

Seminar Report

INTEGRATION: PHILOSOPHY AND DIRECTION FOR THE ARMED FORCES

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Issues: Jointness of Indian Armed Forces

- **Enhancement of Combat Potential.** This aspect has been overlooked in almost all the past wars post independence.
- **Resource Optimisation.** Jointness prevents duplication and triplication.
- **Force Development & Capability Enhancement.** Jointness would balance budget allocation and ensure modernisation.
- **Single Point Advice.** Jointness would provide single point advice to political leadership.
- **Emerging Domains of Warfare.** Jointness must in cyber, special operations, intelligence and information warfare domains.
- **Nuclear Backdrop.** India and her belligerent neighbours are all nuclear capable. To exercise the nuclear option Jointness is a pre-requisite.
- **Slow Progress.** India is woefully short in achieving jointness in her armed forces.

Way Ahead

- **Joint and Integrated.** The armed forces must encourage Jointness and the MoD must integrate with the armed forces in its true spirit.
- **Cross Staffing.** MoD and armed forces must adopt cross staffing to accommodate specialists.
- **Chain of Command.** Armed forces may be bought under one department (HQ-integrated defence staff may be restructured).
- **Permanent Chairman Chiefs Of Staff Committee (CISC).** In the absence of a chief of defence staff, permanent chairman CISC needs to be appointed.

- **Top Down Approach.** Jointness needs to be driven from the top for it to take roots.
- **Integrated Theatre Commands.** Models can be identified based on geographical and operational contiguity.
- **Services Chiefs To Raise, Train and Sustain.** The current arrangement puts unacceptable burden on the three chiefs.

DETAILED REPORT

Issues: Jointness of Indian Armed Forces

Present State of Armed Forces

India is woefully short in achieving jointness in her armed forces. Currently, India is behind 66 countries of the world in this aspect. There are countries which have much smaller armed forces but are way ahead of India in respect of jointness amongst them. In the past five decades we have fought five wars and yet have learnt no lessons in the virtues of jointness. The desired progress has not been made despite recommendations of several committees and task forces constituted by the Government of India for the purpose. This includes Empowered Group of Ministers post-Kargil War, Arun Singh and Naresh Chandra Task Forces and Shekatkar Committee which is a work in progress. The Arun Singh Task Force report has been only partially implemented with the raising of HQ IDS, Andaman & Nicobar Command, and Strategic Forces Command while a Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) has still not been appointed and the integration of the service HQs with MoD remains limited in its scope and impact.

Enhancement of Combat Potential

This aspect has been overlooked in almost all the past wars post independence, both at the strategic and the tactical level. In 1962, there was no jointness, in 1965 war Indian Navy was suboptimally employed while there was the silver lining in the Kargil war where IAF supported Indian Army's ground attacks. A case in point recently was of the Pathankot air base attack, while a division plus force of the army sat next door to the air base, the response and its co-ordination was sought ex New Delhi.

Resource Optimisation

Jointness prevents duplication and triplication, especially in the field advanced technological weapon platforms and that of logistics.

Force Development and Capability Enhancement

Jointness would balance budget allocation and ensure modernisation of the three services in synchronisation. The three services need to modernise in synchronisation with mutually developed and agreed on long-term integrated perspective plans. This would only be possible in its right spirit when a CDS is appointed or a permanent Chairman to joint CISC is put in place. The present appoint of chief of integrated defence staff to the Chairman, CISC is a less empowered appointment and remains an anomaly.

Single Point Advice

The three services carry different views to the MoD, NSC and PMO. This rests the burden of decision on nonmilitary professionals. Jointness would ensure that decisions are based on sound military advice and are in synchronisation with the military leadership.

Emerging Domains of Warfare

The cyber, special operations, intelligence and information warfare domains, of necessity, demand jointness. These are domains which are extremely critical for prosecuting future wars or war-like operations. Any meaningful progress in these domains is only possible through tri-service organisations. Failure to recognise this may result in catastrophe.

Nuclear Backdrop

India and her belligerent neighbours are all nuclear capable. To operate in the nuclear environment, jointness is a prerequisite.

