

Battle of Longewala

Major General Kuldip Singh Bajwa (Retd)*

In the first week of December 1971 a most remarkable battle took place around Longewala in the erstwhile Indian princely state of Jaisalmer in the Rajasthan desert. On the night of 4/5 December a large Pakistani armour-infantry force rather recklessly without air cover advanced across the international border (IB) to capture Ramgarh and neutralise the airfield at Jaisalmer. On the way, 18 km from the IB was the Border Security Force Post of Longewala now held by A Company of 23 Punjab. A platoon strength patrol from this company had shadowed the Pakistani force as it crossed the IB. Despite the knowledge of the large enemy force, the small isolated force at Longewala held firm to provide the anvil for a flight of Indian Air Force (IAF) Hunters from Jaisalmer airfield to inflict crushing losses on the enemy and frustrate its boldly conceived design.

Brigadier (Retd) ZA Khan, Pakistan Army, who commanded one of the cavalry regiments in this operation, in his recently published book 'Indo-Pak Wars 1965 & 71' has given a very forthright and graphic account of Pakistan's Longewala operation. This article recapitulates the Battle of Longewala in the light of the account given by Brigadier Khan in his book.

Situation in the Run Up to the Operation

On the eve of the December 1971 War, Indian 12 Infantry Division in area north of Jaisalmer (India) was facing Pakistan's 18 Infantry Division in area Rahimyar Khan (Pakistan). There was a general belief on both sides that major operations were not feasible in the Rajasthan and Sindh deserts. Nevertheless, in the event of hostilities breaking out, the Indian division had planned to launch bulk of its force from area Sadhewala-Tanot-Kishangarh to capture Rahimyar Khan, and disrupt rail-road link from Lahore to Karachi. Please refer to the map of the area of operations.

Pakistan's intelligence had come to know of the Indian intention to capture Rahimyar Khan. It was also averred that since Indian commanders still believed that large scale military operations were not feasible in the Rajasthan desert, no significant opposition was expected. It was also concluded that since the Jaisalmer air base had not been war activated hardly any hostile air action would be encountered. Based on these assumptions and conclusions, and to pre-empt the Indian attack on Rahimyar Khan, a bold and swift armour-infantry thrust was conceived astride the Reti-Longewala-Ramgarh-Jaisalmer axis to capture Ramgarh and neutralise the air field at Jaisalmer. It was believed that Longewala held by a BSF company could be either bypassed or easily secured to protect the left flank of their advance.

Troops earmarked for this operation were 22 Cavalry (T-59); 38 Cavalry (Shermans) 51 Infantry Brigade (two infantry battalions; the third battalion of East Bengal Regiment, was placed in a defensive box within Pakistan territory and effectively neutralised with mines placed around it); 206 Infantry Brigade, which shed a battalion to cover routes to Rahimyar Khan; one field regiment (25 pr), a mortar battery (120 mm) and later a medium battery (130 mm), deployed near the IB. Air support was assured by Pakistan Air Force (PAF).

Pakistan's Operational Plan

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Water as a Source of Conflict: Indian Context

Lieutenant Colonel Yogesh Nair*

Introduction

“Everything originated in the water and everything is sustained by water” said Goethe and it holds true in absolute sense. Water by virtue of its multifarious uses is one of the fundamental gifts of nature. Its availability greatly influences the sustenance of life, prosperity, development potential and health status of humans. When world population was limited, its bountiful supplies seemed endlessly renewable. This however, is no longer possible since the exponential growth rates of human population, industries and farms have already reduced the availability of water to below its minimum per capita daily requirement of about 23 litres¹.

The magnitude of the problem lies in the fact that only three per cent of world’s water is fresh, of which, approximately 77.7 per cent is locked in polar icecaps and glaciers and is not available for human use. 22 per cent of freshwater is ground water². In the last 70 years, the global population has trebled, while the water consumption has increased six fold due to industrial development and growing irrigation requirements. Supplies have also grown manifold to keep pace with the demand through exploitation of surface and groundwater. The result is that ground water resources are over-exploited leading to ground water scarcity. Surface water resources are over-exploited in many basins and are fast depleting due to siltation. Fresh water supplies are increasingly coming under threat of population from industrial effluents and municipal wastes.

