

Doctrinal Integration of Attack Helicopter Operations*

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Introduction

An attack helicopter (AH) is a military helicopter specifically designed and built to carry weapons for attacking targets on the ground, such as enemy infantry, armoured vehicles and structures. Weapons used on AHs can include automatic cannons, machine-guns, rockets, and guided missiles. Many AHs are also capable of carrying air-to-air missiles, though mostly for purposes of self-defence. AHs are best employed to provide direct elevated fire support for ground troops, and, in the anti-tank role, to destroy enemy armour concentrations. With its unique ability to hover, take-off and land rapidly, the AH has extended the efficacy of air power by bringing it 'down-to-earth'. With the proposed induction of new generation AHs and raising of a Mountain Corps,¹ there is a need to critically evaluate the concept of employment, to effectively exploit the full potential of this potent force multiplier platform.

This essay examines the current Indian Army AH tactics and procedures to arrive at a Doctrine and Concept for employment of AHs in a multi dimensional environment as obtaining in the Indian context. In addition, key aspects relating to integration of AHs into existing land operations have also been analysed.

Future Battlefield Dynamics

Operational Challenges

The future battlefield will be characterised by a combination of small, highly mobile platforms which will apply advanced sensor and information technology, use long range precision attack weapons and conduct relentless operations under all meteorological conditions.² Operations will be characterised by non-linearity of the battlefield and multiple asymmetrical threats in the contemporary operating environment, and these will create challenges for our Army.

Future multi-dimensional scenarios will include a canvas of low-intensity conflicts, encompassing CI/ CT, and even localised wars like Kargil might evolve in the future in J&K, North East India and even in our immediate neighbourhood. These could be fanned by adversaries (and competitors) like Pakistan and China. A table depicting the above operational continuum is indicated at Table 1 below.³ A state of peace or conflict could exist simultaneously in a military commander's theatre of operations, and could even overlap; like conduct of non-combat operations during war.



Army's Role in Shaping the Spectrum

The Army faces the unprecedented challenge of preparing for multiple contingencies, some of which may be impossible to predict. In response to this new strategic environment characterised by global uncertainty and regional instability, the Army will require to maintain its strategic focus on proactive operations with conflict parameters ranging from dissuasion to deterrence. This would require the Army to be prepared to deploy rapidly and conduct operations with very limited period available for acclimatisation, rehearsals or logistics build-up. In addition, the Army will require to be operationally prepared for an expanded focus on 'Operations Other Than War' (OOTW) such as disaster relief, humanitarian assistance, CI/CT operations and to UN peacekeeping missions.

Where Does the AH Fit In?

In the scenarios depicted above, where highly mobile infantry and the Special Forces (SF) operate, the use of AHs will enable timely identification of hostile forces and neutralise them in an earlier time frame.⁴ In the Indian context, the AH is well-suited to meet these operating conditions and the challenges they pose and thus exploiting the third dimension to overcome both, terrain and force friction. However, the scarce AH resources will need to be exploited ingeniously which is possible, if there is seamless integration with the field formations.

Organisational Evolution and Force Re-Structuring

Existing Organisation. The Indian Army uses the Russian origin Mi-25 and Mi-35 helicopters as its mainstay fleet of AHs. However, the concepts employed for operations, by the pilots currently drawn from the Indian Air Force (IAF) only partially meet the operational requirements of our Strike formations. The AHs held currently are organised as two squadrons, with a total of ten helicopters each, and are deployed in support of each of the Strike Corps. The primary role in which these AHs are being employed today is as individual aerial platforms, against high-value targets, and in a secondary role in support of armour operations.

Adequacy of Resources. In the current roles, the capability of AHs to undertake other operations like armed reconnaissance, interdiction, counter-attack or pursuit is not being exploited to its full. This aspect gains importance in view of the planned induction of a family of helicopters (discussed subsequently) as part of Composite Aviation Brigades (CAB) in the Army.⁵

Re-structuring Required. There is a requirement for the AHs to evolve from its initial inception as an aerial platform designed in support of mobile Strike Corps elements into a potent aerial combat weapon system capable of extending the Army’s reach to the third dimension. The capability of executing independent manoeuvre operations, similar to (traditional) armour operations is possible due to inherent mobility and flexibility of AHs. The challenge lies in incorporating these inherent capabilities in the doctrine for employment of AHs.

AHs as Force Multipliers. By virtue of short duration and high intensity characteristics of future wars, with increased depth and frontage of contact, the AH is an ideal weapon system for operations in the tactical battle area (TBA)⁶. Precise and incisive fire power, speed and manoeuvrability in the third dimension and close integration with the ground forces makes the AH a force multiplier in the TBA and a critical resource to the field force commander.

Assets Complimenting the AH. In order to effectively utilise the capabilities of AHs, integration of other aerial resources is essential to make a truly “Composite” Aviation Brigade (CAB; discussed subsequently). These will include the light utility helicopters (LUH), tactical battle support helicopter (TBSH), (christened as ‘Dhruv’) and Light Combat Helicopters (LCH). ⁷ The armed version of the Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH) ‘Rudra’, though not a typical AH, has an array of comparable weapon systems to include gun, rockets, air-to-air, and air-to-ground missiles (ATGM). These could be orbatted to a Pivot Corps enhancing the defensive and offensive capabilities. The tandem-seating LCH, a stealth featured derivative of the ALH, may be employed in an anti-infantry and anti-armour role with a capability to operate at high altitudes.

Command and Control Systems

Breaking Free of Legacies

‘Command’ in the current context implies authority for movement and deployment of AH resources whereas ‘Control’ applies to the control over flying operations including air space management. Command also entails responsibility for administration of AH resources. The eventual availability of multiple types of helicopters at a Corps level mandates the need for tailor made structures to exercise control over the organic and any additional aviation assets placed under command of the formation. This has led to the need for creation of composite aviation brigades (CAB) in each Corps. The CABs will have to be inherently modular in structure, capable of accepting/ detaching sub-units in sync with the overall ‘Integrated Theatre Battle (ITB)’.

Operational synchronisation between ground and air manoeuvres, and conduct of aviation operations will be coordinated by the CAB. The effective command and control of the AH assets in the TBA will include aspects related to operational employment, staffing, training, maintenance and allotment of resources. A detailed analysis of various systems available in other armies was carried out and the following emerged: -

- (a) There is a need for delineation between operational employment of AH resources and a “Class Authority” that deals with allotment, philosophy/policy formulation and maintenance of AH resources - on lines of what the Indian Navy follows for its Naval Aviation Arm.
- (b) An institution for Tactics and Strategy Development (on lines of the Air Force’s ‘TACDE’) is recommended to be built.⁸ The foundation for it could be the existing Combined Air Training School (CATS) functioning in Deolali.
- (c) Specialised stream of officers and men for ASM on the lines of the Fighter Controllers (FC) stream of the IAF.

Accordingly, it is recommended that a variant to the current system of delineation of responsibilities, as followed in the Indian Navy - between the Flag Officer Naval Aviation (FONA) and Assistant Chief of Naval Staff (Air) - be adapted for the Indian Army, as under: -

- (a) **Military Operations (MO) Directorate.** Operational policies, control and allotment of AH resources including concept of employment.
- (b) **Aviation Directorate.** Development of AH tactics, strategy, staffing norms and armament aspects.

The specific tasks and proposed controlling authorities for all the above issues is proposed as listed in the Table 2 below: -

Table 2 : Delineation of Responsibilities

Ser No	Type of Activity	Controlling Authority
(a)	Operational Policy	MO Directorate (MO-7)
(b)	Acquisition	Aviation Directorate
(c)	Operational Concept/ Employment	Formation General Staff
(d)	Staffing Norms	Aviation Directorate
(e)	Armaments	Aviation Directorate
(f)	AH Tactics and Strategy	Combat Air Training School C/o Aviation Directorate

(g)	Tactics Evaluation Group	
(h)	AH Maintenance	EME Directorate
(j)	Control/ Allotment (AH Resources)	MO Directorate (MO-7)

Communications

Aviation operations rely heavily on secure communications for their success. Combat information reporting, dissemination and its exploitation are fundamental to combat operations. This includes:-

- (a) Passage of operational mission status, including Recognised Air Situation Picture (RASP).
- (b) Airspace and Air Defence clearances.
- (c) Air Traffic Controller (ATC) services – in the 100 metre from ground-up within the TBA.
- (d) Fuel, ammunition, spares and logistics states.
- (e) Weather picture etc on a real-time basis.

With AH operations spread over large areas in the TBA, communications must be reliable and redundant. Key aspects meriting attention are as under: -

- (a) Use of Combat Net Radio (CNR), including stand-by High Frequency (HF) for beyond line of sight ranges and during nape-of-earth (NoE) flying.
- (b) Satellite communications (using state-of-art Ku-band transponders on the recently launched GSAT-7 satellite).
- (c) Operational Data Link (ODL) connectivity to formation HQ (akin to the 'Link-16' used in the F-16 fighter planes). Information shared will include the following: -
 - (i) Real-time sharing of the Situational Awareness (SA) picture.
 - (ii) Voice/ data connectivity with Joint Air Defence Centre (JADC) on Command radio nets.

Training and Administrative Aspects

Training

The optimum utilisation of AHs as force multipliers can only be made by enhancing the skill sets of pilots for performing close combat attacks and air-ground integration. Aspects requiring attention are discussed in the subsequent paras.

Institutional Issues

- (a) The Aviation Directorate will require to develop a close combat attack school, on the lines of the IAF, where pilots would be ready for all different types of engagements prior to arriving at their unit. Training on planning and executing missions will require to be incorporated.
- (b) Structured training of the currently available Air Force AH pilots in strike corps operations.

Jointness in Training. Operations of the AHs will entail close coordination between the IAF, Army Air Defence, offensive formations and the AH. The need for Jointness in training can accordingly be appreciated and some of the aspects that will require to be addressed are mentioned below :-

- (a) Specialised training infrastructure and syllabi for the new specialisations, to include Fighter Controllers and Forward Air Controllers.
- (b) Complexities of flying technically advanced AHs at night will require special emphasis.
- (c) Radio Telephony (RT) procedures be standardised and protocols between the ground forces and AH pilots will require to be laid down afresh. This aspect assumes significance when calling Battlefield Air Strikes (BAS) or Close Air Support (CAS), both discussed subsequently.

Administrative Aspects

Cadre management of a new stream of AH pilots, keeping in mind the peculiarities and uniqueness of the "trade" involved. In addition, a planned strategy to "operationally orientate" the newly trained Army AH pilots after Air Force pilots are returned back to their parent Service.

Amendments to the existing "Army - Air Force Joint Training Directive of 1996", to incorporate AH doctrines and employment philosophies.

Doctrinal Framework and Operational Concepts

The Russian and the US Philosophies

It was only in the late seventies that a thorough integration of air and land battle concepts was duly recognised. It was

somewhere around the same time that, emergence of dedicated AHs took place, leading to the development of air-land doctrines. The Russians incorporated the AHs effectively in their BAS missions as demonstrated by them in Afghanistan. Their 'Hind' class of AHs also substituted for tanks and artillery in the mountainous terrain for obvious reasons.¹⁰ The Americans on the other hand conceived the idea of employment of AHs primarily in the anti-armour role.¹¹ It was only in the eighties that the NATO realised the concept of employment of AHs in BAS role. This was subsequently demonstrated in the Gulf Wars and in Afghanistan.

Doctrinal Aspects in Indian Context

AH employment must be akin to that of an independent armoured brigade acting like the sword of the strike formation. The aviation assets must be seamlessly integrated with other ground components to achieve the desired concentration of effects. Bold employment of composite forces, centred on "combined arms team" concept, involving rapid grouping and re-grouping, would epitomise its employment philosophy. The AH is envisaged to be used as part of an Airborne Task Force (ABTF), comprising attack, recce/ EW helicopters¹² to be grouped with requisite infantry, armour and integral air defence, with a specific objective based on capability and mandated to compliment the primary operational (ground) plan.

A typical mission plan, based on the above operational imperatives, will include: -

- (a) Selection of mounting bases, landing zones, firm bases and locations of Forward Area Arming and Refuelling Points (FAARPs).
- (b) Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis including characteristics of objective, resources analysis (AH, firepower and troops) and execution timelines.
- (c) Aspects related to logistics and maintenance over an area of operations will need to be factored-in.

In view of the limited ground holding capability of the ABTF, its operations must be synchronised with the main offensive for desired impact. In addition, the ABTF can also be assigned independent tasks like flank protection and recce-in-force.

Use of AHs in Mountain Strike Corps

Mountainous areas provide unique opportunities for AH. The AH is perhaps tailor-made for mountain operations as enemy mechanised forces will be slowed down and channelised as they move up steep gradients and down narrows valleys or are restricted to roads and trails, providing excellent targets. Fighter aircraft would be restricted in their operations due to limited manoeuvring air space and difficulties in target acquisition. Mountains provide excellent terrain-masking and permit easy avoidance of radar and visual acquisition. In addition, decisive manoeuvre in the mountains requires a significant infantry force capable of traversing most inaccessible terrain. However, such AH based air power alone cannot be relied upon as sole provider of concentrated fire power to support ground missions. Suppressive fire, created by a heavy volume of continuous fire over a wide area, is a necessary complement to ground manoeuvre, and is best provided by the artillery.

Mountainous environment, particularly the severe and rapidly changing weather, affect aircraft performance, accelerate crew fatigue and influence basic flight techniques. Limited visibility and peculiarities of flying in the mountainous terrain pose additional hazards and require extensive aircrew training. While high altitude limits load-carrying capabilities of the aircraft, compartmentalised mountain terrain enhances the possibilities for rapid movement to the flanks and in the rear of an isolated enemy force.

AH vis-à-vis Fighter Aircraft. There is indeed a need to re-look fresh at the concept of close air support in the TBA and the role of AH/armed helicopters in the same. The present concept of close air support is a relic of World War II, driven by range limitations of surveillance, target acquisition, and engagement capability of land-based platforms. The availability of UAVs, missiles and long range artillery platforms (40-120 km) has changed all that. Today, surface-based platforms can cover the entire TBA. This also brings into focus the role of AHs in providing close air support (CAS) in the TBA. In Afghanistan, the troops on the ground have been more comfortable with the intimate support provided by attack/armed helicopters in their operations, due to the visible, proximity and response time factors. However, helicopters have their limitations due to their inherent characteristics and subject to weather conditions. Hence, fighter aircraft will continue to be relevant but will have a diminished and limited role in the TBA.

Concept of Operations

The AHs have precise reconnaissance, attack or protection missions. In attack tactics, the surprise effect of a low altitude approach at least partially offsets increased vulnerability due to proximity to the ground. Accordingly, the employment of AH in support of ground operations will call for own armour – with mobility, shock effect and fire power – to spearhead the offensive, with the AHs coordinating its attacks with the advancing armour, to form a combined team. Thus, integrated into teams, AHs can interdict enemy columns on the move in depth, hold up their advance, protect flanks, disrupt the movement of reserves and destroy mechanised forces. Some of the roles that can be assigned to AHs in our context include: -

- (a) **Battlefield Air Strikes.** Given their flexibility and the weapon mix available, Battlefield Air Strike (BAS) is a role that is ideally suited for AHs. Factors favouring the use of AHs are: -
 - (i) Can operate without an airfield/ runway.
 - (ii) Familiarity with terrain helps reduce response time.
 - (iii) Can exploit the terrain features for surprise attacks.

(iv) Attack helicopters fill a vital gap in BAS when strike fighters are either not available due to limitation of resources, weather or terrain.

(v) Low speeds and low altitude capabilities reduce chances of detection by ground based air defence systems.

(b) **Suppression of Enemy Air Defence (SEAD).** SEAD may be required when penetrating or exiting enemy territory. SEAD activities can also be used to distract enemy defences from the actual planned routes or time of operations. The accuracy and lethality of AHs make them useful for conducting SEAD missions.

(c) **Helicopter Counter Air Operations.** The growing threat in the TBA from enemy AHs has necessitated development of 'Helicopter Counter Air' missions. AHs operate from FARRPs and are heavily dependent on large quantities of fuel and ammunition.¹³ AH based Counter Air Operations can be used to target enemy fuel and ammunition dumps.

(d) **Joint Air Attack Teams (JAAT).** The concept of JAAT was conceived by the Americans and also employed by the Russians. In the Indian context, JAAT operation could have synchronised simultaneous attack by AHs, fighter aircraft and field artillery. The composition of a JAAT would also include forward air controllers and directed by an overall commander in an AH.

(e) **AH in CI/ CT Operations.** The AH is ideally suited for employment in counter insurgency (CI) and special operations. Employment of this resource by the US in Afghanistan, Russians in Chechnya and Pakistan in the federally administered tribal areas (FATA), in CI operations clearly illustrates this. While in India, we have used helicopters in CI operations, the use of AH has been avoided as a policy due to the concerns of collateral damage. In special operations, Operation Neptune Spear/ Geronimo launched by the US to get Osama, exemplifies the close and precise integration of all elements of army aviation with SF as well as other elements like the RPAs to achieve success.

In addition to the above, peculiarities of operations in a two-front scenario will necessitate use of AHs in the following secondary roles: -

- (a) Anti UAV Operations (to include slow moving targets).
- (b) Escort to Heliborne (HB) Forces, and SHBO.
- (c) Combat Search and Rescue (SAR).
- (d) Convoy Protection for Move of Strategic Assets (e.g. Brahmos)
- (e) AEW/ ASW (relevant in the context of own Amphibious Brigade).

Limitations of AHs. Although the military benefits of AHs are unchallenged, their limitations must also be considered in order to understand the current situation. Flying lower and slower than a fighter aircraft, the helicopter will always remain vulnerable to some degree to the enemy threat, which has increased since the appearance of ground-to-air missiles that can be carried and used by a single man.

Process to Achieve Doctrinal Integration

The primary employment of AH is to fight the land battle and support ground operations. Some aspects meriting attention for achieving doctrinal integration are discussed in the succeeding paras.

Integral Lift Capability to Complement AH Operations. The organisational changes mentioned above and the process of modernisation would lead to a capability-based force, with integral lift capability of a company at the Corps level, a battalion at command level and a brigade at army level. Accordingly, the resources for this capability in terms of tactical and heavy lift helicopters will require to be inducted.

Integration with GLONASS System. The need for moving away from US-based GPS systems needs no elaboration. A case for ab-initio integration of our AH navigation systems to the GLONASS exists.¹⁴

Encryption of RT. The current CNR connectivity between ground and AHs is in clear. There exists a case for encryption of this link. A combined project to develop communication protocols for the ODL (on the lines of the 'Link-16' discussed earlier) and encryption of RT link, may be considered for taking up as a project by the Army Technology Board (ATB).

Situational Awareness Using Tri-Services Resources. A slew of projects have been undertaken within own and the sister Services to enhance situational awareness (SA) on the battlefield. The integration of data feeds from the air, sea (to cater for contingency of own Brigade in amphibious operations) and ground-based sensor grids will make the AH platform an ideal force multiplier in the TBA. Some of the projects identified are as under:-

- (a) Integrated Air Command and Control System (IACCS) of the IAF.
- (b) Maritime Operations Centre (MOC) of the Indian Navy.
- (c) Real-time video and data feed from Indian Navy's 'Trigun' system.
- (d) Army's Battlefield Support System (BSS).
- (e) The Army Air Defence's 'Akashteer' project. The integration being referred-to herein is a more close form

as compared to the existing mechanism of data availability at the Joint Air Defence Centre (JADC).

GSAT and RPVs Integration

Integration of RPVs and AHs will enable greater target differentiation in the combat zone and tactical mobility. Such integration can work in following ways: -

- (a) The RPV as an autonomous platform for detecting and identifying threats using on-board sensors (electro-optical, thermal and radar). Integrated with a high-capacity data link, it can relay the data in near real-time to different platforms including the helicopters. The latter can then engage the select targets at stand-off ranges, depending on beyond-line-of-sight firing capability.
- (b) In addition, RPVs can operate as an extension of the AH. In such a scenario, the AH will function as an autonomous intelligence gathering and data relaying platform - continuing to retain the advantages of its integral acquisition systems and ability to bypass terrain barriers.

The integration of weapon systems into increasingly sophisticated communication and digitised networks should constitute a major focus of future projects in the Army's Aviation Directorate. A need is also felt for constituting an Experts' Panel to progress a time-bound project under the aegis of the Army Technology Board, on issues pertaining to data and video integration.

Air Space Management

The management of airspace in the TBA is a complex issue with a plethora of weapon systems operating in a confined space and with proliferation of users of air space in the TBA. The enhancement in the types of military equipment along with lethality, speed and accuracy of aircraft and helicopters and air defence, have added a new dimension to air space management in the TBA. Operating of ground-based high trajectory weapon systems, and aircraft (fixed and rotary) mentioned above, will lead to major air space 'conflicts' and confusion, endangering own assets and serious issues of IFF, thus requiring special attention.

The air space envelope below 100 metres above ground level (AGL) is mandated to be under the control of the Army. This is controlled through the Corps Air Space Control Centre (CACC), established under the aegis of CAB. A major aspect of coordination pertains to identification of ground features to de-lineate the TBA at the Command level.

Concept. Air space management in the TBA will enhance efficiency in combined operations of land and air components with minimum interference and restraint. This will involve control of: -

- (a) Own airborne assets.
- (b) Ground-based air defence systems.

Backbone. The backbone of ASM in the TBA will be the recognised air surveillance picture (RASP) with colour-coded tracks available to the CACC. This would also ensure positive control of air space, based on timely detection and identification of all tracks. It involves integration of radar picture through IACCS, Akashteer and Trigun.

Prevention of Fratricide. Clearing friendly elements of indirect fires is vital in fratricide prevention. This task will be coordinated by the JADC - with representatives of Artillery, Infantry (Mortars), UAVs, Aviation, the Air Defence and the IAF - by engaging enemy aircraft and control of air assets to avoid fratricide. Further, the following measures are recommended to achieve coordination between the fixed and rotary wing aircraft :-

- (a) A fixed high-performance aircraft engaged in tactical air operations would normally be under radar or radio control while operating or transiting through the TBA.¹⁵
- (b) All rotary winged aircraft would be operating below 100 meters, under the control of the CACC.
- (c) To reduce conflict between rotary and fixed winged aircraft, a coordinating altitude has been designated. Normally, rotary wing aircraft operate below 100 meters AGL and fixed wing above this altitude, with a buffer zone of 100 - 500 meters, where transitory flights will travel.

Coordination with RPVs/ Slow Flying Objects. All movement of remotely piloted vehicles (RPVs) below 100 meters AGL will continue to be controlled by CACC. To ensure the same, command of RPVs in a TBA will be under the respective aviation brigades.

AH Coordination for Missiles/ Artillery Fire Support. The JADC, in consultation with the FDC, will coordinate fire areas for artillery. However, a detailed mechanism for missile systems will require to be worked out with the Strategic Forces Command. In the interim, AHs in the TBA will require to be re-routed to prevent fratricide due to own missile systems.

Conclusion

Attack helicopters are likely to play a vastly enhanced role in future conflicts. In addition to the roles described in conventional operations earlier, their crucial role in CI / CT operations cannot be overemphasised. The modernisation process that the Army has commenced is a step in the right direction, but the momentum needs to be maintained.

This essay has attempted to bring out doctrinal recommendations in the overall context of future employment of AHs in the Army's operations, and is consistent with the principles defined in the Indian Army Doctrine. The dovetailing of the force multiplier capabilities of the AH in future ground operations of the Army will entail addressing the

doctrinal, training and integration aspects in a coordinated and sustained manner.

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Officer-Men Relationship -A Critical Appraisal*

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Introduction

A soldier is an epitome of valour and courage. He does his duty under unforeseen circumstances, even under incomprehensible odds, which sometimes lead to grave injuries and loss of life. Simultaneously, an officer in the Armed Forces is a dedicated professional leader who has to lead by example. Together they fight for their country and unreservedly perform the tasks assigned to them both, in peace and war.

The questions that arise are : firstly, how can they achieve this to meet the expectations of their countrymen; secondly, what needs to be done to ensure that they get the essential wherewithal to measure up to the required standards of infallibility; and lastly, is the present situation in terms of 'officer-men relationship in the Armed Forces' an ideal one? If not, what needs to be done to bring about an ideal synchronisation between the two vital components of the military might of the country? It is imperative to visit the past and take a look at the aberrations that have crept in this relationship and are the weeds in the present day Armed Forces of our Country.

