

USI Strategic Year Book

2018

United Service Institution of India

Strategic Year Book

2018

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Foreword

The USI of India since its inception in 1870 has rendered a ‘Yeoman service’ to the nation, inter alia by promoting strategic thought, providing policymakers with invaluable strategic inputs and articulating India’s strategic interests and outlook at the international arena. Publication of the Strategic Year Book by the USI is a key national endeavour for shaping and underscoring India’s contemporary strategic discourse.

In today’s knowledge world, strategic communication and public diplomacy have assumed overwhelming importance in gauging and shaping perceptions. Most developed countries, notably the US, periodically publish policy documents namely, National Security Strategy (NSS), Defence Strategy, Defence Capabilities Plan, Nuclear Posture Review and such like other literature to showcase nuances of their strategic outlook, intent, capacities and orientation to shape strategic geopolitical environment and seek outcomes in keeping with their national interests. Over the years, an increasingly confident China too has refined the art of circulating such publications for propagating their world-view, strategic thoughts (with the Chinese characteristics) and direction, under the rubric of a sophisticated Information Campaign Strategy. Likewise, other major world powers periodically publish such literature.

Conversely, India continues to eschew publication of White Papers, Strategic Defence Review, National Security Strategy, Doctrines or Approach Papers on matters of national security. Plethora of Indian literature on the national security by individual writers or ‘Think Tanks’ lacks rigour, credibility, objectivity and ownership from the policymaker. A rising India cannot afford to be lackadaisical in articulation of her core interests, strategic objectives and the world-view. It is axiomatic that India’s National Command Authority (NCA) holistically reviews the impact of internal and external strategic environment on her national interests. This is essential to clearly identify strategic gaps vis a vis our competitors, rivals and adversaries, to make informed policy choices, to craft realistic strategies for enhancing and leveraging Comprehensive National Power in furtherance of national interests. The publication of the Strategic Year Book is a key endeavour in that direction.

The issues of Strategic Year Book published in 2016 and 2017 have been widely appreciated by our readers in India and abroad. The articles in the Strategic Year Book 2018 focus on the strategic challenges and opportunities beset by India in its strategic journey towards an emerging Leading Power. I am sanguine this Publication will prove useful in generating informed debates, cross-fertilizing ideas and refining policy framework.

Jai Hind



New Delhi

26 March 2018

Lt Gen PK Singh, PVSM, AVSM (Retd)

Director USI

The Year Book 2018 - At a Glance

The idea of modern Indian State is steeped in our rich civilizational past. Our sagacious ancestors envisioned the world as one family (**Vasudhavia Kutumbakam**). India's civilizational values, pluralism, secularism, syncretism, democracy and peaceful co-existence are enshrined in our sacred Constitution. India's rich heritage and geo-strategic location confer on her positive attributes of a Great Power. The idea of India inspires a lofty national vision. It envisions India a strong, socially cohesive, militarily powerful, culturally vibrant, 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, instruments of National Power and Dispersed Power (Diaspora) thus transforming her into a **Smart Power**. A proactive and dynamic Foreign Policy is a 'sine quo non' for strategic configuration of India's CNP to achieve stated core national interests and strategic objectives with a view to achieve a favourable strategic posture in ever-evolving **Balance of Power**. In her quest for achieving a **Leading Power** status, India has to navigate deftly through a **geopolitical landscape** that is characterized by **Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous (VUCA)** environment.

Let us not be oblivious, to the reality that on the flip side, India's diversity lends itself to a **multitude of fault-lines** which are exploited by Anti-National Elements (ANEs), anti-social forces and a hostile **Pakistan – China strategic nexus**. Collusive hybrid threats are a stark reality that India can ill-afford to take lightly. India's **strategic neighbourhood is in turmoil**; be it political instability in the neighbouring countries, socio-economic unrest, sectarian or Jihadi conflicts and vexed nature of Great Power rivalry. These geopolitical developments impinge on India's national security. **China's phenomenal rise**, assertive behaviour to propel itself to Centre-stage of new international order, is a matter of concern for India and the international community at large. Perceived relative decline of the US and its inward looking '**American First Policy**', further complicate the strategic environment. Uncertainty of the US role and behaviour emboldens China to push her revisionist agenda. It is therefore, incumbent for **Middle Level Powers** to play an important role as balancers to prevent emergence of another **hegemonic world order**, instead of a **desired Polycentric one**. Against this strategic backdrop, India is expected to play an important role. India must work with a missionary zeal to develop CNP and leverage it to transform India into a **stable Asian power and a responsible international stakeholder**. What should be India's strategic direction and behaviour? What capacities India should develop and how should these be leveraged merit an informed discourse?

To this end, the **Strategic Year Book 2016 and Strategic Year Book 2017**, published earlier, contain a spectrum of perspectives on India's national interest, strategic challenges, opportunities and measures for transforming India into a Leading Power. The editorial team is happy to present our august readers the **Strategic Year Book 2018**, laid out in six sections viz, **Transforming India, India's Internal Security Environment, India's Pakistan and China Strategic Challenges, India's Extended Neighbourhood, India's Comprehensive National Power and India's Defence Capability**.

Section I: Transforming India, The first article written by *Shri Rajiv Sikri, IFS (Retd)*, on "**India's Approach to Development of Comprehensive National Power**", articulates a generic approach for building India's CNP; military, diplomatic, economic, political, and 'soft' power elements.

Section II: India's Internal Security Environment, commences with an article on “**A Road Map for Sustainable Security and Peace in Jammu and Kashmir**”, written by *Lt Gen Deependra Singh Hooda, (Retd)*. The author dilates on the internal and transnational dimensions of conflict and recommends a comprehensive roadmap for sustainable security, peace and development in the State. *Lt Gen Praveen Bakshi, (Retd)*, in his article, “**Securing India's Borders in North-Eastern Region: Challenges and Prospects**” delves into the complexities of management and defence of India's North-Eastern borders and suggests a sound border management policy, with emphasis on integration and synergy between multitude of stakeholders. The next article on “**Dynamics of Security of Siliguri Corridor: Way Forward**”, is written by *Lt Gen KJ Singh (Retd)*. The author highlights overwhelming strategic importance of Siliguri Corridor, maps the internal security challenges, their external linkages and the China factor. He suggests a robust road map for revamping security of the Corridor. *Shri Prakash Singh, IPS (Retd)*, writes on, “**India's Internal Security Challenges and Response Mechanism**”. He takes a holistic look at India's internal security environment and highlights inadequacies in our policing system. He argues strongly in favour of implementing long pending police reforms and rapid modernization of Police and Central Police Forces (CPOs). The next article in this section is “**Demographic Transformations: Implications for India's Internal Security**” authored by *Dr Ajai Sabni*. He underscores demographic trends globally and then focuses on South Asia in general and India in particular. As per him youth bulge from underdeveloped countries to developing countries (that are plagued with shrinking population) will be a source of tension. India will be susceptible to migrations from the neighbouring countries and within from rural to urban areas and from less developed heartland to prosperous coastal areas. Managing demographic transitions is essential for peaceful internal security environment of India. Another lurking threat is that of Nuclear Terrorism. *Dr Roshan Khanijo*, in her article “**Challenges from Nuclear Terrorism and Accidents**”, discusses threats, ill effects of radioactive and nuclear fissile materials, falling in the hands of non-state actors, and the cyber threat to civilian nuclear power plants.

Section III: India's Pakistan and China Strategic Challenge, begins with the article “**Pakistan occupied Kashmir: Genesis of a Fake State**” by *Professor Kashinath Pandita*. The author cogently brings out how PoK is a fake entity sans any legal basis. He brings out how Pakistan through its machinations has subjugated these people and used territory under its occupation for cross-border terrorism. The article, “**Politico-Religious Developments in Pakistan: Implications for India**”, written by *Shri Tilak Devasher*, discusses the political turmoil in Pakistan created due to the disqualification of Nawaz Sharif and the rise of the hard-line religious right, represented by the Barelvi Tehreek-i-LabaikYaRasool Allah (TLYRA) party. Seizing of power by radical political parties in the coming election, may create more hard-line anti-India propaganda, jeopardizing any efforts on confidence building, thus, making the region unstable. *Lt Gen Ghanshyam Katoch, (Retd)*, in his article “**Pakistan's Military Strategy and Behaviour: An Assessment**”, discusses evolution of Pakistan's military history, strategic culture and determinants of Pakistan's military behaviour. He concludes that “No War and No Peace” paradigm favours Pakistan's asymmetric warfare strategy against India. *Shri T C A Raghavan, IFS (Retd)*, in the article “**The United States and its Af-Pak Policy: Implications for India**”, examines the nuances of new Af-Pak, National Security Strategy 2017 and vexed US-Pakistan relations and implications for India. China, India's most formidable challenge is witnessing unprecedented political and military developments. The article “**Post-19th Party Congress: China's Strategic Direction and Behaviour**”, written by *Shri Nalin Surie, IFS (Retd)* discusses China's strategic outlook, intentions and future strategic course under a powerful Xi Jinping. China is promoting BRI to establish a China driven international economic system that is supported by its hard power. His prognosis sees China becoming more assertive in pursuing its expanding core interests. The next article “**China's Revolutionary Military Reforms; Salient Imperatives: Strategic Implications**” written by *Maj Gen (Dr) G G Dwivedi, (Retd)*, discusses the underlying rationale behind the critical military reforms. The article flags salient characteristics, doctrinal dimensions, thrust areas, capacity building through focused ‘Theatre Commands’ and finally examines the implications, it will have for India.

Section IV: India's Extended Neighbourhood, starts with the article, “**India's Engagement with Middle Powers in East Asia**”, written by *Shri Skand Ranjan Tayal, IFS (Retd)*. Indo-Pacific is the centre of gravity in the

global power shift. India has emerged as an important vector in the region. The author argues that India's 'Strategic Partnership' with 'Middle Powers' in East Asia is critical to balance a revisionist China. He suggests measures for cementing India's bilateral and multilateral relations with the regional states. Peace in West Asia is imperative for security of India's energy needs and huge diaspora. *Shri Talmiz Ahmad, IFS (Retd)*, in his article "**The Security Scenario in West Asia: Challenges and Opportunities for India**", discusses the dynamics of raging conflicts and their impact on India's strategic engagement with Afghanistan, Central Asia, energy security, economic well-being and safety of eight million-strong Indian community. He suggests that in a departure from its traditional posture, India should lead a diplomatic initiative to promote confidence-building measures and dialogue, between Saudi Arabia and Iran. Eurasia, the so-called 'Heartland', is equally important for India. *Prof Nirmala Joshi*, in her article "**Changing Perspective on Eurasia and India-Russia Relations**", highlights the changing perspectives in Eurasia, its security landscape and dynamics of India-Russia-China relations. She strongly favours India's continued engagement with Russia to maximize India's manoeuvre in the balance of power. Geo-economics has become the principal driver of geopolitics. *Shri Sanjay Singh, IFS (Retd)* in his article "**Geopolitics of Emerging Transit and Energy Corridors in the Indo-Pacific Region: Indian Response to the Chinese Challenge**" enunciates China's desire to change the existing world order, and the rules to its advantage. BRI covering over 70 countries is a key Chinese initiative in this direction. The success of Indian initiative to build connectivity through a consultative process like SAGAR, Project Mausam, Spice and Cotton Route and partnership in QUAD and other connectivity corridors is paramount to balance China. The Indo-US relations are moving on a positive trajectory, due to convergence on major global issues. The article "**A Perspective on Indo-US Relations**", written by *Maj Gen BK Sharma, (Retd)*, brings out the growing ascendancy in the Indo-US relations and examines congruence, irritants and opportunities.

Section V: India's Comprehensive National Power, This section commences with the article, "**Policy in India Must 'Come of Age' in the 21st Century**", written by *Professor MD Nalapat*. The author highlights inter alia the need to empower youth and recommends enhanced role and capacity building of the armed forces. One of the critical weaknesses in India's CNP is the lack on integration and synergy in the instruments of national power. The next article on "**India's National Power Needs a Dose of Synergy**" is written by *Brig Rumel Dahiya, (Retd)*. He makes a strong case for unity of purpose in all stakeholders to ensure robust policy formulation and its effective implementation. Success of India's 'Neighbourhood Policy' is predicated inter alia on India becoming a reliable Net Security provider in the region. The article "**India as a Net Security Provider**", written by *Lt Gen Anil Ahuja, (Retd)*, discusses, while India has the stature and willingness to take on the role of a Net Security Provider, its capability is constrained by: politico economic limitations, a time consuming democratic decision-making process; inadequate joint service structures and limitations on strategic decision making. He suggests a multi-prong strategy for India's lead role in crafting collaborative security paradigm in the region. Time has come for India to secure her rightful place at the UNSC. The next article "**Comprehensive UN Reforms and India**", written by *Shri Asoke Mukerji, IFS (Retd)* discusses that as against UN General Assembly (UNGA), which follows the democratic principle of equity in decision-making, UNSC on the other hand, is undemocratic (with permanent members ruling the roost) continues to remain outside this framework. Therefore, there is a need to reform the Security Council. He underlines India's key endeavours in seeking the UN reforms and securing its rightful place at the UNSC. He suggests that this should be a major goal for the 75th anniversary of the UN in 2022.

Section VI: India's Defence Capability, This section commences with the article on "**The Enunciation of India's Military Strategy**", by *Lt Gen (Dr) Rakesh Sharma, (Retd)*. The author laments that India does not have a 'National Apex Vision Statement' such as 'National Security strategy', which makes it difficult to contextualize and form a military strategy. He discusses the elements of military strategy and related supporting force structures. India is facing potent collusive hybrid threats. Our adversaries are fast – developing full-spectrum military capability. The article "**Force Structuring and Development of Land Forces**", written by *Lt Gen Arun Kumar Sabni (Retd)*, discusses the changing nature of conflicts. He focuses on injection of niche and disruptive technology and pockets of excellence forces in the force development and structuring. India ought to be a pre-eminent power in the Indo-Pacific region, particularly in the Indian Ocean Region. *Vice Admiral Satish Soni, (Retd)*, in his article

“**Roadmap for India Achieving a Favourable Maritime Balance in the Indian Ocean Region**”, discusses that China’s strategic overdrive in the Indo-Pacific. He suggests that India needs to ingeniously orchestrate a cohesive response with the support of the littorals to ensure that the maritime balance is maintained in favour of the resident maritime powers. Another area of concern, where the adversaries have developed their niche due to rapid technological innovations, is the area of aerospace. The article “**Impact of Niche Technologies in Aerospace Deterrence**” written by *Air Cmde (Dr) Ashminder Singh Babal, VM (Retd)* discusses this issue in the domain of Aerospace. He examines the technologies that are likely to revolutionise aerospace effectiveness in the future. He also discusses the transformation of Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicles to Smart Drones, stealth as a major force multiplier, Hypersonic Technology and Automation and Artificial Intelligence. Role of Special Forces as a strategic force multiplier needs no emphasis. *Lt Gen Navkiran Singh Ghei (Retd)*, in his article, “**Restructuring India’s Special Forces**”, deliberates on the role of Special Forces in the Indian context. He discusses various employment scenarios and recommends approach for creating a Special Forces Command. India needs to develop a robust indigenized defence industry to reduce import dependency and achieve self-reliance. The article on “**Indigenisation of India’s Defence Industry**”, written by *Lt Gen Manjinder Singh Buttar, (Retd)*, carries out a critical appraisal of our Ordnance Factories (OFs), Defence Public Sector Units (DPSUs) and the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) and suggests practical steps to modernize India’s defence industries. The Artificial Intelligence (AI) has emerged as an important driven in Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA), China is overtaking the US as a leader in the AI. Finally, *Lt Gen RS Panwar, (Retd)* in his article, “**Artificial Intelligence in Military Operations: Technology and Ethics - An Indian Perspective**”. He discusses the developments in the field of AI and its application in military operation with particular reference to the Indian military.

The editorial team profusely thanks the eminent writers for contributing valuable articles for the Year Book 2018. We hope that our readers will find the contents useful in obtaining an insight into the contemporary issues that impact India’s national security. We are sanguine that policymakers will find useful inputs to enrich their assessments and refine policy framework. We are keenly looking forward to your valued contribution and feedback for improving future editions of the USI Year Book.

Jai Hind



New Delhi
26 March 2018

Maj Gen BK Sharma, AVSM, SM & Bar (Retd)
Deputy Director (Research) and Head
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Section I

Transforming India

India's Approach to Development of Comprehensive National Power

Shri Rajiv Sikri, IFS (Retd)[@]

Abstract

India's strategy to build its Comprehensive National Power (CNP) encompasses military, diplomatic, economic, political, and 'soft' power elements. India's excessive reliance on foreign military equipment is being reduced, and its acquisition procedures are being streamlined. India's foreign policy is dynamic, imaginative and pragmatic, with a sharper economic content, under a strong, determined and visionary leader. The leadership is giving highest priority to India's immediate neighbourhood, including the Indian Ocean Island countries. Pakistan and China are being handled with firmness and confidence. India is increasingly being seen as a major power that could be a reliable anchor and partner for other countries worried about China. As economic strength is a critical component of CNP, steps are being taken to make India's economic foundations more robust and to have citizen-first policies to enable India to take full advantage of its current demographic dividend.

Introduction

Comprehensive national power is the ability of any country, to achieve desired outcomes in its foreign relationships that promote its national interests. In popular perceptions, the military dimension has been regarded as the traditional measure of a country's power. The reality is more complex. Firstly, exercise of military power has to be part of a larger military-diplomatic strategy. Secondly, military power, although essential, is not a sufficient component of comprehensive national power. It is only one of the determining factors in seeking favourable outcomes. Other aspects of a country's power that have to be considered are economic, political, and 'soft' power. It is under these broad heads that one should examine the extent of India's comprehensive power and the strategy it is adopting to enhance it.

Military Power

Obviously, the military dimension of any country's power remains the core of its comprehensive power, since it is a power specifically meant both to coerce others as well as to resist coercion by adversaries. The most critical element is the human and financial resources that are allocated to the military. India is well endowed with human resources – its armed forces are over a million – but the financial resources are far from adequate. It has been argued that India's defence budget, at only 1.58% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), is well below the ideal 3%, and should be at least over 2%. This of course assumes that defence expenditure should necessarily increase, in the same proportion, as the GDP rises. In other words, as India becomes more prosperous, it must spend more money on defence. This argument is not totally convincing, since it is based on linear thinking, whereas India's defence budget should logically be based on political-military objectives and threat perceptions. Are we looking to expand

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[@] Shri Rajiv Sikri, IFS (Retd) is an officer with wide diplomatic experience. He was Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs and has served in diplomatic missions in Moscow, Paris, New York, Kathmandu and Almaty. Currently, he is a Distinguished Fellow at the United Service Institution of India, and at the Vivekananda International Foundation. He is the author of "Challenge and Strategy: Rethinking India's Foreign Policy."

our military footprint globally, or are our goals purely defensive? It also doesn't explain why routinely India's defence budget is never fully spent. Perhaps we are also spending more efficiently. No one would dispute that it costs less to maintain an Indian soldier than an American soldier, or even a Chinese one, since the standard of living of these countries is higher than India's as are the expectations of those who serve in the armed forces. Despite these caveats, all stakeholders, including the political leadership, agree that India should be spending more on defence. At the same time, India has to balance its defence expenditure (currently about 12% of the budget) against its equally pressing development requirements that cannot be ignored in a democracy. It would seem that India's political leadership has come to the assessment, hopefully in consultation with the military, that we are fully capable of defending ourselves with the present allocation of resources, and that India's long-term strength lies in developing its economy since in any case it is only economic growth that will provide the resources for higher allocations to defence expenditure. However, keeping in mind the growing threats to India's national security, the 2018-19 Budget has provided for a reasonable 8% increase in defence expenditure, including capital expenditure.

While money is no doubt important, more important is the morale of the armed forces. Under the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) Government, there is greater recognition of this factor. Unlike some of their somnolent predecessors, the Defence Ministers over the last four years have been pro-active, though one shortcoming has been the frequent changes of the incumbent. Long-standing irritants like the One-Rank-One-Pay issue have been resolved; the status of the armed forces vis-à-vis the civilian bureaucracy has been somewhat restored; there is a conscious effort at more regular consultation with the Service Chiefs; a freer hand has been given to the armed forces to deal with situations on India's borders and in border states (which is an important reason why the Doklam crisis ended satisfactorily and the Jammu and Kashmir situation is somewhat better today than it was a year ago). The military's point of view on Siachen and revocation of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act is being given due weight. At the same time, accusations of corruption and human rights violations cannot be brushed aside in a free and open society.

India's big vulnerability on the military side is its excessive reliance (about two-thirds) on foreign countries for military equipment and supplies. This makes India dependent on the goodwill of foreign countries, which could be a critical weakness in times of war. That is why the recent thrust by the Government to promote indigenization through the 'Make in India' programme is significant and welcome. Using the clout of its large market that makes it lucrative for foreign suppliers, India is exerting pressure on foreign partners and countries to transfer technology. The Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) policy in defence has also been liberalized to make it more attractive for foreign partners to manufacture in India rather than export finished products to India. This is by no means an easy task, and requires that foreign policy be tailored to meet defence objectives. Domestically, there is less reliance on the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) and there have been attempts to involve the private sector in defence production. With focused attention, it is clearly possible for India to have indigenous production of state-of-the-art equipment, as India has admirably managed to do in the cases of the navy, space and missile programmes. In any case, this is a long-term objective. For the foreseeable future India will continue to be highly dependent on foreign military equipment. Fortunately, steps have been taken in recent years to streamline acquisition procedures in the Ministries of Defence and Finance, and restoring a legitimate role for agents. Perhaps it would help if there were to be a Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), with the responsibility for prioritizing defence production and acquisition among all the branches of the military, ensuring optimal utilization of India's existing strategic and geographic advantages, and ensuring that there is coordinated long-term strategic planning. Some of the issues that require attention are to significantly enhance India's capabilities in cyber warfare, space, special operations, and fully developing the Tri-Services Command in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

Perhaps it would help if there were to be a Chief of Defence Staff, with the responsibility for prioritizing defence production and acquisition among all the branches of the military, ensuring optimal utilization of India's existing strategic and geographic advantages, and ensuring that there is coordinated long-term strategic planning.

Diplomacy

The principal military threats to India today emanate from China and Pakistan. China continues to put pressure on India's land borders. Its 'all-weather' alliance with Pakistan has been cemented by the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which is part of its larger global strategy to bring the whole of Asia and Europe under its domination through its One-Belt-One-Road project. It is rapidly establishing bases and facilities in the Indian Ocean. It is openly trying to seduce India's neighbours into its economic whirlpool (truly a 'Chakravayuh' with no escape route). Pakistan's traditional anti-Indian policies, including fomenting terror and unrest and seeking to divide and weaken India, have not changed in the least. These are serious challenges that India can tackle only with the help of friends and partners; perhaps even allies may be needed. However, having said that, India is very favourably placed geographically. It dominates the northern Indian Ocean. Major energy and trade Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs) pass very close to its waters. It is located at the crossroads of Asia with easy access to eastern and southern Africa, West Asia, Central Asia and Southeast Asia.

The NDA Government has followed a dynamic, imaginative and pro-active foreign policy that boldly seeks to make India "a leading power," rather than a mere balancer in great power equations. Pragmatism and realism, not ideology or sentimentalism, guide India's foreign policy. Special attention has been given to relations with the United States, since it is the only power with the resources – and hopefully, the will to cooperate with India in meeting the Chinese challenge. The high point was President Obama's visit to India in 2015 as Chief Guest on Republic Day, which resulted in the articulation of a joint strategic vision for the Indo-Pacific region and a sharp rise in the quality and extent of defence cooperation, especially in the maritime domain. Steadily growing ties have paved the way for tentative, but clearly discernible, moves to revive the 'Quad' of the US, Japan, Australia and India, all major maritime powers in the Indo-Pacific. Apart from joint exercises and training, India is systematically working to get military facilities in countries across the Indian Ocean and the Western Pacific like Vietnam, Singapore, Seychelles, Mauritius, and Oman. The Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) with the US, and a possible similar agreement with France, would enhance Indian capabilities in the Indian Ocean Region in the event of a conflict situation.

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The 'Look East' policy, now called the 'Act East' policy, has acquired a salience and urgency as India has ramped up its relationship with the ASEAN countries and Japan, which are also deeply concerned by China's aggressive behaviour. In West Asia, India is openly engaging with all the principal players namely, Israel, Iran and the Gulf countries, notwithstanding their mutual rivalries and suspicions. Prime Minister Modi has tirelessly travelled to all corners of the globe, including many countries that had been ignored for decades. India is being projected as an active and responsible international player, committed to tackling the problem of climate change, developing clean energy sources, and promoting a rule-based world order and trading regime. The economic content of foreign policy has been given a much sharper focus as India seeks foreign investment and technology on a large scale. Prime Minister Modi's presence at Davos in January 2018 was a first in over two decades. All these moves have enhanced India's credibility and enabled it to get membership of technology regimes like the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), Australia Group and the Wassenaar Arrangement.

