

PROMOTING JOINTMANSHIP

BY

BRIG RS JAMWAL

Introduction

1. National security is a dynamic concept contingent on the constantly evolving global environment. A nation which does not change with the changing environment would suffer at the hands of the adversary. Modern day warfare requires synergized application of all elements of armed forces to achieve decisive results. History has proved that the key to success in operations is the ability to integrate the efforts of armed forces into a single team – what we term as jointmanship.

2. There is nothing new about the concept of jointmanship. All efforts were made to orchestrate the three Services to achieve military objectives after the Gallipoli campaign in World War-I, where the British were denied naval gunfire during withdrawal, since the supporting fleet was cleaning the boilers of the ships. The joint concept was progressed during World War-II and within two months of US entry into the war, President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill created Combined Chiefs of Staff to provide strategic direction to the US-British war effort. Later, the concept was carried forward to theatre level with a Supreme Commander overseeing operations in Normandy. After the war, this concept was built into the Defence Organisation at National level in the form of Chief of Defence Staff.

3. In the past five decades, India has had to face serious threats from her neighbours, besides having to deal with the turmoil of partition,

insurgencies, terrorism, providing military aid in foreign countries and to civil authorities. Most of these operations required a joint effort between two, if not all three Services. Each conflict or calamity emphasized the need for greater understanding of the operating philosophies and ethos of other Services. However, in spite of all this experience, jointmanship is still at a very nascent stage in India. Only recently have efforts fructified to integrate the diverse constituents of the national security apparatus by way of establishing Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff and putting in place Andaman and Nicobar Command with an integrated setup.

The Indian Imbrolio

4. The Indian Armed Forces have been involved in seven operations since independence. 1947 was mostly a land battle with limited air support employed. Liberation of Goa saw joint operations being carried out for the first time, albeit to a limited extent. The inadequacy in jointmanship for planning and conduct of war was exposed in 1962 when Air Force was restricted to transportation role while in 1965 deficiency at all levels of command was demonstrated. A clear need emerged to improve the joint infrastructure, communications and cooperation. These shortcomings were incorporated during the intervening years and 1971 saw sustained improvement in jointmanship between the three Services. Joint planning was again hampered in Sri Lanka due to the geographical separation between the Army and Air Force Command Headquarters.

5. Kargil threw up the draw backs of the tri-service command structure. The Army Chief as Chairman Chiefs of Staff Committee could not enforce the military decision on use of air power. Valuable time was lost in obtaining sanction for use of air power which resulted in a compromised harmony, falling short of achieving what a properly enmeshed and

synergised capability would have. The Kargil operation highlighted the need for a review of the entire security setup within our country.

6. The intelligence failure in Kargil was another cause for concern. It was not the first time that an intelligence failure had led to National embarrassment. The flawed assessment of China's intentions had led to a similar embarrassment in 1962 thus highlighting the need for an integrated approach not only in planning and conduct of war but also between all intelligence, finance, procurement and administrative agencies to include political, bureaucratic and military personnel.

7. Sep 11 has brought us rapidly to the precipice of trans-border threats during peace time. Situations earlier defined as "Operations other than War" are increasingly manifesting as "Operations of War", encompassing the gamut of chemical and biological threats. Such fluid operational scenarios cannot be constrained merely to Army, Navy or Air Force responses. Indian Armed Forces have until now been operating merely in support of each other and not as a single entity in pursuit of a singular aim. There is a need to integrate the war fighting effort right from the planning stage to the conduct of operations.

Future Scenario

8. Modern wars are no longer a single service affair. They require participation of at least two, if not all the three Services. The future war is likely to be short and intense giving little time for evolving a joint doctrine, thus necessitating its evolution during peacetime. The coming decades of this millennium will witness exponential and rapid changes in technology leading to faster rates of obsolescence, making procurement cycles more critical. Proliferation of information and communication technology will lower the barriers of time and space, making Revolution in Military Affairs

an omnipresent feature of modern warfare. True Revolution in Military Affairs would be total flexibility of mind to handle all the situations from aid to civil authority to conventional operations, effectively utilizing all resources placed under command for the operation.

9. Rapid advancements in C4I2SR have rendered the battle field transparent and have vastly accelerated the speed of battle over a geographically vast expanse thereby rendering the conventional paradigm irrelevant. Future engagements will be increasingly complex, involving intense diplomatic and political interaction concomitant with psychological warfare and information management. The ever changing environment, rapid technological advancements, reduced response time and the constant threat to national security demands greater cohesion and integration of political and military leadership thereby calling for simultaneous, systematic and coordinated application of all resources. The three Services need to apply combined resources to bring to bear all available combat power, and evolve joint strategy and plans to achieve synergy for an optimal response.