A Historical Perspective

The British Indian Army was the principal 'instrument' of power of the British Raj in the pre-Independence era. The present day Indian Army's heritage and origins go back to the aftermath of the 1857 uprising when the British Crown took over direct rule of British India from the East India Company. Upto the end of the Nineteenth Century, the term Indian Army was used as a collective description of the Presidency armies (the Madras Army, the Bengal Army and the Bombay Army) of British India. Thereafter, in 1903, Kitchner reforms unified them into one Indian Army.

In those times, only the British could become officers and the soldiers were predominantly Indian. The stark disparity between salaries and social status of Indian soldiers and their British counterparts was a cause for dissatisfaction amongst the Indians. The Indianisation of the Indian Army began in 1918 after the publication of the Montagu-Chelmsford report, which established the principle of self-governance in India.

In the following three years a trifling bit was done and only ten seats per year were allotted to Indians at the Royal Military College, Sandhurst. The Indianisation had been painfully slow and it wasn't complete until 1947. An extreme view point has been that we are still "walking in the shoes of our colonial masters. That we treat our own people with same contempt and distrust as the British did."

The result has been that we have had no major changes in the ideology of recruiting men since the creation of the Indian Armed forces. The "officer level" on the other hand is a different story. It was with great difficulty that one became an officer in the earlier days to be at par with the "British". We absorbed all those Victorian cultures and traditions and imbibed them as our own. We still follow with great reverence the archaic customs of the Victorian era that unfortunately displays a lack of evolution. We imbibe a false sense of superiority and fail to follow the true tenets of military leadership that have been inscribed on the oak panelling at the entrance to Chetwode Hall at the Indian Military Academy. There exists, undoubtedly, a great barrier between the Officers and men which can no longer be disregarded in this age of information.

Though our Armed Forces have made vast technological advancements, and have transformed themselves into a very modern and superior force with state of the art weapon systems, the framework of the relationship between officers and men, sadly remains nearly the same as it was post-Independence. Cultural changes are also afoot with every next generation yearning for the Indian equivalent of the "American dream"! This has changed the way the new generation views the profession of arms. While admiration for the men in uniform still fuels the respect of most citizens of India, the numbers of officers joining Armed Forces is fast dwindling. This has led to a shortage of officers in the Armed Forces and may be one of the reasons for the eroded image of an officer in the eyes of the men. A bold relook at preventing a breakdown of this relationship is required to put it on a sound footing that would be able to withstand the challenges of the future. The Officer-men bond is an intangible and to suggest measures to improve this bond, one needs to look at measures to improve the quality of life and the quality of the intake of officers and men rather than suggest behavioural changes in the existing system today.

Macro Level

Glorify the Profession. The success of advertising industry is a proof that the human mind is extremely gullible in certain ways and gets influenced, voluntarily or in- voluntarily by various mediums. Data reveals that after huge success of the Hollywood film "Top Gun", the enlistment for American naval aviators jumped 500 per cent. Military service was glorified in the United States of America after years of resentment from the fallout of the Vietnam war. Not only did "Top Gun" benefit the United States of America, a lot of aviators around the world joined their Air Forces with the dream of becoming fighter pilots. Projecting Armed Forces in positive light by way of good advertising can do a great deal of good at attracting promising talent in our country rather than the unnecessary criticism of the sensationalist news of many news channels that seem to blow out of proportion the statistically low cases of reported indiscipline in the armed forces albeit on the seemingly increasing trend. What is needed is a dedicated media cell at the Service HQ to advertise the Indian Armed forces in an imaginative and sustained manner, more than what is being done today. Not only will this increase the intake in the armed forces, but the common man's opinion about a soldier defending his country will improve greatly. This will further result in an increase in the motivational levels and finally help make the officer-men bond a better one.

Amend the Pay-Scales. The soldier has always been glorified in the Indian conscience and glorified as the bearer of

high morals and ideals. When the slogan “Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan” was raised by the then Prime Minister of India, Lal Bahadur Shastri in 1965, it was to motivate the soldiers to defend India against enemies and simultaneously increase the production of food grains. But the pay scales of Defence Forces Personnel based on the Post-war Pay Committee equates a fully trained infantry soldier with 3 years of service with a semi-skilled worker. This disparaging equation does not echo in any way the slogan “Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan”. While it can be argued that the report on the Sixth Pay Commission is, by “equating”, creating an unbiased comparison to the nearest possible profession in the civilian context, it seems a trifle vague when it talks about a comparison with the private sector and echoes the bureaucratic red tapism of the bygone British Raj. To top it all, there was no military member in the Sixth Central Pay Commission. It goes on to say that “a mere comparison of the pay or pay scale without taking cognisance of the total package of allowances and benefits available within the Government may not be appropriate and the value of job security provided cannot be undermined since they form major components of the total package”. While the Government does provide job security, the nature of the job does not provide life security! Never, in the parlance of common sense, has the value of job security, whatever it means, been higher than the value of life. “A trifle vague” now seems sarcastic. It is the same story with the recently announced Seventh Central Pay Commission, i.e. to say that there is no representation from the Armed Forces.

The growing shortage of officers in the Armed Forces, as mentioned earlier, is of concern and is taking a toll on the officer-men relationship. The time that should be devoted to developing the bond is now being devoted to fill up for officers permanently in absentia. This shortage can be directly linked to potential officer candidates being lured away to greener pastures in the pursuit of making more money. The only possible solution then, is to amend the existing pay scales and give the Armed Forces a perceptible edge over the highest rung of Central Govt Civil Services and police forces. It has been observed that for men, the stress levels during operations are much lower than the stress generated due to the problems at home, which many a times are monetary in nature. These stressors have been initiators of unrelated officer-men clashes. Keeping the soldiers financially more comfortable will in turn help in keeping this bond untarnished.

The Cradle of Military Leadership. The many officer training institutes that are viewed as being the cradles of military leadership have the onerous task of keeping up with the job of churning out great leaders of men. While the National Defence Academy is a premier institution and boasts of being an institution that - “educates, trains and develops future military leaders to possess the requisite qualities of leadership, integrity, character and intellect”, in practice, it has turned out to be an immensely difficult task in imparting cadets with such a multitude of honourable traits amidst a rigorous routine. While the Auchinleck Committee might have envisioned a rosy future, the de facto arrangement seems to be otherwise, not just for the National Defence Academy, but for other officer training academies as well. What is ultimately taught and learnt under the aegis of adolescent seniors is not always higher virtues but the esoteric arts of “managing, minimum-effort, shamming, etc.”. The task of guiding young cadets must not be left to the ever so slightly more experienced cadets who still are at the cusp of adulthood. The official rhetoric may be that it is the duty of officers to guide the young cadets but in reality young impressionable cadets spend much more time with their senior cadets than officers. The academies are where the future leaders are moulded and every possible care must be taken to ensure that they become true cradles of military leadership. To state such things might brand one as a blasphemer, but the road ahead needs to be paved with stones of criticism to reach the gates of a semi-utopian reality. Unnecessary rigour should be removed and greater involvement of officers in the lives of the cadets needs to be ensured. Good leaders will mean a good bond.

British Customs and Traditions. The Indian Armed Forces are the offspring of that once mighty colonial empire that left a huge legacy of customs and traditions that are still prevalent in our Armed Forces today. To cling still, to those traditions which are alien to the Indian way of life, tend not to establish a common bond between the officers and men, but rather does apportion a superficial tone of elitism amongst the officer clan, regrettably so. The idea is not to alienate the officers from the men and display gaudy acts of customs and traditions that were never Indian in the first place but to show quite the opposite – the congruence of a common goal. To divorce ourselves completely from the legacy of the British will be foolhardy, but the point is to render more reverence to the officer-men relationship rather than an extreme reverence of archaic and anachronistic Victorian traditions that are rendered moot in today’s context. This is important to ensure that the men do not have to look up to the officers with estranged eyes and also ensure that the officers don’t imbibe a sense of elitism resulting in branding everyone else as inferior.

Sir, Yes Sir Syndrome! In an extremely hierarchical institution like the Armed Forces, it is considered irreverent to say “no” to a superior officer even if the subordinate officer graciously disagrees. A jawan, sailor or airmen doing so is nothing short of insubordination. While it may be an exaggeration, the truth is that nay saying, in the constructive sense, isn’t part of our culture. While there may be many boards displaying the proverb- “professional disagreement is not insubordination”, saying “no” is by and large taken as a sign of incompetence or an inflated ego.

In the United States Air Force after the Vietnam war, many combat pilot veterans were left disillusioned with the culture of combat that prevailed before Vietnam; and soon after Vietnam, a mass exodus of officers took place once they had served the minimum number of years. The combat veteran pilots that stayed became majors in the early 1970s. They became known as the “iron majors”, a group that was willing to put their careers on the line while they pushed hard for changes. They seemed to have vices of a rebellious spirit and a willingness to criticise higher authority. However, it soon became clear that these weren’t vices but virtues that helped change the USAF into what it is today.

Without a constructively critical approach to the way our organisation works, the feedback from the lower levels will resound the worrisome chants of “sir, yes sir” to portray an image of absolute perfection, a fallacy. Someone who is opening a Pandora’s Box of realities in the field will certainly face the stigmatisation of his superior officers and peer group. A way to reverse this is to reward acts of bold initiative, even at the cost of the initiative being atypical as far as the accepted norms and customs are concerned. This will empower the JCO level, in taking decisions, in creating a smoother gradient in the hierarchy instead of a steep gradient from men to officer.

At the Unit Level

While it is becoming more difficult to devote a greater amount of time in developing a bond with the men, young officers need to be the instrument of change before the vagaries of time and the pressures of family life erode the youthful and somewhat quixotic notion of leadership and gives way to a wry and pragmatic approach to leadership that is based out of experience of knowing the quickest way to get the job done.

Displays of the customs and traditions of the British era must be toned down at the unit level and instead, more Bara Khaana's should take place to increase interaction with the men and their families. Also, the JCO's must be empowered more to take decisions and be a part of the decision making process. An officer supervising every tiny detail of every mundane activity relinquishes the faith of the JCO's in the officers and vice versa even though they might have spent many years serving in the forces.

Professionalism, a Higher Virtue. Professionalism is a virtue that is seldom placed in the top shelf generally reserved for seemingly romantic virtues such as loyalty and integrity. The concept of warfare has changed, with technology being the most crucial factor for determining the output of a futuristic combat zone. With technology also comes the need to be well aware of all the capabilities of the weapons platform. Thus there is a greater requirement of being an astute professional. Professionalism should not just confine itself to the specifics of work but should be the *raison d'être* more so at the lower levels. During the process of achieving higher professionalism, the importance of team work that is required between men and officers will come to the fore, thus improving the bond.

Conclusion

In the past few decades, our Country has seen a number of conflicts and has undergone unprecedented socio-economic changes. Modernisation seems to be the order of the day for the three Services. Technology has seeped into every mundane task and is now a way of life. Technology is now a bigger tool than ever. But the greatest asset which always was, is, and will

always be is the man – the man behind the sight of a gun to the man behind the controls of an advanced fighter jet. Modernisation cannot be at the cost of losing the effective bond between officers and men. The onus of responsibility lies on the officer, the leader.

*This is an edited version of the article which won the First Prize in USI Gold Medal Essay Competition 2013, Group B – open to officers upto 10 years of service.

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Some Reflections on Ethics

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Introduction

The word 'ethics' originated from the Latin word 'ethicus' and the Greek word 'ethicos' which means character or manners. The horizon of this definition may further be expanded and the concepts of right or wrong behaviour or conduct are incorporated. As ethics acts as a guide of action, it can be also termed as a normative discipline. We are social creatures. More often than we realise, we get our cues for acceptable and unacceptable behaviour from our environment as well as our intrinsic traits of character. This is even truer in the intense social environment of a military organisation or institution. Various ethical theories provide a system of rules or principles that guide us in making decisions about what is right or wrong and good or bad in a particular situation. It provides a basis for understanding what it means to be a morally decent human being. Stated another way, ethical theories when applied to leadership are about both, the actions of leaders and who they are as people. The choices leaders make and how they respond in a given circumstance are informed and directed by their ethics.

Military Ethics -What does it Mean?

Our way of life and our well-being in the armed forces depend upon the ability of leaders at all levels to inspire and lead often under the most harrowing conditions and unimaginable levels of stress. How do we go about these duties is an important question that props us. The Military Ethos or its Ethics has an important role to play here. The military officer is considered a gentleman, not because Nation wills it, nor because it has been the custom of people in all times to afford him that courtesy, but specifically because nothing less than a gentleman is truly suited for his particular set of responsibilities.

Military ethics applies to a specialised realm and has developed principles appropriate to it over time to help guide future practices. Military ethics is a species of the genus 'professional ethics'. That is to say, it exists to be of service to professionals who are not themselves specialists in ethics but who have to carry out the tasks entrusted to the profession as honourably and correctly as possible. It is analogous to medical ethics or legal ethics in the sense that its core function is to assist those professions to think through the moral challenges and dilemmas inherent in their professional activity and, by helping members of the profession better understand the ethical demands upon them, to enable and motivate them to act appropriately in the discharge of their professional obligations.¹

Military ethics is at its core practical and professional. It is meant to be the handmaid of the profession of arms. It exists to assist thoughtful professionals to think through their real-world problems and issues. Although there are few conceptual rough edges; overall these principles make good practical sense to experienced military professionals. In the field of military ethics in particular, clean and tidy solutions to problems are sometimes at hand, but often all options have some regrettable aspects.² It necessitates a deep understanding of the constraints under which the profession carries out its duties. It even requires an understanding of the internal structure and dynamics of the profession. Military ethics have come under greater scrutiny especially during the 'War on Terror and Insurgency'. The question what constitutes a 'just war' and how it may be waged are highlighted in the conflicts involving security forces in Counter Insurgency and Anti-terrorist operations.

The Centrality of Ethics to Leadership

Ethics are a fundamental component of leadership. Our lives are permeated with ethical challenges that help each one of us to learn about oneself and the world around us. Through such experiences we build our character, which is one of the most important elements of leadership. In regard to leadership, ethics has to do with what leaders do and who leaders are. It is concerned with the nature of leaders' behaviour, and with their virtuousness. In any decision making situation, ethical issues are either implicitly or explicitly involved. Other leadership elements, like our value systems, the goals that we set for ourselves and for our organisations, our actions, and our interaction and relationships with others, all lead to changes in our environment and contribute to the legacy we leave behind.

Leaders have a particular responsibility to enforce ethical standards because they hold both the power and the responsibility to exert change. Ethical leadership means first and foremost staying true to oneself and remaining firmly grounded in reality, recognising that we—leaders and subordinates—are all equal in our obligations to respect the same laws and ethical standards. Rank or status immunity does not give us the right to misuse it, and it does not give us absolution from breaking the law. Ethical leadership means to treat others as you would like to be treated yourself; treat everyone with dignity and respect regardless of their ethnic, religious or social background, gender or political beliefs, rank or file. It means giving everyone a chance at learning, expression, development and promotion.

Ethical leadership carries with it an obligation to use power and authority for the common good—to improve the lives of others. It means motivating, leading others to do well, to make a difference for a better world. We have a responsibility well beyond our official functions, as human beings. We have to build professional ethics upon our personal ethics. Fairness, caring, and compassion for others have to lead us in our professional and personal lives. Leaders influence followers and the nature of the influence depends on the leaders' character and behaviour (particularly the nature and outcome of behaviour)

Leaders will fill positions of command. And very much of leadership is about "taking charge" and "getting stuff done". Besides these practical things, leadership demands character. Other words for character are integrity, or conscience. The ideas of conscience and trust illustrate the difference between leadership and command. Leadership is personal; it depends upon people of good character and moral courage, acting in good conscience. Such people inspire trust in those who follow them willingly. Command is positional and with command comes all the power and authority over subordinates that the leader needs to achieve tasks. The nature and scope of command authority varies from appointment to appointment and increases with rank. Leaders have an ethical claim to the authority of command only

by unflinching integrity. Leaders bring strength of character to command positions.

Leadership demands an ethical example. Leadership must be ethically disciplined in order to protect the interests and reputation of the armed forces and its people. The end, no matter how worthy, never justifies unethical means. People who demonstrate leadership, demonstrate society's ideals, and act in accord with the laws and moral codes which separate the unethical application of force from the ethical application of force. All military tasks must be accomplished by ethical means. As General Sir John Hackett once remarked: "What a bad person cannot be, is a good sailor, soldier or airman. Military institutions thus form a repository of moral resource that should always be a source of strength within the State."³

The Trilogy of 'Ethics, Conscience and Leadership'

Ethics also means the continuous effort of studying our own moral beliefs and our moral conduct, and striving to ensure that we, and the institutions we help to shape, live up to standards that are reasonable and solidly-based. Conscience is an engine of moral authenticity or genuineness, enabling professional decisions from the basis of integrity. Conscience is central to the leadership 'ethic of being' which is central to Military ethos. 'Being' is what Shri Debashis Chatterjee in his book "Timeless Leadership" describes it as 'is the raw material for becoming a leader'. Character is defined by conscience, which is the moral sense of right and wrong and central to leadership. Leaders acknowledge other people as moral equals, equally deserving of the respect which promotes trust and confidence. This emphasises those leaders' model professional ideals which demand more than mere technical expertise. Despite all our efforts, the chance of a clash between conscience and duty through ignorance and misjudgment is still very real. The risk is there in peace, it is probably at its height in counter-insurgency, and it smolders in general war. All the while, the soldier's actions are exposed, and his principles questioned by the society as never before.⁴

Conscience, more robust than the 'competencies' of 'emotional intelligence', is an inner feeling as to the goodness or otherwise of behaviour. Conscience guides behaviour. Conscience is more than an ill-defined self-justified, confidence in the correctness of action or judgment. Conscience draws upon the wider environment in which it operates. In the armed forces, conscience is strengthened by a rational appreciation of our values, conventions, expectations and by the ideals of armed forces professional service. The rational foundation of conscience is important because leaders must be exemplars of the military profession and inspire others to commit to a just cause.

Conscience demands ethical 'mindfulness' or ethical 'awareness'.⁵ Leaders of conscience will always realise what they are doing, and why they are doing it. They will work hard to be ethically responsive and aware and to build an organisation which becomes collectively mindful. Ethical leadership does not depend upon the quality and substance of (organisational) values, but upon the strength of character which interprets and applies values to achieve what's best and what's right. Acting in good faith is the essence of leadership by example, and fundamental to trust between leaders and followers.

Ethics of Character : Virtues and Values

For Aristotle, virtue is something that is practised and thereby learned—it is a habit. This has clear implications for moral education; for Aristotle, obviously thinks that you can teach people to be virtuous. Virtues are those strengths of character that enable us to flourish. The virtuous person has practical wisdom, the ability to know when and how best to apply these various moral perspectives. Values are what we, as a profession, judge to be right. Individually or organisationally, values determine what is right and what is wrong, and doing what is right or wrong is what we mean by ethics. To behave ethically is to behave in a manner consistent with what is right or moral.

Character is the foundation of a leadership culture. Such a culture recognises that commendable personal example generates trust and commitment, rather than compliance and submission. Character, comprised of a person's moral and ethical qualities, helps determine what is right and gives a leader motivation to do what is appropriate, regardless of the circumstances or consequences. An informed ethical conscience consistent with the armed forces values strengthens leaders to make the right choices when faced with tough issues. Leaders must embody these values and inspire others to do the same.

Character is essential to successful leadership. It determines who people are, how they act, helps determine right from wrong, and choose what is right. Adhering to the principles as embodied in the army, navy and air force values (hereinafter called collectively as military values) is essential to upholding high ethical standards of behaviour. Unethical behaviour quickly destroys organisational morale and cohesion—it undermines the trust and confidence essential to teamwork and mission accomplishment. Consistently doing the right thing forges strong character in individuals and expands to create a culture of trust throughout the organisation. Ethics indicate how a person should behave. Military values represent the beliefs that a person has. For example, the seven army values of loyalty, duty, respect, selflessness, honour, integrity and courage (physical and moral), represent a set of common beliefs that leaders are expected to uphold and reinforce by their actions. The translation from desirable ethics to internal values to actual behaviour involves choices. Discipline, though not specifically stated above as a core value, is a value which is most profound when it finds expression as self-discipline, which is a dignified, responsible and willing commitment to the ethos of professional service articulated in our value system.

Ethical conduct must reflect genuine values and beliefs. Soldiers, sailors and airmen adhere to the military values because they want to live ethically and profess the values because they know what is right. Adopting good values and making ethical choices are essential to produce leaders of character. Leaders seen as abusive or toxic (such as intimidating and insulting subordinates) have higher rates of non-combatant mistreatment and misconduct in their units/establishments. Leaders must consistently focus on shaping ethics-based organisational climates in which subordinates and organisations can achieve their full potential. Leaders who adhere to applicable laws, regulations and unit standards build credibility with their subordinates and enhance trust with the Indian people they serve.

Ethical Dilemmas

A dilemma is a predicament in which the decision-maker must choose between two options of near or equal value. In addition, the dilemmas, which confront modern professionals, may result from options, which are not well defined, or from solutions, which create additional possible or known problems and harm for the problem carrier or for others. We have all experienced, at one time or another, situations in which our professional responsibilities unexpectedly come into conflict with our deepest values. We very often respond to these in a variety of ways: some impulsively “go with the gut feeling”; others talk it over with friends, colleagues, or families; still others think back to what a mentor would do in similar circumstances. In every case, regardless of what path is chosen, these decisions taken cumulatively over many years form the basis of an individual’s character.

An ethical decision typically involves choosing between two options: one we know to be right and another we know to be wrong. A defining moment, however, challenges us in a deeper way by asking us to choose between two or more ideals in which we deeply believe. Such challenges rarely have a ‘correct’ response. Rather, they are situations created by circumstances that ask us to step forward and ‘form, reveal and test ourselves’. We ‘form’ our character in defining moments because we commit to irreversible courses of action that shape our personal and professional identities. We ‘reveal’ something new about us to ourselves and others because such moments uncover something that had been hidden or crystallise something that had been only partially known. And we ‘test’ ourselves because we discover whether we will live up to our personal beliefs/ideals or only pay lip service to them.

Leaders who are most satisfied in resolving such issues are the ones who undertake a process of probing self-enquiry, if possible in quiet seclusion or otherwise they may have to do it on the run as they engage in other managerial tasks. In such introspection, one is able to dig below the busy surface of their daily lives and refocus on their core values and principles. Once recovered, those values and principles renew their sense of purpose at work and act as a springboard for shrewd, pragmatic, politically astute action. By repeating this process throughout our working lives, one is able to craft an authentic and strong identity based on your own, rather than on someone else, understanding of what is right. Not every ethical dilemma has a right solution. Reasonable people often disagree; otherwise there would be no dilemma. However, it is essential that one must agree on a process for dealing with dilemmas.⁶

Ethical Reasoning versus Rationalisation

To have clear ethical thought is to discern the difference between ‘reasoning’ and ‘rationalisation’. Reasoning is a process of analysis for arriving at informed judgments. It clarifies the distinction between right and wrong action. Rationalisation is a process of constructing a justification for a decision we suspect is really flawed—and often, one that was arrived at through a mental process characterised by contrivance and self-dealing. Rationalisation purposefully blurs right and wrong. We fool ourselves into thinking something is justified when it isn’t. This is a lesson we all have learned, probably to our embarrassment. But in ethical decision making, rationalisation can become more than an isolated error. It can become a habit. With practice, we can ethically desensitise ourselves to the point that we are likely to repeatedly do the wrong thing.⁷

The tell tale sayings of rationalisations that pop-up daily are: “If you can’t beat them, join them; if I don’t do it, somebody else will, it is all for the good of the organisation, if it does not hurt anyone, what does it matter? Everyone else is doing it”. We can be sure that when we catch such lines on the tips of our tongues, we are twisting ethical reasoning.

