

# INTEGRATED THEATRE COMMANDS: DOES THE IDEA SUIT INDIA?

**RAMESH RAI**

## INTRODUCTION

There is talk about the division of the Indian subcontinent into theatres of war and the formation of Integrated Theatre Commands for war-fighting. This probably stems from a belief that such a division and reorganisation would promote jointness, integration and accrue operational benefits. A conflict theatre is the geographic space where military events occur. World War I had seven theatres, each the size of a continent i.e. Western Theatre, Balkans, Russia, Egypt, Africa, Asia and Australasia. During World War II, the entire geographical space of war, that engulfed almost half the planet, approximately 98 million sq km, had two theatres i.e. the European and Pacific Theatres. It seems rather unusual that India, which measures only 3.3 million sq km should divide itself into three theatres of war as per the recommendation of a committee appointed by the Ministry of Defence (MoD). Apparently, there is a difference in the perception of the term theatre between then and now, and a revisit is necessitated to understand its basic characteristics i.e. the distances involved, the influence of one on the other, the lines of communication between theatres, the location of belligerents and the strategic objectives, etc. Unless the committee's recommendation is an attempt to perpetuate the army's centrism and give it more control,

---

Air Marshal **Ramesh Rai** VM (Retd) was AOC-in-C Training Command when he retired in July 2015, after serving in the Indian Air Force (IAF) for 39 years.

**It seems rather unusual that India which measures only 3.3 million sq km should divide itself into three theatres of war as per the recommendation by a committee appointed by the MoD.**

considering that most strategists are still landlocked in their outlook to war-fighting. Be that as it may, let us first, understand the fundamental elements of the term 'theatre'.

#### **DEFINITION**

There are many definitions of the term 'theatre' as given in many sources, including dictionaries and websites. A few are given below for the reader to get an idea of its fundamental elements. The definition by Carl Von Clausewitz in his book

*On War*, however, is the most elaborate, definitive, relevant and desirable :

- The Merriam Webster Dictionary definition: The entire land, sea and air area that is, or may become, involved directly in war operations.<sup>1</sup>
- Dictionary.com definition: The entire area in which ground, sea and air forces may become directly employed in war operations, including the theatre of operations and zone of interior.<sup>2</sup>
- Militaryfactory.com definition: The area of air, land and water that is, or may become, directly involved in the conduct of war. A theatre of war does not normally encompass the geographic component commander's area of responsibility and may contain more than one theatre of operations.<sup>3</sup>
- Carl Von Clausewitz has defined the term as one that: Denotes such a portion of space over which war prevails and it has its boundaries protected and possesses a kind of independence. The protection may consist of fortresses or important natural obstacle, presented by the country or even it being separated by a considerable distance from the rest of the space embraced in war.

Such a portion is not a piece of the whole, but a small whole complete in itself and, consequently, it is more or less in such a condition that changes which take place to other points in the seat of war have only an indirect or

---

1. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/theater%20of%20war>

2. <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/theater-of-war>

3. [https://www.militaryfactory.com/dictionary/military-terms-defined.asp?term\\_id=5421](https://www.militaryfactory.com/dictionary/military-terms-defined.asp?term_id=5421)

no direct influence at all.<sup>4</sup>

### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

The key characteristics that emerge from the definition are : independence of a theatre, its demarcation through natural boundaries, large distance from the rest of the space embraced in war, so as not to bear direct influence on the other and to serve as a complete whole. The theatres of the two World Wars conformed to this definition. In World War II, the European and Pacific Theatres were over 1,000 miles removed, their operations independent, and the coastlines of various continents served as natural boundaries. Theatre Commands came into being since resources could not be quickly relocated for sustained operations and deep offensives across the Europe and Pacific arenas, owing to the vast distances, and wars being fought away from homelands. In the Indian context, carving out theatres would tantamount to making pieces of our composite whole, in total contradiction with the very basic element of the definition. Theatres would be within our homeland and adjoining. Implicit in such an arrangement would be the aspect of operational influence on each other, thereby defeating the fundamental purpose of their creation. Let us further examine the implications of these characteristics.

