

# U.S.I. JOURNAL

INDIA'S OLDEST JOURNAL ON DEFENCE AFFAIRS

(Established : 1870)



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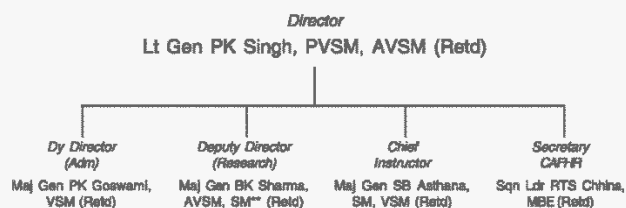
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<sup>2</sup> Lina Bolzoni and Pietro Corsi, *The Culture Memory*, (Bologna : Societa editrice il Mulino, 1992), p. 45.

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<sup>4</sup> R Poirer, *Learning Physics*, (Academic, New York, 1993), p.4.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>6</sup> T Eliot, *Astrophysics*, (Springer, Berlin, 1989), p. 141.

<sup>7</sup> R Millan, *Art of Latin Grammar*, (Academic, New York, 1997), p.23.

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### **Course Members**

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## **Editorial**

The article "Defence Deserves its Due" by General Deepak Kapoor, PVSM, AVSM, SM, VSM (Retd) focusses on need to build military capabilities side by side with economic growth. History has time and again emphasised the linkage between economy and defence of a nation. It is the balanced combination of the two that determines the place of a nation in the world order. India possesses the third largest military in the world in terms of numbers, but in modern warfare, lightening mobility, precision targeting, cyber warfare capability, enhanced lethality and effective use of space by modernised military are factors which determine the outcome. Unfortunately, we are lagging far behind in most of these areas compared to our potential adversaries. Our defence budget has progressively been going down year after year and currently it stands at 1.57 per cent of the GDP. Most defence analysts have been demanding around three per cent of the GDP. According to the author; there is an inescapable requirement to carry out structural reforms to make defence compatible with our growing economic footprint. There is a need for our politicians to understand implications of national security fully. National aims, objectives and strategy are areas to which they have hardly any exposure. Politicians tend to rely on bureaucracy who also have limited and superficial knowledge pertaining to national security matters. Consequently, faulty decisions are taken causing irreparable damage . Political class must rely on sound professional advice rather than minimally informed bureaucracy. Further, it is essential to enhance defence spending annually to achieve matching military capabilities for which sufficient time is required. Defence portfolio is important but successive defence ministers have been lightweights with limited say in crucial decision making. Higher defence management despite suggestions by a number of Committees has not been streamlined. Historically, National Security Advisors (NSA) have been Foreign Service or Police Officers. Their exposure to national security matters is bound to be limited. The defence of the country is not getting its due. We need to address our vulnerabilities before it is too late.

The article titled “Towards an Effective and Viable Information Warfare Structure for the Indian Armed Forces” has been authored by Lt Gen RS Panwar, AVSM, SM, VSM (Retd) . The author has analysed the intangible and multi – disciplinary factors of Information Warfare (IW) against the backdrop of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century battlespace. The role of IW is gaining prominence. Organisational structures for Armed Forces should be optimised for a total conflict scenario, which is likely to be most demanding in resources. Scenarios lower down the ladder can be catered for through modifications to structures and processes. The Defence Intelligence Agency at the tri-Services level uses Signals Intelligence resources to carry out its activities. Efforts are made to gain strategic intelligence by exploiting computer Networks. The Electronic Warfare organisations are structured mostly to acquire tactical Signals Intelligence. Electronic Intelligence (ELINT) resources are under the Military Intelligence Directorate, whereas radar signatures collected by ELINT units are meant for EW Units to exploit enemy vulnerabilities on outbreak of hostilities. Restructuring appears to be necessary. According to the author, placing ELINT units under the Theatre Commander could be a good interim arrangement. The author has made a number of recommendations in terms of doctrinal improvements and organizational restructuring. However, key driver for transformation would be the conviction that warfare in Information Age is changing. New model of human resource development philosophy needs to be put in place and accepted. It should cover recruitment, training and career progression aspects. Essentially a change in existing mind-set is a pre-requisite.

The Indian Ocean occupies twenty per cent of the Earth’s sea surface. Heavy volume of trade to and from the Indian Ocean Region takes place. Article titled “The Indian Ocean Rim Dynamics and New Challenges” by Vice Admiral Satish Soni, PVSM, AVSM, NM (Retd) makes interesting reading. A key priority of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) is to ensure reliable, uninterrupted and safe movement of people, goods, energy and resource supplies throughout the Indian Ocean and address issues related to maritime safety and security. IORA has not been very effective in dealing with piracy, smuggling, maritime terrorism, illegal fishing, narcotics and human trafficking. Their

achievements have been modest and speedy reforms are required. Oceans have traditionally been areas of contestation and the Indian Ocean is no exception. The countries of the littoral should evolve a maritime order to safeguard the aspirations of the people. Resurgent maritime powers, China and India should also play this important role as they replace the US and Western powers to strengthen maritime order in the Indian Ocean waters.

The Indian Air Force conducted air war exercise from 18 to 20 April 2018. An article titled “Exercise Gagan Shakti 2018 – Comprehensive Test of Air Power” by Air Marshal Anil Chopra, PVSM, AVSM, VM, VSM (Retd) covers the salient features of the conduct of the exercise. 1100 aircraft of various types were deployed. War like scenarios were exercised on Western and Northern borders. Special Operations with the Army included induction of a parachute battalion in airborne assault operation in desert terrain. The assault included 560 paratroopers, combat vehicles and GPS guided cargo platforms. The landing force was dropped behind the simulated enemy lines. Maritime operations with the Indian Navy on the Western sea board for air domination and deep strike validation over extended area in the Indian Ocean Region was practiced. Precision Weapons are available with all 4<sup>th</sup> Generation plus fighter aircraft. Precision Weapons were also dropped from various platforms. All weapons achieved their designated points of impact causing the desired damage. Secure information grid of the Air Force (AFNET) and the Integrated Air Command and Control System were used to conduct operations. The IAF exercised its entire Operational machinery to validate its concept of operations and war - waging capability. Light Combat Aircraft (LCA), though in small numbers, has begun its operational innings well. According to the author, the IAF lived upto its motto ‘Nabh Sparsham Deepatam’ meaning ‘Touching the Sky with Glory’.

India became independent in 1947. Ever since, the State of Jammu and Kashmir has not had peace. In a significant development PDP and BJP in J&K got separated, the government fell, and the Governor’s rule has been imposed. J&K Assembly elections are due in 2020 and general elections in 2019. The Governor’s rule is likely to continue till general elections. An article

titled “Addressing Radicalisation in Kashmir; A *Sine Qua Non* for Governor’s Rule” by Maj Gen BK Sharma and Brig Narinder Kumar has focused on present situation in J&K, challenges for the Governor’s rule, role of terrorists and unarmed jihadis and strategy to eliminate the idea of jihad. While terrorists inflict death and destruction, unarmed Jihadis also play a significant role. A recent study has revealed that new terrorists are not driven by ideology. They come from middle class families and join terrorism because of thrill seeker attitude. On the other hand, unarmed Jihadis are product of radicalisation. Terrorist fights with the weapon in hand and unarmed jihadis fight to conquer cognitive domain. Between the armed and unarmed jihadis, third dimension is Pakistan, which has driven a wedge in society to undermine the sense of shared values essential for democracy and Kashmiriyat. The State is crippled by terrorism. The Governor’s rule should be treated as an opportunity to ensure course correction. State should not be seen as oppressor and should be committed to genuine welfare of the people without any biases. At the same time survival of democratic institutions in J&K must be ensured.

The Northeastern region of India has common borders with five neighbouring countries. The common thread among these borders is inhospitable terrain, low development, and complexities of socio-economic milieu impacting security. Along Bangladesh, there is border fencing manned by the BSF. With China, Sino (Tibet) - Indian border remains unresolved. Other borders are well settled. An article titled “Border Management in Northeast : Paradigms of Technology Driven Tactical Interface” by Lt Gen Rameshwar Yadav, PVSM, AVSM, VSM (Retd) focusses on how the technology can contribute towards better border management. According to the author, the operational parameters and technology needs are required to be dovetailed with each other to optimise their effectiveness on the basis of militancy, insurgency and criminal content in each sector. Artificial Intelligence (AI), robotics, space and aerial surveillance, communications networks, GPS system, drones, Night Vision Devices (NVDs), radars and C4I system should be incorporated in a need based pragmatic manner in the Indian context. The Chinese conduct on the LAC is reflective of their design to keep India on the backfoot having strategic connotations requiring politico-military response. For



improving border management, technology should be suitably interfaced with tactical and strategic needs for planning and conduct of operations.

The article titled “Tides of Change in Northeast India : Enablers and Impediments to Naga Peace Process” by Brigadier Sunil Bodhe reflects an objective assessment of the realities on the ground. The Naga insurgents’ demand for a greater Nagaland encompassing all Naga tribes in the region has been there for some time. However, signing of ceasefire agreements by major insurgent groups since 1997 has led to a better understanding. On 04 Aug 2015 Socialist Council of Nagaland (Isak Muivah) [(NSCN (IM) ] signed with the Government of India, Naga Peace Framework Agreement. It has changed the dynamics of insurgency in Nagaland. In February 2018, assembly elections were held in northeastern states. The Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party (NDPP) and Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP) won elections and formed new governments. This has offered an avenue for furthering the Peace process. Lasting peace is the goal of counter – insurgency. While pursuing peace process, there are certain enablers to promote peace and certain impediments that need to be bridged. Enablers include – firstly, the territorial integrity of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur. These are multi-racial, multi-lingual and multi-religious states in the region. These states have to stay as they are. Secondly, NSCN got split in 1988 leading to formation of NSCN (IM) and NSCN (Khaplong). On 16 September 2015, the Indian Government banned NSCN (K) under Unlawful Activities and Prevention Act for five years. Thirdly, NSCN (K) has realized that minuscule Naga Community in Myanmar is unlikely to get a good political deal. Further, India has worked out a comprehensive security co-operation with Myanmar. Finally, Naga Civil Society Organisation is playing a positive role in promoting lasting peace. Among the impediments, major issue is Nagalim versus Naga identity. NSCN (IM) wants a Christian, Religious State. NSCN (K) wants independent “Greater Nagaland” to include territory now in Myanmar, based on ethnicity. Secondly, some ceasefire ground rules are flawed, e.g carrying of arms under cover of jackets being done by terrorists defeats the rationale of ceasefire. Thirdly, surrender policy permits insurgent groups to keep arms and ammunition in reserve, thereby ensuring

option open to go back to the jungles. Only minimal arms and ammunition are being deposited. Policy needs to be reviewed. Fourthly, education has declined and development in the state has suffered badly. Nagaland is a Christian majority state. Religious Organisations have had role in elections. Church groups have been calling for resistance against Hindutva' parties. In conclusion, it can be stated that Government of India's Look East Policy and friendly neighbour in Myanmar offer opportunities to meet goals of Naga people; neutralise impediments, and take forward the peace process.

The circumstances which led to informal summit at Wuhan can be attributed to strategic review of the global environment by President Xi. The article "Wuhan Reset – Strategic Etymology Kaleidoscopic View" by Maj Gen GG Dwivedi, SM, VSM and Bar, PhD (Retd) presents objective assessment of informal summit. China has always opposed global security system based on military alliances and partnerships. China will not condescend to the idea of 'Indo-Pacific' gaining currency and quad (US, India, Japan and Australia) grouping taking shape of an alliance. To counter Trump's 'America First' policy, China is keen to make Asia as the globalisation pivot. In this effort, China views India as an important player. Xi is going about systematically to challenge America. In this process, Beijing is willing to yield tactical space to serve its larger strategic interests. India had put across concerns about cross border terrorism; China's looming presence in India's neighbourhood including Indian Ocean; China - Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC); impasse on border issue and restoring glaring trade imbalance. In the absence of a joint communique, the two sides issued separate statements with common themes but varying tones. Both sides agreed to enhance mutual trust and follow Five Principles of peaceful coexistence. There is a need for a pragmatic China policy with thrust on achieving strategic equilibrium between the two neighbours.

The article titled "India-China Riparian Relations : Of Reality and Rationality" by Dr Uttam Kumar Sinha makes interesting reading. Rivers are complex socio-natural realities that invariably get entangled with politics. India and China share rivers and also have trans-boundary rivers flowing between them. The issue is

whether there will be cooperation or uneasiness between the two on the shared rivers. China has a legacy of control and dominance of rivers. 'Whoever Controls the Yellow river controls China' is a timeless maxim. China is unlikely to compromise on its water resources. Given this reality, India has to rationally view its downstream status. The Brahmaputra Originates from Angsi Glacier in Burang county of Tibet, where it is known as Yarlung Tsangpo. The length of the river is 2880 kms, of which, 1625 kms flows through Tibet, 918 kms traverse India and 337 kms in Bangladesh. Yarlung, when it reaches Indian territory and becomes Brahmaputra, swells because of heavy monsoon rain and fast flowing tributaries - the Lohit, Dibang and Siang / Dihang. Annual outflow of the Yarlung from China is significantly less than the Brahmaputra. Thus India has ample water to develop and harness. India needs to have more water development footprints in Arunachal Pradesh for economic growth building more water storage, and be able to exert riparian prior appropriation rights. Greater economic integration in the border region is an effective way to neutralise China's claim. Equally significant is 1800 km of potential Brahmaputra National Waterway 2 emerging as economic corridor with direct access to Chittagong Port in Bangladesh and Haldia Port in West Bengal and also to boost trade with South East Asian Countries. India's strategic and policy initiatives pertaining to Brahmaputra have to be carefully balanced between pursuing 'water dialogue' with China and an emphasis on 'basin approach' with Bangladesh and Bhutan.

The article "The Islamic State and the Civil War in Syria" by Shri VP Haran, IFS (Retd) traces the history of the IS, expansion into Syria, support of foreign countries, followed by action by the US and Russia resulting in serious setback for the IS. Al Qaeda established itself in Iraq in 1999 and became Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) in 2004. In May 2010, it came to be known as Islamic State in Iraq (ISI). In June 2014, it rechristened itself as Islamic State (IS), following proclamation of the Caliphate. The territory they wanted to Control in Syria and Iraq largely overlapped the oil and gas fields. They also wanted to spread their influence across the Middle East. In January 2015, IS controlled nearly 90,000 sq kms of territory in Syria and Iraq and 10 million or so people lived in that area. IS suffered a set back in the face of concerted efforts by

the international community. After setbacks, IS has lost 95 per cent of the territory and now controls three small pockets in Syria – town of Abu Kamal; a pocket on border with Jordan; and a pocket south of Damascus along Israeli occupied Golan heights. The civil war scenario in Syria has implications for India. Over 50 persons having connection with IS were arrested in 2015-16. They came from Kerala, Maharashtra, Gujrat and Uttar Pradesh. Reach of IS in India has been through the social media. Already, there is suspicion of involvement of IS in unrest in J&K, though in a limited way. It is probable that IS cadres exiting from Syria may reach Pakistan and be available for mercenary operations, posing serious challenges to India. IS may be down, but their ideology and propaganda appeal to some. India needs to be vigilant.

The article titled “Iran and the West Asia Region : Changing Dynamics and New Challenges” by Shri Sanjay Singh, IFS (Retd) has clearly brought out that the Region is on the boil due to continuing violence. There is violence in Syria and Yemen, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, deepening divide between Iran and Saudi Arabia, terrorist violence and external intervention. The Islamic State (IS) has been defeated but not eliminated. The breakdown of state order in several countries of West Asia owing to conflict provides a fertile breeding ground for extremism. Iran’s pursuit of nuclear capability brought it to adverse attention and pressure from the US, Europe and the UN to force it to desist. The concerted pressure including economic sanctions led Iran to agree to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). President Trump is opposed to the P5+1 Agreement with Iran. He feels that the Agreement was flawed and did not ensure that Iran would not become a nuclear power and that deal’s non-inclusion of missile development needed to be addressed. Iran had made it clear that the deal was not negotiable. President Trump has withdrawn US from the deal and has re-imposed all US nuclear related sanctions, both the suspended primary and secondary sanctions on Iran’s economy, including on oil and financial sectors. Other countries including India will be forced to make a choice on whether or not to respect the sanctions. European economic relations with Iran will be seriously affected, leaving Iran, Russia, China and handful of other countries as partners. India has considerable interest in West Asia. Over eight million Indians live

and work in the region. India takes 70 per cent of its oil and gas requirements from the region. India and Iran are co-operating in Chabahar Port improvement project to facilitate trade with Afghanistan and Central Asia. It is important that India should examine possible options for playing a more robust role in the region.

India has vital strategic and economic interests in West Asia. The article titled “Turkey, Israel and the Region : Implications for India” by Dr Mohamed Muddassir Quamar focuses on current scenario in West Asia, role of Turkey, Israel and major powers. India has friendly relations with Turkey and close strategic relations with Israel. Both are allies of the US and in the past had maintained friendly relations with each other. As one looks at the Fertile crescent – Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Israel and Palestine – the two have geopolitical role and stakes. The Syrian Crisis has seen involvement of Turkey and Israel with their armed forces crossing the border to neutralize security threats. These incursions and deepening footprints of Iran in Syria threaten to flare up and engulf the whole region. Turkey ‘s actions in Syria have put it in a peculiar situation with the Syrian regime, Russia and the US. All are opposed to Turkish military presence in Syria but have allowed it to take control of Northwestern enclave in Syria so as to disallow the Kurds the strategic advantage. Nevertheless, it has put Turkey in a vulnerable position vis-à-vis both the US and Russia. Israel is focused on militarily countering Iran in Syria. Israel wants to counter Iran through the US and by aligning with Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Israel was instrumental in pushing Trump administration to withdraw from JCPOA. Implications for India in the Middle East quagmire are vital. India needs to go beyond the current policy of balancing relations and keeping safe distance. While it is necessary to protect the Indians residing in the region and other national interests, given the prospective cost of a flare up, India needs to work with other emerging powers to stabilize the situation and prevent major conflict in the region.

The article titled “War at Sea : Nineteenth Century Laws for Twenty First Century Wars” by Professor Steven Haines was published in International Review of the Red Cross. The Journal is

published by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The article has been reproduced in the USI Journal after obtaining permission to do so. The article appeared in ICRC Journal, Volume 98, Number 902, August 2016. Since the article is long, it is being published in two parts. Part II will appear in July-September 2018 Issue of the USI Journal. While most laws on conduct of hostilities have been updated, the law dealing with armed conflict at sea has not been reviewed. This is not surprising, because there have been few naval conflicts after the Second World War, which ended in 1945. Nevertheless, navies have tripled in number since then. There are growing tensions between significant naval powers. Conditions have changed since 1945, but the law has not developed in that time frame. The law regulating the conduct of hostilities in naval war – the law of armed conflict (LOAC) applicable at sea has attracted little attention. The objective of this article is merely to start a debate on a subject that has been confined to the margins of dialogue by force of circumstances. No firm legal solutions have been suggested, as these would require engagement with experts from around the World, in both laws and the naval operations it is meant to regulate. However, the article makes interesting reading.

Major General YK Gera (Retd)

# Defence Deserves its Due

General Deepak Kapoor, PVSM, AVSM, SM, VSM (Retd) @

**H**istory has time and again emphasised the umbilical linkage

between economy and defence of a nation. It is a balanced combination of the two that has determined the place of a nation in the world order. In the 5<sup>th</sup> Century BC, Spartan military dominance could not be sustained in the face of rising economic and naval prowess of Athens. Resultantly, by the end of the prolonged Peloponnesian War, both Sparta and Athens emerged drastically weakened notwithstanding ultimate Spartan victory.

In the 15<sup>th</sup> Century, Spanish dominance of the world was successfully challenged by the economic rise of Portugal resulting in division of the respective colonial empires across the globe. The economic effect of the Industrial Revolution made Britain, backed by its naval might, the pre-eminent global power of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The United States, having progressed economically throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> Century while following a policy of 'Splendid Isolation', came in to its own to dominate the 20<sup>th</sup> Century as the foremost global power. It continues to do so till date. Germany's economic and military rise repeatedly in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century was possible only because it concentrated on both these aspects equally. Its subsequent defeat in the famous two world wars by the stronger economic and military alliance highlights the importance of growing economically and militarily simultaneously.

Finally, we are currently witnessing the economic and military rise of China for the last three decades. It is only a matter of time when it would overtake the US as the most powerful nation of the globe. While that may happen when it does, it is important to recognise the crucial linkage between economic growth and military power. The strength of this linkage determines the role that a nation plays at the global level.

Indian economic growth has been noteworthy during the last decade, though nowhere near the Chinese. However, while currently we are witnessing a decline in the Chinese growth rate, there are signs of an improvement in India's, thus making it a

leading growing power. If this momentum can be sustained, we may be heading for better times.

The moot question that arises is that even if we perform well on the economic front, is that enough to claim a high place in the regional and global pecking order? While some of us believe so, this thought process may be premature in the absence of matching defence capabilities.

We do lay claim to possessing the third largest military in the world, and rightly so in terms of numbers. But in modern warfare, large number is just one factor that can influence a successful outcome. Battlefield transparency, lightening mobility, precision targeting, cyber warfare, enhanced lethality and effective use of space by a modernised and integrated military are factors which have equal if not greater say in determining the outcome. Unfortunately, in most of these areas, we are lagging far behind some of our potential adversaries. We also need to be clear that an odd surgical strike or a firm stand against an adversary a la Doklam is not necessarily a true indicator of our military prowess and capabilities.

The last skirmish that the Indian military was involved in was in the years 1999-2000 at Kargil. Since then, as a percentage of GDP, the defence budget has progressively gone down year after year. Today, it stands at a paltry 1.57 per cent of the GDP. Indeed, it is a far cry from 3 per cent which most defence analysts and well-wishers of the nation have been demanding over the years.

While in real terms, our budget for the current financial year stands at approximately USD42 billion, the official Chinese budget is USD160 billion. Pakistan spends close to 4.5 per cent of its GDP on defence annually. US military spending is of course equal to the combined spending of Russia, China, India and Japan. Even European nations, which are currently in a state of relative peace, are gradually increasing their defence expenditure to 2 per cent of the GDP.

Resultantly, while collusive threat from our potential adversaries has enhanced the possibility of a two front war for us,



our defence capabilities have not kept pace with the changing dynamics. Modernisation has suffered, obsolescence levels have gone up and fighting stocks have gone down even though we continue to maintain the dubious distinction of being the biggest importer of weaponry globally year after year. While successive governments, since 2000 may have had their own compulsions in allocating inadequate resources for defence, the damage that gets done to national security is tremendous and cannot be made up overnight. We need to analyse what structural reforms should be undertaken to make defence compatible with our growing economic footprint.

The first requirement is for our political class to grasp and understand the implications of national security fully. Both within the Parliament and the Government, the number of people somewhat conversant with national security and its role in nation building can be counted on finger tips. National aims, objectives and strategy are areas to which they have hardly been exposed during their career spans. Nor are these useful to earn them repeated victories at the polls. Resultantly, their total dependence on bureaucracy shifts the control to the latter, a situation wherein it enjoys total authority without accountability. Unfortunately, since the exposure of bureaucracy to matters of national security and strategy is limited and superficial, faulty decisions are frequently taken, in the process causing irreparable damage.

The best solution would be for our political class and the bureaucracy to be exposed to some formal training in national security studies. If that is not feasible, then the political class must base its decisions on sound professional advice rather than on the politically expedient advice of minimally informed bureaucracy. The procrastination in implementing the previous recommendations on providing single point advice on national security matters is causing incalculable damage.

The aspect of increase in defence budget is generally brushed aside with two specious arguments. Firstly, the oft used rhetoric that whatever is needed for defence would always be provided is conveniently trotted out. Secondly, the inability of the military to even spend the allotted budget annually is highlighted to deny any major increase. The truth, however, is that mandarins

of the Finance Ministry have the final word in any purchases above Rs 1000 crores. Thus, when the file reaches them for approval after its meandering and torturous journey, it is put in to a fresh loop by raising or repeating a couple of inconsequential enquiries, ensuring the financial year ends and the budget lapses! Unfortunately, such practices are chipping away at defence preparedness and making the military hollow with the danger of crumbling in the face of a crisis. Even at the expense of curtailed growth, it is essential to enhance defence spending annually to achieve matching military capabilities.

In appointing its custodians, successive governments have not done full justice to the Defence Ministry portfolio during the last 10 to 15 years. While conceptually recognising the cardinal principle that defence together with external affairs, home and finance forms the core of government functioning, successive Defence Ministers have either been totally dependent on bureaucracy or lightweights with limited say in crucial decision making.

The UPA government ensured continuity in the MOD but the propensity to play safe and retain the tag of righteousness ensured that most of the proposed foreign acquisitions were scuttled by the simple process of a losing competitor writing an anonymous letter hinting at corruption. During last four years of the present government, the MOD has had four Raksha Mantris with Mr Jetley occupying the chair twice besides simultaneously also being the Finance Minister. There have also been times when the chair has been lying vacant during this period! In the process, national security has been denied its due.

Higher defence management continues to be a pipe dream despite constructive suggestions by a number of committees constituted by the government in the past two decades. Recent announcement of formation of the Defence Planning Committee (DPC) headed by the NSA with Service Chiefs and Secretaries home, external affairs, defence and finance as members has inherent flaws and is unlikely to achieve the desired results. To begin with, it creates another layer between the political authority and the Service Chiefs. Secondly, it capitalises on the current personal equation between the PM and the NSA thus giving a go

bye to an institutional arrangement which would withstand the test of time and prove beneficial in the long term. Thirdly, indirectly it impinges on the authority of the Raksha Mantri, a major stakeholder in national security matters. Lastly, historically, almost all NSAs have been Foreign Service or police officers. Accordingly, their exposure to national defence matters is likely to be limited.

The aspects discussed above highlight the basic point that the defence of the country is not getting its due. This is gradually leading to increased hollowness which would not be able to withstand the array of threats that the country may be exposed to in the foreseeable future. Without sounding alarmist, we need to pragmatically assess our vulnerabilities and address them before it is too late. It would be right to assert that the greatness that we strive for would be achievable only if we build our military capabilities side by side with economic growth.

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## **Towards an Effective and Viable Information Warfare Structure for the Indian Armed Forces\***

**Lieutenant General RS Panwar, AVSM, SM, VSM, PhD (Retd)®**

### **Introduction**

**T**he primary focus of this work is to suggest Information Warfare

(IW) structures which are effective enough to match up to the challenges of 21<sup>st</sup> Century warfare. However, given the existing status of IW preparedness of our Armed Forces, the viability requirement is, perhaps, the greater challenge. Thus, in order to move pragmatically from where we are to where we wish to be, this analysis adopts a transformational, as opposed to a revolutionary approach towards achieving the desired capabilities.

IW being a nascent, complex and dynamically evolving field of warfare, developing the conceptual and doctrinal basis for IW structures is an important first step. Equally importantly, in this highly specialist field, identifying the right human resource (HR) philosophy is at least as important as arriving at optimum organisational structures and should, in fact, be a driving parameter while arriving at the choice of structures.

In the complex 21<sup>st</sup> Century battlespace, the role of IW is gaining prominence vis-à-vis the entire spectrum of conflict. Nonetheless, organisational structures for any military capability must necessarily be optimised for a “total conflict” scenario, as this is likely to be the most demanding in terms of resources. Scenarios lower down on the escalatory ladder could then be catered for through suitable modifications to structures and processes.

At the outset, it is also pertinent to highlight that there is no common understanding of the term “Information Warfare”. Indeed, the interpretations of this and other related terms are so diverse that, in order to carry out a coherent discussion on the subject, it is important to clarify the sense in which terminologies and associated concepts are used. Against the above backdrop, the attempt here is to first dwell on the basic considerations, and then outline an approach for creating the right IW structures for our Armed Forces.

### **Concepts and Doctrine**

#### **IW in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Battlespace**

Until just about a decade ago, it would have been hard to find theorists and practitioners of IW who claimed that IW was more than just a supporting means for conducting a kinetic multi-domain battle in the physical domain. Today, the scenario is radically different, with the US having established a Cyber Command in 2010,<sup>1,2</sup> China working with fervour to achieve dominance in the information domain by building capabilities, notably its Strategic Support Force (SSF),<sup>3</sup> and most significantly, Russia demonstrating an increasing degree of maturity in the IW field, going by the success of its information campaigns in Estonia, Georgia and Ukraine.<sup>4</sup> The powerful role of social media in the destabilisation/overthrow of established regimes during the Arab Spring (which, in Russian perception, was the result of “subversive information technologies of the West”), brought in a new dimension to war-waging in and through cyberspace.<sup>5,6</sup>

It is interesting to note that while it is the concept of *Information Warfare* which took root in the 1990s and matured remarkably after the turn of the century, it is *Cyberspace* which found its place alongside the traditional domains of land, sea and air and then space, in a multi-dimensional battlespace.<sup>7,8</sup> This is perhaps because of the unique characteristics of cyberspace, allowing cyber-conflicts of various hues to occur during peace as well, without fear of escalation.

The term *Cyber* itself eludes a precise definition, with one view stating that it has lost all meaning.<sup>9</sup> In its most generic

interpretation, *Cyber* is in fact a synonym for *Information*. The most common perception of the term *Cyberspace* would probably be as follows: information (at rest or in motion) and information systems, inter-connected as a global network (the Internet). But what if the network in question is air-gapped, as was the Iranian nuclear facility intranet which was attacked using the Stuxnet malware? Would an isolated network of combat radios transporting voice, data and even video information in a tactical scenario be considered a segment of Cyberspace?

There is an on-going debate in the US Department of Defence (DoD) whether or not a sixth domain, namely the *Electro-Magnetic (or EM) Domain*, needs to be added to the existing five-dimensional battlespace construct.<sup>10</sup> The motivation for such thinking is the increasing importance being accorded in the US to developing Electronic Warfare (EW) capabilities after decades of neglect, perhaps spurred by the rapid advancements made in this field by formidable potential adversaries, particularly China. It needs to be kept in mind, however, that assigning *domain* status implies designation of a separate jurisdiction together with suitable allocation of resources.

If the EM Domain is indeed designated as the sixth warfighting domain, then the only major sub-component of IW without an associated domain would be Psychological Operations (PSYOP), making it a notable exception. Against this backdrop, rather than designating a separate domain for each IW capability, it is worth considering whether there exists a case for replacing *Cyberspace* with *Infospace* as a warfighting domain.

### **Existing Organisational Structures – Indian Armed Forces**

#### **Tri-Services Level**

**Doctrine.** The first Joint IW Doctrine was issued in 2005, which was revised in 2010, the current version.

**IW Establishments.** At the tri-services level, there are two organisations related to IW: the Defence Information Assurance and Research Agency (DIARA) and the Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA), both functioning under the aegis of HQ Integrated Defence Services (IDS).<sup>11</sup>

**(a) Defence Information Assurance and Research Agency (DIARA).** Originally established as the Defence Information Warfare Agency (DIWA), DIARA subsequently got re-designated to its current nomenclature. It was initially established to handle all aspects of IW. However, while on paper the functions remained the same, the focus of DIARA is on Cyberspace Operations (CO). Approval has been accorded late last year to upgrade DIARA to the Defence Cyber Agency (DCA), which is a whittled down form of the Cyber Command proposed by the three Services as early as 2012.

**(b) Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA).** The Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA) coordinates the intelligence effort of the three Services and provides a common interface with the civil intelligence community. Director General DIA is a member of the Intelligence Coordination Group, which works under the NSA. He is also a member of the National Information Board (NIB) as well as the Apex Committee on Satellite Surveillance Board. He controls the strategic assets like Defence Imagery and Photo Analysis Centre (DIPAC) and Signals Intelligence (SIGINT).

**Training.** Joint training is being carried out presently only on EW, on a rotation basis, by the Army, the Navy and the Air Force and at their respective training establishments at Mhow, Kochi and Gwalior. There is some participation by the Navy and the Air Force on IW courses being conducted by the Army for officers at the Army War College, Mhow.

**Public Relations Organisation (PRO).** Public Affairs (PA) is the purview of the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and its archaic PR machinery, termed PRO Defence. Regional PROs posted at various stations report to the PRO Defence, and are not under the local formation commanders or staff, thus remaining largely out of sync with the needs of our Armed Forces.<sup>12</sup>

### **Individual Service Level**

At the Service level, integrated employment of Information Operations (IO) is being carried out as a staff function at various

headquarters. As regards individual IO functions, execution establishments exist for the CO and EW functions, but not for PSYOP or its concomitants (PA, Military Deception (MILDEC)). It is pertinent to note here that the Defend function for CO and EW is the combined responsibility of all users of the network end-points and EM spectrum respectively. Also, the specialist task of defence of common user networks (both cyber and EM aspects) is the responsibility of the Corps of Signals (and its equivalents in the sister services).

**Doctrine.** The first Indian Army (IA) IW Doctrine was issued in 2004. A revised doctrine was subsequently promulgated in 2010, which is the current version.

**Staff Organisations.** At Army Headquarters level, the Additional Director General Military Operations (ADG MO) (IW) under Military Operations Directorate is designated as the Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) for the IA and is responsible for all aspects of CO, EW and PSYOP. Similarly, the Indian Air Force (IAF) has the Directorate of IW. The ADG Public Information (PI) is an ad hoc organisation chartered to carry out the PA function. As regards field formations, specific IW related staff set-ups exist at some higher headquarters, while at others this function is carried out by the operations staff officers in addition to their other duties.