Conclusion

The question of ethics is faced in all walks of life. Everywhere it raises hard, often insoluble questions about the choice of the right path. The biggest trouble even to a sincere wish to conform to ethical principles is the persistent cropping of situations where ethical principles themselves may appear to be contradictory and one has to make a difficult choice, guided by one’s conscience. Conscience is probably best described as a fallible moral judgment which, if acknowledged, produces actions and if ignored, merely produces a sense of guilt. An informed ethical conscience consistent with our value systems strengthens leaders to make right choices when faced with tough issues.

A leader is a moral ‘exemplar’, in that he demonstrates ethical behaviour in all his actions both in public and private. He embeds these ethical behaviours in all his decisions and knows, and recognises how these actions affect the common good. Not only is he aware of the core values, he has the courage as well to live these in all parts of his life. Here he moves from the ‘mere intellectual acceptance’ to a ‘heart and soul embodiment’ of these values in every day decisions and actions thus articulating ‘walking the talk’. He will not compromise the good of the whole for the privilege of the select few. What makes the leader the most is certain solidity at the core, a solidity based on principles that are essential points on a moral compass.

Making good ethical decisions requires a trained sensitivity to ethical issues and a practised method for exploring the ethical aspects of a decision and weighing the considerations that should impact our choice of a course of action. Making ethical decisions is easy when the facts are clear and the choices black and white. But it is a different story when the situation is clouded by ambiguity, incomplete information, multiple points of view and conflicting responsibilities. Many cases of misconduct, cheating, misappropriation, bribery, though may appear different but they have a lot in common since they are full of the oldest questions in the world, questions of human behaviour and human judgment applied in ordinary day-to-day situations. Clay T Buckingham puts it more succinctly when he remarks “Standing firm ethically can exact a cost, perhaps a steep one. As professionals we must be willing to pay it.”⁸

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Vietnam's Considerations on Participation in UN Peacekeeping Missions

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Introduction

The UN peacekeeping started in 1948 as an important initiative during the period of East-West confrontation. At that time, after the Second World War, none of the two major powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, emerged as absolute dominant. Therefore, the two powers decided to create a “neutral” group called “peacekeepers” under the auspices of the UN. The initiative was accepted by the majority of UN members and was expected to work as a mechanism to prevent and settle conflicts without one of the two big powers taking advantage and/or to prevent war in certain strategic areas.

On the basis of reviewing the remarkable developments of the UN's 65 year-old peacekeeping operations, this paper makes recommendations to Vietnam's policy in case of joining such activities in the coming years.

Activities of the UN Peacekeeping in the Past 65 Years

At the time of drafting the UN Charter, the authors took into account the use of coercive measures to prevent the re-emergence of Nazi forces after the Second World War. However, since its inception, peacekeeping missions have not only resolved country-to-country conflicts, but, especially after the end of the Cold War, the UN has been increasingly involved in settling ethnic and religious conflicts as well as interest and resources disputes within a country. Globalisation has further spurred the need for resolution of international disputes through peacekeeping operations. The number of UN peacekeeping missions in the last 20 years has increased as many as three times compared to the previous 45 years. Peacekeeping missions have been deployed in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America.

In the beginning, UN peacekeeping missions were basically groups of military observers. But today, the strength of UN peacekeeping missions has increased manifold and these include units of “blue berets”, civilian police, civilian personnel and groups of international volunteers working in peacekeeping missions; thus making peacekeeping operations more robust and vibrant. Some of the emerging trends are enumerated in the succeeding paras.

Diversifying Peacekeeping Tasks

Apart from preventing and resolving conflicts, the UN peacekeeping missions have also undertaken measures aimed at long-term stability; for example, disarming warring parties, repatriating people separated by conflicts, demining, humanitarian activities, organising elections, reconciling governments, unifying nations, reconstructing societies and so on.

Diversifying Peacekeeping Participants

In the late 1980s, regional organisations also started their cooperation with the UN in several peacekeeping missions; for instance, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the Organisation of American States (OAS) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). By joining in coercive activities during the Bosnian conflict, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) also expanded its scope of operations beyond Europe to pursue the United States' goal of a “New World Order”. Thus increased number of actors is challenging management and operation of regional organisations, multinational forces and UN agencies; not to mention if these actors are competing with the UN.

Powers Compete with Each Other and take Advantage of Peacekeeping Activities for Their Own Sake

Before 1993, it was impossible for major countries (permanent members of the UN Security Council) to contribute military personnel and staffs to peacekeeping missions. But what they were able to do, was to assist with finance and logistics. Therefore, peacekeeping missions implicitly worked as an instrument of certain powerful countries and were at the same time not open to others. After 1993, major countries also started to send troops to participate in peacekeeping missions. This resulted in an intense competition for regional influence and in an attempt to shape a new world order, benefitting those major countries. Without a counter balancing force, like during the Cold War, the US strove to play a hegemonistic role and to manipulate the Security Council for allowing coercive activities. In fact, the US preferred to resolve conflicts unilaterally in the name of the UN, but to their own advantage.

More States Contribute to UN Peacekeeping Missions

During the Cold War, there were at the most 50 countries that were sending personnel to work in coordination with UN peacekeeping missions. However, the current number of such countries has increased to 130, which is three times as many as 20 years ago. For instance, seven out of the ten ASEAN members have their troops currently working in peacekeeping operations.

Non-aligned and developing countries are the ones which have sent most of the military personnel. When a country participates in peacekeeping activities, it gains political benefits (willingness to cooperate with the international community), economic benefits (financial revenues from participation) and indirect benefits like laying the foundation for future economic relations with the countries which invited the peacekeeping mission. Besides, there are countries, which are not acting under a UN mandate, but play a very important role in peacekeeping activities. They send their troops to undertake peacekeeping missions in areas where they have national interests, even combined with coercive activities.

Vietnam and Its Participation in Peacekeeping Activities

International peacekeeping is part of external relations, consisting of both, cooperation and competition. When peacekeeping missions began, they were manipulated by the US and western countries. However, since the early 1990s, the active participation by China and other developing countries in peacekeeping missions has diminished the negative aspects and limited the influence of the US and the West.

By participating in UN peacekeeping missions, Vietnam will increase its opportunities to cooperate with the UN and thus have a more powerful voice when coping with regional and international issues. In addition, with appropriate approach and measures, Vietnam will have the chance to strengthen its capacity to protect national interests and to consolidate its relations with the international community, which again will help in promoting the country's interests.

The international community supports Vietnam's participation in UN peacekeeping missions due to Vietnam's international prestige and its tradition of expelling foreign invaders. Vietnam has defeated a lot of enemies and has experience in people's mobilisation as well as in reconstruction; two fields that form major tasks of peacekeeping missions. Therefore, by participating in peacekeeping activities, Vietnam will have the opportunity to improve and project the status of the Country and its armed forces on the international forum. Moreover, joining peacekeeping missions will pave the way for Vietnam to enhance its international and regional integration.

The Goal of Vietnam's Participation in UN Peacekeeping Missions

When Vietnam joins peacekeeping missions, the Country's objectives are to :-

- (a) Contribute along with the international community to a peaceful settlement of international conflicts and disputes and thereby contribute to international stability.
- (b) Enhance Vietnam's prestige in the host country and in the international community.
- (c) Build-up and promote mutual-understanding and cooperation between Vietnam's and other countries' armed forces and thereby strengthen mutual trust and coordination.
- (d) Prepare specific plans so as to timely solve conflicts; especially those occurring in neighbouring countries or in areas within Vietnam's interest.
- (e) Understand the nature of policies and activities of other nations, especially the powerful ones, in relation to the countries which invite UN peacekeeping missions. Such an understanding will also assist in the formulation of Vietnam's foreign policy.
- (f) Collect information and conduct research on other countries' experiences in training, organising rapid reaction forces for crisis situations, providing humanitarian relief, accessing information about military operations, learning (to some extent) about modern warfare, drawing practical lessons for staff development and organisation and, equipping its military forces with experience for defending and protecting the Country in newly emerging situations.

Some Principles that Must Guide Vietnam's Participation in UN Missions

Any country which wishes to send troops to join UN peacekeeping missions must comply with general rules and at the same time evolve its own guidelines. The following are the principles that Vietnam must observe when the Country decides to join peacekeeping missions of the UN :-

- (a) The involvement of Vietnamese troops in peacekeeping activities has to contribute to the promotion of the international image and prestige of Vietnam. Vietnam's forces have to stand up and work in line and in the spirit of: "Vietnam is a friend and reliable partner, a responsible member of the international community."
- (b) Vietnam's forces have to comply with the basic principles of the UN Charter; namely, the respect for national sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs of other countries. Vietnam's forces must also ensure impartial and unbiased operations.
- (c) Vietnam should only join in peacekeeping operations with the permission and on the invitation of the conflicting parties and would not join in any coercive activities (under Chapter VII of the UN Charter).
- (d) Vietnam's forces would only carry out peacekeeping tasks for a clearly specified period and consistent with its own ability. Vietnam's forces must also reserve the right to reject active participation in peacekeeping missions after a thorough examination of the prospects of such an operation. Vietnam's forces should only participate in UN peacekeeping missions taking place in countries with whom it has good relations or which invite Vietnam's forces. Vietnam's forces should not engage in complicated tasks in sensitive areas.
- (e) Vietnam's forces would only participate in peacekeeping operations directly guided by the UN and would not join in any other alliances, especially multinational missions, to avoid being isolated.
- (f) Vietnam's peacekeeping forces would not work for any other countries' interest and would not do anything harmful to friends and the host country. Vietnam's peacekeeping forces would not get involved in searching for and arresting "war criminals" in order to hand them over to the International Criminal Court (ICC)

Scope, Extent and Form of Vietnam's Participation in UN Peacekeeping Missions

In addition to Vietnam's full contribution to the UN peacekeeping fund, Vietnam should participate in peacekeeping missions which are suitable, not too sensitive and risky to Vietnam's politics and the people. Vietnam's forces should not participate in any operations resulting from religious disputes since such conflicts are rather difficult to solve and could

interfere with the sensitivity of religions in Vietnam and the region. The Country's forces should also avoid engaging in punitive and coercive measures, which are generally based on the use of force. At the beginning, the forces participating in peacekeeping operations could be of a company strength and then gradually be upgraded to battalion level; of course any expansion must be under the requirements of UN peacekeeping regulations.

The forces should only join peacekeeping activities which are appropriate to Vietnam's foreign policy and the Country's capacity (it is not necessary to join in every peacekeeping mission). To begin with, Vietnam should start by participating in a few missions and provide military observers, election observers, civilian police, mission protection, patrol guards at UN offices, emergency medical aid and humanitarian relief as well as assist in mine clearance and providing assistance to local people in how to deal with the mines left over from previous conflicts. The forces should also participate in the processes of reconstruction and facilitate repair and reconstruction of infrastructure. Later, on the basis of experience gained in several peacekeeping operations, the forces may adjust the scale and extent of its activities.

Opportunities and Challenges for Vietnam in UN Peacekeeping Missions

Opportunities. Vietnam joins UN peacekeeping missions at a time when the international environment provides favourable conditions. Some of these are mentioned below :-

- (a) Peace, cooperation and development constitute the trend of our times; every country is keen to maintain peace, stability and resolve disputes peacefully. Countries also desire the UN to promote its central role of addressing global peace and security.
- (b) The participation in peacekeeping missions is a voluntary-based activity. Vietnam has the right to decide the time, size, scope and type of participation, and can even withdraw its troops if it finds the conditions unfavourable. In addition, operational costs are paid by the UN, which means that the country does not need to use its national defence budget for such operations.
- (c) The Vietnamese People's Army (and Police) is disciplined, well-trained, full of experience as "a working army", and ready to undertake and fulfill its missions. Vietnam intends to send troops only to such areas where its forces are familiar with and professionally trained for. Therefore, Vietnam's forces will require only short orientation courses to meet UN standards.
- (d) The international community expects and is willing to cooperate with Vietnam in peacekeeping missions.

Challenges. However, there are also some challenges that Vietnam has to face as a country joining UN peacekeeping missions. These are :-

- (a) Peacekeeping activities are taking place in areas with a high risk of casualties due to harsh climates and differences in geographical conditions.
- (b) Vietnam does not have sufficient experience in international peacekeeping and in collaborating with foreign forces.
- (c) The advanced payments are restricted for training, logistics and technical equipment. Moreover, the language proficiency of Vietnamese troops is another challenge. Hence, traditions and customs of the host country must be studied carefully before troops are sent.

Preparations for Joining UN Peacekeeping Missions

Vietnam must actively prepare and pay attention to the following matters :-

- (a) Public relations is important to raise the awareness of Vietnamese people of the country's obligations towards the international community, especially to those countries which supported and helped Vietnam during its struggle for national independence and are now calling for Vietnam's help.
- (b) Vietnam has to complete its domestic legal framework, including preferential regulations and policies concerning international peacekeeping, consistent with Vietnamese law and the principles of the UN.
- (c) The Government should - related to Vietnam's forces working overseas - improve the operating mechanisms, the coordination between agencies and local units, formulate and negotiate a mechanism for coordination, register and join the UN permanent system of settlement. A specialised agency, which is in charge of monitoring the activities of peacekeeping forces as well as focusing on training the forces, should be established. Vietnam should also locally and internationally express its views concerning international peace and security issues.
- (d) Specialised forces for UN peacekeeping missions should be established and trained. To begin with, Vietnam should prepare and train some officers and have them deployed in ongoing peacekeeping missions.
- (e) Regarding financial issues, Vietnam should prepare such matters well in advance and in accordance with the agreement between Vietnam and the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and should pay due attention to equipment, logistics, and finance for its forces joining a UN peacekeeping mission.
- (f) Vietnam should strengthen its international cooperation with other countries which have joined UN peacekeeping missions before and conduct research on their experiences in organising, training and deploying technical and logistical staffs and equipment. Vietnam should also facilitate the transit of UN peacekeeping forces through Vietnam, as this is not only a responsibility of all UN members (article 43, UN Charter) but also a good preparation for Vietnam's peacekeeping troops should they have to transit through a third country in the future.

Conclusion

For the past 65 years, UN peacekeeping missions have contributed to the noble goal of maintaining international peace and security. The 1998 Nobel Prize which was awarded to the UN peacekeepers is an evidence of these great contributions. As a member of the United Nations, Vietnam maintains close and effective relations with this largest international organisation. Coordinating with the UN is part of the Country's foreign policy, taking advantage of all international favourable conditions which are helpful for the construction and defence of the country. Participating in UN peacekeeping missions could be one measure to strengthen Vietnam's relations with the international community in furtherance of Vietnam's national interests and international prestige. Apart from adhering to the basic principles of the UN Charter and the above mentioned national principles, Vietnam's involvement in UN peacekeeping missions has to be based on the Country's actual capabilities.

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Burma - In Retrospect and Prospect

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Introduction

Burma was inhabited by migration of Mongol people from China thousands of years ago as part of a migration that also settled Mongol people in Assam, the hills and valleys of Northeast India, Bhutan, Sikkim, Nepal, and Tibet. Another wave migrated and populated South East Asia-Malaya, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Indonesia and the Philippines.

In Burma, a majority settled in the Central plains, while others settled on the hill ranges that extended north-south on either side of the Central plains. All these different groups had evolved animist religions. In India to the West, two major religions evolved, besides numerous animist religions too. The two major religions were Hinduism and Buddhism. It was the Buddhist king Ashoka who propagated Buddhism to several countries to the West and East of his country. To the East, the emissaries of Ashoka carried Buddhism to Burma and several South East Asian countries, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Sri Lanka, Tibet, China and Japan.

In Burma two groups who had settled in the Central plains, the Burmans and the Mons were converted to Buddhism, while the groups who had settled on the hills ranging roughly North-South on the East and the West retained their animist religions, except for the Rakhines in the West and the Shans on the East who also adopted Buddhism. Later, when the British came to India and then to Burma, they converted some of the animist groups to Christianity.

Today, if you work from North to South on the eastern borders of Burma, you have the Kachins and Wa to the North. Of these, the Kachins are mostly Christian, while the Wa are animist. Further South, there are Shans who are mostly Buddhist; Karens are mostly Christian and some are Buddhist; Kokang, Kayan, Pa-o are all animist. In the West, the Rakhines are Buddhist, the Nagas are now mostly Christian, though some are still animist, while the Chins are all Christian.¹

The main Buddhist Burmese resented the rule of the British. In fact, the Buddhist Burmese looked down upon all the animist groups of their country. The different animist groups however did not resent the British and some like the Kachins and the Karens liberally converted to Christianity.

The Buddhist Burmans generally dominated the animist peoples of their country. When the British East India Company took over Burma, the Buddhist Burmese resented the British. The Christian British however liked the animist people of Burma. They sent missionaries to these areas to set up schools and hospitals and soon converted many of these people to Christianity. The British also recruited people from the animist groups to posts in the civil services and the army.

As a reaction to the British colonial rule, the Buddhist Burmese students began calling themselves Thakin or the Master. The Burmese set-up institutions run by them independent of the British schools. A "We Burman" association was also set-up as Dobama Asiyaone which later became hubs of political activity and led to a widespread movement for Independence.²

Nationalist passions were aroused because of the way in which the British had privileged ethnic minority groups over the Burmese. The Second World War then broke out and Japan invaded Burma and the British had to hastily retreat to India. The Burmese were upset, because the Japanese ruled Burma as a conquered territory. Aung San, a Burmese officer had at first sided with the Japanese after being dissatisfied with British rule. When he found the Japanese treating Burmese as a conquered country, he changed sides and started resistance against the Japanese along with the British.³ The Burmese did not like the Japanese military and civil government and set-up an Anti Fascist Peoples Freedom League (AFPFL). This included the Burmans and the Hill people.

During the British rule, they had openly favoured the hill groups like the Kachins, Karens and Shans. This was because the Buddhist Burmese felt that they had a superior religion Buddhism, while the hill people were all animist. The British Christian missionaries had meanwhile converted many of the hill people to Christianity. The British had governed the hill areas differently from the plains where the Burmese lived. The British had recruited a large number of ethnic minorities from the hills in the Burmese Army, and used them against the ethnic Burmans.

The one person who could reconcile this situation was General Aung San, father of Aung San Suu Kyi. When the British gave Independence, General Aung San reached out to the Hill groups and appointed a Karen as Chief of the Burmese Army. He immediately organised a multi-ethnic conference at Panglong where a concept of a federal union was agreed upon and ethnic States were to be created with full autonomy. In the final Panglong agreement, representatives from the Shan states, Kachin Hills and the Chin Hills signed their willingness to cooperate with the interim Burmese Government. Representatives of the Karens and Karennis, Mons, Arakanese, Was and Pa-o were absent.⁴ Unfortunately for Burma, General Aung San was assassinated by a right wing Burmese group, who probably resented the latitude shown to the Hill groups by him.

The situation was confusing. The Communists opted out of the AFPFL and went underground. Different States were to be created with each having autonomy over their internal affairs. Meanwhile, the Kuo Min Tang had retreated from Yunnan in China into Burma and settled in the southern border with Laos. The United States fighting the Chinese Communists was sending daily plane loads of arms and equipment. The pilots flying these planes complicated the situation by loading their planes with opium and heroin on the return flights.

U Nu, the Prime Minister made the mistake of making Buddhism the State religion that alienated the hill groups who were animists or Christians. It was at this stage that General Ne Win seized power. The students did not get along with the Army and there were clashes in the University. Over 100 students were killed in the firing and the

University had to be closed for some time. His nationalisation and land reforms led to economic disaster. He then resigned and assumed civilian titles and initiated a one party system.⁵ General Ne Win then made the mistake of trying to exercise control over the Buddhist Monks, going to the extent of closing the monasteries when the Monks resisted. He replaced about 2000 civilian Government servants with army personnel and nationalised the banks. A large number of Chinese and Indians who had come during the British time were removed and replaced by army personnel. Burma, which was ahead of Malaya and Thailand in industrial production steadily declined. Industrial and agricultural production suffered and very soon there was a thriving black market.

When U Thant, the Secretary General of the United Nations died, and his body was brought to Rangoon, the Nation should have honoured him. Instead, the students of the University in Rangoon took over the responsibility and began to construct a mausoleum for the late U Thant. The Government reacted by closing the University and calling out the Army. There was firing on the students and again a number of them died.

At this stage, the Communist Party of Burma (CPB) organised the Wa group living on the northeastern hills bordering Yunnan and fought against the Burmese Army. They managed to control the northeastern part of the country bordering Yunnan. Three other groups, living on the eastern borders, the Kachins in the north formed the Kachin Independent Organisation (KIO) and the Karens living further south formed the Karen National Union (KNU), the Shans living further south formed the Shan State Army. All started to fight against the Tatmadaw (The Burmese Army). In the Southern plains, the Mon State party also took up arms against the Burmese government. Regrettably, most of these insurgent groups including the CPB purchased arms and maintained their armies by taxing the trade in opium that was grown all along the eastern hills of Burma.

It was during this stand-off between the Army and the people of Burma that Aung San Suu Kyi, the daughter of General Aung San entered the scene. She had married an English Scholar and had come to Burma and was living in her father's house nursing her sick mother when the demonstrations against the Ne Win government broke out.⁶

Aung San Suu Kyi decided that she would speak to the people at a public meeting on 26 August 1988. She spoke simply but eloquently. She asked the people not to turn against the Army but to seek for democracy in a peaceful way. She was not affiliated to any group, but immediately became a key figure in the politics of Burma. On 18 September the Army carried out a coup and deployed units in all strategic places in the city. After two days of confrontation the Army resorted to firing in several places and controlled the situation. The armed ethnic groups on Burma's periphery and the armed CPB in the North did not participate in these demonstrations. This was the main factor in the success of Army's coup. The Army Junta called itself the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC). General Ne Win was not on the forefront of this coup. General Saw Maung headed the coup, but General Ne Win was reported to be in the background.

A short while after the coup, General Saw Maung announced that political parties could register for elections. The National League for Democracy (NLD) headed by Aung San Kyi and Tin Oo and the National Unity Party (NUP) also registered. The latter party represented the old order and was backed by the Army. The NLD quickly became popular, mainly because it was led by Aung San Suu Kyi. She and Tin Oo campaigned extensively particularly in the ethnic areas.

The SLORC leaders immediately realised the popularity that Aung San Suu Kyi was gaining. Shortly thereafter Aung San Suu Kyi was planning to lead a procession to the tomb of her father on Martyr's day. The SLORC acted swiftly and she was put under house arrest. Tin Oo was also arrested in his house. Aung San Suu Kyi cancelled the plan to lead a procession to her father's tomb on Martyr's day.

When the results of the election were declared, the NLD had won. Most significantly, the NLD won seats in military dominated districts in Rangoon and elsewhere. It won 392 out of the 485 Parliamentary seats, including all 59 seats in Rangoon division. The NUP won only ten seats.

Once the Army realised that they had lost badly, the Generals began delaying the decision to allow the elected party to form the Government. The monks began to agitate on behalf of the elected party. When the Army acted against the monks, they refused to attend Army personnel for religious rituals. The Army then raided over a hundred monasteries. The Army forced the monks to submit.

The Army now began to expand and soon, from a figure of 1,80,000, the Army touched a strength of 3,00,000. The Army

then turned to the dissident groups on its northern and eastern periphery. The Army was able to contain the insurgent groups to some extent over the next two years. Also over the next two years, the Army ruling the country opened it up to foreign investment and tourism. In the process they improved roads, bridges and irrigation canals. The Army also began to control the long standing insurgencies on its periphery in the North and East. The CPB which had been fighting the Government collapsed in 1989. Two ethnic factions with the CPB, were the United Wa State Army and the Kokang led Myanmar Democratic Alliance (MDA). The agreement was that there would be minimal interference by the Burmese Army, the Tatmadaw, in their affairs. This also meant that these two groups could now produce and peddle drugs with impunity. Between 1989 and 1991, 23 new heroin refineries opened up in Kokang territory in the hills of northern Burma.

The Pa-o National Organisation and the KIO also made their peace with the SLORC. The worst case scenario was of Khun Sa the biggest drug lord on the eastern border of Burma. The Army brought him to Rangoon. He was allowed to invest in property and set-up two casinos near the Thai border. He was also wanted by the USA on heroin trafficking charges.⁷ The US government had a reward of two million dollars for him. Despite this the Military regime did not allow his extradition.

In December 1991, Aung San Suu Kyi was awarded the Nobel Prize, the Military regime did not release her though University students called for her release. The Army closed the Universities for some months.

