

## **Introduction**

Napoleonic dictate, "Without an Army there is neither independence nor civil liberty" finds an echo in 'The Queens Regulations for the Army' which set forth the task of the British Army of maintaining peace and public order. Because the Armed Services truly have a vital part to play in preserving community's existence, the relationship between the Services and Civil authorities is of paramount importance. If correct balance cannot be attained, the outcome may be detrimental and dangerous to the Services, Government and Society at large – as France discovered during the Algerian War (1956-62) and subsequent Organisation Armée Secrète campaign, when generals challenged the elected politicians.<sup>1</sup>

Post World War II period, particularly after the end of Cold War, is marked by greater dissipation of power, with new power centres emerging, spread of globalisation and greater economic interdependence and interaction. Last two decades have seen the emergence and spread of terrorism, making the security scenario complex and diffused. While most nations have learnt by experience and created structures and procedures to meet the new challenges, we have been slow to respond. Since Independence, suspicion of military in power centres persists and they are reluctant to shed power gained beyond Constitutional framework, which remains a hurdle for Civil-Military relations.

Broad aims of national security continue to be to protect the nation against external and internal threats. While our external threats persist, our internal threats have increased. Internal security has got intertwined with external threats and spread of terrorism and subversion threatens the stability of India. State response has been mostly to crisis and violence. Holistic policy is mostly absent and measures if instituted are not sustained. Political handling of security problems is tardy. In such an environment Civil-Military relations as an aspect of security assume even greater importance.<sup>2</sup>

Before proceeding further, I consider it appropriate and useful to briefly recount the experience of other two democracies – the USA and the UK. The UK first, as we have adopted their systems and traditions.

## **The UK Experience**

Developments in Civil-Military relations in the UK can be examined broadly in three parts – during World War II, from World War II and up to 1962, and post 1962. Churchill on becoming the Prime Minister in May 1940 appointed himself as Minister of Defence, the central direction of war became personalised and beyond Cabinet scrutiny. The real check on Churchill came not from Cabinet but from Chiefs of Staff. Where there were differences Churchill's authority was weak, even when he tried to bully them he knew he could not command them.<sup>3</sup> For this paradoxical situation credit goes to both, although for success Churchill claimed credit. Probably only those who had experienced his exceptional power of interference and obstinacy can imagine how difficult he could be. He mostly had a good cause and kept his powers within limits. The role of Cabinet diminished and two Defence Committees of operations and supplies with a common secretariat were more to implement rather than take decisions. The evolution of joint planning and administrative procedures, concerning the Services, influenced to a large extent post War command and control.

In the post War phase, Prime Minister Attlee retained the post of Minister of Defence till 01 Jan 1947, when a separate ministry was established. The Committee of Imperial Defence and a revamped Defence Committee under the Prime Minister were formed, with different sub-committees for different areas of Defence. Prime Minister remained directly responsible. Chiefs of Staff though normally part of the new ministry but submitted strategic papers directly to the Defence Committee and not through Defence Minister, although Minister of Defence was its deputy.

Chairman of the Defence Committee, was not to chair Chiefs of Staff and only to discharge administrative functions of allocation of resources. He was a coordinator and not a controller. Individual Service ministers were excluded from the Cabinet but attended Defence Committee. In 1955, serious flaws became apparent due to lack of coordination between Service departments and Colonial Office, and Minister of Defence complained that since Chiefs of Staff were not under him so joint inter-service long term plans in conformity with political plans could not be formulated. Lord Montgomery as the Chief of Imperial General Staff (CIGS) suggested placing a senior officer above Chiefs of Staff for single point advice and coordination. But it was due to the escalating defence expenditure really that Eden, on instigation of Lord Mountbatten, first Sea Lord, decided to end the system. He created a Chairman of Chiefs of Staff in addition to Service Chiefs to convey the collective views to the Minister of Defence and sit on international bodies like NATO and Western European Union. Lord Mountbatten was asked to be chairman but he declined due to his junior position and Sir William Dickson, Marshal of the Royal Air Force, assumed the new post. Attlee also asked Lord Mountbatten to become the Defence Minister in 1949 as no Defence Minister had made an impact.