10. This evolving situation also places an enormous burden on military leaders, since decision-making would encompass many more variables in much reduced time frames. It is therefore essential for senior commanders to be equipped with all information, be it on land, sea or air, to enable them to take appropriate decisions to meet the challenges of the changed environment. Moreover, forces of the future must be trained in a joint environment to face wider range of threats, emerging unpredictability and ever changing technology. These forces must be lethal and flexible controlled by joint organisations capable of performing at all levels of war.

Achieving Jointmanship

11. Integration and jointmanship are the two buzz words in the Armed Forces today, being used interchangeably, although they are quite distinct from each other. Jointmanship falls short of integration since it is for achievement of a common goal and is generally time specific, mission specific or operation specific. It involves integrated planning and application of military power leading to synergy in employment of forces and optimal utilisation of resources to achieve the objective. The concept of jointmanship lies in having a common doctrine, culture, logistics and maintenance facilities. It is desirable that jointmanship is ultimately transformed into integration.

12. The main impediment towards achieving true jointmanship is the attitude of the Services, combined with a sense of insecurity. Fear of being overshadowed by the other Service, lack of understanding of each others' capabilities and limitations, lack of opportunities for joint training and biased attitude of senior officers to single service experience often leads to a tendency of the three Services to function at cross purpose to each other. The two smaller Services are thus wary of too much integration lest they and their achievements be swallowed up by the bigger Service.

13. A key feature for jointmanship would be the need for the personnel to undergo a cultural change. The officers being posted to joint services environment would need to shed their individual service traditions, culture, customs and ethos and mould themselves into a joint service environment. There would be a requirement of closer staff consultations amongst the three Services as also collocation of military staff with civilian counterparts. Lack of understanding of capabilities and limitations of the other two Services would lead to inability to exploit resources available in the Services in terms

of manpower, weapons and equipment. Commanders at all levels must have a lucid understanding and perception of the capabilities and limitations of all resources under their command or those that are likely to be employed in support of their operations. This would facilitate decision making and allotment of tasks to subordinate commanders. It would therefore be incumbent on the Armed Forces to impart orientation training to such officers so as to bring about a smooth transition in their methods of functioning.

14. Integrated Defence Staff would become a principal forum for conceptual planning, to consider strategic and operational matters including the long term force structure strategy, aspects related to the size and preparedness of the Armed Forces, force dispositions, major investments and supporting infrastructure. Similarly the long, medium and short term defence plans of the three Services will need to be integrated at Chief of Defence Staff level based on strategic and financial guidance including Government directions. Preparation of a joint doctrine to define the method of achieving objectives in consonance with the national security doctrine; formulation and implementation of a joint training doctrine to enhance inter-service understanding, interoperability and standardisation; control of all intelligence, strategic and nuclear forces; and active interaction with the media are a few other important tasks envisaged for achieving jointmanship.

15. All modern armies of the world have a joint training command structure to enable them to utilize all the assets of the Services in a befitting manner, carry out joint training to provide synergy and enhance war fighting capability. In India all the three Services have separate training commands catering to the training needs of the respective Service. Joint training and joint exercises have thus been neglected. There is therefore a need to establish a joint training command.

16. So far we have discussed only inter Service jointmanship. There is however a need to increase intra Service joint-ness. Much is desired to ensure that the commanders and subordinates of all arms and services likely to be grouped together for an operation train together for that particular operation. Plans made for armour to lead or for infantry to be mounted on tanks can fructify only if complete coordination and rehearsals have been carried out. Which squadron would lead, who is the squadron commander, who are the troop leaders on whose tanks infantry would mount, interaction between the troop leaders, infantry company and platoon commanders, identification of tanks, tying up of communications between armour and infantry are some of the questions left unanswered since operation based training amongst the various arms is not carried out on ground. If commanders and subordinates have never met and trained together, how would they be expected to perform in war? It is therefore imperative that commanders should experience the resources likely to be placed under their command and plan for their coordinated employment.

Role of Defence Services Staff College

17. Realising the importance of jointmanship, National Defence Academy was raised for imparting joint training and initial bonding amongst the cadets of the three Services. College of Defence Management and Higher Command courses focus on directional and conceptual level training to senior officers of the three Services while National Defence College provides joint training at strategic level. Defence Services Staff College is the only institute which provides joint planning opportunities for middle level officers of the three Services at tactical level and helps them understand the ethos of other Services. The officers at this stage are in their impressionable age, yet mature enough to imbibe the nuances of a joint culture.