In 1992, the Junta sacked General Saw Maung. The SLORC was now headed by Senior General Than Shwe. They called a National Convention in January 1993 to write a new Constitution. The first meeting was called in January 1993. Out of 702 delegates, 603 were appointed by the SLORC. Only 99 were elected Members of Parliament. When the deliberations started, they found that the six main objectives of the Constitution had already been drafted by the SLORC. The sixth objective stated that 25 per cent of the Parliament's seats must be held by military personnel chosen by the Commander-in-Chief! The whole exercise was just a charade.

On 10 July 1995, Aung San Suu Kyi was informed that her period of house arrest was being terminated. Two other senior party members Tin Oo and Kyi Maung were also released. When the news spread people began to rush to her house. She came out and standing on a table began to give audience to the people who came to greet her. Foreign journalists began to interview her regularly. A new political centre emerged at Aung San Suu Kyi's compound. She began giving talks every weekend from her compound. She answered the mail dropped in a box outside her house. This sparked off student protests which the Army ruthlessly crushed. The Army also had several academic courses shifted to different parts of the country, to divide the student community.

In September 1997, the Army renamed the Government as the Peace and Development Council (SPDC).

The Military Government then did a shameful act by denying a permit to Michael Aris, husband of Aung San Suu Kyi who was seriously ill, to visit Burma. They wanted Aung San Suu Kyi to go to England to visit her dying husband, obviously with the intention to never allow her to come back. Knowing this, Aung San Suu Kyi refused to go to meet her dying husband. Michael Aris died on 29 March 1999.

Fifty years after Independence, Burma was still struggling to resolve its political and economic problems with the Military still clinging to its idea of a Unitary State.

Aung San Suu Kyi was again put under house arrest. This time after some interval the United Nations intervened and the Army released her and also allowed her to travel. She began touring parts of the country by car. She became increasingly popular as crowds collected wherever she stopped to hear her views. Then on 30 May 2003, her convoy was attacked by a mob near Depayin town, who assaulted her entourage mercilessly. None of the perpetrators was arrested but 150 NLD supporters were arrested.

In October 2004, General Than Shwe sacked General Khin Nyunt. This was probably an internal power struggle. In November 2005, General Than Shwe moved the Military to a new Headquarters in a previously undeveloped area in interior Central Burma called Naypyidaw.

In the next two years conditions continued to deteriorate. In mid August 2007 the military Government suddenly increased the prices of diesel and gas. Transportation and food prices skyrocketed. The 88 generation student groups started marches in Rangoon and other towns asking for a reduction in the prices of gas and food. The Government deployed Paramilitary forces and tried to crush the agitating groups. Starting on 8 September, monks from the monasteries in Sittwe, Rangoon, Mandalay and other towns started to march through the towns in protest against the Government's price rise. Many monks were carrying their bowls upside down indicating their refusal to accept alms from the authorities. In Rangoon a group of marching monks passed by Aung San Suu Kyi's house. She came out and met them with tears in her eyes. More people began to join the protesters. In confronting Buddhist monks along with protesting people, the security forces threatened to shoot the monks if they did not disperse. The situation did go out of hand and the civilians and monks were beaten and some were shot. A Japanese reporter was also shot dead in the riots. The Army raided several monasteries and some monks even left Burma to take shelter in neighbouring countries. General Than Shwe was unfazed by the International community's concern.

The Army now set-up a committee to draft the Constitution. This was published in 2008. Then the Army decided to have a referendum on the draft Constitution. When published it was found that twenty five per cent of the seats in each legislative body were reserved for the Military. Also the President of the country had to be of a Military background. Besides, the Army had the right to manage military affairs without any civilian interference.

The next step for the Army was to set-up a political party. This was called the Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP). A large number of its members were ex military personnel. It captured almost 80 per cent of the votes and won a landslide victory. In the ethnic minority areas only the local parties won. The leaders of the USDP were all recently retired Military personnel. Aung San Suu Kyi's party was split on whether to take part in the elections. She opposed the elections. One section participated. A week later, the results were declared. Shortly thereafter, Aung San Suu Kyi was released after six years of house arrest.

The new President sworn in after the elections on March 2011 was a retired General, Thein Sein. His opening call was a refreshing change from the usual military generals. He called for urgent economic reforms and an end to corruption.⁸ General Thein Sein has been a welcome change from the usual Burmese generals who have ruled Burma till 2011. He however has continued to get the best deals from China. In addition to the new pipelines, roads and railways, the Chinese Government agencies have offered loans worth billions of dollars and help on everything from new information technology and telecommunication infrastructure to a major expansion of the country's electricity grid. The United States and the United Kingdom however have both tied their policies very closely to Aung San Suu Kyi and have stood firm on sanctions.

The disturbing feature is that though the Burmese leader General Thein Sein has a much more humane presence, there have been several communal incidents involving the Rohingyas, Bengali Muslims from erstwhile East Bengal, who have migrated and settled in Western Burma in the Arakhans. There have been periodical attacks on the minority Rohingyas in the Arakhans by the majority Buddhist Rakhines. The Police and the Government regrettably side with the local Buddhist Rakhines. During the last one year there have been attacks on the local Burmese Muslims living in Central Burma and at least one incident in Lashio on the eastern border with China. These attacks were on ethnic Burmese who had converted to Islam. In all these instances the Police regrettably took no action against the Buddhist

Burmese attackers. Regrettably in all these cases Aung San Suu Kyi did not make any statement to the press. The inescapable conclusion is that there is a streak of Burmese Buddhist superiority in the nation. Aung San Suu Kyi's silence on these incidents regrettably shows that she could not rise above the Burmese Buddhist majority.

Because the Rohingyas were being treated as literally second class citizens, a French humanitarian organisation, the Medecin Sans Frontiers (Doctors without Borders), operating in Burma began to attend to the medical needs of the Rohingyas. The Burmese Government banned this humanitarian organisation from Rakhine state. This has left some 250,000 Rohingyas without medical care since February 2014. As a result, about 150 persons including women with difficult pregnancies have died since the ban was imposed. The Burmese Government decided to take this action after Medecin Sans Frontiers doctors treated 22 Rohingyas for gunshot wounds following an attack by a Buddhist mob in January 2014. United Nations (UN) investigation concluded that up to 40 men, women and children were killed in the rampage.

If the objective of banning the Medecin Sans Frontiers from functioning in Rakhine State and depriving thousands of people of their only source of medical care is to prevent foreign witnesses to the human rights violations in the region, it is a badly calculated strategy. The Rohingyas have long been persecuted. In 1982, they were stripped of citizenship and restrictions were placed on their right to travel or own property. The UN is seriously negotiating with the Burmese Government to let Medecin Sans Frontiers resume their medical work among the Rohingyas.⁹

The other pressing issue that has defied solution in all these years is the relationship between the Burmese Buddhist majority living in the Burmese plains and the minority people who live on both the eastern and western borders of Burma. The understanding that was arrived at by the Burmese Army, the Tatmadaw was that all these groups were to be given a degree of independence. However in all the hill areas on the eastern border with China in the North, and Thailand in the South, opium is grown and refined to heroin and related derivatives. These are marketed across the border into China, Laos and Thailand. Obviously, the drug generated funds contribute to the general economy of all these semi autonomous units. They include the Was, Kachins, Shans, Karens, Pa-o, the Kokang and some smaller groups. The issue preventing the absorption of all these groups is that the Burmese Buddhists look down on the animist or Christian religion. It will be necessary to include all these groups after ensuring a degree of autonomy for all of them. These are the two big challenges facing General Thein Sein!

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**A Report on the 2nd International Conference on Security and
Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific Region, Beijing : 27-28 May 2014**

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I represented the United Service Institution of India (USI) at the “2nd International Conference on the Security and Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific Region”, organised by China Institute of International Strategic Studies (CISS) at Beijing from 27 to 28 May 2014. First session of the conference was devoted to security challenges, causes, trends and implications; whereas, the second session focused on measures for achieving security cooperation in the region. Top-level strategic thinkers from China and about 50 other countries, including the US, Japan, Vietnam and South Korea, attended the event. The galaxy of distinguished participants included : HE Bob Hawke, former Prime Minister of Australia; Admiral Sun Jianguo, Deputy Chief of General Staff, PLA; HE Madam Fu Ying, Chairperson NPC Foreign Affairs Committee, China; HE Yu Hongjun, Vice Minister of CPC Central Committee, China; General Ray Henault (Retd), former Chairman of Military Committee, NATO; Admiral William J Fallon (Retd); Mr Evan Revere, member National Committee on American Foreign Policy...to name a few. From South Asia, besides this writer, Dr Maria Sultan, Director General of South Asian Strategic Stability Institute, Islamabad (Pakistan), presented papers and formed part of the select panel.

During the Inaugural Session, the Deputy Chief of General Staff and other Chinese speakers seized the opportunity to pointedly criticise the US for displaying a ‘Zero Sum Game’ and ‘Cold War Mentality’ and termed its ‘Asia Pivot Strategy’ as a danger to the regional peace and security. They blamed the US for instigating regional countries against China, supplying arms to Taiwan and entertaining the Dalai Lama. Chinese hierarchy and strategic analysts reiterated their sovereignty claims in the South China Sea and the East China Sea as their core interests which China would protect at all costs. They referred to McMahon Line as an ironical colonial legacy but at the same time maintained that the Border Defence Cooperation Agreement with India had ushered sustainable peace and tranquility along the Indo-Sino borders. Chinese speakers were vocal in their criticism of Japan to the extent that they demanded that Japan ought to apologise for their war crimes and dismantle Yasukuni shrine – which had become a major bone of contention.

With regard to the ongoing oil rig crisis with Vietnam, the Vietnamese and Chinese participants stuck to their stated positions but showed inclination to resolve the crisis through bilateral negotiations. Vietnamese representative hinted at seeking international arbitration. The Chinese side reaffirmed their resolve to maintain peace and shun hegemony, no matter how powerful China becomes in the future. Bob Hawke, the former prime minister of Australia, whom Chinese consider as a great friend – aka another Henry Kissinger – in his articulation argued that in view of China’s rise the balance of power had to change and that the US must recognise the strategic imperative of accommodating China in the new world order. Balance of power between US-Japan-China in his view was the key to redefining the new ‘Asian Order’. He also endorsed Chinese affirmation of harmonious world by stating that hegemony was alien to China’s DNA and that the world need not be unnecessarily paranoid about China. Chinese participants repeatedly spoke about Asian values, Asian Century and the need for creating an Asian Security architecture sans the USA, as enunciated by the president Xi Jinping during the recently concluded Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) at Shanghai.

The US participants were at pains to explain that the US Rebalancing in Asia was not aimed at containing China but to maintain a strategic balance in the region so that the smaller countries did not feel intimidated by China’s military modernisation and assertive behaviour. They urged China to use persuasive diplomacy to amicably resolve the disputes with other contenders, rather than changing the status quo of sovereign space by the use of force. In regard to position of other ASEAN participants, it was one of studied neutrality; maintaining a balance between China and the US. During the discussion it clearly emerged that North Korea was a wild card that can seriously undermine strategic security in the region and embroil major powers in the crisis. The US side was strident in its stand that the six-party talks could not begin unless North Korea rescinded on further nuclear testing. North Korea was blamed for going back on the understanding reached during the Sep 2005 and Feb 2007 parleys on no further nuclear weapon testing. Chinese side pressed for resumption of six-party talks without laying any pre-conditions.

The Russian speaker emphatically articulated Russia’s abiding strategic interests in the region and legitimised the need for pursuing Russia’s pivot to Asia-Pacific, as alluded by president Putin during the APEC conference. He also emphasised the growing salience of Northern Sea Route as an alternate to the conflict ridden western sea lanes of communication (SLOC), passing through the Malacca trait and the South China Sea. Russian and Chinese scholars were skeptical about the concept of Indo-Pacific promoted by Australia, India, the US and some ASEAN members and argued that such a geostrategic conception lacked viability in the absence of any supporting politico-diplomatic and security framework, unlike the concept of Asia-Pacific, which was supported by a host of structures and mechanisms.

In my presentation, I highlighted geostrategic salience of Asia –Pacific Region, flagged contemporary and emerging security challenges, dilated on strategic security trends, identified potential flash points, assessed security implications and proposed measures for prevention of conflict. Pakistani scholar in her exposition inter alia adopted a hostile position towards India. She devoted much of her time to portray India as a “wild card” that could destabilise South Asia and even trigger a conflict with China. She showed pictures of Muslims allegedly killed during 2002 riots in Gujarat, spoke about India’s “Cold Start” doctrine, military exercises and weapon systems targeted against Pakistan. She argued that the rise of Modi and so-called Hindu nationalism did not augur well for peace in South Asia. However, her anti-India rhetoric had no takers and her India bashing was deemed as an unnecessary oddity in her discourse at such a forum. On the contrary, most participants considered Pakistan as a fountainhead of global terrorism. However, some scholars commented on the uncertainty as to how Indo-Pak hostility and threat of terrorism could pan out in the region? Apropos India, there was a lot of enthusiasm about Indian elections and hope that the new regime in India would re-boot India’s economic dynamism. The Chinese in their informal interaction showed regard for India’s civilisation and its potential to emerge as a major economic power in Asia. They were particularly curious about the

policy guidelines to be declared by the new Government of India.

During the conference, leaving aside the oft-repeated national rhetoric, there was a genuine concern that the security scenario in the region was fragile, with attendant risks for hurting regional and global economy. The predominant sentiment was, “peace is not an option but a necessity”. There was a consensus on need for continued parleys at the levels of Track -I and Track-II, to build strategic trust and formulate measures to strengthen existing frameworks and instrumentalities than creating new architectures. Measures such as implementation of Declaration of Parties, Code of Conduct, Confidence Building Measures, Joint Survey and Development of maritime resources and collaborative security arrangements to mitigate non-traditional security threats (cyber- terrorism, narco-terrorism, migrations, disasters, pandemics, piracy, militarization of space etc.) were deliberated upon.

The foreign delegates called on General Chang Wanquan, the minister of National Defence of PRC. He personally received each member of the visiting delegations at the Ministry of Defence. During introduction to this writer, he showed warmth and referred to India as a close neighbour. In his speech he was conciliatory and restrained vis-à-vis other Chinese participants who were rather overbearing and assertive towards Japan and the US during the main seminar proceedings. He portrayed China as a sober-civilisational state and projected a benign view of rising China. He articulated China’s military modernisation goals till 2050 and spoke about doctrine of “Active Defence” to win local wars under conditions of informationalisation, in keeping with China’s legitimate defence needs. The main focus of military modernisation was the transformation of PLA on the basis of Revolution in Military Affairs with the Chinese characteristics. He said among other things, integration, synergy and jointness within the military and with civil sectors as also human resource development were the key objectives of the ongoing modernisation endeavour. He reiterated the need to establish “Asian Security Architecture” as suggested by the president Xi Jinping during the CICA conference. In response to the Defence Minister’s speech, Bob Hawke, inter alia, referred to Pakistan as a major security risk in the region. He cautioned China about growing instability of Pakistan, its nexus with Jihadi elements and urged China to exercise their influence to moderate the behaviour of Pakistan or be ready to bear unintended consequences.

During my visit to public places in Beijing and Shanghai, and interaction with a cross-section of people, it appeared that the society looked generally content but aspired to become richer. The socio-economic stratification of society is growing and so is relative sense of deprivation. There is a sense of grudge against the elite who enjoy access to higher education and lavish life styles. Communist ideology since long has been substituted by capitalism and Chinese nationalism. The young generation strives to seek a balance between modernity, lure of wealth and freedom on one hand, and Chinese traditions on the other. There is mistrust about the US, anger towards Japan and some curiosity towards India as an old civilisation. There is a passion for developing ultra-modern infrastructure and at the same time preserve civilisational heritage. Despite heavy volume of traffic there is good traffic discipline and public order at tourist and market places. Their main security concerns stem from rising spectre of Uighur terrorism in the country. There is intense patrolling and security presence around Tiananmen Square. Use of internet is restricted; there being stringent restrictions on access to Internet sites, Facebook and Twitter. The foreign tourists are very small in numbers and knowledge of English language in the country is highly limited.

@Major General BK Sharma, AVSM, SM (Retd)**, Deputy Director (Research) at USI, attended the above conference on behalf of USI and presented a paper on ‘Security Challenges, Strategic Trends, Flash Points and Opportunities in the Asia-Pacific Region’.

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Infrastructural Development by China in Tibet Autonomous Region & Military Implications for India

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General

In the 21st Century, wars will be won not merely on the fighting prowess of the armies on the battlefield but also on the infrastructural capability of the two antagonists in the area of operations. Thus, having a strong force capability coupled with infrastructural capability is an essential element in winning wars. The development of infrastructure along the Indo-Chinese Border leaves much to be desired. The lack of infrastructure including roads, railways, ammunition and housing shelters, communications, telephone/mobile connectivity, etc. is likely to hamper the logistics sustenance of own military operations against the Peoples' Liberation Army (PLA), thereby impacting successful culmination of own operations.

On the other hand, China has embarked upon the path of infrastructure development in a methodical way, especially in Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR). In the 2008 Chinese White Paper, focus on logistics reforms including upgradation and deepening of logistics support were the key objectives.¹

In 2007 AK Antony the Hon'ble Raksha Mantri (RM) stepped up to a border post at Nathu La in East Sikkim to look across. Jolted by what he saw, he candidly described it as "an eye-opener". He realised that China had highways and metalled roads leading right up to their border posts to bolster rapid mobilisation of PLA along most stretches of the unresolved 4,057-km Line of Actual Control (LAC). In contrast, Indian soldiers often had to trek for miles to reach their border posts, which would be a logistics nightmare in times of conflicts.²

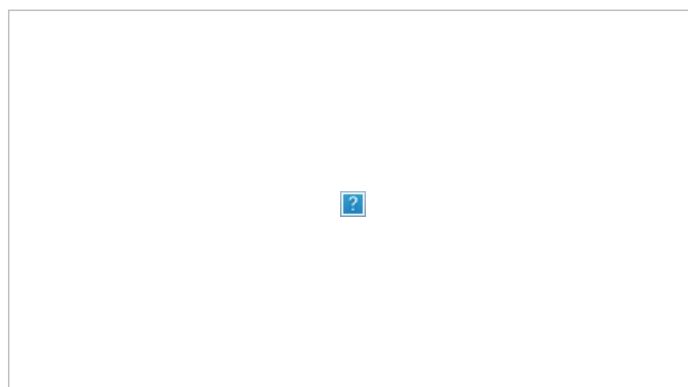
This article will analyse the infrastructural developments in TAR and the military implications on India thereof, especially in the Eastern Sector. Having assessed the latest infrastructural developments, this article will then recommend suitable measures to counter this challenge including steps to be initiated at various levels to build an edifice through which potential threats could be mitigated.

Road Network in TAR: North of River Tsang Po

In the initial decades ensuing the founding of the Peoples' Republic of China (PRC) in 1949, undivided attention was given to coastal China. In fact, Deng Xiaoping declared to the people of Western China, "Let them (coastal China) get rich first, you can get rich later."³ Since the time China established its sovereignty over Tibet followed by the establishment of TAR in September 1965, the Chinese Government has paid special heed to the importance of this region vis-à-vis enhancing security on its Western frontier.⁴ TAR, including the overlooking interspersed China-India locations along the Western crest wall of the Chumbi Valley and North Sikkim which are disputed, has excellent infrastructure including roads and tracks developed by the PLA in the 1990s.⁵

The Western, Central and Eastern Highways have leveraged greater connectivity between Western and mainland China. The total length of roads in TAR presently is 51,000 kilometres (km) & all major highways have been upgraded to class 50, two-way traffic capability.⁶ These highways are as shown in Map 1. The details of these highways are as under:-

- (a) **Western Highway.** It connects Xinjiang to TAR, by linking Kashgar and Lhasa (3,105 km). This highway is also called Lhasa - Kashgar / Aksai Chin Highway.⁷ This class 50, two-way, black top highway, has a capacity of 3,200 tons per day and has no closure period.
- (b) **Central Highway.** It is also known as Qinghai-Tibet Highway and is referred to as the 'lifeline' of TAR. The 2,122 km class 50, four-lane, black top highway, with a capacity of 5,100 tons per day, connects Gormo to Lhasa. Vehicles can travel at an average speed of 35-40 km per hour and can cover a distance of approximately 200-250 km in a single day.⁸
- (c) **Eastern Highway.** It is also known as Sichuan-Tibet Highway and is the highway between Chengdu (Sichuan) and Linzhi (Ngiti). It is 1,715 km long (2,413 km up to Lhasa), class 50, four-lane, black top, all weather highway, with a capacity of 3,200 tons per day. This highway is primarily aimed at improving lateral mobility between the Central and Eastern TAR.⁹



Map 1 - Highways in TAR

Road Network in TAR: South of River Tsang Po

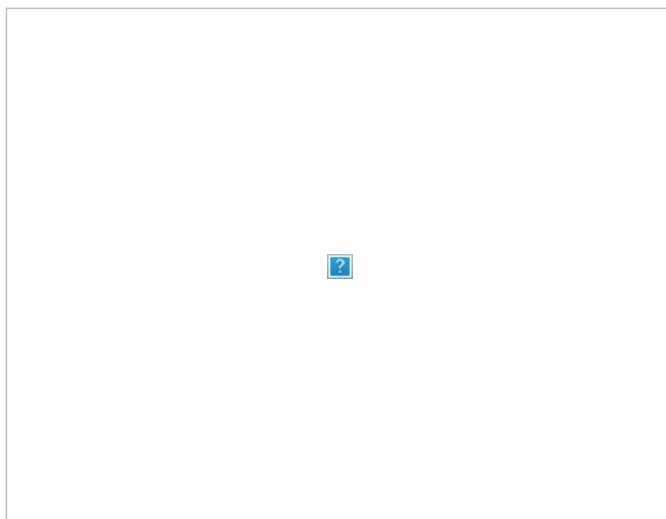
With the opening of border trade via Nathu La, additional border trade venues and plans for border trade at Bumla, Demchok and the old Stilvel Route, TAR appears well poised for 'fast-track' development.¹⁰ Other roads are as under:-

- (a) **Eastern Feeder.** It is a 250 km long, class 40 road running from Gyantse to Yatung through Tang La. It can facilitate movement of 600 tons per day.
- (b) **Western Feeder.** It is a 395 km long, class 18 road running from Shigatse to Yatung. It can carry approximately 300 tons per day.
- (c) **Yatung Artery.** This is a class 40 road upto Asam (western Bhutan), thereafter class 9 upto Sinche La running almost parallel to Amo Chho River. All roads leading to the watershed along the Indo-China border in Chumbi Valley emanate from this road.

Railway Networks

The following are the important railway lines existing/planned in TAR which have a critical bearing on military operations against India:-

- (a) **Qinghai - Tibet Railway (QTR).** The railways arrived in Gormo in 1979 and were used exclusively by the military up to 1984. It was extended to Xining in 1980.¹¹ China's State Council in February 2001 gave approval to begin work on QTR.¹² Becoming fully operational on 1 July 2006, the 1,142 km QTR line from Golmud in the Qinghai province to Lhasa in Tibet became Tibet's maiden railway line connecting and integrating the Tibetan plateau with the rest of China at the cost of a staggering \$4.2 billion. The highest point of the QTR comes in at 5,072 m (16,640 feet) high Tanggula Pass in the Kunlun mountain range.¹³ The Tibetans have termed it as "the Second Invasion of Tibet". The railway network in TAR including QTR is shown in Map 2.