**In the Indian context, carving out theatres would tantamount to making pieces of our composite whole, in total contradiction with the very basic element of the definition. Theatres would be within our homeland and adjoining. Implicit in such an arrangement would be the aspect of operational influence on each other, thereby defeating the fundamental purpose of their creation.**

### SIZE AND DISTANCE BETWEEN THEATRES

The inherent idea of a theatre relates to vast contiguous land or sea areas that translate into the size of continents, with large distances separating them. Such is the case with the US Theatre Commands (quite often referred

---

4. <http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/OnWar1873/BK5ch02.html#ahttp://www.clausewitz.com/readings/OnWar1873/BK5ch02.html#a>

to, to justify our case) which divide the entire globe into six geographical theatres, each measuring approximately 40 to 50 million sq km, almost the size of continents. The separations are of over a 1,000 miles. Each serves as a composite whole, with integral forces, independence of initiation and sequencing of manoeuvres, and no influence from another theatre. But in the Indian context, theatres would measure a mere one million sq km i.e, 1/40th the size of US theatres. These theatres would be adjacent, thereby influencing one another and depriving each of their independence over initiation and sequencing of operational manoeuvres. These must logically, then be under the same commander, to weigh the implications and accord priority. What is the compelling need for theatres when operational independence is not implicit in their creation? Ours is a smaller sized country that at best needs to be seen as one theatre. The size does not warrant that we divide ourselves and our forces into pockets, merely on the belief that it would be operationally more viable. It needs to be put to simulations / tests and war-gamed for further examination. Moreover, there is no example of any country of the size of India that has divided itself into theatres for homeland defence. Interestingly, the entire US landmass, which is three times larger than India, is organised under one single theatre called USNORTHCOM. For Russia and China, which are six and three times our size, the key enablers are their size and need for out of area contingencies. Russia has reorganised into four Regional Commands but with an Independent Air and Space Command, Strategic Nuclear Forces Command and Transport Command. Clearly, the air defence of the country wasn't divided. In China's case, the Theatre Commands were established very specifically to bypass the military bureaucracy and establish direct political control over the military. Reports claim that the Theatre Commands would not directly command troops, which will be under the individual People's Liberation Army-Army, People's Liberation Army-Navy, People's Liberation Army-Air Force (PLAA, PLAN, PLAAF) Commands in each theatre except in times of war.<sup>5</sup> The Chinese Theatre Commands are still evolving and while

---

5. <http://www.vifindia.org/article/2015/december/07/military-modernisation-in-china-its-implications>

some benefits may accrue, so would new vulnerabilities. But in our case, neither is the size compelling nor is the need for out of area contingencies or the stretch of our regional or global interests and, above all, we cannot afford to divide our air and space forces for there just aren't enough numbers.

### DIVISION OF FORCES

Each theatre that we form, would need to have its own army, air force and naval component integral to its structure so as to retain independence of command and manoeuvre.

While the army and navy may have sufficient

forces to be divided into three parts and still remain effective and viable war-fighting entities, such is not the case with the air force. If the Indian Air Force (IAF) were to distribute its assets to the three Theatre Commands on a permanent basis, each theatre would end up with totally untenable numbers and by design would have created an asymmetry in favour of the enemy, much to our peril. Given the lesser numbers, the country can ill afford to tie down the assets to a single theatre's operational plan when they can be available for employment in other theatres and utilised in their full capacity and capability. It is this concept of use of air power that needs to be understood by those propagating the idea of integrated Theatre Commands.

IAF aircraft have a large Radius of Action (ROA) of about 1,500+ km, with a wide mix of weapons. Thus, even when based at one geographic location, these aircraft have the ability to carry out operations anywhere in India's geographical war space. In one mission, an aircraft could cut across for a strike on the western border and then be engaged in an air interdiction on the eastern border. Such usage would not only be necessary but essential to make up for the inadequacy of numbers. More so, our aircraft have the capability to execute multiple missions such as battlefield interdiction, offensive counter-air, air interdiction, defensive counter-air, in the same mission and across

**This omni-role capability which needs to be multiplexed between theatres would fall prey to the Integrated Command Structure if forces are divided and retained for employment in one theatre alone.**

**Thus, dividing the versatile assets of this force would be at the cost of victory.**

theatres. This omni-role capability which needs to be multiplexed between theatres would fall prey to the Integrated Command Structure if forces are divided and retained for employment in one theatre alone. Thus, dividing the versatile assets of this force would be at the cost of victory.