On becoming the Chairman of Chiefs of Staff, Mountbatten in 1962 expanded his joint planning staff and wrote a paper on reorganisation of defence and sent to the Minister of Defence. This was based on his experience of unified commands then established in Middle East, Near East and in the Far East in November 1962. He proposed abolition of separate service departments and creation of a single Ministry of Defence to overcome wasteful and ineffective decision making. He recommended that Minister of Defence be upgraded to Secretary of State level and two Ministers of State under him for administration and equipment for all Services. The new organisation came into being on 01 Apr 1964. However, it took twenty one more years for the establishment of the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) system and integration of Services with the Ministry of Defence on 02 Jan 1985.

The British association of symbols of Sword and Mace respectively of Armed Services and Government at all levels represents the interaction and interdependence which obtains between civil and military. We have similar symbolisations but it still is to be translated into practice.

## **The American Experience**

Unlike the UK who had a long history of wars, colonial governance and traditions; American Civil-Military relations and defence systems matured in a short period since World War II. These were conditioned by their participation in war, nuclearisation, Cold War confrontation and their role as a world power.

During the World War major policy and strategy was influenced and executed by the military. According to Huntington power of military reached unprecedented heights,<sup>4</sup> faced with war both the political authority and the military had little choice but to accept it. The creation of Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) in 1942 was a military necessity and gradually its influence and activities increased in areas of diplomacy and politics. By 1945 War Department became totally involved in foreign policy. Huntington further argues that the enormous role of military in war and its experience in conducting a total war made it an indispensable organ for civilian authorities in the conduct of foreign policy.

In the post War period military policy and political policy became more closely related, which resulted in tension in Civil-Military relations. These tensions and disagreements became pronounced during the Cold War period. However it goes to the credit of both the political authorities and the military that while disagreements in formulation of policy were frequent, it was accepted and considered vital for transparent dialogue in Civil-Military relations. To contain and deter communism, development of nuclear weapons was considered essential. American involvement in the Korean War added to military's dominant role. Policy makers gave military strong impetus in not only building and management of nuclear weapons but also shaping nuclear doctrine around nuclear deterrence and massive retaliation, which had an enormous impact on the USAF. The Manhattan Project for production of nuclear weapons was under Army control with General Leslie Groves in charge and scientists working under him. Even though the Atomic Energy Act 1946 established certain civilian control with Lilienthal as Chairman of Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) but military continued to assert itself in the management of nuclear weapons. In 1946, JCS made the first attempt to wrest control over nuclear stockpile arguing that utility of weapons depended on their familiarity with its use. President Truman in spite of his reservations placed nine capsules under military control at the outbreak of Korean War. During Eisenhower's administration the nuclear stockpile was gradually transferred to the military. Civilian custody of nuclear weapons finally ended in 1967, when President Johnson directed AEC to deliver all completed nuclear weapons to military. AEC remained only the producer and not the controller.

Another notable feature of American functioning and role of the JCS was the National Security Act of 1949, which allows a member of the JCS after informing the Secretary of Defence to present to the Congress on its own initiative any recommendation related to Department of Defence (DoD) he may deem proper. Although JCS works within the DoD but its recommendations are submitted direct to the President and the Congress.

The Iraq war (2003) brought out serious differences between the Bush Administration and the military over the objectives of war and its execution. The military fraternity openly criticised the civilian administration and called Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld incompetent while the media called it, "Revolt of the Generals".<sup>5</sup> They accused politicians to have chosen loyalty to their Party above their duty to the Constitution and the Nation, which was borne out by General Petraeus testimony to the Congress. Obama administration faced similar criticism on Afghanistan (2009-2010) from the military and General Stanley McChrystal, one of the chief architects of America's counter-insurgency strategy. His open criticism in an interview to the "Rolling Stone" Magazine resulted in his removal and replacement by General Petraeus.<sup>6</sup> The above clearly reflect on failure of policies due to civilians treading in military's domain.

Before discussing the Indian Scenario, I wish to briefly dwell upon major environmental imperatives and societal influences.