**IW Establishments.** IW establishments which are presently in existence are as under:-

(a) **CO.** The Army Cyber Group (ACG) is mandated to carry out all aspects of CO for the IA, less the implementation of defensive measures. It also functions as Cyber Emergency Response Team (CERT)-Army. Some of its primary functions include cyber audit, cyber forensics, cyber evaluation of new systems, etc. Policy formulation and cyber audit in the field formations is carried out under the aegis of IW staff, with the primary manpower resource for the audit teams being provided by Signals.

(b) **EW.** Army EW resource being scarce, EW groups/ sub-groups are presently placed directly under Command Headquarters from considerations of efficient utilisation.



Notwithstanding this, their employment is entirely at tactical levels in close support to the fighting formations. The application of this resource is primarily for execution of the “Attack” and “Exploit” sub-functions. In the IAF and the Indian Navy (IN), EW effort mostly focusses on platform based non-communication (anti-radar) capability.

**(c) PSYOP.** Presently, there are no formal PSYOP establishments in existence.

**Human Resource Development (HRD).** Some of the main highlights of the HRD philosophy being followed by individual Services are as given below:-

**(a) Cadre Management.** In the case of officers, postings to all IW assignments (CO, EW, IW) are on tenure basis. For other ranks a special trade, common for SIGINT and EW tasks, exists in the Corps of Signals.

**(b) Training.** IW training for officers is conducted by the Army War College, with some participation from the IN and the IAF. EW and Cyber Security training for Army officers is conducted by the Military College of Telecommunication Engineering (MCTE), Mhow which is the declared Centre of Excellence for these disciplines. For the IAF, IW training is being conducted by their Information Warfare School at Bangalore. For lower ranks, structured training for EW/SI is being conducted by the Signal Training Centres.

PA exposure is being given to officers as part of command oriented courses at various levels, or capsule courses at civilian institutions mostly on a volunteer basis. There is no specialist training being conducted within the Services specifically for PSYOP/MISO/PM, MILDEC or Strategic Communications.

### **Effective and Viable IW Structures**

Having discussed the conceptual underpinnings of the major IW functions and the interplay amongst them, and to some extent the IW organisational structures in the Indian Armed Forces, this section attempts to suggest how one might move towards more effective structures in a manner which is feasible.

## **IW Doctrine**

There is a need to substantially update existing IW doctrines at the Joint Services as well as individual Service levels. In view of the ambiguity in the definition of IW terminologies worldwide, these doctrines must make a deliberate effort to rigorously define terms as applicable in the Indian context. The doctrines must be based on the model of a five-dimensional battlespace, with Infospace rather than Cyberspace as the fifth dimension. They must emphatically endorse the operational imperative that conflict in this artificial and virtual dimension is at par with the traditional notion of conflict in the physical realm, and not merely in support of it.

The doctrines should characterise and classify the following major streams of IW as being distinctly different: Information-Technical Operations (ITO), comprising of CO and EW functions, and Information-Psychological Operations (IPO), covering PSYOP, MILDEC, PA and SC. Also, mechanisms to achieve inter-stream integrative and intra-stream synergistic effects should be spelt out.

In addition to its traditional orientation towards foreign audiences, SC should be defined and characterised so as to be responsive to the prevailing Counter Insurgency (CI) scenario in terms of the desired perception management, without resorting to the term PM. An overview of other aspects brought out in succeeding paragraphs with respect to individual doctrines (CO, EW, IPO), as also the manner in which the Intelligence function relates to IW capabilities, must also be spelt out in these doctrines.

An unequivocal stress must be laid on the critical importance of achieving specialisation in each of the IW functions, and a viable HR philosophy spelt out to meet this end. The logical relationship amongst IW streams and functions is depicted below.



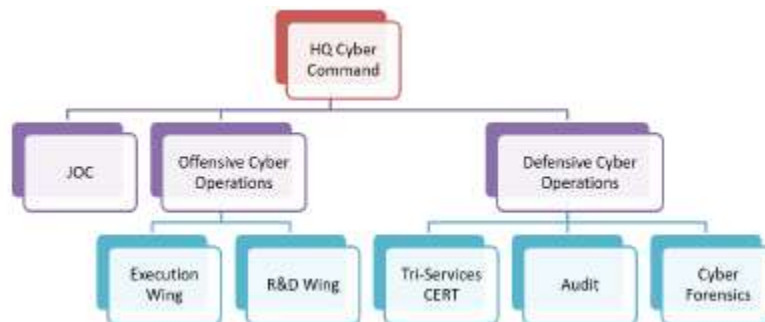
### Information-Technical Operations

ITO as a separate major sub-stream of IW, signifies the strong synergetic relationship which exists between the CO and EW functions. The level of operational deployment as well as the nature of expertise required to take these functions towards greater maturity have also been indicated. Keeping all these factors in view, it is felt that organisational convergence across these two functions should be achieved by having a common line directorate for them in each Service. However, purity of the individual functions should be maintained at the functional unit level. Synergy in their operational deployment is recommended to be achieved through either staff coordination or, in specific scenarios, through task-based grouping of teams from both these domains of expertise. Intra-ITO staff coordination at each Headquarter must be by the specialist line directorate component at that Headquarter. However, overall staff coordination between the ITO and IPO functions should be carried out by the IW/Operations staff at each Headquarter. Since EW manifests itself primarily at the tactical level, an important underlying assumption here is that employment of CO at the tactical level is considered to be an operational imperative.

### CO: Way Forward

**Doctrine.** A Joint Cyber Operations Doctrine needs to be promulgated at the earliest. Guiding principles for such a doctrine should include the following: resources for Offensive Cyber Operations (OCO, to include CNA and CNE) must be deployed down to tactical levels; in any scenario involving state-to-state

conflict (which may not necessarily imply declared hostilities), the primary authority/ responsibility for CO should rest with the MoD/Armed Forces, including authority over cyber resources available with other ministries; and, a completely fresh HR philosophy should be evolved to meet the unique needs of CO.



**Organisation.** A full-fledged tri-Services Cyber Command should be raised for carrying out OCO (CNA/CNE), with the same urgency and determination as was the case for the Mountain Strike Corps; as part of this Command, in addition to a Command HQ, cyber units should be raised and deployed down to tactical levels, along with intermediate subordinate HQ as felt necessary; while HQ may be inter-Services in structure, Service purity should be maintained at unit level, similar to the model which has been adopted by the Signal Intelligence Directorate (SI Directorate); cyber units should be of two broad flavours: cyber execution units and cyber R&D units, with each of R&D units focusing in a different area of expertise in support of the execution units; command and control structures should be put in place in line with the philosophy of 'centralised control, decentralised execution', in order to address the disadvantages of deploying offensive cyber resources at multiple echelons; suitable linkages should be established with EW organisations at all levels for achieving the desired synergy between these two capabilities.

**HR Philosophy.** HR philosophy is recommended to be modified based on the following guidelines:-

**(a) Line Directorate.** One of the following three options is available for consideration: raise a separate Inter-Services Cyber Corps; raise service-specific Cyber Corps; or, raise sub-cadres within existing Service Line Directorates. It is recommended that, to begin with, the last option be adopted. In the case of the IA, the only suitable candidate line directorate is the Corps of Signals, which is already mandated to carry out Defensive CO (DCO/CND); similar solutions be identified in the IN and the IAF.

**(b) Cadre Management.** A permanent cadre for OCO be put together through selections, based on aptitude, from within existing uniformed cadre already available and trained for DCO, as well as by means of direct recruitment from expertise available within the country. The Territorial Army (TA) option may be considered only to meet surge capacity, once permanent sanctioned cadre has been fully made up. In the case of officers, to begin with a profile based on repeated tenures ('concentrations') should be considered as a career progression model, whereas for other ranks, induction into the cyber cadre should be on a permanent basis.

**(c) Training.** Structured training for DCO is already being carried out by the three Services. Extensive training for OCO, right up to post-graduate level, should be carried out at respective premier training institutions within the three Services (for example, Military College of Telecommunication Engineering for the Army). Efforts should be made to sponsor specialist post-graduate courses in CO, including ethical hacking, to be conducted at leading educational institutions within the Country.

## **EW: Way Forward**

**Doctrine.** A Joint Doctrine on EW, followed by separate EW Doctrines by each of the three Services, needs to be promulgated. The doctrines should emphasize the critical role of EW in 21<sup>st</sup> Century battlespace, as well as the degree and manner of coordination with cyber resources, in order to achieve the desired synergy in military Infospace.

**Organisation.** The quantum of Army EW units/formations needs to be significantly increased (EW Group per Corps HQ) in order to provide the requisite EW support to fighting formations. Once additional EW formations are raised, these should be placed under Corps Headquarter for integrated functioning, with EW Sub-Groups in support of Divisional Headquarter. The model of Integrated CC Blocks (Communication plus Non-Communication) is recommended to be adopted for optimal utilization of EW resources. ELINT resources should ideally be merged with the EW Groups (please see section on the Intelligence function below). Strike Corps EW elements should be equipped to have matching mobility and be deployed well forward (within combat groups) for achieving a tangible force-multiplier effect.

**HR Philosophy.** HR philosophy for EW is recommended to be modified based on the following considerations:-

**(a) Cadre Management.** In general, a much higher degree of specialisation than what is presently existing is considered essential. In the case of officers, the postings policy must be modified to ensure repeated tenures in EW establishments. For instance, criteria for command of an Army EW Sub-Group/ Group must require at least one/ two prior EW tenures respectively. For other ranks, EW specific trades (operators/ mechanics) must be created and rotated strictly amongst EW units/ establishments (and not in SI units).

**(b) Training.** The quality and quantum of structured training at all levels, including through conduct of joint services courses, needs to be significantly upgraded. Also, specialist components of IW courses should be conducted by designated centres of excellence in the respective disciplines.

**R&D and Project Management.** On the one hand, skill development for execution of EW tasks is not as challenging as for cyber skill development. On the other, project management for EW systems requires highly specialised expertise, especially as Indian R&D in this area is far below global standards. Although efforts should be made to give a fillip to domestic R&D, including by private players, in the interim special endeavours must be to

obtain the best technology existing in the world market, especially as this may not be freely available. The first step in this direction is to improve the quality of our project management organisations (PMOs) in all three Services. In order to make this happen, giving project based long tenures to EW specialists in PMOs is an essential prerequisite.

### **Information-Psychological Operations**

This work has focussed briefly on the PSYOP, PA, MILDEC and SC functions. As stated above, an overall alignment and synergy is desirable amongst these four functions, which are recommended to be grouped under a separate stream of IW, termed as Information Psychological Operations (IPO). In order to develop IPO to the desired degree of maturity, stiff resistance to modifying organisational charters as they exist today would first need to be overcome. Thereafter, considerable efforts will need to be devoted to developing expertise in all the IPO disciplines, most of which happen to be in very nascent stages, especially in the context of the complex 21<sup>st</sup> Century battlespace.

**Concepts and Doctrine.** A formal study of the IPO disciplines under discussion here has never been undertaken by the Armed Forces with any degree of seriousness. Limited exposure by way of short capsules on media management (PA) is being provided in some of the command oriented courses at different levels of service. Commanders and staff entrusted with IPO tasks, by virtue of their tenure-based assignments, carry them out mostly on the basis of their general military experience, as also on the strength of short-term institutional knowledge which might exist within their establishments. This ad hoc approach to IPO disciplines leaves much to be desired, especially in today's information intensive world. It is vital, therefore, that suitable steps be initiated for developing these disciplines to a degree of professional maturity, duly adapted to our strategic environment. A joint doctrine for IPO, covering concepts and employment modalities for individual functions as well as the interplay amongst them, needs to be promulgated. In addition, it is desirable to issue a similar doctrine separately for the Army which, in the context of our national security, has the most significant role to play in this area.

**Cadre Management.** Although trained manpower for the IPO disciplines is required by all the three Services, the numbers required are small. Also, presently there is no specialist manpower available with any of the Services. In view of this, it would be prudent to establish a new tri-Service line directorate for managing all the IPO disciplines. A suitably structured tri-Service training institute should also be established as a centre of excellence for the IPO disciplines. As a first step in this direction, a separate wing could be set-up at the Army War College. Broad recommendations for individual IPO disciplines are given out in succeeding paragraphs.

**PSYOP.** PSYOP demands staff as well as ground resources for executing operational tasks. Specialist training needs to be imparted for all personnel involved in PSYOP tasks. To begin with, cadre management at officer level could be based on providing repeated tenures, after suitable specialist structured training has been imparted. For lower ranks, creation of a specialist cadre is desirable. The strength of the cadre, the structure of execution elements and the nature of training to be imparted will emerge once concepts and doctrine in this important area have been developed. Due to its “black” content, this function is recommended to be kept firewalled from PA.

**PA.** The Defence PRO needs to be recast in such a manner as to rise up to the challenges of the Information Age, and in conformity with the operational needs of the Armed Forces. For this to happen, this resource should be placed under command of the Armed Forces for all purposes, or at the very least for operational deployment and training. Additional cadre may be recruited if needed. With respect to the IA, the ADG PI as an organisation should be formally sanctioned, and should carry out its tasks through PA Cells (re-cast PRO) at each formation Headquarter, down to the Corps Headquarter in the initial phase. The activities of these cells should be coordinated by the Operations staff at all levels. From considerations of credibility, these cells must carry out only ‘truth projection’, and be shielded from PSYOP functions.

**MILDEC.** MILDEC must necessarily be a function of the Operations staff at any Headquarter, since planning for military deception is inextricably linked to actual operational plans.



Officers specially trained in this discipline need to be posted to various Headquarters. However, raising of specialist units is not felt necessary for carrying out MILDEC tasks.

**SC.** Existing literature on SC in the military context is based on deployment scenarios for expeditionary forces, such as in Iraq, Afghanistan, Ukraine, etc. In the Indian context, SC of this flavour may not be so applicable. However, the basic principles of SC are relevant to CI scenarios prevalent in the Valley as well as the North-East. Such an umbrella concept would comprise of, in addition to PSYOP and PA, activities such as interaction with political and civil functionaries, *Sadbhavna* and Aid to Civil Authorities in the affected areas, sometimes referred to as Civil Affairs (CA). An important point to note is that, since PM as a term is perceived to have “black” connotations, it is felt that perception management of own populations as a function would be better covered under this umbrella terminology. Being a whole of government approach, close coordination with the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) as well as Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) is needed for effective execution of SC tasks. In addition to its relevance to CI operations, since our Armed Forces have a role in foreign countries as well by way of defence attachés, maritime diplomacy, participation in UN missions, etc., SC need to evolve with a tri-Services perspective. At this juncture, the only viable recommendation that may be made is to develop a formal joint services doctrine on SC. In the interim, the endeavour must be to continue making progress on development of the SC related IPO functions (PSYOP, PA).

### **IO vis-à-vis the Intelligence Function**

It has been brought out earlier that the IW Exploit function is essentially the acquisition of intelligence using information weapons, specifically the ES and CNE sub-functions of EW and CO respectively. At the same time, acquisition of intelligence through Signal Intelligence (SIGINT) capabilities of Intelligence organisations also play out in the EM domain. SIGINT is the combination of Communication Intelligence (COMINT) and Electronic (or Non-Communication) Intelligence (ELINT) functions, which are essentially ES manifestations at the strategic level. Traditionally, it is HUMINT which has been the primary source of

intelligence acquisition at the strategic level. In the wireless, networked world, however, HUMINT is gradually yielding ground to SIGINT and CNE for strategic intelligence collection.

In the Indian context, the Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA) at the tri-Services level, using the considerable SI Directorate resources at its disposal, is mandated to carry out SIGINT activities. It is but natural for the SI Directorate to attempt to develop CNE capabilities for acquiring strategic intelligence. However, in the scenario of a Defence Cyber Agency (DCA) and subsequently a Cyber Command being established, for the DIA to carry out CNE activities in parallel would amount to wasteful duplication of effort, and is hence not recommended.

The EW organisations are best structured to acquire tactical SIGINT through its ES function. However, in CI scenarios within the country, SI units too, under the direct control of the tri-Services SI Directorate, are deeply involved in this activity. Existing command and control structures are not conducive for achieving the requisite synergy between these two capabilities. This needs to be corrected by suitably modifying the existing command and control hierarchy.

In a similar vein, ELINT resources are currently placed under the Military Intelligence (MI) Directorate, whereas radar signatures collected by ELINT units are primarily meant to be exploited for EA by EW units on outbreak of hostilities. Here too, suitable organisational re-structuring appears to be warranted. While merging ELINT resources with the EW Groups would be an optimal solution, placing ELINT units directly under the Theatre Commands could be a good interim step in this direction. Further study in this area is recommended.

### **Conclusion**

This work has endeavoured to analyse the intangible and multi-disciplinary arena of IW against the backdrop of a complex 21<sup>st</sup> Century battlespace, with the specific intention of suggesting effective and viable IW structures for the Indian Armed Forces. A conceptual understanding of the large number of disciplines involved and, more importantly, the interplay amongst them, is key to evolving optimum organisational structures. A large number of recommendations have been made, both in terms of doctrinal improvements as well as organisational re-structuring.

It is felt, however, that the key driver for bringing about the requisite transformation would be the conviction that the nature of warfare in this Information Age is changing in fundamental ways, which demands, even more than organisational changes, radically new models of HR philosophy, covering recruitment, training and career progression aspects. For this to happen, a change in existing mind-sets is essential, which by far is the greatest challenge. This work is primarily an effort to contribute towards addressing this challenge.

### Endnotes

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### **Compendium of Abbreviations**

1. ACG - Army Cyber Group
2. CC - Command and Control
3. CERT - Computer Emergency Response Team - Army  
- Army
4. CI - Counter Insurgency
5. CISO - Chief Information Security Officer
6. CNA - Comprehensive Network Attack
7. CND - Computer Network Defence
8. CNE - Computer Network Exploitation
9. CO - Cyberspace Operations
10. DCA - Defence Cyber Agency (upgraded version of  
DIARA)
11. DCO - Defensive Cyberspace Operations
12. DIA - Defence Intelligence Agency
13. DIARA - Defence Information Assurance and Research  
Agency
14. DIPAC - Defence Imagery and Photo Analysis Centre
15. DIWA - Defence Information Warfare Agency
16. EA - Electronic Attack
17. ELINT - Non Communication Electronic Intelligence
18. EM - Electro-Magnetic Domain
19. ES - Energy Source
20. EW - Electronic Warfare
21. HUMINT - Human Intelligence
22. IO - Intelligence Officer
23. IPO - Information-Psychological Operations
24. ITO - Information Technical Operations
25. IW - Information Warfare
26. MILDEC - Military Deception
27. NIB - National Information Board
28. NSA - National Security Advisor
29. OCO - Offensive Cyberspace Operations
30. PA - Public Affairs
31. PI - Public Information
32. PM - Perception Management
33. PMO - Project Management Organisation
34. PRO - Public Relations Organisation.
35. PSYOP - Psychological Operations

- 36 SC - Strategic Communications
- 37 SIGINT - Signal Intelligence
- 38 SSF - Strategic Support Force

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# **The Indian Ocean Rim Dynamics and New Challenges**

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**W**est Asia has a peripheral geographical linkage with the Indian Ocean and yet gets influenced by its dynamics and challenges. The following aspects are covered in this article :-

- (a) Historical perspective.
- (b) US, Iran and the Strait of Hormuz.
- (c) India-China rivalry.
- (d) Maritime Security – A collective responsibility.
- (e) Blue economy and sustainable development.
- (f) Human trafficking.
- (g) Existing cooperative mechanisms.
- (h) Naval cooperation with West Asia.
- (j) Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS).

## **Historical Perspective**

Indian Ocean is the third largest ocean in the world occupying approximately twenty per cent of the Earth's sea surface. With trade to and from the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) being lucrative, mariners from the littoral traded actively through the ages. No one enforced a maritime order at sea. There was a policy of live and let live. Sailors from distant lands including China joined in. The landing of Vasco da Gama in Calicut in 1498 changed all that. The Portuguese wanted the waters to themselves and tax others for its use. An intense power struggle ensued, between the Portuguese, home grown Admirals of Kunjali and Khanoji Angre lineage, Dutch and the British. The Mughals were a land-based empire and

ignored the sea. The British Empire that drew power mainly from its Naval fleet, emerged victorious and ruled the Indian Ocean well into the mid-20th Century. After the Second World War, the Royal Navy withdrew and the Indian Ocean became a stage for power play between the United States and the Soviet Navy. Ending of the Cold War has witnessed an overwhelming US military presence and infrastructure in Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Afghanistan; it has a major naval base in Diego Garcia; the Fifth Fleet is headquartered in Bahrain and units of the US Africa Command are stationed in Seychelles and Djibouti. The US is also spearheading international efforts for maintaining stability in the region; Task Forces 150 and 152 are stationed in the Gulf, Task Force 151 is stationed in the Horn of Africa, Naval ships from NATO countries for anti-Piracy duties and the European Union Naval Force (EURO-NAFOR) in support of the 'World Food Programme' missions are deployed off Somalia. At any time, over 120 warships from extra regional navies are present in this area.

The essence of highlighting this is that, historically, organic capacities to enforce a maritime order in the Indian Ocean have been lacking. Countries of the Indian Ocean have traditionally been blind to the sea. Maritime security has been outsourced. India has had a rich maritime heritage in ship building, trading with distant lands, voyages to spread Indian culture/Buddhism etc. But we regrettably were never muscular at sea. Kunjali was a pepper trader who lost business due to Portuguese interventions and took up arms; lasting just four generations. Similarly, Khanoji Angre was considered the first Maratha Naval Chief but was allegedly a pirate whose resistance lasted only two generations. The only exception to a passive maritime policy was perhaps Rajendra Chola in the 11th Century, who looked east with an expeditionary force.

Foremost challenge is for the maritime countries of the Indian Ocean region to assume responsibility, develop a strategic thought and have organic maritime security structures.

### **US-Iran and the Strait of Hormuz**

20 per cent of world's Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG), 90 per cent of Gulf's oil exports i.e. 17 mn barrels of oil accounting for 30 per



cent of the total oil traded in the world, transits through this strait which is 33 kms at its narrowest. On an average 20 big oil tankers sail through this waterway every day. Fragile peace prevails as a result of the presence of the US led task forces and the peninsular shield of the Gulf Cooperation Council. Regional navies are fairly modern with Iran holding an edge over others; but no match to the multinational forces. Relations between US and Iran have been strained since 1980s and Iranian patrol boats allegedly harass US warships exercising in the area; the number of such incidents exceeded 30 in 2016. In Jan 2016, the Iranian Navy captured 10 US sailors whose boat had drifted into the territorial waters of Iran. Since last August, for some reason there hasn't been a perceptible calm which could be interpreted as an Iranian desire to mend fences and move on. Notwithstanding the acrimonious relationship, Iran has never followed through on threats to close the Hormuz strait, perhaps because such closure will deny import of refined petroleum products and export of her own crude.

In raising the level of confrontation with the US, Iranians would remember Operation Praying Mantis of 1988, when in retaliation of a mine attack on a US Naval warship, the US Navy sank half the operational Iranian fleet. The present standoff between the two countries may not embolden the Iranian Navy into any adventurism. But a challenge has emerged.

### **India-China Rivalry**

India and China seem to be on a collision course in the waters of the Indian Ocean. Both Navies have been modernising at a steady pace with induction of aircraft carriers, Ship, Submersible, Ballistic, Nuclear (SSBN) submarines, destroyers, frigates, long range maritime patrol aircraft etc; the Chinese Navy having an edge. Since the principal sources of Chinese energy either lie in the Indian Ocean, or must travel across the Indian Ocean, China is keen on acquiring a foothold in the area as is evident by development of a number of logistic bases including Gwadar in Pakistan, Hambantota in Sri Lanka, Feydhoo Finolhu in Maldives and Djibouti. Regional countries of the Indian Ocean are finding it difficult to resist the gravitational pull of the Chinese money and are being ensnared into debt traps. Chinese are leveraging this advantage for gaining coercive military dominance of the region.

The Indian Navy is a dominant force in the Indian Ocean with substantial influence over the littoral. In an effort to increase its maritime outreach, India is reportedly discussing establishment and development of bases on the Assumption Island (Seychelles) and Agalega Islands (Mauritius). There are efforts to improve connectivity by developing ports such as Chabahar in Iran and Sittwe in Myanmar.

Chinese aggressive stance in the South China Sea, its activism in South Asia and IOR and India's enthusiastic participation in the rejuvenated Quadrilateral dialogue is resulting in a head long clash. Smaller countries are getting anxious and would like to avoid taking sides as evident from public statements by Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Seychelles, Iran and so on. Both India and China would do well to constantly remind themselves that the world expects them to contribute to maritime security and not jeopardise it.

Last month Indian Navy was in the news for having 'welcomed' an incoming Chinese Navy task group to the Indian Ocean, insinuating that they were being watched. It is indeed customary for a Navy to mark their presence to an outsider as if to assert their jurisdiction; however, a rush of adrenalin during such unplanned encounters has the propensity to spiral spirited nationalistic displays into avoidable embarrassing situations, which if not de-escalated, can have graver and unforeseen implications for both parties. Whilst we have a "Peace and Tranquillity" agreement between the two countries on the land border, no such formal mechanism is in place to bridle the growing ambitions of the two Navies. It would be prudent to lay down Confidence Building Measures so that a contentious situation at sea can be de-escalated. Managing rivalry at sea is a challenge for the Asian giants as well as countries of the littoral.

### **Maritime Security- A Collective Responsibility**

Somalia gained independence in 1960. The country did not do well and was a failed state by 1991. There was no governance on land, forget about the sea. The country did not claim the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) that it was entitled to by United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and foreigners

poached their waters for over USD 300 mn of fish whilst Somalis starved on land. Somali waters became the toxic colony of the world with world's radioactive, industrial and hospital waste being dumped in their EEZ. Reportedly more than 35mn tonnes were dumped at a cost of 2.5 USD per tonne as opposed to over 1000 USD per tonne that it would have costed them to dispose this waste in Europe. Local militias took to coast guard policing and discovered that piracy was more profitable. USD 400 mn were paid in ransom from 2008 to 2012 for 178 successful hijackings in 645 attempts. After spending 7 to 9 bn USD a year, ironically by the western countries, piracy has now been brought under control somewhat.

What we must all realise is that lack of governance at sea is detrimental for everyone. Maritime Security is a collective responsibility and it is the duty of the more advanced navies to help the less capable ones so that such situations are avoided.

### **Blue Economy and Sustainable Development**

Countries are looking to the seas for economic prosperity, food security and social wellbeing of their people, and there is a growing realisation that the emerging construct of Blue Economy holds great significance, especially, for the Indian Ocean Rim Region which is home to nearly one-third of the world's population. The rising demand for seabed minerals such as Polymetallic Nodules, Polymetallic Sulphides and Cobalt Crusts has resulted in increased commercial interest in seabed minerals. A term often heard in this regard is the 'new gold rush'. China and South Korea have joined India in obtaining exploration rights in the Indian Ocean. Very soon, sea bed mining is going to become cost-effective and there is going to be a scramble amongst maritime powers to reap dividends.

On 27 Sep 2015, the global community announced commitment to Sustainable Development Goals 2030 in which Goal 14 is to 'Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development'.

There is a symbiotic relationship between blue economy, Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and security and, therefore, ocean governance has become critical to ensure safety

and security of economic assets and activities such as offshore oil platforms, protection of marine wealth, prevention of illegal fishing, and upholding national environmental regulations, thereby, ensuring livelihoods of coastal populations as also enforcing national commitments to international agreements and initiatives such as the SDG 2030.

Of the first twenty in the fragile states index 2018, ten have their coastlines in the Indian Ocean. Many others have severe handicaps in enforcing rule of the law in their waters. This adds to the existing security challenges and robust maritime security architecture would have to be put in place, to derive benefits of the envisaged Blue economy initiatives. The need to provide maritime security to ocean resources is going to be the next challenge for all of us.

### **Human Trafficking**

In the latter half of the previous century, higher demand in the labour market appeared as a by-product of economic development of the Gulf countries, Europe, North America and Australia. A large number of the populace from South Asia and Africa migrated or was hired by these relatively economically solvent countries. Unfortunately, migration aspirants from Bangladesh, the Rohingyas of Myanmar and the poor from the Indian and African coastal countries have become a target of human traffickers. Attracted by the employment potential, they are lured into taking illegal routes to reach the Gulf states and Southeast Asian countries such as Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia for onward journeys, in search of better prospects, using the Arabian Sea, Bay of Bengal and the Andaman Sea. In 2015, the scenario ended in one of the largest human disasters in the region when huge mass graves were found in remote parts of Thailand; hundreds died at sea.

### **Existing Cooperative Mechanisms**

Whilst we have a number of challenges and a non-existent organic maritime order, there are a number of platforms for maritime cooperation. Countries and their security agencies are

working hard to provide maritime security to their people. There has been a marked increase in levels of maritime cooperation – by way of bilateral and multilateral summits (for example first IORA Summit on 05 Mar 2017 in Jakarta, World Ocean Summit in Bali on 22 Feb 2017 to discuss blue economy, Shangrila Dialogue, Galle Dialogue, Indian Ocean Conference etc.), exchange of arms and defence technology, staff talks, port visits by warships, visits by Service officers and joint naval exercises. Numerous Think Tanks have sprung up and serve an important medium for Track 2 interactions.

Formal cooperative Mechanisms include the IORA-1997, IONS (2008), Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) (1981), South African Development Community (SADC) (1980), Arab League (1945), India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA) (2003), Djibouti Code of Conduct (2009), South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC) (1985), Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) (1997) etc. And yet over the years we haven't been able to achieve much. Perhaps there is too much talk and not as much action.

### **Naval Cooperation with West Asia / Middle East**

India's engagement in West Asia is often viewed through the prism of Oil trade and remittances from its seven million diaspora and defence analysts assess India as a benign actor that avoids participation in security issues. This is true. We have basic level but robust naval cooperation with all Arab states, importantly, not to the exclusion of a maritime relationship with Iran. Our warships visit almost all ports in the Persian Gulf. Senior officers take every opportunity to interact with their naval leadership. Some of our retired officers and sailors have been involved in training their naval personnel. With Oman, the level of naval cooperation is a bit advanced; in that we train their personnel in our training establishments, hold a biennial joint naval exercise and have logistic facilities at their port in Duqm. After the breakup of the Soviet Union, our technical naval cooperation with Israel has increased exponentially and it has become the 'Go To' country for state of the art weapon and electronic systems, for example Barak SAM and UAVs.

## **IORA and IONS**

A key priority of IORA was to ensure reliable, uninterrupted and safe movement of people, goods, energy and resource supplies throughout the Indian Ocean and address issues related to maritime safety and security. And yet when piracy erupted off Somalia, Djibouti Code of Conduct was conceptualised to counter the menace. Obviously IORA was not considered effective and its continued relevance has been questioned. Indeed, IORA's achievements so far have been modest and there is room for speedy reforms. Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Maldives, Myanmar are some of the important countries who are not members of IORA. An all-pervasive agreement for combating transnational non-traditional security challenges such as piracy, smuggling, maritime terrorism, illegal fishing, trafficking of human and narcotics, which can be legally enforced merit early discussion by all members. IONS could play an important role in orchestrating a collective response to Chinese strategic moves in the IOR as also to the many challenges at sea; the low hanging fruit being in institutionalising a common Maritime Domain Awareness, Humanitarian Assistance Disaster Relief mechanism and a Crisis Response Centre. All Arab states are members of IONS and Iran is currently Chairing it.

## **Conclusion**

Oceans have traditionally been areas of contestation and the Indian Ocean is no different. The need to harness the economic dividends of the Blue economy must impel countries of the littoral to evolve a home grown maritime order that safeguards the aspirations of both the 'haves' and the 'have nots' in the IOR. Resurgent maritime powers, India and China have a responsible role to play as they join or replace the US and the Western powers to strengthen a maritime order in our waters.

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# **Exercise Gagan Shakti 2018 - Comprehensive Test of Air Power**

**Air Marshal Anil Chopra PVSM, AVSM, VM, VSM (Retd)®**

In a massive signal to its neighbours and assurance to Indian

public, the Indian Air Force (IAF) conducted the biggest air war exercise 'Gagan Shakti 2018' from 08 to 22 April 2018. This all-India exercise employed all IAF fleets, including the newly inducted indigenous Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) 'Tejas'; upgraded Mirage-2000, MiG-29 and AN-32; new transport aircraft C-17 Globe Master III and C-130J Super Hercules, and the Hawk trainer. It exploited its force multipliers like Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS), Airborne Early Warning and Control (AEW&C), Flight Refuelling Aircraft (FRA), and Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR). Joint Special operations were carried out utilising both transport aircraft and helicopters. 1100 aircraft of various types were deployed. All personnel across the IAF, including those at peace and training stations were mobilised. War-like scenarios were exercised both on western and northern borders. The aim of this exercise was real time coordination, deployment and employment of Air Power in a short and intense battle scenario, including a two-front war. Air operations were in all terrains - Punjab plains, Rajasthan desert, high altitude in J&K, Uttarakhand and Northeast. There were long-range maritime missions, realistic aerial combat, air-to-surface attack and weapon release, paratrooper-assault and medical evacuation missions. Concept of accelerated operations, network centric operations, Effect Based Operations (EBO), flexible use of airspace, simulated Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR), special operations with IAF Commandos 'Garud', mass casualty evacuation from highway and Advance Landing Ground (ALG) Operations, to name a few, were tested. Operations with the Indian Army included Counter Strike Force Operations (CSFO), airborne operations, air-landed operations, and inter-valley troop transfer. There were elaborate maritime air operations with the Indian Navy. The logistics back-up and stamina of the IAF and the ability



to sustain continuous operations through day and night were put to test. IAF also practiced and validated Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) drills, and mobilisation of air ambulance transport aircraft and helicopters.

