



Forging Tri-Services Synergy: The Evolution of Integrated Defence from Fragmentation to Unified Command in India

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Key Takeaways

- **Evolution Post-1947:** After independence, India proposed separate Commanders-in-Chief and a Chief of Staff Committee, but Nehru's government, fearing a military coup, opted for individual service chiefs and placed the Service Headquarters under the Ministry of Defence to ensure civilian control.
- **Op-Sindhoor Example of Jointness:** Operation Sindhoor is by far the best example demonstrated by the Indian armed forces, in its exceptional degree of jointness and integration in military operations, with a seamless synergy by all three branches of the military (Army, Air Force and the Navy).
- **Kargil Review Committee Impact:** The main purpose assigned to the CDS was to establish theatre commands in the armed forces to bring about the jointness of operations and synergy amongst the Army, Navy and the Air Force.
- **On Theatre Commands:** Each theatre command will be led by a four-star officer from any of the three services. Although there is broad consensus on their implementation, administrative and bureaucratic hurdles have delayed their formalisation, which is expected to be resolved soon.
- **On Inter Services Organisation (ISO) Act:** The Act empowers ISO commanders to exercise disciplinary and administrative control over personnel from all three services, streamlining the command structure and enabling more efficient decision-making.
- **Think Tank for Defence Integration:** A kick-start can be made in this direction with the appointment of a Diplomatic Advisory Council, headed by a senior and eminent person who has worked extensively in senior roles with the major defence and strategic allies of India.
- **On Integration Benefits:** Integration reduces duplication of efforts and optimises resource allocation across all services, and the creation of integrated theatre commands aims to streamline planning, logistics, and operations.
- **Joint Intelligence Theatre Command (JITC):** A Joint Intelligence Theatre Command could mitigate such lapses by functioning as a unified command and control centre, integrating strategic, operational, and tactical intelligence inputs across sectors and regions.

Tracing The Evolution Of Jointness Post-1947 In The Indian Armed Forces

When the British Empire ruled India, the post of Commander-in-Chief of India was last held by Field-Marshal Claude Auchinleck, who had authority over the Indian army, Navy, and Air Force. He received the title of Supreme Commander for a brief period following Partition. In 1947, after India's independence, the Government of India requested the last British Viceroy, Lord Louis Mountbatten, and his Chief of Staff, Lord Lionel Ismay, to formulate a system of higher defence management for independent India. Their suggestion was to create a Commander-in-Chief for each service of the Indian armed forces, as well as a Chief of Staff Committee to

coordinate with the central government on defence matters.

However, this arrangement was discarded by the Government of India in favour of having chiefs of staff for each service, with powers of Supreme Commander given to the President of India. The civilian government of then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, wary of a possible military coup, placed the Service Headquarters (SHQs) as attached offices under the Ministry of Defence (MoD), ensuring decision-making remained under civilian control.

Thus, in the early decades after independence, there was an absence of formal structures that institutionalised joint operational planning between the three services of the armed forces. Despite these shortcomings, the armed



Prime Minister Nehru was in favour of appointing a CDS just before the 1962 war, but was unable to appoint one due to opposition from his defence minister, Krishna Menon, as observed by Lord Mountbatten in a letter written to Lieutenant General M.L. Chibber.

forces performed reasonably well in the 1947-1948 Kashmir war and the 1961 Liberation of Goa. The Indian armed forces' first experience of joint operations was during the first war with Pakistan in 1947-1948 over Jammu and Kashmir. The 1947-1948 war was fought mostly by the Indian army, with the Indian Air Force being used only to transport troops and equipment and to provide limited air support to ground troops. Later in 1961, Goa was liberated from Portuguese colonial rule in a two-day operation by the three services of India's armed forces. This was a simple task as the Portuguese troops defending Goa surrendered quickly with little or no resistance.

The 1962 India-China border war was a wake-up call to the Indian political leadership and the Indian armed forces concerning military preparedness, as the Indian army suffered severe military defeats at the hands of the Chinese army in Arunachal Pradesh and Ladakh. The 1962 war saw no military operations by the Air Force and Navy, as the Indian government did not want to escalate the border war into a full-scale war between the two countries.

The three services of the armed forces did come to fight together against Pakistan in the 1965 war, but without any preconceived plan for joint military operations. The then chief of the Indian Air Force, Air Marshal Arjan Singh, had said on many occasions that he came to know that air support was needed only when hostilities had already broken out and the army was under pressure in the Chamb sector.