The problem of water and its related management is global. There is no such thing as managing water for a single purpose; all water management is multi-objective and based on navigating competing interests. Within a nation, these interests include domestic users, agriculturalists, hydropower generators, recreators and environmentalists; any two of which are regularly at odds and the chances of finding mutually acceptable solutions drop exponentially as more stakeholders are involved. Add international boundaries, and the chances decrease exponentially yet again. The scarcity of water in the countries leads to intense political pressures, often referred to as ‘water stresses’. As per water scholars, by 2050 it is likely that two-third of the world population would be living in areas facing water stress conditions³.

Many Asian countries are beginning to experience moderate to severe water shortages brought on by the simultaneous effects of agricultural growth, industrialisation and urbanisation. Several countries in the region, including Indonesia and Papua New Guinea, have experienced droughts of such severity that they have caused food shortages and have threatened the long-term food supply. Further, climate change and environmental degradation in the form of shrinking forests and swamps may produce even more erratic weather and result in similar crises. Another concern in the region is growing competition over shared water resources.

In the entire gambit of water shortage, the Indian Sub Continent is becoming the focal point. Estimate of the future population indicates that this region is expected to add 570 million in India, 200 million in Pakistan, and 130 million in Bangladesh over the next 50 years, hence water stress and water scarcity are and will be confronted by countries of this Sub Continent⁴. Due to its location, size and contiguous borders with other countries of the region, it is India, in its capacity as both upper and lower riparian, which is facing the brunt of water scarcity. In India, the

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The Situation in Afghanistan and the Way Ahead

Major General Y K Gera (Retd)*

Background

Afghanistan is a landlocked country with an area of 6,52,100 sq km and population of 22 million approximately¹. Four million Afghans live outside, mostly in Iran and Pakistan. Afghanistan is one of the world's least developed countries with 90 per cent of its population living in rural areas at subsistence level. Twelve per cent of the land is arable, three per cent under forest cover, 46 per cent for pastures, and the rest 39 per cent or so is mountainous. Its small scale industry contributes 26 per cent to its Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Four million children are out of school. Annual population growth is at 2.6 per cent or so. Life expectancy is 41 years for males and 43 years for females. The country has been fighting war for more than 25 years. The educational and health infrastructures have been destroyed during this war.

The erstwhile USSR's intervention in Afghanistan and failure of its policy there is said to have contributed substantially towards its demise and the end of the Cold War. In early 1989 the Soviet Union withdrew from Afghanistan after loosing more than 14,500 troops. One million Afghan lives had also been lost. The policies followed by the USA and Pakistan in Afghanistan led to the emergence of the Taliban, who continue to be active there. Supporting Taliban served the short term interests of both these countries. Afghanistan during the period 1996-2001 became epicentre of Jihadi terrorism under the Taliban regime. It provided sanctuaries and training facilities to organisations like Al Qaeda, holy warriors of Chechnya, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) and so on.

On 11 September 2001, terrorists attacked sensitive targets in New York and Washington DC in the USA. In October 2001, American forces launched 'Operation Enduring Freedom' against the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. This step was welcomed by most countries adversely affected by terrorism, since it suited their strategic interests. Pakistan was forced to take a U-turn in its policies. Pakistan continues to be a reluctant partner in the global war against terrorism. Its attitude in countering terrorism continues to be ambiguous. The US employed Special Operations Force (SOF) in conjunction with Northern Alliance Forces in Afghanistan in successfully over throwing the Taliban Government. North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) mandated by the United Nations Security Council, participated as a multinational military force under American leadership. Britain contributed a big contingent. Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Denmark, Poland and Portugal have contributed only token elements.

Internal Dynamics: Afghanistan

Afghanistan is a difficult country to govern. In the past, attempts to control large number of tribes and sub-tribes, who are fiercely independent, have failed. There is a need to adopt tribe friendly approach, isolate the bad Taliban, and highlight that presence of foreign donors and security forces is for the benefit of the local population. Dependence of the locals on poppy cultivation is also difficult to reverse, given that the area is dry, barren, and very cold during winter.