### **Preparatory Phase**

Preparation for the exercise began nine months in advance. To sustain such a large scale of operations on a 24x7 basis, the training status of entire IAF was enhanced. All qualified and medically fit crew up to 48 years of age were given re-validation training. Over 1,400 officers and 14,000 men were pulled out of training and other establishments and deployed for the exercise, to augment existing operational resources. The repair and maintenance agencies had been forewarned to ensure availability of sufficient spares and arrange speedy repairs of aircraft as and when required. The serviceability in many fleets was lifted up from 60 per cent to as high as 85 per cent. Quick loading and unloading of aircraft and cutting down of turn-around time was fine-tuned. The physical move of spares, weapons and personnel was tested.

### **Force Mobilisation**

The exercise was conducted in two phases so that all Commands got adequate opportunity to test the efficacy of their preparedness. Phase-I of the exercise involved activation of Western, South Western and Southern Air Commands, with affiliated Army and Naval formations. Phase-II of the exercise involved activation of Western, Central, Eastern and Southern Air Commands. Re-deployment for Phase-II involved relocating the forces so as to be effective at the new locations within 48 hours. This was made possible by round the clock operations of heavy-lift transport aircraft like C-17 and IL-76 as well as by employing a large number of tactical airlift aircraft like C-130 and AN-32 aircraft. IAF also used civil chartered-flights and trains for mobilisation of resources. For joint operations, IAF's joint command and control structures such as Advance Headquarters and Tactical Air Centres with Army, and Maritime Air Operations Centre and Maritime Elements of Air Force with Navy were activated. Army troops and combat vehicles were deployed to simulate Tactical Battle Areas in all Commands and some of the Army exercises were dovetailed with air operations for simulation of realistic battlefield environment. Ships were deployed, both in the Arabian Sea as well as in Bay of Bengal, for anti-shipping strikes by IAF maritime aircraft operating from bases on the East and West coast, as well as from island territories.

## **Fighter Aircraft Operations**

9000 out of the total 11000 sorties flown were by fighter aircraft. Fighter aircraft undertook surge operations i.e. generating maximum number of sorties in a 24 hours cycle. These included long range missions with concentrated live and simulated weapon releases across all air-to-ground ranges in India. An Air Defence umbrella was created to facilitate ground operations. All the eight indigenous LCA fighters were deployed at forward bases with close-combat and Beyond Visual Range (BVR) air-to-air missiles in a simulated scenario apart from air-to-ground weapons. LCA employment in the operational matrix of the IAF also highlighted its strengths and shortcomings. Hawks flew close support missions. The IAF has consistently encouraged the development of indigenous aircraft said Air Chief Dhanoa. Su-30s flew very long range missions.

## **Special Operations with Indian Army**

IAF inducted an Indian Army's parachute battalion in airborne assault operation on the night of 14 April 2018, in the desert sector. This assault included para-drop of 560 paratroopers, combat vehicles and GPS guided cargo platforms. The landing force was dropped behind the simulated enemy lines to soften up the likely resistance to own armoured offensive. The airborne force comprised six C-130J and seven AN-32 aircraft launched from multiple IAF bases. The force was provided aerial surveillance by AWACS and protected by a flight of SU-30 air superiority fighters. The high risk airborne operations are planned based on accurate intelligence and dynamic air-dominance by own forces is a critical requirement. Joint special-airborne-operations conducted in Northeast Sector involved Strategic Forces dropped by combat free-fall from AN-32 and C-130. IAF commandos 'Garuds' were inserted to establish control over an ALG, making it conducive for landing a C-130 carrying light field gun to reinforce Indian Army. Airborne assault missions also involved combination of airdrop of 'Combat Rubberised Raiding Craft' and combat ready commandos by night at a high altitude large water body. IAF's capability to take-over and secure a civil airport under control of hostile elements was tested by inducting IAF Garud commandos who used stealth and clockwork precision.

On 12 Apr 2018, Special Heli Borne Operations (SHBO) mission was conducted by 2xMI-17 V5 helicopters.

### **Inter-Valley and High Altitude Operations**

IAF fighters, transport aircraft and helicopters carried out extensive flying in the mountains on the northern border with China. Fighters carried out Close Air Support (CAS) and interdiction missions. Heavy transport carried out inter theatre movements from western to the eastern sector. All ALGs were activated and their support services mobilised for seamless conduct of operations. The C-17, C-130 and AN-32 landed at the forward ALGs. A C-130 flew in artillery pieces at Mechuka ALG near Tibet border. ALGs were also used for conducting Inter Valley Troop Transfers (IVTT), SHBO, Air Landed operations and Special Operations. SU-30s also operated from the Pasighat ALG in the Northeast sector. The ALGs are known for unpredictable weather, undulating terrain, narrow flight approaches and very short runways and air operations require extreme precision and professionalism. IVTT operations were carried out in Uttar Bharat Hills and at the Tezu-Walong in the Northeast sector. An IAF Mi-171V airlifted a light field gun in Arunachal Pradesh. In the mountainous terrain the movement of the troops from one valley to another is a challenging task. By road it could take couple of days. IVTT operations help to reposition the desired acclimatised forces within a couple of hours. These operations will be crucial during war with China in the Northeast region.

### **Maritime Operations with Indian Navy**

On 14 April 2018 the IAF conducted maritime air operations in support of Indian Navy on the Western sea board, with the aim of air dominance and deep strike validation over the extended area of interest in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). Combat enablers like the IL-78 Flight Refuelling Aircraft (FRA) flew in conjunction with IAF's maritime fighter aircraft, Su-30 and Jaguar, carrying long distance anti shipping weapons to address both near and in depth targets using the potent BrahMos and Harpoon anti-ship missiles. The long-range strike concept was validated when the Su-30s, airborne from a base on the East coast engaged multiple targets, in the Western seaboard, at distances beyond 2500 Km, and landed at a southern base, thus covering a total distance of 4000 Km, in a single mission. These joint operations had Indian

Navy's P-8I MR aircraft and AWACS of IAF in support. In Phase-II targets over the Eastern sea-board right up to the Malacca Straits were addressed. IAF's maritime aircraft in this phase operated from bases in the Southern peninsula and Andaman and Nicobar Islands. These joint coordinated operations showcased IAF's ability to support the Navy to dominate the IOR and effectively address any misadventure by an adversary in our area of interest.

### **Precision Fire-power and Network Centric Operations**

IAF has acquired latest stand-off precision weapons for all its 4th Generation plus fighter aircraft fleets; weapons that are more lethal and can be delivered from greater ranges with precision. More lethal weapons delivered with greater precision not only reduce aircraft required to neutralise target, but also limits collateral damage. Standoff firing ranges enhance aircraft safety from the enemy air defence. A large number of precision weapons of different categories were dropped from various platforms, both in day and night. All the weapons achieved their designated points of impact creating the desired damage. While the detailed professional analysis of overall effect on war is a continuous process, the initial indications are encouraging. Secure information grid of Air Force (AFNET) and the Integrated Air Command and Control System (IACCS) were used to enable all operations. It greatly enhanced situational awareness of all elements and enabled real time data transfer between airborne weapon systems and ground based systems.

### **Casualty Evacuation and Medical Operations**

A mass casualty air evacuation drill was carried out in the northern sector. A C-17 aircraft was converted for this role with stretchers in the main cabin. 88 casualties were airlifted from Leh and taken to Chandigarh airbase. An indigenously developed Patient Transfer Unit (PTU) capable of providing in-flight critical care to patients was used. After landing at Chandigarh, these patients were evacuated to Command Hospital, Chandimandir. For swift transfer of the patients in ambulances to the hospital, a green corridor was made in liaison with Chandigarh civil authorities. Eastern Air Command (EAC) conducted mass casualty air evacuation drill on 19 April 2018, from Air Force Station Chabua in

Assam to International Airport, Kolkata and further to Command Hospital (Eastern Command), Alipore by road. During the Exercise, IAF also formalised the concept of a Forward Surgical Centre (FSC). FSC was set up at the remote forward base at Naliya in the Kutch region of Gujarat with the aim of enhancing the medical capabilities at the forward base located away from a service hospital, thus enabling immediate life and limb saving surgery and stabilisation of the patient. A dedicated surgical team, equipped to undertake six to eight surgeries a day was in place. FSCs were also established at Phalodi and Sirsa forward airbases. Such FSC would even support the Army formations in the region.

### **Air Systems Serviceability and Maintenance**

A major highlight of the exercise was a very high availability and reliability of all combat assets including aircraft, missile systems and radars. IAF was able to achieve 80 per cent serviceability of aircraft while radars and surface to air guided weapons maintained a serviceability of 97 per cent, which included some of the legacy systems that were over 40 years old. Focussed effort enabled a dispatch rate of more than 95 per cent for the combat aircraft, 100 per cent availability of combat-support systems and almost 100 per cent dispatch rates of combat-enablers. This was possible due to good planning and dedicated efforts of all air-warriors as well as support by Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs) like Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) and Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). High tempo operations also enabled the IAF to ascertain its logistics stamina and the ability to sustain continuous operations through day and night. Contingencies such as repair of battle damaged aircraft and relocation of essential services due to enemy air action were also practiced.

### **Contingencies Simulation and Civil Coordination**

The exercise also focussed heavily on base security aspects. Simulated drills of enemy infiltration into operational areas were practiced. Dedicated contingencies simulated sustaining operations in a Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear attack scenario. Bomb disposal procedures were practiced. The Military Engineer Services (MES) was activated for simulated bombed runway

repairs. Different techniques for repairing runway after bomb damage were practiced in addition to restoration of essential services and mass casualty evacuation at forward bases. Extensive coordination with Territorial Army units and local civil administration was undertaken to refine response during various security and administrative contingencies. The procedures and paperwork related to war time casualties was rehearsed. Intense operations of this magnitude, in a short span of time, involved very close coordination with Airport Authority of India for airspace coordination. It was an endeavour of the IAF to conduct this exercise with negligible disruptions of civil traffic anywhere in the country. IAF had also activated a number of civil airfields to support combat operations during the exercise.

### **Exposure to MoD Decision Makers**

Raksha Mantri Smt Nirmala Sitharaman watched the exercise from close quarters. She visited IAF's eastern most fighter airbase at Chabua. Accompanied by the Air Chief, BS Dhanoa, she witnessed operations by Su-30 MKI fighters, C-17 Globemaster aircraft and rocket loading on Mi-17 V5 helicopters at Pasighat ALG. She witnessed an assault drill by the IAF's Garuds, who had landed earlier by the C-17 Globemaster. She also witnessed coordinated strike packages of Su-30 aircraft delivering Laser Guided

1000 lbs, conventional 1000 lbs and 100 kg bombs, and Mi-17 V5 Helicopters in the armed-role delivering 80mm rockets on simulated targets at the Dullong Mukh air-to-ground firing range in Assam. She also witnessed accelerated fighter operations at Chabua and attended a briefing on employment of air-power in the defence of Eastern Sector. The Raksha Mantri announced clearance of development of seven more ALGs. The Defence Secretary Sanjay Mitra was given an exposure of a Su-30 flight at Sirsa airbase. The mission was flown in a dense network-centric environment as a part of the exercise. The mission gave him a firsthand assessment of operational preparedness and the combat effectiveness of the air warriors in a real time operational scenario. It is important that the politicians and bureaucrats understand the tough military life and importance of operational procurements.

### **Reassurance and Exposure to Indian Public**

For the first time IAF Media Control Centre was very active and ran a media blitz and kept the public fully briefed on the progress of exercise and educated them on the type of operations. It also reassured them that the three Services work very closely, and despite depleting numbers, IAF will do everything to defend the nation from an attack from the air, and create a favourable air situation for the surface forces. Indian masses have a clear message that any misadventure of a two-front war by our neighbours will be met with appropriate response.

### **IAF is Combat Ready**

IAF for the first time exercised its entire Operational machinery at this massive scale to validate IAF's concept of operations and war-waging capability. IAF's overall fire-power and delivery accuracy has been greatly enhanced with induction of newer and upgraded platforms. LCA, though still in small numbers has begun its operational innings well. A significant part of the exercise being in Arunachal was a clear signal to China that India has built significant strength in the region. Geographically, IAF stands at an advantage vis-à-vis the People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) with a few airfields in Tibet. Efficient exploitation of combat support assets, including use of enablers like AWACS, AEW&C, FRA, Transport aircraft and ISR assets are critical. Special operations employing transport aircraft and helicopter as well as SFs were tested. New strategies and tactics, especially of recently inducted or upgraded assets and equipments were validated. Apart from wartime drills, IAF also validated various HADR drills. Achieving better operational synergy between the three Services, in application of combat power was a great plus. The logistics stamina of the IAF and the ability to sustain continuous operations through day and night were put to test. As the Commanders and crew change over, there is a need to conduct similar scale exercises every few years. They not only hone the skills, but also bring realism in maintenance and administrative tasks. Air warriors displayed agility and great team spirit.

The greatest achievement was an accident free record of this massive air exercise. Also there were no ground casualties and air warriors maintained high morale. The hands-on Air Chief

Dhanoa led the exercise from the front. He visited various formations in the western and eastern sectors during live action, reviewing operations. A large number of teams are analysing the aircraft and ground recordings and reports to come to meaningful operational lessons and tweak decisions. The IAF continues to live up to its motto '*Nabh Sparsham Deepatam*' meaning 'Touching the Sky with Glory'. Exercise Gagan Shakti was meant to achieve this high ideal.

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# **Addressing Radicalisation in Kashmir : A *Sine Qua Non* for Governor's Rule**

**Major General Bal Krishan Sharma, AVSM, SM and Bar  
(Retd)\***

**Brigadier Narender Kumar, SM, VSM (Retd)®**

## **Introduction**

**T**he politics is all about “doctrine of unpredictability”. In a significant development PDP and BJP in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) have separated and the government has fallen. It has paved the way for Governor's rule in the state. The anti-defection law in J&K is strong enough to prevent any defection by a group of MLAs or an individual to assist in forming the government. Provisions of law even make a Member of the House lose his membership even if he votes or abstains from voting in the House contrary to any direction of the party.<sup>1</sup> As a consequence, the Governor's rule is the only option till state is able to conduct elections. J&K Assembly elections are due in 2020 and general elections sometime in the first or second quarter of 2019. Whether the government will take a decision to conduct general elections and assembly elections simultaneously or stagger it, will be dictated by the security situation on the ground. There are reports that hardliners including Jamaat have welcomed the breaking up of the so-called unholy alliance. Some sections of the society are pleased with the fall of the government because this government was perceived to have failed on all fronts including security, economic development, job creation, corruption and prevention of rising crime. There has been no public display of solidarity for the PDP even in South Kashmir that is considered a stronghold of the party. In large parts of the Valley, there is jubilation about the fall of the government. “It feels like Eid was today,” said a postdoctoral student in South Kashmir's Pulwama district. “This is a relief for us all. We don't want any political rule.”<sup>2</sup> There are

mixed reactions, some perceive that developmental work under the current Governor will speed up, there will be accountability of the bureaucracy to deliver in the window of next 12 months and the government is likely to adopt muscular policy against the terrorists and stone pelters. It is likely that Union Government will ensure that Governor's rule is continued till general elections to ensure that there is no outright rejection of the democratic process in the Kashmir Valley. Some sections of the society and PDP also predict greater instability and political uncertainty in Kashmir. However, Pakistan will see it as an opportunity to ferment trouble on the ground and would look to ensure that the Governor's rule is seen as a complete failure and strong arms tactics to suppress the self-determination movement in Kashmir.

### **Challenges to the Governor's Rule**

Governor's rule in J&K should not be looked at through the prism of harsh security measures. A teacher from Kashmir University stated, "A stronger security response would not mean a major improvement in the situation. The current discourse of resentment is based on a narrative of victimhood. The more you show harshness to the people, the more it will embolden and strengthen them."<sup>3</sup> The Governor's rule needs to be balanced that engages with the people, be sympathetic to their genuine grievances and work for creating space for dialogue and development. It will also be unrealistic to expect miraculous results from the rule that may last a year or little longer till next assembly elections are conducted. The focus of the Governor's rule should be to ensure following in the next 12 months or so:-

- (a) **Bring Calm to the Streets.** It is essential to normalise the life of common man from this muddled environment.
- (b) **Keep the Youth Away from the Streets.** It is a major challenge. To bring youth out of this disarrayed environment, there is a need to establish communication and dialogue to disengage youth from the negativity of the overall environment. Simultaneously, it would require return of the students to the education institutions and restoration of economic activities including tourism to engage the youth in constructive activities.

(c) **Dealing with the Unarmed Jihadis.** It is a challenge but methodology to deal with Jamaat and local ideologues who are responsible for mobilising crowd for protests and stone pelting needs to be worked out and if considered appropriate some of the ideologues and separatists should be booked under Public Safety Act (PSA) or appropriate law.

(d) **Disruption of the Network for Recruitment of Terrorists.** It is a major challenge and needs to be a priority because as long as the ideologues are free to operate, terror recruitment will continue. Simon Cottey says that, "Law-enforcement agents can't disrupt a motive, but with the right intelligence they may be able to disrupt a network of terrorist recruiters".<sup>4</sup>

(e) **Re-establishment of Communication with Public.** According to John Burton, the initial dialogue must centre on the public security, development, identity needs, youth aspirations and political access.

(f) **Improvement in Law and Order.** There is need for the government to restore faith of the people in the administration and putting in place a grievance redressal mechanism.

(g) **Fight Radicalism with Human Development<sup>5</sup>.** It should be done through social awareness campaign and engagement with the people.

(h) **Meeting the Aspirations of the People of Jammu and Ladakh Division.** They need to be compensated for maintaining peace.

(i) **Set a Benchmark.** Governor's rule must establish effective system to inform, influence, and persuade public to leave the path of confrontation with clearly defined objectives.<sup>6</sup>

(j) **Strategy to Overthrow Established Order.** Eric Brahm while quoting Metz wrote, "Broadly speaking, terrorism and insurgency is a strategy to overthrow the established order". The biggest challenge of the Governor rule will be to ensure conduct of elections. Pakistan has been working consistently

to overthrow the established order and it has targeted the grass root democracy in J&K. In fact the state government has not been able to conduct Anantnag by-election for Lok Sabha, and Panchayat elections have been deferred indefinitely due to the prevailing “security situation” in the Kashmir Valley.<sup>7</sup>

### **Idea of Jihad is Acting as Push Factor For Youth to Join Terrorism**

J&K Police in its report on “Radicalisation and Terrorism in J&K - A Study” has come out with certain alarming and surprising facts. As per the report, new terror recruits are not driven by ideology as most attended government schools and come from middle class families.<sup>8</sup> Hardly anyone was educated full time in madrasa and majority among the recent recruits joined terrorism because of thrill seeker attitude.<sup>9</sup> The terrorism in Kashmir is an enigma where unarmed Jihadis are product of radicalisation but armed Jihadis are product of glamorisation of Jihad. One fights with the weapon in hand and the other fights to conquer cognitive domain by employing perception as a tool to expand the domains of conflict. Between armed and unarmed Jihadis there is third dimension and that is the role of Pakistan. Pakistan has managed to drive a wedge deep enough within the society to undermine the sense of shared values that form the foundation of democracy<sup>10</sup> and enshrined values of Kashmiriyat. The situation in J&K is that state is crippled by terrorism, political and social crisis and is not in a position to put in place the necessary building blocks for development,<sup>11</sup> peace and stability.

The lure to join terror ranks is neither completely due to monetary gains, nor entirely due to religious indoctrination that is pushing the youth to participate in Jihad for establishing Islamic State in Kashmir or Azadi. It is a mix of radicalisation, glamorisation of Jihad, sense of adventurism and a perceived alternative method to break the *status quo* of hopelessness. Albert Bandura said that, “it requires conducive social conditions rather than monstrous people to produce terrorists. Given appropriate social conditions, decent, ordinary people can be led to do extraordinarily cruel things.”<sup>12</sup> The youth of Kashmir today is joining terror organisations due to social, cultural, economic,

political, and psychological factors coming together<sup>13</sup> and backed by aggressive, emotional and ideological misinformation campaign. The factors that push a youth to terrorism are disillusionment with the *status quo*, failure in personal life, identity crisis and sense of hopelessness setting in the minds of the youth. As an escape from this psychological barrier, they either turn to drugs or to religion and then they get secluded from the family, friends and the education institutions. In the next stage they want to change the *status quo* and negativity and rejection from the society by picking up guns. The unarmed Jihadis are feeding the perception of victory against the perceived occupation and have been reminding the public including women and children that one day the sacrifices of their children will bear fruit and Kashmir will be a free Islamic State. The situation is further complicated when mosques become the only outlet for mass politics, the outcome is often religious dissent and motivation to the youth to join Jihadis ranks.

### **Role of Unarmed Jihadis in Radicalisation is a Major Pull Factor**

A sense has been created by ideologues who rightly should be called unarmed Jihadis, that it is a religious duty of every Kashmiri youth to join Jihad. Some of the religious institutions controlled by Jihadist ideologues are preaching a skewed and misconstrued interpretation of religion that has the potential to capture the hearts, minds and imaginations of the young people.<sup>14</sup> Jihadi ideologues are creating alternative narrative and pushing moral boundaries to legitimise the violence and unending miseries as a service to God. The unarmed Jihadis weave a web of misinformation campaign that promises a youth sudden identity as a soldier of God, an exalted position among his peers and local populace. He now wields authority and social media also helps him to become a local hero. There is a sense of accomplishment in him and he starts believing that he is doing Jihad for a just cause. The most unfortunate part is that if a misguided youth returns to the main stream the family suffers the stigma of having a son who is coward and scared of attaining martyrdom. Parents are caught between the misinformation campaign and violation of tenants of Islam by separatist and ideologues forcing youth to join

Jihad without sufficient reasons. The loss or killing of terrorists is celebrated, parents are congratulated and family members are made to believe that now their path to attain salvation has been cleared by their son by sacrificing his life for Islam and Jihad. The cycle of recruitment continues because ideologues of Jihad glamorise the killing of terrorists to create more recruits and as a result burial grounds become in reality a recruitment rally to attract the new Jihadis. The peril in Kashmir is that unarmed Jihadis have created conditions where objectives are non-negotiable: they want the total elimination of all who are not with them.<sup>15</sup> To spread their ideology of hate and Jihad unarmed Jihadis are using social media to their advantage to create a terrorist from a simple innocent youth. As per Rand Corporation, internet creates more opportunities to become radicalised than any other tool. It acts as an 'echo chamber': a place where individuals find their ideas supported and echoed by other like-minded individuals. Process of radicalisation gets accelerated and it occurs without contact. The internet increases opportunities for self-radicalisation.<sup>16</sup> Ideologues in Kashmir are using internet extensively to spread the venom of radicalisation.

While terrorists are developing strategies to target and attract the youth, counter-terrorism efforts continue to focus on hard power as the central approach in dealing with this issue.<sup>17</sup> In fact radicalisation falls in the spectrum of potential extremist activity<sup>18</sup> and it needs to be treated as such. Unarmed Jihadis are turning to be the catalysts and more dangerous than armed Jihadis in Kashmir. Though they do it in the name of Islam but they violate every tenet of Islam in pursuance of their perceived Jihad/ war against India. For them battleground is not Srinagar, Shopian or Pulwama it is the cognitive domain where the fire of Jihad must continue to burn at the cost of destruction of invaluable lives of innocent youths.<sup>19</sup> Qanta Ahmed a British Author and Columnist said, "No act is singularly more un-Islamic than the destruction of human life. No assault is more offensive to Islam (which enshrines free will) than compulsory belief. No law of war in Islam is more violated than the targeting of unarmed men, women, and children. Islamists claim to represent us but in reality they are destroying us."<sup>20</sup> Ideologues have created such a void on ground that reconciliation at this stage appears impossible. The pluralist

Muslims need to introspect and expose this façade of terror organisations and separatists and let the people know that such an ideology is self-destructive. There is a need to break this cycle of terror factory in the name of religion. Thus it is vital that instead of fighting terrorism, state must find ways and means to 'fight radicalism with human development'.<sup>21</sup>

### **Strategy to Eliminate Idea of Jihad**

Counterterrorism is a holistic process that should focus on elimination of terrorism and not only terrorists. However, there seems to be some dichotomy in our strategy and conceptual understanding of dealing with armed and unarmed Jihadis. The critical conceptual point for formulation of response strategies lies in the recognition of the factors that give impetus to the idea of Jihad. It is evident that important factors in Jihad are the ideologues and unarmed Jihadis who more often remain beyond the reach of the law, because they wear the mask of religious preachers and at times religious/social reformers. As a result, the law is unable to reach them unless they cross the red line. Apart from legal recourse, this issue needs to be looked at from a strategic perspective. Following few options must be exercised to deal with terrorism:-

(a) **Engage to Disengage.** Disengaging might suggest critical cognitive and social changes, in terms of leaving behind the shared social norms, values, attitudes and aspirations so carefully forged while the individual was still a member of a terror network.<sup>22</sup> Disengagement is not possible unless there is engagement with armed and unarmed Jihadis. One must remember that the individual is moulded by a way of life or misconception that he may continue to adhere due to the belief of so-called enshrined values or way of ancestors drilled by indoctrination. Once a recruit joins terror organisation he is trained simultaneously for violence and psychologically believing that, he is following the path of Allah. Thus disengagement is not only from violence but also from some continued adherence that are part of terror code of conduct, perceived values and attitudes. Engagement should be socially relevant 'support' so that individual is not stigmatised. Disengagement from terrorism may be, broadly

speaking, the efforts of an individual or collective process (or combination of both). We can identify both psychological and physical dimensions of disengagement,<sup>23</sup> through society, parents and religious teachers who can debate and discuss the true interpretation and teachings of Islam and meaning of Jihad. One must remember that disengagement may not always result in de-radicalisation or counter radicalisation.

**(b) Distinguish between Near Enemy and Far Enemy.**

The focus of counter terrorism initiative is directed against the near enemy. In this case near enemy is terrorist who is seen on ground as the face of terrorism. But little is being done to bring to book the far enemy and that is unarmed Jihadis. There is a need to adopt an approach to deal with near and far enemy simultaneously through a process or law, social awakening, theological interpretation of true values of Islam and removal of misconception that has been articulated by terror ideologues. This engagement is not sequential; it should be attempted simultaneously.

**(c) Radicalisation or Rehabilitation.** The word de-radicalisation and radicalisation have become buzz words and very loosely referred to. If there is nothing wrong with 'radicalisation', then it is offensive and misleading to speak of 'de-radicalisation'.<sup>24</sup> No individual will accept that he has been radicalised or he was manipulated and willingly chose a wrong path. It should be left to him to introspect this aspect later but he should never be told that he has been radicalised. Rather psychological and social rehabilitation should be attempted. Some Arabian countries are using the term 'reforming' instead of de-radicalisation and is being done through correct interpretation of the teachings of Islam that proscribe violence against innocent and unarmed subjects.

**(d) Transition and Transformation.** The central aim to set the stage for transition and transformation is to ensure active participation of all stakeholders to the conflict including armed and unarmed terrorists. It is an inclusive process first to recommence the transition back to the society and then transform him to be accepted in the society without any



stigma or baggage of his past. It would require conditional amnesty (legal and social). It is a process that cannot be executed by the state alone but through a holistic approach of state and society.

(e) **Strategy Must be Enduring.** There cannot be a change of strategy on daily basis. The results of above strategy may start fructifying after a few years. Unlike the tactical operations where terrorists are eliminated and counter terrorism strategy appears to be working, the strategy to deal with terrorism and unarmed Jihadis need long gestation period. Patience, perseverance and pursuance are the keys to succeed in this complex psychological, and information war.

## **Conclusion**

In Jammu and Kashmir today it is time to engage and it does not matter with whom. It could be with young people in remote areas, it could be religious preachers and it could be a man on the street. Governor's rule should be seen as an opportunity to ensure course correction and break the *status quo* of public disorder. State should not be seen as oppressor but as benevolent and committed to the genuine welfare of the people of J&K without any biases.

Mr Ram Madhav in his interview to the Economic Times had said, "Many governments across the world have only one approach towards terrorism – eliminate the terrorists to eliminate terrorism."<sup>25</sup> It is true that elimination of terrorists is important but not holistic to completely annihilate terrorism. Thus, it is high time that instead of targeting terrorists, state should work out methodology to deal with terrorism in a holistic manner. To bring calm to the streets, unarmed Jihadis are required to be dealt with appropriately and they cannot be allowed to run a parallel system of Intifada.

Apart from the military and non-military operations most important challenge at this stage is ensuring survival of democratic institutions in J&K. India cannot afford outright rejection of democratic process in the state through coercion and

subversion. Should that happen it will be a dangerous trend that could slip the state further into anarchy.

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# **Border Management in Northeast : Paradigms of Technology Driven Tactical Interface**

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**T**he Northeastern India starts from the junction of Indian states

of West Bengal, Sikkim and Assam alongside Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and China in its close vicinity. The Northeastern region has common borders with five out of seven of Indian neighbours and all of them are different in their structures and peculiarities. The common thread amongst all these borders is inhospitable terrain, low development quotient alongside complexities of socio-economic and cultural milieu impacting on internal as well as external security of the region. These borders are open except Bangladesh where there is a border fencing manned by the BSF. All other borders are well settled except China wherein they have not resolved the Sino (Tibet)-Indian border till date.

The discussion on border management in Northeastern India warrants identifying the nature of border and activities of inimical elements which deserve attention of the government and the executing agencies. In this context, it can be stated that none of the borders in the region are peaceful due to ongoing insurgencies, a socio-political affliction across all the states. These insurgencies have been initiated and sustained with the active support of the external forces so as to destabilise India. Hence, there is an external as well as internal security element when it comes to border management planning in the Northeastern region.

In that, the Chinese footprint has been identified in most of the insurgent movements in Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram with cascading effect in other areas of the region. Complicity of ISI of Pakistan is also well established in providing support and safe

sanctuaries to Indian insurgent groups in the erstwhile East Pakistan which continues even today by Bangladesh to some extent. There are more than 70 insurgent groups in the Northeastern region, most of them have their safe sanctuaries across the porous borders, viz. Myanmar, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal. Therefore, area dominance and population control are also an adjunct to the border management exercise. In consequence, control of insurgencies is an extension of border management in the Northeast regional context.

The government has a “one border one force” policy based on recommendations of a Group of Ministers (GoM) for better operational synergy, albeit there is a scope of making it more effective. The department of border management, established in 2004, has been entrusted with the responsibility of all matters associated with land borders and costal borders, with the exception of LOC in the Jammu and Kashmir sector. The roles and responsibilities of the Border Management include fencing and floodlighting, surveillance and patrolling, security infrastructure development, intelligence and establishing integrated Check Posts (ICPs).

The approach, as employed by the government towards border management, is categorised into four essential processes to include guarding the borders, regulation of the borders, development of border areas and constitution of consultative mechanism to resolve the disputes, if any. This format is more applicable to the settled parts of the international borders dealing primarily with civil criminal activities during peace time. Whereas, that is not the case with Northeastern region of India which has been in the state of “no war no peace” since Independence.

The BSF has been given the responsibility of 4096 km long border with Bangladesh. The border is well defined, except few enclaves inside each other's territories which have been resolved by exchanging these enclaves for administrative ease. Camps of Indian insurgents and illegal immigration of population from Bangladesh into India are two major areas of concern besides normal criminal activities. The entire border, except 50 km riverine sector, is fenced and there are 802 border out posts (BOPs) as of

now. 383 more BOPs have been sanctioned to manage this border.

The Assam Rifles has been taking care of 1643 km border with Myanmar. India shares a porous border with Myanmar that spans across Arunachal Pradesh (520 km), Nagaland (215 km), Manipur (398 km), and Mizoram (510 km). It's an open border without any fencing with provision of movement of population up to 16 km on either side of the border for the economic activities. The terrain is inhospitable, full of dense jungles with minimal roads and tracks making it conducive for insurgents and the criminals to hide once chased by the security forces. The ethnic and cultural ties with the population astride the border makes it further difficult to monitor the movement of people from one country to the other. The insurgencies in Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura and Assam could be sustained due to nature of Indo-Myanmar border.

Nepal and Bhutan both have well defined open borders with India, with no restrictions on movement of population and commercial activities. The Seema Suraksha Bal (SSB) has been given the responsibility of border management with Nepal and Bhutan. There are designated crossing places and freight corridors for transportation of goods and services from Nepal and Bhutan to Kolkata Port. The ULFA insurgents had made lower hills of Bhutan their hide outs during peak of their movement in late 1990s. They were evicted by the Bhutan army in "Operation All Clear" between 15 Dec 2003 and 03 Jan 2004. While there are elaborate security protocols to deal with the criminal activities, the main areas of concern are : complicity of Pakistan to use Nepal for terrorist activities and emerging Chinese footprints in Nepalese as well as Bhutanese landscape.

The most important areas from the border management point of view lie along our northern border with China. It encapsulates Sino-Indian border in the states of Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh. China has cleverly orchestrated disputes in areas which provide them observation as well as domination of avenues leading to Tibetan border from Indian side. The axes astride rivers leading to the watershed in Tawang and five valleys in rest of Arunachal Pradesh fall in this category. China is known to send their patrols frequently in these areas to assert their claim over their perception

of the LAC. Looking at the penchant for military aggressiveness by China, the Sino-Indian border warrants optimal military presence with reserves located close by to respond to any adverse situation.

While entire Arunachal Pradesh is claimed by China, there are no disputes in Sikkim except status of tri-junction of India, China and Bhutan at the tip of Chumbi Valley at Doklam. China claims it to be seven km further south as it facilitates direct observation into Siliguri Corridor. The military geography suggests that the Siliguri Corridor is the most vulnerable piece of land which has potential of severing the entire northeast from the mainland India. Therefore, this sector happens to be the biggest challenge for the border management in northeastern region.