Given the Indian government's

determination to limit the scope of the conflict as much as possible, the role assigned to the Navy during the war was a mainly defensive one which involved ensuring the safety of Indian ports, guarding the country's entire coastline and above all protect India's shipping from interference by the Pakistani Navy.

However, in spite of the above problems created by the absence of formal structures that institutionalised joint operational planning between the three services of the armed forces, the Indian political leadership refused to create a Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) post due to a number of reasons. One such reason was recalled by Lord Mountbatten in a letter written to Lieutenant General M.L Chibber, where he wrote that Jawaharlal Nehru was in favour of appointing a CDS just before the 1962 war – with General Thimayya as his preferred choice – but was unable to appoint one due to opposition from his defence minister, Krishna Menon. Nehru had earlier opposed appointing a CDS due to fears that it might lead to the revival of the British colonial era post of Commander-in-Chief in India.

Another reason for the refusal of the political leadership to create a CDS post was the fear of a possible military coup by the Indian army, similar to what had happened in neighbouring Pakistan. In 1958, the first Pakistani Commander-in-Chief, General Ayub Khan, had seized power from Pakistan's civilian government through a military coup. This created a fear in the minds of Indian political leaders that an Indian CDS or Commander in Chief without tight civilian control might attempt a similar military coup in India.

Setting Up Of Military Institutions To Foster Jointness Among The Three Services

Soon after independence, India established two military institutions that were tailor-made to promote jointness. One was the Joint Services Wing – later to become the National Defence Academy (NDA) at Khadakvasala to train young cadets to become officers in the armed forces. At the time of its establishment in 1954, the NDA was the first tri-services military training academy established anywhere in the world. The other military institution is the Defence Services Staff College (DSSC) in Wellington, Tamil Nadu, which would bring officers of the three services together once again after about twelve years of service. To these were added in due course the College of Defence Management (CDM) at Secunderabad at a more senior level and, finally, the National Defence College (NDC) at New Delhi at the highest level of Brigadier and equivalent rank. This framework for joint training of officers at different levels and to bring them together again at different stages of their careers was, therefore, well laid and continues till now. It has yielded very good results in bringing about inter-service camaraderie. However, the absence of a CDS post and joint theatre commands prevented the resources and personnel of the Army, Navy and Air Force from working together in an integrated manner to ensure the successful conduct of joint operations.

The 1971 War And Efforts Of Jointness Among The Three Services

In March 1971, civil war broke out in East Pakistan when the Bengali-speaking population of East Pakistan declared itself to be the independent nation of Bangladesh. The Pakistani army's subsequent military crackdown in East Pakistan is estimated to have killed around 3 million people, with another 10 million people fleeing as refugees to India's border states of West Bengal, Assam and Tripura. This created an immense strain on India's meagre economic resources.

This compelled the then Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, to instruct the Indian armed forces to prepare for a military intervention in East Pakistan in support of the Mukti Bahini (Bangladesh freedom fighters). The Indian armed forces used the following nine months (April – December 1971) to prepare for a military campaign in East Pakistan.

In 1971, the Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC) was the highest level of decision-making within the military hierarchy. The then Army Chief General Sam Manekshaw functioned as the chairman of the COSC by seniority. He was responsible merely for the coordination of joint and inter-service matters and had little say over the internal matters of the other two services. Much of what could be achieved by the COSC depended upon the personal equation of the chairman with the other two service chiefs, Admiral S.N. Nanda and Air Marshal P.C. Lal.

The service chiefs had little direct

access to the political leadership and had to depend upon the Defence Secretary to express their views to the Defence Minister on routine matters. Occasionally, they were invited to attend the proceedings of the Political Affairs Committee, when military-related matters were discussed. However, for the most part, the armed forces were kept isolated from the political decision-making process in the government, which kept them apolitical in their outlook.

It was up to General Sam Manekshaw, who was ultimately responsible for the conduct of operations, both as the chairman of the COSC and the chief of the Army, to provide the bulk of the fighting strength for the war. He had the stature, by being a decorated war veteran

and his commanding personality, to ensure that he got the complete support of the political leadership in evolving and actualising the military strategy. He realised the importance of the “whole of government” approach to war, bringing on board the different ministries and agencies of the government towards the war effort. He leveraged his rapport with Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and his standing with the military establishment to ensure all agencies of the government were brought on board towards the war effort.

