air Force (Col & above) officers will form this Div. The officers of the Int Division handling relevant countries could be co-opted to the IDC to assist them for def coop issues. Additional Int Div/officers are added under the DIA and the Int Divisions reorganised to cover countries region or relevant importance wise.

(c) DP& FL functions as the central contact point of contact for foreign liaison in addition to the present assigned duties.

(d) Training Division with officers from the Int div with additional duties as trainer in foreign Int /doctrine formulation.

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(e) MI & Foreign Fund Dte The Dte under DIA will be responsible for budgeting and financial expenditure control for the DAs and foreign Int related aspects.

12. Selection to Foreign Division. The officers from the three services (Maj/Eqvt or above) could volunteer for this specialisation. Experience of foreign training, aptitude for analysis, international affairs and Int gathering will be possible QRs for the selection from the volunteers and could be by a Board of officers under DIA. The selected officers would undergo studies at the University (or INDU) on International affairs and specialise in at least in one or two foreign Region and language. The officers of the Foreign Division would be utilised as Int analyst at DIA and appointment as DA as per his performance. They would also be deputed to other Int organisations and three Services as Int analyst/advisor duties at the Command/unit level or in DSSC/ NDC/Int Trg School/ INDU as per their area specialization. The three Services could appoint officers to foreign countries separately as per their projects/procurement plans etc. with that country on as required basis.

### CONCLUSION

13. Jointmanship is the order of the day in any organisation including the Armed Forces due fiscal pressures, ever increasing manpower & infrastructure establishment costs, depleting resources and such other factors. The IDS is one of the steps instituted by our Armed Forces to bring about joint functioning and approach on many issues by our three Services. The DIA was also such another step which was made responsible for central control of the Def Attaches abroad and Foreign DAs in India. However, the DAs abroad have multiple control/tasking from various agencies more so from their parent service and as a result the use of DA as an integral part of the DIA for foreign Int/ Co-op issues is lost.

14. The experience of the DA abroad is used for a limited period of time and their experience is not carried forward as an asset to the DIA. There is a need to reorganise the Foreign Div of the DIA by merging IDC into IDS. The Foreign Division under the DIA should have dedicated officers. The officers with international trg exposure, aptitude for analysis, international affairs etc could volunteer for Foreign Div and on selection given exposure on international studies and foreign language. They could be extensively used for foreign Int analysis and deputation as DAs depending on their performance in the DIA. The experience of the officers could also be used by the DSSC, NDC, INDU, Int Trg School, Int appointments at unit/Command level.