Naturally, India's immediate neighbourhood, including the Indian Ocean island countries, gets the highest priority. The strategy is to make India's neighbours, stakeholders in India's economic growth, and for India to be seen, as a generous and reliable neighbour. Admittedly, the results have been mixed. While Bhutan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan are success stories, Nepal, Sri Lanka and the Maldives are succumbing to Chinese blandishments and drifting into its orbit. Although India's pockets are not as deep as China's, it is noteworthy that in the latest 2018-19 Budget, a

significantly larger allocation for aid to neighbours has been made. These include not just India's land neighbours but also small island countries in the Indian Ocean like the Seychelles and Mauritius. Both Pakistan and China are being handled with firmness and confidence. With an aggressive posture on the border, including cross-border strikes, Pakistan is being made to pay a heavy price for its policy of fomenting terrorism in India. India's dogged and persistent diplomacy has helped to isolate Pakistan internationally. By refusing to be part of China's One Belt One Road project, India has signalled that it is not prepared to submit to a Chinese world order. The standoff over Doklam showed that India has the nerve and capability to stand up to Chinese bullying and psychological pressure. This has certainly raised India's standing within the international community. It is increasingly being seen as a major power with the will and capability to defend its national interests and one that could be a reliable anchor and partner for other countries worried about China.

Economic Strength

Economic strength is critical to developing India's comprehensive national power. While India has been growing reasonably well, it needs to accelerate its economic growth. This is possible only if the size of the formal economy increases and its foundations are more robust. Unlike previous Governments, the NDA Government has adopted a multi-pronged development strategy that would bring long-term enduring benefits to India, rather than one dictated by short-term political gains. Conscious of the weak existing infrastructure, the Government has embarked on an accelerated programme to build roads, expand and modernize the railways, build a network of ports, improve air connectivity, prioritize digital connectivity, increase power production and electrify villages. Special attention has been given to reducing dependence on hydrocarbon sources of energy, where India's import dependence is extremely high, and developing indigenous clean energy sources like solar, wind and electric. Steps have been taken to make it easier to do business in India, allocate natural resources in a transparent manner, simplify procedures and root out corruption. Demonetisation was a bold and risky step that has brought more people into the tax net, and paved the way for action to be taken against holders of benami property. The other major step has been the introduction of a uniform Goods and Services Tax, an important step towards creating a unified market throughout India that is expected to boost India's GDP growth in the long term. The moves to bring banking to the masses (Jan Dhan), have a national unique identity scheme (Aadhaar) and make mobile phones practically universal are intended to ensure that the welfare benefits reach the masses without intermediaries, who typically siphon off a large chunk of the money.

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Prime Minister Modi has made conscious steps to have citizen-first policies, with the involvement of people in nation building. Only then, can India take full advantage of the current demographic dividend of a large youthful population; so that it can make the breakthrough that would enable the Indian economy to realize its true potential. The Prime Minister's monthly "Mann Ki Baat" radio broadcasts seek to inform and motivate Indians in this direction. A cleaner, healthier and better-educated India is a critical prerequisite for India's growth. Special focus has been given to the agricultural sector where about half of India's labour force is engaged, as well as women's health and education. These are the objectives of the 'Swachh Bharat and Beti Bachao Beti Bachao' campaigns, expansion of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) connections, the immunization drive, increased maternal benefits, introduction of life insurance, crop insurance, minimum support price for agricultural produce, and the recently announced breathtakingly ambitious universal health insurance programme. Agriculture will require special attention. Climate change and shortage of water, in part because of China's activism on harnessing the waters of upper reaches of rivers originating in Tibet and flowing into India, could reduce agricultural output in the long term. At the same time, urban areas and richer sections of the population are not being ignored. Witness the programme to develop Smart Cities, improve citizen services and ensure

greater use of technology in all aspects of public life and activity. Recognizing that this constitutes a large and talented human resource base, the Government is making special efforts to involve the Non-Resident Indians and Persons of Indian Origin in India's nation building.

However, much still remains to be done, especially on making it easier to acquire land for priority development activity and on reforming labour laws. Many of these tasks lie in the domain of the States, who are jealous of protecting their powers. Urban administration and disaster management systems still remain well below par. The resources allocated to scientific and technological research and development are wholly inadequate (less than 1% of GDP).

Political Stability

On the political side, India's biggest advantage in developing its comprehensive national power is that it is a deep-rooted, functioning and stable democracy. There is the rule of law, with a fiercely independent judiciary, and very active human rights organizations. The role of Parliament and constitutional bodies like the Election Commission and the Comptroller and Auditor General is well established. The States have been given more financial powers following the recommendations of the Fourteenth Finance Commission. For the first time in over a quarter century, India has a dynamic and energetic, visionary and determined, strong-willed and confident leader whose party has a majority in the Lok Sabha. Few question Prime Minister Modi's sincerity in wanting to radically transform India and get it out of its 'chaltahai' attitude. Regrettably, however, Opposition parties have tended to adopt a petty, obstructive attitude, including in the Rajya Sabha, where the ruling party doesn't have a majority. Far from being a handicap, India's cultural and religious diversity is its strength, since every section of society from different parts of the country has its unique strengths and talents that they can contribute to nation building. On the whole, Indian society remains inclusive and cohesive, despite occasional incidents and social tensions sparked by the activities of fringe and extremist elements. Admittedly, large sections of the population, especially the 'Dalits and Tribals', still remain hugely disadvantaged. Their frustration and anger finds expression in social unrest and agitations, as well as terrorist activity. A lot more needs to be done to normalize the situation in Jammu and Kashmir and the states of the Northeast Region. The overall poor state of law and order requires urgent attention. So, does the reform of traditionally lethargic and unresponsive bureaucracy. Some steps have indeed been taken to tackle these problems. The challenge is to ensure that the deep-rooted weeds of the system do not choke the freshly sown seeds of hope.

A lot more needs to be done to normalize the situation in Jammu and Kashmir and the states of the Northeast Region. The overall poor state of law and order requires urgent attention. So, does the reform of traditionally lethargic and unresponsive bureaucracy.

'Soft' Power

In assessing India's comprehensive national power, one should not forget 'soft' power, a powerful magnet that attracts people and countries to India. India's deep spiritual and philosophical traditions, its religious heritage that has influenced hundreds of millions across Asia, its rich and vibrant living culture, rooted in centuries-old traditions that are as appealing as the glamour and allure of 21st century Bollywood – all these make India attractive to the world. India is universally revered as the land of 'Buddha and Yoga'. In addition, India is seen as a humane, non-aggressive society that combines realpolitik with a desire to better the lot of the so-called 'Third World' countries. Its philosophy of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam', reflected in the refuge that India has given to persecuted people through the ages, is a reality, despite occasional aberrations. These are some of India's most precious, if somewhat intangible assets, that greatly add to India's Comprehensive National Power.

Section II

India's Internal Security Environment

A Road Map for Sustainable Security and Peace in Jammu and Kashmir

Lt Gen Deependra Singh Hooda, PVSM, UYSM, AVSM, VSM & Bar (Retd)[@]

Abstract

The Kashmir imbroglio continues to be a major internal security challenge with strong abetment and support from Pakistan. However, our approach to J&K problem is somewhat patchy and bereft of a comprehensive strategy. The Center and State should together assiduously work to augment multi-dimensional security measures, initiate intra state dialogue, embark upon de-radicalisation of youth and usher good governance and inclusive development. The existing decision making and implementation mechanism need to be re-vamped and strengthened.

Introduction

In July 2016, after the killing of Burhan Wani, a Hizbul Mujahideen terrorist, the Kashmir valley erupted in a fury of protests. As per state government data 78 people were killed and 9,042 injured, including 6221 due to firing of pellet guns. One month into the protests, a police spokesman said that 3,329 personnel from Jammu and Kashmir Police and Central Paramilitary Forces had been injured.

Pakistan took full advantage of the situation by stepping up infiltration and carrying out high profile terrorist attacks at Uri and Nagrota. The situation along the border deteriorated, with the Indian Army carrying out ‘surgical strikes’ into Pakistan Occupied Kashmir. Heavy exchanges of fire became a routine along the Line of Control (LoC). The year 2017, has seen a continuation of this violence. Security forces achieved significant success in the killing of over 200 terrorists but there were many troubling indicators. Elections for the Srinagar constituency saw an abysmal 7% voting and the violence on polling day forced the Anantnag elections to be indefinitely postponed. As per South Asian Terrorism Portal, 57 civilians were killed in 2017 in terror-related incidents, the highest since 2008. Recruitment of local youth into terror ranks has seen a steady rise and these numbers were boosted by continuing infiltration from across the border. Despite claims by some officials that the situation in Kashmir is fast returning to normal¹, it remains serious.

In order to define a strategy for bringing sustainable peace to Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) it must be understood that the conflict has both an internal as well as transnational dimension. Any long-term strategy has to look at both these dimensions with equal emphasis.

Checking Pakistan’s Support to Terrorism

Pakistan’s support is a key element in keeping the conflict alive in J&K. In 2017, local recruitment has touched a high of 126, but even now, the number of foreign terrorists killed, continued to outnumber local terrorists killed.

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Pakistan will reduce support to the Kashmir conflict only if there is some incentive or it is deterred by the cost it imposes on the Pakistani army. Today, there is no incentive that can be practically offered to Pakistan. The deep-rooted hostility in India-Pakistan relations has touched a new low. Diplomatic relations are barely surviving and there is no economic interdependence which could dampen hostilities. Confidence Building Measures are only present in name as is evident from the ceasefire agreement which lies in tatters.

The deep-rooted hostility in India-Pakistan relations has touched a new low. Diplomatic relations are barely surviving and there is no economic interdependence which could dampen hostilities. Confidence Building Measures are only present in name as is evident from the ceasefire agreement which lies in tatters.

Depending on the U.S. to put pressure on Pakistan has its limitation. In January, the U.S. State Department announced the freezing of \$225 million in military aid to Pakistan. President Trump tweeted, "They give safe haven to the terrorists we hunt in Afghanistan, with little help. No more!" The language is important because the American focus is on terrorists fighting in Afghanistan, not in Kashmir. In November 2017, on the insistence of the Pentagon, the U.S. Congress had dropped a provision which linked financial aid to Pakistan with its taking demonstrable action against Lashkar-e-Taiba. The U.S. defence department had argued that America must remain focused on the Haqqani Network fighting in Afghanistan and not get distracted by other terrorist groups.² The only option to India therefore, lies in deterrence through pressure applied on the Pakistan Army at the border. India must have an unpredictable force response which includes punitive fire assaults and cross-border strikes. Pakistan has a capable and professional army and no quick results should be expected. The pressure will have to be relentless and sustained. It could be argued that such a strategy is dangerous and could escalate to an all-out war. While nothing can be completely ruled out, in my view, the escalation can be controlled. The two armies have, since independence, faced each other across a hostile and deadly border, in an environment which is famously called "No War, No Peace". I do not think they will be panicked into going to war unless it is a well-considered decision.

The implementation of this strategy has to be consistent across both the LoC and the International Border (IB) in J&K. With two different forces, the Army responsible for LoC and the Border Security Force (BSF) responsible for the IB, formulation and implementation of a common strategy is problematic. It is essential that the complete border of Jammu and Kashmir be placed under the control of the Army. I know this is not going to be easy but some of our established practices will have to undergo a change for bringing in greater coherence in our strategy.

An escalation at the borders has one very unfortunate consequence – impact on civilians. Minimising impact on civilian lives must necessarily be factored into our plans. It is poor strategy if we count success by the number of mortar rounds fired even as thousands of people are displaced from their homes. Therefore, our actions along the border must be nuanced and specifically directed towards the Pakistan army.

In 2005, Professor Paul Staniland of Chicago University published a work in the Washington Quarterly, titled, Defeating Transnational Insurgencies: The Best Offense is a Good Fence. This sums up the importance of sealing borders from transnational terrorists. India's Anti Infiltration Obstacle System along the LoC has been extremely useful in checking infiltration but now requires significant technological upgrade. In recent times, more than 100 terrorists have been successfully infiltrating each year into the Kashmir valley. The need for a 'smart fence' is recognized by everyone but we have not been able to get over our tardy procedures to put it in place with the desired speed. A 'smart fence' will also enable a reduction in the number of soldiers manning the counter-infiltration grid and free them for their conventional tasks.

Another area where we need to defeat the efforts of Pakistani terrorists coming from across the border is in the defence of our forward bases. Any attack on a police or army garrison, irrespective of casualties caused, is a powerful propaganda tool for the terrorists. There has been severe criticism of the army and air force during attack on bases at

Mohura, Uri, Pathankot, Nagrota, and more recently, Sunjwan. Some of this criticism is certainly justified but to pass it off merely as a result of laxity of soldiers is not completely true. Again, technological intervention is required for enhancing security of bases. There are limits to human endurance and adding soldiers for garrison security will come at the cost of pulling them out from the border.

Healing the Internal Fault Lines

While dealing with the internal situation in Kashmir, we have often tended to equate a reduction in violence with a return to normalcy. Therefore, in times of relative peace, no concrete steps are taken to address the root causes of the problem. Looking at the Kashmir problem through the narrow lens of a security perspective has limited our search for solutions.

The start point for sustainable conflict resolution is the clear spelling out of the political objective. In the absence of this, various agencies are making their own assumptions. An example of this is the so called ‘muscular approach’ of the government. I do not think the government has articulated such a strategy. Rather it has been the silence of the government which has been taken by the security forces as an acceptance of a more muscular policy.

The lack of political objectives also leaves the security forces unsure about their focus areas. Leslie Gelb and Richard Betts, in an outstanding book, *The Irony of Vietnam: The System Worked*, wrote, “Administration leaders persistently failed to clarify U.S. objectives in concrete and specific terms. Uncertainty and ambiguity in reports were therefore bound to emerge, for no one could be certain what he was measuring progress against or how victory could be defined.”

With clear government objectives, the security forces will be in a better position to define the metrics for measuring success. Currently there is too much emphasis on quantifiable metrics like casualty figures and violent incidents. Metrics which capture the mood and sentiment are equally important to enable comprehensive strategic assessments to be presented to the political leadership.

Insurgencies are, by their very nature, protracted conflicts and the focus must be on long-term objectives. We have often been guilty of claiming success by comparing one year with the previous one. This short-term approach sometimes leads us to misread the impact of our overall strategy. Once the objectives are clear, a strategy must be crafted jointly by the civil and military leadership in J&K. The ideal situation would be to have unity in command with security operations under one commander. Today, different agencies work under different ministries- the army under the Ministry of Defence, the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and Border Security Force (BSF) under the Ministry of Home Affairs and the police under the state government. In our current governance framework, there is no way around this. Therefore, to improve synergy and coordination, the Unified Headquarters (UHQ) mechanism should be strengthened. The UHQ, while structurally sound, is generally convened only to look at security for upcoming events like the elections, Amarnath Yatra etc, or after some major terror incident has happened. It has a very limited role in determining future strategy. A greater role for the UHQ will not only ensure the preparation of a sustainable strategy, where all organs of the government are on the same page, but also prevent civil-military differences from spilling out in the public domain.

Today, different agencies work under different ministries- the army under the Ministry of Defence, the CRPF and BSF under the Ministry of Home Affairs and the police under the state government. In our current governance framework, there is no way around this. Therefore, to improve synergy and coordination, the Unified Headquarters (UHQ) mechanism should be strengthened.

Let us now look at the contours of a long-term strategy for bringing peace within the state. I have deliberately used the heading of this section as 'Healing the Internal Fault Lines' because the healing touch is the most important component in devising any strategy to bring sustainable peace. It is here that the Centre's strategic communications have been poor. Scholars like Ted Robert Gurr and John Burton have talked about 'fear of the future' as a driver of ethnic conflict, and David Lake and Donald Rothchild have put forward the hypothesis that "intense ethnic conflict is most often caused by collective fears of the future."³ In Kashmir, it is the fear of a future loss of identity which manifests in protests against Article 370, land for Amarnath yatra and Pandit colonies, while in Jammu; it is fears about the inequitable division of resources and the plight of the Pandits. These fears are exacerbated by some of the statements being made by some senior officials and in sections of the media.

Besides sharpening the division between the two regions of Jammu and Kashmir, an impression has been created that the state is at war with a section of its population. The government needs to urgently put in place an effective counter narrative which conveys the theme that the government cares for its people and is serious about a resolution of the problem. Fear must be replaced by hope. This must then be followed up by concrete actions. There is sometimes a feeling that social media campaigns are an end in themselves. The Arab Spring clearly brings out the effectiveness but also the limitations of social media. Facebook and Twitter contributed to revolutions which brought down governments, but it did not automatically result in long term stability in these countries. That would have required sustained and tangible efforts.

The state also needs to internally heal itself. In the recent past, divisions between the three regions of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh have only sharpened. An intra-state dialogue involving the politicians and civil society members must be started. Concerns must be openly debated and an attempt made to find solutions. A transparent and equitable distribution of development programmes would address many concerns of Jammu and Ladakh. A question often asked of me by the people of Doda, Kishtwar, Rajauri and Reasi districts was, "Now that peace has returned to these areas and there is almost no terror activity, where is the promised development?"

The youth are at the forefront of the agitations in Kashmir and must be meaningfully engaged. Radicalisation is very real but there are no structured counter-radicalisation or de-radicalisation programmes except isolated efforts by the police and army. For those local youth who have joined terrorist ranks, there should be an incentive for returning to the mainstream. This incentive is not merely a financial reward for surrender but a successful rehabilitation into the society. "Chieu Hoi", the amnesty program in Vietnam, did attract a large number of defectors from the Viet Cong but, as a RAND study notes, one of its biggest flaws was the lack of follow-up on the defectors. "Once they left the Chieu Hoi centers, little was done to track them or aid their reintegration into South Vietnam."⁴ The government is working on a new surrender policy and it must pay due attention to post surrender security and rehabilitation.

Youth must find gainful employment to keep them off the streets. In January 2017, an analysis by the PRS legislative research found that the unemployment rate for persons between 18-29 years of age in J&K is 24.6%, which is almost double the national unemployment rate of 13.2% in the same age group. Skilling and employment initiative like Udaan, by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), have not seem much success because of modest salaries and jobs being largely outside the state. The scheme could be modified by offering training and jobs within the state, for example in the travel and hospitality sectors. This would attract many more young men and women.

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Concerted and sustained operations against terrorists have to continue. The Chief Minister has made it clear that the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act cannot be revoked in the prevailing situation. Synergy between various security agencies is excellent and has resulted in the killing of over 200 terrorists in 2017.

If there is one area where procedures could be refined, it is in the confrontation between the Army and the local population. The Army should be completely kept away from such situations. I understand that this is not always possible, but some thought will have to be given to this aspect. The Army still commands a fair amount of respect because it has largely been seen as people-friendly. Magisterial enquiries and police investigations which invariably follow the death of a civilian in Army firing, irrespective of the circumstances in which it happened, are also not good for the morale of soldiers operating under the most trying conditions.

Conclusion

J&K remains a troubled state. A long-term strategy will require an understanding of the core issues to be addressed. Often, we take isolated parameters to announce success, for example the reduction in stone pelting incidents is equated with normalcy. It is also claimed that the problem is only restricted to a few districts in the Kashmir valley but this does not answer as to why we are unable to hold panchayat elections in the state.

For sustainable peace in J&K, the transnational and internal facets of the conflict will have to be tackled with equal seriousness. A strong, proactive response at the LoC is essential to ensure that the Pakistan army realises the costs of supporting terror groups. Along with this, effective counter infiltration measures, particularly a 'smart' fence, should be implemented.

Internally, a simple narrative that the government cares for all sections of the people of the State could be the start point for a people-centric approach. The youth, more than anyone else, fear for their future as they have the most to lose. They have to be suitably engaged.

There are no quick and easy solutions to the Kashmir imbroglio. The insurgency is almost three decades old and much has been done to contain it. However, there have also been major weaknesses in handling the situation which have prevented peace from returning. This is a good time to comprehensively review all aspects of our strategy.

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Securing India's Borders in North-Eastern Region: Challenges and Prospects

Lt Gen Praveen Bakshi, PVSM, AVSM, VSM (Retd)[@]

Abstract

India has 15106.7 km of land borders and 7516.6 km of coastline, including the island territories. Given the complexities of the borders in the Northeast, where the India-China border is a mix of IB and LAC, Indo-Myanmar border, as an IB remains, porous and exploited by insurgents, Indo-Bangladesh IB despite being the longest, is peaceful but with a potential to flare up and the Indo-Bhutan IB is relatively quiet. Thus, each sector requires a separate approach for effective border management. The complexities are accentuated by the different border guarding forces operating in this region under an over watch by the armed forces, as also three different ministries handling issues related to border management. The challenges are well recognised by the government; however, the structural and organisational reforms is necessitated due to a yet to be articulated border management policy.

Introduction

Man-made borders shall always be temporary and remain in perpetual conflict with natural boundary

– Alfred Beinstein

International borders are guided by the Doctrines of Absolute Sovereignty, Absolute Integrity, Limited Territorial Sovereignty, Communality of International Resources and Correlative Rights¹. However, these doctrines are being increasingly questioned with interpretation being as per the national interests of affected nations. This brings to fore the dangers faced by nations with unresolved borders. China's understanding of the border in the South China Sea is a case in point, which needs to be viewed seriously given India's unresolved border with China, especially in the Northeast region.

India's geostrategic location, its relatively sound and growing economic status and its liberal democratic credentials are attracting attention amongst its neighbours for more reasons than one, some with inimical intentions. This has induced the government to undertake more effective management of Indian borders, which is vital to national security. India has 15106.7 km of land border and a coastline of 7516.6 km, including island territories². All states except Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Delhi and Haryana share a land border or a coastline with a neighbouring country. Due to proclivity of India's neighbours, to undermine her quest for peaceful and sustained growth and to achieve a status of pre-eminence in the region and

Due to proclivity of India's neighbours, to undermine her quest for peaceful and sustained growth and to achieve a status of pre-eminence in the region and the world, India's internal security challenges are inexorably hyphenated to her border management abilities.

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the world, India's internal security challenges are inexorably hyphenated to her border management abilities. Most of India's neighbours are experiencing political or economic turmoil, accentuating the poignancy of sound and effective border management. Nowhere is this evidenced more than in the Northeastern region.

The eight states of Northeast share borders with China, Bhutan, Myanmar, Bangladesh and part Nepal. The borders, referred to as International Boundary (IB) and Line of Actual Control (LAC) is characterised by differing terrain complexities and dynamics, to the extent that the Government has inexplicably deemed it appropriate to ascribe four different border guarding forces in the region. India's border with Bangladesh (4096.7 km) is responsibility of Border Security Force (BSF); with Myanmar (1643 km) of Assam Rifles (AR); with Bhutan (699 km) and Nepal (1751 km) of Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) and China (3488 km) of Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)³. The presence of the Indian Armed forces is very much evidenced throughout the Northeast, but more prominently on the LAC for border management with China, as also on the Myanmar border due to AR being under their operational control. Despite the 20th round of talks in December 2017⁴, the border with China remains not only unsettled and not demarcated, even the perception of the LAC in certain areas is unclear and contested by both countries. This leads to acrimony, frequent face-offs and clashes on the LAC. Further, misinterpretation of the LAC by various agencies and ministries entrusted with border management in our country adds to the confusion.

Border Management in the Northeast

Border management remains primarily the responsibility of Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). The Department of Border Management was created under the MHA in January 2004 to pay focused attention to the issues relating to the management of the international land & coastal borders; strengthening of border policing & guarding; creation of infrastructure such as road, fencing and flood lighting of the borders and implementation of the Border Area Development Programme (BADP). The traditional approach to border management, i.e. focusing only on border security, has become outdated and inadequate. Border management is an all-encompassing charter which entails the defence, security, policing, resolution, local population, trade, growth, development and diplomacy. However, it is to be noted that border defence is the responsibility of the Indian Armed Forces under the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and border resolution the responsibility of Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)⁵. MEA has limited interaction with the state governments, which impedes its task of border resolution. In the Northeast, all states share a border with one or more countries and conversely, neighbouring countries like Myanmar or Bangladesh share borders with multiple Indian states. The

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prognosis hereafter shall be of our land borders in the Northeast, excluding Nepal. The India-China border in the Northeast along the IB/LAC is 1346 km, with large areas not held physically due to lack of infrastructure. It may be deemed to be the most contentious border, since China has deliberately played a game of ambivalence. It is believed that in 1960 Zhou Enlai, the then Foreign Minister of China, on a visit to India was keen to reach an agreement in the Northeast in exchange for areas it had ceded from Pakistan in Aksai Chin, but was rebuffed⁶. Of late, China's stance has been more strident and in addition to the acknowledged disputed area of Namka Chu, Sumdorong Chu, Asaphi La, Longju etc, a new dimension has been added by China extending its claims unilaterally opposite the Sikkim sector, as seen in the Doklam crisis in June-August 2017. The prevalent situation has de facto passed on the responsibility of border guarding to the Indian Army. It is a known fact that on the India-China border the Army deploys double the troops compared to the ITBP and that the Doklam crisis was hallmarked by the complete absence of the ITBP. Resultantly, border resolution through diplomatic efforts led by the MEA had to largely depend on the army inputs to the MoD, as against from the MHA. The prime concern on the LAC remains vigilant border guarding, territorial sovereignty and early resolution of border issues with China. Of immediate importance is infrastructure development,

to enable the border guarding forces to do their task effectively. On a more positive note, the Border Defence Cooperation Agreement (BDCA) agreement of 2013, coupled with previous agreements on border management, lend a formality to resolution of border incidents and notably, not a shot has been fired since the last three decades in this region. Surprisingly, this border finds minimal mention in the Annual Report of MHA 2016-17⁷. The Indo-Myanmar border of 1643 km, and is open, porous, designated an IB and largely demarcated except a relatively small patch of 171 km in two parts⁸. India shares cordial relationship with Myanmar, which ought to make the task of border management easier compared to other places. In effect, this border is the most volatile and defies effective management. Notably, the terrain is exceedingly difficult, exacerbated by poor infrastructure development, rendered more difficult due to tribal affiliations of the people straddling the border and shared ethnicity with the myriad insurgent groups. Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram share their border with Myanmar. Each state has its own dynamics related to tackling insurgency, trade practices and population control, especially regarding the implementation of the Free Movement Regime (FMR), which permits unfettered movement up to 16 km on either side by the population residing within a 40 kms belt of the border⁹. This has resulted in large scale smuggling of arms, drugs, illegal trade, free movement of insurgents, fake currency and an opening to China to calibrate its support to the insurgent groups. Intelligence reports have alluded to large quantities of arms, rendered surplus due to PLA's modernisation, being smuggled to the insurgents. Ceasefire abrogation by National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Khaplang (NSCN-K) has upped the ante in the region. Insurgent camps are known to be dotting the border on Myanmar side and sheer lack of capacity of the Myanmar Army, coupled with lack of will especially at the lower levels, makes it all the more frustrating to effectively guard this border. It is to be noted that only 15 AR Battalions are currently chartered with this responsibility, a gross over-estimation of their ability to do so. Recent attempts to fence the border between BP79-81, approximately 10 km¹⁰, has faced stiff opposition from the border populace, adding a political dimension to a purely security related issue. Myanmar is of immense strategic importance to India, being the gateway to South East Asia with a huge economic potential. A policy of smart border management of this strategically important border is of overriding importance to be implemented on priority.

