CHAPTER – 8

COMMUNICATION IN EME

8.1 Need for Communication

The word ‘communication’ has been derived from the Latin word ‘communis’, which means common. Therefore to communicate is to inform, to tell, to show or to spread information in a common language, understandable to both the sender and the receiver. Communication is defined as a process by which one assigns and conveys meaning in an attempt to create shared understanding. In other words, it is the process of passing information and understanding through a medium from one person to the other. This process requires a vast repertoire of skills in intrapersonal and interpersonal processing, listening, observing, speaking, questioning, analysing, and evaluating. It is through communication that collaboration and cooperation occur. It is a process that allows us to exchange information by several methods. Communication requires that all parties understand a common language that is exchanged. There are auditory means, such as speaking, singing and sometimes tone of voice, and non-verbal, physical means, such as body language, sign language, paralanguage, touch, eye contact, or the use of writing. Communication is defined as a process by which we assign and convey meaning in an attempt to create shared understanding. This process requires a vast repertoire of skills in intrapersonal and interpersonal processing, listening, observing, speaking, questioning, analyzing, and evaluating. It is through communication that collaboration and cooperation occur. Communication is the articulation of sending a message, through different media.

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130 Adhikary, N.M.; Sancharyoga: Approaching Communication as a Vidya in Hindu Orthodoxy, China Media Research, 2010.
whether it be verbal or nonverbal, so long as a being transmits a thought provoking idea, gesture, action, etc.

Communication is the most basic function of the management. It happens at many levels (even for one single action), in many different ways, and for most beings, as well as certain machines. Several, if not all, fields of study dedicate a portion of attention to communication, so when speaking about communication it is very important to be sure about what aspects of communication one is speaking about. Definitions of communication range widely, some recognizing that animals can communicate with each other as well as human beings, and some are narrower, only including human beings within the parameters of human symbolic interaction. **It involves a systematic and continuous process of telling, listening and understanding. It is the process of meaningful interaction amongst human beings.**

The importance of communication in an organisation needs no emphasis. If the organisation has to operate as an integrated unit, it is essential that the top management should keep the employees well informed of its objectives and what it expects from each person to accomplish towards their realisation. By freely sharing information, the management takes employees into its confidence, prepares them for changes and avoids/resolves misunderstanding. Effective communication is therefore an essential ingredient for development of a cordial management-employees relationship. The communication may be top-down or downwards (in the form of an instruction, circular, notice, policy letter, standing operating procedure, orders passed in Sainik Sammelans or bottom-up or upwards (in the form of feedback, suggestions, complaints or anonymous letters etc) or lateral. The need for communication is felt because it forms a basis for the following main functions of any organisation:-

(a) Management by objectives (MBO).
(b) Long term strategic goal setting and policy formulation.
(c) Strategic planning and its implementation.
(d) Organisational development (OD).
(e) Organisational effectiveness (OE).
(f) Right decision making.
(g) Mutual sharing of ideas, facts, opinions, information and arriving at common understanding.

(h) Allied managerial activities aimed at effective achievement of organisational goals.

### 8.2 Process of Communication

A communication system usually consists of the following main components or sub-systems as depicted in Figure 8.1.

![Figure 8.1: A Simple Communication System](image)

(a) **Source.** Also known as sender, emitter, origin or transmitter by whom the communication is transmitted with some purpose.

(b) **Receiver.** It is the sink, target or destination to whom the communication is targeted.

(c) **Encoder.** It is the process of converting the transmitted communication in the language or symbols, which can be understood by the recipient. For example, if a message is received in the local language from the field staff to the regional centre it is encoded into English before transmission to the HQ.
(d) **Decoder.** It is the process of decoding the received communication in a language or symbols understood before passing to the lower staff for action. For example from English to local language.

(e) **Medium.** The channel or link through which the communication is transmitted from the sender to the receiver. It may be verbal, written, non-verbal (body or silent language) or may be print, audio-video (TV) or through electronic media (viz. telephone, fax, internet or intranet etc).

(f) **Feedback.** It is important for checking the effectiveness of a communication. One can never be sure whether or not a message has been effectively encoded, transmitted, decoded and understood until it is confirmed by the feedback. Similarly feedback indicates whether individual or organisational change has taken place as a result of communication. It thus completes a two way communication process.