President Karzai of Afghanistan has the support of a majority of Afghan leaders constituting the Jirga. He is occasionally accused of taking help of tribal leaders and warlords with dubious reputation of being a part of drug

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Whither Chinese Characteristics of Market Economy Horizon of China's Fight Back against Scary Recession

Dr Sheo Nandan Pandey*

Introduction

The People's Republic of China (PRC) is beset with recession.¹ It defies all public pronouncement of the Chinese leadership. Barely a fortnight after Hu Jintao, the Chinese President, Wen Jiabao, the Chinese Prime Minister and Yang Jiechi, the Chinese Foreign Minister had demonstrated and displayed China's rock bed to withstand surging global financial crisis and its cascading aftermath in the presence of 45 heads of states/governments at the 7th Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM) in Beijing, the Chinese State Council announced a stimulus package of 4 trillion Yuan (US \$ 585.5 billion) to ward off the wolf of recession as the USA Congress had done in announcing US \$ 700 million bail out. Fifteen European Union (EU) member countries and several other important actors in the world economic scene have followed suit in their own ways, as their economies continued to shrink through the third quarter without likelihood of a check during the fourth quarter.

Phenomenon of recession is not something new for the world. It is concomitant to business/trade cycles in a capitalist system.² Due to forces of globalisation and inter-dependence of the world economies, the recessionary pressure of one country and/ or group of countries tend to breed recession in another country and/ or group of countries. The bust as such can seldom be avoided unless boom is done away with. The capitalist system does not have to be apologetic as it is reminiscent in its objective laws. There is issue just with the socialist system, which got into being as an anti-thesis to this.³ It is still much more in the case of the PRC, which swears by socialism while lives on long despised capitalist road. The appendage "socialist" to "market economy" in specific context of "socialism with Chinese characteristics" serves little intent and purpose except being a cloak.

In this paper, there is an attempt to bring out how best and to what extent the Chinese stimulus package could at long last pull out the Chinese economy from the quagmire of recession much less stop further slide into depression. In its perspective, the paper would shed light on the fact whether the Chinese strides in economic development had reached a stage whereby it was capable of decoupling from the push and pull factors of the global economy. The framework of the study, accordingly, examines: the Spell and Severity; Convulsion and its Inter Sector Spread; the Stimulus Package and its Outreach; and, in finality, the Outlook of Fight Back. The discussions, in the bargain, will throw light on the relative weight of the Chinese economy to square over the losses to consumer confidence. The study will rely basically on open source information to testify various constructs of the study.

Spell and Severity

In the first three quarters of the year 2008, the growth rate of China's gross domestic product (GDP) has been lower by 2.3 percentage point over the same period last year. In absolute terms, it stood at 20.163 trillion Yuan (US \$ 2.96 trillion). It included 2.18 trillion Yuan generated by the primary industry, 10.11 trillion Yuan by the secondary industry, and 07.87 trillion by the tertiary industry. While the primary sector clocked 0.2 higher percentage points, the secondary and tertiary industries were down by 3.0 and 2.4 percentage points respectively. While acknowledging the

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Emerging China as a Strategic and Economic Super Power

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Introduction

China's double-digit increase in defence spending over the last 15 years has raised hackles across the world on at least two concerns. First, is the force modernisation and second, the objectives of its military strategy. This is particularly true in the context of an external environment in which older conflicts still fester while a new set of challenges emerge almost every five years.

The international environment has become unstable since the watershed events of the 1990s; many major and rising states in Asia have been reviewing their strategic choices. The extent and scope of China's military modernisation has become a critical factor in the choices these states will make. China is proceeding rapidly in projecting its military capabilities to 'major' levels by 2020, to engage with its adversaries.¹

China is being heralded as the next biggest emerging economy of the world followed by India. Witness the stunning economic growth, massive modernisation programmes and the rising standard of living in the cities of China.

