USI Strategic Year Book

2019

United Service Institution of India

Strategic Year Book
2019

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(Established 1870)

United Service Institution of India

New Delhi

Vij Books India Pvt Ltd

New Delhi (India)

United Service Institution of India

Strategic Year Book 2019

Published in 2019

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Design and layout by

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Foreword

It gives the USI team immense pleasure to bring to the readers the issue of the Strategic Year Book 2019. The USI of India plays a stellar role by generating informed policy debates inter alia on India's national security and military thought. Publication of the 'Strategic Year Book' is a key endeavour to articulate India's national interests and the tenets of national security strategy, iterating the ends, ways and means. India is at the cusp of its strategic destiny in a globalised world. The country is witnessing tangible comprehensive national development, proactive diplomacy and enhanced deterrence capability. It has demonstrated strong national resolve to protect its territorial integrity and core interests. The South Asian States / Indian Ocean littorals acknowledge India's leadership and expect it to be potential net security provider in the region. Likewise, the world at large recognises India's pivotal role in the balance of power in the Indo – Pacific region and as a major vector in an evolving polycentric world order. However, India is beset with vexed internal security challenges and a formidable Pakistan-China Strategic Nexus. These challenges, if remained unaddressed, will continue to sap India's vitality and stem its raise as a 'Leading Power'. Further, the evolving geopolitical environment is characterised by Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity (VUCA), arising from contestation between major powers and intractable nature of intra and inter - state conflicts in the 'Grey Zones'. How should India navigate in such a turbulent strategic environment merits a serious thought. To this end, it is imperative to clearly articulate India's core interests, undertake a 360 degree horizon scan, examine its impact on core interests and formulate a comprehensive national security strategy to steer India's strategic destiny. Concurrently, we must undertake policy cum structural reforms and lay added focus in the capacity building, particularly in the domain of defence and security. In the information age, as part of strategic communication and public diplomacy, most developed countries publish literature to convey their nuanced intents, policies, strategies and postures on national security issues. Conversely, India continues to eschew publication of cogent literature on these matters. Time has come for India's National Command Authority (NCA) to holistically examine its policy choices, strategic direction and focus on the capacity building.

The issues of Strategic Year Books published in 2016, 2017 and 2018 have been widely appreciated by our readers in India and abroad. The articles in the Strategic Year Book 2019 focus on the tenets of India's national security strategy, resolution of internal security conflicts, response to Pakistan – China strategic nexus, geopolitical developments in the strategic neighbourhood and thrust areas for national capacity building. I am sanguine that this publication will provide vital inputs for a strategic dialogue and preparation of India's national security policy framework.

Jai Hind

New Delhi
15 Mar 2019

Lt Gen PK Singh, PVSM, AVSM (Retd)
Director, USI

The Year Book 2019 – At a Glance

India is a rich civilizational state and ipso facto a strong exponent of the ancient philosophy of Vasudhavia Kutumbakam (world as one family); a belief that posits the universality of globalisation, much before its recognition by the modern world. The Indian constitution echoes India's civilizational values; pluralism, secularism, syncretism, democracy and peaceful co-existence. Modern India aspires to be a socially cohesive, militarily powerful, culturally vibrant, at the forefront of science & technology, pragmatic & influential in international relations, confident and satisfied society in pursuit of dignified peace & tranquillity in a multipolar world. There is a growing recognition that as an emerging 'Leading Power', India must invest in all elements of Comprehensive National Power (CNP); Hard Power, Soft Power, Coordinated Power and Dispersed Power and configure this CNP to realise its expanding core interests and to achieve a favourable strategic posture in an ever-evolving Balance of Power. The evolving geopolitical scenarios present India with a host of challenges and opportunities.

India's diversity lends itself to a multitude of fault-lines, which are manifest in simmering internal conflicts in the North East, J&K and the tribal belt, besides menace of anti-social forces. Added to these are various transnational asymmetric and non-kinetic threats, posed by terrorism, crime syndicates and disruptive technologies. However, the most formidable strategic and security challenge beset by India is that of Pakistan – China strategic nexus. Also, India's strategic neighbourhood is in ferment due to internal instability that casts its perennial shadow on the bilateral relations. China's strategic forays in South Asia and in the India Ocean are profoundly impacting the strategic balance in India's traditional sphere of influence. Afghanistan is mired in critical uncertainties due to zero – sum power play, possible U.S. exit and ascendency of Pakistan and its Taliban proxies. These geopolitical developments, coupled with complicated relations between the U.S. and Iran profoundly affect India's Afghanistan and Central Asia strategy. Likewise, instability in West Asia has consequences for India's energy security and safety of its diaspora. India's multi - vector engagement with Great Powers bears strain due to antagonistic relationship between U.S. on one side and Russia and China on the other. It is therefore, incumbent for the Middle Level Powers to play an important role as balancers to prevent emergence of another hegemonic word order, instead of a desired polycentric one. As an emerging power, India is expected to play an important role as a strategic balancer. India must work with a missionary zeal to develop CNP and leverage it to transform India into a preeminent South Asian and Indian Ocean Region (IOR) power, a major Asian power and an important international stakeholder. It is therefore axiomatic for the Indian policymakers to constantly review national interests and craft a sound strategy that informs India's inclusive transformation in the arenas of national development, diplomacy and security.

To this end, the Strategic Year Books 2016, 2017 and 2018 published earlier, contain a spectrum of perspectives on India's national interest, strategic challenges and opportunities and measures for transforming India into a 'Leading Power'. The editorial team is happy to present our august readers the Strategic Year Book 2019, laid out in five sections viz, National Security Overview, Internal Security Environment, Pakistan-China Strategic Challenge, India's Strategic Neighbourhood and National Security Capacity Building.

Section I: National Security Overview. This section starts with views of **Shri Shivshankar Menon (Retd)**, on the topic **"Security Strategies for India as an Emerging Regional Power with Global Ambitions"**. He emphasises on the need to accord top priority to secure India's integrity, citizens, values and assets, and to enable the development and transformation of India into a strong, prosperous and a modern nation, where every Indian can achieve his or her full potential. He articulates national security tasks and elucidates how these are impacted by internal and external strategic environment. He offers pragmatic guidelines for enhancing India's comprehensive development and security. **Admiral Arun Prakash (Retd)** writes, on the topic **"India's National Security Objectives: Challenges and Opportunities"**. The author points out that despite India's substantial investment in defence, it is perceived as an under-performer, as far as the upholding of its vital national security interests is concerned. Among other issues, he underpins civil-military dissonance and India's failure to attain self-reliance in defence equipment as India's critical vulnerabilities.

Section II: Internal Security Environment. **Prof David Devadas** writes on **"Kinetic Successes in Kashmir, Leave Vast Well of Public Anger Unaddressed"**. He dwells upon Pakistan's inimical designs, China's strategic interests in the state and youth rage in Kashmir. He pointedly brings out how political expediency and inconsistency has exacerbated Kashmir imbroglio. He identifies key areas and enunciates a broad approach for peace and reconciliation in the state. Another region of concern in the North East is Manipur. **Lt Gen (Dr) KH Singh (Retd)**, in his article **"Assessment of Insurgency in Manipur and Recommendations for Conflict Resolution"**, writes that ethnic strife dominate the security paradigm in the state and underscores the need for engagement with all ethnicities and militant groups. He reiterates good governance as the main medium through which alienation and aspirations of the people should be addressed. **Shri Jitesh Khosla (Retd)** writes on the topic **"Illegal Implementation, Update of National Register of Citizens in Assam and its Security Implications"**. The author, having dealt with the issue at the very apex level, authoritatively provides the background, various facets and stages of the process and its current status. He highlights the challenges, internal and external, associated with the implementation of National Register of Citizen's (NCR). He concludes his article by flagging hybrid nature of security threats emanating from the ensuing issue. Emergence of Crypto currency is a major challenge to the established financial system. **Col Satish Chandra Tyagi (Retd)**, in his article **"Emergence of Crypto Currency and its Impact on India's Financial Security"**, discusses emergence of Crypto currency and the threat it poses to the extant financial system, since it defies the established regulatory systems keeping the transactions totally hidden. Besides creating a major flux in the global financial system, the Crypto currencies can be misused for terror funding and other international crimes. He stresses the need to generate awareness at all levels about the magnitude of challenge and mitigation efforts, it warrants.

Section III: Pakistan-China Strategic Challenge. This section begins with the article written by **Maj Gen BK Sharma (Retd)**, on **"Evolving Geopolitical Developments in China: Implications for India"**. The article is based on the writer's observation and interaction during his recent visit to Chengdu and Tibet. He comments on the unravelling of 'China Dream', internal dynamics of China, and developments in Tibet and implications for India. Chinese look at the geopolitical issues purely from the prism of their core interests and they seem to have hazy understanding of India's core interests and concerns. India needs to bridge this gap through both credible deterrence and deft diplomacy. **Maj Gen (Dr) GG Dwivedi (Retd)** writes on **"Doctrinal Shift: Decoding China's Way of War Fighting"**. The article contains the genesis and evolution of China's military doctrinal thought since the creation of People's Republic of China (PRC). It offers a crisp analysis of China's White Papers and lists out salient features of China's contemporary war fighting techniques. The writer succinctly covers the salient aspects of China's military modernisation and force restructuring. He emphasises the need for India to give a high impetus to develop a credible military deterrence against China. China is facing internal security challenges, especially in Tibet and Xinjiang.

Maj Gen SB Asthana (Retd), in his article **"Decoding Chinese Strategy of Combating Three Evils"**, analyses the challenges of terrorism, separatism and extremism, beset by China in Xinjiang and Tibet and along the CPEC in Pakistan. The writer provides a good insight into China's strategy to combat the 'Three Evils'. China's strategic forays in the Indian Ocean are well known. *Rear Adm SY Shrikhande (Retd)*, in his article **"From Zheng He to 'Gung- Ho': Implications and Responses to China's Indian Ocean Region Strategies"**, depicts the salience of IOR in China's strategic calculus, and analyses its impact on the balance of power, particularly for India. This essay examines the differences between peace and conflict in the maritime context and suggests a range of strategic options for India to balance China. Pakistan due to its chronic animosity for India will continue to be our bête noire. *Shri Tilak Devasher*, in his article **"Unravelling Naya Pakistan: Implications for India"**, carries out a critical examination of the idea of 'Naya Pakistan' articulated by its Prime Minister Imran Khan. He carries out a reality check of expectations it aroused by the PTI government. The author believes it would be difficult for Imran Khan to achieve stated goals or attempt to reset anti India policy in the short or medium term.

Section IV: India's Strategic Neighbourhood. *Prof SD Muni* writes on the topic **"India's Neighbourhood First Initiative: Hits, Misses and the Way Ahead"**. The author dilates the tenants of India's, "Neighbourhood First Policy", which has inspired new hope and optimism in the neighbouring states, after a phase of hiatus by the UPA government. He details major achievements in re-invigorating bilateral and multilateral initiatives steered by India. At the same time, he points out major shortcomings in the implementation of 'New Policy', arising from India's tardy response to complex geo-political developments in Maldives, Sri Lanka and Nepal. He brings out the nuances of India's China challenge in South Asia and offers a multitude of pragmatic guidelines for making Indian neighbourhood policy more efficacious. Central Asia is part of India's extended neighbourhood. *Prof Nirmala Joshi*, evaluates in her article **"An Appraisal of India's Connect Central Asia Policy and Need for Recalibration"**, examines the efficacy of India's Connect Central Asia Policy (CCAP), on the touchstone of emerging geopolitical imperatives rooted in 'Great Power Competition' in the region. She suggests a slew of measures to provide traction to CCAP in sync with India's 'Look North Policy'; developing Central Asia–South Asia connectivity, and investments in the infrastructure development and economic projects. The writer underscores the importance of India-Iran-Afghanistan Trilateral Agreement and Indo-Russia alignment in the balance of Eurasian power. Iran is a strategic gateway to Afghanistan, Central Asia and West Asia. Chabahar – Zaranj – Delaram corridor and INSTC pass through Iran. *Shri Sanjay Singh (Retd)*, in his article **"India-Iran: Way Forward after the U.S. Sanctions"**, lucidly discusses the nuances of India-Iran relations, its ups /downs and convergences/divergences. He objectively analyses the dynamics of bilateral relations, the impact of U.S. economic sanctions and Pakistan, China factor on the Indo-Iran relations. Maldives has witnessed tumultuous political developments in the recent past that have impacted Indo-Maldives relations. *Maj Gen RPS Bhadauria (Retd)* in his piece **"Reengaging with India's Neighbour — Maldives"** examines the evolving geopolitical scenario from the Indian perspective and cogently brings out how India should avail the new window of opportunity to reset and consolidate its relations with Maldives. Japan and India enjoy profound convergence of strategic interests in the Indo-Pacific region. *Cdr Subhasish Sarangi*, in his article *"India-Japan Strategic Convergence"*, discusses the political, economic and security dimensions of India–Japan strategic engagement, bilaterally and in a multilateral framework. He points out the sticking points in the bilateral relations and suggests measures to optimisation of ensuing strategic engagement. One of the major foreign policy challenges for India is how to navigate its relations with the contesting major powers. *Shri Asoke Kumar Mukerji (Retd)*, writes on **"India's Engagement with the Great Powers: Emerging Paradigms"**. The author articulates Indian perspective on the concept of integrated Asian space and flags India's convergences and divergences with the major powers. He cogently argues how India should leverage its engagement with these nations' to become a Leading Power in a resurgent Asia.

Section V: National Security Capacity Building. The key to India's rise and recognition as a Leading Power lies in comprehensive capacity building. Considering the formidable nature of collusive hybrid threats, India cannot afford to remain inert in developing a credible deterrence capability. **Maj Gen Rajiv Narayanan (Retd)** writes on "**Developments in India's National Security Architecture and Way Ahead**". He examines the efficacy of cosmetic changes in India's National Security Architecture. He brings out how China is configuring its CNP for creating a China-Centric Asian order. He underscores the inadequacies in the existing security framework and pitches for urgent policy and strategic reforms. **Lt Gen NS Ghei (Retd)**, writes on "**India's Strategic Culture and Use of Force in Furtherance of National Interests**". He examines the evolution of India's strategic thought and experience in the use of force since independence. He debunks the notion that India lacks strategic culture and that India is averse to use of force, when needed. He suggests measures for developing better understanding of strategic culture and nuances of use of force in furtherance of national interests. In comparison to China, India's infrastructure along its Northern Borders is abysmally inadequate. **Lt Gen AK Sahni (Retd)**, in his article "**A Review of Infrastructure Development in India's Northern Borders**" updates on the state infrastructure projects; which have been recently completed and the ones which are under construction. He analyses the strategic implications of infrastructure deficit on the psyche of border population and on operational preparedness. He suggests measures for fostering integration and synergy between various agencies and stakeholders to fast-track infrastructure development. Our adversaries have well – honed intelligence set ups. **Lt Gen GS Katoch (Retd)**, in his article "**Optimizing India's Military through Transformation: Intelligence Driven Effectiveness in the Changing Security Environment**", clearly co-relates optimisation and transformation in a conceptual context. The writer outlines the nuances of global, regional and domestic security environment and the nature of war India is confronted with. He emphasises the importance of intelligence as a driver of transformation and recommends approach to enhance India's capacity in this domain. **Air Cmde (Dr) AS Bahal (Retd)**, in his article "**Towards Enhancing India's Aerospace Capability**", offers a critical analysis of Aerospace balance of the Indian Air Force (IAF), vis a vis the People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) and Pakistan Air Force (PAF). He clearly identifies the asymmetries and competitive edges of IAF vis a vis its adversaries. He suggests a pragmatic road map for building IAF from the present juncture till 2040. Indo-Pacific has emerged as the centre of gravity of global power shift. For India it is a strategic imperative to develop a credible maritime power. **Vice Adm Satish Soni (Retd),** in his article "**Transformation of India as a Maritime Power**", discusses the dynamics of geopolitics in the IOR. He argues in favour of crafting an Indian Ocean maritime strategy, where India can play a dominant role. Two nuclear adversaries surround India; hence, India developing a credible nuclear deterrence is a sine qua non for India. **Lt Gen (Dr) VK Saxena (Retd),** writes on the topic "**Agni I to VI – Not Just a Number Game**". He maps the evolution of India's missile programme and depicts hope and optimism that India has the capability to deter its nuclear rivals effectively. Nuclear domain is witnessing the emergence of niche and disruptive technologies. The next article "**Emerging Niche Technologies in the Nuclear Domain**" written by **Dr Roshan Khanijo** highlights the use of niche technologies like Hypersonic Glide Vehicles (HGVs), Swarm Technology, Under Water Drones, Directed-Energy Weapons (DEW) and Artificial Intelligence (AI). The author also opines that India should imbibe, develop and deploy these technologies to enhance its war fighting capabilities. One of the core areas for achieving self–reliance is the indigenisation of defence industry. The article "**Indigenisation of Defence Manufacturing in India: Participation of Private Sector**", written by **Lt Gen Subrata Saha (Retd),** highlights that the high defence import continues to be a matter of critical concern, both from security and economic perspective. For 'Make in India' initiative to succeed, there is a need to create an enabling environment for participation of the private sector. Specialists must manage the acquisition structures, and the Services need to create their own cadre of technology leaders, who understand military requirements and technology. Police reforms and modernisation in India is moving at a snail's pace. **Shri JN Choudhury (Retd),** in his article

"Reforming the Police: A Necessary Condition for Robust National Security", provides a deep insight into the evolving internal security challenges and contemporary developments in the counter terrorism and policing. He brings out inadequacies in the policing system and recommends a slew of measures for reforming police and judicial criminal system. He advocates police-community partnership to mitigate deficit police-population ratio and for effective border management. Information operations play a crucial role in creating a powerful narrative to counter terrorist ideology, narratives and modus operandi. **Lt Gen Syed Ata Hasnain (Retd),** in his article **"Information Strategy for India: A Conceptual Approach"** explains the importance of information operations in the hybrid conflicts. He brings out how Pakistan has effectively executed information operations to radicalise population in the Kashmir Valley and to motivate the susceptible youth to join Jihad. He laments on the lack of proper vision, policy strategy and organisational structures for planning and conduct of information campaign. The article cogently spells out the aim, scope, structures and modus operandi for undertaking information operation, in the Indian context. The terrorists in their reign of terror are effectively using disruptive technologies, as are the developing countries in counter terrorism operations. **Brig Narender Kumar (Retd),** writes on **"Use of Technology to Counter Modern Terrorism."** The author explains how terrorist networks are using niche disruptive technologies for kinetic and non-kinetic terrorist strikes with a devastating effect. The writer cautions that the traditional approach to combat terrorism is becoming ineffective by every passing day. He recommends a way–forward for use of technology in counter terrorism campaign. Integration and synergy in the instruments of national power is vital for crafting and implementing policies and strategies. Regrettably, the ailing civil – military relations has become a major impediment in India gaining its optimum potential as a recognisable power. **Lt Gen Prakash Menon (Retd),** in his article **"Mending India's Civil Military Relations"**, highlights that the extant state of civil-military relations is in need of considerable improvement. Military's internalised narrative of victimisation is the dominant factor effecting morale. He opines that several important reforms remain resistant to bureaucratic inertia and turf battles. Political leadership have to first recognise the need for reform and thereafter, take responsibility for sustained monitoring and implementation. A key trigger for a constant dialogue between civil and military leadership is the appointment of Chief of Defence Staff (CDS). The nub of the problem is the under-utilisation of existing institutional mechanisms for a perpetual civil-military dialogue that serves to improve military's usefulness.

The editorial team is grateful to the eminent writers for contributing valuable articles for the Year Book 2019. We hope that our readers will find the contents useful in gaining an insight into the contemporary strategic issues that impact India's national security. We are sanguine that policymakers too will find useful inputs to enrich their assessments and refine policy framework. We are keenly looking forward to your valued reviews, feedback and contribution for improving future editions of the USI Year Book.

Jai Hind

New Delhi
15 Mar 2019

Maj Gen BK Sharma, AVSM, SM & Bar (Retd)
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Section I

National Security Overview

Security Strategies for India as an Emerging Regional Power with Global Ambitions

Shri Shivshankar Menon, IFS (Retd)@

Abstract

The article derives from a talk given by Shri Shivshankar Menon, IFS (Retd), at the USI of India. Shri Menon states that India's Strategy since independence is the transformation of India. India's security strategy has to ensure that the environment remains conducive for this overarching goal. To do this task, India must accumulate hard power. Being a great power will follow, not precede, our success in building a strong, prosperous and modern India. India's goal is sufficient security, not absolute security because absolute security for any one state in the system would mean absolute insecurity for all the other states. The article explains reactive and proactive strategies. The security strategy of British India was based on buffer states like Afghanistan, Tibet, Myanmar which were lost at independence. This made the British strategy impossible for the new government to follow. India could no longer rely on the Royal Navy for its maritime security. India fought four major wars in the first twenty-three years of its existence which shaped its national strategy. India regarded the Himalayas as an impenetrable defensive barrier. Today, the Himalayas are not an impenetrable defensive wall. India's major trading partners are all outside the region, which accounts for less than 15 percent of our non-oil trade. Our area of primary economic interest is, therefore, much wider than our geopolitical reach. The new geopolitical scenario is caused primarily by the rise of China. The hierarchy of security tasks that results in order of importance are maintaining the Integrity of India, our Internal Security, meeting external challenges from China and Pakistan and lastly countering Transnational Threats. The real transnational threats now are from the militarisation of outer space, from the hostile use of cyber space, and from renewed proliferation risks and not terrorism. In the field of internal security the increase in communal violence and polarisation, and its concentration in certain north Indian states, is worrying. The other rising form of violence is social violence in the form of rapes, violent crime and the side effects of rapid urbanisation. To some extent, it is the consequence of development that fuels Left Wing Extremism (LWE). This is something that traditional policing and the Indian state is not equipped to handle. The article recommends that India's suggested response should be to maintain strategic autonomy. Fear of the future which portends an unstoppable China, leads some to suggest an alliance with the USA. We should retain the initiative with ourselves and not get entangled in other's quarrels, keep our powder dry and ourselves free to pursue India's national interest. The article recommends that India should engage China bilaterally while carrying out external balancing by working with other powers. Lastly, the article states that in the realm of 'National Security Structures' we need to reform our policing since the biggest security concern today is from within. We need to introduce flexibility in our thinking and our structures. For change is the only certainty in life.

National Goal

Any strategy must have a purpose or a goal, the clearer it is the better it is. India's Strategy is clear and will remain so for quite some time—it is the transformation of India. At the time of independence, there could be no doubt about what the national goal or aim should be. The abject condition of India in 1947 left us with no choice but to make the transformation of India into a strong, prosperous and modern country the overriding national goal. In 1947, after partition displaced about 10 million people, life expectancy was 26 years, literacy 14 percent (8

percent among women), and disease, hunger and poverty were rampant. India had seen less than 1 percent economic growth since 1900 to the extent that we were unable to feed ourselves. The Bengal famine of 1943 and 200 years of Empire Raj had reduced one of the most prosperous and advanced societies in the world to one of the most miserable and backward. Because of this, at Independence, the goal of transforming India naturally took priority over all other possible goals. Goals of status, recovering lost territories, organising our neighbourhood, and so on were only means to an end, and were to be pursued only in so far as they helped us to transform India. There have always been differences among us on how to get there. But the goal of transforming India has been agreed across the political spectrum and is what all governments since independence have worked for.

As national security professionals our task is to protect and secure India's integrity, citizens, values and assets, and to enable the development and transformation of India into a strong, prosperous and a modern nation where every Indian can achieve his or her full potential. To do this task, India must accumulate hard power if it has to have a say in the international system. We accumulate hard power not because we seek domination or hegemony or because it makes us feel good. We do so only so that we can transform the lives of our people. That is the sole purpose of the acquisition of hard power. India is unique in several respects, and no other power shares our interests. In fact, the established power holders in the international system resent the rise of new powers and resist it, covertly and overtly. If we seek a say in the running of the international system, and a larger international role, it is for the purpose of transforming India. Some in India think that this is too defensive a goal, that we should make it clear that we wish to be a great power or a super power. However, being a great power will follow, not precede, our success in building a strong, prosperous and modern India. The USSR which attempted otherwise saw its defence spending consuming its economy, leading to its disintegration.

> **We accumulate hard power not because we seek domination or hegemony or because it makes us feel good. We do so only so that we can transform the lives of our people.**

All rising powers in history have chosen to keep their head down while building their own strength, rather than inviting resistance to their rise to great power status by proclaiming their power. Those that followed the path of flaunting their ambition and their growing power too early, like Wilhelmine Germany and Imperial Japan, were frustrated in their rise and paid a heavy price. Sparta prevailed militarily over Athens at the cost of her own destruction, leaving Persia the real winner of the Peloponnesian war. The Soviet Union, Japan, Germany and Pakistan are all 20th century examples of what happens to powers that overreach and proclaim grandiose ambitions. China so far had bided its time. Let us see whether China's rising assertiveness will be 21st century example of this phenomenon.

Please note that this task does not limit our security calculus to the territory of India. Also, that it excludes ideas such as exporting democracy, protecting the ideological frontiers of India, creating global public goods, seeking status, seeking revenge, undoing partition, and other such pursuits, unless they contribute to the security of India's citizens and assets and to India's development and transformation.

Our goal is sufficient security, not absolute security. And the reason why it should be so is because absolute security for any one state in the system would mean absolute insecurity for all the other states. By this criteria, with a few exceptions, we have actually managed to provide India with sufficient security to enable her to change and grow faster after independence than ever before in her long history.

Strategy

A strategy is a plan of action designed to achieve one's long-term or overall aims. In other words, it provides for the achievement of one's goals using the means available within the given situation. It is thus largely a means and ends problem. Setting the goal is a political function that a state, society or nation undertakes through political and social mechanisms.

What strategy you adopt depends not just on the goal or where you want to reach but, on the means, available and the situation that you are in. A reactive strategy is one where you list threats and respond only when they become acute or hit you; this is the strategy of the small and the weak and of those without capacity and vision. Alternatively, a proactive strategy, with a vision and some power, helps to shape the environment. This is a state that we have achieved after 70 years of independence. We can consider this as a much more reactive strategy that we have achieved. In having a reactive strategy no matter how powerful you are, you need to set up a hierarchy of tasks which enable you to measure the tasks against your goal of the transformation of India.

Our Inheritance

The Raj always gave priority to imperial interests over India's and based its defence of India on defence in depth. This was based upon what Mortimer Durand, then Foreign Secretary wrote in 1875, that Curzon later adopted, and the former governor of the NWFP and last Foreign Secretary of British India, Olaf Caroe, called–the glacis or Himalayan fringe. These three sought to build a ring of buffer states or neutral zones running from the Persian Gulf through Iran, Afghanistan, Tibet, and Burma, which was later replaced by Siam. In this effort, they met with mixed success at different times in Afghanistan and Iran. Britain fought wars to ensure that the states and statelets in this zone were neutral and not available to Britain's rivals through the Great Game and, as a last resort, war. Within the outer ring of buffers, was another zone where British influence predominated and no other power was allowed to enter, but British Indian law and administration did not apply. In this zone, the presence of Indian forces was avoided, as far as possible, until Curzon pushed them forward in the west. In the west, Indian law and administration applied up to the Indus, from the Indus to the Durand Line tribal law applied except within 500 yards of the main highways and the tribal chiefs kept the peace in return for British subsidies. A similar distinction was maintained between boundaries in the east which were, however, left much more fluid since there was no threat from a decrepit China in British eyes comparable to that from the Russian empire.

> **A reactive strategy is one where you list threats and respond only when they become acute or hit you; this is the strategy of the small and the weak and of those without capacity and vision.**

At independence, India faced a new strategic situation that, our inheritance from the Raj did not prepare us well for. Externally it was not an easy situation. In 1947 India lost the security provided by the Royal Navy and Empire. We could not be followers of Curzon, Durand and Caroe in pursuing grand strategy without the resources or interests of the British Empire. We had been partitioned, saddled with refugees, had a hostile neighbour to our West with whom we were forced to fight from day one and had a number of large princely States to be integrated within the subcontinent. China occupied Tibet in 1950 and we had a border with them for the first time. Before that we had a boundary settled by custom, usage and treaty with Tibet. We lost all the buffers that the British Indian Empire had: Afghanistan, Tibet, Myanmar, this made the earlier British strategy impossible for the new government to follow. Lastly, we could no longer rely on the Royal Navy for our maritime security. For almost two centuries the British Indian government had left the sea to London, while Calcutta and Delhi worried about the land borders. The result was a severe case of sea-blindness in the new Indian republic and its leaders, which we have only recently started to overcome. Logically, once our land frontiers were closed with two difficult neighbours like Pakistan and China, it was the sea, the much cheaper domain for transport but which is much more expensive militarily, that we should have turned to.

Independent India

Independent India fought four major wars in the first twenty-three years of our existence. This shaped its national strategy. There are, of course, basic drivers of national strategy such as geography and history and economic endowment, that remain true no matter how your capabilities or the situation around you change. But the effect they have on policy varies over time.

On the other hand geography, history and economic endowment have made us a trading and manufacturing nation. We have been most prosperous and successful when most connected to the world because we are people-rich even if resource poor. Today, 80 percent of our imports are essential maintenance imports of energy, crude oil, fertiliser, non-ferrous metals and even lentils like moong dal. In history, we have been an exporter of ideas and people, and have been a net provider of knowledge and security– in the Indian Ocean area and across land borders to our west.

There are changes in how we see our interests as a result of technology and changed situations, the best example are the Himalayas. For most of history, we had no border with China, only with Tibet, and regarded the Himalayas as an impenetrable defensive barrier protecting us. Today, with the Chinese in Tibet and with modern technology, the Himalayas are not an impenetrable barrier or defensive wall, and it is essential that we have visibility across the mountains to know what is happening in Tibet. Our definition of our interest, in this case, has evolved considerably. Equally, we often speak, as Curzon used to, of India's interests from Suez to Malacca. But today, our major trading partners are all outside this region, which accounts for less than 15 percent of our non-oil trade. Our area of primary economic interest is, therefore, much wider than our geopolitical reach. Our well-being is affected much more by global factors than is reflected in our political-military thinking. In other words, though geography is unalterable, and history is a man-made construct, neither can be taken for granted as having the same effect on our calculation of national interest or on the strategy that we should follow.

National Security Tasks

Since free India couldn't follow the strategy of the Raj, what should determine our strategy? As stated in the beginning, our goal is the transformation of India; it is according to that task that we should prioritise and concentrate on issues and problems — on the basis of how they will affect our ability to transform India into a modern, prosperous and secure country where every citizen has the opportunity to achieve his or her full potential. The overriding goal of transforming India enables us to prioritise among our many opportunities and challenges according to their effect on India's integrity and their ability to affect the transformation of India.

> **With the Chinese in Tibet and with modern technology, the Himalayas are not an impenetrable barrier or defensive wall, and it is essential that we have visibility across the mountains to know what is happening in Tibet.**

The Hierarchy of Security Tasks. The hierarchy of security tasks that results from this calculus of seeing what matters in terms of our transformation in order of importance are:

The Integrity of India

This is primarily physical integrity and territorial integrity, but it is also in terms of defending India's other attributes and values and its sovereignty. This is a primary and permanent interest.

Internal Security

This is critical to the wellbeing of our people and, therefore ranks above everything else and next only to the integrity of the nation. It is also critical to our ability to deal with our external security. Unlike the fifties and sixties, we face no external existential threat as a nation. Deterrence, nuclear and conventional, has by and large operated since the seventies, and when it failed — as in 1999 in Kargil — it has rapidly been restored. The last large-scale conventional war we fought was forty-six years ago in 1971. The risk of war is not what it was. The balance of power in our immediate neighbourhood is better than it was. Nor is there a serious separatist threat within India that we cannot prevail upon.

If there is an existential threat to India it is from within. It is our internal polarisation and divisions — LWE, communal violence and polarisation. These are our own nation-building failures. There is social violence as a consequence of extremely rapid and unequal development and rootlessness following rapid urbanisation, which could threaten the existence of India as we know it, and which today contributes to the average citizen's heightened sense of insecurity.

Deaths from terrorism and separatist violence have declined steadily for a decade and a half, but since 2012 deaths from communal violence have risen. The crime statistics for social violence and crimes against the person such as rape, are also worrying and increasing. Our real threats are internal—polarisation and alienation.

The problem of social violence and fracturing, alienation etc as a result of urbanisation is not peculiar to us in India though it is most rapid and dislocating in India and China. This is a global issue. Of the 560,000 violent deaths around the world in 2016, 68 percent were murders, wars caused just 18 percent deaths. Today 70 percent of humanity lives within 200 miles of the coast, and of the 43 megacities (over 10 million population) only 3 are outside what used to be called the Third World. By 2025, 75 percent of the world's population will live in cities. In India, by then more than half our population will live in cities. Socially, we will be an aspirational and young population, cut off from traditional family and social structures, alienated and alone, ready for new ideologies, good or bad. The political effects of urbanisation are even more marked. Politics becomes an exercise in mob psychology and mobilisation, abetted by the mass and social media which converts politics into politics of emotion. This is an environment where social violence, polarisation and the militarisation of policing are likely, and where traditional policing is ineffective. Today we see social violence on the rise across the globe, enabled by the new technologies and the easy availability of traditional weapons. The state has lost its monopoly of violence.

In India, since the beginning of this century, all indices of violence have actually declined except—and this is important, communal violence and social violence or crimes against the person, which have increased since 2012. This is already visible, and not just in India. However, for us the scale of the problem is more complicated.

> **The political effects of urbanisation are even more marked. Politics becomes an exercise in mob psychology and mobilisation, abetted by the mass and social media which converts politics into politics of emotion.**

External Challenges – China and Pakistan

China's rise is the foremost challenge which could derail our quest for transforming the lives of Indians. But it is also an opportunity, as is the return of classical geopolitics and the post-2008 fragmentation of the globalised world economy after the end of the world's unipolar moment. It is in our interest to create, to the extent possible, an external environment that enables the transformation of India. Pakistan is a strategic distraction and we will talk about it later.

Transnational Threats

This has become important, particularly in the public mind, as Pakistan has sought to compensate for her internal decline by attacking India and making herself useful to outside patrons — a nuclear bomb for Saudi Arabia; checking India and providing access to the Indian Ocean and influence in Afghanistan for China; a strategic toehold and the tactical promise of a clean exit from Afghanistan to the U.S., and so on. But the fact is that Pakistan and the cross-border terrorism she sponsors could derail our quest only if we allow them to. That is why I say that Pakistan is only a strategic distraction. Sadly, though India's responses to terrorism have improved, terrorism itself has enjoyed a global resurgence — in West Asia, Pakistan and Afghanistan and North Africa. In Afghanistan, Pakistan has got the U.S., Russia and China to buy into the idea that the Taliban should be accommodated in the government, and that Pakistan can deliver that outcome. And we now see terrorism spreading in South East Asia as well, from among the Rohingya in Myanmar through Malaysia and Indonesia to the Philippines. The dangers of contagion and radicalisation in India are increasing, though its effect will depend on what we do internally.

The threats mentioned earlier are those that we can manage but the real transnational threats now come not so much from terrorism but from the militarisation of outer space, from the hostile use of Cyberspace, and from renewed proliferation risks.

Enablers and Necessities

These are things without which we cannot transform India. These are challenges which would affect our quest unless handled properly. They include energy security and building the technological and industrial sinews necessary for India to be strong and prosperous. They also include non-ferrous metals, access to markets and the other things we depend on the world for, because of our resource endowment.

Over half of our GDP is due to the external sector, from the import and export of goods and services. In 1991 when we began radical reform and opened up to the world, external merchandise trade (import and export of goods) was about 15.3 percent of India's GDP and most of it went West. By 2014 it was 49.3 percent of GDP and most of it flowed East of India. When you add Services, more than half our GDP depends on our dealings with the rest of the world. This has changed and expanded the definition of India's interests. Clearly, freedom of navigation in the South China Sea became an Indian interest of some importance once our trade began increasingly flowing East through those waters. During the same period, China, for strategic and commercial reasons, in 1996 informed the UN that the nine-dash-line was her boundary in the South China Sea and after 2008 began describing it as a "core interest". In other words, as both our countries grew, our interests evolved, and we began to rub up against each other in the periphery that we share. The larger point is that as we have developed, our interests have grown, we are more dependent on the rest of the world than ever before, and, therefore, our definition of our own security has grown. This requires an adjustment in our thinking, and in our strategy.

> These are challenges which would affect our quest unless handled properly. They include energy security and building the technological and industrial sinews necessary for India to be strong and prosperous. They also include non-ferrous metals, access to markets and the other things we depend on the world for, because of our resource endowment.

The New Geopolitical Scenario

We are today in a new geopolitical situation, caused primarily by the rise of China, India and other powers—Indonesia, South Korea, Iran, Vietnam—in a crowded Asia-Pacific which is the new economic and political centre of gravity of the world. Rapid shifts in the balance of power in the region have led to the arms race that we see around us, and to rising uncertainty, now also fuelled by the unpredictability, disengagement and transactional "America first-ism" of Trump. China-U.S. strategic contention is growing, uninhibited so far by their economic co-dependence. The shift in the balance of power is clearest in global GDP shares.

Share of Global GDP (PPP)

	1980	2016
Advanced countries	64 percent	42 percent
Europe	30 percent	16.7 percent
China	2.3 percent	17.8 percent
India	3 percent	7.24 percent

By 2014 India and China together accounted for about half of Asia's total GDP. In PPP GDP terms they are the world's largest and third largest economies. Most of this, of course, is accounted for by China. China and India's combined share of world GDP in 2016, of 17.67 percent (in nominal terms) or even 25.86 percent (in PPP terms) is still well below their share of the world population of 37.5 percent, but represents a significant economic force. How the overall location of economic activity has shifted is apparent in the fact that of the world's total nominal GDP of $

74.1 trillion, Asia accounts for 33.84 percent, North America for 27.95 percent and Europe for 21.37 percent. America's share has remained roughly constant since the seventies, and it is Europe's that has dropped sharply, in favour of Asia. In essence, as a result of globalisation, the balance of power has shifted. The world is multipolar economically, still unipolar in military terms, but confused politically.

Transformation in International System and Impact on Indian Security

We are living in a time when there is a deep sense of strategic confusion, not just in India but in some of the most powerful states in the world. In our case, that confusion extends not just to the ultimate goal the national security apparatus should pursue, but also to the best means to achieve them. We seem to mistake controlling the narrative with creating outcomes, which is the real task of foreign and security policy.

Looking at the world as a whole from the end of the Cold War in 1989 for some years until 2010; war seemed to be going away. Interstate warfare disappeared for a while and civil wars were at a lower level. Since 2010 war is back, and armed conflict is increasing steadily in the world as a whole. The number of wars, the number of battle deaths, the number of terrorist incidents, and the number of people displaced by violence, are all getting worse. In 2014, for the first time since the end of the Cold War, global annual battle deaths topped 100,000, a level below which it seldom fell during the Cold War, with spikes above 200,000 for extended periods. In the same year, 2014, the worldwide total of refugees and internally displaced persons topped 50 million, a number not seen since the close of WWII and the Chinese civil war in the forties. In 2015 it touched 65 million people! In the same period, terrorism has reached unprecedented levels in the Middle East, Africa and the West. The global number of terrorist attacks, and the number of casualties almost tripled between 2010 and early 2016.

> **We are now in a far more dangerous world, where the Westphalian state has collapsed or vanished to our immediate West, but where traditional great power rivalry between strong and rising states is the norm to our East.**

We are now in a far more dangerous world, where the Westphalian state has collapsed or vanished to our immediate West, but where traditional great power rivalry between strong and rising states is the norm to our East. This is evident in the return of Asia-Pacific to centre stage in global politics and economics, the international system's limited ability to accommodate change (when established powers like the U.S., Europe and Russia are losing self-confidence), and the return of classical geopolitics in terms of territorial and maritime disputes, political instability, and contention in the maritime domain in the South China Sea and the East China Sea. China is successfully building a continental order, consolidating the Eurasian landmass with Russia's help, through pipelines, roads, railways, fibre optic cables and so on, using her One-Belt-One-Road/BRI project as a strategic Marshal Plan across the continent. She is also contending for supremacy in her near seas with the existing maritime order led by the U.S. and has succeeded to the extent of converting the South China Sea into the South China Lake.

China is reforming the PLA into an instrument of force projection, an expeditionary force modelled on the U.S. armed forces. She has also modernised her nuclear and ICBM forces into a more capable second-strike force and developed MRBM and cruise missile capabilities and systems that are altering the regional military balance, even with the USA. The latest round of PLA reforms, of the military commands and regions, of the role of the Political Commissars, and the functional and other military changes show a determination to change the PLA in fundamental ways into an instrument for power projection and to fight short, intense, high-technology wars in "informationalised" conditions, outside China's own territory and immediate periphery, further developing PLA missile, maritime and air capability. The five new theatre commands are modelled on the U.S. pattern and bring an unprecedented degree of jointness into the PLA. As China seeks primacy in a world so far dominated by the U.S., we are in the midst of a destabilising power transition which may or may not be completed. The immediate prospect, therefore, is for a low-growth world which is more driven by inter-state and intra-state conflict and violence. In other words, we are in an increasingly dangerous

world, which is fragmenting and slowing down economically, while India's adversaries — state or non-state, or both, as in Pakistan's case— are becoming increasingly powerful.

Internal Security Concerns

If the external world is getting more unpredictable and uncertain, the internal security challenge is also evolving. The increase in communal violence and polarisation, and its concentration in certain North Indian states, is worrying. The other rising form of violence is social violence, mostly against the person, in the form of rapes, violent crime and other side effects of rapid urbanisation, the breakdown of the sense of community and family, and the rootlessness of the displaced and marginalised, whether for economic reasons like work, or as a consequence of other phenomena. It is this marginalisation, to some extent the consequence of development, that feeds the Naxalites with their foot soldiers and makes LWE such a difficult phenomenon to eradicate. This is something that traditional policing and the Indian state is not equipped to handle, mitigate or solve.

It is a cause of worry that while the world around India has changed in fundamental ways, we are still doing what was good for us some years ago, and may be frittering our energies away on the status and prestige goals rather than our hard interests. In other words, we have not adjusted our policies to the new realities.

India's Suggested Response

What should India's response be to the new emerging situation?

> The increase in communal violence and polarisation, and its concentration in certain North Indian states, is worrying. The other rising form of violence is social violence.

Strategic Autonomy. Fear of the future which portends an unstoppable China, leads some to suggest an alliance with the USA. In my view, the best response is the pursuit of strategic autonomy. This has been the common thread running through the foreign and security policies of successive governments of India until the present one. In practice it has meant keeping decision-making power with ourselves, avoiding alliances, and building our capabilities while working with others when it was in India's interest to do so. Alliance seems to me to be exactly the wrong answer. We should retain the initiative with ourselves and not get entangled in other's quarrels, keep our powder dry and ourselves free to pursue India's national interest. This is a world that calls for creative diplomacy and flexibility, adjusting to the fast-changing balance of power and correlation of forces around us. The sources of instability are in our immediate vicinity: in fragile and extremist-ridden West Asia, and in East Asia where a rising China is increasingly assertive in the pursuit of her expanding definition of her interests; in Pakistan and her internal demons. No alliance will solve these to our satisfaction. The U.S. has her own and different stakes in China, Pakistan and West Asia.

Now is the time for us to stick to the verities that have enabled us to come so far, and to make progress in the last seventy years despite huge power asymmetries against us. Now is the time to build our own strength, enlarge strategic autonomy, and work with all those whom we can work within the international system. That appears to be the best way forward. Why do I think that strategic autonomy is the best way forward for us? Doklam is only the most recent example that shows that no one else is ready to deal with our greatest strategic challenge, China. We saw the tepid reaction of the rest of the world. To expect anything else is unreasonable. They do not share our interest in the integrity or the rise of India. No other country shares our precise set of interests for the simple reason that no other country shares our history, geography, size, culture and identity, and our domestic condition, all of which determine what we seek from the international system. What we seek is an external environment that supports the transformation of India, that enables us to build a modern, prosperous and secure country, eliminating poverty, illiteracy, disease and the other curses of underdevelopment from the lives of our people. That is our core interest.

Because that core interest is permanent, strategic autonomy has served our interest best despite changes in the international situation. During the Cold War, when the world was divided into two hostile camps, it obviously served our interest not to be dragged into external entanglements decided on by an ally or alliance. When the bipolar world ended with the collapse of the Soviet Union we entered two decades of globalisation, of an open international trading and investment climate. Once again it was in our interest to pursue a multi-directional foreign policy, working with all the major powers in the pursuit of India's transformation. The results of the pursuit of strategic autonomy speak for themselves: Over thirty years of 6 percent GDP growth and a much more secure and capable India, which has pulled more of its citizenry out of poverty and grown faster than it ever did in history. Only one other country, China, can claim a better record in the recent past in terms of improving the quality of life of its people and in rapid economic growth. As a result of that period of accelerated growth and change, India is today much more integrated into the world than when she began. By every metric of power, in the last thirty years, India has improved her position *vis a vis* every country in the world except China. Strategic autonomy has served us well in much more difficult circumstances soon after independence when we lacked many of the capabilities that we now take for granted.

Building and Strengthening National Capabilities.   It is essential that we presently concentrate our effort on strengthening ourselves, consolidating our periphery and on external balancing. Building our own capacity in every aspect of hard and soft power is essential. We have made some strides in building national power and in internal consolidation in the last seventy years. It is China that is our main strategic challenge, because she sees our rise as affecting her quest for primacy, first in the region, then in the world. If we are to meet this challenge, it is essential that we build our capacity in more than conventional defence. Wars are not won by equipment alone but by men and ideas too. We need an all-azimuth definition of security to guide our effort. This means military reform and changes in the defence industry and higher defence management. This includes keeping up with the relevant technologies, as we did with nuclear weapons despite the pressures, we were subject to. For the future, it includes scientific advances in communications, surveillance and other areas, like the use of photons. We need to prepare for the coming economic revolution caused by digital manufacturing, artificial intelligence and other developments.

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Domestic Cohesion.   We have gained experience in tackling and handling terrorism and separatism. Deaths by these two causes have been declining in India for a decade and a half. But deaths from communal violence are rising since 2012, as are social violence and crimes against the person. The more divided we are, the worse the condition of our people, the less able we are to cope with our internal and external security tasks. We need to reform our internal security structures and management methods, starting with police reforms.

Periphery Consolidation.   If we are to enjoy peace at home to develop, we need to consolidate our periphery and ensure that it cannot be used against us. This is not the first time that we see outside powers in the Indian subcontinent. Today every major power except China defers to your preferences in the Indian subcontinent, and your means to cope with the situation have grown exponentially. We should learn to use them.

India – Pakistan Relations.   Pakistan is not a strategic threat to India unless we hand them victory by making it possible for Pakistan to exploit religious fissures in our society. India has done best in the years when Pakistan was most active making trouble in Punjab, J&K and elsewhere. Our Pakistan problem now is in large part a China problem, because it is China that enhances Pakistan's capabilities, keeping her one step behind us at each stage of her nuclear progress, building up her defences and committing to her long-term future in the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

India – China Relations.   India should engage China bilaterally to see whether we can evolve a new modus vivendi, to replace the one that was formalised in the 1988 during Rajiv Gandhi's visit which successfully kept the peace and gave the relationship a strategic framework for almost thirty years. In essence that provided for: negotiations on the boundary question while preserving the status quo on the boundary; not allowing bilateral differences like the boundary to prevent bilateral functional cooperation; and, cooperating where possible in the international arena. In practice, each stayed out of the other's way internationally while concentrating on internal development and growth. That framework is no longer working and the signs of stress in the relationship are everywhere from our Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) membership application, to Masood Azhar's listing by the UN, to Doklam. The more we rise, the more we must expect Chinese opposition and we will have to also work with other powers, and in the subcontinent to ensure that our interests are protected in the neighbourhood, the region and the world. The balance will keep shifting between cooperation and competition with China, both of which characterise that relationship. The important thing is the need to rapidly accumulate usable and effective power, even while the macro balance will take time to stabilise. As stated earlier a large part of our trade flow is also going through the South China Sea. This makes freedom of navigation in the South China Sea a significant interest for India. As a consequence, India's stakes in the peace and stability of the area have grown. India, therefore, works with partners in the region like Singapore, Japan, Vietnam and others in new ways extending to defence and security issues. Like maritime security even issues like cyber security have emerged. These impact on India-China relations and need to be taken into account.

> India should engage China bilaterally to see whether we can evolve a new modus vivendi, to replace the one that was formalised in the 1988 during Rajiv Gandhi's visit which successfully kept the peace and gave the relationship a strategic framework for almost thirty years.

Besides, the international context in which the relationship developed has also changed. Before the 2008 crisis, the main economic issues on the multilateral negotiating agenda were North-South issues in the Doha Round, and international trade and investment flows were supportive of India and China's development. It was relatively easy and natural for India and China to work together on those North-South issues, to work up a common front. The same was true of climate change negotiations where India and China worked with the basic group to preserve the advances of the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). After 2008, however, the world economy fragmented, with each major economy attempting to preserve its own growth and prevent contagion. With the post-2008 rise of protectionism and China's rise to become a great manufacturing and trading power in the world, the issues were now of opening up domestic markets to each other in negotiations like Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), or trade facilitation, and were no longer developmental in nature. Energy security issues came to the fore in the climate change negotiations with far less flexibility displayed by the industrialised countries, and a middle-income and highly industrialised China's interests were now more aligned with those of the U.S. and Europe.

In other words, both the global and regional context had become more challenging for India-China relations. Regionally, China-U.S. strategic contention has intensified and presents other Asia-Pacific states with a choice between the two that they do not wish to make. The contested commons and security risks in the maritime, cyber and other domains further complicate the calculus.

As a result of successful domestic reform and development, the outside world is now a much greater factor and matters much more for both India and China, and will affect their future directly. They will, therefore, both seek to shape that external environment to a much greater degree than before. And since they both share the same periphery, they need to come to an understanding of how they will prevent their activism in their immediate periphery causing friction in their bilateral relationship.

To these changes in the balance of power and emergence of new factors that require a recalibration of India-China relations should be added the trajectory of domestic politics in both countries. The emergence of leaders who rely on

a heightened sense of nationalism for their legitimacy, who present themselves as strong leaders, represents both an opportunity and a danger. As strong and decisive leaders they could take the decisions required to deal with difficult issues in the relationship. At the same time, reliance on nationalism limits their ability to compromise and be flexible, or to counter the negative narrative that is emerging in both countries on the relationship.

The one factor above all others that has brought renewed stress into the India-China relationship is China's much stronger strategic commitment to Pakistan evident since President Xi Jinping's 2015 visit to Pakistan which announced the CPEC.

This calculus of interests suggests that India-China relations are more complex than simple narratives suggest, and indeed that there is room here for both sides to seek a new strategic framework or modus vivendi for the relationship. This would require a high-level strategic dialogue between the two sides about their core interests, red lines, differences and areas of convergence.

External Balancing. We must simultaneously work with other powers to ensure that our region stays multi-polar and that China behaves responsibly. Some of this began as part of the "Look East", now "Act East", policy begun by PM PV Narasimha Rao in 1992, and we are working more closely in defence, intelligence and security with Japan, Vietnam, Singapore, Indonesia, Australia and others.

> A free and open Indo-Pacific is a noble goal, but it will not be achieved so long as we do not recognise the different geographies, security issues and solutions in the Indian Ocean, the seas near China and the Western Pacific.

There has been a lot of talk of the Indo-Pacific recently. Freedom of navigation and security in the Indo-Pacific is critical to India's wellbeing and future prosperity. But it is not the answer to our continental security issues, of which there are many, and which are not shared by any of the other members of the Quad. A free and open Indo-Pacific is a noble goal, but it will not be achieved so long as we do not recognise the different geographies, security issues and solutions in the Indian Ocean, the seas near China and the Western Pacific. The Western Pacific is dominated by the U.S. Navy. The seas near China are being converted into a Chinese lake, and are the only maritime theatre where China can hope for a favourable balance of power in the near term. The seas near China are enclosed seas, and have, therefore, been battle spaces in history, since powers can hope to control them and what flows through them. The Indian Ocean, on the other hand, has an open geography, and has, therefore, always been a trading highway rather than a battle space. Even at its height, pax Brittanica never managed to control all the choke points around the Indian Ocean. The security solutions and architecture for each of these bodies of water has, therefore, to be different and designed specifically taking into account the conditions of that sea.

National Security Structures

While the external security organs of the state have evolved considerably in the life of the republic, this is not equally true of the internal security organs. Our biggest security concern today is from within. India has shown an ability to learn and adapt to our external security threats. We have yet to show the same ability for our internal security threats, to modernise policing, for instance, to cope with the results of rapid urbanisation and social churn. This requires us to reform our policing, a road map for which the Supreme Court gave us in 1996 but which the states have not implemented.

No strategy can work without it being seen as an integrated whole, without a driving vision, clarity of goals and being matched to the means available and the situation. And that holistic view and the coordination of the various parts of the national effort is why we set up the National Security Council in 1998. National Security Council (NSC) and National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS). now twenty years old. We have enough experience to give it a statutory basis and to formalise its working.

Are our structures effective?

Yes, they have been so far. We have built up nuclear deterrence faster than any other nuclear weapon state did; deterred large scale conventional war since 1971. Our national security structures and actions have provided sufficient security and kept the peace for India's best ever period of economic growth and social change in history, namely, the last thirty years.

Are we ready for future challenges?

We are better than before at handling conventional threats, including terrorism. But technology is changing the nature of the threats, as are the changes in India. the new technologies, like Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Artificial Intelligence (AI) etc, empower both the state and small groups and individuals, irrespective of their motivation, good or bad. This has far-reaching consequences and we must stay abreast of the technologies and work out our own counter-measures.

Conclusion

Tactically, China-U.S. contention — which I think is structural and, therefore, likely to continue for some time with a paradigm shift away from cooperation to increasing contention, despite temporary deals and "victories" declared by one or both. This opens up opportunities and space for other powers. Both China and the U.S. will look to put other conflicts and tensions on the back burner while they deal with their primary concern, the other. We have seen this effect already in the Wuhan meeting and the apparent truce and reducing of rhetoric by both India and China, even though this does not extend to a new strategic framework or understanding or to a settlement of outstanding issues.

> **Our definition of security has grown to include several non-traditional aspects, most of which are now included in "human security". Our expectations of the state and of the world are much higher than they ever were.**

Strategically speaking, again, there is opportunity for India's transformation. Despite dim prospects for the global economy as a whole, the UN forecasts that if China grows at 3 percent, India at 4 percent and the U.S. at 1.5 percent, by 2050 China's per capita income would be 40 percent of U.S. levels, and India's at 26 percent, where China is now. China would be the world's largest economy (in PPP terms), India the second, and the US the third. By that time both China and India will be overwhelmingly urban societies.

Of course, history, like life, is not a linear extrapolation from the past. But given the recent record of India growing at near 7 percent for over 30 years and China at around 10 percent for the same period, the lower estimates suggested by the UN appear a reasonable guess. Both India and China have much the same ratio of trade to GDP, show hesitation in wholeheartedly embracing the private sector, display widening income inequality and distribution failures, and show limited state capacity, particularly in health and education. But rapid growth has given them the means and access to technologies to deal with these problems, if they can manage rising geopolitical risk and avoid costly entanglements abroad.

Seventy years after independence we are better placed and have capabilities that we never had before. And yet, if you were to ask the average Indian, they would tell you that they feel more insecure than before or than previous generations. And that has a good reason. Our definition of security has grown to include several non-traditional aspects, most of which are now included in "human security". Our expectations of the state and of the world are much higher than they ever were. And this is so at a time when the world itself is much more uncertain than it ever has been since WWII — politically, economically, and in terms of the pace of change in technology and life-styles.

The other reason why Indians do not feel as secure as we did is less well recognised and something of a paradox.

As a result of seventy years of development, by most metrics of power India has improved her relative position *vis a vis* every other country except China. This is particularly true since reforms began in 1991. And yet, today India is more dependent on the outside world than ever before. We rely on the world for energy, technology, essential goods like fertiliser and coal, commodities, access to markets, and capital. Consequently, we cannot think of securing India without considering energy security, food security, and other issues that can derail our quest to transform India, such as climate change and cyber security. We also cannot think of securing India without trying to shape the external environment along with our partners. When you add the new security agenda and the contested global commons in outer and cyber space and the high seas, to our traditional state-centred security concerns such as claims on our territory, nuclear proliferation, state-sponsored cross-border terrorism, etc., you can see why there is greater worry or a sense of insecurity.

As for India, we risk missing the bus to becoming a developed country if we continue business and politics as usual, or try to imitate China's experience in the last forty years, do not adapt, and do not manage our internal social and political churn better. We need fundamental reform of our internal security apparatus and military reform if we are to manage this singular world. Ultimately what should guide us as national security professionals is the quest to make India a great power with a difference, namely, in a way which enables us to achieve Gandhiji's dream of 'wiping the tear from the eye of every Indian'. That would be in keeping with our core values, national interest and is the right objective.

Avoiding war and attaining one's goals is the highest form of strategy by any tradition or book — whether Kautilya, Sun Tzu or Machiavelli. And if you look at India's record over sixty-eight years of independence, we have not done badly in moving towards our main goal of transforming India. That requires the national security calculus to consider broader questions — from technology issues, like atomic energy and cyber security, to resource issues like energy security, while building the strength to deal with traditional hard security issues. We have weathered several storms and performed our basic functions in the past. But it is certain that what will face us now will

> We rely on the world for energy, technology, essential goods like fertiliser and coal, commodities, access to markets, and capital. Consequently, we cannot think of securing India without considering energy security, food security, and other issues that can derail our quest to transform India, such as climate change and cyber security.

not be more of the same. Which brings me to the last and most important improvement that I think we need to make in our national security structures and their work — introducing flexibility into our thinking and our structures. For change is the only certainty in life.

Certain other points highlighted by the author were

➢ We may not have a written National Security Strategy, but our beliefs constitute our strategic culture. Based upon these our strategic behaviour has by and large been consistent regardless of who is in power in the Central government.

➢ Our demography dividend can only be realised if we continue growing. We cannot grow if we cut ourselves off from the world.

➢ Education is critical to growth as also making sure that all sections of our society are beneficiaries.

➢ Pakistan will continue to make herself useful to her patrons - China and the USA which will help her to face us.

➢ What happens between China and the USA is a crucial variable which is important for our security situation.

➢ It is not that we cannot work with China. Since the 1980s China and India who are the world's largest and second largest importers of fertilizer have coordinated when they go to market to pick up their stocks, lest going in an uncoordinated manner creates a scarcity and drives up prices.

➢ 34 percent of India's trade goes through the South China Sea, hence freedom of navigation in this sea is important for India.

➢ The U.S.-China tariff war is also a consequence of realisation by the U.S. that China is its peer competitor, and the window to prevent the rise of this peer competitor is closing. Since World War II, U.S. core strategic interest has been to prevent the rise of a peer competitor. How far the U.S. big business which draws a very sizable part of its profits from trade with China, will go with sanctions remains to be seen.

➢ In case we are asked to choose to go with either USA or China, we should go with neither. We should maintain our strategic autonomy.

➢ We need to have hard power, and for that our defence budget needs to be more than what it is presently. At the moment our deterrence is showing signs of being frayed.

➢ In some way or the other everyone in India is a minority, that is why we are a democracy. Democracy gives inclusiveness and that is what gives us cohesion.

➢ Military reforms must be related to the current situation and not to the past.

➢ Almost 90 percent of the Naresh Chandra Committee and Subramanium committee reports were implemented. But these were the minor recommendations. The major recommendation, in particular for a CDS was not implemented. One reason for this is resistance from within the Services themselves.

➢ The National Security Advisor (NSA) is essentially an advisor, however; of our five NSAs some have maintained the view that unless you can implement what you advise, then you are of no use. All NSAs tried to do the job in their own image. The experience from USA has generally been that when NSAs (like Kissinger) tried to implement their advise directly themselves, the results were not good.

➢ Ideally senior serving military officers should be in the NSC, however; not only in the Armed forces but also in the IAS there is a particular career progression route which gets upset when a rising officer goes off his core field. We must institute a system whereby the career interest of senior officers can be safeguarded in the NSC stream.

➢ We need specialist security professionals and not generalists.

This is edited version of the 34th National Security Lecture delivered at the USI on 05 December 2018 by Shri Shivshankar Menon, IFS (Retd).

India's National Security Objectives: Challenges and Opportunities

Admiral Arun Prakash, PVSM, AVSM, VrC, VSM (Retd)[@]

Abstract

Despite its substantial investment in defence, and the acquisition of many visible manifestations of military capability, India is perceived as an 'under-performer', as far as the upholding of its vital national security interests is concerned. Given the extent of security threats, both external as well as internal and some of them endemic– the author attributes India's inability to address them effectively, to egregious political indifference towards national security issues. The proposition that the roots of this neglect lie in India's unique 'strategic culture', is sought to be empirically substantiated through a brief survey of India's post-independence history. Amongst the more serious shortcomings that impede the attainment of India's national security objectives, the article points at the prevailing civil-military dissonance and India's failure to attain self-reliance in production of weapon systems, which have resulted in dependence on foreign sources. Flagging a set of security challenges, which demand a strategic thought-process, it is pointed out that, their resolution would also represent huge opportunities for India. Having acknowledged existing shortcomings, India's leadership must visualise how vital national interests may be protected and promoted. The author suggests that such a process of policy-making is best initiated by formulating and articulating a National Security Strategy (NSS).

Cost-EffectiveDefence?

Given its size, demography, economy and military strength, India has huge potential to be a force, for stability and an upholder of the rules-based international order. Culturally rich, India is committed to democratic institutions, the rule of law and is in the front rank in the fight against terrorism. India's claim to membership of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) having received widespread support, the time seems ripe for India to take its rightful place on the world-stage.

And yet, there is a view that India 'punches below its weight'. A nuclear weapon state with conventional forces that count amongst the largest in the world, India's defence budget for Financial Year (FY) 2018-19 was 63 billion USD, with additional amounts being spent on the nuclear triad and on other secret projects and organisations[1]. The Home Ministry, too, maintains over a million strong Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) for border-guarding and internal security tasks. All found, the Government of India (GoI) possibly spends over 100 billion USD on national security, annually, and the Indian taxpayer is often left wondering whether this huge expenditure is effectively providing him safety and security.

There are reasons for such apprehensions. It is clear that India has been unable to leverage its significant national power, to deter or dissuade others from undertaking actions inimical to its interests. There is a palpable lack of will to pursue a coherent security policy, and India's rulers have shown little interest in grand strategy. For years, India tended to relish the international applause that it received for 'strategic restraint' in the face of grave provocations like the 2008

Mumbai terror episode. The September 2016 retaliatory cross-border raids into Pakistan marked a welcome policy shift that would have conveyed appropriate signals of national resolve and retribution. Regrettably, the exploitation of these raids for political gains trivialised them and diluted their deterrent value.

Security Threats

Currently, the issues that demand the nation's resources and urgent attention are; socio-economic development, health, education and job-creation for a burgeoning youth-population. And yet, the one lesson we should have learnt during India's 71 years as a sovereign nation, is that security shortcomings, both internal and external, have led to repeated conflicts and crises that have served to distract attention and divert resources from the pursuit of development. Therefore, India cannot treat 'guns' and 'butter' as mutually exclusive – it needs both.

Seven decades after independence, India's deep internal instabilities persist. Apart from continuing insurgencies in the North East and spiralling unrest in Kashmir, we now have a cross-border threat to Punjab's peace and harmony[2]. The most serious internal security threat remains the one from the armed Naxalite insurgency; running across half of India's 29 states. Each of these, 'running-sores', is evidence of the State's failure, to assimilate alienated citizens and deliver social justice to the poor and deprived.

While the possibility of inter-state conflicts may be receding elsewhere, India's two revisionist neighbours, Pakistan and China, continue to stake claims on India's territory; backed by nuclear intimidation. India has, helplessly, watched the progressive emergence of a China-Pakistan axis, whose sole aim is the 'containment' of India within the South-Asian 'box'. At the same time, China has proceeded to seduce India's other neighbours with the lure of economic aid, infrastructure projects and cheap weaponry. China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is a project of immense significance that will not only reshape the global economic order, but also ensure this nation's geo-political primacy over the Indo-Pacific[3].

> The issues that demand the nation's resources and urgent attention are; socio-economic development, health, education and job-creation for a burgeoning youth-population. And yet, the one lesson we should have learnt during India's 71 years as a sovereign nation, is that security shortcomings, both internal and external, have led to repeated conflicts and crises that have served to distract attention and divert resources from the pursuit of development.

The post-Doklam meeting between Prime Minister Modi and President Xi Jinping, in Wuhan, seems to have reduced bilateral tensions, for the time-being, but given China's aggressive posture in international relations, there is little room for complacency - either in the Himalayas or the Indian Ocean.

Political Indifference

A prime cause of worry, for the citizen, should be the overwhelming preoccupation, of the Indian politician, with electoral politics that prevents him from devoting adequate time and mental-space to national security issues. Parliament shows little interest in national security; it has never undertaken a discussion on the defence budget, sought a Defence White Paper from the government or even examined the annual reports of its own Standing Committee on Defence (SCOD).

This lack of political interest and oversight has engendered a sense of smugness and complacency in the national security establishment; exemplified by the maladroit handling of the 26/11 Mumbai terror attack by its agencies. The lapses of 26/11 could have been condoned, had the right lessons been learnt from them. But as the Pakistani fidayeen attacks on the Pathankot air base (and the Uri and Nagrota Army camps), in 2016, showed; little had changed. India remains deficient in intelligence-analysis, inter-agency coordination, Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and, above all; a National Security Doctrine (NSD).

Emerging challenges promise to become crucible for testing India's strategic acumen and diplomatic skills. With

few cards – economic or military – to play, India would need to evolve a skilful NSS that will buy a breathing-spell, while it builds economic and military muscle. However, before delving further into this topic, it is useful to acquire an understanding of the roots of national security as a discrete discipline.

Provenance of National Security

The 'world order' as one sees it today, emerged from a diplomatic conclave conducted in Germany in 1648, to end the Thirty Years War in which nearly a quarter of Europe's population died from combat, disease and starvation. The 'Peace of Westphalia', as it was called, encompassed a series of treaties effectively ending the ongoing European wars of religion. The agreement they hammered out, became the template for a 'New World Order'; incorporating many radical concepts that one takes for granted today, but which had not existed till then[4].

Amongst these were, the entitlement of each nation state to sovereignty over its territory and domestic affairs; recognition of the principle of non-interference in another country's domestic affairs; and most importantly, equality in international law, regardless of the country's size. The Treaty of Westphalia, thus, shaped the principles of 'international relations', as one knows them today[5]. The new European order, however, lacked a universally acknowledged 'headmaster' to maintain order amongst nations, and each state considered 'might as right'. At the same time, chaos and disorder prevailed, internally, in most states.

In 1651, the English philosopher Thomas Hobbes made a proposal for establishing peace and order, not just in England but across Europe. In what came to be known as the 'Social Contract'[6], Hobbes, proposed that, in order to overcome perpetual fear of insecurity and violent death, free men should surrender their rights to the supreme authority of a monarch. The ruler, in return, would establish an orderly civil society within the state's borders and also protect his people against external threats. This established the first mandate for 'national security' as we know it today.

> If one were to choose from amongst the numerous national security challenges facing India, today, the absence of a strategic culture and civil-military dissonance would be closely followed by a barren defence-industrial complex and a dysfunctional weapon-procurement system.

A hundred and fifty years later, German strategist, Carl von Clausewitz, declared that, "War is not merely a political act, but also a political instrument and a continuation of politics by other means."[7] This definition legitimised the use of violence for political objectives and reinforced the perception of national security as a means of nations trying to further their self-interests.

Against this backdrop, if one were to choose from amongst the numerous national security challenges facing India, today, the absence of a strategic culture and civil-military dissonance would be closely followed by a barren defence-industrial complex and a dysfunctional weapon-procurement system[8]. Let me briefly address these issues.

Strategic Culture

During the Cold War years, Western analysts, discovered, after many intelligence fiascos, that there was no 'one fits all' method of predicting how nations would interpret diplomatic signals and react to international events. There were distinct national and cultural traits which influenced the politico-military responses of nations that called for study and analysis. Thus, a new metric; 'strategic culture', came into being.

While Indian analysts had generally ignored this aspect, a study of India's strategic culture, undertaken in 1992, by an American scholar named George Tanham had pointed out many intellectual voids and cultural shortcomings, including historical amnesia, in Indian society that had resulted in adverse outcomes throughout the country's history[9]. This lack of a strategic culture has come at a cost, as can be seen from the following sequence of post-independence events:

> ➢ In October 1947, when Pakistani forces invaded Kashmir, India's nascent political and military leadership undertook no overarching analysis of the situation and gave no strategic direction other than to 'repulse the invaders'. After a year of sporadic fighting, just as the Indian Army was getting the upper hand, Prime Minister Nehru referred the issue to United Nations (UN). The outcome has been the perpetuation of the so-called 'Kashmir problem' for which the country has not been able to find a solution for seven decades.

> ➢ China, at the end of its Civil War, had a clear-eyed vision of attaining Asian dominance; and cutting India down to size was part of this agenda. Yet India deluded herself with hopes of Sino-Indian friendship and sought to appease China by acknowledging its suzerainty over Tibet. Strategic naiveté and poor political judgment led to the 1962 military confrontation, with the People's Liberation Army (PLA) overrunning Indian defences in North East Frontier Agency (NEFA) and Ladakh.

> ➢ India's finest hour came in December 1971, when a historic victory over Pakistan led to the liberation of Bangladesh. Resolute political leadership and sound tri-Service planning resulted in a swift military campaign which achieved all its objectives. And yet, as a victor, India faltered on the negotiating table; giving away the gains of a bloody and expensive war – including prisoners of war and territory – in return for false promises which Pakistan had no intention of keeping.

> ➢ In the strategic domain, India's nuclear weapon and missile development programmes have, been guided, exclusively, by the scientific community, with marginal inputs from the armed forces. In hindsight, India's prompt declaration of a moratorium on testing, and a 'No First Use' guarantee within days of the 1998 tests, appear to have been unduly hasty commitments. Equally worrisome is the emerging dichotomy between India's threat of 'massive retaliation' and Pakistan's newly acquired faith in tactical nuclear weaponry[10].

> | The clearest manifestation of a weak strategic culture is the fact, that for the past 70 years, despite several major conflicts, no substantive defence reforms have been initiated; nor has a NSD been issued. |
> |---|

> ➢ The clearest manifestation of a weak strategic culture is the fact, that for the past 70 years, despite several major conflicts, no substantive defence reforms have been initiated; nor has a NSD been issued. Strategic defence reviews are unknown in India, perhaps, because the security establishment simply lacks the expertise and intellectual capital to undertake an exercise of this nature. For this reason, recommendations relating to defence reforms and successive draft security doctrines have simply vanished in the maw of the defence bureaucracy.

If India is to shape its own destiny and become a major power, it needs to take strategic culture more seriously and pay heed to sociologist Samuel Huntington's warning about the "incalculable harm that neglect of civil-military relations" can inflict on a nation[11].

Civil-Military Dissonance

For two centuries preceding independence, while Indian soldiers saw combat all over the world, neither our bureaucrats nor politicians had any involvement in military affairs or strategic planning. Notwithstanding this lacuna, India's post-independence leadership deemed it appropriate to hand over the Ministry of Defence (MoD) to a generalist bureaucracy; totally excluding military professionals. Despite the drawbacks of such a paradigm, India has persevered with it for seven decades; resulting in major functional handicaps as well as strained civil-military relations.

The bureaucracy is firm in their conviction that advice to the politician must come exclusively from them, and their role in decision-making is interpreted as the key to 'civilian control' of the military. Firm in their resistance to change, proposals for creating a specialist cadre to foster national security expertise have been summarily rejected since it would impede the career prospects of rising IAS stars[12].

The most worrisome impact of this dissonance is the MoD's lackadaisical functioning. By stubbornly resisting the integration of Army, Navy and Air Head Quarters (HQ) with MoD, the bureaucracy has denied itself, readily-available professional advice and, the ministry, badly-needed decision-making ability. Proof of the system's ineptitude is to be found in the languid manner it has discharged its primary function of equipping the forces.

Arms Dependency

One of the most adverse fall-outs of detaching the military from the MoD is India's failure to attain self-reliance in production of weapon systems. There is insufficient comprehension of the fact that all claims to 'rising power' status remain hollow, unless India acquires the capability to design and undertake serial production of major weapon systems. India's current dependence on unreliable and unpredictable external sources for military hardware severely undermines India's military preparedness and national security.

At the root of this failure lies in the total autonomy granted to the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), which enables scientists to set their own priorities; often at the expense of the soldiers' urgent needs. Similarly, the vast public sector defence production complex, under the supervision of the MoD bureaucracy, has been disappointing as the sector had undertaken assembly and licenced-production when indigenisation was expected.

Had the armed forces been permitted a greater say in the functioning of DRDO as well as defence production units, far more could have been achieved in terms of efficiency, innovation and self-reliance over the past seven decades. Dependent on languid bureaucrats, complacent scientists and the convoluted 'Defence Procurement Procedure', (now in its 6th edition), makes India's arsenal half-empty, and its defence modernisation plans stalled.

> India's most crucial challenge relates to the maintenance of domestic peace and harmony. The lack of a long term, clear-eyed vision of national interests in the internal security context, has led to an ad-hoc approach to a set of problems rooted in complex socio-economic and political factors.

Challenges and Opportunities

While India is, undeniably, heir to an ancient tradition of strategic thinking, and has its own strategic culture, its democratic system has not yet reached a level of maturity to deal with serious issues of national security. India's Parliament, when it does function, is overloaded with political and socio-economic agendas – and has rarely found time to address issues related to national security.

I flag four serious security challenges; whose resolution requires long-term vision and a strategic thought-process but would also represent huge opportunities for India.

Firstly; India's most crucial challenge relates to the maintenance of domestic peace and harmony. The lack of a long term, clear-eyed vision of national interests in the internal security context, has led to an ad-hoc approach to a set of problems rooted in complex socio-economic and political factors. Consequently, India's ongoing internal conflicts involving Naxalism, cross-border terrorism in Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) and insurgencies in the North East equal or surpass the external hazards that India faces today; especially since they provide fertile ground for foreign intervention. The evolution and implementation of a comprehensive strategy to overcome these conflicts will immeasurably bolster India's national security.

Secondly; the hostility and aggressive posturing by a rising China, both on India's land borders and at sea, demands that India diminish the possibility of conflict by diplomatic means. With the 1998 nuclear tests and the 2005 Indo-U.S. nuclear deal, having resulted in a fundamental transformation of India's status, India's foreign policies are now guided by pragmatism and national interest, rather than idealism. *Realpolitik* demands that India evolves strategies to prevent

hegemony and domination, by ensuring a favourable regional balance-of-power; through cooperation and partnerships, striking short-term alliances if necessary.