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The Indo-Bangladesh border, the largest land border India shares amongst its neighbours, had been besotted with issues of illegal migration with substantial overtones of fundamental insurgency¹¹. The change of regime in Bangladesh led to the landmark Land Border Agreement of 2015. Not only was a vexed border resolution of decades amicably decided by exchange of 62 enclaves totalling 34,270 acres, but more importantly, it led to active cooperation between the two nations to tackle illegal migration and resultant insurgency¹². The IB is largely fenced and trade at Petrapole Integrated Check Post (ICP), has increased exponentially over the years. People to people contact are facilitated and the border haat concept has found favour with the border population. Talks are progressing satisfactorily towards enhancing road, rail and most importantly river transportation systems, which has the potential of opening strategic alternate routes to the Siliguri corridor for India's connect with the Northeast states. The border is effectively managed by BSF with issues of smuggling and fake currency dominating their attention. The Army's role on this border is hugely diminished. The final outcome of updating the National Register of Citizens (NRC) and modification of the Citizenship Act in Assam, will have an effect on the border management, but can be addressed by the two nations in a cooperative manner.

Indo-Bhutan border is just 699 km, though shared by Sikkim, West Bengal, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. Given our more than friendly relationship with Bhutan, the concern has shifted more towards the Bhutan-China border (470 km) resolution, of which 24th round, took place in December 2016. China is unrelenting on its claims in the Chumbi

valley, wanting the tri-junction to be shifted southwards to Gyemochen. In exchange, it is willing to acquiescence or give up its substantial claims in the north and North-East of Bhutan's border. The border with India till recently was active due to the Bodo and United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) insurgent groups in Assam, however, post the coordinated Operation "All Clear", launched jointly by the armed forces of both the Nations in 2003, the border is largely peaceful¹³.

Challenges and Prospects

Absence of a National Security Policy by India prevents articulation of a coherent Border Management Policy¹⁴. Despite tremendous efforts and progress made in border management by the government of India, especially in the last decade, critical issues of command and control remain unresolved. Multiple stakeholders, e.g. MHA, MEA and MoD unfortunately necessitates a collaborative approach which maybe divisive in nature, to the detriment of a clear, coherent formulation of policy which would be optimally implementable. Matters are not made easier with the multitude of border guarding forces, each with their own ethos, culture, HR issues and competing requirements. The SSB was erstwhile Special Service Bureau under R&AW with a clear charter; however, passage of time made that charter irrelevant. Instead of merging it with BSF or ITBP, it was converted into yet another border guarding force, the Sashastra Seema Bal¹⁵, defying prudence or logic.

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The army's capability to handle border defence is unmatched and beyond reproach; however, when it comes to border management, it tends to fall short of expectations. Classic example is of the Indo-Myanmar border manned by the AR under the IA¹⁶. The recent proposal of MHA to raise a new force comprising of 29 AR and 4 ITBP Battalions, under the overall command of ITBP, clearly reflects the turf war between the competing ministries, much to the detriment of national security. Requirement of border management to include aspects of policing against smuggling, promotion of trade, population control measures including implementation of FMR etc. is a specialist task for which the army is not ideally trained. The Army could consider allowing the border guarding forces to take responsibility of border management whilst focusing on CI operations in the hinterland. Template of LC sector in J&K cannot be applied here, instead that of IB sector of J&K can be replicated. A more logical approach could be reversion of the 15 AR battalions raised for border guarding back to the army for CI operations or border guarding of the LAC, so as to free up the infantry battalions committed on these tasks. In any case, the LAC should be firmly under the Army till border resolution, because currently the border guarding/defence responsibility far outweighs border management of the LAC¹⁷. It may be recalled that earlier AR guarded the India-China border and did exceedingly well; their expertise should not be lost. Addition of an air wing to ITBP is not grudging but seems to be duplication of existing capability, perhaps because different ministries are involved. As regards command and control, especially during war, the current arrangement is sub-optimal. BSF battalions are mandated to come under the army, but not the sector/frontier HQs. Paradoxically, the intelligence organisation of these forces remains under the Frontier HQ, thus being institutionally denied to the Army. The task of these DIG/IG led HQs during war is baffling. Further, despite repeated requests by the Army, no clarification is forthcoming on the command and control of ITBP and SSB in war.

The answer lies in a clear border management policy, which has been echoed unanimously by all security experts¹⁸. Nodal ministry for all aspects of border management designated as IB should be the MHA; e.g. existing arrangement on IB in Jammu Sector could be replicated on the Myanmar border. Responsibility of borders which are operationally active and beyond the capacity of the border guarding forces should be given to the armed forces under the MoD, till resolution e.g. LAC and LC sectors. MoD and MEA should be in an advisory role to MHA for all aspects related

to border management for the entire land border and coastline during peace-time, including border guarding and border resolution. MEA, which is currently plagued by shortage of staff and vastly hampered in dealing with state governments, can assume a lead role in discussions with the neighbouring country when it takes place. One border – one force principle must remain but BSF and ITBP should be nominated as the only Border Guarding Forces, as distinct from other CAPF, with SSB being merged with them. BSF should be nominated for borders with Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal and ITBP for China, Bhutan and Myanmar. In such an eventuality, nomination of border guarding forces for internal security or election duties should be an exception rather than a norm; there is adequacy of other CAPF in the country. Given the envisaged increasing complexities of border management in future, there is a strong case to create a separate Ministry for Homeland Security¹⁹. Understanding and harvesting the economic benefits of border management is a challenge today. Interestingly, FICCI and MHA had commissioned two separate studies under PwC for smart land border²⁰ and coastline management²¹ in 2016. The reports are revealing and when read with PwC global report on The Future of Border Management: Maintaining Security, Facilitating Prosperity, 2015, they clearly articulate, what needs to be done to make for smart management of our borders. The report highlights political instability, cultural radicalism and patronage of mafia and terrorism in some neighbouring countries which makes border management a strategic imperative to guard India's sovereignty. Effective border management for such complex territorial conditions calls for proper planning and measures on three main aspects: people, processes and technology. A competent border management system is predicated on tight coupling of technology and infrastructure that is capable of handling the geopolitical, social and economic challenges we face in India owing to our vast borders. Smart border management is an attempt to identify and implement controls which aim to improve border security by enabling effective communication and coordination among various agencies involved in border management such as customs, immigration, armed forces, border security and intelligence agencies, to thus arrive at a common entity picture. The report therefore, suggests that border management agencies adopt a proactive and resilient approach comprising of four key elements: innovation and technology infrastructure, collaborative border management, capacity building and agile organisation.

One border – one force principle must remain but BSF and ITBP should be nominated as the only Border Guarding Forces, as distinct from other CAPF, with SSB being merged with them. BSF should be nominated for borders with Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal and ITBP for China, Bhutan and Myanmar.

It can undeniably be stated that India's borders in the Northeast are the most contentious, with a potential to become the gravest threat to our national security in times to come. The government of India has done well to not only realize this fact, but also acknowledge it and publicly commit towards ensuring massive infrastructure development for effective border management. Years of neglect of the Northeast has had an exponentially telling effect on the border management of this region. Apart from infrastructure development, there is a need to take cognisance of the merits of a smart border management architecture, where technology would ensure lesser manpower manning more complex and challenging borders of the future in an optimally effective manner. The government would do well to carry out policy and structural reforms commencing with the Northeast region, both in the concerned ministries and border guarding forces, so as to ensure better accountability along with responsibility of India's border management.

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Dynamics of Security of Siliguri Corridor: Way Forward

Lt Gen Kamal Jit Singh, PVSM, AVSM & Bar (Retd)[@]

Abstract

Siliguri Corridor, a tenuous link with eight Northeast states and a gateway for citizens of Northeast, is a strategic space of national salience. Vital surface communication and logistics links to Northeast are routed through this narrow corridor. It also has large number of important security and other establishments besides being a commercial and trading hub extending into neighbouring countries. The Corridor has border with four neighbouring countries, however, besides these benign neighbours, pointed at the Corridor is the Chumbi valley, like a Dragon's dagger. The jostling at Doklam was a controlled Indian reaction to help out hapless Bhutan, in face of Chinese concerted unilateral move to extend its surface communication through unresolved border with Bhutan. Its significance and vulnerability came as a wakeup call during the recent 73-day stand-off at Doklam (also referred to as Dolam or Donglang), which though currently diffused has the potential to escalate again. Corridor has some unresolved internal fault-lines like Gorkhaland, Kamatapur/Rajbongshi agitations, and is also utilised by other insurgent and terrorist groups for transit. This was evidenced during Operation 'All Clear' in Southern Bhutan in 2003-2004. Sensitivities involved call for an imaginative road map incorporating both internal leverages and regional co-operation to build up redundancies to achieve risk mitigation.

Introduction

Geography in terms of neighbours and boundaries throws up myriad challenges, which are classified as cartographic anxieties. These concerns and challenges if not managed well magnify into strategic vulnerabilities. Siliguri Corridor, a tenuous link with eight Northeast states and gateway for more than 50 million North-Easterners, is indeed one such critical national vulnerability.¹ This situation can be attributed to many geo-strategic and geo-economic factors accentuated in the recent past by aggressive activities of Chinese in Doklam or Dolam plateau. This apart, centrifugal forces manifesting in unresolved insurgencies and separatist movements in North-East further accentuate these concerns.

Besides the external drivers, sensitivity is exacerbated by mismanagement of internal fault lines, most notably Gorkhaland problem combined with other problems like Kamatapur and Rajbongshi movements, which though currently subdued can spin out of control. This issue provides opportunity to external elements to fish in troubled waters and keep the region on boil. Corridor has multitude of external and internal challenges like illegal migration, counterfeit, narcotics, cross border smuggling of animals and wild life products.

Dynamics of Siliguri Corridor

Siliguri Corridor is approximately 200-km stretch in length with width varying from 17 to 60 km. It is also aptly referred to as Chicken's Neck and measures approximately 12,203 sq km.² The Eastern part of the Corridor is wider

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and borders Bhutan and Bangladesh. The Chumbi valley tapering into Dolam/Dokalam plateau is barely 50 to 100 km away, depending on contrasting boundary claims. While, it is approximately 50 km as the crow flies but in such hilly and wooded terrain, large scale movement is restricted and is confined along beaten paths/tracks. Mapping the Corridor is a challenge as its limits are a matter of interpretation. Corridor is criss-crossed by streams like Teesta, Rangeet, Mahananda, Torsa and large number of nallahs and rivulets. Corridor has large number of reserve forests and has wild life like elephants in plenty and also serves as a migration corridor for them. Corridor is defined by low hills, jungles and broken ground dotted with numerous rivers, streams and nallahs thereby posing multiple obstacles and formidable defence lines.³

Terrestrial communication from mainland to the Northeast is based on double line broad gauge rail link. This is complemented by two National highways, which also provide gateway to Bhutan through twin townships of Jalgaon and Phuntsholing. In addition, vital hydrocarbon pipelines pass through this stretch along with communication links based on Optical Fibre Communication (OFC) links. The Corridor has two major airbases, Bagdogra and Hashimara. In addition, Army aviation base at Shaugaon is also planned to be operationalised. A large number of Army and CAPF installations and their HQs including a Corps HQ are located in this narrow stretch. In keeping with 'one border, one force' policy, the responsibility of borders is divided between the Army and ITBP for China; SSB for Nepal and Bhutan and Bangladesh with BSF. Multiplicity of forces and agencies requires an effective and tailor-made coordination mechanism. Most of the border except for Bangladesh is unfenced and porous with treacherous riverine stretches.⁴ Tea, timber and tourism are the main drivers of economic activity, controlled from Siliguri, which is de facto capital of North Bengal with regional headquarters and associated offices. Booming city is also becoming a trading and medical tourism hub for neighbouring countries besides skill provider based on education centres located in hill towns in vicinity.

In close proximity and notorious for criminal activities, Kaliachak in Malda is hub of counterfeit trafficking, narco-terrorism and bomb making. Uncontrolled migration from Bangladesh has complicated demographics and Islamist radical groups and madrasas have proliferated with tacit support of the government agencies. Adding to the complexity are non-indigenous Meitei and Bodo settlements, which provide shelter to cadres, in addition to United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) and Kamtapur Liberation Organisation (KLO) utilising it for transit as was highlighted in Operation 'All Clear' in South Bhutan in Dec 2003. Simmering Gorkhaland problem coupled with Kamatapur insurgency have made this region a potential target for hybrid warfare. Insurgency in Cooch Bihar is of low order and follows twin tracks of demand for Kamatapur and Rajbongshi causes. These movements are sustained due to support of other groups, who often seek shelter in parts of Southern Bhutan in collusion with Kamatapur Liberation Organisation (KLO) and other such splinter groups. These groups have also maintained linkages with Bhupalese (Nepali origin elements settled in Southern Bhutan). However, Gorkhaland is a much more serious issue. The obvious question is, why should we allow it to become an Achilles Heel in our geo-strategic calculus and this critical space? More of Gorkhaland problem is discussed in the next part.

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Parameters of Gorkhaland Problem

Gorkhas, early settlers from Nepal, migrated in the 17th century as part of the expansion of the Nepali kingdom and made the hills their homeland. In 1777, Nepal appropriated Sikkim, including Darjeeling district. Settlers leveraged their

entrepreneurial skills and took over Sikkim and adjoining Darjeeling, marginalising native Lepchas and Bhutias. The treaty of Sugali in 1816 brought these areas under the British rule.⁵

Gorkhas, first articulated the demand for a separate administrative unit in 1907 through Hillmen Association, however, it didn't find critical traction. Gorkha National Liberation Front (GNLF) under an ex-soldier, Subash Ghising, gave the movement a new lease in 80s. This led to the establishment of Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council in 1988 after a violent phase from 1986 to 1988, which claimed 1,200 lives.⁶ GNLF ruled for 20 years with a say in economic development, tourism and culture. Following in the mould of militant turned failed leaders like Laldenga, Ghising got virtually booted out in 2008 and was a non-entity till his demise. His legacy got appropriated by Bimal Gurung and Roshan Giri under Gorkha Janmukti Morcha (GJM), surprisingly riding the popularity wave for Indian Idol candidate, Prakash Tamang. After second wave of agitation lasting three years, modified council, Gorkha Territorial Administration (GTA) was established in August 2012 with enhanced mandate and additional five mouzas (revenue unit corresponding to village), notionally enlarging geographical scope into Dooars. Gorkhaland demanded by protagonists' combines hill tracts of Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Mirik with Dooars, which is relatively plain area and low rolling hills.

Dilution from the original demand of 398 mouzas to just five and non-inclusion of tea revenue indicated that the problem is likely to fester. Notwithstanding the fact that departments under GTA have been increased from 19 to 59, real delegation never happened. The ruling party in Bengal decided to utilise the British trick of divide and rule by instituting councils and boards for Lepchas, Shrepas, Bhutias, Tamangs and other communities. Buoyed by the recent success of TMC in Mirik municipal elections and on the verge of GTA elections due in July, Chief Minister Mamta made the ill-advised move of declaring Bangla as an additional language in hills.⁷ Motive behind this move was revealed in immediate rescinding of the decision but it gave Gorkha Janmukta Morcha (GJM) an escape route as it was staring at possible Ghising moment due to its failure on all fronts. However, a large share of the blame lies with the state government. Currently, there is an uneasy truce with Bimal Gurung going into hiding consequent to being declared a proclaimed offender. Dissenting faction is running an interim arrangement till elections, which have been delayed indefinitely.

Gorkhas deserve our gratitude and understanding for their loyalty as they have made unparalleled sacrifices in many wars, starting from the legendary Maharaja Ranjit Singh but more importantly, they need committed leaders. The state that they want is hardly economically viable but can find negative resonance and cause economic disruption in neighbouring states like Sikkim and even Bhutan⁸, where Bhupalese (Nepalese settled in Bhutan) issue has caused its own share of problems. Governance and development of such a sensitive strip is a national responsibility and obligation, however, it has been conspicuous by near total absence. It is high time the state government, aided by the Centre, calms down frayed tempers in the hills and establishes a genuine and functional autonomous administration.

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Chumbi Valley and Doklam

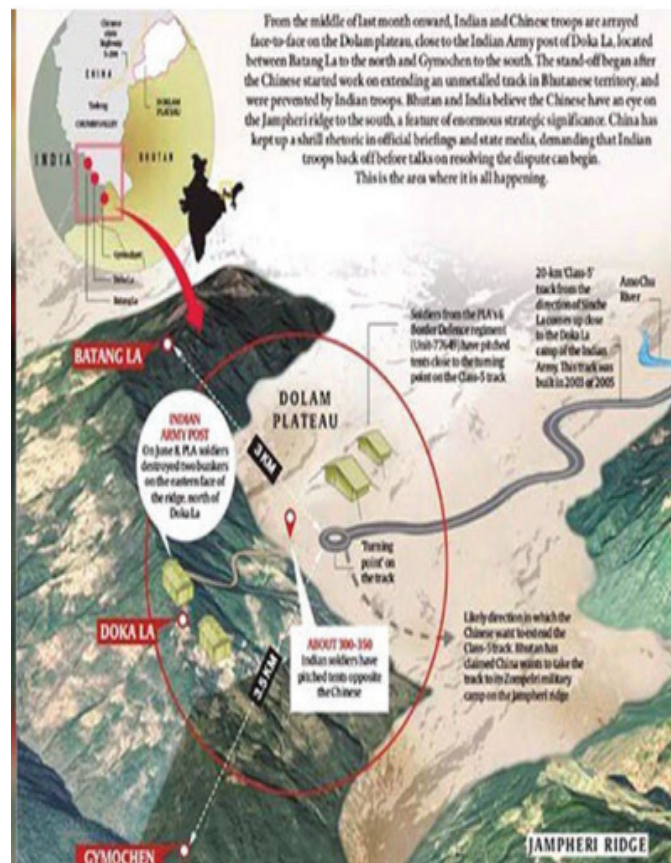
Chumbi is a dagger shaped valley, broad at top and narrowing down to barely 15 to 20 km at Southern tip in Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), China. The valley is on the South side of the Himalayan drainage divide, near the Chinese border sandwiched between Sikkim (India) and Bhutan.⁹ The Chumbi Valley is connected to Sikkim to the southwest via the mountain passes of Cho La, Nathu La, Jelep La, Batang La and Doka La from North to South. While, Jelep La is controlled by Chinese, Nathu La is managed jointly by both countries. Three passes of Cho La, Batang La and Doka La are controlled exclusively by India. The valley is at an altitude of 3,000 m (9,800 ft), and being on the South side of the Himalayas, enjoys a wetter and more temperate climate than most of Tibet. It is on one of the primary routes between India and Tibet; hence, the Chumbi Valley has been at the forefront of several military expeditions like Young Husband

expedition. The British military expedition of 1904 occupied the Chumbi Valley for about three years after the hostilities to secure Tibetan payment of indemnity. Contemporary documents show that the British continued the occupation of Chumbi Valley until February 1908, after having received payment from China. Since the valley is dominated on both flanks, Chinese endeavour has been to increase its width with unilateral claims as narrow valley restricts manoeuvre and deployment. China has already unilaterally extended its control in East up to its claim line. Towards South, the Chinese quest is being mounted through Doklam, Tri junction and to gain a foothold on Jompheri ridge as a launch pad.

Doklam

Doklam or Dolam as referred to by India and Bhutan is called Donglang by Chinese and Zhoglam in Standard Tibetan. It is an area with a plateau and a valley, sandwiched between Tibet's Chumbi Valley to the North, Bhutan's Ha Valley to the East and India's Sikkim state to the West. While traditionally it has been depicted as part of Bhutan in the Bhutanese and other maps since 1961, but it is also claimed by China.¹⁰ To date, the dispute has not been resolved despite several rounds of border negotiations between Bhutan and China. The area is of strategic importance to all three countries due to its proximity to Siliguri Corridor as also providing launch pads into Sikkim and Bhutan.

Humphrey Hawksley's 'Dragon Fire'¹¹ and 'Assassin's Mace' by Brig Bob Butalia outline a scenario of Dragon using Chumbi valley¹² through Doklam and Jaldhaka to cut off the corridor. The recent 73 days standoff at Doklam (also referred to as Dolam) plateau was stark projection of Chinese desire to build a road from Chumbi valley across Torsa Nallah to Bhutanese Chela post to gain a foothold on Jompheri ridge with a view to threaten Siliguri Corridor, the same is explained by graphic given below.



(Source- Times of India graphics)

Way Forward- Siliguri Corridor

Defence of Corridor - Siliguri Corridor with low hills, jungles and broken ground dotted with numerous rivers provides multiple formidable defence lines. Various possible scenarios with associated forms of threats like airborne raids have been war-gamed many times with devil given more than its due, but in every such exercise and simulation, Dragon is not only stymied short of corridor but stage is set for quid-pro-quo options.¹³ While India certainly does not want a war, yet for such an eventuality, troops including mechanised forces are not only earmarked but are regularly rehearsed.

Managing Internal Fault lines - It is absolutely important to deal with internal fault lines, most notably Gorkhaland and to some extent Kamatapur and Rajabongshi in the Corridor on priority and not allow this to be exploited by external players and intelligence agencies. It is also important to follow a zero tolerance policy towards narcotics, counterfeit and other illegal activities. State governments should rise above narrow interests like in case of sharing of Teesta water in lean season through Farrakka barrage to accommodate interests of Bangladesh to forge better ties, which can open possibilities for transit corridor.

Inter-Agency and Force Coordination - There is a need to have clear cut division of responsibilities between security, intelligence agencies and Border Guarding Forces to set up efficient coordination mechanisms. Problems of illegal migration, cattle smuggling, narco-terrorism, trafficking counterfeit/ wild life products need to be managed efficiently.

Theatre Dynamics - In Eastern theatre, India is likely to engage in three separate sub-theatre battles in respective Corps Zones due to terrain configuration. The primary defensive architecture with inbuilt reserves is already in place. Newly raised Mountain Corps can be applied to further stabilise and even create limited quid-pro-quo options. Strategic air lift capability can be utilised to induct additional reserves. Even with attrition on communication links, at worst there can be partial degradation but certainly not disruption, for lots has been changing since 1962 in terms of building of infrastructure and force levels by India as also a will to stand up to bullying China¹⁴, which was displayed in ample measure at Doklam. The requirement is to boost up this dissuasive capability with additional surveillance, mechanised forces, air defence and surveillance resources¹⁵. There is also a requirement to have a separate designated HQ for defence of Corridor.

Building Redundancies - Risk mitigation dictates focused investment in strategic storage for critical commodities like hydro-carbons and munitions to boost sustenance capability of Eastern theatre to reduce dependence on Corridor. The overall thrust should be to reduce salience of Corridor.

Alternative Connectivities - There is a need to invest in 'Act East' policy to link Northeast to Association of Southeast Asian Nations(ASEAN), thereby, reducing dependence on mainland. The success of this policy is predicated on maintaining amiable relations with neighbours, especially Bhutan, Bangladesh and Myanmar. There is also a need to invest in alternative connectivities such as Sittwe-Kaladan multi modal project, which has got inordinately delayed like the much touted tri lateral friendship highway connecting India, Myanmar and Thailand.

Bangladesh Corridor - A very viable project is transit corridor through Bangladesh as sustenance on aerial bridge even in emergency has limited potential. Contagious to corridor is long pending project of Tetuliya link (4 km) through Bangladesh, which has potential to reduce vulnerability and reduce transit distance. Security of region is linked to partnership with neighbours particularly Bangladesh for which early resolution of Farakka/ Teesta dispute is mandatory. All these factors cumulatively applied have the potential to reduce salience of Corridor.

Operationalising 'Act East' Policy- India is showing increasing focus and interest in regional groupings oriented towards East like BBIN (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal); BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sector Technological and Economic Co-operation) and now ASEAN. India needs to build on diplomatic coup of getting ten

India's Internal Security Environment

ASEAN Heads of state as Chief guests for Republic day by graduating from symbolism, to concrete measure like swift conclusion of Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP).

Indo-Pacific Switch- India needs to partner Pacific countries by joining Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) and further strengthening Quad grouping forged with USA, Japan, Australia and India.

Conclusion

Siliguri Corridor is an important strategic space, in fact critical yet if handled well and leveraged with our resilience and capabilities can ensure that it does not become our Achilles heel or critical vulnerability. Since aggressively rising China is showing interest in this space, we need to apply a range of measures to build up our strategic deterrence from persuasive to credible deterrence. It is axiomatic that we build our capabilities and infrastructure as also forge regional linkages to reduce dependence on the Corridor.

