

PROMOTNG JOINTNESS: SOME RANDOM THOUGHTS

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1. Since the time 'Gold Water Nicholas' act was signed in 1985, the 'Jointmanshp' became the buzzword for achieving the desired victory in the war. The concept of joint operations is accepted in principle but its implementation in Indian armed forces, though has been a matter of debate, discussion and concern, and is gaining momentum. Jointmanship signifies the realisation that in modern warfare there is no such thing as discrete air, land and sea war. The notion of jointmanship represents the historical truth that neither air power nor land power nor does sea power alone can win wars by itself. The widespread adoption of joint themes indicates that we realise that how we train and employ our force structure is as important as the force structure itself.

2. It is well known that all operational planning still tends to have an individual service orientation, be it strategic level to the tactical level. The tri-Service training institutions present the trusted and time tested success story in the realm of jointmanship. The National Defence Academy, has earned well-deserved accolades for the strong spirit of camaraderie and the long-lasting bonds. The Defence Services Staff College provides institutionalised guidance to officers from the three Services and puts them on a common grid. The College of Defence Management provides common professional training in modern management practices at directional level, to the officers who will be placed in both command and senior staff appointments. At conceptual level, the National Defence College, trains together potential future leaders and bureaucrats in the intricacies of Strategic and defence planning of national security. All of these institutions have been extremely successful in achieving the aims set out for them and have been contributing very well to jointness. What if an officer does not pass through the portals of these four training institutes? – either

due to his entry type or unwillingness to appear or not succeeding in DSSC entrance examination or not being nominated for HDMC or NDC courses? How does the organisation train him in jointness? These are some questions which are not answered by the present system. There is a pressing need to address these issues, so that jointness is promoted and enhanced at the earliest possible – preferably at the functional level, wherein the officers understand the ‘Other Service Nuances’ and appreciate the needs and requirements in a holistic manner. What can be done? Certain areas of training and subsequent employment hold the key to these issues.

Training

3. Besides the training imparted in the above institutes, service specific training is done at almost all levels in all the three services. It is considered that following areas can help foster jointness.

(a) Training of Engineers. All the three services have their engineering training institutions - CME / MCEME / MCTE for Army, INS Shivaji for Navy and AFTC for Air Force. The officers of EME and Signals do first one year of Engineering Degree Course in CME and then join MCEME or MCTE for the balance portion of the degree course. This intra-Army system, of initially training officers of Engineers, EME and Signals in CME together, not only optimizes the training infrastructure of these institutions but also helps them in understanding others better. Why not extend this concept from intra-Army to Inter-Service institutions by sending young officers of all three services for cross training to the other two services for a short duration, say a semester or two, and then revert them back to parent service. The other option would be train for the complete duration in the specific disciplines, say communications/ electronics/ Information technology/ mechanical engineering. More such areas can be identified, as commonality of subjects exists between the

three services for basic/general engineering. Besides the learning and advantage of knowing the other service, the young officers would be almost along with their course mates from NDA / at the same service seniority bracket (for non-NDA entries) and would understand the other service better. The post graduate degree/diploma curriculum, being run in these institutes, also needs to be looked into for such initiatives. All this would result in better jointmanship at a very young age. This is a large canvass with lot of promise and potential which can be exploited.

(b) Training in other Areas. Commonality in other areas /disciplines also may be looked into. These are those areas where, the knowledge of other service is essential for conducting joint operations. Some of these areas could be as under:-

- (i) Joint training by ASC and AOC officers of Army, Logistics officers of IAF and that of Navy.
- (ii) Joint training of officers from AOC, Armament officers of IAF and Navy.
- (iii) Training of officers from specific branches in general administration.
- (iv) Training of officers of JAG's branch of the three services.
- (v) Training of Education branch officers.
- (vi) Exchange programmes and short capsules for common subjects for the three services.