Thirdly; India's failure to integrate organs of state which contribute to national security with the central edifice, constitutes a major Achilles heel for the nation. The sequestration of the armed forces from each other, along with 100 percent civilian MoD, has rendered India's higher defence organisation archaic and of doubtful utility in 21ˢᵗ century warfare. It is imperative that India conceives a strategic vision to eliminate the civil-military divide, integrate the military with the MoD and enforce jointness among the three services.

Finally; India's half-empty arsenal calls for a drastic re-structuring of India's military-industrial complex. A languid bureaucracy and complacent scientific community, entrusted, for 70 years, with defence production and defence Research and Development (R&D), have reduced the nation to the status of a supplicant, where military hardware is concerned. A strategy that envisages a major re-structuring of these entities through amalgamation and creation of public-private partnerships must be evolved to attain 60-70 percent self-sufficiency in defence hardware within 25 years. The creation of an overarching 'Ministry of Defence Technology & Industrial Production' could be considered.

Conclusion

The Indian state suffers many self-inflicted wounds. The police forces have been emasculated and intelligence agencies rendered ineffective by interference and politicisation, so that they are unable to discharge their core functions. The national security establishment has encouraged turf distribution and creation of fiefdoms, and thereby deprived itself of the benefits of holistic thinking and synchronised action; which a 'whole of government approach' could have provided. In a system that must be unique world-wide, the armed forces have been kept on the margins of national security management by a powerful bureaucracy, and rarely consulted or heard; even on issues in which they have exclusive expertise.

> In a system that must be unique world-wide, the armed forces have been kept on the margins of national security management by a powerful bureaucracy, and rarely consulted or heard; even on issues in which they have exclusive expertise.

While we look to the future with hope and optimism, we must recognise that India remains vulnerable to intimidation or nuclear blackmail by its neighbours - either singly or in collusion. The long-term security policies of a state must be guided by a vision of its place in the world and, should be rooted in perceptions of its vital interests. Having acknowledged existing shortcomings, India must visualise how its vital national interests may be protected and promoted. Such a process of policy-making is best initiated by formulating and articulating a NSS.

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Section II

Internal Security Environment

Kinetic Successes in Kashmir Leave Vast Well of Public Anger Unaddressed

Prof David Devadas@

Abstract

Through the history of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), global powers have used turbulence in the Valley for their benefit, particularly with regard to the strategically vital Gilgit. In this light, the triad of challenges to national security—Pakistan's inimical designs, China's unfolding plans, and youth anger in Kashmir—are of urgent concern. Youth anger within Kashmir is the one prong of this triad that could have been addressed and reduced, but it has not been. 2018 witnessed a string of security forces' successes to kill militants in South Kashmir, but fresh teenagers continued to join the ranks. The zeal of the stone-pelting crowds that aid them too has sharpened. The age profile of boys in the field has steadily reduced, and an inverse correlation between age and radicalisation is evident in society. To address youth rage is a human and constitutional imperative. These trends also make it a strategic one, particularly since a large number of foreigners who have infiltrated over the past five years are lurking in North Kashmir.

Anti-militancy operations in Kashmir have been remarkably successful during 2018. The Army and police have killed 248 and captured 58 militants during the year; five surrendered[1]. The second half of the year has seen a string of successful operations. Sixty percent of the 248 were killed after the Ramzan ceasefire, which ended in mid-June. Governor's Rule, which was imposed just then, gave the forces more operational flexibility. Operations were generally backed by precise intelligence, and the targets included most of the prominent militant commanders. By the end of the year, Riyaz Naikoo, and Zakir `Musa' Bhat were about the only well-known commanders left in the field—and the latter two had been lying low for a long time.

However, these security force successes are only one part of the story. Anthropological findings, and trends visible on the ground, are far better indicators of the situation in Kashmir than any number of statistics. For one thing, statistics have not always been reliable in certain periods. More importantly, statistics of kills can cut both ways in the extremely complex matrix of a conflict zone. Since 2015, the funerals of militants have contributed vigorously to motivating other youth to take up the gun.

So, although the security forces have had improved successes, the number of militants in the field has remained high. A few fresh boys continued to go underground even in the last two months of 2018, when militant commanders had stopped calling for recruitment. Indeed, some of the commanders in South Kashmir appeared to have lost morale, following the killing on 11 October, of the former Aligarh Muslim University scholar, Mr. Mannan Wani. Yet, a few boys continued to join their ranks.

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Far more significant than the number actually taking up arms is the number that has become alienated enough to want to do so. A number of teenagers in South Kashmir have said that they would take up gun, if weapons became more easily available. Fear of death does not seem to be a match for the lure of heaven. And various efforts to engage them in order to counter their radicalisation seem to have had little impact so far.

Another dimension of the story is the huge public support for militancy in society at large. This has been clearly visible since at least 2015, but it continues to rise. More and more ordinary men and women rush out of their homes to save militants caught in an encounter with forces—and do so with increased fervour. Perceptions regarding the situation of Muslims in Kashmir, across the country, and across the world, have played a significant role in shaping these supportive actions. These perceptions appear to be turning more negative over time. Muslims are viewed as generally oppressed, and as targets of deliberate genocidal violence.

There is an even more disturbing fact about the situation in Kashmir, which can only be ignored at great peril. A large number of foreigners has infiltrated since at least 2014. Infiltration has mainly been across the Shamsabari range, but also elsewhere, including the International Border, South of Jammu. There have been four or five separate attempts almost daily, and have continued even in midwinter.

Most of those who have got through have not got involved in active operations, yet. They are by and large billeted in pockets of North Kashmir. No doubt they are waiting for a signal to show their hand. So, even as the convergence of stone-pelting demonstrations with militant operations in South Kashmir has shaped a huge tactical challenge, another cohort waits in the wings to add to that challenge.

> **A large number of foreigners has infiltrated since at least 2014. Infiltration has mainly been across the Shamsabari range, but also elsewhere, including the International Border, South of Jammu.**

Triad of Challenges

Even the full gamut of active and potential militant and other challenges within the Valley are only one part of the larger security challenge. I have argued since the beginning of this decade that three distinct challenges to national security emerged in 2008.[2] These have gradually converged since then. The terror attack in Mumbai in November that year marked a sea-change in Pakistan's attitude, after the confidence-building measures and negotiations of the previous five years.

The intrusion into Ladakh by Chinese troops late that year marked the second challenge. Although such intrusions have taken place before, however, this one was followed by a prolonged refusal to give visas on Indian passports to citizens from this state. Among those who were refused, in August 2010, was the then Commander-in-Chief of the Northern Command, Lt Gen BS Jaswal.[3] China officially stated that it was refusing him a visa because he controlled `disputed territory.'

The third challenge was mass agitations by young Kashmiris, which became visible on the ground following the transfer of land to the Sri Amarnath Shrine Board in the spring of 2008. That ended a long period of relative calm in the Valley, during which most Kashmiris, including youth, had sought opportunities for prosperity and career-building. It is this last challenge that should have been managed, so that its potency decreased. The potential convergence of this ominous triad should have been taken seriously at that stage, or even in the subsequent years. Without the resentful rancour on the ground, the twin external threats would have found little purchase. As Chairman Mao once observed, a guerrilla without public support is like a duck without water. Tragically, policymakers remained complacent even during the mass agitations that followed the killing of Burhan Wani, who was Hizb-ul Mujahideen's divisional commander from mid-2015 till he was killed on 8 July 2016.

Evolving Rage

There are two aspects to the stone-pelting. One, it can be viewed as a tactical method to support militants. Two, it may be seen as a measure of public anger. Although money has undoubtedly been spent to keep agitations going, that public anger is real and its potency has evolved since 2008. So, it is not enough to label every incident of stone-pelting, only as terrorism by other means in order to conceptually invalidate it. To formulate responses in light of such labelling would be foolhardy. For achieving success in the medium to long term, it is far more important to comprehend and respond to the public anger, than to only respond kinetically in the field to the militant and other acts that spring from that public anger.

Not only the potency of the militant threat, (the roots of the anger) that was behind the stone-pelting and other kinds of public defiance have evolved in 2008.[4] Also, that year's anger was, over the transfer of land to a shrine board that comprised members from outside the state. It was essentially an assertion of the inviolability of Article 35-A of the constitution of India, which prevents persons who are not state subjects from owning land in the state.

This is deeply ingrained in the minds of most Kashmiris in the Valley. Whether or not one likes or agrees with this, the pertinent fact is that the agitations of 2008 were essentially an insistent cry for the inviolability of a constitutional provision. It was about upholding the law as it exists.

By the time stone-pelting agitations erupted again in 2010, the anger stemmed directly from kinetic operations, but was still a cry for upholding the law. Those protests were sparked by widespread public anger over the killing of young men not involved in militancy. The killing of three young men who had been lured to an Army camp at Machil with the promise of work was the most vital sparks for that anger. The killing of one or two young demonstrators every day for several weeks added fuel to the fire. For, in the minds of many young Kashmiris, it seemed to confirm the narrative that the forces were there to kill.

> There are two aspects to the stone-pelting. One, it can be viewed as a tactical method to support militants. Two, it may be seen as a measure of public anger. Although money has undoubtedly been spent to keep agitations going, that public anger is real and its potency has evolved since 2008. So, it is not enough to label every incident of stone-pelting, only as terrorism by other means in order to conceptually invalidate it.

The tragic fact is that policymakers deluded themselves that the anger that had been so fiercely evident that summer was over, that it had been no more than a flash in the pan. Beyond failed job creation programmes[5], the state apparatus did not engage with youth or seek to assuage their anger. Meanwhile, the police employed repressive tactics against young men accused of being `stone-pelters' (which somehow became a new criminal category at police stations across the Valley). This repression only further spurred the anger and insurgent responses of young men.

A trickle of fresh recruits had begun to join a new militancy in South Kashmir since late 2009.[6] After the uprising of 2010, the trend increased, although it was still only a trickle. Burhan Wani joined in September 2010, after he was arbitrarily assaulted by Special Operations (SO) policemen not far from his home, when he was returning from the market with his brother. Burhan was only 15 years old then. However, his charismatic personality allowed him to become a major motivator and recruiter. Over the next few years, he became a larger-than-life heroic figure in the minds and hearts of young Kashmiris, particularly in South Kashmir.

The roots of anger had evolved much further between 2010 and 2016 than they had between 2008 and 2010. Whereas the 2010 uprising was against the killing of innocents not involved with militancy, the 2016 uprising was specifically against the killing of a militant, Burhan Wani. The 2008 and 2010 agitations were essentially demands for the rule of law. By contrast, the 2016 uprising rejected the rule of law, even the system of law and order as it had been experienced by young Kashmiris.

Ominous Trends

There are two more progressions over the decade since 2008 that we can only miss seeing at our own peril.

One, the age profile of those involved in protest demonstrations has steadily declined. Most of those who agitated on the streets of Srinagar and elsewhere in 2008 were adults, many of them in their thirties or forties. In 2010, most of the agitators were in their late teens and early twenties. By 2016, the age profile had further reduced. After the first few days following the killing of Burhan Wani, the agitations were kept going mainly by teenagers, even boys in their pre-teens.

It is important to note that these comprise a new generation. For, those who were in their late teens in 2010 were in their twenties by 2016. The boys who kept the agitations going in 2016 were millennials, who had not witnessed the mayhem of the 1990s. The fact that most adults remained on the sidelines of that round of agitation is significant. Many of those who were even in their late twenties in 2016 were introspective, perhaps because they remembered how futile the violence of the 1990s had ultimately been. In that context, one should take very serious note of the fervour with which adults, including women, have emerged in the recent past in defence of young militants. This trend has been visible since 2015, but appears to have steadily become more strident. Crowds now pelt stones with ferocity. Some of them even dare to clamber onto security force vehicles.

> **Social media has become the chief vehicle for radicalisation during this second decade of the century. Over the past five years, video and other material valorising Islamic State have become more common on the internet. All these have had a tremendous impact on young minds. More important, the trend continues to show an upswing.**

The second progression of this past decade is the increasing intensity of radical narratives and world-views. Fundamentalist movements such as Ahle-Hadith and Tablighi Jamaat had won over many adherents during the first decade of the century. Their work promoted exclusivist and fundamentalist world-views. It was buttressed by televangelists such as the late Pakistani Maulana Israr Ahmed and the Indian Zakir Naik.

Social media has become the chief vehicle for radicalisation during this second decade of the century. Over the past five years, video and other material valorising Islamic State have become more common on the internet. All these have had a tremendous impact on young minds. More important, the trend continues to show an upswing.

Burhan Wani's video recordings also reflected a more pan-Islamist mindset than the discourse of, for example, a Majid Dar (who was the operational commander of Hizb-ul Mujahideen throughout the 1990s). The stridency of Zakir `Musa' Bhat's audio recording, which went viral on 12 May 2017, took the trend further, thus, entrenching it strongly in many young minds.

At one level, these two trends are intertwined, for there appears to be an inverse correlation between age and radicalisation. This correlation points towards a steadily increasing challenge to political stability, social harmony, and established cultural mores. Demography adds to such portents of instability. For, about 70 percent of the population of the Valley is estimated to be below the age of 30. On the one hand, the adult population of the place is barely able to influence the young in the current phase. On the other, adults are numerically less significant in any case.

Inimical Geopolitical Trends

Geopolitical trends too are not encouraging. The U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan could lead to the sort of results its earlier withdrawal caused at the end of the 1980s. Pakistan's security establishment turned its attention towards Kashmir, utilising the expertise they had gained, in fueling the Afghan rebellion through remote control and diverting some of the

weapons and equipment that the U.S. had sent for the Afghan rebellion.

The end of the war of succession in Afghanistan in April 1992 led to the ISI clearing the way in December that year for the Afghan-dominated Harkat-ul Mujahideen and the Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, dominated by Pakistanis, to fight in Kashmir. Some security analysts have warned of the possibility that, if the Taliban were now to be re-established in Afghanistan, Pakistan might feel emboldened to up the ante in Kashmir again.[7]

Of course, the other geopolitical trend that should worry security planners is the closeness between Pakistan and China. The two countries have described the closeness of their relationship in superlative terms. The relationship is to take a quantum leap with the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)—which came into the limelight around the time the new militancy gained ground in South Kashmir.

China proposes to spend more than 60 billion U.S. dollars on the project, which will connect it to the Gulf, the Western Indian Ocean, and from there to Africa and Europe. In the bargain, China will gain immense leverage and control over Pakistan.[8] The hinge for this project is the Karakoram Highway, which passes through the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Chinese troops are said to already be present in parts of the state.

It is significant that Burhan's heroic image was built up on social media in 2015, just about the time when the CPEC project was gaining salience in the public mind. For, throughout the history of the state of Jammu and Kashmir[9], turbulence in the Valley has been repeatedly used by global powers of the time to gain leverage over the strategically valuable Gilgit area.

The British became conscious of the strategic value of Gilgit as a frontier against the Russian empire in the late 1860s, and more so after their Afghan campaigns foundered in the early 1870s. Much was made of human rights abuses in Kashmir by the British press during that decade, including talk of Maharaja Ranbir Singh having had Kashmiris drowned by the boatload in the Wular Lake in 1876-77.

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A British Agent was appointed in Gilgit from 1877 to 1881,[10] and apparently got the impression that Maharaja Ranbir Singh was in touch with Afghan chieftains and the Russians.[11] The British appointed an agent for Gilgit again when it took over the powers of Maharaja Pratap Singh between 1889 and 1905, the very years during which the British Empire negotiated with China over Aksai Chin. The Maharaja's powers were restored when those negotiations were given up. To explain why the Gilgit Agency was re-established in 1889, the British recorded that `the advance of Russia up to the frontier of Afghanistan and the great development of her military resources in Asia, had admittedly increased the necessity for strengthening the line of defence.'[12]

Talks with China were taken up again in 1929. Unrest came up in Jammu and Kashmir in 1930 and erupted in the Valley in 1931. Sheikh Abdullah was among those who suspected[13] that G.C. Wakefield, the British Senior Member of the Maharaja's Regency Council, had promoted the unrest. Supporters of the Kashmiri agitations infiltrated into the state from West Punjab during that summer and autumn. When the demonstrators in Kashmir defied even martial law, the Maharaja turned to the British Governor in Lahore for help.

After British troops marched into Jammu, on November 04, from the Jallandhar cantonment,[14] a viceregal proclamation banned the infiltrations, and the British press stopped writing about Kashmiri human rights. The British

government got the Maharaja to appoint Colonel Elliot Dowel James Colvin as Prime Minister. Colvin persuaded the Maharaja to lease Gilgit to the British for sixty years. The lease agreement authorised the Viceroy to assume the civil and military government of the Wazarat of Gilgit, along with Hunza and Nagar, leaving mining rights to the Maharaja and the right to call himself the ruler of these territories.

It was this lease that allowed a British Army officer to influence history by raising the flag of Pakistan over the Gilgit fort on 2 November 1947, a week after Maharaja Hari Singh had acceded the state to India. Work on the Karakoram Highway began in 1959 and it was opened in 1979. Work to expand and upgrade it to an all-weather highway began in 2003.

Conclusion

While there can be no doubting the genuineness of the public anger behind the agitations and militancy in the Kashmir valley over the past decade, the strategic implications of these waves of anger too must be kept in mind. Global and regional powers could exploit the opportunity for their advantage. Indeed, it is entirely possible that some of them might once again have contributed to stirring the cauldron of unrest.

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It is imperative that measures be urgently taken to address the public anger and to assuage the distress among Kashmiri youth. It is a human priority. It is a constitutional requirement. It is also a security concern.

Endnotes

1   Figures from the Srinagar-based defence spokesperson on 2 January 2019

2   I argued this in a lecture at the Nehru Memorial Museum and library in March, 2011

3   https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/China-denies-visa-to-top-general-in-charge-of-JK/articleshow/6442437.cms, accessed 30 December, 2018

4   For more detailed analysis, see Devadas, David, *The Generation of Rage in Kashmir* (OUP, 2018)

5   Mainly the Udaan programme, which was supported by the Ministry of Home Affairs, and has been very far behind targets from the start.

6   Based on the author's interactions at that time with well-informed community leaders

7   If US troops exit Kabul, and the Taliban holds sway, Pakistan could unleash 'Ghazwa-e-Hind' against India - VikramSood, https://www.orfonline.org/research/if-us-troops-exit-kabul-and-the-taliban-holds-sway-pakistan-could-unleash-ghazwa-e-hind-against-india-46870/, accessed 30 December, 2018

8   See *Pakistan to pay China $40b on $ 26.5b CPEC loans over 20 years* - Shahbaz Rana https://tribune.com.pk/story/1874661/2-pakistan-pay-china-40-billion-20-years/, accessed 28 December, 2018

9   the state was formed in 1846 through the Treaty of Amritsar between the East India Company and Raja Gulab Singh of Jammu, who was recognised as maharaja by that treaty

10   http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/78309/5/05_chapter%201.pdf, accessed 30 December 2018

11   Devadas, David, `The Story of Kashmir,' 2019

12   Chohan, Aman Singh, The Gilgit Agency 1877-1935, Atlantic Publication, New Delhi, p.86.

13   Devadas, David, `The Story of Kashmir,' 2019

14   http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/78309/5/05_chapter%201.pdf, accessed 30 December, 2018

Assessment of Insurgency in Manipur and Recommendations for Conflict Resolution

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Abstract

The insurgency situation in Manipur today has improved considerably from the 1982-2006 period, in terms of level of violence and militant activities. The state is emerging as gateway of India to the South-East Asia through land route in due course. Act East Policy initiatives is likely to be slowed down due to prevailing uncertainty of security situation in the region. Hence, there is a need to look at the situation in Manipur with greater focus, as also on the ground realities. Ethnic issues dominate the security paradigm in the state. Ethnic issues also dominate the socio-political landscape more now, than ever before. The Naga Framework Agreement is also being keenly observed by all concerned. One way or the other, the outcome is likely to impact the situation as never before. There is thus, a need to address the issue holistically, to include all ethnic groups and the militant groups, strictly keeping in mind India's national interests. The idea of Indian nationhood must not be allowed to be watered down under any circumstances. Reorientation of aims and objectives of the security forces operating in the area will be a necessity. Governance issues remain the main medium through which most of the ills of insurgency situation can be removed. In this Centre has a dominant role.

Introduction

Manipur was an independent kingdom since time immemorial with a recorded history of more than 2000 years (since 33 AD), whose boundary was said to have extended up to Sibsagar in the present day Assam and parts of present-day Myanmar. The extent of kingdom increased or decreased with the fortunes of the Manipuri Kings. Historically, it is stated that the kingdom of Manipur was ruled by Meitei Kings and the Meitei community inhabited the plains. The surrounding hill tribes, who existed in independent villages under the rule of their village chiefs paid tribute and tax to the Meitei kings and accepted the suzerainty of the Manipuri Kings. Manipur was a princely state during British colonial rule, in which the Meitei kings had enjoyed considerable autonomy. Manipur lost its autonomy after its merger with India in 1949, and 23 years later Manipur became one of the states of the country. It shares a land border with Myanmar, and with India's states of Mizoram, Nagaland, and Assam. The state is made up of two geographical regions: the hills and the plain (valley). It is inhabited by ethnic groups broadly classified into Meiteis, Meitei-Muslims, Nagas, and Kukis. While various Naga and Kuki tribes are concentrated in the hill areas, Meiteis are concentrated in the plain areas. Nagas and Kukis are officially recognised into 29 scheduled tribes in Manipur. The tribals enjoy the benefits of reservations in jobs, education, and welfare programs. Meiteis and Meitei-Muslims are not in the category of scheduled tribes, and further, they are restricted by law to purchase and own real estate and other land in the hill areas while the members of scheduled tribes can buy land anywhere in Manipur[1]. The state has been witnessing armed conflicts between ethnic groups over the demand for the creation of new states within India's federalism or

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independence from India. These conflicts have resulted in a number of flashpoints that have gained both domestic and global attentions in recent times.

The delay in granting statehood and ill-treatment felt by the people of Manipur caused dissension. The Indian Government's policy after the merger agreement brought about many undesirable consequences and led to the further division of people of Manipur on ethnic lines. Consequently, in the later years, the Nagas Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland (Issac & Muivah) in particular, wanted to detach part of Manipur, Assam, and Arunachal Pradesh, and integrate to the adjacent state of Nagaland to form Nagalim. It is also claimed that Nagalim was historically an independent region of the Naga people (not supported by any historical evidence), which was divided, during the British colonial rule, into two parts in India and Burma (Myanmar). Similarly, some section of Kukis like Kuki National Organisation (KNO) wanted to integrate the Kuki-concentrated areas of India, Myanmar, and Bangladesh under one homeland known as Zale'n-gam. It also claimed that prior to the advent of British colonial rule Zale'n-gam was an independent nation much like the Nagas (not supported by any historical evidence).

If Nagalim and Kuki land are carved out of Manipur into two more new states of India, Manipur will lose 85-90 percent of the existing territory. Infact, it will be just 10 percent of the present size of Manipur valley, where Meiteis predominantly reside. But demands of the Nagas and Kukis is unlikely to go unchallenged since Meiteis are determined to preserve the integrity of Manipur and its territory which Meiteis consider it as rightful part of past kingdom. While the Nagas and Kukis are serious about creating a separate state/entity of their own, both these ethnic groups are at loggerheads as their territorial claims overlap.

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Ethnicity was first introduced in the governance of Manipur during the colonial rule when they separated the administration of the hill tribes from that of Manipur valley. The Maharaja was entrusted with the administration of the Meitei inhabited valley with the help of Manipur State Durbar while, the President of the Manipur State Durbar, a British ICS officer was to administer the hill tribes who were sub-divided into the Nagas and the Kukis. Thus, the contemporary manifestation of ethnic alignment is creditable to the British indirect rule that was introduced in the hills areas.[2]

Accordingly, the British recognised the Kuki Chiefs and the headmen or the Khullakpas[3] of the Nagas who were authorised to administer their villages through the tribal customary laws. Thus, politicisation of ethnicity was embedded in the colonial administrative system and the subsisting and sharpened trend may be attributed as a continued discourse. Social exclusion of tribal communities in the early years of the twentieth century had led to their welcoming Christian missionaries in their midst. The latter brought education and a new worldview[4].

Much of the politics in Manipur seems to centre on the question of preserving one's ethnic identity especially through assertion of political autonomy demands[5]. For instance, the United Naga Council (UNC) which spearheaded the integration of the Naga inhabited areas of Manipur into the present state of Nagaland, represents the Nagas of Manipur in the form of an organised political force. Similarly, Kuki Inpi Manipur (KIM) serves as an apex body for the Kukis inhabiting Manipur.[6]

With three competing ethnic groups- the Meiteis, the Nagas and the Kukis engaging in a self-centred and articulated campaign of ethnic assertion and consolidation, to expand their realm of influence, Manipur has of late become a political hotspot. No doubt, the salient feature of the social order of Manipur is perhaps its heterogeneity. These groups exhibit remarkable variation in terms of 'language and culture'. Identity formation by the communities and tribes harping on exclusivity, integration and dominance, often results in several forms of sanguinary conflict and intensified

autonomy demands. Over the years, ethnic mobilisation and identification has surfaced as a process of emerging group interests, rather than the manifestations of primordial interests and sentiments.[7] Ethnic mobilisation by one group kindled and heightens the ethnic identity of another group. The assertion for greater autonomy by one group stimulated similar demands from other groups. This conflicting territorial claim has turned into inter-tribal warfare in 1992 while the Nagas at the behest of NSCN (I-M) asserted their supremacy over the Kukis.[8] "The state has become an arena of serious ethnic conflict. Mobilisation and couner-mobilisation of identities coupled by competing demands have approached to be the source of conflicts. So much so, some scholars have labeled Manipur as 'Wounded Land' due to multiple problems like social divide, political unrest, armed groups, antagonision among tribes, ethnic intolerance and disputes over territory."[9]

The issue of ethnic identity, territorial claims on ethnic lines remain the most important issue in the unrest in Manipur. The period of insurgency as India knows it to be, has largely become one where each ethnic groups try to dominate the other through the barrel of the gun. The issue of ethnicity largely dominate the law and order paradigm in the state. Moreover, it's only those gun wielding people who claim to represent their respective ethnic groups, that engage in extortion, looting, large scale smuggling of contraband goods, recruitment, kidnapping etc, purportedly with the connivance of state functionaries in many cases that dominate the scene in the last 10-15 years. The issues of ethnicity dominate the insurgency paradigm in the present context. Each ethnic group view their respective militant groups as their saviour to protect their interests.

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At present there are some issues which dominate the socio-political environment in Manipur. The outcome of the Naga Peace Talks is eagerly awaited in some Naga dominated areas of Manipur while the Meiteis and Kukis await the outcome with suspicion about the possible effect on their interests. The final outcome of the Framework Agreement will also directly impact the insurgency or law and order scenario in the state and adjoining areas. While the Kukis strongly support the 6th Schedule to be applied in the Hill areas, there is considerable conflict about what each tribal group consider as their ancestral land. Each tribe construct their own history or assumed history in order to grab more and more advantages in terms of land, resources and rights. While many Kuki groups are SOO (Suspension of Operations) with the Government of India (GoI), the major Meitei groups such as People's Liberation Army (PLA), United Nations Liberation Front (UNLF), Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup (KYKL), etc. are yet to respond positively to the overtures of the elements of the state. There are suspicions among the masses that the SOO groups are used to neutralise the other ethnic militant groups thus enhancing the inter-ethnic animosity. In this context, the Hon'ble CM of Manipur made the following remarks while delivering a talk on the occasion of Vijay Divas on 17 Dec 2018. He stated, "There are reports of SOO groups indulging in kidnappings, recruiting of new cadres, smuggling of arms from neighbouring countries, hijacking of development funds meant for the tribal in the interior." The CM also stated that," some UG cadres are foot patrolling the highways to carry out illegal activities".

The recent land grabbing along the Imphal-Moreh road, where hundreds of huts came up overnight just to claim land compensation, using tribal rights as the shield is one such plot of the militant groups. Similarly, the NSCN (IM) and ZUF struggle to dominate Jiribam-Imphal railway line which is nearing completion. The domination is for the purposes of illegal taxation, land compensation and other such opportunities. In sum, the shape, the objectives, the modus operandi of the militant groups are remodelling themselves to exploit the emerging opportunities that come with the Act East policy in terms of monetary gains.

Policy Imperatives and Recommendations

Much activity could unfold once the contours of the Framework Agreement are known. At present many armed groups are awaiting the shape of agreements likely to be reached between the NSCN and the GoI. Notwithstanding the final shape of the agreement, dissenting voices are likely to keep the idea of secession alive with active support from across the border. The crux of the problem, as it exists today is of mistrust among the ethnic groups fuelled by the hope of promised land and quest for uniqueness of their respective ethnicity. Pursuit for preservation and propagation of ethnic identity has made the situation extremely complex. Traditional claim over land, ethnic lineages, identity formation sometimes under coercion have only added fuel to the fire.

A lasting solution can only be evolved by the people, by the various ethnic groups through dialogue under an atmosphere of trust. Trust can be established if there are minimised armed threats from the anti-national and armed ethnic groups. Trust can be built up, if there is less interference from outside (Nagaland, Mizoram, foreign hand, armed groups). Moreover, the centre could be a facilitator in the process of mediation to integrate the ethnic groups.

Policy Approaches: National Level

➢ **Peace Talks/Cease Fire Initiations**.

The State Government and civil society groups in the state will need to be taken on board while attempting concrete steps for resolution of ethnic militancy related conflicts. All groups will need to be engaged for an amicable solution. To engage one and neglect the other groups will be counter-productive. There appears to be a thought process in some circles that a peace deal with one armed group will eventually force the other groups to follow. In Manipur, that is unlikely to be the case. Assuage feelings/emotions of all stake holders through dialogue and negotiations within the ambit of the constitution. Of the three verticals Meitei, Naga and Kuki; the Central Government is in the process of talks and peace agreements with the Naga and Kuki groups in some form with perhaps a reluctant State Government in the periphery. Hence, the need to deal with the Meitei groups as well.

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➢ **Security Forces (SF) Strategy**

Strategy to counter militancy and ethnic conflicts are largely political and socio-economic in nature. The role of the SF, however, should focus on neutralising the active cadres of militant groups, prevent extortion and recruiting etc. SF will also need to consider whether or not acting against illegal taxation along the lifeline highways is part of the Counter Insurgency (CI) strategy. Border management will have to be taken up more seriously. Too many agencies make none of them responsible for lack of anti-militant operations. Reduced violence levels need not be an indicator of the overall insurgency situation in the state. Hence, over-dependence on security forces will have to be reviewed from time to time. Securitisation of the ethnic problem will lead to a negative spiralling effect. Perceived exploitation of one group to act against the interest of the others by the SF is unlikely to pay dividends in the long term.

➢ **External Factor**

The involvement of external forces like some elements in China will need to be taken care of. Close coordination with Myanmar Army to flush out militant camps in Myanmar will need to be taken up from time to time. The states of Nagaland and Mizoram in the matters related to the triangular ethnic conflict should desist from complicating the matters.

> ➢ **Destination North East (DONER) and North Eastern Council (NEC)**

Multiple agencies handling the North East situation may not bring about desired effect. The responsibility for peace initiatives, internal security, socio-economic efforts, development issues need to be handled by one ministry in the centre. To end this, an empowered and restructured and revitalised NEC could be a step to this direction. NEC will, however, need a major over hauling of structure and processes. Destination North East (DONER) Ministry at Delhi may not provide the requisite input for the region.

> ➢ **Border Management**

Border management being a central issue plays a significant part in containing militancy in the state. Stopping of smuggling of arms, which fuel militant activities is one such job of the central agencies. The drug money and smuggling which support the militancy is the other important responsibility of the central agencies. All unlawful activities in the area are mostly trans-border in nature. Intelligence agencies may need more focus in the border areas too. In this context border fencing in some form is recommended to ensure relatively well-controlled border. The existing system just would not be effective in the long-term.

> ➢ **Other Issues**

The Central Government in consultation with State Government will need to address the issue of Armed Forces (Special Powers) Acts (AFSPA)1958; frequent highway blockades in Naga, Kuki and Meitei dominated areas, surrender policy of the militant groups, the functioning of over ground workers and their dependent associates, rehabilitation policies of the militants, unemployment and reservation policies in the state. The issue of International Boundary with Myanmar and with other states, will need to be looked into.

> The Centre and State together could initiate midterm and long term infrastructure development and commercial projects for all the regions of the state. To be implemented and monitored by a joint mechanism to include Centre, State and District level representatives. Aim being to generate economic activity and employment to the local. Special Economic Zone Models to assist in Look and Act East Policies of India be created.

Approaches by the State

Leaderships in the state need to initiate talks. Public opinion will need to be built up. Available statistics reveal that 50-55 percent people of the state strongly favour peace and ethnic harmony. The Centre and State together could initiate midterm and long term infrastructure development and commercial projects for all the regions of the state. To be implemented and monitored by a joint mechanism to include Centre, State and District level representatives. Aim being to generate economic activity and employment to the local. Special Economic Zone Models to assist in Look and Act East Policies of India be created.

- **Skill Development**. People of Manipur are highly skilled in local industries such as handicrafts, bamboo crafts and weaving activities. A major thrust towards this end. Role of private industries is minimal at present. Self-employment is imperative through well-oiled financial assistance to micro-enterprises. Each district should have credible skill development centres.

- **Infrastructure** to improve potential for employment through industrialisation. Manipur lacks behind the national average with regard to level of industrialisation and infrastructure facilities. Lack of power, transportation communication is responsible for the slow progress in employment opportunities in the state. Marketing network, credit facilities and technological knowhow are at a nascent stage as compared to the national average. These issues need to be attended to, in order to ensure that larger number of people are usefully employed.

- **Sports and Culture**. It is assessed that close to 600 sports persons of Manipur are representing various other

states, Departments of Government of India, other clubs in International and National Games and sports events. Development of cultural and sports talent on the state to meet the National and International level standards will be a big nullifier of ethnic tensions since games and cultural activities play a very significant part in the lives of all ethnic groups of Manipuri people.

- **Corporate Social Responsibilities.** Corporates can play a significant part in training and absorption of Manipuri youths. In sectors such as hospitality, nursing, Business Process Outsourcing (BPO), there are thousands working in big cities such as National Capital Region (NCR), Bangalore, etc. Corporate Houses could be facilitated to create facilities for training in such sectors in the state itself. This will be a big boon for the youth in the interiors of the state.

Inclusive Development

The issue of non-inclusive development has multiple facts and is characterised by deep ethnic divide and allegation of bias against Tribals by the Meitei dominated State Government. With emotions running high, it is imperative that development and more importantly governance is made more transparent. Digital Governance, and transactions through digitisation of most activities will be a step in the right direction. Middlemen and contract system should be closely monitored to ensure a fair and inclusive distribution of funds. Ensuring that resources are distributed and reach the intended beneficiaries will serve greatly in ensuring that ethnic rivalries in this issue is minimised, fund allocation should take into account existing infrastructure so that a multiplication factor for the Hills is applied to ensure equitable progress and development. At present approximately 28 percent of the developmental funds go the Hills which is less than approximate proportion of the population. But this mathematical distribution may not work towards improvement on the ground.

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District Councils to be Operationalised

There is an urgent need to ensure that District Councils be made effective. It is easier said than done. The authorities should appeal to the ethnic groups to separate the demand for Sixth Schedule and the implementation of existing councils. With passage of time numerous welfare initiatives like National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA), National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) etc should be allowed to be implemented or else money meant for these schemes will continue to flow into coffers of the militant groups. The District Councils should be empowered under the law, with constitutional amendment if need be, with certain other activities which are otherwise listed in the Sixth Schedule. These could be areas like health, agriculture, public works, forest and animal husbandry etc. Presently the District Councils barely looks after the primary education and not effective in any case.

Civil Society

There is a need to ensure that opinion of very small armed groups/violent groups do not hijack the agenda of larger voice. There are prominent personalities in many fields from all communities who have great standing in the society. Their contribution and patronage could be sought for inter-ethnic dialogue. The potential of these officials and intellectuals from the State in various academic institutions in India could be taped for the purpose. There are many young leaders of repute among the student bodies who could be reached out towards the ethnic dialogue. The civil society organisations need to be closely integrated with the initiatives taken as far as security-related issues are concerned.

Governance Issues

Governance issues need to be addressed on priority basis in the state. It has been amply clarified in the feedback that this is the key to inter-ethnic conflict resolutions. Financial management (corruption issue) is the most important issue of concern that affect governance in the state. Implementation mechanism is non-existent. Monitoring agencies are deficient, the region has been subjected to one of the worst forms of deprivation for many decades. The Hill councils remain largely ineffective. Funds are fraudulently diverted to wrong hand in many of the cases. There is a feeling that the funds meant for the Hills are being looted by unscrupulous officials (from all ethnic groups). MNREGA / NREGS funds should be given to beneficiaries directly, rather than to the Village heads. Facilities like banking, roads construction and connectivity should be improved in the Hills. The legitimate needs of the Hill people as well as of the Plains men should be addressed. The local village authorities should be involved, and there is a need to make the village authorities more accountable. It may not be possible to see any improvement in the situation as long as the militants divert most of these funds to their organisations. The way forward is to educate the affected people and enforce governance machinery.

Role of Civil Police

Police force of the State needs to be trained in modern policing. Intelligence gathering, interaction with the public, understanding of law and human rights and above all counter-insurgency operations, need to be given the required impetus in training. The Manipur Rifle which was meant to assist in law enforcement agencies have been deployed mostly in so-called VIP duties in their residences. Very junior Police officers posted in safe places, are provided round the clock security. The example of a Vice Chancellor who enjoyed bullet-proof vehicles, head of some academic institutions with 30 strong security personnel are only a tip of the iceberg. The police need to operate in the entire state, not just in Imphal. Police will need to ensure better border policing in the light of loose border management as it exists today.

Media

Media plays an important role in perception management. There is enough evidence in cyber world to establish the fact that the ethnic divide has assumed unacceptable levels. Every positive step by one ethnic group is countered by negative view from one of the major ethnic group. It is being played out as Zero sum game. With the help from the Media; the differences can be narrowed down to manageable levels.

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Conclusion

In conclusion, the way forward has to be a multi-pronged strategy. The lead has to come from the Centre. Firm commitment and support from the State Government is mandatory. Consultative process, presently, in progress need to be given a further push by the Centre. Gains of Naga talks must not be allowed to be withered away. All stakeholders must be part of the process. Talks must be initiated with other groups as well. Governance issue need a solid thrust. Strong leadership who can relate to all the stakeholders need to be given the opportunity. The militant outfits in talks or otherwise with the government, should not be able to set the agenda in the discourse. The idea of Indian state should remain supreme in whatever is on the table.

Endnotes

1   Section 158 of Manipur Land Revenue Act 1960.

2   Op. cit. SekholalKom." " *Ethnic politics in the Hills of Manipur*", pp-154

3   The term 'Khullakpa' is a local parlance denoting the head of a village. This term is often used by the Meiteis to address a village head in tribal areas. It is a term used to address a village head among the Nagas. With regard to the Kukis, the term " Ningthou" is rather a widely used term to address Kuki Chiefs.

4   Lal Dena. (1984). "*British Policy towards Manipur 1891-1919*". (Directorate of Welfare of Tribals. Government of Manipur), p.41. xiv.Shimray, U.A.(2001, September 29). *"Ethnicity and Socio-Political Assertion: The Manipur Experience"*. Economic and Political Weekly, Vol.36 No.39, pp 3676-77

5   Shimray, U.A. (2001, September 29). " *Ethnicity and Socio-Political Assertion: The Manipur Experience*". Economic and Polical Weekly, Vol36 No.39, pp 3676-77

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7   Op.cit SekholalKom. "*Ethnic Politics in the Hills of Manipur.*", pp-155

8   Singh, A Koireng, (2008), " *Ethinicity and Inter-Comminity Conflicts: A case of Kuki-Naga in Manipu*", Akansha Publishing House, New Delhi.

9   SekholalKom. *"Ethnic Politics in the Hill of Manipur*", Journal of Alternative Perspective in Social Sciences (2011) Vol 3, No 1, pp-147-167

Illegal Implementation, Update of National Register of Citizens in Assam and its Security Implications

Shri Jitesh Khosla, IAS (Retd)@

Abstract

The process of updating the National Register of Citizens (NRC), a document specific to Assam, currently under progress and under the supervision of the Supreme Court of India, has once again brought attention to the long-standing problem of detection and deportation of illegal immigrants in the state. While the exercise is being conducted efficiently with extensive use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), it has brought several legal, administrative and human issues to the fore. The application of the due process of law has to be transparent and thorough and must be accompanied by humane treatment of deportees. Otherwise, it can create deep social, ethnic and communal fault lines which have the potential of disturbing peace in Assam, a state that over the last two decades has gradually emerged from a long period of insurgency and terrorism. The conduct of the process to its logical conclusion will also have serious security issues-both internal and external-for the region and the country as a whole.

Currently, a massive exercise for updating the NRC in Assam is under progress, under the supervision of Hon'ble Supreme Court of India. This Register was originally prepared in 1951 only for Assam, in context to a large inflow of migrants into the state. This, over a period of time had threatened to upset the demographic balance and posed a threat to indigenous population of the state. However, the need for this exercise and the sensitivity of the problem can be understood better in the background of immigration into the state, and the manner in which it has engaged national attention ever since the country became independent in 1947.

Background

Migration from other parts of undivided India into Assam started as far back as 1840 when the colonial rulers started large scale tea cultivation in the territories now comprising the Assam State. The first wave comprised of labour brought in from Central India to work as labour in the tea estates. Gradually, as population increased, a need was felt to bring more areas under cultivation for food crops in the plains of Assam. The colonial administration encouraged cultivators, as well as educated Indians (for office jobs) from the erstwhile province of Bengal, to come and settle in Assam. Traders and businessmen from the Western provinces of India soon followed. This trend continued well up to 1947.

Colonial rule ended in 1947 with the partition of India. In an environment of intense communal divide, minority population in Punjab in the West, and Bengal and Assam in the East, scrambled to cross over to either side. The violence that ensued claimed nearly one and half million lives and caused forced displacement of several million people. While the bulk of the violence and migration took part in the West, in the Eastern part of the country also, more than one million refugees migrated from the then East Pakistan into India, largely to West Bengal, Assam and Tripura. There was migration to East Pakistan as well. 1948 also saw the first war between India and Pakistan in Kashmir. An effort was

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made to restore communal peace and avert another war. This resulted in the Nehru-Liaquat Pact of 1950. According to this Agreement, both governments would ensure complete and equal right to citizenship and security of life and properties, to their minorities, including freedom of movement, thought and expression and religion. However, unlike in the West, conditions in the Eastern part of the sub-continent remained unsettled.

Persecution of minorities in the erstwhile East Pakistan and the 1965 Indo-Pak war further resulted in forced migration from East Pakistan to continue during the 1950s and 1960s, largely comprising Bengali speaking population. While Hindu Bengali migrants were displaced as a result of communal conflict in East Pakistan, Muslim Bengalis also migrated, driven by poverty and lack of livelihood. During this period, schemes to pushback Pak infiltrators were implemented in Assam, but porous borders with inadequate policing resulted in many of the migrants which were "pushed back' to return to Assam and Bengal.

After the 'War for Liberation of Bangladesh' in 1971, an estimated 10 million refugees fled to India from erstwhile East Pakistan and took shelter in the states of West Bengal, Assam and Tripura. After the emergence of Bangladesh, many of the displaced population went back, but there were many who did not. Migration from Bangladesh continued due to economic disparities between Bangladesh and India and porous borders. Following the assassination of Sheikh Mujib-ur-Rahman, the leader of the Awami League and the first Prime Minister of Bangladesh and imposition of military rule, persecution of religious minorities in Bangladesh restarted afresh. However, the assassination of Sheikh Mujib-ur-Rahman in 1975, subsequent military rule and the emergence of ultra-nationalist Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) resulted in heightened communal conflict and anti-India sentiment, resulting in a steady migration of minorities to India.

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The net result of migration over nearly three decades after partition was a sizable influx - largely of Bengali speaking people, both Hindus and Muslims into the North East. There were many migrants from Nepal too. The immigrants settled largely in the Assam and Barak Valleys and in Tripura. Meanwhile, the erstwhile state of Assam was reorganised in 1972 to meet the aspirations of the tribal people of the North East (NE). New State of Meghalaya and Union Territories of Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh were carved out. (Both these Union Territories became full–fledged states later). The presence of a large population of migrants was perceived as being a threat that would change the demography of the new State of Assam, and may redraw political equations to the detriment of the indigenous population.

The Anti Foreigners Agitation and the Assam Accord

By 1978, the resentment against the ever-growing immigrant population erupted in the form of 'Anti-Foreigners' agitation in Assam which continued for nearly seven years. So intense was the anti-immigrant sentiment that agitation turned into a mass movement. The law and order situation deteriorated and the effort to hold elections in the state in 1983 failed, as in large areas of the state there was widespread violence. With the realisation that the government so elected lacked a genuinely popular mandate, discussions between the agitation leaders and the Central Government were taken up again. Eventually, the Assam Accord, in the form of a Memorandum of Settlement (MoS) was signed between representatives of the Government of India (GoI) and the leaders of the anti-foreigners agitation in Assam, in New Delhi, on 15 August, 1985. The Accord brought an end to the agitation and paved the way for its leaders to join the political mainstream by forming a political party and contesting elections. This they did, and having won a majority in the state assembly formed a government in 1986.

The Assam Accord that eventually brought peace to Assam contained the following understandings with regard to illegal immigration:

- All the foreigners who had entered Assam from "Specified Territory" upto January 1, 1966, were to be given full citizenship rights, including the right to vote;

- Those foreigners who had entered Assam after January 01, 1966 but up to March 24, 1971 were to be detected in accordance with the provisions of the Foreigners Act, 1946 and the Foreigners Tribunals Order (FTO), 1939 and enrolled in the Foreigners Register (Under the Registration of Foreigners Act 1939) and their names would be deleted from the Electoral Rolls. They would be denied voting rights for ten years. They would, however, not be deported.

- All the foreigners who had entered Assam after March 24, 1971 would be detected and deported;

- The international border shall be made secure against future infiltration.

- A package of central assistance for the economic development of Assam and legislative and administrative safeguards, to protect the cultural, social, and linguistic identity and heritage' of the Assamese people was also included.

Efforts to Deal with Illegal Migration Prior to Assam Accord

The NRC 1951: Even earlier, considering the seriousness of the persistent influx of illegal migrants, the GoI had formulated the Immigrants (Expulsion from Assam) Act, 1950, mandating expulsion of illegal immigrants from the state of Assam. The NRC was prepared to enumerate genuine citizens along with their particulars, specifically for Assam during the conduct of 1951 Census. However, the definition of a foreigner (to cover a Pakistani national) was only clearly spelt out with the amendment of the Foreigners Act, 1946. With reorganisation of states on linguistic basis, a movement for recognition of Assamese as the official language of Assam took place. As a result, the information contained in the NRC 1951, could not be used for identification and expulsion of illegal migrants in a timely manner.

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The Prevention of Infiltration from Pakistan (PIP) Scheme: In 1962, the Assam police established a special organisation under the PIP scheme. This unit was entrusted with detecting and pushing back foreigners who had migrated illegally from (then) East Pakistan. Under the PIP scheme, nearly two lakh persons were forcibly pushed back into the then East Pakistan. However, the Indo–East Pakistan borders were poorly guarded. It is suspected that these push back efforts had a temporary effect and most persons who had been "pushed back" returned to Assam.

The Illegal Migrants Determination by Tribunal (IMDT) Act 1983: This was enacted immediately after the violent reaction to the elections to the state Assembly in Assam. It was applicable to the state of Assam only, whereas, in other states, detection of foreigners continued to be done under the Foreigners Act (FA), 1946. The Act excluded the migrants who entered India before March 25, 1971 and laid down new procedures to detect illegal immigrants (from Bangladesh) and expel them from Assam.

While the IMDT Act was in response to the fears that minorities targeted by the Assam agitation may be subject to undue harassment, it made it very difficult to deport illegal immigrants from Assam. The reason was that the Act shifted the burden of proof for establishing a person as a foreigner on the accuser, as against the provisions in the FA 1946, under which the onus to prove lay on the person so accused. There were also many restrictions and opportunities

for appeal. The number of Tribunals set up (eleven) was also inadequate. The proceedings dragged on and were mostly inconclusive. In conclusion, this Act also proved quite ineffective in detecting and deporting foreigners.

Developments Post-Assam Accord

Electoral Roll Revisions and Doubtful Voters

In 1985, after the Assam Accord, the Election Commission (EC) ordered intensive revision of the electoral rolls in Assam. This was a detailed exercise which included filing of claims and objections. A large number of objections were filed. These were looked into by a large number of Assistant Electoral Registration Officers (AERO), especially appointed by the Election Commission (EC) for the purpose. Elections were held on the basis of the electoral rolls so prepared. The newly constituted Asom Gan Parishad (AGP), a party set up by various agitating organisations, won the majority and formed the government in the State.

Again, In 1997, the EC, after another intensive revision of the electoral rolls, identified nearly 3, 70,000 people as Doubtful Voters (D Voters), on account of doubts relating to their nationality. The commission directed that the cases of such D Voters be referred to the FTs, set up under the Foreigner Tribunal Order of 1964. However, only 199,631 cases were referred to the Tribunals. The process dragged on and some of the D Voters went missing. In April 2004, the Gauhati High Court ordered the D Voters to be sent to detention camps till their cases were disposed off. Accordingly, the D Voters facing trial before the Foreigners Tribunal were sent to the detention camps set up at Goalpara and Kokrajhar.

> In 2005, another survey was carried out by the EC after which the number of D Voters was officially revised to 181,619. Since 1997, the tribunals have declared 20,578 D-Voters as foreigners. As of February, 2018, the State officially had 1, 25,333 D-voters whose cases were under adjudication in the Tribunals. The D-Voter issue remains a work-in process till date.

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Judicial Intervention

Even after the Assam Accord, the demand for effectively detecting and expelling immigrants remained. Meanwhile, the state slipped into an insurgency, and terrorism which erupted in the state affected it till the year 2000.

Eventually, the IMDT Act was challenged by Sarbananda Sonowal (a former student leader who became Chief Minister of Assam in 2016), in the Supreme Court *(Sarbananda Sonowal v. Union of India)*. In 2005, a three-judge bench of the Supreme Court of India, held that the Illegal Migrants Determination by Tribunals Act, 1983 and rules there under, had "created the biggest hurdle" and were the "main impediment or barrier in the identification and deportation of illegal migrants" and struck down the Act.

Later, following writ petitions by Assam Public Works, an Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) located in Assam, in 2009, Hon'ble Supreme Court in 2013, directed the Union Government and the State Government to complete the update of NRC, to be implemented in adherence with the Citizenship Act 1955 and the Citizenship Rules, 2003, in all parts of Assam with the objective of identifying illegal foreign immigrants in the state and to enable their deportation. The current revision of the NRC is being done in pursuance of this order of the Apex Court.

The NRC

As mentioned in the foregoing narrative, the NRC, now being updated in Assam, was first prepared after the 1951 Census of India and has not been comprehensively updated since.

Eventually, there was a growing political perception that the updating of the NRC 1951, by implementing the agreements arrived at during the Assam Accord was the only solution to the vexed foreigner's issue in the state. On March 17, 2010, the Assam assembly passed a resolution urging the Centre to update the NRC 1951 on the basis of 'Voters List' of 1971. A pilot project to update NRC was started in two circles (Tehsils or Talukas), one each in Barpeta and Kamrup districts, in 2010. This, however, ended abruptly amidst a huge law and order problem. There were mob attacks on the office of the Deputy Commissioner, Barpeta that resulted in a police firing, killing four persons.

Following directions of the Apex Court, and under its monitoring, the NRC update exercise was started again in the year 2013. The Registrar General of India notification dated December 06, 2013, notified commencement of updating of NRC, and specifies that this would be done as per the provisions of the Citizenship Act, 1955 and the Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and Issue of National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003 as amended from time to time. Under the framework approved by the Apex Court, the eligibility status would be ascertained based on the NRC, 1951, and Electoral Rolls up to 1971, and in their absence the admissible documents up to 24 March (midnight) 1971.

The administrative framework for NRC updates involves both the Central and State governments. Policy decisions, guidelines and funds for the purpose are provided by the Central Government, implementation is done through the State Government machinery under the Registrar General of India (a Central Government authority), who functions as the Registrar General of Citizen Registration. The modalities for NRC updates therefore, are developed jointly by the government of Assam and the Government of India in adherence to the relevant statutes

The current exercise of updating the NRC in the state of Assam, is an elaborate and comprehensive exercise, relying extensively on digital technology, along with wide outreach through doorstep facilitation and personal verification through an elaborate facilitative mechanism spread out throughout the state. To understand fully the magnitude of the exercise, it would be useful to consider the elaborate arrangements made. These are briefly described as follows:

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Detailed Eligibility Criteria was laid down covering all the eligibility conditions as per the law and directions of the Apex court. Thus, the eligibility criteria covered all persons whose names appeared in NRC, 1951, persons whose names appeared in any of the electoral rolls up to March 24, (midnight), 1971, their descendants, persons who met the eligibility criteria as per Assam Accord, the local/indigenous population of the state, all members of the 'Tea Tribes', all Indian citizens including their children and descendants who had moved to Assam post 24 March 1971, on adducing satisfactory proof of residence in any part of the country (outside Assam), as on 24 March 1971.

Extensive use of Digital Technology was made in the exercise. Bespoke Software, with over 20 large custom software applications, involving over 2500 digitisation hubs and a state of art data centre were developed. Legacy Data, comprising old records running into lakhs of pages was digitised. Online data search, application and verification systems were enabled. A system of digital map-based display of performance at district/circle/NSK/village level was devised for monitoring purposes. Software for transliteration of data digitised in English to Bengali and Assamese was also put in place. Massive manpower deployment (over 30,000 government officers and 10,000 contractual/ outsourced staff), was made for the exercise.

Outreach: NRC Seva Kendras (NSKs): In order to aid and assist the public in enrolling themselves in the NRC update process, ICT enabled NRC - NSKs were set up in each district of Assam; each NSK covering approximately of 2,500 households. NSKs acted as nodal points for public contact and facilitation for all NRC related activities. Each NSK was equipped with adequate hardware such as computers, scanners etc. for public use along with sophisticated software for Legacy Data search in English, Assamese and Bengali.

Publication of Legacy Data: As per statutory requirement, the NRC authorities had to publish copies of NRC 1951 and electoral rolls of all years up to March 24, 1971 (collectively named as Legacy Data). As per information available in public domain, the NRC 1951, which comprised about 6.26 lakh pages of old documents, was dispersed across the state, mostly in very poor condition. To develop the legacy data and to make it available in easily searchable format, all the pages of the NRC 1951 were converted to images and linked to 2.01 crore digital records. The data was search enabled in Assamese, English and Bengali. The database and image files were then installed in the IT hardware in all the 2500 NRC Seva Kendras (NSKs). Legacy database was also made available, free of cost, in the public domain through NRC Website. Out of 68.23 lakh Application Forms received from the public, 95 percent applicants submitted Legacy Data so prepared as supporting document to prove their claim for inclusion in NRC.

Specification of Relevant Documents: Two set of documents had to be furnished by the applicants for inclusion in the updated NRC. They were documents issued before 24 March (midnight), 1971, where the name of self or ancestor appeared to prove residence in Assam up to 24 March (midnight), 1971; and documents to establish relationship with such ancestor, i.e., father or mother or grandfather or grandmother or great grandfather or great grandmother etc, whose name appears in List A.

The Application Process: The application process was facilitated in both online and offline modes. People opting for the offline mode could visit their nearest NSK for filling up and submitting their application forms. Those opting for online mode could also submit via their smart phones and tablet devices. Application forms, in Assamese, Bengali, Bodo and English were made easily available. Guidelines to fill up the forms were widely circulated. That apart, video tutorials or each side of the application form, were made available online as well as distributed in the form of CDs in each district. Applicants could also call NRC toll-free helpline number or visit their designated NSKs for any assistance required in the filling up the application form.

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Three Fold Verification: The process started with office verification, focused on establishing the authenticity of the documents submitted by validating the same with issuing authority. Each of 6.6 Cr documents such as electoral rolls, land records, birth certificates, university certificates, bank documents, post office documents, passports etc. were sent to respective issuing offices to check authenticity of such documents. A specialized IT-based work flow management system was developed to send the documents to the respective authorities from where the document was issued, for verification. This was followed by field verification, done through house to house visit to over 68 lakh applicants and 'Family Tree Verification' (FTV), done by comparing Computerised Family Trees (CFTs) with Manual Family Trees (MFTs). Final eligibility for inclusion of names was determined only if the results of all the three verification process - field verification, office verification and Family Tree Matching (FTM), were found positive.

Publication of the Draft NRC: The complete draft NRC was widely published on July 30, 2018 office of the State Coordinator of National Registrar (Assam). The total number of persons included in the complete Draft NRC is 2, 89, 83,677 leaving a total of 40, 70,707 as ineligible for inclusion. The people left out include more than 2.48 lakh applicants,

who were automatically put on hold due to declared foreigners, doubtful voters (disenfranchised in 1997 and 2005) with cases pending in the tribunals, and all their descendants and siblings.

Claims and Objections: The process provides opportunity to persons whose names do not appear in the Draft NRC to file claims. Objection against the entry of any name in the draft NRC could also be filed. Any person could also apply for correction of his name or any other entry in his respect as appearing in the draft updated NRC. Considering the large number of people left out of the NRC by the time of final draft publication of the NRC and also due to much anomalous exclusion, the time limit for filing claims and objections was considered by the Apex Court and a sixty day period was provided from September 25, 2018. Subsequently, while approving the modalities for filing claims and objections, December 15, 2018 was finally fixed as the last date by the Apex Court. Thereafter, the final examination of claims and objections is to be done.

Issues

Given the complexities of the foreigners issue in Assam and repeated attempts made to deal with it, including the most recent one of updating the NRC through an elaborate and comprehensive exercise, many sensitive issues arise, which may need to be dealt with carefully in the days to come.

The Foreigners Tribunals

Currently there are 100 FTs functioning in Assam. Initially, 11 IMDT were functioning. After the repeal of IMDT Act, these were re-designated as FTs. Government of Assam established another twenty one FTs in 2005, four in 2009, and sixty four in 2014, to dispose of pending cases. As of February 2018, it was reported that a total of 93399 persons had been declared to be foreigners by the tribunals, while nearly 2,00,000 cases were still pending.

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The task before the FT is likely to be huge if a large number of persons are finally left out of the current NRC Update. NRC is an enumeration and verification exercise. Non-inclusion in the NRC would not take away the right of any person to the due process of law before he/she is adjudged a foreigner and deported. After adjudication by FTs, affected persons have the right of appeal to higher courts. The process is, therefore, quite time-consuming.

The persons whose cases are being referred to the FTs are largely very poor people who can ill afford legal representation. Many of them are also illiterate. In this context, the process of adjudication followed in the FTs has to ensure that there is no arbitrariness in deciding the citizenship of any person and fullest opportunity is afforded to the person to prove his case, otherwise, the credibility of the process would be lost. Thus, the gains made by an elaborate NRC Update exercise would be jeopardised.

Deportation Process

There is considerable uncertainty about the fate of those whose names would not be in the NRC. As per law, they are to be deported to the country of origin. In the case of Assam, the relevant country would primarily be Bangladesh. Deportation/Readmission process, however, is not a unilateral matter; it has to follow international protocols and the process is quite cumbersome. While some repatriation/pushback to Bangladesh has taken place in the past, the numbers have been tiny. It is not certain how the deportation of large numbers of people would be done without a

bilateral agreement with the Government of Bangladesh. Internationally such bilateral agreements do exist between some countries. Such agreements, however, are the result of elaborate negotiations involving give and take on special trade concessions, financial assistance etc. In context of India and Bangladesh, signing a deportation/readmission agreement could have adverse political consequences in Bangladesh and could stoke anti-India sentiment there. With the Government of India being concerned at China's growing influence in the region, an agreement with Bangladesh on this matter is likely to be a very complex and time consuming task.

Detention

The persons who are identified as non-citizens through the processes under way would be stateless till their country of origin accepts them. The numbers are likely to be large. The manner in which they are handled would also be a matter of concern. Deportation attempts ordinarily involve detention arrangements with setting up of detention centers / waiting zones to house identified deportees. These are effective if deportation is backed up by a bilateral deportation treaty, numbers small and the turnover quick. However, numbers are quite large in the process of deportation. Starting in 2004, Assam now has six detention camps for housing illegal foreign immigrants in Goalpara, Kokrajhar, Silchar, Dibrugarh, Jorhat and Tezpur. There are plans to build more.

Detaining large number of people in detention centers for a long time is likely to create ethnic, communal and social tensions apart from humanitarian issues and costs. Unless deportation takes place quickly, these centers could also become breeding ground for insurgency and terrorism. In addition to speedy disposal of cases, proper and humane administration of these detention camps is therefore, essential.

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Future Migration

Update of NRC is a one–time exercise. It is not that illegal movement of people across Indo–Bangla border will stop with this exercise. Given the sensitivities attached to such migration and to prevent it from becoming a permanent problem, it is important to put into place mechanisms that would deal with future immigration effectively.

Guarding the Border

The Indo–Bangladesh border is 4156 km long and stretches of fields, waste lands, wooded and riverine areas. It is guarded by the Border Security Force (BSF). A decision was taken to fence the entire border. This is a work in process. However linguistic, religious and ethnic contiguity on both sides, ongoing border trade between the two countries and interdependence of border areas upon each other, create a very complex situation. Movement across the border cannot be entirely controlled. In the past, this led to exchanges of fire between BSF and Bangladesh Rifles. The situation is much better now with friendly relations between the governments of India and Bangladesh but could change if the political complexion in Bangladesh changes. In any case, guarding the border will remain a difficult and costly exercise, eased only by continued co-operation on both sides.

The Efficacy of Border Police Organization

Currently, the Assam police border organisation, set up for detection and deportation of illegal immigrants, is manned by over 4,000 personnel and headed by an Additional Director General of State Police. While the legal framework was unable to ensure speedy disposal of case, the Border Police itself was never adequately trained and equipped to undertake this complex task. Secondly, in a situation where insurgency, terrorism and law and order disruptions, due to various kinds of conflicts were common, detecting and deporting foreigners was a low priority job and often

inadequately funded. Further, apart from Assam other North Eastern States, who are also affected by immigration, have not set up requisite machinery. However, ongoing detection and deportation would be necessary even after the one-time revision of NRC is complete. The state agencies would have to acquire the capacity to do this effectively.

Linguistic, Ethnic and Religious Fault Lines: The Proposed Citizenship Amendment Bill, 2016

This is a proposed Bill which is currently pending before the Parliament. As per the Bill, illegal migrants from certain minority communities (i.e. Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi or Christian) coming from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan would not be imprisoned or deported but would be eligible for permanent citizenship after six years of residency in India. However, the proposal has evoked considerable opposition in Assam from various groups including those long agitating for detection and deportation of illegal migrants

Implications for Regional and National Security

Internal Security: Unsatisfactory resolution of the process of identification of non-citizens could have grave consequences on the law and order situation in Assam as well as other states of the NE due to the following:

> Given the background of migration into Assam, the identification of illegal foreign immigrants is likely to focus on specific ethnic and linguistic groups, and depending upon the religion of the identified migrants, this may take communal colour as well. The impact in terms of social and communal tensions and conflict on these very lines is a strong possibility.

> Identity based exclusion from various rights can also have a knock-on effect on the immensely varied mosaic of communities and tribal groups spread out all over the NE. The political entities comprising states and district councils are all vulnerable to this. The confronting ethnicities/linguistic/religious denominations may vary. Ethnic or intra-tribal violence can be sparked off in an unpredictable manner. The ongoing tension between Bodo tribals and communities comprising Tea Garden Labour is one of the many examples.

> The presence of a large number of people excluded from NRC but not repatriated for a long time would also create an underclass that is ripe for extremist/terrorist influence. NE Region is prone to extremist/separatist activity as also smuggling of arms and drugs. All such activities would find ready recruits who have very little to lose. Besides they would be able to easily merge with the general population as they would have the same ethnic/ linguistic/religious identity.

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As a result, the possibility of violent flash points and extremist/ terrorist activity emerging in an unpredictable manner would be strong. This would require heavy and costly commitment on the part of state police forces which may be detriment to investment in other sectors of the economy and trade and commerce.

External Environment

An important contributory factor to peace in the NE is the continuing friendly relationship with Bangladesh which has resulted in a significant check on the support to separatist/extremists. Indeed there was a phase when Bangladesh was a hotbed of ISI activities, aimed at training and equipping extremists and fostering terrorism in the NE. However, Bangladesh is also subject to fundamentalist activity with decidedly anti-India complexion. It is a matter of conjecture

as to how long targeting of people of Bangladeshi origin can go on without a backlash in Bangladesh. A change in the political climate in Bangladesh can have drastic security implications for the NE. At the very minimum, it may require enhanced deployment on borders with Bangladesh and Myanmar, in addition to the frontier with China.

Continued Engagement of Armed Forces on Internal Security

Easy flow of arms and ammunition into the state and presence of ready recruits could create several situations where the state police is out-gunned or unable to effectively contain the situation. In such cases army deployment would resort to more frequent forced deployment of personnel and equipment, away from the assigned task of the armed forces. Army at the frontier would be deprived of the security of a united and committed civilian population at the back. In addition, frequent, or long, army deployment on internal security duties would be detrimental to the discipline, training and preparedness of the armed forces for actual combat.

Lines of Supply

Another serious fallout of unstable law and order conditions would be the possible disruption of lines of supply, which pass through the "Chicken's Neck" Siliguri Corridor to support massive army deployment over a huge geographical area in the NE, including a very high altitude terrain. In a disturbed law and order situation it is all too easy to disrupt rail and road communication through bandhs, blockades or sabotage. Harsh action on civilian population by security forces only makes matters worse.

In short, it would be possible for a hostile power to engage the country in a costly and debilitating "hybrid War", short of open armed attack. Thus, disturb the focus and attention of the armed forces against external aggression, scatter deployment of personnel and equipment, and disrupt supply lines and logistic systems.

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Conclusion

The exercise of updation of the NRCs, though conducted in an efficient and comprehensive manner, would, however, not be an end in itself but a stage in addressing the issue of presence of illegal immigration into Assam. It is also a divisive exercise that may disrupt the social and communal harmony in the state. A lot will depend on the manner in which subsequent processes, associated with adjudication of claims of citizenship and eventual deportation of foreigners takes place. Transparency in applying the due process of law and human rights of the persons affected shall have to be guaranteed. While carrying out this process it would be prudent to keep in view the legal, and both internal and external security implications.

Emergence of Crypto Currency and its Impact on India's Financial Security

Col Satish Chandra Tyagi (Retd)@

Abstract

On one hand technology is acting as an enabler, and on the other hand there are concerns about technology growing beyond control. Crypto currency is one such concern and this has altered the notion of money transactions radically. This is because the identity of the user is forever unknown as opposed to the traditional system where, the person who gave money and the person who received remained transparent. Crypto currency could thus, be used for any purpose with impunity; which includes to buy narcotics and drugs, weapons, carry out illegal trade and above all, it could be used for funding terror organisations and for radicalisation. The emergence of the parallel economy might further threaten the financial security of any nation-state and lead to chaos and breakup of the prevalent regulatory systems. Therefore, it is important to understand what the Crypto currency is, its eco-system and operative details and its implications on securing the present financial system, governance issues and regulatory controls.

Introduction

The evolution of money, started with barter system-initially consisting of stone tools for hunting which later transformed to leather, copper and gold coins and finally the current paper currency. The transition of paper currency to plastic money and now to the digital wallets has altered the lives of common men throughout the world and has penetrated even the rural landscape in India. Availability of mobile based payments to anyone in the street has empowered the masses in India in a manner not known before. Technology has acted as an enabler and has transformed the money transaction landscape forever. Would such a technology remain tamed and continue to produce positive results always, or there would be areas where caution is needed?

Analysis of the evolutionary trends in money transactions suggests preference for an online international currency; this is gaining ground mainly to avoid regulatory controls and to keep the identity of the buyer/seller hidden forever. Looking at several virtual currencies that have emerged in last one decade, the shape of the future is visible in the horizon. Some people call it virtual currency while the others call it geek currency. It is also referred to as Crypto currency because cryptography is used to make it immutable. Such a system has enormous potential to be disruptive both in positive as well as in the negative direction. Internet has no boundaries and when anonymity in money transactions too is guaranteed by the technology, the consequences could be disastrous for the security of financial systems of any nation-state.

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Emergence of Crypto Currency

The revolution in the virtual currency landscape came with the emergence of Bitcoin. In the recent past, it generated considerable amount of interest internationally. Claimed to have been invented and introduced by Satoshi Nakamoto (a pseudo name) in January 2009, Bitcoin has come a long way after it was launched, as at that time the financial crisis was still underway. Back then one Bitcoin was worth less than a dollar and today it costs approximately $ 4000. It has since long grown from a nerd novelty to a kind of economic miracle, by spawning several versions of it. World over, people are increasingly investing in other Crypto currencies such as Ethereum, Litecoin, Peercoin, Namecoin Monero, Ripple etc. Today, there are well over 1,658 Crypto currencies, according to one of the latest listings[1]. The total Crypto currency market capitalisation is around $369 billion[2] or even more.

Features of Crypto Currencies

Leading from the front in Crypto currencies and the technological marvel it has offered, Bitcoin has drawn not only common men but also many researchers and scientists. One of the main reasons for the adoption of Bitcoin is to be able to use a payment system which digitally allows peer-to-peer transactions between users directly, without any intermediary or central authority. Secondly, Bitcoin value has the potential to increase like the shares in the market; offering phenomenal returns, that too anonymously, and therefore, has drawn waves of speculations and investment. Crypto currencies especially Bitcoin has made millionaires or even billionaires who invested in its early days. Bitcoin, therefore, deserves special and greater analytical look at its fundamentals.

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➢ **No Geographic Restrictions.** The transaction of any number of Bitcoins can take place, from any part of the geographic boundary to another, without having to bother about governmental regulations. Bitcoin thus becomes an attractive proposition; anyone could use it to purchase anything in any part of the world and no taxes could be imposed by any government until the identity of the buyer/seller is known.

➢ **Unbreakable Identity.** The identity of the users remains completely hidden forever in the womb of cryptography which is used in creating 'Block chains'. The identity so created becomes unbreakable and can't be decoded until the advent of some other technological innovation in future. Quantum computing might be the answer. On the other hand, Block chain, which is the core technology used in Bitcoin, is a disruptive and game changer technology; which has found many takers and has many other uses and applications. Therefore, considerable amount of efforts are on to understand and adopt it elsewhere.

➢ **Transparent and Auditable.** The transactions are transparent without giving away the identity. This can be audited as Block chain, used in Crypto currency which acts as a fool proof record of transactions, which can't be tempered with or altered. In fact, Block chain is a decentralised and shared ledger; thus, it offers visibility of the transactions. It therefore, builds trust and ensures transparency.

➢ **Multiple Identities**. Single user can opt to have multiple identities with impunity and can carry out transactions at different times with different pseudo-identities.

➢ **Technologically Secure Transactions.** Bitcoin transactions are secure as its protocol is based on asymmetric cryptography. A wallet is created for the user which coverts private key to Bitcoin address. It is impossible to do the reverse i.e. to get the private key from the address; should someone try to do the reverse engineering.

Incidentally, the wallet does not contain any Bitcoins as is the case with normal digital wallets today; but it consists of a database. This database contains the key pairs associated with a user's Bitcoin addresses and a list of transactions related to those addresses. We are familiar with public and private key pair which is commonly used in transactions through credit/debit cards.

➢ **Non-repudiable**. The system is fast and non-repudiable and being transparent, buyer/seller can't claim transactions and there is no central authority. Also, Bitcoin solves the double spend problem by using 'proof of work' as a means to do it, which is very complex method and can't be forged.

Features of Bitcoins that attract a common man could be summarised as–

➢ It is a secure money transaction system which is anonymous, completely transparent and easy to operate despite technical complexity.

➢ Anyone can directly give any amount to or receive from anyone who has a Bitcoin address through one on one or so-called peer-to-peer transactions.

➢ There are miniscule transaction fees when compared with regular currencies.

➢ Decentralised ledger known as block chain is used to keep track of Bitcoins which can't be tempered with.

Valuation

Some of us perceive Bitcoin in the physical sense as a coin and resultantly consider it as a currency. Actually, the graphic image, which one sees on the internet search, is a mere artistic representation of Bitcoin. In the virtual world, Bitcoins are nothing but digital records of transactions, created by using a special algorithm and then encrypted cryptographically.

> **As Bitcoin is traded on various exchanges around the world and its speculative value for trade is established through these exchanges, hence Bitcoin is considered to be several times higher in volatility than dollar or gold. A limited supply and extremely high demand makes the Bitcoin a valued asset.**

Let us consider how the transactions turn into valuable assets for users. All the transactions are broadcast between the users and it takes just seven seconds to reach out to the entire Bitcoin network spread out globally. The confirmation is usually arrived at by the network in the next ten minutes through a complicated process involving producing a 'proof-of-work' and 'consensus' based process called mining. Tremendous processing power is needed by the miners and not all those involved in mining are able to succeed and obtain consensus and create a dominant Block Chain, which wins 12.5 Bitcoins computational lottery as a reward (it was 25 Bitcoins till recently); which as a design will halve after every addition of 210,000 blocks into the chain. A lot of effort and money goes into mining globally and only the fastest gets the reward. The mining activity fulfills the requirement of having a central authority, that ensures there is no double spend or no fudging of records by having a consensus by all the nodes in the network. Consensus will not be reached, if there is anything amiss. When anything is chased by so many of them, but grabbed by only one, the value goes up. With every creation of Bitcoin, the complexity increases in a compounding manner, as each new block has to contain the entire information right from the genesis of the Bitcoin, thus, the need to have higher computational power and electrical energy.

As Bitcoin is traded on various exchanges around the world and its speculative value for trade is established through these exchanges, hence Bitcoin is considered to be several times higher in volatility than dollar or gold. A limited supply and extremely high demand makes the Bitcoin a valued asset. Satoshi Nakamoto had kept a limit of total of 21 million Bitcoins that can be mined[3]. 17.3 million Bitcoins have been mined[4] so far. In recent times, the miraculous and meteoric rise of Bitcoins made its presence felt when it had touched a peak of $ 18,000 per Bitcoin in December 2017.