Map 2 - Rail Network In TAR Including QTR. ¹⁵

- (b) **Railway Line Planned Opposite Arunachal Pradesh.** The planned rail link will head eastwards from Lhasa along the Tsangpo River (Brahmaputra) to Nyingchi (Kongpo). According to the Chinese claims, the Nyingchi Prefecture also includes part of Arunachal Pradesh. From Nyingchi, this rail link is further scheduled to link up to Dali in Yunnan province. It is also connected to Chengdu via Guangtong & Xichang.¹⁶
- (c) **Railway Line Planned Opposite Sikkim.** In its "long term railway network plan" Chinese Railway Ministry is all set to extend its network till Chumbi Valley, very close to Sikkim.¹⁷ The expected time of completion of this project is set to be 2017. This proposed link is a recent addition to China's existing plans of constructing a railway line from Lhasa to Zangmu on the Nepal border.¹⁸ Another line will branch out midway from this link at a place called Shigatse. This line will move East and go right up to Yatung, on the mouth of the Chumbi Valley.¹⁹

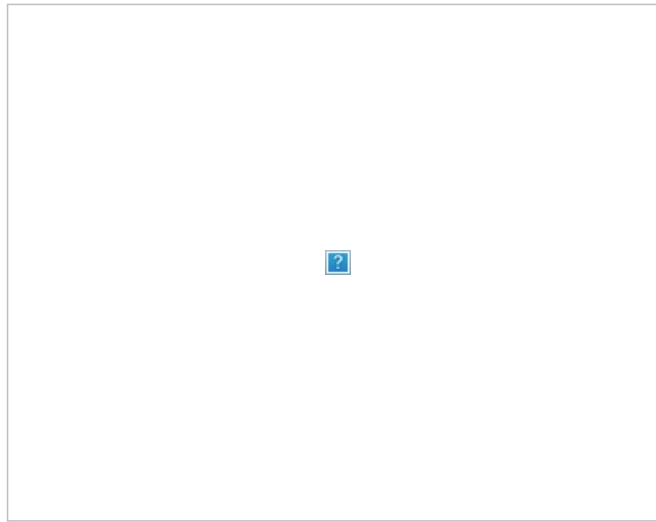
Air Fields in TAR

There are 15 airfields in and around TAR out of which only three are open for civilian activity.²⁰ The airfield of Naqu is under upgradation. Gonga and Bangda airfields are being upgraded to cater to 1.1 million and 1.0 million transients respectively i.e.,

2.1 million transients per year.²¹ Further, ten new airports are planned to be constructed in the next five years.²² China is also opening another airport at Nyingchi. Further, Su-27s have recently been deployed in the Chengdu Military Region (MR) and they might, in the future, also be deployed in Tibet.²³ The airfields in TAR are as shown in Map 3.

Other Infrastructural Developments

Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) Connectivity. All 55 counties of TAR have OFC connectivity. Chengdu and Lanzhou MRs are interconnected with one another and both these MRs to Beijing, through secure communications, thus ensuring secure and real-time communications. OFC is also steadily being extended towards military installations along the



Map 3 - Airfields in TAR

Naqu Logistics Base. TAR's biggest logistics centre in Naqu in South West China was completed in June 2009 at a cost of US \$ 220 million. It is located next to a railway station at an altitude of 4,500 m in the Naqu county, in Northern TAR, about 300 km North East of the regional capital, Lhasa.²⁶ The centre is expected to handle 2.23 million tonnes of cargo by 2015 and 3.1 million tonnes by 2020.²⁷

Infrastructural Development: Military Implications

Military Implications of QTR. The operationalising of QTR implies the following:-

- (a) **Troops For Unrest in Tibet.** The completion of QTR has clearly tightened China's grip on Tibet, which is much prone to unrest due to various restrictive policies of the Chinese hierarchy. Further extensions of QTR may permit the PLA troops in TAR to handover the Internal Security (IS) tasks completely to Peoples' Armed Police Forces (PAPF) and focus their attention on India.²⁸ In this case, the following are highlighted:-
 - (i) **Pre QTR.** In 1989, when a major unrest occurred in Tibet and the curfew was imposed in Lhasa, the 149 Special Mechanised Mountain Division (SMMD) (Unit 56016) of 13 Group Army (GA) of Chengdu MR located at Leshan/Emei in Sichuan province, was the first PLA combat unit to arrive on the scene, in about a week's time. The 149 SMMD troops entered Tibet via the Sichuan-Tibet highway which imposed considerable delay.
 - (ii) **Post QTR.** However in March 2008, within 48 hours of the start of the riots in Lhasa, T-90/89 APCs and T-92 wheeled Infantry Fighting Vehicles (IFVs) of the 149 SMMD appeared on the streets. This rapid arrival of the division using QTR relieved pressure from the troops of the 52 and 53 Mountain Brigades, which are located comparatively closer to Lhasa at Linzhi and Milin respectively in Chengdu MR. The Armoured Personal Carriers (APCs) of SMMD were transported first from Chongqing to Xining by rail/road, and then to Golmud and Lhasa by train on the QTR. This deployment reportedly took only about 48 hours and the 1956 km distance between Xining and Lhasa was covered on QTR.²⁹
- (b) **Improved Mobilisation Timings Against India.** Presently, the travel time for troops from Golmud to Lhasa is approximately 72 hours (including night halts and restrictions). QTR has reduced this to 16 hours, implying a complete turnaround time of about three days from Golmud to Lhasa.³⁰ The average load capacity of one Chinese train car is normally 60 tonnes, with about 20 cars in each cargo train implying that each train could transport 1,200 tonnes. In times of war, the actual number of trains running on the railroad could double to roughly 20 trains both ways, each day. Assuming that the total weight of the equipment and combat material needed for one Rapid Reaction Force (RRF) division is around 15,000 tonnes, the QTR could transport a whole RRF division on one average day. In other words, within every one-and-a-half to two days, China could move one RRF division from Chengdu MR or one RRF division from Lanzhou MR to TAR.³¹ This implies that PLA would be able to transport approximately 10 light mechanised divisions and some heavy mechanised divisions through QTR to TAR from the Lanzhou and Chengdu MRs within 30 days.³²
- (c) **Trans Regional Support Operations (TRSO).** QTR has facilitated faster induction of trans-regional support from Guangzhou, Jinan, Beijing and Shenyang MRs to the Indian war zone. It has considerably reduced the time frame for inducting 13 GA from its locations in the Sichuan province or the 14 GA from Kunming into TAR, enhancing the threat to Arunachal Pradesh, Western Bhutan and Sikkim.
- (d) **Logistics Sustenance.** Besides, "The Chinese Armed Forces Today" published by the US Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA), had revealed that the daily re-supply requirement of a standard Chinese division would be about 300 tonnes short for moderate combat and an average of 200 tonnes short for a protracted per day of combat.³³ QTR thus cuts down induction timings and aids in build-up and logistics sustenance in TAR.
- (e) **Alternate Induction Route.** QTR also provides an alternate to road convoys for induction of offensive formations, reducing their build-up time.

(f) **Effect of Weather.** Logistics build-up and maintenance is easier and more economical via QTR and sustenance of PLA during prolonged operations can be carried out with minimum impact of adverse weather conditions.

Military Implications of Road Network. The key implications of road communications are as under:-

- (a) **Military Use of Highways.** Most of the key civil highway projects have been constructed to military specifications and can be turned over to the PLA in the event of war.
- (b) **Switching of Forces.** The Western, Central and Eastern highways are laterally connected and facilitate smooth switching over of forces, both in operational and strategic depth, within and across the MRs. This has serious strategic implications for India.
- (c) **Reduction in Warning Period.** Speedy mobilisation coupled with acclimatised troops in hinterland reduces the warning period available for mobilisation of own forces.
- (d) **Laterals.** A number of laterals ensure unhindered connectivity even in the eventuality of closure due to natural or manmade blockades.
- (e) **Multiple Options.** Multiple options are available to PLA wherein they can disperse their forces and concentrate them in time and space to launch offensives across Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, as per their operational plan(s).
- (f) **Battle Space - South of Yatung.** Construction of feeder roads upto perceived claim lines in Western Bhutan enables better options for employment of forces. To increase the battle space South of Yatung, PLA is also creating a loop in the claimed areas from Rubinkha to Asam via Zena Lake in Western Bhutan.
- (g) **Pre-Emptive Actions.** The availability of feeders upto perceived claim lines provides an option to the PLA to carry out pre-emptive grab actions.

Military Implications of Airfields. Following are the military implications of airfields:-

- (a) **Dual Use.** The air fields serve dual purpose and may be used for both military and civil traffic. Presently all airfields have limited military infrastructure. However, the runway length of all airfields is adequate and suitable for all types of aircraft.
- (b) **Altitude and Acclimatisation.** The airfields are located in high altitude areas which have their own disadvantages, which have been obviated to a large extent by extending the length of the runway and by employing the Air-to-Air Refuelling (AAR). The high altitude of airfields also facilitates acclimatisation of Special Operations Forces (SOF) and Air Borne (AB) forces in the vicinity.
- (c) **Additional Airfields.** Additional airfields along Nepal and Myanmar border provide additional options to the PLA Air Force (PLAAF) for air operations against India.

Military Implications of OFC Network. PLA has a very secure and fool proof all weather communication system designed for offensive / defensive operations. PLA has also linked all its Forward Defended Localities (FDLs) with secure OFC communication. This gives PLA a marked communication and cyberspace advantage.

Military Implications of Logistics Infrastructure. It is appreciated that the existing logistics infrastructure south of line Shigatse - Gyantse can hold a stock level of up to 90,000 tons which can sustain operations of 5 to 7 divisions for about 30 days @ approximately 600 tons per division per day.

Recommendations

Keeping in view the foregoing analysis, certain quintessential points emerge which if addressed on priority will reduce/negate the minor advantages accrued by PLA vis-à-vis IA. These are given in the succeeding paras.

Refining Operational Plans: Two-Front War. The now routine Chinese posturing in Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim may either turn out to be merely pressure tactics or Chinese gauging of our response - an ominous precursor of conflict. It is, therefore, operationally imperative for the IA to refine its operational plans for various contingencies.

Augmenting Organisational Incisiveness. Enhancing the organisational battle readiness of the IA as a whole and formations bordering China in particular is an operational imperative. However, certain critical requirements are reiterated below:-

- (a) **Aerial Surveillance Assets.** There is a need to have aerial surveillance assets (read Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs)) to be integral to the formations on the LAC. This will ensure real time detection of the PLA mobilisation and battle dispositions, thereby indicating their likely intentions..
- (b) **Long Range Vectors.** In order to shape the battlefield and interdict the enemy from building-up to its requisite force levels for attack and to prevent the enemy subsequent force application on our defences, there is a requirement of having long range vectors integral to the formations responsible for operations against China.
- (c) **Increase in Firepower Destructiveness.** The current scaling will not suffice in the next war in the mountains and therefore must be increased. Alternatively, new and more effective ammunition may be developed and scaled to the formations to increase their destructive power.

Enhanced Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) Capabilities. India should enhance its ISR capability to maintain all-round vigil on the border. The IA must also upgrade the firepower capabilities by an order of magnitude so as to be able to engage and destroy intruding forces at a distance.

Framework of Calibrated Response. It is de rigueur to put in place the framework of calibrated response. This implies certain dissuasive and/or punitive actions triggered by enemy actions. For example if an enemy formation crosses say a particular bridge on River Tsang Po (South of Lhasa), then enhanced readiness posture be adopted; if the enemy concentrates in a given general area opposite our border, a particular sequence of degradation be adopted, etc. This framework must be cleared at the highest levels and plans made for its implementation accordingly.

Infrastructure Build-Up. For over four decades after the 1962 war, the Indian security establishment kept a firm lid on the development of any infrastructure along the LAC in the fear that it would actually help PLA make swift inroads into India during a conflict. It was in early-2006 that the UPA-I government finally gave the go-ahead for the creation of infrastructure in all the three sectors -Western (Ladakh), Middle (Uttarakhand and Himachal) & Eastern (Sikkim and Arunachal) - along the LAC.³⁴ Asked if he was satisfied with infrastructure development along the “northern borders” facing China, Chief of Army Staff General Bikram Singh said, “Several projects are underway... But yeh dil maange more.” It is in the Indian interest to upgrade the logistics infrastructure in the states bordering TAR to facilitate the rapid reinforcement of sectors threatened by the Chinese during any future conflict.

Speedier Construction of Roads. All the roads pending construction should be constructed/developed at the earliest. As of now, just 17 of the 73 strategic roads which add up to 3,808 km identified for construction along the LAC have been fully completed, which were to be completed by end-2012. Similar slow progress dogs the 413 other roads identified for construction under the “General Staff Long-Term Perspective Plan” for borders with China and Myanmar.³⁵ Better connectivity will not only serve India’s own interest but also develop these regions economically and integrate them emotionally with rest of the Country.

Construction of Railways. IA’s demand for 14 strategic railway lines along the western and eastern fronts, too, is still hanging fire. The Government, however, says “work on a majority of all these roads is underway”.³⁶

Environmental Clearances. Infrastructure build-up within 50 km of the LAC should be exempted from requisite environment and other clearances. Ecological concerns are important but national security needs cannot be simply brushed aside.³⁷

Conclusion

It is beyond doubt that India is far behind China in its development of border areas. The question is whether there is any political will to counter China’s herculean efforts.

China’s massive infrastructure build-up in TAR is causing concern to the Government of India. Speaking during the question hour of the Lok Sabha in the Budget session of Parliament in March 2011, RM AK Antony highlighted the rapid development of rail, road, airfield and telecom infrastructure and military camps being undertaken by the Chinese in TAR. Effectively controlling the TAR is crucial for China’s security as TAR comprises approximately one-fourth of China’s landmass.

Our northern borders with China are for the most part unsettled, undemarcated and disputed. Notwithstanding all the confidence building measures along the LAC that are in place, it would be prudent to take note of the infrastructural developments taking place in Tibet and take measures on own side to be able to respond to any contingencies that may arise in future. As infrastructure development takes long time to fructify it is imperative that long term plans are prepared and implemented in a determined manner.

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Introduction

Since the end of the war in Sri Lanka in May 2009, the discourse on Sri Lanka has largely revolved around the country's human rights record and the Government's attempts at redressing Tamil grievances. Revelations in international media about the scale of human rights violations during the last phase of the military operations against the Liberation Tigers of the Tamil Eelam (LTTE) led to mounting international pressure on Sri Lanka for accountability of war crimes. The Sri Lankan Government (SLG), in turn, made efforts to address the issues of resettlement of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and the economic development of war affected zones in the Northern and Eastern Provinces of the country. President Mahinda Rajapakse also constituted the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) to recommend measures to address the Tamil problem and framed a National Action Plan (NAP) to implement its recommendations. However, key Tamil grievances, related to the devolution of power, remained largely neglected. Attempts at fixing the accountability for human rights violations were also half-hearted. This was evident in the widely publicised Army Court of Inquiry, appointed to investigate allegations of war crimes, which eventually absolved the Army of any wrong-doing¹. This in turn, shaped the international opinion on the SLG's willingness to resolve the Tamil problem. Today the prospects for reconciliation in Sri Lanka are linked to certain key issues. These include (i) Action related to human rights accountability,

(ii) Resumption of dialogue between the main Tamil Party, Tamil National Alliance (TNA), and the Government on finding a political solution to the Tamil grievances and, (iii) Preventing the rise of religious intolerance in the country. The contemporary issues with regard to these aspects are discussed in this paper.

Human Rights Accountability

Sri Lanka has faced three consecutive resolutions at the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) since 2012. The incremental text of the resolutions, over these years, portrayed the growing impatience of the international community with the lack of progress on reconciliation and human rights accountability. The resolution of 20122 called on SLG to implement the recommendations of the LLRC Report while the resolution of 20133 linked the issues of reconciliation and accountability and termed the country's NAP as an inadequate measure to implement the LLRC recommendations. While acknowledging the progress made by the SLG in the fields of economic development and resettlement, these resolutions stressed on the need for a credible domestic mechanism to investigate into human rights violations.

The 2013 resolution also requested the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (HCHR) to report on the progress in implementation of the resolution in Sri Lanka. However, finding the progress inadequate, the HCHR recommended a continuous scrutiny of the human rights situation and criticised the SLG for making no comprehensive effort to independently or credibly investigate war crime allegations. The change in the tone and tenor against Sri Lanka was evident with the warning that if the SLG did not engage in a credible national process with tangible results, including successful prosecution of perpetrators of war crimes, before March 2014, the international community would have a duty to establish its own mechanism.⁴

The latest resolution in March 2014⁵ has, thus, laid the grounds for an international investigation into human rights and war crimes related allegations against both the Government Forces and the LTTE from the year 2002 to 2009. The resolution has mandated the Office of the HCHR "to undertake a comprehensive investigation into alleged serious violations and abuses of human rights and related crimes by both parties in Sri Lanka during the period covered by the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission, and to establish the facts and circumstances of such alleged violations and of the crimes perpetrated with a view to avoiding impunity and ensuring accountability, with assistance from relevant experts and special procedures mandate holders".⁶

There is little doubt that the unwillingness of the SLG to address the issues raised in the three resolutions led to the present scenario of a proposed investigation against the country. Nevertheless the latest resolution does not augur well for reconciliation in the country. The Tamil and Sinhala polity in Sri Lanka has been polarised due to the incessant focus on human rights. While the hard-line Sinhala political parties in the country view the human rights rhetoric as another ploy of the Tamil extremists to achieve their eventual goal of a separate state, the Tamil political parties seem to be using the human rights issue to sustain international pressure on the SLG to achieve other substantial concessions on contentious issues. The polarised positions between the SLG and the TNA were evident in their reactions to the latest resolution. The SLG has refused to cooperate with any investigation mechanism of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), terming it as an encroachment on its sovereignty, while the TNA welcomed the resolution terming it a victory for truth and justice and a strong message to the SLG on the unsustainability of its current policies.

Another reaction of the SLG has been the renewed vigour in investigating attempts by LTTE remnants to revive the group. Many LTTE cadres who had managed to escape the fighting have either left the country or have continued to lie low and away from the eyes of the authorities. Aware of such elements, the SLG's target, after the end of the war with the LTTE, has been to rout both LTTE remnants in the country and initiate action against Tamil diaspora groups who have been supporting the Tamil cause since the 1980s. While these attempts have been ongoing since 2009, recent reports of alleged anti-state activities of LTTE elements surfaced around the same time as the UNHRC session in early March. A few days after the session concluded, the SLG proscribed 15 Tamil diaspora organisations and over 400 individuals for being affiliated to the LTTE.⁷ Subsequently, commemoration of those who were killed during the war between the Sri Lankan forces and the LTTE was also banned ahead of the 5th anniversary of the decimation of the LTTE on May 198, even as the Sri Lankan Armed Forces (SLAF) hold "Victory Day" celebrations every year to celebrate their victory over the LTTE. While the SLG is well within its right to counter the threat of terrorism, for the Tamils restrictions on their right to mourn the dead and the right to hold free discussions are signs of repression and

intimidation. These developments have further heightened the insecurity amidst the Tamil population.

After the resolution was passed the SLG has also been keen to give more impetus to domestic mechanisms for addressing reconciliation issues such as setting up of a Sri Lankan version of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)⁹ besides speeding up the implementation of several physical aspects of the LLRC recommendations. Though such an impetus is largely in order to reduce international pressure and stymie the international investigation before it begins, there has been a fresh momentum in the country towards the need for effective dialogue and domestic investigation mechanisms. The apposite utilisation of such a momentum would not only address the issues raised in the UNHRC resolutions but also build trust within the Tamil community. Key to such an environment would be the removal of the impunity enjoyed by the SLAF, establishment of the truth and delivering of justice and rendering accountability for human rights crimes.

Government- TNA Relations

The measures outlined above could, in turn, lay the grounds for a durable political solution to the conflict. Furthermore, a political solution also rests on the outcome of a dialogue between the SLG and the TNA. A dialogue between the TNA and the SLG, on finding a political solution to the Tamil issue, had been initiated in 2011. It continued through that year, in fits and starts, but even after several rounds of talks, both parties failed to arrive at any solution. Thereafter the SLG formed a Parliamentary Select Committee (PSC) envisaging the participation of all political parties to recommend constitutional amendments to address the Tamil grievances. The SLG's insistence on TNA's participation in the PSC has been one of the contentious issues between the two sides. President Rajapakse has been insisting that since any arrangement reached between the two parties has to be approved by the parliament, the PSC is the only platform for resolving the Tamil issue. However, the TNA wants to present a proposal at the PSC once an arrangement was reached bilaterally between the TNA and the SLG. Further, suspicions that the PSC proceedings were being state-managed by President Rajapakse increased the scepticism and served to strengthen hard-line elements within TNA at the cost of moderate elements.

Though the TNA was disenchanted with the SLG, it utilised the formation of the Northern Provincial Council (NPC) as a platform to voice its grievances. Elections to the NPC were held in September 2013 after nearly three decades, addressing one of the longstanding demands of the Tamils for political representation. SL's main Tamil political party, the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) won a landslide victory, securing 30 out of the 38 seats while the ruling coalition United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA) secured the remaining 7 seats.¹⁰ However, despite the victory, the TNA led NPC has been unable to function effectively. The NPC government faced a host of problems relating to the devolution of power under the 13th Amendment (13A) including interference by the NPC Governor, Major General GA Chandrasiri (Retd), in the administrative domain of the Chief Minister CV Vigneswaran, problems in the appointment of key officials, like the Chief Secretary, allocation of required finances by the Centre, inability to solicit foreign funds directly and the inability to exercise land and police powers.¹¹ Another NPC concern has been the military control over vast swathes of private land in the province and the delays in reallocation or return of land to the Tamils in the province.¹²

At the core of the problem today is the implementation of the 13A, which resulted from the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord of 1987 and laid the basis for the devolution of powers to all the Provinces in Sri Lanka. After the failure of talks in 2011, the PSC has formed the main forum for discussing the implementation of the 13A. However, the credibility of the PSC can be questioned. Not only the main opposition United National Party and the TNA, but some of the constituents of the UPFA have also boycotted the proceedings. There are also suspicions amidst the TNA and some allies of Rajapakse that the PSC proceedings are being stage-managed, with a majority of the people appearing before the PSC, either advocating against devolution of powers or recommending that the provincial council system itself be abolished.¹³ This, along with attempts to repeal some of the provisions of the 13A and reduce the powers vested with the Provinces, heightened the scepticism of the TNA which sought recourse in using the international pressure on human rights issues to compel the SLG to address as many contentious issues as possible. As a result the two sides have maintained a confrontationist attitude both at the national and international levels.

In the aftermath of the latest UNHRC resolution, there has been a momentum towards reviving the talks between the two sides. Significant among the efforts at hand is the likely engagement of South Africa as a facilitator between the SLG and the TNA. The South African (SA) Government, keen on facilitating the talks, had appointed a Special Envoy to Sri Lanka, Cyril Ramphosa, to hold discussions with the two sides on the proposed agenda of the talks. There has also been some forward movement on the SA initiative with the TNA delegation's visit to the country in early April 2014 and a scheduled meeting between Ramphosa and the SLG in June 2014. However, it is important to note that in the past whenever such momentum for talks had been built, political calculations of the ruling government always took precedence over the resolution of the Tamil issue. It, therefore, remains to be seen whether the present momentum can be sustained. Though the SA initiative may have come at an appropriate time for the SLG to counter international claims of its unwillingness to resolve the conflict, sections within the UPFA are against SA's role. Ramphosa is perceived to be close to pro- LTTE Tamil diaspora groups such as the Global Tamil Forum (GTF) and Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam (TGTE), which are now proscribed by the SLG, and is viewed as being influenced by the Tamil diaspora's narrative of the conflict in Sri Lanka.

Religious Intolerance

Besides the Tamil problem per se, the prospects for reconciliation in Sri Lanka are also being threatened by the growing trend of religious intolerance in the country. Over the past year and a half several Sinhala extremist groups have been formed in the country. These include the Bodu Bala Sena (BBS), the Sinhala Rawayaya and the Ravana Balaya. BBS has spearheaded an anti-Islam campaign which has included protests against the alleged forcible conversion of Buddhists to Islam, attacks on mosques and Muslim businesses, and also cases of physical assaults. The BBS has further objected to the attire of a section of Muslims and the practice of halal certification.¹⁴ The Sinhala Rawayaya has been primarily targeting the Catholic establishment while the Ravana Balaya has been campaigning against the TNA, the support for SL Tamils from Tamil Nadu in India, and the international community, particularly the United Nations, for

the various resolutions brought against Sri Lanka at the UNHRC. These groups have also been at the forefront of an anti-13A campaign which is said to be supported by sections within the SLG.¹⁵

The anti-Muslim aspect of the campaign by these groups has in turn heightened the insecurities of the Muslim minority in the country. The reluctance of the SLG to act, so far, on the excesses of these groups and the relative impunity with which these groups have been able to function over the past year has raised the concerns of the Muslim polity and the Muslim population. Hence, taking a leaf out of the TNA, the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC), a constituent of the UPFA, sought to internationalise the religious intolerance in country with a recent report titled “Religious Violence in Sri Lanka January- December 2013”, which has detailed particulars of 227 incidents of hate crime against Muslims, including 14 cases of physical assault, 12 attacks on mosques and 12 on Islamic businesses¹⁶. The issue of religious intolerance has thus not gone unnoticed by the international community which has included this aspect in the latest UNHRC resolution.