### **Environmental Imperatives**

First one is globalisation and its interplay with security dynamics. Two inferences of Professor Gregory Foster of the American Defence University are important. One, the phenomenon itself; he has defined globalisation as a process which suffuses virtually every aspect of our lives and is inevitable. It assumes so many forms and occurs at so many levels that it cannot be stopped. Second, the viability of the State will depend on how it meets the expanding needs of the society. He also concluded that performance of the military acting as an arm of the State and as an Institution of the society will be instrumental in determining how viable the State remains.<sup>7</sup>

The author's claim that globalisation is irresistible is an acknowledgement of variety and complexity and a reasoned descriptive judgment of its likelihood, not a normative assessment of its goodness or otherwise. This coupled with advances in information technology and in the present era of instant communications has resulted in telescoping of time and space requiring immediate responses. Effect of action and inaction will be magnified, threshold of crisis for decision making lowered and potential for disaster multiplied. In such an environment compartmentalised functioning and out dated procedures are a recipe for disaster. Need for immediate attention and action mandates close Civil-Military coordination, cooperation and jointness.<sup>8</sup> It also requires strategic competence of both civil and military, a responsive society and resource backing.

### **Societal Influences**

Huntington has allied the Civil-Military relations with national security and gone on to claim that Civil-Military relations entail the formal, structural position of military institutions (in the State) - informal role and influence of military groups in politics and society at large, and ideologies of military and non-military groups. Considering the hierarchical and disciplined nature of the Army, he focusses on the study of officer corps and its relationship with the State. He further broadens professionalism of military beyond expertise, thus making officers as the directive element of military and responsible for military security of the society as the State is the directive entity of the society; hence, responsible for allocating adequate resources for military as well as for the society.<sup>9</sup> Social and economic relations between the military and rest of the society normally reflect relations between the officer corps and the State.<sup>10</sup> Unfortunately it is not true of India as military's relationship with the society is very healthy but not so between the military and the State. Face-off between the Services (Chiefs of Staff) and the Govt during the implementation of the 6th Pay Commission recommendations, the events of the years 2011 and 12 and long dragging issue of 'one rank one pension' reflect it

vividly.

The officers' role concerns management of violence and not the act of violence. Similarly, military professionalism is a means by which armies become neutral and not a threat to society. Janowitz's idea of constabulary role of armies is a further refinement. Violence will be deployed and managed for benefit of the society (not for the State).<sup>11</sup> However, this can be challenged as violence is more frequently deployed by the State for its protection and political motives. This was clear during the ill-conceived elections of 1983 in Assam.

The Armed Forces operate at the margin of moral behaviour and they shall obey political authority as long as it appears to be legitimate. Military derives its legitimacy from its Constitutional position and public acceptance of its role, thus its involvement in affairs of the State has to be proper within the accepted norms of democracy.<sup>12</sup> During the emergency in 1975, Mrs Gandhi left the Armed Forces untouched. The Armed Forces on their part also remained aloof and detached from the happenings. In the final analysis, the democratic system reasserted itself and the Indian polity was restored, though a little dented.

### **The Indian Scenario**

The Indian scenario is marked by crisis management, reactive responses, an inadequate system of defence and security management, and Civil-Military relations are a reflection of the same. Improvement is slow and primarily driven by compulsion of events. Like any other institution, the Indian Armed Forces are driven by its functional imperatives to meet the growing threat to the Country. They are also influenced by our democratic system and societal influences; that is why they are different from the Pakistan Army. Unlike Pakistan, the legitimacy of the political authority has a traditional acceptance by the military. It is also a fact that while in western democracies, military over a period of time, has learnt to accept the skills of their political masters, it cannot be said in our case.

The concept of civilian control is accepted and honoured by the Armed Forces but what is worrisome is the misplaced concept of civilian control – who is the controller? Huntington has defined that civilian control exists, “where there is subordination of an autonomous profession to the ends of policy”; while the statesman acknowledges the integrity of the military profession, military in turn remains neutral and accepts political guidance of the State.<sup>13</sup> The controller is the political master and not the bureaucracy, which is only an administrative executive.