Bitcoin is a global phenomenon and its value is determined not by one but many parameters which are not bound by any specific geography. Exchanges for its trade have come up. Bitcoin mining within the country is a possibility that also can't be denied. However, as compared to other countries where the total Bitcoin trade is huge, volumes of trade in India are below ten million Rupees per day[5].

What Makes the Crypto Currency so Inviolable?

The answer is cryptography, which is the strength of the virtual currency. The sites or users using the Bitcoin network are required to use a global database called the Blockchain. As the name suggests, it consists of a chain of blocks which are but a record of all transactions arranged in semi-decentralised way, a distributed ledger system, that have taken place in the Bitcoin network. There is no central authority in this network that acts like a sovereign government which could provide a guarantee, maintain a central reserve or gold backing or a central bank, as is the case with the prevalent currencies all over the world. Transactions are packed in a block that fits very strict cryptographic rules thus, shielding and making the system unassailable. It thus, differs from all the other forms of currencies and is often termed as an intellectual artifact by some in their arguments.

International Acceptance

Crypto currencies are in the deregulated space. Most of the countries in the developed world have yet to take a definitive stand about them, as there are large gaps in consumer and investor protection that need to be considered before taking a position on it. Any surge in use of Crypto currencies may prove harmful to security of the financial systems. Research and development is though fast in progress (especially in the field of Block chain technology) to understand it better and utilise its potential elsewhere. It is argued that Block chain, which underpins the Crypto currency, has a potential to fight counterfeiting and is likely to bring about major transformation in the financial market functioning, systems for payment and collateral identification such as land records.

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Notwithstanding the above, there are exceptions where cautious acceptance and tolerance of Crypto currency has been permitted under controlled environment. The regulations vary between total ban, implicit ban and permitted use. The United States (U.S.) Department of Treasury does not define Bitcoin as a currency. Bitcoin payments in the U.S. are subject to the anti-money laundering regulations that apply to transactions in traditional currencies and to payments by banks and other financial institutions[6]. By terming it as a Money Services Business (MSB), it has brought it under regulations that require exchanges and payment processors to adhere to certain responsibilities like reporting, registration, and record keeping. In addition, Bitcoin is categorised as 'property' for taxation purposes by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).[7] The Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) in the U.S. has issued a Customer Advisory to use caution when buying digital Coins or Tokens.[8]

European Union too has yet not got a definitive stand. However, several countries have developed their own rulings e.g. United Kingdom (U.K.) has taken a pro-Bitcoin stance and wants the regulatory environment to be supportive of the digital currency. Bitcoin is under certain tax regulations in the U.K.[9]

Australia and Canada have permitted use of Bitcoin. It is not regulated in Russia, though using Bitcoin as payment for goods or services is illegal. China allows private individuals to hold and trade Bitcoin, but participation by banks and other financial institutions is prohibited. In countries like Vietnam, Columbia, Bolivia and Ecuador, there is a total ban on Bitcoin.[10]

In December 2013, the Reserve Bank of India had cautioned the users, holders and traders of virtual currencies about the potential financial, operational, legal, customer protection and security related risks that they are exposing themselves to.[11] There have been periodic guidelines thereafter on the use of Crypto currencies with caution.

In the Annual Budget speech, the Indian government had declared its intent that it does not recognise Crypto currency as legal tender or coin and will take all measures to eliminate the use of these Crypto assets in financing illegitimate activities or as part of the payments system. However, it must be noted that India has a couple of Bitcoin Exchanges for trading. Recently, a Bitcoin ATM was also established in Bengaluru but had to close down due to non adherence to certain conditions. With the government intent clear; there is a simmering undercurrent to get Crypto currencies legalised in India. It must, however, be added here that worldwide Crypto losses since January 2018 have been estimated to be around $ 700 billion.[12] Some experts have even called it the 'Cryptocalypse' and consider it bursting of the bubble.

Impact on Financial Security

Crypto currency markets are highly volatile and prone to dramatic changes without any regulatory controls and guarantee. Balance between regulations and consumer and investor protection is needed. Implications of Crypto currencies on securing the present financial system and governance issues have to be analysed and regulatory controls carefully crafted. The following points merit consideration:

> **Crypto currencies could easily be used for terror funding; not difficult to imagine terrorists buying and stock piling weapons with it. Also, hostile states can fund terrorist organisations in other countries to create terror and destabilise the security. Already, terrorist's organisations such as Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) are known to have used this method for funding terror modules and for radicalisation of youths.**

➢ Crypto currencies are not backed by any guarantee or gold. Very high volatility in its price may result into bursting of the bubble, leaving the consumers without protection. Consumers do not have any central authority to complain and will have to bear the loss. For example, Mt Gox Bitcoin Exchange, based in Japan, was the largest Bitcoin Exchange in the world in the beginning of 2014. It was dealing with 70 percent of the Bitcoin transactions/trade worldwide.[13] But by the end February of that year, it went bankrupt because of a massive hack, simply due to lax cyber security, procedures, protocols and operating processes. It definitely was not the failure of Bitcoin technology but some human error that was exploited by criminals. Nearly six percent of all the existing Bitcoins were lost[14] and the loss was valued at $ 473 million at that time[15], whose value today runs into billions of dollars. The collapse of Mt Gox serves as an example for risks consumers face in the absence of any guarantee or regulations to fall back on. Government agencies do not supervise the exchanges which may lack safeguards in their systems thus, exposing consumers to risks and market manipulations, hacking and theft. Such a loss at a large scale may result in mayhem and panic in the market.

➢ If unregulated transactions are permitted by any government, money will flow in or out of the country with impunity. A large amount of funds going out or coming in to any country could collapse the economic stability and financial security as the financial institutions and services and legal systems would find them unable to cope up with the conflicting needs i.e. to protect the interest of the consumers or ensure compliance with the regulations, thereby, protecting the interest of the country.

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➢ Worst would be that tracing out the two transacting parties would be extremely difficult, if not impossible. Fortunately, the transacting parties will be vulnerable to law enforcement agencies' scrutiny at the time of conversion of Crypto currency to and from the state currency as and when it happens. But the buyer or sellers might be in a country where Crypto currencies are valid thereby avoiding the legal scrutiny.

➢ Market place already exists in the Dark and Deep web and drugs and narcotics can easily be sold and purchased by anyone. No one would be able to know the identity of the seller or the buyer. Human organ trafficking will get an alternate and secure route to access the seller/buyers. Consequences of such a trade will result into anything but secure environment.

➢ Considering a scenario when Crypto currencies reach their zenith and replace a very high percentage of money in circulation all over the world, what would happen if the major electrical grid failure takes place due to servers getting disrupted or corrupted or hacked or vice versa? Disruption could also take place due to an act of war. Any loss of data due to disruption can never be recreated thus, blocking major funds permanently. Such a financial crisis situation might result into worst of legal tragedies across the globe.

Even though Crypto currencies look promising to a large number of people, as its supporters claim that every new technology is initially looked at sceptically but eventually adopted; but until it is fully understood, its adoption might be premature. It can however be said that the time has come to take a serious note of Crypto currencies as they have the potential to de-stabilise the economy and create disorder in the public. One needs to pause and think, whether Crypto currencies are good or bad or neither; and above all, the governance issues and legal safeguards will have to be fully analysed, before taking a final position on this matter.

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Section III

Pakistan- China Strategic Challenge

Evolving Geopolitical Developments in China: Implications for India

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Abstract

The upward trajectory of China's geopolitics at the beginning of 2018 has flattened in the beginning of 2019. This may be the result of the U.S. trade war with China, hiccups in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) or the geopolitical churning in Asia. The article illuminates the geopolitical situation and the implications it has for India based upon the author's travel to Chengdu and Tibet in 2018. The problems that China faces are seen in the light of its internal dynamics and a prognosis made keeping in view developments in Tibet. With this background, the author looks at evolving Sino-Indian relations which include a yearning to enhance trade relations while being sceptic about growing strategic proximity between India and the US. The conclusive point made is that the Chinese look at the geopolitical issues purely from the prism of their core interests and seem to have a hazy understanding of India's core interests and concerns. India needs to bridge this gap. Both credible deterrence and deft diplomacy are required for this.

Introduction

The 'One Belt One Road (OBOR)' initiative is a concerted push to expand China's global influence. This push has come up against the hurdle of President Trump's trade wars with China, as well as growing suspicions regarding the project by the cooperating countries that it is a disguised debt trap. At the same time, South Asia is in the midst of a geopolitical churning as a result of a number of developments. China's efforts to increase its influence throughout Eurasia by the BRI of which the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a major component, impacts India in particular as the CPEC makes China a major stakeholder in Pakistan's stability. Increased Chinese civil and military presence in Pakistan is inevitable. At the same time, India's efforts to work with South and Southeast Asia; attempts by the United States (U.S.) to recalibrate its own grand strategy to address new power dynamics across the arc of Asia from the Pacific to the Indian Ocean and the U.S. military drawdown from Afghanistan are all churning factors. These shifting dynamics carry within them the seeds of contestation which has implications for India. Despite their developmental similarities, and substantial and growing trade relations, China and India's bilateral strategic rivalry means that they have competing priorities in the arena of international relations. They broadly agree on matters relating to the international economic system, energy security, and the environment. However, they have differences when it comes to matters of non-proliferation, Asian security, regional stability in South Asia, and security in the global commons.

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The Year of the Pig and Xi Jinping's Credibility

2019 is the "Year of the Pig" in China. In the Chinese Zodiac, the pig is believed to be a symbol of optimism, enthusiasm and hard-work. However, fissures are appearing in Chinese optimism in the BRI. The Chinese are enthused with 'China Dream' that inter alia posits rejuvenation of China as a great power by 2049. For this, the BRI is de-facto China's grand strategy, CPEC its flagship project and President Xi Jinping is the main architect. The U.S. is perceived as a threat to the rise of China and India and Japan as the principal players with proclivity to bind with Washington to balance China. China perceives the U.S. trade war as part of the U.S. ploy to stymie its rise. So the primary focus for China for the moment is how to deal with an intransigent Trump Administration on priority. Much of President Xi Jinping's credibility is predicated on the prognosis of the BRI. There are concerns that a pushback on the BRI will cause socio-economic stress in the country and impinge on the credibility of President Xi Jinping as a core leader. Internally, one of the principal concerns of China is the radicalisation of the Muslim population in the Xinjiang province and the international condemnation it has attracted on human rights violations in dealing with that. Externally China's primary concern remains the future trajectory of Sino - U.S. relations.

Internal Dynamics

Domestic Concerns

There is considerable internal debate on President Xi Jinping's decision to abolish the term limit and do away with Deng's 'Collective Leadership Model', effect of the U.S. economic sanctions on China and social stresses, caused due to rapid urbanisation. Barring some elite Netizens, the majority believe, that leadership continuity is an imperative to weed out corruption and marginalise groups resisting reforms. There is a belief that President Xi Jinping will seek one more term and then hopefully hand over power to a new leader. There is a view that nomination of a successor well in advance has its own flaws, such as, creation of coteries, cliques, parallel power centres and jostling for influence. There are concerns that sustained economic sanctions could bring down China's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), incrementally ranging from 0.3 percent to 1.0 percent. Such a reduction would entail loss of about 10 million jobs in the manufacturing sector and resultant displacement of workers mostly to urban centres. China believes that the U.S. economic sanctions notwithstanding, it would remain the centre of gravity of the global supply chain. In its assessment, the sanctions are bound to hit American consumers and give jitters to the world economy. China intends to mitigate reduction in exports by enhancing domestic consumption.

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Demography and Development

Presently, 60 percent of Chinese population lives in urban areas. Rapid urbanisation has caused socio – economic strain in the society. Most of the government schools in urban areas are over-crowded, with a teacher to student ratio reaching 1:80, and these schools are unable to accommodate more students, as a result, they are being diverted to poorly run and costly private schools. There is acute housing crisis for the young, who earn on an average US $400 a month and support their parents and in most cases even grandparents. The bank mortgage on house loans is extremely high; per person - 25 percent for one house, 50 percent for two houses and 75 percent for three houses.

About 400 million people have transformed from the agriculture sector to industry. President Xi Jinping is focussing on developing industry in the relatively less developed Western and Central parts of China. There is a nationwide campaign of mapping the poorest clusters in every province and allocating resources for their development. Relocation of people from far-flung hamlets to new model cluster villages is underway. There is a drive for collection of more taxes from rich provinces and invest money in the less developed provinces. A new 'Rural-Urban Integration Model' forms

the basis of development through rapid transport corridors and satellite townships. Villagers are being encouraged to create land banks and pool their resources to develop farmhouses and commercial enterprises to generate and share profits for improving living standards. Suburbs of major cities have a number of model villages, farmhouses, restaurants, recreational and conference facilities. The urban people visit these facilities to transact business, as well as experience village life.

Consolidation of Communist Party of China

Communist Party of China (CPC) has 90 million members. Chinese Communist Party (CCP) branches exist down to village level. Senior party members are mandated to identify potential party candidates based on their talent, skills and behaviour. The newly introduced 'Social Credit System' effectively monitors the ideological orientation and behaviour of people. After evaluating their performance, they are granted party membership. Nomination papers are scrutinised and endorsed by select committees, before participation in elections. There is a proper election system for entry into committees at the district, prefecture, province and central level. Chinese ensure that top leadership rises from grass-root levels, village, town, county, prefecture, provinces, under a very well defined appraisal system. President Xi Jinping started his career as deputy of the county. The party and the administration work in tandem to jointly plan and execute development projects. Restructuring of CCP by President Xi Jinping has rendered party factions such as the Youth Communist League, Princelings, Shanghai Gang (Jiang Zemin clique) more of a myth. There is a well-streamlined system of addressing grievances. The constitution permits people to hold protests albeit with prior permission from the police. The aggrieved people can address their complaints to the administration and CCP committees up the chain. 'Inspection and Discipline' committees are effectively dealing with the grievances and disciplining erring officials and party members.

> **The capital of Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), and the Lhasa town can be visited only through Chinese travel companies, which conduct select groups of foreign tourists after obtaining permit from the Foreign Office. The connectivity along the Central Highway and Qinghai is through Tibet Railway (QTR) to Namtso Lake.**

Developments in Tibet

The capital of Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), and the Lhasa town can be visited only through Chinese travel companies, which conduct select groups of foreign tourists after obtaining permit from the Foreign Office. The connectivity along the Central Highway and Qinghai is through Tibet Railway (QTR) to Namtso Lake. Tibet figures prominently in China's strategic calculus; as it is the water tower of Asia, rich in resources, and shares vast borders with India, Nepal and Bhutan. China can use water and the disputed border as a strategic leverage vis-à-vis India. China has adopted a two-prong strategy to assimilate Tibet, i.e. firstly, the massive development of the region and the second, social re-engineering of the Tibetan population. China has developed massive multi-modal connectivity in Tibet. Gonga (65 km from Lhasa), is a modern airport astride Tsangpo River; with frequent flights to different parts of China. There is a regular international flight from Lhasa to Kathmandu. China is funding the construction of Nepal consulate in the Norbulinka complex, where reportedly the old Indian mission was housed before the annexation of Tibet by China. The airport has multiple runways and a portion of the airfield is used for military aircraft. The Central Highway connects the airport with Lhasa town across a 2.5 km long bridge system and a 2.5 km long tunnel system over the Tsangpo River. There are about seven passenger trains from Golmund (Qinghai province) to Lhasa (13 hours journey) and about three from Lhasa to Shigatse (less than three hours travel time), besides several goods trains. People from seven cities in China can travel by train to Lhasa. These trains are painted in disruptive olive green colour, probably keeping their military usage in mind. Nagqu (the mother logistic base in Tibet) is on this line with a number of goods sidings. It is becoming the hub of economic activities in the Tibetan plateau. The Central Highway is being developed into an Expressway. There are a large number of resting

and fuel stations on the way. Stringent accident prevention and rescue facilities are in place at regular intervals. Tourist companies have installed cameras in cabs and drivers are periodically advised to watch speed limits and halt for rests. The mountains in the northern Tibet are ideally suited for conducting third stage acclimatisation of troops and for operation-oriented training for contingencies in the super high altitude region. The road can easily carry two-way heavy and long containers/prime movers. Wi-Fi and mobile connectivity exists in every nook and corner of Tibet.

Lhasa city though having traditional temples and monasteries wears a modern look as it has pubs, discotheque and departmental stores, selling international brands. The modern look is primarily conceived to influence the local people by giving them access to good quality of life, medical facilities and job opportunities so that the traditional lifestyle could be manipulated. Also, the life span has increased from 40 years, a few decades ago, to about 70 years and most of the youth are gainfully employed in airport security, local police, and administration and in the tourism sector. As part of social re-engineering and population control drive, about 20 percent Hans have settled in Tibet. Most of the villagers and nomads have been settled in model village clusters. Schooling till 12th standard is compulsory and Mandarin is compulsory from the first class level and is a criterion for getting government jobs. In fact, majority of youth in Lhasa now speak Mandarin and lure for Tibetan language is fading. Thus, amidst the razzle-dazzle of modernity, Tibetan Buddhists feel a major spiritual deficit and a loss of inheritance. Chinese consider Dalai Lama a splitist for his demand of Greater Tibet that would entail re-constituting the boundaries of four existing Chinese provinces or autonomous regions, Sichuan, Qinghai, Gansu, and Yunnan. Such an idea of redrawing the boundaries on the ethnic lines is deemed as being secessionist and hence it is a Red Line for the CCP leadership.

> China perceives that signing of Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA), Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) and possibly Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) in the near future will make India and the U.S. de-facto strategic allies, which will be inimical to China's interests.

CCP has done away with the system of adopting Lamaism at a young age. The children cannot go to seminaries till they have acquired formal education unto the 12th standard (18 years of age) in the government schools. Also, Chinese have put their own people in the management of Buddhist shrines, who provide a strict oversight on how these shrines are run. China thinks this is necessary to control corruption in the monasteries. The effect of social re-engineering is manifest in the streets of Lhasa, where more youth are attired in swanky dresses playing with their smartphones than dressed in traditional costumes with their fingers on the beads.

Evolving Sino-Indian Relations

Post the Wuhan Summit, China has decided to whip up interaction with India at all levels with a view to gauge and shape India's perceptions. While they respect India's resolve to maintain strategic autonomy, the scepticism about growing strategic proximity between India and the U.S. persists. China perceives that signing of Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA), Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) and possibly Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) in the near future will make India and the U.S. de-facto strategic allies, which will be inimical to China's interests. China, therefore, seeks to improve relations with India, lest it out–rightly falls in the U.S. orbit. Also, China is keenly watching how India and Russia steer their strategic relations and execute recent defence deals in the face of Countering America's Adversaries through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) imposition. In the Chinese view, India wields considerable influence in South Asia and inter alia resorts to coercive strategy, particularly with Nepal, Sri Lanka and Maldives. They felt that India tried to intimidate the outgoing regime in Maldives but without much avail. China would keenly watch how India deals with the new regime in Maldives. There are concerns about politico-economic stability in Pakistan. Given Pakistan's sensitivity vis-à-vis India, there is unlikely to be any significant policy shift in Beijing on Pakistan, which has become a lynchpin in Beijing's South Asia/Indian Ocean Region strategic calculus. There is a yearning to enhance economic engagement with India, particularly on extension of

Nathula trade route to Kolkata, China-Nepal-India Economic Corridor, Bangladesh–China–India–Myanmar (BCIM), connectivity from Kunming to Assam, export of Darjeeling tea and expansion of item list for the border trade.

Conclusion

The Chinese look at the geopolitical issues purely from the prism of their core interests and seem to have hazy understanding of India's core interests and concerns. They candidly admitted the need to interact frequently with India's strategic community to develop a balanced perspective on India. The evolving geopolitical scenario demands that Beijing focuses on the U.S. challenge and avoids any overt confrontation with India. However, the ongoing thaw in the bilateral relations notwithstanding, the Sino-India relations will continue to be characterised by three Cs; Cooperation, Competition and Conflict. China is cognizant of India's growing economic heft and resolve to protect its core interests. Realpolitik on the part of China demands a tactical adjustment to steer relations with India to a manageable level so that the American challenge is mitigated.

South Asia / IOR is virtually the centre of gravity of China's BRI. The successful completion of CPEC, China-Nepal Economic Corridor, China-Myanmar Economic Corridor, Kyakphu port in the Bay of Bengal, Gwadar port in the Arabian Sea and critical infrastructure in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives (the Maritime Silk Road signatories) is bound to alter the strategic landscape of the region to China's advantage. India and China will compete for domination of resources, location and influence. Structural factors in the relationship suggest that Sino-Indian relations will be marked by intensified competition. There is a widening gap in the comprehensive national power of India and China. Beijing is constantly gaining a competitive advantage in the strategic balance vis-a-vis New Delhi. India needs to have a nuanced understanding of the new "modus vivendi" with China. It should be deft in its assertions to make China understand and heed India's core interests and sensitivities. In the meanwhile, India should use the window of heightened strategic brinkmanship between China and the U.S. to build capacities to reclaim influence in the strategic neighbourhood and acquire a favourable strategic posture vis-à-vis China. Concurrently, measures to build strategic trust, complementarities and interdependence with China must continue with dignity and sincerity. Finally, India must heed the Theodore Roosevelt maxim, "speak softly and carry a big stick; you will go far". For India this implies achieving credible deterrence and showing deft diplomacy in engaging China.

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Doctrinal Shift: Decoding China's Way of War Fighting

Maj Gen (Dr) GG Dwivedi, SM, VSM & Bar (Retd)@

Abstract

Chinese leaders are known to have penchant for nations history. To decode China's doctrine and its ways of war fighting, it is imperative to have a deeper understanding of its strategic culture. Hard power, an important component of Chinese concept of 'Comprehension National Power' (CNP) has been frequently employed by its leadership in pursuit of national interests. Beijing has continuously refined its war-fighting doctrines in consonance with prevailing security environment. Its current military doctrine of "Local War under Informationisation Conditions" is well aligned to further nation's quest to acquire superpower status. China's rapidly growing military capability under President Xi Jinping has serious implications for the global polity.

Genesis

The Chinese thinkers have a great sense of history, vindicated by an old proverb; "Farther you look back-further you look ahead". Thought process of Chinese leadership continues to be influenced by ancient wisdom, deeply rooted in four and half millennium old civilization. Hence, to comprehend the essence of China's doctrinal architecture and decode its ways of warfighting, it is imperative to gain insight into its history and strategic culture.

In the Confucian doctrine, *Guanxi* implies reciprocal relationship based on 'network of balanced interactions' amongst the states[1]. *Yizhan* on the other hand, pertains to 'tenets of righteous warfare'- a concept which emerged during the turbulent 'Spring-Autumn' period (770-476 BCE). Whereas, Sun Zi 'doctrine of legalism' enunciated in the classic 'Art of War' set in the Warring Period' (475-221 BCE) propounded military as an instrument to rein in the adversary. Traditionally, Chinese strategic thinking professed that best way to respond to threat was by eliminating it; stressing the value of violent solutions to conflict, with preference to offensive over defensive strategies. No surprise, China used force eight times during the period 1950-85.

During the 'Imperial Era', Chinese security strategy was centred on the defence of heartland, encompassing plains of Yellow River in the North and Yangze River in the South, against threat emanating from bordering regions namely Xinjiang, Mongolia (both Outer and Inner), erstwhile Manchuria and Tibet. The basic strategy was a mix of border defence and employment of coercive and non-coercive means[2]. China remained unified except for two brief periods (220-589 AD and 907-960 AD) when it was fragmented. Besides, there were two non-Han dynasties; (Yuan 1279-1368 and Qing 1644-1910). The Chinese strategists harbour a firm belief that their country was more secure when internally strong, with subdued neighbourhood, ensuring peaceful periphery.

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Chinese emperors sought tribute from weaker nations, pursuing expansionist and hegemonic policies. It was due to the weakness of the Qing Dynasty and continental mind-set that China lost its prime position. The Chinese attribute their nation's suffering during the 'century of humiliation'; period from First Opium War (1839-42) to1949, primarily to twin factors i.e. internal unrest and foreign aggression (*Nei Luan-Wai Huan*).

China's military strategic culture lays great emphasis on Shi i.e. strategic configuration of power to achieve specific objectives. Aim is not to seek annihilation but relative deployment of own resources to gain position of advantage or 'strategic encirclement, as in the game wei qi[3]. China's latest grand initiatives, namely the 'Belt-Road' and 'Maritime Silk Route' are adaptions of this strategy. Surprise and deception marked by unpredictability are the inherent component of Chinese stratagem. Every move is thought through on the checker board. Negotiation process is always long drawn-to force a favourable deal.

Even today, Chinese military handbooks routinely refer to old classics and battles fought some four thousand years back. A case in point is Dr Henry Kissinger's narration about Chairman Mao briefing his commanders on the eve of '1962-Sino-Indian War' in his seminal book 'On China'. Mao recalled that China and India had fought one and half wars earlier. First one was during the Tang Dynasty when Wang Xuanxe led Sino-Tibetan force against King Harshavardhana's rebellious successor to avenge humiliation in 649 AD. The 'Half War' was Timurlane ransacking Delhi, some 700 years later. The historic lesson, as Mao put it; "Post China's interventions, the two countries enjoyed long period of peace and harmony. But to do so, China had to use force to 'knock' India back to negotiation table"[4].

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Chinese defence doctrines post 1949 have been based on the grand strategy, factoring national objectives and threat perceptions, drawing richly from the past. Its war fighting ways have continuously evolved, marked by major doctrinal shift. In the earlier stages, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) was constrained to fight with whatever weapons that were available. Over a period of time, with Chinese capability to produce high-tech systems, it is now the doctrine which drives the choice of weapons.

The paper delves into the dynamic process of China's doctrinal shift, its capacity building and ways to prosecute the future wars.

Doctrinal Shift-Since 1949

During the four decades period from 1911-49, China as a Republic made tectonic transition from Imperial Era to a Communist State - the People's Republic of China (PRC). The architect of this shift was the Communist Party of China (CCP). Established in 1921, under Mao, its main stay was 'peasant revolution'. The highlight of Communists eight years 'civil war' campaign culminating in successful revolution in 1949 was the national power; its key components being the political agenda, mass support and propaganda machine[5].

China has long theoretical and historical tradition of seeking asymmetric responses to strategic challenges. The concept of asymmetric warfare originated with Sun Zu emphasizing numerous strategies to defeat the enemy, later Mao propagating the 'people's war' concept of exploiting the masses.

China's Doctrinal Shift - 1949 Onwards

2005 onwards			Local war under informationalized conditions
1991-2004		Local war under modern high-tech conditions	
1979-1990	Peoples' war/ limited war under modern conditions		
1949-1978	People's war		
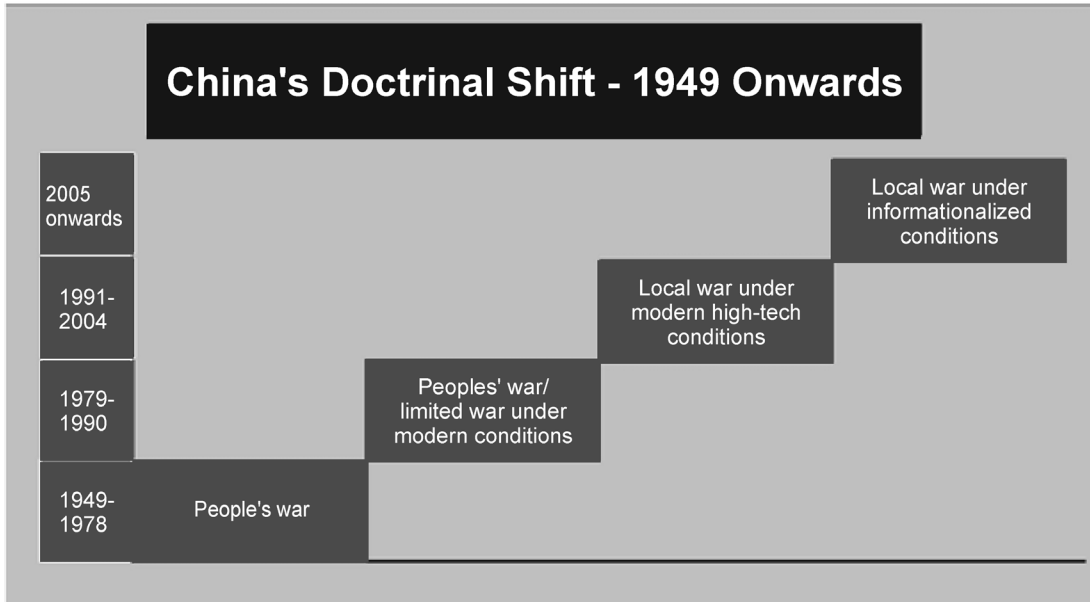
People's War (1949-78)

Mao's 'People's War' doctrine was driven by the vital national interests i.e. unity, security and economic progress, premised on the defence of hinterland. It was configured around the notion of 'total war' which included employment of nuclear weapons by the adversary. Defensive in nature, it was to be fought by luring enemy deep into Chinese territory, causing attrition in a gradual manner, trading space for time, characterised by mass employment of regular troops to make up for inferior weapon systems, with heavy reliance on militia forces.

> In pursuit of the 'People's War' Doctrine, Mao went in for limited war against ill prepared India in 1962, to keep the neighbour restrained. Again in 1969, with border tension leading to Ussuri River skirmish (Damanski-Zhenbao Islands), Mao took on President Brezhnev.

Mao's strategy was a combination of 'Protraction and Attrition'; implied diplomatic manoeuvre with the strong and coercion against weak. In 1949, PRC aligned with erstwhile Soviet Union to ward off threat from Japan. In October 1950, PLA marched into Tibet, re-establishing Chinese control to ensure stable periphery. Around the same time, perceiving Mac Arthur's advance across the 38th Parallel as threat to the mainland, China jumped into the Korean War. In pursuit of the 'People's War' Doctrine, Mao went in for limited war against ill prepared India in 1962, to keep the neighbour restrained. Again in 1969, with border tension leading to Ussuri River skirmish (Damanski-Zhenbao Islands), Mao took on President Brezhnev. By openly challenging Soviet Union, China was able to set stage for reconciliation with America to imbalance the adversary.

People's War/Local War under Modern Conditions (1979-90)

In February 1979, China launched a massive attack on Vietnam to reassert its control over the latter, in pursuit of its 'peaceful periphery' policy. It was in keeping with its aggressive strategy of using force to achieve political objectives. PLA performed poorly which led to review of its doctrine and structures This also coincided with Deng Xiaoping's 'four modernisations' drive launched in December 1978. The new military doctrine-"People's War under Modern Conditions" was focused on mitigation of threat from the Soviet Union. Earlier concept centred on defence was revised in favour of mobile warfare, with pre-eminence of modern weapons in war fighting. Towards the mid-1980s, with the gradual decline of Soviet Union and change of threat perception, there was again a strategic review, resulting in the formulation of new doctrine of "Local War under Modern Conditions".

Local War under High Tech Conditions (1991-2004)

The high intensity '1991 Gulf War' and changed international situation were key factors for PLA to initiate major doctrinal reforms during the 1990s. In 1995, the Central Military Commission (CMC) the highest military body put forth 'New Generation Operation Regulations' (xin yidai zhuozhan tiaoling) to 'fight and win future wars'. The two transformations (liangge zhuanbian) sought to make Chinese military undergo metamorphoses; first-from an Army preparing to fight and win 'local wars under ordinary conditions' to fight and win 'local wars under high-tech conditions' and second-to transform the armed forces from one based on quality to one based on quality. An important component of the new doctrine was the concept of 'War Zone Campaign' (WZC)". More offensive in design; 'active defence' being the core element, it encompassed controlled space and time, deployment of Rapid Reaction Forces (RRFs) and combined arms operations.[6] It envisioned prosecution of future campaigns under 'Unified Joint Services Command' guided by the CMC.

China's White Papers act as authentic indicators of doctrinal shift since the late 1990s. The first 'White Paper' was released in July 1998 titled "China's National Defence[7]". It was for the first time that PRC systematically expounded on its defence policies and explicitly expressed its new outlook on security. Second 'White Paper' followed two years later which laid stress on China's priorities in safeguarding sovereignty and territorial integrity. Another 'White Paper' on 'China's National Defence' was released in December 2002 which brought China's core national interests as the fundamental basis for formulation of the defence policy. The 'Gulf War 2003' demonstrated the importance of 'mechanisation' and 'informationisation'. In 2004, President Hu Jintao laid down revised mandate for the military; "to win local wars under informationised conditions".Consequently, the 2004 'White Paper' propounded the idea of dual historic mission of 'mechanisation and informationisation', besides delving on the concept of 'Revolution in Military Affairs' (RMA) with Chinese characteristics[8].

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Local War under Informationised Conditions (2005 onwards)

The first decade of the new millennium was perceived by the Chinese strategic community as the 'critical period of multi-polarisation' leading to the review of national security strategy, dealt in the 'White Paper' released in 2006. As per threat assessment by the security experts, probability of full-scale external aggression was unlikely in the near terms. However, in the future conflicts, the PLA would be faced with technologically superior adversary. Therefore, the idea behind reframing national doctrine from 'high-tech conditions' to 'informationised conditions' was on the assumption that through informationised conditions, technologically superior adversary could be defeated.

Chinese military doctrine of 'Local Wars under Informationised Conditions' has two components. 'Local Wars' envision short swift engagements with limited military objectives in pursuit of larger political aim. 'Informationised Conditions' refers to the penetration of technology into all walks of modern life, but specific to war fighting includes IT, digital and 'artificial intelligence' applications. It implies network-centric environment and waging information operations to ensure battlefield domination. In essence, the aim is to achieve complete security of PLA networks while totally paralyzing that of adversary's. This encompasses electronic warfare along with psychological warfare and deception to attack enemy's Command, Control, Communications, Computer, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (C4ISR) systems, employing both hard and soft kills.

The concept of 'informationisation' is broad-based, all-inclusive and gives prominence to information ascendency as the decisive determinant and the key battle-winning factor. Salient operational facets of 'Limited War under Modern

Informationised Conditions' include induction of high-tech force multipliers, network centricity, Information Warfare (IW), jointness and interoperability, control of outer space, integrated forward logistics system and ideal man-machine mix.

Decoding - China's Ways of War Fighting

As evident from the above, the Communist leadership has continuously reviewed the war fighting doctrines in consonance with prevailing security environment. To visualise the future course, it is important to analyse the rationale behind path-breaking military reforms initiated by President Xi Jinping over the last five years. On assuming the mantle of the Fifth Generation leadership in 2012, President Xi unfolded 'China Dream' (*fixing*-restoration) which envisions 'powerful and prosperous' China. To translate his 'China Dream' into reality, he outlined twin objectives; first to become 'fully modern economy by 2035' and acquire 'great power status by 2049'. President Xi Jinping foresees China to be the key player in shaping the new world order with Chinese characteristics. Alongside stability and economic progress, sovereignty is a glue to foster nationalism. It implies security of periphery and integration of Taiwan and other claimed territories with the motherland, wherein use of force remains an option.

The sense of urgency with which President Xi Jinping initiated the transformational process could be attributed to the geopolitical considerations - U.S. strategy of rebalancing to Asia-Pacific being a major factor. The underlying rationale behind the critical reforms was twofold; firstly prepare the military for China's expanding global role and secondly, establish Party's firm control over the PLA through the revamped CMC. The Ninth 'White Paper' on 'National Defence' published in May 2015 was titled 'China's Military Strategy'. Its focus is on building strong national defence and powerful armed forces as a security guarantee for China's peaceful development. The theme is 'active defence' and stress remains on winning 'local wars under conditions of modern technology'[9]. Priority has been accorded to Navy and Air Force vis-à-vis the ground forces. It also marked a shift in the naval strategy from 'off shore waters defence' to combined strategy of 'off shore waters defence and open sea protection' to secure its maritime interests. Establishment of 'Air Defence Identification Zone' (AIDZ) is in sync with the new strategy.

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Salient facets of China's future was fighting are as under[10]:-

➢ Adopt holistic approach to balance 'war preparation' and 'war prevention', create favourable posture, resolutely deter and 'win informationised local wars'.

➢ Respond to multi-directional security threats; adhere to principles of flexibility and mobility to facilitate concentration of superior forces while ensuring self- dependence.

➢ Employ integrated combat forces to prevail in system-vs-system operations, featuring information dominance, precision strikes and joint operations.

➢ Plan for strategic deployment and military dispositions to clearly divide areas of responsibility, with the ability to support each other as organic whole i.e. reorientate from 'theatre' to 'trans-theatre' operations.

➢ Build a modern system of military forces with Chinese characteristics and constantly enhance capabilities.

➢ Continue to pursue the strategy of "Nibbling and Negotiating" (*yi bian dan, yi bian da* -talking and fighting concurrently); case in point, its actions in the South China Sea.

➤ As part of defence diplomacy, expand military cooperation with major powers and neighbouring countries, for the establishment of regional security framework.

To align the specific services potential with the above strategic direction, salient advances in the armaments are designed to achieve domination in the field of information warfare, anti-radiation missiles, electronic attack drones, direct energy weapons, airborne early warning control system, anti-satellite weapons and cyber army under the 'Strategic Support Force'[11]. Even the focus of the Chinese military publications dealing with new modes of war fighting is on jointness and space-based operations. Information based operations are an on-going process, conducted even during the peace time, which could prove a valuable asset during the times of conflict.

Key Result Areas (KRAs) for the services have been clearly defined in keeping with the higher strategic direction. PLA Army (PLAA) is required to reorient from 'theatre defence' and adapt to precise 'trans-theatre mobility' missions. PLA Navy (PLAN) while gradually shifting focus to 'offshore waters defence with open sea protection' is required to build a combined, multi-functional and efficient maritime force structures. PLA Air Force (PLAFF) in line with the strategic requirements to execute informationised operations is to create requisite structures to ensure transition from erstwhile territorial air defence to building air-space capabilities. Besides it is also expected to boost early warning, air strike, information counter measures and force projection potential.

The 'Rocket Force' is adopting transformational measures through reliance on technology upgrades; enhance safety and reliability of missile systems both nuclear and conventional, thus strengthening strategic deterrence. The 'Strategic Support Force' is to deal with challenges in the outer space and secure the national space assets. Besides, it is also required to expedite the development of 'Cyber Force' by enhancing situational awareness and security of national information networks.

> **At the macro level, major changes have been instituted with focus on civil-military integration, jointness and speedy decision-making process. With the redefined role, CMC is now responsible for formulating policies, controlling all the military assets and higher direction of war.**

Systems and structures have been revamped across the board. At the macro level, major changes have been instituted with focus on civil-military integration, jointness and speedy decision-making process. With the redefined role, CMC is now responsible for formulating policies, controlling all the military assets and higher direction of war. As a sequel to the military reforms, the Theatre Commanders directly report to the CMC.

At the operational level, erstwhile 17 odd Army, Air Force and Naval commands have been reorganised into five 'Theatre Commands' (TCs); Eastern, Western, Central, Northern and Southern. With all the war fighting resources in each battle zone placed under one commander ensures seamless synergy in deploying land, air, naval and strategic assets in a given theatre. In addition, 84 corps level organisations have been created including 13 operational corps, as well as training and logistics installations. Given the sensitivity of Korean Peninsula and disputed islands territories, the deployment is biased towards Eastern and Northern Theatres. The broad area of responsibility of the reorganised TCs is as under:-

❖ Eastern–Nanjing   (Taiwan, East China Sea)   - 71, 72 & 73 Corps

❖ Southern–Guangzhou   (Vietnam and South China Sea)   - 74 &75 Corps

❖ Western–Chengdu   (India & Internal Security)   - 76 &77 Corps

❖ Northern–Shenyang   (Korean Peninsula & Russia)   - 78, 79 & 80 Corps

❖ Central–Beijing   (Internal Security & Reserves)   - 81, 82 & 83 Corps

China's naval strategy in the Western Pacific is to counter U.S. aircraft carrier-based assets by concentrating on the nuclear-powered stealth submarines, littoral class surface ships and land-based anti-ship cruise missiles DF-21D (high precision heavy warhead aircraft carrier killers). It is also known to have deployed DF-26 Missiles, 'Guam Killer' with a range of 5500 km. Besides Liaoning, three more aircraft carriers are expected to join PLAN soon. Current fleet of 62 submarines is expected to add another 15 boats in the near future.

To make the armed forces nimbler, a reduction of 300,000 rank and file, mostly from non-combatant positions has been ordered which will downsize the PLA to around to 1.8 million. To support capacity building in pursuit of its envisioned warfighting, adequate budgetary support has been provided with substantial periodic increase in the defence expenditure. The defence allocations for the year 2018 was pegged at $ 175 bn[12]. (Taking into account the hidden expenditure, the actual figures are much higher).

Conclusion

But for China, no other country can claim to link its ancient classics and dictums of strategic thoughts to its present statesmanship. This is evident from the singular uniqueness of PRC leadership, which as a matter of practice, invokes principles of warfare from events dating back to thousands of years. As a result, its national defence policies are deeply impacted by the nation's strategic culture.

> **President Jiang Zemin had stated - "PRC should first turn itself into a powerful country if it intends to make a greater contribution to progress of mankind and world peace". The grand strategy of the PLA here on, was based on the key assumption that economic prosperity will afford China greater international influence, diplomatic leverage and robust modern military.**

The Chinese strategic community has continuously reviewed its war-fighting strategies inconsonance with the international security environment, resulting in periodic doctrinal shifts. Mao Zedong, the architect of 1949 Communist Revolution propounded the concept of 'People's War', as major security concern then was the defence of hinterland. As a sequel to the strategic review undertaken towards the early 1980s, it was perceived that while major wars were unlikely, yet China getting involved in the limited local conflicts remained high. Consequently, 'modern conditions' was added to 'People's War' doctrine. Large scale restructuring of defence forces was undertaken as part of the 'Four Modernisations'.

A decade later, given the seismic changes in global arena and technology intensive operations by the US during the '1991 Gulf War' led to China initiating major doctrinal reforms. By the late 1990's, PLA operationalised the revised doctrine; "Local Wars under High-Tech Conditions". It is around this time that former President Jiang Zemin had stated- "PRC should first turn itself into a powerful country if it intends to make a greater contribution to progress of mankind and world peace". The grand strategy of the PLA here on, was based on the key assumption that economic prosperity will afford China greater international influence, diplomatic leverage and robust modern military.

The year 2005 witnessed yet another shift in the Chinese war fighting doctrine as both during the '2003 Gulf War' and Kosovo conflict, importance of mechanisation and informationisation was duly highlighted. Hence, the rationale behind reframing the doctrine from 'High-Tech' to 'Informationised Conditions' was the conviction of the Chinese strategists that through the 'Informationisation' ascendency, it was possible to defeat a technologically superior adversary. Whereas mechanisation was to provide foundation, informationisation was the driving force.

Deep rooted military reforms initiated by President Xi Jinping since 2013 has provided major impetus towards operationalisation of "Local Wars under Informationised Conditions" Doctrine. Focus of 'Ninth White Paper' is on winning 'local wars in conditions of modern technology'. President Xi Jinping commenced his second term in 2018 by exhorting the 2.3 million strong PLA to be combat ready and focus on 'how to win wars'. He has laid down 2035 as the

timeline for PLA to transform into a modern fighting force, at par with Western Armies, fully capable of supporting China's global role.

The impact of China's doctrinal shift and its growing war waging potential is evident from Beijing's growing assertiveness, in pursuit of its strategic interests. The latest Pentagon Report has sounded alarm on China's relentless drive for global expansion, both by military and non-military means. PRC is on a spree to acquire string of military bases, especially in the Indian Ocean Region. This will enable PLA to project power to enhance its strategic footprint and emerge as a pre-eminent power in the Indo-Pacific region. As per Dan Taylor, senior US defence intelligence analyst, China is rapidly building robust and lethal force with capabilities spanning the ground, air, maritime, space and information domains, designed to enable Beijing to impose its will in the region and beyond[13].

For India the implications are serious given its complex relations with China. While India is not in position to match China's fast expanding military and economic clout, it is also constrained to join any grouping such as the 'Quad' with US, Japan and Australia so as not to antagonise China. Above paradox notwithstanding, India has no option but to revamp its military preparedness and scale up its defence budget to thwart any misadventures as Doklam type of situations could be a new normal. Delhi also has to have its long term policy in place to emerge as an important player in the Indo-Pacific.

In the Chinese concept of 'Comprehensive National Power' (CNP), hard power is a key component. Its military culture lays immense emphasis on 'strategic configuration of power' to create favourable disposition of forces and exploit asymmetric edge. PRC has set course to emerge as a superpower by the mid of this Century, with its military's doctrine fully aligned to support the grand design. Hence, it is vital for the global polity particularly the neighbourhood to follow PRC's war fighting doctrinal developments closely as Communist leadership narrative on nation's rise to be peaceful-defies its past legacy.

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Decoding Chinese Strategy of Combating Three Evils

Maj Gen SB Asthana, SM, VSM (Retd)@

Abstract

China has adopted a unique strategy of combating the "Three Evils" namely "terrorism, separatism, and religious extremism". The threat of three evils is perceived from the ethnic minorities - mainly Uighurs of Xinjiang and Tibetans, who are mostly concentrated in Western fringes of the Han, dominated China, (with only 7.1 percent ethnic minorities). Some of the components of its strategy are no different than other countries who are struggling with similar problems like granting autonomy, inclusive development to include infrastructure, social needs, economic and financial inclusion of population. There is a vast difference in Chinese strategy - like shaping external environment by linking the aid being given to some countries in neighborhood, with their efforts in addressing Beijing's concerns of 'Three Evils'. The components of Chinese strategy drawing maximum controversy of Human Rights (HR) violations, which include control over freedom of exercising religious practices of suspected communities, keeping alarming number of people in glorified imprisonment (under the camouflage of re-education camps) and separating the children from parents on the pretext of education (to imbibe Chinese characteristics). They also undertake psychological transformation of population and make legislative changes, and then justify it as a security need. Changing hierarchical structure and social engineering in Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), tweaking education system to change social profiling, irreversible demographic changes, exhaustive surveillance and mental profiling using artificial intelligence are part of the strategy. China can afford such a strategy being a communist country with no room for dissent, but it is not a model to replicate in any modern democratic society.

When China coined the terminology of the 'Three Evils' to be combatted against, namely "terrorism, separatism, and religious extremism", and sold this narrative at the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit at Tashkent on June 11, 2010, to the leaders of SCO, it was willingly agreed upon. The narrative was sold under the overarching idea of organizing joint efforts against terrorism, separatism and extremism, to ensure peace and security in the region as the first priority[1], which looked quite benign. At that point of time, China was battling with violent ethnic unrest in Xinjiang Autonomous province. This idea of combating 'Three Evils' is being frequently used by China, not only to seek cooperation from the Western neighbours against independence movements in restive Xinjiang, but also for smooth implementation of Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) projects, as its progress and security can be adversely affected by it. A deeper look to decode "Chinese strategy of combating three evils" is being attempted in this paper.

Demographic Profiling of China

A White Paper issued by the Information Office of the State Council of China on 28 February 2005[2], reiterates that out of the fifty-six ethnic groups identified in China, fifty-five (other than the Han) are 'relatively small; hence customarily

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referred to as "ethnic minorities". It quotes the fifth national census of 2000, in which the total population of the fifty-five ethnic minority groups was recorded as 104.49 million, which was 8.41 percent of the total population of the Peoples Republic of China (PRC). Chinese population profile, therefore, makes it overwhelmingly a Han Chinese state with 91.6 percent population and Zhuang 1.3 percent (2010 census). Out of the remaining 7.1 percent population bracketed as others include Hui, Manchu, Uighur, Miao, Yi, Tujia, Tibetan, Mongol, Dong, Buyei, Yao, Bai, Korean, Hani, Li, Kazakh, Dai and other nationalities. The analogy of three evils is more applicable to the minorities with restive tendencies located at the fringes of China, closer to Western border areas, which as per Chinese perception were prone to external influences, had lesser influence of heartland, located in difficult terrain and relatively lesser developed areas. This indicates that the density of ethnic minorities, as well as their restiveness, keeps increasing as the distance from developed eastern sea board and Beijing increases; hence western fringes, with Xinjiang is most restive, followed by Tibet.

Backdrop of Restive Xinjiang and Tibet Problem

Xinjiang. Historically, to summarise the problem, Xinjiang was keenly contested by various Turkic groups, Mongols and Chinese until the 18th century, when the Chinese Qing Dynasty brought it under its control. Later it remained under Russian influence after the fall of the Qing Dynasty in 1912. The Soviet Union supported an Uighur-led separatist East Turkestan Republic there in 1944-1949, till Communists took over PRC. As Chinese tightened control over the local people of Xinjiang, over half-million Uighurs fled to Central Asian Republics (CAR) and got in contact with Muslim radicals from other countries. Protests against Chinese showed significant increase in 1990s. China reacted forcefully, leading to clashes like the one in 1997 in Yining, followed by execution of some of the alleged separatists. Xinjiang became a center of ethnic tension, with repeated violent clashes, bombings and riots since 2007. Coinciding with the Olympic Games in Beijing, protests resumed in March 2008 in Urumqi, Hotan and Kashgar. Xinjiang again became the focus of global human right organisations in July 2009, with fierce clashes between Uighurs and Han Chinese in Urumqi leaving over 200 Uighurs killed. This led to the Chinese government sending large numbers of troops to control the situation. At least 1,000 rioters clashed with the police after days of rising tensions between Muslim Uighurs and Han Chinese[3].

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Xinjiang currently houses over 47 ethnic groups mainly the Uighur, Han, Kazak, Tajiks, Hui, Mongolian, Kirgiz, Xibe, Tajik, Ozbek, Manchu, Daur, Tatar and Russian, and continues to witness the influx of Han Chinese over many decades. It is home to at least 11 million Muslim Uighurs, constituting the largest segment of population (about 45 percent). 90 percent of Uighurs are concentrated in Southern Xinjiang; hence they have links with militant groups of Afghanistan-Pakistan (AF-Pak) region. They speak Asian Turkic language, practice moderate form of Sunni Islamic religion and continue to fight for an independent East Turkistan since last 150 years. Han Chinese account for 40 percent of the population of Xinjiang, excluding large number of troops located there and unregistered migrants, making it much more than recorded numbers. Chinese continue to move Han Chinese to Xinjiang and insist on their assimilation to change the demography in favour of Hans, bulk of them residing in Northern Xinjiang along hub of communication to CAR, along BRI Corridors.

Tibet. After annexation of Tibet in 1950, a large number of Tibetans fled to various countries, with major chunk getting into India. Since the Tibetan uprising in 1959, India is host to thousands of Tibetan refugees, including the 14th Dalai Lama, their tallest Buddhist leader. The Government in exile in Dharmsala under him continues to remain a bone of contention between India and China. The Buddhist monks in Tibet have been protesting against their annexation,

demographic changes, religious interference, environment issues and sinicisation in general. The degree of restiveness in Tibet in last few decades has been varying from moderate to intense involving self-immolation by Buddhist monks indicating extreme disgust. 2008 saw one of the fierce clashes between Tibetan Buddhist monks and Chinese Security Forces leaving few Tibetans dead, but the security forces could quell the dissent. Chinese, however, consider this area as restive with separatist tendencies (although lesser than Xinjiang) and continue to monitor it rigorously. China has added additional police stations in Tibet to maintain social stability, on the excuse of providing security and safety residents and tourists.

Insecurities of Communist China to Three Evils

Chinese believe that the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM), now being called as Turkistan Islamic Party (TIP)/ Turkistan Islamic Movement (TIM), which has links with al-Qaeda and Tehriq-e –Taliban Pakistan (TTP), are responsible for such militant activities in Xinjiang. They keep the region restive with spurge of violence at regular intervals. 2013 saw another upsurge in violence in Kashgar leaving 21 dead, followed by similar actions in 2014. There are some exiled Uyghur groups accused by China of exaggerating the controlling actions of the Government as oppression like World Uyghur Congress (WYC), set up in Germany in 2004 by followers of Rebiya Kadeer[4]. The WYC describes itself as a nonviolent, peaceful movement opposing Chinese occupation of East Turkestan, and advocates rejection of totalitarianism, religious intolerance and terrorism as an instrument of policy. China continues to show concern over growing radicalisation in Xinjiang with international connections and support to Uyghur Muslim communities. The use of electronic media for communications, propaganda under the cover of anonymity is gaining grounds in Xinjiang, duly inspired by the success of methodology of recruitment and operation of Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS). The ISIS after its dissipation in Iraq and Syria is looking at Xinjiang as a region to regroup-is another challenge to reckon with for China.

> China realises that BRI cannot be executed unless the ethnic unrest and militancy in Xinjiang is under control and surface transportation can operate smoothly. Insurgency prone Xinjiang is a weak link in BRI; hence effective control over militant organisations of Uighurs is a must, even if it amounts to change in demography, lifestyle, and manipulation of their religious habits.

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Strategy to Fight Three Evils

In formulating the strategy for fighting the three evils there are certain measures adopted by China, which are common to many countries struggling with terrorism, separatism, and religious extremism. Two such measures are highlighted below.

Regional Autonomy

The White Paper issued by the Information Office of the State Council on 28 February 2005,[5] indicates clearly that Chinese do rely on the existing structures of regional autonomy including Xinjiang and Tibet. Regional autonomy is 'critical to enhancing equality, unity and mutual assistance among different ethnic groups, upholding national unification, and development' says the White paper.

Development Strategy

In the case of China the 'Western Area Development Strategy' or 'Go West Strategy' was launched in 2000, to accelerate the development of China's Western region and ethnic autonomous areas. This grand strategy covers five autonomous regions, 30 autonomous prefectures and 83 of the 120 autonomous counties. It has been followed up by the 'Action plan on the BRI' released on March 30, 2015[6], which includes development in its Western Areas as domestic compulsion, besides its international, strategic and military dimensions. It indicates long term Chinese strategy of integrating the restive Xinjiang and Tibet. Besides infrastructure projects like the West-East Gas Pipeline, Power Transmission Project, Qinghai–Tibet Railway, highway projects, airports in Xinjiang and Tibet, preferential financial support including subsidies, tax benefits and special funding for minority areas, have been some appeasing measures. The claims of Chinese are impressive, because improvements in infrastructure of the Western regions are visible, but most of the locals feel that bulk of these facilities and concessions are being enjoyed by Han population and have been made to encourage them to settle there to change the demography.

How is Chinese Strategy to Combat Three Evils Different from Others?

Shaping External Environment

Chinese President Hu Jintao, during the first meeting with Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf in 2003, said that both nations must battle the "three forces" -- extremism, ethnic separatism and terrorism[7]. It was in context of some of separatist Muslims from Xinjiang trained in al - Qaeda camps in Pakistan. Erstwhile President Hu Jintao linked it with assistance to Pakistan, thus tried to get Musharraf on board to prevent his soil being used to train ETIM. The attempt was not successful as sporadic incidents like Uighur women caught with explosive in a flight immediately prior to Beijing Olympics having linkage with al Qaeda was noticed. In the Lal Masjid takeover, when Muslim extremists kidnapped Chinese in Islamabad, China quickly pressurised Musharraf to launch military operation on the mosque in order to free the Chinese hostages. It is learnt that President Musharraf held a meeting with various imams/ religious leaders and urged them to work for the betterment of China[8].

> China continued working with its neighbours to step up the fight against the "The Three Evil Forces"[9], in many forums including SCO. It started linking its assistance to CAR countries also with the efforts in addressing Chinese concerns in Xinjiang. Lately, China has been working with Afghanistan to assist in setting up a brigade size military base in the Wakhan Corridor to restrict movement of terrorists to Xinjiang.

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Hard Hand with No Velvet Gloves

Chinese Policy to deal with the ethnic unrest in Xinjiang has been a mixture of extremely hard action, sidelining all human right organisations, along with some inclusive development, visible infrastructure progress, demographic changes and well planned long term indoctrination of population. The media reports point out Chinese government's crackdown on Uighur Muslim population of Xinjiang, involving mass detention and re-education of Uighurs and

other predominantly Muslim ethnic minorities. A United Nations panel on racial discrimination recently cited "credible reports" that as many as one million Muslims in Xinjiang are being detained[10]. China has denied the crackdown justifying that the citizens guilty of minor offences were sent to vocational centres.

Re-education or Psychological Transformation

China's muscular approach to de-radicalisation of these violent groups, as national security need, has remained under cover due to strict media censorship. In the recent past, UN Human right organisations are voicing against restrictions placed on Muslim community, in practicing their religious customs/needs. It is learnt that a large number of children of Uyghurs have been separated from their parents and sent to boarding school to provide Chinese oriented education as part of long term indoctrination. The nature of preventive strategies undertaken to control vulnerable individuals against the lure of terrorist cause are peculiar to China. It remains to be seen whether these strategies are useful in de-radicalizing or are counter-productive, leading to further hatred towards the state, creating a situation ready to explode anytime, whenever the grip of occupation force in the form of PLA and PAPF gets loose.

China feels that Uighur Diasporas in U.S. and other locations and Human Right Organisations like Human Rights Watch (HRW), Washington-based Uighur Human Rights Project (UHRP), are inciting the terror groups. Notwithstanding, the above the information War and perception management will continue by Chinese as well as Uighurs and their sympathisers to influence the region.

Legislative Changes

Xinjiang People's Congress passed China's first legislation to prevent terrorism in the region on 01 April 2017. It prohibits people of Xinjiang from wearing full-face coverings and long beards, and thirteen other behaviors involving religious practices and dietary regulations like having halal. Chinese feel that it will be able to check/control extremist activities. As per them "The new regulation mainly focuses on prevention and education rather than punishment"[11]. The violators will be dealt with according to China's Anti-Terrorism Law and Criminal Law, after due caution. Xinjiang has become China's main battleground in the fight against terrorism and

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the penetration of extremism from abroad. Earlier this month, President Xi Jinping called for a "great wall of iron" to safeguard Xinjiang[12].

In a bid to make Islam more compatible with socialism, Beijing has passed a law to "implement measures to Sinicize" Islam within the next five years. The move came after the Chinese government officials met with the representatives from eight Islamic associations, as per reports published in the Global Times. Practicing Islam is illegal in some pockets of China. People caught fasting; praying, growing a beard or wearing a hijab may attract arrest.

Change in Hierarchical Structure and Social Engineering in TAR

China has consistently made efforts to change Tibetan hierarchical structure, to have religious leaders supporting Beijing, besides structured administration monitoring them. In recent years the demographic pattern of TAR has appreciably changed in favour of Hans. Hans constitute a major chunk of population in Lhasa and are encouraged to settle in other cities of TAR. The tourism industry in TAR, tightly controlled by the Hans is heavily concentrated in the Han-dominated urban areas. The 'Go-West' campaign also includes sending Chinese graduates to Tibet. Chinese have instructed all conscripts posted in TAR to apply for change of residential registration, which will facilitate the de-

mobilised cadres (approximately 50,000 every year) in finding employment in TAR. During the 12th Five-Year Plan (2011-15), 2.6 billion Yuan was invested in public cultural projects in Tibet. [13]

Long Term Psychological Transformation

On 15 Oct 02, in a conference named "National Education to Aid Tibet' made education compulsory up-to ninth grade to be achieved by 2010. Reportedly, US $ 54 million have been spent to promote education in TAR, yet the officially quoted illiteracy rate is more than 40 percent, which is higher than any other region of China even now. Chinese has been made as the medium of instruction in schools, which will necessitate more number of Han tutors to come from the hinterland, thus helping Sinicisation. The Chinese have resorted to closing down Tibetan schools teaching traditional Tibetan language. Educational projects with Chinese characteristics are measures to change the psyche of younger generation.

As per Tibet Daily reports, the Autonomous Communist Party Commission had improved the management of 1,787 temples in Tibet since 2012, quoting the need to check corruption. It is to lead religious groups to align themselves to the country by touching their religious chord. An annual fund of 26 million Yuan is provided to lamas and nuns in Tibet for social insurance. Chinese have been actively working to display the image of a "socialist new Tibet" to the world. This is claimed as a stable international environment for the reform and development of Tibet[14]. China has also adopted a policy for preferential training and promotion of ethnic minority officers, especially in TAR. This has resulted in the increase of Tibetan officers in units, better educational standards and acceleration of their promotions. In the past few years, Tibet has been relatively harmonious and stable in terms of religious and ethnic issues. This policy is likely to reduce the influence of the Dalai Lama over Tibetans and contribute towards their assimilation into the Chinese mainstream, tightening China's grip over Tibet.

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Exhaustive Surveillance and Mental Profiling

Chinese have confiscated passports of suspected Uighurs and forced the population to compulsorily download a mobile app recording their biometric profile. China is also using many modern innovative techniques for exhaustive surveillance like mental profiling using artificial intelligence. These techniques have unleashed unprecedented hardship to people, because stern actions are being taken against them for some predictive action, which they were expected to do in future, deduced through artificial intelligence. It is learnt that there are 7300 police stations in Xinjiang and exhaustive network of monitoring mechanism.

Will Chinese Strategy be Successful in the Long Run?

China is managing its terrorists, separatists, and religious extremists without much regard to international opinion or HR violations. Their idea of laying restrictions on religious practices, social engineering and manipulating the thinking of public by re-education camps and sinicisizing thinking of future generations is its strategy of dealing with it. The disgruntlement of Uighurs and the terrorist groups is not reducing. The HR organisations claim that the people of Xinjiang sent to re-education camps are being brainwashed to follow Chinese identity. Chinese government, however, continues to deny any arbitrary detention policy, claiming that the citizens guilty of minor offences are being sent to vocational centres for better integration. In the long run such stern actions may not deliver positive results, as it is learnt that the number of hardcore Jihadis has increased tenfold.

Chinese Gamble with Terrorists

ISIS had been highlighting since formation of their caliphate that "Muslims' rights are forcibly seized in China". After disintegration of their caliphate, Xinjiang emerges as one of the obvious choice for fragments of ISIS to recoup. In this context Chinese strategy is looking at appeasing some terrorists groups to seek security for China or China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects, by putting pressure on Pakistan. Pakistan has deployed 15,000-strong force for the Chinese security, yet kidnapping of Chinese workers has caused serious concerns for China. Chinese may be looking to induct more of their own troops for protecting CPEC workers or directly striking deals with some sponsor militant groups. They may not mind buying some of them for security of China/CPEC.

Chinese realisation that dealing with terrorists through Pakistan is a risky experiment and will happen only when terrorism strikes hard in its heartland. China cannot keep distancing itself from terror gaming of Pakistan, if it wants CPEC to succeed. Pakistani debt to China on account of CPEC and sale of military hardware will make Pakistan a colony of China or enter into a client-patron relationship, where strategic choices of Pakistan will be hostage to China. Those in power in Pakistan, including Pakistan Army may not mind, so long the fund flows to them. The people and most importantly the Jihadis' do mind it and do not want to see any foreigners including Chinese because it disturbs their well-established terror industry. This will bring China into a new conflict arena risking their country exposed to terrorism, a lesson which U.S. learnt too late, after going through the entire cycle, which China has just commenced. Now China will have to take a call of fighting terrorism by reigning Pakistan or keep quiet till terrorism strikes them.

Conclusion

The analysis of the strategy being adopted by China brings out few significant features. The fact that some of the actions of Western area development are more than five decades old indicates that China has a cogent, long term strategy to deal with minorities and tackling terrorism, separatists and religious extremists. Certain hard actions taken by them are possible because of communist regime and one party system, where there is no room for dissent. Certain actions like placing religious restrictions are unimaginable in the vibrant democratic world of today. In fact Mr. Sajjan from 'Combating Terrorism Centre' argues that the terrorism in China has reached the Seventh Stage[15] in 2014, citing the number of militant attacks in the heartland including the most guarded places in Beijing and on critical infrastructure like railway line. With tough policies and curbs, it's likely to increase further. The events, however, indicate that China has been able to largely quarantine the extremism and the future will depend on many other factors, other than the three evils in controlling the internal restive elements. Externally China continues to engage CAR, Af-Pak region and Iran with BRI and CPEC promises, with an eye to control 'Three Evils' besides economic, strategic and infrastructure benefits.

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From Zheng He to 'Gung-Ho': Implications and Responses to China's Indian Ocean Region Strategies

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Abstract

China's vexed relationship with India and its growing interests, presence and influence in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) are, and will remain of concern, to India and several other IOR and Indo-Pacific stakeholders. China has come to play, stay and have a say and its growing economic, diplomatic and above all, military hard power needs to be watched and countered. China's synthesis of continental and maritime concerns and ambitions has resulted in real benefits to them. The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is the prime example of this vision. Increasingly, Chinese interests will need to be under-written by their military power. This essay examines the differences between peace and conflict in the maritime context and suggests that India needs autonomous counter-strategies as well as cooperative/ coalitional strategic approaches. It examines the astuteness of the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) in using submarines as its potential leading edge in the IOR. In some areas, India could leverage qualitative factors to offset the greater quantitative capabilities of China. In maritime- military terms, India may need to look at the changing trends in maritime warfare and adopt more jointness; work towards future- readiness and leverage friends and partners.

The vantage spot from where that strategy is narrated is that-India occupies a central position in an ocean named after it. China's rise obviously evokes caution and occasional alarm in India. China is a rising global power, a neighbour with an unsettled border, an Asian co-traveler, and an opponent that handed out a debacle five decades ago.[1] The above summation is particularly good because it outlines the environment in which India and China would continue to deal and cope with each other even as they attempt to influence regional and global affairs.

The sources of Chinese conduct[2] in present times are increasingly being understood to be historically old, sometimes coloured for their domestic context, and deep-rooted in the centrality of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) or CPC in Chinese usage). At the same time, in its flexibility and agility at the operational and tactical level, the CCP and all other elements of Chinese statecraft seem to be helping the objectives of Chinese Grand Strategy.[3]

The purpose of this essay, however, is not to look at Chinese statecraft but rather to narrow it to the Indian Ocean (IO) to examine a few larger issues. These issues are:

➢ Why and how do Chinese interests and influence in the IOR, serve its global and Indo-Pacific aspirations?

➢ Does this affect the balance of power as wished for by India and other IOR nations, as well as by other powers outside the region, especially the United States (U.S.)?

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> ➢ What is the strategy-dampers India alone and India in concert with others, could place in the paths of Chinese strategies? Concurrently, what are the strategies that India should proactively pursue in its own interests?

> ➢ A significant proportion of IOR strategies for any major stakeholder is in the maritime domain. What are the options that India and other potential friends could pursue more robustly at the maritime strategic and naval operational levels to deter conflict in the first place? Equally important, what if deterrence fails?

China has Come to Stay, Play and have a Say in the IOR

The title of this essay deliberately is from "*Zheng He to Gung-Ho*". Zheng He's 15th Century voyages were intrepid, expansive and could have been expansionist in the long term, had the then emperors, exploited what they had started. In the closing decades of the 20th and the early decades of 21st century, the CCP leadership has demonstrated that the future shall not fault them for lost opportunities again.[4] Even more, they are 'gung-ho' a word that has origins in Mandarin. Unlike its usage in English, gung-ho in Mandarin means teamwork.[5] That is increasingly apparent in the way their "mandarins" have leveraged the strands of diplomatic, informational, military and economic lines into a fairly cohesive rope of statecraft. At the strategic level, China has come to stay and play for the long run and position herself to have a say.

There are several reasons for China wanting to be an IOR player and these are already well known in political and strategic circles including within China. In recent times both erstwhile President Hu Jintao and current President Xi Jinping have clearly articulated their vision of China.[6] In brief, China's longer-term interests and imperatives to stay, to play and have a say in the IOR could be enumerated as follows:

> **Zheng He's 15th Century voyages were intrepid, expansive and could have been expansionist in the long term, had the then emperors, exploited what they had started. In the closing decades of the 20th and the early decades of 21st century, the CCP leadership has demonstrated that the future shall not fault them for lost opportunities again**

> ➢ China's internal political and economic well-being is linked to its ability to trade globally. The IO is and will increasingly be the ocean that is critical to this outcome.

> ➢ The IOR, is vital to China for its ports, access to hinterland, sources of energy and raw materials as well as markets.

> ➢ Access, reach, staying power (not only military, but also politico-diplomatic and economic) that China continues to build up in this "connector" ocean, for the more proximate Pacific and the more distant Atlantic and European gateways, through the Mediterranean Sea, are concerns that can only grow for several other stakeholders, more so for India.

> ➢ With the BRI, there is an obvious synthesis of purpose and synergy in action by China in its continental and maritime grand strategy. The synthesis of the ideas of Mackinder, Spykman and Mahan is a marriage made for trouble as this writer and another naval colleague have posited elsewhere.[7]

> ➢ Even if trade percentages, energy flows or specific raw materials change from time to time, the larger imperatives for China would continue to be present in the IOR, with increasing proportion of its hard power. The elements of this hard power would span diplomacy, commerce, finance and of course, its military.

Balance of Power in the Indian Ocean?

In 2010 Mr. John Mearshimer bluntly said, "China cannot rise peacefully."[8] While it is true that conflict has not occurred, China is more confrontationist in many matters. Mearsheimer points out that Chinese behavior today is similar to what

American behavior was and perhaps is so perceived today. To counter China's rise and its potential threat, much has changed in the IOR and the Indo-Pacific in the past dozen years or so and the rate of this change has been particularly noticeable in the past two or three years. In a recent article published to coincide with the Raisina Dialogue in New Delhi, Jeff Smith has outlined the unbalancing and efforts to counter-balance quite well.[9] It may be right to say that China's leaders, as also in other capitals may be risk-averse. That is not automatically an assurance that they may not face risk, miscalculate potential for risk or roll towards a precipice. China may or may not initiate a conflict, but it is positioning and arming itself to try and win conflicts.

The IOR as a whole, or the IO in particular cannot be strategically isolated from the Asia-Pacific or the Indo-Pacific. India appreciates this and yet, its concerns are primarily about growing inroads that China makes into the IO and IOR. China will very likely move form a "wannabe" to a "will be" global player in the near future. Its overall power and ability to be a continental and maritime threat by itself and with some friends like Pakistan could be ignored by India at great peril. For China, it is the United States (U.S.) that is its competitor for "peerage". American concerns about China's rise are global and obviously have an important IOR consideration. China's political influence in the IOR, North Africa, West Asia, Central Asia, Eastern European Union is a source of deep concern as has been voiced by numerous analysts. The U.S. has been a key player in the IOR-West Asia region and despite its strategic setbacks since 2001, will also stay, play and want to have a say.

Fear, Honour, Interest

That said, there is another major consideration when one thinks of the environment in which nations and coalitions look at each, with a certain wariness. The continuation of peace does not automatically mean that deterrence is working. It essentially implies that the incentives and causes that lead to war are not strong enough. This has been efficiently conveyed by Thucydides when the Athenians argue that "with the Spartans in defence of their empire to its present height; fear being our principal motive, though honor and interest afterwards came in."[10] In fact, Mr. Colin Gray calls this formulation from around 400BCE thus: "the general theory of war is economically, indeed parsimoniously, best expressed in Thucydide's timeless triptych…(fear, honour and interest)…it explains why wars occur…also why peace prevails."[11] Yet, as Mr. Mearshimer cautions, that while military capabilities can be quantified, intentions cannot be verified empirically -"Talk is cheap and leaders have been known to lie."[12]

> China's initiatives, investments and intensity, have had multiple impacts. Firstly, it has leveraged its wealth and grand strategic vision to provide an alternative source of investment in and beyond the IOR. Second, much of the investment is trade oriented and therefore, has maritime implications for China as well as India. Third, China's P-5 status helps it with diplomatic influence and sheer clout that India does not have. Fourth, the terms and quantum of investments by China create opportunities and vulnerabilities for it and recipient governments.

India Stands Alone & India Stands with Friends

India's involvement as an important player in the IOR, as a fairly significant contributor to security, especially, maritime security, is perhaps about five decades old.[13] While becoming a net security provider is as yet an aspiration, India does have a clear advantage in its 'friendliness of purpose" when compared with China.[14] In the sweep stakes of international influence, however, China's initiatives, investments and intensity, have had multiple impacts. Firstly, it has leveraged its wealth and grand strategic vision to provide an alternative source of investment in and beyond the IOR. Second, much of the investment is trade oriented and therefore, has maritime implications for China as well as India. Third, China's P-5 status helps it with diplomatic influence and sheer clout that India does not have. Fourth, the terms and quantum of investments by China create opportunities and vulnerabilities for it and recipient governments. Thus, far Chinese statecraft seems to be focused strategically even as it copes with some tactical challenges. The BRI could bring strategic level difficulties for Beijing in years ahead, but it is likely that they would have antidotes to these issues.[15] Fifth, the

growing spread and depth of their military-hardware and training relationships in the IOR is much greater than what India has built in the last 30-40 years. The gap is widening, in fact. The related concern not only for India but for the U.S. (and eventually would be even for Russia) is that China could provide increasingly sophisticated hardware and make available its information and surveillance capabilities to the growing list of partners. Some of these partners would not mind being in military equipment "debt trap."

Countering Quantity with Quality?

Each of these aspects requires more effort by India as counter-measures and parallel opportunities for IOR partners. Happily, Indian foreign policy seems to be redefining itself. As Mr. Harsh Pant puts it, "The Modi government is redefining strategic autonomy as an objective that is attainable through strengthened partnerships rather than the avoidance of partnerships. By doing so, it seems to be underlining that in today's complicated global scene, strategic autonomy and non-alignment are not necessarily a package deal."[16] In just a few paragraphs, Mr. Pant explains how shibboleths are being demolished and how India's new interpretation of strategic autonomy would enhance India's global position. This pro-activeness helps to place some dampers on China's strategic progress in the IOR. Indian bilateral and multi-lateral interaction and investments in the IOR are increasing. It may ultimately be the different nature of Indian governmental aid, models of corporate investments and openness of interaction that may be more important than the higher quantums that China's deeper pockets and ready at hand "cheque-books" give.

Peace and Conflict

Having examined the wider strategic canvas of the IOR and beyond, and with Mr. Gray's advice of fear, honour and interest, as drivers for war, or dampers for peace to prevail, one's gaze could shift to the waters of the IOR itself. The geographic character of the Indian Ocean, its choke points, its constellation of harbours, its resources as well as trade-routes are all too well known to need repetition here.

> PLA has been on the leading edge of two fundamental shifts that it would implement at the operational and strategic levels of warfare. The first, is that it is using space-based and cyber-capabilities for intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) of maritime theatres like no one else has done so far. (The U.S. has matching capabilities, of course, but perhaps not the surge capacity that the PLA could leverage in theatres that could matter.) Second, it has invested in long-range strike capabilities against ships in the form of ballistic and cruise missiles, hypersonic weapons to supplement shore-based aviation. These two games-changing steps are being complemented by increasing capabilities in playing the existing game better.