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India's Internal Security Challenges and Response Mechanism

Shri Prakash Singh, IPS (Retd)[@]

Abstract

The internal security scenario is grim. Terrorism, international and domestic, poses the most formidable threat. Terrorists are opposed to the very 'idea' of India. Besides, Pakistan has been fuelling separatist movement in J&K. Government is trying to win over the alienated sections and is pursuing a comprehensive counter-insurgency policy. There are insurgent movements in the Northeast, though these have been generally contained. The Maoist movement is also ebbing but there is no room for complacency. The socio-economic problems which are at the root of unrest need to be addressed. Border management poses complex problems. India must have a proper internal security doctrine to tackle these formidable challenges. The law enforcement apparatus needs to be restructured. The colonial police must be replaced by progressive, modern police, upholding the rule of law. Supreme Court's directions on Police Reforms must be implemented in letter and spirit. Besides, the capabilities of the state police must be enhanced in terms of manpower and infrastructure. The Central Armed Police Forces need to develop more teeth. The intelligence organizations must improve their coverage, particularly their penetration of extremist organizations, and the Maoists. The internal security structure, as a whole needs to be completely revamped.

Introduction

Kautilya wrote in the Arthashastra that a state could be at risk from four different kinds of threats – internal, external, externally-aided internal and internally-aided external. The internal security scenario of the country has a mix of all the shades of threats visualized by Kautilya.

Terrorists have spread their tentacles all over the country. J&K continues to be on the boil with Pakistan continuing to push infiltrators from across the border and refusing to dismantle its infrastructure of terrorism. The separatist movements in the Northeast have been contained, but the region continues to be in a state of turbulence. The Maoist insurrection appears to be ebbing in Central India, but there are indications of its expansion in the Northeast and some southern states. Both, land and maritime borders present formidable challenges to the management.

The major challenges on the internal security front are:

- threat of terrorism, international and domestic
- separatist movement in J&K aided and abetted by Pakistan
- insurgent movements in the Northeast

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- Left-Wing Extremism and
- Border Management

A brief review of the aforesaid challenges would be necessary to understand their gravity and examine what changes in the existing response mechanism would be necessary, to deal with them.

Terrorism

Terrorism poses the greatest challenge to the security and stability of the country. The terrorists are opposed to the very idea of India; they want to destroy its icons and its symbols. They have been repeatedly causing explosions in Delhi because it is the political capital of India; they have been repeatedly attacking Mumbai because it is the commercial hub of the country; they have been perpetrating incidents of violence in places like Ayodhya and Varanasi because these are the holiest places of the Hindus; they have been active in Bangalore because it is the IT hub of the country. In other words, they want to destroy India politically, economically and culturally. According to the US Country Reports on Terrorism 2016, India is the third most affected country in the world after Iraq and Afghanistan in the number of attacks perpetrated on its soil.

Indian Mujahideen (IM) is the most powerful indigenous terrorist outfit. It announced itself to the media through an e-mail, sent after the blasts in courts at Lucknow, Faizabad and Varanasi in November 2007. The organization drew recruits mostly from the Student Islamic Movement of India (SIMI). The arrests of Yasin Bhatkal, one of the top commanders of the IM, in Nepal in 2013 and that of Abdul Subhan Qureshi alias Touqeer by Delhi Police in 2018, have however given setback to the IM. Lashkar-e-Toiba and Jaish-e-Mohammad are the two most important Pak-sponsored terrorist formations, committing depredations in India.

According to the US Country Reports on Terrorism 2016, India is the third most affected country in the world after Iraq and Afghanistan in the number of attacks perpetrated on its soil. The Al Qaeda leader, Ayman al-Zawahiri, in a recent video, called upon the Muslims to “raise the flag of jihad” in the sub-continent. He also announced the formation of a new branch of Al Qaeda, Jamaat Qaidat Al-jihad, to “bring back Islamic rule” in the sub-continent.

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The emergence of the ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) in the Middle East and its concept of Caliphate have given a new dimension to the terrorist threat. A video entitled The Bilad al-Hind (Land of India) released in May 2016 by the IS threatened to wage Jihad in India and urged all Muslims to take revenge for the injustices meted out to Indian Muslims in Kashmir, for the demolition of Babri Masjid and for the communal riots in Gujarat and Muzaffarnagar.¹

Economic terrorism is yet another dimension of international terrorism. Pakistan has been flooding the country with counterfeit currency with a view to subverting its economy and funding terrorist activities in different parts of the country.

Jammu & Kashmir

The Government of India has made a number of tactical mistakes in Jammu & Kashmir in the past. Some of these are mentioned below:

- Referring the matter to UN when the Indian Army was in the process of flushing out the invaders

India's Internal Security Environment

- Nehru's uncalled-for assurance, that the wishes of the people of the State would be ascertained
- Bartering away the territorial gains of 1965 at Tashkent
- Indira Gandhi could have dictated settlement of the Kashmir issue in 1972 following the liberation of Bangladesh
- Release of militants in exchange for Rubaiya Sayeed on Dec 13, 1989
- Release of militant leaders including Maulana Masood Azhar, Ahmed Omar and Mushtaq Ahmed Zargar in the wake of hijacking of Indian Airlines flight IC 814 on December 24, 1999.

The killing of young Hizbul Mujahideen Commander, Burhan Wani, by the security forces on July 8, 2016 in Bamdoora village led to prolonged agitation by separatists in the Valley. The popular upsurge was fully exploited by Pakistan. Hizbul Mujahideen chief, Syed Salahuddin, threatened on September 3, 2016 to train more Kashmiri suicide bombers who would turn the Valley into "a graveyard for Indian forces".

Cease-fire violations on the Line of Control (LoC) witnessed a quantum jump in 2017. The figure, which was 271 in 2016, shot up to 860 in 2017. Pakistan has also been trying to push more militants into the Kashmir Valley. There were 310 attempts at infiltration in 2017 as against 270 in 2016 and 130 in 2015. Indian security forces have been responding very effectively to these transgressions.²

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Northeast

Northeast has been convulsed with separatist and secessionist movements of different hues. These movements could broadly be attributed to:

- A feeling of neglect by the central government;
- False propaganda by leaders of the area;
- Alienation of tribals;
- Changes in the demographic pattern caused by the influx of people from across the borders;
- Availability of sanctuaries in Myanmar and Bangladesh;
- Assistance to rebel groups by countries inimical to India.

Nagaland is having suspension of operations since 1997. A framework agreement was signed on August 3, 2015. It is to pave the way for a final settlement.

Manipur has about 40 militant groups operating in the Valley and the Hill districts. Six Valley-based militant outfits have formed a body called CorCom (Coordination Committee) to bring unity among revolutionary groups to free Manipur from India's "colonial regime".

In Assam, the sharpness of United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) has been blunted, thanks to Bangladesh's cooperation. Leaders of the insurgent outfit have shown willingness to negotiate with the Government of India and abandoned their insistence on recognition of 'sovereignty' as pre-condition for talks. Paresh Baruah, commander of the armed wing of ULFA is, however, opposed to any talks with the Government of India until the 'core issues' of sovereignty and independence of Assam are also discussed. Baruah has about 150 armed cadres with him and is believed to be camping in Yunnan province of China. The various militant groups operating in the Northeastern region – ULFA-I, IK Songbijit faction of National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB-IKS), Kamtapur Liberation Organisation (KLO) and the Khaplang faction of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) – have combined to form the United National Liberation Front of Western South-East Asia (UNLFWSEA).

Left-Wing Extremism

Left-wing extremism was once described as the biggest internal security threat to the country. According to the US state Department, Naxals were the third most deadly terror organization in the world after Islamic State and the Taliban in 2016.

The salient features of the movement today are:

- Spread over a large geographical area
- Increase in potential for violence
- Expansion in Northeast
- Nexus with other extremist groups

The movement which started from a small village in 1967 has spread over a vast swathe of the country during the last over 45 years. Presently, about 106 districts of the country are affected by incidents of Maoist violence.³ these are mostly in the states of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Odisha and Bihar.

The Naxals have significant potential for violence. According to Home Ministry's estimates, about 12,000 people lost their lives in Naxal violence during the last two decades.⁴ The armed wing of the Maoists - the People's Liberation Guerrilla Army (PLGA) - is estimated to be about 8,000 strong; besides there is jan militia (about 30,000) armed with simple weapons who provide logistical support to the PLGA.

The Maoists are spreading their tentacles in the Northeast and there are reports about their trying to forge links with the insurgent outfits' active in the region. As noted by a parliamentary panel, "the foray of Maoist into sensitive Northeastern States is fraught with serious strategic implications, since it has potential trans-border possibilities of connection, activities or interaction."

The Maoists' nexus with the other extremist organizations has added to the complexity of the problem. They have *entente cordiale* with the NSCN (IM). Some batches of Naxals received arms training from the ULFA. The ISI is trying to reach out to the Maoists.

The Maoists have recently suffered considerable attrition in their top leadership and are in some kind of a tactical retreat. The Home Minister of India recently claimed that there had been a 40 per cent reduction in the incidents of Maoist violence, during the last three years.⁵

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India's Internal Security Environment

The socio-economic dimensions of the problem are recognized and handsome grants have been released for development of the affected areas from time to time. There are however disturbing reports about economic inequality in the country increasing since the 1980s. An Oxfam report released in January 2018 shows that the richest 1% of the country cornered 73% of the wealth generated in the country last year.⁶ Such unequal distribution of wealth has the potential to fuel discontent among the lowest strata of society.

Border Management

India has international borders with six different countries:

China	-	4,056 kms.
Pakistan	-	3,074 kms.
Bangladesh	-	4,095 kms.
Myanmar	-	1,643 kms.
Nepal	-	1,751 kms.
Bhutan	-	699 kms.
Total		15,318 kms.

Besides, there is a coastline of 5,422 kms; there are also two island territories on our eastern and western flanks accounting for a coastline of 2,094 kms. We have three border guarding forces – Border Security Force (BSF), Indo-Tibetan Border Police Force (ITBT), and the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) to guard the land borders and the Coast Guard to patrol the coast line

The challenges of border management acquire added dimensions due to certain factors peculiar to the country. These are:

- Most of our land borders are artificial boundaries and are not based on natural features like rivers or watersheds
- There are stretches of un-demarcated land borders
- There are no sanitized corridors along the borders and there is habitation or cultivation right up to the zero line
- The borders are porous and therefore easily negotiable. Securing the borders poses formidable problems.

Tackling the Threats: Response Mechanism

The internal security challenges are formidable. Unfortunately, however, the state police today, is in shambles and in urgent need of reforms. There have been several Commissions, both at the State and Central levels, which made recommendations for reforms, but these received no more than cosmetic treatment at the hands of government with the result that there has been hardly any change in the pattern of colonial policing which we inherited from the British.

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The National Police Commission submitted eight comprehensive reports between 1979 and 1981 covering the entire gamut of police working. Unfortunately, for political reasons, its recommendations were generally ignored. In 1996, public interest litigation, Prakash Singh vs Union of India, was filed in the Supreme Court for police reforms. The Supreme Court gave a landmark judgement on September 22, 2006 to insulate the police from extraneous pressures, but the state governments have been dragging their feet in implementing the judicial directions.

Developing the Capabilities of the State Police

It will be necessary that the capabilities of the state police and the central armed police forces are substantially augmented to deal with the multi-dimensional challenges confronting the country.

Manpower

The police-population ratio in India, according to Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPRD) Data on Police Organization (as on January 1, 2015), was 182 policemen per lac of population. In actual fact however only 139 policemen are on the ground because of the large number of vacancies. According to information placed before the Lok Sabha on July 26, 2016 the country was short of more than half a million policemen on January 1, 2015. It is absolutely essential that the vacancies are not only filled up but steps are also taken to increase the sanctioned strength so as to bring us closer to recognized international standards.

Infrastructure

The shortfalls at the State level in respect of (a) transport, (b) communications, and (c) forensics need to be made up. The police should have a good fleet of vehicles to meet their requirements. Communication facilities also need to be upgraded. Forensic facilities in most of the states are inadequate.

Housing

The National Police Commission recommended that family accommodation should be provided to all the gazetted and non-gazetted officers. According to information available with BPR&D, as on January 1, 2015, only 5.80 lakh family quarters were available for over 17.21 lakh police personnel in the country. Housing has a direct impact on the welfare and morale of police personnel.

Training

The training academies in most of the states have very poor infrastructure in terms of buildings, equipment, literature and facilities. What is worse, the most unwanted police officers are dumped in these institutions. Bereft of any motivation, these officers are not able to inspire or inculcate high values among the trainees. As recommended by the Second Administrative Reforms Commission, the deputation to training institutions must be made more attractive in terms of facilities and allowances so that the best talent is drawn as instructors.

Modernization

Government of India approved in September 2017 a Rs. 25,000 crore internal security scheme to strengthen the law and order apparatus, modernize the state police forces and improve their capacity to combat terrorism. The scheme has been hailed as “one of the biggest moves towards police modernization in India.”

Control Room

The police control rooms in the states need to be upgraded. There should be a universal number which people could dial in any part of the country for police assistance in an emergency, like 911 in US, 999 in UK or 112 in EU. MHA's National Emergency Response System (NERS) needs to be given a push.

Commissionerate System

The National Police Commission, in its sixth Report, recommended that in large cities the system of Police Commissionerate should be introduced. The Commissioner should be a police officer of adequate maturity, seniority and expertise, and he should have complete authority over the force and be functionally autonomous. There is fierce bureaucratic resistance to the scheme in some states.

Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems

The Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems aims to network all police stations across the country. It would establish seamless connectivity among the 14,000 police stations and 6,000 supervisory police officers. Ninety-two per cent police stations had been connected to the State Data Centre till Nov.30, 2017.⁷

Police in Concurrent List

The founding fathers of the Constitution had placed "public order" and "police" under the State List of the seventh schedule. During the last nearly seven decades, however, the law and order situation in the country has undergone a sea change. There are threats to internal security which have inter-state and even international ramifications. It would be in the fitness of things therefore if "police" and "public order" are brought on the Concurrent List of the seventh schedule of the Constitution. It would rationalize and give de jure status to what prevails de facto on the ground.

Central Armed Police Forces

India has a formidable Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF). These are Assam Rifles, BSF, Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), ITBP, National Security Guard (NSG), Railway Protection Force (RPF) and SSB. Their combined strength is 2.26 million.

The forces have problems of infrastructure and weaponry which need to be addressed. Government should also ensure that there is no open-ended expansion of these forces and that whatever augmentation takes place in future is in the state police forces so that they are progressively less dependent on the CAPFs.

Intelligence

The Intelligence Bureau has large number of vacancies. These must be filled up. Besides, intelligence operations must be aggressive and capable of frustrating enemies' sinister plans. At the state level, there is considerable scope for improving intelligence coverage of extremist organizations, insurgent outfits and the Maoists. The National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID), which is meant to bolster India's counter-terrorism capabilities by combining 21 sensitive databases relating to domains such as banks, credit cards, cell-phone usage, immigration records, motor vehicle registration, income tax records into a single database for access by authorized officers from central agencies like the Intelligence Bureau (IB), Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI), and ED, needs to be operationalized early.⁸

Summing Up

The internal security scenario is quite challenging. To tackle the various problems effectively, we must have a comprehensive Internal Security Doctrine. The legal framework would also need to be strengthened. Measures will also have to be taken to rejuvenate and reform the police. The Supreme Court's directions must be implemented in letter and spirit. Professional police accountable to the people of the country and placing the highest importance to upholding the Rule of Law will provide the essential foundation for a progressive, modern India. The capabilities of the state police would need substantial augmentation and modernization in terms of manpower, infrastructure and other resources. The Central Armed Police Forces must develop more teeth. The intelligence organizations would need to improve their penetration. There are no short-cuts to tackling the challenges. We shall have to comprehensively revamp the entire internal security architecture.

Endnotes

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Demographic Transformations: Implications for India's Internal Security

Dr. Ajai Sahni[@]

Abstract

Today, across the world, demographic trends are a cause for concern, both in countries of rising and of declining populations. Population pressures are expected to lead to widespread resource scarcities and increasingly acute possibly violent competition between various groups, which can be exacerbated by political mismanagement and administrative ineptitude. The predicted impact would include spiralling water scarcities (and 'water wars') and the depletion or degradation of a wide range of natural resources. Europe's shrinking work forces and a population that is aging dramatically will have serious implications. Whereas, the only visible option of maintaining population size in Europe is by increasing migrant inflows – a strategy fraught with a range of other risks. There are, consequently, a number of countervailing factors that would go some way in neutralizing or balancing the many negative impulses that demographic forces may generate. It is necessary, to evolve specific policies, to factor these elements.

Introduction

A deeply destabilized global order, the resurgence of radical political ideologies, primarily of the extremist right – and not the Islamist stream alone – the dilution of constitutional democratic norms in many of the most stable democracies of the world, and a creeping revival of the politics of fear, intimidation, polarization and authoritarianism, cumulatively portend the commencement of new global 'Dark Ages'. In hindsight, the ugly stability of the Cold War era now appears relatively benign, as a violent multi-polarity, reckless interventionism and the collapse of a succession of established states creates uncertainties, and tempt even marginal states and non-state entities (or proxies) to an adventurism unprecedented in the modern world. Powerful ideologies of disruption have created alternative strategic and tactical perspectives that explicitly seek the randomisation of violence, the creation of 'conditions of savagery'¹ and, at their limits, apocalyptic conflict.

Demography underpins or exacerbates many of these deleterious developments. "Demographic visions of the future, Myron Weiner and Michael Teitelbaum remind us, "have rarely been benign."² Today, across the world, demographic trends are cause for concern, both in countries of rising and of declining populations. However, a measure of caution is necessary in making projections on the basis of such trends alone. Demographic forces can alter the realm of the possible, but they do not always do so. There are simply too many variables to evolve a clear set of projections based on population trends alone. The task of strategic planning is to note broad propensities and predispositions, and accommodate these within projections for the future.

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It is useful, consequently, to flag some of the most important trends within the Eurasian region, which could have significant potential impact on India's future security.

In 1950, Asia accounted for nearly 1.4 billion of the world's 2.52 billion people (55.4 per cent). By 2000, this number had grown to 3.67 billion out of 6 billion (60.4 per cent). By 2020, this population will have risen to 4.62 billion (according to 'medium variant' estimates), but will secure a measure of stability in terms of its share of the world's population of 7.79 billion (59.30 per cent), and a significant decline in proportions is expected thereafter, accounting for 53.75 per cent of the global population in 2050 (5.25 billion of 9.77 billion). By 2020, crucially, China alone will account for 18.22 per cent of the world's population, and India, 17.71 per cent.

The sheer burden of population growth will have direct and potentially dire consequences for many parts of Asia. The population densities that would be achieved by this demographic surge, particularly in South and Central Asia, will hurl these regions against the inflexibility of their natural endowments. Environmental and resource stresses already afflict many countries in Asia and many of the most politically unstable or overpopulated concentrations will see the most significant rise in densities.

The sheer burden of population growth will have direct and potentially dire consequences for many parts of Asia. The population densities that would be achieved by this demographic surge, particularly in South and Central Asia, will hurl these regions against the inflexibility of their natural endowments.

Absolute densities and increases, however, are not the only problem, and the carrying capacity of different regions varies widely, and is defined not only by natural resource thresholds, but also by a complex of social, economic and political factors the last of which includes a spectrum of geopolitical variables that have become particularly volatile over the past decades. Demographic factors nevertheless, remain a critical variable within the complex dynamic that generates political violence. It is useful to note, consequently, that the Fragile State Index 2017, based on twelve clusters of indicators of instability,³ which puts 178 countries in different categories (Sustainable, Stable, Warning, Alert), has as many as 29 countries in Asia on the Alert or Warning Category, out of a total 124 in these categories globally.⁴ In South Asia, every country that shares a land border with India finds a place in this Alert or Warning Category.⁵ Asia in general, and the South Asian neighbourhood, with long histories of hostility, terrorism and covert warfare in particular, is the quintessential bad neighbourhood.

Further, a looming demographic crisis characterized by low birth rates and enormous need for migrant labour – overwhelmingly drawn from troubled Third World populations, including many that have displayed a high proclivity for political and ideologically motivated violence in the recent past – will have a crucial impact on stability in the Eurasian periphery and on the emerging global equation of power and conflict dynamics.

In 1950, Europe and Russia comprised 25 per cent of the global population; the share is now 13.8 per cent; by 2020, it will be 11.3 per cent; and by 2050, it will have declined to just 8.6 per cent.⁶ Further, six of the 10 most populous nations were in the developed world in 1950; by 2020, only the United States will remain in this top-10 list.⁷ Minor players like Pakistan and Bangladesh already have populations substantially greater than Russia's 143.9 million, and this gap is widening rapidly.⁸ On Russia's eastern and sparsely populated borders, the Chinese giant already has a population over 9.7 times greater, and will grow almost to a multiple of 10 by 2020.⁹ Crucially, Russia demonstrates incapacity to sustain the manpower requirements of a credible Land Army to defend and hold its sprawling borders, to contain the unremitting threat of secessionist and terrorist movements along its peripheries, and to prevent a creeping occupation through massive illegal migration into border areas. The impact will not be limited to Russia. Today, as Europe fails to maintain a 'replacement rate' of reproduction, the prospects of Europe retaining its present position appear to be shrinking. Significantly, "Contracting populations have often given way militarily, economically and culturally to

expanding ones,”¹⁰ and the only visible option of maintaining population size in Europe is by increasing migrant inflows – a strategy fraught with a range of other risks. Europe’s shrinking work forces and a population that is aging dramatically will have serious implications. It is estimated that Europe would require an annual average net migration of 20 million if it is to maintain its potential support ratio – the ratio of the working age population to old age population – at peak levels.¹¹

The only visible option of maintaining population size in Europe is by increasing migrant inflows – a strategy fraught with a range of other risks. Europe’s shrinking work forces and a population that is aging dramatically will have serious implications.

A large proportion of these migrants would come from former Western colonies, including Muslim countries, creating further pressures on race and communal relations. From mid-2010 to mid-2016 alone, the share of Muslims in Europe rose more than 1 per cent point, from 3.8 per cent to 4.9 per cent (from 19.5 million to 25.8 million). By 2050, the share of the continent’s population that is Muslim could more than double, rising to 11.2 per cent or more, depending on how much migration is allowed. Even in the unlikely event that future migration is permanently halted, the Muslim population would still rise to an estimated 7.4 per cent, due to the relative youth and high fertility rates of Europe’s current Muslim residents.¹²

There has been a resurgence of radical Islam among Muslim migrants in Europe and these trends can be expected to deepen as the ratio of the Muslim population increases over the coming decades. The general decline in population, and particularly of the youth cohort, will have necessary and obvious implications for Europe’s military capacities. Culturally, it has already become increasingly difficult to attract youth to the Armed Forces across Europe. With a dwindling recruitment base, it will become impossible to sustain the current manpower levels in Europe’s Armies and over the coming decades Europe’s military Forces “will have little capacity for power projection.”¹³ The capacities for maintenance of internal order – which have already coming under strain in the face of what could prove to be very preliminary challenges – would also be significantly constrained by the contraction of the population and the proportion of youth within it. In sum, the richest developed nations of Europe may become “demographically challenged, fiscally starving neutrals who manoeuvres to avoid expensive international engagements.”¹⁴

The broad trends to destabilization in the wide Eurasian periphery will impact directly on an even more demographically complex and volatile South Asian neighbourhood, where rates of population growth, while they are declining, remain a cause for major concern. The absolute increases in population that each of the countries in the region will experience are distressing, and there is little basis for confidence that the region’s governments will demonstrate extraordinary efficiency in the management of these stresses, given their past record.

By year 2020, India’s population will exceed 1.38 billion, adding over 330 million to its year 2000 population (an increase of 31.35 per cent). The growth in some countries in the neighbourhood is even more alarming. Afghanistan adds 17.9 million to its 2000 population of 20.09 million (registering a growth of over 89.38 per cent); Pakistan would add nearly 69.8 million to its year 2000 population of 138.5 million (50.41 per cent); Bangladesh adds 38.19 million to its 2000 population of 131.58 million (29.02 per cent); Nepal would add 6.51 million to its 2000 population of 23.74 million (27.45 per cent). Sri Lanka is the only country in the region where the rate of growth appears manageable, with populations rising by a little over two million from year 2000 levels at 21.08 million (12.25 per cent).

Population pressures are expected to lead to widespread resource scarcities and increasingly acute – possibly violent – competition between various groups, which can be exacerbated by political mismanagement and administrative ineptitude. The predicted impact would include spiralling water scarcities (and ‘water wars’) and the depletion or degradation of a wide range of natural resources; the progressive diminution of the per capita resource base through cropland fragmentation, erosion, deforestation and desertification; and the augmentation of structural scarcities, that is, the denial of equal access to particular resources to specific groups as a result of social and political inequalities.¹⁵ Intra-regional variations in growth will add to the skews.

Within India, as much as 63 per cent of the country's population growth in the first quarter of the present century is in its most backward States – UP, Bihar, MP, Rajasthan, Orissa, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Uttaranchal. This would take the share of these States in India's population up from 40 per cent to 50 per cent.¹⁶ Moreover, the more progressive States of South India would have 'completed the demographic transition' by this time, with very low growth rates of population and an increasing age profile. This could provoke massive migration from the North to these States,¹⁷ and such migrants could take with them the culture of lawlessness and violence that afflicts many of their States of origin, adding fuel to rising and potentially violent 'sons of soil' movements in the affected regions.