Based on his recommendations, a Joint Intelligence Committee was set up under the vice chief of army staff, comprising representatives from the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), India’s external intelligence agency,



Lt Gen A.A.K. Niazi of Pakistan surrendered to Lt Gen Jagjit Singh Aurora of India, with over 93,500 Pakistani troops laying down arms. The Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force dominated the 1971 war in East Pakistan.

the Intelligence Bureau (IB), internal intelligence agency, and the directors of intelligence of the three services. This provided a common intelligence picture and avoided duplication between the various intelligence agencies.

Similarly, a Joint Planning Committee was established within the Ministry of Defence to coordinate the operational plans of the three services, making them function as a joint team. Although the army played the lead in planning and preparing for the war, General Manekshaw always kept the other two service chiefs informed and gave due credit to the other two services for their contribution towards the war effort. This ensured their wholehearted cooperation and made up for the lack of joint institutional organisation at the apex level.

However, in spite of these efforts, there were instances during the 1971 war where there was a lack of synergy between the three services of the armed forces. One such instance was the lack of coordination between the army and navy in planning the maritime amphibious assault on Cox's Bazar using Gorkha troops, which ended in disaster, with some of the Gorkha soldiers losing their lives due to drowning. Another instance was the separate attacks carried out by the Air Force and Navy against vital installations in Karachi, which were not part of any joint coordinated operational plan. Lieutenant General J.F.R Jacob, who, as Chief of Staff of the army's Eastern Command was responsible for the conduct of operations in East Pakistan had gone on record to say that the three services of the military went about doing their things without

any synergy and that he, himself, disregarded the orders of the Army chief concerning the conduct of the land battle.

However, following India's decisive military victory over Pakistan in the 1971 war, there was a reluctance on the part of the three services to reflect on their operational shortcomings, and instead, the three services argued that the existing structure for promoting jointness was working and that there was no need for any changes.

Kargil Review Committee Report: A Major Step Towards The Efforts Of Jointness

The Kargil committee report was constituted post the Kargil conflict in 1999. It was chaired by the eminent Strategic Scholar and the Chairman of NSAB, K Subramanyam. Its main mandate was to assess the shortcomings of the Kargil conflict and provide recommendations towards reforming and modernising the Indian Defence and suggesting measures towards providing a new paradigm shift towards India's strategic and defence policy. Three major recommendations given by this committee towards jointness of defence were immediately implemented in 2001. They were, Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff-IDF, the Andaman and Nicobar Command and the formation of the Strategic Forces Command, which looks after India's Nuclear Assets. Another major recommendation that came about in this report is the



establishment of the office of the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS). It took almost close to two decades to establish the Office of the CDS in 2019. The main purpose assigned to the CDS was to establish theatre commands in the armed forces to bring about the jointness of operations and synergy amongst the Army, Navy and the Air Force.

The duties and functions of the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) include the following:

- To head the Department of Military Affairs in the Ministry of Defence and function as its Secretary.
- To act as the Principal Military Advisor to the Hon'ble Raksha Mantri on all Tri-Service matters.
- To function as the Permanent Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee
- To administer the Tri-Service organisations/agencies/commands.
- To be a member of the Defence Acquisition Council, chaired by the Hon'ble Raksha Mantri.
- To function as the Military Advisor to the Nuclear Command Authority.
- To bring about jointness in operation, logistics, transport, training, support services, communications, repairs and maintenance, etc of the three Services.
- To ensure optimal utilisation of infrastructure and rationalise it through jointness among the Services.
- To implement the Five-Year Defence Capital Acquisition Plan and the Two-Year roll-on Annual Acquisition

Plans, as a follow-up to the Integrated Capability Development Plan.

- To assign inter-service prioritisation to capital acquisition proposals based on the anticipated budget.
- To bring about reforms in the functioning of the three Services to augment the combat capabilities of the Armed Forces by reducing wasteful expenditure.

The mandate of the Department of Military Affairs inter alia includes “Facilitation of restructuring of Military Commands for optimal utilisation of resources by bringing about jointness in operations, including through establishment of joint/theatre commands”.

Inter Services Organisation Act: Legislative Affirmation Towards Jointness

Background

The Armed Forces currently function under distinct Service Acts, namely the Army Act of 1950, the Navy Act of 1957, and the Air Force Act of 1950. However, the variations among these acts have occasionally presented challenges in upholding uniform discipline, enabling effective coordination, and ensuring swift proceedings across the different branches of service.

The ISO Act does not propose any alteration to the existing service acts, rules, or regulations.