Military Modernisation

Since 1978 the big story from China has been its economic growth and the defence modernisation. Focussed military modernisation, the fourth and the last of Deng Xiaoping's four modernisations, took a back seat to economic concerns while China's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was sustained at an average growth rate of 9-11 per cent per annum. China has viewed the military modernisation of science and technology, of agriculture and industry, and the assumption that it is primarily the national economic strength that translates itself into greater influence in world affairs.²

China's strategies changed after the major Cold War confrontations broke down, as the world was emerging in a period of peace and stability with conventional notions of large scale land based world war unlikely in the near future. China therefore evolved a new security concept of downsizing military until 1980s. However, the United States emerged as the world hegemon which made the Chinese to carry out strategic analysis that led to nation's comprehensive national power.³ Military modernisation assumed a new significance, especially given the lessons to be learnt from the revolution in military affairs (RMA) in evidence during the first Gulf War.

Chinese Military Strategy

By mid-1990s the People's Liberation Army (PLA) had changed its national defence strategy from Deng's people's war under modern conditions to 'regional limited war under high-tech conditions.⁴ More recently, the national defence strategy mentions fighting future wars under 'conditions of information' involving the development of a military equipped with advanced technology, enabling to fight an adversary beyond its borders. Its five defence White Papers since 1998, have given the world a glimpse of its military planning and the context of its military modernisation.

Three events have prompted changes in China's military: the end of the Cold War, the rise of the US as the sole superpower and the PLA's

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Tackling Terror and Our Response Mechanism

Lieutenant General Chandra Shekhar, PVSM, AVSM (Retd)*

‘I say to you that no war is ever won through terrorism. It’s that simple. Because (if you employ terrorism,) you earn the opposition, hatred and rejection of those whom you need in order to win the war’.

Fidel Castro, My Life

Introduction

Despite the truth of the above statement, the number of terrorist attacks in the World today increase every day. We in India, particularly face the brunt of such violent attacks, the most recent being the tragic Assam bomb attacks which have left hundreds dead, injured or bereaved. India is a complex society with diverse cultures, religions, ethnic groups and economic levels. This is our strength. Unfortunately, however, the multifaceted nature of our Nation has also been our bane. The reasons are many. There are many groups within our Country who feel wronged, marginalised or exploited. Thus, we have ongoing terrorism in large areas-right from Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) in the North to some of the States in the Northeast, to large swathes of the tribal belts of Andhra Pradesh (AP), Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and Orissa. We also have Islamic fundamentalist groups supported by the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) and Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami (HuJI) carrying out terrorist attacks all over the Country.

It was because of uneven economic growth levels of the ethnic groups and diverse cultures, that Article 370 for J&K and the Sixth Schedule for the North east States was introduced, so that special provisions were provided for these areas. No outsiders were allowed to settle there. Special quotas, additional autonomy and rights were granted. The aim was to prevent exploitation of the region and its people from outside these areas. Ironically and regrettably, these have only heightened the divisions, rather than improving harmony. This is true both in J&K and the North east States. Religious fundamentalist groups have further exploited the diversities and differences, while bad politics, inept administration and a weak bureaucracy have not done enough to improve the lot of the people.

The only way to counter the terrorist threats in each of these regions, is to evolve specific ways of governance and development, based on their specific social, cultural and ecological needs. However, broadly, the issues involved may be divided into three categories: Terrorism in J&K, Situation in the North east States and Internal challenges of 'Naxalism' and Islamic fundamentalism.

Fighting Terrorism in J&K

The separatist movement in J&K has caused us the greatest concern so far. The situation has resulted due to a series of historical blunders in the past, compounded by electoral politics of the State, corrupt administration and active Pakistani support for cross-border terrorism. Article 370, though well intentioned, has not facilitated the integration of the 'Valley' with the rest of the Country. A consistently unfathomable political and administrative volte-face and lack of strategic thought, has allowed Pakistan to retain POK despite battlefield gains by the Indian Armed Forces in 1948, 1965 and 1971. In more recent times, the mishandling of the Amarnath Shrine Board episode by the State and the Centre has undone all the work of last two decades. The sanctity of the National institutions stands low and has to be restored and strengthened.