Conclusion

Progress on the aspects elaborated above could lay the grounds for effective reconciliation in Sri Lanka. The contemporary concerns on human rights accountability and dialogue between the SLG and TNA are not new in the sense that Sri Lanka has been facing a debate on the devolution of power and on the basic rights of the Tamils for decades. However, the key issue is the ability to sustain the momentum for reconciliation. Such a momentum can be sustained only if the SLG can give precedence to the resolution of the Tamil problem over its own political calculations.¹⁷ In the present scenario the momentum is being driven largely by the need to rebut international claims and allegations, which does not bode well for the prospects of reconciliation.

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Living With Cyber Surveillance and Espionage

Colonel Sanjeev Relia@

Introduction

Surveillance and espionage have existed for time immemorial. While they were always a part of any military campaign and study, private lives of ordinary citizens were generally not much affected by such activities. Things are not the same anymore. With the internet invading into our lives like never before, we today live under constant surveillance of multiple agencies like the government, your employer and perhaps your friends and neighbours. While a lot has been written and spoken about surveillance using land, sea, air and space, not much is heard about the surveillance using the fifth domain – the cyber space.

In the age of internet, where information travels at the speed of light and events can be created in a matter of microseconds, privacy and safeguarding one's personal information has become a challenge. Securing private information was so much simpler when there was no internet. Today, Google perhaps knows more about what you do when, than you yourself know. The recent one minute video clip created by the social media Facebook for all its users clearly indicates that personal information is not as personal as we consider it to be and that someone is constantly watching over you.

What are Cyber Surveillance and Cyber Espionage?

Surveillance is defined as monitoring of the behaviour, activities or other changing information, usually of people for the purpose of influencing, managing, directing, or protecting them.¹ Technology has always played a very important part in such monitoring activities. In the realms of surveillance, the impact of networking technologies has been phenomenal which has given rise to a new model of surveillance called Cyber Surveillance.

Cyber surveillance is monitoring of computer activity, data stored on a hard drive, or being transferred over computer networks such as the Internet. Monitoring is often done clandestinely and may be done by or at the behest of governments, by corporations, criminal organisations, or individuals. It may or may not be legal and may or may not require authorisation from a court or other independent agency.² In 2013, Edward Snowden, a former employee of the CIA and then a contractor working for the National Security Agency (NSA), revealed the scale of America's secret mass cyber surveillance programme at the transnational level codenamed "PRISM". (Interestingly Snowden is said to have learnt his hacking skills in an ethical hacking institute in India). Snowden's leaked documents uncovered the existence of a large number of global surveillance programmes, many of them run officially by the USA. While some called Snowden a hero for exposing the clandestine cyber activities of the Obama administration, there are some who also referred to him as a traitor. His disclosures nonetheless have fuelled global debates over mass cyber surveillance, government secrecy and the balance between national security and information privacy.

Cyber espionage on the other hand is the act or practice of obtaining secrets without the permission of the holder of the information (personal, sensitive, proprietary or of classified nature), from individuals, competitors, rivals, groups, governments and enemies for personal, economic, political or military advantage using methods on the Internet, networks or individual computers through the use of cracking techniques and malicious software.

How is Cyber Surveillance/ Espionage Done?

The global surveillance industry is estimated to be growing at over 5 billion US dollar a year. Capabilities of surveillance technology have grown vastly in the past decade. Today, cyber surveillance technology ranges from malware which infects a target computer to record every keystroke, to systems for tapping undersea fibre-optic cables in order to monitor the communications of entire population. Some of the common surveillance techniques being used to gather information from the cyber domain are covered in the succeeding paras.

Network Surveillance. Majority of computer surveillance involves the monitoring of data and traffic while it is moving on the network. This includes both the Internet as well as stand alone discreet networks. The USA leads the pack of nations who indulge in such activities. While all phone calls and broadband internet traffic are required to be made available for real time monitoring under the Communication Assistance for Law Enforcement Act in the USA, international traffic moving on the internet too is susceptible to monitoring. Figure 1 below which was part of the secret PRISM presentation clearly indicates why any communication originated in India for a recipient in Africa or Europe can be easily tracked and monitored in the USA.³

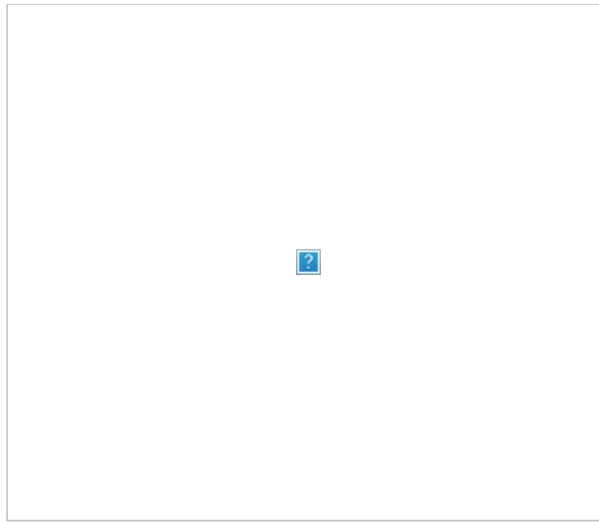


Figure 1 : International Internet Regional Bandwidth Capacity in 2011

As is clearly evident from the above diagram, bulk of the internet traffic flows via USA. Also, over eighty per cent of the servers and cloud providers are located in the USA. PRISM findings indicated that the internet service provider companies in the US whom the world trusted with their most private data were handing over the data to the NSA as if they too were a part of the entire clandestine operation.

Packet Capture. Packet capture or packet sniffing is monitoring of data traffic on a computer network. Data over the internet is transmitted by breaking it into small chunks called “packets”, which are routed through a network of computers. At destination, they are reassembled back into original message. Packet Capture Applications intercept these packets as they are travelling through the network, in order to examine their contents using analysis tools thereby deriving information out of them. As there is far too much of data travelling on the internet, automated Internet surveillance computers sift through the vast amount of intercepted Internet traffic to filter out information based on keywords or phrases, visiting certain types of websites, or communicating via e-mail or chat with a certain individual or group. Deep packet inspection (DPI) is the leading method of such surveillance. DPI technologies are capable of analysing the actual content of the traffic that is flowing. DPI allows network operators to scan the payload of IP packets as well as the header. This technique is often employed by law enforcement agencies and security forces trying to identify cyber criminals and cyber terrorists over the internet.

Malicious Software. Use of computer viruses, worms and Trojans is an effective method to examine or steal data stored on a computer’s hard drive, as well as to monitor activities of a person using the computer. A surveillance programme maliciously installed on a computer can search the contents of the hard drive for data, monitor computer use, collect passwords, and report back activities in real-time to its controller through the Internet connection. GhostNet a Trojan used by the Chinese in 2008-09 is an example of cyber surveillance of the Tibetans community in general and Dalai Lama in particular, using the internet. This Trojan allowed attackers to gain complete, real-time control of the infected machines and diverted the data to its controllers in island of Hainan. How deep routed is the Chinese cyber espionage set-up can be made out from Information Warfare Monitor (IWM) investigation detailed report of GhostNet, an extract of which is under :-4

“During the course of our research, we were informed of the following incident. A member of Drewla, a young woman, decided to return to her family village in Tibet after working for two years for Drewla. She was arrested at the Nepalese-Tibetan border and taken to a detention facility, where she was held incommunicado for two months. She was interrogated by Chinese intelligence personnel about her employment in Dharamsala. She denied having been politically active and insisted that she had gone to Dharamsala for studies. In response to this, the intelligence officers pulled out a dossier on her activities and presented her with full transcripts of her Internet chats over the years. They indicated that they were fully aware of, and were monitoring, the Drewla outreach initiative and that her colleagues were not welcome to return to Tibet. They then released her and she returned to her village.”

Social Network Analysis. Social media technologies such as Facebook and Tweeter can be used by companies, marketers, and governments to collect significant amounts of data about individual users. Aim of this form of cyber surveillance is to create maps of social networks based on data from social networking sites as well as from traffic analysis information from phone call records. These social network “maps” are then data mined to extract useful information such as personal interests, friendships and affiliations, wants, beliefs, thoughts, and activities.

Hardware Monitoring. Today techniques exist where network or computer transmissions can be monitored using the hardware installed in the system. Some of these techniques are :-

- (a) Monitoring by detecting the radiations emitted by the Cathode Ray Tube monitor. In the USA, surveillance using spurious transmissions being emitted by hardware is termed as TEMPEST.
- (b) Using the transmissions between a computer and a presentation device such as a projection system.
- (c) Picking up the noise of the key board clicking. Research shows that each key has a distinct noise which can be picked up using an audio surveillance device and the message deciphered.
- (d) Use of the audio speakers connected to the system for picking up and transmitting information from a

computer.

(e) Radio Pathways. Tiny trans-receivers are built into Universal Serial Bus (USB) plugs and inserted into target computers which then communicate with a hidden relay station up to 12 kms away. This method is most effectively used for machines isolated from the internet.⁵

Supply Chain Vulnerability. A supply chain attack is an attack through subversion of hardware or software supply chain. A product, typically a device that performs encryption or secures transactions, is tampered with during manufacture or while it is still in the supply chain by persons with physical access. The tampering may, for example, install a root-kit or hardware-based spying components. The aim is to first gather information from the place where this hardware or software is installed and then to execute a cyber attack. Unless the user has facilities of test labs where such equipment and the software can be checked for spyware, a supply chain malware can never be detected. Countries like India where most of the public as well military hardware and software are imported remain vulnerable to supply chain surveillance and attacks. Although National Cyber Security Policy 2013 does talk of undertaking R&D programmes by the government for addressing all aspects including development of trustworthy systems, their testing, development and maintenance throughout their life cycle, is still a far fetched dream. It is unlikely that we will ever be able to sanitise hundred per cent hardware and software being used in the Country. But even if we are able to sanitise the critical components being installed in the national info-infrastructure, we would be able to save ourselves from loss of critical information and Stuxnet kind of attacks.

Legal Cover to Surveillance in India

The Economic Times in December 2013 reported that the Government of India will shortly launch 'Netra', the defence ministry's internet spy system that will be capable of detecting words like 'attack', 'bomb', 'blast' or 'kill' in a matter of seconds from reams of tweets, status updates, e-mails, instant messaging transcripts, internet calls, blogs and forums. The system will also be able to capture any dubious voice traffic passing through software such as Skype or Google Talk.⁶ The 'Netra' internet surveillance system has reportedly been developed by Centre for Artificial Intelligence & Robotics (CAIR), a laboratory under the DRDO.

So, does this mean that the Indian Government too has officially announced that all internet traffic in the country is liable to monitoring like the US Government did in PRISM? The Information Technology (IT) Act of 2000 and IT Act Amendment 2008 does give the power to the Government to carry out monitoring of the internet. Section 69(B) confers on the Central Government power to appoint any agency to monitor and collect traffic data or information generated, transmitted, received, or stored in any computer resource in order to enhance its cyber security and for identification, analysis, and prevention of intrusion or spread of computer contaminant in the country. Under this section, any government official or policeman can (or perhaps is already doing) listen in to all your phone calls, read your chats, SMSs and e-mails, and monitor the websites you visit. No search warrant from a magistrate is required to do so by them.

While the Act is a good tool to control cyber crime and cyber terrorism, Section 69(B) of the IT Act Amendment 2008 gives unrestricted powers of the Government and law enforcement agencies in the Country which can be used to snoop upon unsuspecting citizens. Today the internet is a central element of the info-infrastructure of the information society and a global facility available to the public. The global and the open nature of the internet is a driving force in accelerating progress towards development in its various forms. It is, therefore, important to maintain an open environment that supports free flow of information across the globe and hence, it is essential that surveillance of such a resource, especially by nation states is dealt with caution.

Some governments across the globe argue that internet surveillance is necessary to ensure national security. As per them, keeping an eye on the data flowing over networks is a key to keep the nation safe. The unprecedented Chinese Government's programme of censorship of its people is an example of such a policy. The surveillance and content control system, launched in November 2000 by Peoples Republic of China, became known as the Great Firewall of China, where every bit of information flowing on the internet is kept under a watch by the Communist Government. There are also nations who feel that any such clandestine surveillance undertaken is a violation of human rights especially freedom of information. The stand of the Indian government is not too clear on this aspect. However, it is the duty of any democratically elected Government to appreciate that every law abiding citizen has the right to have a private life, a life which is not fully under constant surveillance of any state machinery.

Impact of Cyber Surveillance and Espionage on the Society

The Justice Department of the United States of America on 19 May 2014 filed unprecedented criminal charges against the members of the Chinese military, accusing them of economic espionage by hacking into the computers of US companies involved in nuclear energy, steel manufacturing and solar energy. Chinese government strongly rebuked the US over its claims of cyber-spying saying they were based on "fabricated facts" and would jeopardise US-China relations. Whether the charges are true or not, the fact of the matter is that cyber surveillance and espionage today has reached a level where it has started to impact bilateral relations between two strong nations.

The economic and business world suffers enormously from malicious cyber activities. While it will be difficult to gauge total cost to societies of cyber surveillance and espionage, but as a rough estimate as per a 2011 research, the upper limit of the cost of cyber espionage and crimes is somewhere between 0.5 per cent and one per cent of the national income. Also, not only does cyber espionage contributes towards high financial losses, it also has intangible loss component associated with it such as:

(a) The loss of intellectual property.

(b) The loss of sensitive business information (such as negotiating strategies), including possible stock market manipulation.

- (c) Opportunity costs, including service disruptions, reduced trust online, the spending required in restoring any “lead” from military technology lost to hacking, and the realignment of economic activity as jobs flow out of “hacked” companies.
- (d) The additional cost of securing networks and expenditures to recover from cyber-attacks.
- (e) Reputational damage to the hacked company.

Here is an example of how colossal damages can be inflicted to even a powerful nation like the USA through cyber espionage. As per a news report, a cyber espionage operation by China seven years ago resulted in stealing sensitive technology and aircraft secrets that have now been incorporated into the latest version of China’s new J-20 stealth fighter jet. The Chinese cyber spying against the Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II took place in 2007. Stolen data was obtained by a Chinese military unit called Technical Reconnaissance Bureau in the Chengdu province. The F-35 data theft was confirmed by the USA after some photographs of the J-20 were published on Chinese websites showing a newer version of the aircraft.⁷ The loss of critical design information of the F-35 was part of widening Chinese campaign of espionage against the US defence contractors and government agencies.

Conclusion

Invasion of the internet into our daily lives is a relatively recent phenomenon. Life is getting more and more dependent on the cyber world. Today the fear that surveillance can actually become so extensive as to threaten an individual’s healthy moral development is reasonable. Hence, the society needs to guard against it.

Most of the world is inadequately prepared for defending against these new types of surveillance and espionage techniques which have emerged in the last two decades. Governments, businesses, organisations, individual owners and users of cyberspace must assume responsibility for and take steps to enhance the security of the information technologies against such malicious cyber activities. Then only will this resource contribute towards positive growth of the society.

Endnotes

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Visit to Bangladesh by Veterans of the 1st Battalion the Maratha Light Infantry

(Jangi Paltan) (12 to 16 April 2014)

Lieutenant General Satish Nambiar, PVSM, AVSM, VrC (Retd)@

The Origin of the Idea

The idea of such a visit has its origins in a brief exchange between Lieutenant Generals Satish Nambiar (Y Company Commander during the 1971 War) and YM Bammi (GSO-2 in 101 Communication Zone Area) when the latter (who was nominated for travel to Bangladesh as part of the yearly Adjutant General's Branch sponsored visit in mid-December 2013) wished to obtain some photographs of the Jangi Paltan's actions. He was referred to Lieutenant Colonel KS Puntambekar (C Company Commander during the War). This reference by YM Bammi, and the fact that he was able to establish contact with Zohal Haq Munshi (the freedom fighter who, together with many others, was with the Paltan from prior to the War right through to the entry into Dhaka on the afternoon of 16th December 1971), spurred Keshav Puntambekar into action in his own inimitable style. In mid-January 2014, he got in touch with Lieutenant General KS Brar (who was the Commanding Officer of the Jangi Paltan during the war) and a number of other colleagues suggesting that we travel together as a group to Bangladesh to revisit the sites where the Jangi Paltan fought memorable battle actions during the War of Liberation in 1971.

Germination

Whereas "Bulbul" Brar, while wholeheartedly endorsing the idea, expressed his inability to form part of the group due to the severe security restrictions he was bound by, the suggestion found total acceptance, endorsement and support, from all the others that included Colonel Shashi Pawar (who was A Company Commander during the war), Lieutenant Colonel Mahesh Sachdev (who was D Company Commander), Colonel Subhash Kulkarni (who was the Adjutant), Lieutenant Colonel Sridhar Salgar, Brigadier BK Ponwar, and Lieutenant Colonel Jaiwant Pimpley; and in due course, Lieutenant Colonel Sushil Sarin, Lieutenant Colonel VM Sawant, Captain TKV Nair (the Quartermaster of the Paltan), and Colonel AK Rajpal (AEC officer on attachment with the Paltan). Initial indications were that at least four or five wives would accompany.

In putting together the visit, our thoughts went out to four officers of the Paltan who had taken part in the operations but were no longer amongst us; namely, Colonel Shahaji Mohite (who was then the second-in-command), Captain Rajendra Dafle (Y Company officer who was awarded the Vir Chakra), Colonel Suresh Patil, and Lieutenant Colonel RM Mohan. Harsh Malhotra, the Regimental Medical Officer could not be contacted.

Taking Shape

Satish Nambiar took on the responsibility of getting in touch with our Defence Adviser in Dhaka for assistance in setting up a programme of visit, reasonably priced accommodation and transport at as reasonable rates as possible; as also for liaison with the Bangladesh Defence Adviser in New Delhi for issue of visas to all those travelling. As it happened, our Defence Adviser in Dhaka Brigadier PC Thimmaya, was from the 5th Battalion the Mechanised Infantry Regiment, of which Regiment Satish Nambiar was the Colonel after General K Sundarji. He called on Brigadier General Noor Mohammad Noor Islam, the Bangladesh Defence Adviser in New Delhi and provided him with the details of the officers and spouses who intended to travel to Bangladesh on this memorable visit; Brigadier General Noor passed on the word to the various consulates for action. Preparations for the visit in terms of visa applications and air ticketing were set in motion by individual officers from their respective places of stay.

Fruition

By mid-March 2014, the numbers had started dwindling due to medical and domestic compulsions. Shashi Pawar, Sridhar Salgar, Jaiwant Pimpley, and Vasant Sawant dropped out for medical reasons, and Sushil Sarin and AK Rajpal expressed their inability to make the trip. The final line-up therefore was: Satish and Indira Nambiar; Keshav Puntambekar; Mahesh and Bina Sachdev; Subhash Kulkarni; and Basant Ponwar. Due to compelling domestic commitments, Bina Sachdev had to drop out at the very last moment.

The aspect of taking appropriate mementoes for presentation was addressed. Keshav Puntambekar got in touch with the Deputy Commandant at the Maratha Light Infantry Regimental Centre (MLIRC) and ascertained that some pieces of 'Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj on Horseback' were available. After discussion with Satish Nambiar and firming up on the wording to be inscribed on the plaque mounted on the plinth, the MLIRC was requested to make five pieces available and despatched to Pune to Subhash Kulkarni. The inscription decided upon was as under :

"Presented by

Lieutenant General Satish Nambiar, Lieutenant Colonel KS Puntambekar, Lieutenant Colonel MC Sachdev, Colonel SA Kulkarni, and Brigadier BK Ponwar, war veterans of the 1st Battalion the Maratha Light Infantry (Jangi Paltan) to recall with great pride our participation in the 1971 War of Liberation

April 2014"

Telephonic contact was finally established with Colonel Harish Sharma, the Commanding Officer of the Jangi Paltan. While it was too late to initiate action to get one of the serving young officers to accompany the group on its visit, so that succeeding generations could get a flavour of the Paltan's performance during the 1971 War, the Commanding Officer lent his support by despatching five Jangi Paltan plaques, as also some ties and scarves for presentation as mementoes.

In the meanwhile, thanks to the efforts of Brigadier Thimmaya, a super programme of the visit was finalised after much coordination with the Bangladesh authorities, and appropriate reception, accommodation and transport arrangements were put in place.

Saturday 12 April 2014: Dhaka

The first to arrive at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, Dhaka, were Satish and Indira Nambiar by Air India flight from New Delhi at 0900 hours on Saturday 12 April 2014. They were received by Brigadier Thimmaya and the Conducting Officer, Major Mohsin from the “Welfare Department” of the Headquarters. A commando, trained in VIP protection, Major Mohsin was with the group throughout the stay and became a member of the “Jangi Paltan” team; a person the members of the visiting team will always remember. We later met his wife and became aware that she too was a Major in the Bangladesh Army, and also trained in VIP protection duties. Within half an hour, Basant Ponwar who flew in from Kolkata arrived in the VIP lounge. On completion of formalities that were most efficiently taken care of by Brigadier Thimmaya’s staff, the three were taken to the place of stay of the Jangi Paltan delegation, the “Mahananda” VIP complex close to the Bangladesh Army Headquarters. A most generous gesture by the Bangladesh Army, no doubt due to the excellent rapport established by Brigadier Thimmaya.

Shortly after noon, Keshav Puntambekar, Mahesh Sachdev and Subhash Kulkarni arrived from Mumbai and a reunion soon took place at “Mahananda” followed by non-stop reminiscences and lunch.

After some rest and change, the veterans set out for the first item on their visit programme. The transportation provided by the Bangladesh Army was an air conditioned minibus that was to be with the group throughout the visit. The driver was excellent, in as much as, only he could have negotiated the traffic in the manner he did. There was also a spare driver, not even sparingly used. The two were supported by a military policeman. It is quite possible that the reputation of the Jangi Paltan had preceded us and the authorities felt it necessary to provide military police back-up in case any of us got into trouble. In the event, every member of the group was on the best behaviour throughout.

The first port of call was the Liberation War Museum, set-up in 1996 and run by a private trust to honour the heroic struggle of the people of Bangladesh for freedom. The museum collection has about 16000 objects that include rare photographs, documents, media coverage and material used by freedom fighters and martyrs. Many of the items on display pay tribute to, and acknowledge the contribution of, the people of India and the Indian Armed Forces. On arrival at the Museum the group was thrilled to meet our “freedom fighter” colleague, Zohal Haq Munshi. Much emotional embracing and hand-shaking ensued. It was indeed a great reunion of sorts, as Munshi had always retained a special place in the hearts and minds of the Jangi Paltan veterans. Besides all his other activities with the Paltan, he had placed his life on the line on 09 December 1971 by agreeing to carry the “famous” hand-written message from Brigadier HS Kler, the then Commander 95 Mountain Brigade, asking the Commander of the Jamalpur garrison and Commanding Officer 31 Baluch, Lieutenant Colonel Sultan Ahmad, to surrender as the position had been outflanked with the Jangi Paltan interposed between the Jamalpur garrison and the route to Tangail, and plenty of air support on call. Though initially beaten up somewhat by the Pakistani troops at Jamalpur, Munshi returned with an audacious reply from Sultan Ahmad, with a live bullet enclosed in the envelope. Munshi had made the trip to Jamalpur and back on a bicycle commandeered from Mollapara. The Jangi Paltan veterans were unanimous in congratulating Munshi for being conferred with the “Bir Purush” award by the Government of Bangladesh for his contributions to the war effort.

Satish and Indira Nambiar accompanied by the Defence Adviser had to detach themselves from the group to call on the High Commissioner, Pankaj Saran. Satish had known the High Commissioner earlier when the latter was with the National Security Council Secretariat, and later in the Prime Minister’s Office. The High Commissioner was impressed with the spirit of the Jangi Paltan that prompted the veterans to undertake this private visit to the 1971 battle sites. He expressed his inability to host them as he was leaving that night for Vietnam where his wife was the Ambassador. He however conveyed his best wishes for a successful visit.