Of more significance is the way in which the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and its constituent arms including the PLAN is equipping, training, reorganizing and integrating itself to increase its spread in peace, and its readiness for conflict should that happen. Thinking strategically about maritime warfare, the PLA has been on the leading edge of two fundamental shifts that it would implement at the operational and strategic levels of warfare. The first, is that it is using space-based and cyber-capabilities for intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) of maritime theatres like no one else has done so far. (The U.S. has matching capabilities, of course, but perhaps not the surge capacity that the PLA could leverage in theatres that could matter.) Second, it has invested in long-range strike capabilities against ships in the form of ballistic and cruise missiles, hypersonic weapons to supplement shore-based aviation. These two games-changing steps are being complemented by increasing capabilities in playing the existing game better. Among these, are its growing numbers of more capable submarines; power-projection capability with modern ships, extra-ordinary expeditionary capacity supported by integral aviation and logistics trains that earlier had received less attention.[17] In its reorganisation and in periodic reports and analysis of PLA exercises are indications that operational and tactical level doctrines and execution also are progressing apace. Whatever may be the political motives for doing so, rarely has a leader in general

situations of peace made so many exhortations to his own armed forces for readiness, preparation and victory in war as President Xi has done in the past two years.[18]

Not to Foray, But to Stay

The PLAN became a deployed force rather suddenly and unexpectedly. A Chinese newspaper that Erickson quotes was not exaggerating in saying that "over five years of deployments to the Gulf of Aden have transformed PLAN antipiracy forces from maritime rookies to confident sea dogs."[19] Yet, just a year before the first Gulf of Aden patrol with three ships beginning in Dec 2008, some analysts were skeptical of the Chinese Navy's ability to undertake long-distance operations.[20]

The Chinese had come to IOR to stay and they are still very much there. Furthermore, they began their moves to deepen their maritime involvement by investing in ports, ramping up ship production for the global market and investing in energy supplies and resources faster than ever before. Having proven their ability to keep their destroyers at sea for 100 days and more at a stretch, they began regular port visits for turn-around, goodwill and relationship building. Eventually, came the steps for a military logistics base like Djibouti and Gwadar, if they choose to make it so, at very short notice. There are more "places and bases" options they are working on. Most importantly, for some years now, it is their submarine deployments in the IOR and Gulf of Aden that have raised concerns.

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Astute Rationale for Submarine Deployments?

Chinese submarine deployments for piracy control have raised not only concerns but eyebrows as well. It has been called "illogical" and worse by some commentators.[21] But, is it? This needs some analysis. Submarines have been used for commerce interdiction since the First World War. In both world wars, they sometimes surfaced and used their guns to force a merchant ship to stop and surrender. Anti-piracy tactics essentially involves interdiction for which modern submarines are quite well-suited. They can approach or intercept a pirated ship stealthily and while submerged launch special inflatable-boats or more sophisticated vehicles to board a target-ship. This is merely another method of VBSS (Visit, Board, Search and Seizure) tactics. In conflict, the practice could be useful for interdicting an enemy's ships if for some reason they are to be captured, not sunk. A counter-factual (as of now) question is would pirates not have used submarines instead of skiffs for attacks if they had easy access to them? Secondly, it is quite possible that the Chinese have also used these sorties for ocean mapping, refining tactics and techniques needed for tapping or cutting undersea data cables. Thirdly, are the obvious gains in mastering topography, hydrology and traffic patterns that all help in making China's Under-water Domain Awareness (UDA) and effectiveness better with every deployment. Finally, the covertness of submarines exercising in the IOR enables high effectiveness, should conflict be imminent. In Chinese minds, the opportunity that piracy created for their submarines may not have been a fig-leaf as much as an opportunity, to expand their professional envelopes.

Other Imperatives for PLAN

Some very pertinent points of the PLAN's strategic and operational imperatives have been made by Goldrick.[22] Much of what he says applies to India as well, because like China, India too has to cope with the difficulties of continental

and maritime interests and concerns into combined strategies. An unusual take he provides is to suggest that while China merges the continental list approach with the maritime in the South China Sea (SCS) "islands", (it adds to its island chains), in a peer level war they would be merely "immovable" targets more than unsinkable aircraft carriers. He also considers the possibility that China could, and perhaps would deploy its carrier battle groups in the IOR for the relatively lower-end spectrum of conflict. Logically, he adds that their carriers would be vulnerable in ways similar to U.S. Navy's concerns in wars with near-peers.

From Peace to Conflict

There is a tendency in media and sometimes in the world of analysts and naval professionals to forget the great distinctions between peace and conflict. At the naval operational and tactical levels, the ability for "presence" and reach during peace does not automatically translate into the ability to have sea control and then project power.[23] These latter two are combat missions. It is in this context that PLAN's deployment of submarines in the IOR is an astute move. This writer is working on the increasing roles, methods and effectiveness of submarines in sea control and denial and power projection while using their attribute of "covert presence" which is a justifiable oxymoron.[24] All nations that use the IO and are not in Beijing's camp need to think of submarines with greater "depth", if one may use a pun. China understands that it needs more submarines, conventional, as well as nuclear and future classes of Chinese submarines, could be qualitatively much better.

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The Indian Navy (IN) as a Dominant IOR Player

In the IOR, and especially in the littoral that spans the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea, IN would remain the dominant force for some time to come. India also has geo-strategic and operational advantages but no benefit comes out of over interpreting them or assigning them permanence.[25] In fact, China could be better positioned to use Djibouti and Gwadar for military purposes in conflict than could India despite having older friends in the IOR. Indian statecraft needs to create conditions where places, and perhaps even bases would be available even in time of conflict.

Maritime Partnerships

In a two-front war (China and Pakistan) or only with China it might seem unlikely that other nations might actively support India "continentally." However, this is where the focus on maritime partnerships including the potential of the "Quad" and "Quad-Plus" formulations may give some actual benefits. In addition to maritime partnerships in time of conflict, could be benefits of cyber and space-based assistance, crucial in any upcoming scenarios. There are several precedents for this. The French fleet's contribution in the American War of Independence; the Imperial Japanese Navy's operations with British dominion navies in the Indo-Pacific as well as in the Mediterranean in WWI; the U.S. Navy's to Britain fighting Nazi Germany from 1939-41 until it formally joined in after Pearl Harbour (07 Dec 1941); or on the side of Iraq for some time during the Iraq-Iran war 1980-88. Closer home in India was the indirect assistance by the IN to the Sri Lankan Navy during the 1990s and later.

Indo-Pacific Continuum

Maritime strategies, even more than continental (and air strategies), are about indirect actions and indirect effects. The vastness and the continuum of oceans historically and practically create large theatres. The Indo-Pacific continuum for

conflict embroiling India and China in the IOR is a clear case in point. India and China both are users of the South and East China Seas. China has advantages there, but these could be degraded by India. This may seem difficult now but future response capabilities need to be created. Alliances are one option, but autonomous capabilities are even more important. IN submarines and long-range strike options of a type similar to what both the U.S. and China are developing come to mind. China should be expected to strike Indian maritime assets and ships in the seas of its littoral. In any case, economic warfare is slow and resource-heavy. Overtly simplistic inferences about the limitations of the PLAN in the IO or assumptions of leverage that may emerge from notions of "loss of face" as uniquely Chinese characteristic (which it is not) could become problematic.[26]

Near-Term Response

In the near-term, India's maritime responses to China's strategies in the IOR could only benefit by incremental increases to steps already in progress in terms of statecraft, maritime diplomacy and military enhancements. The last could benefit from concerted jointness at the military, strategic and operational levels devoid of exaggerations of any particular service's "shoulders squarely" and turf issues that hold us back.[27] One area where greater robustness would benefit several member-states is in ramping up Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) maritime security policies with operational partnerships executed through Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) .

Mid-Term Response

In the mid-term, India would need to actualise coherent and purposeful coalition(s) such that China becomes concerned enough to taper its ambitions. Despite its occasional setbacks and tactical road-blocks, China and even a post- Xi Beijing may not temper its grand vision. Increasingly, this grand vision will be under-written by military power and military threats. Indian military modernisation needs to orient itself to future-readiness. To attain that dynamically, the services jointly need to transition from acquisition-orientation that has been a hall mark, to the spectrum of organisational, training, doctrinal, and educational reforms and transformation that make India's hard power "harder" vis–a-vis China.[28] Self-reliance in defence capabilities is, of course, an imperative for hard power. This transformed military, with the steps taken via coalitions, would enable India to create maritime pressures

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and challenges for China in the Pacific. Absence of such a will, Karl Haushofer's coinage of the term Indo-Pacific (and one elaborated by KM Panikkar in 1944 in a context that has remained essentially the same since Zheng He's voyages, followed by the uncoined idea of the Indo-Pacific in the colonial age), will remain just rhetoric.[29] Specifically, the idea of the "Quad" has some meaning only, if at its core is its ability to become a 'Squad' (or, even better, "squad- plus").

Long-Term policy, vision and strategic road maps are very much necessary and possible but require a different study.

Conclusion

Near-term alterations and adaptations and mid-term planning and actualisation are areas for Delhi's focus for the Indian ship-of-state, along with "ships" flying other friendly flags. China did not capitalise on Zheng He's voyages, unlike the Portuguese and follow on European kingdoms did with their own explorers and built their own colonial empires. With

"gung-ho" in its Mandarin sense, the Middle Kingdom is likely to spread along the IOR, and much of the world ought to counter this. Cdr Rajesh's closing sentences, therefore, are perhaps a fine coda for this essay "Notwithstanding the domestic checks and balances, they (i.e. India and her friends) should keep pace with Chinese footwork—if not in quantity then in quality. A timely trickle on occasion serves more than a torrent." [30]

Endnotes

1   MH Rajesh, *China in the Indian Ocean: One Ocean, Many Strategies* (New Delhi: Pentagon, 2018), 2. In this important study, Rajesh departs from the more common approach of using strategy in the singular, and as in the title, correctly appreciates that China actually is implementing multiple strategies. The multiplicity of strategies is summed up rather well in the concluding Ch 10.

2   The phrase is borrowed from George Kennan's masterly analysis of Soviet politics, relations and their sources while suggesting what could be counter- policies and strategies for containing the USSR. "Sources of Soviet Conduct". Foreign Affairs, July 1947.

3   It is useful to apply the levels of warfare (different from war, which is really at the strategic level) to statecraft as well. Hierarchically, in ascending order the tactical, operational and strategic levels of statecraft help us to better achieve the objectives of strategy.

4   Yunling, "China's Regional Strategy" in *Power Shift: China and Asia's New Dynamics*, ed. David Shambaugh (University of California Press, 2005), 48-68. Several scholars have written extensively about the coherence of Chinese grand strategy as it unfolded from Deng's era to the current Xi rule. A good early analysis (actually in 2005) is by Tang Shiping and Zhang

5   According to Webster's II dictionary, in Mandarin *gong* is 'work' and *he* is 'together'. That English usage implies individualistic enthusiasm is another matter. In the title here, it is included to be more of the Mandarin and only partially in terms of enthusiasm.

6   Thomas J. Bickford, "Haiyang Qiangguo: China as a Maritime Power" (paper presented at the 'China as a Maritime Power Conference, CAN Headquarters, Arlington, Virginia, Mar 15, 2016). (Revised and Updated by author in Mar 2016). A very good assessment of Chinese Strategy can be found in Tobin, Liza (2018) "Underway—Beijing's Strategy to Build China into a Maritime Great Power," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 71 :No. 2 , Article 5.Available at: http://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol71/iss2/5

7   Sudarshan Shrikhande, " China's Synthesis of Mahan, Mackinder and Spykman: Matrimony that Spells Trouble for the World" (paper presented at the Indian Naval War College, Goa for the IN NWC- Carnegie and US NWC Conference on China, 03 Oct 2017).

8   John Mearshimer, "The Gathering Storm: China' Challenge to US Power in Asia" (transcript of paper presented at the fourth annual Michael Hintze Lecture in International Security, at Sydney. 4 Nov 2010) accessed on 18 Oct 2018 http://sydney.edu.au/news/84.html?newsstoryid=5351. An unpublished paper by Captain Kapil Bhatia, IN, written while at the US Naval War College in 2018 is very illuminating; "Mackinder, Mahan and the middle Kingdom: China's Potential Convergence of Mackinder's and Mahan's Land and Sea Strategies."

9   Jeff M. Smith, "China's Rise and [Under?] Balancing in the Indo-Pacific: Putting Realist Theory to the Test", https://warontherocks.com/2019/01/chinas-rise-and-under-balancing-in-the-indo-pacific-putting-realist-theory-to-the-test/ accessed on 15 Jan 2018.

10 Thucydides, *The Landmark Thucydides: A Comprehensive Guide to the Peloponessian War*, ed. Robert B. Strassler (New York, Touchstone, 1996), 43.

11 Colin Gray, *The Strategy Bridge: Theory for Practice* (Oxford University, 2010), 101-2.

12 Mearshimer, "The Gathering Storm". In his book, *Why Leaders Lie: the Truth about Lying in International Politics* (Oxford, 2011) John Mearshimer gives the subject of lying a comprehensive examination.

13 The Indian Navy's latest publication, *Ensuring Secure Seas: Indian Maritime Security Strategy,* (Integrated Headquarters, MOD (Navy), New Delhi 2015) describes what net security means in the maritime environment, which is the primary contextin the IOR, p.81-82. Mauritius was the first IOR country to benefit from ship transfers for EEZ patrols in the mid 1970s. Bangladesh began its own Navy with transfers from India soon after its liberation from Pakistan in Dec 1971.

14 Sudarshan Shrikhande, "India's Information Fusion Centre-IOR & a Safer, more Secure Indo-Pacific" http://www.southasiaathudson.org/blog/2019/1/7/indias-information-fusion-centre-ior-amp-a-safer-more-secure-indo-pacific-1, accessed 29 Jan 2019. The author has used GerogeKennan's phrase, "unfriendliness of purpose" in the context of several things that China does that cause unease and potential reverses for its objectives.

15   For a discussion on Beijing's risk- mitigation approaches, see author's "BeatiSuntPossidentes (Blessed are Those in Possession): A Leitmotif for Chinese Statecraft" https://www.vifindia.org/article/2017/april/10/beati-sunt-possidentes-blessed-are-those-in-possession. Published on 10 Apr 2017.

16   Harsh Pant, "A Quiet but Decisive Shift in India's Foreign Policy," *live Mint*, 28 Jan 2019. https://www.livemint.com/opinion/columns/opinion-a-quiet-but-decisive-shift-in-india-s-foreign-policy-1548695556487.html. accessed 30 Jan 2019.

17   This paragraph emerges from thinking done by the author about military transformation. Some of these issues were presented at the College of Defence Management's Annual Seminar 27-28 Nov 2018 on transformation of Armed Forces". See author's paper, "Challenges Intrinsic to the Armed Force" 57-63. A second paper was at the Western Naval Command- Maritime History Society Annual Seminar at Mumbai on 06 Dec 2018. (To be published by the MHS.).

18   Amongst the most recent is Xi's issuance of his second "mobilization order" to the PLA on 04 Jan 2019. Since the last Congress of the CPC, Xi's involvement with the PLA has been among the closest for several decades. While this could be partly due to pulls and pushes within the regime, Xi's consolidation of military power in his hands and his overt display of doing "military" things gives the teamwork interpretation of "gong-he" or gung-ho as used in the title of this essay a dangerous edge.

19   Andrew Erickson and Austin Strange, "China's Blue Power: Antipiracy, Engagement , and Image Enhancement", *Naval War College Review*(Winter 2015, Vol 68 , No 1):5.

20   Gabriel B. Collins and William S.Murray, "No Oil for Lamps of China", *Naval War College Review*(Spring 2008 Vol 61, No 2):80.

21   DinakarPeri, "U.S. Admiral questions logic of Chinese submarines on anti-piracy missions", *Hindu*, 09 Jan 2019, https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/U.S.-admiral-questions-logic-of-Chinese-submarines-on-anti-piracy-missions/article13990276.ece. See also, Lalit Kapur, ed, Golden Jubilee: Indian Navy's Submarine Arm (1967-2017), coffee table book (New Delhi, Newseye Media, 2017), 121.

22   James Goldrick, "Reflections on the Rise of China's Navy", *Defense Security Brief*, Vol 7, Issue 2, Dec 2018), 41-44. The paper is useful at several levels including the reminder that the Chinese study Mahan as much for his analysis of why France lost out in maritime theatres as much as why Britain prevailed. The distinction is easy to forget!

23   Sudarshan Shrikhande, "Making India's Sea P ower Formidable and Future-Ready",*ORF Occasional Paper no 152,* (New Delhi, Apr 2018), 6.

24   This writer is studying the ongoing transitions in maritime warfare. His coinage of a term like "covert presence" may be new, but the effect has been long- existent. Most easily seen in terms of covertly deployed SSBNs/ SSGNs whose presence has a deterrent impact, it has also been experienced in conventional situations and exercises when stealthy boats deployed off an adversary's coast or in other areas could have an impact greater than surface forces exercising "presence". This is not to say that surface forces are passé, or will be, but to explain why submarines matter greatly. In the last 125 years of naval warfare, the principles of sea control/ sea denial and power-projection have remained almost unchanging even when platforms, weapons and sensors involved have changed and are changing from time to time. Goldrick reminds us to think of principles of sea control, but naval professionals sometimes tend to forget this.

25   Shrikhande, ORF 152. A reader may refer to this for a fuller discussion on maritime geography issues, p 8-11.

26   National Security, Vol I, Aug 2018, Vivekananda International Foundation (New Delhi); Section on Maritime Security, 4-12.

27   National Security, VIF, 8.

28   CDM "Transformation of the Armed Forces", Proceedings, qv note 17.

29   Sudarshan Shrikhande, "India's information Fusing Centre-IOR & a Safer, More Secure Indo-Pacific",07 Jan 2019, Hudson Institute, Washington DC, http://www.southasiaathudson.org/blog/2019/1/7/indias-information-fusion-centre-ior-amp-a-safer-more-secure-indo-pacific-1.

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Unravelling Naya Pakistan: Implications for India

Shri Tilak Devasher@

Abstract

The key elements in Imran Khan's Naya (new) Pakistan are his own pre-disposition; the expectations he has aroused; the hand he has been dealt with and his achievements in the few months he has been in power. Imran Khan has encouraged the expectations of a Naya Pakistan by making grand promises that would be difficult to achieve in the short or medium term. He has been fettered in implementing his ambitious agenda due to a fragile majority in the National Assembly and in Punjab a confrontational polity. The government's bowing down to the Barelvi hard-line party - Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) has not shown Naya Pakistan in a favourable light. The government's performance has also been amateurish as evidenced by the effort to crowd-fund the Diamer-Bhasha Dam and the series of reversal of decisions taken. The economy is clearly the most pressing and immediate challenge for the government, here the government is seen as fumbling. For India, there is nothing really new in Naya Pakistan, so long as the Army continues to call the shots on matters of foreign policy. For the long-term, Naya Pakistan would have to confront serious issues of governance that will test Imran Khan's leadership qualities.

Pre-Disposition

Three strands stand out in Prime Minister Imran Khan's thinking. The first is a strong belief in an 'Islamic Welfare State'. In his book[1], he wrote that Pakistan could have overcome all its difficulties, had it been able to find a political system capable of implementing the egalitarian, democratic and ethical ideals of Islam that had inspired the creation of Pakistan. These included: rule of law, justice, compassion, welfare and equality. Linked to this are his frequent references of converting Pakistan into the seventh-century state of Riaysat-e-Medina, though he has been vague about the specifics of how he would do so.[2] How this concept squares with Jinnah's Pakistan that he refers to frequently, has also been left vague.

The second strand is his fight against corruption and for justice. In his book, he holds that it was in the 1990s that Pakistanis really started to lose hope as the country plunged into semi-anarchy. More or less every institution was destroyed. Corruption permeated into every stratum of society.[3] Hence, he set up the Tehreek-e-Insaf (Movement for Justice) on 25 April 1996, and since then, has waged a relentless war against corruption.

The third strand is the political capital that he brings to the table. The key elements of this are the belief in himself, his single-minded focus, stamina and determination; his corruption-free image, his undoubted popularity and the ability to inspire hope for change in large swathes of the electorate. Mr. Imran Khan was dropped after his first test match, when the newspapers called him 'Imran Khan't'. He didn't give up. It took him two years to get back into the team and three, before he could consolidate his position.[4] The rest, of course, is history - captaincy and the world-cup win. Likewise, he stuck with the establishment of the Shaukat Khanum free cancer hospital and the university in Mianwali,

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even though people scoffed at him, calling them unrealistic. Downside of such a strong belief is that it could lead to arrogance - that he alone knows what is best and can achieve the impossible.

Expectations He Has Aroused

Prime Minister Imran Khan and the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) have themselves encouraged the expectations of a Naya Pakistan and 'tabdeeli' (change). Some of these include 10 million jobs, 5 million housing units, universal education and healthcare, industrial and agricultural turnaround, a south Punjab province, police and civil service reforms, bringing back the "looted billions," removing the balance of payments deficit without tough International Monetary Fund (IMF) conditionality, building mega-dams to reduce water shortages; tackling corruption, re-setting relations with the U.S. and so on. In reality, these grand promises are just not possible to achieve, in the short or even medium term.

Moreover, after Imran Khan announced his party's programme prior to the 25 July 2018 elections, impression was created that the PTI was ready with an agenda of governance. However, the limited time that the party has been in power, has shown it fumbling and being unsure of how to tackle economic and administrative problems. As has been stated that while the PTI government has inherited formidable, if not intractable challenges, it is also haunted by its populism, and it's performance has been undermined by lack of preparation and a looming impression of incompetence.[5]

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Hand He Has Been Dealt

Imran Khan is fettered in implementing his ambitious agenda for Naya Pakistan by the hand he has been dealt: a fragile majority in the National Assembly(NA) and in the critical province of Punjab and a confrontational polity.

Though the PTI emerged as the single largest party in the July 2018 elections, it lacked a simple majority in the NA. It was able to form the government after forging a coalition with half a dozen smaller parties. Some of them like the Mohajir Qaumi Party-Pakistan (MQM-P) and the Balochistan National Party-Mengal (BNP-M) have expressed unhappiness at the working of the government and warned withdrawing support. In the critical province of Punjab the PTI has been able to cobble together a majority only with the support of the Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q), even though it has only 10 seats in a House of 371. Not surprisingly, PML-Q leader Pervaiz Elahi has started flexing his muscles. The problem has been compounded due to a weak Chief Minister and multiple centres of power, making governance even more difficult.

Moreover, extreme political confrontation has become the hallmark of politics in Pakistan. Against the backdrop of the opposition parties having a combined majority in the Senate and a strong presence in the NA, it would have been prudent for Imran Khan to have adopted a conciliatory approach and take the opposition along. However, he has chosen confrontation and used accountability as the weapon of choice. Among the early decisions taken were to put former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and his daughter Ms Maryam Nawaz on the Exit Control List (ECL). Other PML-N leaders are caught up in a plethora of cases like Saad Rafique in Paragon Housing Scheme, party president Shahbaz Sharif in Ashiana Housing Scheme. With such selective accountability, polarisation would only be heightened making it difficult for the government to implement its ambitious reform agenda.

To overcome the numerical parliamentary challenge, Imran Khan has indicated that he could run legislative business through Presidential Ordinances.[6] What Prime Minister Imran Khan seems to have ignored is that ordinances have a shelf life of 120 days, after which they lapse. Constitutionally, only one re-enactment is allowed making the

maximum life of an ordinance - 240 days or eight months. This would hardly serve the legislative agenda. Moreover, an ordinance can be rendered meaningless, if a resolution disapproving it is passed -the combined opposition has the collective numbers in the Senate to pass disapproving resolutions. [7]

Achievements

How has Prime Minister Imran Khan's Naya Pakistan fared in the few months that he has been in power? While it would be premature to pass judgement on any government, based on its performance in the first few months, two factors become important here. First, the pattern of functioning of the government is by now discernible. Second, Prime Minister Imran Khan had himself set the yardstick to judge his administration's performance with his 11-point agenda, announced even before the elections, and his 100-days plan afterwards.

Two events, standout in Naya Pakistan, both showing the government bowing down to and appeasing the Barelvi hard-line party - Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP). The first was the appointment of Princeton professor Atif Mian to the Economic Advisory Council (EAC) and his subsequent sacking due to his religious affiliation. Being an Ahmadi was considered ground enough for his sacking under pressure from the TLP. The second is related to a Christian woman Aasia Bibi who was falsely accused of blasphemy. After having languished in jail for eight years, she was finally acquitted by the Supreme Court. Faced with a violent protest against the acquittal launched by the TLP, the government capitulated. It agreed to put Aasia Bibi on the Exit Control List (ECL) and refrain from objecting to a review petition filed against her acquittal. The retreat was complete when the state took no immediate action even after the TLP called for mutiny in the armed forces and advocated killing of Supreme Court judges. Later the TLP leadership was arrested, but clearly the clerics have tasted blood after being fed on a diet of appeasement, their appetite is whetted. The greater tragedy, as the *Daily Times* put it, was that in Naya Pakistan, the highest court in the land could acquit a Christian woman of all charges of blasphemy and this was still insufficient for her to be free.[8]

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Both the cases have severely damaged Naya Pakistan. In effect, the government lost the moral high ground even before it had started. Muhammad Ali Jinnah's famous words of August 11, 1947, "You may belong to any religion or caste or creed that has nothing to do with the business of the state," lay in shreds. The cases demonstrated that Prime Minister Imran Khan would accommodate religious extremists, confirming his "Taliban Khan" image. His inability to uphold Article 36 of the constitution, which stipulates that non-Muslims would not be discriminated on the basis of their faith for employment, would continue to haunt him. Thus, instead of a Naya Pakistan, it was the old Pakistan, with the streets dominated by intolerance and hatred, where the message to the minorities was that they would always be second-class citizens and unwelcome in the government.

Two Other Strands Mark the Performance of the Government

First, an element of amateurishness is apparent in governance. An example is the effort to crowd-fund the Diamer-Bhasha Dam that is estimated to cost about $ 12 billion. It has been assessed that at the current level of donations, it would take more than 100 years to raise the funds required. Another example is reducing imports by banning the import of cheese that account for only around 0.03 percent of Pakistan's annual imports while Pakistan's trade deficit is about $37.7 billion. [9]Auctioning the Prime Minister's cars and selling buffalos at the PM House were nothing more than gimmickry, which could not cover up the unpreparedness of the PTI to govern.

The second element is the series of reversal of decisions taken. These would include not travelling abroad for the first three months or using special planes for foreign tours, both of which were flouted; his announcement that nationality would be granted to all Pakistan-born refugees of Afghan and Bangladeshi origins that was disowned two days later; retracting that Saudi Arabia would not be a third partner in the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) after triumphantly maintaining for weeks that it will.[10]

Prime Minister Imran Khan compounded his penchant for U-turns by tweeting "doing a U-turn to reach one's objective is the hallmark of great leadership…' Analysts, however, feel that it was PM Imran Khan's inadequate understanding of the economy and governance to begin with that has led to frequent adjustments to reality.[11]

Economy

The economy is clearly the most pressing and immediate challenge for the government, especially the precarious foreign exchange reserves. Of course, many of the economic problems have been inherited but the government does not seem to have an action plan. While in opposition, Mr. Imran Khan had said that he would rather die than beg for money. His prescriptions have, however, changed from seeking support of overseas Pakistanis and recovering looted wealth stashed abroad, to help from 'friendly countries' for oil facilities and dollar deposits, and finally an approach to the IMF.

The prescriptions of the IMF are likely to be harsh: additional energy price hike, further rupee devaluation, interest rate hike, "absolute transparency" on Pakistan's debts, including its obligations to the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC),[12] etc. The implication of these prescriptions could well be: the exchange rate touching Rs150 to a dollar from the current about 130; increased inflation and interest rates; reduction in the development expenditures; further increases in fuel prices; decrease in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth. All this will negatively impact the ambitious plans of building five million houses and creating 10 million jobs.

Not surprisingly, the Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) held that the government seemed to have no economic policy, vision or direction, which was triggering uncertainty. It was especially harsh on devaluation and interest rate hike that would result in the closure of thousands of businesses leaving over half a million people unemployed.[13]

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Civil-Military Relations

As compared to Nawaz Sharif's tenure, there has been a marked improvement in civil-military relations based no doubt on the role of the Army in ensuring PTI's electoral victory. Not surprisingly, PM Imran Khan has papered over the dominant role of the Army in politics, dismissing civil-military divide as a myth. The focus in his speeches has been on domestic issues with little mention about critical issues like terrorism or foreign policy, other than seeking peaceful ties with Pakistan's neighbours. This has been as clear an indication as any that his role would be limited in areas, that the Army considers its preserve. Despite this, his repeated references to being on the same page as the Army or the Army being supportive of the PTI manifesto[14], raises doubts about who is actually in control. In a democracy, there should be no need for the civilian leadership to keep saying so.

Implications for India

What implication does Naya Pakistan, such as it is, have for India? Given the Army's role in bringing him to power and his fragile majority, PM Imran Khan is unlikely to adopt a course very different from that of the Army as far as India is concerned. Issues such as Kashmir and terrorism are too deeply ingrained in the army's psyche, for him to make a dent. As opposition leader Imran Khan had raised slogans like "Modi kajoyaarhai, ghaddarhai" (Modi's friend is a traitor). Even if one discounts this as opposition rhetoric to discredit Nawaz Sharif, his leap of faith to claim that Pakistan will take two steps if India takes one, needs to be taken with a pinch of salt. His tweet after India cancelled a meeting between the foreign ministers of the two nations on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in September indicated his mindset: "Disappointed at the arrogant & negative response by India to my call for resumption of the peace dialogue. However, all my life I have come across small men occupying big offices who do not have the vision to see the larger picture."[15] Against this back-drop, gestures, like inviting Punjab minister Shri Navjot Singh Sidhu to his oath-taking ceremony and opening the Kartarpur border for Sikh pilgrimage, would need to be balanced with actions on the ground.

Whatever political capital that Pakistan could have reaped in the opening of the Kartarpur corridor was frittered away by the overzealous Foreign Minister claiming that it was googly.[16] Pakistan's decision to agree to a Kartarpur corridor was likely based on a calculation that the initiative could provide an opportunity to indoctrinate Indian pilgrims who would visit the shrine. It also viewed this gesture to kick-start a peace initiative with India at a time when it is faced with all kinds of international pressures. [17]

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As has been well put, it took Islamabad and New Delhi 71 years, to allow for a Kartarpur to happen, as the nations travelled just four kilometres in these seven decades to meet at Kartarpur. At around 0.05 kilometer per year, it will take 13,000 years for the two nations to bridge the gap between Islamabad and New Delhi.[18]

The Future

For the long-term, Naya Pakistan would have to confront some uncomfortable questions: How can the economy be brought back on rails with sustained economic growth and reduction in poverty? Can investments be encouraged without changing course on terrorism and extremism? How can the military's role in governance be eliminated? How can the 2.4 percent growth of population be controlled? How to put in schools the 25 million out of school children and how to improve the quality of education and the literacy rate? How to improve the water infrastructure and availability that has taken Pakistan to the brink of absolute water scarcity

Conclusion

An overview of Naya Pakistan would be that it has not been a great start for PM Imran Khan. There appear to be deficiencies in the strategy and direction of governance. Undoubtedly, the PTI has inherited major problems, but so has each incoming government in Pakistan. What has increased the problem for the PTI is its own rhetoric, wildly ambitious announcements, the lack of groundwork and a simplistic approach towards governance. For Naya Pakistan to become a reality, the government would have to go beyond the symbolic measures and transition quickly into maturity.

Sooner or later, questions will be asked if Imran Khan has what it takes to head the government or would he continue to be an opposition leader. Central to such questions would be his ability to understand the hydra-headed problems confronting Pakistan and the vision and determination to tackle them. His political capital, his sincerity and the goodwill he enjoys will only take him so far and no further.

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Section IV

India's Strategic Neighbourhood

India's Neighbourhood First Initiative: Hits, Misses and the Way Ahead

Prof Sukh Deo Muni@

Abstract

Modi government's 'neighbourhood first' initiative was launched with considerable enthusiasm. This initiative has remarkably bridged the communication gap between India and the neighbours at highest political levels and also tried to reduce the "delivery deficit in its overall foreign policy. Under this initiative, India has strengthened its security relationship with the neighbours and deployed its soft power of civilizational bonding with positive effect. The policy has however yielded only partial results. To a considerable stance, India's complacent and coercive diplomacy, as well as China's assertive stance to push its strategic and economic stakes, including through the multi-billion dollars "Belt and Road Initiative" (BRI), has lured the neighbours against India. India faces a real challenge to restore its primacy in its sensitive neighbourhood.

Neighbourhood has remained a persisting puzzle in India's foreign policy. Seldom a comprehensive neighbourhood policy been projected by India; the Gujral Doctrine in the late 1990s being an exception, which in any case lived a very short life. Since Nehru's times, neighbourhood has been dealt with bilaterally, depending upon the tone and tenor of the issues involved at a given point of time. India's systemic preferences for the neighbourhood, like democracy, secularism, federalism, economic development, and stability/security concerns have no doubt shaped the way India has engaged with her neighbours and responded to the developments affecting them from time to time, but no set priorities or a basic framework for doing so has been defined or spelled out.

The 'Neighbourhood First' initiative, announced as a critical component of India's foreign policy by Prime Minister Narendra Modi was somewhat different in this respect, as it underlined 'Neighbours' as a priority. During his campaign trail, there were reports and claims by former foreign secretaries and foreign ministers that PM Modi had consulted them on foreign policy and neighbourhood issues, and that they had suggested that neighbourhood concerns, (considerably neglected during the UPA regime), should be at the fore-front in foreign policy. But no principles or strategy were however spelled out for engaging the neighbours. This looked more like a politically driven emotional response of the new government, signalling to the neighbours that the Modi government promises to deal with them differently, as they occupy a pride of place in the conduct of India's foreign policy. All heads of the government or State were invited by the newly elected Prime Minister Modi to participate in his swearing-in and after the ceremony; Mr. Modi met them all individually assuring them that India will accommodate their concerns, interests and sensitivies.

The process of defining the 'neighbourhood first' approach began within weeks of Modi's swearing-in ceremony. Then Foreign Secretary Mrs Sujata Singh invited Indian envoys from all the neighbouring countries where Foreign Minister Mrs Sushma Swaraj said that a mantra of '3Cs' – Commerce, Culture and Connectivity – will govern India's approach to the neighbours and the world. Addressing South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation

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(SAARC) Summit in Kathmandu in November 2014, Prime Minister Modi outlined his neighbourhood dream saying; "…the future I dream for India is the future I wish for our entire region… for India, our vision of the region rests on five pillars – trade, investment, assistance, cooperation in every area, contacts between our people – and all through seamless connectivity".[1] Foreign Secretary Dr S. Jaishankar subsequently elaborated; "The word 'Neighbourhood First' has a clear self-explanatory message", Jaishankar echoed Prime Minister's message; "A neighbourhood first policy that puts premium on connectivity, contacts and cooperation. Where required, one that is both reasonable and firm".[2] A few months later, some of the key components of this policy were spelled out a bit more clearly, when he said:

The term is meant to convey a strong sense of priority, not suggest a problem-free future. In diplomacy, challenges are often in inverse proportion to distance. The point to note is that this articulates a comprehensive vision of India's broader neighbourhood that reflects growing capabilities and confidence. It is posited on the belief that whatever the past, the realisation of shared prosperity can be India's goal. To achieve that India will not only have to sharply raise levels of cooperation and connectivity, but also bring to bear a new mind set. Where India is concerned, she could herself drive regional cooperation rather than be driven by it. In fact, India should be pursuing her own goals purposefully, without letting them be overly influenced by the limitations of her partners, or diverted by difficulties of the day.[3]

The exact contours of these components, including the tone of positive unilateralism underlined in the last two sentences of this statement unfolded gradually as the policy was put in practice.

The Hits

The message of the policy inherent in the invitation to all the neighbouring leaders for swearing-in ceremony became an instant hit with the neighbours, arousing their hopes that India would be more accommodative and supportive of their interests and sensitivities. There soon emerged four significant and positive aspects of the policy namely (i) bridging the communication gap, (ii) reducing the delivery deficit, (iii) strengthening security cooperation and (iv) deploying India's soft power.

As far as bridging the communication gap is concerned, Prime Minister Modi and Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj travelled to all the neighbours. He launched his visits to the neighbouring countries in June 2014, from Bhutan. As the end of his first term approached, he has

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travelled to all the neighbouring countries, in some cases twice (Afghanistan, Myanmar and Sri Lanka) and to Nepal four times. The only country left out initially was Maldives because the former President Abdulla Yameen, had attacked democratic institutions and function within his country and unduly ruffled India's strategic sensitivities by getting too close to China. However, on 17, November 2018, PM Modi visited Maldives as a special invitee for the swearing-in ceremony of the new President Ibrahim Mohamad Solih. During these visits Prime Minister met people extensively in the host country, covering all the important political players, including those in opposition. In order to reach out to various sections of society he met diverse social groups and addressed joint sessions of their national legislatures in all these countries. His meetings with the Maoists of Nepal, the ousted President Mr. Rajapaksa of Sri Lanka and the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) leader Ms Khalida Zia in Bangladesh were significant, as all these political leaders were perceived to be having reservations with India on one count or the other. Mr. Rajapaksa of Sri Lanka had even publicly blamed India for his electoral defeat in January 2015 elections. PM Modi also travelled to Tamil dominated Jaffna and Talaimannar, as also the Sinhala religious town of Anuradhapur in Sri Lanka. In Nepal, he desired to visit the

Madhes region of Terai in southern Nepal, which however did not materialise. The main objective of these visits was to assure India's respect and support for the developmental aspirations and concerns of the neighbouring countries. This invoked a very positive response from the people in all these countries. Nepalese media praised PM Modi and after his address in Nepal's then Constituent Assembly, former Maoist Prime Minister Baburam Bhattarai tweeted: "PM Modi has won heart and mind of Nepalese people with his magical address".[4]

The second positive aspect was PM Modi's efforts to reducing India's delivery deficit – the gap between promise and performance – in the neighbouring countries. The most obvious example was the ratification of LBA (Land Boundary Agreement) with Bangladesh pending since 1974. The last UPA-II regime had tried to attempt the ratification but could not, due to coalition compulsions. The maritime boundary issue also got resolved through international adjudication, to the satisfaction of Bangladesh wherein, Bangladesh got 19467 out of 25602 square kilometres of the territorial sea limit. In the case of Nepal, hurdles in power trade were addressed and moves were initiated to activate pending infrastructural projects. In Sri Lanka, in August 2018, 46,000 houses of the 60,000 committed by India were completed and handed over to the Sri Lankan authorities for distribution to the beneficiaries.[5] The reconstruction of rail and road links, which was disrupted during the ethnic conflict, has also been expedited.

India also moved to strengthen its economic and developmental cooperation with the neighbours. Problems of trade, especially, the negative trade balance of the neighbouring countries, and investments are being addressed. By the end of 2018, India-Bangladesh trade registered a 28.5 percent increase from 2014 onwards, including enhancement of duty-free exports of garments from Bangladesh to India. Indian investments in Bangladesh grew from $3bn to $10bn.[6] Nepal has been offered US$ 1.75 billion Line of Credit for post-earthquake (April-May 2015) reconstruction. The grant-in-assistance extended to Nepal during the financial year 2017-18 was highest in relation to other neighbours at INR 253.17 crores.[7] India's commitment of developmental credit to Sri Lanka stands at US$ 2.6 billion, devoted mostly to infrastructure support. India's assistance to Afghanistan has touched the $3bn mark. India has been generously helping Bhutan in its developmental plans. During the new Prime Minister Lotay Tshering's visit to India in December 2018, Prime Minister Modi assured Bhutan of India's full support in its 'quest for development and economic prosperity based on the priorities of the people and the Royal Government of Bhutan'. India fixed the power tariff for the new hydro-power 720 MW Mangdechhu project which is in progress, and promised a grant-in-aid of INR 4500 Crores for Bhutan's 12th Five Year Plan.[8]

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A critical area of concern in India's neighbourhood policy has always been to ensure security of the periphery. The security concerns of India and the neighbours go far beyond conventional framework, which is firmed up by treaties and agreements. Under the 'Neighbourhood First' initiative, attempts have been made to consolidate and expand cooperation with these countries in the areas of counter-terrorism, counter insurgency, border security, fighting economic and social crimes like circulation of fake currencies and human trafficking. India has broadly succeeded in persuading Bangladesh to drop the notion developed in post-1975 period, of India being a source of threat. As a first in India's security approach, a soft loan of US$ 500mn has also been extended for acquisition of defence purchases which may help Bangladesh reduce its heavy dependence of Chinese arms and equipment.[9] India has also started conducting military exercises with the armies of Nepal and Bangladesh, and naval exercises with Sri Lanka to enhance 'interoperability' and 'counter-insurgency' cooperation.

A distinguishing feature of PM Modi's neighbourhood policy has been the emphasis on the conscious and assertive use of soft power. In this respect existing cultural policy of India has been institutionalised and strengthened. Special place has been accorded to the promotion of Yoga and Buddhist linkages in relation to Sri Lanka and Nepal. Prime Minister Modi himself has been visiting Hindu and Buddhist temples during his visits to these countries. International Yoga day has been celebrated with considerable fanfare in these countries. India has come forward to help its neighbours in disaster relief. India was first to reach Nepal in the face of massive earth quake of April-May 2015. During floods in Bangladesh and Nepal in August-September 2016, and in Sri Lanka in May 2017, India promptly stepped forward with help while itself suffering with massive floods. India also helped Sri Lanka during the Cyclone in December 2017. In December 2014, under 'Operation Neer', India supplied more than 1000 tonnes of fresh drinking water to Maldives.

The Misses

Notwithstanding these positive aspects, 'Neighbourhood First' policy suffered several setbacks. The worst deterioration has been in relations with Pakistan. Within months of the announcement of India's new policy, trade talks were called off in August 2014, this on the question of Pakistan's continued support for the Kashmiri separatist group (the Hurriyat Conference.) Relations continued to become worse leading to the public announcement of India's policy to isolate Pakistan as it was not stopping cross border terrorism. This was despite PM Modi's surprise visit in December 2015, to attend then Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's family function, to Lahore. In response to the Pakistan supported terrorist attack on Uri which killed 18 Indian soldiers in September 2016, India decided to isolate Pakistan internationally. This attack had come in quick succession to the earlier attack on Pathankot air base. In a public rally PM Modi announced on September 24, 2016: "Let the terrorists make no mistake. India will never forget…we will leave no stone unturned to isolate Pakistan in the world." Relations with Nepal touched a new low in September 2015 following India's diplomatic intervention and coercive economic diplomacy in support of the Madhesis rights during the adoption of a new Constitution by Nepal. Deterioration in Maldives was in response to undemocratic governance and defiance of India's security sensitivities by the former President Yameen, as noted earlier. Relationship has also not been moving smoothly with Sri Lanka despite a friendly government, owing to internal political tensions in the ruling coalition in Colombo.

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Three factors may be identified behind the failures and flip-flops in the 'neighbourhood first' initiative. First was the persisting delivery deficit. Nepal's Prime Minister Oli listed his demands in this respect during his India visit.[10] Despite Prime Minister Modi's intent and efforts, India's delivery deficit suffers on account of lack of coordination and synergy between various departments and agencies, responsible for delivering projects in the foreign countries, including in the immediate neighbourhood. Bureaucratic procedures and subsidiary conditionality also hamper development cooperation. For instance, the Lines of Credit have been so packaged that accessing funds become difficult for the targeted beneficiaries.[11] A commentator has aptly underlined that Prime Minister Modi's visits and "promises to speed up the long-pending projects, have not yet succeeded in reversing the damage done" in neighbourhood relations.[12] Some of the neighbours have also been less cooperative in promoting India's development projects for various reasons. Sri Lanka's Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, openly admitted lapses on his country's part.[13] There have been problems in Nepal, for acquisition of land for the road projects along with some bureaucratic delays. In Maldives, former President Yameen, kept many Indian projects on hold and encouraged Chinese investments in the interest of

his regime survival. There are several reservations in the leadership of neighbouring countries on participating in India initiated projects. There is no national consensus in these countries on how close is not too close to India. Bhutan's reservations on Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal (BBIN) projects, Sri Lanka's delays on Economic and Technological Cooperation Agreement (ETCA) and slow movement on SAARC satellite project may be mentioned here.

The neighbourhood first initiative was also dented by India's adhocism and coercive policy moves. Both these aspects of 'adhoc' responses and 'coercive' moves were clearly evident in case of Pakistan and Nepal. In Pakistan, if Hurriyat links were a problem, the Indians should have made clear to Pakistan much earlier and openly. The Hurriyat contacts with Pakistan High Commission could also be thwarted by the government, right there in Srinagar. Public declaration of isolating Pakistan also appeared to reflect desperation and then references to Baluchistan and Pakistan Occupied Kashmir by Prime Minister Modi from the ramparts of the Red Fort in independence day speech in August 2016, did not make much sense without being backed by concrete and credible back-up moves. Then was the politicisation of "surgical strikes" and border crossing to deal with terrorism and insurgency. In his long press interview on January 01, 2019, Prime Minister Modi reiterated the relevance of "surgical strikes" and claimed the success of policy to isolate Pakistan.[14] In pursuance of this policy, India has also allowed the SAARC process to be paralysed. Now Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is being conceived as an alternate to South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), but this may not prove to be realistic. Similarly, in case of Nepal, open diplomatic intervention in its constitutional process after the adoption of the Constitution by the Constituent Assembly in September 2015, was most undiplomatic and proved to be counter-productive. Following it up with economic coercion, offend not only the Oli-Government but turned ordinary Nepalese against India – an uncalled move that will not be forgotten for a long time to come. These moves generated unsympathetic reverberations in other countries also. Prime Minister Modi's refusal to visit Maldives, though justified, was also an example of coercive diplomacy. Public declaration and making a virtue out of cross-border intervention in Myanmar by Indian security forces in pursuit of insurgents, was also uncalled for.

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It is difficult to say if the 'neighbourhood first' approach of India was in reaction to, or a victim of China's assertive stance in South Asia. China never let go of any opportunity to stand by India's neighbours, especially, whenever the neighbours needed China to counter-balance India. But since 2015, there has been a clear shift in China's posture. With the announcement of the BRI and formulation of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), China has taken an initiative to be present as strongly as possible, both economically and strategically, in India's periphery. It is now not waiting for an invitation but is pushing itself for its own economic and strategic reasons. Billions of dollars have been purse-loosened to lure India's neighbours in debt-traps so as to expand and consolidate China's strategic presence in South Asia. India's neighbours cannot afford to forgo the attraction of political support and economic largesse on offer from China even at the cost of hurting their relations with India. India can barely match China's economic power and political resilience in this respect. India's hope that the regime change in Sri Lanka would reverse the trend of China's expanding presence may not materialise. In the case of Maldives also, change in regime may also follow the Sri Lankan example. In Nepal also, efforts to cultivate pressure points on the Oli regime have not been yielding results.

The Way Ahead

India has woken-up to the derailment of its 'neighbourhood first' initiative. Attention has now been directed towards working out damage control moves, which are working slowly, but are still far from yielding desirable results. India has almost dropped its insistence for Madhes' accommodation in Nepal's constitution. Diplomatic softness has been observed in respecting and acknowledging newly elected governments in Bhutan, Maldives and Bangladesh. Windows

of engagement opportunities are also being opened in relation even to Pakistan. Response to Pakistan's Kartarpur Corridor project was one clear indication in this respect. Despite blocking the SAARC summit and seeking alternative regional engagement in BIMSTEC, SAARC process is not being abandoned. Delivery deficit is being addressed more seriously, and India's participation in the development programmes in the neighbouring countries is being made more generous and smooth.

The road to resetting the neighbourhood initiative will not be free of challenges. The most important challenge is the persisting political and socio-economic turbulence in the neighbourhood where questions of systemic structures like constitutions, political dynamics, social and political polarisation, paths to economic development have not yet been stabilised. This instability will continue to drag India into controversies and internal contests within the neighbouring countries. The challenge for India is to keep out of these conflicts while pursuing its vital security and economic interests, including the values of democracy and social inclusion cherished by Indian people so strongly. In this respect, it was good that India refrained from taking any position in Sri Lanka's internal constitutional crisis and conflict between the President and the Prime Minister since November 2018.[15] India has also opened up its engagement in Sri Lanka towards the Sinhala community by undertaking developmental projects in Sinhala areas and by asserting its own Buddhist identity. India's projection of soft power in the neighbourhood should be based upon its composite culture that also owns its Islamic heritage besides Hindu and Buddhist affiliations. There are four Islamic countries in its neighbourhood and India's internal communal political rhetoric that underlines the Hindu-Muslim divide often sends un-happy waves in the neighbouring countries. India's careful avoidance in making any political references in the elections of Bhutan, Maldives and Bangladesh, was a prudent move to insulate its interests from domestic polarisations and contentions in these countries. India will have to continuously trade carefully in this respect.

There are no easy answers to the Chinese challenge to India's strategic presence and stakes in the neighbouring countries. India is working on various fronts to cope with the Chinese challenge. Besides working with other regional powers like Japan and the U.S., India is also keeping China engaged to work out a modus vivendi to ensure that China respects India's sensitivities. Assertion in Dokalam and engagement in Wuhan perhaps represent the evolving parameters of a redefined China policy. Neighbours would draw their lessons and may perhaps find out limits beyond which they may not be able to play India and China in pursuing their respective interests. Though, Pakistan may still fall in a category by herself. A credible China policy has still to take a clear shape in India, which will have its impact on India's neighbourhood approach as well. India must make sure that the neighbours are not alienated to the extent, that they find possible and profitable to use China as a counter-balance.

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On the whole, India's emerging approach towards the neighbours may have to integrate a harmonious balance, three critical components of resilient and careful responses towards the political and socio-cultural fault-lines in the turbulent neighbouring countries, building internal capabilities and coordination to bridge the delivery deficit between promises and performances and crafting a credible response to China to cope with its assertive thrust in the immediate neighbourhood.

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An Appraisal of India's Connect Central Asia Policy and Need for Recalibration

Prof Nirmala Joshi@

Abstract

The significance of 'Connect Central Asia Policy' (CCAP) lies in the fact that, it is India's first regional initiative. Earlier the relations with the Central Asian Republics (CAR) were on a bilateral basis. The CCAP initiated in 2012 came at a time when Eurasian region was in a state of flux as fundamental changes were taking place. The policy reflects India's desire to play a wider role in the region. The article examines the regional context and the trajectory of the policy.

The Central Asian region had always held immense geopolitical and strategic significance for India; whether in the past or in the contemporary scenario. In the present century, India's ties with the five CARs has seen a gradual upward trajectory; from building strategic partnership to Connect Central Asia (CCA). India's, CCAP is aimed at enhancing its strategic space and engagement. The significance of Central Asia was rightly stated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his visit to Kyrgyzstan in July 2015. He said, "We see an important place for Central Asia in India's future."[1] Today CCAP occupies a central position in India's strategy of "Look North". India's CCAP is an amalgam of India's rich legacy of historical ties and cultural contacts with the region and its contemporary importance. In order to understand and evaluate India's CCA strategy, it is essential to place it in the regional context. More so, since inception, the CARs have been caught in the vortex of competitive international politics, with external powers vying to establish their presence and build leverages in a region, which has drawn attention because of its geopolitical location and wealth of natural resources.

In the evolving dynamics of present day Eurasia presents a mixed picture. Nevertheless, it is perceived as the key feature of new world order that is taking shape. Many experts and analysts perceive the on-going interplay as a re-invention of British geographer Halford Mackinder's theory of geopolitics; 'the Heartlands of Eurasia and Pivot of History'. According to Mackinder's theory, Eurasia will determine the destinies of nations, region and the world as well. In his speech at the Nazarbayev University (2015), Prime Minister Narendra Modi brought out this point in a succinct manner. He said, "Central Asia is at the crossroads of Eurasia. It has been caught in the currents of history and it has also shaped."[2]

In the on-going interplay, Eurasia especially Central Asia is witnessing the trend towards globalisation, technology and geopolitical connectivity projects through rail, road and energy pipelines, which are crisscrossing the Eurasian space. Are these the modern tools evident in the power play in Eurasia? Is the reasoning of Mackinder "who controls Eurasia rules the world?" relevant to explain the interplay of major powers?

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The Regional Context

India enunciated its CCAP at a time when the geopolitical scenario in Eurasia was in a state of flux. USA's announcement that the bulk of coalition forces under the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in Afghanistan would be withdrawn by the end of 2014, has triggered fundamental developments in the region. The Russian Federation's 'Pivot to Asia' emphasised the Eurasian vector of its policy. Russian aim was to establish itself as an independent centre of power, a pole in the multipolar world. This is clear from the following statement of former Prime Minister (Yevgeny Primakov) who had perceptibly stated "Considering Russia's history, intellectual resources, huge size, natural resources and finally the level of its armed forces the country will not agree to the status of a State that is led". It will seek to establish itself as an independent centre of a multipolar world.[3] Central Asia had to be seen as Russian sphere of special interests. It was its 'Near Abroad'.

In furtherance of its objective of emerging as an independent centre, Russia launched two of its flagship multilateral projects; the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) in 2003, and the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) in 2015. According to President Vladimir Putin's vision of Eurasia, this sort of economic union constituted the basis for a higher level of integration in the Eurasian Union.

On the other hand, China considers Central Asia as its strategic rear. It is part of its "Greater Eurasian Partnership" concept. In 2013 President Xi Jinping while on a visit to Kazakhstan, put forth the idea of the Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB), now referred to as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The SREB is an overland transport corridor connecting China with Europe via Central Asia and other regions. It was an attempt to revive the ancient silk route and today the BRI is the defining feature of Chinese foreign policy. Today Russian and Chinese strategic partnership is the key feature of present day Eurasia. The question is can two huge land powers sharing a lengthy land border, with a history of accommodation and rivalry; establish a long term durable partnership? How the interaction of the two projects will be played out is unclear at present. Whether this is a new version of the nineteenth century 'Great Game' as some scholars and analysts opine needs to be examined further. Although the U.S. presence in Central Asia is on the margins, nevertheless it maintains five military bases and a residual force in Afghanistan. Viewed from the Central Asian perspective U.S. military presence is looked upon with favour.

> **Today Russian and Chinese strategic partnership is the key feature of present day Eurasia. The question is can two huge land powers sharing a lengthy land border, with a history of accommodation and rivalry; establish a long term durable partnership? How the interaction of the two projects will be played out is unclear at present. Whether this is a new version of the nineteenth century 'Great Game' as some scholars and analysts opine needs to be examined further. Although the U.S. presence in Central Asia is on the margins, nevertheless it maintains five military bases and a residual force in Afghanistan. Viewed from the Central Asian perspective U.S. military presence is looked upon with favour.**

In the regional matrix, another noteworthy trend is the growing awareness about cooperation among themselves. So far Central Asia was dominated by centrifugal tendencies. Historical differences and animosities had kept the CARs away from real cooperation. Today centripetal tendencies are gradually, but surely gathering momentum. In this regard the role of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev is commendable. Since accession in 2016, he has launched hectic diplomatic parleys and exchange of high-level visits. Uzbekistan's foreign policy axiom is 'Region First' – a positive and an inclusive concept. These initiatives elicited a positive response from other CARs. The following statement of President Nursultan Nazarbayev reflects the cooperative spirit of the conference. At a conference in Astana in March 2018, he sharply reacted to a question by saying "… in order to solve the problems of Central Asia, we do not need any third person. We ourselves can resolve all questions and that is why we are meeting." Importantly the idea of introducing a Schengen type of visa is being discussed by the CARs. The visa is being dubbed as the 'Silk Road Visa'. Located between zones of Eurasian politics and the centre of instability in neighbouring Afghanistan, the CARs have realized that the best way forward is cooperation. Although such cooperation is still a long way off, there is

now greater realisation that, if they have to progress and become players in their own right, then regional cooperation is essential, more so, as all are landlocked.

However, due to its geographical proximity to the 'pivot of instability', external impulses are fanning fundamentalism in Central Asia. Extremist and terrorist groups, organisations and networks, are well entrenched in the Af-Pak region where they enjoy safe haven and other support. These non-traditional threats are trans-national in character and carried out by non-state actors. Such extremist and terrorist forces are highly insidious and have the potential to destabilise Central Asia. In this regard, Tajikistan is the most vulnerable with a long open border, and any destabilisation of Tajikistan will have a ripple effect, and affect the whole of Central Asia. The best way to counter the challenge of extremism and terrorism is by forging a joint cooperative effort.

It is against the backdrop of increased Russian and Chinese activeness and the promotion of their respective flagship projects and a resurgent insurgency, (which could challenge their very existence), that India initiated its CCAP.

India's CCAP

India launched its CCAP at a time when the connectivity issue in the vast Eurasian landmass had moved to the centre stage of international politics. In the process, Central Asia had also acquired tremendous significance. Like the Chinese who had made connectivity issue the defining feature of its foreign policy, India's CCAP also laid considerable emphasis on the issue. The policy operates at two levels; official as well as non-official. The policy was unveiled by the Minister of State Shri E. Ahmed in his first inaugural address at the First India Central Asia Dialogue at Bishkek in 2012 where in the issue of connectivity was brought out in a pointed manner. He said, "India is now looking intently at the region through the framework of Connect Central Asia Policy which is based on proactive political economic and people to people engagement with the Central Asian countries both individually and collectively." Elucidating further he said "We must factor in the regional situation and especially the challenge of rebuilding Afghanistan …. One is to work towards converting Afghanistan into a hub of trade and energy connecting Central with South Asia."[4] Importantly the significance of CCAP was not only at the bilateral level, but it was India's first regional initiative as well. The CARs welcomed India's initiative as there was a wide area of commonality of interests on issues of regional security and stability.

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The emphasis on connectivity with Central Asia had become one of the top priorities of Indian foreign policy. In her address at the Raisina Dialogue in March 2016 Smt. Sushma Swaraj, India's External Affairs Minister highlighted the significance of connectivity. In her words "… Connectivity today is central to the globalisation process. It is, of course, particularly important for Asia's growth and development – whether it is domestic, external or regional connectivity will determine how we meet our promise of growth, employment and prosperity."[5] Subsequently, in an apt observation S. Jaishankar, former Foreign Secretary said "by contemporary standards we are significantly an under connected nation. This is a major constraint on both our capabilities and competitiveness."[6]

Apart from the focus on connectivity, equal emphasis was laid on regular exchange of high level visits and projection of India's soft power. At the official level Indian Vice President Shri Hamid Ansari visited Tajikistan (April 2013) and Uzbekistan (May 2013) to elicit views of the leaders on the post 2014 scenario in Afghanistan. The objective was to strengthen common concerns on security and to possibly chalk out a strategy. In his consultation with President Emomali Rahmon, the latter stressed the need for a joint consultative effort before the withdrawal of NATO forces from Afghanistan. Regional stability was the core concern of Tajikistan.[7] Due to its strategic location

bordering Afghanistan and close geographical proximity to Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK), Tajikistan holds immense geopolitical significance for India. In 2015 Smt. Sushma Swaraj was in Ashgabat to discuss the progress of Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) a natural gas pipeline. Prime Minister Modi's visit to all the CARs was a historic one in more than one way. The aim of the visit was not only to strengthen ties, but to convey the message that each Republic was of strategic importance to India. It was an acknowledgement of their individuality as nation states. Importantly, it signaled India's regional approach, the first of its kind launched by it.

The bilateral context of India-Kyrgyzstan relations received a big stimulus during President AlmazbekAtambayev's visit to India in December 2016. An important take away of the visit was that two countries would jointly construct the Kyrgyzstan-Indian Mountain Training Centre, in the city of Balykchy, in Issy-Kul district. The Centre will provide instruction and training for personnel of the Armed Forces of the Kyrgyz Republic as well as host joint mountain training exercises.[8] The Kyrgyz President's visit was followed by Tajik President Rahmon Sojourn's visit from 14-18 December 2016. In the course of the visit security and defence, economic and connectivity issues were discussed. The recent visit of President Mirziyoyev of Uzbekistan in September 2018 was a milestone, one raising considerably Uzbek profile in India.

Besides regular exchanges of high level and official delegations, mention must be made of India's growing soft power projection. New and innovative ideas were introduced. Amongst them are the construction of 'Friendship Hospital' in southern Tajikistan for both civilian and military personnel, and capacity building in the economic sphere particularly agriculture. For sooner rather than later the issue of food security is going to emerge as a critical one. India has also proposed its flagship developmental projects such as e-net working with a hub in India for delivering tele-education and tele-medicine to all the CARs. Other projects which are being set up are Central Asian Institute for Higher Studies in Bishkek, multi speciality clinics, along with centres of excellence in Information Technology (IT) in all the CARs. India is already offering scholarships to Central Asian students under the ITEC programme of the Ministry of External Affairs. The programme imparts skill and knowledge to people who would like to further improve their expertise.

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Meanwhile, two fortuitous developments in the region occurred that can give a big push to CCAP. One significant development is the Indian firm India Ports Global Ltd. took over operations at the Shaheed Beheshti port in Chabahar on 24 December 2018. Chabahar is a vital gateway to reach out to Afghanistan, Central Asia and beyond. Chabahar is of critical significance, as Pakistan has denied direct overland access through its territory to India. Plans are afoot for multiple options for the CARs to reach the Indian Ocean. Efforts are on to modernise the existing rail, road network. The focus of the CARs on regional cooperation and the Ashgabat Agreement will facilitate transportation through the corridor. Secondly, India is now a full member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Membership of the grouping has opened up immense opportunities for India to intensify its engagement and strengthen CCAP. In his speech at the Qingdao Summit (June 2018), Prime Minister Modi, sought increased economic links and integration among the SCO security bloc but also underlined the need for a respect for sovereignty and transparency in connectivity projects among the members of the grouping. Further, he said India would be ready to play its role in fostering socio-economic development of the SCO region and it can offer experience in skill development, capacity building and human resource development.[9]

The above mentioned developments would be highly beneficial in furthering the objective of CCAP. India should ensure that its decisions are implemented quickly. A monitoring committee could be set up to resolve road blocks, differences etc. that could arise. It is important that India should not miss out on these opportunities.

India's CCAP in the Eurasian Context

India initiated its policy at a time when the Eurasian landscape was beginning to bristle with integrationist projects. Today the big picture is becoming clear. Today the dominant feature of Eurasia is the Russian Chinese partnership. The question is, can two huge contiguous land powers, once bitter foes, now turned partners, maintain durable partnership in the long term? Both their prestigious projects have global ramifications, but are rooted in Central Asia. Hence Central Asia is of critical importance to both Russia and China. A factor to be noted is that, competitive tendency is slowly emerging in the partnership. What needs to be factored in particular is the nature of differing perspective. The CARs are likely to come under pressure from both the leading players. Since Indian interests also lie in the sphere of security and stability, like the Russian concern, it would be necessary for India to synchronise its interests with Russia to the extent possible. China perceives India as a competitor in Central Asia as their interests are similar. China's prime interest is the operationalisation of BRI while India's CCAP also emphasises connectivity, but in the southern direction. An opening in the southern direction for the CARs would work at cross purposes for BRI.

The trend towards regional cooperation is a positive development. The 'Region First' focuses on economic growth and development. The CARs are placing an increasing focus on connectivity in the southern direction. It is perceived that the Indian Ocean region is the hub of investment and trade. The issue has acquired a new urgency as Central Asia's young population is rising (in the age group of 25 to 50), it is between 40-42 percent and with this rise is also the growing expectation of the people. Initially, Indian focus should be on those areas that will facilitate growth such as infrastructure development and agriculture. In the sphere of infrastructure India should focus on not only major networks but at the provincial, district and village level. This would enable faster transportation and promote intra and inter regional trade. Since all the CARs are agrarian based economies, development of agriculture is important. In the sphere of industrial development India has been imparting skill development and capacity building especially in those areas that will generate employment. At this juncture focusing on connectivity and economic development are the best tools available for CCAP.

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In the implementation of its policy, India confronts the challenge of continuing insurgency in Afghanistan, India's gateway to Central Asia. Several efforts are being made to bring about peace and stability in Afghanistan, which will have a beneficial impact on the region as well. Indian approach to stability is primarily focused on economic development, and India is one of the highest investor in Afghanistan. It is important to convince the Taliban that Afghanistan's emergence as the hub of trade, transport and transit is in the interest of the Afghans, as the country will derive transit revenue. However, diverging interests of the stake holders, has kept Afghanistan in turmoil and insurgency alive.

Conclusion

India's CCAP initiative is noteworthy and is in the mutual interest of both India and the CARs. A sustained pursuit of the policy and its quick implementation would be valuable inputs into India's 'Look North' strategy. Relations with Iran will have to be nurtured and the 'Trilateral Agreement' between Afghanistan, India and Iran is the crux, for reaching out to Central Asia. So far there has not been any conflict of interest between Russia and China; however, the competitive element between the two players is also evident. Scholars and analysts often construe an under-current of competition between India and China for the Central Asian space. India will have to use its diplomatic skills to generate the requisite political will among the countries involved for the smooth functioning of its policy.

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India–Iran: Way Forward after the U.S. Sanctions

Shri Sanjay Singh, IFS (Retd)@

Abstract

India has a complex relationship with Iran. The two countries have a broad convergence of interests based on their civilizational relationship, longstanding people to people relations and a mutually beneficial cooperation encompassing energy, trade and connectivity. However, the relationship is complicated due to differing perspectives on several issues–Iran's relationship with Pakistan and China and the animosity exhibited towards Iran by important Indian partners such as the U.S., Israel and Saudi Arabia. President Trump has reinstated all the sanctions that the U.S. had imposed on Iran prior to Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). This affects Iran's ability to trade in U.S. dollars and to sell its oil, barring temporary exemptions, which have afforded India temporary relief. The U.S. is renewing pressure on Iran unilaterally, and on Iran's economic partners, including India, forcing them to make a choice. The relationship is further complicated by Iran's own destabilizing behaviour in the West Asia, affecting peace and stability - a primary Indian objective given the strategic importance of the region for India. Nevertheless, it is important that India retains a degree of autonomy on its relations with Iran, so as to be able to influence its behaviour as well as preserve its own economic and political space in the country. It is within these contours that India would need to fashion its relationship with Iran, in a pragmatic and flexible manner, over the foreseeable future.

The Broad Contours

India has a complex relationship with Iran, which does not lend itself to easy binaries. Several factors determine the relationship, all of which India needs to take into account while framing its policies towards this important country in its neighbourhood. The basic components of the relationship are fairly simple: The legacy of history, long standing people to people relations, energy, trade, connectivity and an interest in the stability of the region. However, the relationship does get complicated at times owing to differing perspectives on several issues and their relationships with the U.S., China, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Israel, among others.

India and Iran have a civilisational relationship. The peoples of North India and Iran migrated from a common homeland and share a common linguistic and racial background. The two countries have had a close connection through the ages and their interactions have enriched each other's language, literature, art, music, culture and food. The close people to people relationship endures till the present day through the Shia connection and the exchange of students, pilgrims, businessmen and tourists. Erstwhile PM Jawaharlal Nehru, in his book *'Discovery of India',* wrote, "Few people have been more closely related in origin and throughout history than the people of India and the people of Iran".

Being neighbours, competition, contention and cooperation has always been present in the relationship between India and Iran, the two centres of power in the region. In mediaeval times, the relationship between the Moghuls and

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the Safavids was not always cordial, with the two contending for control of Afghanistan. India also bore the brunt of the depredations of Nader Shah and his infamous sacking of Delhi in 1739. On the other hand, the role of Indians under British India in the nineteenth and early twentieth century has not left happy memories in Iran. Indian troops participated in the Anglo-Persian War of 1856-57. Under Viceroy Curzon, British India started taking an inordinate interest in Iran, a process which led to the British Indian Army bolstering British presence in the Southern influence zone in Iran, during the First World War, and culminated in the control of Iranian oil by the Anglo-Persian Oil Company.

The Pakistan Factor

Partition and the creation of Pakistan geographically separated the two neighbours and brought about a hiatus in their relationship. The two countries world views did not converge for many years thereafter, with Iran being part of Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO) and India a leader of the Non Aligned Movement (NAM). Iran provided strategic depth to Pakistan, as was witnessed during the 1965 war with Pakistan. It was only after the comprehensive Indian victory in the 1971 war that lead to the creation of Bangladesh that Iran stopped viewing India through the prism of Pakistan. Following the Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979, the Islamic factor became an important consideration for the Islamic Republic in constructing relationships. This had its influence on Iran's relationship with both India and Pakistan. In the 1990s, under President Rafsanjani, the Iranian world view displayed a new pragmatism. This enabled India and Iran to make common cause against the threat emanating from Afghanistan, build strong economic links and work on projects to improve connectivity between India, Eurasia and Afghanistan.

> The Pakistan factor is omnipresent in the relationship, as is the U.S. factor. As the relationship between India and the U.S. strengthens, and U.S. pressure on Iran increases, the Pakistani factor could be brought more and more into play signalling to India that Iran has other options in the region.

Yet the Pakistan factor is omnipresent in the relationship, as is the U.S. factor. As the relationship between India and the U.S. strengthens, and U.S. pressure on Iran increases, the Pakistani factor could be brought more and more into play signalling to India that Iran has other options in the region. Recently, in December'18 when he was in India, Iranian Foreign Minister Zarif as reported in *The Hindu* underlined that "Iran is a close friend of India as well as Pakistan". Iran has recently started formal talks with the Taliban, though it has always had some form of interaction with factions of the Taliban for some time now. It wants the U.S. to leave Afghanistan as it believes that the U.S. presence in Afghanistan poses more of a threat to Iran than the Taliban (Iran has not been averse to clandestinely assisting factions of the Taliban in their campaign against the U.S.). India however, holds a contrary view. It believes that the U.S. presence in Afghanistan is an important factor stabilising the country.

On Indian news channel NDTV during the same visit Zarif stated that, "-- it would be impossible to have a future Afghanistan without any role for the Taliban". This is something that India has not subscribed to till now. He also added further that "...Pakistan now is trying to play a positive role in getting a peace process underway in Afghanistan and the Pakistanis also do not wish to see an Afghanistan dominated by extremist groups.... Extremism in Pakistan and Afghanistan is an existential threat for Pakistan." Zarif clarified that "We disagreed with Pakistan in the 90s when they created the Taliban or helped to create the Taliban....but we cannot be prisoners of the past. We need to work for a better future and Iran is ready to work with Pakistan in order to realise what the Pakistani leaders have been telling us that they believe fighting extremists groups is in their national security interest and we believe analytically, that, that is the case." This is a position which nobody in India buys. If Iran persists on this line, it will be very difficult for India to do business with it on Afghanistan.

Co-operation in Energy & Trade

Iran is a major storehouse of energy, possessing the 2nd largest gas reserves and 4th largest oil reserves in the world. India, on the other hand, imports nearly 85 percent of its oil and gas requirements, vital for its growing economy. This lays the foundation for an energy partnership between the two countries. Iraq was a major supplier of crude oil to India, till its invasion of Kuwait in the early nineties, which forced India to look for other sources of supply. The instability in Iraq following the U.S. military action in 2001 and the consequent disruption of supplies increased Iran's importance for India as a major source of oil. India, in turn, became the second largest destination for Iranian oil exports. Iran also provides a large market for Indian exports and is an important transit corridor for trade with Afghanistan and Central Asia, (given Pakistan's intransigence in giving India transit rights). Iran recognises India as an important power with a large market and as a source of goods and technology. U.S. sanctions on Iran have created new obstacles in taking this important economic relationship for India, forward. Iran's cooperation is paramount in the successful implementation of International North–South Transport Corridor (INSTC) and Chabahar-Zaranj-Delaram Corridor, which are critical for Indian's connectivity to Afghanistan and Eurasia.

Iran's Role in West Asia

Iran, about half the size of India, with over 80mn people, boasting modern infrastructure, a developed industrial base and considerable acumen in science and technology, is a major power in West Asia, a region of critical importance for India. The entire region is an important economic partner, a major source of oil and gas, where nearly 8 million Indians earn their living. Its stability is a primary Indian objective and Iran is an important role player, as it also is, in the context of Afghanistan. This year at the Raisina Dialogue, Mr Zarif called for a collective security architecture in the region, based on the will of the regional countries, through dialogue between them.

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It is in these contexts that India's relations with Iran assume a special significance. While there is a broad convergence of interests between India and Iran, it must be recognised that their core interests are not the same. The major objectives of the Islamic Republic of Iran are the preservation of the Islamic State and regime, and spreading its influence. Iran considers itself central to a critical region over which it wishes to exercise pervasive influence. It wishes to be the leader of the Islamic world, a pursuit in which it clashes with Saudi Arabia. Many of its activities harm Israeli and U.S. interests. Iran is a revisionist power, whose activities do not always contribute to peace and security in the region, a primary Indian objective. While the events in Iraq, Syria, Palestine and Yemen are not of its making, it has not desisted in fishing in troubled waters and further muddying them.

Iran's pursuit of nuclear capability could be destabilising for the region as it could encourage others to follow suit, resulting in nuclear proliferation. Its nuclear programme has brought it to adverse attention and resulted in pressure, especially from the U.S. and Europe. While its people are one on Iran's right to be a nuclear power, the economic difficulties it encountered as a result of its nuclear programme, had led it to agree to the JCPOA an arrangement it concluded with the P5+1 in 2015. This deal has two components - the removal of sanctions, in return for Iran's suspension of its nuclear activities. This deal was opposed by Israel and Iran's neighbours in the Gulf, who argued that it did not eliminate Iran's nuclear capability but actually assisted in Iran increasing its influence in the region. Post the P5+1 Nuclear deal in 2015, Iran's economy grew stronger by obtaining renewed access to international finance, investment and trade, allowing it to ramp up production and exports of oil and gas, and access to funds banked abroad. This gave a fillip to its activities around the region in support of its allies - President Assad in Syria, the Shia brigades in Iraq, militant elements in Palestine and the Houthis in Yemen, to the detriment of its principal adversaries in the region.

Re-imposition of Sanctions

Last year, the U.S. under President Trump unilaterally rescinded the nuclear deal, concluded with Iran under his predecessor President Obama. The U.S. also renewed its pressure on Iran and on its partners to follow suit. The other signatories of the deal have not agreed to do so. Nevertheless, the threat of U.S. secondary sanctions has created a considerable handicap for others in doing business with Iran. President Trump and his 'National Security' team do not believe that it is possible for the U.S. to have any relationship with the present regime in Iran, as they hold them responsible for the problems and extremist violence in the region.

The U.S. has reinstated all the sanctions by November 2018–both the suspended primary and secondary sanctions on Iran's economy, including on the oil and financial sectors, that it had imposed on Iran before the JCPOA. This will affect Iran's ability to trade in U.S. dollars and to sell its oil, even though there will be no additional European and the U.N. Security Council sanctions. Exemption from oil-related sanctions have been provided to some countries including India for an initial six-month period. The re-imposition of U.S. secondary sanctions, targeting Iran's international trade and finance with other countries and its oil and gas exports, will make it difficult for its partners to do business with it. Other countries, including India, have been forced to make a choice on whether to respect the unilaterally imposed sanctions.