Features of the Act:

• Empowering ISO Leadership:

The Act grants Commanders-in-Chief and Officers-in-Command of ISOs the authority to exercise disciplinary and administrative control over service personnel under their command, regardless of their specific branch (Army, Navy, Air Force).

This simplifies command structure and ensures efficient decision-making within ISOs.

• Constituting and Classifying ISOs:

Existing ISOs like the Andaman and Nicobar Command, Defence Space Agency and the National Defence Academy will be formally recognised under the Act.

The central government may constitute an Inter-services Organisation which has personnel belonging to at least two of the three services: the army, the navy, and the air force.

ISO will be placed under the command of an Officer-in-Command.

A Joint Services Command (tri-service) can also be formed, which will be placed under the command of a Commander-in-Chief.

• Applicability and Qualifications:

It can be extended to other centrally controlled forces beyond the Army, Navy, and Air Force.

It outlines the eligibility

criteria for Commanders-in-Chief and Officers-in-Command, specifying high-ranking officers from each service.

• Control and Commanding Officer:

The central government retains ultimate authority over ISOs and can issue directives related to national security, administration, and public interest.

It establishes the Commanding Officer position, responsible for a specific unit, ship, or establishment within an ISO.

They will carry out duties assigned by the higher leadership and have the authority to initiate disciplinary or administrative actions concerning personnel under their command.



The Significance Of The Integration Of Armed Forces

Enhanced Operational Effectiveness:

Joint planning and training foster better coordination and enhance the understanding between services, which is essential for modern warfare. For example, the Inter-Services Organisations (ISOs) Act, 2024, empowers the leadership of ISOs to execute a unified command.

Faster Decision-Making:

Streamlined command structures within integrated units allow for quicker decision-making on the battlefield.

Established in 2019, the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) is a single-point military advisor to the government, facilitating better coordination in defence planning and procurement.

Optimum Resource Utilisation:

Integration reduces duplication of efforts and optimises resource allocation across all services.

The creation of integrated theatre commands aims to streamline planning, logistics, and operations.

The process of integration of the Indian armed forces has been a long-term vision, and past steps seem to be in the right direction. Also, the inclusion of modern warfare systems similar to China's information support force, cyberspace force, or the USA's space forces can enhance India's defence-related capabilities to match modern

warfare needs and challenges.

Op-Sindhoor and the Jointness of Armed Forces

Operation Sindhoor, which started on the 7th of May 2025, is by far the best example demonstrated by the Indian armed forces, in its exceptional degree of jointness and integration in military operations, with a seamless synergy by all three branches of the military (Army, Air Force and the Navy). In the Past, conflicts such as the 1962 war with China, the 1965 war against Pakistan and the Indian Peace Keeping Forces in Sri Lanka in 1987, a lack of joint coordination between the forces was reported from credible sources. The main reason for the past failures in Joint Operation happened to be that the leadership of the Army, Navy and Air Force was under different commanders and a lack of a unified command system and structure. But Op-Sindhoor changed the whole ballgame, with the entry of the CDS's monitoring. This was the first major operation and a mission that was conducted under the leadership of the CDS, which led to greater synergy and seamless jointness. The Air Force's IACCS, the Integrated Air Command and Control System and the Army's AKASHTEER integrated command system seamlessly provided support. Multiple layers/ levels of defence were created.

- Level 1: Portable Missiles and Air Defence Guns (Operated by the Army)
- Level 2: Short-Range Missiles
- Level 3: Medium Range Missiles

- Level 4: Long Range missiles (Levels 2,3,4 operated by Air Force)

Along with this, the intelligence coordinates were so precise that the strikes on the first day of the operation, which were deep inside Pakistan, were conducted with 100% accuracy, resulting in minimal to nil civilian casualties. 10 ISRO satellites were also helping in monitoring the border areas with Pakistan. 99% of drones and missiles coming from Pakistan were shot down with complete efficacy.

All the theatre commands will be headed by a four-star high-ranking military official from any of the three branches of the armed forces. Most of the forces are in agreement with the theatre commands, but due to some administrative and bureaucratic issues and hurdles, there is a delay in formalising and enforcing the theatre commands, which is expected to be resolved soon.