Observations on Joint Doctrine of Indian Armed Forces-2017

Generalist in Nature

The document is theoretical in nature and is not a joint war fighting doctrine.

No Political Inputs

There are no inputs from the political leadership.

Specific Tasking

Defence forces need to be organised and prepared to tackle territorial threats.

Lessons from Major Powers on Joint War Fighting and Examining the Indian Context

Common Understanding

All stakeholders including the political leaders should be on board. This will bring jointness necessary for rationalisation of threats and force levels. The examples of presidents of USA and China are very relevant and contextual. Further, India does not have a defence policy which results in serious limitations militarily. The Honourable RM needs to be the pivot with the chiefs and the CISC providing inputs.

Technology and Doctrine

Technology and doctrine are complimentary and synergise to produce exponential capabilities. We need to learn lessons from the first gulf war. Massive use of technology was made perhaps for the first time in the history of warfare which led to Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) which, in turn, led to Effect-Based Operations (EBO) that fuelled further technological advances thus, resulting in changes in doctrine and making a perfect closed loop.

Multiple War Domains

There should be a complete synergy amongst all war domains. Cyber, space and electronic domains should now be added to the land, sea and air domains. In the United States, the cyber command has been elevated to an independent command, whereas China has brought cyber, space and electronic warfare domains under one umbrella that is Strategic Support Force. In the Indian context, the three services are pursuing advances in these critical domains based on independent service doctrines.

Nuclear Option

The United States, with possession of tactical nuclear weapons, has adopted a First Use Policy whereas the Chinese have adopted a No First Use Policy. India, too, has a NFU policy; however, there should be a seamless transition between conventional and nuclear war plans. In India, the field commanders are not aware of the nuclear readiness posture or conditions of its exercise. This requires a change and the CISC may act as that of the Chinese Joint Staff Department in these matters.

Way Ahead

- **Joint and Integrated.** The armed forces must join hands and the MoD must integrate with the armed forces in its true spirit.
- **Cross Staffing.** MoD must adopt cross staffing to have specialists in the requisite appointments, both in the ministry as well as the armed forces.
- **Chain of Command.** Armed forces may be brought under one department (HQ-integrated defence staff may be restructured) with respective Vice Chiefs having secretarial powers and reporting directly to the honourable *Raksha Mantri*.
- **Permanent Chairman CISC.** In the absence of a Chief of Defence Staff, permanent chairman CISC needs to be appointed to be accountable for establishing desired tri-services institutions in the identified time frame.
- **Top Down Approach.** Jointness needs to be driven from the top for it to take roots as the past efforts of the bottoms-up approach has failed to deliver.
- **Integrated Theatre Commands.** Models can be identified based on geographical and operational contiguity and can be headed by the lead service initially which can be reviewed and modified progressively.
- **Services Chiefs to Raise, Train and Sustain.** The current arrangement puts unacceptable burden on the three chiefs. Joint

Theatre Commands for executing operations would allow the three chiefs to raise, train and sustain their respective services. Service specific training commands may continue to operate under respective service chiefs.

- **Established and Preapproved Road Map.** The Jointness-Integration Road Map should be drawn up in detail with established time lines, mile stones and key result areas. It should also be approved by the Cabinet Committee of Security and if need be, by the Parliament.

CONCEPT NOTE

Changing Nature of Threat

The threat to National Security of any nation state today is covering a vast spectrum from economic inequality/economic disparity, poverty, ideological differences, energy requirements, noncontact manoeuvres to include the triad of cyber, space and nuclear hegemony. Due to global interlinking, the security construct of a nation state is progressively becoming dependent on global and regional challenges as there is a de novo geopolitical rebalancing. In Indian context, it is further compounded by increasing assertive China, volatility in the entire South Asian region, conventional and sub-conventional challenges from Pakistan, Left Wing Extremist (LWE) in the hinterland and insurgency in the north-east (NE).