The first evening was rounded off with a marvellous dinner at the residence of Major Ashok Nath and his Swedish wife Ylva. Ashok Nath had served as a short service officer in the Indian Army (Armoured Corps) in the late 1970s; he left after doing five years or so, and went off to Sweden to pursue academic work. Satish had got to know him as Director, United Service Institution of India in context of Ashok’s work on Indian Army history, and had visited the couple in Stockholm. As it happened, Ashok was at a dinner hosted by Satish at his NOIDA residence on 05 March 2014 for Field Marshal Sir John Chapple, among others, on the occasion of a conference in Delhi to commemorate India’s contribution to the First World War (1914-18), where he became aware of the visit by Jangi Paltan veterans. Ashok’s reply to the letter of thanks sent on return from Dhaka, expresses the flavour of that evening: “The excellent spirit exuberated that evening goes to show what a terrific esprit de corps Jangi Paltan has; no wonder 31 Baluch were no match for you all. I think Ylva also got some idea of what regimental spirit is all about.”

Sunday 13 April 2014: Dhaka

After a leisurely breakfast at “Mahananda”, appropriately attired in Jangi Paltan ties, the veterans set out to pay homage to the fallen heroes of the Liberation War at the “Shikha Anirban”, a Bangladesh Armed Forces memorial somewhat akin to the one at India Gate in New Delhi. A visit to the Jatiyo Smriti Soudha (National Martyrs Memorial) at Sawar could not apparently be arranged due to time and space constraints. Even so, it may be a matter of some satisfaction that Satish Nambiar had visited that memorial in the second week of August 2001 when invited for a conference on South Asian security in Bangladesh; he had, on that occasion, recorded an entry in the visitor’s book recalling the Jangi Paltan’s participation in the 1971 War of Liberation.

The veterans then proceeded to Army Headquarters to make a formal call on the Chief of the General Staff, Lieutenant General Md Mainul Islam (the Chief of the Army Staff was apparently away on a visit). Lieutenant General Islam accorded a warm welcome to the group, recalling with great fervour the contribution of the Indian people and the Indian Armed Forces, including the Jangi Paltan, to the Liberation War in 1971. After exchange of pleasantries over tea

and refreshments, and presentation of mementoes, a group photograph was taken outside the office. The veterans took leave of the CGS with profuse expression of gratitude for the excellent arrangements that had been made by the Bangladesh Army for the visit.

On the way back to the “Mahananda”, the group made a brief visit to the “Bijoy Kheton”, a Bangladesh Armed Forces museum that was set-up a few years back. This was followed by a lively inter-action at “Mahananda” with two Bangladeshi veterans of the 1971 Liberation War, Lieutenant Colonel (Retd) Quazi Sajjad Ali Zahir, a recipient of the Swadhinata Padak and Bir Protik, and Major Qamrul Hassan Bhuiyan (Retd). Both are regular visitors to India in their active pursuit of recording the history of the freedom struggle. Jangi Paltan mementoes were presented to both veterans as a reminder of the inter-action.

After a quiet lunch, the group set out in the minibus for a meeting with Mr AKM Mozammel Huq, the Minister for Liberation War Affairs, Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh. A trip that all members of the group will remember for “forgettable’ reasons. A trip that should have taken about half an hour was, because of the apparently perennial Dhaka traffic jams, extended to about an hour and a half resulting in the veterans’ arrival at the Minister’s office almost an hour late; unforgivable by Jangi Paltan standards. The Minister was however generous in receiving the group without delay, and welcomed the veterans with great warmth and affection; recalling with some nostalgia his own commitment to the freedom struggle, and acknowledging with gratitude the support and assistance of the people of India and the Indian Armed Forces. Following an exchange of views and tea and snacks, the Minister was presented with the “Chatrapati Shivaji Maharaj on Horseback” memento.

The group then returned to “Mahananda” to quickly freshen up before leaving at about 1800 hours for Ghatail Cantt, where HQ 19 Infantry Division was based, and where the group was to spend two nights (13/14 and 14/15 April 2014) while visiting the battle sites. The Defence Adviser, Brigadier PC Thimmaya and the conducting officer Major Mohsin, also travelled with the group. The long drive of about five hours with one short halt, was enlivened by exchange of episodes of the days with the Jangi Paltan, including those of the war period. On arrival at Ghatail Cantt, the Colonel Staff of the Division together with other officers, including two conducting officers (one male and one female) escorted the veterans to the comfortable guest rooms that had been arranged in the medical unit of the Division. A very late dinner was followed by well deserved rest for the night.

Monday, 14 April 2014: Kamalpur/Bakshiganj/Jamalpur/Ghatail Cantt

At 0800 hours Monday, 14 April 2014, the group set out again in the minibus via Jamalpur and Bakshiganj, arriving at Kamalpur post on the border with Meghalaya, at about 1030 hours to be received by Lieutenant Colonel Tarique, the Commanding Officer of 35 BGB Battalion. Assembled at the post were a large number of freedom fighters from the area; the Jangi Paltan veterans were obviously pleased to see that Munshi was also present. Lieutenant Colonel Tarique made a brief presentation about the Liberation War effort in the area, including the actions fought by the Indian Army. In reply, the “Baby” of the group, Basant Ponwar (who was just 22 years old during the 1971 War) addressed the gathering. Basant did the Jangi Paltan proud by making an absolutely inspirational address that brought tears to the eyes of the assembled freedom fighters.

The veterans then proceeded to lay wreaths at a memorial that had been constructed at the post, and also visited another memorial in the village to pay homage to the martyrs who were commemorated there. This was followed by a sumptuous lunch and presentation of mementoes. ‘Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj on Horseback’ memento will hopefully adorn the Officers Mess of 35 BGB or the office of the Commanding Officer.

On the way back, the veterans visited the ambush site between Kamalpur and Bakshiganj, where Y and C companies decimated a heavy mortar battery of the Pakistanis. The actual site would never have been recognised by the veterans without the guidance of Munshi. It was in fact he who guided the companies through the paddy fields and marshes to the ambush site in 1971. It was at this site that Satish Nambiar had killed two Pakistani soldiers manning a machine gun position, by first using a grenade, and then firing his Sten gun Machine Carbine. After much reminiscing and photography, the veterans boarded the minibus to resume the journey back. At Bakshiganj, notwithstanding the festive atmosphere and the crowds on account of Poyla Baisakh (the Bangladesh New Year) that day, Mahesh Sachdev got Munshi to indicate the place at which the Pakistani company commander Major Ayub (who had died of injuries sustained in an encounter with D company on night 4/5 December 1971) was buried, and placed a rose in homage.

The return journey was resumed, and half way between Bakshiganj and Jamalpur, Munshi took leave of the group; with much emotion and assurances that he would be asked to join in the Jamalpur Day celebrations in December 2014 when the Jangi Paltan is hopefully in an accessible peace station.

It was a matter of some disappointment that, due to the expansion of Jamalpur town over the last 42 years and the built-up areas that had come up, the group could not physically identify the sites South of Jamalpur where the intense battle (that led to the award of the Battle Honour “Jamalpur” to the Paltan), took place on night 10/11 December 1971. A battle that resulted in the deaths of a couple of hundred Pakistanis from 31 Baluch and rangers, in front of the Jangi Paltan positions, and the surrender of the Jamalpur garrison comprising another 300 or so personnel, to Y Company in the early hours of 11 December 1971. Even more disappointing was the fact that the Guest House in Jamalpur where the surrender was affected could not be located. Notwithstanding this, on the drive through Jamalpur, the thoughts of the Jangi Paltan veterans went out to those who had made the supreme sacrifice in that battle; Laxman Rane (who was awarded the Vir Chakra) and his section from D Company, and young Nalawade from the Y Company platoon with Rajendra Dafle. Subhash Kulkarni’s nostalgia about the lucky escape he had with “Bulbul” Brar, Bhiku Shirke and a couple of others, when they nearly walked into the Jamalpur garrison on night 9/10 December 1971, was quite evident.

The return journey to Ghatail Cantt was somewhat subdued with each of the veterans immersed in their

thoughts of the fateful period in 1971.

Major General Md Shafiqur Rahman in command of 19 Infantry Division was gracious enough to invite the Jangi Paltan veterans to a cultural programme and dinner that was held in the Cantt auditorium to celebrate the Bengali New Year 1421. A very lively evening was followed by the exchange of mementoes and a delicious dinner spread after which, a somewhat weary group of veterans and Indira Nambiar, were escorted to their rooms.

Tuesday, 15 April 2014: Tangail and Dhaka

Another nostalgic trip commenced with the departure from Ghatail Cantt at about 0800 hours Tuesday, 15 April 2014 after breakfast. The Jangi Paltan veterans were seen off by the Colonel Staff of HQ 19 Infantry Division and other officers whose hospitality had been spontaneous and overwhelming.

After about an hour's drive in the ubiquitous minibus, the group reached the bridge North of Tangail where, in 1971, the Jangi Paltan had caught up with Qader Siddiqui, and linked-up with 2 PARA (Maratha) led by Lieutenant Colonel Kulwant Pannu and his second in command, Major "Jumbo" Bhadha, a batchmate of Satish Nambiar. At the bridge, the group was met by Colonel Anwar Ul Alam who was deputy to Qader Siddiqui during the War of Liberation, and later Secretary and Ambassador. Following some nostalgic photographing, the group headed for the museum set-up by Colonel Anwar; a truly inspiring effort by an individual with the assistance of local volunteers. The Jangi Paltan veterans were treated to tea and snacks by Colonel Anwar and his charming wife.

Taking leave of Colonel and Mrs Anwar and his committed band of volunteers, the veterans headed for Dhaka; reaching there in time for lunch at the "Mahananda" VIP complex.

Following a quiet lunch, the veterans accompanied by Indira Nambiar visited the Bangabandhu Memorial. The group was received and taken around by one of the trustees of the Memorial. A truly moving experience that graphically depicted the killing of Sheikh Mujib-ur-Rehman and most of his family members on that fateful day of 15 August 1975. The members of the group recorded their feelings in the Visitors Book and departed in a sombre mood.

The dinner that evening was hosted by Brigadier Thimmaya and his charming wife Neena, at Khazana, an Indian restaurant. Thimmaya had managed to bring together an extraordinary group of invitees. That included a number of freedom fighters who participated in the War of Liberation, a couple of historians, and some of the Indian officers attending various courses of instruction in Bangladesh including the National Defence College and the Staff College. The evening was indeed a great success. At the conclusion of which, Brigadier Thimmaya was presented with the "Chatrapati Shivaji Maharaj on Horseback" memento, and Neena Thimmaya and Amardeep Sidhu with personal gifts.

Wednesday, 16 April 2014: Dhaka

At breakfast on Wednesday 16 April 2014, it was time for mutual farewells. Keshav Puntambekar, Mahesh Sachdev and Subhash Kulkarni departed for Mumbai shortly after noon and were seen off at the airport by the Assistant Defence Adviser, Squadron Leader HS Sidhu. Basant Ponwar left for Kolkata in the afternoon and was seen off by Major Mohsin.

Escorted by Brigadier Thimmaya and Major Mohsin, Satish Nambiar went to the Bangladesh Institute for Peace Support Operation Training (BIPSOT) at Rajenderpur Cantt to address officers attending a Military Observers course, on the subject "Future Trends in UN Peacekeeping". As it happened, the Commandant of the Institute, Major General Mohammad Maksudur Rahman had served as a Military Observer in UNPROFOR in the former Yugoslavia in 1992-93 as a young captain when Satish Nambiar was the Force Commander and Head of that Mission. Another nostalgic experience.

After addressing the course and having interesting interaction with the student officers over tea, Satish Nambiar returned to Dhaka for lunch at "Mahananda". While Indira, accompanied by Neena Thimmaya, was engaged in shopping that afternoon, Satish Nambiar rounded off the visit with nine holes of golf at the Army Golf Course in Dhaka.

Thursday, 17 April 2014: Departure

Satish and Indira Nambiar departed Dhaka at 0915 hours Thursday, 17 April 2014 and were seen off at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, Dhaka, by Brigadier and Neena Thimmaya and Major Mohsin. A memorable visit had come to an end.

Two Salutes

The visit was an outstanding success at every level. Things could not have been better organised. All the veterans who made the trip are richer for the nostalgic experience that will without doubt add a few years to their lives. It would only be fitting to place on record our grateful thanks to the Defence Adviser at the High Commission of India in Dhaka, Brigadier PC Thimmaya, for the efforts he put in to make the visit so memorable, satisfying and rewarding in every way. It is a measure of his commitment, dedication and professionalism, and his rapport with the establishment in Bangladesh, that he was able to put together such a comprehensive programme of visit with the attendant administrative arrangements. The Jangi Paltan veterans salute him in the knowledge that with officers like him around, the future of the Indian Army is in safe hands. At the Paltan level, it is appropriate to place on record our grateful thanks to Keshav Puntambekar for his untiring efforts at coordination, and for his wise counsel at all times. Keshav, we salute you.

@Lieutenant General Satish Nambiar, PVSM, AVSM, VrC (Retd), a Padma Bhushan awardee, was commissioned on 15 Dec 1957 into 1 MARATHA LI and later commanded the same battalion and 20 MARATHA LI (10 MECH INF). He

participated in 1971 war as a company commander with 1 MARATHA LI in the Eastern Theatre and was decorated with Vir Chakra. He was the first Force Commander and Head of the UN Mission UNPROFOR in Yugoslavia and was Director USI from Jul 1996 to Dec 2008. Presently, he is a Distinguished Fellow at IDSA and an elected member of the USI Council.

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1962 War - Operations in the Walong Sector (A View from the Other Side of the Hill)

Major Generals GG Dwivedi, SM, VSM (Retd)@ and PJS Sandhu (Retd)£**

Background

While the Chinese main offensive in the Eastern Theatre was directed against the Tawang – Bomdi La Sector, the subsidiary was launched in the Walong Sector. The Chinese aim was to annihilate the Indian troops deployed in Walong Sector and in the process advance upto their claim line of 07 Nov 1959, i.e. almost the foothills. Initially on the Indian side, Walong Sector was the responsibility of 5 Infantry Brigade which was part of 4 Infantry Division. It was the Assam Rifles which manned the border posts. In response to occasional Chinese incursions through the Lohit Valley, 2 RAJPUT was moved into the area. In Mar 1962, it was replaced by 6 KUMAON.¹

Walong, a small hamlet, is situated in the vicinity of Tri Junction of Tibet, Myanmar and India. It lies astride the ancient trade route. The terrain in the area is characterised by high mountains, narrow valleys and dense forests. The valley is divided by the Lohit River, a very fast flowing stream about 100 metres wide at its narrowest point and is 20-30 feet deep. There was no bridge and movement from one bank to the other was by a cable called ‘a twine.’ There are numerous small branches joining in, both from the East and West, emanating from steep narrow valleys. From the valley floor-around 700m, the mountain peaks rise to approximately 5000m, with vast variation in the temperatures.

Please refer to Map ‘P’. Walong is about 30 km from the Tibetan border (McMahon Line) and approximately 200 km from the road-head (in 1962) at Teju on our side of the border involving a march of 14 stages over a goat track. A track from Walong also led towards Kibithoo along the Western bank of Lohit River. Onwards, it hit the McMahon Line; crossing into Tibet, culminating at Rima, an administrative base on the Chinese side of the border. The supply line and transportation of troops was only by air. Teju airfield was the nearest airlift point. There was an airstrip at Walong, capable of handling only light aircraft like Otters or Caribous. After 1000 hours, even an Otter could not operate due to strong winds.

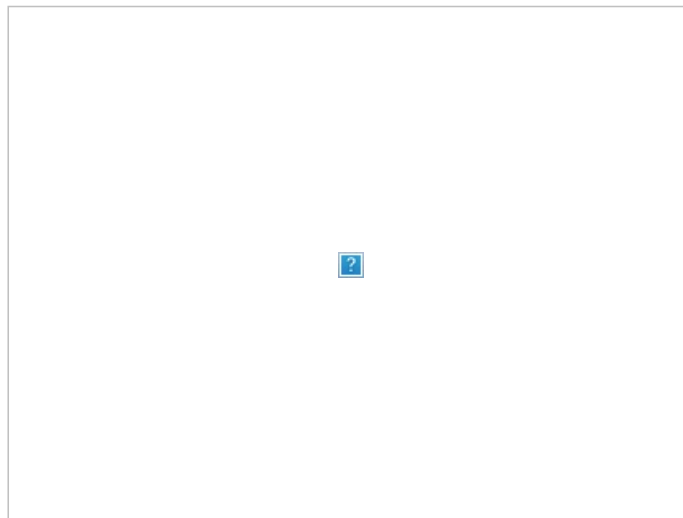
Operations in Walong Sector can be divided into three distinct phases as under :-

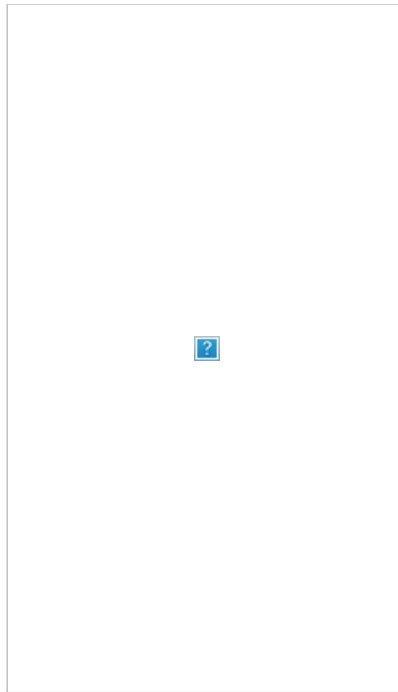
- (a) Initial Operations: 18 – 24 Oct.
- (b) Reorganisation and Build-Up: 25 Oct – 13 Nov.
- (c) Main Battle: 14 – 21 Nov.

Initial Operations: 18 - 24 Oct

Please refer to Sketch ‘Q’. In the first week of Sep 1962, 6 KUMAON had been moved up and located a few km short of the International Border (IB). A Company was deployed forward at Di chu. Remainder three companies occupied defended localities; B Company at East Ridge, C Company at Kibithoo and D Company at Ladders.² By end September, 4 SIKH was also in the process of induction. Two of its companies had been air lifted into Walong.

In the meantime, Chinese activities had increased across the IB. Tactical Headquarters of Chengdu Sub Area with 153 Regiment and one reinforced battalion had staged forward.³ On 18 Oct, a reconnaissance patrol of 6 KUMAON reported presence of two Chinese officers and about 50 men in the area of Hill 100 (on the McMahon Ridge). On 21 October, light signals were observed on the Chinese side.





At 0015 hours (h) 22 Oct, the Chinese launched an attack on Kibithoo held by a company of 6 KUMAON, with a battalion size force, duly supported by mortars and machine guns. The battle lasted for almost four hours. The Chinese ultimately were able to breakthrough, by sheer weight of numbers. 6 KUMAON withdrew to occupy a defensive position at Walong, leaving behind a screen position at Ashi Hill ex D Company, under Lieutenant Bikram Singh. In the early hours of 23 Oct, the Chinese attacked the screen position. At 0400 h, the same day, screen position was ordered to withdraw. By 24 Oct morning, the Chinese had contacted the main defences at Walong.⁴ By this time, 4 SIKH had occupied a defended area at Walong along with two companies of 2/8 GR. Hereafter, there was a lull in the battle for some time, except for patrol clashes.

Reorganisation and Indian Build-Up: 25 Oct - 13 Nov 1962

Initially, 5 Infantry Brigade was responsible for the Walong Sector. As a sequel to the reorganisation, after the fall of Tawang, a new formation 2 Infantry Division was raised with Major General MS Pathania as the GOC. The newly raised Division was assigned the responsibility of the whole of NEFA, less Kameng (Tawang) Sector. Consequently, 181 Infantry Brigade was allocated for Walong Sector. However, later on GOC's insistence, entire 181 Infantry Brigade was moved out and 11 Infantry Brigade under Brigadier NC Rawley was moved to Walong. Further, to bring the Brigade to full strength, 2/8 GR was ordered to move to Walong. Half way through the move, they were replaced by 3/3 GR. Even 3/3 GR was shuttled up and down till it was finally brought into Walong. Finally, 11 Infantry Brigade under the command of Brigadier NC Rawley assumed the responsibility for Walong Sector on 31 Oct 1962. It will be seen that there were far too many changes in the order of battle and responsibility which was detrimental to the development of a brigade defended sector at Walong.

Chinese Build-Up

As a result of operations conducted from 22-24 Oct, Chinese had captured Kibithoo, a post on the Indian side of the border (McMahon Line) and were occupying Ashi Hill, separated from Indian troops by Namti Nullah. Through aggressive patrolling, Chinese had also gained control of Green Pimple (12500), Tri Junction (13250) and, were operating on the West Ridge and the Avalanche Ridge; thus posing a threat to the western flank of Indian positions in Walong. Chinese patrols were also operating in Satti Valley, thus posing a threat to the eastern flank.

Subsequent to the raising of Indian 2 Infantry Division and induction of 11 Infantry Brigade into Walong Sector, Chinese ordered the move of 130 infantry Division (Commander Dang Zhanlin) located at various places around Cheng-Tu (Chengdu) (Ya-an, Lo-shan etc.) in Sichuan province for offensive in the Walong Sector. On 28 Oct, the GHQ PLA nominated Ding Headquarters (HQ) under Comrade Ding Cheng for overall command and control of operations in the Walong Sector. Ten days were given with effect from 29 Oct, to complete all preparations for the offensive. 130 Infantry Division had the following troops available to it ⁵ :-

- (a) 388 Infantry Regiment.
- (b) 389 Infantry Regiment.
- (c) 390 Infantry Regiment.
- (d) Engineer Regiment.
- (e) Composite Artillery Battalion of 134 Infantry Division.
- (f) Anti-aircraft Battalion of 135 Infantry Division.

The PLA high command carried out detailed appreciation of the task. Operational instructions issued to lower formations emphasised the following ⁶:-

- (a) As Indian defences were expected to be well prepared and held in strength, the operational plans were to be based on encirclement and outflanking movements. The break-in points were to be selected with due deliberation.
- (b) Superior fire power, both of artillery and supporting weapons was an essential prerequisite. Anti aircraft weapons were to be organised to interfere with the adversary's air supplies as also for security of own troops.
- (c) For effective command and control, line and wireless communications were to be ensured.
- (d) Chengdu Military Sub Area and Tibet Military Command were assigned the responsibility of logistics support for the offensive. Adequate resources were to be earmarked for constructing road up to Walong.

Chinese Logistics Build-Up

Please refer to Map 'R'. The logistics chain involved a move of nearly 1300 km to a road head at Shugden which was approximately 90 km from Rima, the launch area for the offensive. Rima was 4-5 days of marching distance from the road head. Chengdu Military Region organised 17 and 20 Motor Transport Regiments for building-up the logistics for the operation. Chengdu Military Sub Area mobilised 7169 civilian workers, 835 livestock, 634 mules and horses; and to further augment the effort 130 Division deployed five infantry battalions (altogether 1800 personnel) to ferry the stocks for impending operations. The total strength for logistics build-up exceeded that of the combat troops; such was the magnitude of the logistics effort.⁷

Chinese Plan of Attack

The plan for capture of Walong was finalised on 7 November at Ding HQ and forwarded to the Central Military Commission (CMC) who in turn communicated their final approval of the plan on 09 Nov. Salient points of the plan were as under (Sketch 'Q')⁸ :-

- (a) Main attack was to develop from West of Lohit River with a subsidiary attack from the East.
- (b) 388 and 390 Regiments were to attack simultaneously from the West. After initial penetration into the Ladders - Maha Plateau - Tri Junction localities, Walong was to be isolated; prelude to its subsequent capture.
- (c) 389 Regiment (less a battalion) was to advance keeping East of the Lohit River. After clearing Dong Heights, it was to progress operations towards Walong, in conjunction with 388 Regiment.
- (d) 153 Regiment which was already in contact was to provide firm base and subsequently complement the operations of 388 and 390 Regiments.
- (e) 2nd Battalion of 389 Regiment alongwith the reinforced battalion of Chengdu Military Sub Area (less 3rd and 5th Companies) were to act as reserves.
- (f) 5th Company of the reinforced battalion was to launch a feint attack initially and was to subsequently protect the western flank of the offensive.
- (g) The Artillery Group to support the offensive was composed of the composite Artillery Battalion of 134 Division, 122 mm mortar company and 82 mm mortar company of 153 Regiment.
- (h) All preparations were to be completed by 1800 h on 13 Nov. The date for the offensive was fixed as 18 Nov, which in the event had to be advanced to 16 Nov.
- (j) Logistics set-up and rear command office were established by 12 Nov. One week's supplies and ammunition were to be stocked by 15 Nov.