Between parties, communication includes acts that confer knowledge and experiences, give advice/commands and ask questions. These acts may take many forms, in one of the various manners of communication. The form depends on the abilities of the group communicating. Together, communication content and form make messages that are sent towards a destination. The target can be oneself, another person or being, another entity (such as a corporation or group of beings). Communication can be seen as processes of information transmission governed by three levels of semiotic rules:-

(a) **Syntactic.** Deals with formal properties of signs and symbols.

(b) **Pragmatic.** It is concerned with the relations between signs/expressions and their users.

(c) **Semantic.** It is the study of relationships between signs and symbols and what they represent.

Therefore, communication is a social interaction where at least two interacting agents share a common set of signs and a common set of semiotic rules. These commonly held rules, in some sense ignores auto communication, including intrapersonal communication via diaries or self-talk. In a simple model,
information or content (e.g. a message in natural language) is sent in some form (as spoken language) from an emitter/ sender/ encoder to a destination/ receiver/ decoder. In a slightly more complex form, a sender and a receiver are linked reciprocally. A particular instance of communication is called a speech act. In the presence of "communication noise" on the transmission channel (air, in this case), reception and decoding of content may be faulty, and thus the speech act may not achieve the desired effect. One problem with this encode-transmit-receive-decode model is that the processes of encoding and decoding imply that the sender and receiver each possess something that functions as a code book, and that these two code books are, at the very least, similar if not identical. Although something like code books is implied by the model, they are nowhere represented in the model, which creates many conceptual difficulties. Theories of co-regulation describe communication as a creative and dynamic continuous process, rather than a discrete exchange of information.

8.3 Management Information System & Information Technology

Management Information System (MIS) is defined as a formal method of making available to the management the accurate and timely information necessary to facilitate the decision making process and enable the organisation’s planning, control and operational functions to be carried out effectively. The system provides information on the past, present and projected future and on related events inside and outside the organisation. The purpose of MIS is to aid decision making and not to automate the decision making process itself. Secondly MIS should focus only on those decisions whose benefit-cost ratio is attractive. Information Technology (IT) plays an important role in achieving this objective. The main objectives of maintaining MIS are the following:-

(a) To provide the desired information in the right form at the right time.
(b) To supply the desired information at a reasonable cost.
(c) To keep the information up to date.
(d) To store important and confidential information properly.

Therefore the functions of the MIS are to provide the management following four-fold information services:-
(a) Determination of information needs
(b) Information gathering
(c) Information processing
(d) Information utilisation.

Human Resource Information System (HRIS) is a sub-system of the organisational MIS whose objective is to supply information relating to human resources for effective decision making on related aspects in an organisation. A computerised HRIS aids in monitoring, control and influence the movement of people from the time they join the organisation till the time they leave the organisation. The scope of HRIS is very vast and includes information on the following main issues:-

(a) Recruitment related aspects like advertisement, applicant’s profile, Defence Services Qualification Regulations (DSQR), Recruitment Rules (RRs), appointment and placement data.
(b) Human Resource Planning to assist in assessment of demand and supply, mobilisation and inputs for skill development.
(c) Personnel Administration to maintain personal records, e.g. leaves, transfer, increments, promotions etc.
(d) Training for determining the training needs, course designs, evaluation of training programs etc.
(e) Maintenance of personal data on health, safety and welfare of the employees.
(f) Performance Appraisal or Annual confidential records (ACRs) for promotion, career planning, transfer and postings.
(g) Pay Roll relating to information about salaries, wage incentive, fringe benefits, deductions etc.
(h) Personnel Research relating to employees’ attitude surveys, absenteeism, turnover (attrition), forecasting about future needs etc.

In Indian Army (including the Corps of EME), the following agencies look after the complete HRIS :-
(a) Adjutant General (AG) Branch including Records Office, which looks after JCOs/OR training, promotion, placement and release etc.
(b) Military Secretary (MS) Branch, which looks after the officers promotion, placement and release etc.
(c) Director General of Military Training (DGMT) Branch, which looks after the complete training requirement including course design, modification, detailment etc.
(d) Director General of Resettlement (DGR) Branch, which looks after pre-retirement settlement courses and post-retirement placements for the officers and the JCOs/OR.