To an extent, the date for India to make this choice has been put off for some time as there are indications that the U.S. has allowed India to import around 300,000 barrels of oil a day from Iran for six months. However, this is still lower than the 540,000 barrels a day that India was importing last year. Transportation and insurance difficulties could be overcome by using Iranian, Russian and Chinese shipping companies. Payment difficulties could also be dealt with by oil payments to be deposited in rupees, in the escrow accounts of Iranian banks with an Indian bank, with around half of that, being earmarked for Indian exports to Iran, which amounted to around $2.5 billion during the last financial year. The U.S. should not be averse to the export of agricultural products, food, medicines, and medical devices to Iran, the major components of Indian exports.

> In end December 2018, Indian Ports Global Limited opened its office at Chabahar and took over operations of the Shahid Beheshti port. Commercial operations have begun at India Ports Global Chabahar Free Zone (IPGCFZ) at Chabahar. Bank Pasargad, an Iranian bank, has been permitted to open a branch in Mumbai. Along with UCO Bank, they are to facilitate transactions relating to operation of berths at Chabahar port and strengthen this route for trade with Afghanistan and Central Asia, facilitating India's role in Afghanistan.

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These arrangements should allow Indian exporters to be able to trade with Iran, receive the proceeds, and Indian oil companies to continue sourcing oil from Iran. They should also keep open the trading conduit to Afghanistan and Central Asia. Most importantly they will maintain Indian presence in Iran. However, all this is dependent on U.S.-Iran dynamics. The Rupee-Rial arrangement also has its limitations, as it may lead to huge Iranian rupee balances building up again in India, unless, Iran imports more from India and balances trade. Hopes for a European route for facilitating such transactions is yet to be operationalised. Indian companies importing oil would in any case have to be careful, if

they are not to attract any U.S. sanctions. Indian involvement in Chabahar port may also be affected, if the U.S. feels that sanctioned Iranian companies are involved in the project, or it negatively impacts on U.S. interests.

The Chinese Factor

U.S. determination to end Iranian pursuit of its nuclear ambitions and cause difficulties for the Islamic regime runs the danger of pushing Iran further into the Chinese sphere of influence. China has already an important presence in Iran and is its largest economic partner. Chinese investment in Iran's oil and gas sector is growing and China is the largest customer of Iran's energy exports. Iran is an important constituent of its Belt and Road initiative, providing China connectivity to the Levant and the Persian Gulf. China is the largest trading partner of Iran and its largest destination of oil exports, with trade over $30 billion in 2017. The first Head of State to visit Teheran after the signing of the JCPOA was President Xi Jinping in January 2016, when the two countries released a vision of an exponentially expanding trade and economic relationship. The growing Chinese influence in Iran will also have a beneficial effect on Iran-Pakistan relations and extension of CPEC to Iran could be one result. India needs to take proactive action to preserve its economic space in Iran. The difficulty lies in doing so without alienating the U.S., an important partner for India in the broader Indo-Pacific.

Conclusion

A broad India-Iran convergence exists but this has its own complications. Important Indian partners - the U.S., Saudi Arabia, U.A.E. and Israel, exhibit a visceral hatred towards Iran and have reservations on any strengthening of relationships with Iran. Iran's own behavior in the region is not always helpful and affects the larger peace and stability. Nevertheless, it is important that India retain a degree of autonomy on its relations with Iran, so as to be able to influence its behavior, as well as preserve its economic and political space in the country. It is within these contours that India would need to fashion its relationship with Iran in a pragmatic and flexible manner over the foreseeable future.

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Reengaging with India's Neighbour — Maldives

Maj Gen Rakesh Pratap Singh Bhadauria, VSM (Retd)@

Abstract

The two key tenets of India's grand strategy to emerge as the leading power in 21st century are, firstly to ensure its primacy in South Asia and the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and secondly, the need to maintain its strategic autonomy. Within the construct of India's Maritime Strategy, India-Maldives relations assume significance far more than the size or the national strength of the country. The bilateral relations have had a roller-coaster ride up to now, but the author feels that the new leadership in Maldives post-election will realise that the Chinese investments may lead to a debt trap; this opens up opportunities for India, provided India by herself or along with her strategic partners present a credible alternative for investments. It is now time to seize the moment and engage robustly on both security and economic issues, with one of India's strategically most important neighbour.

Introduction

The two key tenets of India's grand strategy to emerge as the leading power in 21st century are, firstly to ensure its primacy in South Asia and the IOR and secondly the need to maintain its strategic autonomy. India's geopolitical imperatives, however, dictate that before India can extend its reach to the far corners of the world, it must first consolidate its standing in its own neighborhood. And to do that, it must contend with the mounting challenge posed by its principal strategic competitor: China. Therefore, the 'neighbourhood' has always been an important aspect of India's foreign policy. Within the construct of India's Maritime Strategy, India-Maldives relations assume significance far more than the size or the national strength of the country. While Maldives' relationships with India have generally been stable, the situation changed after the removal of Mohamed Nasheed from power in February 2012, which led to a complex power play in the IOR. For past many years, India has been trying hard to regain stability in its bilateral relations with the Maldives, but has achieved only mixed results; the rough patch now seems to be behind India after the victory of President Solih.

Analysis of the key drivers of foreign policy of Maldives, the roller coaster relationship with India thus far, study of the economic situation and overall socio-political milieu, will help in identifying issues which need attention in India's relationship with Maldives. Moreover, the realisation by leaders in the new government in Maldives that the Chinese investments may lead to a debt trap opens up opportunities for India, if India by herself or along with her strategic partners present a credible alternative for investments. It is now the time to seize the moment and engage robustly on both security and economic issues with one of India's strategically most important neighbour.

Strategic location of the country is the key driver of its foreign policy, the other two are - the small size and religious identity. These have remained constant over the years[1].

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Maldives is an Archipelagic Nation

Maldives is situated in the middle of the Indian Ocean. It is located 300 miles from the southern coast of India and 450 miles southwest of Sri Lanka. It consists of 1,192 islands, of which nearly 200 are inhabited. With a population of about 350,000, it is one of the most dispersed countries in the world. It is a low lying nation, and most parts of the country are barely a meter above sea level. This makes Maldives very vulnerable to the phenomenon of climate change and sea level rise[2].

The Strategic Location of the Maldives

Straddling important Sea Lanes of Communication (SLOCs) and its proximity to Deigo Garcia - where the U.S. has a logistic base - has aroused the interest of important world powers in Maldives, since long. In the past, countries like Iran, Libya, and the former Soviet Union had shown interest in leasing the erstwhile British base in Gan, one of the Islands of the archipelago - perhaps for military purposes. It is, therefore, not surprising that external powers have occasionally aided and abetted political conspiracies, bringing political instability to the country.

In recent times, the rise of China has resulted in heightened strategic completion between India and China in South Asia and IOR. China's strategic interests and logistical limitations in the Indian Ocean have prompted the country to increase its presence in the region. For example, China is using anti-piracy missions to expand regular naval activity. China is also reaching out to the IOR through the "One Belt One Road (OBOR)" project, which is premised on the idea of common development[3]. Both China and India rely on safe trade routes crossing the Indian Ocean, so both countries aim to boost their clout in the area. Maldives plays a key role in this geopolitical competition.

USA is a key extra-regional player in IOR with vital strategic and security interests in the region at large and Maldives in particular. It was reported that a secret move by the Obama administration was made in early 2013 to negotiate with Maldives about a Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), which would have led to increased military cooperation between the two countries, possibly establishing the U.S. bases there[4]. But draft of the agreement was leaked to the press, and the U.S. was forced to concede that such talks were indeed going on. The negotiations got derailed when erstwhile President Yameen got elected in November 2013 by narrowly defeating Nasheed.

> The real U.S.-Indian game plan is to create a "second island chain" (similar to the one in the Western Pacific) connecting Maldives with Diego Garcia (and Seychelles, where India has a base on one of the islands and has concluded an agreement to build an airstrip and a sophisticated "monitoring station" at a cost of US$45 million) to curb the presence of Chinese submarines in the Indian Ocean and to control the sea lanes through which China conducts the bulk of its foreign trade. Also, the U.S. and India closely cooperate in monitoring the presence of Chinese submarines in the Indian Ocean.

If the media reports are to be believed then the real U.S.-Indian game plan is to create a "second island chain" (similar to the one in the Western Pacific) connecting Maldives with Diego Garcia (and Seychelles, where India has a base on one of the islands and has concluded an agreement to build an airstrip and a sophisticated "monitoring station" at a cost of US$45 million) to curb the presence of Chinese submarines in the Indian Ocean and to control the sea lanes through which China conducts the bulk of its foreign trade. Also, the U.S. and India closely cooperate in monitoring the presence of Chinese submarines in the Indian Ocean.

It is for these reasons that most leaders of Maldives have concluded that it is imperative for the country to remain friendly with major powers like India, the U.S., and China, as well as to join multilateral forums like the SAARC.

A 100 Percent Sunni Muslim Country

Maldives has also been close to the Islamic world, especially Saudi Arabia. It is therefore, not surprising that Maldives has been getting increasingly radicalised and coming under the influence of fundamentalist Wahhabi ideology. Islamic State (IS) and Lashkar-e-Taiba are also reported to have established bases in the country[5]. Several hundred young men and women had deserted their homes to fight for the IS in Syria and Iraq. The rapid growth of radical Islam in India's vicinity is a matter of serious concern for India and for regional security.

A Roller Coaster Relationship with India Thus Far

As close and friendly neighbours, India and Maldives share ethnic, linguistic, cultural, religious and commercial links, steeped in antiquity and enjoy cordial and multi-dimensional relations. India was among the first to recognise Maldives after its independence in 1965 and to establish diplomatic relations with the country. India established its mission at Malé in 1972[6].

The bilateral relations have had a roller coaster ride up to now. A peep into the evolution of the relations suggests that India will have to engage with Maldives on a regular basis at the highest level and not leave it to the officials. Maldivian foreign policy during the President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom era was indifferent to India, although, Gayoom successfully managed to create the impression that he was friendly to India. India had saved his regime from a coup. However, he still did not give any special privileges to India.[7]

President Gayoom then, had tried to play China against India, during the democratic movement which started to gather momentum in Maldives. He probably feared that democratic India, may not support him as strongly in the face of a democratic upsurge. This insecurity prompted him to look for new international partners. In this quest, he started relying increasingly on China - an emerging global power with important strategic interests in the Indian Ocean[8].

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Bilateral relations between India and Maldives saw some improvement with the onset of multi-party democracy, and the coming to power of President Mohamed Nasheed[9]. During his visit to India, (before the October 2008 multiparty presidential elections) Nasheed openly accused Gayoom of cosying up to China[10]. During Nasheed's presidency, tourism industry - the mainstay of the Maldivian economy - was going through some difficulty, because of global economic recession. The Chinese sensed an opportunity there, and signed some agreements to develop tourism[11].

Chinese also opened their embassy in Malé on November 8, 2011, during President Nasheed's time. However, what surprised everyone was the plan of the Nasheed government, to sign two agreements with China for the supply of military hardware and for military training. These plans were later given up, once they became known, and Maldives promised not to do anything that compromised the security environment of the Indian Ocean. In October 2011, President Nasheed tried to allay Indian fears by stating that the Maldives "will always be India's friend", and also added that he trusted "democracy far more than any other system".

The government of Nasheed had tried to follow an 'India first' foreign policy. Nasheed defined this policy as not having defence exercises with other countries, not to conduct domestic policy in a way that creates concern in India, not to give a base to the Chinese, or indeed anyone to create strategic infrastructure, like deep-water ports and airports[12]. This meant that the government under him prioritised Indian interests. It also meant that Maldives would not do anything which could jeopardise Indian security interests. He had allowed the installation of radars on 26 atolls.

Indian and Maldivian navies engaged in joint exercises. The Indian Navy also provided training to the *Maldives* National Defence Force (MNDF).

The Maldivian approach to India shifted yet again under the stop-gap regime of President Waheed[13]. The Waheed government started on a clearly anti-India note, for example, terminating the GMR contract to build airport, ab-initio. The decision was not just a result of domestic politics; it seems to have been made under external influence, especially of China. The broad trends witnessed during the Waheed regime continued in the initial period of Abdulla Yameen's regime. The foreign policy of Abdulla Yameen was driven by religion and the need to tackle the financial crisis of the Maldives.

The bilateral relationship with China continued to deepen under President Yameen. The visit of Chinese President, Xi Jinping, to Maldives in September 2014 was the first visit of any Chinese President to the Maldives. The most important objective of visit was to get Maldivian support for his BRI project. Maldives agreed to participate actively in the initiative[14]. President Yameen also took two very controversial decisions, firstly passing of a law that allowed foreigners to own land in the Maldives and secondly, he introduced amendments to the Tourism Act. It is widely believed that these moves would help China establish a foothold in the IOR.

While the engagements with China were on the upswing, the relations with India deteriorated considerably towards the end of his tenure.

Growing Economy with Many Challenges

Since the late 1980s, economic policies have combined a liberal economic and investment regime – focused on tourism, fishing, and manufacturing sector. The economy has been growing at an impressive rate of 6.5 percent. This stable growth is supported by tourism and infrastructure projects.

Massive infrastructure and development investments across the tourist islands will contribute significantly to economic growth. The expansion of the Velana International Airport and the construction of a new passenger terminal will facilitate the accommodation of more than 7 million passengers per year, compared to 1.5 million currently. The expansion is financed by Chinese, Saudi, and Emirati investments. China has committed the biggest investment by far: as part of the Maritime Silk Road (MSR) initiative, USD 830 million (20 percent of the Maldives' GDP) was released for the airport expansion. China has already financed a new airport runway, and a bridge between the airport island and the capital, Malé, both inaugurated in 2018.

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The tourism sector (over a third of GDP) will remain a major contributor to growth and will need a secure environment for the sector to grow at the present rate. India with its maritime power and strategic location is in a position to become net provider of security; India must jointly ensure a safe and secure environment for tourism and contribute towards the overall development of the State.

In order to attract investments, Former President Yameen had signed Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with China in Dec 2017. According to sources within the Maldives government, there was pressure from China on signing of the FTA, the first by Maldives with any other country. A cursory study of the FTA document shows that the FTA is Beijing driven, with little in it for Male. The preamble of the document includes 'strengthening cooperation on jointly building the 21st century Maritime Silk Road (MSR)', one of the key goals of the Chinese government under President Xi

Jinping. The FTA is unlikely to boost Maldives exports to China, given its narrow export base, at the same time burden Maldives with loans which it may not be able to repay.

Is Maldives Falling Victim to China's Debt Trap?

The share of Chinese loans for construction investments as part of the MSR is worrisome, as it reaches 70 percent of total national debt, and annual repayments to China take up around 10 percent of the government budget. The reality is that the Maldives has borrowed heavily from China to finance infrastructure and other related projects. As a result, the Chinese will continue to exert influence over the archipelago nation.

A section of Indian establishment hopes that the new government in Maldives wills either roll back some of the China-linked infrastructure projects or put them in cold storage. Although Prsident Solih has indicated that his government is in the process of revising the FTA with China, it seems unlikely he will engage in a radical policy shift or seek to push off all Chinese engagement.

The harrowing experience of Sri Lanka in not too distant past will loom large on the minds of the new government. Despite his best efforts, President Sirisena was forced to confront the harsh realities of Beijing's deb-trap diplomacy as he was compelled to transfer control of its strategically situated Hambantota port to a Chinese state-owned company under a 99-year lease deal.

The absence of other viable development financing options in the Indo Pacific helps explain why China's debt trap strategy has reaped such profitable dividends for Beijing thus far.

This highlights the role India can play by taking the lead and getting other like-minded countries to generate sources of financing to the Maldives. India, Japan, the U.S., and the E.U. in the past have discussed mechanisms aimed at increasing overall investment in the Indo-Pacific, this initiative must fructify before it becomes too late. They will have to convince the countries in the region that more attractive alternatives to Beijing exist. This should be the cornerstone of India's long-term strategy in IOR. If New Delhi can help pull Maldives out of its debt trap it will increase India's real influence in future.

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Re-setting the Ties Post Elections

Post Sep 2018 elections in Maldives, where President Ibu Solih was a surprise winner; India seized the opportunity to restore the balance in the bilateral relations. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who was invited to the 'Inauguration Ceremony', held talks with the new President. Both leaders agreed on the importance of maintaining peace and security in the Indian Ocean and being mindful of each other's concerns and aspirations for the stability of the region. The two leaders also expressed their unwavering commitment and support for increased cooperation in combating terrorism both within the region and elsewhere.

President Solih also briefed PM Modi on the economic situation facing the country as he took office. The two leaders discussed ways in which India can provide economic assistance to help the new government in meeting its pledges to the people of the Maldives[15]. President Solih candidly admitted that Maldivian economy is facing crisis as it has incurred debts following China funded projects[16].

During his maiden India visit to India in Dec 2018, President Solih affirmed his government's "India First Policy." Displaying nimble footed diplomacy, India reciprocated the gesture by announcing an assistance of $1.4 billion through a credit line and budgetary support to the Maldives. Enhancing cooperation in the IOR, particularly in the maritime security domain through coordinated patrols and aerial surveillance, was also the centrepiece of Modi-Solih discussions.

Having been presented with an opportunity, it must now be ensured that the economic assistance is provided in a time bound manner and India's credibility to fulfil its promises is restored. India should also become a provider of net security, but should be careful, to avoid a Nepal-like situation, where New Delhi's perceived interference in Nepal's internal affairs had turned the Nepali people against India. Having a lighter diplomatic footprint, but regular engagements at the highest level, backed by substantial assistance to boost the economy is the best way forward with Maldives.

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India - Japan Strategic Convergence

Cdr Subhasish Sarangi @

Abstract

The strategic convergence of India and Japan has aided in forging a strong bilateral relationship with engagements at multiple levels. The two nations seek to promote values upholding international law and alignment with like-minded nations. They are synergising their capabilities for infrastructure development and connectivity enhancement, both within India and in the region, including Africa. Security cooperation is being progressed through interaction at political, bureaucratic and military levels, with maritime security being the key concern. There is scope for transfer of military equipment and technology. Economic prosperity and Human Resource Development in India is steadily moving up in the agenda. The two nations have moved beyond the bilateral and are collaborating to shape infrastructure development, connectivity enhancement and architecture for stability in the region.

Background

The India-Japan partnership has enjoyed bipartisan political support in both countries irrespective of the political parties in power. The biggest advantage in the relationship is that there is no negative historical legacy between the two nations and no direct conflict of strategic interests. The bilateral relationship has moved in tandem with the India-U.S. relationship and it is not a coincidence that it has flourished with the increased U.S. interest in India as a stabilising factor in Asia.

The bilateral has prospered since the time it was elevated to a "Strategic and Global Partnership" in December 2006[1] and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe delivered his "Confluence of the Two Seas" speech in August 2007[2]. It is guided by the framework of the "Special Strategic and Global Partnership" agreed upon during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Japan in September 2014[3] and the Vision 2025 unveiled during PM Abe's visit to India in December 2015[4].

One of the primary factors guiding the trajectory of India-Japan relations has been the increasing international engagements by both nations in recent decades. Japan is breaking out of the straitjacket of the post-World War II era. In the last two decades, it has perceptibly shifted from its reticent posture to pursue a more proactive foreign policy, radically reform its national security structures and create wider defence response options. With economic development, India's radius of strategic interest has also been expanding. The greater engagement between India and Japan has also become imperative due to the concurrent phenomenon of the rise of China and the perceived decline of U.S. power in Asia.

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Strategic Partnership

Alignments between like-minded nations, rather than formal alliances, are central to international politics now. National interests are intertwined like never before due to economic and, sometimes, military interdependence. "Strategic Partnerships" have emerged as a viable arrangement in this environment of competition and interdependence. By 2015, India had inked strategic partnerships of various hues with 28 countries.[5] In recent times, India forged a strategic partnership with Rwanda in 2017 and more encompassing strategic labels have been provided to some existing strategic partnerships.

Mr Rajesh Basrur and Ms Sumitha Narayan Kutty have listed the key characteristics of strategic partnerships[6] as "not expressly aimed at an identified enemy", "are limited and flexible and do not involve deep-action inducing commitments", "involve regular high-level political interactions", "frequently involve security cooperation" and "usually extend to other mutually beneficial interactions".

With this framework of a strategic partnership, it is instructive to trace the discernible trends in the India-Japan relationship to discover the strategic convergences. Although one of the reasons for the two countries coming together is a common strategic anxiety about the rise of China, its maritime assertiveness in its near seas and its strive to expand geopolitical influence, it will be incorrect to portray this bilateral relationship merely as propelled by the ascendancy of China.

Value Based Diplomacy

The foremost trend discernible in the joint statements is the pursuit of 'value based diplomacy' to primarily address the contestation over maritime space in South China Sea and East Asia.[7] Rule-based international order, freedom of navigation and overflight, respect for sovereignty and international law, resolution of disputes through dialogue in accordance with principles of international law such as United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), and a 'free, open and prosperous Indo-Pacific' have become bellwether terms to indicate like-minded nations. Conjoint to it are the declarations for 'free, fair and open trade and investment system' and 'unimpeded lawful commerce'. Similarly, to address the competing initiatives in enhancement of connectivity and infrastructure, the desire expressed is that they should be 'quality infrastructure' and undertaken in an open and transparent manner based on international standards and responsible debt financing practices while ensuring respect for sovereignty, rule of law and the environment. For cyberspace, the commitment is for it to be open, free, secure, stable, peaceful and accessible.

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Alignment of Like-Minded Nations

In 2007, the Prime Ministers of India, Japan and Australia had met the U.S. Vice President in Manila on the margins of the Association of South East Asian Nation (ASEAN) Regional Forum. This informal grouping called the Quadrilateral (or Quad) had a short shelf life due to the protests of China and subsequent backing down by Australia. The buzz over the Quad erupted again in November 2017 when officials of the four nations met ahead of the ASEAN-led meetings in Manila. The third Quadrilateral Meeting was held in November 2018 at Singapore. The potential contours of this grouping have been a subject of great conjecture. The willingness of India and Japan to expand "cooperation with U.S. and other partners" has been expressed frequently.[8]

The rise of trilateral arrangements is yet another indication of alignment of like-minded nations. India-Japan-USA Trilateral dialogues at Joint Secretary Level have been institutionalised since 2011. It also includes a Trilateral Infrastructure Working Group. The inaugural ministerial-level dialogue was held in September 2015 at New York. President Donald Trump, PM Abe and PM Modi met on the margins of the G20 Summit in Argentina in November 2018. PM Modi labelled the Trilateral as JAI (victory). Similarly, Secretary level India-Australia-Japan Trilateral Dialogue commenced in 2015. In addition to this, both nations have "2+2" arrangements (either Ministerial or Vice-Ministerial level) with USA and Australia.

Regional Architecture and Multilateral Forums

In addition to agreeing to align the Japanese Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy with the Indian Act East Policy[9], the two nations have moved on to 'work together to shape and strengthen evolving regional architecture'. ASEAN unity and centrality has been reaffirmed to be 'at the heart of the Indo-Pacific concept'. The two nations have supported each other in expanding their membership in regional forums and share space in numerous multilateral forums. They seek 'expeditious and meaningful' reforms of the United Nations Security Council and the World Trade Organisation.

Infrastructure Development and Connectivity Enhancement

Another major agenda is to enhance connectivity and infrastructure in India and other countries in the region, including in Africa. Japan launched the Partnership for Quality Infrastructure (PQI) initiative in May 2015 with a commitment of $110 billion funding by the Japanese government and Asian Development Bank for international infrastructure development over the next five years[10].

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Some of the largest infrastructure projects in India are being undertaken through Japanese funding and technical collaboration. Japan is providing a loan of $12 billion to cover the project cost of $15 billion for the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Rail (MAHSR) project, incorporating Japanese *Shinkansen* technology. The Mumbai-Delhi Dedicated Freight Corridor (DFC) that consists of a double line electric rail track of 1,490 km is being progressed with Japanese assistance. The Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC) envisages setting up of industrial zones and cities along the DFC. Part of the estimated $100 billion cost of the project is being financed through Japanese funding. The other major infrastructure projects being undertaken with Japanese assistance include the Chennai-Bengaluru Industrial Corridor (CBIC), metro rail projects and development of Japan Industrial Townships (JITs).

There is a special emphasis on the development of India's North East region and increasing connectivity between India and Southeast Asia. The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is supporting construction of highways in North East India[11]. The India-Japan North East Forum was launched on December 05, 2017 to identify specific projects for economic modernisation of India's North-East region.[12]

Collaborative projects in Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Bangladesh and Kenya have also been envisaged[13]. Collaboration with Africa is through platforms such as Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) and the India-Africa Forum. However, despite announcement for an Asia Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC) in November 2016 and release of the Vision Document in May 2017, there has been no progress thereafter. Formation of a "Platform for Japan-India Business Cooperation in Asia-Africa Region" for business houses has been announced and a MoU for support of business projects in third countries has been signed between Nippon Export and Investment Insurance (NEXI) and Export Credit Guarantee Corporation of India (ECGC).

Partnership for Prosperity

Partnership for prosperity is the other major highlight in the relationship and Japanese Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) has a pivotal role in it. Japanese ODA was augmented after the revision of the Development Cooperation Charter in 2015 and India has been the largest recipient since 2003.

Intuitively, India and Japan seem complementary to each other for trade and investment. India is a developing country that requires capital infusion and technological know-how for infrastructure development, prosperity and growth. With its large and young population, it provides a ready availability of labour and market for consumption. Japan is a developed country that is capital surplus and possesses cutting edge technological know-how. Its ageing and declining population means that it requires new markets to sustain its economy. Bilateral trade has not lived up to the potential. The total trade of $15.70 billion in 2017-18 is lower than that of $18.51 billion in 2012-13.[14] A Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) was signed on February 16, 2011 and came into effect from August 01, that year but numerous barriers still remain.

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows are healthier, although fluctuating, with cumulative inflows between 2000-18 at $28.16 billion (not accounting for FDI through Singapore and Mauritius).[15] Although arrangements dedicated solely for Japanese investment have been set up by India[16], its poor infrastructure, cumbersome labour and land acquisition laws, taxation issues and local business conditions have been some of the dampers for Japanese investment. A $75 billion bilateral currency swap agreement was concluded in October 2018 to aid in bringing greater stability to foreign exchange and capital markets in India.

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Defence and Security Cooperation

Defence and Security cooperation is a vital element of the relationship. The "Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation" was announced in Oct 2008 and an "Action Plan to Advance Security Cooperation" was agreed upon in Dec 2009. The "2+2" Dialogue has been upgraded to Ministerial level in 2018. The other forums include Annual Defence Ministers Dialogue, the National Security Advisers' Dialogue, Defence Policy Dialogue and Service-to-Service staff talks.

Maritime security cooperation is driven by economic and strategic factors. With its energy sources located in West Asia and dependence on sea-borne trade, the security of the Sea Lanes of Communication (SLOCs) is of utmost importance to Japan. However, the assertive behaviour of China in the South China Sea, non-traditional security threats and the extended lines of its sea lanes has created anxiety. India's East-bound sea trade has been increasing over the years and hence, India too is concerned about its sea lanes to the Pacific.

The Coast Guards of the two nations concluded an agreement for cooperation in 2000 and have conducted bilateral exercises since then. Both countries are also involved in the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) and have contributed military resources to combat piracy off Somalia since 2008.

The India-U.S. naval exercise 'Malabar' is conducted annually and Japan was included in it in 2007, 2009 and 2014. In 2015, it was decided that Malabar would henceforth be a trilateral naval exercise between USA, Japan and India. The third edition of the bilateral Japan-India Maritime Exercise (JIMEX) was conducted, after a gap of five years, in October 2018 off Visakhapatnam. The Indian Navy and the Japan Maritime Self Defense Force have exercised jointly in other multilateral exercises like RIMPAC and Kakadu. Negotiations are underway for a mutual logistics support

agreement called Acquisition and Cross Servicing Agreement (ACSA) that will enable supporting of military units in each other's bases. The navies have also concluded an agreement for the exchange of information to enable better Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA).

The armies conducted their first bilateral Exercise 'Dharma Guardian' over two weeks in November 2018. The air forces have participated in Exercise Pitch Black in Australia in 2018. Japan was an observer in the Cope India Air Exercise between India and USA in 2018.

Cyber security cooperation is sought to be progressed through the India-Japan Cyber Dialogue, whose 2nd meeting was held in August 2017. Counter terrorism is another area of cooperation. Japan has unambiguously supported prosecution of perpetrators of terror attacks in India.

Defence Technology and Equipment Cooperation

In April 2014, Japan amended policy, by declaring the 'Three Principles on Transfer of Defence Equipment and Technology', to enable it to export military hardware and technology[17]. However, efforts at defence equipment transfer to India have still not fructified despite the formation of a Joint Working Group (JWG). The procurement of US-2i amphibious aircraft, manufactured by ShinMaywa Industries, has stalled although Japan is now amenable to joint production and the Mahindra Group has announced a partnership with ShinMaywa Industries for this purpose. The Soryu class submarines of Japan are one of the most advanced in the world but procurement is unlikely, primarily due to their mismatch with Indian requirements (displacement).

Technical discussions have commenced on research collaboration in the area of Unmanned Ground Vehicles and Robotics. The 1st Defence Industry Forum was held in Tokyo in September 2017 to enable defence industry cooperation. Japan has been invited to participate in the two defence industry corridors proposed to be set up in India.[18]

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Human Resource Development

Human Resource Development in India has increasingly found greater mention in the form of skill development, Japanese language training and, lately, for health and well-being sectors. This is important for Japan also as it struggles with an ageing population and has very reluctantly eased immigration laws for expatriate labour in the country. In November 2018, Japan's lower house passed a new regulation, authorising the entry of more foreign workers into the country, which will be implemented in April 2019.[19]

Restricted Technologies

Japan is a strong supporter for inclusion of India in the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), the only one of four major technology control regimes in which India is not yet a member. The India-Japan civil nuclear cooperation agreement was signed in November 2016 and came into force in July 2017. This enables foreign nuclear reactor manufacturers to enter the Indian nuclear energy market. All the major U.S. manufactures are either owned by Japanese companies or source technology from them. In May 2012, both countries agreed to jointly extract rare earth minerals in India.[20] Rare earth minerals are essential for manufacturing electronics products and Japan is heavily dependent on China for it. During the diplomatic row of 2010, China had restricted the supply and hence, Japan desires to diversify its sourcing.

Conclusion

At the regional level, India and Japan seek to bring together like-minded powers through trilateral and quadrilateral arrangements. The next tier of cooperation is to bring together the smaller nations through regional structures and also provide them capacity enhancement in security and infrastructure (and hence economic prosperity) through a synergy between India's regional linkages and Japan's economic capacity.

At the bilateral level, they seek to enhance security for their respective national interests across the Indo-Pacific through mutual cooperation with the militaries interacting more often to enhance interoperability, have a better understanding and share best practices. India stands to gain from the assistance provided in infrastructure development and connectivity. Japan can put its idle capital reserves to use, provide avenues for utilisation of its technological capabilities and strengthen links with India, a growing economic power. Its industry can set up production facilities in India to benefit from the low-cost labour and the large market it provides. India will also be the springboard to the African market and resources through the AAGC.

The India-Japan relationship has flourished due to the convergence of strategic interests. It should not be seen merely through the prism of competing with China. Its trajectory is actually determined by 'common values' and 'shared strategic objectives'. The very fact that the relationship has been described as 'the cornerstone of India's Act East Policy' indicates its importance to India.

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India's Engagement with the Great Powers: Emerging Paradigms

Shri Asoke Kumar Mukerji, IFS (Retd)@

Abstract

India's engagement with the great powers is increasingly influenced by the Asian context. India has articulated a clear strategic framework for an integrated Asian space. India's engagement with the United States (U.S.) is a structured "global strategic partnership". However, significant divergences between India and the U.S. on defining the Indo-Pacific region and the impact of applying U.S. domestic laws extra-territorially need to be reconciled to realise the full potential of this relationship. India's engagement with Russia now focuses on the Asian framework. The deepening of bilateral collaboration in the energy sector and a regional security architecture that provides equal and indivisible security to all countries in Asia are priorities. India's engagement with China will determine to a large extent the impact and influence of an integrated Asia and the evolution of an Asian Century. India's engagement with France and the United Kingdom (UK) within the Asian framework has been less active. India's priority should be to leverage her engagement with the great powers to become one of the great powers of a resurgent Asia.

Introduction

India's engagement with the great powers since India's independence in August 1947, has sought to maximise her strategic space to pursue her core national interests. The five permanent members of the UN Security Council, viz. China, France, Russia, the UK and the U.S are currently categorised as 'great powers' because they dominate decision-making in international political matters through the veto power given to them by the UN Charter. The interaction between India and these powers is increasingly influenced by the Asian context, as the centre of gravity of international relations shifts to Asia.

The Asian Framework

According to the World Bank, India is today the world's third largest economy in purchasing power parity terms,[1] and the fastest growing large economy. As much as 40 percent of India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is dependent on India's increasing international trade relations. India's growth provides the great powers, which are also amongst India's major trading partners, a major incentive to engage with India.

Asia provides the strategic framework for India's aspirations to become a great power herself. India's engagement with the current great powers prioritises this dimension. India has articulated a clear strategic framework for an integrated Asian space. India's "Neighbourhood First"[2], "Act East"[3] and "Connect Central Asia"[4] policies, illustrate her priorities towards the Asian landmass. A significant addition to this strategic framework is the unveiling of India's maritime policy since 2015.

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In March 2015, Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled India's Indian Ocean policy, known as the "Security and Growth for All in the Region" (SAGAR). This policy rests on five clear principles. These are: (i) to safeguard India's interests and position India as a net security provider in the region; (ii) to enable India's contribution to the enhanced maritime security capabilities of the region; (iii) to advance peace and security through collective action and cooperation in the maritime domain; (iv) to bring about the integrated sustainable development of the region, including the Blue or Ocean Economy; and (v) to ensure that the primary responsibility for peace, stability and prosperity of the region lies on the countries of the region. The policy welcomed cooperation with external partners in meeting these objectives.[5]

In June 2018, speaking at the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore, Prime Minister Modi, spoke of the "ASEAN centrality" of the Indo-Pacific region, which India defined as stretching "from the shores of Africa to that of the Americas". India's commitment to a free, open and "inclusive" region is dependent on equal access to common spaces in the region, upholding a "rules-based order" to create an open, balanced and stable trade environment. In a veiled reference to the impact of great power interaction in the Indo-Pacific, the Prime Minister emphasised that "contests must not turn into conflicts".[6] It is worth emphasizing in this context that India has not been a member of any military alliance. She has a vested interest in maintaining international peace and security through the rule of law and dialogue and to ensure her own transformation into a great power in the 21st century.

The United States

India's engagement with the U.S. is a structured 'global strategic partnership'. India's interest is in engaging with the U.S. on an equal basis, building on "shared democratic values and increasing convergence of interests on bilateral, regional and global issues."[7] The U.S. has supported India's emergence as a "leading global power", and proposed India as a "key partner in India's efforts to ensure that the Indo-Pacific is a region of peace, stability and growing prosperity".[8] The two drivers of this shared vision are technology and economic relations.

> It is a strategic priority for India to reconcile this divergence, if the concept of the Indo-Pacific is to be sustained as the primary framework for India's engagement with the U.S in the future. Any reconciliation would have to consider U.S. policy towards terrorism emanating from the Afghanistan-Pakistan (Af-Pak) region (which continues to target India), and U.S. policies on the countries of West Asia, especially in the Gulf and Iran.

However, in defining the Indo-Pacific region, significant divergences between India and the U.S. are apparent. For the U.S,[9] the Indo-Pacific is limited to the region that "stretches from the west coast of India to the western shores of the U.S.", whereas India sees the region as inclusive of the entire Western Indian Ocean to the shores of Africa, including the littoral states of the Western Indo-Pacific where India has clearly defined national interests. The perception of the U.S. that "China and Russia challenge American power, influence and interests, attempting to erode American security and prosperity"[10] adds another dimension to this divergence, requiring India to develop her relations with all three great powers equitably while keeping in mind her own core interests.

It is a strategic priority for India to reconcile this divergence, if the concept of the Indo-Pacific is to be sustained as the primary framework for India's engagement with the U.S in the future. Any reconciliation would have to consider U.S. policy towards terrorism emanating from the Afghanistan-Pakistan (Af-Pak) region (which continues to target India), and U.S. policies on the countries of West Asia, especially in the Gulf and Iran. These countries today account for the bulk of India's energy imports, apart from hosting about 8 million Indian nationals working in their national economies.

Defence cooperation has emerged as the showcase of India's engagement with the U.S, helped by strong support from the U.S for India to become a member of global dual-use technology trade regimes.[11] The main reason for this has been India's quest to upgrade defence technologies as part of the transformation of India. Over the past decade, U.S has sold $14 billion worth of defence equipment to India, including Apache and Chinook helicopters and C-130 aircraft, making U.S one of the top three defence suppliers of India (along with Russia and Israel). The current assessment of

the U.S is that "with the Indian government's strong preference for products designed and manufactured in India, it is important that U.S. companies develop a strategy to transition from being an exporter to forming partnerships and strengthening supply chains within India to meet future defence requirements."[12]

An attempt by the U.S to apply its domestic laws extra-territorially will impact on the growing engagement between India and the U.S. Two specific cases illustrate this. The first is the Countering American Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) of August 2017, which directly impacts on India's defence relationship with Russia. Analysts have pointed to the impact of this domestic U.S. legislation on India's ability to pay through international banking channels for defence imports from Russia, as well as perhaps the unintended impact on curbing the exports of U.S. high technology items to India.[13] The second is the re-imposition of unilateral U.S's sanctions on Iran by President Trump's Executive Order 13846 dated 6 August 2018, which targets other countries engaged with Iran, especially in terms of imports of energy from Iran.[14] Neither of the domestic U.S. laws has been endorsed by the UN Security Council and are therefore not binding on India under the UN Charter.

Russia

India and Russia marked the 70th anniversary of the establishment of their diplomatic relations in 2017, highlighting the strategic partnership between the two countries, launched by the late Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and President Putin during the first India-Russia annual Summit in 2000. India's engagement with Russia now focuses on the Asian framework. In their "vision for the 21st century", set out after the 18th annual Summit in St Petersburg in 2017, India has been invited to collaborate actively in Russia's Far East as well as in the Arctic.[15] For the first time since the annual summit architecture was established between India and Russia, an "informal" Summit between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Vladimir Putin took place in the Russian city of Sochi on 21 May 2018. The two leaders interacted personally for more than nine hours and reiterated their commitment to the "special and privileged strategic partnership" between India and Russia, agreeing to consult and coordinate with each other "including on the Indo-Pacific region".[16]

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The public focus following the Sochi Summit has been on India's defence relations with Russia, especially India's decision to go ahead and acquire the S-400 long range Surface to Air Missile (SAM) system. At the same time the decision of the Summit to impart new energy into the relationship has a deeper significance for India's policy on an integrated Asia.

Two areas identified in the joint statement issued after the 19th annual Summit between India and Russia in New Delhi in October 2018 illustrate this.[17] One is the deepening of bilateral collaboration in the energy sector which is focused on Asia. In nuclear energy (which was earlier the prime driver of the nascent strategic partnership between India and the U.S following the "Nuclear Deal" of 2005[18]), Russia is the only great power that has constructed functioning nuclear reactors in India at Kudankulam, following the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) waiver of 2008, and two out of the proposed six reactors are already on stream, producing 1000 MW of electricity each. Similarly, in the fossil fuel energy sector, India has become the preferred investor in Russia's Far East, building upon her initial investments made in Russia's Sakhalin-1 oilfields in 2002.[19] These developments hold the potential for the eventual emergence of an Asian energy grid of producers and consumers of energy.

The second area is the commitment of India and Russia to work towards the establishment of a "Regional Security Architecture that provides equal and indivisible security to all countries in Asia and in the regions of the Pacific and

Indian Oceans." As the joint statement emphasised, "new initiatives aimed at strengthening of the regional order are to be based on multilateralism, principles of transparency, inclusiveness, mutual respect and unity in the common pursuit of progress and prosperity, and not directed against any country".[20] India's participation in the development of the Russian Far East[21] including in the energy and maritime transportation sectors will add an important dimension to India's presence in the eastern Indo-Pacific/Pacific Ocean. The implementation of the initiative of India and Russia (and Iran) in 2002 to construct the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC), as well as Russia's interest in including India in its larger Eurasia framework, will facilitate India's interests in the landmass of the Western Indo-Pacific/Indian Ocean region.[22]

China

India's engagement with China will determine to a large extent the impact and influence of an integrated Asia and the evolution of an "Asian Century". India and China have more than thirty dialogue mechanisms at various levels, covering bilateral political, economic and consular issues, as well as dialogues on international and regional issues.

After the exchanges of high-level visits in 2014 and 2015, expectations of normalizing bilateral relations between India and China were dampened by the 73-day standoff between troops of the two countries at the Doklam tri-junction on the India-Bhutan-China border. This was eventually resolved through astute diplomacy. India reiterated her position that she was "committed to working with China to find a peaceful resolution of all issues in the border areas through dialogue."[23] The first bilateral meeting after Doklam between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping took place in September 2017 in Xiamen, when China hosted the BRICS Summit.

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The most significant outcome of this bilateral meeting was the decision to introduce the mechanism of 'informal summits' to respond to, and guide, relations between India and China. The first such informal summit took place in Wuhan in China on 27-28 April 2018, during which the two leaders exchanged "views on overarching issues of bilateral and global importance," while elaborating their "respective visions and priorities for national development in the context of the current and future international situation." The agreement between the two leaders that "proper management of the bilateral relationship will be conducive for the development and prosperity of the region and will create the conditions for the Asian Century" is a significant outcome, with implications for both India and China in Asia. The scope of this agreement includes strategic coordination, peaceful resolution of border issues, balanced and sustainable trade and investment relations, greater people-to-people contacts, cooperation on responding to global challenges and strengthening "strategic communication" between each other.[24]

Both India and China have ambitious plans to integrate Asia through connectivity projects. In the context of China's mammoth 'Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)', one part of which includes the creation of a China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) using Indian territory in Jammu and Kashmir illegally occupied by Pakistan, India's objections focus primarily on CPEC. The Indian position is that "that connectivity initiative must be based on universally recognised international norms, good governance, rule of law, openness, transparency and equality, and must be pursued in a manner that respects sovereignty and territorial integrity."[25] India's nuanced position enables her to take advantage of connectivity projects proposed through regions of priority for her foreign policy, including Central Asia and South-East Asia, as well as to access funding from multilateral institutions like the World Bank, which proposes to spend $80 billion for infrastructure projects in BRI countries.[26]

Europe: France and UK

India's engagement with the two European great powers within the Asian framework has been less active, though not less significant, than her engagement with the U.S, Russia and China.

France has engaged with India in four focal areas – civilian nuclear energy, defence cooperation, countering terrorism and cooperation in space. Looking at the Indo-Pacific framework, a Joint Strategic Vision of India-France Cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region was issued during the official visit of President Emmanuel Macron to India in March 2018. This set out France's *locus standi* in the Indo-Pacific, due to "its overseas territories, where 1.6 million of its citizens reside, and its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), spans 9.1 million sq.km, in the Indo-Pacific."

In terms of specific cooperation, India and France are committed to engage in responding to the emerging challenges in the Indian Ocean, which have been enumerated as: maritime traffic security in the face of the threats of terrorism and piracy, especially in the Horn of Africa; respect of international law by all States, in particular freedom of navigation and overflight; fight against organised crime, trafficking, including in weapons of mass destruction, smuggling and Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing (IUU); combating climate change and its consequences on security, particularly in terms of natural disasters; protection of the environment and natural resources, including tackling oil spills; and aid to victims of disasters.[27]

India and France co-chair the International Solar Alliance (ISA), created during the Paris Climate Change Summit in December 2015 to focus on sustainable energy and energy security. The ISA was launched during President Macron's visit to India in March 2018 and is the first UN-affiliated inter-governmental organisation headquartered in India. It provides a distinct 'constituency' for India's leadership on a major global challenge among its 62 member-states, many of whom are in Asia.[28]

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UK. India's engagement with UK has been more diffused in terms of interaction in Asia. This has been partly due to UK's preoccupation with Brexit negotiations. In August 2018, UK referred to its "All of Asia Policy", which focuses on three issues: "prosperity, security and values".[29] In bilateral policy terms, "a secure, free, open, inclusive and prosperous Indo-Pacific" has been emphasised as being in "the interests of India, the UK and the international community. The UK and India will also work together to tackle threats such as piracy, protect freedom of navigation and open access, and improve maritime domain awareness in the region."[30]

An Asian Century

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said at the 2018 Shangri-la Dialogue in Singapore that "Asia of rivalry will hold us all back. Asia of cooperation will shape this century".[31]India's leadership of the process to integrate Asia and make India a major contributor to an Asian Century, as part of her engagement with the great powers of today, requires a platform.

One platform for India, Russia and China to work together in Asia is the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), headquartered in Beijing. India attended the SCO Summit held in Qingdao, China on 10 June 2018 for the first time as a full member. Prime Minister Narendra Modi underlined India's interest in connectivity issues in Asia by saying "physical and digital connectivity is changing the definition of geography. Therefore, connectivity with our neighbourhood and in the SCO region is our priority."[32] Engaging with Russia and China to bring about a convergence

on connectivity issues, without compromising on her principled stand on the CPEC, will represent a challenge for India's diplomacy with China.

The Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), established in 2002 and based in Astana (Kazakhstan), of which India is a founder, represents another platform. So far, India has taken minimal interest in CICA, which brings together 26 member-states accounting for nearly ninety percent of the territory and population of Asia. These include Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Egypt, India, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Russia, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam. Observer states include Belarus, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, Ukraine and USA.

Tajikistan is the current chair of CICA. Previous chairs of CICA include Kazakhstan (2002-2010), whose President Nursultan Nazarbayev proposed the organisation; Turkey (2010-2014) and China (2014-2018). It is worth noting that Chinese President Xi Jinping's strategic vision for "comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security in Asia" was first made at the 2014 CICA Summit, and fleshed out in April 2016. This vision rests on four propositions: accommodating divergent security and developmental interests; creating an 'Asian Civilisational Dialogue' mechanism; upholding the peaceful settlement of disputes; and the construction of an Asian security architecture based on the "Asian way of mutual respect, consensus-building and accommodation of each other's comfort levels."[33] A more visible leadership role for India in CICA would provide a viable platform to create an Asian architecture for an Asian Century.

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Section V

National Security Capacity Building

Developments in India's National Security Architecture and Way Ahead

Maj Gen Rajiv Narayanan, AVSM, VSM (Retd)@

Abstract

With the geo-economic Centre of Gravity (CoG) shifting towards the Indo-Pacific, India finds itself in a unique position - to rejuvenate itself and achieve its vision of being a strong, economically prosperous, liberal democratic country in a stable multi-lateral environment. With the U.S. and China in peer competition in this region (amongst others), India needs to take a call whether it would partner the U.S. & West narrative, or the Chinese narrative, or continue to hedge under the new lexicon – strategic autonomy (non-alignment). Considering that the CoG of geo-economics has shifted to include the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) along with Asia-Pacific, due to India's rise, maintaining strategic autonomy comes with its concomitant risks of missing the wood for the trees and India being economically left behind. To be able to assess the risks and evolve a viable National Security Strategy (NSS) there is a need for effective and constitutionally mandated security architecture. While some progress has been made in setting up such architecture much needs to be done. The security architecture should not be based on an administrative order but be mandated by an act of the Parliament with associated 'Allocation and Transaction of Business (AOB/TOB) Rules'. The need for checks and balances, as warranted in a democracy, also need to be considered. This paper looks at the evolving core interests for India, based on its vision and the related Security Strategy, in brief, to secure and enhance its Comprehensive National Power (CNP) / National power (NP), and assess developments in its security architecture to recommend the way ahead.

Every nation has a vision to achieve, which it strives to enhance through its own CNP and prevent its subversion, while it concurrently attempts to limit the CNP of its likely competitors and enemies. Chanakya had termed the aspect of limiting the CNP of competitors and enemies as *Tushnim Yuddh[1]*, verily a 'silent war', which is same as the USA's 'Full Spectrum Warfare' and the 'Chinese Unrestricted Warfare (URW)' in present times. The identification of the assets needed to increase one's own CNP, to defend the same from external or internal threats and to denude the same of the enemy and competitors, leads to the core national interests, from which emerges the NSS.

The clash of core national interests amongst nations leads to competition, contest and conflict. These contests and conflicts were more military or kinetic in nature in the previous millennia and have morphed to include non-kinetic domains like economic, social, socio-political, water, environment, information, space (including digital space), cyber and other such asymmetric domains, to present a hybrid threat to denude the CNP, much akin to Chanakya's 'TushnimYuddh'. This hybrid outreach has been facilitated by globalisation, the spread of digitisation and social media.

Thus the NSS of today needs to be more comprehensive to include multiple domains to cover both kinetic and non-kinetic means. It is from this overarching strategy that the economic and foreign policy, the internal and external security strategies and all other policies emerge. The NSS is not a one-time document but needs to be dynamic and keep pace with the evolving geo-political and geo-strategic construct that would impact India's core interests. The core

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interests are also not static and evolve with the rise in the CNP and the strategy of either forming part of an alliance/ partnership or retaining strategic autonomy (hedging). Therefore, the architecture needs to encompass structures to counter these varied hybrid threats that India would face and adjust to the evolving geo-political and geo-strategic dynamics in the region.

This security architecture should be headed by a constitutional authority, with clear demarcation of AOB/ TOB rules, rather than be based on an administrative order of the government. It adds not only to the authority but also brings in a sense of accountability. As India rises within the comity of nations, there would be a need to relook its constitution and its rules of governance, with the need to bring in specialists in the policy-making domain rather than 'generalists' as hither-to-fore. However, it would not be preferable to layout India's NSS in the open domain at present, till it achieves a certain level of CNP and has systems in place that are capable of securing it from the future hybrid threats. This paper looks at the evolving core interests for India based on its vision and the related security strategy, in brief, to secure and enhance its CNP and assess the developments in its security architecture to recommend the way ahead.

India's Perceived Core Interests and Strategy

Before assessing India's likely core interests, it may be worth the while to analyse the two schools of thought that exist on National Power and its application - the U.S. and the West on one side, versus the Chinese on the other. While the metrics for determination of NP and CNP are similar, but the utilisation is very different, another example of Mao's pithy statement - 'You fight your way and I'll fight my way'.

> The NSS is not a one-time document but needs to be dynamic and keep pace with the evolving geo-political and geo-strategic construct that would impact India's core interests. The core interests are also not static and evolve with the rise in the CNP and the strategy of either forming part of an alliance/ partnership or retaining strategic autonomy (hedging). Therefore, the architecture needs to encompass structures to counter these varied hybrid threats that India would face and adjust to the evolving geo-political and geo-strategic dynamics in the region.

The U.S. and the West assess NP from three basic determinants – latent power (resources and capabilities), kinetic power (military, diplomatic and other means to convert latent power) and the outcomes in the use of power. The use of state power, here, ranges from persuasion, coercion to application of military power.[2] It essentially considers these to build capacities for effective military powers and other instruments of power, viz, economic and diplomacy. That said the U.S. and the West also use various means to curb the latent power of other countries to ensure their continued dominance – Full Spectrum Dominance[3]. Use of NGOs (Non-Government Organisation), media, social media, think-tanks, colour revolutions et al is an example of such hybrid means by the U.S. and the West though it gets overshadowed by their kinetic interventions in various nations.

Chinese use of CNP lays more importance on weakening their competitors' and enemies' resources and capabilities (latent power); rather than enforcing with use of military power, it resorts to use of geo-economics and reflexive control as a tool for coercion. It was in 1985 that erstwhile President Deng Xiaoping asked the Chinese scholars to arrive at new metrics to ascertain NP and termed it as CNP (zonghegouli)[4]. They arrived at the new metrics that had four basic determinants or major index subsystems, hard power index (such as economic wealth, natural resources, science and technology, military might), soft power index (such as political power, foreign affairs, culture, education), coordinated power index (such as line of command, leadership in policy decision-making), and environmental index (such as international environment)[5]. The Chinese view the CNP as an aid to coordinate political, economic, information and diplomatic offensive, to psychologically disintegrate the competitors and the enemies and subdue them to accept the Chinese domination. A strong military and its current geo-economic strategy of 'debt-o-nomics' enables this form of coercion within the region.

The methods used by both on the chequered board of the world stage are as different as chalk and cheese, akin to their concepts of NP & CNP. The U.S. and the West seem to be playing a game of Chess while China is playing the game of Wei Qi / Go[6]. Chess entails capture of space, while Wei Qi /Go entails control of space; and therein lies the difference in application of respective CNPs. While the U.S. and the West are more kinetic in their pursuit of capturing the space (and containing the enemy's space), Chinese prefer non-kinetic means at present and resort to the use of 'Reflexive Control'[7] to gain control of space. The use of geo-economics to gain geo-political and geo-strategic space is part of this strategy. By this China appears to be moving towards a strategy of 'integration of the CNP' of the 'Neighbourhood' with itself, in a step by step approach – an umbilical connect that would not be easily disrupted, a reshaping of the regional economic and security architecture with 'Chinese Characteristics'[8].

India's vision is well articulated – to be a strong, economically prosperous, liberal democratic country in a stable multi-lateral environment. Based on this vision, its core interests are contingent on its CNP and the geo-political and geo-strategic environment in the region.

India's rise in the 21st century was based on its economic success and a strategic construct of India's perceived role as a stabiliser in its neighbourhood, a balancer in Asia and an actor in global peace and security. As part of these goals India helped create the G-20, agreed to strategic partnerships with the United States, the European Union (EU), China, joined key East Asian institutions and engaged in multilateral naval exercises with Japan, Singapore, Australia, and the United States, eventually forming the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)[9]. In each of these engagements, India has worked toward fulfilling its strategic goals, which would also enable the country to become a more influential regional and a global actor, provide internal stability and external security through a credible deterrence, thus, enabling peace in its neighbourhood, and facilitate in establishing a multi-lateral order both at the regional and global stage.

> India needs to be clear on the path it chooses, which must be bipartisan and not change trajectory based on individual perceptions. 'Chanakya Niti' could form a strong basis for espousing the same. The concepts of 'Yogakshema and Vasudiava Kutumbhakam' have been implemented in all Indian forays in the region and beyond that had extended India's 'soft power' outreach.

But the strategy it follows appears hazy as it looks more towards economic growth without equal attention to the military power. It prefers to manage and use of its latent power through diplomacy and soft power alone to further its interests. This would not be prudent as hard and smart power also need equal attention. That said, India needs to be clear on the path it chooses, which must be bipartisan and not change trajectory based on individual perceptions. 'Chanakya Niti' could form a strong basis for espousing the same. The concepts of 'Yogakshema and Vasudiava Kutumbhakam' have been implemented in all Indian forays in the region and beyond that had extended India's 'soft power' outreach. Can it be adjusted to gain a 'smart power' influence in the region?

Considering that the World economy is shifting to the Indo-Pacific, can India continue to hedge and attempt a 'strategic autonomy' (anew lexicon for non-alignment), especially, when this shift towards the Indian Ocean has come about due to a rising India? There are two geo-strategic narratives being pushed in the Indo-Pacific aggressively – a U.S. led narrative that permits growth of nations and is a counter to a rising China (its peer competitor), and a Chinese led narrative that would subsume nations into its fold in its quest to be the sole power in Asia. India needs to choose, and choose intelligently, as its future trajectory depends on this choice. There is a possibility that should India continue to hedge, the CoG may shift back to the Asia Pacific, thereby inhibiting India's economic growth and later India could get subsumed by the Chinese narrative.

India needs its policy makers to study Chanakya's Arthshastra, review and apply it judiciously to the present environment. Enamoured by his '*Raj Mandala*' concept of the 'Circle of Kings', Chanakya's elaboration of the seven

constituents of power (Saptanga Theory) has been forgotten, especially, its relevance to 'Tushnim Warfare or Silent War'. The hard, soft, co-ordinated or smart and environmental power indices all fall within the purview of the seven constituents of power, as postulated by Chanakya, in various permutations and combinations. It needs to be noted that the constituents of power in a liberal democratic order of today would be more than seven as the political parties, political allies, and opposition, would also form part of it.

The need for alliances has always been present, as advised by Chanakya. The choice of its allies, or eschewing the same for strategic autonomy (hedging or non-alignment) would decide India's core national interests and the connected NSS to enable it to achieve its vision. The security architectures are then based on the same. Which narrative would suit India?

The Chinese narrative for the region does not suit India's vision of being a strong, economically prosperous, liberal democratic country in a stable multi-lateral environment. This narrative in its current form would subsume India under its tight grip and inhibit its growth to ensure that Asia becomes unipolar under its suzerainty. Unless there is a major policy shift in the manner in which China desires to achieve its dream of national rejuvenation and becoming the sole super-power, it would not be in India's interests to accept China's narrative.

The U.S. and Western narrative provides India a better scope for its own rejuvenation and achieving its vision. However, the fault lines with China would be deep and run across all domains and frontiers. With support from the U.S. and West, this hybrid threat can be managed by India and be effectively countered in both kinetic and non-kinetic domains. It would also enable strong economic growth and stability.

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However, strategic autonomy could leave India out in the cold with the CoG shifting back to Asia Pacific and India being open to the hybrid threats from both the camps. While India may be able to manage these threats somewhat with a bipartisan effort, it would not be easy considering the impact on economic stability. It would need a very deft management of the geo-political and geo-strategic situation with very little room for error.

To facilitate any choice that India makes, a structured security architecture is essential to ensure that it is capable of securing its core interests, and can develop its CNP / NP on its path to achieve its vision.

The Evolving Architecture and the Way Ahead

India does not have any structured security architecture till date - an architecture that is constitutionally mandated. In August 1990 the then PM VP Singh established the National Security Council (NSC) and the National Security Advisory Board (NSAB), with the Principal Secretary to the PM overseeing its activities; but it became dysfunctional, post the NSC's only meeting in October 1990 due to the political developments. It was revived and formally established by erstwhile PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee, based on an administrative note on 19th November 1998, with Mr. Brajesh Mishra as the first National Security Advisor (NSA) to oversee it[10]. The overall security architecture established was three-tiered – the NSC[11], NSAB[12] and the Strategic Policy Group (SPG), under the Cabinet Secretary[13].

Under the Vajpayee government, since the NSA was also the Principal Secretary to the PM, his word carried enough weight to move things as desired. However the same was separated under the UPA government in 2004. The functioning and authority of the NSA has since been dependent on the personalities manning the chair, something that is avoidable, given India's rise and its aspirations.

In 2018 the Modi government brought in a revamp of the national security architecture of India, again via an

administrative order. A Defence Planning Committee (DPC) under the NSA was set up on 18 April 2018[14]. The Chief of Integrated Defence Staff to the Chairman of the Chief of the Staff Committee (CISC) would be the member secretary of the committee, according to the notification, and the HQ of the Integrated Defence Staff (HQ IDS) would be the secretariat of the DPC. The DPC consists of the Chairman Chiefs of the Staff Committee (COSC), the three Service Chiefs, Defence Secretary, Foreign Secretary and Secretary (expenditure) in the Finance Ministry. The Committee operates through four sub-committees to cater for

- ➢ Policy and Strategy;

- ➢ Planning and Capability Development;

- ➢ Defence Diplomacy and;

- ➢ Defence manufacturing ecosystem.

The DPC is also to formulate the national military strategy, a strategic defence review and a draft national security strategy. Should Defence dictate the NSS that has multiple domains ranging from military to trans-military to the non-military?

Further, the security architecture revamp included the addition of three Deputy NSAs (internal security, external intelligence and diplomacy) and a Military Advisor (Deputy NSA??). The SPG was revamped and now placed under the NSA with the Cabinet Secretary now being just a member. A China specific think-tank was established under the aegis of the Ministry of External Affairs – Centre for Contemporary China Studies. The budget for the NSC has also seen a sharp spike of almost a ten-fold increase from the levels of 2016-17.[15]

> **A detailed net assessment and analysis of India's stance in today's emerging world order – to partner either narrative or to go it alone under the lexicon of strategic autonomy is the need of the hour. It should assess the impact on India's overall security, the core interests that emerge and the strategy needed to secure India and progress towards its vision.**

There is a school of thought that far too much authority and responsibility is being centred on a single personality, who is not a constitutional authority. The appointment of the NSA, creation of NSC, NSAB and DPC with clear AOB/ TOB Rules should be passed in the Parliament. This would bring in greater transparency and authority to the NSA. The steps currently taken should form the basis for the architecture envisaged, with one major change – it should be the charter of the NSC to produce a draft NSS and not the DPC, which will skew the perception more towards a military strategy.

A detailed net assessment and analysis of India's stance in today's emerging world order – to partner either narrative or to go it alone (under the lexicon of strategic autonomy) is the need of the hour. It should assess the impact on India's overall security, the core interests that emerge and the strategy needed to secure India and progress towards its vision. Should there be a separation of the NSC and the SPG, with both being tasked to periodically present the NSS? It could provide two inputs to the PM and Cabinet Committee on Security to decide from. It would also bring in the necessary checks and balance so essential in a democracy.

As India rises amongst the comity of nations, the challenges that it would face would be manifold. There is an urgent need to have stable and balanced national security architecture in place. While certain positive steps have been taken by the present government in this regard, there is still much to be done, especially maintaining a balance by having dual input from constitutionally approved appointments rather than centralisation of powers under one person appointed by an administrative order by the government.

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11 Besides the National Security Advisor (NSA), the NSC consists of the Deputy National Security Advisor (DNSA), The Ministers of Defence, External Affairs, Home, Finance of the Government of India, and the Deputy Chairman of the NITI Aayog. Other members may be invited to attend its monthly meetings, as and when required.

12 The National Security Advisory Board (NSAB) consists of a group of eminent national security experts outside of the government. Members are usually senior retired officials, civilian as well as military, academics and distinguished members of civil society drawn from and having expertise in Internal and External Security, Foreign Affairs, Defence, Science & Technology and Economic Affairs.

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India's Strategic Culture and Use of Force in Furtherance of National Interests

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Abstract

Strategic culture is a complex concept that is difficult to define and quantify. Many questions come to mind when one thinks about it. One way of defining strategic culture simply, could be as 'A set of beliefs, attitudes and norms acquired through experiences over time for furthering National Interests (NI) by any means including the use of Force'. There has been a debate on existence of India's strategic culture. This paper suggests that India does have a strategic culture and analysis this through a brief look at strategic thought and use of force in various instances at the politico-military level since our independence. The deductions from this indicate that political leadership has shown little hesitation to use force when needed. However, the outcomes of these conflicts and India's strategies for the furtherance of NI have been far from satisfactory. A better understanding of strategic culture at the national level and its further refinement at the level of strategic leadership will enable us to harness India's not so limited resources, capacities and instruments into a more integrated, synergised and effective whole. The paper suggests some ways for better inculcation of strategic thought.

Introduction

Strategic culture is a complex concept that is difficult to define and quantify. Many questions come to mind when one thinks about it. Some of these could be:-

(a) Is strategic culture an outcome of the interpretation of history and historical beliefs of a nation?

(b) Is it a socio political and psychological Legacy?

(c) Is it the strategic outlook of the leadership alone, or of the whole nation?

(d) How important is strategic culture for use of force in furtherance of NI of a State?

(e) Does ethnic and cultural homogeneity strengthen strategic culture?

(f) Does the form of government affect strategic culture?

Defining Strategic Culture

One way of defining strategic culture simply, could be as 'A set of beliefs, attitudes and norms acquired through experiences over time for furthering national Interests by any means including the use of force'. Thus, there is great relevance of military force when one talks of strategic culture. A widely accepted definition was given by Mr. Jack Snyder in his 1977, report as, "The sum total of ideals, conditional emotional responses and pattern of habitual behaviour, that members of national strategic community have acquired and share with each other with regard to strategy". Mr. Iain Johnston describes strategic culture as "an ideational milieu which limits behaviour choices and acts to establish

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pervasive and long lasting strategic preferences by formulating concepts of the role and efficacy of military force".

The Debate over India's Strategic Culture

India's strategic culture has been in debate in various forums in recent years. But the concept actually came into the consciousness when the Pentagon ordered a study on 'India's Strategic Culture' in 1992. The study was done by George Tanham of Rand Corporation. In a nutshell he concluded that India is a status quo nation with a tradition of non-aggression, it has for most of its history been on strategic defence with a subcontinent mind set and lacked strategic culture. He attributed this to India's culture, history and the influence of Buddha and Mahatma Gandhi. He evidently did not give much value to the contribution of Chanakya to strategic thought which was made well before Machiavelli and Clausewitz. He also ignored Indian military thought in ancient India, reflected in 'Sada Shiva Dhanurveda' one of the sub Vedas that deals with archery, 'Hastayur Veda' that deals with the management of war elephants or some of the Puranas that deal with war fighting and theory like the Agni Purana, Matsya Purana and Bradharma Purana.

Many Indian strategic thinkers have contested this view but what is not commonly known is that the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) ordered another study on India's strategic culture in 2006. This study was done by Rodney Jones and he concluded that:-

> India has a strategic culture which is not Monolithic but is Mosaic possibly due to India's diversity.

> It is distinct and more coherent than most contemporary states.

> That India's strategic culture draws on Kautilya's secular treatise 'Arthsathra'.

The fact that Indian democracy has been frugal but effective and has contributed to the whole world in many ways supports this view point. It has also been argued that strategic culture has been an important component of the very survival of India as the nation that one sees today.

> India's strategic thought has evolved over time and has moved from the Nehruvian period to a mix of Neo Realism and Neo Liberalism which, while believing in the primacy of economy in International Relations in a globalised world, acknowledges the importance of military power. This is demonstrated by the challenging economic reforms that have been undertaken in recent times and the political ownership of even routine use of military force at times.

Evolution of Indian Strategic Thought

It can well be argued that Indian strategic culture does exist and has contributed to India's strategic thought in its modern history. Mr. Neil Padukone, calls India's early strategy as, 'India's Monroe doctrine', where keeping the subcontinent together and denying extra-regional powers space in the subcontinent was the aim. On the other hand, as per Mr. Kanti Bajpayee, the Nehruvian strategy betted on diplomacy and transnational understanding, it looked at Pakistan and China as Asian brothers, mistrusted U.S. policies in Asia and placed no value on military power. India's strategic thought has evolved over time and has moved from the Nehruvian period to a mix of Neo Realism and Neo Liberalism which, while believing in the primacy of economy in International Relations in a globalised world, acknowledges the importance of military power. This is demonstrated by the challenging economic reforms that have been undertaken in recent times and the political ownership of even routine use of military force at times.

India's Historical Experience of Strategic Thought and Use of Force

Indians did learn about military and strategy matters from the British with the contribution of more than a million men in the First World War and more than two million men in the Second Great War. This is significant as at that time the population of Greater India which included Pakistan and Bangladesh was just around 300 million in all. A vast majority

of Indian families would thus, have been effected by these wars. It is, therefore, surprising that India has never had a militarist culture. In India's journey since independence, there have been many positives and negatives in the realms of strategic thought and use of military force in the furtherance of NI. While many are severely critical and consider most of these events as strategic failings, I will analyze these in the context of their effectiveness at the politics-military level.

Period from 1947-48

India is suffering the outcome of the 1947-48 war even today, almost on a daily basis. However, considering it to be a failure ignores the existence of strategic thought and political willingness to use force at the very inception of India's modern statehood. The intervention by air to save Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) was an example of positive use of force at the political level. Militarily the campaign was fought brilliantly and valiantly with meager resources under adverse circumstances. I will like to argue that what ruined the outcome was not strategy but ideology. It defies strategic sense that after routing the invading Tribal Lashkars (Armies) India settled for a ceasefire, which made Pakistan occupy Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK) and strategically vital Northern Areas bordering China.

The 1962 Skirmish

This war was a total disaster on all counts. May it be political, diplomatic, intelligence or military and has contributed in a major way to the belief in many quarters that India lacks strategic culture. The culprit here was again the ideology of a very few who ran the affairs of state at that time. I would like to call this an aberration in India's modern history. As a young state, it taught us the importance of military force though at a great cost.

> The gains were again squandered at the negotiating table, where military involvement or advice was kept at arm's length. This pattern has continued right from 1948 onwards. Is the political leadership alone to blame for this? Or is part of the blame with the bureaucracy and diplomats who guide decision making and have always been much closer to the political leadership than the military? Can the military leadership totally absolve itself for not being assertive enough in these crucial matters of NI?

The War of 1965

The political leadership again displayed willingness to use military force beyond J&K contrary to Pakistani expectations. Opening the Punjab Front and threatening Lahore was a strategic move that saved 1965 for us. Handing back Haji Pir Pass to Pakistan was a blunder which happened because the military was not involved in decision making or the negotiations that took place for six days at Tashkent after the ceasefire. It is hard to believe but there was no military team for structured support to the negotiations in Tashkent.

War of 1971

Nothing needs to be said of the brilliant strategy at the political and military levels and the political willingness to use force. The gains were again squandered at the negotiating table, where military involvement or advice was kept at arm's length. This pattern has continued right from 1948 onwards. Is the political leadership alone to blame for this? Or is part of the blame with the bureaucracy and diplomats who guide decision making and have always been much closer to the political leadership than the military? Can the military leadership totally absolve itself for not being assertive enough in these crucial matters of NI? The answers to these questions are not hard to find.

1961/1975 Goa and Sikkim Takeover

Though like 1961 in Goa, the ground work in Sikkim in 1975 was political and diplomatic, but there was no hesitation to use force of the Parachute Brigade and a Division to evict the Portuguese from Goa, a Parachute Battalion for the removal of the 'Chogyal', and the final takeover of Sikkim after a small skirmish, again displaying political willingness to use military force.

1987/88 Sri Lanka and Maldives Operation

The air drop of supplies in Jaffna was a successful example of politico-military coercion and the deployment of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) was again purely a political decision. The outcome would have been better if military advice had been more proactively sought, or had been more pragmatic and professional. In 1988 also, the decision to intervene in Maldives to rescue President Abdul Gayoom was a political one to help a neighbour, taken at the behest of U.S. at extremely short notice. India was not at all prepared for an 'Out Of Area Contingency' of this kind at that time. That the operation was a great success is a different story. Both the *Times* and *Newsweek* magazines carried the story on the front cover and the world accepted India as an emerging regional power.

Nuclear Tests

India crossed the nuclear restriction by conducting a series of nuclear tests in May 1998 at Pokhran. Indian political leadership exhibited remarkable determination to defy international condemnation and ushered the way for India to enter the country of nuclear powers. Since then India has made impressive strides in its missile and Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) programmes.

1999 Kargil Conflict

The tactical surprise achieved by Pakistan showed India's intelligence capabilities in poor light. However, India's response to Kargil intrusion was firm and resolute.

The decision to not to escalate beyond the Line of Control (LoC) was a political decision again. The military learned of it at formation level after the PM's public statement to this effect on national media. There was visible angst at the ground level among the military on this decision but in hindsight, it turned out to be a good politico-strategic decision. But on the whole the Kargil conflict was well handed at the political, diplomatic and media level.

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Post Kargil Conflict

Post Kargil conflict, India has steadily improved its image as a nation to use military force in pursuance of its NI. In the wake of parliamentary attacks on December 13, 2001, India undertook a massive mobilisation and adopted an offensive military posture against Pakistan. Exercise Parakram: likewise, India's resolute response to PLA intrusions in Depsang, Chumar (in Ladakh Sector) as also surgical strikes inside Myanmar against Naga insurgents and against terrorist camps inside PoK demonstrate India's increased propensity to use force.

Some Observations

What conclusions can we draw from this historic experience of strategic thought, use of military force for furtherance of NI and decision making at the strategic levels? The main lessons that can be drawn are briefly given in the paragraphs below.

> ➤ First and foremost, it clearly emerges that contrary to common belief, there has been little hesitation at the political level to use military force when NI were in grave danger. But use of force in most cases has been reactive. There has been a broad absence of proactive use of force and this could be because pacifism has been considered to be a virtue in India's ancient history.

> ➤ In instances where India has been proactive, while the decision to use force was political, the military has almost never been brought on board from the beginning. The military was brought in after the decision to use force had been taken. The acceptance that political leadership is securely above the military seems to have become a

hurdle in effective integrated decision making. Even in 1971, the decision to use force had already been taken; the delay of about six months was made on behest of Field Marshall Sam Manekshaw. Had there been a lesser personality than him to press his point of view, the outcome of the 1971 war could well have been different.

➢ While the strategy and execution of military campaigns has ranged from fairly good to excellent except of course in 1962, the military was never an integrated part of the end negotiations. Thus, in most cases the politico-military strategic gains were squandered at the negotiating table.

➢ While the political leadership has displayed a fair propensity to use military force, it doesn't seem to have trusted the military and has hesitated to give direct access to the military in the decision making process, making the Civil Services dominant. This has directly affected the buildup of India's military power. Thus, modernisation is lacking by more than a decade and military faces routine shortages in personnel and materials.

➢ In all these instances where military force has been used, the population of the nation has stood steadfastly behind the military and the political leadership of the day. Displaying a basic understanding of NI and thus possibly, traces of strategic culture.

➢ In a globalised world with a scary, over active electronic and social media, the political decision to use force is more and more complex. The whole nation will practically be an audience to the decision making process in the future.

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It is quite evident from the above that while India has been using force fairly regularly in recent history, the outcomes have been far from satisfactory. Has India's strategic culture played a role? It definitely has. Coming to the present, India continues to face security challenges in the search for its rightful place in the comity of nations. These lead to many strategic questions. Some of these are - In what state would India like to see Pakistan in the next decade or so? How does India respond to Chinese coercion and what if China decides to use force? Can India, in turn, coerce China? How does India handle her relationship with the U.S while continuing the deep engagement with Russia? How does India mesh her maritime strategy with her continental strategy? How does India leverage the Indo-Pacific construct to her strategic advantage? It emerges from the analysis, that use of force always remained a distinct possibility. To be able to use it effectively in pursuit of India's NI, a refined and well developed strategic culture is an important contributor.

How To Inculcate Strategic Culture?

If one accepts the need to inculcate strategic culture then the question would be 'How does one do it?'. The answer is not easy. There can be no direct action plan to impact this intangible kind of notion. However, certain actions which could help in the stated aim are being considered here.

BJP Vision Document 2014

I would like to mention the BJP's vision document issued before the 2014 elections. Besides the issues of One Rank One Pay (OROP), it talked of some other very positive issues, which if implemented would certainly have an impact on our strategic culture. These were:-

➢ Construction of a National War Memorial, which would not only honour the Military but also, bring the importance of military force into the consciousness of the Nation.