Indian Dispositions

By the first week of Nov, 11 Infantry Brigade had established itself finally with its full complements. Due to cross attachments, the homogeneity of the units was adversely affected. The profile of the Brigade Defended Sector by 14 Nov was as under⁹:-

- (a) Brigade Tactical HQ was in general area Tri Junction with administrative echelons at Walong Camp.
- (b) 4 SIKH was deployed on both sides of the Lohit River with the Battalion less 'D' Company on the West and the 'D' Company on the East in the area of High Plateau, the latter under command 3/3 GR. On the West, a company each was deployed at Patrol Base, Ladders and Maha Plateau, with the Battalion HQ in the Area West Ridge.
- (c) 3/3 GR was also deployed on either side of the Lohit River. Two of its companies were in the area of Lachman Ridge and Ladders with other two in Dong Plateau and Dong Hill, and Battalion HQ in the area of Dakota Hill on the East bank.
- (d) 6 KUMAON had taken up defences in the area of Tri Junction and West Ridge on the West, after withdrawing from Kibithoo.
- (e) 4 Dogra was deployed in the depth astride the Avalanche Ridge, guarding the Western approach to Walong.



From the above deployment, it may be noted that two companies of 3/3 GR deployed on the West bank of Lohit River were under command 4 SIKH; while two companies of 4 SIKH on the East bank were under command 3/3 GR. This is what the Chinese understood from the above arrangement :-

“.....3rd Gorkha Rifles (3/3 GR) in the East of the river had its two companies deployed on the West of the river which were under command of 4th Sikh Regiment (4 SIKH). However, 4th company of the Sikh Regiment was deployed to the East of the river, on the base set-up on the forward slope of the position held by the Gorkha Battalion. Indian forces attempted to achieve the aim of restraining each other by adopting difficult patterns of organisational cross deployment.”¹⁰

6 KUMAON Attack - Prelude to the Main Battle : 14-15 Nov 1962

Please refer to Sketch 'Q'. As part of consolidation and extension of the Firm Base, the Chinese had secured the Green Pimple spur on 06 Nov, posing a threat to Walong from the West. Despite repeated attempts by 6 KUMAON to retake it, the Chinese held firm. Similarly, enemy attempts to advance along West Ridge had been blocked by 6 KUMAON. Green Pimple was dominated by Yellow Pimple and Yellow Pimple was dominated by Tri Junction. Tri Junction thus became a ground of great tactical importance as it opened several approaches to the enemy, besides providing an approach to own troops to the enemy positions on Ashi Hill. By about 10 Nov it could also be observed that the Chinese preparations for their offensive were nearing completion.

After carrying out an assessment of the situation the Brigade Commander (Brigadier Rawley) came to the conclusion that it was essential to secure Green Pimple through Tri Junction and Yellow Pimple. At this stage the Brigade Commander was ordered to relieve 2/8 GR, while its replacement 3/3 GR had still not been fully inducted. Keeping in view the urgency of the situation the Brigade Commander decided to readjust positions within the brigade defended sector and relieve two companies of 6 KUMAON to join the parent unit at Firm Base thus concentrating the whole of 6 KUMAON on the western flank. 6 KUMAON was then tasked to capture Green Pimple and thereafter to occupy a battalion defended area from Green Pimple to Tri Junction. The progress of the attack is best described in Brigade Commander's own words ¹¹:-

“6 KUMAON commenced their advance from Firm Base on the morning of 14 Nov. Second Lieutenant Khetri was commanding the leading platoon up the ridge the Chinese saw them and headed for Yellow Pimple. From Yellow Pimple the Chinese opened up on to the lower slopes of Tri Junction and at the same time other Chinese troops tried to get up to Tri Junction. Khetri with his men dashed up the slope, reached the top and then dashed down the spur leading to Yellow Pimple. Thus the vital ground that was Tri Junction was secured. This now formed the base for Phase 2, i.e. the attack on Yellow Pimple.

6 KUMAON continued their attack and made slow but steady progress. By mid-day, however, they began to suffer fairly heavy casualties and I ordered one company of 4 DOGRA who were concentrated on the ALG to start moving up. By approximately 1430 h, 6 KUMAON casualties increased considerably and I realised that inspite of the fact that they were still making progress, they would not be able to carry out Phase 3 the next day, i.e. capture of Green Pimple. At this stage I ordered the whole of 4 DOGRA who were still in the process of concentrating on the ALG to move upto Tri Junction. By last light, inspite of suffering heavy casualties 6 KUMAON managed to reach within 50 yards of the top of Yellow Pimple. I was hoping that by first light they would have captured the whole of Yellow Pimple and would be in a position to prepare for the final phase which was to capture Green Pimple.

6 KUMAON by now was considerably reduced in strength, since they had started the operation. They had started the operation as a weak Battalion and had suffered heavy casualties. During the night, at approximately 2200 h, the enemy opened up with automatic weapons. At exactly 1 AM all hell broke loose. He counter attacked with, I consider a minimum of one regiment plus. The night was lit up almost like one of the main roads of Delhi. You must not forget that Chinese are all equipped with automatic and semi-automatic weapons. The right company of 6 KUMAON was overrun almost immediately. The second company 6 KUMAON on the spine between Yellow Pimple and Tri Junction fell back slowly under continuous pressure. The noise was absolutely deafening and continued without a break till 0750 h on 15 Nov when their counter attack was finally held. At this moment I looked at my watch as there was complete silence. When the counter attack was finally held the Chinese had pushed us back after continuous fighting of over seven hours up to less than 50 yards of the top of Tri Junction. In this fighting, lasting almost the whole night, 6

KUMAON suffered heavy casualties.”

Thus ended the brave but ill-conceived spoiling attack by 6 KUMAON. It was to have far reaching effects on the main battle that was to follow. 6 KUMAON had suffered very heavy casualties and needed to be relieved and given rest. 4 DOGRA who were just arriving at the ALG were also fed into the battle piecemeal without any tactical gains. The result was that Brigade's left flank was almost open and the Brigade had no reserves. Incidentally, Chinese accounts do not talk of this battle which raged on 14 and 15 Nov.

The Main Battle : 16 Nov 1962

The PLA 130 Division, which had been tasked to capture Walong commenced its move from the assembly areas across the IB on 13 Nov and got into the battle positions by last light 15 Nov. Ding Tactical HQ deployed itself in the area of Green Pimple. **In order to exploit initial success and deny Indian side an opportunity to regain balance, the Chinese higher command advanced the D Day for the main offensive to 16 Nov.**¹²

The Chinese launched the main attack on 16th morning, engaging all the forward localities, supported by artillery, mortars and machine gun fire. 6 KUMAON localities in the area of Track Junction and a portion of 4 DOGRA Defended Area were attacked by 390 Regiment which had divided itself into three echelons. The troops of both the units put up stiff resistance which involved even close quarter fighting. They succeeded in stalling the initial Chinese attack, inflicting heavy casualties.

Simultaneously, 388 Regiment attacked A Company of 4 SIKH which was deployed at Maha Plateau. By 0530 h, the position had been overrun. Next, the Delta Company of 3/3 GR came under attack. It beat back two successive Chinese attacks. Subedar Kharak Bahadur Gurung distinguished himself in this fighting. By 1500 h, the locality had been surrounded. The remnants decided to breakthrough and fall back. In the process, the Gorkhas suffered heavy casualties including the Company Commander Captain KN Bavadam. The Chinese were able to penetrate the forward line of defences and drive a wedge between the 6 KUMAON and 4 SIKH Defended Areas. By the afternoon, two Chinese regiments had linked-up to tackle the depth localities of 6 KUMAON and 4 DOGRA.

On 15 Nov, 3/3 GR Company deployed at Ladders Post inflicted heavy casualties when the Chinese attacked it. This

locality was mutually supporting with A Company of 4 SIKH at Dong Hill, on eastern bank of the River. On the 16 Nov morning, Chinese 389 Regiment attacked Dong Plateau, crossing the River using rubber dinghies. The Company position fell but not before it took a heavy toll of the enemy. Due to the loss of this locality, Ladders position lay exposed. It held on till 1630 h, and was ordered to withdraw thereafter, as the position had become untenable. While most of its personnel were able to escape, Major Chand the Company Commander was taken prisoner.

Meanwhile on the eastern flank, A and B Companies of 3/3 GR were under intense pressure. By 1430 h 16 Nov, orders were given for them to withdraw. These troops suffered heavy casualties and many were captured, as they were ambushed by the Chinese who had cut-off the routes of withdrawal. C Company of 4 SIKH deployed on High Plateau which by now was isolated was attacked on 16/17 Nov and was overrun.

By the evening of 16 Nov, the 11 Brigade Sector had crumbled. 390 Regiment had seized Walong airfield by the last light. Chinese 153 Regiment cleared the left over pockets of resistance. Some of the troops like the platoon of 6 KUMAON at the West Ridge fought to the finish.

The Withdrawal

The overall situation as it prevailed in Walong at around 1100 h on 16 Nov (based on personal papers of Brigadier Rawlley, the Brigade Commander) is given in the succeeding paras.¹³

On the West Bank

(a) The defended localities of Tri Junction, Patrol Base, Lachman Ridge, Mithun Track, Maha Plateau and West Ridge had fallen. The occupation of the West Ridge gave the enemy the capability to observe and bring down small arms and artillery fire over the Dropping Zone (DZ), Advance Landing Ground (ALG) and the Brigade HQ at Walong itself.

(b) Ladders position held by C Company of 3/3 GR had been considerably weakened in strength and was low on ammunition but was holding on in stubborn resistance.

(c) Firm Base held by the two companies of 4 DOGRA, stood surrounded by the enemy. There was no contact between them and the Brigade HQ.

(d) 71 Heavy Mortar Battery was left with few rounds of faulty ammunition and was under enemy observation.

On the East Bank

(a) High Plateau held by D Company of 4 SIKH under the command of Lieutenant Yograj Palta had fallen.

(b) 3/3 GR less two companies along with a company of 4 SIKH holding Dong Plateau, Dong Hill and Dakota Hill stood encircled.

There were only two companies of 4 DOGRA at the Brigade HQ that were available to the Brigade Commander, which had so far not come in contact with the enemy. The situation all along the front was grave. The troops had been in action since 21 Oct, i.e. for 26 days and were now exhausted. Having had to fight a most unequal

battle, under most unfavourable conditions without combat air support, they were hungry, cold, many were wounded, low on ammunition, had no winter clothing and had been on a starvation diet for many days.

As would be apparent from the above, the position of the Brigade on the morning of 16 Nov was truly untenable. Lieutenant General BM Kaul, GOC IV Corps had been in Walong since 15 Nov and had seen the situation first-hand. **The Brigade Commander recommended withdrawal to the Corps Commander. The Corps Commander was reluctant. He (General Kaul), as the Chief of General Staff at Army HQ had been an accomplice of the politicians and bureaucrats in the formulation of the 'Forward Policy' and the order to 'throw the Chinese out', was now in a dilemma. He refused to order withdrawal. Tactical logic of the Brigade Commander and hopelessness of the situation were of no avail. Thereupon, the Brigade Commander accepted his directions of continuing the fruitless struggle, provided the Corps Commander stayed on. He told him in no uncertain words that he would not allow him to take off in his aircraft. Thereupon the Corps Commander agreed to permit a withdrawal and offered Brigadier Rawley a lift in his aircraft back to safety. The offer was politely refused by the Brigade Commander who then put into motion the process of withdrawal of his Brigade or what was left of it to Hayuliang, a distance of 105 km from Walong.¹⁴**

The orders for withdrawal were issued at 1200 h on 16 Nov. Due to the prevailing tactical situation (all units and sub-units were not in communication and enemy troops were swarming all around), the plan of withdrawal could not percolate to all sub-units.

Withdrawal Plan. The outline plan of withdrawal was as under :-

- (a) All troops on the East bank of Lohit River to abandon positions and withdraw along East bank to join the Brigade Column at Hawaii (HQ of Arijaw District of Arunachal Pradesh).
- (b) All troops on the western flank of the Brigade Defended Sector to abandon positions at 1400 h on 16 Nov.
- (c) Brigade HQ, supporting arms and services to cross the Brigade check point (CP) between 1500-1600 h on 16 Nov.
- (d) 4 SIKH to commence thinning out at 1700 h and abandon positions by 2000 h on 16 Nov.
- (e) Successive layback positions to be taken-up by one company of 4 DOGRA at Area DZ Ridge and one company of 6 KUMAON at Yepak Ridge. 6 KUMAON layback position at Yepak Ridge to remain in position upto first light 17 Nov.
- (f) Laybacks to be in position by 1400 h on 16 Nov and to abandon positions after withdrawal of 4 SIKH, excluding 6 KUMAON layback at Yepak Ridge.
- (g) Brigade CP to be located at Yepak - Lohit River Junction.
- (h) Brigade column to RV at Area Satti Camp (located approximately 10 km further South of Brigade CP).
- (j) All troops to move self-contained for four days.
- (k) All guns to be destroyed/rendered unserviceable.

Conduct of Withdrawal. It was far from a smooth operation. Chinese troops having sensed the victory were close on the heels and ambushed the withdrawing troops, wherever possible. Salient points are mentioned below :-

- (a) At approximately 1200 h the Brigade Commander ordered one company of 4 DOGRA located at Mortar Position to reinforce Firm Base. This company was ambushed about 1000m West of Firm Base at 1300 h. However, the company managed to break contact with the enemy and moved along the Yepak Ridge to the Brigade CP.
- (b) 4 SIKH withdrew from their positions at about 1400 h and moved to the Brigade CP.
- (c) 3/3 GR less two companies commenced withdrawal at about 1430 h. This column was later ambushed in the area of the Danti-Lohit River Junction on 18 Nov. Thereafter, the column disintegrated into smaller groups.
- (d) By 1700 h, the tail of the Brigade column had cleared the Brigade CP.
- (g) During Night 16/17 Nov all troops holding layback positions cleared the Brigade CP.

The move of the Brigade column from the Brigade RV to Hayuliang was covered by troops holding successive delaying positions. It is creditable that each of the withdrawing battalions, inspite of the casualties suffered and trauma of defeat, managed to occupy successive covering positions with their remnants to facilitate the withdrawal. Command and control was maintained throughout. One can say that this withdrawal which is the most difficult of the operations of war was carried out in the best tradition of the Indian Army. The remnants of the battalions held series of delaying positions. The Chinese followed-up closely as far as Chingwinty. The tail of the Brigade column cleared the covering troops provided by 82 Infantry Brigade at Hayuling by 1030 h on 21 Nov 1962.

The Pursuit (As viewed by the Chinese)

By about 1600 h on 16 Nov it was quite clear to the Chinese that they had broken through the Indian 11 Infantry Brigade defences and that the withdrawal had commenced. Ding HQ then ordered the troops to switch over to pursuit and search operation. On 17 Nov, GHQ sent a telegram to the Ding HQ instructing as under¹⁵:-

"Fiercely chase fleeing Indian troops upto the traditional and customary line of the border and carry out thorough

mopping up operations.”

130 Division in turn tasked 389 Regiment and two battalions (1st and 2nd) less a company of 390 Regiment to undertake pursuit, commencing around first light of 17 Nov. Thus Indian 11 Infantry Brigade troops got 16 Nov (AN) and Night 16/17 Nov to get away almost unhindered, except for observed small arms and artillery fire on Indian positions and small groups of Chinese troops who had managed to infiltrate during the night. During the withdrawal, especially on the East bank of Lohit River there were a number of ambushes and skirmishes in which 3/3 GR and 4 SIKH troops withdrawing along the East bank without the support of any fall back positions suffered considerable losses. Chinese troops maintained continuous pressure till they reached the designated line by about 1200 h on 21 Nov. There they received orders to stop the pursuit and switch over to search operations in the areas captured by them.

It is worth mentioning that Chinese troops engaged in pursuit and search operations also faced tremendous hardships on account of logistics. Chinese account mentions that some units ran out of food and water. Troops had to sustain themselves by eating wild plants to satisfy their hunger and used grass to protect themselves from cold at night. For instance, 1st company of 389 Regiment (operating on the East bank of Lohit River) during ten days ran out of food successively four times and had no water for three days. Because of hunger and cold, out of a total strength of 129 men, almost 90 per cent suffered from dysentery and bleeding of lips. On 26 Nov, 3rd Platoon of this company seems to have ambushed a column of 3/3 GR, inflicting 39 casualties [killed and wounded, including the Commanding Officer Lieutenant Colonel NB Jadhav who was wounded and taken a Prisoner of War (PW)]. The Division commenced retreat from the Indian territory on 01 Dec 1962.¹⁶

Casualties

The casualties suffered by the Indian and Chinese troops during the battle of Walong are given at the Appendix. The killed and wounded of both sides (Indians – 642, Chinese – 752) are comparable. Out of an Indian garrison of 2191, one third of the force was either killed or wounded and over 300 taken PsW. The Chinese too paid an exorbitant price for their victory as they too suffered colossal losses. Eventually of course, the numerical superiority and tactical advantage that the Chinese had gained the initial stages (failure of 6 KUMAON attack) decided the outcome.

An Assessment

Although Walong was a subsidiary thrust of the Chinese offensive in the East, it turned out to be the bloodiest battle of the War. Initially, Chinese had catered for only one Indian battalion (6 KUMAON) plus some Assam Rifles troops to be defending this Sector and accordingly built up a Regiment plus a reinforced battalion to launch the offensive. However, after Phase I (20-24 Oct) it became known to them that India had reinforced this Sector by another battalion and subsequently built it up to a Brigade. Chinese reacted quickly and moved another Division (130 Division) with additional artillery and air defence troops from Chengdu, a distance of nearly 1300 km across high mountain ranges and three major rivers, and concentrated this force around Rima by 07 Nov, in a matter of 10-12 days. It was a remarkable logistics feat.

Indian commanders seem to have been oblivious to the above developments as no intelligence on Chinese moves, strength, dispositions and intentions was forthcoming from the IB or the Military Intelligence. It would be relevant to recapitulate some of the Indian actions at the tactical level during this period :-

- (a) Initially, the Sector was defended by one battalion (6 KUMAON) and 'A' Wing (6 platoons) of 2 Assam Rifles. They were holding Kibithoo and areas to the West and East of it, generally on the McMahon Line.
- (b) By 18 Oct, another battalion (4 SIKH) was inducted but without a brigade HQ to control or deploy the troops according to a battle plan.
- (c) After the Chinese attacked and captured Kibithoo and surrounding areas on 22 Oct, 6 KUMAON was withdrawn and ordered to defend Walong.
- (d) On 29 Oct, it was decided that HQ 181 Infantry Brigade would be responsible for this Sector. This was changed to 11 Infantry Brigade by 31 Oct, i.e. the day the new Commander reached this Sector with his rover group (brigade commander's party) to assume command of this Sector.
- (e) The deployment had a mix of troops from different units as has already been brought out.
- (f) While the Chinese were almost ready to launch their offensive with a Division plus, 6 KUMAON (the only reserve) was launched into an attack to capture Green Pimple on 14 Nov which was a failure. 4 DOGRA who were just arriving at the ALG by air were also fed into this attack.
- (g) The Chinese not only foiled this attack but followed it up by their main offensive by advancing their D Day by two days to 16 Nov.
- (h) The brigade having launched all its reserves in this attack was totally unbalanced and unprepared to face a Division plus size well-coordinated offensive. The result is well-known.
- (j) To top it all, India decided to keep its Air Force out of battle, while its Army was receiving a battering on ground. This is inexplicable!

Notwithstanding the above, 11 Infantry Brigade put up a tough and a determined fight but the odds were heavily weighed against them. The decision of withdrawal was a timely decision. Had it been delayed by a few hours, the fate of this brigade would have been the same, if not worse, as that of 7 Infantry Brigade on the Namka Chu.

The battle of Walong also proved that man to man, Indian soldiers were more than a match against the

Chinese, even under the most adverse circumstances. Even in defeat, they upheld the honour of the Nation, the Army and their Regiments. The reasons for defeat are to be found elsewhere. And lastly, the martyrs of this battle need to be remembered and honoured.

Endnotes

1. Official 1962 War History @History Division, Ministry of Defence, Govt of India. 1992, p 234, accessed on internet on 01 May 2014..
2. Ibid., p. 236.
3. A History of Counter Attack War in Self Defence at Sino-Indian Border, Beijing Military Science Publications 1994, Chapter 5, Section 3.
4. Brigadier NC Rawlley’s Papers in USI Archives.
5. Op. Cit. 3.
6. Ibid.
7. ibid.
8. ibid.
9. Op. Cit. 1.
10. Op. Cit. 3.
11. Op. Cit. 4.
12. Op. Cit. 3.
13. Op. Cit. 4.
14. Ibid.
15. Op. Cit. 3.
16. Ibid.

Appendix

Casualties Suffered by Indian and Chinese Troops during the Battle of Walong

Indian Casualties

The casualties suffered by the units of 11 Infantry Brigade are tabulated below and these tell their own story :-

Unit	Strength	Killed	Wounded	PsW	Total
4 SIKH [£]	519	83	117	40	240
4 DOGRA [*]	537	110	31	74	215
6 KUMAON [@]	696	115	109	167	391
3/3 GR [%]	439	56	21	64	414
Total	2191	364	278	345	987 (44 per cent of the total strength)

Source : Brigadier (Later Lieutenant General) NC Rawlley’s personal Papers held in USI Archives. The figures are also generally borne out by respective regimental histories.

£Lieutenant Colonel AL Bahl, CO 4 SIKH with remnants of his battalion marched for eight days and reached Teju.

*Lieutenant Colonel RS Pathania, CO 4 DOGRA was wounded.

@Lieutenant Colonel CN Madiah, CO 6 KUMAON was taken PW.

%Lieutenant Colonel NB Jadhav, CO 3/3 GR was wounded and taken PW.

Chinese Casualties

The Chinese casualties (as gleaned from Chinese sources) are given below :-

		Officers	Soldiers	Total

(a)	Killed	26	172	198
(b)	Wounded	68	486	554
	Total	94	658	752

<p style="text-align: center;">Remarks</p> <p style="text-align: center;">These casualty figures are for the second phase of operations commencing on 14 Nov 1962 and do not include the casualties which they would have suffered during Phase One commencing on 20 Oct during patrol clashes and capture of Kibithoo on 22 Oct</p>				
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Source : Chinese Book, A History of Counter Attack War in Self Defence Along Sino-Indian Border, Beijing Military Science Publications, 1994.

*This article is in continuation of the three earlier articles “1962–Battle of Se-La and Bomdi-La”, “1962–The Battle of Namka Chu and Fall of Tawang” and “1962 – War in the Western Sector (Ladakh)” published in Oct-Dec 2011, Apr-Jun 2013 and Jul-Sep 2013 Issues of USI Journal respectively.

@ **Major General GG Dwivedi, SM, VSM**** (Retd) was commissioned into 14 JAT on 14 Nov 1971. Veteran of Bangladesh War, He latter commanded 16 JAT in Siachen and a Mountain Division in the Northeast, responsible for the defence of Eastern Arunachal Pradesh. He was India's Defence Attaché in China and Reired as Assistant Chief of Defence Staff, HQ IDS in 2009. Currently, he is a Professor and Chairman, International Studies, Aligarh Muslim University.

£ **Major General PJS Sandhu (Retd)** was commissioned into 8th Light Cavalry on 15 June 1966 and later commanded 47 Armoured Regiment. He retired from the Army as Chief of Staff, 1 Corps on 31 July 2003. Presently, he is working as Deputy Director and Editor at USI since 01 May 2007

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