It is significant moreover, that scarcities and consequent social tensions may coexist with rapid rates of GDP growth and apparent declines in the national poverty ratio. The late 1990s and early 2000s have witnessed the most dramatic increases in India's growth, but also some of the most unsettling signs of rural distress (malnutrition, starvation deaths and the spreading incidence of 'farmer suicides' in some of the most unexpected locations), demonstrating the fact that "scarcity and abundance may very well coexist."¹⁸ This period has also seen the most dramatic extension of the regions of disorder and violence, with insurgent movements of various ideological persuasion variously affecting as many as 310 of the total of India's 636 districts at peak, in 2010,¹⁹ though there has been an equally dramatic contraction in recent years, with the number of affected districts down at 191 at end 2016, of which just 59 were in the 'highly affected' category, indicating chronic violence.²⁰

There is, in the popular and political commentary, much celebration of the growth of population and the 'youth bulge' that will purportedly help the Indian economy boom – and eventually equal and overtake China. But the 'youth bulge' has a down side, and has historically been associated with instability and internal conflict in many theatres in the world as "youth bulges may aggravate already manifested conflicts over natural resources."²¹

The consequences of the youth bulge may be exacerbated further by the significantly skewed sex ratios across the region, creating the dangers of substantial populations of rootless 'bare sticks' or surplus adult males. As one study colourfully expresses it, a "surplus of men" points to a potential "deficit of peace"²² as this rootless population is "prone to seek satisfaction through vice and violence".²³

Changes in the composition of the population may also have significant destabilizing impact, particularly as democratic political mobilization exploits ethnic and communal divides in an effort by political leaders to increase the size of their ethnic group in order to gain or consolidate power.²⁴

Patterns of the urban-rural distribution of populations will also prove crucial for a variety of reasons. Much has been made in India, for instance, of the growth of the urban population and the pressure this would exert on urban infrastructure, governance and security. At least 60 per cent of the Indian population is expected to live in cities by 2050, significantly more from 27.7 per cent in 2000.²⁵

Crucially, however, the dramatic growth in the urban population would not provide any relief to the rural areas. India's rural population in 2020 would stand at 882 million, significantly above the 2000 figure of 753 million. Despite massive migration to urban areas, consequently, dependency on the agricultural and rural sector would not decline. Given the patterns of narrow and focused development in a handful of priority sectors in the hi-tech arena, as well as a handful of "corridors of growth",²⁶ rural-urban disparities can be expected to widen, aggravating social tensions in rural areas. Though, these numbers are expected to start declining by 2035 there will still be a gigantic rural population of about 805 million by 2050.²⁷

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Implication for Indian Security

In broad terms, these trends suggest that pressures of demographic and resource management across the Eurasian region will incline to greater stresses, tensions, conflicts and a pervasive sense of insecurity. These trends would afflict, in different measure and in different ways, virtually all societies and states in the region, from the most developed to the least. Demographic stresses appear to be the most significant within the South Asia region itself, and this would certainly and directly result in a deepening of the disruptive propensities and potential in the region.

Within this broad perspective, specific threats to India's wider and widening security interests arise out of the fact of increasing linkages with countries in the Eurasian complex; the rising dependencies of systems in the region; the potential for export of conflict from one area to another – including the export of current movements and cadres connected with Islamist extremism; the disruption of existing and potential trade links and economic projects; and the call upon Indian Forces to support friendly regimes or maintain the peace in widely dispersed areas. Simply put, India's engagement in the processes of globalization has created a demand for a much wider projection of both soft and military power, without evidence of a commensurate increase in such powers.

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Energy security will be a crucial component of this Byzantine web of interests. According to estimates, India doubles its consumption of energy between 2000 and 2020, while China's needs to grow by at least 150 per cent.²⁸ This will fuel an intense and global competition for supplies, and will make the stability of the primary oil and natural gas suppliers – overwhelmingly concentrated in West and Central Asia – critical to Indian economic interests. Significantly, fossil fuels – principally oil, natural gas and coal – will continue to dominate global energy utilization through 2020, despite the growth of alternative sources. Moreover, by 2015, only one-tenth of Persian Gulf oil will be directed to Western markets; three quarters will go to Asia.

At least some of the efforts to ensure control or guarantees of supplies of energy resources have taken the shape of geopolitical adventures and mischief involving the exploitation of the politics of religious identity over the past decade and a half, and India will find its interests challenged in both Central and West Asia by Pakistan's exploitation of Islamism, and by Pakistan's hitherto unsuccessful efforts to consolidate its strategic overreach beyond Afghanistan, as well as the new 'great games' that are unfolding as the tentative 'unipolarity' of US domination is challenged by a crystallizing axis of powers clustering around China and Russia.

Considerations that apply to securing transportation routes and sources of energy apply more widely to the securing of transportation and trade routes in all regions. Within this context, China's construction of the new 'land bridge' to Europe through Central Asia, the One Belt One Road Initiative and the China Pakistan Economic Corridor, as well as the existing and vital sea routes in South East Asia, will all create and face new challenges, and will demand particular attention.

The threats emanating from weak and failing states are being exacerbated by certain aspects of the dynamics of globalization, including the "unparalleled empowerment of small groups of non-state actors, including terrorists, who have access to modern technologies."²⁹ These threats afflict every region in the Eurasian mass, and will have a potential destabilizing impact on Indian interests.

Such destabilization acquires an additional edge when countries in the immediate neighbourhood seek to externalize their own potentially growing problems by exporting terror, engaging in subversive activities, or overt military adventures, and to exploit India's internal fault lines.

India's own internal difficulties will persist, and will require the evolution of a range of instrumentalities for maintenance of internal order, and military and non-military interventions and mechanisms to discourage neighbours from engaging in mischief on Indian soil.

The threat of Islamist terrorism is integrally linked to developments in all regions of the Eurasian mass. Developments across West Asia, prominently including Iraq, Syria, Libya and Yemen, the destabilization of Turkey, the rising tension and adventurism of the Shia block led by Iran, and the continuing problems created by the Sunni alliances led by Saudi Arabia, will collectively reverberate across the world. The possible collapse of one or more of the West or Central Asian regimes, and a takeover by an Islamist extremist entity of any such state would encourage further radicalization in all regions, and feed the armies of jihad. The radicalization and consolidation of Muslim populations in Europe, and their engagement in extremist and terrorist activities would not only directly threaten local economies and political systems, but all other systems – including India – that are linked through trade and complex economic relationships with Europe, and crucially, globally linked through the Internet, and would also revitalize Islamist elements in other parts of the world. In sum, the growth of disorder in any part of Eurasia – indeed, of the world – now jeopardizes order and stability everywhere on an increasingly interconnected globe.

Such an impact may be direct or indirect, the former, for instance, in the case of areas of loose or poor governance, or of governmental collusion, that permits anti-Indian terrorist or criminal groups to plan, coordinate and manage their activities from foreign soil, or to recruit and train there; the latter in terms of the direct impact such disorders have on general economic capacities, undermining the country's growth rates, impacting on the quality of life of large masses of the people, and imposing a rising burden of expenditure on security and defence.

It is important, within this context, to realize that India remains one of the most 'under-militarized' countries of the world, and a significant expansion of military capabilities – both manpower and technology – is mandated, not just by the dramatic extension of the necessities of future strategic projections, but in terms of current and static circumstances themselves. A look at the population/troops ratios shows India at the bottom of most significant countries in this context.³⁰ Given population trends, moreover, it is inevitable that other countries in the region would expand their military manpower over the coming decades as well.

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However, the complexity of the emerging world situation makes it impossible for individual nations to develop independent capacities that would meet all their security needs unilaterally. As one commentator notes, "Conflicts that will require military operations will be so cumbersome, sophisticated and expensive that the need grows towards a multilateral approach in settling not only economic issues but political and military conflicts as well."³¹ The future will, consequently, require multifaceted and multiple cooperative security arrangements with a wide range of countries and international organisations.

Any assessment of future security needs within the context of demographic developments would need to recognize that culture is the core. The outcome of demographic shifts will depend on cultural factors: whether particular societies become technologically, economically and administratively competent, or continue to exist as 'communities of hate' relying on divisive issues for political mobilization and management.

A corollary, here, is that any country that seeks an international role will have to rely increasingly on 'soft power' projection, and to integrate such soft power considerations into its wider military and security strategies. However, the lesson of history is that enduring soft power capabilities require a strong underpinning of hard power.

Finally, some qualification is necessary here. Asia in general and South Asia in particular, are also regions of the most extraordinary hope and opportunity today, with Asian powers developing economic muscle as they seek an expanding role in the rapidly enlarging and increasingly interdependent global economy. While the problems of Asia's constituent states are certainly mounting, so indeed, in many cases – prominently including India – are their capacities to cope. There are, consequently, a number of countervailing factors that would go some way in neutralizing or balancing the many negative impulses that demographic forces may generate. It is necessary, in evolving specific policies, to factor these elements into projections, and to design mechanisms that would accentuate such trends, even as they seek to mitigate the many deleterious impulses that are unfolding.

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Challenges from Nuclear Terrorism and Accidents

Dr. Roshan Khanijo[@]

Abstract

The threat of nuclear terrorism has been rising due to increase in the stockpile of nuclear fissile materials, especially in the civilian sector, owing to upsurge of civilian nuclear power plants. Also, the number of countries developing low yield nuclear weapons has also increased. This has led to dispersal of nuclear weapons, which has increased the chances of terrorist organisations obtaining them. Also, the threat from 'Dirty Bombs' is looming, as radiological materials can be procured due to its wide use in industry. The terrorist organisations reside in the Af-Pak region; in India's immediate neighbourhood. Consequently, India has become vulnerable to nuclear terrorism. Therefore, issues like 'Nuclear Safety and Security', accounting of radiological sources, upgrading surveillance and intelligence networks, assume added importance in mitigating threats from nuclear terrorism.

Introduction

The threat of nuclear terrorism has existed since terrorist organisations like the Al Qaida, ISISs, declared their intention to acquire nuclear weapons. This issue has been vigorously discussed at various Nuclear Security Summits, where leaders deliberated on it relentlessly. The deliberations led to an improvement in the security of nuclear fissile materials and nuclear weapons, but there are still several loopholes that need to be plugged. It has been observed that when it comes to the safety and security of nuclear power plants, States are often content regarding the measures they have implemented. Either they believe they are well prepared to address the threat or, as the threat has not happened yet, they fail to visualize the catastrophic consequences.

Source of threat

According to the 2005 United Nations International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, nuclear terrorism is an offense committed if a person unlawfully and intentionally “uses in any way radioactive material ... with the intent to cause death or serious bodily injury; or with the intent to cause substantial damage to property or to the environment; or with the intent to compel a natural or legal person, an international organization or a State to do or refrain from doing an act”¹. However what needs to be stated here is that it is global terrorist organisations - and not individuals - that are the biggest causes of concern. Although ISIS and the Al Qaida have been weakened, yet they retain the potential to unleash radiological strikes.

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The major vulnerabilities that States need to examine are: -

- Sabotage of nuclear facility/transport and transit routes.
- Theft of nuclear material to make an explosive nuclear device.
- Theft of radioactive material to make ‘Dirty Bombs’.
- Nuclear weapons **Theft**– ‘Low Yield Nuclear Weapons’.
- Cyber-attacks to acquire access to, and damage plant safety.

Since major terrorist organisations reside in the Af-Pak region in India’s neighbourhood, hence India has both internal as well as external challenges to address.

Internal Challenges

Increase in Civilian Nuclear Power Plants- India expects to have 20,000 MWe nuclear capacities on line by 2020 and it aims to supply/source 25 per cent of its electricity from nuclear power by 2050². Currently, India has 22 nuclear power plants and is planning to construct more nuclear parks, indigenous Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWR), Fast Breeder Reactors (FBRs), and acquire Light Water Reactors (LWRs). The challenge is to maintain a high standard of nuclear safety and security, for the nuclear power plants. As per the IAEA, the Nuclear Safety is “the achievement of proper operating conditions, prevention of accidents and mitigation of accident consequences, resulting in protection of workers, the public and the environment from undue radiation hazards”, and nuclear security is, “the prevention and detection of, and response to, theft, sabotage, unauthorized access, illegal transfer or other malicious acts involving nuclear material, other radioactive substances or their associated facilities³”. The challenge to the power plant can be multifarious, arising from several areas, such as – design-based threats, the ‘Insider Threat’, sabotage, ‘Drones Attacks’ against nuclear power plants and other radioactive and nuclear research facilities. For example, a swarm of drones carrying explosives can not only damage a nuclear plant, but can also be used to disperse radioactive materials, against multitude of human congregations or critical infrastructure.

India expects to have 20,000 MWe nuclear capacities on line by 2020 and it aims to supply/source 25 percent of its electricity from nuclear power by 2050 . With the increase in capacity/resource building, the nuclear safety and security challenges to the power plant increases tremendously.

Secondly, there are threats of sabotage, where the terrorist may use the land or aerial route. Although, there are strict no fly zones demarcated, transgressions have known to occur. Mumbai, Pathankot, and Uri attack, show the determination and coordinated efforts of these terrorist groups. Keeping in view of the increased risks of nuclear sabotage, the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), may prove to be inadequate, there is thus, a need to have a specialised force that looks after nuclear safety and security of India.

Thirdly, Uranium theft from the ‘Bulk Processing Facilities’, where there is no adequate system for material accounting is another vulnerability. What is necessary, therefore, is a better surveillance facility and more dedicated monitoring mechanisms.

Fourthly, the nuclear power plants are currently, under the Public Sector. The role of Private Sector is limited to manufacturing, fabrication, logistics, etc, but in future their role will increase. Hence security guidelines, safety norms, legal provisions and penalty system for violations need to be put in place.

India's Internal Security Environment

Lastly, since the safety and security is the responsibility of the nation, hence it is important to develop an 'Independent Regulatory Body'. In this regard India is trying to formalise a Nuclear Safety Regulatory Authority that would be truly independent. At present the regulatory overseeing body is the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB), but often questions are raised regarding its independent functioning.

Dirty Bombs

A 'Dirty Bomb' is a "Radioactive Dispersal Device (RDD)". In other words, it is a conventional bomb spiked with radioactive material. It usually consists of a cocktail of explosives - such as dynamite mixed with radioactive powder or pellets - that further spikes its volatility. When the dynamite or the other explosive elements of the bomb are set off, the blast carries radioactive material into the surrounding area as well.⁴ As per IAEA estimation there are approximately 1 million radiological sources around the globe⁵. India is particularly susceptible to radiological threats, as there is wide industrial usage of radioactive materials, e.g., it is used in scientific laboratories, agriculture, health, and many other fields. Terrorist organisations may try to acquire these radiological substances to make "Dirty Bombs". If these are used in market places/ economic hub, then the contaminated area would become inaccessible for a prolonged period of time, thereby, adversely affecting the daily life of people. A case in point is the detection of low grade radioactive material in Mayapuri from a scrap yard in 2010.

National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) of India has made elaborate arrangements in radiation monitoring systems. There are Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) guidelines for radioactive licensing, norms for safety mechanisms etc, to prevent this threat. Even, NDMA Guidelines for Management of Nuclear and Radiological Emergencies states that "even while we have an enviable and impeccable record of safety and virtually fail-safe arrangements in our nuclear establishments, the possibility, however remote it may be, of human error, systems failure, sabotage, earthquake and terrorist attacks leading to the release of radioactive matter in the public domain, cannot be entirely ruled out⁶." Another area, which needs to be looked into is the accounting of the radiological substances, at the source as well as at disposable levels.

Cyber Threats

This is major threat to nuclear power plants and Nuclear Command and Control systems. Old Nuclear Power plants had analogue systems but the new ones have been digitised this makes it prone to cyber-attacks. Terrorists could hack into the systems and disable cooling functions, thereby, causing a severe meltdown. Furthermore, through an insider's help terrorists can bring in USB flash drives, and easily infect systems with viruses. If terrorists destroy the plant's back-up functioning mechanisms and cut off the water and power supply, they might be able to create a whole new Fukushima crisis.⁷ Furthermore, computers that operate on a closed network may be compromised by various hacking methods, such as privilege escalation, roaming notebooks, wireless access points, embedded exploits in software and hardware, and maintenance entry points⁸. The U.S. nuclear power industry has spent a total of \$1.2 billion on improving its facilities⁹. India needs to up its investment significantly, if it wants to safeguard its infrastructure and maintain security standards.

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External Factors

Changing Nuclear Doctrines and Increase in Low Yield Nuclear Weapons- The 'Nuclear Doctrines and Force Structure' of some nations have undergone a change. For example, Pakistan has evolved its doctrine from "Minimum

Credible Deterrence” to “Full Spectrum Deterrence” and is developing its force structure accordingly. Pakistan has also been expanding its main plutonium production complex at Khushab, Punjab - which currently consists of four operational heavy-water nuclear reactors and a heavy-water production plant; they have constructed a new reprocessing plant¹⁰. This enhanced production of Plutonium is with the aim of developing more non-strategic weapons. Pakistan navy is currently developing its sea-based nuclear-armed cruise missiles, which will be deployed on submarines/ surface ships.

The risk of using low yield tactical nuclear weapon at the lower end of spectrum escalates instability. This trend is extremely dangerous, as these low yield nuclear weapons are operationally dispersed, and the authority is often delegated to local commanders, which increases related risks such as theft by terrorist groups; accidental use and the operational dilemma of “use it or lose it”. Some of the terrorist organisations like the Al Qaida, Taliban (and its affiliates), Haqqani Network, Lashkar-e-Omar (LeO), Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Mohammed, etc all reside in Pakistan, and are often supported by the Pakistani Army for asymmetric warfare against India. There are instances in Pakistan where terrorist groups have tried to acquire nuclear weapons. So, the risk of Jihadi commander/Jihadi scientist or a terrorist group seizing a nuke or radiological device and using it against India is real.

Availability of Nuclear Fissile Material -As on January 2017, the global stockpile of Highly Enriched Uranium (HEU) was estimated to be at about 1340 tons approximately, 290 tons is in the civilian sector, and the rest presumably in military production and global stockpile of separated plutonium is about 520 tons, of which about 290 tons are in civilian custody¹¹. This is inspite the efforts being undertaken by the global community, to convert large amount of Highly Enriched Uranium (HEU) to Low Enriched Uranium (LEU). These efforts involve the development of replacement LEU fuel, the conversion of the HEU-fuelled reactor to use the new LEU fuel; and the removal of fresh and spent HEU from the reactor site and its associated facilities¹². India has made an effort to curb the use of the highly volatile HEU but this practice is not shared by its neighbours. Pakistan in particular, has seen an increase in the production of HEU which is dangerous as it can be used by terrorists to make an improvised nuclear device/gun type nuclear weapon. While this probability wasn't high a few years ago, the scenario has changed now. A few decades ago, there were technological challenges, and HEU was not easily available but now, nuclear fissile materials are increasingly being dispersed. Furthermore, terrorists have also become more aware of technological advancements and have increased access to resources. There have been many instances, both globally as well in India, where low grade Uranium was acquired by Non State Actors.

A few decades ago, there were technological challenges, and HEU was not easily available but now, nuclear fissile materials are being dispersed increasingly, furthermore terrorists have also become more aware of technological advancements and have increased access to resources than they did before. There have been many instances both globally as well in India, where low grade uranium, has been acquired by non-state actors.

Another reason for the increased accessibility to fissile material is that many countries in African like Gabon, Niger, Namibia and South Africa have abundant uranium deposits. The mining and shipping sectors in weak states merit particular attention. There has also been a burgeoning of research reactors using HEU as fuel, some with minimum security standards. Managing this threat, therefore, requires more cooperation amongst nations, especially in terms of following the norms laid down by the International Atomic Energy Association (IAEA).

Nuclear Proliferation

Some of the countries in West Asia like UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Kuwait are taking the civilian nuclear route. This creates two problems. Firstly, an increase in the number of countries going in for civilian nuclear power plants, increases the probability of diverting material from civilian to military use. Secondly, the chances of terrorists acquiring

fissile material at some point in the supply chain, as well as sabotaging the power plants increases. The risk is enhanced since there are no uniform standards/operating procedures for nuclear safety and security.

Nuclear Forensic

In order to improve investigative skills related to nuclear trafficking, countries are setting up Nuclear Forensic laboratories. "Nuclear forensics is the examination of nuclear and other radioactive materials using analytical techniques to determine the origin and history of this material in the context of law enforcement investigations or the assessment of nuclear security vulnerabilities"¹³. Nuclear Forensics will help in identifying the illicit trafficking of nuclear materials, as nations develop the ability to analyse nuclear materials from detonation sites/radiological debris and after analysis, identify the source and ascertain the potential suppliers.

Nuclear Treaties

While there are several global treaties available to check/control this threat, gaining international consensus on such sensitive issues has been difficult. Some examples of these treaties are the United Nations Security Council - Resolution 1540, Convention for the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM), Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (ICSANT), INTERPOL, etc. Fissile Material Cut off Treaty (FMCT) was another excellent initiative aimed at controlling the proliferation of fissile material; however it was blocked by Pakistan. India, however, has been a responsible player and a signatory to all the major treaties. Furthermore, domestically India has developed the Global Center for Nuclear Energy Partnership (GCNEP) and its affiliated five schools namely -School of Advanced Nuclear Energy System Studies (SANESS), School of Nuclear Security Studies (SNSS), School of Radiological Safety Studies (SRSS), School of Nuclear Material Characterisation Studies (SNMCS), School of Studies on Application of Radioisotopes and Radiation Technologies (SARRT), which are trying to increase the resource base as well as the requisite awareness regarding the usage/handling of nuclear materials.

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Conclusion

India's challenges thus are multiple, Internally India is developing a strong nuclear safety and security architecture. However, the nature of the threat makes it extremely imperative to ensure that safety and security parameters are constantly reviewed. Self-assessments, continuous training of customs officials, smart border controls, dedicated security details, and lessons from best practices are necessary to create a seamless security envelope that cocoons facilities and materials at every stage¹⁴. It is essential that Licensing policies as also accountability of radioactive material is constantly monitored. Better synergy is developed between the on-site, off site operators and state security guards. Especially local police need to be made aware of radiological threats. Intelligence surveillance and monitoring at all levels needs to be revamped for better integration and synergy. Government is already in the process of forming autonomous Nuclear Safety Regulatory Authority. For India the risks of nuclear terrorism and accidents are real. The Government must constantly keep upgrading its capability to prevent and mitigate these risks and high impact threats.

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Section III

India's Pakistan and China Strategic Challenge

Pakistan occupied Kashmir: Genesis of a Fake State

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Abstract

Security Council Resolution of 1948 stipulates that Pakistan vacate its fighting people and Army from Kashmir, the State administration with the administrative center in Srinagar becomes functional, and India reduces the number of her troops in Kashmir so that free and fair plebiscite under the supervision of the UN is held in Kashmir, asking the people of the state which dominion they would like to be with. Pakistan not only did not withdraw her troops and fighting men, she reinforced her military strength in entire part of the State under her illegal occupation. India proceeded with shaping a democratically elected government in Jammu and Kashmir. In the Karachi agreement, the bogus government of so called Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) was institutionalized by its subservience to Pakistan. Constitution of AJK is full of contradictions. For example, the Act says that the future of the State will be decided on the basis of free plebiscite in accordance with the UN Security Council's relevant resolutions. Then in the same breath the Constitutions says that "no person or political party in AJK shall be permitted to propagate against or take part in activities prejudicial or detrimental to the ideology of state's accession to Pakistan. Pakistan has therefore, been using the disputed territory of PoK for setting up scores of training camps. Kashmiris are lured to these camps run by retired Pakistan army officers. Pakistan not only illegally ceded parts of Aksai Chin area to China which originally belongs to the princely State of Jammu and Kashmir, but also collaborated with China in building illegally the Karakorum Highway,

Political Formulation

Linguistic element is a stronger determinant for identifying what we call Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK). There are two major linguistic segments of PoK viz. the Balti and Bhautia speaking population in the north, now to be called Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), and the Potwari, Punjabi and Pahari dialect speaking people of southern region to be called PoK and alternatively "Azad Jammu and Kashmir" (AJK), in the parlance of local population. After thousands of Hindus and Sikhs of this region were massacred and extirpated in the course of Pakistani tribesmen's invasion of J&K State in October 1947, which was barely ten weeks after India became free from colonial rule on 15 August 1947, the demographic change brought about, against the free will of the Hindus and Sikhs resulted in outright Muslim majority in the region under discussion.

Economic conditions of the people of the State in general were not good. However, for Muslims to remain as subjects of a State with a non-Muslim ruler as its head was an irritant: it contravened the injunctions of faith. Obviously, there was an undercurrent of dissatisfaction among them, more so when on the basis of two nations' theory, a new Muslim State of Pakistan came into being out of British contrivance, as its next door neighbour.

The Hindus of the State, particularly of the valley, had a different reason to be disappointed with the administration of the Dogra rulers, prior to independence, which the National Conference cleverly cashed. Dogra rulers were under compulsion to employ outsiders in the State services because local manpower with requisite qualifications was not

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available.¹ Continued influx of outsiders led to the emergence of a protest movement called “Kashmir for Kashmiris” in which some bright Kashmiri Pandits studying in Lahore took prominent part. The law of hereditary state subject in J&K is the result of this movement.² This movement can also be counted among the ingredients that contributed to the emergence and rise of J&K National Conference.