As regards other states, due to insurgency, the format of border management warrants focus on people and their activities across the IBs as well as in the hinterland. Accordingly, surveillance and intelligence mechanism assumes importance, given the type of terrain, similarity of ethnic composition and complicity of civil society in anti-national and criminal pursuits. While the border management falls under police mandate, dealing with the armed militants with external linkages may need support of the army when the situation happens to be beyond capabilities of CPOs to handle due to their structural inadequacies. Manipur, Nagaland, Assam, Tripura and Tirap-Changlang sector of Arunachal Pradesh are most disturbed areas which need quasi-military involvement alongside policing duties.

While there is an apparently functional border management mechanism, its structures and processes continue to be manpower intensive with limited cognitive and physical capabilities to deal with complex and hybrid nature of the job content. The system does not have the operational effectiveness to achieve the requisite dominance and deterrence to dissuade insurgents and criminals from their inimical indulgences. The entire border management process is reactive in concept and executed in a set pattern routine manner by varied forces and agencies with communication and coordination disconnect, especially, at lower cutting edge level.

There is a need to change the manpower intensive linear surveillance matrix to technology empowered information centric border management system which is time sensitive, focussed, efficient, with larger span of influence and catering for reserves for effective response. The concept is to shift from threat based reactive mindset to capability based proactive doctrine by empowering the individuals and formations through battlefield transparency, information awareness, night enablement, mobility and force protection.

The essential tactical design for a technology driven border management mechanism should include “detect movements and activities in-depth across the IB, read pattern of activities and analyse intentions of the movements, identify likely areas of interests and sanctuaries on either side of the IB, plans and *modus operandi* of criminals/ insurgents, force deployment at the IB/LAC and depth areas, intervention and finally the neutralisation.” While there are numerous government agencies co-opted in the entire sequence of tactical activities, the synthesis and synchronisation needs to be done under one field commander wrested with full authority and accountability. Therefore, seemingly isolated and watertight way of functioning of different agencies involved in the business of border management has to be replaced with unified command structure at all levels of operational matrix.

Apropos, the operational parameters and the technology needs to be dovetailed with each other to maximise their effectiveness on the basis of varied military, insurgency and criminal content in context of each of the sectors. The emerging technologies in the field of artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics, space and aerial surveillance, communication and network centricity, Global Positioning System (GPS), drones, Night Vision Devices (NVDs), radars, battle management systems (BMS), Command, Control, Communications, Computers and Intelligence (C4 I) systems and aerial and ground mobility transportation means etc. may be incorporated in reference to the envisaged tasks in a need-based pragmatic manner in Indian context.



The satellites have capability to observe over a vast area and can be utilised to study the structural configurations and changes if any in the areas of interest. The drones are useful in day and night surveillance, patrolling, tracking the targets and providing real time information to the commanders in variety of contingencies. The interceptors and jammers can be utilised for intelligence gathering and tracking the movements. There are plethora of optronic and communication equipment for smart fencing and border surveillance, besides providing seamless flow of information to the planners and the ground troops. The Information Technology (IT) and AI provide means to store and study the data for synthesis of the available information to establish patterns and suggest options for operations based on digital analysis.

There are war gaming modules available capable of task analysis, allocation of resources, their mobilisation, route guidance, target analysis and engagement by designated weapon and platform. The technology as on date has tools and mechanisms to reduce the time consuming human interface across the entire spectrum of the border management. The operations in Afghanistan and Syria have amply demonstrated the use of technology for surveillance by drones and neutralisation of targets by precision strike weapon systems reducing human interface. The network centricity is of a kind wherein the entire area of interest is being monitored all the way back from the US. However, such a technology infusion would require appropriate changes in the organisations, processes and work culture, besides recruiting, training and psychological reorientation to handle these devices and systems by the Indian troops.

Besides technology, the international cooperation is also a mandatory part of border management to optimise the effectiveness of the entire process. It would help in checking cross border criminal activities like drugs peddling, human trafficking, smuggling of banned items, movement of insurgents and destruction of their camps etc. It may also need political pressures and mediation through friendly foreign countries to help in resolution of contentious interstate problems. There is a problem of displaced populations like Chakmas, Rohagiyas, Chin, Bruz,

Tibetans, Bangladeshi Muslims, Lishus etc. wherein international support may be required to facilitate their return to their original habitats. They are, as on date, spread across the Northeastern region and are adding to socio-political and border management problems.

The border management in Northeast is a highly complex matter with variety of socio-political disturbances, economic deprivation and political opportunism which has far too many parameters to be considered in arriving at an appropriate mechanism. The psychological disconnect from the national mainstream is another factor responsible for the vulnerability of the local population by the inimical forces and the insurgents. The Chinese conduct on the LAC is reflective of their design to keep India on backfoot which has strategic connotations necessitating politico-military response with inherent diplomatic sensitivities.

Therefore, no single template fits in for border management in the Northeastern region. All the borders need a separate treatment based on its own historical legacies, demographic peculiarities, insurgencies and socio-political afflictions. Whatever be the border management design on each of these sectors, there is a need to utilise technology to get better of the terrain, hostile people and criminals responsible for disturbed public order in the region. The technology in turn has to be suitably interfaced with the tactical requirements for planning and conduct of operations for efficient and effective border management and much needed hinterland control synergies.

The dichotomy is that military, by its composition and training is too strong a force and police/CPOs, fall short of capabilities to handle the border management cum insurgencies in Northeastern context. There is a tendency to call in Army by the administration even in seemingly manageable situations by the police and CPOs due to “play safe syndrome” with intent of evading the accountability at times. The correct philosophy should be to restructure and train the police forces who are mandated for internal security in all its dimensions. The government has been working towards this objective in right earnest with plans to

empower the police and CPOs through technology. Media is abuzz with news of technology driven “smart border management systems” being introduced along settled and fenced western borders. Whereas, looking at the complexity of northeastern borders it would require “smarter border management” with much higher technology empowerment to handle the operational intrigues not only on the open borders, but also the complicity of local population in their inimical socio-political afflictions.

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# **Tides of Change in Northeast India : Enablers and Impediments to Naga Peace Process**

**Brigadier Sunil B Bodhe®**

## **Introduction**

India's Northeast presents a bewildering picture to the policy makers, outsiders as well as the local population. The Naga insurgents' demand is for a Greater Nagaland that will encompass all Naga tribes in the region; but the issue is complicated as the state itself is demographically fragmented. Its people adopt different stances on their nationhood which further complicates the security perspective. Signing of Ceasefire (CF) Agreements by major insurgent groups since 1997 has given way to a better understanding between Government of India (GoI) and Naga Insurgent Groups.

Year 2015 has been a watershed year as far as Naga Insurgency is concerned. The signing of Naga Peace Framework Agreement by GoI with Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland (Isak Muivah) (NSCN (IM)) on 04 Aug 2015 has changed the complete perspective of the dynamics of insurgency in Nagaland. Since 2015, major politico-military events in the Northeast India and Myanmar have seen major political and counter-insurgency breakthroughs in Nagaland. The real breakthrough came in February 2018 Assembly elections in the northeastern states. The Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party (NDPP) and Bhartiya Janta Party winning the election and forming the government offered an avenue for furthering the peace process.

## **Part – I**

### **Security Perspective in Nagaland Post Signing of Peace Framework Agreement in August 2015**

#### **Build-up for Talks**

**Developments during CF Period.** The CF with militant groups started in 1997. This helped the Central Government and People of Nagaland to understand each other's viewpoints. Though no major breakthrough was made at national level during the CF period, ground level advantages accrued which included distinct reduction in violence levels in Nagaland. The signing of CF with NSCN (IM) and NSCN (K) and its further extension has had a salutary effect on other minority outfits that have realised the futility of their armed struggle and ideology driven insurgency.

**Breakthrough.** The Government of India (GoI) and NSCN (IM) signed a peace framework accord on 04 Aug 2015. The historic Centre-NSCN (IM) agreement has had many strategic fallouts.<sup>1</sup> The Naga Peace Accord with NSCN (IM) lays down the framework for peace process, though not openly declared, the ultimate end-state visualises peaceful existence of Naga people with their identity protected within the constitutional framework without disturbing territorial integrity of India and neighbouring states.

**Changing Perspective.** The signed document appears to be more in the nature of a declaration or a preamble, which has been discussed in the Naga region for at least two or three years. Kiren Rijiju, Minister of State for Home Affairs called it 'a framework' for a permanent settlement. Details of the settlement revolve around the 31 points which the Naga side had given to the GoI about a decade back. Of these, two crucial clauses have been dropped: the one on sovereignty, and the other expansion of Nagaland through territorial contiguity. These have long been unacceptable to New Delhi and affected states.

**Conflicting Views.** There are a few questions and fascinating facets to the 'historic accord' between the GoI's representative and the NSCN (IM). The statements, one by the Prime Minister (PM) of India, and the other by the General Secretary of the NSCN (IM) who is also known as the Ato Kilonser (PM) of the Government of the Peoples Republic of Nagalim, said positive things but their content and approach were different. The PM declared that the 'talents, traditions and efforts' of the 'people of Nagaland' would 'make the nation stronger.' Muivah on the other hand made no reference to any details, but did say that the

current effort would lead to a better understanding between 'the Nagas and India', underlining the separate identities as far as he was concerned, even if it was for public consumption. He praised Modi, saying that under his leadership 'We have come close to understanding each other and have worked out a new relationship'. The statements, thus, kept the avenues open for insurgent conflict by the Group.

**Government Outreach.** The Gol had sent a group of Naga elders and lawmakers to Myanmar to speak to the Myanmar Naga rebel leader SS Khaplang and get him to accept the agreement. But Mr Khaplang refused to meet them and instead deputed his military wing Chief, Niki Sumi, to speak to the visiting delegation, thus missing the opportunity. A new umbrella group called United National Liberation Front of Western South East Asia (UNLFW) was formed with Khaplang as its head. UNLFW is an alliance formed by NSCN (K), United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA), National Democratic Front of Bodoland-Songbijit (NDFB-S) and Kamtapur Liberation Organisation (KLO). The major terror attack in Manipur in June 2015 was the handiwork of UNLFW. It was the first major operation of the UNLFW which declared the intent of the new outfit.

**Leadership crisis.** The death of Isac Chishi Swu on 28 Jun 2016 has put additional burden on the Muivah faction to sustain the accord. Indications are that insurgency in many parts of northeast declined substantially. The death of Mr SS Khaplang in Myanmar on 09 Jun 2017 has weakened the group and is undergoing leadership crisis.

**Chinese Support.** There have been reports that China is back to covertly aiding and abetting insurgent outfits in the northeast. A peace agreement with NSCN (IM) will inevitably lead to better and real time intelligence which will keep China wary. This is especially because NSCN (IM) was the first northeastern insurgent outfit which had established contact with China, a fact acknowledged by Muivah also in one of his many on-record interviews. Moreover, NSCN (IM) used to procure weapons from China and, thus, obviously would be a treasure trove of intelligence in this context.

**Insurgent Movements across Myanmar Borders.** Since 1980s separatist outfits were allowed to set up camps in Myanmar by Nagas. The 'Myanmar Connection' thus became the common antecedent of insurgent groups operating in the northeast.<sup>2</sup> The General Elections held in Myanmar in November 2015 and setting up of a friendly democratic government by National League for Democracy has had a positive impact on isolating the militant groups operating from across the borders. The changing political scenario in Nagaland and Manipur where BJP-led governments came to power has reduced insurgent activities. The Counter Insurgency (CI) forces and Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) have formulated strategy to avoid collateral damage.

**Effect on Economic Development.** In Nagaland, the obstacles to economic development generally arise out of the prevailing political, social and economic conditions. The conditions also relate to the hilly terrain, dense forests and difficult communication networks. The social obstacles are the people's initial apathy to any kind of innovation and lack of education. The economic difficulties are the dearth of capital, absence of marketing centres, and similar other factors. To these we may also add the political condition arising out of the subversive activities of the underground Nagas to complicate the issue to a precarious position. The economic development and progress of the northeast is directly related to the resolution of peace in Nagaland.

**Civil Society and Political Activities.** Since 2015, the civil society groups and local political leaders had become very active and started contributing to the peace process. The state government got full support from the central government. During 2017, six Naga National Political Groups (NNPG) joined the peace process. Efforts are being made by the central government to get NSCN (K) to join peace talks too. The big challenge for the new government now is how the protracted Naga political problem will be solved.

## **Part - II**

### **Enablers and Impediments to Peace Process in Nagaland**

**General.** Lasting peace is the ultimate goal in counter-insurgency. The process is very long and it takes decades of efforts. Towards the peace process, there are certain enablers that will promote peace and certain impediments that will have to be overcome to achieve lasting peace. The same are discussed in subsequent paragraphs.

### **The Enablers**

(a) **Regional Plurality.** The protracted conflict in northeast India has social, political, economic and strategic components, which is also true of the protracted peace processes, making for a vicious cycle. The sense of stagnancy in the conflict management scenario in northeast India is due to the inability of the stakeholders to break away from this vicious cycle. The territorial integrity of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur is crucial to the future stability of the Northeast. These are, and have been, multi racial, multi-lingual and multi-religious states and if the region has to make a beginning in effective management of plurality and change, these three states have to stay the way they are. The Nagas should, therefore, demand a just political deal that allows their kinsmen in Ukhrul and Senapati, Tamenlong and Chandel, Tirap and Changlang areas to maintain close development and cultural links with Nagaland. The acceptance of this plurality will help in containing the insurgency.

(b) **Territorial Integrity of North Eastern States.** Pacifying the aspirations of the Nagas or other tribes cannot be done at the cost of breaking up of other states. The GoI and NSCN (IM) negotiations have been shrouded in utmost secrecy and, therefore, the stakeholders in Manipur, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh are apprehensive of the course which the peace process would take and contents of the proposed 'special federal arrangement' being talked about<sup>3</sup>. The respective state assemblies of Manipur, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh have passed resolutions that no territory will be parted for the setting up of a Greater Nagalim, as a solution. The GoI is also firmly supporting this stand of northeastern states.



(c) **Accord for Lasting Peace.** It would require the highest level of statesmanship to build the contours of the framework for peace. For the Naga people, it would be prudent to abandon a glamorous vision of a contested past or to demand exorbitant privileges based on their unique history because history tells us that every other ethnic group before 1947 also had a unique history. This is the only way for Nagas towards a lasting peace.

(d) **Isolation of NSCN (K).** Patricidal rivalry among the Nagas has persisted since the formation of the NSCN (K) and NSCN (IM) following the split of the original NSCN in 1988.<sup>4</sup> On 16 Sep 2015 the Indian Government banned the NSCN (K) under the Unlawful Activities and Prevention Act for five years for its role in the June 2015 ambush in Manipur; which killed 18 Indian security personnel. Since abrogating the cease-fire with the Government of India on 27 March 2015, the NSCN (K) had repeatedly targeted Indian security forces. The NSCN (K) was unhappy that its repeated demands for inclusion in the Naga peace talks between the NSCN (IM) and the Indian Government had not been accepted. Though the GoI made an effort to reach out to NSCN (K), it did not fructify thus further isolating the NSCN (K).

(e) **Sovereignty of Myanmar Nagas.** NSCN (K) realises that it is very unlikely to get a respectable political deal for the minuscule Naga ethnic community in Myanmar. So, why is the NSCN (K) not fighting the Myanmar Government but is combative in India for the Naga cause, in spite of much larger Naga-claimed lands in Myanmar as compared to India? The answer lies in Myanmar politics. The truth of the matter is that when the NSCN (K) signed a “bilateral ceasefire” agreement in 2012 with the Myanmar Government, it resolved not to join in any political talks for the Naga areas with the Myanmar Government. The Myanmar Nagas are committed to give no trouble to the Myanmar Government and to fully support whatever political decisions are made by the Government for the Nagas in Myanmar. In return, the NSCN (K) obtained safe sanctuary, while waging war against

India, which makes sense from a tactical military perspective of not fighting two enemies together. This has weakened the demand for Nagalim and NSCN (K) outfit as such.

**(f) Security Cooperation Mechanism with Myanmar.**

India appears to have set up a comprehensive and functional security cooperation mechanism with Myanmar. Over the years, the drastic reduction in insurgency related violence in Manipur and Nagaland states sharing borders with Myanmar has allowed New Delhi and Naypyidaw to explore policy options to seal the gains. These include a generous supply of arms and equipments by India to Myanmar, and setting up forums for the continuous exchange of ideas between the two countries. India and Myanmar reached an agreement to open the fourth Border Liaison Office (BLO) in the Nagaland sector. Three BLOs are already in operation in the Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Mizoram sectors. BLOs have served as mechanisms to promote cooperation between the law enforcement agencies of both countries.

**(g) Tourism and Industry.** The peace agreement signed with a key Nagaland outfit will help the resource-rich state realise its true economic potential and help attract tourists and industrialists. Nagaland is rich in natural resources such as coal, natural gas, decorative stones, petroleum, nickel, cobalt-chromium and agri-products etc. The cooperation by Central Government will help Nagaland realise its true potential of economic growth.

**(h) Positive Impetus by Naga Civil Society Organisation.**

Attempts to draw locals into mainstream of development as infringement of their independence and culture by the churches and formation of various Civil Society Organisations has changed the outlook of locals. The civil society organisations in Nagaland such as the Naga Hoho-An apex council of Naga tribals, Naga Mothers Association (NMA), Naga Students Federation (NSF) and United Naga Council (UNC) are playing an important role in laying the groundwork for the emergence of lasting peace in the region<sup>5</sup>.

## **The Impediments**

(a) **Sovereignty and Federalism.** While Mr Rijiju told *The Hindu* that the NSCN (IM) has given up on “Naga sovereignty”, the NSCN’s Muivah said the opposite on 14 Aug 2015 at the 69th Naga Independence Day in his Hebron Headquarters. He clarified that the NSCN had never given up on Naga sovereignty. But he clarified that the final settlement will be based on the concept of “shared sovereignty” because if India recognises the “unique history of the Nagas”, the Nagas should recognise India’s problems and limitations. That spirit of give-and-take is most welcome but should not be misconstrued as a compulsion instead of a choice. “Shared sovereignty” is not a bad idea because it can take Indian federalism forward to new heights. A unique federalist solution would mean greater autonomy and more powers to the Naga State (and to other Indian States as well in future), whatever its final territorial shape may be. But, Mr Muivah’s insistence that they have not given up on Nagalim does complicate the scenario and keeps it open ended.

(b) **Nagalim versus Naga Identity.** The various groups involved in this conflict include several rebel groups, the NSCN (IM) which purportedly wants a Christian Religious State: the NSCN-K which wants an independent “Greater Nagaland” to include territory now in Myanmar, based on ethnicity<sup>6</sup>. Any attempt to parcel off Naga areas to Nagaland will reduce Manipur to less than half its present size and have disastrous consequences for the state and the region. The problem has surfaced in various parts of the Assam-Nagaland and the Arunachal Pradesh-Nagaland border with intense contestations over villages claimed under Greater Nagalim. The local/tribal leaders with personal aspirations will support the demand and try to keep the insurgency pot boiling.

(c) **Transition and Future of NSCN (IM).** The leadership of NSCN (IM) has become aged. Death of Isac Chishi Swu in Jun 2016 and struggle by other leaders are likely to pose leadership crisis. Future of NSCN (IM) and peace talks are hinged on smooth transition of leadership. In the interim the

political leadership in the state is growing stronger thus posing a threat to the insurgent leaders.

**(d) Implementation of Ceasefire Ground Rules (CFGR).**

Carrying of arms under the cover of jackets and shawls everywhere during CF-which has been done by NSCN (IM) and NSCN (K), defeats the very rationale of having a CF. Such violations have the potential to intimidate and incite violence, as has been demonstrated in the 'peacetime factional fights' which has killed many combatants and non-combatants in various parts of Nagaland and other states as well. The implementation of CFGR by all should be strictly enforced and action taken to curb criminal activities sheltered by ceasefire.

**(e) Surrender Policy.** Due to protracted talks, the surrender policy is such that it permits insurgent groups who come forward to surrender opting to keep arms and ammunition in reserve, thereby ensuring an option open to go back to the jungles if they are not able to achieve tangible gains out of the peace process. Insurgent surrenders in recent times have shown that the number of arms and ammunition deposited with security forces at the time of their surrender are minimal compared to the estimated levels based on their insurgent operations earlier. There is need to take a relook at the surrender policy and make it more effective in disarming the insurgents.

**(f) Education and Employment of Youth.** Education, the core of human progress, has declined so much that hordes of students have had to move out of the state to seek better education elsewhere. Beyond the state capital of Kohima there is absolutely no development. Eastern Nagaland bordering Myanmar, the home of the Konyak Nagas, is totally ungoverned territory. Another factor which has been exploited by the militants is the relatively high level of unemployment in the state. The state has a good literacy rate of 80 per cent and the emerging new generation is keen to take up white collared jobs. However, with a weak industrial base and a civil administration mired in controversy and corruption, jobs are not available to the educated youth. The

Gol and State Government should concentrate on higher education and skill development in youth to promote jobs.

(g) **Look East Policy.** National Highway 39 has been projected by New Delhi as part of Trans-Asian Highway, as component of its 'Look East Policy'. The development goals and prospects of the Look East Policy have not been attuned to existing realities of political and ethnic divides in the region. The need is to energise the re-conditioning and re-connections of the other road networks through Moreh (Manipur) and Ledo (Assam) to Myanmar. If the issue of connectivity is resolved, then development would not be a problem.<sup>7</sup> Efforts are on to provide railway connectivity to state capitals in the region.

(h) **Clash of political and Religious Organisations.** Nagaland is a Christian majority state where religious organisations have had role in elections with Church groups calling for resistance against 'Hindutva' parties. All political parties and religious organisations will have to put development, inclusive growth and nationalism above everything else failing which it has potential to impede the peace process.

## **Conclusion**

Nagaland state has a 'Vision 2020' initiative to develop and become an industrial hub by 2020. Perhaps Nagaland is about to reap benefits from modernisation and globalisation, as the shining example of the Indian Government's Look East Policy. The leadership crisis in the insurgent groups has helped in establishing of law and order and softening of stand by insurgents. Above all the Gol's 'Look East Policy' and friendly neighbour in Myanmar are great opportunities to meet goals of Naga people and neutralise impediments. The current socio-political developments in the northeast India i.e. the State governments of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Tripura, Meghalaya and Nagaland supported by Central Government, stand a good chance of taking forward the peace process.

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# **Wuhan Reset – Strategic Etymology Kaleidoscopic View**

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**M**<sup>r</sup> Henry Kissinger's seminal book "On China" begins with

Chairman Mao Zedong briefing his top military commanders in October 1962, in the wake of Sino-Indian border standoff.<sup>1</sup> Deep diving into history, he recalled that China and India had fought 'one and half' wars and there were valuable lessons to be drawn from each. The "first war" occurred during Tang Dynasty (618-907 AD) when China dispatched troops to support Indian Kingdom against an aggressive rival. After China's intervention, the two countries enjoyed centuries of religious and economic exchanges. The lesson as Mao put it; "China and India were not doomed to perpetual enmity. They could enjoy long period of peace again, but to do so, China had to use force to 'knock' India back to negotiating table." The "half war" Mao referred to was, when Mongol Timurlane sacked Delhi, almost seven hundred years later in 1398, killing over 100,000 prisoners. (Mao reckoned China and Mongolia then were part of same political entity). When ordering offensive against India, Mao instructed his forces to be 'restrained and principled'. Accordingly, after inflicting crushing defeat on Indian forces, People's Liberation Army (PLA) retreated to the original line of control, returning even the captured heavy equipment.<sup>2</sup>

The singular uniqueness of Chinese leaders lies in invoking strategic principles from millennium old events. No other country can claim to link its ancient classic dictums of strategy to its present statesmanship. This is why; the world often gets China wrong while decoding the mind of its leaders. Even in the recent past, series of incidences that occurred on India's border with China invariably synchronised with important visits. Depsang in April 2013 preceded Chinese Prime Minister (PM) Li Keqiang visit to India, Demchok-Chumar happened in September 2014 when

President Xi was in India and Doklam in June-August coincided with PM Modi's visit to the USA.

President Xi Jinping is known to have deep understanding of Chinese history and seems to follow Mao. As per Mr Kevin Rudd, former Prime Minister of Australia, Xi is a man of extraordinary intellect with well-defined world view.<sup>3</sup> Late Mr Lee Kuan Yew had compared Xi with the likes of Nelson Mandela. Therefore, informal summit (*Fei Zhengshi Huitian*) at Wuhan on 27-28 April 2018, at the behest of personal invitation from President Xi Jinping to PM Modi merits in-depth introspection and analysis. It was the second time that Xi made an exception to welcome any leader outside Beijing, first time in 2015 when he hosted Modi at Xian. Xi definitely would not be making such exceptional gestures without a grand design. To unravel the labyrinth of Wuhan reset, it is pertinent to take a kaleidoscopic view of the strategic etymology, particularly from the Chinese perspective and its interpretation to gauge impact on the future course of India-China relations.

### **Strategic Etymology- Kaleidoscopic View**

The circumstances which led to the informal summit at Wuhan can be largely attributed to the strategic review of the global environment by President Xi, in the realm of his recently enunciated doctrine. After assuming power as Fifth Generation Leader, President Xi surprised everybody by grossly bending the constitutional rules followed by his immediate predecessors. During the 19<sup>th</sup> Party Congress held in October 2017, Xi had his "Thought for New Era Socialism with Chinese Special Characteristics" enshrined in the Constitution.<sup>4</sup> During the 13<sup>th</sup> National People's Congress (NPC) in March 2018, he went on to abolish the Presidential term limit, to retain power for life.<sup>5</sup> Thus, Xi has emerged as the most powerful leader after Mao.

Through its history, China has persuaded neighbours to acquiesce. It prospered only when the Emperor was strong and periphery peaceful. Xi commenced his second term with conviction that China needed strong personalistic leader. Accordingly, he gradually established himself both in the Party and PLA; twin pillars of Chinese power structure. Xi unleashed anti-corruption campaign to clean up the system and purge



potential political rivals. Simultaneously, he initiated radical military reforms to prepare the defence forces for future global role and reinforce Party's hold over the PLA.

During the Party Congress, Xi unfolded his doctrine centred on 'China Dream' (*zhongmeng*); which envisions 'powerful and prosperous China'. It entails rejuvenation (*fuxing*) i.e. restoration of China's past grandeur. To implement his grand vision, Xi outlined twin centenary objectives; People's Republic of China (PRC) to become fully modern economy – achieve social modernisation by 2035 and acquire status of 'great modern socialist country' by middle of the Century.<sup>6</sup> He also propounded the policy of 'striving for achievements' (*fanfa youwei*) and usher China into the New Era, advocating Beijing's leadership role to shape China-centric global order. This marked a paradigm shift from Deng's strategy of maintaining low profile till China completed its peaceful rise.

Xi has been empowered by the Communist Party of China (CPC) to be at the helm indefinitely, to give him adequate time to complete the process of China's rise as a global power. Besides, Chinese economy is in state of transition from low technology manufacturing to advance digitally enabled products. Further, continuity is considered vital in executing the mega global initiatives like the 'belt-road'. With collective leadership on the backburner, the burden of performance now squarely rests on Xi. His failure could push China into chaos, given the high expectations of China's rising middle class.

China has always opposed global security system based on American military alliances and partnerships. Therefore, China's policy seeks diminution of American influence in the Asia-Pacific region. With US adopting 'pivot to Asia' policy, China accelerated its military modernisation process. In pursuit of the Chinese based world order, Beijing has undertaken series of initiatives to set up alternate multilateral structures to include Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), Asia Infrastructure Development Bank (AIDB) and Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). As per Beijing's strategic calculus, in the coming decades, while China and USA will be the competing powers, the other important players will be

India and Japan, both in its neighbourhood. Hostile periphery will not be conducive to China's progress.

China at no cost will condescend to the idea of 'Indo-Pacific' gaining currency and Quad (US, India, Japan and Australia) grouping taking shape of an alliance. Even in the ancient times, its emperors dealt with the adversaries by pitching 'one barbarian against the other'.<sup>7</sup> To counter Trump's 'America First' policy, China is keen to make Asia as the globalisation pivot. In the larger Pan-Asian sub-set, China views India as one of the important players. Beijing is also re-engaging Tokyo as part of its strategic review. Mr Li Keqiang visited Japan for the trilateral summit which included South Korea in May 2018. The trio strongly voiced for regional comprehensive economic cooperation encompassing ASEAN and other major economies; India, Australia and New Zealand. Sino-Russian relations over the recent years have transformed into strategic partnership.

In view of the aforesaid, Xi apparently has had a serious rethink on Beijing's relations with its important neighbours. Doklam stand-off was also a trigger for China to reconsider its India policy. Xi is going about systematically to challenge America. In the process, Beijing is willing to yield tactical space to serve its larger strategic interests. How can PRC stake its claim to be a superpower; politically isolated and confined to Western Pacific?

From India's perspective, there was an imperative need to recast China policy based on pragmatism through fresh initiatives. PM Modi has established good personal rapport with president Xi. Hence, informal setting offered excellent opportunity to put across India's concerns about the cross border terrorism, Chinese looming presence in India's neighbourhood including India Ocean Region, China-Pak Economic Corridor (CPEC), impasse on the border issue and restoring glaring trade imbalance.

### **Wuhan Reset: Common Theme – Different Tones**

Considerable effort went in by way of ministerial level meetings to set the stage for the Wuhan Summit. The basic rationale behind whole exercise was to build mutual trust and identify common ground to resolve vexed problems. Besides being on same page

on a number of global issues, idea was also to evolve broad framework for strengthening bilateral relations.

Wuhan as a venue, situated on River Yangze in central China was a well-considered choice; given its rich historic past (unrest to unseat the Qing Dynasty started in the military barracks of the city) and to showcase China's industrial prowess. Six meetings in the course of twenty four hours with open ended agenda allowed the two leaders to have a freewheeling dialogue with no pressure on the outcome. Mr Modi highlighted the need to have shared vision, shared thought process, shared resolve, strong relationship and better communications between the two neighbours. He further went on to define his vision of bilateral relationship in the form of five principles i.e. Thought (*Soch*), Contact (*sampark*), Cooperation (*Sahyog*), Determination (*Sankalp*) and Dream (*Sapne*).<sup>8</sup>

In the absence of a joint communiqué, the two sides issued separate statements, with common themes and varying tones.<sup>9</sup> Salient aspects are summarised below:-

- (a) One significant outcome was agreement between the two leaders to have such summits periodically, facilitating 'strategic communications' at the highest level.
- (b) Second important facet was of providing 'strategic guidance' to the respective militaries to build trust, mutual understanding and enhance cooperation in effective management of the border affairs. There was emphasis by both sides on 'maturity and wisdom' to handle differences; keeping each other's sensitivities, concerns and aspirations in mind.
- (c) With regards to India-China border question, the two leaders expressed support for the work of Special Representatives. They urged for intensification of efforts to seek fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable settlement, while underscoring the importance of 'maintaining peace and tranquility' in all areas of border region. Apparently, it is further building upon the agreement reached in 2005 referred

to as “Political Parameters and Guiding Principles for Settlement of Border Question”.<sup>10</sup>

(d) On terrorism, both sides agreed to promote more active regional and international cooperation. They also concurred to join hands in offering innovative and sustainable solutions to global challenges like natural calamities and climate change.

(e) With regards to trade and economy, the areas of emphasis were starkly divergent. While India wanted the trade deficit to be balanced and sustainable, China on the other hand was focussed on investment, by tapping full potential and exploring new areas of cooperation.

(f) Another important outcome was agreement to work jointly on an economic project in Afghanistan. The details are to be worked out through diplomatic channels.

(g) On the issue of strategic autonomy and stability, the two sides were at variation. India’s view on peaceful, stable and balanced relations envisaged creating conditions for the ‘Asian Century’. China sees the two biggest developing economies as a positive factor for global stability. Both sides agreed to continuously enhance mutual trust and carry forward the fine norms enshrined in ‘Five Principles’ of peaceful coexistence.

### **Prognosis**

Wuhan Summit, although termed as an informal meeting between Modi and Xi, was a meticulously planned, deliberately structured and precisely choreographed dialogue with far reaching ramifications. It was aimed to provide the two leaders a platform for ‘heart to heart’ candid exchange of views. Being strategic in nature, the underlying intent was to take holistic perspective of complex issues and explore innovative options for future progress. The thrust was on developing shared understanding, establishing personal rapport and exploring avenues of consensus for establishing effective structures for stable and balanced relations. While the themes of summit were common, the accents of the two sides were at variance, given the divergent perspectives. China’s

political aspirations being global, its post- summit statements were articulated accordingly. Indian approach on the other hand, was more in the regional setting.

China's core national objectives – Stability, Sovereignty and Modernity remain sacrosanct. Stability implies unchallenged authority of the Communist Party. To this end, Chinese leadership remains very sensitive to Tibet and Xinjiang. Sovereignty, besides strategic autonomy entails unification of claimed territories with the motherland which includes Taiwan, island territories in East and South China Sea and South Tibet (*Xizang*-Arunachal Pradesh). Modernity connotes development and economic progress; critical to the very survival of the Communist regime.