- ➢ It promised to expedite the establishment of the National Defence University.

- ➢ It also talked about four other defence related Universities.

- ➢ Extremely important, it talked of greater participation of the military in decision making.

These issues are still in hand and very little visible progress has been made on them. One hopes that future governments will accord adequate priority to these and push them hard in the overall national interest.

Vibrant Think Tanks

Another important factor that contributes to the strategic thought of a nation is active, independent and vibrant 'Think Tanks'. The number of think tanks in India was 280 in 2015. This is the fourth highest in the world after USA, China and UK. Five Indian think tanks have been rated in the top 150 think tanks of the world. This progress in recent years is indeed laudable but much more needs to be done. Funding continues to be a big constraint. While the government has to step in on a larger scale, the corporate world can do much. If corporate social responsibility funds are made eligible for this expenditure, India will surely see more corporations stepping in with funding and organisational support.

Universities

India's universities are another source for enhancing strategic culture. Since the Jagjit Singh Report of 2008, almost all new Central Universities have a department for 'Defence and Security Studies'. However, almost all over, these are the smallest departments due to limited finances and low priority. The Madras University that one is familiar with, I think now has only two or three lecturers in the department. Other universities are not much better off. This limits the availability of guides and the number of Ph.D.'s that are done in the country on topics of strategy, defence or security, are extremely small. Better and focused funding for these departments with a possible direct monitoring role by the Defence Ministry can give a fillip to the overall strategic culture of the nation.

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National Security Strategy (NSS) Document

There are various other steps that can be taken as part of conventional education or community awareness programs but one of the most critical need to harness strategic thought, facilitate decision making and synergise all elements of national power to attain national goals, is to enunciate a 'NSS Document'. One cannot and should not delay it any longer. Most of us would have seen the highlights of the U.S. NSS Document released in December 2017. It has a foreword by the President and talks of, 'Pursuing threats to their source', 'To preserve Peace with Strength', includes the defence industrial base, nuclear forces, space, cyber space, intelligence etc. Such a document provides the essential link between goals, capacities, strategies, coordination and contributes to effective use of Comprehensive National Power (CNP).

Conclusion

It is time that the debate on whether India has a strategic culture or not should be put to rest. India definitely has displayed elements of strategic culture, which in India's short history since independence has led to use of military force on a number of occasions. The political leadership has shown little hesitation to use force when needed. However, the outcomes of these conflicts and the strategies for furtherance of NIs have been far from satisfactory. A better understanding of strategic culture at the national level and its further refinement at the level of strategic leadership will enable India to harness her not so limited resources, capacities and instruments into a more integrated, synergised and effective whole.

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A Review of Infrastructure Development in India's Northern Borders

Lt Gen Arun Kumar Sahni, PVSM, UYSM, SM, VSM (Retd)@

Abstract

The infrastructure development, astride India's Northern Borders, is woefully inadequate, more so, when this region borders the antagonist trans-Himalayan neighbor, China. This is in sharp contrast to the infrastructure across the international border, in both mainland China and Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR). The widening disparity in the infrastructure on the two sides of the international border, not only impacts the morale of the resident population, but has an adverse impact on the Inter-State relations with Nepal and Bhutan. This infrastructure deficiency also impacts the operational efficiency of the Army or the Para Military Forces (PMFs) / Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF), in executing their mandated tasks of 'external security' and 'border guarding'.

It would be pertinent to highlight that physical connectivity is the precursor for other developmental initiatives and also a must for the Security Forces (SFs). Therefore, it is proposed to carry out a holistic appraisal of the 'ongoing' connectivity projects of road, rail and aviation, including habitat and logistic requirements, astride India's Northern Borders, from a security perspective. The article reviews the progress of ongoing initiatives; identify the recent organisational / policy changes and modulations carried out for enhancing efficiency and make suitable recommendations.

General

Infrastructure development for a Nation is essential for inclusive economic and social upliftment of the people. It enables trade, is a driver of growth, powers businesses, creates opportunities and enables competitiveness, efficiency and productivity. It is essential for effective governance and to establish the writ of the country in the remotest corners of the nation. International Monetary Fund (IMF) analysis has indicated that for every dollar of investment in infrastructure, there is a '1.6 multiplier' in the form of a boost to short-term employment combined with a longer-term productivity gain to the economy. However, due to various reasons the infrastructure development is woefully inadequate astride India's Northern Borders, even after seven decades of Independence, more so when this region borders with the antagonist trans-Himalayan neighbour, China.

This is in sharp contrast to the infrastructure profile across the International border, in both mainland China and TAR. The widening disparity in the infrastructure on the two sides of the international border, not only affects the well being and morale of the people residing in this part of India, but has an adverse impact on the perception and therefore, the inter-state relations with India's two friendly and land locked states of Nepal and Bhutan. This gains importance as they have borders with both India and China. In addition, this infrastructure deficiency is an impediment

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for both the Indian Army and the other Border Guarding PMFs, which are responsible for ensuring the sanctity of the undemarcated/disputed Northern Borders.

The present state of infrastructure voids and inadequacy is across sectors and includes basic amenities; be it road, rail or air connectivity, transportation systems, energy generation, supply & transmission or water collection & supply, sanitation systems, or in the telecommunication & internet connectivity. The causative factors range from very low density of population, spatial distance from the national capital, political ineptitude, lack of will and accountability and a flawed sense of security. The fragility of the terrain on the Indian side of the disputed border, compounded by its alignment, across extremely rugged and inhospitable terrain and at altitudes as high as 4500m, further creates mammoth challenges.

The Centre and State Government schemes are on priority, looking at redressing existing deficiencies and shortfalls in infrastructure, for social well being and economic inclusivity of the people of the border regions. The Army has been redressing inadequacies of infrastructure from the viewpoint of the Security Forces (SF) also, since the early 2000s. There is complementarity in the efforts in certain areas, but there is still a lot to be done. It is indisputable that connectivity is a must for construction of other elements of related infrastructure and overall socio-economic development of the region. But in the immediate future there is urgency from the external security perspective, to support India's regional and global aspirations.

In this article, it is therefore proposed to take a holistic appraisal of the 'on going' connectivity projects along the Northern Borders from a security perspective, review the progress, identify the recent organisational/ policy changes and modulations towards increased efficiency and make suitable recommendations.

> The widening disparity in the infrastructure on the two sides of the International border, not only affects the well being and morale of the people residing in this part of India, but has an adverse impact on the perception and therefore, the inter-state relations with India's two friendly and land locked states of Nepal and Bhutan. This gains importance as they have borders with both India and China. In addition, this infrastructure deficiency is an impediment for both the Indian Army and the other Border Guarding PMFs, which are responsible for ensuring the sanctity of the undemarcated/disputed Northern Borders.

Security Overtones

Indian sensitivity with respect to the external security along its Northern Borders is indeed unique and an outcome of the festering problem of unresolved, un-demarcated and disputed borders with China, across nearly 3488 km of inhospitable land frontiers. *Refer Fig 1* . This differing perception of the border is a continuous security challenge for the nation. It has resulted in a conventional conflict in 1962, and thereafter, periodically witnessed incidents of confrontation that had the potential to escalate. These included the 1967 border skirmish at 'Nathu La' in the State of Sikkim, the 1987 'Sumdrong Chu' incident in Arunachal Pradesh, and the Doklam stand-off at the Bhutan-Sikkim-China tri-junction, in 2017. The latter stand-off was a result of the Indian Army preventing Chinese road building efforts in disputed territory, of Doklam Plateau which would have increased the threat to the 'Siliguri Corridor', the umbilical linkage between Indian hinterland and its North Eastern states. Fortunately, resolute political leadership, Army's prompt and timely intervention, coupled with mature handling by the officialdom, led to peaceful resolution. It would be pertinent to highlight that the Northern Borders, every year, in addition, are witness to a spate of incidents/ stand-offs between the troops of the two armies. This occurs as they carry out regular patrolling up to their respective claim lines. It needs to be appreciated that this tactical activity can trigger actions with strategic ramifications, due to momentary lapse of equanimity by the troops in contact.

The existing reality of the borders has led to a permanent schism in the bilateral relationship of the two neighbours. India retains angst, as China not only continues to retain captured territories of Aksai Chin, in J&K and Shaksgam valley (wrongly acceded by Pakistan) in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK), but is carrying out infrastructure changes for amalgamating these areas permanently. Beijing, on the other hand, is of the conviction that these regions historically

belonged to it and their capture/annexation was justified. It also lays claim to the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh, which it claims as 'South Tibet'. Towards managing the problem, the two countries have a mechanism of periodic 'strategic level talks', between nominated government representatives. But in spite of numerous rounds of talks, there is presently no light at the end of the tunnel.

The criticality of the border security from India's perspective has to be viewed in context of changing 'geo-political' & 'geo-strategic' realities, international focus on the Indo-Pacific region and China's economic rise. It has led to greater assertiveness and belligerence by China in protecting its interests in the extended sphere of influence. This growing stature and influence was apparent by the attendance of 29 Head of States and 130 country representatives for its conference on 'Belt Road Initiative (BRI)' in 2017. Simultaneously, in the last two decades, India's economic growth has resulted in 'resurgent nationalism'. And this has manifested in the nation demanding greater accountability from the politico-bureaucratic hierarchy with respect to India's territorial integrity. This has resulted in reversal of the erstwhile mindset of anchoring territorial security with lack of infrastructure and there is renewed vigour in mitigating the existing infrastructure shortcomings along the Northern Borders.

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Therefore, pragmatism demands that India be conscious of the growing asymmetry in the power and influence of the two nations and its impact on the security dynamics. With no likelihood of an early resolution, there is a need for India to enhance its operational preparedness.

Profile – Northern Borders

FIG 1

Complexities for Infrastructure Development

The comprehensive development of any region is hinged on its inter and intra-regional connectivity. This physical connectivity needs to be provisioned in all the mediums, be it road, rail, air or digital. The air connectivity in this rugged and mountainous terrain needs to be addressed separately for rotary and fixed wing, as it is not easy to find suitable space for runways required by the modern fixed wing aircrafts. Also, the landing strips/ runaways need to be sited close to economically vibrant population centers that require these long distance linkages. These townships, in the regions astride the Northern Borders are spatially dispersed due to low population density.

Capital investments for constructing infrastructure in low population density areas have added complexities. As development, is a function of economics and hence, the pressure created by the locals on the civil administration. Unfortunately, this is woefully inadequate in the Northern Border states as there is a glaring disparity in the population density of these states, vis à vis the national average. Against a national average of 450 persons/sq. km (2017 statistics), the population density in Arunachal Pradesh is 17, Sikkim – 86, Himachal Pradesh – 123 and Uttarakhand – 189 and that in Ladakh region of J&K, is as low as 3 (the state density figures are of 2011 census). Therefore, all infrastructure projects, including that of connectivity are mostly uneconomical, when one does a 'cost benefit analysis', by assessing the population percentage that is serviced by the infrastructure project. In addition, the challenge in these low density areas, is the requirement for 'capacity building' across the spectrum of labour, material and skilled expertise for any developmental project.

> The review of the developmental initiatives along the Northern Borders is being looked at intimately, by dividing the border areas into three sub divisions, namely, 'Northern' covering the State of J&K, 'Middle Sector' that encompasses Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand and 'Eastern Sector' that is primarily the State of Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh. The challenge of the fragility of the terrain of Eastern Himalayas is primarily in the Middle and Eastern sectors, whereas it is the inclement weather and altitude in the 'Northern' sub-sector. The weather vagaries are applicable across sectors.

Fortunately, this economic dimension along the Northern Borders has got subsumed under the 'National Security Essentials', as suitable and adequate connectivity is a prerequisite for operational and optimal employment of the Armed Forces, along the disputed borders.

The sedimentary rock structure of the Himalayan range, coupled with the vagaries of weather and altitude of the border areas, creates engineering challenges that finally reflect in cost and time overruns. This has been amply repeatedly highlighted by Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) in its strictures against the construction authorities in its annual reports. This has been systematically redressed with renewed impetus in the form of organisational and structural changes for time-bound implementation. Concurrently, the focus of the Central Government to ensure 'inclusive growth for all' is reflected in aggressive and priority implementation of its socio-economic welfare schemes like 'Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik (UDAN)', Sagarmala, Char Dham etc. in the frontier regions of the Northern Borders.

It is once again highlighted that availability of connectivity is a precursor to infrastructure development of suitable habitat, power generation and distribution facilities, livelihoods, industry, trade, commerce and healthcare. Apropos, connectivity needs to be a priority in developmental initiatives.

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Developmental Initiatives

It is pertinent to state that the up-gradation and development of infrastructure in the border regions is being looked at in a holistic and comprehensive manner, through a 'Long Term Perspective Plan'. The Central Government in its endeavour for inclusive growth has also commissioned projects for the social and economic upliftment of the people in these remote areas. There is an on going effort for greater synergy amongst the various projects steered by the civil administration, Ministry of Defence (MoD), and Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).

However, presently India's border infrastructure has serious military limitations. The Chinese being on the plateau have their road construction activity in close proximity of their perception of the LAC, whereas Indian road construction is woefully short of the passes on the watershed. This disparity is more pronounced in the 'Middle Sector', where the roads in some areas are 30 to 40 km short of the Line of Actual Control (LAC). The problem is compounded as there are no laterals linking the various linear axes to the LAC, creating manpower cum resource criticality and time overruns. It puts the Army at a disadvantage in the High Altitude Areas (HAAs), impacts mobilisation cum force application and demands enhanced and dispersed logistics.

To review the current state of accessibility in the border region, there is a need to be aware of the approved plans cum schemes and their current status. This is being dealt with in detail in the subsequent iterations.

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Roads

The road development program for border connectivity, commenced in 2005 based on the recommendations of the 'China Study Group (CSG)', set up in 1997, under the aegis of the Foreign Secretary. It was mandated to study the requirement of road communication along the China border, to assert the country's territorial claim and upgrade logistic sustenance for the armed forces. This was in response to the heightened Chinese road and track construction work along India's Northern and Eastern Frontiers.

It initially approved construction of 13 roads up to the LAC under the classification of 'CSG roads'. Later in 2005, after completion of the study, it approved a total of 73 strategic roads, under what was termed as the India China Border Roads (ICBR), with an approximate financial outlay of Rs 4700 Cr, the project was to be completed by 2012. This revised list of roads included the earlier approved 13 CSG roads. Therefore, a total of 46 roads, classified as 'General Staff (GS)', were under the MoD and the remainder 27, notified as 'Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) roads', were to be constructed by the MHA. The implication was that it had separate channels for funding and monitoring for the progress in execution of the projects. The geographical disposition of the proposed roads as per the sectors is Northern – 14, Middle – 26 and Eastern -33. *Refer Fig 2*

The construction responsibility of 61 of these 73 roads was given to the Border Roads Organization (BRO). For the remainder 12 roads of the ITBP, (two roads each in Eastern Ladakh and Himachal Pradesh)were given for construction to National Project Construction Corporation (NPCC) and Himachal Pradesh PWD (HPPWD) respectively. The remainder 8 roads were entrusted to the CPWD (Uttarakhand – 05 & Sikkim – 03). The monitoring was entrusted to a subcommittee, approved in 2006, under the aegis of the Director General of Military Operations of the Army.

**Geographical Disposition of the 73 Roads Project**

FIG 2
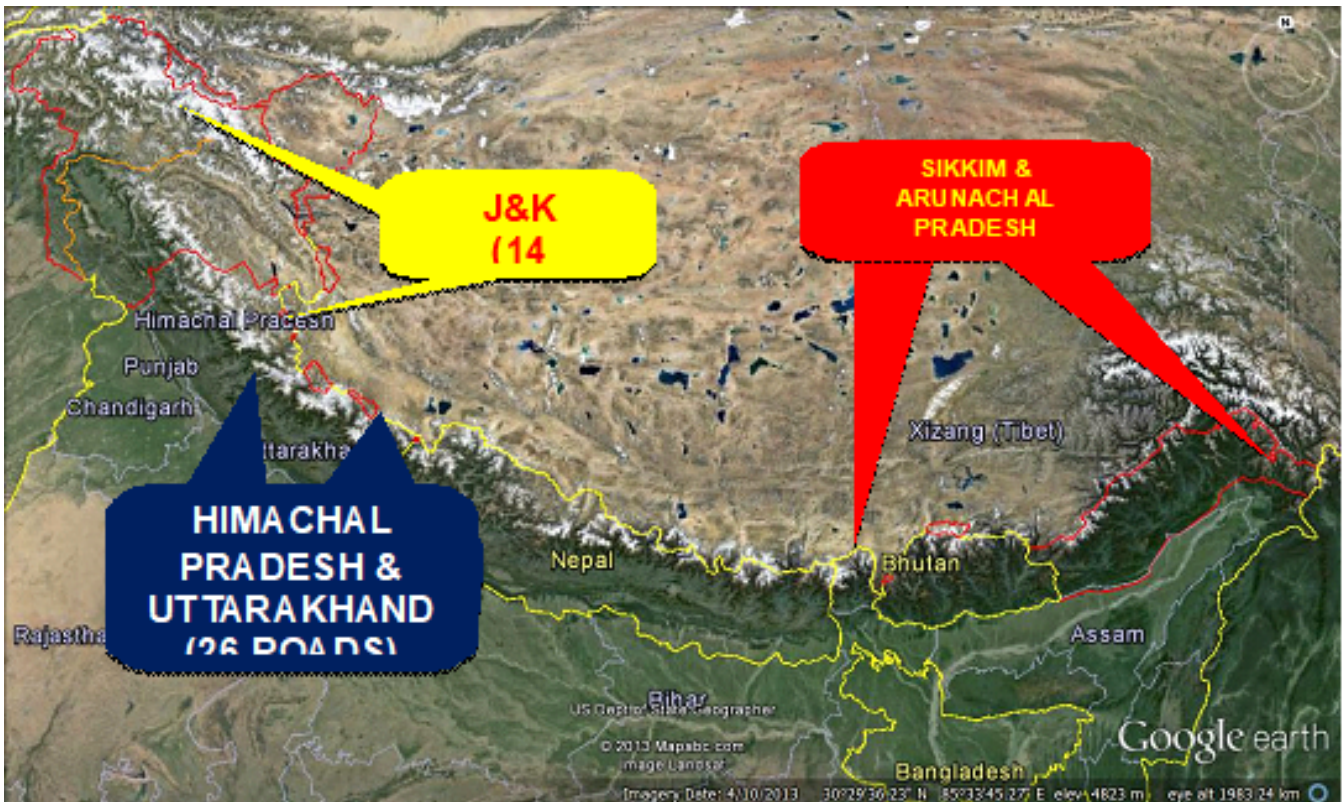
Exceptional time and cost overruns continue to be there in executing the 73 roads project. As of December 2018, 35 roads have been completed and in case of 27 roads, the initial connectivity has been achieved with blacktopping at various stages. The remainders of 11 roads are at various stages of completion. The profile of the incomplete roads with each of the construction agency is:

➢ BRO – 6 (3 each in the Middle & Eastern Sectors)

➢ CPWD – 6 (5 in Middle & 1 in the Eastern Sector)

➢ HP PWD -2 (middle sector)

Post the Dokalam incident in 2017, there was renewed urgency to address the infrastructure shortfalls. The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) then approved an additional allocation of Rs 3459 Cr for the pending road projects, with a completion date of 2022. The river Brahmaputra traversing the state of Assam does inhibit mobilisation of troops towards Arunachal Pradesh, but recent bridge construction initiatives have improved the overall traffic-ability of the North Eastern (NE) Region. The recent inauguration of the 5.2 Kms Bogibeel rail road bridge is a welcome addition. The profile of the bridges is on the River is at *Fig 3*.

FIG 3
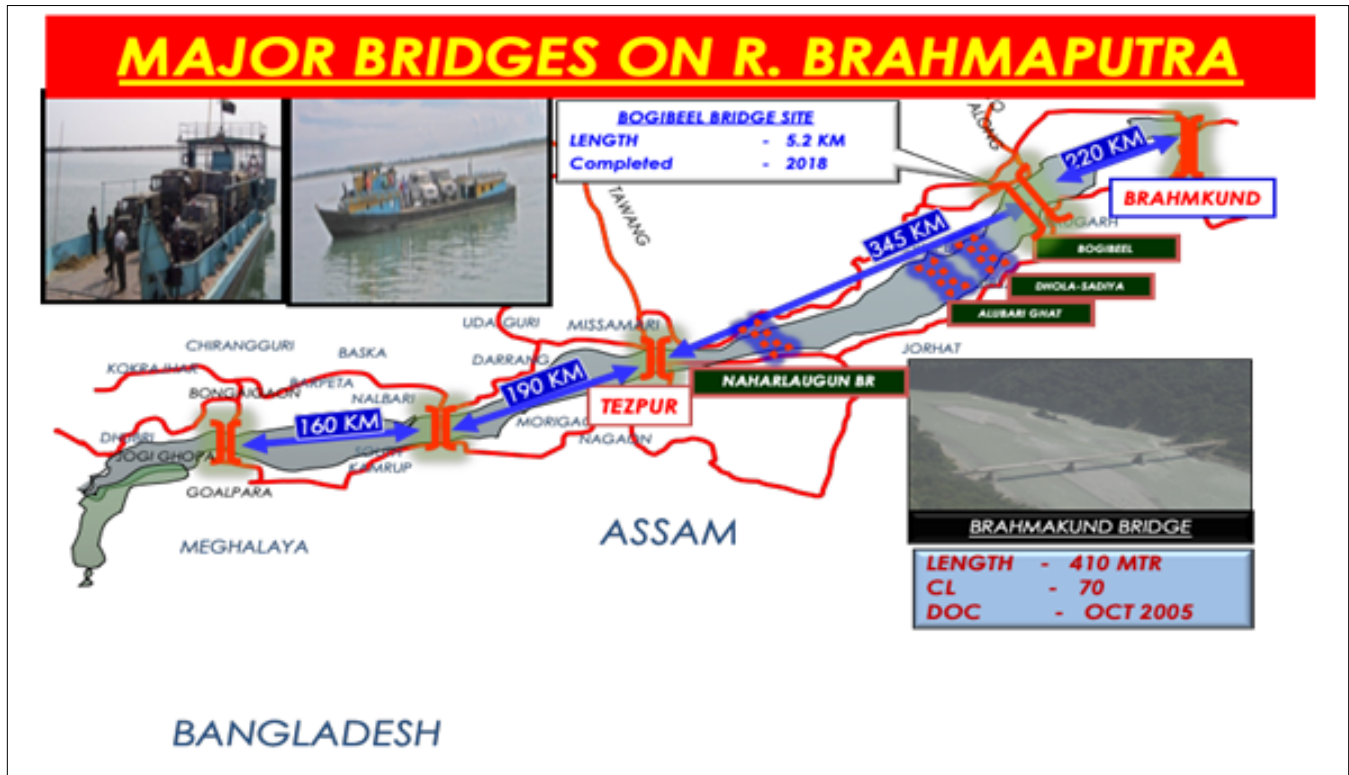
The delay in the completion of the projects is due to a combination of reasons. It encompasses organisational anomalies in the functioning of the BRO, to faulty planning and appreciation of difficulties of working in mountainous, rugged and high altitude areas, attendant engineering issues of working with fragile rock structures of the Eastern Himalayas, inclement weather, limited working season, inadequate road construction material and a shortage of labour. Issues of forest & wildlife clearances and land availability, coupled with budgetary constraints have further impeded the progress of work.

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Recent Changes for Efficiency

Till recently the BRO was handicapped by its internal contradictions and organisational structures. These have been rectified to an extent with it being placed under the MoD in 2015, with a newly created Joint Secretary BR (Border Roads) for ministerial interface. A delegation of financial and administrative powers to the DG BR and key appointment holders has further facilitated its functioning. In addition, the other modulations with positive spin-offs are:

> ➤ Delinking of salary from the work chart, ensuring comprehensive planning of roads /projects prior to commencement, application of MoRTH normative rates to Border Road Organisation (BRO) projects, simplified categorisation of roads and synergy between the Army Engineers and Border Roads for road Alignments and Track Cutting (RATC).

➢ Planning and dissemination of annual approved projects of the BRO, with greater transparency and affixing the reallocation of 'funds to work' authority at the level of General Officer Commanding(GOC) Corps. Adopting 'Mission Mode' for completion of work projects.

➢ To curtail time and cost overruns. The projects are cleared after formulation /analysis of DPRs, with EPC mode for project execution, instead of the 'item rate contract' methodology.

➢ Use of technologically advanced construction materials like polymers and cementitious materials for soil stabalisation, double tube tunneling norms at high altitudes etc. and adoption of modern best practices in the organisation.

Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change has accorded general approval under Section (2) of the 'Forest (Conservation) Act 1980' for diversion of forest land for construction and widening of the border roads in the 100 kms aerial distance from the LAC. However, these are not applicable in the state of J&K and these exemptions do not extend to environmental and wildlife clearances. So the issue has been partially addressed.

To ensure all-weather connectivity of areas along the Northern Borders, tunnels have now been planned at important passes. These tunnels have been recommended as 'National Projects' with central funding. In the 'Northern' and 'Middle' sub sectors, the MoD has in principle agreed to construct four tunnels for improved all weather linkages to the Ladakh region. These tunnels, at altitudes of 16,000 to 17,000 ft will cut through the main mountain passes in the Himalayan and Zanskar mountain ranges. These tunnels are planned at the passes of Baralachala, Tanglangla and Lachungla, on the Manali- Leh axis and one at Shinkunla Pass connecting Lahaul valley in Himachal to Zanskar in J&K. Rohtang tunnel is in final stages and will be completed in the current year for the Lahaul – Spiti region. In the budget speech for 2018-19, the Finance Minister announced a tunnel at Sela Pass (13,700 ft) for faster road access to the Tawang sector of Arunachal Pradesh.

Tunneling is also under progress with a number of projects of MoRTH. The Z Morh and Zojila tunnels on the Srinagar – Kargil – Leh axis are important on going projects. However, the financial issues of the IL & FS are impacting the completion of most of these projects.

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Concurrent Road Development Projects

In addition to the security steered road projects, other governmental agencies also have road development projects. These are:-

➢ Special Accelerated Road Development Project – North East (SADRP - NE), that commenced in 2005, was to construct strategically important border roads, 'Four Lane' of National Highways (NHs)connecting NE State capitals and further connecting them to their respective District HQs. This was planned in two Phases. Phase A, specifically for Arunachal Pradesh, with a completion date of 2015, is nearing completion. Phase B for critical roads in other NE states is yet to be cleared. This has enhanced connectivity in the border areas of the 'Eastern Sector'

> ➢ NE council is also giving impetus to road development efforts, under a new scheme called the 'North East Road Sector Development Scheme'. It aims to construct 10,500 kms of strategic roads and upgrade critical bridges, through a new organisation called 'National Highway and Infrastructure Development Corporation (NHIDCL)', which was raised in 2015. It will undertake 14 such projects at an estimated cost of Rs 214 crores. It could become a force multiplier, as its project funding and monitoring is directly from the Central Government.

> ➢ Arunachal Frontier Highway (AFH), for inter valley connectivity is being accorded priority, as Arunachal Pradesh in spite of being the largest state has the least density of roads. This supplements the SADRP projects, completed under Phase A for the State.

> ➢ A 1300 Kms, express highway project along the Brahmaputra River, at an estimated cost of Rs 40,000, is at the planning stage to resolve connectivity issues in Assam.

> ➢ Char Dham, all-weather road project is a two-lane expressway project being constructed in Uttarakhand. It includes 889 kms of NHs in 7 segments, comprising 9 destinations. This will increase the backbone road connectivity of the 'Middle Sector', especially the 'Mana Pass Axis.

> ➢ There are various socio-economic welfare schemes in which road development projects are also being included. e.g., the Ministry of Rural Development funds National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) & Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) and Ministry of Urban Development takes on roads and constructions within urban centers. These supplement the overall aim of improving connectivity.

> **The 5 km long Bogibeel Bridge will connect Dibrugarh in Assam and Dhemaji district, bordering Arunachal Pradesh. This bridge will cut the travel time between the two points by four hours.**

Rail Infrastructure

The Railway Ministry has launched projects for connecting the border regions. From the security point of view, the MoD has approached the CCS for central funding for 14 strategically important railway lines, of which 11 are astride the Northern Borders.

The government has prioritised 4 projects which in the next decade will enhance rail connectivity of the Northern Borders. The survey presently underway needs to be expedited. Two of the 3 projects in the 'Eastern' sub-sector, provide rail connectivity to Arunachal Pradesh from the northern bank of Brahmaputra River in Assam. These are Misamari - Tawang (378 Kms) and North Lakhimpur - Along- Silapathar (248 Kms). The third project of Murkongselek – Pasighat – Tezu – Parsuramkund - Rupai (256 Kms), with the commissioning of the rail-road Bogibeel bridge, will result in faster Trans-Brahmaputra connectivity. The 5 kms long Bogibeel Bridge will connect Dibrugarh in Assam and Dhemaji district, bordering Arunachal Pradesh. This bridge will cut the travel time between the two points by four hours. *Refer Fig 4*. The fourth link of Bilaspur – Mandi- Manali-Leh (498 Kms) is in the 'Northern' sub-sector and will increase the mobility from Himachal Pradesh to J&K.

Strategic Rail Connectivity – NE

FIG 4
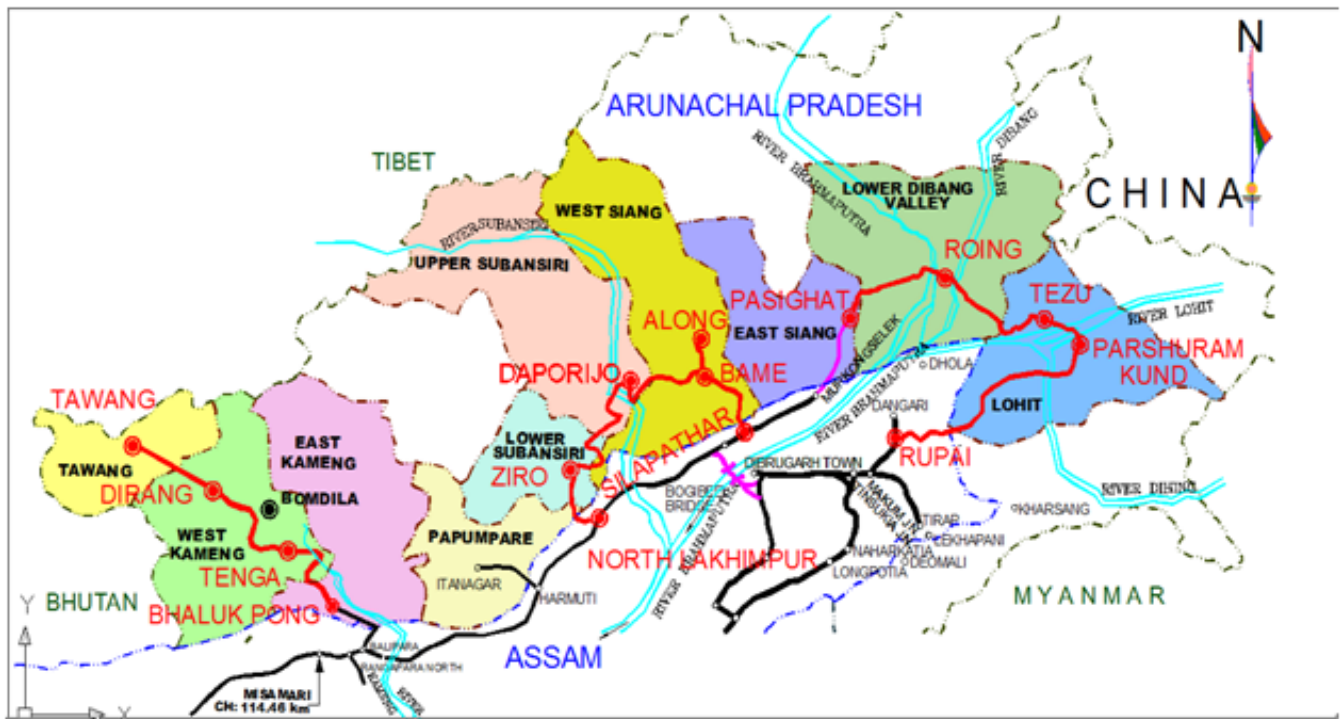
(Linkages in Red Indicate the Strategic Links Approved)

Concurrent Railway Projects

There are plans to provide a railway link for the NE states through 20 major railway projects, encompassing 13 new lines, two gauge conversions and five doublings, with a length of nearly 2,624 Kms. In addition, construction of a broad gauge railway line connecting Bairabi and Sairang in Mizoram is in progress to connect capital cities of the NE States by 2020. This will ensure better intra connectivity in the NE and support the plans of the SFs to mitigate the external security challenges on the Northern Borders. The state capitals of Assam, Arunachal and Tripura are presently connected, which addresses the requirement of SFs *Refer Fig 5*.

## Status of Rail Connectivity to NE State Capitals

FIG 5

In addition, the Government of India has acceded to the request of both the neighbouring states of Nepal and Bhutan for rail connectivity. This further cements the bilateral relations, enhancing security and improving the overall connectivity of the region. Refer Fig 6 & 7 below

## Rail Connectivity Nepal & Bhutan

FIG 6 & 7
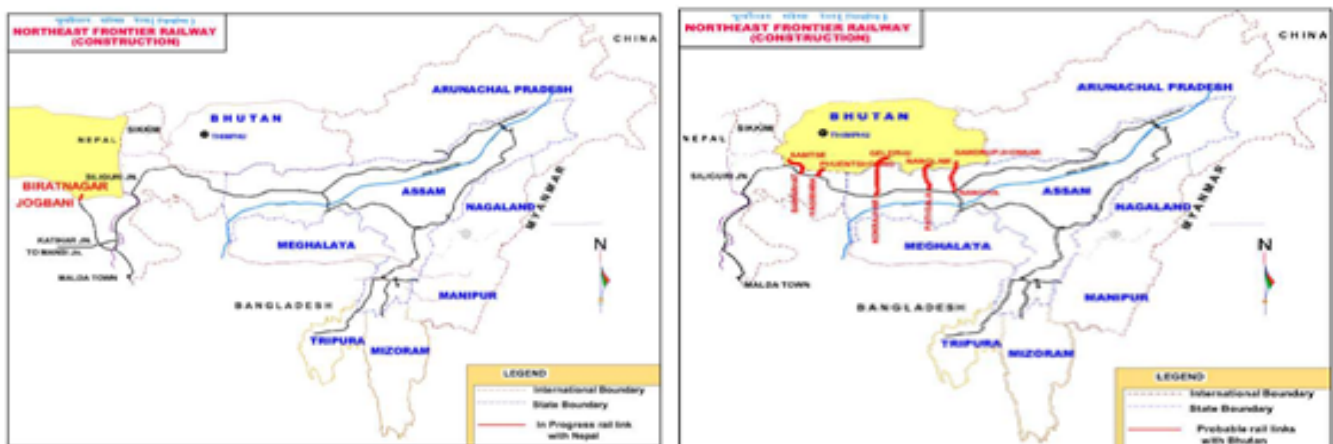
Air Connectivity

There is no doubt that construction of road and rail connectivity will take time. The fastest way to enhance both military and local accessibility of a region is by provisioning air and helicopter services. Towards this the CCS approved a long-standing proposal of the Armed Forces, in 2009, to upgrade and operationalise the discussed 07 Advance Landing Grounds (ALGs) and 2 Enhanced Helipads (EH) in the NE, which was the worst affected due to poor connectivity. ALGs were at Ziro, Menchuka, Tuting, Pasighat, Along, Tezu and Vijaynagar and the EH bases at Walong and Tawang. These were all in Arunachal Pradesh. Refer Fig 8. On completion of the project the Civil Aviation was to operationalise Tezu and Pasighat airfields, for civil passenger traffic. A new Greenfield alignment air base was developed in the foothills of Sikkim. Simultaneously, the Civil Aviation was asked to accord priority to projects in the 'Central Sector' that would facilitate air traffic-ability in Uttrakhand and Himachal Pradesh, with Pantnagar being accorded priority. In the northern sub-sector an ALGto connect the eastern part of Ladakh, was operationalised at Nyoma. These projects have since been completed and made operational.

ALGs and Enhanced Helipads in NE

FIG 8
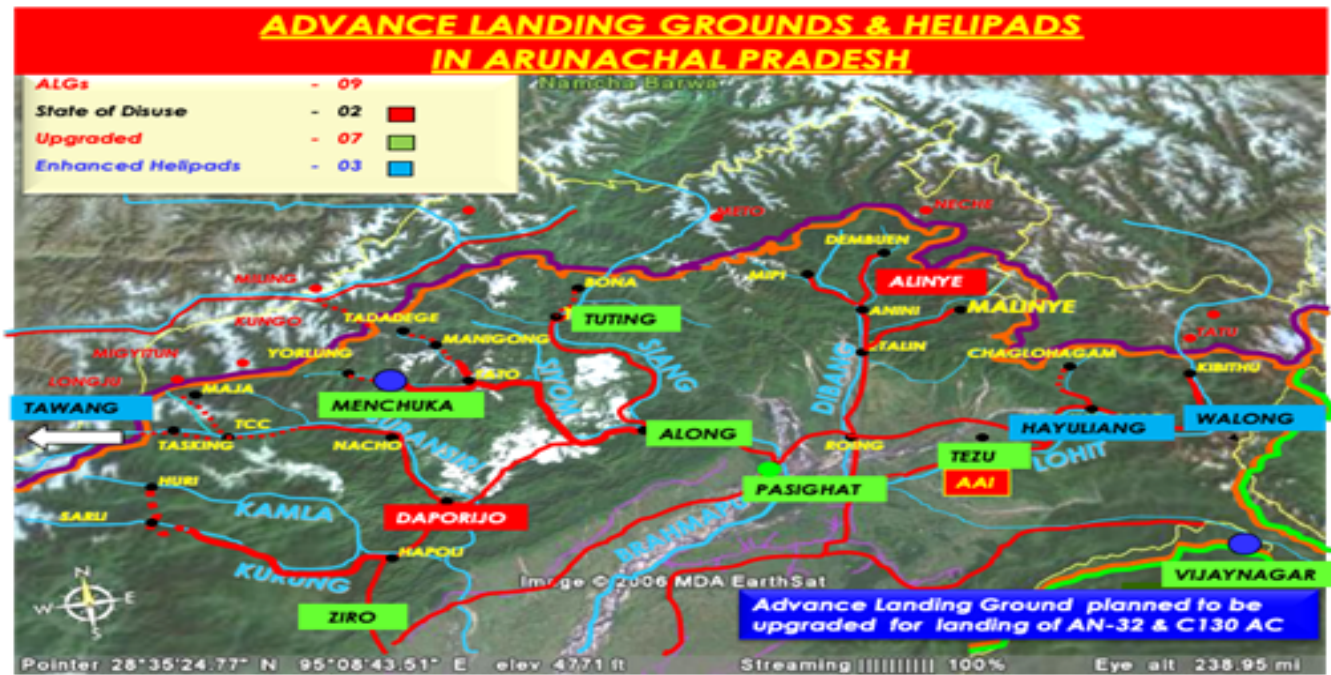
Concurrent Socio – Economic Initiatives to Enhance Air Connectivity

The Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) of UDAN of the Central Government is facilitating priority development of air infrastructure in the remote areas. Refer Fig 9. The NE Council (NEC), has also, identified and prioritised projects for constructing/ upgrading of requisite infrastructure at 12 NE airports. The projects recently completed or under implementation are as under:

➢ In Sikkim, the 200-acre Pakyong Airport, at an altitude of 4500 ft with a 1.75 Kms runway was completed and inaugurated by the PM on September 24, 2018. It is amongst the five highest airports in the country and is located approx. 30 Kms from Gangtok.

> ➢ In Arunachal Pradesh the Tezu airport at the eastern extremity of India, is in final stages of operationalisation. This will increase the connectivity to the remotest districts of Arunachal; namely, Lower Dibang, Anjaw, Namsai and Dibang Valley.

> ➢ Runway extension work is proposed at Umroi (Shillong) Airport, to enable bigger aircrafts to land. Similarly, work is underway to allocate hangars at LGBI Airport in Guwahati.

Highlights of RCS-Udan in the NE States

FIG 9
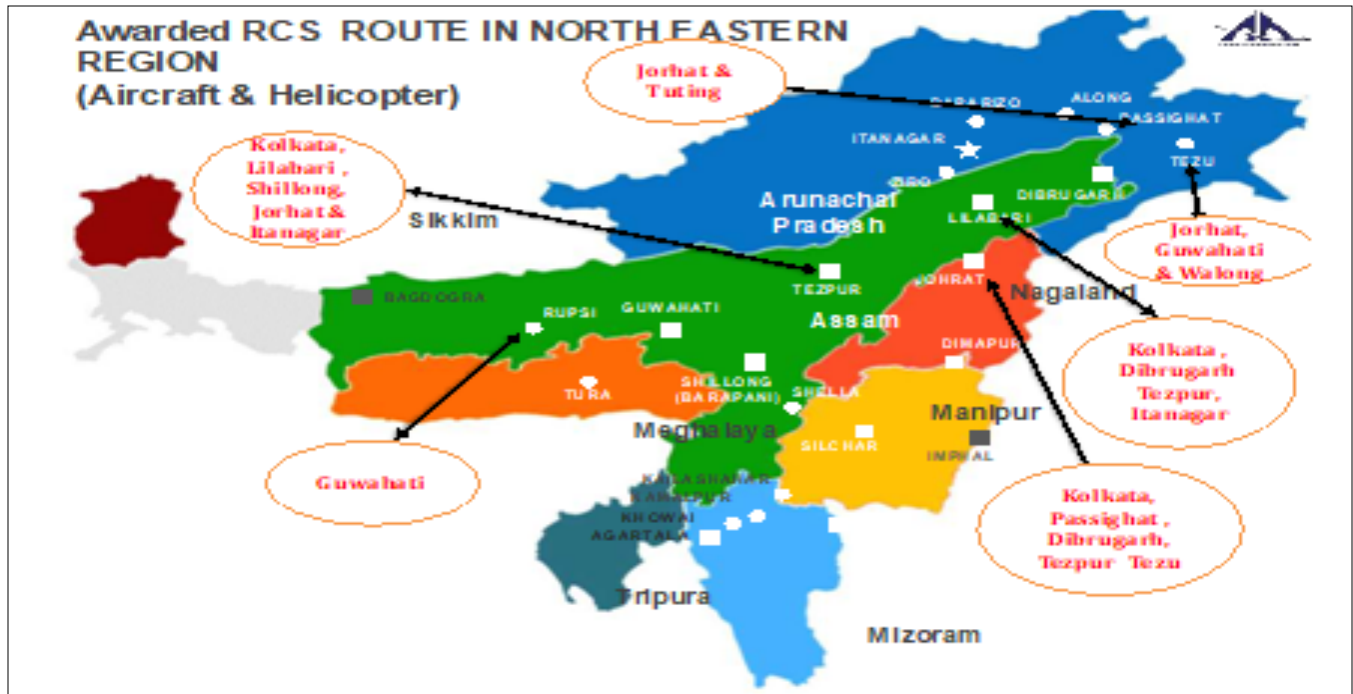
Habitat and Logistic Infrastructure

The mandate to the Armed Forces to be prepared for a 'Two Front War' in 2009 led to detailed internal analysis of the optimal force structures and desired resources. This was carried out in perspective of improved and planned developments for enhanced physical border connectivity, that was being driven both by the political agenda to address the social aspirations of the people of the border region and by the Army and the PMFs for enhancing external security of the Northern Borders. This led to force accretions in the Army, ITBP and the Assam Rifles, to comprehensively address the external security challenges of the Northern Borders. It also led to raising of Scout Battalions on the 'son of the soil' concept in Arunachal and Sikkim. This was in conformity to the rationale of existing scout battalions and their force multiplier effect. Presently, these are gainfully employed in the 'Middle' and 'Northern' areas, like the previously raised Ladakh, Kumaon and Garhwal Scouts.

This numerical accretion coupled with the constantly improving road connectivity and changed operational architecture, required a corresponding increase in the support infrastructure. The spectrum encompasses a wide canvas, that includes habitat for billeting troops as far forward as required and in the case of the Scout Battalions their families, training facilities for increased troop density, defensive battle emplacements and complementary transit and logistic facilities like transit camps, acclimatisation areas, depots, ammunition dumps, fuel and supply storage dumps, equipment parks etc. The induction of heavy equipment, technologically advanced intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance

(ISR) resources, mechanised forces and modern artillery also required a change in the planned specifications of the road infrastructure. The deployment of mechanised forces like tanks and Infantry Combat Vehicles well far forward required not only upgrading of existing roads and bridges for move of these heavy/oversized equipment but innovative road construction to simultaneously create, parking / overtaking bays, helipads and administrative repair facilities.

The move and deployment of troops in the remote and inclement altitude and terrain conditions requires construction of modern user - friendly habitat with technologically advanced ancillaries for power generation and waste disposal. This to an extent is underway, but the challenge remains to ensure that the best should not be sacrificed at the altar of commercial interests and political expediency.

The developmental work in these areas is hindered due to availability of funds, land acquisition issues, forestry clearances and 'babudom'. The delay in the timelines for execution of projects in the harsh working conditions of these regions is there, but greater concern is that the pace of developmental activity should not be due to ambivalence, tedious archaic procedures/processes and inept decision making by officials not conversant with the ground realities.

Recommendations

The profound statement as enumerated in a UN study with respect to infrastructure development is equally valid for the efforts presently underway in the Northern Borders. It states that "a critical aspect for infrastructure development is the need to ensure a very high standard of quality control, so as to avoid higher lifecycle costs, inequitable distributive effects, highly negative environmental and social impacts resulting in vulnerability to natural disasters and climate change". This demands that the developmental initiatives should address the social and environmental impacts, facilitate capacity building, ensure alignment of economic and developmental strategies, put in place an enabling investment and business climate for Public Private Partnership (PPP) model of development and exploit innovative use of technology to mitigate the physical challenges. The thrust should be on border development, where the border areas are not militarised but where military capability is enhanced

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To enhance the on going efforts, following modulations are recommended:

➢ There needs to be a single agency responsible for undertaking security related developmental work along the LAC/Northern Borders. Presently MoD and MHA undertake projects separately and synergy if any is by default. It is opined that as the MoD is mandated and therefore, oriented for external security, it would be better suited for this responsibility. Also, the project executing agency for both the ministries is primarily the BRO, which is under the MoD. However, the project approval and funding process of the MoD needs modification to become more responsive. The experience is that projects of the MHA get cleared and approved on a fast track, whereas, those of the MoD get delayed or are hindered by lack of funding.

➢ Security-related infrastructure projects need to follow the 'Executive Council' and 'Political Council' route for fast-tracking clearance and funding.

➢ There is a need to create a conducive environment for attracting the Indian private sector for developmental work in the border regions. An effective way would be through the PPP for project implementation. These partnerships assist the government and companies share costs, risks, rewards and ensure funds are available for maintenance and construction. This infuses competition, adoption of best practices and also capacity building.

    In view of the innumerable road infrastructure construction projects, there is a need to have a clear division of responsibilities for the private sector and the BRO.

➢ To ensure participation of large corporates for developmental projects in the border regions, there is need to make it economically viable. This can be achieved by grouping projects that are geographically co-located, irrespective of them being from different Ministries/ agencies. These projects in geographical clusters could be from defence, MoRTH, rail, aviation, hydel, power or energy. The grouping of projects will ensure that work engagement is spread over time. It will, therefore, be an attractive proposition for the big infrastructure corporates.

➢ The exemption for forest clearance of up to 100 kms, promulgated by the government, needs to be extended to environment and wildlife clearances too. Also, the 'Compensatory Afforestation' (CA) norms of the Army and Border Roads need to be harmonised to 1:1.

➢ There is a need for rationalisation of land rates by the state governments, preferably by districts, for a fixed period of 3 to 5 years to arrest the current inflationary trends.

➢ State governments need to be made stake-holders for land acquisition, environmental and wildlife clearances.

➢ Unified approach or integrated development should be planned for the infrastructure works across sectors, in each region. This would be in consonance with the cluster concept that was propounded above for making it attractive for the private sector. Also, there would be optimal utilisation of resources cum effort if the road and rail links are constructed simultaneously on a near similar alignment, with digital & communication lines being laid alongside. The waste disposal while constructing these arterial linkages in the mountainous terrain could be at pre-planned 'disposal sites 'to create helipads, parking bays, transit halt facilities and recreational areas.

➢ Maintenance and resurfacing norms, including its budgeting, needs to be a separate allocation. In this rugged terrain the norms need to be revised upwards by up to 40 percent.

Conclusion

It would be pertinent to conclude that there is a lot that is happening or is underway with respect to addressing the deficiencies of infrastructure, but a lot more that needs to be done on priority. Coordinated planning across sectors with simultaneous execution in these difficult and fragile border regions, coupled with suitable incentives and policy changes will attract private players to speed up government's developmental initiatives. There is a need for centralised funding without restrain to give impetus to the pace of development.

Optimising India's Military through Intelligence Transformation : In the Changing Security Environment

Lt Gen Ghanshyam Singh Katoch, PVSM, AVSM, VSM (Retd)@

"Both force and foreknowledge are essential to win battles"

—Ralph Bennett[1]

Abstract

The article deals with the optimisation of the Indian military in the changing security environment. The way to do that is proposed through 'Transformation'. This process is described as doing something more efficiently, by following an entirely new approach. The article explores the relationship between optimisation and transformation in light of India's military aim. Thereafter, the author briefly summarises India's present security environment, the nature of wars in this environment, and then gives the recommended option. This option is to change India's traditional primacy to operations, by primacy to intelligence. This step involves a change in the management of India's human resources and does not lead to increased expenditure which happens when one follows transformation through modernisation of arms and equipment.

Introduction

Optimisation in the context of this article and the meaning of that word refers to making the best use of India's military in the changing security environment. When viewed considering the military as a whole the subject being vast cannot be dealt with in one brief paper. Therefore, this article will concentrate on the largest component of the Indian military, i.e. the Army, an entity which is synonymous with the word "military" in the Indian context. Optimisation is a subject much discussed at present in light of the four transformation studies ordered by the Indian Chief of the Army Staff (COAS), Gen Bipin Rawat[2].

Transformation is expensive when applied through modernisation (procurement of the latest weapons and equipment). It may cost very little if affected through significant improvement in practices, procedures and processes, even with changes in organisation. Such transformation is possible through a change in the manner of employment of human resources and evolving organisations in conformity with the security environment.

For systematic analysis the article will consider the following:

➢ Understand the relationship between Optimisation and Transformation.

➢ India's Military Aim.

➢ India's present security environment, both external and internal.

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- ➢ Consider the nature of wars in our environment.

- ➢ Discuss the options for Optimisation through Transformation.

Optimisation and Transformation and Their Relationship

Optimisation and transformation have a symbiotic relationship. Optimise is in context of making the best use of available resources by reducing processes/working longer or harder/pooling resources. In an organisational context, transformation is a process of profound and radical change that orients an organisation in a new direction and takes it to an entirely different level of effectiveness. Transformation implies a basic change of character. It aims to do what one is doing more efficiently, by following an entirely new approach.

Transformation became a buzzword post the First Gulf war in 1991 when electronic intelligence, night vision capability and precision weapons changed the concept of war-fighting. Broadcast live world over by CNN, a path-breaking satellite channel, it made the world's militaries aware of the huge transformation the US military had undergone. Post the Gulf War, every military wanted to jump on the transformation bandwagon. However, transformation is never a quick process. "The [US] transformation-related developments between 1975 and 2008 [actually] occurred across nine different defense secretaries and five presidents."[3] While the common understanding became that transformation is synonymous with modernisation, the truth is that one transforms when one "change the way one thinks".

This article recommends optimisation by transforming through using the existing resources differently. The aim is to increase efficiency, without increase in the cost factor. One could call it, 'resetting the functioning for the present environment'. The military organisation-more than other organisations is very change averse. Transformation through modernising weapons & equipment may have interested parties rooting for it, (like the industry/ arms and equipment dealers/ contractors/ middlemen etc.). However, transformation through reorienting/reorganising human resources will mostly draw criticism as it may eat someone's turf, because one is change averse or just because it disturbs the status quo. Choosing the track to follow starts with understanding what India's military aim is, as well as the security environment in which Indian Army has to function.

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Military Aim

The primary aim of India's military is to foil external threats to India's security, enabling it to have peace and accompanying prosperity. The secondary aim is helping police forces of the Union to combat internal threats, with the same purpose.

Security Environment

Global

The present 'new world order' can be called a multipolar world with three traditional poles and one non-traditional pole. Traditional poles are centred on States with global geo-strategic capability. The three poles are the USA, China, and Russia (in that order of capability). The non-traditional pole is a non-state entity which is a religion—Islam. It has become the fourth power centre, albeit amorphous, intangible and unstable. Transcending national boundaries, fundamentalist adherents of Islam with a vision of Islamic resurgence have created instability in the world-leveraging

the concept of "Ummah"[4], undermining the concept of a 'State'. Interests of USA-China-Russia are in conflict and all of them have varying degrees of friction with the fourth pole. This environment is leading to paradigm shifts in alignment as there is uncertainty, as to which pole will best serve a nation's interests. A diffuse alignment of India with the USA had developed, which is a break from the traditional India-Russia(USSR) alignment as well as India's policy of strategic autonomy. Terrorism, catalysed by Islam and globalisation (which undermines the concept of borders), is placing stress on secular societies like that of India leading to polarisation of the population and an upsurge of ultra-nationalism.

Regional

In India's neighborhood, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Myanmar are all in some form or the other impacted by militant Islam. In Afghanistan, the fundamentalist Taliban have re-emerged as the strongest and largest armed group pursuing distinct military as well as political objectives. Any future government in Afghanistan sans the Taliban is difficult. As far as Pakistan's proxy war in Kashmir is concerned, it will continue to be encouraged as its advantages continue to outweigh its disadvantages.

Internal

Militarily significant areas of unrest in India are in Jammu & Kashmir (J&K), the North East (NE) and in the Left Wing Extremism (LWE) afflicted areas. The militancy here is characterised by communist, Islamist and separatist origins. Many of these are in the grey zone of insurgency, crime, narco-terrorism and extortion. Incidents in these regions while posing no existential threat to the country do adversely affect public order and India's quest for prosperity. Each foundational philosophy gives terrorism spawned by it, varying characteristics; one template does not fit combating all shade of terrorism/insurgency. With rapid urbanisation[5] in India, counter insurgency operations or proxy wars by Pakistan will be increasingly city centric.

Summarising the Security Environment

The U.S. drawdown from Afghanistan affects India's security in that it creates condition for a return of the Taliban, freeing Pakistani security concerns on its Western borders and enabling it to ratchet violence in J&K. Cooperation with China on the economic front will not stop competition at the strategic level as India and USA find many commonalities in security interests. Russian strategy will be guided by its limitations as a third-tier hegemon trying to stitch alliances with regional powers when confronting a potentially cooperative second tier hegemon and a potentially uncooperative prime hegemon. In such a security environment while military muscle flexing to deter war will be required, it is the spectre of hybrid war[6] that will pose the greater threat, as the cocktail of militant Islam and proxy war permeates across the borders into India. This will need detailed situational awareness to counteract, because with the growth of urban agglomerations, counter-terrorism will require specialised and specific operational and strategic intelligence.

> The present 'new world order' can be called a multipolar world with three traditional poles and one non-traditional pole. Traditional poles are centered on States with global geo-strategic capability. The three poles are USA, China, and Russia (in that order of capability). The non-traditional pole is a non-state entity which is a religion—Islam. It has become the fourth power centre, albeit amorphous, intangible and unstable. Transcending national boundaries, fundamentalist adherents of Islam with a vision of Islamic resurgence have created instability in the world-leveraging the concept of "Ummah"

The Nature of War in India's Environment

India's conventional war capability has to be structured to fight against China and/or Pakistan. Both are neighbours with which India has longstanding unresolved disputes. Both are also nuclear weapon armed nations, as is India. In such a situation enemies avoid wars and not without reason. This is because at a stage where one country begins to lose a

conventional war, there is a very high likelihood that nuclear weapons will be used. Resultantly nuclear weapon armed enemies fight proxy wars and hybrid wars. That has been the reality in every confrontation between nuclear weapon armed states. USA-USSR/Russia, USA-China and now India-Pakistan.

Two other drivers of irregular wars are conflict between a strong nuclear/non-nuclear state and a weak state, and internal wars fought because of religion/ethnicity/ideology. In the first case the weaker state takes recourse to irregular war (terrorism/non-state actors) to maintain deniability and hence avoid a conventional war, which it is certain it will lose. The obvious examples of the second case are Islamic militancy transcending national boundaries and intra religion conflict (Shia-Sunni conflict); conflicts such as in Sri Lanka or by nationalities like Kurds, Pasthuns, Baluchs etc. who have been divided by political boundaries, and lastly conflicts between communism and capitalism, presently confined to Korea and Taiwan.

The military historian and journalist John Keegan researching the usefulness of intelligence in war has written "[d]ecision in war is always the result of a fight and in combat willpower counts more than foreknowledge"[7] His book supports his argument by examples of conventional war from Gaugamela in 331 BC to Iwojima in 1945. His thesis is that intelligence is a secondary factor in war. However, Keegan is talking about the role of intelligence in conventional war and not in unconventional war-the present dominant form of war. It is keeping in view this environment that the Chinese have given importance to intelligence based operations through the concept of informatisation. Although the notion of "informatisation" itself is infamously amorphous, this concept alludes to the comprehensive integration of information technology into the PLA to improve its ability to utilise information.[8] The importance Pakistan gives to its intelligence arm is evident from an analysis of the awards given to the Indian and Pakistani servicemen on their respective Independence Days in 2018.[9] The marked preponderance of awards given by Pakistan to its military intelligence personnel is an indicator of the primacy it gives to intelligence. In the exercise to optimise Indian Army one must recognise the importance of intelligence as a war winning factor in the present unconventional war environment.

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Unconventional war has the following defining characteristics:

➢ War by proxies.

➢ Use of terrorism as a tactic.

➢ War not at the borders but in the hinterland.

➢ The preferred operating environment are urban jungles.

➢ Random strikes by the aggressor hiding within the population; precise counteraction by the defender.

➢ Civilians are on the new frontline. Measures to minimise collateral damage to civilians and civilian infrastructure to prevent alienation.

Optimisation of India's Military for Future Wars

If intelligence based operations are the new norm, what should one do to dominate militarily in this environment? The best intelligence comes from specialisation. One requires restructuring the Human Resource (HR) policies so that

area specialists both in the intelligence and the operational field can be built and groomed. The wars India confront require excellent human intelligence besides technical intelligence, and top-class intelligence analysts to sift through the mountains of information from multiple sources. Procurement will have to be focussed towards equipment which aids intelligence acquisition and precise targeting. The intelligence will then be provided to Special Forces (SF) or small teams equipped with the wherewithal to execute intelligence driven operations. The Indian Army like most armies has given primacy to operations. This was a sine-quo-non in warfare where only force prevails. It translates into officers in the operational career field having greater upward mobility, of operational billets attracting better talent and the 'executive' of the military being from the core operational field. The core operational career fields are those where weapons are fired (e.g. Infantry, Armoured Corps and Artillery in the Army, Fighter Pilot stream in the IAF and those parts of the Executive Branch in the Navy who handle weapons, related equipment's and platforms). Winning in the present operational environment requires situational awareness and mental and physical agility rather than brute force alone. It is pointless to have accurate weapons without knowing when, where and whom to target. Indian military doctrine is based on preventing conventional wars through deterrence and winning unconventional wars. The deterrence works in the first case evidenced by the fact that there has been no conventional war in the past 47 years. India's inability to win unconventional wars is evidenced by protracted insurgencies in J&K and NE India. India need to build up the ability of her military to launch intelligence based operations. It is such operations and not destructive firepower which builds deterrence to unconventional war. Therefore one needs to:

> Winning in the present operational environment requires situational awareness and mental and physical agility rather than brute force alone. It is pointless to have accurate weapons without knowing when, where and whom to target.

➢ Reshape India's Human Resource Development (HRD) policies to emphasise primacy to Intelligence operations and to the human resources being provided to the Intelligence speciality and field.

➢ Bring service in the Intelligence speciality at par with the Operations speciality in the path to promotion.

➢ Define and identify the right quality of manpower for intelligence operations.

➢ Shift focus towards acquisition of better intelligence generation technologies rather than better target destruction technologies.

Armies learn from each other's best practises. The Germans learnt mobile operations from the British, the Chinese learnt network-centric operations and theatre commands from the USA. India picked up the concept of canal defences and Recce & Support battalions from the Pakistanis and the Pakistanis learnt the utility of Strike Corps and Army Commands and the efficacy of border fencing, which they are doing on their Western border. Therefore, India should have no hesitation of picking up the stress to intelligence operations from the Pakistanis with structures like the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) and Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR). The structures themselves are not as relevant as the manner of managing the human resources for these structures.

This article recommends a paradigm shift in the Indian Army's thinking from being an operations-oriented Army to an intelligence-oriented Army. This requires no government sanction or intervention. It requires the Army to change its mind-set. It requires a change in the HR management policies. The best and brightest officers will require to be posted to the Intelligence Corps and intelligence staff appointments.[10] The promotion policies will have to be changed to give credit to those operating in intelligence field. Military's obsession with security and the 'traditional military' should not stop one from formulating personnel policies which can enable us to utilise the huge pool of world class, technically savvy youth on a contract basis. They could provide the military with the ability to generate quality intelligence for both 'hard' and 'soft' operations.

Conclusion

Deterrence has its own place especially between nuclear weapon armed states in conventional war. It is a step in the escalation ladder in war. Without conventional deterrence, conflict will ratchet from normal inter-state completion to nuclear war without any cushion in between. Effective deterrence pushes war into the unconventional sphere, to proxy and hybrid wars. If such wars are to be fought then intelligence acquires a dominant role. Pakistan has learnt this long ago when it realised the futility of trying to be conventionally equivalent or superior to India. It nuclearised to achieve deterrence to conventional war. To win in the unconventional sphere it gave primacy to intelligence as is evidenced by Pakistan's primacy to the ISI, ISPR, Military Intelligence and the proxy *Jehadi* soldier. Present and future wars will have to be fought by relatively smaller, and mobile units with versatile equipment offering precise targeting because they will be fought amidst the population in urban environments. The key element in this kind of war is intelligence. An often repeated lament is that the Pakistan supported and spawned proxy war in India has stymied India's deterrence. The normal reaction to fight this war is to ask for more money, more men and more contemporary weapons. The new normal should emerge from the realisation that military needs to recalibrate her own thinking and give primacy to intelligence. It is a cause of worry that while the military threat to India has changed in fundamental ways, one has not adjusted the policies to the new realities. Military is still doing what was good for them decades ago and feel frustrated when this does not lead to the desired outcomes.

> **This article recommends a paradigm shift in the Indian Army's thinking from being an operations-oriented Army to an intelligence-oriented Army. This requires no government sanction or intervention. It requires the Army to change its mind-set. It requires a change in the HR management policies. The best and brightest officers will require to be posted to the Intelligence Corps and intelligence staff appointments.**

Endnotes

1   John Keegan, *Intelligence in War*(London : Hutchinson, 2003), 205.

2   Gurmeet Kanwal, "Transform The Army Into One That Can Deter War Or Be Ready To Fight It,"*Hindustan Times*, Nov 24, 2018, accessed 18 Dec 2018 from https://www.hindustantimes.com/analysis/transform-the-army-into-one-that-can-deter-war-or-be-ready-to-fight-it/story-iLy0SIe1PBgFHTtGbVOZ4O.html

3   Paul .K. Davis, "Military Transformation? Which Transformation, and What Lies ahead?", *RAND*, 2010, accessed 08 Dec 2018 from https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/reprints/2010/RAND_RP1413.pdf

4   Muslim community. A fundamental concept in Islam, expressing the essential unity and theoretical equality of Muslims from diverse cultural and geographical settings. *Oxford Islamic Studies Online.*Accessed Jan 30, 2019 from http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t125/e2427

5   India's urban population will soarto 590 million in 2030. It took India nearly 40 years (between 1971 and 2008) for the urban population to rise by nearly 230 million. It will take only half the time to add the next 250 million.ShirishSankhe et al. "India's urban awakening: Building inclusive cities, sustaining economic growth", *McKinsey Global Institute*, accessed Jan 28, 2019 from https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/urbanization/urban-awakening-in-india

6   Warfare employing regular (conventional), irregular (insurgency and terrorism) and cyber (information technology based psychological, disinformation and disruption attacks) means.

7   Keegan, 28.

8   Elsa Kania and John Costello, "China's Quest for Informatization Drives PLA Reforms," March 04, 2017, *The Diplomat,*accessed 08 Jan 2019 from https://thediplomat.com/2017/03/chinas-quest-for-informatization-drives-pla-reforms/

9   Of the 505 Indian army awardees only 16 (3%) were from the Intelligence Corps. In the Pakistani Army of the total 451 awards 60 (or 13%) awardees were from the Intelligence Corps. These included one Colonel and one Junior Commissioned Officer (JCO) who were the recipients of the highest awards given, the Sitara-i- Basalat, both given the award posthumously. Of the 60 Intelligence Corps awards only 23 were COAS CC.

10   In the Indian Army the Military Operations Directorate has traditionally received the best and brightest officers, followed by the Military Secretary's Branch. The latter is on account of the unstated requirement of having HR management officers who are unaffected by organisational pressures for unbiased functioning.

Towards Enhancing India's Aerospace Capability

Air Cmde (Dr) Ashminder Singh Bahal, VM (Retd)[@]

Abstract

The Indian Air Force (IAF) is the fourth largest Air Force in the world and faces two formidable aerospace forces, People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) and Pakistan Air Force (PAF). PLAAF views stealth technology as a core capability and is developing its own fifth-generation fighter, the J-XX and the S-37A. The number of fighter aircraft in the IAF, meanwhile, has decreased from the late 1990s, due to withdrawal of older aircraft and also due to accidents. The IAF has a current strength of 31 combat squadrons. To resolve the issue of diminishing air power assets, an appropriate mix of force multipliers, upgrades and new acquisitions are necessary. An ideal fighter strength combination could have a mix of medium and high technology and this could include 14 Su-30 MKI, four Rafale, four stealth/ Fifth Generation Fighter Aircrafts (FGEA), two upgraded Mir-2000, eight Light Combat Aircraft (LCA), four upgraded Jaguar and two upgraded Mig-29 squadrons. To supplement aircraft numbers, force multipliers such as Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicles (UCAVs) could be a cost-effective option and IAF should go for the urgent purchase of six squadrons of stealthy UCAV by the time FIFA technology differential is reduced with PLAAF. The force structure could include progressively moving towards 39.5 fighter squadrons by 2030 and a 42 squadron Air Force by 2040. This would help the IAF to achieve regional capability by 2030 and area capability by 2040, yet provide adequate operational deterrence with respect to PAF and PLAAF.

Introduction

On 08 Oct 1932, IAF was formed and during World War II, the strength of IAF was increased from one to nine fighter squadrons. It was after the 1962 war, that force levels and capabilities of the IAF were significantly enhanced. IAF played a crucial role in the 1965, 1971 and the Kargil war and the only war in which it was not offensively utilised (1962 Sino-India conflict), India lost. IAF has developed into a potent force with the induction of a wide variety of fighters, transport aircraft and helicopters. Though the IAF's qualitative capability has been significantly enhanced, its combat strength has declined to around 31 squadrons. IAF has sent a proposal to the Ministry of Defence (MoD) to increase its sanctioned fighter strength from 39.5 to 45 squadrons[1]. India is sandwiched between two hostile neighbours who possess strong aerospace capabilities. Commensurate with India's growing economic capability, India's strategic boundaries have been redefined. In future, it may be required to contain regional conflicts and to prevent unscrupulous exploitation of the Indian Ocean region. This requires the IAF to enhance its Aerospace capabilities to meet its strategic responsibilities.

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Airpower to Aerospace Power

The transition from air power to aerospace power came in the mid twentieth century. Space assets provide significant enhancement to overall war fighting capabilities. Military organisations today depend heavily on Space for intelligence, communications, meteorological information, navigation aids and early warning. The offensive capability of air power has been significantly enhanced by integrating it with Space based assets. Aerospace power with its unique ability to attack the enemy's crucial vulnerabilities in depth with precision creates possibilities to achieve quick strategic success. This enhanced aerospace capability assumes significance in a nuclear environment where territorial violations become difficult to prosecute. It therefore, becomes imperative that IAF's capability needs to be enhanced by synergizing it with space-based applications to transform it into an Aerospace Power that has extended reach.

21st Century Drivers

In the twenty-first century, the drivers that affect wars are demographics, politico-economic challenges, environmental and water issues, strategic location and effect of technology[2]. The role played by the non-state actors' has resulted in asymmetric warfare being the preferred form of conflict. This could result in increased convergence of the Western and other nations to combat this menace together. A volatile situation is also created by the rapidly increasing Chinese power and its aggressive involvement in global affairs, its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), nuclearisation of the Korean subcontinent and pulling out of the U.S. from the Iran nuclear agreement. This geo-political environment brings in its own dynamics as nations collate strengths to contain China in the Indo-Pacific region.

Whilst aerospace technologies have moved from Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) towards UCAVs to smart drones that have the ability to locate, identify and destroy targets[3], the future scenario could include large number of small low observable drones swarming adversary's air space to saturate air defences and simultaneously cause significant damage to a number of geographically dispersed high-value target systems. The UCAVs may obviate the need to employ highly expensive manned aircraft. This implies that slowly a shift is taking place from manned aircraft to highly smart UCAVs that saturate defences, yet, are significantly potent in destroying well defended targets with precision. China has progressed extensively in developing stealth UCAVs and India is also developing AURA stealth UCAV, but its pace is slow.

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21st Century Aerospace Levers of the Region

PLAAF and IAF

There are two regional Air Forces that make a significant impact on India's Aerospace capability; PLAAF and PAF. PLAAF is the third largest Air Force in the world. Current estimates peg the number of fourth-generation aircraft in PLAAF to be between 700-800, including J-10s, J-11s, Su-27s and the Su-30 MKK fighters, which are comparable to IAF's Su-30 MKI. By 2022, PLAAF is expected to field around 1000 4th/5th generation fighters[4]. PLAAF's modernisation drive has resulted in overall reduction of aircraft but with a concurrent increase in the quality of its fleet.

PLAAF views stealth as a key technology to transform from a territorial Air Force to one that has global reach. It is developing J-XX and the S-37A fighters, as a counter to the Western stealth fighters such as the F-22 Raptor[5]. Induction of J-20A low observable aircraft gives China the ability to carry out strikes deep inside India[6]. India's FGFA development with Russia, however, has received a critical setback. This increases China's stealth technological differential, which would result in significantly enhancing their combat edge over the IAF. If this stealth differential

is not reduced, any conflict with China post - 2025 could result in another humiliating loss like the 1962 war. The short term goal of PLAAF is to develop a fourth-generation Air Force by 2030 and the long term (2049) is global reach through aerospace dominance.

PLAAF's modernisation drive increases the qualitative asymmetry with IAF from 2020-2025 as majority of its projects bear fruit. It is also likely to have significant superiority in terms of fourth/fifth generation aircraft (J-10, JF-17, J-11, J-20 and Su-27/30 fighters), Directed Energy Weapons, space based assets, anti-satellite weapons, network-centric warfare, Airborne Warning and Control Systems (AWACS) and strategic air lift assets. This implies that by 2025, PLAAF would be able to field around 1300 modern aircraft, thereby; having significant combat edge besides the overwhelming lead it has in stealth, nuclear and ballistic missile fields. Another crucial strength of PLAAF lies in its dense long-range air defence (AD) network[7]. Development of 16 airfields close to Sino-India border facilitates rapid force mobilisation and may render the natural Himalayan barrier ineffective[8].

Aerospace capabilities of China have enhanced significantly and its strategic plans include establishing space-based stations, manufacturing reusable space shuttles and developing potent anti-satellite capability. China's satellite navigation system (Bideou) is operational since December 2011[9]. These abilities are complemented by a robust surface to surface cruise and ballistic missile forces. Since 1990s, the missile force has grown in size and sophistication and China has developed a potent doctrine for its employment that plays an important role in deterrence and warfighting[10]. In 2017, China unveiled DF-31AG Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBMs), which feature greater mobility and is developing DF-41, a road mobile ICBM capable of carrying Multiple Independently Targetable Re-Entry Vehicles (MIRVs) and hypersonic glide vehicles for strategic deterrence[11]. It is gradually building such integration that exploits missile forces as a key offensive arm that paralyses the functioning of the adversary's combat potential from long ranges. This implies that China has the potential to strike at any Indian asset accurately with limited warning.

> China has the ability to target satellites operating in Low Earth Orbit (LEO), but is developing capability to target Medium Earth Orbit (MEO) and High Earth Orbit (HEO) satellites. MEO, has the Global Positioning System (GPS) satellites and at HEO are communication satellites. China's ability of targeting LEO satellites implies that reconnaissance satellites would be under severe risk and there would be a need to keep a number of satellites ready to launch at short notice, including mini and micro satellites as well as develop anti-satellite technology quickly.

China has developed a comprehensive array of counter-space weapons including ground-launched Anti-Satellite (ASAT) missiles, directed energy weapons, satellite jammers, computer network operations and co-orbital ASAT systems[12]. ASAT weapon was first tested in Jan 2007 and in May 2013; China tested a rocket for over 10,000 kilometers indicating that the rocket could be designed as an anti-satellite weapon. It has experimented with green and blue laser weapons and US military has accused China of firing laser beams at their satellites (laser pulses can disrupt/destroy satellite communication)[13]. This implies that not only China has the ability to target satellites operating in Low Earth Orbit (LEO), but is developing capability to target Medium Earth Orbit (MEO) and High Earth Orbit (HEO) satellites. MEO, has the Global Positioning System (GPS) satellites and at HEO are communication satellites. China's ability of targeting LEO satellites implies that reconnaissance satellites would be under severe risk and there would be a need to keep a number of satellites ready to launch at short notice, including mini and micro satellites as well as develop anti-satellite technology quickly.

India's stated policy of 'No First Use' and sandwiched between China and Pakistan, if there is any country that needs Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) it is India[14]. India is currently developing a two tier BMD system capable of tracking and destroying incoming missiles; inside (endo) and outside (exo-atmospheric)[15] modes. The system comprises long-range radars picking up incoming missiles approx 600km away, a C3I system and an interceptor surface-to-air missile[16]. The first test of Atmosphere Intercept System (AIS) was carried out at an altitude of 40-50 km; this system

is similar to Arrow-2 BMD[17]. In Dec 2007, an endo-atmospheric interceptor successfully intercepted a Prithvi Missile at 15km altitude; akin to the PAC-3 system. Interception of missiles have been carried out both in exo-atmospheric and endo-atmospheric modes and using Prithvi Air Defence (PAD) interceptor at 75 km altitude indicates that India could engage Intermediate Range Ballistic Missiles (IRBM). In Phase-I, capability to intercept IRBMs was tested and in Phase-II, the BMD system would tackle 5000 km range missiles. However, these systems are still a distance away from operational deployment.