Civilian control implies two things. First, civilians make policy and all policies made by subordinate institutions remain subordinate to civilian policy, because political leadership of the Country exercises ultimate say, whether policy is right or wrong. Secondly, with specific regard to the Armed Forces, even if civilians respect the military as an autonomous institution with expertise on issues of strategy, final decision remains the prerogative of civil polity. Civilian control can be objective or subjective. In objective control there is a clear division of civilian and military functions – civilian make policy and military fights war. Subjective control can vary from overlapping of civilian and military functions to excessive influence of civilians in military affairs and vice versa.

The other point of rub is involvement of military in internal strifes and non-conventional operations, where military profession faces different challenges with no clear-cut political or military objectives. This will be discussed in detail later, but this factor has to be recognised in the light of distorted civilian control in India.

The ignorance of our political elite of national security issues has resulted in absence of politico-strategic direction and ineffective mechanism for formulation and execution of national security policy. The fear and suspicion of military of our founding fathers, and lack of understanding of military affairs by our political leadership has been exploited by the bureaucracy, as they (politicians) feel comfortable in dealing with the civilian bureaucracy. The void can only be filled by professional military advice and understanding of it by the political leadership. In 1965 war with Pakistan and to a much greater extent in 1971 war for liberation of Bangladesh the political leadership and the nation benefited due to sound professional advice. The advice of Field Marshal Manekshaw and other Service Chiefs to postpone operations till winter was accepted by Mrs Gandhi in spite of very pressing international and domestic political compulsions. The requirement is for an objective civilian control where power is distributed between the civilian political control and military with maximising of military professionalism.

What we have in India is a type of subjective control. This is the main cause of friction in Civil-Military relations. List 1 of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution lays down the subjects to be dealt with by the Government of India (GoI). In this GoI is assigned the responsibility for the defence of India and part thereof. While the President is the Supreme Commander but responsibility for national defence is with the Cabinet. Raksha Mantri is the head of the Ministry of Defence (MoD), which is his secretariat. GoI (Transaction of Business Rules) 1961 lay down that all business allotted to the department shall be disposed off under general or special direction of the Minister in Charge i.e., Raksha Mantri. Rule II provides that in each department the Secretary (or Relevant Level Officer) shall be the administrative head and shall be responsible for observance of these rules (Rule II). Accordingly, the functioning of the MoD rests with the Raksha Mantri, with MoD providing secretarial and administrative support. Bureaucracy has manipulated its interpretation to say MoD is responsible for all matters related to defence of India and thus intruded into policy formulation and matters related to the Services. Moreover Army, Navy, and Air Force are autonomous professions and institutions and not departments of MoD. The rot started during Krishna Menon's time due to his overbearing style and interfering in military matters, which continues to be perpetrated, in spite of recommendations of civilian strategic thinkers like Late Dr K Subrahmanyam and Shri Arun Singh. As we shall see later, the recommendations of Kargil Review, Arun Singh and Naresh Chandra Committees have been ignored in this regard and system remains inadequate and distorted, with MoD occupying the middle space in the defence structure between the political leadership and the Services. This ultimately is detrimental to national interest as security management lacks strategic and professional interaction between the political decision maker and the military which remains a major area of concern due to its absence.

### **Compulsive Changes in Civil-Military Relations due to Nuclearisation**

Nuclearisation of the sub-continent followed the familiar competitive action and reaction between India and Pakistan. When India established the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) and created the Department of Atomic Energy in 1954, Pakistan followed by establishing Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission in 1955. In 1971 after the defeat in East Pakistan and birth of Bangladesh, Pakistan and Bhutto took a conscious decision to go the nuclear weapons route. Without going into detailed historic narrative it is important to record that Pakistan's nuclear programme differed from India both in substance and nature. It was guided by their military, totally weapons oriented and supported by their political leadership. On the contrary Indian programme was developed under civilian scientific and highest political control without any security or strategic dimension. Sitting along with General Sundarji in Rajasthan desert less than 100 kms from the Pokhran site we heard about the blast on the radio in 1974. This was the first time that I heard General Sundarji talk about the need for nuclear weapons.