President Xi's commitment to the national aims in letter and spirit is evident from the fact that he started his second innings by exhorting the PLA to be combat ready and focus on winning wars. During the closing session of the 13<sup>th</sup> NPC, Xi vowed to safeguard national sovereignty and not concede an inch of its territory.<sup>11</sup> He also issued stern warning to Taiwan against any attempt of separatism. In view of the above, China is unlikely to soften its stand on the border issue or forsake claims on Arunachal Pradesh. Its heavy handed policy on Tibet is there to continue as also pressure on India to keep distance from Dalai Lama. There is likely to be no significant change in Chinese relations with all-weather ally Pakistan. Even on the issues of candidature for the membership of UN Security Council or to be part of Nuclear Supply Group, Chinese are expected to stick to their current position. With the strategic guidance to the respective militaries, the tension on the borders is expected to ease out.

It is in India's larger interest to collaborate with China and manage the differences through dialogue. To ensure continued engagement with Beijing on equal terms, Delhi needs to carry out strategic review of its national aims and objectives on a wider spectrum, factoring both regional and global imperatives. There is need for a pragmatic China policy with thrust on achieving strategic equilibrium between the two neighbours. This can only be achieved if India makes an earnest effort to scale up its 'Comprehensive National Power' and reduce the prevailing yawning gap. This includes both the hard and soft power. Indian

Armed Forces have to adopt a transformational approach in modernisation process to match the PLA which is all set to emerge as modern military at par with the Western Armies by 2035. India has a major geostrategic advantage in the Indo-Pacific region which it needs to leverage through astute diplomacy.

Wuhan Summit was not merely tango between the Dragon and Elephant. It was a well thought through diplomatic initiative to give fresh impetus to the India-China relations in the realm of changing international environment. Informal structure of the meeting provided the two sides to think beyond the stated positions to dismantle existing gridlocks. The new format of 'strategic communication' between the two sides sets a precedence, for more such dialogues to follow.

Chinese leaders have penchant for ancient history and realpolitik approach to address the contentious issues. Xi and his team would definitely take long term view of the Wuhan deliberations to recalibrate strategic calculus in consonance with the 'Grand National Objectives'. On the Indian side, given the reality of 'five year' cycle based strategic culture, post 2019 scenario will be crucial to take Wuhan process forward. This notwithstanding, in the larger national interest, Wuhan format needs to be institutionalised as a platform for strategic dialogue at the highest level, which will go a long way in balancing and stabilising India-China relations.

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# India-China Riparian Relations: Of Reality and Rationality

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## Introduction

When a subject is highly controversial, as water issues tend to be, the truth often gets blurred. Lies, misperception and differing interpretation make water relations contentious both at the transboundary and provincial levels. Rivalry over water is age-old and is actually built into our language. In fact the word rival derives from Latin *rivalis*, originally meaning 'person using the same stream as another'. The phrase to 'sell someone down the river' means to betray someone. It is increasingly becoming clear that water cannot be understood in isolation from a variety of broader contextual issues – particularly energy security, food security, as also wealth generation. The internal water challenges that states are rapidly going to encounter will greatly impact the transboundary water issues.

Riparian relations are underpinned by varied interpretations of the use of river water and the differing claims. Upper riparian nations essentially base their claims on "absolute territorial sovereignty", i.e. the right to use rivers unilaterally. The lower riparian, on the other hand, claim "absolute territorial integrity" of rivers, stressing that upper riparian actions should not affect the water flowing downstream. The two claims are incompatible. There are, however, accepted legal norms of "equitable utilisation", "no-harm rule" and "restricted sovereignty" that riparian states work through, and frame negotiations and treaties accordingly to overcome such differing positions. But more often than not, these norms in power dynamics are rendered meaningless. With state interest overriding legally binding international treaty, riparian relations are thus largely influenced by the prevailing political dynamics and strategic considerations. What quite clearly emerges in the river basins is a hydropolitical



security complex in which states are part hydrological owners and part technical users of rivers. In this security complex, to what extent factors like distribution, quality and competing uses contribute to domestic or regional water insecurity is critically important to peace and stability in Asia.

Rivers are complex socio-natural realities that invariably get entangled with politics. India and China, two big and powerful riparians, offer an interesting account of hydro-behaviour and hydro-politics. The two not only share rivers between their neighbours but also significantly have transboundary rivers flowing between them. The political framing, thus, is whether there will be elements of cooperation and understanding between the two or whether there will be uneasiness and unsettlement on the shared rivers. Another dimension to this framing is that shared rivers are an extension of the broader strategic interaction in which China and India compete, contest and cooperate.

China's hydrological position is one of complete upper riparian supremacy. According to the Ministry of Water Resources, China shares more than 50 major international watercourses with its downstream riparian neighbours that include 13 directly bordering countries and three close neighbour countries.<sup>1</sup> China's riparian neighbours are North Korea, Russia, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Bhutan, Myanmar, Laos, Nepal, Pakistan occupied Kashmir, Afghanistan, India and Vietnam. An interesting fact to note is that less than one per cent of water comes from outside China's territory, while the volume of water flowing out of China is about 730 billion cubic metres (bcm).<sup>2</sup> This is a huge strategic asset that can be translated into political leverage and bargaining with the downstream neighbouring countries. With water as a tool and an instrument, China quite effectively mixes 'coercion and compliance' with 'attraction and intimidation', what the Marxist political philosopher Antonio Gramsci famously termed "a mix of force and consent."

In contrast, India is simultaneously an upper and lower riparian. Some figures indicate that about 354 bcm of water flow into India from Tibet of which the annual average flow in the Brahmaputra is 78.10 bcm. India's lower riparian position increases its dependency (and thus water insecurity) on the

headwaters of the rivers such as Indus, Sutlej and Brahmaputra which originate in the Tibetan plateau. While China has no water sharing treaties or agreements on its transboundary rivers, India, has entered into water sharing treaties with its lower riparian countries Pakistan (Indus Waters Treaty of 1960) and Bangladesh (Ganga Treaty of 1996).

China's per capita water resources in 2013 was just over 2,000 cubic meters with overall water availability at nearly 2.8 trillion cubic metres.<sup>3</sup> The average annual per capita availability of water in India as per the 2011 census was 1545 cubic metres with utilisable water resources of only 1123 bcm, which is likely to be 1093 bcm by 2025.<sup>4</sup> While both China and India are currently in high water stress category, it is projected that by 2040 both will be in the top 50 water scarce countries.<sup>5</sup> Currently, both countries face wide ranging challenges including deteriorating water quality, uneven distribution of water resources in space and time and inefficient utilisation. The critical difference between the two countries is that China is far more water secure while India receives a large portion of its water from outside its territory and hence water dependent.

### **China Legacy of Hydro-Control and Supremacy**

China has a legacy of control and dominance of rivers. The history of the Chinese civilisation is in many ways a history of hydraulic engineering, canal-building and water conservation. Yu, the Great, who founded the Xia dynasty, the first dynasty under traditional Chinese around 2200 BC, had a mythical status that came from his ability to manage the Yellow river. 'Whoever controls the Yellow river controls China' is a timeless maxim. Yu demonstrated for 11 years how to tame the Yellow river by incorporating local knowledge and participation to successfully divert the flow to the sea. Interestingly, Yu's father, Gun had failed in his attempt to control the floods of Yellow river and was executed. Wu, the Han (141-87 BC) deemed as the greatest Han emperor, who expanded the territory, realised in the end the futility of war and expansion and diverted his attention to agriculture and irrigation.

Mao Tse-tung, one of the most remarkable personalities of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, who once commented that he was "part monkey,

part tiger”, established the People's Republic of China in 1949 and transformed it into a modern industrialised socialist state. In 1950, Mao issued a directive, *The Huai River Must Be Harnessed* that entailed constructing a new route for the river to the sea in order to mitigate flooding. It was an audacious plan but for Mao it was a “triumph of political mobilisation over seemingly overwhelming obstacles”<sup>6</sup> or as he would often state “nature is an enemy that had to be beaten” and that “man must conquer nature”. Mao reclaimed the hydraulic mind-set, portraying it as the courage of the leader and the struggle of the labouring people against the elements of nature.<sup>7</sup> Systematically since 1950, Mao’s leadership created a hydraulic society, with control of water supply for irrigation as the basis of the Chinese mode of production and of a powerful, exploitative bureaucracy.<sup>8</sup>

Rivers are not only territorial but status seeking and symbolise political supremacy. When Mao looked at Tibet he saw the mighty rivers flowing from the landscape and made a seemingly innocent remark: ‘the south has a lot of water, the north little ... if possible, it is ok to lend a little water’.<sup>9</sup> Since then it has spawned a whole breed of Chinese leadership who think hydrologically. Without Tibet, China’s hydrological supremacy would be overturned. It would go from being entirely water-independent to being water-dependent. Had it not been for Tibet, China would not have been the world’s most independent riparian country. In fact, Beijing’s total control over Tibet in effect is its ‘total’ control over the water resources. Over 60 per cent of China’s current leaders have engineering backgrounds with deep interest in mega-water projects.

An example of this is, the South-to-North Water Transfer Project from Tibet got under way in 2002, and is expected to take more than 50 years to complete, making it the world’s largest hydropower project ever. The project involves drawing 44.8 bcm of water from the southern rivers in Tibet and linking it to mainland China’s four main rivers – Yangtze, Yellow, Huaihe and Haihe – through three diversion routes – the eastern, central and western.<sup>10</sup> The eastern and central routes are now functioning and the rivers that have been linked are within the territory of China, but the western route, which factors diverting the transboundary

rivers including the Yarlung/Bramaputra at the 'Great Bend' is controversial and of concern to India. Currently, the feasibility of the central project is being studied but more importantly the political cost is being determined as any diversion would mean disturbing relations with downstream countries. However, China will never say it officially. Diversion will always create fear and apprehension and, hence, maintaining a strategic silence on the diversion plan is a strategic choice.

In the context of water diversion and with the US rebalancing of Asia, it is important to observe President Xi Jinping speech in the Boao Forum in April 2013. Xi asserted that China "While pursuing its own interests, a country should accommodate the legitimate concerns of others...We need to work vigorously to create more cooperation opportunities, upgrade cooperation, and deliver more development dividends to our people and contribute more to global growth."<sup>11</sup> It is a well calibrated political messaging, emphasising China as a benign power and respecting peaceful co-existence. In reality, however, China's emphasis on sovereignty and territorial integrity is far more pronounced than mutual benefit on managing its transboundary waters. It is a conundrum that will define how China balances its domestic water needs with its 'good neighbour' policy.

For China, water is immensely strategic. Its internal stability depends a lot on the stable supply of water and it is unlikely that China will compromise on its water resources. Given this reality, India has to rationally view its downstream status. Hydrological facts and objective data-based analysis will be important in its calculation and not a generalised fear hypothesis that China will 'water bomb' us by controlling the flow of the Brahmaputra. Informed science is a good starting point for India to build its capability and capacity on the Brahmaputra and in the process de-emphasise China as a hydro-hegemon. The reasons are explained below.

### **Brahmaputra is ours to Develop**

The Brahmaputra originates from the Angsi Glacier in the Burang County of Tibet, where it is known as the YarlungTsangpo. The total length of the river from the source to the mouth is 2,880 km,

of which 1,625 km flows through Tibet, 918 km traverses India and the rest 337 km in Bangladesh. On the face of it, since 56 per cent of the river flows in the Chinese territory one can be easily mistaken to believe that China controls the large share of the water. However, and this is an important fact, the volumetric of the Yarlung/Brahmaputra is not proportional to its length inside a country. The Yarlung is a trans-Himalayan river where precipitation averages about 300 mm annually. Once it crosses the Himalayan crest line, the annual precipitation reaches about 2000 mm.<sup>12</sup> Translated, this means that the Yarlung when it reaches India's territory and becomes the Brahmaputra, it swells and becomes mightier because of the heavy monsoon rain and spring water and also the contribution of the fast flowing tributaries the Luhit, Dibang and Siang/Dihang. Peer reviewed data clearly suggest that both, during the lean and peak flow, the total annual outflow of the Yarlung from China is significantly less than the Brahmaputra. This means that India has ample water on its side to develop and harness.

India needs to have more water development footprints in Arunachal to enhance economic growth in the region particularly building more water storages and thereby exert down riparian prior appropriation rights. It must not be forgotten that China's claim to the Arunachal territory (South Tibet) is also a claim to the vast amount of water flowing in the area. Greater economic integration in the border region is an effective way to neutralise China's claim. Of course the hydro projects in Arunachal, apart from being scientifically sound and technologically robust, need to be framed in a cooperative and consultative manner with wider stakeholder and inter-provincial participation in the north-east particularly with Assam which is downstream to Arunachal. It will be counter-productive for India to create upstream and downstream acrimony within its own territory. Equally significant is the 1800-km of potential waterways and navigation in the northeast, which unfortunately has been much ignored. With the current government's investment on inland waterways, the Brahmaputra National Waterway 2 would act as a critical economic corridor with direct access to Chittagong Port in Bangladesh and the Haldia Port in West Bengal and boost trade with Southeast Asian countries.

There are ways to pursue positive interactions on the Brahmaputra exclusive of China and more significantly de-emphasising China. An important element of India's hydro-diplomacy would be to initiate a lower riparian coalition stretching from the Ganga-Meghna-Brahmaputra to the Thanlwin / Salween and Mekong basins. One such calculation can be to consider strongly a multi-basin treaty on the Brahmaputra with Bhutan and Bangladesh. The sub-regional groupings like the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) and Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal (BBIN) can act as a catalyst. Whether it is tourism, culture, transport and communication, rivers can be a force multiplier. More than knee-jerk counter-responses, India needs to think of cohesive engagement. The Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC) and the government's recent initiatives to expand the areas of cooperation among the member countries that includes Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam are vital to the sustainability of India's Act East Policy.

At the diplomatic front India needs to bring the transboundary rivers with China as a core issue in bilateral discussions. This space is important to provide the political push for the two countries to think of mitigating risks and sharing benefits on the Yarlung/Brahmaputra and Sutlej. India's downstream position increases its vulnerability to China particularly in flood season. There are also huge concerns of natural disasters like glacial lake outburst flood that happened on the Pareechu river in 2005 leading to enormous damage downstream in Himachal Pradesh. China has always been reluctant to discuss water issues but the onus is on India to frame the water agenda beyond the volumetric and bring in larger environmental conventions like climate change, wetland protection, and biodiversity to the table. This will help in adding fresh perspective and practicality to the MoU that India has with China on data sharing and emergency situation.

### **Conclusion**

India is not one-river downstream with China and thus India's riparian relations with China are exceptional and critical. India is multi-river dependent with the Brahmaputra on the East and the Indus and the Sutlej on the West. The Ganga which originates in

India has nine tributaries joining it from Nepal, three of which Karnali, Gandaki and Kosi arise in Tibet. The geographical reality of China being the upper riparian cannot be changed but India's lower riparian position does not necessarily mean acute disadvantage. China in recent years has changed the narrative of engagement with greater strategic partnership including the OBOR and Maritime Silk Road as well as deep economic ties and investment. China will be far more willing to discuss water concerns of the lower riparian countries than it did in the past. India's strategic and policy initiatives on the subject of Brahmaputra has to be carefully balanced between pursuing a 'water dialogue' with China and an emphasis on 'basin approach' with Bangladesh and Bhutan on the Brahmaputra.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> International Cooperation on Transboundary Rivers between China and its Neighbouring Countries, Ministry of Water Resources, People Republic of China, April 2015, p.2. See, <http://www.mwr.gov.cn/english/mainsubjects/201604/P020160406513798903048.pdf>. Also see, the National Bureau of Statistics of the People's Republic of China, <http://www.stats.gov.cn/>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p.2

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p.2

<sup>4</sup> Ministry of Water Resources, Government of India, <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=119797>

<sup>5</sup> India Water Portal, <http://www.indiawaterportal.org/articles/what-does-being-water-stressed-mean-india-and-her-neighbours>

<sup>6</sup> Thayer Watkins, "*The Control of the Huai River System in China*", see, <http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/watkins/huairiver.htm>

<sup>7</sup> Uttam Kumar Sinha, "Examining China's Hydro-Behaviour: Peaceful or Assertive?", *Strategic Analysis*, 36(1), 2012, p. 45

<sup>8</sup> See, Karl Wittfogel, *Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Power*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957

<sup>9</sup> Cited in James Nickum, 'The Status of the South to North Water Transfer Plans in China', at [http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2006/papers/james\\_nickum\\_china\\_water\\_transfer.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2006/papers/james_nickum_china_water_transfer.pdf).

<sup>10</sup> Water Technology, [https://www.water-technology.net/projects/south\\_north/](https://www.water-technology.net/projects/south_north/)

<sup>11</sup> Full text of the speech, [http://www.china.org.cn/business/Boao\\_Forum\\_2013/2013-04/10/content\\_28501562.htm](http://www.china.org.cn/business/Boao_Forum_2013/2013-04/10/content_28501562.htm)

<sup>12</sup> JayantaBandyopadhyay, Nilanjan Ghosh and ChandanMahanta, "IRBM for Brahmaputra Sub-basin", [https://www.orfonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Monograph\\_IRBM-for-Brahmaputra\\_Z-Final.pdf](https://www.orfonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Monograph_IRBM-for-Brahmaputra_Z-Final.pdf), pp.8-9

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# **The Islamic State and Civil War in Syria**

**Shri VP Haran, IFS (Retd)®**

## **Introduction**

**E**gyptian Goddess ISIS was worshipped all over Greco-Roman empire in ancient times. She resurrected her slain husband, the divine King Osiris. She was believed to help the dead enter afterlife. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century ISIS is anything but that Goddess, but could do with Her help and guidance.

Jama'at al Tawhid Wal Jihad was established in Iraq in 1999 and became Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) in 2004. By late 2009, over 80 per cent of AQI leadership in Iraq had been killed or captured. Only eight leaders were at large. In May 2010, Abu Bakr al Baghdadi took over as the leader of AQI also known by then as Islamic State in Iraq (ISI). By 2011 ISI started rebuilding in Iraq, helped by release of Al Qaeda prisoners by the US and Iraq and freeing of prisoners by ISI. The released prisoners, discharged soldiers of the Iraqi Army and disgruntled Sunnis formed the core of ISI cadres and senior leadership. They were already well trained when they joined ISI. In this background, developments in Syria provided the opportunity to ISI to expand its base and area of operations.

AQI rechristened itself as Islamic State (IS) in June 2014, following proclamation of the Caliphate. Various referred to as Islamic State in Iraq and Levant (ISIL), Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), and Daesh; IS is a Jihadist terrorist organisation that has used cruel tactics to establish a Caliphate, initially in Iraq and Syria. An ISIS map of 2006 gives a clear indication of the plans of IS. The territory they wanted to control in Syria and Iraq largely overlapped the oil and gas fields. A later map indicated that IS wanted to spread their influence across the Middle East. They had visions of realising their dreams, with successes on ground in 2013, but their dreams came crashing down in the face of

concerted efforts by the international community, since 2014-2015.

### **Expansion into Syria**

AQI was involved in the Syrian civil war from the beginning in March 2011. Around 20 April, they overran two security posts on the highway from Damascus to Jordan border and beheaded the soldiers. In June, in Jisr al-Shughour, AQI was at the forefront when security forces offices were surrounded and overrun and reinforcements sent were intercepted and beheaded, the trademark way that AQI was known for.

The crisis in Syria was an important factor in AQI gaining strength. They found a safe haven. They had access to weapons, resources and real time intelligence, thanks to support extended by many countries to the opposition. AQI was able to benefit from all this since they had battle hardened cadres. Senator Rand Paul was right when he blamed the US Government of indirectly supporting ISIL by arming their allies and fighting their enemies. The disturbed conditions provided the ideal chance to IS to realise their dream of controlling territory.

AQI started sending cadres experienced in guerilla warfare to Syria regularly since August 2011 with a clear plan: to build an organisation. Areas of their concentration were Sunni dominated areas of the provinces of Deir ez Zor, Raqqa, Idlib and Aleppo. It helped them establish control in contiguous areas, which had a border with AQI controlled areas in Iraq. This facilitated easy movement of cadres and in due course helped AQI declare a Caliphate.

Their differences with the other Groups were more over influence and lust for control of territory than doctrinal. Their ruthlessness, sectarian attacks and imposing of Sharia law distinguished them from the others, but also led to their being viewed by locals as foreign occupiers. Though they accepted assistance from other countries, they were conscious of the need to reduce dependence on external funding.

For about two years, many of the major operations were coordinated with other Groups. In many operations it was difficult to distinguish AQI cadres from the others. AQI was never hesitant

to display their banners in areas of operation. The brutality of AQI, proved an attraction for cadres from other groups to gravitate towards AQI. Further, AQI paid higher salaries than the other groups. Once AQI established itself, Baghdadi unilaterally announced in April, 2013 that Al Nusra Front, another Al Qaeda group operating in Syria has merged with ISI. This marriage proved short lived and the divorce was announced in February 2014. By then fierce clashes had broken out between AQI and the rest of the opposition. AQI was set on establishing control over areas and did not show any hesitation in getting rid of anyone who stood in their way. AQI thus emerged as the leading opposition group in Syria, but this also meant that they became the targets of everyone else on the ground.

### **Phenomenal Growth**

During 2013-15, IS achieved phenomenal advances in Syria and Iraq. In 2013, when AQI started seizing and holding territory, they renamed themselves as ISIL. They became prominent in early 2014, when they succeeded in forcing Iraqi troops to withdraw from several cities in Western Iraq and captured Mosul and Sinjar. They captured large areas in Syria. They gained notoriety for beheadings, ethnic cleansing, destruction of artifacts and sights of cultural heritage and implementation of their interpretation of Sharia law. IS proclaimed the Caliphate on 29 June 2014 and came to be known as Islamic State. Baghdadi was proclaimed the Caliph. Raqqa became the headquarters in Syria. Declaration of the Caliphate, successes on ground and effective social media campaign attracted more cadres. By early 2015, IS had 30,000 strong armed cadre, of whom nearly 50 per cent were foreigners, who were mostly from Russia, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Tunisia, with significant numbers from France, UK and Germany. In January 2015, they controlled nearly 90,000 Sq Kms of territory in Syria and Iraq, including a third of Syria. An estimated 10 million people lived in that area.

From the beginning, IS was aiming to become financially self-sufficient. In Syria its sources of revenue were oil, gas, taxes, extortion, sale of artifacts, looting, kidnapping etc. and foreign donations primarily from the Gulf. According to one estimate, its revenue in 2014, '15 and '16 were US \$1.9 billion, 1.7 billion and

.9 billion respectively. However, another estimate puts the annual revenue significantly lower at between US \$ 200 and 300 million, with assets totaling US\$2 billion.

In July 2014, IS took control of Syria's largest oilfields and soon thereafter a gas field in Homs province. It took control of all the cities in a stretch of 140kms from the provincial capital of Deir ez Zor to the border with Iraq. On 14 Nov 2014, UN Independent International Commission of Enquiry on Syria concluded that IS has committed war crimes and crimes against humanity. The UN declared it as a terrorist organisation; not that these worried IS. In May, 2015, it captured Palmyra, the ancient Syrian city in the middle of the desert, surprisingly easily. IS had also started using chemical weapons. In November 2015, Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) confirmed use of sulphur, mustard gas by IS in August 2015 in Northern Syria. This passed by without any strong international action against IS and those who supplied the ingredients to IS. By end 2015, the Caliphate extended from Al Bab near Aleppo, to the border with Iraq and beyond up to the south of Baghdad. In August 2016, IS was reportedly operational in 16 countries.

### **Foreign Support**

It is widely suspected that the rapid success of IS had foreign backers. The former US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton alleged that Saudi Arabia and Qatar are providing financial and logistical support. German Minister Ger Muller blamed Qatar. US Secretary of State, John Kerry, however, blamed the Syrian Government of collusion with IS and said Syria had purposely ceded territory to IS. This may be off the mark as 43 per cent of IS attacks during March 2016 to April 2017 were on Syrian Government forces and only 17 per cent against the US supported Syrian Democratic Front (SDF). Their biggest supporter was Turkey, which had been accused by the US Vice President Joe Biden of colluding with IS, based on evidence uncovered by the US Special Forces. Nature of help included financing, medical services, transit for IS cadres, military assistance, weapons transfers and logistical support. IS leaders have acknowledged Turkey's help. It is also true that the US, UK, France, and Gulf countries shared real time intelligence, weapons, equipment etc., with the rebels, even after knowing that

these were being passed on promptly to IS. Their objective of overthrowing Assad Government took precedence over need to check IS.

### **Direct Action by the US and Russia**

Alarmed at the spread of IS, the US announced a strategy for destroying IS in September 2014. Since then it has carried out air strikes and trained and armed local groups. Their initial effort to enlist local 'moderate' Arab groups was a disaster, but they found a useful ally in the Kurds, who were also at the receiving end of IS. Syrian Democratic Front [SDF] consisting primarily of Kurds and a few Arabs was formed to take on the IS, with US support and air power assistance. On 30 Sep 2015, Russia got involved directly in the Syrian conflict, which added pressure on IS. Russia helped in throwing out IS from near Damascus and Homs and from Palmyra. It helped ward off IS attack on Syrian forces in many places.

### **Serious Setbacks for IS**

The downhill journey of IS was swifter than their uphill journey due in large measure to their own indiscretions. To send a message to the US led coalition that if they hit IS in Syria and Iraq, they have the capacity to take the battle to mainland Europe, they struck in Paris in November 2015 and in Brussels in March 2016. This only ended up strengthening the resolve of the alliance. The tide turned decisively against IS when it lost Mosul in July 2017 and Raqqa, their main control centre in Syria in October 2017. Earlier in March 2017 they had been driven out of Palmyra, which they had recaptured in December 2016.

After the recent setbacks, IS has lost over 95 per cent of the territory it had captured since 2013 and now controls three pockets in Syria: the border town of Abu Kamal and surrounding areas on the banks of the Euphrates, a stretch above Abu Kamal in Eastern Syria along the border with Iraq and a small pocket on the border of Syria with Jordan and Israeli occupied Golan heights, to the south of Damascus. The first two pockets are in the area controlled by SDF and the US. With the Caliphate losing territory and resources dwindling, cadres started deserting. IS are probably left with about 2500-3000 cadres. Al Baghdadi is

believed to be near Abu Kamal. IS is also present in some other areas including in the outskirts of Damascus, north east of Palmyra and south east of Deir ez Zor.

### **US Policy on IS and Eastern Syria**

Having bottled up IS in Eastern Syria, the slow pace at which the US led alliance and SDF are carrying out operations is inexplicable, particularly since the US President has publicly stated that he wants to withdraw troops from Syria soon. The US intelligence services and the army seem to be prolonging the operations so as to retain *raison d'être* for continued presence in Syria which also serves the interests of Syrian Kurds, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and most importantly Israel. One of the reasons given by the US forces is that SDF cadres have moved to the North following Turkey's invasion of Kurdish strongholds. This is partly true. The Saudis and Israel want US forces to stay as that would prevent Eastern Syria from falling into the hands of Iran, which wants to establish a land corridor from Iran to the Hezbollah stronghold in South Lebanon. It is for this reason that Israel is extending support to the IS in the enclave adjoining Golan. Turkey wants the continued presence of the US to keep the Kurds under check.

President Trump announced on 30 Mar 2018, that he wants to get the US troops back home. The announcement left the rest of Washington, coalition allies, Turkey, Israel, Jordan and the Kurds shocked, each for their own self-interest. It came as a surprise since on 17 Jan 2018, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson had laid out what one thought would be US policy for Syria after IS are decimated. He said that the US will maintain 2500 troops in Syria to the East of the Euphrates; the military campaign against IS will be sustained, UN peace process would continue, Turkey's concerns would be respected, the US will work to diminish Iran's influence in Syria and train and arm 30,000 Kurds. Tillerson's broad strategy pleased Israel, allies and Kurds, but Turkey was alarmed at the US training and equipping Kurds. Earlier US Generals had reportedly assured Turkey that the weapons being given to the Kurds to fight IS would be taken back. Tillerson lost his job on 31 Mar 2018.

US allies and Trump's military advisers and intelligence officials want US troops to continue in Syria for more time till IS are neutralized completely, but in reality for multiple reasons: to ensure that there is no vacuum in the area to be vacated by the US which could fall into Iranian hands; stranding of Kurds, who had thrown in their lot with the US; to ensure that friction between Turkey and the Kurds doesn't erupt into a conflict; and to retain leverage in a political settlement to the Syrian conflict. It is to be noted that early normalization of the situation in Syria and welfare of Syrian people is, regrettably, not a reason. Achieving these objectives will take a long time. Their entreaties with the President has earned some reprieve; the withdrawal will not be immediate. The reason why President changed his mind may also be the alleged use of chemical weapons by Syria on 07 Apr, which for valid reasons, many suspect was organised by some in the coalition to get the President to change his mind. The White House Spokesperson made it clear that the US Mission hasn't changed; it wants US forces to return as quickly as possible. He added that the US expects its regional allies and partners to take greater responsibility both financially and militarily to secure the region. Troop withdrawal issue may become alive closer to elections in 2020.

SDF, with the help of the US is in control of a third of Syria. Apart from a good part of the agriculturally rich Euphrates valley, almost all the oil wells of Syria are in that area. Kurds total 10 per cent of the population of Syria. Main area of their habitation is the province of Hasake which forms the northern part of the area they control now. Not all the Kurds of Syria are in that area. They are spread all over Syria. For them to hope to control a third of the area of Syria and the oil wells is unrealistic. It will not last and lead to problems with Syria very soon. Given their past record, it should be possible for the Kurds to work out an honourable deal with Syria, if only the US would allow it.

### **Gulf Troops in Syria?**

The suggestion to bring in forces from the Gulf to take over from the US forces will only aggravate the situation and prolong the conflict. The Kurds, who are non-Arab Sunnis, have had serious problems with Arab Sunnis and were happily living alongside other

minorities in Syria including Alawites. Presence of Saudi and Qatari troops will be a red rag to Syria and Iran and the security situation will escalate beyond redemption. Any chance of Iran minimising its presence will evaporate. Syria blames Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey of having supported the opposition terrorists, including IS throughout the conflict. Revival of terrorist groups, presently in Idlib, and who had earlier been sponsored by them, is a distinct possibility.

### **Implications for India**

There was suspicion from 2012 onwards that a few Indian nationals from the Gulf may have joined IS in Syria. Initially there was reluctance to believe that Indians would fall for jihadi or IS propaganda. The arrest of over 50 cadres or persons having some connection with IS in 2015-16 from Kerala, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh shook our agencies out of complacency. Investigations revealed the reach of IS in India through social media. While the number of IS cadres may not be many, they have the potential to cause serious disruptions through lone wolf terrorist operations. Already there is suspicion of involvement of IS in the unrest in Jammu and Kashmir, though in a limited way. IS is active in our neighbourhood. It is probable that IS cadres exiting from Syria will reach our neighbourhood and would be available for mercenary operations, which will pose serious challenges for us. IS may be down, but their ideology and pernicious propaganda are found appealing by some and will need to be guarded against. We need to be vigilant both within India and at our borders.

### **Conclusion**

Reports indicate that IS is down but not out. They have been carrying out sporadic attacks across the Euphrates in Eastern Syria, Deir ez Zor and even in the outskirts of Damascus. The US seems to be playing a double game. While they are fighting IS they had reportedly given safe passage to IS leaders in Raqqa. This is in contrast to their bombing of IS cadres given safe passage by the Syrian Government near Damascus. There have been many reports of IS cadres in trouble in Deir ez Zor being taken to safety by US helicopters, probably to hold them as assets for possible use in future. Russian FM Lavrov is reported to have



said on 03 May 2018, that the US forces positioned in al-Tauf area and al-Rukban camp are training terrorists. Further the US is reluctant to move decisively against the cornered IS. Israel is also helping IS in the enclave south of Damascus for possible use in due course against Iran. If this game continues, the IS would get undeserved relief.

The military advisers of President Trump are right in saying that IS would make a comeback, should the US withdraw its troops quickly. They are speaking from their experience in Iraq. Apart from the project to eliminate IS, every effort should be made to counter their ideology, and massive digital reach. For the present IS will continue to hope that they will be able to turn things around. Even if they don't succeed in doing that, the organisation would splinter into groups and involve in terrorist activities in many parts of the world. Some of the splinter groups may join hands with the groups holed up in Idleb and start a new round of conflict in Syria. People of Syria deserve better after seven years of continuous suffering.

**@Shri VP Haran** is a former diplomat. He was Ambassador to Syria and has extensive experience in neighbourhood diplomacy and international trade issues.

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# **Iran and the West Asia Region Changing Dynamics and New Challenges**

**Shri Sanjay Singh, IFS (Retd)\***

**W**est Asia is afflicted by the continuing violence in Syria and

Yemen, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the deepening divide between Iran and Saudi Arabia, sectarian conflict, extremism, terrorist violence and external intervention. Each of these will continue to have serious implications for the region and beyond.

The Islamic State (IS) has been defeated but not eliminated with its cadres dispersed in Iraq and Syria as well as the countries from where they came, carrying with them their grievances born from discrimination, sectarian conflict and the absence of meaningful employment and economic opportunity. The breakdown of state order in several countries of West Asia owing to conflict and external intervention provides a fertile breeding ground for extremism.

'Arab Spring' which commenced in 2011 was the result of authoritarian and static political order not addressing the aspirations of the people for a reformed and moderate state and society and improved opportunities. However, except in Tunisia, these uprisings have only led to instability, and in some countries resulted in repression and civil war.

The resulting conflicts have devastated Syria and Yemen which have also become a battleground for a proxy war between Saudi Arabia and Iran. The activities of the Muslim Brotherhood and Salafi-Jihadists as well as those of Israel and Turkey feed fuel to the fire. The situation is further vitiated by great power intervention in the region.