4. Deputation/ Cross Attachments. One of the possible areas to enhance jointmanship would be conduct deputation/ cross attachments of officers from one service to other- as is done within the Army for Young Officers of Services with Rashtriya Rifles units. No doubt, there is certain effort in this direction, but this needs to be enhanced. Pilots from Army and Navy do get posted to flying training institutions, post courses. Similarly, officers of various branches from all the three services could be considered for cross attachments, as per

commonality of functions as stated above. This could be on an experimental basis at first and could be formalised after weighing the pros and cons. A good example is UAV units, which are common to the three services. The officers would not only learn the nuances of other service but would also be able to impart own service philosophy and employment/deployment of such resources. Other areas which have such potential are Joint Training at JC courses, cross attachments before and during joint exercises and so on. For this, a strategic approach to Joint training of Officers is required. This approach would identify needs for education and experience in joint matters and particular mission areas and establish personnel policies to ensure that officers with the required knowledge, skills and experience are available to meet those needs.

5. Management Education within Armed forces. The importance of management education in the three services needs no emphasis. College of Defence Management is the prime institution, which conducts courses for the three service officers, in a true joint environment. However, there are certain other areas where the three services conduct training in isolation. A case in point is conduct of Human Behavioral capsules by individual services. IAF conducts CLABS capsule and so does Indian Navy. Of course, CDM which has the core competency does send its instructors to these institutes for running short capsules/ programmes for the officers. It would be in order to look for the 'Core Competency' of all such institutions and have such joint training for all officers in one training institution alone, on the model of CME degree engineering course for EME and Signals officers. It will be better to include Defence Institute of Work Study, Mussorie and Defence institute Of Armament Technology, Pune also into the fold by having a "Lead Service" concept. Let one Service set up the organisational structure with elements of the other Services. This Lead Service system will allow for better growth, response, a faster end solution and eliminate duplicity in effort by all these institutions. In addition, a periodic conference of all management instructors of all these management institutes should be held for exchange of views, ideas and progress of the conduct of such joint training. Even

the management professors from the management institutions run by Army Welfare Educational Society may be invited to attend these conferences as they would be more current with the latest management theories and practices, since they have to prepare their students to be industry-ready and therefore be more current with the latest. A similar system is existing in Corps of Engineers, by having an Engineer DS Conference in CME, which is attended by all Engineer Directing Staff of Arty School, ACC&S, AWC, HQ ARTRAC and E-in-C's Branch.

6. Other Issues in Promoting Jointness.

(a) Cross-posting in Headquarters. Presently, only a limited number of officers get opportunity to serve in inter-service organisations and that too during later years in service for most of them. It is however desirable that more officers get a tenure in these organisations or serve in other sister organisations. Towards this end, suitable appointments that are tenable by officers from sister Services should be identified in various headquarters by all three Services - divisional HQ and above. A helicopter pilot can probably work in Aviation Branch of Command Headquarter. After the Staff College course at Wellington, up to 25 to 30 per cent officers should serve in junior staff appointments in Headquarters in sister Services to consolidate theoretical learning and help them in their move towards jointness. For example, a logistics officer of Air Force can work as DQ or AQ. Those who do not get an opportunity at this stage should be posted to such appointments later during their service. Appointments will need to be carefully selected to ensure that efficiency is not compromised. Placing a much larger number of army officers in suitable appointments will pose much greater challenges for the Navy and the Air Force than for the Army. However, it should be possible to find a suitable compromise. Each service should get as many officers from the other two services as it offers their own to them.

(b) Observers in Exercises. A much larger number of observers should be sent for both joint as well as single-Service exercises, especially exercises with troops. The logistical difficulties should not prove to be insurmountable.

(c) Inter-posting of Instructors Hand-picked instructors should be posted to each other's training establishments so as to enhance awareness and learn from each other's strengths. To some extent this is being done already but the scale needs to be enlarged. For example, there is no reason why a Navy or Air Force expert cannot teach electronic warfare at the MCEME or MCTE or an EME officer in INS Shivaji or a Naval officer in CME/MCEME/MCTE or vice versa.

7. Training of PBOR. Why should the training and finally Jointmanship be restricted to officer level alone? We must promote jointness at the functional level to personnel below officer rank also. There would be many areas where it is viable to train together and promote synergy. In fact, PBOR from one service may be posted to other two services on a tenure basis, in common areas. Some of the areas for common training are as under:-

- (a) Training of Office clerks.
- (b) Training of Drivers.
- (c) Joint training of police personnel of the three services.
- (d) Management training of PBOR.
- (e) Joint Training of MARCOS of Indian Navy, Garud Force of IAF and NSG of Army.