By 1980s, General Sundarji was quite clear of the need for India to go nuclear and while as Commandant of College of Combat he articulated his views through two essays "Effect of Nuclear Symmetry on Conventional Deterrence" and "Nuclear Weapons in the Third World Context". Later, as Western Army Commander in 1983 he made a full presentation to General Vaidya the then COAS on India's Nuclear options, where I was present. After he took over as COAS, a start was made to acquire equipments with nuclear, chemical and biological defence capabilities. He also started trying his ideas to make the Army conscious of the nuclear environment and new organisations like reorganised army plains infantry divisions (RAPIDs) came up to enhance mobility for quick concentration and dispersal. I was a close witness to this and authored exercise "Brass Tacks" under General Sundarji's guidance set in such an environment. This is also the time that missile based delivery systems were initiated and the Integrated Guided Missile System programme was launched under Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) in mid 1980s in conjunction with the military.

Pakistan's clandestine operations came to notice by 1990, when Pakistan offered nuclear technology and weapons programmes secretly to Iran, Iraq, Libya and North Korea. In early 1992, Pakistan's Foreign Minister in an interview to Washington Post announced that Pakistan had obtained capability to produce nuclear weapons.

At a seminar organised by the USI in 1990, serving and retired officers from the Services, diplomats, academicians and strategists all were of the opinion that to offset Pakistan's nuclear capability nuclear weapons were essential. Late Dr K Subrahmanyam, India's foremost strategist thinker and doyen, supported by late Air Commodore Jasjit Singh and others strongly propagated in favour of nuclearisation. This is also the time that Mr VP Singh asked Arun Singh to do a review after UN special commission inspectors had discovered documentary evidence of Dr Khan's contacts with Saddam Hussein. Arun Singh in his findings commented, "It is clear that we have to end the wink and nudge approach. When it is crunch time you just cannot ring up the COAS and say press the button. The Army will not take scientist's word that it would work. They want to know if they have a credible deterrent, otherwise they are likely to say buzz off.<sup>14</sup> It is a significant disadvantage if you don't have a command and control structure". In a major decision Prime Minister Shri Narasimha Rao put Army's Prithvi Ballistic missiles (150 kms/1000 kg) at Army's disposal.

Indian nuclear tests in 1998 were followed by Pakistan's tests and 1999 Kargil war was fought under a nuclear shadow. The Kargil Review Committee (KRC) Report made categorical recommendations supporting Indian Military's role in formulating nuclear policy, saying Indian Military has to be made as well informed as its Pakistani counterparts and military has a professional role in formulation of nuclear strategy. The KRC also strongly recommended a reorganisation of higher defence organisation. Indian nuclear doctrine of minimum nuclear deterrence and 'no first use' raised the question of minimum deterrence which could only be decided by professional military, and testing their effectiveness before absorption. Nuclear weapons presence in the subcontinent has made achievement of political and military stability difficult. While the presence of nuclear weapons has reduced the chances of war, stability is undermined by sub-conventional and proxy war. The biggest challenge to Civil-Military relations has been that we thought of going nuclear first and thought of doctrine, strategy and structures for command and control afterwards. However, it has forced civilian authority to accept that selection of weapon systems, target selection and delivery means and doctrine formulation can only be decided by the military. It also mandates the military to formulate new ground, air and naval doctrines. Greater shift to offensive doctrines will require political leadership to be proactive in national security. It should also hopefully result in greater convergence of Civil-Military functions. It is not only desirable but an urgent necessity.

### **Civil-Military Relations in Counter Insurgency (CI) and Proxy war Environment**

Most scholars with Western orientation including Indians are of the view that involvement in these operations distracts the Armed Forces particularly the Army from their main role of conventional operations of war and affects their capability to execute such operations. This is true to a large extent but over a period of time the Indian Army has learnt to draw a balance as was proved by the Kargil war in 1999. However, this needs constant attention and our field formations must ensure that they train for their conventional role as intensively as possible.

It must also be recognised that we have extensive experience in CI and unconventional operations in diverse environment, both in physical terrain and population variety. We must keep in mind what I have mentioned earlier of Bush and Obama administration's criticism in Iraq and Afghanistan as it will be useful to compare with Indian experience. Space does not permit covering in detail our varied experience in different areas. I shall mainly give out inferences with key elements of the background.