In Syria, the peace talks brokered under UN auspices are not making any progress and the Russian brokered Astana/Sochi peace process faces its own hurdles. The US today faces difficult

choices between supporting its Kurdish allies or not alienating Turkey, its NATO partner as well as whether to maintain its presence in Syria about which President Trump is ambivalent. The Syrian regime assisted by Russia and Iran is meanwhile making steady progress in re-establishing its control over the country. Russia is developing a greater understanding with Turkey and is to supply it the S-400 missile system. Israel recently had its first loss since 2006 of an aircraft, a F-16, in combat. This raised doubts about its unchallenged control of the regional airspace and its defence against Iranian/Hezbollah missiles. Israel does not want the Iranian presence to grow on its northern borders and has responded forcefully with increased bombardment of the area.

**Yemen** is in a state of chaos. The Hadi-led Government has scant control and the country has been divided into areas of influence of different tribal and political groups. The Hadi-affiliated national armed forces, supported by the Saudis and the Emeratis, have made no progress in their fight against the Houthis and Al-Qaeda militants in the south. The increasing divide and hostilities between the Hadi Government and the Southern Resistance forces (SRF) is another problem that Yemen did not need. The revival of the peace process will require political accommodation between the Hadi and Houthi forces, a polity that will provide space for local aspirations, the cessation of external intervention in the country and international political and financial support. Otherwise, the fratricidal war will continue endangering stability across the region and continue to pose a threat to Saudi Arabia.

**Iraq** seems to have stabilised after the defeat of Islamic State in Mosul, but the situation remains fragile. The Government, led by PM Al-Abadi, was relatively more focussed on bringing the various communities of Iraq together and addressing the sense of discrimination felt by the Sunnis. It also arrested Kurdish fissiparous activities. The results of the elections held on 12 May 2018 could have further strengthened Abadi's hands and helped him move the country forward; but his formation has come third after two Shia groups. The first led by a Shia cleric Sadr who is not too enamoured of Iran but even less so of the US. The second draws its strength from the Shia militias. It remains to be seen how

Iran behaves through its proxies, especially the Shia militias in the country post US withdrawal from the JCPOA before a definitive prognosis for Iraq can be made.

The major regional powers : Iran, Egypt, Turkey, Israel, Saudi Arabia have all been weakened one way or another and will not be able to effectively address regional instability which will continue and will affect as under :-

(a) Firstly, energy security which would possibly lead to higher prices. Higher prices though, may not continue as there are contradictory trends, with oil prices coming under increasing pressure from renewables and the shale oil industry in the US. If prices fall again the budgets of States dependant on them will be squeezed affecting their domestic social contracts:

(b) Secondly, sea lanes of communication and trade through the Suez, Bab-al-Mandab, Gulf of Aden and the Strait of Hormuz, which are already under threat from pirates and other extremist elements and could be affected by regional hostilities:

(c) Thirdly, the region itself and beyond, through further growth of radical and fundamentalist ideologies, sectarian conflict and terrorism.

The disunity in the region will continue to suck in the Great Powers as well as disgruntled elements, further compounding the problem.

The **US** will remain present in the region, especially to safeguard its own national interests. While the shale oil and gas revolution has reduced the region's importance for the US, nevertheless the US, continues to maintain its bases in the region (5th fleet in Manama, Bahrain and USAF Centcom at Al Udeid Airbase in Qatar) and its Naval Support Facility in Diego Garcia, and is capable of projecting force all over West Asia. The visit of President Trump to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was his first visit abroad. He has taken steps towards developing a special relationship with the Kingdom and its Crown Prince Mohamed Bin Salman. However, he believes that countries of the region should

assume a fairer share of the burden for their own security. How the relationship will play out remains to be seen. President Trump and his national security team have also extended great support for Israel and Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu and have bought into the Israeli narrative on the Palestinian issue and the peace process as well as on Iran. Under President Trump's watch, the US embassy has been moved to Jerusalem. This could put an end to the two-state solution and lead to greater strife in Palestine.

**Europe's** trade and energy interests are adversely affected by developments in the region, especially in the contiguous Maghreb. It also faces a growing refugee problem owing to the instability coupled with the rapidly growing population of the region and Africa. Extremist and terrorist ideologies have also made inroads into Europe and many of its residents have been indoctrinated and pose threat to its internal security. European economic interests in Iran are threatened by re-imposition of sanctions by President Trump. Nevertheless, despite the negative consequences, it continues to intervene in the region as recently seen in its participation of the bombing of alleged chemical weapons facilities in Syria.

**Russia** utilised the opportunity in Syria to insert itself more forcefully into the region as also to degrade the extremist threat to the Caucasus from Chechen cadres of the Islamic State (IS). The cooperation it has extended to Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) over oil and gas production and pricing has also been helpful to it in enhancing its influence in the region. It has been hosting a stream of visitors from the region seeking its cooperation, including from Iran, Turkey, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and even Israel.

**China's** presence in the region is growing exponentially owing to burgeoning Chinese imports of energy resources and trade with West Asia and its growing economic presence. The Central belt of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) traverses the region which is witnessing China's increasing maritime presence and acquisition of naval facilities in the Red Sea and Indian Ocean Region. Authoritative Chinese studies have called for its greater strategic engagement with the region.

## **Iran**

It is against this background that we need to examine developments in Iran. Iran is about half the size of India with 81mn people, 60 per cent below 30 and the most populous in West Asia. 15 to 20 million of them are in schools and colleges, in the process the country is developing enormous human capital. It boasts of modern infrastructure, developed industrial base and considerable acumen in science and technology. Its agricultural sector provides it food security and its energy resources, energy security. It is quite capable of sustaining itself even under severe sanctions.

Iranian population consists of 51 per cent Persian, 16 per cent Azeris, 10 per cent Sunni Kurds, with Baluchis, Gilanis, and Arabs around its periphery. It has a rich historical legacy and its location contributes to its crossroad culture. It does have internal contradictions between its periphery and the centre; rich and poor; urban and rural divides and aspirational youth against its conservative system. But its people are one on Iran's right to be a nuclear power.

Iran is an Islamic democracy led by an all-powerful Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khomeini and the clerical establishment. The main objectives of Iran are the preservation of the Islamic State and regime and spreading its influence for which the major instrument is the Revolutionary Guards. Iran has well-developed security and defence capabilities. Iran has multiple centres of power: the Clerics, the Security forces, the Majlis, the Judiciary and the Government itself, in seemingly perpetual debate against one another. Iran considers itself to be critical country in a crucial region. It wishes to lead the Islamic world, in which pursuit, it clashes with Saudi Arabia. Its activities also impinge negatively on Israeli and US interests.

Iran's pursuit of nuclear capability brought it to adverse attention and pressure from the US, Europe and the UN to force it to desist. This concerted pressure which included economic sanctions was an important factor which led it to agree to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). This deal, which entailed in return for the removal of sanctions, Iran's suspension of nuclear

activities but not the elimination of its nuclear capability, was opposed by Israel and Iran's neighbours in the Gulf who were against its increasing influence and support to its allies in Syria, Iraq, Lebanon and Yemen. Post the P5+1 nuclear deal, Iran's economy strengthened owing to the renewed access to international finance and trade, ramping up of production and exports of oil and gas and renewed access to its funds banked abroad. Chinese and some European companies began reinvesting in Iran.

President Trump during his Presidential campaign had vociferously expressed his opposition to the P5+1 Agreement with Iran arrived at by his predecessor President Obama in 2015. He felt that the Agreement was seriously flawed and did not ensure that Iran would not become a nuclear power and that the deal's non-inclusion of Iranian missile development and activities in the region needed to be addressed, for the United States to continue supporting it. Iran had made it clear that the deal was not renegotiable. President Trump has now withdrawn US from the deal. In this he has the support of his Secretary of State, Pompeo and National Security Adviser, Bolton.

The differences on this deal are indicative of the divide in the American establishment on Iran. President Obama and his team were perhaps hopeful that Iran, given incentives, could become part of the solution to the problems besetting the region and that Iran and the US could eventually achieve a 'grand bargain' and settle all differences. President Trump and his team do not believe that it is possible for the US to do business with the present regime in Iran which they hold responsible for the problems and terrorist violence in the region. President Trump and his national security team have also bought into the views of the Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu as well as those of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and its Crown Prince Mohamed Bin Salman – both opponents of the Iran deal and Iran in general.

President Trump has re-imposed all US nuclear-related sanctions – both the suspended primary and secondary sanctions on Iran's economy, including on the oil and financial sectors. However, unlike earlier there will be no additional European and the UN Security Council sanctions. The US in any case, even after

the JCPOA continued to maintain sanctions on Iran related to terrorism, human rights violations and ballistic missile development, which practically ruled out business activity by US firms in Iran except with specific waivers. The US Treasury has indicated that the sanctions would be renewed progressively from the start of the process on 06 August 2018 and by 04 November 2018 all the sanctions that the US had imposed on Iran before the JCPOA will be reinstated. This will affect Iran's ability to trade in US dollars and to sell its oil. Exemption from oil related sanctions will be provided to those countries which can show that their oil purchases from Iran are significantly reduced.

The re-imposition of US secondary sanctions targetting Iran's international trade and finance with other countries and its oil and gas exports that will make it difficult for it to find partners. Other countries, including India would be forced to make a choice on whether or not to respect the sanctions. European economic relations with Iran will be seriously affected, leaving Iran, Russia, China and handful of other countries as its partners.

French Minister of the Economy, Bruno Le Maire said Europe has to defend its 'economic sovereignty'. He questioned whether Europeans want to be vassals and bow to decisions made by the US. EU is considering enacting blocking regulations to protect its entities. European banks facilitate trade with Iran. Energy major, Total of France, and automobile companies Renault and Peugeot have investments in Iran. Total has announced that it will not proceed on its project in Iran without a specific waiver. Logistic major, Maersk has indicated it will halt business with Iran. Airbus's plans to sell 100 planes to Iran is in jeopardy because it sources parts from the US. European institutions will remember that HSBC, BNP, Credit Suisse, Deutsche Bank etc. have paid large fines to the US for not respecting its unilateral sanctions. Last year European Union (EU) imports and exports from Iran both were of the order of US\$ 11 bn and investment about US\$ 4bn in comparison to exports of US\$ 593bn to US and imports of US\$ 475bn from US with US\$ 2.75 trn invested in the US and US\$ 2.4 trn US investment in Europe. Given their huge stakes in the US market, European Banks and companies are likely to be cautious. While European leaders have re-affirmed their



commitment to the JCPOA, Iran has said that it will see what this means in practical terms before taking its own decision.

India is presently the second largest destination for Iranian oil exports. Indian oil companies will now have to use currencies other than US dollars for payments to Iran and route it through banking channels outside the US. These may be difficult to find given US sanctions. In case the Indian Rupee - Rial arrangement is re-instated huge Iranian rupee balances may again build up in India unless Iran imports more from India and balances bilateral trade with India as it does with China or even with South Korea, Japan and Turkey to an extent. In any case Indian companies would have to show significant reductions in imports of oil if they are not to attract any sanctions. Indian involvement in Chabahar Port may also be affected if the US determines that it contributes to Iran's nuclear programme and/or if sanctioned Iranian construction companies are involved in the project. India would need to get clarifications from the US administration before taking a view.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the GoI Press Release of 09 May 2018 skirting contentious issues said: "India has always maintained that the Iranian nuclear issue should be resolved peacefully through dialogue and diplomacy by respecting Iran's right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy as also the international community's strong interest in the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme. All parties should engage constructively to address and resolve issues that have arisen with respect to the JCPOA." While it is not in Indian interest that another nuclear power emerges in the region it is equally important that India exercises its autonomy on relations with Iran.

The sanctions are likely to unite the Iranian nation behind the regime. If Europe too is unable to keep open the channels of trade and finance with Iran, Iran may resume pursuit of its ambitions of becoming a nuclear power with renewed vigour. Iran would also seek to strengthen alignments which may not be in US interest. While President Trump is determined to undo the nuclear deal, he may push Iran further into the Chinese economic embrace. China already has an overwhelming economic presence in the country being Iran's largest economic partner with growing investment in

its oil and gas sector, the largest customer of Iran's energy exports and which views Iran as an important constituent of its BRI, providing China connectivity to the Levant and the Persian Gulf. Iran's trade with China has more than doubled since 2006, to over US\$ 37 billion in 2017. The biggest chunk of Iran's oil exports goes to China, about US\$ 11 billion a year at current prices. The first high ranking visitor to Teheran after the signing of the JCPOA was President Xi Jinping in January 2016 when the two countries released a vision of trade relationship of US\$ 600 bn by 2030.

Iran's activities in the region to expand its influence, has diverted scarce resources at the cost of its own domestic economy, consequently increasing the hardship faced by its people. Iranian currency is under pressure and has devalued considerably. The agitations in Iran earlier this year could be attributed to growing economic difficulties. This compelled President Rouhani to urgently try and address the problems the people face. The disgruntlement will only grow because of the reintroduction of US sanctions.

However, the agitations were also symptomatic of the positioning by different contending groups in anticipation of the power struggle in post-Supreme Leader Khamenei Iran. The Regime 'liberals' which include President Rouhani and his group will be in competition with the more conservative anti-US groups including a majority of those in the Revolutionary Guards and the Clergy. The US would have done well at this juncture not to become an issue in Iran's domestic politics which is exactly what President Trump by walking out of the nuclear deal has made it.

## **India**

It has considerable interest in the Gulf and the broader region with which it shares civilisational ties. Over 8 million of Indians live and work in the region. The region provides around 70 per cent of India's oil and gas requirements as well as phosphatic fertilizers and Urea essential for agriculture. It is India's largest economic partner with trade exceeding US\$ 100 billion annually and a growing investment partnership. Prime Minister Modi has pursued energetic diplomacy with the region visiting over the last four

years Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, Jordan, Palestine, Israel, Iran, UAE thrice and Turkey for the G20 summit. His outreach has yielded positive outcomes resulting in enhanced political, economic, security and defence partnership and has been matched by reciprocal visits. India has developed bilateral institutional mechanisms to enhance cooperation in the fight against terrorism and extremism as well as defence and security cooperation arrangements with nearly all countries in the region. India in its interactions with the countries of the region has been non-prescriptive, non-interfering and has sought to promote dialogue and moderation. It is important however, that India start thinking beyond this, and examine possible options for playing a more robust role in the region.

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# Turkey, Israel and the Region : Implications for India

**Dr Mohamed Muddassir Quamar®**

India has vital economic, political and strategic interests in the

Middle East. It has strong trade relations with the Persian Gulf countries and depends on petroleum imports from the region for energy security. The presence of over 8.5 million Indian expatriate workers and the annual remittance of nearly US\$ 30 billion are vital links between India and the region. The security of India's and international sea lanes of communication in the Indian Ocean and Arab Sea demands cooperation with the Gulf countries. Further, coastal security, especially to prevent use of sea for terrorist attacks, cannot be ensured without close engagements. Similarly, the emergence of Islamist terrorism and the fear of its spread in the subcontinent has led to closer security cooperation with Middle Eastern countries. Therefore, India has been steadfast in its diplomatic outreach to the region and this has found a new dynamism under Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This has led to a growing engagement not only with the Gulf but the wider Middle East.

India has close strategic relations with Israel and has friendly ties with Turkey, the two important countries in the Middle East. Both are the allies of the US and are driven by their national security in dealing with the neighbourhood and had in the past maintained friendly relations with each other. In fact, as one looks at the Fertile Crescent – Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Israel and Palestine – the two have significant geopolitical role and stakes. Thus, the Syrian crisis has witnessed significant involvement of Israel and Turkey with their armed forces crossing the borders with an objective to neutralise security threats. These military incursions along with the deepening security footprints of Iran in Syria threaten to snowball into a major crisis and any flare up in this trouble spot has the potential to inflame the whole region. Given India's vital stakes in the Persian Gulf and Middle East, this will adversely affect its interests and national security.

## **Turkey, Israel and the Region**

Both Turkey and Israel have been playing a significant role in regional developments in the Middle East. Both are driven by domestic political developments in pursuit of their foreign policy. The domestic situation in Turkey is under tremendous stress due to continued aggressive policy followed by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan who has preponed the Parliamentary and Presidential elections to June 2018, earlier scheduled for November 2019. If Erdogan wins the elections, which seems likely given the current domestic political situation, Turkey will remain on the current path of trying to expand its strategic involvement in the region. This is visible from Turkey rushing to support Qatar after the June 2017 boycott by the quartet of Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt. It has come out in support of Iran after the US pulled out of Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and has opposed the US move to shift the embassy to Jerusalem. Its support for Hamas and the Palestinian militancy though have been subdued due to concerns about strong Israeli reaction, Turkey continues to raise concerns about the situation in the Gaza Strip and has given refuge to some of the top leadership of Hamas. However, its relation with Israel has been permanently damaged and chances of any reconciliation are lean. Its support for the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, especially in the wake of the removal of Mohammed Morsi, has strained relations between Ankara and Cairo.

Turkey's actions in Syria have put it in a peculiar situation with the Syrian regime, Iran, Russia and the US. All are opposed to the Turkish military presence in Syria but allowed it to take control of northwestern enclave of Afrin so as to disallow the Kurds the strategic advantage they were looking for. Nevertheless, it has put Turkey in a vulnerable position vis-à-vis both the US and Russia who have only tactically allowed Ankara a presence in Syria. In addition, Turkey has been for long in a diplomatic row with the US over the deportation of Fethullah Gulen and has arrested an American pastor and some Turkish staff of the US embassy in Ankara. Turkey's desire to play larger role in the regional affairs has forced it to align with Russia and Iran on the Syria peace process and it has stepped up efforts to remain a

relevant player. Nonetheless, the policies and interests of Russia, Iran and Turkey in Syria do not always converge and there are vital differences. For example, on the Kurdish issue Russia is ready to allow some degree of autonomy but both Turkey and Iran are opposed to it. Similarly, on the issue of Turkey's military presence both Bashar al-Assad and Iran are opposed. Russia on the other hand wishes to stabilise the situation in Syria and do not want it to become a quagmire that it cannot leave, akin to the US presence in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Israel's regional policy is currently focussed on militarily countering Iran in Syria. It wants to counter Iran and its growing regional influence through the US and by aligning with Saudi Arabia and the UAE that share some of the Israeli trepidations vis-à-vis growing Iranian influence in the region. Israel was instrumental in pushing the Trump administration to withdraw from JCPOA. The tensions between Israel and the US over regional issues, evident during the Obama administration, has given way to significant convergence of policy direction in the Middle East. Israel, for example, has welcomed the US move to shift the embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem as long overdue. The violence associated with Jerusalem move is likely to abate and diplomatic opposition to the US in the UN might not be a major problem for both Trump and Netanyahu. Notably, both the Trump administration and Israel believe that this move will force the Palestinian leadership to accept the peace the 'ultimate deal' being prepared by the US. Nonetheless, Israel continues to face threats from Hezbollah, Hamas and other militias which are used by Iran as proxies in advancing its regional interests. Thus, the bulk of Israeli strategic calculus is focussed on countering Iran as it feels Tehran has established military presence close to its borders in Syria. The Trump Administration has a hawkish view of Iran and has decided to undo the Obama legacy of US-Iran rapprochement and moved in tandem with Israel and Arab Gulf countries to isolate Iran. This, in their calculus is likely to place the Iranian regime under immense pressure and put brakes on its growing regional influence. Even though the hopes of public understanding with Gulf countries has been dashed due to Jerusalem move, but they remain on the same page when it comes to Iran.

As far as the regional turmoil in the Middle East is concerned, both Turkey and Israel will continue to play a significant role. Turkey has come a long way from its foreign policy objective of zero-problems with neighbours and despite the ability of President Erdogan to antagonise all his neighbours, Ankara has been able to handle regional challenges by pursuing a policy of active involvement with regional players and straddling with dominant global powers. Though Ankara's quest for conflicting foreign policy objectives emanating from economic, political and strategic interests has created a confused foreign policy, it has managed to secure its core interests. On the other hand, Israel remains isolated in the region but its military capability is a major shield of defence. It knows that its regional enemies can only be deterred by continuously growing its military capability and, hence, the focus on military capacity. Simultaneously, it has built strategic partnerships with established and emerging global powers to secure its national interests.

#### **India, Israel and Turkey**

India has strong bilateral relations with Israel and friendly ties with Turkey. It has no outstanding issues with any of them. India's relations with Israel are centred on security and defence, science and technology and growing people-to-people contacts. It is indeed developing into a major strategic partnership where the two sides not only understand but are ready to make special concessions for each other. India's ability to leverage political and diplomatic relations with Israel and Gulf countries is significant and a case in point is the beginning of direct Air India flights to Tel Aviv via Saudi airspace. The bonhomie on display between Benjamin Netanyahu and Narendra Modi during their respective visits to India and Israel demonstrate the close understanding the two sides have developed over bilateral issues. Nonetheless, when it comes to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, India has been cautious and aware of its historical support to the Palestinian cause. Though under Prime Minister Modi, New Delhi has pursued a policy of de-hyphenating bilateral engagements with Israel and Palestine but as was evident from Indian response to the US embassy move, it is not ready to take sides when it comes to the conflict. Similarly, India is unlikely to be drawn into the proxy or direct conflict between Israel and Iran. New Delhi is unlikely to be

pulled into any US, Israel and Gulf alignment that might be on the horizon to isolate Iran.

With Turkey India has friendly relations but does not have close strategic cooperation. The bilateral trade is marginal and there are no significant political engagements. Though there is desire on part of both sides to seize economic opportunities and develop bilateral ties, the chances of it materialising are limited as relations for a variety of reasons remain frozen in time because New Delhi and Ankara saw each other aligned with the opposite camps in the Cold War politics. The likelihood of a change in this is remote, especially under the present government in Ankara, which on many occasions took up mantle of Kashmir conflict in the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and at other multilateral platforms.

Given the current situation in the region, the likelihood of any direct confrontation between Israel and Turkey is remote but tension is expected to remain. Turkish support for Palestine and Hamas and its willingness to come out openly in support of Iran will be an irritant for Israel. For Turkey, Israel does not present a direct challenge but Ankara's inability to play any constructive role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and tendency to jump into regional conflicts can complicate its already fragile and tense relations with Israel. Though Israel and Turkey are not at the centre of the explosive geopolitical situation in the Middle East, they might find themselves in opposite camps in case of a major crisis that may envelop the whole region.

### **Implications for India**

Given India's vital stakes in the Middle East and its growing engagement with the regional countries, any significant flare up or conflict will adversely affect its interests. When it comes to the situation in Syria, India has largely remained aloof and has been supportive of the legitimately elected government. It, however, maintains that the problem in Syria should be resolved through peaceful dialogue. But as the Syrian quagmire evolves into a regional and global struggle for power, can India afford to remain indifferent? This question becomes more important if seen in the context of India's close and friendly relations with the regional countries and its growing global profile.



India's interests in the Middle East will be significantly affected in case of a regional hot war. The core of its interest lies in the Persian Gulf. Given the growing vulnerabilities in the region, India will be impacted in many ways. Its economy will be adversely affected if a conflict arises in the region and damages its trade with regional countries. In the eventuality of a war, the chances of a steep rise in international oil prices cannot be ruled out and Indian economy will be significantly affected in such a scenario. Simultaneously, given that 60 per cent of India's energy imports come from the region, its energy security will also be adversely affected. The security of the 8.5 million Indians and planning an emergency rescue for such a large population can be a nightmare for the country. Even though India has in the past successfully organised the rescue of its nationals from trouble spots such as Kuwait in 1990, Egypt and Libya in 2011 and recently in Yemen, the numbers are not comparable.

Therefore, what are the options for India? New Delhi cannot afford to take sides with the conflicting parties in the eventuality of a regional conflict. It will have to maintain a safe distance from regional conflicts without compromising on bilateral engagements. India will need to balance its relations with all regional countries involved as it has been doing. At the same time, India cannot afford to remain indifferent. New Delhi has been urging regional players to practice restraint and use the option of negotiations and diplomacy to resolve conflicts. However, it has not taken any active interest in engaging with interested parties to try and figure out the possibility of New Delhi playing a larger role in keeping the region peaceful. Some of the regional countries and many observers within India have advocated establishing diplomatic channels to bring the regional adversaries together on negotiation table. India, thus far, has remained reluctant given the complexities involved. Nevertheless, if India has to safeguard its interests and realise its global potentials, it will have to be ready to rethink this policy and work toward devising a more proactive approach. For this to happen, it will have to maintain friendly relations with all regional countries including Saudi Arabia, Iran, Israel and Turkey and balance its ties with global powers with regional interests including the US, Russia and China. The possibility of working with multilateral organisations such as the

Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa (BRICS) and Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) as well as with individual countries with friendly ties can also be explored.

To conclude, it can be argued that India cannot afford to remain indifferent to the emerging geopolitical tensions in the Middle East. It has vital stakes in the region and to safeguard those interests it needs to go beyond the current policy of balancing relations and keeping a safe distance. While this is necessary to protect the Indians residing in the region and other national interests, given the prospective cost of a major conflict, India needs to work with other emerging global powers to stabilise the regional situation and prevent any significant flare up.

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# War at Sea: Nineteenth Century Laws for Twenty-first Century Wars?\*

## Part I

Professor Steven Haines®

### Abstract

While most law on the conduct of hostilities has been heavily

scrutinised in recent years, the law dealing with armed conflict at sea has been largely ignored. This is not surprising. There have been few naval conflicts since 1945, and those that have occurred have been limited in scale; none has involved combat between major maritime powers. Nevertheless, navies have tripled in number since then, and today there are growing tensions between significant naval powers. There is a risk of conflict at sea. Conditions have changed since 1945, but the law has not developed in that time. Elements of it, especially that regulating economic warfare at sea, seem outdated and it is not clear that the law is well placed to regulate so-called “hybrid” warfare at sea. It seems timely to review the law, to confirm that which is appropriate and to develop that which is not. Perhaps a new edition of the San Remo Manual would be timely.

In the past quarter of a century, the *lex specialis* for armed conflict has been subjected to intense public, official, judicial and academic attention, becoming one of the most intensely scrutinized areas of public international law today. Much of this examination resulted from a combination of usage and abuse followed by due process in relation to breaches committed in a range of armed conflicts since the early 1990s. Most certainly, the jurisprudence of the various international tribunals has contributed a great deal to its interpretation. Extensive research into State practice has also been conducted under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), for its Customary Law Study, which remains a “live” project.

One element of the *lex specialis* has been largely overlooked, however. The law regulating the conduct of hostilities in naval war – the law of armed conflict (LOAC) applicable at sea – has attracted little general attention or focused scrutiny. There have been very few instances of armed conflict at sea, and those that have occurred have not brought seriously into question the detailed rules regulating it. There have been no naval cases dealt with by the international tribunals and, compared with the law regulating armed conflict on land, in the air and even in cyberspace, that applied at sea has failed to attract very much academic analysis.<sup>2</sup> Finally, the ICRC did not research practice in naval warfare during its study into customary international humanitarian law.<sup>3</sup> Its stated reason for not doing so was that it believed international humanitarian law (IHL) applied at sea had already been adequately covered during work carried out in the early 1990s under the auspices of the International Institute of Humanitarian Law (IIHL) in Sanremo, resulting in the publication of the *San Remo Manual on International Law Applicable to Armed Conflicts at Sea* (San Remo Manual or SRM).<sup>4</sup>

This lack of attention prompts a question about whether or not a review of the LOAC applicable at sea is necessary. In providing an initial answer, this paper's objective is merely to start a debate on a subject that has been confined to the margins of dialogue by force of circumstance. No firm legal solutions are suggested, as these would require significant engagement with experts from around the world, in both the law and the naval operations it is meant to regulate. Nevertheless, how such engagement might be achieved may be a sensible issue briefly to address.

Before moving forward to the application of the law, some explanation of naval roles and functions will be useful to assist those unfamiliar with them. Some historical background is also important for providing perspective and explaining context. The paper starts, therefore, by placing naval war roles in the wider naval operational context. It then outlines the occurrence of armed conflict at sea since 1945 and provides a cursory assessment of the potential characteristics of war at sea in the future. The current law on the conduct of hostilities is then briefly described before

two particular forms of naval warfare are singled out for detailed comment: traditional economic warfare and the novel challenge of so-called “hybrid warfare”. Comment is then made on how the current law measures up in relation to them, before a suggestion is presented regarding how a review of the law might be conducted.

### **Naval Roles**

Navies do not exist simply to fight wars at sea with other navies. Indeed, since the Second World War very few have been engaged in armed conflict at sea. Their capacity for warfighting has served mostly as a means of deterring war rather than actively engaging in it. Effective deterrence requires equipment, manpower, and frequent training and exercises to maintain operational capability and effectiveness. All the major navies in the world have been developed with combat operations against other navies as the principal consideration. As naval wars have been a rare occurrence since 1945, it is not surprising that these expensive and sophisticated forces have been utilized by governments for other purposes. They have not been idle.

Naval operations can be categorized under three headings: “benign”, “constabulary” and “military”. Constabulary and military operations both involve the application of force, but neither benign nor constabulary operations involve combat. While benign and constabulary operations are not the focus of this paper, a brief explanation of each will be useful before the discussion moves on to the military functions of navies.<sup>5</sup> Later in the paper, the overlap between military and constabulary roles will become relevant to the discussion of hybrid warfare.

### **Benign Operations**

Benign operations deserve brief explanation, if only to satisfy the reader’s curiosity. They do not involve either the threat or the actual application of coercive force; the “benign” label says it all. In the early modern period, navies famously engaged in exploration, the charting of the seas and other voyages of scientific discovery; today they still conduct hydrographic surveying, including to provide data for the compilation of navigational charts. Search and

rescue, salvage, disaster relief and explosive ordnance disposal are notable additional examples of naval activities that provide assistance and a service to the maritime community. They entail helping communities and individuals cope with the challenges generated by the sea and its environment. Fascinating though these operations are, they will attract no further mention in this paper.

### **Constabulary Operations**

Constabulary operations entail law enforcement, both domestic and international, the former particularly within territorial waters and the latter principally on the high seas – with significant overlap between the two. Prior to 1945, the domestic law-related functions of navies were largely confined to enforcing law within three nautical miles of their own coasts. The enforcement of inshore fisheries regulations, for example, and the protection of the State from threats to its health and integrity through the enforcement of quarantine, customs and fiscal regulations, were primarily naval functions. Some States developed civilian- manned agencies for such tasks (e.g., coastguards), but it was principally navies that were routinely employed for that purpose.<sup>6</sup>

On the high seas, navies exercised exclusive flag State jurisdiction over their own States' merchant ships and other civilian vessels. They also engaged in anti- piracy operations, ensuring that the seas were free for safe and secure trading activities. This was a naval function with a long history dating back many centuries.<sup>7</sup> During the nineteenth century, the suppression of slavery became a further significant role for navies.<sup>8</sup> Both anti- piracy and anti-slavery operations remain potential naval functions today, although the former has been more in evidence recently than the latter.<sup>9</sup>

Since 1945, naval constabulary functions have increased substantially, principally as a consequence of maritime jurisdictional changes ushered in through the Third United Nations (UN) Conference on the Law of the Sea, between 1974 and 1982. The resultant 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)<sup>10</sup> led to substantial increases in both the extent and nature of coastal State jurisdiction, most notably through the

extension of territorial seas from three to twelve nautical miles, the creation of contiguous zones beyond the territorial sea, and the introduction of the exclusive economic zone extending to 200 nautical miles from the coast. Each of these zones has caused the domestic coastal law enforcement task to increase, especially in relation to the enforcement of resource management arrangements.

Also, under UN auspices, the last fifty years have witnessed the development of maritime economic embargo operations, which are one means of enforcing economic sanctions imposed by the UN Security Council. The first such operation was not initiated until the mid-1960s,<sup>11</sup> but UN maritime embargos became a more common resort after the Cold War ended, with operations mounted in the Mediterranean (including the Adriatic), the Middle East and Haiti.<sup>12</sup>

It is important here to distinguish maritime embargo operations from what may appear at first sight to be a very similar naval operation – belligerent blockade. Constabulary UN maritime economic embargo operations are emphatically not a modern form of belligerent blockade, which is a method of economic warfare (discussed in more detail below). The UN Charter is very clear in this regard – while it mentions “blockade”, it does so deliberately in Article 42, dealing with military sanctions, and not in Article 41, which explicitly addresses “measures not involving the use of armed force” to enforce economic sanctions. Blockade and embargo operations have very different purposes, are conducted in different ways – one is an act of war (blockade) and the other a constabulary operation (maritime embargo) – and have completely different legal bases.<sup>13</sup>

Additional high seas constabulary operations include responses to illicit drugs trafficking and for the safety of maritime navigation.<sup>14</sup> Maritime crime is increasing; navies have an important function to perform in response.<sup>15</sup>

The majority of navies are engaged in constabulary operations to some degree. Indeed, for many today it is their principal employment. They require minimum levels of force to be

used at all times, the primary legal basis today being human rights law.<sup>16</sup>

### **Military Operations**

Naval doctrine supported by the study of naval history has generally identified three distinct forms of naval operation mounted against an opposing belligerent. All such naval operations can be located under one of the following three headings: sea control/sea denial, power projection, and economic warfare.<sup>17</sup> Each deserves some explanation. Indeed, it is impossible fully to understand naval power, its strategic value or its tactical application without an appreciation of these.

Navies traditionally exerted their influence in war by projecting power ashore (through shore bombardment or by landing troops in amphibious operations, for example) and by applying economic pressure on opposing belligerents through the interdiction of their trade via commerce raiding and blockade. Navies can only undertake such operations if they are secure and have sufficient control of the sea to conduct them. Navies fight other navies to secure such control of the sea so that they are able to mount either power projection or economic warfare operations against the enemy. They fight for sea control and at the same time seek to deny their opponent control of the sea for its own purposes. Sea control and sea denial are opposite sides of the same coin.