The IAF's current force levels are at 32 fighter squadrons, 3 Airborne Warning and Control Systems (AWACS), 6 Flight Refuelling Aircraft (FRA), 10 C-17s, radars and Surface-to-Surface Air Missiles (SAMs). The strength of fighter squadrons is well below the authorised figure of 39.5 and the approved 42. On forming three theatres i.e. Northern, Western and Southern, as recommended by the committee, each theatre would have 10 / 11 fighter squadrons, 2 FRA and 1 AWACS integral to its structure. Dividing the air force into various theatres would render it weaker than the enemy in each theatre. In the Northern Theatre, our enemy is likely to field 20 to 25 fighter squadrons and likewise our western adversary has 20 squadrons to employ against our 10 integral to the Western Theatre. Rendered weak in every theatre, and in the face of such asymmetry in numbers, the air force will not be able to provide the requisite air defence and support to the ground forces. During war, a stronger side looks for the enemy and defeats him wherever he is found. A weaker side avoids being found, and hides. Thus, a weaker force would have to avoid war which would render the air force's offensive capability and capacity unusable and make our land forces vulnerable. Dividing the air force, thus, dilutes its combat potential, which can be retained only by holding it together and centrally orchestrating the air campaign and multiplexing the use of aerial assets across the entire battle space / across theatres, irrespective of how many fronts we may be fighting on. Israel demonstrated such a doctrine during the Six-Day War in 1967 and Yom Kippur War in 1973, when it faced Egypt in the south, Syria in the north and Jordan in the east concurrently. Centrally orchestrated air operations were critical to winning these wars. We need to adopt a similar approach.

## **EMPLOYMENT OF AIR FORCES**

Air forces fight in the medium of air. Though a new battle ground during the two World Wars, it is now a powerful medium, much like the army

and navy, and must be viewed that way and accorded equal status. Today, the sky is of much more interest even to the land and sea forces as it constitutes a battle ground just above their heads and which profoundly affects them. Therefore, much like equal partners, air forces must be seen as fighting for the same objective i.e. to win the war. Their sole purpose being to provide the requisite air defence and keeping the enemy air off the backs of the surface forces. Our air force has lesser numbers since larger numbers are not easily affordable. **The less a nation can afford, the more carefully it must utilise what it has. This statement is what sets the tone in our unique case.** The less a nation can afford, the more carefully it must utilise what it has. This statement is what sets the tone in our unique case. The inherent flexibility, reach, concentration of mass, ability to wage war at all levels, multiplexed employment, ability to traverse distances across theatres to engage targets within a short time span and within the same mission need to be exploited. Only such exploitation can meet the challenges and threats of a two-front war and, hence, the need for central orchestration under an air force commander, who understands how this force is to be employed is vital.

During Operation Desert Storm, the air force and the navy had arguments concerning centralised air control. After Desert Storm, the army corps commanders criticised the air force for targeting only 300 (15 percent) of the 2,000 army-nominated targets. An air force officer justified this situation on the basis of (1) a two- to three-day lag in army intelligence from US Central Command Air Forces (USCENTAF); and (2) a redundancy in the target lists. He also said that half of the marine corps' sorties (150 to 200 a day) were dedicated to MARCENT (Marine Corps Command Centre) and, therefore, not available to the Joint Forces Air Command Centre (JFACC), which narrowed the effectiveness of JFACC management of the air effort. Centralised air command was superior to allowing theatre commanders to operate relatively independently, he concluded.<sup>6</sup>

---

6. Sterling D. Sessions and Carl R. Jones, "Interoperability: A Desert Storm Case Study", McNair Paper, July 18, 1993.

**Synergy in the application of individual capabilities of the army, navy and air force is, thus, the key issue. But does that warrant creation of new structures in the form of Integrated Theatre Commands in the hope that by compulsory merging of the armed forces, integration and jointness would accrue.**

Despite abundance of air power, the need for central orchestration of aerial forces of various arms was still felt in Operation Desert Storm. In our case, it would be a necessity. A Rand Corporation note evaluating employment of air power in the Gulf says that the role of the joint force air component commander was never put to the test as the sheer mass of air power available allowed the command to employ it inefficiently at times and to cater to the doctrinal preferences of the various Services.<sup>7</sup> Such is not the situation in India as our air power assets are woefully less. With lesser numbers, we cannot afford inefficient employment. Air support to surface forces is

one of the most important tasks for any air force but not the only one. The biggest flaw and inappropriate use would be to utilise air power solely as an auxiliary to the army and navy. Its speed, reach, quick turnaround, freedom of action, deep penetration and flexibility in employment is only vaguely understood by the surface force commanders. Integrating the air force under the Army or Navy Command would render its employment primarily to assist land and sea forces, with little or no aerial force left to fight for control of the air and provide air defence. Inadequate air defence would make it easy for the enemy air force to interfere with our surface operations and that would be a sure recipe for disaster.