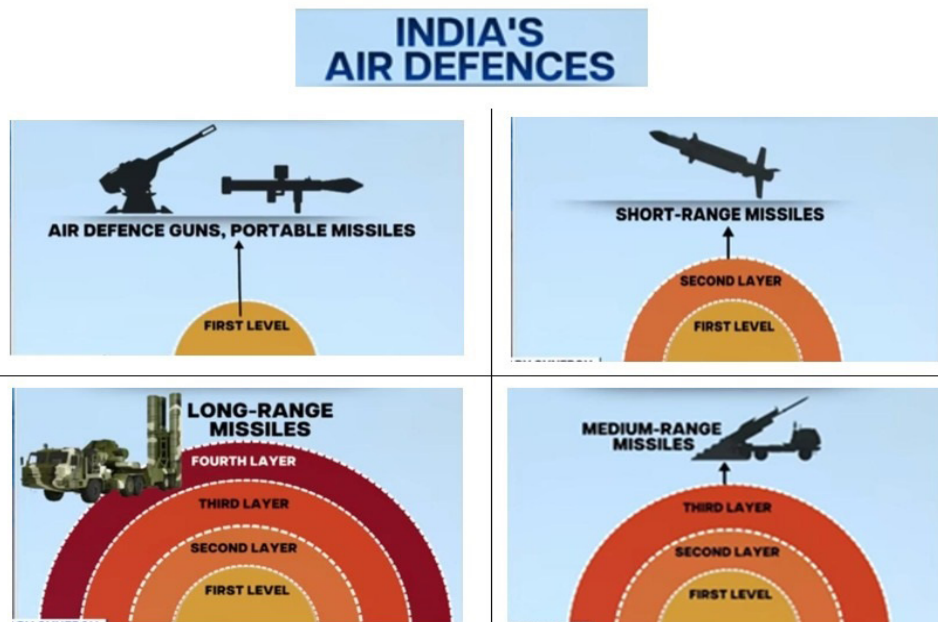


Image Source: Firstpost

Proposed Theatre Commands:
3 Major theatre commands have been largely discussed in the top strategic circles in India, namely:

- 1) Northern Theatre Command
- 2) Western Theatre Command
- 3) Southern Theatre Command
- 4) Improvisation and full Scaling of the Andaman and Nicobar Theatre Command.

Institutionalising Defence Integration Through A High-Powered Think Tank Enabled With Decision-Making

As India's external threats are increasing, the need to ramp up the defence assets, weapons and armoury has become the need of the hour. The late Gen Bipin Rawat, India's first CDS(Chief of Defence Staff) had spoken on several occasions on the