A notable historical example, the battle of Trafalgar in 1805, involved two rival fleets (the British on the one hand and the combined French and Spanish on the other) fighting for control of the sea. The British needed sea control in order freely to apply economic pressure on France through the interdiction of shipping bound for the continent. They also sought to deny the French control of the sea to prevent them launching an invasion of Britain itself. Viewed from the French and Spanish perspective, the aim was to deny the Royal Navy's (RN) ability to disrupt their trade, but also to achieve sufficient control of the sea to allow for a French invasion of Britain. The significance of the battle was not the fighting on the day but the strategic consequences that British tactical victory delivered. The ultimate function of navies has been to project power ashore in order to



influence events on land or to interfere with the enemy's trade, thereby undermining its ability to sustain its war effort. Obtaining sea control is the necessary precursor for these.<sup>18</sup>

In the age of sail, surface fleets fought surface fleets for sea control. In the early twentieth century, however, following the emergence of effective sea denial technologies (sea mines and submarines armed with torpedoes), powerful surface fleets could no longer be assured of dominance at sea. By the outbreak of the Second World War, aircraft had further complicated the achievement of sea control. Since then, both shore-based and ship-borne missiles have caused surface forces yet more sea control difficulties.<sup>19</sup>

Julius Caesar's and William of Normandy's invasions of Britain in 55 BC and 1066 were each major amphibious assaults; there is nothing new about "naval power projection". The traditional shore bombardment and amphibious landing retain their utility, but modern manifestations of power projection are far more varied and extensive. Naval forces can launch long-range attacks using both aircraft launched from carriers and land-attack missiles launched from surface warships or submarines. The big-gun battleships that were dominant in the early twentieth century gave way to aircraft carriers during the Second World War as the capital ship of choice for major naval powers, with the more ambitious subsequently procuring nuclear-powered submarines. While such warships may have originally been developed principally for sea control and sea denial operations, they are today frequently employed as powerful platforms for long-range power projection. The cruise missile, capable of reaching targets hundreds of miles inland, is routinely the weapon used by the more sophisticated naval forces when deployed to apply persuasive force against States. It has been a prominent feature of past attacks against targets in Iraq and Afghanistan, for example, and sea-launched attacks on Syria today are naval power projection involving both missiles and ship-launched aircraft (these days both manned and unmanned).

Economic warfare at sea was a distinctive feature of general naval warfare from the sixteenth century until the Second World War. It consisted of a combination of commerce-raiding and

blockade operations to prevent an enemy benefiting from maritime trading activities, especially in goods (contraband) that were likely to enhance its ability to continue waging war. There has been scant employment of this type of operation in the past seventy years because there has not been a general naval war during that period. Economic warfare is addressed in much more detail below.

### **Armed Conflict at Sea Since 1945**

The most recent period of major naval war was between 1939 and 1945. Historically, the naval conflicts then, in the Atlantic and Mediterranean and in the Pacific theatre, were the most recent in a long line of general and great-power naval wars stretching back to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Some significant examples of these included the series of Anglo-Dutch wars between 1652 and 1674, the Seven Years War of 1756–63, the American Revolutionary War of 1775–84, the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars from 1792 to 1815, the Anglo-American naval war of 1812, and the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–05.<sup>20</sup> All were struggles for power of an imperial nature in the era of maritime empires, which stretched from the early seventeenth to the mid-twentieth century.<sup>21</sup> These wars had potentially global impact, with navies frequently utilizing the extent of the free oceans to carry on their conflicts, especially in relation to the interdiction of trade. It was these wars that influenced the development of the laws of war and neutrality at sea.

While there has been no general naval war since 1945, there have been at least a dozen armed conflicts with naval dimensions worth mentioning. The Arab–Israeli wars which commenced in 1948 included the 1956 Anglo-French amphibious assault on the Suez Canal Zone in Egypt, and continue today with the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians, which recently featured the Israeli naval blockade of Gaza.<sup>22</sup> The Korean War (1950–53) included the September 1950 amphibious assault by UN forces at Inchon.<sup>23</sup> The Vietnam War (1955–75) included various naval operations, with substantial US involvement following the August 1964 Tonkin Gulf incident and concluding with the *Mayaguez* incident in May 1975. In between, naval operations included the provision of naval support from the sea and extensive riverine

operations.<sup>24</sup> The Indo-Pakistan War (1971) lasted a mere thirteen days but included submarine attacks on surface warships and an Indian blockade of the East Pakistan/Bangladesh coast in the Bay of Bengal.<sup>25</sup> Between 1971 and 1974, the “Troubles” in Northern Ireland arguably crossed the threshold into non-international armed conflict in the early 1970s and, perhaps surprisingly to some, involved a significant naval element in 1972 when substantial British military reinforcements were landed into the province from RN amphibious shipping.<sup>26</sup> The Battle of the Paracels lasted just two days in January 1974 and involved the armed forces of the People’s Republic of China and Vietnam. The outcome was Chinese control over the islands, still a source of dispute in the South China Sea today.<sup>27</sup> In stark contrast, the Iran–Iraq War (1980–88) was a long-drawn-out conflict, the naval dimension of which lasted from 1984 to 1987. It was initiated by Iraqi attacks on Iranian oil facilities on Kharg Island, and included attacks on neutral shipping and an Iranian blockade of the Iraqi coast.<sup>28</sup> The Falklands/Malvinas War (April–June 1982) was fundamentally a maritime campaign involving classic sea-control and sea-denial operations coupled with power projection through amphibious assault. A number of surface warships were sunk, with the Argentine cruiser *General Belgrano* and the British destroyers *Sheffield* and *Coventry* being prominent casualties.<sup>29</sup> The Sri Lankan Civil War (1983–2009) had a notable naval dimension, with the Tamil Tigers deploying forces at sea (an unusual capability for an armed non-State actor in a non-international armed conflict).<sup>30</sup> The Gulf of Sidra Action in 1986 involved air and sea forces of Libya and the US Sixth Fleet and resulted in the sinking of two Libyan warships.<sup>31</sup> Both of the Gulf Wars against Iraq (1990–91 and 2003) had naval dimensions, with coalition forces defeating Iraqi naval forces and conducting landings in Kuwait and Southern Iraq.<sup>32</sup> Finally, of interest is the Kosovo armed conflict in 1999 between the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) Alliance members and Serbia – although the most significant observation is to do with naval inactivity. A naval blockade of the Montenegrin port of Bar was considered within NATO because there was a fear that Serbia might be

resupplied with war materiel by neutral vessels through Bar. The Kosovo operation was mounted without a UN Security Council resolution authorizing NATO's intervention. For that reason, there was certainly no possibility of putting a UN maritime embargo in place to prevent ships entering Bar. Having considered blockade as an option, the Alliance rejected the idea, however. While this decision not to employ a blockade may seem irrelevant in terms of State practice, the reasons for not doing so included a belief within some NATO capitals that, while the Alliance was engaged in an armed conflict, this method of naval warfare was not a lawful option and would be too controversial.<sup>33</sup>

These post-1945 conflicts have all been markedly limited in their naval scope, with none having strategic naval influence beyond the immediate region of the conflict. Only three (the Battle of the Paracels, the Falklands/Malvinas War and the Gulf of Sidra Action) were principally maritime conflicts at the operational level.<sup>34</sup> In the others, the main operational-level focus was on land campaigns, with the naval dimensions being clearly subordinate. These armed conflicts were certainly not global in scope, and none had the characteristics of the notable naval wars of the maritime imperial era. Economic warfare has not figured as a major component, although belligerent blockades have been imposed, including, for example, the Indian blockade of Bangladesh in the Bay of Bengal in 1971, the blockade of Haiphong Harbour in 1972 during the Vietnam War, and the controversial Israeli blockade of Gaza. There was also the serious interference with shipping during the so-called "Tanker War" phase of the Iran–Iraq war. Two of the conflicts were non-international (Sri Lanka and Northern Ireland), but there were also non-international features of the Vietnam War and the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971, which saw East Pakistan (Bangladesh) break away from West Pakistan. The recent naval activities of the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka, in particular, have served as a reminder that civil wars (or non-international armed conflicts) can involve the bringing to bear of naval influence. It is worth stressing here that no post-1945 war has involved the

principal naval powers in major and sustained combat operations against each other.

Compliance with the law during these naval engagements was mixed, with the Falklands/Malvinas War being largely compliant, while the Iran–Iraq “Tanker War” certainly breached the rules on the interdiction of shipping.<sup>35</sup> The Israeli conduct of the Gaza blockade operation was tactically compliant with the *jus in bello*, albeit controversial and resulting in a UN enquiry.<sup>36</sup> All other engagements raised legal issues, but none in a manner or to an extent that seriously challenged the existing law. While there has clearly been some evidence of practice resulting from these recent wars, this has not caused any discernible trend towards customary development of the law.<sup>37</sup> Nor has there been any demand for new conventional law. The status quo is a comfortable place for States to occupy, especially when they are not being challenged by circumstance.

### **Potential for Naval War in the Twenty-First Century**

What is the potential for naval war in the future? Even if prediction is difficult, it would be naive to dismiss the possibility altogether. On the basis of what has occurred since 1945, there would certainly appear to be some potential, even if recent past evidence suggests it is likely to be brief, lower-intensity and geographically limited. Equally, the absence of general naval war suggests that it may now be a feature of the past rather than something to contemplate in the future. Such general wars require two ingredients. First, there is the need for navies to be capable of engaging at that level. Second, it would require an international security situation that would give rise to it. It is worth saying something about both.

There are three times as many navies today than there were at the end of the Second World War.<sup>38</sup> Not all are capable of high-intensity and sustained operations at significant distance from their home waters, but an increasing number are. A useful hierarchy of navies currently in use places each in one of eight categories based on an assessment of size, reach, combat capability and general utility.<sup>39</sup> The single remaining “major global force projection navy” is that of the United States. Below it are a growing number of medium-ranked, well-developed navies, whose

force structures are predicated principally on the need to engage in combat operations. These include the second-rank navies of China, France, India, Japan, Russia and the United Kingdom, and third-rank navies like those of Australia, Brazil, Canada, Italy, Germany, Singapore and South Korea, together with those of Denmark, Norway and Sweden. The majority of the world's navies are in ranks four to six, and while they are less capable, it has been combat capability that has driven their force development. Only seventh-ranking "constabulary navies", capable of law enforcement operations within their own States' offshore jurisdictional zones, and eighth-ranking "token navies" fail to deploy effective combat capability. Nevertheless, the lower-ranked navies, with limited combat capacity, still possess potential for low-intensity applications of force that could cross the armed conflict threshold. Given the proliferation of navies and the range of States in politically unstable regions of the globe, it is perhaps surprising that there have so far been so few conflicts at sea.

Of the more than 160 navies currently operating, only the US Navy (USN) has the capability to operate globally in the true sense. It has no peer competitor and is unlikely to face one for decades to come. Those navies that might aspire to compete at that level (perhaps the Chinese and Russian) fall well short at present and would take some time to reach it. Even so, the USN does not enjoy the dominance and full command of the oceans that the collective naval power of the British Empire did during the nineteenth-century *Pax Britannica*.<sup>40</sup> It is even doubtful that it could adequately defend its own trade globally from concerted submarine attack.

If that sounds surprising, one might reflect on some figures from the Second World War, focusing on just one of the powers involved, to give some impression of how its naval forces coped with the conflict. Overall, the combined British Empire navies deployed a total of almost 885 significant warships (battleships, battle cruisers, aircraft carriers, cruisers, destroyers and submarines) during the Second World War, of which 278 (31 per cent) were lost to enemy action.<sup>41</sup> The losses alone, then, amounted to around the same number of significant warships currently possessed by the USN. During the Battle of the Atlantic

in the 1940s, the Allied navies (including the USN after US entry as a belligerent in December 1941) had around 300 destroyers available for convoy escort duty. The British Empire alone lost 153 destroyers to enemy action while defending transatlantic shipping.<sup>42</sup>

Technology has developed since then, with faster, more powerful and far more capable warships fitted with advanced sensors and weapon systems. Without conducting operational analysis around the subject, it would be difficult to predict both force requirements for defensive economic warfare, given current maritime trade volumes, and the likely losses that defensive forces would face. Nevertheless, with submarine technology also vastly improved and with quantity having a quality of its own when it comes to convoy escort tasking, it is difficult indeed to imagine a re-run of the sort of campaign that was fought in the North Atlantic between 1940 and 1943. In the 1930s and 1940s, the design, development and construction of new warships took a matter of mere weeks or months. Today's equivalent vessels take years from drawing board to operational deployment, and the sort of rapid force generation possible during the Second World War would now be impossible to achieve. The strategically vital battle – for both sides – in the Atlantic theatre in the middle of the last century represented an extreme manifestation of warfare at sea, with the focus on threats to shipping. The Pacific theatre saw a greater concentration of naval power than the Atlantic and was more about the projection of power from sea to shore. Both theatres witnessed extremes in terms of sea control and denial operations, with the war against submarines being the focus in the Atlantic, while the maritime air war dominated the Pacific theatre. While prediction is fraught with difficulty, it seems unlikely that a global great-power naval war on that scale will occur again, no matter what combinations of naval powers are ranged against each other. The end of empires does appear to have brought an end to conflict between the major powers, with none having occurred since 1945. Why might that be?

There seem to be a number of reasons: an increased number of international organizations, including the impact of the UN; the rapidity/ immediacy of international communications and

the fundamental changes it has ushered in as far as international political and diplomatic practice are concerned; and the positive effect of nuclear weapons, which seem to have had a calming and beneficial influence on great-power relations, reducing the tendency for them to resort to force against each other. If the major powers today did engage in war, then it is fair to say that general naval war would be a likely feature. This would have potentially catastrophic economic consequences, with a considerable risk of a halt to globalization through the disruption to oceanic trade. There would likely be considerable international diplomatic effort to avoid it.<sup>43</sup> It is difficult to imagine international order breaking down to the extent that the world becomes embroiled in another global conflict.

This is not to say that there will not again be war at sea having some of the characteristics of the naval war in the 1940s. If a significant and sustained naval war were to occur between combat-capable naval powers, it is even possible that aspects of economic warfare could return to the oceans. Nevertheless, on the balance of probability, future armed conflicts at sea seem most likely to be limited geographically and almost certainly to be confined to a single region or even locality. Obvious potential flashpoints currently are in the South and East China Seas, in proximity to the Korean Peninsula, in the Gulf, in the Eastern Mediterranean and in parts of Africa (although few African navies are equipped for sustained naval confrontation, regardless of the potential for bloody conflict ashore). One should also be conscious of the unpredictable occurring in regions not thought of as being at high risk – and over time, of course, new tensions will undoubtedly emerge in places that are currently relatively benign.

### **The Conduct of Naval Hostilities: The Established Law**

The existing law on the conduct of hostilities at sea is a part of the broader body of the LOAC, with most of the rules applied at sea reflecting those applied in other environments. The basic principles of military necessity, humanity, distinction and proportionality and the rules on precautions in attack most certainly apply at sea as they do elsewhere.<sup>44</sup> The principles regulating weapons are also identical, with new weapons for use at sea subject to Article 36 weapons review in common with those



deployed on land or in the air.<sup>45</sup> A notable feature of the law applied at sea is that it allows for warships to disguise themselves, including by wearing a false flag until the point at which they launch an attack, although such “ruses of war” are probably not as significant as they once were (and will not be addressed further as the topic falls outside the scope of this article).

In common with all laws regulating war, those dealing with the conduct of war at sea were entirely of a customary nature until the middle of the nineteenth century. The development of the relevant treaty law occurred in the eighty-year period between 1856 (the Paris Declaration<sup>46</sup>) and 1936 (the London Protocol on Submarine Warfare<sup>47</sup>), with the bulk of it emerging from the Hague Conference of 1907.

There were eight naval conventions agreed that year, although only five of them remain extant:<sup>48</sup>

- (a) Hague Convention (VII) relating to the Convention of Merchant Ships into War-Ships;<sup>49</sup>
- (b) Hague Convention (VIII) relative to the Laying of Automatic Submarine Contact Mines;<sup>50</sup>
- (c) Hague Convention (IX) Concerning Bombardment by Naval Forces in Time of War;<sup>51</sup>
- (d) Hague Convention (XI) relative to certain restrictions with regard to the Exercise of Capture in Naval War;<sup>52</sup> and
- (e) Hague Convention (XII) Concerning the Rights and Duties of Neutral Powers in Naval War.<sup>53</sup>

Attempts to develop the law conventionally since 1907 have had minimal effect, the only treaty of current relevance being the 1936 London Protocol on Submarine Warfare. This was the final act in the process set in train to outlaw unrestricted submarine warfare following the First World War. It determined that submarines were subject to the same economic warfare rules as surface warships. If applied, it would have had the effect of virtually ruling out the use of submarines for commerce raiding on practical grounds. They would have found it almost invariably impossible to conduct visit and search, or the seizure or lawful

destruction of enemy merchant ships and others carrying contraband. Once war broke out in 1939, the protocol was generally ignored.

Since 1936, there has been no substantial conventional development of the law, despite naval power having changed in important respects.<sup>54</sup> Operations have also been affected by fundamental changes to the general maritime legal environment and in the nature of ocean governance ushered in by conventional developments in the law of the sea. While that regulates the relations of States in peacetime, it also affects the areas within which naval armed conflict could legitimately be waged. The post-UNCLOS extensions and enhancements in coastal State jurisdiction mean that the seas are not as “free” as once they were. This was well recognized as UNCLOS was moving towards ratification, with calls then to review the law of naval warfare.<sup>55</sup>

Once the Cold War was over, the IIHL in Sanremo, supported by the ICRC, initiated its project to produce a contemporary restatement of the international law applicable to armed conflict at sea. The results were published in 1995 as the San Remo Manual.<sup>57</sup> The project’s methodology was rigorous and thorough, involving a series of meetings of the leading scholars on the subject as well as representatives of many of the world’s navies – and all the major naval powers were represented, albeit informally.

The San Remo Manual’s influence is significant, and for very good reason. Both the USN and the British Ministry of Defence have quoted the SRM rules in their manuals dealing with the LOAC.<sup>57</sup> The SRM was used in its entirety as the “first draft” of the “Maritime Warfare” chapter in the UK’s *Manual of the Law of Armed Conflict* (UK Manual).<sup>58</sup> It was quoted by Israel in support of its conduct of the blockade of Gaza, following the May 2010 attempt by a flotilla of neutral vessels to enter the territory.<sup>59</sup> In subsequent enquiries into that incident, the SRM was again relied upon.<sup>60</sup> Most recently, the editors of a guide to human rights law applications in armed conflict have relied on a combination of the SRM and the UK Manual in their own “Maritime Warfare” chapter.<sup>61</sup> There is, therefore, strong evidence that the SRM is

widely regarded as a reliable statement of the LOAC to be applied at sea.

One does need to be circumspect in assuming that the San Remo Manual is definitive of the law, however. Its Foreword describes it as “a contemporary restatement of the law, together with some progressive development, which takes into account recent State practice, technological developments and the effects of related areas of the law”.<sup>62</sup> It is neither conventional law nor a codification of customary law, but it very clearly relies on both. It is authoritative, in so far as it is the product of a rigorous process of review, but that authority is limited by the fact that States were not officially represented in the process of consultation, with all officials contributing in their “personal” capacities. Not all of its rules are invariably accepted. For example, while the UK Manual’s “Maritime Warfare” chapter relied heavily on the SRM, the rules were modified to reflect the UK’s position.<sup>63</sup> Nor is the SRM declaratory of customary law. One might be forgiven for assuming that it is; the ICRC Customary Law Study deliberately excluded any practice in naval warfare, because “this area of law was recently the subject of a major restatement, namely the San Remo Manual”.<sup>64</sup> Nevertheless, it is appropriate to regard the SRM as a basic statement of the extant law. This is convenient for the purposes of this paper, which alludes to the SRM rules and thereby avoids lengthy reference to conventional sources and historic practice.

A comprehensive review of the law would require an examination of all SRM rules and their conventional and customary antecedents. This paper does not attempt that. It examines only two aspects of naval warfare, which are regarded as particularly challenging from a legal point of view: economic warfare and hybrid warfare.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>Jean-Marie Henckaerts and Louise Doswald-Beck (eds), *Customary International Humanitarian Law*, Vol. 1: *Rules*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2005 (ICRC Customary Law Study). The ICRC Customary Law Database is kept updated at: [www.icrc.org/en/war-and-law/treaties-customary-law/customary-law](http://www.icrc.org/en/war-and-law/treaties-customary-law/customary-law) (all internet references were accessed in May 2017).

<sup>2</sup> It would be wrong to claim that it has received no attention at all. The most significant and notable concentration of scholarship has been conducted under the auspices of the US Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island, within the Stockton Center for the Study of International Law. Its extensive “Blue Book” International Law Studies series is an essential source of scholarly and professional opinion on the subject and is now openly available online at: [www.usnwc.edu/departments—/international-law.aspx](http://www.usnwc.edu/departments—/international-law.aspx).

<sup>3</sup> It is important to clarify the terminology, not least because there is a tendency today to regard the law of armed conflict (LOAC) as synonymous with international humanitarian law (IHL). Although the debate on overlaps and distinctions between the LOAC and IHL falls outside the scope of this paper, it is important to state what the LOAC addresses and what it does not. The law that is the focus of this paper is that which regulates the conduct of hostilities at sea. Traditionally known as the “law of war and neutrality at sea”, it is now more commonly referred to as the “law of armed conflict applicable at sea”. This paper does not deal with the application of IHL at sea and will not address that subject (which derives from Geneva Convention (II) for the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea, 75 UNTS 85, 12 August 1949 (entered into force 21 October 1950) (GCII), and related instruments).

<sup>4</sup> ICRC Customary Law Study, above note 1, p. xxx. See also Louise Doswald-Beck (ed.), *San Remo Manual on International Law Applicable to Armed Conflicts at Sea*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1995 (San Remo Manual). It should be noted that while the IHL is located in Sanremo (one word) in Italy, the manual is invariably referred to as being associated with “San Remo” (two words).

<sup>5</sup> This is the way that operations have been categorized by the British Royal Navy (RN); see Defence Council, *BR 1806 British Maritime Doctrine*, 2nd ed., Stationery Office, London, 1999, pp. 57–58. Other navies have admittedly departed slightly from this formula. See, for example, Royal Australian Navy Sea Power Centre, *Australian Maritime Doctrine*, Defence Publishing Service, Canberra, 2000, p. 57; Maritime Concepts and Doctrine Centre, *Indian Maritime Doctrine*, INBR 8, Ministry of Defence (Navy), Mumbai, 2009, p. 91. For a leading academic treatment, see Geoffrey Till, *Seapower: A Guide for the Twenty-First Century*, 2nd ed., Routledge, Abingdon, 2009, which discusses both military tasks and “maintaining good order at sea”.

<sup>6</sup> Interestingly, the US Coastguard traces its origins to before those of the US Navy. For a discussion of different navy/coastguard arrangements, see *ibid.*, pp. 314–319.

<sup>7</sup> Grotius makes reference in his “Defence of Chapter V of *Mare Liberum*” to Julius Caesar’s involvement in countering piracy; see David Armitage (ed.), *Hugo Grotius’ The Free Sea*, Liberty Fund, Indianapolis, 2004, p. 129. A notable early nineteenth-century example of naval action against pirates was that ordered by President Thomas Jefferson and conducted by the US Navy (USN) against the Barbary Pirates; see Robert Turner, “President Thomas Jefferson and the Barbary Pirates”, in Bruce Elleman, Andrew Forbes and David Rosenberg (eds), *Piracy and Maritime Crime: Historical and Modern Case Studies*, Naval War College Newport Papers No. 35, Newport, RI, 2011.

<sup>8</sup> For a recent comprehensive treatment of this subject, see Peter Grindal, *Opposing the Slavers: The Royal Navy’s Campaign against the Atlantic Slave Trade*, I. B. Tauris & Co., London, 2016. The USN was also employed in suppressing the slave trade, despite slavery itself remaining lawful in its own southern States until the Civil War. Congress outlawed the slave trade in 1808, and a West African USN squadron was established in 1821 to suppress it. See Craig Symonds, *The US Navy: A Concise History*, Oxford University press, Oxford, 2016, pp. 37–38.

<sup>9</sup> Although navies are currently doing little to suppress slavery, it is of growing concern at sea, in particular with slave crews in fishing vessels engaged in illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing. See the website of Human Rights at Sea, at: [www.humanrightsatsea.org](http://www.humanrightsatsea.org).

<sup>10</sup> UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, 1833 UNTS 3, 10 December 1982 (entered into force 16 November 1994).

<sup>11</sup> This was mounted by the British navy off the Mozambique port of Beira between 1966 and 1975 to enforce economic sanctions against the white minority-ruled British colony of Rhodesia, which had illegally declared its independence from Britain. The operation was authorized by UNSC Res. 217, 20 November 1965. The author himself served on the “Beira Patrol”, but see Richard Mobley, “The Beira Patrol: Britain’s Broken Blockade against Rhodesia”, *Naval War College Review*, Vol. 55, No. 1, 2002. It is incorrect to describe this law enforcement operation as a “blockade”; see the discussion immediately below.

<sup>12</sup> James Kraska and Raul Pedrozo, *International Maritime Security Law*, Martinus Nijhoff, Leiden and Boston, MA, 2013, pp. 903–923.

<sup>13</sup> This distinction has admittedly been difficult for some to discern, but see Rob McLaughlin, *United Nations Naval Peace Operations in the Territorial Sea*, Martinus Nijhoff, Leiden and Boston, MA, 2009, pp. 129-152.

<sup>14</sup> For these constabulary operations on the high seas, two conventions are of some importance: the Vienna Convention on the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation, 10 March 1988 (entered into force 1 March 1992), together with its Protocol of 2005; and the Vienna Convention on the Suppression of the Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, 19 December 1988 (entered into force 11 November 1990). See also J Kraska and R Pedrozo, above note 12, pp. 801–858, 531–540.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., pp. 1-5.

<sup>16</sup> Daragh Murray, *Practitioners' Guide to Human Rights Law in Armed Conflict*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2016, p.91.

<sup>17</sup> Different analysts may produce different ways of describing and ordering these “military” operations. This categorization is the author’s preferred way of doing so, born of a lengthy period employed as a naval analyst on the Naval Staff within the UK’s Ministry of Defence, including the period during which he was the lead author for the RN’s maritime strategic doctrine.

<sup>18</sup> Nicholas Roger, *The Command of the Ocean: A Naval History of Britain 1649–1815*, Allen Lane, London, 2004, especially pp. 542-544.

<sup>19</sup> Martin Van Creveld, *Technology and War: From 2000BC to the Present*, Brassey’s, London, 1991, pp. 204– 216; Max Boot, *War Made New: Technology, Warfare and the Course of History, 1500 to Today*, Gotham Books, New York, 2006, pp. 241–267.

<sup>20</sup> There are numerous works covering these naval wars but, for example, see James Jones, *The Anglo-Dutch Wars of the Seventeenth Century*, Longman, London and New York, 1996; Daniel Baugh, *The Global Seven Years War 1754–1763*, Routledge, London and New York, 2011; Andrew Lambert, *The Challenge: Britain Against America in the Naval War of 1812*, Faber & Faber, London, 2012; Alfred Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power upon the French Revolution and Empire 1793–1812*, 2 vols, Sampson Lowe, Marston & Co., London, 1892; Julian Corbett, *Maritime Operations in the Russo-Japanese War 1904–1905*, 2 vols, Naval Institute Press, Newport, RI, 2015; Paul Halpern, *A Naval History of World War I*, UCL Press, London, 1994; Correlli Barnett, *Engage the Enemy More Closely: The Royal Navy in the Second World War*, Hodder & Staughton, London, 1991.

<sup>21</sup> Arguably, the age of empires (including maritime-based empires) came to an end in the middle of the twentieth century. See Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, and Oxford, 2010, especially Ch. 13, pp. 413–433; Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power*, Vol. 3: *Global Empires and Revolution 1890–1945*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2012.

<sup>22</sup> Keith Kyle, *Suez: Britain's End of Empire in the Middle East*, I. B. Tauris, London, 2003. In relation to the Gaza blockade, see Report of the Secretary-General's Panel of Inquiry on the 31 May 2010 Flotilla Incident, September 2011 (Palmer Report), available at: [www.un.org/News/dh/infocus/middle\\_east/Gaza\\_Flotilla\\_Panel\\_Report.pdf](http://www.un.org/News/dh/infocus/middle_east/Gaza_Flotilla_Panel_Report.pdf).

<sup>23</sup> James Patterson, *Grand Expectations: The United States, 1945–1974*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1996, pp. 218–219.

<sup>24</sup> Stanley Karnow, *Vietnam: A History*, Guild Publishing, London, 1983, pp. 366–373, 687.

<sup>25</sup> James Goldrick, *No Easy Answers: The Development of the Navies of India, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka 1945–1996*, Papers in Australian Maritime Affairs No. 2, Royal Australian Navy Maritime Studies Programme, Lancer Publishers, New Delhi, 1997, pp. 68–103.

<sup>26</sup> See Steven Haines, “Northern Ireland 1968–1998”, in Elizabeth Wilmshurst (ed.), *International Law and the Classification of Conflicts*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2012, p. 126.

<sup>27</sup> See Toshi Yoshihara, “The 1974 Paracels Sea Battle: A Campaign Appraisal”, *Naval War College Review*, Vol. 68, No. 2, 2016.

<sup>28</sup> See Ronald O'Rourke, “The Tanker War”, *US Naval Institute Proceedings*, Vol. 114, No. 5, 1988, available at: [www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/1988-05/tanker-war](http://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/1988-05/tanker-war).

<sup>29</sup> Sir Lawrence Freedman, *The Official History of the Falklands Campaign*, 2 vols, Routledge, London, 2005.

<sup>30</sup> Justin Smith, *Maritime Interdiction in Counterinsurgency: The Role of the Sri Lankan Navy in the Defeat of the Tamil Tigers*, unpublished Masters Thesis, US Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, June 2010, available at: [calhoun.nps.edu/bitstream/handle/10945/5346/10Jun\\_Smith\\_Justin.pdf?sequence=1](http://calhoun.nps.edu/bitstream/handle/10945/5346/10Jun_Smith_Justin.pdf?sequence=1).

<sup>31</sup> Alessandro Silj, "The Gulf of Sidra Incident: March–April 1986", in *The International Spectator: Italian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 28, No. 1, 1993.

<sup>32</sup> See Iain Ballantyne, *Strike from the Sea: The Royal Navy and the US Navy at War in the Middle East 1949–2003*, Pen and Sword Maritime, Barnsley, 2004.

<sup>33</sup> The author was serving in the UK Ministry of Defence at the time and was consulted by the director of naval operations. He suggested blockade as an option, in the absence of a UN Security Council resolution allowing for the possibility of a UN maritime embargo operation – caused by a likely Russian veto in the Council.

<sup>34</sup> The "operational level" is the level of command at which campaigns are planned in order to achieve strategic objectives. In many instances, the maritime element of a campaign will be manifestly subordinate to the land or air element – as were the naval operations during the two Gulf Wars. In other cases, the principal focus at the operational level will be maritime, as it was during the British campaign to recover the Falkland/Malvinas Islands in 1982. Since 1945, the vast majority of naval/ maritime contributions to military campaigns have been subordinate to other, principally land-based elements.

<sup>35</sup> Mention of the 1982 conflict in the South Atlantic must not pass without some comment on exclusion zones declared by the British, in one instance seemingly establishing what one distinguished international lawyer has described as an unlawful "free-fire zone" (a description with which this author agrees), although this did not result in any unlawful action. See Wolff Heintschel von Heinegg, "How to Update the San Remo Manual on International Law Applicable to Armed Conflict at Sea", *Israel Yearbook on Human Rights*, Vol. 36, 2006, pp. 144–145.

<sup>36</sup> See Palmer Report, above note 22.

<sup>37</sup> One shift that did occur was in relation to the encryption of communication employed by hospital ships, which is prohibited under Article 34(2) of GC II but which proved problematic during the 1982 Falklands/ Malvinas War. As a consequence of that, Rule 171 of the San Remo Manual permits the use of encryption for the purpose of effecting the humanitarian mission of such vessels but asserts a ban on their use of encrypted communications to pass intelligence or to gain any other military advantage

<sup>38</sup> The principal reference book on the world's navies listed fifty-six navies in 1950; see Raymond Blackman, *Jane's Fighting Ships 1949–50*,



McGraw Hill, New York, 1949. The volume covering the period 2016–17 lists just over 160; see Stephen Saunders and Tom Philpott (eds), *Jane's Fighting Ships 2016–17*, 116th ed., Jane's Information Group, London, 2016.

<sup>39</sup> In descending order, they are: major global force-projection navies; medium global force-projection navies; medium regional force-projection navies; adjacent force-projection navies; offshore territorial defence navies; inshore territorial defence navies; constabulary navies; and token navies. See Steven Haines, "New Navies and Maritime Powers", in Nicholas Roger, *The Sea in History*, Vol. 4: *The Modern World*, Boydell and Brewer, Martlesham, 2016, pp. 88–89.

<sup>40</sup> For a recent study of British naval dominance, see Barry Gough, *Pax Britannica: Ruling the Waves and Keeping the Peace before Armageddon*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2014.

<sup>41</sup> The combined British Empire navies were the Royal Navy (by far the largest), the navies of Australia, Canada, New Zealand and India, and the South African Naval Forces.