8.4 Communication Channels & Network

There are different types of networks, which are used for transmitting the communication. They are depicted in Figure – 8.2 and 8.3. Details about the same are deliberated below:-

(a) **Chain or Scalar Type Network.** In this network, information is received at one source X and from here transmitted upwards and downwards in the organisational hierarchy.
(b) **Yoke or Y Type Network.** In this network, information is received from two different sources at centre X, collated there and then transmitted down the organisational hierarchy.
(c) **Wheel Type Network.** In this network, information is received from different sources at centre X, collated there and then transmitted to different destinations.
(d) **Cyclic Type Network.** In this network, information is received and transmitted in cyclic order. That means all centres work both as sources and destinations.
(e) **All Channel Network.** In this network, information is received from different sources and transmitted to different destinations in a cyclic order.

In an organisation including Army and EME, the various combinations of network function simultaneously for effective communication management.
8.5 Communication in Army
Communication is very important in the Armed Forces including the Corps of EME. This is because all the operation instructions, exercise drills, repair and maintenance strategies etc. have to be done very meticulously to achieve operational success. The communication system and its prevalent types in Army and in EME are described in the succeeding paragraphs:-

(a) **Written Communication.** Written communication is one which is issued in black and white. This is done primarily to bring out all the issues / aspects, related to a particular subject. As such the scope for ambiguity is lesser and the contents / instructions have more clarity of thought, vision and statistical backing. Advantages of written communication are:-

(i) More clarity and less ambiguity
(ii) Can be preserved for posterity
(iii) Can be used as a future reference
(iv) Further amendments /errata sheets can be issued etc.

Disadvantages of the written communication, on the other hand, are consumption of lot of time, efforts and cost, both for compilation and communication. Examples of written communication in the Army are the following:-

(i) General Staff Qualitative Requirements (GSQR)
(ii) General Staff Policy Statements (GSPS)
(iii) Operational instructions
(iv) Exercise drills
(v) Move plans
(vi) Standing Operating Procedures (SOPs)
(vii) Security Instructions
(viii) Unit Orders
(ix) DO Part I and Part II Orders
(x) Parade States
(xi) Various reports and returns
(xii) Vision Statements
(xiii) Other instructions, notices, brochures etc.
(xiv) Letters / Signals / Telegrams / FAX etc

In addition to the above, specific to the Corps of EME, the commonly used written means for communication are the following:

(i) Permissible Repair Schedule (PRS)
(ii) Technical Manuals
(iii) Users Hand Books
(iv) Initial Stocking Guides, Maintenance and Overhaul Scales
(v) Illustrated Spare Parts List
(vi) Electronic and Mechanical Engineering Regulations (EMER)
(vii) Vehicle Off Road (VOR)/Equipment Out of Action (EOA) state
(viii) Equipment Appreciation
(ix) Equipment Management Policy Statement (EMPS)
(x) Advice to the Users
(xi) Maintainability Evaluation Trial (MET) instructions.

(b) **Verbal Communication.** The following modes of verbal communication are commonly used in the Army:

(i) Sainik Sammelans
(ii) Interviews
(iii) Conferences
(iv) Verbal Instructions / Orders
(v) Telephone calls.

(vi) **Upward, Downward and Lateral Communication.** In the Armed Forces, the usual communication is top to down, as per the example illustrated in Figure – 8.4. However at each level upward (bottom up) communication also takes place in the following forms:

(i) Feedbacks
(ii) Views and Comments sought from the lower formations
(iii) Implementation problems faced or clarifications sought
(iv) Competent Financial Authority (CFA) sanction
(v) Various reports and returns.
In addition, lateral communications (i.e. at the same level) takes place in the form of peers group speaking, meets, assemblies, telephone calls etc. This is very important as the success of any operation is dependent on effective synergy.
and coordination of various groups, teams, arms, services and agencies – army or civil.

8.6 Barriers to Communication

There are several barriers which hinder effective communication. These result in breakdowns or distortions of communication. Barriers can exist in the sender, in transmission of the message, in the receiver or in the feedback. Major communication barriers are listed below:-

![Communication Barriers Diagram]

(a) Human or Personal Barriers. These barriers arise from the judgments, emotions and social values and thus give rise to psychological distance. The important barriers under this category are:-

(i) Personal emotions
(ii) Biases
(iii) Perceptual variations
(iv) Competencies
(v) Sensual abilities
(vi) Mental faculties operational senses (viz. sight, touch, hearing, taste, smell) etc.