PLA is likely to use War Zone Campaign (WZC) concept between the theatre and the operational level. It would be based on joint operations coordinated under a single integrated HQ. It aims to achieve political solution at each stage of war with political and military solution in the last stage. It utilises selected pockets of excellence to create asymmetry in time and space[18]. PLAAF has adopted "light front, heavy rear" approach, thereby emphasising fast aggressive attacks with strong air defence. This implies that rear bases would be utilised to launch offensive missions and forward air bases for refueling and rearming. PLAAF capabilities and doctrine have also been developed for Anti-Access/Area-Denial (A2AD) strategy[19].

China's tools for asymmetric warfare include niche technologies to create out of proportion effect, such as cyber warfare, anti-satellite weapons, lasers, UCAVs, stealth, ballistic and cruise missile technologies and refinement of anti-ship ballistic missiles to target aircraft carriers to promote anti-access area denial strategy. It is here that the asymmetric effect caused by such technologies would play an important role in the prosecution of wars. Time has come for India to take urgent steps to ensure that our Research and Development organisations become accountable in quickly developing niche technologies. Currently, they are pygmies in front of Chinese research organisations; heavily shielded by successive governments.

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Indian Defense Research and Development Laboratory's Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle is aimed to attain Mach 6.5 speed at 32.5 km altitude. In the missile field, Shaurya is a hypersonic surface to surface tactical missile, developed by Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO), with a range between 750 to 1,900 km, capable of carrying a payload of one ton of conventional/nuclear warhead and has been successfully tested three times. India is developing Brahmos-2K (around 600km range) and it is likely to be fielded around 2022-24[20]. Yet, our defense research is proceeding at snail's pace and there is an urgent need to completely overhaul their functioning.

PAF Capabilities

PAF for its first three decades of existence enjoyed superiority in technology, tactics and training over the IAF due to its close linkages with the US[21] and the Western countries. Later, due to its involvement in supporting terror activities, its modernisation process got delayed. In the last decade, it has again picked up with PAF upgrading its fighter aircraft under different projects, such as Mirage ROSE-I to incorporate Beyond Visual Range (BVR) missiles on 33 Mirage III aircraft and Mirage ROSE-III to upgrade 34 Mirage-V fighters to execute surgical strikes using long-range weapons during day/night. Pakistan commenced manufacturing 250 JF-17 fighters indigenously with Chinese assistance to replace the ageing F-7 PG/MG aircraft. PAF has also received 12 S-70 Super Cobra US helicopters. PAF's current reported strength is around 400 combat capable aircraft including upgraded 60 F-7 PG/MG, 150 upgraded Mirage III/V, 75 F-16 fighters and 100 JF-17 aircraft.

PAF has six squadrons of JF-17 aircraft and the first batch of 50 JF-17s is equipped with Chinese/Pakistani avionics and missiles, which will be upgraded with advanced radars and weapon systems. France has offered its RC-400 radar and MBDA MICA missiles. JF-17 would be its mainstay fighter till 2035. Pakistan has acquired six Saab-2000 aircraft equipped with Erieye Airborne Early Warning (AEW) system (four in service). In 2008, China and Pakistan signed an agreement for joint development of ZDK-03 AWACS[22] and currently, PAF has four such aircraft. It is also acquiring Chinese FT 2000 long-range missiles to deter Indian AWACS. Pakistan has four IL-78 based Air to Air Refueling aircraft[23] and is acquiring 10 batteries of SPADA 2000 (ground based air defence missile system)to provide integrated air defence.

Upgradation of F-16s, acquisition of F-16C/D Block 50/52 fighters and AWACS/AEW aircraft, as well as new weapons and sensor systems, give PAF enhanced BVR, EW and night attack capability. PAF's combat potential has therefore, been significantly enhanced. IAF is losing its qualitative edge with PLAAF and PAF and the IAF may get into numerical parity with PAF because of our failure to induct new systems in time and in sufficient quantities; this will start becoming critical by 2025 as a number of MiG 21s, MiG 27s and part of Jaguar fleet is phased out without finding replacements in sufficient quantities[24].

A comparison between the two Air Forces reveals that the IAF scores over PAF in terms of personnel (approx. 2.6:1) and in terms of fighters (1.6:1). Currently, the ratio is high when it comes to modern technology aircraft, of which the Indian Su-30 MKI and the Mirage 2000 provide long-range strike capabilities. The IAF has a better BVR capability, a larger stock of specialist precision weapons, unmatched strategic reconnaissance capability, better potent terminal defences, a much superior air-lift capability and above all strategic depth.

PAF has acquired Advanced Medium Range Air to Air Missiles (AMRAAMs), however, the Indian aircraft with BVRs are likely to have the ability to engage PAF aircraft at medium/long ranges, whilst operating under AWACS/Aerostat cover. This gives IAF effective air superiority over the battlefield. As compared to Pakistan's AWACS aircraft, the Indian Phalcon is much better, as it provides tactical surveillance of airborne and surface targets and helps gather signals intelligence with tracking ranges being around 400 km[25]. The number of IAF AWACS aircraft is less and PAF has a better pilot to aircraft ratio, meaning it could sustain a greater sortie generation rate over a protracted conflict[26].

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Whilst the IAF could sustain losses to SAM's at low/medium altitudes, Pakistan will suffer serious losses at all altitudes, whilst executing deep strike missions. IAF has the flexibility to operate in airfields located in depth. Pakistan doesn't have strategic depth to safeguard its crucial vulnerabilities. It is this weakness, if exploited correctly, can give significant gains, especially in tackling Pakistan's AEW and LRMP aircraft and attacking crucial nodes. Furthermore, India has superior satellite reconnaissance capability, which could lead to information dominance that would turn out to be a major force multiplier in any tactical situation.

In terms of ballistic/cruise missiles, the maximum range achieved by Agni-2/3 is between 3000-5000 km. The maximum range of Hatf-V/Gauri is around3000 km and both Hatf and Agni missiles are nuclear capable. India's BrahMos is the fastest cruise missile at Mach 2.5 and its speed and range are now being extended. It has been successfully tested for aerial launch on Su-30 MKI aircraft. Pakistan's Babur cruise missile has a range of 700 km with a maximum speed of 880 km/h. Pakistan has large numbers of different types of ballistic/cruise missiles and it is this capability that they would exploit in any future conflict. IAF, therefore, needs to procure BMD systems on urgent priority to neutralise

this threat. IAF has serious deficiencies in terms of air defence, BMD, anti-satellite capability and secure networked environment. Above all, lack of integration in war fighting strategy and command and control structures between the three Services could prove to be the bane in any future conflict. Added to this is the rapidly depleting fighter squadron strength with limited replacements in sight till 2025.

Indian Air Force Modernisation Plan

Indian Air Force is the fourth largest Air Force and has a strength of 1820 active aircraft[27] that includes 680 combat aircraft and 305 helicopters[28]. It has a mix of British, French, American and Russian origin aircraft[29]; this multiplicity causes a logistics nightmare for sourcing spares and maintenance support. IAF has an effective strength of 31 fighter squadrons, which include eleven Su-30MKI, three MiG-29, three Mirage 2000, six Jaguar, six MiG-21 Bison and two upgraded MiG-27 squadrons along with half squadron with 'Tactics and Air Combat Development Establishment'[30]. Under implementation is Long Term Integrated Perspective Plan (LTIPP) 2012-17 to acquire cutting edge technology[31].

The number of fighters has decreased due to withdrawal of obsolete aircraft and due to accidents. To deal with the depleting force levels, IAF has prepared a 10-year modernisation plan that identifies technologies and services needed and has shared it with the private sector, but, just 10-15 percent of the over Rs 2.5 lakh crore projected acquisitions are expected to be from domestic manufacturers[32]. IAF is procuring 36 Rafale fighter jets and S-400 missile system to enhance IAF's capability[33]. The acquisition of 36 Rafale fighters helps, but the number is far too less to provide an answer to defending India's vast air space. Though, MiG-21, MiG-27 and Jaguar aircraft have been upgraded and Mirage-2000, AN-32 and MiG-29 aircraft are being upgraded[34], IAF plans to revamp 118 Jaguar fighters with new engines and airframes from overseas grounded aircraft; the effort speeds the upgrade with new avionics, communication, active electronically scanned array radars and airborne weapon systems and gives the fleet additional operational life of 20 years[35]. IAF is currently undertaking upgrade of Mi-8, Mi-17 and Mi-17-IV medium lift helicopters, 40 Su-30MKIs to carry BrahMos cruise missile and Mirage 2000H to Mirage 2000-5 Mk 2 variant with new radar, weapons suite, missiles and electronic warfare systems. The deal for the joint development of FGFA, Sukhoi T-50, however, is floundering. To fill the gap, the Request for Information to procure 110 fighter aircraft was made in Apr 2018. 15 percent aircraft will come in flyaway condition and the remaining 85 percent to be made in India by a Strategic Partner/Indian Production Agency[36]. Since it is a fourth generation single engine fighter, it would be in direct competition with the indigenous Light Combat Aircraft (LCA). There seems to be a dichotomy here, the requirement is for a stealthy fighter and that is not being met, whilst IAF is trying to procure another competitor to LCA in large numbers thereby still remaining within medium technology regime and not going to the Fifth Generation stage. This would put IAF in a significantly disadvantageous position with respect to PLAAF by 2025.

> **Pakistan has 20 squadrons "that can be brought to bear against us" while China has approximately 1,700 fighter aircraft, 800 of them fourth generation; there is therefore an urgent need to enhance India's Aerospace capability.**

LCA's basic version entered service in 2016 and with a total order of 40 jets, IAF is looking for 83 of improved version, Mk.1A. The stipulation is that an order would only be placed if the improved LCA, which features a more powerful engine, radar, electronic warfare and avionics suite, meets the expectations of the IAF. The decrease in IAF's fighter squadron strength from 39 ½ to of 31 squadrons was offset by the IAF's Su-30 induction that arrested the down slide, but the problem is that IAF's retirement rate far outstrips its intake rate of new aircraft[37]. Three squadrons of MiG 21 and MiG 27 fighters are being phased out as IAF focuses on cannibalisation to keep the serviceability rate high whilst three squadrons of Su-30 fighter aircraft are expected to join service by 2025[38]. However, six squadrons of MiG-21 Bison, some Jaguars and two MiG-27 squadrons will be phased out by 2025-27 and if no new aircraft are ordered, then IAF may be left with only 30 combat squadrons[39]. Pakistan has 20 squadrons "that can be brought to bear against us" while China has approximately 1,700 fighter aircraft, 800 of them fourth generation[40]; there is therefore an urgent need to enhance India's Aerospace capability.

Funds Requirement to Meet Enhanced Capability Requirements

It takes around $5 billion to establish a fighter squadron, inclusive of 18 aircraft, weapons and supporting equipment. For a 'Two Front War', IAF needs a minimum strength of 42 squadrons, however, even if the fighter squadron strength is kept at 39.5 squadrons, IAF still needs around 10 squadrons by 2025-27 and the cost comes to nearly $50 billion[41]. On the horizon are only three squadrons of Su-30 MKI and two Rafale squadrons with LCA still not fully operational. Since the Mig-21 (Bison), Mig-27 and Mig-29 aircraft need replacement from 2022; it becomes imperative that the IAF's rapid acquisition plan needs to be put in place today. The second key problem is the FGFA project, since IAF currently has no match for the J-20 stealth fighter, the FGFA project needs to be revived or procurement/co-development of stealth aircraft initiated, even if it implies that India funds major portion of the project. The options available with IAF to arrest its depleting strength are to acquire systems off the shelf, undertake up-gradations and life extension of the existing aircraft and equipment and lastly procure systems that provide force multiplication effect, thereby reducing the overall requirement for numbers.

The Way Forward

The option for indigenous development requires scientific/technical manpower, infrastructure, finance and time. This may not be possible in the time frame in which all the systems desired need to be made available. Complete procurement from abroad goes well beyond the likely available budget allocations (around $300bn is required), besides remaining completely dependent on the countries providing these equipment. Therefore, only certain percentage of aircraft, technology and systems can be acquired off the shelf. The option of upgrading and giving life extension to the existing aircraft, equipment and systems though cost effective may not provide IAF with the requisite deterrence potential as it does not cater to the current deficiencies and future losses/retirements and hence certain amount of new acquisitions would be required periodically once the current systems/

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equipment become obsolete. Furthermore, all contemporary aircraft, equipment and systems would need periodic upgradations as they age. The force multipliers significantly enhance combat potential, but their non-availability would severely degrade the offensive/defensive capability, hence, redundancy is required with other systems or in the total numbers of force multipliers procured.

China's J-20 fighter poses considerable challenge to India because the IAF's existing Su-30, MiG-29, Bison and Mirage fighters would not match up to it. India needs to advance the FGFA program and instead of going for more single/multi-engine fighter aircraft there is a need to procure less numbers but appropriate stealth fighters such as contemporary F-22/F-35 aircraft. Overall, they may prove to be more cost effective, if survivability is factored. If 36 Rafale aircraft are costing around $9-10 bn, then probably appropriate numbers of stealth fighters could be procured instead of 110 single/multi engine aircraft. This mix of numbers could be supplemented with additional LCA/Su-30 fighters/force multipliers. Focus, therefore, needs to be given on acquiring appropriate numbers of force multipliers (qualitative) to provide enhanced combat capability with lesser numbers.

The optimum force structure could include progressively moving towards 39.5 fighter squadrons by 2030 and 42 squadrons by 2040, acquiring AWACS/AAR aircraft, Heavy Lift/METAC transporters and adequate numbers of armed/attack and heavy lift helicopters whilst developing stealth capability/FGFA. Meanwhile, to plug the combat effectiveness degradation due to dwindling number of fighter squadrons, six squadrons of stealth UCAVs as force multipliers could be procured. This would help us cross the fifth generation hurdle without losing combat edge and

reach the sixth generation directly whilst simultaneously developing FGFA. An ideal combination could include 14 Su-30 MKI, four Rafale, four stealth/FGFA, two upgraded Mir-2000, eight LCA, four upgraded Jaguar and two upgraded Mig-29 squadrons by 2030. There should not be additional multiplicity of types to prevent getting into logistics nightmare. To supplement aircraft numbers, force multipliers such as UCAVs would be a cost effective option and IAF should go for urgent acquisition of six squadrons of stealth UCAVs.

Conclusion

IAF is the fourth largest Air Force and faces PLAAF and PAF. PLAAF views stealth technology as a core capability and is developing fifth-generation fighter; the J-XX and the S-37A. With J-20 operational, stealth technology differential has increased significantly in favour of PLAAF. The number of fighter aircraft in the IAF has decreased with current strength of 31 combat squadrons. To resolve the issue of diminishing air power, an appropriate mix of force multipliers, upgrades and new acquisitions are necessary. An ideal fighter strength combination could have a mix of 14 Su-30 MKI, four Rafale, four stealth/FGFA, two upgraded Mir-2000, eight LCA, four upgraded Jaguar and two upgraded Mig-29 squadrons. To supplement numbers, force multipliers such as UCAVs could be a cost-effective option and IAF should go for urgent procurement of six squadrons of stealth UCAVs. The force structure could progressively move towards 39.5 fighter squadrons by 2030 and a 42 squadron Air Force by 2040. This would help IAF to achieve regional capability by 2030 and area capability by 2040, yet provide adequate operational deterrence with respect to PAF and PLAAF.

> To plug the combat effectiveness degradation due to dwindling number of fighter squadrons, six squadrons of stealth UCAVs as force multipliers could be procured. This would help us cross the fifth generation hurdle without losing combat edge and reach the sixth generation directly whilst simultaneously developing FGFA

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Transformation of India as a Maritime Power

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Abstract

Oceans have been drivers of global economic growth and have influenced contemporary geo-politics through the ages. The challenges to a maritime construct are numerous and waters around India are no different. India today has an opportunity to capitalise on its maritime geography for transforming into a dominant maritime power for the well-being of its people and those of the littoral. The Indian Ocean is attracting undivided attention and emerging as the focus of geo-political interplay between the extant and emerging powers.

Historical Perspective

Ancient India had a rich tradition of shipbuilding and seafaring. Whilst traders and Buddhist missionaries sailed from Indian shores to distant lands to exchange merchandise and spread Indian culture, we were never muscular at sea; the only exception to a passive maritime policy being the reign of Rajendra Chola-I, who looked East with an expeditionary intent. During his brief rule from 1014 to 1044, he subjugated the Maldives, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Malaysia, South West Myanmar and influenced waters of the South China Sea. Dynasties with a pan-Indian footprint, which followed the Cholas remained pre-eminently continental in their outlook. Waters around the Indian peninsula were for everyone to exploit and no one enforced a maritime order at sea. There was a policy of live and let live with sailors from distant lands including China, using the monsoon winds to criss-cross the ocean for commerce and proselytizing coastal populations. The landing of Vasco da Gama in Calicut in 1498 was a watershed event in history as it set the stage for the aggrandizement of the contemporary maritime power - Portugal. The Portuguese wanted the waters for themselves and tax others for its use. An intense power struggle ensued between the Portuguese, home grown Admirals of Kunjali and Angre lineage, the Dutch and the British. The British Empire that drew power from its naval fleet emerged victorious and ruled the Indian peninsula till 1947.

Independent India inherited few small ships from the Royal Navy and started to lay the foundation for a strong Navy. Acquisition of 'hand me down ships' from Britain, a steadfast relationship with the Soviet/Russian Navy, and a concerted drive towards indigenisation has helped the Indian Navy emerge as the strongest in the region and amongst the most professional Navies of the World.

In recent times, Indian Government has articulated a strident maritime intent by announcing initiatives such as Security and Growth for All (SAGAR), 'Sagarmala' for improving hinterland connectivity, Project 'Mausam' for reviving historical linkages and an Act East policy to strengthen relations with Association of Southeast Asian Nations(ASEAN) and countries of the Western Pacific. Participation in the rejuvenated Quadrilateral Dialogue and an improved military relationship with the United States (U.S) is projecting India as a possible ally of the western countries for balancing

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China. Whilst a clearer picture is yet to emerge, India certainly is on course to improve its response to the waters around us as the Indian Ocean starts to become the focus of the new emerging oceanic economic order – The Indo-Pacific.

India's Maritime Might

India has a coastline of 7516 kms and an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of over two million square kms. Over 95 percent of India's trade by volume and 70 percent by value transits the sea lines of communication straddled by the Indian peninsula and flanked by the Lakshadweep and Andaman group of islands. The 12 major and over 200 minor ports handle around 1500 million metric tonnes of cargo. The mercantile fleet comprising 1200 ships handles 22 million tonnes of cargo and fishing fleet of over 2,50,000 fishing boats provides employment to nearly 20 million people. Oil and gas are tapped from India's EEZ and there are numerous opportunities to exploit the seas for sea bed mining, tidal, wind and thermal energy[1].

India's maritime forces- the Indian Navy and the Coast Guard are modern and capable forces, comprising indigenously designed state of the art warships and submarines. With a dedicated naval satellite in space, the footprint of networked operations, cover waters in our primary and secondary areas of interest.

It could well be argued that India is already a maritime power; a power that perhaps has not realised its full potential. It, therefore, becomes opportune to introspect and discuss next steps for India to make an impact and leave its footprints on the emerging maritime landscape.

India's Neighbourhood- The Indian Ocean

India's immediate maritime neighbourhood comprises the Indian Ocean littoral which is home to 39 percent of the world's population. Most of these states emerged from their colonial past as unindustrialised and impecunious. The first three countries in the fragile state's index 2018 have their coast lines in the Indian Ocean[2] Many others have severe handicaps in enforcing rule of the law in their waters. They are all becoming aware of an increasing maritime interconnectivity, a growing volume of sea trade, rise in non-traditional and traditional challenges, increase in jurisdiction at sea by way of claims on the continental shelf and the challenge of reaping benefits of the Blue Economy construct. They marvel at the China miracle and in their desire to improve marine infrastructure, are being attracted by the gravitational pull of easy Chinese money, only to be ensnared into debt traps. Increasing presence of the Chinese and other 'International Navies', to ostensibly guard Sea Lanes of Communication (SLOCs) and combat piracy, is turning the 'Ocean of Peace' into an arena of contestation. Smaller countries fear the simmering competition between big players and would prefer not to be forced into taking sides. They seek an equal status in a homegrown maritime order.

> Now, an ascendant economic and military power, China is as aggressive as their European colonisers and after agglomeration of the islands in the South China Sea, has set their sights on the Indian Ocean. Djibouti, Hambantota, Gwadar, Jiwani, Kyaukphyu and Maldives are all coming under Chinese influence.

The China Factor

It is a Chinese claim that throughout the nineteenth century, they have been coerced into signing unequal treaties, resulting in the loss of sovereignty of the island of Hongkong and forfeiture of control of their sea ports, during the century of humiliation. Now, an ascendant economic and military power, China is as aggressive as their European colonisers and after agglomeration of the islands in the South China Sea, has set their sights on the Indian Ocean. Djibouti, Hambantota, Gwadar, Jiwani, Kyaukphyu and Maldives are all coming under Chinese influence. Of particular significance is the Chinese military engagement with India's neighbours particularly Pakistan. Most countries in the neighbourhood are recipients of Chinese military hardware, which could increase their dependency on China, base Chinese maintenance teams on their territories and subject them to Chinese diktats. The China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), flagship project of the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is likely to result in the PLA Navy

getting based at India's doorstep –in Gwadar and Jiwani. Gwadar is one of the key nodes of CPEC and more than 1 bn USD worth of projects are to be developed around the port. India ought to be wary of this development as deteriorating financial situation could well result in a debt-ridden Pakistan losing sovereignty over this strategically located port[3].

Increasing Chinese presence and China-Pakistan nexus in particular, is a challenge which India would have to overcome in her pursuit of becoming a credible maritime power in the Indian Ocean.

Maritime Governance in Indian Ocean

Whilst we have a number of challenges and an amorphous maritime order, there are a number of platforms for improving maritime governance. Formal mechanisms include the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA-1997), Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS-2008), Gulf Cooperation Council (1981), South African Development Community(1980), Arab League (1945), India Brazil South Africa (2003), Djibouti Code of Conduct (2009), South Asia Association of Regional Cooperation (1985), Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (1997) etc. Countries are working hard to improve maritime cooperation – by way of bilateral and multilateral summits (First IORA summit on 05 Mar 2017 in Jakarta, World Ocean Summit in Bali on 22 Feb 2017 to discuss Blue Economy, Shangrila dialogue, Galle Dialogue, Indian Ocean Conference etc), exchange of arms and defence technologies, staff talks, port visits by warships, visits by service officers and joint naval exercises have proliferated. Numerous think tanks have sprung up and serve an important medium for Track 2 interactions. And yet there isn't as much improvement. Littorals of the Indian Ocean must introspect that whilst they were unable to evolve a governance structure in response to the threat of piracy, the U.S, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and European Union were able to orchestrate an effective response by a disparate group of more than 30 navies with diverse interests. A homegrown maritime order in the India Ocean has eluded thus far, perhaps because there is too much talk and not as much action.

> India needs to exhibit a strong resolve and enunciate an Indian Ocean strategy, a white paper to help the littoral countries perceive India's point of view. And China is a good example. Abandoning of the Trans-Pacific Partnership by the U.S. and the general perception of the U.S. turning inwards with an America First policy, emboldened China to release its first white paper on Asia Pacific Security Cooperation-2017.

Time for An Indian Ocean Strategy

India's Defence and External Affairs ministries' both publish Annual reports, highlighting the challenges and accomplishments during the year, but there is never a declaration of an intent/policy or an indication of what others may expect of India. India needs to exhibit a strong resolve and enunciate an Indian Ocean strategy, a white paper to help the littoral countries perceive India's point of view. And China is a good example. Abandoning of the Trans-Pacific Partnership by the U.S. and the general perception of the U.S. turning inwards with an America First policy, emboldened China to release its first white paper on Asia Pacific Security Cooperation-2017, wherein it makes a strong case for China to take a lead in defining security architectures in the Indo-Pacific and suggesting that smaller countries do not take sides and avoid a Cold War mentality. This decisive move is in line with the concluding remarks of President Xi Jinping at the 19th Party Congress of Communist Party of China (CPC) meeting on 18 Oct 2017[4] wherein he said:-

> *"The wheels of history will move on; the tides of the times are vast and mighty. History looks kindly on those with resolve, with drive and ambition, and with plenty of guts; it won't wait for the hesitant, the apathetic, or those shy of a challenge."*

As a rising economic and military power sitting on the high table, India must be willing to stick her neck out and provide persuasive and astute leadership that aims to aid maritime governance in the Indian Ocean. Declaration of intent way of propounding an Indian Ocean strategy is a prerequisite to assuming leadership.

Indian Navy-Need for Capacity Building

Speaking at the Shangrila Dialogue-2018, Prime Minister Narendra Modi emphasised that the Indian Navy was building partnerships for peace and security in the region[5]. The Navy has indeed done well to become the flagship of India's international maritime cooperation efforts to engage all India's maritime neighbours. It is formally mandated to be a net provider of maritime security to smaller countries in the Indian Ocean and lists 'constructive maritime engagement' as one of its missions in the Indian Naval Doctrine-2015[6]. We participate in joint exercises/coordinated patrols with the navies of USA, Russia, UK, France, South Africa, Singapore, China, Australia, Japan, Malaysia, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Maldives, Cambodia and South Korea. Staff talks are held regularly wherein, apart from ongoing initiatives, additional avenues for cooperation with other navies are also explored. Indian ships are deployed for EEZ surveillance missions in friendly countries that have a large EEZ but lack the wherewithal to patrol it. Indian Navy trains over 800 foreign personnel in her training institutions every year. The Navy is helping her maritime neighbours build capacities. Ships, aircraft, equipment and spares have been given *gratis* to several friendly countries. Indian survey ships are deployed regularly to other countries for carrying out hydrographic surveys in their waters. It has been unequivocally accepted that the Indian Navy is a dominant maritime force in the region and maritime security cooperation a key constituent of India's foreign policy. It was at the commissioning ceremony of the Indian built Mauritian Coast Guard Ship Barracuda, that our Prime minister articulated his vision of SAGAR and reiterated it in Visakhapatnam in Feb 2016, where over 100 ships from 50 countries had assembled for the second International Fleet Review of Independent India. Malabar, the Indo-US-Japan joint naval exercise has become a part of the strategic discourse. The Indian Navy has indeed become the face of India's maritime engagement in the Indian Ocean Region and beyond.

> Whilst the Indian Navy certainly has the wherewithal to influence events in the Indian Ocean, its capability to project power in the Western Pacific remains somewhat limited. Political indifference, excessive bureaucratic oversight and reduced budgetary allocations have resulted in capability gaps that will take some time to overcome.

Whilst the Indian Navy certainly has the wherewithal to influence events in the Indian Ocean, its capability to project power in the Western Pacific remains somewhat limited. Political indifference, excessive bureaucratic oversight and reduced budgetary allocations have resulted in capability gaps that will take some time to overcome. The share of the naval budget as a percentage of the Defence budget has declined from 18.21 percent in 2012 to 13.1 percent in 2018. There is an urgent need to address shortfalls in India's Naval orbat if India seeks to play any meaningful role in the Indo-Pacific. A strong Navy is the most important ingredient of maritime power.

Maritime Infrastructure Development

Countries of the Indian Ocean littoral look up to India for ameliorating their maritime capabilities by improving connectivity, modernising their ports, building capacities to safe guard their EEZ and implementation of measures for sustainable development of Blue Economy. Speaking at the Indian Ocean Conference in Vietnam in Aug 2018, the external affairs minister Ms Sushma Swaraj underscored the importance of connectivity and highlighted the Kaladan transport project leading to Sittwe port in Myanmar, the Trilateral Highway to Thailand, and the Chabahar port project in Iran as some of the initiatives taken by India[7]. However, India's engagement with her regional neighbours falls well short of what the Chinese have been able to achieve as India does not seem to have the economic wherewithal to walk the talk. It is rumoured that development of Hambantota port was first offered to India but was declined due to capacity constraints. The Asia-Africa Growth Corridor conceived in early 2016 was meant to rival China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) but has still to make an impact. Inspired by India's historical role as the focal point for trade in the Indian Ocean, Project 'Mausam' was to be the Indian government's most significant foreign policy initiative to re-establish India's ties with its ancient trade partners and re-establish an 'Indian Ocean World', stretching from east

Africa to Southeast Asia. During 2015-2018, an amount of Rs. 23,94,600/- has been utilised and the budget for the next two years is merely six crores[8]. Four years back, the government formally initiated the port led development initiative 'Sagarmala', a Rs 8.7 trillion project that would set up new mega ports, modernise existing ports, develop 14 Coastal Employment zones, enhance port connectivity via road, rail, multi-modal logistic parks, pipelines and waterways and boost coastal community development. Whilst the government claims to be able to complete the projects in half the envisaged time frame of ten years, only 1/5th of the listed projects are nearing completion[9].

Development of marine infrastructure, both at home and in our neighbourhood, must engage our urgent attention if India is to attain its ambitions of becoming a maritime power. We must be able to translate our good intentions into visible contributions on ground.

Maritime Security

A key priority of IORA was to ensure reliable, uninterrupted and safe movement of people, goods, energy and resource supplies throughout the Indian Ocean and address issues related to maritime safety and security. The organisation has paid little heed to this very important mandate. It was therefore not surprising that when Piracy erupted off Somalia, Djibouti Code of Conduct was conceptualised to counter the menace. Indeed, IORA's achievements so far have been modest and there is room for speedy reforms. Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Maldives, Myanmar are some of the important countries who are not members of IORA. An all-pervasive agreement for combating transnational non-traditional security challenges such as piracy, smuggling, maritime terrorism, illegal fishing, trafficking of humans and narcotics- which can be legally enforced merits early discussion by all members.

> **Development of marine infrastructure, both at home and in India's neighbourhood, must engage urgent attention if India is to attain its ambitions of becoming a maritime power. We must be able to translate our good intentions into visible contributions on ground.**

IONS could play an important role in orchestrating a collective response to meeting security challenges in the IOR; the low hanging fruit being in institutionalising a common Maritime Domain Awareness, Humanitarian Assistance Disaster Relief mechanism and a Code for Unalerted Encounters at Sea. Let us follow the fine example set up by Singapore and invite representatives from all countries to be physically present in the International Fusion Centre in Gurugram and facilitate not only exchange of data but also intelligence and analysis of contacts at sea. Commissioning of a Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Coordination Centre would help in coordinating the efforts of all regional and extra-regional countries in a region prone to disasters. With overlapping footprints of International Navies and an increasing presence of PLA-(N) ships in the Indian Ocean, it would be prudent to build confidence building measures and evolve a Code for Unalerted Encounters at Sea (CUES) for the Indian Ocean.

India must provide leadership in building security structures which are home grown, pluralistic and inclusive. The benign roles of the Navies are becoming more important as these affect a majority of the population. India must take advantage of its Naval superiority to influence the seas around us.

A Strategy for Developing a Maritime Industrial Base

All countries including India are striving to develop their maritime industrial base viz. exploration and exploitation of Oil and Natural Gas along their coasts,cost-effective mining of sea bed minerals, building ecosystems for tapping renewable energy from wind, wave and tidal variations, building a merchant marine,giving impetus to the fishing industry, promoting cruise tourism, putting in place a safe ship recycling industry, promoting a culture for protection of marine environment, laying of submarine cables for improving communications, adoption of measures to tackle climate

change and other avenues for using the waters for an economic turnaround. Greater cooperation across all these marine industries is feasible and a strategy needs to be spelt out to identify areas of commonalities that exist across some of these groups of industries. India needs to have one government body which can facilitate cooperation between the myriad sectors. A strategy should be enunciated for identification of an export-oriented development, with the laying out of a road map for skill development in specific areas. Investments could be prioritised and shared aims between different industries identified, to benefit from economies of scale. Gains from such an initiative would help not only our maritime industrial complex but that of our neighbours as well.

Conclusion

India possesses an excellent geography, a long coastline, numerous island territories, a vast EEZ backed by a fast-growing economy but has much to accomplish for a transformation into a dominant maritime power. India needs to cultivate an ambitious maritime bent of mind and stimulate an abiding nautical culture to exploit the sea for the wellbeing of her population. India must assume leadership to shape the environment for better Maritime Governance of the Indian Ocean and build a strong Navy for providing robust maritime security not only to India's maritime interests but also those of the countries of the littoral. Naval power remains but a subset of maritime power. India must concentrate on development of marine Infrastructure, build a shipbuilding ecosystem, modernise the fishery industry and formally enunciate a strategy for developing a maritime industrial complex to harness the dividends of 'Blue Economy'. India needs to articulate a percipient 'Indian Ocean strategy' which aims at assuming leadership of what truly ought to be India's ocean.

> **India needs to have one government body which can facilitate cooperation between the myriad sectors. A strategy should be enunciated for identification of an export-oriented development, with the laying out of a road map for skill development in specific areas.**

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Agni I to VI – Not Just a Number Game

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Abstract

The nomenclature of the Agni ballistic missiles (Agni 1,2….6) are perceived as a function of range escalation. However, the fact is that each successive missile type is related to a particular need and operational logic. The author explains that starting from Agni I which was a technology demonstrator, the follow on variants besides purely increasing range, overcame technological challenges and incorporated new technologies available at that point of time. The author explains these technologies and their need. The basic requirement to provide the delivery means for the carriage of conventional or nuclear warheads into the domain of India's potential adversaries remained fundamental to the development of the missiles while progressively making India's strategic deterrent credible. The author covers the development of the variants from Agni II to V, which were affected by environmental factors such as the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR). This denied the import of missile-related technologies, but proved to be a blessing in disguise, since; it forced development of indigenous capability. The author concludes with the optimism that Agni variants will be finite and successively overcome challenges while meeting India's operational needs.

Introduction

Often there is a tendency to perceive the journey of Agni ballistic missiles over the years as merely a function of range escalation, the fact, however, is that each successive missile type is related to a particular need and operational logic. This article tries to make sense of this logic by connecting each successive Agni missile to the felt need and technological challenge that prevailed at that point in time.

When the Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP) of the Ministry of Defence (MoD) for research and development of a comprehensive range of missiles, namely *Prithvi, Trishul, Akash* and *Nag,* was started by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), Agni was conceived only as a Technology Demonstrator (TD), which by definition, is a prototype version of a conceivable product of a future system which is aimed to prove a concept or a new technology. This was exactly the status of the first version of Agni.

Need for Re-entry Technology

Well before the second nuclear tests in 1998, when the IGMDP got started in 1982-83, the stakeholders knew it well that for carrying our warheads (both conventional and nuclear), to longer ranges in the land of the potential adversaries, re-entry technology was an essential requirement. Re-entry in the context of ballistic missiles, relates to the end portion of a cycle which starts by missiles going out of the earth's atmosphere (exo-atmospheric) during accent flight (post-boost phase), traversing most of their flight paths (mid-course phase) in the exo-atmospheric region, flying on a sub orbital

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trajectory before finally making a "re-entry" into the earth's atmosphere (100 km/53.9 nautical miles) for striking their intended targets (terminal phase). Since ballistic missiles are not powered all the way like, for example, the cruise missiles, specific advantages are gained in pushing such missiles out of the earth's atmosphere for most of their flight paths. Firstly, during their flights outside the earth's atmosphere, longer ranges can be achieved since no energy is wasted in overcoming air resistance, and secondly, and as a consequence, comparatively very high velocities can be achieved using the same propellant (boost) charge. These velocities could be of the order of 5000 miles per second or thereabout. Such tremendous velocities enable the ballistic missiles to cover long distances in very short periods of time. This increases their lethality and effectiveness, as such missiles give minimal reaction time to the defenders to employ counter measures. For instance, an Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) can cover a range of 10,000 km in a matter of 30-35 minutes.

The big challenge arrives at the moment of re-entry, when owing to the atmospheric drag due to air resistance impacting on the missiles, temperatures of the order of 30000 C/54320F are reached. These temperatures can totally disintegrate the re-entry vehicle. In addition, there are a host of other technological challenges at the time of re-entry related to gas flows, accuracies and more, which have not been covered in this article.

Since longer ranges for delivery vehicles were operationally required as an essential component of India's deterrence strategy, harnessing the re-entry technology was the starting aim of embarking on the Agni journey. It is also relevant to mention here, that Agni was the only ballistic missile out of the ones being developed under the IGMDP. Others were either surface-to-surface or surface-to-air or anti-tank missiles.

> There were two specific target requirements in this very first development. First, the requirement to keep the missile rail and road mobile so as to keep it quickly moveable/deployable (15 minutes) essentially as a measure of survivability against adversary's first strike. Secondly, the technological challenge to harness the re-entry technology. Both were successfully achieved.

Range and Altitude Capabilities

The period 1982-83 to about 1988 saw Project Agni take its baby steps gradually maturing into its first success. The expertise brought in by the IGMDP Project Director, Dr APJ Abdul Kalam from the Satellite Launch Vehicle (SLV)-3 programme was the starting block. While the basic requirement to provide the delivery means for the carriage of conventional or nuclear warheads into the domain of India's potential adversaries remained fundamental to the development of the Agni (and Prithvi) series, the question was to progressively achieve such range and altitude capabilities that made our strategic deterrent credible and effective in the perception of India's adversaries.

Development of Agni II Missile

In the timeframe, 1982 to 1988, the first of the Agni series (Agni II) was developed starting from the basic design developed in the TD version. The missile had a range capability of 2500-3500 km. The range consideration was obviously driven by the range to be effective in the gut of the adversary's vulnerabilities. Also pertinent to mention here is the fact, that around the same time, Pakistan successfully test fired its Ghauri Missile (Ghauri I range 1500 km, Ghauri II range 1800 km) capable of reaching India's rear areas. The first successful test of Agni II on 11 Apr 1999 achieved a range of 2000-2100 km.

There were two specific target requirements in this very first development. First, the requirement to keep the missile rail and road mobile so as to keep it quickly moveable/deployable (15 minutes) essentially as a measure of survivability against adversary's first strike. Secondly, the technological challenge to harness the re-entry technology. Both were successfully achieved.

It is to be noted that the approximate time frame of maturing of Agni II also coincided with the Indian nuclear tests of 1998, supposedly making the nuclear boosted fission weapon available[1]. The re-entry vehicle (RV) of Agni II was

designed to carry this warhead. As time would roll, another 7-10 years (say around 1995) and lighter nuclear warheads (thermonuclear weapon payloads) would be made available, Agni II would see another technological escalation ushering a new Agni RV Mk II[2]. Since the warhead would be lighter, there would be a room to pack liquid fuel into the pressurised vessels of the RV, making it manoeuvrable (MaRV), thus, ushering the cutting edge manoeuvrable re-entry vehicles. Such RVs could be programmed to be manoeuvred to their target.

MaRV was a major milestone achievement. The conventional RV is a passive ballistic load whose accuracy is dependent on the accuracy of its parent missile's insertion into the exo-atmospheric sub-orbital trajectory. MaRV on the other hand, can be manoeuvred to its intended target with its own propellant steam, thus, improving its accuracy manifold, and also, making it unpredictable.

Effect of Technology Denial Regime

Getting back to 1998-99, a major setback happened. Soon after the nuclear tests of 1998, the MTCR, then alliance of Group of Seven (G7) nations established in 1987 (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, UK and USA, now 35 member strong), imposed a technology denial regime on India preventing it to import missile related technologies[3]. This actually proved to be a blessing in disguise since all systems and sub-systems were then to be home grown; an uphill task but a sure route to developing indigenous capability.

As the events unfolded within a year or so, India got engulfed in the Kargil War. Besides everything else that happened in the said war, an operational need was felt to have a warhead carrying capability that could cover a huge gap between Prithvi II (250 kms) and Agni II (2500 Kms) missiles both of which stood developed by then.

Such a capability in the form of a single stage, solid fuel, road and rail mobile Short Range Ballistic Missile (SRBM) was ready as early as 1989 itself. In fact, the first test firing of this missile in the TD mode was carried out in 1989 itself. The capability, pursuant to the felt need was operationalised post Kargil with its first launch taking place on January 25, 2002. Several successful launches have happened after this, including one on February 06, 2018 conducted by the Strategic Forces Command (SFC).

> The miniaturisation of components and their smart placement allowed this missile to be more compact yet have a much larger range (Agni II - 21 m, Agni III - 17 m). Another milestone achieved by this missile was its accuracy. In that, it is no small credit to say that Agni III is the most accurate IRBM in its class in the whole world today having a Circular Error of Probability (CEP) of 40 m in range. CEP is the measure of a weapon system's precision. It is defined as the radius of the circle, centred on the mean where 50 percent of all the missiles fired are likely to land.

Agni III Missile

The graduation from Agni II to III was firstly to conform to the fundamental requirement of range and reach increment as explained earlier, and secondly, to incorporate newer technological features as were available at that point in time. As to range, Agni III with a capability of 3500-5000 km actually ushered the nation into the select group of nations who possess an Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile (IRBM) capability. Besides, it made India capable to strike much deeper across India's Northern Borders.

In addition to the above, the miniaturisation of components and their smart placement allowed this missile to be more compact yet have a much larger range (Agni II - 21 m, Agni III - 17 m). Another milestone achieved by this missile was its accuracy. In that, it is no small credit to say that Agni III is the most accurate IRBM in its class in the whole world today having a Circular Error of Probability (CEP) of 40 m in range[4]. CEP is the measure of a weapon

system's precision. It is defined as the radius of the circle, centred on the mean where 50 percent of all the missiles fired are likely to land.

Agni IV Missile

The escalation from Agni III to Agni IV was not range-driven but technology driven. In that, while Agni IV retained the range bracket of 3000-4000 km only, it included many a cutting edge features as the flight of missile technology had made available by that point in time. Most importantly, since the era of composite materials had kicked in by then, the same was adopted for missile construction bringing in a huge weight reduction. In that, while Agni III weighed 48000 kg, Agni IV weighed only 17000 kg.

In a bid to carry out continuous improvement in the RV technologies and moving ahead to include Multiple Independently targetable Re-Entry Vehicles (MIRVs) as warheads, the missile featured the inclusion of a new heat shield (to ward off the temperature challenge at re-entry, as explained earlier). In addition, new and enabling technologies like the ring laser gyros for precise measurement of angular rotation of the missile, accelerometers for accurate measurements of vibrations in the rotating missile, micro-navigation system based on accurate inertial navigation, high performance on board computers, distributed avionics architecture and more, made this missile really a cutting-edge system. Agni IV like its predecessors, was road mobile with a very low radar cross-section signatures (RCS) making it difficult for detection by adversary's sensor systems. A successful firing of this missile was conducted on January 02, 2017.

Agni V Missile

The nation knocked at the threshold of having the ICBM when Agni V successfully soared the skies on June 03, 2018. The most notable feature in Agni V is the fact that despite its huge range of 5500-8000 km, the missile is canister launched which means that it does not need any pre-built launch site but can be quickly launched from any pre-surveyed location. This helped in the survivability of missiles, providing much higher operational flexibility keeping the 'No First Use' in mind. Maraging steel has been used in the construction of this missile which provides superior strength, superior toughness without losing on malleability.

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Of course the design of the canister is very critical as the same has to withstand huge stresses up to 200-300 tons besides keeping the missile hermetically sealed. Technically, this capability can also be further developed into an Anti-Satellite (ASAT) capability[5].

Conclusion

The country now looks forward to Agni VI ICBM which, as per open source, is under development. Thus goes the saga of Agni missiles where each successive stage is not just a number game in achieving higher range and reach, but is driven by operational need and technological advancements as these unfolded with the march of time.

Another aspect which also becomes clear is the fact that in ultimate analysis, the range and reach requirements are finite and driven by cold operational logic and security challenges. This will ensure that the number escalation in Agni (1, 2, 3...6) will also be finite. In fact, each new version will be driven by specific operational need and security challenge that will present itself as we progress into the future. Such has been the precedent all along.

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Emerging Niche Technologies in the Nuclear Domain

Dr Roshan Khanijo@

Abstract

The defence technology has evolved over the years, and the effects are visible in both conventional as well as in nuclear domains, which has led to the transformation of military strategy. Some of the technologies like Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD), Hypersonic Glide Vehicles (HGVs), Swarm Technology, Under Water Drones, Directed-Energy Weapons (DEW) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) will impact both the conventional and nuclear domains. This paper tries to analyse the progress made by U.S, Russia and China in developing and deploying some of these technologies, as also its implications for India.

Introduction

There has been a remarkable transformation in defence technology, which has initiated a Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) of immense proportions, and its effects are visible in both conventional as well as in nuclear domains. The technological innovation has not remained limited to the military alone, but often it has emerged from the civilian sectors too, and this dual use technological pattern, will transform the way of war fighting in future. Technologies, like the development of Stealth, BMD, Cruise Missiles, etc had transformed the traditional ways of war fighting, but certain other technologies like Drones, AI, Hypersonic, DEWs etc may impact the deterrence quotient in nuclear domain, thus, challenging the nuclear concepts of survivability, first strike etc.

Further, the challenge to nuclear domain is getting more noticeable, due to the advancements taking place in Space and Cyber domains, which may create pressure for nations' to go in for 'First Use', as the nations' may face the classic dilemma of 'use the missiles or lose it'. So technology is going to play a major role in disrupting the 'Strategic Stability' which, the world had seen for some decades now. Though, the term strategic stability has been used differently by different authors, in this paper it connotes 'stability through mutual deterrence'. In order to maintain the deterrence quotient, the nations are going to compete vigorously, leading to the emergence of new technologies which will foster arms race. This vicious circle will continue in times ahead. The countries' which intensely compete in this arena are- U.S., Russia and China. However, India cannot remain oblivious of these developments. In order to have credible deterrence, India too will have to imbibe and use these technologies. Some of the critical technologies in this regard are BMD, HGVs, Swarm technology, Under Water Drones, DEW and AI.

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BMD & MIRVs

On one hand the number of nations' using missiles has increased, on the other hand, the missiles (ranging from tactical to strategic) have become more diverse, offensive, and modern. Countries like the U.S. and Russia have tried to counter the missile threat with developing advanced BMD systems. The main purpose of developing BMD technology according to the Americans, is to "detect, disrupt, and destroy a threatening missile prior to or after its launch. These include: first, active missile defence to intercept adversary missiles in all phases of flight; second, passive defence to mitigate the potential effects of offensive missiles; and third, if deterrence fails, attack operations to defeat offensive missiles prior to launch"[1]. This is a complicated procedure and requires a high level of Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) capability, as also integration of both active and passive defence systems, along with enhanced interoperability. Space has come to play a major role in this domain, as more space based sensors are being developed for better mobility. The U.S. has developed systems like the Ground-Based, Mid-Course Defence (GMD), Terminal High Altitude Area Defence (THAAD), Aegis Sea-based Missile Defence systems,Patriot Advanced Capability-3 (PAC-3)etc, to protect U.S. homeland, and her allies and partners. Similarly, Russia has her A-135 Anti-Ballistic Missile System as also newer versions of S-300P (SA-10) have been developed, the latest in this series being the S-400 (SA-21). This is also being purchased by China and India.

Russia and China have developed - Multiple Independently-targetable Reentry Vehicle (MIRV). As the name suggests a MIRV is a missile which can carry multiple warheads, which can be released at varied speeds and can target at different distances. This was developed with the aim to counter the BMD systems of the U.S. Currently, U.S. Russia, UK, France and China has developed this technology. It has been developed in all three domains of warfare. Both India and Pakistan are also developing their MIRVs. Thus, this technology has led to the deployment of another class of disruptive weapons, which will lead to arms race.

> The Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) or drones have changed the face of modern warfare. Though, big drones like the 'Predator' has been in the military use for long, but now small 'Smarm of Drones' and 'Nuclear Drones', are being developed, which will further complicate the already precarious military environment.

Drones –Swarms and Nuclear Drones

The Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) or drones have changed the face of modern warfare. Though, big drones like the 'Predator' has been in the military use for long, but now small 'Smarm of Drones' and 'Nuclear Drones', are being developed, which will further complicate the already precarious military environment. In January 2017, the US Air Force carried out trials with 103 Perdix quadcopter drones functioning as a Swarm. In 2016, China demonstrated drone swarming using 67 larger, fixed wing, drones. Russia has reportedly been working on a concept of drone swarming, is also probably trying to integrate drones with its 'sixth generation' fighter aircraft[2]. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) of China has one of the largest and most organised Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) programs in the world[3]. The Chinese plan to use drone swarms against aircraft carriers with decoys, electronic warfare UAVs, anti-radiation drones, armed UAVs, and communications relay UAVs[4]. The Chinese "military uses multiple ASN-207 systems, in tandem, where one drone acts as a communication relay, and allows for a massive expansion of systems, ranging to several hundred kilometres, thus, becoming a formidable platform that can loiter indefinitely, while maintaining a secure data link for real-time updates"[5]. Since these drones are cheaper, it is used not only by the military, but can also be used by the non-state actors for surveillance, and reconnaissance .This technology can become a potent tool for nuclear terrorism too. Drones as a tool can be used for surveillance of nuclear power plants, especially, to track the movement of fissile material vans. These may also be used for dispersal of radioactive materials by non-state actors, thus posing a formidable threat to states in combatting terrorism.

Further, another area of concern is the 'Under Water Drone'. "Russia has developed Autonomous Underwater Vehicle (AUV), called 'Kanyon' or 'Ocean Multipurpose System Status-6', the drone has a range of 6,200 miles, a top

speed in excess of 56 knots and can descend to depths of 3,280 feet below sea level"[6]. The Russian Navy plans to place more than 30 Poseidon strategic nuclear-capable Under Water Drones on combat duty, further as reported in TASS, the Russian News Agency, "Two Poseidon-carrying submarines are expected to enter service with the Northern Fleet and the other two will join the Pacific Fleet. Each of the submarines will carry a maximum of eight drones and, therefore, the total number of Poseidons' on combat duty may reach 32 vehicles"[7], This trend of deploying Under Water Drone capable of carrying both conventional and nuclear warheads will alter the character of maritime conflict. Considering,this will also have a spilling effect in Asia; there are chances that more nations will opt for this technology. In future the waters of Indian Ocean Region (IOR), may become more congested due to the increased presence of nuclear submarines and underwater nuclear capable drones, which will test the nuclear stability in IOR.

Hypersonic Glide Vehicles (HGVs)

Another disruptive technology is 'the Hypersonic Vehicles', the Hypersonic Cruise Missiles (HCMs) and Hypersonic Glide Vehicles (HGV) are the two emerging Hypersonic Weapons. These weapons will quite likely be engineered as "kinetic energy strike weapons, meaning they will not use explosives but rather rely upon sheer speed and the force of impact to destroy targets"[8]. Since they can destroy long distance targets without being detected due to its speed, they would become weapons of choice in future. The concept of hypersonic vehicles had been initiated by the Americans in their 'Conventional Prompt Global Strike' program, but now Russia and China have also developed their own HGVs. The American objective for developing this technology was 'it would give them a capability to strike targets anywhere on Earth in as little as an hour. This capability may bolster U.S. efforts to deter and defeat adversaries by allowing the U.S to attack high-value targets or "fleeting targets" at the start of, or during a conflict'[9] Senior U.S. Air Force weapons developers, state that "US hypersonic weapons might first be deployable by the early 2020s and Hypersonic drones for attack or ISR missions, were to emerge in the 2030s and 2040s"[10]. This is significant, because "a drone or unmanned ISR platform,

> In 2018, Russia successfully launched Avangard from a missile base in the southern Ural Mountains which successfully hit a practice target on Kamchatka, 6,000 kilometres (3,700 miles) away, and which flies 27 times faster than the speed of sound and can carry megaton-class nuclear weapons.

traveling at hypersonic speeds would better enable air vehicles to rapidly enter and exit enemy territory and send back relevant imagery without being detected by enemy radar"[11]. Russian hypersonic system is the 'Avangard', and it is a dual use system capable of carrying nuclear as well as conventional weapons. "In 2018, Russia successfully launched Avangard from a missile base in the southern Ural Mountains which successfully hit a practice target on Kamchatka, 6,000 kilometres (3,700 miles) away, and which flies 27 times faster than the speed of sound and can carry megaton-class nuclear weapons"[12]. President Putin stated that "In 2019, a new intercontinental strategic system 'Avangard' will enter service in the Russian Army and the first regiment in the 'Strategic Missile Troops' will be deployed[13]," On the other hand the China Academy of Aerospace Aerodynamics tested a new hypersonic aircraft called the Starry Sky. The "wave-rider hypersonic vehicle that detached from the booster rocket flew for 400 seconds, achieving a maximum speed of Mach 5.5 to 6 (4,200 to 4,600 miles an hour) and reaching an altitude of 100,000 feet"[14]. All these tests makes it evident, that within few years another disruptive technology will be used in all domains of warfare. It will be more disruptive for the Navy, because "it will challenge the survivability of aircraft carriers, as it would be very difficult for ship-based sensors, radar and the layered defences, to succeed, in detecting, tracking and intercepting or destroying an approaching hypersonic weapon, which is traveling at five-times the speed of sound"[15].

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

AI has advanced, in using its deep learning techniques, especially in understanding the human brain and its neural processes. AI is already a military reality. For example, weapons-guidance systems make decisions independently of human inputs, further, intelligence agencies can use algorithms to identify patterns in large datasets.[16]. However, in

the domain of nuclear weapons its use needs to be restrictive, and guided by ethical principles. Traditionally, nuclear weapons are being used by human decision-makers, and so it is subjected to human psychology, but in future if AI systems are associated with nuclear weapon's decision making, then by contrast, AI will not make decisions in the same way as humans would, even if their algorithms are often loosely modelled on human cognition[17]. Further, if AI is used at tactical level for ISR capabilities and for attack purposes, then it may escalate the conflict at lower spectrum of warfare. This may affect the decision making at the strategic level, because if through ISR the adversary is able to locate and attack the nuclear launchers then this may impact nation's nuclear strategy too. More nations' may adopt the more escalatory 'First Use' policy. So a lot depends on the capabilities of AI, how advance they are, and on what platform they are used. AI in space robotics is another dangerous development, as visible in China's development of robotic arm on one of its satellites. The robotic arm has dual purposes ie aiding Chinese space stations as well as offensively intercepting other nearby satellites. Considering the dependency of missiles on Space, this will open new fields of warfare.

Directed-Energy Weapons (DEW)

DEWs are energy weapons (Low wavelength high frequency) which are used to destroy the adversary's equipment, facilities' etc. There are two kinds of DEWs namely laser and microwave; the former is used for targeting long distance targets due to less dispersion,whereas, High Powered Microwave (HPM) – the electromagnetic E-bombs is used for damaging communication systems by destroying the adversary's electronic circuits through electromagnetic pulse. The advantage of DWEs is that it has pin point accuracy, can damage hard targets and destroy missiles at the boost phase. It is for this reason that many countries want to position DEWs in Space. The US Undersecretary of Defence for Research and Engineering, Mr Michael Griffin, has stated "he expects to have usable directed-energy weaponry in the hands of war fighters in no more than a few years,…and have space control

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weapon, a missile defence capability, space-based, boost-phase or midcourse capability, with a large directed-energy weapon"[18]. Further, he called for a "proliferation" of sensors in low-Earth orbit to combat hypersonic threats. The Russian President Vladimir Putin had first announced the development of lasers, as one of Russia's six new major offensive weapons systems, during a state-of-the-nation speech in March 2018. Defence Ministry's Krasnaya Zvezda Newspaper reported that the 'Peresvet Laser Complex' entered into combat service on December 01, 2018[19]. Similarly China Aerospace Science and Industry Corporation (CASIC) unveiled its 'LW-30 Road-Mobile', laser weapon system, at the November Air Defence Exhibition 2018. Further, the CASIC representative stated that "The laser can be used to target unmanned aerial vehicles, the electro-optics of high-precision weapons, various aircraft, and guided missiles,"[20] They can be positioned in Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) and South China Sea.

Implications for India

All these technologies have revolutionised the military strategy. Developing nations are forced to update and keep pace with these technologies in order to maintain the deterrence quotient, and prevent aggression from their adversaries. India also has kept pace with these technologies and has been moderately successful. As far as BMD is concerned India has a two layered BMD programme, where Prithvi Air Defence (PAD) is used to intercept missiles at higher altitude and Advanced Area Defence (AAD) is used for intercepting missiles at low altitudes. The AAD test last year was significant, because the endo-atmospheric missile, capable of intercepting incoming targets at an altitude of 15 to 25 kms was launched against multiple simulated targets of 1500 km class ballistic missile[21] and also the indigenous imaging infrared (IIR) seeker was used. India is also buying S400 from Russia. India has a successful Agni missile programme, and efforts are on to integrate it with the MIRV systems. As far as drones are concerned, India operates a fleet of unarmed Heron and Searcher UAVs for surveillance and intelligence gathering, and soon India will acquire from Israel 'The Heron TP-armed drones', capable of detecting, tracking and taking down targets with air to ground

missiles[22]. India has been pursuing the drone programme which mostly encompasses micro UAVs (MAVs), mini UAVs, tactical UAVs, and medium-altitude long-endurance (MALE) UAVs, where the designs were started from scratch but integration was undertaken with the help of foreign companies[23]. The Futuristic programmes from the Defence and Research Development Organisation (DRDO) include the Autonomous Unmanned Research Aircraft (AURA), the Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicle (UCAV), as well as other multirole and solar-powered UAVs[24]. However, in the area of hypersonic, AI, DEWS, India need to accelerate its research, and weapons need to be developed and operationalised for military use. Though the Advanced Technology Vehicle (ATV), a sounding rocket for research purposes with a solid booster carrying advanced scramjet engines, was successfully flight-tested from the launch pad of Sriharikota Range (SHAR) on August 28, 2016[25], but still a lot needs to be done, especially considering that China and Russia, both are developing dual use hypersonic vehicles and their progress in AI and DEW weapons is also increasing at an alarming pace.

The two areas which India requires to look into are the economics of funding research projects, and the greater interface between the military and the DRDO. The Indian budget allocation for Research & Development (R&D) is very less compared to that of other countries. For example in 2018, China's R&D spending as percent of GDP was 2 percent compared to just 0.8 percent for India. The R&D spending for China in the same year by sector of performance was Business $286,453.2 million, Government $58,564.0 million, Universities $25,572.6 million, as compared to Indian sector of performance for - Business: $17,044.0 million, Government: $29,066.8 million, and Universities: $1,952.3 million[26]. This is one area which needs to be addressed.

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Similarly, for making the innovations more user friendly, it may be prudent to analyse the U.S Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) model adopted by the United States Department of Defence (DoD). Today's war-fighters rely on systems ranging from aircraft to navigation to communications, and DARPA tries to combine multiple technological advances by layering and integrating them which can lead to a revolution in capabilities.[27] DRDO needs to recalibrate its function in terms of delegating few areas and concentrating on developing advanced designs and develop futuristic technologies, so that the technological gap is lessened. The resurgence in Indian industry today offers scope for its greater involvement in the defence sector due to the availability of the requisite skills and infrastructure for undertaking defence production and R&D in some fields[28].

Conclusion

Technology is a dynamic field and the innovations are an ongoing process. Nations need to constantly not only monitor the adversaries' technological advancements and weapon build-up, but also need to develop their own resource pool so that the technological gap does not become unmanageable. Indigenisation is the crux and for that funds and streamlining of scientific and defence institutions are very important. The government should consider adopting recommendations, mentioned in the Kelkar and Rama Rao Committees reports. India aspires to play a major role and for that technological proves is a key component.

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Indigenisation of Defence Manufacturing in India Participation of Private Sector

Lt Gen Subrata Saha, PVSM, UYSM, YSM, VSM & Bar (Retd)[@]

Abstract

India was the world's largest importer of weapons between 2013 and 2017, with imports increased by 24 percent over the last 10 years. However; India has now become the fifth-largest defence spender in 2017 at $52.5 billion but the high import is of critical concern, both from security and economic perspective. The 'Make in India' initiative, is striving to bridge this gap in indigenisation with greater private sector participation. To enhance output from private sector nurturing the right environment for decision making and implementation of the many transformational policies is crucial. In the short term, six functions need immediate attention, viz. competency mapping of private sector; developing capabilities of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME); faster procurement cycles; self-certification to save time and synchronise procurement cycles with technological cycles; introduction of an end to end digitised procurement system with accountability and timelines strictly defined; and concerted drive to leverage India's IT industry for defence. In the medium to long term, time bound production targets must be supported by timely procurement with budgetary support. Over a period, the acquisition structure must be managed by specialists, and the Services need to create their own cadre of technology leaders, who understand military requirements and technology, and can lead the drive.

At the time of independence in 1947, India had a defence industrial base comprising 18 ordnance factories (OF), one Defence Public Sector Unit (DPSU) and a small Research and Development (R&D) set up. In the initial years', little attention, if any, was paid to self-reliance in defence. The Sino-Indian conflict of 1962 was a wakeup call, and to overcome the crisis, India had to depend heavily on foreign military assistance. Despite all constraints, the armed forces rose to the challenge and delivered well in1965 war and won a classic victory in 1971. Through the 80s and 90s, the sector expanded rapidly to its current level of 41 OFs and nine DPSUs. The government-run indigenous defence industrial base, however, could not keep pace in meeting the needs of the Armed Forces in dealing with the evolving threats and changing technologies.

Defence sector was opened to direct private sector participation in 2001, with each edition of defence procurement procedure adding provisions to promote indigenisation. But this did not generate enough enthusiasm due to complex processes and difficulties in accessing the user.

India was the world's largest importer of weapons between 2013 and 2017, and its imports have increased by 24 percent over the last 10 years[1]. India became the fifth-largest defence spender in 2017 and India's defence spending has increased at $52.5 billion, up from $51.1 billion in 2016[2]. With such high import dependence, modernisation plans are difficult to sustain. The Prime Minister's 'Make in India' initiative, is striving to bridge this gap in indigenisation and self-reliance with greater private sector participation.

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Private Sector Participation

There are nearly 6000 MSME supplying components to defence public and private industries[3]. Till June 2018, Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion (DIPP) has issued 379 licenses to 230 Indian companies[4]. 70 licensee companies with 114 licenses have commenced production. 41 Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is an investment in the form of a controlling own FDI proposals / Joint Ventures have been approved for manufacturing of defence equipment, both in public and private sectors. FDI amounting to US $ 5.13 million has been received in the Defence Sector from April 2000 to March 2018[5].

According to reports placed in Parliament in December 2018, "The value of capital contracts bagged by DPSUs in 2015-16 was Rs15,617 crore, which came down to Rs12,374 crore in 2016-17 and further fell to Rs10,475 crore in 2017-18"[6].It may also be appropriate to note that reduction in public sector orders does not necessarily mean an increase in private sector orders. In fact, it might just mean the opposite, as public sector is increasingly outsourcing to private sector. The criticality is in correcting the import vis-à-vis domestic production imbalance.

This article analyses policy intervention in production and procurement, examines budget and other implementation realities, sets out priorities and imperatives, and makes recommendations to increase participation of the private sector.

Policy Propulsion

Following up on the Make in India initiative, the Defence Procurement Procedure (DPP) 2016 introduced the Buy – IDDM (Indian Design Developed and Manufactured) as the most preferred category for procurement.[7]

DPP 2016 redefined 'Make Procedure' into two; Make-I with 90 percent Government funding and Make-II with no Government funding. Make-I is meant for major platforms involving critical technologies, large infrastructure and high investment. Make II provides opportunity to private industry to design and develop minor platforms, systems, and components[8]. In January 2018, the Make-II Procedure has been simplified, timelines tightened, and provision for suo-motu submission of projects introduced[9].

> In May 2017, the 'Strategic Partnership' policy for production of aircrafts, submarines, helicopters and armoured vehicles was announced. The strategic partner was expected to play the role of the system integrator by building an extensive eco-system comprising development partners, specialised vendors and suppliers, in particular, those from the MSME sector.

The defence offset policy introduced in 2005 to leverage capital acquisition for developing domestic defence industry, has undergone several revisions with original equipment manufacturers being incentivised to take Small And Medium-Sized Enterprises(SMEs) as offset partners. In June 2014, FDI in defence was increased from 26 percent to 49 percent, and further increased to 100 percent, with the condition that modern technology is brought into the country.

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For providing defence 'Make in India' further impetus, the Annual Budget 2018 announced the creation of two defence industrial corridors. To encourage innovation and start-ups the Prime Minister announced the Innovation for Defence Excellence (IDEX,) at the Defence-expo in April 2018.

Despite the policy propulsion, the outcomes fall short due to multiple reasons discussed below, primarily being that of budget inadequacy, and procurement bottlenecks.

Budget Reality

For financial year 2018-19, out of the defence allocation of Rs. 2,95,511.41 crores; Rs. 1,95,947.55 crores were allocated for revenue expenditure and Rs. 99,563.86 crores for capital expenditure for the Defence Services[10]. Indian Army in their report to the Parliamentary Standing Committee in March 2018 submitted, "the marginal increase in Before Estimate (BE) barely accounts for the inflation and does not even cater for the taxes. Allocation of Rs. 21,338 crores for modernisation is insufficient even to cater for committed payment of Rs. 29,033 crores for 125 on-going schemes, emergency procurements, 10 (I) and other Defence General Ordinance Forces (DGOF) requirements. Committed liabilities of 2017 which will also get passed on to 2018, will further accentuate the situation. Therefore, liquidation of this committed liability will hardly leave any funds for new schemes in 2018-19. On the revenue part, bulk of the 4.5 percent increase in the revenue allocation goes towards [providing for] pay increase following the 7th Pay Commission. The balance amounts to an increase of just over three percent, which does not even cater for inflationary requirements"[11].

Clearly the budget for capital and revenue procurements is severely constrained, and the tax commitment, hitherto inapplicable, is causing further stress. Further, on the one hand while there is inadequacy of funds, on the other there is underutilisation of capital allocations[12]. Over the years, complexity of process, and multiplicity of agencies, has made it almost impossible to pin point accountability for delay and lapse of funds.

The process requires urgent reengineering with an end to end digitised system, with accountability and timelines defined.

Prioritisation of Modernisation Requirements

Alongside competing demands on the budget, there are complex threats that India faces. There is an ongoing sub-conventional conflict being fought, with concomitant, continuous preparations for a war. Prioritisation of defence modernisation requirements is therefore critical. Government has recently constituted the Defence Planning Committee (DPC) under the chairmanship of the National Security Adviser (NSA). The composition of the Committee includes the three Service Chiefs, Foreign Secretary, Defence Secretary, Expenditure Secretary and the Chief of Integrated Staff Committee (CISC).

> An analysis of the 11th and 12th five-year modernisation plans, budget and procurements clearly revealed that despite augmenting capacity, the public sector by itself would not be able to meet the colossal requirement. Therefore, it was important to energise the private sector.

The committee should outline the priorities for modernisation, technologies being sought, timelines, targets and define accountability.

Outreach and Handholding

Through 2016-17, the Indian Army conducted an extensive outreach program to connect with the industry and academia[13]. An analysis of the 11th and 12th five-year modernisation plans, budget and procurements clearly revealed that despite augmenting capacity, the public sector by itself would not be able to meet the colossal requirement. Therefore, it was important to energise the private sector. About 32 interactions were conducted at industrial and academic hubs across the country, to promote an understanding of the modernisation requirements of the Army, assess capabilities of the Indian industry, and identify academic activities that could be aligned to meet future requirement of the Army.

Equipment demonstrations were organised for the Industry and Academia at Ahmednagar, Coimbatore, Gopalpur, Devlaliand Mhow. Field trips for scientists/engineers were organised to Kashmir, Sikkim, Rajasthan, Rann of Kutch, and Ladakh.

Alongside these interactions at industry hubs, a series of workshops on Standard Qualitative Requirement (SQR), costing, trials, etc were conducted for officers dealing with procurements. Interactions with experts from industry and academia, helped the officers to widen their perspective. Likewise watching the equipment demonstration and live firing, enthused the industry and academia. During the artillery firepower demonstration at Devlali, an industrialist who had been manufacturing components for artillery shells for decades saw his products fire live for the first time. Emotionally charged by the experience he said, "now when I go back, I can share with my team the effect of what we produce. Trust me, their output will multiply manifold".In an interaction at IIM Ahmedabad in May 2016, an industrialist asked an interesting question. "In this presentation haven't you disclosed to us all your secrets on what you need over the next ten years? He was told, "we would much rather share the secret with our countrymen, than import the equipment 10 to 20 years down the line".

The point that needs to be underscored is that we deny ourselves indigenous capability, by being unnecessarily secretive. There is capability in the country, but it needs to be tapped with an open and encouraging policy that "tests and trusts".

Defence Industrial Planning Document

The first important requirement is to tell the industry what the armed forces require in terms of numbers, specifications and timeline. This is currently being done through the Technology Perspective and Capability Roadmap (TPCR). However, while the latest version TPCR 2018 is certainly an improvement over earlier ones, it does not cover the entire range of the requirements, besides there being no assurance, that the items listed, will be procured in the given timeframe. Moreover, there are hardly any requirements driven by emerging technologies.

An Industrial Planning Document (IPD) should provide the basis on which industry can plan their investment. In the absence of guidance, the industry is investing resources, based on its own appreciation of the future requirements. Resultantly, either there is over competition or no competition in procurement schemes. With over competition, there are complaints and controversy, leading to floundering of procurement schemes. With no competition, on the other hand, a single vendor situation ensues, which makes it almost impossible to pass the rigour of financial processes.

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Defense procurements need to be driven by a certain Qualitative Requirement (QR), based on certain technology, and therefore a Defence Industrial Planning (DIP) document, issued well in advance, would help industry to plan investment, collaborate for capability, streamline competition, and enable meaningful participation.

Distinction between Procurement and Development

A distinction needs to be made between procurement and development. Procurement should be out of what is available, and in case the desired QR is not available, then development is necessary. Currently, this distinction is blurry, at best. Because of this, there is industry lament of 'ambitious QR' of the Services, as voiced by a former Secretary DP[14]. Often QRs of procurement schemes compel the industry to go back to the drawing board, with obvious cost and time imperatives. Wherever development is required, the scheme should be progressed either as Make 1, Make 2 or through the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

Problem Statements and Solutions

Set up on 31 August 2016, the Army Design Bureau (ADB) has published three volumes of 'Compendium of Problem Statements'. Department of Defence Production (DDP) has also put out some innovation challenges. Both, Industry and academia, have found these to be useful and IITs as well as private universities have submitted solutions. Amrita University is the first private university to have been granted a 'Technology Development Project' for developing composite based individual bullet proof material. It is important for the Services to define problems, in order that the industry and academia find solutions, be it research or manufacturing solution. Furthermore, depending on the technological readiness level, the solutions need to be taken forward with services Technology Board (STB) funds, DRDO Technology Development, other research funds, or Make programs.

Production and Procurement

A new Defence Production Policy is in advanced stage of consideration. The key policy objective is to reduce current dependence on imports, to achieve self-reliance in development and manufacture of thirteen listed weapon systems/platforms, by 2025.[15] The policy envisages a turnover of INR 1,70,000 crores in defence goods/services by 2025, involving additional investment of INR 70,000 crores, and creating employment for nearly 2-3 million people. Arguably, it is an ambitious Defence Production Policy, but considering our dependence on import and the evolving security scenario, 'mission mode' is a must. Time bound production targets must be supported by efficient procurement plans. Signing of contracts and timely payments will set the process in motion.

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Substitute Trials with Warranty

A great relief to the private industry has been the opening of public sector trial and testing facilities. Further facilitation is planned through government support for trial and testing facilities in the defence industrial corridors. There is scope for further simplification of the trial process for procurements, and substitution of trial with warranty. Currently, import substitution and infusion of latest components/technology are inhibited by the present policy of going through user and Quality Analysis (QA) trials afresh. Repeat orders and revenue procurement of already introduced equipment are similarly affected.

Price Indexing of Technology

DPP 2016, introduced the provision for Enhanced Performance Parameters (EPP), to enable Armed Forces to procure equipment with better specifications, than what is defined as essential parameter. Equipment qualifying EPP during trials could be awarded a credit score of up to 10 percent, for evaluation of lowest bid (L1), with each individual attribute not exceeding a score of 3 percent[16]. Effectively this provision seeks to achieve an intersection of best technology (T1) with lowest bid (L1). The provision has not been utilised so far, for want of clarity on calculating the credit score. 'Price Indexing of Technology' must be undertaken by the Services with help of technology experts and cost managers, to get the best technology and value for money in EPP, strategic partnerships, as well as Make programs.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Robotics

There is immense potential of AI on a day to day basis in counter infiltration and counter-terrorist operations. AI can replace human operators manning control rooms, and surveillance devices. In Israel, AI is revolutionising warfare, by providing inputs to commanders, through high-end predictive analysis. AI and robotics can provide solutions to

improve teeth to tail ratios. Being largely driven by software, it also provides an opportunity to leverage India's strong IT industry.

In February 2018, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) had set up a Task Force on Artificial Intelligence led by Tata Sons Chairman N Chandrasekaran, to study the strategic implications of AI in national security. The Task Force has submitted its final report in July 2018[17].It is essential now to put-out specific requirements to enable industry to get on with development.

Self-Reliance Objectives for Critical Components, Materials and Chips

Like the defence production policy has identified thirteen systems for self-reliance, it is equally important to lay down self-reliance objectives for critical components like engines e.g. an aircraft engine accounts for a substantial portion of the overall cost, besides recurring requirements of Money Receipt Order (MRO). With the combined military and civil aviation requirements, this should make attractive business propositions for joint ventures, technology transfer and R & D. Defence systems require high-end material technology. Like priority to high indigenous component in 'Buy IDDM', it is crucial to encourage materials technology.

India's software industry needs to be incentivised to participate in defence systems. Algorithms integrate various sub-systems/systems of defence equipment, where self-reliance could be the battle-winning factor.

India lags in chip technology. In defence systems, the requirement gets more challenging due to specifications of ruggedness, extreme temperatures and minimizing size. The trend is shifting towards systems on chips. Defence could well lead the way by focusing our IT industry towards this field.

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Scare of Scams

Simplification of MoD processes is a constant expectation of industry. The challenge to simplification is the fear of allegation of scams. To quote a former bureaucrat, "We are so fond of scams, we manufacture one even when it doesn't exist." Defence procurements, whether its PT shoes or fighter aircrafts, make headlines, with allegations and counter-allegations, resulting in freezing of procurement, with collateral effect on other schemes, thereby, making the process more knotty. The unnecessary hue and cry discourage both domestic and foreign industrial partners. For the armed forces to modernise, and the defence industry to grow, this environment must change. Inherent challenges in an election year notwithstanding, in a democracy there needs to be a larger buy-in for strategic decisions. A possible solution is to empower the parliamentary committee on defence, which cuts across party lines, to scrutinise major procurement decisions and send the right message, while being mindful of security sensitivity.

