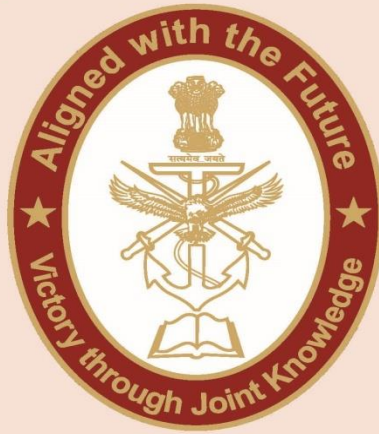


CENTRE FOR JOINT WARFARE STUDIES



CENJOWS

EVOLUTION OF HDO



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1. Higher Defence Organisation of most powerful countries have evolved over a period of time. HDO obviously includes appropriate structures for:-
 - (a) Political control over Military.
 - (b) Bureaucratic oversight in budget management, acquisition of weapon systems & equipment for capability enhancement, creation of infrastructure, administrative support etc & of course.
 - (c) Organisational structure of the armed forces, individually & combinedly to deliver on the military objectives determined by the nation.
 - (d) This is where the **Allocation of Business & Transaction of Business Rules of the Govt of India** come into play for efficient functioning of the top echelons of Political leadership, Bureaucracy & Military.
 - (e) Joint Warfare cannot be seen through the narrow prism of integrated war-fighting by the three Services alone, it has to be viewed through a wider prism, which includes **integration of**

Political, Bureaucracy & Military leadership. In other words, it means jointness of HDO, the enabling factor in creation of Military power & its use to achieve national objectives.

2. It is not possible to 'copy & paste' the template of the US, European Nations or China for India's higher defence organisation, because the structure of the HDO is governed by Constitutional framework, National aspirations, threat perception & its mitigation. These factors cannot be the same for all nations. The US has global commitments & its military have expeditionary roles. They have immense resources to meet their aspirations to have a global strategic footprint.

3. China, the rising superpower is building up its economic & military capabilities to challenge American hegemony. Therefore, the HDOs of these nations have undergone restructuring in the recent past, especially of China to meet their global commitments in power projection.

4. India is not in their league. It has no territorial ambitions, expansionist intentions or expeditionary commitments. But India has to protect its legitimate strategic interests in the region & secure its territorial integrity against two collusive, nuclear-powered adversaries. India does not have the economic heft or resources, except human resources, to be a global power as of now. Therefore, the question is what should Indian HDO be?

Shortcomings of the HDO in India

5. There are not many shortcomings in the National Security Architecture. However, the gap between the 'purpose' & 'practice' or the 'functioning' of near perfect instruments of national power is remarkable.

6. India has tiered decision making institutions. These consist of the CCS at the apex, MoD under the RM with multi-discipline elements (DRDO, SA, FADS & other Secretaries), Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence for oversight in Defence issues, Defence Planning Committee headed by NSA, Defence Acquisition Committee etc & now the CDS & Department of Military Affairs, besides the three Service Chiefs.

7. India has several Policy Documents & Directives for smooth functioning of HDO. The important ones include National Security Strategy (nebulous & undocumented), Military Strategy (RM's Directive), Union War Book, AOB/TOB Rules, Defence Acquisition Policy, Military Doctrines etc. All these documents require an upgrade.

8. It is evident that India has excellent structures & institutions, policies & directives & well established mechanisms to deliver on National Security Objectives. So what ails the HDO which needs fixing?

9. These are:-

(a) **NSS.** Non-availability of a well articulated & documented NSS is a huge handicap for top decision makers, be it political, bureaucracy or military leadership. Every decision made must reflect the tenets of this document.

(b) **MS.** Regular updation is invariably delayed by years beyond its relevance, hence planning for mitigation of evolving threats get jeopardised. The Long Term Integrated Perspective Plan (LTIPP) of the Armed Forces is based on this valuable document signed by the RM.

(c) **Lack of Professional Knowledge, Expertise & Exposure in Leadership Hierarchy.** The Political leadership & the Bureaucracy lack adequate perspective on national security & matters military while the military leadership is deficient in the knowledge about the functioning of the Govt machinery, especially cannons of financial management.

(d) **Mistrust in the Military.** Right from the beginning in independent India there has been a perception of mistrust by Political leadership & Bureaucracy towards the Military. It has undermined the relationship at the highest levels. Functioning of the MoD has been non-transparent, eg, 'shadow files' are maintained on most projects & cases which normally cannot be accessed by Service Headquarters. The salience of bureaucratic advice over military advice in matters

military is evident in most MoD decisions. The CDS/DMA entity should be able to overcome this challenge.

(e) **Higher Directions by Political Authorities.** Such directions are invariably delayed & inadequate on important issues. 'Adhocism' tends to be the only constant. Once again the CDS/DMA may be able to influence the top decision makers for corrective measures.

Is Jointness the Real Issue?

10. Jointness amongst the three Services is not the real issue, especially after the establishment of the post of Chairman COSC & HQ IDS. The flaw was 'ad hocism', the dual hatting of the Chairman instead of a Permanent Chairman, made him a 'lame duck' Chairman. Turf battles are common to all militaries & such battles have been minimised to harmless levels by appointing a CDS in most countries, who enjoys decision making powers over the Service Chiefs, if they fail to agree, making use of his professional discretion. Service Chiefs are often influenced by the hard-liners in their own Service, jointness becoming the victim of inflexibility, selfishness & egos. This aspect would get addressed by the CDS now.