(b) Semantic Barriers. These arise due to the difference in meanings, which different people attach to different things. The important barriers under this category are:-

(i) Word interpretations
(ii) Gesture decodings (viz. hand shake, frowns, yawns, stretching etc).
(iii) Language translations
(iv) Sign and symbols
(v) Cue meanings etc.

(c) **Technical Barriers.** These barriers occur due to a number of technical factors, such as:

(i) Space or geographical distance
(ii) Mechanical failures
(iii) Physical obstructions
(iv) Technological malfunctions
(v) Concrete obstacles
(vi) Time lags etc.

(d) **Physical Barriers.** These barriers occur due to physical factors, such as:

(i) Noise
(ii) High temperature
(iii) High humidity
(iv) Poor ventilation
(v) Weather disturbance etc.

(e) **Psychological Barriers.** These are connected with the status symbol of an executive due to different hierarchical levels, which makes in a subordinate a sense of inferiority or embarrassment in the presence of his seniors and thus creates a difficulty in communication.

(f) **Linguistic & Cultural.** These are related to language problems and cultural differences, which hinder effective communication.

Like any other organisation, in Army and in the Corps of EME, the barriers as discussed above, affect the transmission of communication from one source to another, individually or in a combined manner.
8.7 **Grievances Redressal**

Grievance is defined as any discontent or dissatisfaction, whether expressed or not, arising out of anything connected with the organisation, which an employee thinks, believes or even feels to be unfair, unjust or inequitable. A grievance is usually more formal in character than a complaint. It is generally connected with the terms of employment, work conditions or growth opportunities etc which is brought to the notice of the management, either through the employee himself/ herself or through their trade union representatives. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) defines a grievance as a complaint of one or more workers in respect of wages, allowances, conditions of work and interpretation of service stipulations covering such areas as overtime, leave, transfer, promotion, seniority, job assignment and termination of service. In the opinion of the National Commission on Labour, ‘complaints affecting one or more individual workers in respect of wage payments, overtime, leave, transfer, promotion, seniority, work assignment and discharge constitute grievances’.

In a study by S Chandra\(^{131}\), the causes of employees' grievances have been identified as under:-

(a) Promotions
(b) Amenities
(c) Continuity of services
(d) Compensation
(e) Disciplinary action
(f) Fines
(g) Increments
(h) Leave
(i) Medical benefits
(j) Nature of the job
(k) Payment of wages
(l) Acting promotions
(m) Recovery of dues

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\(^{131}\) Kumar, Raj; Chandra, S., *Study in Human Resource Management: Strategic Analysis Text and Cases.*
Grievance and discipline are closely related. Grievance not addressed leads to indiscipline and disturbs the harmonious relationship between the workers and the management, besides contributing to growth of the organisation. Therefore there is a need to constitute/ have proper grievance redressal machinery in the organisation. The following grievance redressal machinery exists in the Army and in the Corps of EME: -

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For Military Personnel</th>
<th>For Civilian Personnel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) A Complaint Advisory Board (CAB) at COAS Secretariat.</td>
<td>(a) As per the provisions of Industrial Dispute Act(^{132}): -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Provision of statutory &amp; non-statutory complaints.</td>
<td>- Works Committees - Joint Consultative Machinery (JCMs) - Central Administrative Tribunal (CATs).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) At unit level, OC/ CO personal interviews.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Army Tribunal.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to maintain good industrial relations, MP-4(Civ) has Civilian Labour Welfare Commissioners (LWC) who are from the Central Labour Service (CLS), Ministry of Labour. LWC is assisted by 26 CLS officers designated as DLWC / ALWC posted in 27 units comprising Ordnance/ Ammunition Depots (under OS Directorate) and Army Base Workshops (under EME). LWC (C) monitors industrials relations in Units/ Establishments and resolves industrial disputes. LWC (C) also deals with grant of recognition of Unions and Associations under the rules laid down by MoD in 1996. The cases for recognition of unions are processed

from unit level through the Line Directorates and LWC examines/recommends the case to MoD for Govt approval.