The threat to India is both external and internal from state as well as non-state actors as transnational threats posed by the activities of state and non-state sponsored terrorist organisations are exacerbated by the dynamics of intra- and inter-state conflicts which pose a danger to regions beyond primary theatres. The asymmetric risks involved need all elements of the national power to be applied in harmony. The threat assessment in the Indian context can be summed up as:

- Territorial disputes with nuclear capable neighbours, foreign abetted separatist groups (in Jammu and Kashmir and NE), and the LWE movements in the hinterland. Radicalisation is likely to add more complicity in the security environment.
- Maritime security will assume an increasing future importance as India progresses to her rightful place in the world (economic) order.
- Threats in the noncontact domain of cyber, space, information and psychological warfare are likely to further proliferate and grow in lethality and complexity.

This national threat is further complicated by technological advances as technological curve is under compression and the operations of warfare is likely to be under increased transparency, accuracy, lethality and continuous technological upgrades.

India has moved to a proactive and pragmatic philosophy to counter various conflict situations. Therefore, there is a need to move from a subregional framework to a more global framework. The national security under its ambit include commerce, science and technology diplomacy, defence and many other elements of national power. The synergy for security has to start from the armed forces and then only other agencies can harmonies the national effort towards national security. The recently published Joint Doctrine for the Armed Forces of India articulates 'Integrated Theatre Battle' to ensure decisive victory in a network-centric environment across the entire spectrum of conflict in varied geographical domains, and this is likely to be the guiding philosophy for evolution of war-fighting strategies. War needs to be conducted in such a manner that the land, air and naval commanders jointly formulate, orchestrate and implement war plans. In order to fight together they need to train jointly. The new doctrine also envisages 'jointness', for which it is essential that personnel from the three services serve together in organisations across the military-strategic, operational and tactical levels. The higher defence organisation, thus, has no option but to foster further interservice coordination in planning, execution of operations and force planning which will include restructuring, staffing, modernisation and training.

The essence of integration of the armed forces in India is to systematically prepare for the 'emerging triad' of space, cyberspace and special operations in support of military operations, even as it builds an integrated land-air-sea war fighting machinery, maintains credible nuclear deterrence and guards against unconventional threats.

Therefore, the integration would entail:

- Military operations orchestrated through joint, multidimensional, tri-service, planning and application of combat power. Thus, the need for identification of suborganisations and structures for

joint war fighting. Joint and integrated organisational structures and procedures at the operational and theatre levels have to be accordingly created.

- The physical manifestation of this requirement in the technologically advanced armies of the world at the operational/military strategic levels is by reorganising into ‘Integrated Theatre Commands (ITC)’.
- This ‘Joint Military Response’ has to be timely and appropriate, to deter a full spectrum threat, ranging from a tech-savvy non-state actor, to a hi-tech conventional war under a nuclear overhang.
- For this military capability to result into action, it is imperative that the political decision makers are kept not only abreast, but also seized of the exact nature of the security threat. They have to be rendered professional advice on ideal military response options to effectively deter or counter emerging security threats.
- The ‘Higher Defence Organisation’ (HDO) has to be functionally organised to facilitate this vital civil military interface. No dilution in quality or timeliness of military advice to the political decision makers is acceptable in the interest of national security.
- The intelligence effort would entail a continuum involving synergy and coordination of all agencies as the challenge of some or the other form of warfare will always pose a challenge to the security dynamics of the nation.
- The scientific community will have to be on board on future technological challenges in the security domain and a sizable effort will be needed in R&D.
- Diplomacy and Defence are likely to be the two most important elements of national power.

Scope of Seminar

The seminar aims to examine following aspects of Higher Defence Organisation:

- Doctrines, concept and organisation for integrated war fighting and need for time-bound implementation of Joint Defence Reforms and restructuring of HDOs including past recommendations.
- Lessons from major powers on joint war fighting and examining Indian context.
- Road map for redrawing and restructuring of armed forces.
- Change management will post biggest challenge due to differing perception of national security between uniformed fraternity and civil bureaucracy and inter service rivalry. It is time India shed its resistance to change, come out of comfort zone and shape a *de novo* security strategy.

Conduct: The seminar will offer inputs to facilitate policy makers and security forces to evolve HDO for India.

Programme and session details are att.

Participants: The participants will be from the three services, members of CAPF, strategic community, veterans and academia.

Venue: Talwar Hall Manekshaw Centre.

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