Dissertation Monitoring and Dissemination

8. Knowledge management and its importance is without doubt, the cornerstone of any learning and developing organization. The importance of knowledge management is accepted by any person, who is inclined to share,

develop and proliferate in the fast changing environment. It is a must for all of us in Armed Forces, to develop knowledge, proliferate the available knowledge and disseminate it to the environment. As Armed Forces officers and future leaders, it is expected from each one of us to pursue the academic prowess and dexterity, enabling aptitude towards professional skills and knowledge and developing higher proficiency.

9. It is not out of place to mention that Defence Services Staff College, College of Defence Management and National Defence College, are three institutions, which are the domains of 'Military Professional Knowledge', and are engaged in the development and proliferation of almost all topical subjects, ranging from age old 'War Fighting' concepts to 'Management of Modern and Future War'. Army War College, College of Air Warfare and College of Naval Warfare, also pursue and update the professional knowledge through various means and methods. These institutions hold the key to the vast potential of knowledge available at any time and would be ready to be use in future too.

10. All these institutions encourage the participant student officers to pursue their research work in the form of "DISSERTATIONS/THESIS", to be submitted by each officer undergoing long courses. Every year, close to five hundred to six hundred dissertations are added to the existing bank of dissertations at these institutions collectively. But a large number of topics may have been repeated. Some how, over a period of time, efforts being put in to collectively exploit it to its full potential are inadequate, as a systems approach to the issue seems to be lacking. Some views, to harness and proliferate this knowledge so that the environment gets its vast benefits through sustained effort of the student officers are as under:-

- (a) Selection of Topics for Dissertations. Lot of work and time is spent by the Directing staff in all training institutions in selecting topics for dissertations by the student officers. While selecting the topics, each

institution makes an effort to match its/service requirement, area of expertise of DS guide and preference of the student officer. It is imperative that in so doing, data of oft-repeated topics and saturated topics is readily available in these institutions so that the efforts of student officers is harnessed for researching only those topics, having voids in research, requiring validation/confirmation or are emerging. Ideally, while addressing an emerging area, it must be a topic of dissertation in more than one training institution before elevating it to a project, as per requirement. In the long run, the list of all past topics should be available to other institutions, so as to reduce repetition of topics within the Armed Forces and effectively utilize the time, effort and knowledge of student officers. In addition to sharing between them the research work, these institutions must proliferate this knowledge to the stake holders in a pro-active mode and also to the environment for better knowledge management. Of course, fears of plagiarism need not arise when topics selected pass the test of non-repetition.

(b) Central Monitoring of Topics and Dissemination. Perhaps, the best step would be to gather the information, for allocation of topics for research, and capture the selected work, centrally, so that large section of the officers are benefited. Central Agency, should also select topics from the three services, which needs research in future needs and requirements. This would be an important step towards developing future competencies. Probably, HQ IDS could be the nodal agency. Initially, a beginning can be made with a limited number of topics, leaving the rest to the training establishment.

(c) Networking/Linking of Institutions 'On Line'.All these institutions, as mentioned above should be interlinked, online through an intra-service net or an internet with secured connectivity.

11. The above steps, if taken, would result in the following advantages:-
- (a) Emerging areas of research would be addressed.
 - (b) Topics would emerge form 'Bottom Up, Top Down and Laterally' too'.
 - (c) Monitoring at HQ IDS level would ensure full exploitation of the potential of the effort that goes into the dissertations. Institutionalization would result in economy of effort.
 - (d) Areas of specialization could be selected easily without repetition.
 - (e) New areas, to reinforce concepts or to negate concepts would emerge.
 - (f) It would be "Planned Unified Concentrated Effort", ensuring that the services get Best Value for Money spent on the student officers.
 - (g) Vast benefit to the organization in 'Knowledge Management' while harnessing the potential and core competencies of the officers.
 - (h) It will also overcome the disadvantages of in-breeding in any training organisation.

CONCLUSION

12. Of late, Jointmanship has been getting a major boost. However, the pace needs to be stepped up considerably. It will probably take some time before a stage is reached where all the officers of three services can wear the same uniform. The areas recommended for accelerating the spirit of Jointness merit due attention by policy makers ,as these address young officers and others not going through NDA/DSSC/CDM etc. It is also time that we concentrate on promoting Jointness among PBOR, by making a small beginning, as this would auger well for the services in its drive towards Jointness.