What has caused this situation and how can we rectify it? The causes may be summarised as:-

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National Security - Nationalism :We Cannot Reverse History - But Prepare To Maintain Freedom

Lieutenant General ML Tuli, PVSM (Retd)

“Leaders of the Society should have the moral strength to proclaim truth fearlessly”

Rig Veda

Introduction

Peace and harmony have been sought by humanity ever since the dawn of civilization.¹ And yet the whole of human history, from the very earliest times is replete with wars and violent conflicts from the tribal rights upto the international level. Indians, however, tend to believe that conflict is unnatural, that peoples from all nations are basically alike, that differences are product of misunderstanding and that permanent peace is a reachable goal. For ages the Indian psyche has been geared to devoting ones life to the welfare of all, ‘Sarva Bhute, Hite Raha’. It has also been focussed not on individual self but on the entire globe, ‘Vasudheva Kutumbakam’ was always the objective. History disapproves each of these propositions. As mentioned, the causes of the conflict have been many and varied. Some wars have resulted from the ambition of individuals or groups to dominate society, others from an attempt to fight injustice and tyranny, and there have also been wars of national liberation, freedom and religion. All religions preach peace, but in fact it has been one of the major source of violent conflict down through the centuries and remains so even today. Science was supposed to establish peace but it has created deadly weapons of mass destruction. Only when the countries have accepted the existence of conflict and sought to manage it have enduring periods of general peace resulted.

Unfortunately, we Indians lack confidence to revisit our history with a degree of candour. Although we can not reverse history, we must examine our past in order to prepare for the future. Availability of facts will lead to informed debate and a great consciousness. History can be used to create trauma or to apply creative ideas from the past; ‘forewarned is forearmed’. We have suffered heavily in the past because we were disunited. The concept of nation state was non existent in earlier feudal times when loyalty of the masses was extended to their king and not to the country. When we study a large number of battles that we lost, it is possible to discern the recurrence of three main shortcomings which contributed to our misfortunes. In the technology of the contemporary weapon system, we invariably lagged behind the invading armies. For example, for centuries we relied on slow and unwieldy elephants against the more nimble and versatile horses which were used to advantage by the invaders. With the advent of gunpowder, we were also slow to catch up with the latest advances, the same weakness continues to date in the manufacture of modern weapon systems. And, finally a lack of aggressive spirit, planning ahead to meet the danger, coupled with treacherous defections remained the root cause of misfortunes that befell the Country.

Military History

Let us examine the chronicle, of our Indo-Islamic past and the British conquest and post Independence conflicts, which is filled with the debris of the tides of war.² India was lost first to Arab followers of the Muslim faith in 712 AD, then to the Afghans in 1206 AD, then to the Mughals in 1526 AD.

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**Twelfth Colonel Pyara Lal
Memorial Lecture
Regional Security Dynamics and
their Impact on India***

**Lieutenant General VR Raghavan, PVSM,
UYSM, AVSM (Retd)****

It's good to see so many of my friends here. I acknowledge and salute the presence of many elders and seniors from whom I have learnt over the years, and whose careers have been the role models for my generation of military leaders. Thanks for being here, each one of you. I take your presence here as acknowledgement of Colonel Pyara Lal's great contribution far more than of any special skills that I might have.

I remember Colonel Pyara Lal when I was a junior officer. Whenever I was in Army Headquarters, and the USI was in a very old part of Kashmir House; always warm, very leaky in monsoons, where the books had to be covered in tarpaulins and plastics with limited staff. Yet it was the place where one could find the book or reference one needed, due to the care Colonel Pyara Lal took of the library's efficient management. My generation owed him a great debt because he encouraged us, personally took interest in our work, and guided us on how to work on research issues. It is an advice I share with many young officers today. Every time one gets posted to Army headquarters or in Delhi, use the USI's facilities to widen one's military knowledge base. I ask them to choose the subject of interest and specialise in it, go deeper into it, write about it, talk about it because that will give them a unique speciality. It would also become a window to another career when they retire. As General Nambiar said, we are grateful to Colonel Pyara Lal in providing leadership to this fantastic organisation for so many years, and bequeathing to us the legacy of USI's traditions.