## **TYPES OF WARS**

India's concerns are more related to homeland defence. Building a deterrent capability, preparation for a conventional conflict and alongside dealing with low level sub-conventional operations, border skirmishes and anti-terror operations are the main demands on its armed forces. The Kargil conflict was emblematic of the kind of lower-intensity

---

7. [https://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_briefs/RB19/index1.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_briefs/RB19/index1.html)



border skirmish between India and Pakistan, and perhaps also between India and China, that could recur in the next decade. Given the range and scale of such operations and the fact that conventional wars would be for border disputes, short and limited, with little territorial annexation or capture, the Theatre Command concept appears a gross overkill. Most certainly, future wars would have to be fought in an integrated manner, given the induction of new technology weapons, their destructive power and reach. Synergy in the application of the individual capabilities of the army, navy and air force is, thus, the key issue. But does that warrant creation of new structures in the form of Integrated Theatre Commands in the hope that by compulsory merging of the armed forces, integration and jointness would accrue? Problems between Commander Allied Force Gen Wesley K Clarke, and Joint Air Force Component Commander Lt. Gen Michael C Short, affected campaign planning in the Kosovo operations even while under an integrated command structure. Refusal of orders from Gen Clarke by Gen Michael Jackson, commander, Rapid Reaction Force, had to be resolved after the Kosovo conflict. In Operation Anaconda, senior army commanders were widely criticised by their naval and air counterparts for not coordinating with them effectively even while under one command. During the Indian Peace-Keeping Force (IPKF) operations in 1987, the army commander of the IPKF Unified Command elected to make a helicopter drop at Jafna University, overruling the air force element's advice of it being far too risky. Consequently, all the helicopters were damaged and a number of lives lost. These examples pointedly confirm that jointness is not implicit in an integrated command structure.

**Joint planning serves as the start point for integrated war plans and synergistic application of military power, and is necessitated irrespective of the military structure that a nation adopts.**

An excerpt from a Rand Corporation report on Operation Desert Storm highlights the same:

Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm demonstrated the effectiveness of modern air power and joint air operations. The nature of these operations, and the extensive resources at the disposal of both US and coalition forces, however, masked the problems in command and control. Unresolved doctrinal issues and some residual controversy over roles and missions did not surface because of the abundant air assets in the theatre. Accordingly, decisions about allocating resources never became contentious. The adage that one learns more from failure than from success should be applied to the Gulf War. There is still the danger that jointness may be a façade for single-service command structures and procedures, or that its influence may stop with the CINC. Despite integrated commands, the wings of the armed forces services remained suspicious of one another and retained their individual perspectives. Jointness is, thus, not implicit in an integrated command structure but accrues by jointly planning for integrated operations with an understanding of the war-fighting tenets of the other service.<sup>8</sup>

### **JOINT PLANNING : KEY ENABLER FOR SYNERGY**

Combat performance in a future war will depend on how well the three Services are integrated. Joint planning serves as the start point for integrated war plans, and synergistic application of military power and is necessitated irrespective of the military structure that a nation adopts. Integration does not imply merging of the armed forces, but demands activities for integrated operations to be done jointly, evolved by understanding concepts of integrated war-fighting, resolving doctrinal issues, clarity on roles and missions, working closely in a cooperative mode with knowledge of the core competencies of the other Service and with an overriding perception of what is best for the nation and not necessarily for the individual Service.