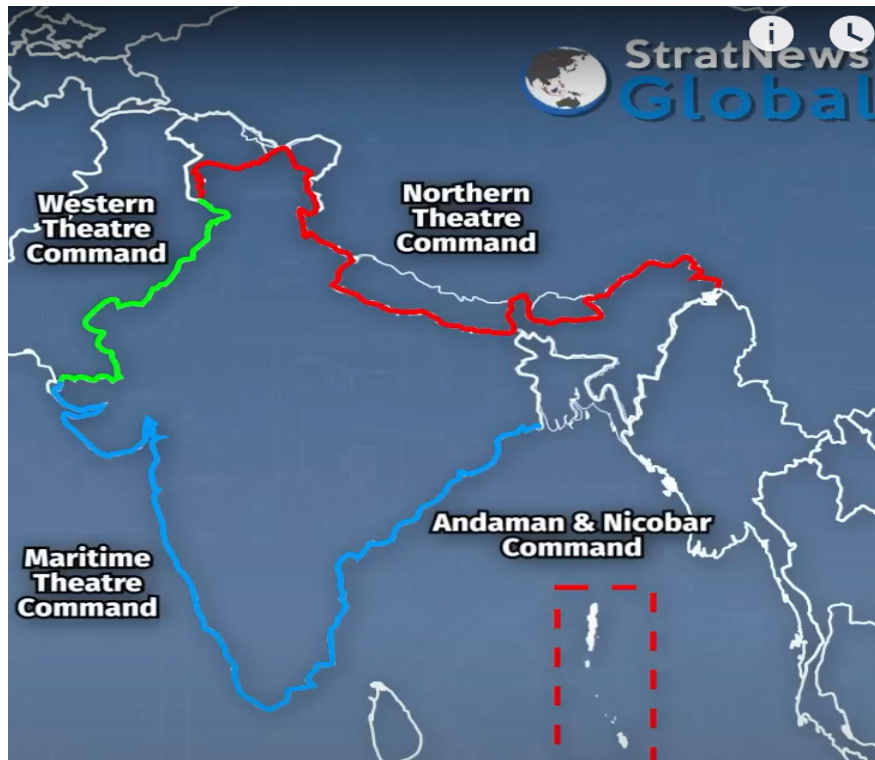


Image Source: Strat News Global

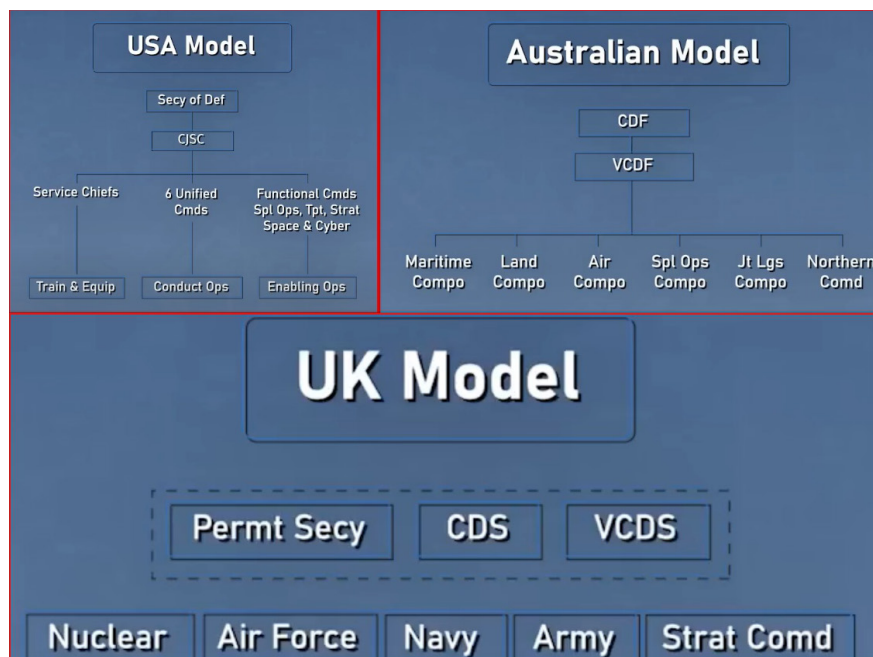


Image Source: Strat News Global

need envision for a specialized defence diplomatic core, which would possess exemplary professional competence in understanding defence and strategic issues, along with striking effective negotiations in the complex defence deals with India's major defence partners

in the world. A kick-start can be made in this direction with the appointment of a Diplomatic Advisory Council, headed by a senior and eminent person who has worked extensively in senior roles with the major defence and strategic allies of India. Other members may consist

of India's topmost strategic scholars and intellectuals, former diplomats and senior staffers of the National Security Council, senior journalists specialised in defence and strategic affairs, etc. This measure would lay the foundations for the institutionalisation of defence diplomacy.

Ex officio members of this Think Tank should be the National Security Advisor NSA, the Foreign Secretary, Defence Secretary, Cabinet Secretary, the Chief of R&AW, India's External Intelligence Agency, the Three Service Chiefs, the CDS, the Deputy Chief of Defence Staff, and other members must be inducted as and when deemed necessary.

A Special Ex-Officio member must be appointed who should be a political appointee, most likely a Minister of State MoS of Defence, should be appointed to this position, who should also be a senior and seasoned specialist in strategic and defence-related matters. The government should make it a norm to appoint the MoS of Defence as a person emanating as a specialist in defence, strategic studies or on broad matters of foreign policy and national security.

Defence Advisory Council Staff

• Chairman and members

An eminent defence professional/ prominent academic specialised in defence and strategic studies/ senior journalist of an eminent stature/ a scholar of eminence in Defence and Strategic studies/senior diplomat, bureaucrat/a person of eminence in public life, with experience of more than three decades

in the relevant fields of strategic affairs.

• Distinguished Fellows

senior academics/ eminent military veterans/ senior journalists/ senior bureaucrats/senior diplomats with a distinct experience in defence strategy/ strategic studies/international relations, diplomacy and foreign policy decision making, etc, to play the role of eminent advisors to the DAC.

• Senior Fellows

Senior Academics and military veterans with experience of at least 15 years in think tanks, military affairs, and research fellows with a minimum experience of 15 years in relevant strategic affairs domains.