18. Joint approach demands conditioning of command and staff at functional, directional and conceptual level to respond optimally in a tri-service perspective and to build a proactive and positive mindset in the field of training, operations, logistics and information warfare. Since these are the core subjects at the Staff College, the College provides a perfect environment for training officers in jointmanship at tactical (functional) level. The joint tutorials conducted in the College highlight the functions, limitations and capabilities of each Service thus enhancing understanding about the Service. The joint exercises and war-games focus on training the officers of the three Services in formulating an operational plan right from the inception stage. Planning is carried out jointly by Army, Naval and Air Force students to come up with a joint plan rather than a plan in support of each other. This fundamentally shapes the way officers think about other Services and enables them to appreciate the implications of a joint operation and optimal utilisation of resources. Defence Services Staff College is thus an ideal institution to develop a true joint service ethos and a life long bonding amongst officers of the three Services.

Recommendations

19. The foremost aspect would be joint training to change the opinions and perceptions of commanders and help them understand the cultural differences and ethos of other Services. Officers being posted to joint services environment would thus need to shed their individual service traditions, culture, customs and ethos and mould themselves into that environment. This would necessitate orientation training of the officers.

20. As a long term measure it would be prudent to amalgamate National Defence Academy, Defence Services Staff College, College of Defence Management, National Defence College and the three War Colleges under

the umbrella of National Defence University. In order to achieve synergy between the three Services, it may serve the cause of jointmanship to amalgamate the three individual service training commands into a joint training command.

21. Prior to an operation, mission specific training must be carried out to achieve the desired level of coordination, understanding among commanders of various Services participating and for prioritizing the allocation of scarce resources among numerous competing demands. Such training should be inter service and intra service, based on realistic conditions taking into account political, economic, social and geographical constraints. Such training would lead to mutual confidence building, understanding of each others' capabilities and limitations, enhancing interoperability, standardizing procedures and would train commanders and staff to function in a joint environment. This would assist commanders in deciding how one service can make up for the limitations of the other during critical phases of operation.

22. All three Services need to follow the joint doctrine which lays down the fundamentals of joint training and joint operations, and defines the concepts and perspectives on employment of military power to achieve strategic ends. It describes the joint exploitation of men and equipment to optimize the resources and military capabilities. A joint doctrine thus offers a common perspective from which to plan and operate. The Services need to train within the realms of this doctrine to help maintain a flexible, joint fighting force, prepared to fight as a team. Joint war games could be conducted to fine tune and validate the doctrine and standing operating procedures for successful conduct of war.

23. In order to bring about understanding on the functional aspects of other Services, cross attachment of officers amongst the Services and within own Service for one to two years should be carried out. This would enable understanding the basic functions through on job training and enable integration in the three Services. Similarly affiliation of regiments with naval ships and air force bases would promote bonding between the three Services. There is also a requirement to dovetail all the national and state resources including intelligence services, para military forces, police, medical facilities, railways, fire department, telecommunications and other public utilities to meet the national security goals.

Conclusion

24. In modern times, challenges and threats to national security have to be met by forces in being. Little time would be available for trial or policy making after the crisis develops. In the short intense war of the future, it would be prudent to apply maximum combat potential of the Armed Forces in a synergized and coordinated response. It is therefore important that sound mechanisms be created which can act with requisite responsiveness.

25. The ever increasing isolation of the Defence Services from the process of decision-making in defence matters has been a highly retrograde development, eating into the vitals of the organisation. To safeguard our national interests in a world fraught with challenges and rapid technological developments, it is essential to ensure that the country has an integrated organisation where politicians, military officials and civilian bureaucrats jointly take policy decisions to include procurement and financial planning.

26. The implementation of jointmanship must ensure that each service individually, and the organisation as a whole, derive maximum benefit without eroding the authority of any individual service. Successful

jointmanship can come about when professionals understand and appreciate the implication of the views of their counterparts and those of their own. Only through such understanding is there hope of creating synergy so necessary in modern warfare.

Bibliography

1. "Inter-Service Integration: Problems and Perspectives," Lt Gen K Davar, Defence Management, Volume 27, No 2, Nov 2000.
2. "Managing Change to Usher in Jointmanship," Col RS Jamwal, Defence Management, Volume 29, No1, May 2002.
3. "Time for Lateral Integration of Indian Armed Forces," AVM HPS Sidhu, AVSM, VSM & Col RS Jamwal, Defence Management, Volume II, Issue 2, Sep 2003.
4. "Integrated Training for Jointness: Suggested Implementation Strategy," Cmde CP Srivastava, Defence Management, Volume VII, Issue 2, Sep 2007.