It is important to recall that the correct functioning of the Higher Defence Organisation (HDO) of any nation is essential for joint planning. This organisation, in our case, the Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC), takes directions from the government and translates them into operational

---

8. James A. Winnefeld and Dana J. Johnson, *Joint Air Operations: Pursuit of Unity in Command and Control, 1942–1991* (Washington DC: RAND Corporation, 1993).

directives for commanders in the field. The Service chiefs are principal military advisers to the government and expected to meet regularly at the COSC to consider all matters of military importance and formulate defence plans jointly. Thus, integration has been fundamental to the formation and working of our higher command system and the onus is on the Service chiefs to jointly develop integrated war plans. We ignored it during the 1962 War and suffered a defeat. It became apparent after the war, that the COSC had ceased to function, as the then Defence Minister VK Krishna Menon had taken over, in all but name, command and directions of war to the army.<sup>9</sup> In the 1965 conflict, Gen JN Chaudhuri ( then Chief of the Army Staff—COAS ) bypassed the COSC and the joint intelligence and planning staff completely. The three Services were not asked to define the parts that they would have to play in the event of war. The speed of decisions taken by the prime minister, defence minister, and COAS clearly brought out that the whole business was the army's alone, with the air force as a passive spectator and the navy out of it altogether. The whole concept of the higher defence organisation was ignored.<sup>10</sup> With such attitudes, no structure, including that of the Integrated Theatre Commands would ever succeed in obtaining the desired integration.

It is strange that military personnel who share the same love for their country and are willing to sacrifice their lives for it, find it difficult to cooperate, and like the Americans, need an act of Parliament or recommendation of a committee to force down a structure that still won't ensure integration and only serve as a facade, as mentioned earlier. The US military system had completely broken down during the period 1958 to 1983, as they suffered several operational setbacks i.e. the Vietnam War, the seizure of the USS *Pueblo*, the seizure of the Mayaguez, the failed Iranian rescue mission, the marine barracks bombing in Beirut, and the Grenada incursion. Their failures had a number of common denominators : poor military advice to political leaders, lack of unity of command, and inability to operate jointly<sup>11</sup> and the Parliament was compelled to pass

---

9. ACM P C Lal, *My Years with the IAF* (New Delhi: Lancer International), p. 158.

10. Ibid., p. 162.

11. James R. Locher III, *HAS IT WORKED? The Goldwater-Nichols Reorganization Act*, p. 99.

**Jointness was amply and unarguably demonstrated during the 1971 conflict, where the three chiefs were in constant touch with the developments in the subcontinent and what the Cabinet was thinking.**

the Goldwater-Nichols Act. Such has not been our story nor have the resources had to be divided into Theatre Commands. Our system has worked in the face of the many challenges of various wars. In 1948, we blunted Pakistan's first attempt to occupy Kashmir owing to early, close and effective cooperation between our army and air force. Jointness was amply and unarguably demonstrated during the 1971 conflict, where the three chiefs were in constant touch with the developments in the subcontinent and what the Cabinet was thinking. Once the political aim was

set, the three chiefs jointly arrived at mutually planned military aims, with objectives for each Service, as well as in support of the other two Services. The planning process was joint from the word go and each Service was considered an equal and important partner.<sup>12</sup> India conducted one of the most successful campaigns in history with the liberation of Bangladesh and the surrender of 86,000 Pakistan Army soldiers, a feat unprecedented after World War II. Likewise, during the Kargil conflict, (though not a full-fledged war), once the government took the bold step to employ the air force, the Indian Army and Indian Air Force (IAF) in a combined and a remarkably swift operation, threw back the intruders. There were media reports that the army demanded attack and armed helicopters without disclosing the full ground picture to the air force, and commentators criticised the IAF for the delayed start of the air action and termed it as non-cooperation, but they were not aware of the need for political clearance for the use of combat air power since it meant escalation. Without question, the effective use of the air force was pivotal in shaping the successful outcome for India of a conflict which was of Pakistan's making. While some degree of lack of transparency and coordination in the initial phase of the operation could be conceded, that would happen in the fog of war. Once resolved at the

---

12. AVM AK Tiwary VM, *Indian Air Force in Wars* (New Delhi: Lancer Publishers, 2012), p. 164.

COSC, integrated combat power application was visible at the Dras, Kargil and Batalik Sectors. These examples imply that a holistic and integrated approach to war-planning is very much ingrained in, and fundamental to, the present system, provided it is made, and allowed to, function as designed. There is no real need to restructure.