LWC (C) monitors two types of bipartite forums:-

(i) **Statutory Forum.**

(aa) Works Committee under Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 if 100 or more workmen are employed. Meetings are held once in three months. Workers representatives(reps) are elected by unions/employees and management reps are nominated by officer commanding (OC) units.

(ab) Canteen Managing Committee formed under Factories Act 1948. Workers reps are elected and management reps are nominated.

(ii) **Non-statutory Forum.** Welfare Committees are formed under departmental orders, where the strengths of civilians is less than 100 and Works Committee cannot be established under Industrial disputes Act. All members of Official Side and Staff Side are nominated by OC units/Commandants of Establishments at their discretion.

(iii) LWC(C) advises on application of labour laws and redresses the grievances and resolves industrial dispute and send reports to Ministry of Labour about the functioning of ALWCs/ DLWCs.

Trade Union activities are prohibited in areas specified under SRO 17-E. Similarly, trade unions are prohibited in Military Hospitals, Training Establishments, Ports and Embarkation Units.

**JCM Scheme.** Central Govt introduced JCM Scheme in all Departments in 1968 to promote harmonious relations between Govt and the employees and to secure greater measure of cooperation between Govt and general body of employees in matter of common concern and to ensure efficiency of public services through collaborative endeavour. Under the scheme, the
following bipartite forums (which are of non-statutory nature) have been provided for negotiation between the Govt and its employees.

(i) **National Council (JCM I Level).** Headed by Cabinet Secy on issues affecting employees of more than one ministry.

(ii) **Departmental Council of MoD (JCM II Level).** Chaired by Defence Secretary on issues generally affecting employees under three Services and other Defence establishments. Adjutant General (AG) represents Army as Official Side Member.

(iii) **Army HQ JCM Level III Council** Chaired by AG on issues concerning civilian employees in the Army units including MES establishments.

(iv) **JCM IV Level.** Chaired by OC / Commandants of units of Army on local issues affecting the civilians of units/establishments. Meetings are held every month. JCM IV Level Council is formed under a Departmental order.

The three meetings of JCM Level III for every quarter are as follows:-

**Steering Committee.** Chaired by DDG (CP) to screen draft agenda points to admit worthy points if any for agenda.

**Main Meeting.** Chaired by AG to discuss agenda points admitted by the Steering Committee. The Staff side members submit their Mention Points in writing and speak briefly on salient issues brought out therein. Generally, no discussion takes place on these points.

After the Main Mtg, these points are referred to respective Line Dtes for follow up action and reply to Staff Side Member and also for forwarding progress to MP-4(Civ) (JCM).

To resolve the mention points submitted by the Staff Side, an additional meeting takes place under the Chairmanship of ADG MP prior to each main meeting.

The composition of Army JCM III Level for the 11th Term is as given in Table – 8.1 subsequently.
**Table – 8.1 : Composition of JCM III Level for 11th Term**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Official Side</th>
<th>Staff Side</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E-in-C, DG OS, DG EME, DGST, DDGMF, DFA (AG)</td>
<td>5 Reps from AIDEF (Recog.Fed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DDG (CP) as Member Secy other DGs/ADG as</td>
<td>5 Reps from INDWF(Recog.Fed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-opted members including ADG RVS, ADGSD</td>
<td>5 Reps from BPMS(Recog.Fed)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3 Reps from 13(Recog. Assns (by rotation)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Nodal Women Cell**

There are around 7770 women employees in the various units/establishments of Army. Nodal Women Cells have been created in Army Units/Ests and HQ Commands to avoid any exploitation of these women. In MP-4 (Civ), a nodal Women Cell functions under DDG CP. The charter of the Cell is to disseminate/implement directions of National Commission for Women and the Govt policy or prevention of sexual harassment and the implementation of Supreme Court directives on this aspect. An Annual Report on functioning of Women Cells is obtained from Command HQs for monitoring purposes.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a preliminary meeting with the officials of the Prime Minister's Office on 28 May 2014, wherein he stressed the need to resolve people's grievances on a fast track basis. He emphasized on leverage of modern technology and processes for effective monitoring and resolution of grievances. While taking charge of the Women and Child Development Ministry on 28 May 2014, Mrs Maneka Gandhi announced that her ministry would soon set up an interactive complaints redressal page on Facebook.