11. The real issue is non-availability of the wherewithal in terms of funds, assets, weapon platforms etc for capability building to mitigate the external threats. 'Ad hocism' rules the roost in budgetary support. The prioritised LTIPP approved by the RM is based on the Y-o-Y increase in budgetary allocations, by 10 percent for Capital & 6 percent for Revenue expenditures. But these plans are rarely adhered to. Very long gestation period of acquisition cases & non-release of funds jeopardise the LTIPP & operational capability. The contemporary example is the purchase of 36 Rafales instead of 126 aircraft even after more than 10 years of protracted negotiations. It is true for all acquisition projects, because they are 'process' driven & not 'outcome' driven with no one accountable.

12. As far as warfighting is concerned, the Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971 is an excellent template of jointness in military planning, training & execution of operations, which gave India an outstanding victory in military history. The CDS & HQ IDS need to study 1971 conflict to identify the

aspects which contributed to synergistic operations and adopt them in the current model of jointness.

13. Let us not make revolutionary changes in the organisational structure, based on their success in other militaries. It would amount to trying to fix a system that ain't broken. The remedy may prove to be worse than the disease. It is recommended that the reforms be progressive, a step by step approach to change is more permanent & desirable.

Tasks Cut out for CDS & DMA

14. The institution of CDS/DMA is a major step in Reformation of HDO, related mainly to the Armed forces. There are several Tasks cut out for the CDS, most of them are already under implementation.

- (a) Creation of a more lean & mean force by enhancing teeth to tail ratio.
- (b) Elimination of existing redundancies & duplication of assets, infrastructure & manpower.
- (c) Set up Joint Functional Commands for training & maintenance/ logistics. Build up Joint tri-Services Space & Cyber Operational Commands to full capacity- an absolute essential for silent warfare of the future.
- (d) Emphasise & implement tri- Services communication network for Administration & Operations, very important for Network Centric Warfare (NCW) capability. A lot of progress has already been made in this domain.
- (e) Enhance jointness in every sphere of military endeavour, ie, Intelligence, Acquisition of equipment, Budget management, HADR etc. These are already under the CDS/Hq IDS.
- (f) Formulate & Implement effective HR policies & in-service training for tenanted appointments in joint organisations. Weed out hardliners with strong bias against jointness. Tenanted Criteria

appointments in joint organisations successfully should be essential for promotion to higher ranks.

- (g) Insist on formulation of NSS & participate in the process.
- (h) Update MS, Military Doctrines & reprioritise LTIPP based on MS & Y-on-Y escalation in budgetary support, agreed to by MoF.
- (j) Seek updation of relevant clauses of AOB/TOB Rules & Union War Book. The Defence Secretary continues to be responsible for the defence of India, which ignores & defies the ground reality.
- (k) The most important task which would pay rich dividends is - Integration of Operational plans at the three Service HQs level for every warfighting contingency. Similarly, fused plans at Operational Command level must be upgraded to tri-service plans.
- (l) Finally, reduction in the number of Op Commands for enhanced jointness through better coordination, planning, training & execution of war-fighting contingencies.

15. The IA had split the original Western Command into NC, WC & SWC, while the IAF created two new Commands, SWAC & SAC. In hindsight, these new Commands may not have been desirable.

16. **The recommended formulation** envisages dividing India into four Regions.

- (a) Western - Pakistan centric.
- (b) N/N Eastern - China centric.
- (c) Peninsular - hinterland centric &
- (d) IOR - Maritime centric.

17. Western & N/NE Regions would have one Operational Command each from the Army, Navy & IAF. These Commands of the three Services would work together in coordinated & dedicated manner ensuring jointness in operational planning, training & execution of fused plans. The Peninsular

Region would have one IA & IAF Command each supported by WNC & ENC. The IOR Region would have an expanded tri-services Command of ANC. It would be provided with maximum Naval assets & beefed up with IA & IAF resources.

18. **Responsibilities of CDS.**

(a) Exercise Command & Control over all Tri- Services Operational Commands, ie, SFC, ANC (Maritime IOR Command), Space, Cyber & Special Ops Commands as well as joint Functional Commands like Training & Logistics/Maintenance Commands.

(b) Oversee the formulation of fused joint op plans at the three Services HQs level for all warfighting contingencies.

(c) Attend all joint wargames & op exercises both at Service HQs & Operational Command level.

19. The Service Chiefs to retain Command & Control (Ops & Adm) with respect to their Operational Commands. They take responsibility for formulation of fused operational plans with other two Services for all warfighting contingencies.

20. The decision for establishment of ITC be undertaken on completion of the Tasks stated above & the problems, if any, ironed out. The factors which need consideration before creation of ITC are, Area, Assets & Concept of Operations:-

(a) **Area & Assets.** The total Area of India is much smaller than the WTC of China. The US Indo -Pacific Command is 10 times larger in area compared to India. It has more than 200 warships with 5 CBGs & 30 Submarines, stronger & bigger than IN. It has 1300 aircraft, which include many types of combat, heavy lift transport, AWACS & FRA aircraft, much larger than IAF. The IAF would find it very difficult to distribute its meagre flying assets to ITCs & AD Command.

(b) **Difference in Concept of Operations.** The IA believes in having all forces under its control, which is very relevant for meeting

'mobilisation & reserves' requirements, directly affecting efficient conduct of operations by the Army Commander. But for the IAF these two factors are intrinsic to its concept of air ops, especially with meagre assets. Its concept of ops is 'Centralised planning & decentralised execution', switching roles of multi-role fighter fleets, does not matter in which Command they are located & where the target systems lie. It ensures great flexibility & concentration of force at the point of application for the best results.

Conclusion

21. Reforms in HDO should not be aimed only at the Armed Forces. It would involve integration of Political, Bureaucracy & Military organisations & leadership. The key operative areas are, formal exposure to national security aspects, synergy & jointness for all stakeholders.

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