The mandate to jointly formulate war plans by the three Service chiefs must stem from the COSC, with the Service chiefs jointly setting up mandatory processes that make it incumbent on their staff and commands

to jointly evolve integrated plans. The COSC needs to lay down the framework, forum, information formats, methodology and guidelines for making integrated war plans and jointly train for their implementation. These have not been laid out or made mandatory till today. The three Service chiefs must ask their respective commands to follow the mandated process and only then forward jointly planned and signed war plans for approval of their Headquarters (HQ). The exact nuances can be worked out at the COSC and translated down to Command HQ in a standardised format. Standardisation at Command HQ is necessary since individual perspectives of senior leaders have a profound effect on the command's judgment and influence inter-Service integration. Guidelines must underline the need to empathise with members of the other Service and solve contentious issues through logic, mutual trust and understanding. Such an approach would further strengthen the Indian system. It ought to be appreciated that at the tactical level of operations, the three Services work together extremely well and without friction. With the right framework and attitude developed and implemented by commanders at the apex level, the commanders in the field would find it more conducive to work and train jointly with units from the other Services to ward off threats that our belligerents may pose in an actual war.

**The mandate to jointly formulate war plans by the three Service chiefs must stem from the COSC, with the Service chiefs jointly setting up mandatory processes that make it incumbent on their staff and commands to jointly evolve integrated plans.**

## **THE BELLIGERENTS**

Our belligerents lie conjoined on our western and northern borders and could threaten us individually or in collusion / support of each other. This situation is typical to India. The nation would need to realise that only a single integrated strategy would ward off a combined threat for which singularity of command would be essential at both the political and military levels, even though we would be waging a war on two fronts against two nations. Such a structure, where the country is seen and treated as one theatre, would be best suited. Forces could be moved at short notice between geographical spaces, with one central agency assuming command and control. This way, the forces would respond faster to meet war objectives unimpeded by theatre issues. To adapt and respond faster than either adversary would be the key to winning a collusive two-front or a single front war.

## **CONCLUSION**

Conceptually speaking, the inherent idea of a theatre relates to vast land and sea areas, with stretched lines of communication, requiring integral forces, spaced out from adjoining theatres so as not to be influenced and emerge as a complete whole. Ours is but a small sized country: with smaller lines of communication, making relocation of forces feasible, theatres would be adjoining, bearing operational influence on each other, and robbing them of operational independence. In this perspective, the idea of carving out theatres is fundamentally flawed. Our size, the indivisibility of the air force, limited conventional and sub-conventional wars, and the disposition of our enemies compel us to be structured and viewed as one theatre, a complete whole employing one strategy against enemies in collusion or support.

Joint planning is fundamental to evolving an integrated war plan and this cuts across all militaries around the world, irrespective of the structure of their armed forces and even that of integrated commands. In our present system, the onus of joint planning is on the three Service chiefs and the system has worked well, as demonstrated in the full scale Indo-Pak War of 1971 and the limited Kargil imbroglio. Should we restructure a system that has always worked for us only because of the imagination and visualisation

of its propagators that leads them to believe that it would not work again? Or is it their superhuman crystal ball gaze into the future that can foresee our defeat in future wars? Should we succumb to such absurdity which comes without any fundamental purpose? Implicit in the creation of Theatre Commands is the division of our woefully short air force assets, thereby creating an asymmetry in favour of the enemy. With the air force divided into various theatres, it is weaker than the enemy in each theatre and when tied to a single theatre's operational plans, it would not be able to provide the requisite air defence across any theatre owing to lesser numbers. Weakened air defence will allow the enemy to take control of the air and interfere with our surface operations, much to our peril. For the air force to remain a viable and effective force capable of fighting a two-front war, its employment needs to be centrally orchestrated and multiplexed across fronts/ theatres / our geographic war space. Such employment would be essential and critical to winning the next war. Any division into Regional Commands would be detrimental to such employment as theatre commanders would not part with air assets for use in another theatre. The less a nation can afford, the more carefully it must utilise what it has. This statement is what sets the tone in our unique case. Hence, dividing the air force into Theatre Commands is not an operationally sound idea and does not suit our nation. It is a sure shot recipe for disaster.

And, finally, it needs to be appreciated that integration and jointness are not implicit in creating Integrated Theatre Commands. In our case, it may not even fetch operational dividends. Being joint implies closely working and cooperating with the other Service, with the right attitude and behaviour primarily of the seniormost military leaders. Therein lies the real crux of the problem. Behaviour which maximises the capability of a part of an organisation at the expense of the whole is dysfunctional. The idea of dysfunctional Theatre Commands does not suit India.