The title of my talk is, "Regional Security Dynamics". The phrase dynamics is from engineering which refers to powers that force a change. Let me start by saying that the word 'region' itself has undergone a change of interpretation. Regions during the Cold War, were determined in terms of the Cold War geopolitics. They were products of super power perceptions of how the World was divided during that period. In the post Cold War era and in a globalised World, the regions are seen through new prisms. Consequently new geographical and strategy related linkages have emerged which make regions into a dynamic - powers that force change - with evolving interpretations. They are being redefined, rephrased, re-titled and regrouped. Remarkably, this is happening more as a result of the market forces than geo-political drivers. When one sees the investment by Japan in China, by China in the United States, the trading and security relations in the ASEAN Region and role of the Asian tigers, the growth of India itself; we find that regions mean different things in different contexts. What was called South Asia, our foreign office now calls Southern Asia. It makes good sense to look at the South Asian region as extending from Afghanistan through Central Asia to the Malacca Straits. Thus there is a change in the dynamics. I feel this title would have pleased Colonel Pyara Lal because he was the one who always encouraged us "to look beyond the immediate, to beyond what is obvious."

There is an extended Southern Asian Region in which India figures prominently. It is also a region which connects almost seamlessly with the rest of Asia and Middle East. In the globalised World, regions are not sui generis and by themselves as they were during the Cold War. They are now interdependent and closely linked. One can't say that one region is in itself an entity. This is because it has close linkages with others: Africa with Southern Asia, Europe with the Middle East, India's own emphasis on ASEAN, its tremendous interests in the Shanghai Cooperative Organisation (SCO) are indicative of the overarching linkages of regions.

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Izzat : Historical Records and Iconography of Indian Cavalry Regiments 1750-2007

Squadron Leader Rana TS Chhina (Retd)*

The 17th of December 2008 marked the culmination of a long period of sustained research activity and intensive support of an important research project that had been undertaken under the aegis of the Maharana Pratap Chair of the United Service Institution Centre for Armed Forces Historical Research (USI CAFHR). The subject of research was the iconography of Indian cavalry regiments in the armies of India from circa 1750 to present times, including Pakistan. Such a catalogue of insignia and accoutrements covering so wide a time-span and so many regiments has never before been attempted anywhere in the world. Furthermore, since the evolution of regimental iconography is incomplete without its historical context, the lineage, battle honours, ethnic composition, highest awards won, as well as the highlights from the respective regimental histories were included in the study and are published in this magnum opus compiled by Captain Ashok Nath (Retd), MA, FRGS. The handsomely produced book, which has been printed to international standards and published by the CAFHR, was released by a senior and distinguished cavalry officer, General VN Sharma, PVSM, AVSM, who retired as the Chief of the Army Staff in 1990.

Captain Ashok Nath was educated at St Stephen's College, Delhi and at the University of Stockholm in Sweden where he studied anthropology and history. He served as an officer in the Indian Army (73 Armoured Regiment) and left India for Europe in 1978. Elected fellow of the Royal Geographical Society for his study of the habitat of the snow leopard in Zanskar, he has travelled extensively in the regions of high Asia, and has been an organiser and a guest lecturer for the Military Historical Society study tours to India, Pakistan, Nepal and Burma. He is currently working on regimental identities, ethnicity, caste and 'martial race' in the Indian and Pakistan armies at the University of Stockholm. This is his first book, with others to follow on the iconography and history of the Indian Army's infantry, arms and services. Conflict history, habitat and ethnography of South Asia remain a major interest and his writings have appeared in various international journals and newspapers.

All professional armies look upon the regimental badge as an icon, worthy of respect and honour (Izzat) - a time-honoured word, understood by all ranks of the Indian Army and therefore also an appropriate title for this book.

There had long been a need for such a work especially since the Indian Army with its rich history lacked a study of its regimental badges. Although a detailed listing of all the regiments that have existed in the armies of India has been earlier compiled by Chris Kempton, a comprehensive catalogue of regimental iconography was till now absent from Indian Army historiography. In the case of the cavalry, over 300 different Indian cavalry units have been identified, several of them previously unknown. Some survive to the present times, but many have faded away. Thus, to cover a period of nearly three centuries was a formidable challenge, which the author has met with aplomb and produced a seminal work which will serve as a point of reference for historians for all times to come.

While the author had been collecting material and data on the subject for many years previously, the seeds of the project were sown following the visit to Sweden by Lieutenant General Satish Nambiar, PVSM, AVSM, VrC, (Retd), Director of the USI. He is also an adviser to the Folke Bernadotte Academy in Sweden and it was on one of his visits there that he suggested that the author could do his Svalo project on the Cavalry regiments.

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