I commanded a division in Manipur and Nagaland in early 1980s, of thirty five battalions (15 Infantry, six Border Security Forces, five Central Reserve Police Force and nine Assam Rifles) deployed in five brigades and six other sectors. Meitei insurgency in Manipur was at its peak with Naga insurgency rejuvenating and spreading to new areas which had been peaceful for over a decade. There was President's rule in Manipur and one of our most experienced and respected IAS officer Mr LP Singh was the Governor of all the seven North East states for over five and half years. After a quick familiarisation, I met him and gave him my assessment of the situation. Situation in Imphal valley was such that some police stations had been deserted and Manipur Rifles, Para Military Forces (PMF) and even some Army troops were protecting anything and everything. I explained to him that all troops under me after a bit of

orientation will go on the offensive; and civil administration, with adequate armed police should take over the protective duties and manage the towns. I had seen Manipur Police and Manipur Rifles and was confident that with support they could manage the situation.

Army and PMF were to operate to hunt and destroy insurgents and their bases. We trained to operate in urban areas in pairs, and in Quick Reaction Teams (QRT) on cycles, motor cycles and civil vehicles. The Governor did not agree and things came to a head when he called Giani Zail Singh the Home Minister and Rao Saheb Krishna Swamy, the Cabinet Secretary. I refused to meet them as I was not answerable to them, till I got orders from the Army Chief General Krishna Rao. I explained to Giani Zail Singh in Punjabi and later to Rao Saheb in English. I ended up saying I am a professional and will not compromise my judgment for good relations. I put my strategy in action and results came in ones and twos, till after two months in a well-planned operation we captured Bisheswar Singh, Chairman of Peoples Liberation Army and some of his Lasha trained ojahs. This was a big break. Mr LP Singh flew from Shillong to congratulate me and after that he was my biggest supporter. He was most magnanimous and later I got a message of congratulations from the Prime Minister. This was followed by continuous success in Manipur and Nagaland. There was equal resistance to me from within the Services. These incidents are recorded in the official history of the division in the chapter "Quick and Aggressive Response".<sup>15</sup>

During one of the discussions, General Krishna Rao said, "Government has not given us a directive, we should ask for one. He said better to draft and send one covering all aspects of political, economic, ethnic and, law and order." I drafted one and when I sent it to the Army Chief, I recommended we should not ask for it as while we continue doing what we have to, the civil agencies would never do their part, my main worry was, who would do it? I issued one as Governor, ten years later, laying down what was to be done in a year's time. It was termed as the year of peace and development.

### **Lessons**

- (a) Professional judgment and military expertise cannot be dictated; Government can lay down objectives which was not done.
- (b) In the absence of policy, military must decide strategy keeping all factors in view - political, social, population and terrain which is the key. This also raises the question, as to what extent should military interfere in formulation of policies in areas affected by insurgency?

### **Jammu and Kashmir**

The Jammu and Kashmir situation is an outcome of lack of politico-strategic vision of our leaders, foundations of which were laid by the partition of the Country and the manner of accession of the State to India. Inner turmoils and convulsions during the period 1953-1989 marked by political ineptness, rigged elections and corruption adversely affected the situation thus, turning disenchantment into alienation. The rigged elections of 1987 perpetuated the syndrome of power sharing, which further added to alienation in spite of economic well-being. On military front, dismemberment of JKLF provided ground for Pakistan design to foment it as a proxy war with radical design and with a religious orientation. The current situation has further increased the Indo-Pak dimension of the problem. We failed again politically and strategically to resolve the issue in 1972 during the Shimla Agreement by trusting a neighbour who had failed to deliver on the promises made. The current situation is a proxy war within our own area where reactive policy as practised so far will not improve the situation. Need is for a strategic design to counter it. Recent floods have demonstrated that fringe elements need to be tackled from within by the J&K Government for which GoI ought to lay down ground rules and support the State Government.

### **Lessons**

- (a) In the absence of politico-strategic vision, military strategy will remain confined to the Line of Control (LC) and anti-militancy with variations in intensity and complexion. Pakistan is a negative factor but we need to look inside.
- (b) Alienation cannot be overcome by political and economic dispensations alone. It requires trust, which can only be built by honest, credible and legitimate means over a sustained period. You cannot play politics over it as it leads to appeasement and mistrust.