• Research Fellows

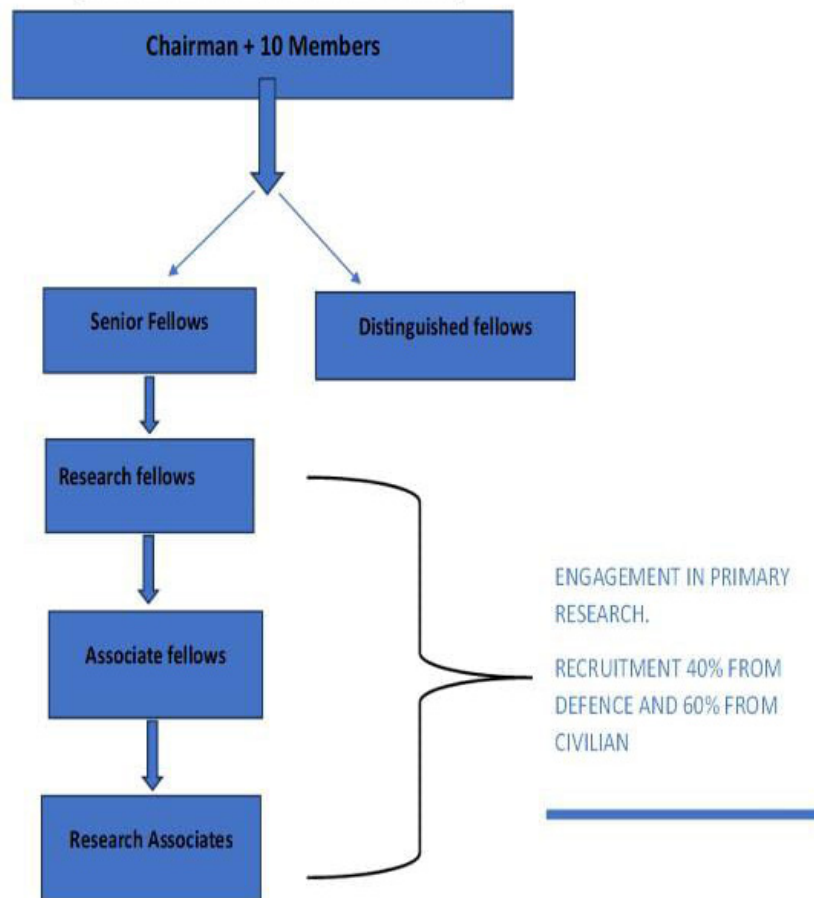
Preferably PhDs in International Relations, Strategic Affairs, Defence and Strategic Studies with a minimum of 8 years of experience in research and field expertise in the case of armed forces personnel.

• Associate Fellows

Preferably PhDs in International Relations, Strategic Affairs, Defence and Strategic Studies with a minimum of 3 years of experience in research and field expertise in the case of armed forces personnel.

• Research Associates

A minimum of a Master's in International Relations/Strategic Studies & Defence with a keen interest in primary research, data collection, and coordination of organisational functions.

DEFENCE ADVISORY COUNCIL CHART:

The Case for a Joint Intelligence Theatre Command in India

India's national security landscape has evolved rapidly in the 21st century, necessitating a transformation not only in defence capabilities but also in the structure and coordination of intelligence agencies. While the armed forces are moving towards a theatre command system for integrated warfighting, a similar restructuring is vital for India's intelligence apparatus. A Joint Intelligence Theatre Command (JITC) would significantly enhance synergy, real-time intelligence sharing, and operational efficiency across agencies such as the Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW), Intelligence Bureau (IB),

Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA), and intelligence units of paramilitary forces, central police forces, and state intelligence departments.

Preferably, an officer of the rank of an Additional Director of the Intelligence Bureau must be made the head of the Joint Theatre Command. A JITC must be constituted in the Jammu and Kashmir region on a priority basis, considering the ongoing threats and operational complexities in the area.

At present, India's intelligence architecture often operates in silos, leading to duplication of effort, intelligence gaps, and coordination challenges. The 26/11 Mumbai attacks and the 2016 Pathankot airbase assault serve as stark reminders of

the critical need for better inter-agency coordination. A Joint Intelligence Theatre Command could mitigate such lapses by functioning as a unified command and control centre, integrating strategic, operational, and tactical intelligence inputs across sectors and regions.

Cyber, AI, and Tech Orientation: The New Frontier

Modern warfare is no longer defined solely by bullets and boots—it now includes bytes and bots. The battlefield has extended into cyberspace, where state and non-state actors wage invisible wars through hacking, disinformation, and cyber sabotage. Therefore, a JITC must also be future-oriented, embedding cyber intelligence, artificial intelligence (AI)-driven analytics, and tech-enabled surveillance at its core.