<sup>42</sup> Figures from the website *Naval History*, available at: [www.naval-history.net/WW2aBritishLosses10tables.htm](http://www.naval-history.net/WW2aBritishLosses10tables.htm)

<sup>43</sup> None of these reasons are the subject of this paper, and the nuclear dimension will undoubtedly be contested by those who regard nuclear weapons as a threat rather than a guarantor of security. The value of nuclear weapons in this respect is, of course, controversial. The author takes the view that nuclear weapons have been beneficial in deterring great-power war, but certainly acknowledges that others will disagree profoundly. Importantly, the legality of the actual use of such weapons, many of which are sea-launched (the ultimate in power projection terms), is not the subject of this paper.

<sup>44</sup> See the chapter on "Basic Principles of the Law of Armed Conflict", in UK Ministry of Defence, *The Manual of the Law of Armed Conflict*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2004 (UK Manual), pp. 21–26.

<sup>45</sup> "Article 36" being a reference to the provision in Protocol Additional (I) to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts, 1125 UNTS 3, 8 June 1977 (entered into force 7 December 1978) (AP I), Art. 36, requiring such reviews. Although not all States are party to AP I, the requirement for legal reviews is more than simply a requirement of treaty law. Indeed, the United States, which is not party, has long conducted such reviews to ensure the legality of weapons being procured

<sup>46</sup> Declaration Respecting Maritime Law, Paris, 16 April 1856.

<sup>47</sup> Procès-verbal relating to the Rules of Submarine Warfare set forth in Part IV of the Treaty of London of 22 April 1930, London, 6 November 1936.

<sup>48</sup> Hague Convention (VI) relative to the Legal Status of Enemy Merchant Ships at the Outbreak of Hostilities has fallen into desuetude; Hague Convention X is now covered by GC II, and Hague Convention (XII) relative to the Establishment of an International Prize Court did not enter into force – see Adam Roberts and Richard Guelff, Documents on the Laws of War, 3rd ed., Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2007, p. 67.

<sup>49</sup> Hague Convention (VII) relating to the Conversion of Merchant Ships into War-Ships, The Hague, 18 October 1907 (entered into force 26 January 1910).

<sup>50</sup> Hague Convention (VIII) relative to the Laying of Automatic Submarine Contact Mines, The Hague, 18 October 1907 (entered into force 26 January 1910).

<sup>51</sup> Hague Convention (IX) Concerning Bombardment by Naval Forces in Time of War, The Hague, 18 October 1907 (entered into force 26 January 1910) (Hague Convention IX).

<sup>52</sup> Hague Convention (XI) relative to Certain Restrictions with regard to the Exercise of the Right to Capture in Naval War, The Hague, 18 October 1907 (entered into force 26 January 1910).

<sup>53</sup> Hague Convention (XIII) Concerning the Rights and Duties of Neutral Powers in Naval War, The Hague, 18 October 1907 (entered into force 26 January 1910).

<sup>54</sup> The diplomatic conference that negotiated AP I did not have the purpose of reforming the law regulating naval operations and was careful to avoid becoming seized of naval issues (see AP I, Art. 49(3)), although it admittedly did have some influence on naval conduct in hostilities. There have also been no protocols added to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons which may be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, 1342 UNTS 137, 10 October 1980 (entered into force 2 December 1983), to do with specifically naval weapons – its Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby-Traps and Other Devices, 10 October 1980 (and the 1996 Amendment to it), did not deal with sea mines.

<sup>55</sup> Natalino Ronzitti, “The Crisis in the Law of Naval Warfare”, in Natalino Ronzitti (ed.), *The Law of Naval Warfare: A Collection of Agreements and Documents with Commentaries*, Martinus Nijhoff, Dordrecht, Boston, MA, and London, 1988, especially the section on “The Theatre of Naval Operations”, pp. 13–41 (which includes some comment on the effects of AP I).

<sup>56</sup> See San Remo Manual, above note 4.

<sup>57</sup> US Navy, *The Commander’s Handbook on the Law of Naval Operations*, July 2007 (USN Handbook), available at: [www.jag.navy.mil/documents/NWP\\_1-14M\\_Commanders\\_Handbook.pdf](http://www.jag.navy.mil/documents/NWP_1-14M_Commanders_Handbook.pdf); UK Manual, above note 44.

<sup>58</sup> The current author was one of the joint authors of that chapter, together with Professor Vaughan Lowe QC (then the Chichele Chair of Public International Law at the University of Oxford), Miss Elizabeth Wilmschurst (then the deputy legal adviser in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office) and Commodore Jeff Blackett (then the chief naval judge advocate).

<sup>59</sup> See, for example, [www.abc.net.au/lateline/content/2010/s2914517.htm](http://www.abc.net.au/lateline/content/2010/s2914517.htm), quoting Israeli government spokesman Mark Regev in an interview to the Australian Broadcasting Corporation in which he cites the San Remo Manual, on 31 May 2010. The Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs has also relied on both the USN Handbook and the UK Manual as containing authoritative statements on blockade; see: [www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/aboutisrael/state/law/pages/gaza\\_flotilla\\_maritime\\_blockade\\_gaza-legal\\_background\\_31-may-2010.aspx](http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/aboutisrael/state/law/pages/gaza_flotilla_maritime_blockade_gaza-legal_background_31-may-2010.aspx).

<sup>60</sup> See, for example, Palmer Report, above note 22.

<sup>61</sup> Daragh Murray et al. (eds), *Practitioners’ Guide to Human Rights Law in Armed Conflict*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2016, pp. 289–303. The editorial team that produced this guide consists of a distinguished group of leading UK-based experts on both international human rights law and the LOAC/IHL; their reliance on the San Remo Manual is indicative of its status as a reference on the extant LOAC applicable at sea.

<sup>62</sup> San Remo Manual, above note 4, p. ix (emphasis added).

<sup>63</sup> The present author has previously provided a full account of the differences between the San Remo Manual and the UK Manual and the reasoning behind them, in Steven Haines, “The United Kingdom’s Manual on the Law of Armed Conflict and the San Remo Manual:

Maritime Rules Compared”, Israel Yearbook on Human Rights, Vol. 36, 2006.

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*Review Article 1*

## **USI Strategic Year Book 2018\***

**Major General YK Gera (Retd)<sup>@</sup>**

**T**he United Service Institution of India started publication of Strategic Year Book in 2016. Strategic Year Book 2018 is third of the series. Its focus is on the strategic challenges and opportunities in India's strategic journey towards emerging as a leading power.

The Book has a collection of 29 well researched articles; which have been grouped under six sections. These sections are : Transforming India; India's Internal Security Environment; India's Pakistan and China Strategic Challenge; India's Extended Neighbourhood; India's Comprehensive National Power (CNP) and India's Defence Capability. The articles are authored by experts in their own fields. To that extent, it is a boon to find so much of wisdom, logic and analysis clubbed in a single book. For review of a book of this nature, it is not possible to comment on each article. Hence, only a few general comments are being offered to give the reader, a fair idea of what to expect from the Book.

**Section I.** Deals with India's strategy to build its Comprehensive National Power (CNP) encompassing military, diplomatic, economic, political and soft power elements. India's excessive reliance on import of military hardware is being reduced and acquisition procedures are being streamlined. The leadership is giving priority to India's immediate neighbourhood. Priority is being given to make economic foundation more robust. Pakistan and China are being handled with firmness and confidence. India is emerging as a major power and a reliable anchor and partner for countries worried about China.

**Section II.** Deals with 'India's Internal Security Environment'. The lead article 'A Road Map for Sustainable Security and Peace in Jammu and Kashmir' sets the direction for this Section. The

Jammu and Kashmir imbroglio with support from Pakistan continues to be a major internal security challenge. The Centre and State should together assiduously work to augment multi-dimensional security measures, initiate intra-state dialogue, embark upon de-radicalisation of youth and usher in good governance and inclusive development. The other articles in the Section, deal with myriad challenges like; 'Securing Borders in North-Eastern Region'; 'Dynamics of Security of Siliguri Corridor', 'Internal Security Challenges and Response Mechanism', 'Demographic Transformations and Implications for Internal Security', and 'Challenges from Nuclear Terrorism and Accidents'. All these subjects are important from national security perspective.

**Section III.** Deals with 'India's Pakistan and China Strategic Challenge'. The lead article, 'Pakistan Occupied Kashmir : Genesis of a Fake State' sets the trajectory for this Section. Security Council Resolution of 1948 stipulates that "Pakistan vacate its fighting people and Army from Kashmir, the State administration in Srinagar becomes functional, and India reduces her troops in Kashmir so that free and fair plebiscite under supervision of the UN is held, asking the people of the State which dominion, they would like to be with". Pakistan instead of withdrawing, reinforced her military strength in entire part of the State under her illegal occupation. In the Karachi agreement, the illegal government of the so called Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) subservient to Pakistan was institutionalized. Constitution of AJK is full of contradictions. For example, the Act says that the future of the State will be decided on the basis of free plebiscite in accordance with the UN Security Council's relevant resolutions. However, the Constitution says that "no person or political party in AJK shall be permitted to propagate against or take part in activities prejudicial or detrimental to the ideology of state's accession to Pakistan". Pakistan has been using the disputed territory of POK for setting up training camps. Kashmiris are lured to these camps and trained for militant activities. Pakistan has illegally ceded parts of Aksai Chin to China and also collaborated with China in building illegally the Karakoram Highway. Other articles in this Section deal with challenges like : Politico – Religious Developments in Pakistan : Implications for India', 'Pakistan Military Strategy and Behaviour : An Assessment', 'The

United States and its Af-Pak Policy : Implications for India', 'Post – 19<sup>th</sup> Party Congress : China's Strategic Direction and Behaviour', and 'China's Revolutionary Military Reforms, Salient Imperatives : Strategic Implications'.

**Section IV.** 'India's Extended Neighbourhood' is the title of this Section. The lead article 'India's Engagement with Middle Powers in East Asia' sets the pace. India has 'Strategic Partnership' with all the important 'Middle Powers' in East Asia sharing commitment to the maintenance of peace and tranquility in the region. The US dominated strategic balance in the Indo-Pacific, since the end of the Cold War is now in a state of flux due to uncertainties on the horizon. China's rise and its pursuit of territorial claims, has the potential of adversely affecting stability in East Asia. India is engaging in a comprehensive strategic dialogue with important partners such as Japan, Republic of Korea, Vietnam, Australia and Indonesia to develop coordinated positions on issues of common concern. This policy augurs well with the Core interests of India, and the countries of the region. The Other articles in this Section deal with challenges like : 'The Security Scenarios in West Asia – Challenges and Opportunities for India', 'Changing Perspective on Eurasia and India – Russia Relations', 'Geopolitics of Emerging Transit and Energy Corridors in the Indo-Pacific Region : Indian Response to the Chinese Challenge', and 'A Perspective on Indo-US Relations'. Undoubtedly all these subjects are important.

**Section V.** It covers India's comprehensive National Power (CNP). It is really the heart of the Book. The lead article of the Section is titled, 'Policy in India Must "Come of Age" in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century'. To fully reap the benefits of being a great power, India must act as a great power. India must locate and seize the opportunities offered by circumstances. India, China and the US are destined to increasingly interact with each other. This dynamic should be channelised in ways to speed up growth and stability, for India to emerge as the World's third superpower, after the US and China. The other articles in this section deal with challenges like : 'India's National Power Needs a Dose of Synergy', 'India as a Net Security Provider' and 'Comprehensive UN Reforms and

India'. These subjects, no doubt are very important for development of the CNP.

**Section VI.** 'India's Defence Capability' is the title of this Section. The lead article is – 'The Enunciation of India's Military Strategy'. India does not have a formal 'National Security Strategy' (NSS). The NSS from which should flow the defence policy or military strategy, remains undeclared as a formal enunciation. Thus the gap is lack of updated 'National Defence Policy' which is integrated with the national security policy. Evolution of military strategy is a two-way traffic between the Government and the military professionals, in which the final call rests with the Government. The lacunae needs to be overcome. The other articles cover : 'Force Structuring and Development of Land Forces', 'Road Map for India : Achieving a Favourable Maritime Balance in the Indian Ocean Region', 'Impact of Niche Technologies in Aerospace Deterrence', 'Restructuring India's Special Forces', 'Indigenisation of India's Defence Industry', and 'Artificial Intelligence in Military Operations: Technology and Ethics – An Indian Perspective'.

It is suggested that at the end of each section, major takeaways from each article should be spelt out to facilitate better assimilation by the reader.

Overall the Book is a treasure house of knowledge with inbuilt logic and analysis which would be very useful for researchers as well as to create general awareness on strategic issues facing the country. The Book would be useful for professional education of Armed Forces Officers and those concerned with national security. Service officers preparing for various competitive and promotion examinations are bound to find the Book of great value.

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## Short Reviews of Recent Books

**Reimagining Pakistan: Transforming a Dysfunctional Nuclear State.** By Husain Haqqani, (Noida: HarperCollins Publishers India, 2018), pp xvi, 336, Price Rs 699, ISBN 978-9-35-277769-3.

Seventy years after it was created based on the two-nation theory Husain Haqqani asserts, “*Contemporary Pakistan need not seek national identity in the idea of a separate homeland for Muslims of the Indian subcontinent...*” He suggests that Pakistan should, “...shift away from ideological nationalism to functional nationalism.....We are Pakistanis because we were born in Pakistan’ as opposed to ‘We are Pakistanis because our forebears resolved to create an Islamic state’...” That is essentially the “reimagining” he seeks. He holds that only through such new conception of the nation will Pakistan shift from the present “paranoid”, “insecure” state to a modern, progressive and prosperous country.

Husain laments that Pakistan did not adopt “*the secular nationalism proposed in Jinnah’s address to the Constituent Assembly...*” though he acknowledges that Quaid himself had also spoken of Pakistan as an Islamic state. For Haqqani, Jinnah’s demand for Pakistan was a way to protect Muslim interests in a post-independence set-up. He avoids the question which lies at the root itself – should religion have been invoked to confer parity to Muslims with Hindus in British India? The Muslim League did so and asked for separate electorates. That began the process that led to the creation of Pakistan.

If religion is taken out of the equation and Pakistan was to become a Muslim majority secular country it may reopen the very logic of partition. Pakistan’s foundational ideology was created based, as Haqqani perceptively notes again and again through this outstanding work, on Islam and anti-Indian and anti-Hindu sentiment. Haqqani extensively catalogues the baneful impact of Pakistan’s ideology on every aspect of the country’s affairs.

Haqqani correctly emphasises that Pakistan’s founders and its rulers used Islam as a binding force to overcome ethnic,

linguistic and provincial differences. Having opted for a centralised model of governance, Islam was the glue to hold the country together. The question, however, was what form of Islam. The initial ruling elite used Islam but were not imbued with religiosity. When pushed by the *mullahs* they compromised as Bhutto did on the Ahmadi issue in 1974, though in 1953 the leadership had refused to do so. That itself showed the trajectory that the country had taken. Later Zia-ul-Haq turned the country towards Islamic puritanism. Stringent blasphemy laws, hudood punishments and constitutional changes to incorporate stringent Islam in governance followed. The country has never recovered. Haqqani traverses this territory well but a focus on the influence of the Arab peninsula on the changing theological doctrines would have been useful.

It is to Haqqani's credit that he does not mince words in detailing Pakistan's hostility towards India and Hindus. No sensible Indian policy maker can overlook Haqqani's assertions that these sentiments are embedded in Pakistan's ideology. For Ayub Khan, India was a "Hindu state" and "Hindus irreconcilable enemies of Islam and Muslims". Haqqani goes on to state, *"He saw India, not as a neighbour with whom Pakistan had some disputes, but as an eternal enemy with 'expansionist designs'."*

That view has not changed. It has led, as Haqqani makes clear, to exaggerated fears that India wants to undo Pakistan. It has also led to the army's hold over the country's imagination buttressed through a carefully controlled narrative by it. Finally, it has resulted in the nexus between the religious groups and the army. Here too Haqqani should have gone deeper and given an account of the army's use of some of these groups against immediate neighbours.

Pakistan's India obsession and assertive Islam has contributed to it becoming a security state. The country is willing to sacrifice popular welfare and economic growth for its ideological obsessions which at page 114 Haqqani mentions thus, *"Securing Kashmir, balancing India and dominating Afghanistan..."* While trade with India is ruled out till the resolution of the "Kashmir dispute" Pakistan has been willing to go hat in hand to foreign donors from the very beginning. Haqqani gives an account of the

growth of the economy since 1947 but correctly argues that the growth would have been much more if Pakistan had jettisoned its obsessions and adopted pragmatic approaches. It would not have resulted in relying on its strategic location to sell itself earlier to the US and now to China. Haqqani notes that the CPEC's benefits will not materialise unless structural changes are made in the country.

It is in his concluding chapter that Haqqani urges his countrymen to change course and not continue with the "March of Folly". Drawing from Barbara Tuchman's work on wrong if not perverse choices made by governments which led their countries to disaster, Haqqani appeals to his countrymen to shed their fears and embrace forward looking postures and get away from "groupthink". He gives examples of countries that embraced radical change and prospered. If Pakistan goes on that course it would not be the headache of the world or dangerous for its possession of nuclear weapons. He dwells on the Pakistani attitude towards these weapons and notes that they have failed to provide it with a sense of security.

Haqqani's book is important for Pakistan. However, given the entrenched nature of its ideology Haqqani's appeal will fall on deaf years. He will suffer the fate of earlier Pakistanis who sought to bring change and will continue to be dubbed as a foreign agent. No Indian policy maker can afford to ignore this book.

*Shri Vivek Katju, IFS (Retd)*

**Special Star: Benazir Bhutto's Story.** *By Syeda Abida Hussain, (Karachi, OUP, 2017), pp 132, ISBN 978-0-19-940757-6*

This interesting biography of Benazir Bhutto has been authored by a seasoned Pakistani politician cum diplomat. The author has been Pakistan's Ambassador to the USA and a minister in the Government of Pakistan four times. Belonging to the landed gentry and moving amongst the upper echelons of society, she has been privy to the murky nature of politics in Pakistan. She was also proactive amongst the coterie that threw out Musharraf to bring in Benazir!

In this volume, Abida Hussain has done a commendable job of giving a comprehensive insight in the Bhutto mystique and her

ruthless pursuit of power. The biography set in eight chapters covers the life of a mercurial politician who saw the cut and thrust of Pakistani politics as practiced by her father Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Belonging to the upper strata of society is certainly an advantage in Pakistan as the author blithely explains the meteoric ascent of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and consequently Benazir's rise to power.

A charming quality of the author is that she states facts boldly without any sugar coating whatsoever. Benazir was educated in Radcliffe College, Harvard, Boston and later in Oxford University, London; but she remained unfamiliar with the language of the masses in Pakistan – Urdu! Abida Hussain highlights the grit and resolve of Benazir who apparently was never discouraged by the vicissitudes of life. Written in an easy, readable style, the reader gets a capsule of the essentials about Bhutto without having to meander through meaningless platitudes of political philosophy spewed by political leaders on captive audiences on either side of the Continent. At times, Abida Hussain changes her narration from first person to third person, mixes wheat with chaff but the effect is not entirely displeasing. As may be expected, there is a fair amount of trivia in the book, but there are enough nuggets to show the low character in high places. The author pulls no punches about "Mr Ten Per Cent" and that Benazir swung the F-16 squadron deal with US only after USD 50 million was allowed to be pocketed by Zardari!

It is a moot point whether Benazir was a Special Star as the author claims or she was destined to be a Shooting Star that burnt out too soon. All in all an enjoyable biography put in an easy to read style.

*Major General Ashok Joshi, VSM (Retd)*

**The Fifth Gorkha Rifles Frontier Force**, *Published by The Colonel of the Regent 5<sup>th</sup> Gorkha Rifles (Frontier Force), Printed by Xtreme Office Aid Pvt Ltd, Nangal Raya, New Delhi 110046. Pages 324, Price Rs 800, First Published in 2016.*

The book covers the glorious and historical achievements of the six battalions of the Regiment and 33 RR Battalion (5/8 GR) during the period 1990 to 2016. Major activities of the 58 GTC,

events of interaction with the retired fraternity and details of regimental customs and traditions specific to 5 GR (FF) have also been covered.

The book is unique, in that in simple readable language, it covers the history of the Regiment since its raising in 1858 to the present. Special chapters cover "Links with the Past" and "Chronology of Events" and signposts the main events from 1858 to 2016. A large number of photographs and a few maps and sketches have been included.

First 25 pages cover Links with the Past and the Victoria Cross won by the Regiment Chapters one to three cover extracts from earlier Volumes one to three, including raisings of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion. Operations in the Frontier , WW I and WW II, after and since 1947 to 1971 (including Counter Insurgency Operations (CI Ops) in the northeast (NE)) have been covered.

Chapters four to six cover raisings of 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Battalions, and operations and activities of the Regiment, from 1990 to 2016. During this period besides guarding the LOC and LAC, the main security threat to our country has been from separatists in the NE and of Pakistan sponsored insurgency and terrorism in J&K. A brief background to causes and prevailing security situation has been included, for easy understanding of operations. All Battalions of the Regiment have done their share of guarding the borders and participated in CI Ops, with distinction.

Their achievements in operational areas and during peace tenures, have been covered, period and station wise. Important regimental and social events, visits and interactions with pensioners and welfare measures undertaken have been covered.

Details of UN Missions, training with foreign armies, aid rendered during natural calamities (like Tsunami in Andaman and Uttarakhand) and achievements in professional and sports events, have also been highlighted.

Special mention has been made of the work done by the Battalions in opening trade route "Rah-E-Milan" with Pakistan from Poonch and interaction with the Pakistan Army, and

interaction with the PLA across LAC in Arunachal Pradesh from Tawang. Honours and Awards, including Unit Citations won by the Battalions have been included .

Chapters 7 to 10 cover 33 Rashtriya Rifles (58 GR), the Regimental Centre, customs, traditions and ethos of the Regiment, chronology of events and ends with thoughts for Afterword.

Annexure 1 to 5 give details of Titles and Badges of the Regiment, Theatre and Battle Honours , Gallantry awards, Roll of Honour and other awards. Annexure 6-11 has details of Colonels of the Regiment, Commanding Officers, Generals' Gallery, Centre Commandants and List of Subedar Majors. The author needs to be complemented for setting a precedence of combining "past with present", which may be followed by other regiments. The book is recommended for libraries of military establishments and institutions.

*Lieutenant General YM Bammi, PhD (Retd)*

**Indian Navy Adventures – Seven Seas to High Himalayas.**  
*Conceived, compiled and Edited by Captain MS Kohli (New Delhi, Har-Anand Publications Pvt Ltd, 2018), Price Rs 695, pp.295, ISBN 978-81-241-2024-8.*

The book is divided into 42 chapters from Introduction to Epilogue, besides the Preface and Foreword by Admiral Sunil Lanba, Chief of Naval Staff and eight half-page photographs. The book is a compilation of some very heroic accounts of the officers and men of the Indian Navy on the high seas, around the North and South Poles and up in the mighty Himalayas, spanning the sixty years from 1954 to 2017 i.e. if one discounts the earlier history, the exploits of Shivraya Kanhojee Angrey, the legendary Maratha Sea Captain who dominated the Konkan sea coast during the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century, causing much awe and fear among the British, French, Portuguese and Dutch, when it is said that no foreign ships could cross the Konkan coast without fear. This has been eloquently brought out in the chapter 'Beacon of Adventure' by Vice Admiral MP Awati.

In Captain Kohli's own words, he joined the Navy to see the world but the invisible hand of destiny had other plans. In 1954 immediately after he reported to *INS Shivaji*, he took the Indian Navy from deep seas to high Himalaya. Within twelve years Indian Navy Ensigns fluttered on tops of Nanda Kot (22510 ft) in 1959, Annapurna III (24,858 ft) in 1961 and Mount Everest (29,028 ft) in 1965.

Of the book's forty odd chapters, twenty relate to mountaineering/land based adventure and of these eleven are Captain Kohli's awe inspiring tales and seven by the later generation intrepid mountaineer, Captain Satyabrata Dam. The remainder chapters are related to the high seas which include wartime episodes which are aesthetically interspersed and accord the book a fine balance. Brevity and humour it is said constitute the soul of wit and this book typically conforms to this adage. There is ample humour, often subtle. The book engages the reader's interest throughout and makes for one straight reading from beginning to the end. The author is one of India's living legends. Born in 1931, his life was steeped in adventure from the childhood days literally. He survived endless encounters with death during the holocaust of Partition in 1947. He carved out a spectacular career spanning 42 years in the the Indian Navy, Indo- Tibet Border Police and Air India full of adventure and success in the high mountains. Captain Kohli was only 36 years old when he left active mountaineering.

My other favourites are; Beacon of Adventure, Away Sea Boat, Those Magnificent Men, Around the World Solo and Solo Nonstop. And there is an exceptionally evocative Introduction by Admiral VS Shekhawat, former Chief of Naval Staff. How one wishes there was more from him though I suspect there is a passage in 'Sensational Drama on Annapurna', that could be his.

It would be apt to conclude with an excerpt from the Foreword written by Admiral Sunil Lanba, PVSM, AVSM, ADC, the present Chief of Naval Staff:-

*"Over the years we have scaled several challenging peaks, undertaken arduous journeys to the North and South Poles and circumnavigated the globe. While we can reminiscence about our*

*achievements with satisfaction, unconquered and unexplored areas persist. I am very hopeful that the Nation and the Navy's list of accomplishments will continue to grow in years to come".*

It is overall a very fine book that will make an ideal mountaineering and sea adventure companion for the adventure lovers in the Navy and outside.

The book in a later edition could do with more photographs, maps and sketches (presently there are none of the latter). This will add to the value of the book.

*Brig DK Khullar, AVSM (Retd)*

**Naga Movement: Longest Surviving Insurgency in Asia.** By Colonel (Dr) MP Sen, (Manas Publications, 2018, Delhi), Price Rs 995.00, pp 315, ISBN 9788170495420

Lasting peace requires stable political and economic environment. Eric Brahm while quoting Metz wrote, "Broadly speaking, insurgency is a strategy to overthrow the established order". The Naga insurgency as described by the author is ethno-political conflict to overthrow the established order in Naga inhabited areas. Historically it is proved that an insurgency is born when there is perception of polarisation of the community for political reasons, endemic corruption, sectarianism, rising aspirations of the people and perceived threat to the culture. The book 'Naga Movement: Longest Surviving Insurgency in Asia' endorses these perceptions and in fact gives out chronological account of the Naga movement since colonial rule.

The author has covered almost all issues that gave impetus to the Naga insurgency including external linkages. The political initiatives and series of treaties including famous Shillong Accord was an outcome of political willingness of the government to resolve the insurgency; has been very well covered by the author. The Naga insurgency post 1990 has not been a political struggle entirely in its spirit. Somehow, it became an industry when the territorial war erupted among the various factions of the Naga insurgent groups. Naga insurgency also became mother of all insurgencies in the Northeast and their survival hinged upon their ability to destabilise other Naga inhabited areas including Manipur,



part of Arunachal Pradesh and Assam. The linkages with other insurgent groups gave them leverage to calibrate violence and instability in more than one state to sustain the insurgency. Thus, to suggest that it is purely a political movement for greater Nagalim may be a misplaced conclusion. In fact it would have been ideal to decode the aspirations of Nagalim in the backdrop of the fact that there is inter-tribal factionalism and East Nagaland People's Organisation (ENPO) has been demanding a separate state as Frontier Nagaland or Eastern Nagaland. Nagas of Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh and Assam fear that they may become subservient to Nagas of Nagaland.

After such a detailed academic exercise that author has undertaken to put together the causes and the trajectory of the Naga movement since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, as a reader one was expecting a detailed analysis of prognosis of conflict and the efficacy of finding permanent solution through a peace accord. What are the options for the government to rehabilitate the cadres, regain control over territory and end the regime of extortion, drug trafficking and gun running. As a reader I was looking at future prospects more since history of Naga struggle is very well documented. There are three critical issues that are acting as the stumbling block in conflict resolution. Most critical issue is rehabilitation of cadres. Second, how to end parallel economy and prevent resurgence of surrogate/splinter groups taking it over. Third, since the government has said state boundaries are sacrosanct; how will the issue of sovereignty be settled? These issues have remained unanswered in the book.

Notwithstanding the above review, the book has given a detailed account of the meandering trajectory the Naga insurgency has taken to survive and sustain in spite of the pressure from the law enforcement agencies and the public. The book has covered historical background of Naga insurgency well. A good reference book for scholars.

*Brigadier Narender Kumar, SM, VSM (Retd)*

**India's National Security: Annual Review 2018.** Edited by Satish Kumar (New Delhi: Pentagon Press, 2018) pp. 416; Price 1295, ISBN 978-93-86618-41-2

The global order is changing in a fundamental way. In this complicated environment, India is looking to transform itself into a modern developed country in which it can promote its national interests. To understand the dynamics of India's security policy, it is imperative that we consider the changes in our immediate neighbourhood, the Indian sub-continent, our extended neighbourhood, and finally at the world order as it is emerging.

This publication captures the dynamics of India's security policy in the last two years in the context of trends towards nationalism, protectionism and isolationism on the part of major powers, mingled with a desire not to deny themselves the benefits of internationalism and globalisation. While India has undoubtedly reinvigorated its partnerships particularly in defence and economic fields with leading powers, it had also to contend with heightened tensions and provocative actions of its unavoidable adversaries like China and Pakistan.

India's immediate neighbours are areas of concern not merely because of the intrusive presence of its adversaries in this region but also because of their discontent with India on various counts. India has intensified its engagement with countries in the Asia- Pacific region which had common threat perceptions and also provided scope for mutually beneficial development cooperation. Countries in the West Asian region have also received special attention because of India's energy needs, diaspora and terrorism. These and other aspects of India's national security concerns have been comprehensively examined by contributions of eminent experts.

The book is divided into six sections covering the gamut of the national security environment, India's security zones, threats and challenges, economic and technological issues, and strategic concerns. It concludes with an assessment which highlights the limited gains and increasing strains. India has major internal political issues and is in need of structural adjustment to cope with the new global and regional economic situation. Overall, the base has been laid, if we choose to build upon it, to continue progress towards integrating the subcontinent, building connectivity and habits of cooperation and making institutions work much better.

There is also a clear dichotomy between what we see to our East and West in our extended neighbourhood. The breakdown of the geopolitical balance, the rise of sectarian violence and ancient animosities and economic stagnation are all issues of concern. The major geopolitical challenge for India in today's situation is dealing with the consequences of the rise of China and Asia. Today's situation is probably best described as generalised fragmented disorder. This is a world that will reward the agile and the nimble who adjust rapidly to change, not those who try to replicate the past and carry on the basis of habit and old experience.

The essays in this book are a very laudable effort indeed to encapsulate the essentials of India's security concerns and enhance our understanding of the complexities that face us. The broad architecture has been well covered by eminent contributors. It is a valuable addition to military libraries.

*Colonel Harjeet Singh (Retd)*

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## USI

(Estd. 1870)

### OUR ACTIVITIES

#### Library and Reading Room

The library holds over 68,000 books, and journals, including some books of 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, on an astonishing variety of subjects. While the principal emphasis is on strategy and defence, there are a large number of works on different vistas of Indian life. There are memoirs, biographies, recollections, diaries, journals, manuscripts for scholars and researchers. The reading room is air-conditioned, spacious and well stocked in terms of current reading material. Library was automated in 2002.

#### Correspondence Courses

The institution runs regular correspondence courses for officers of the Armed Forces to assist them in preparing for promotion examinations, and for the entrance examinations to the Defence Services Staff College and Technical Staff College. Over the years, this has been a significant and well-received activity.

#### USI Journal

The USI Journal is the oldest surviving defence journal in the country and in Asia, having first appeared in 1871. In an era when there is a feeling that free expression of views by Defence personnel is not looked upon kindly by the establishment, the Journal in fact provides just such a forum, without regard to seniority and length of service in the Armed Forces, subject of course, to propriety and quality of the written work.

#### Centre for Strategic Studies and Simulation

The erstwhile Centre for Research and its resources have been merged into the new Centre named as USI Centre for Strategic Studies and Simulation (USI-CS3) w.e.f. 01 January 2005. The Centre aims at conducting detailed and comprehensive enquiry, research and analyses of national and international security related issues, and gaming and simulation of strategic scenarios, to evolve options for wider discussion and consideration.

#### USI Centre for UN Peacekeeping (CUNPK)

The Centre was established in 2000 and functioned with USI till Aug 2014, when it moved out of USI premises and was delinked from USI. Its aims were organising workshops, seminars and training capsules for peacekeepers, observers and staff officers – both Indian and foreign. It also oversaw the practical training of Indian contingents. It functioned under a Board of Management headed by the Vice Chief of the Army Staff and worked in close coordination with the Service Headquarters and the Ministries of External Affairs and Defence. In August 2014, CUNPK moved out to the accommodation allotted by the Army HQ.

#### Centre for Armed Forces Historical Research (CAFHR)

The Centre was established on 01 Dec 2000 and encourages study and research into the history of the Indian Armed Forces with objectivity, covering different facets such as strategy, tactics, logistics, organisation and socio-economic aspects and their implementation.

#### Gold Medal Essay Competitions

Every year the institution organises two gold medal essay competitions: one for officers below 10 years of service and the other open to all officers. These essays, the first one of which was introduced in 1871, constitute a barometer of opinion on matters that affect national security in general and the defence forces in particular.

#### Lt Gen SL Menzies Memorial Essay Competition

This has been instituted from 2015 on a subject related to Armed Forces Historical Research. The Essay Competition is open to all across the globe.

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A series of lectures, discussions and seminars on service matters, international affairs, and topics of general interest to the Services, are organised for the benefit of local members in Delhi.

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This medal is awarded to Armed Forces personnel for valuable reconnaissance and adventure activity they may have undertaken.

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The following are eligible to become members of the Institution :

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