### **IPKF Operations in Sri Lanka**

Sri Lanka from professional point of view is important as a case of power projection in our neighbourhood, where we had been intimately connected with one or other aspects of problems over a period of time. We are all aware of GoI stance varying from helping LTTE with humanitarian help to providing bases and arms, and a sudden change to that of an adversary. It is a clear case of our failure to discern politico-strategic objectives. In the absence of any documented evidence, India-Sri Lanka Accord (ISLA) can probably be treated as the joint intentions and objectives of India and Sri Lanka. The main points of the Accord were to preserve the unity of Sri Lanka and its multi ethnic society and integrity of Tamil speaking areas. Both the governments had agreed that to achieve the above, the establishment of North Eastern Provincial Council (NEPC) and elections to it were essential. GoI had also agreed to extend military assistance to Sri Lanka if asked to implement the Accord. The GoI was deemed to be the guarantor of the Accord. Annexure to Para 6 of the Accord gave IPKF, on invitation of the Sri Lankan President, added responsibility to underwrite the resolution and provide full-fledged military support beyond peace keeping. A critical analysis of the above would reveal that requirements were not only conflicting but fulfillment of some clauses would negate others. Confusion and dichotomy was bound to happen. Such a mandate required clear-cut political directions not only to fulfil the requirements of the Accord but also to safeguard Indian and Tamil interests. All this straight away raised doubts in Sri Lankan Tamil mind, whether IPKF was for them or against them. Elections to the provincial council were only a part of the process and not an end in itself, especially when they were not fully representative.

What made things worse was the so called Core Group in Delhi who failed to carve out a clear CI strategy and started directing and controlling tactical operations which resulted in differences between General Sundarji and the Army Commander. IPKF HQ acted as the henchman of the Core Group and, command and control became a victim of differences amongst senior commanders. There was lack of synergy at politico-diplomatic-military level and General Sundarji totally failed to discern the military fall-out of the changes in political stand. In retrospect, the Services should feel satisfied in performing the task well, considering the political ambiguity, lack of strategic direction and clear cut military directions.

## Lessons

- (a) ISLA was a flawed Accord and in the absence of clear politico-military directions its implementation became even more difficult.
- (b) In the absence of well-crafted political management, our efforts beyond the military field did not respond to situations on ground and stance of the contending parties. This resulted in Core Group's unwanted involvement in tactical operations, with disastrous consequences.

## Overall Observations

In the field of CI and unconventional operations in India, there has been no politico-strategic direction to military. Military has been evolving and carrying out its own military strategy based on its experience and expertise. This is the reason for a situation often not being consolidated after it has been brought under control. It is a cause for frustration and disillusionment for the military.

There is no institutionalised political handling of these problems, which remain confined to political party in power's sphere and interest. The establishment of National Security Council has not helped as they are only duplicating work done by other agencies and ministries. Under these circumstances, while the Army should remain apolitical but it must understand the political dynamics of the areas of their interest and oppose bad politics which precipitate military situations. It is the Army's Constitutional and national duty.

In the absence of institutional structure for strategy, formulation of military strategy by and large shall continue to be carved and operationalised by the military.

Military has never questioned political civil control but the bureaucracy in the MoD can never fulfil this role. Interaction between political leadership and military needs to be institutionalised. In its absence, strategic issues will remain out of focus; knee jerk reactions and tactical responses will be the end result. Similarly, with political leadership's lack of strategic orientation, there can be no division of labour between civil and military, and clout will dictate balance.

The above state has also resulted in raising and augmentation of agencies and forces without effectively contributing to efficiency. Forces need to be employed for the task for which they are raised. Adhoc contingency-based deployments have failed to deliver. New agencies and forces raised without proper thought result in deactivation of existing ones.

At field level unity of command is essential; in its absence operations will suffer and forces will be misused. Unified Headquarters is a ploy to satisfy ego of different paramilitary forces and militates against operational efficiency.

## Endnotes

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\*The article is based on various lectures delivered by the author at Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration, Musoorie, National Defence College in Delhi and some other institutions.

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