All India Muslim League's movement for a separate state for the Muslims of India, had its impact on political activists in the State and more particularly in Mirpur and other districts of present PoK, owing to their proximity to the political centers like Rawalpindi, Lahore, Peshawar and Karachi. Muslim political activists often raised on various platforms the issue of backwardness and poor condition of the Muslims of the State. The Urdu press of Lahore with wide circulation in Jammu and Kashmir gave extraordinary media hype to the bad condition of the Muslims of the State. This provided the grist for forming political organizations with sectarian agenda. Chowdhury Ghulam Abbas running the Anjuman-e-Islami in Mirpur converted it into the Young Men's Muslim Association of Jammu and Kashmir.³ Though the economic condition of the Hindus of the State including the Pandits of the Valley was no better, yet there was not a known platform from which they would give vent to their grievances. Nevertheless, they were the same Pandits in Lahore who had, in early 1920s, floated the idea of a responsible popular government in Kashmir, served a cue to Sheikh Abdullah when around 1938-39, he decided to move away from Muslim Conference and formed the valley-based All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference.

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Secularists eulogize this step of the Sheikh as visionary and statesmanlike, something that will not be disputed on principle even by diehard opponents of the Sheikh. However, they fail to look at the other side of the coin. The Sheikh was not the man to play the second fiddle to anybody. Though he was heading the Kashmir chapter of the Muslim Conference, yet he was averse to Mirpur chapter behaving like a boss.

NC Walks Alone

In 1932 All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference was formally incepted. Chowdhury Ghulam Abbas was to lead its Jammu chapter and Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah was to lead the Kashmir region. The Sheikh drew his strength from the size and status of his constituency viz. Kashmir valley.

Ideological differences between the two wings of Muslim Conference surfaced soon after the uprising of July 1931 when the police opened fire on a mob of people trying to attack the Central jail in Srinagar causing some fatalities. There is no doubt that the riots of 1931 were engineered by the Muslim League outfits in Punjab with explicit backing by the colonialists. By 1938, Sheikh Abdullah's trusted lieutenants Bakhshi Ghulam Muhammad and NC General Secretary Maulana Mas'udi, were convinced that if the movement for responsible government was to succeed it had to be secular in spirit and not sectarian. The Sheikh announced re-christening of the party as All J&K National Conference.⁴ The simple and foregone reaction of the Mirpur Muslim Conference was to distance itself from its Srinagar chapter and come closer to the Muslim League of Punjab. With this, began the domination of PoK-based Muslim Conference by Punjab Muslim League leadership.

NC in Driver's Seat

Two things happened soon after. One was the National Conference issued its manifesto — popularly known as Naya Kashmir — which outlined the theoretical part of NC's political agenda. The second was that NC leadership participated in the Annual Session of Indian National Congress of 1939. The session endorsed support to NC in its struggle for

responsible government in the State.⁵ NC came very close to Congress on ideological basis so much so that Congress stalwart Jawaharlal Nehru chaired the annual session of the National Conference in 1945 at Sopor in Kashmir. In totality, both sub-regional political parties meaning Muslim Conference and National Conference pandered to their respective patronizing sources.

All India Muslim League intensified its political agenda for a separate state for the Muslims of India. State government and state political leadership were closely watching the changing political scenario on the sub-continent. British government delegations were conducting serious talks with the Congress and Muslim League leadership in India and the subject matter was the grant of freedom to India. Kashmir leadership and J&K Government both were keeping themselves abreast of latest developments on national level. The statement of Prem Shankar Jha that “Hari Singh failed to foresee the impact of this on Jammu and Kashmir”⁶ is not supported by available evidence. Letters exchanged between Maharaja Hari Singh and Sardar Patel, (who was to become the first Deputy Prime Minister of free India) during months preceding the announcement of freedom in 1947 clearly reflect the serious concerns of the Maharaja about the future of his State.

One important outcome of Sheikh Abdullah’s distancing from Muslim Conference and converting its Kashmir branch into National Conference was that it pushed Muslim Conference more towards All India Muslim League while it found favour with the Indian National Congress. Some observers believe that the Sheikh was able to strike understanding with Jawaharlal Nehru and Gandhiji while his relations with the Sardar were only formal. Whatever the relations, Sardar Patel was not given to sentimentalism or unrealistic idealism.

The Perfidy

We have copious literature to show that preparations for annexing Jammu and Kashmir State to Pakistan through force of arms were secretly planned months ahead of actual partition of the country. The epicenter of this conspiracy was in Peshawar in NWFP where Chief Minister Qayyum Khan was coordinating the annexation plan by the tribal lashkars. He was in close liaison with Pakistani army and Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan. The British Governor of the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP), too, came to know about it, General Akbar Khan, who was controlling the movement of the lashkars and the Pakistani army into Kashmir in the third week of October 1947, has given a graphic picture of how the tribal incursion of Kashmir was conducted,⁷

Copious literature shows that preparations for annexing Jammu and Kashmir State to Pakistan through force of arms were secretly planned months ahead of actual partition of the country. The epicenter of this conspiracy was in Peshawar in NWFP where Chief Minister Qayyum Khan was coordinating the annexation plan by the tribal lashkars.

Poonch Uprising

A good number of people from the parts of present PoK had been recruited into British Indian Army. During World War II, they were deployed at various war fronts. After the war was won, most of them had been disbanded by the British and they returned to their homes in Sudnauti, Palandhari, Bagh, Poonch, Kotli and Mirpur (PoK). Reports came to Maharaja Hari Singh that these disbanded soldiers could become restive and create trouble. He tried to dissuade them and even is reported to have paid a failed visit to Mirpur to assuage the feelings of his subjects. There were malevolent elements bent upon creating bad feelings against the ruler.

Peshawar conspirators established a link with the seditionists in Poonch district. In all probability, they clandestinely provided some arms to the insurgents. The State forces were deployed to maintain order. Much later, when the tribal intruders dispatched some of their columns to Mirpur after capturing Muzaffarabad on 22 October 1947, the Poonch insurgents joined hands with them and besieged the small contingent of State forces in Mirpur. The story of heroic

defence put up by that small State force has never been told. Also, the massacre of nearly 40,000 innocent people, young, old and children, and the rape and kidnapping of a large number of Hindu and Sikh women by the combined force of tribesmen and local insurgents, too, has not been told in detail. Only recently, some “nationalist” Muslims of PoK, particularly those who remained connected with the J&K Nationalist Liberation Front (Hashim Qureshi group)⁸, have given some clues to those dreadful events. In particular, one young writer Saeed As’ad⁹ has dealt with the subject at reasonable length.

Thus, one finds that the so-called Poonch uprising was only part of the larger perfidy, which some opportunists among the local leadership had stage managed in connivance with the firebrands of Muslim League and pro-Pakistan activists.

Pakistan sponsored and abetted incursion of Kashmir was beaten off by brave Indian soldiers of the Sikh Regiment in the decisive battle of Shalteng on the outskirts of the city of Srinagar. The veteran commander Brig. L.P. Sen recaptured Baramulla on the morning of 8 November and his troops marched down the Jhelum gorge to recapture Uri. Indian army liberated the long besieged Poonch garrison and pushed the enemy back. It made substantial gains on other fronts. Jhangar was recaptured and so were Dras and Kargil.

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On January 1, 1948 Nehru took to the Security Council the case of invasion of Kashmir by Pakistani troops and the tribesmen from NWFP. Some historians and political commentators have criticized Nehru for the bad decision of going to the Security Council without doing good homework. He is reported to have over ruled the majority decision of his cabinet against approaching the Security Council. Nehru’s defenders say that he had thought that the US would understand the game of colonialists and that Washington would be fair to India. That was only naivety.

Security Council Resolution of 1948 stipulates that Pakistan vacate its fighting people and army from Kashmir, the State administration with the administrative center in Srinagar becomes functional and India reduces the number of her troops in Kashmir so that free and fair plebiscite under the supervision of the UN is held in Kashmir asking the people of the state which dominion they would like to be with.

Pakistan not only did not withdraw her troops and fighting men, she reinforced her military strength in entire part of the State under her illegal occupation. India proceeded with shaping a democratically elected government in Jammu and Kashmir, For India that was the plebiscite as indicted by the Security Council.

Anglo-American bloc was seriously interested in bringing about cease fire in Kashmir. The bloc feared that escalation of hostilities between the two countries might, at some point of time, force India to seek intervention by the Soviet Union with which India had forged cordial relations. Thus, under pressure from the Anglo-American bloc, India agreed to ceasefire which came into effect on the midnight of Dec 31, 1948 after fourteen months of fighting.

If Pakistan came into existence as a new country with the announcement of freedom on August 15, 1947, another new state carved out of the State of Jammu and Kashmir with the name of “Azad Jammu and Kashmir” (AJK) came into being with the strike of the midnight bell on 31 December 1948. The separated parts of the State of Jammu and Kashmir received new nomenclatures of (a) Azad Jammu and Kashmir/Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK) (b) Jammu and Kashmir /Indian held Kashmir (IHK).

Legal Position of PoK

The question that arises at this point of study is what was the *de facto* and *de jure* status of the area that separated from the mainland of Kashmir at the time of signing of the ceasefire agreement, Pakistan got the possession of 86,023 sq kilometres of territory of the princely state of J&K and re-named as Azad Jammu and Kashmir comprising the region of AJK and the other called Northern Areas now better known as (i) AJK and (ii) Northern Areas (NA) with area of 13,528 and 72,495 sq kilometres respectively. In 1963, Pakistan illegally ceded an area of 5,180 sq kilometres to China and this included the Shaksgam valley as well that has facilitated China to build a road and rail link to Tibet.¹⁰

We have already said that Pakistan had planned Operation Gulmarg months ahead of the announcement of partition of India and creation of Pakistan. On 24 October, just two days after the capture of Muzaffarabad, a provisional “national” government of Azad Jammu and Kashmir was set up in Muzaffarabad.¹¹ Without a chair, a table and a typewriter the AJK government announced its inception and began raising an army of war of the disbanded soldiers and other from Poonch and Mirpur regions.¹² This so-called AJK government remained in place in nominal form till the signing of the ceasefire agreement between India and Pakistan on 1 January 1949.

Karachi Agreement

Violating relevant clauses of the UN Security Council Resolution on J&K, a tripartite agreement between Pakistan, AJK and the Muslim Conference was signed on 28 April 1949. It is now known as Karachi Agreement. By virtue of this agreement the bogus government of AJK was institutionalized by its subservience to Pakistan. AJK handed over twelve subjects, like defence, foreign policy, negotiations with United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP) and the Coordination of all affairs with Gilgit-Baltistan etc. to Pakistan.¹³

On March 2, 1949 a convention of the Muslim Conference authorized Chowdhury Ghulam Abbas, the chief of the party to appoint the President and the Cabinet for AJK. The Rules of Business of the Azad Kashmir Government 1950, announced through an ordinance, were revised thrice, finally vesting powers not in the people of AJK but in the Ministry of Kashmir Affairs (MKA) of Pakistan, thereby, reducing the authority of Muslim Conference. The Rules of Business were gradually eroded and the Ministry of Kashmir Affairs was given crucial powers for dispensing administration of PoK. For example, appointment of the heads of government departments and the judiciary had to have the endorsement of the Ministry of Kashmir Affairs. This caused irritation between the local leadership in AJK and the Federal government of Pakistan so much so, that people in AJK would bring out protest rallies. AJK government was not allowed to create even a small post that required a monthly salary of rupees 150 only, nor was it allowed to spend more than one lakh rupees without the prior permission of the Ministry of Kashmir Affairs.¹⁴

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No elections were held in PoK from 1947 to 1960. All Presidents were nominated by Pakistan government and only from Muslim Conference who subscribed to the ideology of accession of Jammu and Kashmir State to Pakistan. The Muslim Conference was a divided house with allegiance to Chowdhury Abbas and Ibrahim Khan who were ideologically at great variance and at loggerheads.

Sham Democratic Exercise

After the introduction of the formula of “Basic Democracies” of President Ayub Khan, who had assumed power as a result of coup in October 1958, the President and the Council of AJK were to be elected indirectly by the members of local bodied that were elected directly. In the elections of 1961, Chowdhury Ghulam Abbas and Sardar Ibrahim both were disqualified for election by a Tribunal on charges of corruption. Interestingly between 1947 and 1964 AJK witnessed eight dismissals and appointments of Presidents.

The demand among AJK leaders for a democratic political arrangement for AJK was growing. Finally, in 1970, for the first time, representatives to the Legislative Assembly and the President were elected by the people with representation given to the refugees from J&K settled in Pakistan.¹⁵

In 1974, the modified Act of 1970 was reintroduced as AJK Interim Constitution Act. It stipulated that the Legislative Assembly will consist of 49 members of which 41 are directly elected on the basis of adult franchise. The rest eight members who include five women members were elected by the legislators themselves. A new body known as AJK Council headed by the Pakistan Prime Minister was formed. AJK Council consists of AJK President, five members nominated by the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Prime Minister of AJK or a person nominated by him and six members elected by the AJK Assembly. The Minister of Kashmir Affairs and Northern Areas is an ex-officio member of the Council.¹⁶

During the regime of General Zia u'l Haq all political activities in AJK were suspended. However, election process was revived after the death of General Zia. The composition of the AJK Assembly under new dispensation is as this:-

- Total number of seats = 49
- Directly elected members from AJK – 29
- Refugees of J&K settled in Pakistan – 12
- Female members nominated by directly elected members – 5
- Special groups including Mashaikhs, ulema, technocrats and overseas people- 3

The AJK Act which alternatively may be called the Constitution of AJK is full of contradictions. For example, the Act says that the future of the State will be decided on the basis of free plebiscite in accordance with the UN Security Council's relevant resolutions. Then in the same breath the Constitutions says that “no person or political party in AJK shall be permitted to propagate¹⁷ against or take part in activities prejudicial or detrimental to the ideology of state's accession to Pakistan.”¹⁸ A citizen of AJK has to take the oath of allegiance to Pakistan while accepting employment in AJK government. Further, under Section 56 of AJK Act of 1974 the government of Pakistan can dismiss any elected government of AJK irrespective of the support it may enjoy in the AJK Legislative Assembly. Actually, the AJKIC Act 1974 provides two executive forums — The Azad Kashmir Government in Muzaffarabad and the Azad Kashmir Council in Islamabad.¹⁹

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To sum up political, social and human rights status of AJK, we would like to quote the following excerpt from the Report of the World Watch:²⁰

“Azad Kashmir is a legal anomaly. According to United Nations (U.N.) resolutions dating back to 1948, Azad Kashmir is neither a sovereign state nor a province of Pakistan, but rather a “local authority” with responsibility over the area assigned to it under a 1949 ceasefire agreement with India. It has remained in this state of legal limbo since that time. In practice, the Pakistani government in Islamabad, the Pakistani army and the Pakistani intelligence services (Inter-Services Intelligence, ISI) control all aspects of political life in Azad Kashmir-though “Azad” means “free,” the residents of Azad Kashmir are anything but free. There are curbs on political pluralism, freedom of expression, and freedom of association; a muzzled press; banned books; arbitrary arrest and detention and torture at the hands of the Pakistani military and the police; and discrimination against refugees from Jammu and Kashmir state. Singled out are Kashmiri nationalists, who do not support the idea of Kashmir’s accession to Pakistan. Anyone who wants to take part in public life has to sign a pledge of loyalty to Pakistan, while anyone who publicly supports or works for an independent Kashmir is persecuted. For those expressing independent or unpopular political views, there is a pervasive fear of Pakistani military and intelligence services-and of militant organizations acting at their behest or independently.”

Gilgit-Baltistan

On the expiry of the lease deed of 1935 with the Transfer of Power, Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) would have reverted to the State of Jammu and Kashmir on 15 August 1947. However, instigated by Pakistan and the British Captain, Gilgit Scouts revolted and with the help of Pakistani army arrested Governor Ghansara Singh appointed by Srinagar government. Gilgit fell to Pakistani commanders.

On 28 April 1949 Pakistan, through a proclamation, separated Gilgit-Baltistan from so-called Azad Kashmir. It was given the name of Northern Areas and only recently again changed to Gilgit-Baltistan. The people of GB with a geographical area of 28,000 sq. miles are not receiving the same attention by Pakistani authorities as the people of AJK with barely 4,500 sq. miles of land mass. The Karachi Agreement to which allusion has been made in previous paragraphs, there was no representative of GB in that deal and those who signed the deal were not authorized to speak for the people of **Gilgit and Baltistan**. In a landmark decision of the PoK High Court, GB has been considered as part of the original State of Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistan has filed an appeal against the verdict of AJK High Court.

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From 1947 to 1970 Government of Pakistan established and administered the Gilgit Agency and Baltistan Agency. In 1970 Northern Areas Council was established by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and **Gilgit-Baltistan** was directly administrated by Federal government with nomenclature changed to FANA (Federally Administrated Northern Areas). In 1963, Pakistan illegally and in contravention of UN Resolutions ceded a part of Hunza-Gilgit called Raskam and the Shaksgam Valley of Baltistan region to China pending settlement of the dispute over Kashmir. This ceded area is also known as the Trans-Karakoram Tract. The Pakistani parts of Kashmir to the north and west of the ceasefire line established at the end of the Indo-Pakistani War of 1947, or the Line of Control as it later came to be called, were divided into the Northern Areas (72,971 km) in the north and the Pakistani state of Azad Kashmir (13,297 km) in the south. The name “Northern Areas” was first used by the United Nations to refer to the northern areas of Kashmir.

Gilgit Baltistan, which was most recently known as the Northern Areas, presently consists of seven districts, has a population approaching one million, and has an area of approximately 28,000 sq. miles (73,000 sq. kms) and shares borders with China, Afghanistan, and India. The local Northern Light Infantry is the army unit that participated in the 1999 Kargil conflict. More than 500 soldiers were believed to have been killed and buried in the Northern Areas in that war.

Present-day Gilgit Baltistan (GB)

On 29 August 2009, the Gilgit Baltistan Empowerment and Self-Governance Order, 2009, was passed by the Pakistani cabinet and later signed by the President of Pakistan. The order granted self-rule to the people of the former Northern Areas, now renamed Gilgit Baltistan, by creating, among other things, an elected legislative assembly. There has been some criticism and opposition to this move in GB region of Pakistan. Gilgit Baltistan United Movement, while rejecting the new package, demanded that an independent and autonomous legislative assembly for GB should be formed with the installation of local authoritative government as per the UNCIP resolutions, where the people of GB will elect their president and the prime minister.

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In early September 2009, Pakistan signed an agreement with the People's Republic of China for a mega energy project in GB which includes the construction of a 7,000-megawatt dam at Bunji in the Astore District. This also resulted in protest from India, although Indian concerns were immediately rejected by Pakistan, which claimed that the Government of India has no locus standi in the matter, effectively ignoring the validity of the princely state's Instrument of Accession on October 26, 1947. On 29 September 2009, the Prime Minister, while addressing a huge gathering in GB, announced a multi-billion-rupee development package aimed at the socio-economic uplifting of people in the area. Development projects will include the areas of education, health, agriculture, tourism and the basic needs of life.

Pakistan Times of 15 March 2017 reported that Pakistan is planning to declare the strategic GB region as the fifth province. Inter-Provincial Coordination Minister Riaz Hussain Pirzada told local media that a committee headed by Advisor of Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz had proposed giving the status of a province to GB. He also said that a constitutional amendment would be made to change the status of the region, through which the CPEC passes. This move has created deep stir among the nationalist forces in GB who have already determined to fight for the autonomous status of the region and are facing incarceration and oppression at the hands of Pakistani authorities who are ruling the roost in Gilgit. The widespread discontent among the local people resounded not only in other parts of Pakistan, but also in foreign countries, where the Diaspora has strongly publicized the violation of political and civil rights of the people and atrocities perpetrated on them by Islamabad regimes. The plight and victimization of the people of GB is adequately reflected in a resolution on the subject passed by the British Parliament. We reproduce it in full as it is a rare document of condemnation of violation of human and civil rights of people in GB:²¹

“The British Parliament has condemned Pakistan's move to declare GB as its fifth province. It passed a resolution rejecting Pakistan's position on the region in PoK. A motion was passed by the British parliamentarians announcing GB as a legal and constitutional part of Jammu and Kashmir illegally occupied by Pakistan since 1947. The motion had been tabled in the British Parliament on March 23, 2017 by Bob Blackman of the Conservative Party. It says that Pakistan is attempting to annex an area that does not belong to it.

The British Parliament motion reads, “Gilgit Baltistan is a legal and constitutional part of the state of Jammu and Kashmir, India, which is illegally occupied by Pakistan since 1947, and where people are denied their fundamental rights including the right of freedom of expression.”

The British parliamentarians accused Pakistan of adopting a policy to change the demography of GB region in violation of State Subject Ordinance. They called the construction of the CPEC as illegal. The ‘forced and illegal construction’ of the CPEC has interfered with the disputed territory, the motion said.

The GB area is under Pakistan's control since it invaded Jammu and Kashmir soon after partition of India. It forms the northernmost administrative territory under Pakistan's control just beyond the Kashmir region - a part of which is illegally occupied by Islamabad. Recently, a committee headed by Sartaj Aziz, the Foreign Affairs Advisor to Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif²² recommended converting the GB region into its fifth province".

The GB area is under Pakistan's control since it invaded Jammu and Kashmir soon after partition of India. It forms the northernmost administrative territory under Pakistan's control just beyond the Kashmir region - a part of which is illegally occupied by Islamabad.

Further, two issues need to be highlighted. Firstly, Pakistan has been using the disputed territory of PoK for setting up scores of training camps. Kashmiris are lured to these camps run by retired Pakistan army officers. Pakistani and Kashmiri jihadists, trained and equipped in these training camps are clandestinely pushed to Indian side of the LoC with the purpose of subversion and destabilization of the legally elected government in the Indian part of J&K. This is Pakistan's proxy war against India. The second point to be made is that Pakistan not only illegally ceded parts of Aksai Chin area to China which originally belongs to the princely State of Jammu and Kashmir but also collaborated with China in building the Karakorum Highway which connects Western Chinese Province of Xingjian to the Gwadar port on Makran coast of Pakistan. This Highway has been built illegally over the disputed territory that actually belongs to India. The strategic importance of this road and its potential of becoming a threat to the security of India and the Indo Pacific Region are self-explanatory.

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Politico-Religious Developments in Pakistan: Implications for India

Shri Tilak Devasher[@]

Abstract

Developments in Pakistan convey the impression of a government that has lost its stability and sense of direction, despite a strong parliamentary majority. As a result, many players, political and religious, have entered the fray even as the ubiquitous 'establishment' keeps a watchful eye on all the moving parts. The key political development of 2017 was clearly the 28 July disqualification of Nawaz Sharif that ejected him from the Chair of PM. This has led to Nawaz and his daughter launching a vicious attack on the judiciary, while in the Sharif family itself, serious differences have cropped up over succession. The key event of 2018 is likely to be the general elections scheduled, as of now, for July. As a result, the pace of political activity has quickened and the 'fog of politics' is likely to intensify creating more uncertainties for Pakistan. One critical factor in these uncertainties is the rise of the hardline religious right, represented by the Barelvi Tehreek-i-Labaik Ya Rasool Allah (TLYRA). Its performance in by-elections and its staging of a sit-in, in Islamabad has demonstrated how deep-rooted radicalization has become in Pakistan. India would have to be watchful of these developments because unstable governments may fall prey to hardline anti-India agendas dictated by these religious parties.

Political Developments

The expression 'fog of war' aptly describes the confusion caused by the chaos of war or battle. In Pakistan's case, it would be apt to describe the situation as the 'fog of politics'. Despite a strong parliamentary majority, the government gives the impression of having lost its bearings, its stability and above all, its sense of direction. Corruption charges revealed by the Panama Papers¹ leaks have eroded its legitimacy and credibility. The entire focus is on defending former PM Nawaz Sharif and hence governance has been the biggest victim. Due to this, many players, political and religious, have entered the fray even as the ubiquitous 'establishment' keeps a watchful eye on all the moving parts. With elections scheduled for July 2018 the 'fog' is likely to intensify creating more uncertainties for Pakistan.

What is responsible for this 'fog of politics'? It is a combination of some issues that have persistently plagued Pakistan and some newer ones. The former, of course, is the ever-present civil-military divide, despite assertions of being 'on the same page' and the resultant questions whether the government of the day would complete its term. The newer issues are about the 2018 elections being held on time, the conviction of Mr. Nawaz Sharif on corruption charges, the future of his daughter Maryam and brother Mr. Shahbaz. The rise of the hardline religious right and its entry into politics poses its own set of issues. These are, of course, existential questions; the critical issues of governance like water, education, economy and population², do not seem to be on anyone's horizon.

The ever-present civil-military divide, despite assertions of being 'on the same page' and the resultant question whether the government of the day would complete its term.

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The key political development of 2017 was clearly the 28 July disqualification of Mr. Nawaz Sharif that ejected him as the Prime Minister and the lifetime ban handed to him by the Supreme Court. Even though Nawaz has been able to retain the president-ship of the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PMLN) through a constitutional amendment, this was challenged in the Supreme Court and, the court verdict has gone against Mr. Nawaz Sharif.

Following his disqualification, Nawaz and his daughter Maryam have become extremely scathing in their criticism of the judiciary. According to some, their statements have crossed the limits of contempt and much more. For example, Nawaz declared Mr. Sheikh Mujibur Rehman, the founder of Bangladesh, as not guilty, rather accusing the establishment of driving Mr. Mujibur Rehman out of Pakistan, the same way he was being pushed out. Was Nawaz implying that conditions were being created forcing him to separate Punjab from Pakistan?