Conclusion

To enhance output from the private sector and secure independence from imports, nurturing the right environment for decision making and implementation of the many transformational policies is crucial.

In the short term, six functions need immediate attention, viz. competency mapping of the private sector; development of capabilities of MSME; faster procurement cycles; self-certification to save time and synchronise procurement cycles with technological cycles; introduction of an end to end digitised procurement system with accountability and timelines strictly defined; and,a concerted drive to leverage India's strong IT industry, for defence.

In the medium to long term, time-bound production targets must be supported by timely procurement with budgetary support. Over a period, the acquisition structure must be managed by specialists, and services need to create their own cadre of technology leaders, who understand military requirements and technology, and can lead the drive.

Endnotes

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4   Response to Parliamentary Question – Lok Sabha No 1341 dated 25 July 2018.

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6   https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/nation/defence-psu-orders-down-33-amid-push-to-pvt-sector/704093.html

7   Defence Procurement Procedure 2016. Issued by MoD dated 28 March 2016.

8   Ibid. Make - I projects with cost of prototype development up to Rs 10 crores and Make–II up to Rs 3 crores, have been reserved for MSMEs

9   Simplified Make II issued vide http://pib.nic.in/newsite/mbErel.aspx?relid=175681 dated 17 January 2018.

10   http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=176085 dated 01 February 2018.

11   Forty First Report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence 2017 – 18, presented on 13 Mar 2018, http://164.100.47.193/lsscommittee/Defence/16_Defence_41.pdf

12   In 2016-17 the underutilization was Rs 7393 crores (10.5 percent).

13   This initiative was led by the author as Deputy Chief of Army Staff (P&S).

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Reforming the Police: A Necessary Condition for Robust National Security

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Abstract

Contemporary conflict has blurred lines between combatants and the civil, affirmed by the "proxy war". Violence by secessionist movements in Khalistan, North East and Kashmir was contained by innovations including intelligence-led operations. Yet these different Counter-Terrorist (CT) /Counter- Insurgency (COIN) experiences underscore the need to win public support. Globally, initiatives are underway to reform policing. In India, only a few states have conformed to the Supreme Court directives to insulate police leadership from illegitimate influence. In the CT/COIN context, systematically building up capacity of state police Special Weapons and Tactics Units (SWAT) teams as first responders is crucial. At the same time expanding the network of police stations is necessary as is engaging local communities alongside the police. Other components of the justice system also need reform. National security inevitably takes a worldview of global and regional threats and invests in complex weapons systems. However, neglecting police reform is to ignore the weakest link in security architecture.

National security is necessarily a determinant of multiple factors at the global and regional level; in India's case, its immediate neighbourhood is a predominant strategic priority. Traditionally, a strong military has been an indispensable foundation for national security. Yet today theorists assert that there is an increasing reversion to a pre-modern decentralised form of conflict, with a "blurring of lines between combatants and civilians". Some sovereign states have an implicit policy of using terror and supporting insurgencies as an instrument of national strategy. Moreover, with commercial access to sophisticated weapons, nation-states no longer have a monopoly over instruments of industrial-age destruction.

Because of this changing nature of conflict, internal security architecture is more than ever a key factor not just in ensuring public safety, but safeguarding national security. In the context of India, the "proxy war" launched via Pakistan-based non-state actors affirms this. The last conventional war between the two neighbours took place decades ago. Since then political and social fault-lines in different parts of India were fanned into armed conflict against the Indian state. Exploited in Punjab, encouraged in Assam and directly supported in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), terror attacks have also targeted India's cities and iconic targets; the most destructive being the 26/11 multiple attacks in Mumbai and the most daring being the attack on India's Parliament in 2001. The other major internal conflict, the Maoist movement is "made in India", though it draws inspiration from international extreme Left-Wing ideologies. It is not part of the "proxy war", and has been surprisingly resilient (despite great pressure) in the mineral-rich belt stretching across Central India.

To understand the dynamics of India's internal security matrix, a brief review of major conflicts of the past few decades will highlight common lessons drawn, though root-causes may be different.

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A Million Mutinies

The pro-Khalistan militant movement in Punjab took 14 years to contain with a loss of 12,000 lives. Operation Blue Star, the Army action against the iconic leader Sant Bhindranwale holed up in the sanctum sanctorum of the Sikh faith, the Golden Temple, was the apogee of this armed movement that cost the life of a Prime Minister. Many lessons were learnt on how to respond effectively to armed movements, the primary one being the success of intelligence-led operations. Others include setting up SWAT police units to meet military-style capabilities of militants, and ways to achieve better coordination among different forces of the centre when called in to assist the state administration. Equally important, the need to win the support of significant sections of the public and the imperative of consistent political backing over a protracted time-frame. Pro-Khalistan elements outside India continue to try and stir up unrest, supported by external forces. However, without public support, these efforts have so far failed to gain traction.

In the North East (NE) region, militant movements have been part of the process of political demands since independence. Naga Hills was the first in 1950's followed by the Lushai hills; the Meitei outfits in the Imphal Valley in Manipur, Tripuri tribal areas of Tripura in 60's and 70's, Assam from the late 80's and finally, Meghalaya; both the Hynniewtrep (Khasi hills) and Achik (Garo Hills) militancy. These armed movements had sanctuaries in neighbouring countries like Myanmar, Bangladesh and Bhutan. Pakistan's agencies and more indirectly those of China, have helped the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) and earlier, Naga, Mizo and Manipur insurgents.

Today, Manipur has the highest incidence of militant violence in the NE region, though this is only a fraction of earlier levels. With the death of veteran National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) leaders SS Khaplang and IsakSwu, and an ailing T. Muivah, the "mother of NE insurgencies" is at cross-roads, particularly, after violence has dropped to near-zero after a two decades cease-fire. The situation in Assam has also transformed from what it was during two decade after the late 1980s; the ULFA then held sway over large swathes of the Brahmaputra Valley. This was followed by National Democratic Front for Bodoland (NDFB) militant group; the harbinger of multiple ethnic militancy in the state. In the year 2000, over 400 civilians and 80 Security Forces (SF) were killed by militants in Assam; 330 militants also died. In 2017, fatalities were 5 civilians, 3 Security Forces (SF) and 18 militants. It is only in pockets of Upper Assam where the ULFA retains the ability to strike; as does NDFB(S) for Bodoland Territorial Autonomous District (BTAD)

> **Credit for the improved situation in Assam must in large part go to the Army, state police and Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs), which relentlessly carried out well-coordinated intelligence-led operations, particularly in the decade after Operation Rhino. The Unified Head Quarters (HQ) is a platform that has enabled the required strategic and operational coordination between the civil administration, Army and police forces of the centre and state. At the same time, denial of sanctuaries in Bangladesh and Bhutan were also a major factor, since Myanmar is not as easily accessible.**

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About 7500 fatalities in the past decade, including 3000 civilians and about 2000 police personnel, reflects the

lethality of Maoist militancy. States like Andhra Pradesh (undivided) reduced killings from 320 to 6; the success of this purely state-driven campaign is mirrored in the 'kill-ratio': police fatalities are at less than 10% of over 400 Maoists killed. Other states like Bihar/Jharkhand have lost over 900 police personnel, while inflicting an equal number of casualties. While ten states have varying intensities of Maoist violence today, with the total at a far lower level, currently, 35 districts are in Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA's) category of "worst-affected". Chhattisgarh's Bastar division has the highest number of violent incidents.

The tactical successes achieved by the Maoists are impressive due to expertise of People's Liberation Guerrilla Army (PLGA) in ambushes and assault, leveraged with effective use of IEDs and mobilisation of public support through Jana Militia. They have attacked well-guarded political leaders including Chief Ministers (Andhra Pradesh- 2003, West Bengal- 2008) and a convoy of senior Congress leaders (2013), thus killing 27 people. District armouries have been looted, prisoners freed from jails, police fortified camps and CAPF, Long Range Patrols (LRPs) of up to company-strength over-run and ambushed, massacring all personnel. The brain of this militant movement is the Politburo, a Central Committee and a Central Military Commission. These have been successfully targeted, with more than half the 34 members killed or arrested, though the Supremo Muppalla Lakshmana Rao Ganapati remains elusive. Andhra Pradesh (undivided) and Bengal are states that have effectively contained Maoist militancy within their territory.

The response of the Centre and affected state has been to improve coordination platforms, deploy more central forces, and use technology multipliers like Unmanned Aerial Vehicle(UAVs)/Multi-Purpose Vehicle (MPVs). Surrender policies, creating specially trained and equipped units, and supporting local militias have also been attempted. The 'holistic' approach of the Naxalite Management Division of MHA focuses on inter-state coordination, development schemes like road building, and in addressing grievances of affected communities-such as protection of forest rights, and providing livelihood opportunities for youth. There have been intermittent efforts to bring the Maoist leaders to the negotiating table.

> **Injecting a communal thrust to the separatist movement, pumping in huge amounts of funds, infiltrating foreign militants who have been battle-hardened in Afghanistan, supporting coordination platforms of pro-separatist organisations, encouraging local youth to take up arms through a process of radicalisation and mobilising aggressive public protests against anti-militant operations (similar to intifada), are some of the methods adopted.**

In J&K, the Rajiv-Farooq Accord of 1984, followed by the 1987 elections, is commonly perceived as the 'tipping-point' of the current militant movement in the wake of, alleged rigging of elections and thousands of youth crossed the LoC into Pak Occupied Kashmir (POK), to join tanzeems, falling prey to rumours that special status of Kashmir was under threat and the emotional hype, that it was now-or-never for Azadi. In the past three decades there have been ups-and-downs in the counter-militancy campaigns; the only consistent factor being the continuing support by agencies of Pakistan, regardless of changes in the political climate of that country. First, the Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), then Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (HM), Jaiesh-e-Mohammed (JEM) and Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), all these different outfits have spearheaded the militancy. All methods continue to be used to fan unrest. Injecting a communal thrust to the separatist movement, pumping in huge amounts of funds, infiltrating foreign militants who have been battle-hardened in Afghanistan, supporting coordination platforms of pro-separatist organisations, encouraging local youth to take up arms through a process of radicalisation and mobilising aggressive public protests against anti-militant operations (similar to intifada), are some of the methods adopted. The counter-measures by the Indian state, particularly building up Counter Terrorism (CT) capabilities of the JK Police have been effective in containing violence to a few districts in the Valley. Violence has dropped from a high of about 4000 militancy-related fatalities in 2000-2001, including about 1000 civilians to less than 300 today, mostly militants followed by SF personnel. The challenge now is to offer a counter-narrative that inspires the people especially youth to embrace being citizens of a democratic, economically resurgent India and not be just a pawn in the machinations of a failed state that remains in political doldrums, is mired in sectarian

violence and trapped in an economic quagmire.

In addition to these conflict areas, India continues to experience major outbursts of social violence whether between communities or against the state, on issues like formation of separate states, acquisition of land or reservation in government jobs. India's huge demographic youth bulge, inadequately skilled, the widening economic disparities, and rapid urbanisation with consequent rural-urban migration, add to the pressures of ensuring an internal security environment that contributes to overall national security objectives.

The Need for Reform

In a situation of rapid flux, social stresses are inevitable, thus calling for major changes in the approach to policing. Other countries have also sought to address these changes by adapting to a contemporary socio-political context. The US President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, has called for a return to greater engagement with the community and a change of the trend of increasing militarisation of the police, post the 9/11 terror attacks. The Police Reforms and Social Accountability Act 2011 in the United Kingdom (UK) gave authority to elected Police & Crime Commissioners to give directions regarding priorities to Chief Constables of counties and hold them accountable for performance. The Home Office continues to identify 'Strategic Policing Requirements' to ensure building up of capacities and coordinating mechanisms to deal with issues that spill over local boundaries, such as terrorism, mass disturbances, organised crime and major cyber incidents.

> In exploring how reforms can make policing a more robust component of national security, it is useful to outline main elements of the police COIN/CT architecture, and identify possible areas for reform.

Several states in India have initiated changes (in varying degrees) to conform to directives by the Supreme Court given in Prakash Singh & others Vs Union of India & others (2006). The effort of this intervention is to insulate the police leadership from external pressures in the discharge of its legal role. This is an acknowledgement that the balance of authority has shifted disproportionately in favour of political power centres. These Directives are a first step to reducing improper influence, since the principle is well enunciated that a police chief "is not the servant of anyone, save of the law itself".

Tip of the Spear

In exploring how reforms can make policing a more robust component of national security, it is useful to outline main elements of the police Counter Insurgency and Counter Terrorism (COIN/CT) architecture, and identify possible areas for reform.

After 'Operation Blue Star' the Union Government of India raised a new armed force specifically to combat terrorism. The National Security Guard (NSG) was conceived as a force with a lower violence capability than the Army, but more effective than conventional police against well-armed terrorists trained in military tactics. All personnel were on deputation, drawing the best from both the Indian Army and CAPFs/State Police. This force was further expanded after the 26/11 attacks with a presence in 'Regional Hubs' to reduce the time required to respond to a terror attack in any part of India.

However, maintenance of Law & Order ordinarily remains a state subject under the Indian Constitution and most states zealously guard this space. There were strong objections to setting up of a National Centre for Counter-Terrorism (NCTC) on grounds that this would infringe on state's autonomy. As a Federal Contingency CT Force, the NSG will always remain available to the states for more complex terror attacks. However, the first and often only response to a terror incident is likely to be by the state police. Across the world, police forces have developed SWAT units to deal with a new generation of criminals and terrorists armed with the best weaponry and trained in military tactics. Post the Mumbai 2008 attacks, the capacities of many state CT forces in India have also improved. Several states have created

special units, such as Force One (Maharashtra), Garuda (Karnataka), Octopus (Andhra & Telangana), Tamil Nadu Commando Force etc. The Special Operation Groups of J&K Police have developed a formidable reputation. States have also developed separate special units to deal with Maoists and rural insurgencies. These include Greyhounds (Andhra & Telangana), Assam Police Rangers, Manipur Police Commandos and Special Task Force Unit (Odisha) and more recently the District Reserve Group (DRG) of Chhattisgarh. The Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) has raised Commando Battalion for Resolute Action (COBRA) units for the same purpose.

To enable police special units to systematically review capabilities while learning from one another, NSG has organised several national CT exercises. The objective is to assess capabilities in four dimensions; the quality of personnel, the quality of weapons & equipment, standards of individual training, and team skills.

These exercises revealed capacity-gaps in several police SWAT teams, some of which are outlined below: -

➢ **Planning -** The ability of tactical leaders to make on-ground assessments with available intelligence, improvise intervention plans at the point-of-contact especially in case of multiple attacks, and to issue clear and concise orders, needs improvement.

➢ **Leadership -** Leadership of tactical units needs to be vested with younger officers, who can lead from the front.

➢ **Team Skills -** While individual skills are important, cohesive team performance achieves operational objectives. More emphasis is needed on team-level drills and exercises.

➢ **Motivation -** Individual motivation is critical. Every team member needs to be inspired, competent in his trade and professionally confident enough to frankly articulate views to his team leader.

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➢ **Equipment -** Several states have not supplied SWAT teams with required equipment. Teams need CT/COIN gear as appropriate to the assessed threats.

➢ **Training -** Continuous training is the foundation for an effective CT/COIN response. There is great variance between training standards of different states.

These special units can function only as the tip of the CT spear. To be effective in actual operations, precision intelligence support is needed. Operational intelligence on terrorist and insurgent organisations is available with intelligence agencies, especially since terrorist bases are often outside India and even operations launched and controlled beyond national borders. Yet, tactical Intelligence relating to real-time information on the ground can often be obtained only at the point-of-contact. While effective coordination with State Intelligence Branches (CIB)/Central IB can provide operational intelligence required, intervention teams need appropriate tools and the capacity to acquire situational intelligence, a capability lacking in most Anti-Terrorist (AT) units. The timing of the political/executive decision to shift gear from a siege-type stand-off to intervention by immediately available AT units, or whether to wait for more specialised reinforcements is at times a sticky point that needs to be thought through beforehand. Yet units like the Andhra Pradesh/Telangana SIB, has shown what can be achieved by building up a team of committed domain experts - with a clear mandate, generous funding, and unwavering support from governments over time and without interference or delay in operational decision-making. This unit has developed impressive capabilities in tracking top Maoist leaders in any part of India.

The operational doctrine for CT/COIN units in urban, rural or jungle environments will naturally be different, so also will be the organisation, equipment profile, and training methods. Andhra Pradesh and Telangana have recognised this, and developed the Octopus and Greyhounds as special units, for urban and rural operations, respectively. Special capabilities, whether helicopter mobility, hostage-negotiation skills or well-trained snipers can provide an edge. At the same time, in today's environment of social activism, all forces engaged in CT/COIN operations need to be clear as to the acceptable 'Rules of Engagement' – the boundaries of using force against Indian citizens, however, misguided or brutal, militants may be. The Apex Court itself has taken cognizance of also called 'fake encounters' in conflict states. The ongoing demand to withdraw Armed Forces Special Powers Acts (AFSPA) will require central armed forces to review CT/COIN doctrine and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), and for states to enhance their own capacities to respond to militant movements.

Shield & Armour

Police stations and community support can be an impenetrable shield and protective 'kavach' (Armour) in the national CT/COIN response structure. There is an acknowledged need for greater public engagement, with the police required to be seen more as a provider of services related to rule of law and public safety, and not just an instrument to enforce the state's sovereign authority. This can only begin at 'Thana' level which is the basic building block of the entire internal security system - and can also be its weakest link. Some states have taken up individual initiatives to build police-community bonds. One example is 'Prayaas', a community policing initiative of the Tripura police aimed at improving delivery of policing services to the community. An earlier initiative by the Assam Police project 'Prahari', went beyond this, facilitating developmental work in rural areas, affected by conflict.

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Reform in areas like improving the civil police-to-population ratio, and expanding the spread of police stations adequately staffed needs to be pursued even when conventional parameters such as crime rates or population are unmet in conflict areas. The trend has been to respond to conflict with an expansion of the armed police, supported by central-schemes like India Reserve Battalions. Better systems are urgently needed for internal management of logistics, human resource and finance. A police leadership that keeps the welfare of subordinate ranks as a priority will be able to inspire behavioural changes needed to make citizen-centric policing possible.

A clearer articulation of policing policies and SOPs is needed. Training is grossly neglected and is often unrelated to improving capacities needed to respond to specific local conditions. The CCTNS (Crime and Criminals Tracking Network and Systems) is an ambitious centrally-funded scheme that aims to digitally link the 16,000 police stations spread across the country. Once it becomes the backbone of integrated police databases, the potential connectivity could be a game-changer. Developments in big-data analysis and Artificial Intelligence (AI) promise to make predictive and precision policing more than just theoretical concepts.

There are issues beyond the police mandate, yet within the social, political or economic domains of governance, that are causal factors of CT/COIN challenges. Communities often feel disconnected from governance because of poor representation, minimal contact and a perceived bias. A protest on any issue soon escalates into an "us versus them" confrontation. Public discourse often criticises police actions that involve excessive use of force or inefficient crime prevention or detection. Even a Chief Minister is on record as referring to a policeman as "thulla"; many among the intelligentsia denigrate the police as "unprofessional, corrupt and criminalised", with abuse of power and brutality against the weak being more common than compassionate and competent service to the common man. The 35,000 police personnel killed in the line-of-duty in the past 60 years merit hardly a tear in the public psyche – the annual

Police Commemoration Day on October 21st to honour the 400-700 personnel of central and states' police forces killed during the year is usually an all-police affair. A positive image is a sine qua non for proactive public support in upholding the law. This needs mature political leaders and opinion-makers (including the media) to be more involved in supporting changes that are needed if the police are to better serve the people. Political manifestos rarely include police reform; 'police-bashing' by opinion-makers is unlikely to achieve change unless reinforced by suggesting ways to achieve transformation.

While police are the 'face', they are just one component in the framework of laws, judiciary, prosecution and corrections, all of which determine public confidence in the justice system. Looking at the police in isolation is unlikely to achieve desired outcomes. For example, the legal framework that addresses terrorism/insurgency needs to be re-examined. Abuse of anti-terror special laws such as Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Prevention Act (TADA) and *Prevention of Terrorism Act* (POTA) resulted in a huge backlash that forced repeal. At the same time, prevention and investigation of terror cases is undertaken in conditions beyond the normal framework provided by the *Indian Penal Code* (IPC), Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) or Evidence Act. Even Western liberal democracies, when faced with similar situations, have accepted the need for a separate legal framework. The Supreme Court set up an Special Investigative Team (SIT) in mid-2017 to probe into alleged 1500 plus extra-judicial killings in Manipur – this in part reflects the failure of the regular legal framework to take account of the extraordinary conditions prevailing, an impression reinforced by the exceptionally high proportion of cases under special laws like Unlawful Activities (Prevention) *Act* (UAPA), Manipur has in some years registered over 60 percent of country-wide UAPA cases. However use of such special laws including the National Security Act needs to be carefully monitored so that these can be used in the abnormal conditions prevailing in conflict-areas, without generating allegations of abuse.

> The Malimath Committee had recommended that the criminal justice system as a whole needed changes in structure and processes. The aim was to reduce the huge backlog of cases pending investigation and under trial, and to improve efficiency of processes. At present over 30 million cases choke Indian courts, a significant proportion pending for decades, many of which are petty offences.

In fact, the Malimath Committee had recommended that the criminal justice system as a whole needed changes in structure and processes. The aim was to reduce the huge backlog of cases pending investigation and under trial, and to improve efficiency of processes. At present over 30 million cases choke Indian courts, a significant proportion pending for decades, many of which are petty offences. The all-India conviction rate has dropped steadily from over 60 percent to about 40 percent in the past 4 decades, ever since the police was divorced from prosecution. Even in heinous offences like murder and rape, all-India conviction rates hover around 20 percent. In some states the conviction rate is 10 percent or less, of cases charged. Appeals in criminal cases take 20 years and more to be heard. Without getting lost in holistic criminal justice reforms, how do we address key areas in coordination with the judiciary and prosecutors? Without this, attempts at police reforms alone may falter.

Panchayati Raj or local self-governance with villages as the primary unit was a Directive Principle of India's Constitution. It became a reality however imperfect, with the 73rd Constitutional Amendment (1992). This change in the paradigm of local governance has focused solely on development, not public order or internal security. Yet it is acknowledged today by the world's leading development experts that without secure internal environment sustainable development goals are a non-starter. That's why Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations specifically highlights the need for "peace, stability and effective governance".

It was the colonial era that began the trend of a central power being considered the 'mai-baap sarkar' for governance – the job of the rulers was to rule and the masses to obey, with an intermediary layer of local power centres to enforce the writ of the imperial rulers. Even many thinkers of modern India support the marginalisation

of rural governance on grounds that villages were "sinks of localism and dens of ignorance, narrow-mindedness and communalism". Occasional media reports on actions taken by 'khap panchayats' in parts of India even today are taken as affirmation that these institutions remain trapped in a retrograde frameworks of patriarchy and casteism. However, there is sufficient documentation to attest that in the pre-colonial era, many of the 700,000 villages of India in different regions undertook significant responsibilities of local governance, including prevention and detection of crime.

The 'British Raj' established a policing system that served its colonial objectives of protecting trade routes, ensuring revenue collection and introducing a modern policing model in the presidency cities where most westerners lived. Yet, the rulers understood that to contain costs to the exchequer and to secure community cooperation, some system of village policing needed to be retained. Hence village headman and watchman were given responsibilities and social recognition that provided invaluable support to the formal system which is why it was said that a 'Daroga' would know 'even if a leaf fell in his elaka'.

Today, we need to explore ways to restore the social responsibility of village and traditional communities for maintaining routine public order and perhaps even to deal with petty offences within a framework of contemporary legal and ethical principles. Without this 'last-mile' connectivity, there will remain a gap between the people and the police. The overwhelming dominance of Central Armed Forces in conflict areas and in roles like border policing can be reversed only by strengthening the police-station while finding ways to engage local communities more actively in governance. States like Chhattisgarh alone have about 100 battalions of Central Forces engaged in counter-Maoist operations; a similar quantum is deployed in a counter-militancy role in J &K. There is also a massive deployment of Central Forces on our frontiers. Even non-militarised borders like Bhutan, Nepal and Bangladesh have huge deployment of expensive central border-guarding-forces. States like Assam and J&K have Village Defence Communities (VDC) that assist in law-enforcement, but these are not a component of village governance. The principle reflected in United Nations (UN) Resolution 2151 (2014) needs to be kept in mind: "police reforms are related to needs of particular societies." India is a sub-continent comprising many diverse societies. Local cultures and traditional social institutions need to be factored in, while advocating reforms.

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A similar situation exists in ULBs (Urban Local Bodies) in India where elected city governments hardly play any role in policing. With 30 percent of the population living in urban areas that generate over 60 percent of India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), it is imperative to explore models that provide requisite policing services and security to millions living together in these mega-agglomerations, several of which have bigger populations than many states. Modern policing was, in fact, a response to policing challenges thrown up by the emerging metropolises of Britain consequent to the Industrial Revolution. The axiom of the 'Peelian System', policing by consent required close engagement with the community with the focus on prevention of crime and public disorder. This changed in the early 20th century to the "professional" model in the US, where the police decided their priorities without engaging the community, and only responded to calls for assistance by the public in case of violations of the law. The public were reduced to victims or bystanders, not partners in crime prevention and detection. Today, there is a growing acceptance that effective policing and internal security is not possible without a far more proactive engagement of the community, and there has been a shift back to community-oriented policing models in most democracies.

Even the 74th Constitutional Amendment that indicated a framework for urban governance, kept ULBs virtually unconnected with public safety and law and order, even in mega cities like Mumbai or Delhi. The complexity and inter-

connectedness of urban governance is such that policing cannot function separate from other municipal functions. While city police do enlist public support through informally constituted bodies like Mohalla Committees or Neighbourhood Watch, this cannot substitute for systemic engagement with elected city governments. Some may feel that in the cyber-age when crime and terror attacks can be planned and executed remotely from anywhere in the world, traditional community-oriented policing is an anachronism – virtual communities bound together by social-media platforms are more relevant for the Millennial generation. Yet, even the 'Smart Cities Project' that aims at engaging citizens to plan and execute urban improvements to improve quality of life, hardly gives any space for an appropriate policing model to address crime and security issues of the 'Digital Age'.

What, Who, How, Where

In short, police reforms to meet contemporary requirements of national security cannot be unidimensional. The Supreme Court directive (2006) flags the need for urgent reform beginning with enabling the police to do its job within a given framework of laws and procedures and without illegitimate interference. With reference to the reform process for effective CT/COIN role, specific suggestions in a few key areas are given below:

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➢ Capacities of specialist state police SWAT units for precision intelligence-led operations need to be continually built up, while taking account of the trans-border capabilities of identified adversaries that can be covered only by central agencies. The objective should be to gradually free up the large quantum of Central Forces deployed in defensive roles in conflict areas.

➢ Capacities and presence-on-ground of Police Stations and Civil Police, needs to be expanded, beginning in conflict and areas assessed as vulnerable to terror/militant threat.

➢ Communities need to be re-engaged with requisite capacity, to take responsibility for helping to maintain order and support the policing system. The trend of ever-increasing border-guarding forces must end, and ways found to enlist local communities in shouldering part of this role.

➢ Ways to engage local governments whether panchayats or municipalities in policing/protecting communities needs to be explored, while using technological platforms to connect virtual communities who today influence urban governance.

➢ Focusing on only police reform is unlikely to achieve objectives. Hence changes in other components of the justice system that will impact directly on public confidence needs to be taken. At the same time, there are several critical areas that can be addressed internally by the police leadership itself, which must be pursued.

This brief list is a starting point for identifying the 'what' of police reform, specifically aimed at improving CT/COIN capabilities. 'Who' will initiate this, and 'how'? The Centre has the funds and can access expert resources across the country; police is a state subject. Hence it needs to be a national effort. A sizeable non-lapsable corpus should be allocated through a Special Purpose Vehicle Entity (SPV) to be spent in 10 years on clear and measured deliverables in a project mode, implemented by states with assistance by a panel of experts. Moreover, to be able to achieve desired outcomes any such exercise cannot be confined to Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) since a convergence is needed with initiatives of other ministries that may impact on governance. Niti Aayog has initiated some moves toward "smart policing", but a Task Force on Police Reforms for CT/COIN capacity building under Prime Minister's Office (PMO), may be more suited to provide a clearly articulated strategy, a roll-out plan and ensure better coordination by including

suitable representatives from concerned ministries. Should the whole country be covered? In the initial phase, perhaps the effort should focus on conflict areas and a few vulnerable cities from which representatives should also be included in this proposed Task Force.

Let there be no doubt about strategic national security requirements. It's important to take a world view of global and regional threats. The nuclear triad of Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBMs), Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missile (SLBMs), strategic bombers and other complex weapons systems are indispensable to meet conventional threats on land, air or the maritime spheres. Emerging threats whether in the cyber or space domains also need to be anticipated. One can "choose friends, but not neighbours" and need to project credible deterrence that holds back adversaries from adventurist actions while reassuring friends of our ability to defend common interests. At the same time, neglecting to transform the police is ignoring the most basic, lowest-cost and weakest link in the national security chain. Remember the old saying, "for want of a nail a kingdom was lost?" As a nation, we should not be found wanting to invest in the "nail" of national security– an effective police force that enjoys public confidence and can free the Army from its present commitments to an internal security role.

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Information Strategy for India: A Conceptual Approach

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Abstract

Hybrid conflict has today come to be the dominant form of war, eclipsing the much more expensive conventional warfare domain. Information operations are an essential part of hybrid warfare to form narratives and generally to influence political opinion-making among the target population. Till a few years ago the means to communicate information were limited, but with the coming of modern networks, the worldwide net, broad band video and social media, there has been a transformation in this field, thus, expanding the scope of harnessing the power of information for strategic purposes. This paper analyses the power of the information domain and the strategies which need to be developed by taking the case study of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) and this essay goes only as far as suggesting a strategy and does not delve into nuances of execution.

Background and the Need for an Information Strategy

It is common knowledge that hybrid conflict has today come to be the dominant form of war, eclipsing the much more expensive conventional warfare domain. The thought that hybrid war is something new needs to be set at rest right at the beginning. It has been in existence for long, essentially combining the low intensity domain of violent conflict, irregular warfare-with a choice of multiple other areas such as subversion, narcotics, black money, organised crime, fake currency and religious indoctrination, all aimed at internally weakening a target nation to achieve a strategic objective through gaining a psychological and physical advantage. One of the prime areas used for long in hybrid conflict is the domain of information which impinges on the national resilience of a nation or a target segment. Information operations are an essential part of hybrid warfare to form narratives (a line of thinking and belief) and generally to influence political opinion-making among the target population. The people's dimension is an essential part of hybrid war strategy and the information domain is the most effective instrument to execute this. Till a few years ago the means to communicate information were limited, but with the coming of modern networks, the worldwide net, broad band video and social media there has been a transformation in this field, thus, expanding the scope of harnessing the power of information for strategic purposes.

A good understanding of the power of the information domain can be achieved by referring to the situation today in J&K. Pakistan employs information operations as a tool to cultivate and reinforce ideas to harness the support of the people to various narratives that it spins. Prime among them is the idea of Azadi (separation from India) that is attainable, and that India's hold over J&K is weakening. Pakistan also continues to generate and reinforce the legitimacy of faith-based linkage between Pakistan and the Muslim dominated areas of J&K. It has driven many passionate Kashmiri youth to opt for recruitment to the terrorist ranks on the basis of cultivating the belief that this is a religious duty and that the use of violence is entirely justified.

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India has been tardy in the overall understanding of the exploitation of the information domain as a subset of hybrid warfare. This is best exemplified by the fact that Pakistan afforded such priority to this domain, by raising a specialist arm to exploit it; that is how the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) wing came into being as early as 1949, much earlier than the better known Pakistani entity, the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). In India the strategic employment of information as a deliberate weapon of hybrid war has rarely been understood or employed; hence the means to counter its use against its own population also remains an unrealised area in the security domain.

With fast track development in communication technology, it's a matter of time before external interference in the Indian political scene may also become a reality just as witnessed in the US presidential election in 2016.

"There are deep fake videos that falsify information and distort reality, false news creation and dissemination, robotic tweets and social media posts that spread inaccurate narratives, and systematic disinformation campaigns from foreign and domestic adversaries. Left unchecked, these tactics can disrupt campaigns, encourage extremism, sow discord, and undermine democratic discourse", writes Lisa Kaplan of Brookings Institution. To guard against all this India needs an information strategy. This essay goes only as far as suggesting a strategy and does not delve into nuances of execution.

Formulating a Concept and its Execution

With the need already explained above it's for India to formulate a concept of a strategy- involving a domain of hybrid conflict, hardly ever seriously addressed in India. For convenience one can call it by the more internationally acceptable term – 'Strategic Communication' rather than information strategy or the earlier term -- propaganda. This has to commence with thoughts on the aim, scope, structures and organisation, manning, resource generation, visualisation, objectives, test narratives and initiation, responsibility, coordination and many other vistas that go into the formulation stage of any national strategic initiative. There is a need for the mention of one significant observation here. The identification of the problem should actually be done as a part of the preamble of the National Security Strategy (NSS); the ways and means should be broadly analyzed and recommended with a set of directives, for further study, laying out the intent and the end result sought. The information domain cannot be treated in isolation; it has to be in sync with the NSS and in fact a part of it.

> What needs to be kept in mind is that countering hybrid conflict is never the responsibility of any single domain related entity. It requires comprehensive ownership with different players focused on their domains in what has come to be termed as an 'All of Government Approach'. Conceptually explained, this would mean in one domain the military countering and neutralizing violence in cooperation with the police forces and intelligence. Alongside this is the discernment of the minds of the disruptive elements and identification of their narratives.

What needs to be kept in mind is that countering hybrid conflict is never the responsibility of any single domain related entity. It requires comprehensive ownership with different players focused on their domains in what has come to be termed as an 'All of Government Approach'. Conceptually explained, this would mean in one domain the military countering and neutralising violence in cooperation with the police forces and intelligence. Alongside this is the discernment of the minds of the disruptive elements and identification of their narratives. This has to be done through a joint study team of the Army, police and intelligence agencies; something again never probably attempted. It needs constant updating to be relevant and is the basic input for an information related initiative.

The Aim

The aim of 'Strategic Communication Strategy (SCS)' is to influence the thinking of the identified target segment to obtain an opinion favourable to the national narrative. It simultaneously, aims to counter opinion and narratives which threatens the mainstream national opinion and narrative.

Scope

The employment of strategic communication is not restricted to any particular times. It's a continuum and applies to all aspects involving internal security, border security, external security, diaspora opinion, public opinion within the nation, and can be generic as well as focused only on certain segments of the population, as per requirement. In current and emerging times the importance of identifying 'fake news' and having the tools to counter these is essential. Strategic communication is as much applicable to war like situations in which different objectives are applicable as per the strategic and operational environment. Besides targeting the adversary, the intent is to sensitise own forces on conduct and attitude, and safeguarding own narratives. In erstwhile times this was often crudely referred to as propaganda and counter propaganda.

Structures and Organisation

Pakistan raised the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) and handed over responsibility of strategic communication to it. This ensured that no intelligence agency was directly involved in execution of strategic communication. However, Pakistan's example may not be the best to execute an information strategy through strategic communication, as it primarily addresses the domain of military security, external and internal. Ideally, a constitutional body can undertake the overall control of information strategy and task various agencies that by legislation can be made responsible to it. Legislation may also be required to legalise the drafting of the services of any professional government servant, who could play an effective role in research and execution of the policy.

> **An apex body comprising a secretariat, steering committee, executive committee, research wing, training wing and coordination arm with a cyber-cell for security, is the first step at the highest level. The steering committee should comprise senior, experienced and respected professionals from the domains that would be core to the structure.**

An apex body comprising a secretariat, steering committee, executive committee, research wing, training wing and coordination arm with a cyber-cell for security, is the first step at the highest level. The steering committee should comprise senior, experienced and respected professionals from the domains that would be core to the structure. It would commence with representatives from political, military, police and intelligence domains; plus bureaucracy, academics, strategic analysts, political scientists, sociologists and psychologists, media and technology specialists, among many others. The executive committee's task would be to brain storm the ideas and narratives, identified by the steering committee, and refine plans drafted by the executive committee. It would need to work closely with the research wing which would be responsible for providing the content and other material to be employed for the campaign. The executive committee should also have a contingencies team to cater to situations which suddenly emerge, almost akin to a crisis management team.

The example of the success of the Multi Agency Centre (MAC) set up to coordinate the inputs of various intelligence agencies is a fine example of how an authority can achieve singularity of purpose in an environment where multiple organisations have responsibility. The MAC system has flowered into greater success due to decentralisation into the State MACs or SMACs. The system for formulation and execution of strategic communication system could also be partially decentralised with state bodies of a similar nature or in regional clusters to begin with; states with ongoing turbulence or with greater perceived threats could have a body of their own.

Manning

Communication is a specialist and not a generalist job. This must be accepted by all. While initial manning must be by deputation, a certain amount of contractual hiring will be necessary. An army of researchers can also be created with adequate networking. The intent must be the creation of permanent staff, all trained and ready to deliver. The model of short term deputation does not work in this as it takes much time to get trained and delivery of 'pay back' is usually

delayed. The steering and executive committees could be manned on the basis of five-year contracts, with the presence of different domains being always ensured.

Research Body

This is the crux of the execution. With India's vast diversity there is a need for a deep knowledge bank on demographics, culture, faith, ideology, political narratives, economic factors and gender issues. In addition, geopolitics, border issues and internal security would be under constant research. A technical advisory team would be an asset. Much of this work can be outsourced for detail. The research should be presented as working papers for detailing and extraction of narratives, based upon ongoing and anticipated trends, in conjunction with intelligence agencies. While the research body may have research teams, it's the flatness of the organisation, which is essential since time here is of crucial importance.

> The executive committee/body must have free access to national talent so that the services of identified journalists, media personalities, youth icons, sportsmen and women, television anchors and film producers and directors, can be garnered for the national cause with full freedom to maintain their rights of expression.

Executive Committee/Body

Manned by specialists from different domains, its essential responsibility should be the identification of issues needing to be handled, through strategic communication, as also conceptualizing the approach and formulating the execution plan. The situation in J&K is suitable to consider as an example for initial training, research and testing of narratives. The competing narratives need to be identified and research teams tasked to evolve options for the strengthening of the national narratives. The means to do so should then to be considered while selecting the agencies and organisations to undertake the task. In J&K, the Army for example has a well-structured organisation for information operations, but its weakness lies in the field of research and content. Similarly, the intelligence agencies and the police organisations have organisations of their own. All these need to be coordinated to work for the strengthening of the national narrative. This is where a small state specific body or an organisation such as the Unified Command can act as the coordination body.

The executive committee/body must have free access to national talent so that the services of identified journalists, media personalities, youth icons, sportsmen and women, television anchors and film producers and directors, can be garnered for the national cause with full freedom to maintain their rights of expression. The production of television programs, films and writings in the electronic and print media, remain strong means of communication to counter adversary communication.

Social Media (SM)

One is probably witnessing only the early part of the SM revolution; much more is expected to follow when mass communication on the touch of a button will be accessible, with expected knowledge flow and much greater situational and general awareness. SM is being employed by our adversaries to generate opinion against the nation and cultivate anti-national narratives. However, it is a domain where one who is faster, more knowledgeable, slicker and smarter in generating content and appealing to different senses, as also able to adopt denial as a strategy, is going to have his way. In India organisations are using SM, but the focus and coordination is insufficient. I am aware that in the counter radicalisation efforts in J&K and attempts at de-alienation, it is content which runs out in a matter of days. Hence, the need is to have deep research and availability of text, visuals, jingles and whatever can be absorbing for the human psyche. This is where the strategic communication body will have to have the right selection of people, for manning the SM related research. Most of the world which is adopting strategic communication through SM and other networks is not relying on uniformed people to fight the SM war. These are young, nimble fingered people, with technically wired brains. The concept of the information warrior is just that, a degree of freedom to work from anywhere, content

availability, motivation for a national cause and minimal supervision makes an effective information warrior.

The executive committee/body must have a social media arm to task for the above effort. However, a degree of organisation and structuring will be necessary to prevent compromise of campaigns. Recent examples of political parties in India adopting SM for canvassing should be studied and the methods adapted to structures for a national cause.

It needs to be emphasised that if India delays the study and progressive adoption of strategic communication any further, than it will be extremely difficult to convert emerging technologies into anything advantageous for the nation. As a nation under constant stress from the proxy efforts of none too friendly neighbours, strategic communication is one of the major ways of ensuring-that hybrid strategies do not succeed in straining the integrity of the nation.

> **The concept of the information warrior is just that, a degree of freedom to work from anywhere, content availability, motivation for a national cause and minimal supervision makes an effective information warrior.**

Use of Technology to Counter Modern Terrorism

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Abstract

Globally, terrorism will add to instability and situation may worsen especially in fragile states. Extremist narratives will continue to inspire violence by radicalising youth through social media and internet. Communication technology allows terror groups to direct attacks remotely, often through encrypted messages. The terrorists will 'leave no access point unexploited' and thus misuse of technology by terrorists will be more frequent than before. New technologies could make it easier for terrorists to utilise artificial intelligence, autonomous or semi-autonomous weapon systems and dirty bombs to cause unprecedented collateral damage. It is near impossible to develop counter-terrorist strategies purely based on human skills and instinct, thus, investment in technology to deal with the emerging threats from terrorism is a necessity. There is a growing consensus among the counter-terrorist analysts that governments can no longer rely on countering terror threats with traditional security mechanism. Therefore, countering terrorism and violent extremism will require incorporation and adaptation of technology to build capabilities of detection, prevention, pre-emption and elimination of terrorists through multi-layered technological wall and technological spear.

Introduction

Terrorism is not a new phenomenon; it has long been a method of violent action by organisations and individuals attempting to achieve political goals.[1] Indeed, terrorism is not an end but rather a modus operandi to achieve perceived goals. According to Bruce Hoffman, all terrorists share one common denominator: They "live" in the future, and are convinced that they will defeat their enemies and achieve their political goals.[2] Terrorism is a form of asymmetric warfare in which a non-state actor fights a state. On September 11, 2001, the world woke up to a new reality where terrorists demonstrated their trans-global reach and conveyed the message that no place is safe and no nation is immune – not even a superpower like the United States. No fence, no geographical barrier can stop the terrorists from perpetrating their acts of violence. One distinctive character of modern terrorism is that the religion based ideology of violent extremism can cross international borders with or without contiguous geography when there are ideologically 'co-belligerent' forces -Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Nigeria, Libya and the Af-Pak region are examples of this emerging trend.

Technology has made it possible for the terrorists to even surmount, geographical and demographic barriers by connecting with like-minded willing cadres through the internet and social media. Boko Haram has demonstrated its allegiance to the 'Islamic State' inspite of being geographically separated from West Asia, with which it has no ethnic or racial linkages. The Al-Qaida is the best-known transnational terrorist organisation that has used social media and internet to connect and mobilise like minded organisations and cadres against perceived common adversaries. Similarly, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has been conducting its own global terror campaign through numerous militant groups that share some of its ideological beliefs. The Al Qaida and ISIS have used the very same technology that was created to connect people and nations. The terrorists are using digital technology at every stage from recruitment to aligning resources for launching the attacks.[3] In an environment where terrorists are mobilising cadres, resources and

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strategies at the pace of the internet and states are responding at bureaucratic pace. In such circumstances obtaining information about the identity, goals, plans, and vulnerabilities of terrorists is extremely difficult. Therefore, the only potent tool for dealing with the terrorism is smart technology. In an informationalised environment, the most important tool for preventing, pre-empting, and responding to terror attacks is the technology.

Exploitation of Technology by Modern Terror Groups

Technology has opened up new frontiers of conventional and unconventional terror threats".[4] The ISIS and Al Qaida were able to radicalise, mobilise, and synergise acts of terror by using social media. It was revealed by Sky News, that the ISIS had established sophisticated labs to make surface to air missiles, to engage military and non-military aircraft and were planning to use self-driven cars as bombs. The more serious issue is that the terrorists are not constrained by any ethical and moral dilemmas with regard to deploying autonomous and killer robots against terror targets, whereas, states are bound by certain conventions and global governance rules. Before discussing the use of technology to fight terrorism, it is imperative to understand how terror groups are making use of technology to enhance their reach, improve survivability and increase lethality. Some of the critical technologies that are being used by terrorists in their war against states is given below in succeeding paragraphs.

Exploitation of Cyberspace and Social Media by Terrorists

The cyberspace is an environment without boundaries, a privileged place where terrorists find resources, make propaganda activities and from which it is possible to launch the attacks against enemies everywhere in the world.[5] The access to the internet, has changed the way individuals are radicalised and attacks planned. Online platforms provide great opportunities for promoting radicalisation and accelerate the speed with which radicalised individuals mobilise.[6] Once radicalised, jihadists have used the internet for communication and operational planning. The attack on the Curtis Culwell Centre, represents the most extreme occurrence, as the Al-Shabaab-turned-ISIS operater Mohammad Abdullahi Hassan, directed the perpetrators to conduct the operation through Twitter.[7] The internet, and generally speaking technology, could be exploited by terrorist organisations for several purposes including: shaping perception, recruitment and mobilisation, fundraising, data mining, information gathering, secure communications, cyber-attacks, software distribution (e.g., mobile apps), buying of false documents and training of cadres[8]. Cyber weapons have the potential to attack grids, critical switches, and service sectors with almost the same or even greater impact as that of physical destruction.

> The terrorists are using digital technology at every stage from recruitment to aligning resources for launching the attacks. In an environment where terrorists are mobilising cadres, resources and strategies at the pace of the internet, states are responding at bureaucratic pace. In such circumstances obtaining information about the identity, goals, plans, and vulnerabilities of terrorists is extremely difficult.

Technology to Conceal Identity

Technology is being used to camouflage identity, locations, intentions and theft of identity to remain amorphous and hidden to mislead and misguide the security and intelligence agencies. The ability of AI to generate remarkably accurate artificial voices will pose a serious threat, as "a nefarious actor may easily be able to create a good enough vocal impersonation to trick, confuse, enrage, or mobilise the public".[9] In fact with the sheer volume of data being generated every second of every day, terrorists and radical groups are able to operate in virtually undetected.[10] One of the major challenges being faced by the law enforcement agencies is that social media platforms such as WhatsApp and Telegram, provide end-to-end encrypted messages that afford their users privacy by scrambling the data sent from one device to another. These encrypted messaging services allow unprecedented operational security, limiting law enforcement's ability to view or disrupt these communications.[11]

Innovative Use of Commercial Drones for Terror Attacks

Terrorists are using innovative methods to launch attacks and minimise their own casualties. In January 2018, ten locally assembled drones rigged with explosive devices descended over Russia's Hmeimim air base while an additional three targeted the Russian Naval CSS point in the city of Tartus.[12] This was a first of its kind terror attack where high-value targets were attacked with such a large number of armed drones. Though Russian air defence forces had the system to neutralise and destroy the bulk of the drones, it was reported that considerable damages was done to Russian air assets on the ground. Such swarm attacks are a threat to industry, political leaders, defence installations, airports and public gathering (political/ religious).

Terror Funding and Crypto Currency

Technology has made it easy for terror organisations to raise funds, transfer money for weapon procurement and payment to cadres. Transfer of funds is also being done through Shell Companies and Crypto currency. Crypto currency is traded on a dark web and has made it possible to transfer without government agencies knowing about the money trail.

Evolving Terror Threats from Developing Technology

Threat from Use of High End Technology

The terrorists have extensively employed low end technology for high visibility terror attacks. It is estimated that terrorists will sooner or later employ high end technology, for high visibility acts of terrorism. Nuclear, chemical and biological terror attacks are a distinct possibility and cannot be ruled out. Individuals and small groups have the potential to use an array of new and emerging technologies, including drones, virtual currencies, encrypted communications and AI to enhance their reach and lethality. Additive manufacturing, or 3-D printing, has already been used by individuals to print workable firearms.[13] The task of security forces becomes even more complex when they are required to overcome conventional and unconventional terror threats. India has so far only developed capabilities to deal with conventional and physical terror strikes, whereas, today the threat is hybrid in nature consisting of high and low end technology.

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AI Enabled Autonomous Weapon Systems

AI enabled weapon systems will pose a serious threat, if the technology is acquired by terror groups. Similarly, autonomous and semi-autonomous weapon systems will cause havoc if they fall in the hands of the terrorists.

Self-Driven Vehicles

Self-driven vehicles as being developed by Tesla could be used by terrorists for ploughing into crowds or laden with explosives to explode near vital installations or public place. The Finnish security firm F-Secure, has "concrete evidence" that ISIS is considering the use of self-driving cars for suicide bombers, or for ramming attacks such as those carried out as early as June 2007 in Glasgow, as well as more recently in Nice in July 2016, Berlin in December 2016, London in June 2017 and, just few months ago, in New York.[14]

Nuclear Terrorism

Hybrid and proxy wars supported by non-state actors have led to the collapse of states not in years but in months. Syria, Iraq and Libya are the examples of such a collapse. There is always a time lag when no one is in control of the

state and this is often a stage of complete chaos and disorder. There are many nations who have clandestinely amassed fissile and radioactive material for both scientific study or even for laboratory tests for building of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. At such a time there is always a chance of this material falling into the hands of the terror groups. Thus certain rogue agencies could be in a possession of fissile material and terrorist groups may be willing to acquire it for a cost. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has reported more than a hundred nuclear smuggling incidents since 1993, 18 of which involved highly enriched uranium, the key ingredient for building an atomic bomb and the most dangerous product on the nuclear black market.[15] There have been 21 seizures or attempted thefts of weapons-grade material (mostly from Georgia), uranium or plutonium, since the Soviet Union collapsed. In every case the material seized had not been missed and mostly the theft was by an insider. Thus the threat is real and technology is the only way of detecting this potentially lethal material.

Technology as a Weapon to Fight Terrorism

There is a growing concern among the states that the terrorists are using technology for disruption and destruction. The need of the hour is to defend the state against technologically enabled terror strikes and also to eliminate the terrorists before they can cause damage. Technology today has the potential to detect, disrupt, terror attacks and enable intelligence and security forces to track down terrorists and their networks. Technology can identify the enemy within and proxies far away. Technology is an enabler and also gives the state a defensive wall against emerging terror threats. But it is not simply the use of technologies in isolation that presents the most significant challenge, but rather a combination of these technologies—as evidenced in the Saudi scenario, where a drone was used in conjunction with a deliberate disinformation campaign conducted through social media.[16] The technology of course is vital in the war against terrorism, but it is inadequate to deal with the scope and potential severity of the threat.[17] You can't send a soldier into the battle without a weapon. In the same way, law enforcement needs to be equipped with the right digital intelligence tools to fight terrorists using and abusing technology.[18] Technology would also require a legal framework for application. It would require amendments in privacy laws, that would authorise the state to ensure the digital mapping of the population, monitoring of social media by the state, digitisation of personal records and the monitoring of activities of suspects as and when the situation so demands.

> The need of the hour is to defend the state against technologically enabled terror strikes and also to eliminate the terrorists before they can cause damage. Technology today has the potential to detect, disrupt, terror attacks and enable intelligence and security forces to track down terrorists and their networks. Technology can identify the enemy within and proxies far away. Technology is an enabler and also gives the state a defensive wall against emerging terror threats.

Combination of Technologies for Counter Terrorist Strategies

Reliance on a single technology is unlikely to yield the desired results in the fight against the terrorism. At any given time surveillance, tracking, AI based identification systems would be required to detect and disrupt plans of terrorists. Similarly, once a target is determined it has to be monitored, before the threat is eliminated. Multi-layered technologies are required to identify the communication, monitoring of physical movement of the terrorists, and keeping armed drones as back up. If the threat is from swarm drones, there will be a requirement of wide area surveillance, predator drones to destroy incoming threat, jamming/ hacking incoming drone and even air defence system capable of taking on low flying objects. Without doubt aerial drones, AI, biometrics, ground sensors and semi-autonomous weapon systems have assumed great significance. Technological advancements have made the security of installations and even border security far more feasible. Drone cameras, surveillance systems, motion sensors, and thermal imaging are used to create barriers.[19] The casualties of own troops have drastically reduced in Kashmir since the use of surveillance drones and mobile interceptions during encounters.

The Ultimate Weapon in the Fight Against Terrorism, Digital Intelligence

Cellebrite's digital forensics tools can rapidly unlock, extract, decode, and analyse digital data from multiple sources, including cloud. Being able to analyse and sort through large volumes of data fast is critical to identifying terrorists and their accomplices as well as preventing future attacks.[20]

Use of Cyber as a Weapon

Cross border terrorism, radicalisation and global linkages of terror organisation warrants strengthening of cyber frontiers. Cyberspace is a national asset...the way forward is obviously to acknowledge and incorporate cyber domain as a favourable frontier. While government agencies will remain, principal players, the undeniable fact is that there are also millions of private players and the challenge to cyber security cannot be met unless they work together".[21] Cyberspace is an environment without boundaries, thus it is not possible to control it, but it is possible to monitor it and then build capabilities to harness the potential of cyber weapons to attack the roots of terrorism. Hacking into smartphones, Facebook accounts and impersonating as a group member on social media is one possibility. Through cyberspace, the state can monitor some of activities such as, propaganda, weapon purchase, purchase of stolen or forged cards, counterfeit documents, recruitment of cadres, purchase of malicious codes, fund raising, purchase of Crypto currency, data mining, location of terrorists and even intent.

Use of 'AI'as Counter Terrorist Weapon

Ethical questions are being raised with regard to the employment of autonomous weapon systems; however, South Korea uses a Samsung SGR-A1 sentry gun that is supposedly capable of firing autonomously to police its border.[22] 'AI' can also be used to deface, supress and black out known terror social media accounts. It can be used even to predict the frequency of attacks and the tentative location of next terror strike. The most significant aspect of 'AI' is that if terrorist organisations wish to use 'AI' for evil purposes, perhaps the best defence would be an 'AI' offense.[23]

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Self-Driving Vehicles/ AI Enabled Vehicles

Misuse of this technology by terrorists is a possibility, self-driving vehicles will need to be equipped with cyber-security technology to prevent them from being used in terrorist attacks.[24] This certainly would require legal framework for making these vehicles operational on street. Periodic verification of vehicles would also be necessary. At the same time these cars can also be used to target terrorists hiding in houses as decoys and also as a potential weapons platform.

Digital Tracking of Funding

The terrorists are making big money through charity, drug trafficking and illegal international trade including oil and Shell Companies. Financial foot-prints of Shell companies and the charity organisations can be tracked. However, there is no fool proof mechanism unless there is global effort and sharing of information of any dubious transaction from unknown sources.

Facial Recognition System

In the Chinese city of Zhengzhou, a police officer wearing facial recognition glasses spotted a heroin smuggler at a train station. In another instance in Wuhu, a fugitive murder suspect was identified by a camera as he bought food from a street vendor.[25] The monitoring of cities through algorithm is becoming a necessity. In the absence of such a system,

law enforcement agencies normally operate on instincts because it is not possible to identify a wanted criminal, if he alters his identification by growing beard and using headgears. With the facial recognition system even if an individual altered his identity he still can be caught because either he will become a person unrecognised whose data is not available or his true identification will emerge, in both cases law enforcement agencies can detain him, if such a system is made operational.

Combatting Terrorism through Technology: Indian Perspective

As per Business Insider, in 2018 India was ranked among the top 20 most dangerous countries and home to 11 recognised terrorist organisations, including Al-Qaida and ISIS offshoots.[26] India is facing cross border terrorism, home-grown terrorists, Left Wing Extremists (LWE) and insurgents resorting to violence. Migration is likely to continue to fuel social and interstate tensions in India, while drugs and transnational organised crime take a toll on public safety.

India has seen the impact of smartphone on radicalisation of masses and use of this technology to network with the terror groups and criminals. The way forward is to harness the potential of technology to eliminate threat from the terrorists, insurgents and radicals.

The war against terror cannot be fought purely on the basis of superior fire power, it would require support of laptop warriors to track, monitor and ultimately eliminate the terrorists. There is an urgent need to enhance surveillance of population, social networking sites, induction of facial identification technology and digitisation of personal details. Mapping of population is a humongous task but it has become an utmost necessity so that illegal migrants, criminals and unrecognised persons can be identified and monitored. There is enough firepower with the counter terrorist forces, what they need is situational awareness to react in time. The first priority should be all weather surveillance of borders and public places. The second priority should be to gain access into communication network, ability to use AI to monitor social media and supress or blackout radical discourse. The third priority should be induction of semi-autonomous weapon systems, killer robots, self-driving vehicles as decoys, armed and surveillance drones

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to prevent terror strikes and respond with minimum collateral damages. Technology would also play a vital role in protection of critical infrastructure in near future. Incidents like Pathankot can be avoided by incorporating technology to maintain 24x7 reconnaissance, surveillance and target acquisition. Terrorists follow Chinese maxim of, "Leave no access point unexploited". Therefore, endeavour should be to close all perils of corridor by a combination of human skills and technology.

Conclusion

The destructive capacity of terrorist groups is growing steadily as terrorists prove themselves adept at using modern technology for their own ends.[27] Some argue that technology does not have three vital qualities that humans possess: experience, values and judgement. This means that machines may miss something that only a human could detect. So while technology offers exciting possibilities for tracking terrorist communications and predicting attacks, it is not a replacement for human judgement and should be used with caution.[28] Technology to fight terrorism is becoming a necessity that cannot be wished away. The idea is to enable humans to determine threat, identify location and respond, before terrorists can cause harm. Though, technology induction is expensive, but if the threats can be minimised, it is still worth spending that amount. The Al-Qaida spent roughly half a million dollars, to destroy the World Trade Centre and cripple the Pentagon. The New York Times, estimated the loss to the U.S. approximately $3.3 trillion, or about $7

million for every dollar the Al-Qaida spent while planning and executing the attacks.[29]Asia Economic Institute study, which calculated that the overall damage to India's economy in the wake of the Mumbai terror attacks was about $100 billion, arising from crucial institutions, such as the Stock Exchange, commodities and money markets, and business and commercial establishments which remained closed. Further, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) was hit by an estimated $20 billion.[30] Technology shield and technology spear is an investment and it is already overdue for a country like India to employ technology as a tool to fight terrorism. Single technology is unlikely to deliver a fool-proof security, therefore, there is a need to commission multi layered technology that has redundancy to cover human and technological blind spots.

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Mending India's Civil Military Relations

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Abstract

The extant state of civil-military relations is in need of considerable improvement and is impacting substantially the effectiveness of India's military instrument. This paper explores its impact on the morale of the military and its material deficiencies. Military's internalised narrative of victimisation, is the dominant factor affecting morale, which is coupled with lack of integrated structures to provide political guidance and coordinated execution to shape the military instrument. Both pathologies have been identified by a host of reports including the Kargil Committee Report, Group of Ministers Report et al. But several important reforms remain resistant to bureaucratic inertia and turf battles. Political leadership have to first recognise the need for reform and thereafter, take responsibility for sustained monitoring and implementation. A key trigger for a constant dialogue between civil and military leadership is the appointment of Chief of Defence Staff (CDS). The nub of the problem is the underutilisation of existing institutional mechanisms for a perpetual civil-military dialogue that serves to improve military's usefulness.

Introduction

India's civil-military relationship is fraught with increasing friction that often finds reflection in the country's hyperactive media landscape. Growing internecine tensions between different entities within the government and outside continues to have an adverse impact on civil-military relations and eventually decreases the efficiency of the nation's military instrument. For the primary rationale and end product for harmonious civil-military relations, is the conservation of an effective military instrument.

The deterioration in civil-military relations is coincident with gathering clouds of geo-political anxieties at the global and regional level. India's security interests are impacted by growing tensions at the global level between the U.S. and China and also by China's growing influence in the region, especially in the South Asian Region that is also coupled with a deepened Sino-Pak nexus. India's politico-strategic context demands a military instrument that can deter and deal with a host of threats that loom in India's strategic horizon. The imperative to mend civil-military relationships is unquestionable and begs the query, what should be done?

This paper addresses two broad areas that relate to the civil-military relationship that together produce military effectiveness. These areas encompass the domain of the immaterial, which is reflected in the collective fighting spirit of the military, and possession of the implements for combat, which is essentially a material sphere. Amongst the two, fighting spirit or morale is a superior virtue though it could be effected by deficiency in the material domain. However,

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deficiencies in the material domain can be made up through superior doctrine, originality in operational concepts and tactical innovation. The defeat of USA in Vietnam and its impending withdrawal from Afghanistan are glaring examples.

Morale

Morale is an intangible and dynamic factor that is not easily amenable to assessment, especially, from the outside and may be varied across the military. Holistically, it is impossible to judge and the only area that could provide some sense of the state of affairs is through grasping the dominant narratives that pervades the actions, and the writing and statements of the leadership. This essentially includes the officer class across the military hierarchy.

From the author's analysis of the media landscape, there is one dominant narrative adversely impacting military morale that must be addressed and that is the narrative of victimisation. This narrative has as its central theme, that the government has eroded the status of the armed forces, side lined it from decision making on national security issues and is deliberately denying rightful dues in terms of pay, allowances and promotions. It does not matter whether this narrative is legitimate or not. What should be of concern- is its prevalence and the need to address the issue.

Recently, a group of 356 serving personnel including officers, junior commissioned officers and other ranks from the Army had in an unprecedented move approached the Supreme Court with the plea to protect them for acts done in good faith while carrying out their duties in counter-insurgency areas. The Supreme Court dismissed the plea and remarked that it was the governments' duty to provide the protection[1]. Though the action of the serving persons was related to an ongoing case regarding false encounters in Manipur, the issue that needs to be addressed relates to protection of soldiers against vexatious First Information Reports (FIRs) for acts done in good faith. Presently, protection against prosecution is provided through the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA), but there is no protection against vexatious FIRs. Harassing soldiers through vexatious FIRs are not uncommon in counter insurgency and is resorted by the insurgent supporters or misled human group. The process of investigation becomes the punishment, and the possibility of being subjected to a long and laborious process hangs like the Sword of Damocles for a life time. This requires a legal remedy that the government should bring about. It is unfortunate that the soldiers have to seek protection from the very state for which they are willing to make the supreme sacrifice.

> "The Judicial Committee on One Rank One Pension (OROP) was appointed to look into the anomalies arising out of implementation of OROP. The Committee has submitted its report to the government on October 26, 2016 which is still under examination". As in January 2019, the report is still 'under examination'. Similar fate is experienced by a host of committees that were constituted to address issues arising from earlier and current pay commissions.

There is a laundry list of grievances regarding lowering the status of the armed forces pay and pension issues[2]. Each succeeding pay commissions have added on to existing and unaddressed grievances. A group of veterans have been on strike for over two years in the national capital, being disenchanted with the grant of One Rank One Pension (OROP). The lethargy of the Ministry of Defence (MoD) on the issue is on display in the answer given on March 31, 2017 to a parliament question on the status of the Commission that examined the anomalies of the OROP- "The Judicial Committee on One Rank One Pension (OROP) was appointed to look into the anomalies arising out of implementation of OROP. The Committee has submitted its report to the government on October 26, 2016 which is still under examination"[3]. As in January 2019, the report is still 'under examination'. Similar fate is experienced by a host of committees that were constituted to address issues arising from earlier and current pay commissions. It is also the case that the committees have no representation from the armed forces and therefore, their cases are insufficiently comprehended or fall victim to bureaucratic inertia.

The narrative of governmental victimisation is best illustrated by the glaring issue of Defence Ministry's treatment of soldiers who have been invalidated on medical grounds. Mr. Parrikar as Defence Minister had constituted a committee

in 2015 to examine the issue. The committee had recommended that all appeals pending against disabled soldiers filed in the Supreme Court be withdrawn immediately. Even after three years, the government continues to sit on most of the recommendations. In a reply to MP Rajeev Chandrashekhar, the Defence Ministry accepted that out of 75 recommendations, only 16 were accepted till early 2018[4]. In January 2019, Mr Rajeev Chandrashekhar, along with some activists met the Defence Minister and was reassured that the matter will be addressed. Such reassurances lack credibility and the narrative of victimisation endures.

The narrative of victimisation also pervades the status of the armed forces. Understandably, adjustment in status enjoyed by the armed forces prior to independence was carried out with the objective of achieving civilian control over the military. The move was shadowed by increasing instances globally of military takeovers. One of the Indian Military's institutional hallmarks, so far has been its apolitical stance. There has been no instance of the military being entangled in planning or attempting a coup. This could also be attributed to achievement of a high degree of civilian control. But the experience of the military in dealing with the civilian bureaucracy has given birth to a perception that civilian control has mutated to bureaucratic control with political leadership abdicating their responsibility to apply their minds to issues concerning the military. The continued resistance by the MoD to integrate military personnel in its structure to offset inadequacy in knowledge and experience is characteristic.

The recent move of the MoD to open cantonment roads to the public and usurpation of powers of military commanders responsible for security through bureaucratic subterfuge is another case for reinforcing the narrative of victimisation[5]. There is no doubt that the military occupies prime land in urban areas and there is increasing pressure for creating public infrastructure that requires the military to try and accommodate civilian necessities. What fueled the victimisation narrative was the manner in which the orders were issued with military commanders getting orders overnight. Civilians, celebrating the opening of roads, as if they had won a battle over the Army, were indicative of the civil-military divide, and this one at societal level. Such scars normally run deep and pitting the military with its society should have been avoided. The paramount need is for the political and military leadership to recognise the need to change the narrative, with the political leadership taking responsibility for the change.

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Material

Galloping technological sophistication of the material component of the military instrument has posed a huge challenge to India's ability to keep its armed forces equipped with state of the art technology. India's military modernisation remains bogged down, due to lack of political guidance to shape the military instrument, internecine political slugfests, weak indigenous capability, insufficient structural integration and a tangled web of bureaucratic procedure.

Political Guidance

Shaping the military instrument requires a constant dialogue between the political and military leadership. Such a dialogue is absent in India despite recognizing its necessity through the Kargil Committee Report and the Group of Ministers Report. More importantly, the need for a holistic view of national security resulted in the creation of the National Security Council (NSC), National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS), Strategic Policy Group (SPG) and the National Security Advisory Board (NSAB) in 2001. Political guidance to shape the military instrument was to flow from these national security mechanisms. The meta-issue regarding the balance in the military instrument between continental and maritime power cannot be left to the MoD and the armed forces to decide. Instead, it has to be part of the political guidance that originates from a holistic consideration, which is the remit of the NSC and its supporting structures.

The inability to produce a national security doctrine/strategy has resulted in the Ministry of Defence crafting its own guidance through the Raksha Mantri (RM) Directive. Understandably, the civilian bureaucracy has no professional capacity to create such a document on its own and therefore the document is originated from the armed forces and finalised by the MoD. Practically, the RM's directive is primarily a product of the military imagination instead of being a result of a dialogue between the political and military entities. But the military imagination itself is not in itself a cohesive one due the inter service variance in perspective. Such variances were to be narrowed through the creation of the CDS. The absence of a CDS complicates the dialogue process between the political and civil leadership as they mostly hear single service perspective from the three Chiefs.

Insufficient Structural Integration

The nature of security issues calls for structures dealing with national security be populated by multi-disciplinary expertise. Defence forms an important component of national security and therefore the civil-military natural divide needs to be bridged through integrated organisational structures. It is not the case that the military should acquire a dominant presence but instead it must have adequate representation in appropriate forums.

An examination of the population mix of human capital in the NSCS is revealing. For most of its existence, there was no military representative at the higher level and the situation has been rectified somewhat in November 2018. At most levels, it is tenanted by civil service cadres who are mostly first-termers in the security arena. The NSCS has been quite resistant to induction of armed forces personnel.

The SPG that was supposed to be the principle mechanism for evolution of national security policies had the three service chiefs and Secretaries of relevant departments and organisations. This body that could be convened either by the NSA / Cabinet Secretary hardly met in the last decade. Recently, the NSA has been anointed the head of the SPG, while retaining the same composition. While this will improve the functioning of the SPG, the heavy lifting for preparing policy papers will have to be done at the NSCS either by it or through the NSAB.

> The lack of integration of the armed forces headquarters with the MoD continues to be a major source of tension in civil-military relations. The MoD retains its character as the stronghold of the IAS that has the last word even on issues where they have no experience or knowledge. The lower most level of the civilian bureaucratic hierarchy passes judgement on opinions expressed by senior armed forces officers including the Chiefs.

Till the advent of the present government, the NSAB was a multi-disciplinary body that also had representatives from the three services. From 2014 the composition of the NSAB had been truncated and there has been no Air Force representative and also lacks representation from other disciplines. It has ceased to have multi-disciplinary character.

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Major acquisition delays also ensue because of inter-service disagreements that arise from lack of political guidance regarding the balance between continental and maritime power. The MoD does not have the capacity to arbitrate these differences and the services also cannot do so as there is no CDS. The appointment of a CDS with concurrent integration of the Integrated Defence Staff as a Military Department in the MoD provides a solution. This will facilitate prioritisation, faster procurement and reduce the friction between civil and military components as they will interact at the same level instead of one being subordinate to the other. Same level interaction will also result in integrating respective domain expertise.

Greater integration is also required to improve indigenous defence research, development and production capability. India's lack of indigenous defence capability has resulted in India becoming the world's largest arms importer. The confinement of defence research, development and production, mostly to the governmental sector has been and continues to be its essential weakness. Though the research and development process will probably be largely limited to the government there has been a reluctance to incorporate the military as the user agency. It is only the Navy that has established its own design bureau and Naval Shipyards are managed by retired Naval officers. The Department of Defence Production, on the other hand, has steadfastly refused to allow HAL to be headed by retired Air Force officers.

The lack of integration of the user can be corrected but requires political indulgence, since, it is primarily about changing the status quo that involves entrenched interests and turf battles. For sure, this measure is purely limited to improving the civil-military relationships in the domain of indigenous defence capability. To achieve a sturdy indigenous defence capability remains a humungous challenge that encompasses several more spheres.

Mending Civil-Military Relations

Civil-military relations harbour inherent structural tensions that will require constant attention and efforts to keep it on an even keel. The politicians have no expertise on the role of force and military leadership finds it difficult to reconcile with the values that pervade the world of politics.

> Political recognition of the impact of prevailing adverse civil-military relations on the efficacy of India's military instrument is the critical first step. This is a huge challenge by itself and getting them to keep continued focus even after getting their initial attention will be a bigger challenge. Political responsibility to tackle the issue must rest with the Prime Minister and the Defence Minister. But they will be handicapped without a single point adviser like the CDS. Hence the appointment of a CDS should be the trigger that makes possible a sustained dialogue between the political and military leadership.

The tensions in civil-military relations also stem from the fact that it is fundamentally a social relationship. Social grouping is the natural tendency and thrives by cooperating with people one considers its own. Politicians, civil society, civilian bureaucracy and the military are the four social groups that intermingle and determine the state of civil-military relations. According to various surveys, India's civil society holds the Indian Armed Forces as the most respected institution. Friction in the relationship exists between politicians and the military; and civilian bureaucracy and the military. The prevailing military narrative framework perceives the issue as a nexus between politicians and bureaucracy against the military. 'Military is being victimised' is the prevailing narrative'. The first priority is to tackle this perception.

Political recognition of the impact of prevailing adverse civil-military relations on the efficacy of India's military instrument is the critical first step. This is a huge challenge by itself and getting them to keep continued focus even after getting their initial attention will be a bigger challenge. Political responsibility to tackle the issue must rest with the Prime Minister and the Defence Minister. But they will be handicapped without a single point adviser like the CDS. Hence the appointment of a CDS should be the trigger that makes possible a sustained dialogue between the political and military leadership. CDS atop the existing Integrated Defence Staff (IDS) should be merged with the MoD as a Military Department. Better interaction through integrated structures is the way forward.

Integration continues to face resistance and requires political intervention that has not been sufficiently forthcoming. Integrating the military within the plethora of national security organisations is also linked to overcoming problems of equivalencies between civilian appointments and military ranks. This issue has been exacerbated with unresolved issues from several pay commissions, and has impeded military personnel integration into civilian structures. Only political intervention can resolve this issue.

Political guidance to armed forces to shape the military instrument will require the crystallisation of a National Security Doctrine/Strategy. This is the prime responsibility of the NSC. All attempts to getting political acceptance of papers prepared by previous NSAB's have failed. But it is time that political leadership realised the need for a document that will guide various elements of the National Security System and minimise the civil-military frictions that arise due to its absence. The meta-question of the balance between continental and maritime power should be addressed. It will also provide the rationale for military budgets and ease prioritisation of allocations within the services and the other elements of the MoD.

Pay, pension and allowances of military personnel are a sphere that has continued to be a source of friction with the counterparts of the civilian bureaucracy. The plethora of issues and the fact that quite a few of them are under legal contestation indicates that there is a need for establishing a permanent Military Commission in the MoD to speedily tackle these and prevent them from festering. The composition of the commission should be multi-disciplinary and headed by an elected politician.

Integration to manage manpower in the national security domain is also required to solve the growing liability of military pensions. The opportunity ensues due to the growth in the Central and State Police forces. Since the armed forces require retaining their youthful character, certain percentage of personnel recruited by the police forces in the central and state police can be first sent to the armed forces to serve for 5-7 years and reverted back to the parent organisation where they can re-oriented with their original seniority remaining intact. This is the opposite of what has been unsuccessfully attempted so far, which was to send military persons after they have finished their colour service of 15-18 years. Implementation of this concept could over a period of time reduce the pension outgo of the military and also provide disciplined and trained manpower to the police. Such a proposal will require political intervention as they would be resistance from the police leadership, citing the point that it will be difficult to reorient military behaviour to police duties. Such arguments deny the flexible nature of the human being.

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Conclusion

In a developing country like India, there will be a natural contestation between development demands and security needs. Arbitration of such a contestation finally rests with the political leadership. The process of arriving at decisions regarding devotion of resources must be based on a long-term view of external and domestic environment. The natural tensions that prevail in civil-military relations are exacerbated by the feebleness of political guidance to the executive arms of the government. This is a major deficiency that begs for rectification.

The most efficient security structures tasked for policy and strategy evolution are normally the ones that are integrated with multidisciplinary expertise, especially, in the civil and military. Such integration has not been optimally achieved because of a host of cultural, social and administrative issues. This requires persistent political intervention which is possible only, if institutional pressure is mounted from below, and through a permanent dialogue process that is held behind closed doors. The dialogue yields must be utilised to deal with adverse narratives, and material insufficiencies, that infect the soil of civil-military relations.

Endnotes

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