Dedicated cyber cells within each JITC must monitor, pre-empt, and respond to cyber threats that target military assets, critical infrastructure, or public morale. AI tools can enhance predictive intelligence, sift through massive volumes of data, identify patterns, and issue early warnings. Machine learning models can flag anomalies in cross-border communications or detect suspicious satellite movements and troop mobilisations. Integrating AI with human intelligence (HUMINT) will dramatically elevate threat detection and response time.

Additionally, the JITC should invest in electronic warfare (EW) capabilities and satellite-based geospatial intelligence to offer real-time battlefield updates. Drones and unmanned surveillance

vehicles, guided by AI, can provide persistent monitoring of hostile zones. This tech-first orientation will allow the Indian security apparatus to move from a reactive to a proactive intelligence posture.

Jointness of the Armed Forces: A Unified Response

A key benefit of the JITC structure is the seamless jointness it can bring to the operations of the Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force. Currently, the three services collect, analyse, and act on intelligence largely through service-specific channels. This disjointed approach leads to fragmented responses and lost opportunities. Under a JITC model, intelligence would flow horizontally across all military branches and vertically between strategic and operational levels.

For example, in the event of a border incursion in the Northern Theatre, the Army's forward units, the Air Force's surveillance aircraft, and the Navy's satellite-based reconnaissance platforms can operate on a shared intelligence platform. This enables quicker target acquisition, coordinated multi-domain responses, and minimisation of friendly fire or resource overlap. The jointness also extends to training and planning—defence personnel must undergo integrated war-gaming and simulation exercises using real-time data streamed from the JITC.

Furthermore, theatre-specific intelligence cells—such as Northern (focused on Pakistan and insurgency in J&K), Eastern (targeting Chinese

border threats), and Western (catering to maritime security in the Arabian Sea)—will ensure contextual and localised threat assessments. Intelligence officers from the IB, R&AW, DIA, and state agencies should be regularly deputed across different organisations to foster inter-agency understanding and eliminate turf wars.

Building a 21st-Century Intelligence Culture

The U.S. model of the Director of National Intelligence (DNI), who oversees and coordinates the country's entire intelligence apparatus, offers a useful precedent. However, India must adapt this concept to its unique geopolitical and institutional realities. Rather than diminishing the autonomy of individual agencies, a JITC should function as a synergistic hub, maximising strengths while enforcing accountability and collaboration.

As we embrace high-end technology, we must not forget the foundational principle of intelligence: the human element. An ideal intelligence officer in today's world is not just a field operative but a techno-strategic thinker—someone who blends traditional tradecraft with technological proficiency. The fusion of deep cultural insight, language skills, and on-ground presence with advanced tools like AI-powered predictive models and cyber forensics creates a new kind of intelligence warrior—both valuable and deadly.

Ultimately, the goal of a JITC is not merely administrative restructuring, but a philosophical reimagination of how

intelligence must function in a rapidly changing world. A command structure that facilitates jointness, fosters inter-agency trust, integrates cutting-edge technology, and prioritises actionable intelligence will be indispensable in shaping India's security posture in the decades to come.

The exercise of jointness has come a long way since India's independence. From the initial reluctance in the earlier governments to promote jointness to the present government's political will to carry the heavy mantle of one of the most difficult aspects of defence reforms, which is to enforce jointness of operations, creation of theatre commands and the appointment of the institutional position of CDS, the evolution of India's Armed forces have eventually become robust and synergised to exemplary efficacy in jointness of military operations.



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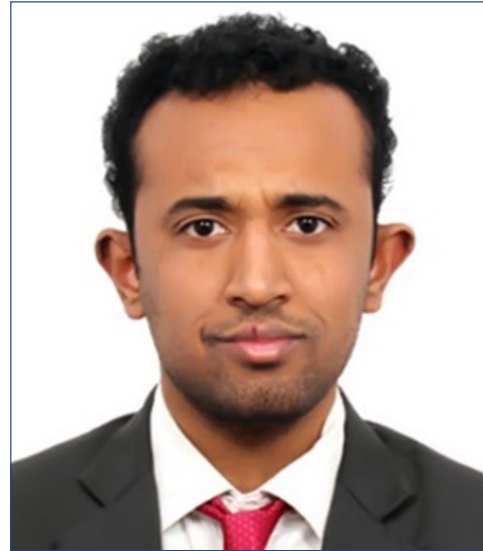
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