There are two reasons that account for Nawaz's vicious attacks on the judiciary. First, the corruption cases against him and his family are coming to a conclusion and the judgement is not likely to be favourable. Nawaz knows that he is guilty and is thus trying to browbeat the judiciary into letting him off. Second, perhaps for the first time in his thirty-year career he has been unable to manipulate the judiciary to ensure a favourable verdict and is faced with its consequences.

There appears to be a method in Nawaz's madness. By his aggressive campaigning, he has managed to keep the party, which looked to splinter at one stage, together and retain its presidency. He has demonstrated that the party cannot afford to write him off because he continues to be the chief crowd puller, an asset that would be needed by the party in the forthcoming elections. For all his qualities, Mr. Shahbaz Sharif does not enjoy a reputation of being a vote getter.

There is no reason for Nawaz to change his aggressive stance. In case he backs down, he faces the possibility of being permanently marginalised himself and also risks Maryam's future as well as his enormous wealth. The key for Nawaz would be to keep his party intact till the elections. A novel aspect of the situation is that for the first time in three decades the PMLN is confronted with having to choose a leader other than Nawaz Sharif. There are several contenders, the chief among them being from his own family: his brother and daughter. Thus, there is churning within the party and nobody would want to be caught in the wrong camp.³ At its core is the rift between the new generations of the Sharifs'. Nawaz would want to hand over the baton of leadership to his daughter Maryam. This could well be in jeopardy in case Shahbaz succeeds him as PM and/or party president because he would want his own son Hamza to come into power, first in Lahore and then in Islamabad. Allowing Shahbaz to take over would create its own dynamics and a new power reality that may not be to the liking of Nawaz.

The Opposition

There is not much in common between the mainstream opposition political parties- the PTI and PPP: the only shared element is the visceral hatred for the Sharifs. Mr. Imran Khan and Mr. Asif Zardari probably hate each other as much as they hate the Sharifs. Imran has publicly stated that after Sharif it was 'Zardari kibari' (Zardari's turn) to be shunted out for corruption. Despite this, in Pakistan's 'fog of politics' anything is possible. Thus both Mr. Imran Khan and Mr. Asif Zardari have come together to support Mr. Tahir ul Qadri, head of the Pakistan Awami Tehrik (PAT), in any agitation he may launch.

Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) dilemma is how to get back some traction and relevance in the one province that matters- Punjab. This would account for Zardari's flirting with Imran and Mr. Tahirul Qadri. The moot point, however, is that while Imran would benefit in Punjab from the exit of the Sharifs' what Zardari would get if Shahbaz is forced out?

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The Army

The army is keeping a watchful eye but between the lines it has made its position clear. The Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa has underlined that the army was committed to democracy but in a clear rebuttal of Nawaz's scathing criticisms of the judiciary, Bajwa has asserted that nobody was above the law. Even the DG, ISPR, told a press conference on 05 October 2017 that no individual was more important than the institutions.⁴In reality, the army has the acumen not to intervene directly because Pakistan's problems are beyond its competence.

Elections 2018

Panama Papers cases apart, the pace of political activity has also quickened due to the general elections slated for July 2018. As always, Punjab, with over 50 per cent seats in the National Assembly, would be the critical battleground. Despite its solid base in Punjab, the PMLN is nervous. For one thing, the credibility of the Sharif's has been dented due to the Panama Papers case and Nawaz's disqualification; its right-wing voter base has been encroached upon, by the Islamist parties and Imran Khan has made inroads.

There is much speculation about the timing of the elections with possible delays due to the issue of constituency delimitations on the basis of the 2017 census. Some have talked about a 'technocratic' setup; others look over their shoulders for the 'sound of muffled drums'.

Two events prior to the general elections are noteworthy. First is the election to the Senate which took place in March. With their parliamentary majority, the PMLN came out as a majority party, followed by the PPP and the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf. The second is the formation of a caretaker government to supervise the elections. The predilections of its nominees would be critical in case the holding of the election is delayed.

A significant factor in the elections would be the fact that about 44 per cent of the registered voters are between the ages of 18 and 35 years. With the economy not creating enough jobs and unemployment endemic, a large chunk of this voter segment would be disillusioned with the current lot of mainstream parties. A shift to more extreme right-wing parties would be natural.⁵

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Religious Developments

Conventional wisdom in Pakistan has been that the religious right, represented by political parties like the Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) and Jamiatul Ulema-i-Islam (JUI) have never taken centre-stage in politics. It was only in 2002 when they coalesced with other religious parties to form the Muttahida Majlis -i-Amal (MMA) that they were able to establish governments in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) and Baluchistan. These elections, under Musharraf, were of dubious validity.

Now, however, the paradigm seems to be changing due to several events that culminated in the siege of the capital Islamabad by the activists of the Tehreek-i-LabaikYaRasool Allah (TLYRA) leading to the pitiable surrender of the state. The TLYRA is a Barelvi group formed in the wake of the execution of police guard Mumtaz Qadri who shot dead Punjab Governor Salman Taseer in 2011 and was ultimately hanged for this crime in February 2016. Barelvi activism revolves around Namooos-e-Risalat (Sanctity of Prophethood).

In September-October 2017, the political wing of the TLYRA called the Tehrik-i-Labaik Pakistan (TLP) and the JUD/LeT linked Milli Muslim League (MML) burst on the political scene by contesting and doing remarkably well in by-elections in NA-120 Lahore and NA 04 Peshawar constituencies. In fact, in Lahore, the TLP polled more votes than

the PPP and the Jamaat-i-Islami and together with the MML captured 11 per cent of the votes. Significantly, the PMLN had lost 11 per cent of its vote share. The conclusion is inescapable that these parties had eaten into the right-wing vote bank of the PMLN. The TLP's showing in NA 04 was important since Peshawar is not known as a Barelvi stronghold. In the PP- 20 Chakwal by election in January 2018, TLP's candidate got over 16 thousand votes showing that religious extremism has a constituency in Punjab.⁶

Hardly had the din of the by-elections subsided when the TLYRA was presented with a tailor-made opportunity to appear on the national stage. The issue was the government's ham-handed attempts in October, to meddle with the provisions of Election Act pertaining to the Khatm-i-Nabuwat (finality of prophet-hood) declaration, a highly sensitive issue in Pakistan. Even though the government backtracked hurriedly, the TLYRA demanded the sacking of Law Minister Zahid Hamid. When the government refused, the group started a sit-down at the Faizabad interchange between Rawalpindi and Islamabad on 08 November, blocking access to the national capital. The language and tone displayed in the protest was very rude and aggressive.

The protest was finally called off on 27 November, when under an army-brokered deal the government surrendered and accepted all the demands of the protestors, including the resignation of the Law Minister. The role of the army was also dubious since a serving Maj General was seen distributing cheques to the protestors.⁷

The implications of the sit-in are significant for the future of Pakistan. Key among these is the political activism of the Barelvis, so far thought of as a peaceful group. This could well result in the consolidation of their large but scattered vote bank though contradictions between various Barelvi groups persist. Second, the addition of the hardline Barelvis to the many militant Deobandi, Ahle-Hadis and sectarian groups already present in the country could well create a volatile situation. Thirdly, the TLYRA demonstrated its ability to mobilize a large number of activists in a short time that shows the how deep-rooted and widespread radicalization has become in Pakistan.

On the heels of the success of the sit-in, TLYRA chief Allama Khadim Hussain Rizvi announced his political ambitions of contesting the next election. The group has promised to get rid of all un-Islamic customs and traditions and eliminate interest from the financial system. They also promise an equitable distribution of wealth and inclusion of Islamic teachings in the curriculum.⁸

Other Barelvi groups, too, are getting organized like the grand alliance of seven Barelvi parties – the Nizam-e-Mustafa Muttahida Mahaz. Tahirul Qadri is also back and could enter the political fray. The Barelvis are clearly unwilling to play second fiddle anymore to the Deobandi parties.⁹ The time, too, is opportune given a general disenchantment with politicians' due to corruption and lack of governance.

Seeing the example of the Barelvis, the MMA has revived itself. However, bulk of the MMA's support is in KPK and Baluchistan and not in the crucial province of Punjab that will be the real battleground in the 2018 general elections.

In brief, a precedent has been set: a hardline religious group can bring an elected government to its knees on an issue of their choosing. The provocation in 2017 was the government's own foolishness. In 2018, it could well be any other issue.

The rise of the TLP and the MML are believed to be trial balloons of the army to 'mainstream' jihadi groups to provide them a political role and take them away from violence. The mainstreaming project was confirmed by DG ISPR Major General Asif Ghafoor who stated in November that a process to bring extremist groups in the 'mainstream' was under consideration. Thus, the

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TLYR supremo Khadim Hussain Rizvi, was catapulted from being just an ordinary cleric in a mosque in Lahore not long ago to a leader of the Barelvis.

However, what is not clear is whether these groups have relinquished violence, surrendered their weapons and agreed to abide by democratic norms. It is equally not clear whether they have been de-radicalized. As has been well put, 'If the mainstreaming project was about making democrats of militants it would be a laudable objective but if it means mainstreaming hate, sectarianism and intolerance then Pakistan will certainly be staring at another disaster soon.'¹⁰ Thus, instead of detoxing society the methods adopted could well mainstream the radical ideologies, instead of the radicals.¹¹

The net result of the rise of the religious right is that extremism is on the rise in Pakistan. The danger is that these parties have little tolerance for pluralism or religious diversity.¹² All this begs the question if Pakistani society has become more radicalised and intolerant over the past few years. With the supposedly tolerant Barelvis, going the way of the Deobandis and Ahle Hadith, in terms of endorsing violence or threats of violence, the inescapable answer has to be yes. Most Pakistanis may not want to live under a state run by Islamists, but the question is whether they have a choice. The Islamists seem to have decided that they want a share in the pie, with elections, if possible, without them, if not.

What is in store for mainstream politicians can be gauged from a few examples. Lashkar-e-Tayyiba head Hafiz Saeed, after his release from state custody, termed Sharif as a traitor for seeking peace with India. The TLYR candidate from NA 129, a retired Major Zaheer, told a news channel that he pledged to murder Nawaz Sharif for blasphemy, calling him an enemy of Islam. In a video message that went viral on social media, a young Pakistani expat in Germany placed a huge bounty on the head of interior minister Ahsan Iqbal. The Sunni Ittehad council issued a fatwa declaring voting for PMLN as haram. The campaign banners of MML and TLYR bore similarities to the propaganda posters of Nazi Germany. And then, of course, Musharraf said in an interview that he was the biggest supporter of the LeT and admirer of Hafiz Saeed.¹³

India

These developments do have adverse implications for India since it figures in the internal tussles. The election manifesto of the PMLN in 2013 was clear about normalizing relations with India. Even though Nawaz won a majority, the establishment looked askance at his efforts to implement these provisions. As a result, the bilateral initiatives ran aground.

In case the 'mainstreaming' efforts are successful, there could, in the near future, be 'mainstreamed' Jihadisin Parliament. With their Kashmir and anti-India profiles, they will become a lobby in Parliament that would ensure that no political government tries any initiatives to improve relations with India. On the contrary, were the Islamists to gain strength, gimmicks like Ghazwa-e-Hind, raising the green flag on Delhi's Red Fort, liberating Indian Muslims, seeking strategic depth and so on, are likely to see a fresh infusion of enthusiasm.¹⁴

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The larger danger is that given the dismal capitulation of the government to the TLYR on a religious issue, what would the government do if these groups were to frame an issue or an incident with India in religious terms? Will any Pak government be able to withstand the pressure to act belligerently? Hence, these developments are ominous for India and would need to be watched very closely.

Conclusion

In the ultimate analysis, the critical question in Pakistan is who will rule the country? Will it be the elected representative with unfettered authority or will they have to accept fetters on their policies including now from hardline religious parties. Martial law regimes have demonstrated that the army cannot run Pakistan effectively for a sustained period and has to civilianize itself. Despite this, the army is unwilling to trust civilians completely with the job, especially on security issues. For their part, civilians, lacking strategic vision, have so far demonstrated a pathetic ability and capacity to govern.

In this 'fog of politics', the government seems to be fragile, caught up in its internal power struggle on the one hand and unable to handle radical religious elements who are growing in strength, on the other. The range of domestic issues – political, social and security have all combined to take a toll on the state's credibility and ability to govern. As a commentator put it, 'The state of Pakistan is in a functional paralysis. Governance is non-existent.'¹⁵

Endnotes

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Pakistan Military Strategy and Behaviour: An Assessment

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Abstract

Pakistan's national security policy is to prevent any further break-up of Pakistan. Pakistan's strategic culture is a mixture of hawkishness and realpolitik. The shaping of Pakistan's military strategy, like India can be traced to its history. Pakistan's military strategy is based upon being able to be seen as standing up against India not only as any other country, but as a Muslim country. Pakistan's military behaviour is not based on rational-actor paradigms; therefore, one can conclude that India and Pakistan now have their own ways to interpret, analyse and conduct war. In the 70 years of the existence of Pakistan, four periods of Pakistani military strategy are identified by this paper. The paper concludes that the emerging new period is the one where the dominant strategy is cross border terrorism and cross Line of Control duelling, as Pakistan is better prepared for this environment of "No War and No Peace". The unstated thought is that India, needs to come up with a better counter-strategy.

Introduction

"The Essence of Strategy is choosing what not to do"

– Prof. Michael Porter

Military Strategy is the connecting link between National Security Policy and the conduct of military operations. It is about understanding the security environment and making choices about how to conduct military operations within that environment. The National Security Policy serves a political purpose. No government can remain in power for long in case its population perceives that the government is incapable of ensuring their security. Therefore, if military objectives are not linked to the larger political purpose, strategy is bound to fail; hence, strategy has to be formulated in synchronisation with the political purpose. Pakistan's national security policy is to prevent any further break-up of Pakistan. There are two threats in the Pakistani calculus that aim to break-up Pakistan. In the order of priority, they are India and Afghanistan. The threat from India is perceived in the order of magnitude to be at least ten times more potent than from Afghanistan. In Pakistani perception India is the existential threat whereas Afghanistan desires sizable Pashtun areas, does not recognise the Durand Line— but poses no existential threat. Keeping in view these security concerns and as stated by the Pakistani defence analyst Ahmad Faruqui, Pakistan's National Security Policy is based upon three premises. These are Fear of India, Optimism about Allied Co-operation and Optimism about its Military Capabilities.¹ While the first premise remains constant the balance two wax and wane depending on the geopolitical situation.

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Strategic Culture

Pakistan's strategic culture is a mixture of hawkishness and realpolitik. The prominent expert on Pakistan, India, and South Asian security, Stephen Cohen states the "Pakistan inherited the Raj's military-dominant side, while India inherited the civilian-dominant pattern".² Pakistan's views regarding war, the perceived prime existential threat from India and how to use its military, has guided its preferences for different strategic options. Pakistan has seldom sought to use diplomacy to solve conflict, its acquiescence to negotiations post the 1971 war was a consequence of its crushing defeat. Pakistan when choosing between offensive and defensive strategies has traditionally preferred the former. The lessons of Arab-Israeli wars—which were seen to provide an advantage to a numerically weaker and territorially smaller nation—contributed to belief in the efficacy of this strategy. In fact the Indian shift towards an offensive strategy in war with Pakistan was the direct consequence of Pakistan's advertised strategy of "offensive-defence" demonstrated in the 1989 army exercise 'Zarb-e-Momin'.³

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The propensity towards an offensive strategy was also influenced by the legacy of Muslim rule. Muslim rule in the Northern part of the Indian subcontinent started from 1192 AD when Muhammad of Gauri conquered Delhi and theoretically lasted till 1857 when the last Mughal emperor was exiled to Burma. The approximately 650 years of Muslim rule engendered a feeling of martial and religious supremacy in the Muslims of India which heightened the angst of 100 years of gradually being relegated to the second place in the British Indian political structure. This angst was carried to the new state of Pakistan and acted as a catalyst to the rejuvenation of Muslim pride, profoundly affected Pakistani strategic culture. The fantasy of Muslim soldiers being superior to Hindus was nurtured in Pakistani military discourse⁴, an idea which suffered a huge setback in 1971. A decade post 1971 the lessons of that defeat are hazy. The Pakistani narrative now attributes that defeat not to Indian prowess but to the treachery of its own leaders and the cunning and deceit of "Hindu" India.

The Shaping of Pakistan's Military Strategy

The development of military strategy is the result of operational and organizational experiences over a prolonged period of time. The shaping of Pakistan's military strategy like that of India can be traced to 1858, when post the 1857 uprising, the Crown took over direct administration of India from the East India Company. This brought in formal British military behaviour to the hitherto independent Company armies of Bengal, Madras and Bombay. A fourth army designated "the Indian Army" was formed in 1895 which was distinct but co-existed with the three armies of the Bengal, Madras and Bombay Presidencies. The Kitchener reforms of 1903 merged the four armies into one army with a common strategic, organizational and operational culture. The scores of wars that these armies fought especially the Anglo-Sikh Wars, the Afghan Wars and the two World Wars built a distinct British culture in the Indian army of the day. Post partition this was the culture which the two armies inherited and continued with till the 1950's.

In the 50's, Pakistan wanting greater security against the perceived Indian existential threat joined the Baghdad Pact, later the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) - as also the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO). Ostensibly meant to save the Middle East and South-East Asia from communist domination these organisations ultimately dissolved by 1977. However, the extensive military interactions within these organizations with the USA, led to an Americanization of the Pakistani military thinking to the extent that its British doctrines got diluted. From "Pakistan's point of view, the pact was useful only because as one of its members, it received military equipment and its military officials received better military training."⁵ Though Pakistan was looking for gains only against India in joining the pacts,

both the pacts did not consider South Asia as its security concern or jurisdiction. In fact, in 1975, Pakistan left SEATO when it realized that SEATO had not supported it in the 1971 war with India. But in this period, it had imbibed the American way of war, of greater reliance on firepower even in limited wars such as insurgencies and counter-terrorism.

Pakistan's military strategy is based upon being able to be seen as standing up against India not only as any other country, but as a Muslim country. Its leaders will continue to extol their upper hand over India in any conflict even when militarily losing, mainly based upon religion based moral superiority. Pakistan knows that man for man it cannot match India in military might. However, as long as the Indian armed forces are distracted by either an insurgency in Kashmir or elsewhere, or a two-front war, it can hope to win. The 'Allied cooperation' referred to earlier is not only through the world's intervention to restrain India fearing escalation to nuclear war, but also the hope for a more direct intervention by China with which India has a serious border dispute.

Pakistan knows that man for man it cannot match India in military might. However as long as the Indian armed forces are distracted by either an insurgency in Kashmir or elsewhere, or a two-front war, it can hope to win.

Pakistan's Military Behaviour

Pakistan's military behaviour till the 1971 war was rooted in British culture based on rational-actor paradigms. However, in launching the Kargil Operation, the Pakistanis did not act rationally. The rational actor theory in the context of military strategy posits that those making a strategy will have sufficient knowledge about the consequences of their potential course of action. A rational military plan would have taken into account an obvious weakness in the Pakistani plan at Kargil—logistics. It was an Indian conviction that a Kargil-like operation was logistically unsustainable which led to the achievement of strategic surprise by Pakistan. One can conclude that India and Pakistan now have their own ways to interpret, analyse and conduct war. Kargil proved that Indian and Pakistani strategists no longer mirror each other's thinking. The Pakistani propensity for taking risks in dealing with a stronger opponent may appear irrational to us, but for Pakistani strategists it is rational behaviour.

The Four Periods of Pakistani Military Strategy

In the 70 years of the existence of Pakistan, four periods of Pakistani military strategy are identified by this paper.

The first period was from 1947 to 1970 when the self-delusion of the Pakistani superiority on account of Muslims being better soldiers, was maintained. During this time Pakistan's strategic community believed that India would collapse under the weight of its ethnic-religious strains. It was a period in which a World War II concept of war was trained for, and military strategy was based on the parameters of a typical conventional conflict. War had to be purely attrition based where the belief that one Pakistani Soldier was equal to 10 Indian soldiers" would lead to victory. Behaviourally, during this period, Pakistan was convinced that "an attitude of constant belligerence is the only way [Pakistan] can affirm its separate existence and specific identity."⁶ This strategy endured through the 1965 war by feeding propaganda of a Pakistani victory to the Pakistani people, though various writers have referred to it as an Indian victory⁷ or a stalemate⁸.

The second period from 1971 to 1988 was a period of heightened realisation of Pakistani vulnerability. This was understandable because in Dec 1971 Pakistan lost half its population and territory with the breaking away of its Eastern Wing into the new country of Bangladesh. Pakistan sought to cover this vulnerability by becoming the conduit of US support to the Afghan insurgency. Pakistani military strategy during this period was fully defensive. During this period Pakistan's support to Sikh extremists created great turmoil in India. Pakistan became convinced that if the Sikhs—a very well integrated religious and ethnic group—could be subverted, then in case some inflaming grievance existed, a defensive strategy and proactive behaviour in fomenting an insurgency in Kashmir would pay dividends. The 1987

'Brasstacks' crisis and the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in May 1988 facilitated this decision due to the availability of huge stock of arms and ammunition meant for the Afghan Mujahidin. The decision to go nuclear was taken at this time "as it was the only option through which Pakistan could achieve some sort of military parity vis-à-vis India"⁹ at a time when it was feeling most vulnerable.

The third period from 1989 onwards till 1998 was a period of gains in Kashmir culminating in the Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests. It coincided with the breakup of the Soviet Union. India was on the loser's side of the Cold war with Pakistan being the toast of the Western world for having made the victory in Afghanistan possible. The period also coincided with the growth of Islamic fundamentalism worldwide spurred by the Muslim world's resentment of the Western world's action in the First Gulf war and the presence of 'infidels' in the holy land. Foreign 'defilement' became the cynosure of the now unemployed Mujahidin, of whom the Al Qaeda assumed a leadership role. Samuel Huntington's thesis on "The Clash of Civilizations" which came out in 1996 appeared to the world as a thesis with a solid basis. Huntington listed the India-Pakistan conflict as one of the inter-civilizational conflicts rather than only over Kashmir. This appeared correct as the growing radicalisation in Pakistani society made it focus more on its Islamic identity in relation to the Arab world which is at the heart of the Muslim civilization and of Islamic fundamentalism. This was not complementary to Pakistan's actual Indian/Turkic/Afghan/Mongol ancestry¹⁰ reflected in the naming of Pakistan's nuclear missiles.¹¹ In this period Pakistan's military behaviour focussing on its Islamic heritage led it to making the mistake of over-estimating its own capabilities."¹² By the end of this period, the perceived cloak of invulnerability achieved through overt nuclearisation led to the Pakistani strategic blunder of Kargil.

From 1999 onwards till date is the fourth period. This was the period of the Kargil War and also the 9/11 perfidy. Kargil was the highpoint of the Pakistani military strategy of Strategic Surprise. As the Director of the Strategic Studies Institute, Douglas Lovelace states in his foreword to a monograph on strategic surprise by Colin S Gray, "strategic surprise offers both golden opportunities and lethal dangers".¹³ Kargil highlighted the fact of Pakistan's behaviour being irrational, whose only positive for it was that it reinforced Pakistan's "contrived irrationality". This irrationality makes the world panicky in the event of heightened India-Pakistan tensions. The post 9/11 period saw cataclysmic shifting in the power alignments in the world with the importance of Pakistan to the USA increasing exponentially as it prosecuted the war against Al Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan. It also led to even greater turmoil within Pakistan as its military leaders tried to ride two horses facing in opposite directions at the same time—an impossible feat—by supporting the Afghan Taliban and attacking the Pakistan Taliban.

The standoff at the border with India post the attack on the Indian Parliament in 2001 convinced Pakistan of the viability of its nuclearisation and "contrived irrationality". During this period India's realisation that short sharp wars in a nuclear environment were possible, and the only option—a view reinforced by the ponderous mobilisation of Operation Parakram—led to Pakistan's development of a tactical nuclear weapon based strategy. This can be seen as a clear shift towards a defensive strategy since tactical nuclear weapons can be used and justified only in defence. The doctrinal debate on the use of tactical nuclear weapons took into account the disadvantages of conventional offensive strategies. The forced preference for defensive action is confirmed by numerous informal sources.¹⁴ This defensive military strategy against India was also inevitable considering that from 2002 onwards a substantial part of Pakistan's forces have been deployed in FATA and the Western borders. With the gradual withdrawal of the US and NATO forces from Afghanistan and the growing Chinese presence due to the CPEC, the strategic framework is becoming more complex. This coupled with India's rising economy and perceptible tilt towards USA portends that the Pakistani military strategy will continue to be fundamentally defensive in the conventional sphere and proactive in the unconventional one.

Conclusion

The fact that Afghanistan and India are becoming closer allies and India is being promoted by the US makes Pakistan fearful over being trapped between hostile fronts. Pakistan is frightened by American threats, evidenced by the reactions

to the explicit tweets by President Donald Trump. Whatever may be the nationalistic rhetoric, the Pakistani elite are scared of losing its power, which is on account of Western backing. It scares Pakistan that a USA which has lost all trust in it (not without reason) may try to de-fang it of its nuclear arsenal, whether this is possible or not is another matter. The second is that American withdrawal of support may increase its vulnerability to the Indian threat, whatever may the offset available through Chinese support, because the Pakistani military at the moment has a great dependency on the United States for weapons and spares. Moreover, Western weapons systems, and not Chinese ones—are considered much more useful for fighting India.¹⁵

The surgical strikes by India post Sep 2016, and Uri attack that India initiated, poses a challenge to Pakistan's military strategy. India swiftly executed a punitive operation and loudly signalled its limited nature. The operation, however ambiguous—was successful because in this age success is not only measured by body counts but by media generated perceptions. This operation offers the most visible example of India's latest deterrence strategy with Pakistan. India cannot allow Pakistan's support for insurgent attacks on its positions to go unpunished, but neither can it respond through war. The objective is no longer to seize territory, but rather to punish the enemy and discourage future provocative acts. Just as India seeks to avoid a full-scale war so does Pakistan. Fighting an extended conflict with an increasingly powerful Indian military provides no real benefit for Islamabad. In fact, there is no likelihood that Pakistan would be able to wrest back territory from India through a conventional conflict.

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The Pakistani military, realizing the danger of losing territory in a war against India, had developed a “Riposte” strategy. “Riposte” calls for Pakistani “strike” Corps to take the initiative in a war with India while other Corps holds back the initial Indian advance. This bold action against a numerically superior enemy relies upon initial momentum and the assumption that Pakistan's allies, notably China, will buttress its efforts by stepping in within a few weeks to urge a ceasefire—effectively halting both armies from advancing farther into each other's territory. Under such a scenario, Pakistan could then trade territory gained for concessions from India¹⁶. But this strategy carries real dangers of escalating out of control. Consequently, a fifth period now beckons as the era of “decisive” short wars, especially in the Indo-Pak context, is largely over because of several reasons.¹⁷ Pakistan's military strategy can only hope to succeed in case it can get full support of the Chinese for a collusive war. The Pakistani strategy in the conventional sphere will therefore be to embrace constant artillery duels and small arms fire along the border in J&K to create a charade of hurting India domestically and hope to draw attention internationally. Causing human and material damage and not the conventional gain of territory is the yardstick of success. An optimistic aim would also be to put political pressure and hope to wear down the Indian resolve through a ‘thousand cuts’, by non-state actors armed and supported by it. Can these strategies succeed? Countries like India and Pakistan can carry out such duelling on the Line of Control for perpetuity, using ammunition which they would normally expend for training. As far as terrorist actions go there is no example in the world where acts of terrorism by themselves have forced a country to waver from its core national interest. However, as of now Pakistan has a clearer idea than India of what strategy to follow in the environment of “No- War and No-Peace.”

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The United States and its Af-Pak Policy: Implications for India

Shri T C A Raghavan, IFS (Retd)[@]

Abstract

Some contrasting narratives emerge from a review of US policy on South Asia over 2017. In the case of India, the positives dominated - in terms of statements of intent, good political chemistry and substantive steps forward. By far however, and for entirely opposite reasons, much greater attention was focused on Pakistan and Afghanistan. The continued deterioration of security in Afghanistan and the firm assessment and conclusion that the answer to this problem lay in Pakistan, meant that Af-Pak remained at the heart of US concerns and policy on South Asia. The challenges of the military and security situation in Afghanistan and dealing with a recalcitrant Pakistan meant therefore, a centrality for Af-Pak in US policy to an extent perhaps not seen since September 2001. That enhanced US pressures coincide with a phase of poor India-Pakistan relations, which subtly enhances the potency of the measures India, has been taking.

Introduction

There appears an almost retrospective inevitability, to the US President's broadside against Pakistan, expressed dramatically in his first tweet of 2018. His remarks represent a compressed bundle of frustration at the continued deterioration of security in Afghanistan and the lack of progress in dealing with this. The subtext to the President's tweet was very clearly a comment on the failure of his predecessor to show results in his Afghanistan policy, as equally, that he in contrast, would deal with the problem – Pakistan- head on, to find better solutions.

The United States has foolishly given Pakistan more than 33 billion dollars in aid over the last 15 years, and they have given us nothing but lies & deceit, thinking of our leaders as fools. They give safe haven to the terrorists we hunt in Afghanistan, with little help. No more!

While the Presidential tweet of 1st January had all the attributes of the President's volatility and unpredictability, it is nevertheless impossible not to see it in the context of a steady build up to it over the course of the year representing the evolution of US policy thinking on what is termed as its 'longest war.'

The chronological milestones in the evolution of US policy towards Afghanistan and Pakistan are clear and rest on three sets of policy statements. (1) The conclusions of an intra agency review of Af Pak policy were announced in a Presidential speech on Afghanistan in August 2017. (2) The US National Security Survey released on December 2017 and which dealt with South Asia in general and Af-Pak concerns in particular at some length. (3) Most dramatic force of course was captured in the Presidential tweet of 1st January 2018, which announced a US statement of intent and brought it into public narratives in a way, diplomatic communiques or formal speeches seldom can.

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The Intra Agency Review

A Presidential speech on 21st August 2017, announced a new Af-Pak policy at the end of an intra agency review, which started in June 2017. For many Afghans, the most significant part of the new policy was the frank admission of the President that he had reconsidered his own original instinct that the US must pull out of Afghanistan. US core interests, the President said, were seeking ‘an honourable and enduring outcome’ of the sacrifices made over the past 16 years. But the consequences of a rapid exit would be ‘both unpredictable and unacceptable’ and create conditions that led to the 9/11 attack. The mistake of the Iraq pull-out (an obvious implied comment on his predecessor) would not therefore, be repeated. The core US policy in Afghanistan and Pakistan would be to defeat terrorists and all its instruments- economic, diplomatic and military-would be directed towards this goal. “We are not nation building again’, the President put it, “we are killing terrorists”. The speech was short in detail and this it was clarified was because ‘it was counterproductive’ for the US to announce in advance time lines or force levels and levels. “Conditions on the ground, not arbitrary time tables” would guide US policy since “America’s enemies must never know our plans”.

It was two other elements in this new policy that drew most comment and attention. On Pakistan, the President was uncompromising and in fact harsh. He used language not in itself unfamiliar to what has been employed by the United States in the past. The difference was that this was the President himself articulating these views without any great effort to softening or even nuancing them. Pakistan often gives, he said, ‘safe haven to agents of chaos, violence and terror’. While it had suffered greatly from terrorism it also sheltered organizations attacking the US. The US had paid Pakistan billions of dollars while ‘they are housing the very terrorists we are fighting’. This, the President said, will have to change ‘immediately’. This blunt talk on Pakistan was accompanied by the statement that the US’s new policy would be ‘to further develop its strategic partnership with India’. India must, he said, help us ‘more with Afghanistan’ especially in the area of economic assistance since it made billions in trade with the United States. If this reflected to some President Trump’s general transactional approach to foreign policy nevertheless there are other factors also. Firstly, the growing convergence on Indian and US positions on a whole range of issues alongside a continued strengthening of bilateral relations across a broad spectrum. Secondly, the indication of an Indian role acts in itself as an obvious pressure point on Pakistan and evidently the willingness to employ this pressure was in itself an indication of its new dimensions.

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Convergence with India

The role for India and more generally the US’s perspective on India in the Af-Pak quicksand merits a pause. On 16th August 2017, just a few days before the Presidential speech on Af-Pak, the United States designated the Hizbul Mujahideen as a terrorist organization. A few months earlier in April 2017, in advance of PM Modi’s visit to Washington, there had been a similar designation of the Pakistan Occupied Kashmir based militant Syed Salahuddin, the head of the Hizdul Mujahideen, as a global terrorist. These are clear signs of US inclinations and preferences in South Asia. Other such instances can be provided including the remarks made by the Defence Secretary James Mattis to the Senate Armed Forces Committee in October that “The One Belt One Road also goes through disputed territory’. This was obviously widely interpreted, in Pakistan in particular, as suggesting US opposition to the China Pakistan Economic Corridor and more generally to the close coordination of strategic positions with India.

The court ordered release of Hafiz Saeed, the head of the Jammāt-ut-Dawa, elicited statements from the United States that gave further clear pointers of its thinking. Remarks made by the State Department were not unexpected and included “The United States is deeply concerned that Lashkar-e-Taiba leader Hafiz Saeed has been released from house arrest in Pakistan,” and “The Pakistani government should make sure that he is arrested and charged for his crimes”. What

was unusual however is that this statement from the State department was followed by an even stronger one from the White House that the release 'sends a deeply troubling message about Pakistan's commitment to combating international terrorism and belies Pakistani claims that it will not provide to sanctuary for terrorists on its soil'. The statement also said that Pakistan's inaction 'will have repercussions for bilateral relations and for Pakistan's global reputation'. Hafiz Sayeed's release from preventive custody just a few days before the ninth anniversary of the November 2008 Mumbai attack is not in itself sufficient to explain the stridency of these statements. In fact, this points to the deep tensions that have characterized different aspects of US Pakistan relations over 2017.

These three pillars of the new US policy- no early withdrawal, a sharp focus on robust military action on counter terrorism, more pressure on Pakistan and a greater role for India. All this is at one level a remix of older strategies. Yet their upfront and blunt statement in itself amounted to a substantive shift in the US approach.

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The US National Security Strategy 2017

Through the second half of December 2017, US statements on Pakistan acquired an increasingly harder edge. Vice President Mike Pence on a Christmas visit to Afghanistan and addressing US troops at Bagram Air base said, "For too long has Pakistan provided safe haven to the Taliban and many terrorist organizations, but those days are over", and, "President Trump has put Pakistan on notice. As the President said, so I say now: Pakistan has much to gain from partnering with the United States, and Pakistan has much to lose by continuing to harbour criminals and terrorists." The Vice President is the most senior Trump administration official to visit Afghanistan and his remarks had as their immediate foreground, the release of the US National Security Strategy 2017, on December 18, 2017.

There is much in the document that was unpalatable to Pakistan, and again not least the role ascribed to India. Nevertheless, remarks pertaining to the Af-Pak theatre and mirroring those made by US officials, including by President Trump earlier, merit attention. These include: "We will insist that Pakistan take decisive action against militant and terrorist groups operating from its soil" as the United States "continues to face threats from transnational terrorists and militants operating from within Pakistan."; "no partnership can survive a country's support for militants and terrorists."; "We will press Pakistan to intensify its counter-terrorism efforts, who target a partner's own service members and officials."; "The United States will also encourage Pakistan to continue demonstrating that it is a responsible steward of its nuclear assets."; "The prospect for an Indo-Pakistani military conflict that could lead to a nuclear exchange remains a key concern requiring consistent diplomatic attention".

Pakistan and Afghan Reactions

In Afghanistan, reactions were expectedly positive, particularly on the clarification that the US did not contemplate an early closure to its Afghan involvement. The increased pressure on the Taliban was also welcomed, although, doubts remain on how exactly this would stem their continued terrorist attacks. Terrorist attacks, especially in Kabul, did not abate and in fact through 2017 major attacks regularly punctuate the political chronology of this period. What therefore, received most acclaim in Afghanistan was the stridency of the language with regard to Pakistan.

The dismay and anxiety in Pakistan by contrast, both, in government and elsewhere was palpable. Statements by Foreign Minister Khawaja Asif summed up one set of responses- Pakistan was being made a scapegoat for past US policy failures in Afghanistan. In general, the reactions were a mixture of defensiveness and indignation- the latter prompted in large part by the enhanced US expectations from India. A meeting of the National Security Council chaired

by the Prime Minister, followed President Trump's speech of August 2017, and the statement issued said that Pakistan was "committed to not allowing its soil to be used for violence against any other country. We expect the same from our neighbours". That sanctuaries in Afghanistan were being used for terrorist attacks on Pakistan formed one part of the rebuttal; reservations about India were another. "India cannot be a net security provider in the South Asia region when it has conflictual relationships with all its neighbours and is pursuing a policy of destabilizing Pakistan from the east and the west." Stock responses by its Foreign Office therefore, also included statements such as - "South Asia's strategic stability is being undermined by India's unchecked brutalization of the people of India-held Kashmir and incessant ceasefire violations targeting innocent civilians." Yet counter statements apart, Pakistani anxieties are considerable and in this context its relationship with China appeared even more valuable.

At the same time, some effort at containing anti US rhetoric is also visible, and the attempt clearly was to project the answer to this situation laying in diplomacy. Public opinion was sought to be reassured that a regional consensus on Terrorism and Afghanistan is being evolved with the Foreign Minister's visits to Turkey and Iran, apart from China. The latter visit was followed by a Trilateral Foreign Ministers Meeting with China, Pakistan and Afghanistan in January 2017. Visits by the Pakistan Foreign Minister to Washington (October 2017) and of the US Secretaries of State and Defence, to Pakistan (October and December respectively) were thus presented, to its public at least, as part of the continuing engagement with the United States.

The 1st January Tweet

The directness of the tweet and the fact that it came directly from the President, places Pakistan at the center of US adverse notice and cannot easily be papered over. Subsequent announcements of suspension of security assistance underwrite, that Pakistan faces a situation amounting to a crisis in what still remains its most important external relationship. The Presidential tweet was accompanied therefore, by an expected degree of consternation in Pakistan. Most in its strategic fraternity appear convinced that they are being scapegoated for Washington's difficulties in Afghanistan. As the strategic community, both, inside Pakistan and elsewhere discussed options and counter options, the fact is that the country faces a long and hard grind. The US is Pakistan's largest export market, and military, financial and technology linkages are numerous, though largely one sided, and these ties bind its elite to the West in general, and the US in particular are a prominent fact of its social fabric.

These issues therefore, imply that Pakistan faces issues far beyond closure or suspension of military and financial assistance. The latter in fact have shown a declining trend since 2011, and while significant in themselves, may not constitute the predominant factor of concern for Pakistan. 'Reprogramming' of assistance as also its reduction has been resorted to in the past 6-7 years, as would have been anticipated and to an extent prepared for. Pakistan is not unused to prolonged periods of a relative cooling down in relations with the US. The 1990s had witnessed a similar phase but with two important differences. Firstly, the extent of US administration displeasure is of an intensity now, which is new, and directly related to the threat US troops in Afghanistan face. Secondly the consequential Pak-US estrangement coincides with a sustained upswing in US-India relations and convergence of positions on a range of issues, not least Afghanistan itself.

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The larger concern in Pakistan would be whether other punitive measures would be embarked upon or the 'name and shame' tactic further ratcheted up. The possible withdrawal of 'Major Non-NATO Ally' status was an obvious enough privilege that could be targeted. But the concerns in Pakistan are possibly even wider and developments in 2017 itself would have provided additional pointers. In July August 2017 New York State's Department of Financial Services, announced measures against the Habib Bank -Pakistan's largest bank-for its failure to comply with regulatory

India's Pakistan and China Strategic Challenges

regimes aimed to combat money laundering, terrorist financing and other illicit financial transactions. The Habib Bank announced in end August that it was closing down its New York Branch. Later in early September it agreed to an out of court settlement to pay a fine of \$225 million. This fine, is the largest ever imposed upon a Pakistani bank. In financial and banking circles in Pakistan the impression certainly is that the action against the bank was not unrelated to President Trump's new policy approach announced after the inter agency review. Many felt that this was a warning that the lessons gained by the US in the past decade with respect to putting the financial squeeze on Iran would now be applied on Pakistan. If Iran potentially provides one sets of templates, Myanmar does another- in terms of targeted sanctions including on travel and freezes on assets held in US jurisdiction on selected ISI officers.

On the other hand, the factors that work in Pakistan's favour, howsoever, obvious, cannot be overstated, they being: The ground and air lines of communication to Afghanistan and the related issue of the poor state of Iran-US and Russia-US relations. Then there are older fears that many in the US nurture and which have prevented in the past greater pressure on Pakistan - the dangers of Pakistan imploding and the risk of its nuclear weapons falling into the hands of extremists. Has the current US administration somehow superseded such concerns? Just how far the US would therefore, go in pressurizing Pakistan, remains an open question and gets posed even more sharply after the spike of major terrorist incidents in Afghanistan since the beginning of 2018.

Implications for India

There is an obvious sense of vindication at the trajectory of US policy on Pakistan over 2017. Along with Pakistan, it is India that has been most affected by the latitude and support that terrorist groups in Pakistan have had. It is reasonable therefore, to have the expectation that pointed US pressures on the issue of terrorism, is to India's advantage. The view that the US will remain tightly focused on groups such as the Haqqani network that threaten its interests in Afghanistan and India's terrorism concerns, are lower down in the priority list has validity. But it is also a fact that the security situation in Afghanistan has a direct strategic interest for India also and any improvement in that situation is to its advantage.

The fact that this enhanced US pressure coincides with a phase of poor India-Pakistan relations, subtly enhances the potency of the measures. India has been taking- counter pressure on the LOC and diplomatic pressure through a variety of means such as restrictive visa policies, informal suspension of official contacts beyond the barest minimum, etc. These steps have arisen independently from the US-Pakistan interface and as such have an independent trajectory.

The internal political turbulence in Pakistan as the country heads to a general election later in the year provides to India a more extended time frame to examine its next steps. The intervening period up to the election is an opportunity to assess US policy and Pakistan responses and decide thereafter, on its own set of policy options.

Post-19th Party Congress: China's Strategic Direction and Behaviour

Shri Nalin Surie, IFS (Retd)[@]

Abstract

The slogans/ names given to the preferred policy approach of successive General Secretaries of China have been different, but the intention have always remained the same, to dramatically enhance China's comprehensive national strength and to become the most powerful country in the world. China under President XI believes, that the time has now come to change or adjust the status quo to meet its changing requirements and long-term objectives, so as to bring about a new balance in international relations that is either in its favour or at least puts it at par with the other preponderant powers in the world. In recognition of its need for the world for its own development, China intends to promote trade and investment; hence Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) was created. However; along with trade and investments China must also be ready to protect against potential dangers in times of peace, and that safeguarding political security is a fundamental task along with safeguarding China's sovereignty, security and development interests. So China aims to complete the military modernisation by 2035.

Introduction

Ever since Hu Jintao took charge as General Secretary of the Communist Party of China in late 2002 and even before that, there has been long term consistency in China's vision of where it wants to be by the middle of this century. The slogans/names given to the preferred policy approach of successive General Secretaries have been different, but the intention to dramatically enhance China's comprehensive national strength and for it to head towards becoming the most powerful country in the world has been the underlying objective. Since the ascendancy of Xi Jinping in 2012, this tendency has sharpened and Chinese activism on the world stage has stepped up several notches.

The directions and behaviour patterns of China in the next two decades had been clearly spelt out both in the report by Hu Jintao at the 18th Party Congress in November 2012 and by Xi Jinping in his report to the 19th Party Congress last October. In the latter, the outlines of China's quest for global leadership have been quite clearly spelt out. At the 19th Party Congress in October 2017, President Xi unhesitatingly stated that China's international standing has risen as never before and that the Chinese nation which has acquired "an entirely a new posture now stands tall and firm in the East". He went further and stressed that what one can call the Chinese model has blazed a "new trail for other developing countries to achieve modernization". It is a model that

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“offers a new option for other countries and nations who want to speed up their development while preserving their independence”. This is a clear manifestation of China’s desire to show leadership, in particular of the developing world, as the 21st century progresses. It reflects the Chinese belief that the post-World War II, western dominated democratic model is no longer dominant.

It has also been made clear that China will continue to play its part as a “major and responsible country” and “take an active part in reforming and developing the global governance system”. China is to continue to contribute its “wisdom and strength” not only to solve the problems facing mankind but also to strengthen global governance. These are all necessary steps to achieve what President Xi described as “the Chinese Dream”. Indeed, he said at the 19th Party Congress that China has the “power to shape” global peace and development.

President Xi also underlined the Chinese intention to build an international “community with a shared future for mankind”. This would be done by forging a new form of international relations featuring mutual respect, fairness, justice and win-win cooperation. State to State relations would be developed with communication not confrontation, with partnership and not alliance. Further, it is the Chinese intention to build a framework for major country relations featuring overall stability and balanced development.

The concept of a “community of common destiny” was first used by erstwhile President Hu Jintao at the 18th Party Congress in November 2012 in the context of Taiwan. President Xi Jinping used this term to refer to China’s neighbourhood in November 2014, at the Central Work Conference on Foreign Affairs. Further, in March 2017, at the NPC, Premier Li Keqiang expanded it to ‘building a community of shared future for all mankind’.

It is clear from the above that China believes that having benefitted very substantially over the last three decades from the status quo not only in international relations but also in international institutions, that the time has now come for it to change or adjust the status quo to meet its changing requirements and long term objectives so as to bring about a new balance in international relations that is either in its favour or at least puts it at par with the other preponderant powers in the world.

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It is not that China is unaware of the challenges that it will face as it attempts to alter the existing status quo in its favour. This is particularly important since China’s dependence on the world for its long-term growth has never been greater. China has grown dramatically, but to realize the Chinese Dream it requires a “peaceful international environment” and “a stable international order”. This is acknowledged by President Xi Jinping when he spoke about the need for China to “draw on the achievements of other civilizations” and made clear that China will continue to adhere to its “fundamental national policy of opening up and pursuing development with its borders wide open”. Interestingly, he argues that China’s ‘Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)’, is intended to build a new platform for international cooperation, to create new drivers of shared development. This is ironical because the BRI has been evolving essentially in a unilateral manner while he himself speaks of China taking a new approach to developing State to State relations with communication not confrontation etc.

In recognition of its need for the world for its own development, China intends to promote trade and investment liberalization and make economic globalization more open, inclusive and balanced. Further, it will get more actively involved in global environmental governance. As the largest pollutant in the world with an extensive programme in place for mitigation, China will want to ensure that it has an important role to play in international decision making on this critical issue.

President Xi is proud of the fact that China has become a global leader in terms of composite national strength and international influence. Yet he worries about both development and security and argues that China must always be ready to protect against potential dangers in times of peace and that safeguarding political security is a fundamental task along with safeguarding China's sovereignty, security and development interests.

China's growing economic and technological capacity and prowess has enabled it over many years, to annually allocate a growing quantum of resources to building, restructuring and modernising its armed forces. This process, which actually began during the time of General Secretary Jiang Zemin and Premier Zhu Rongji was carried forward by General Secretary Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao and has found culmination in the fundamental restructuring undertaken by President Xi Jinping of the Chinese armed forces, both in terms of organization, as also in terms of command structures. Further, China has over the last nearly three decades in particular focused on asymmetrical warfare and technological improvements. In this context, President Xi Jinping said at the 19th Party Congress that by 2020 mechanisation of the PLA forces would have been basically achieved; that IT application would have come a long way, and strategic capabilities substantially improved. The objective is, he said, to complete "by 2035 the modernization of our (China's) national defence" and "by mid-21st century our people's armed forces (would) have been fully transformed into world class forces". All this is off course under the complete control of the Party.

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The Chinese armed forces will ensure that China's sovereignty and territorial integrity is maintained and the historical tragedy of national division never repeated. Taiwan will not be allowed independence in any form nor will anyone, any organization or any political party at any time or in any form be allowed to separate any part of Chinese territory from China. The PLA will also resolutely safeguard China's development interests – domestic and international. The PLA (and the PAP) are organs of the Party and will help ensure that there is no regime change or colour revolution in China.

In trying to better understand the likely strategic directions that China will take in the coming years, it is not sufficient to simply look at the foreign policy and security aspects. It is equally important to understand the direction of domestic changes which will determine China's long-term stability and the ability of the CPC to meet its stated goals. From this perspective, it is important to recall that in his report to the 19th Party Congress, President Xi Jinping asserted that the principal contradiction facing China is the "unbalanced and inadequate development to meet the people's ever-growing needs for a better life".

It is partly in recognition of this principal contradiction that the Chinese Communist Party has decided to reduce the focus from very high economic growth rates to the so-called 'new normal' of between 6 and 7% growth per annum – a growth which is still very high both in per centage terms and in absolute terms. The focus now is also to improve quality, sustainability, and the technological level and sophistication of the economy.

It is also the recognition of this contradiction that is making the Communist Party focus on ensuring a better quality of life for the people of China. This includes the focus on mitigating the negative impact of climate change and ecological degradation. It is also driving the focus on poverty reduction and improving the quality of life in the rural sectors and generally reducing income inequalities across the economy. There will also be a focus on providing fresh and gainful employment, especially in the context of the move towards high-tech and greater use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), the Internet Of Things (IoT) and Industry 4.0.

The need to respond to the people's needs also explains the single-minded drive against corruption, especially in the last five years. It is pertinent here to recall that in his report to the 18th Party Congress, General Secretary Hu Jintao had warned that if the problem of corruption is not addressed, "it could prove fatal for the Party and even cause the collapse of the Party and the fall of the State". China will continue to focus on innovation and moving rapidly up the ladder of technological change and modernization.

China can thus be expected in the years ahead to continue its efforts to establish an international economic system in accordance with its own needs and capacities. BRI is a part reflection of this approach. At the same time, China will continue coordinated land and maritime development, make China a country of innovators, convert more and more Chinese enterprises into world class, globally competitive firms and make China into a trader of quality. It will want to be the leader also in matters of climate change issues. All of this will have a serious impact on the international economic and financial architecture which continues to evolve albeit in fits and starts.

China has clearly benefitted from the existing global world trading and financial system and hence it is no surprise that President Xi Jinping spoke at Davos in January 2017 as a great supporter of free trade and economic globalization. China will continue with this approach. It benefits enormously from international trade, investment liberalization and facilitation and from access to high technology, including dual use technology. The irony is that the more it benefits from the world, the more difficult it makes access for its own markets by others. This will no doubt lead to greater frictions with its principal international economic partners. The signs of the latter are already clear.

The trend is now clear that having achieved remarkable success in terms of development on its land territory, China will also focus more on its maritime areas. This serves a dual purpose and hence it is no surprise that China has, since the 18th Party Congress, made it clear that it intends to build itself into a strong maritime country. This was again stressed by President Xi Jinping at the 19th Party Congress. Hence China's activism on the maritime front, be it on developmental issues, territorial issues or its desire to become a genuine blue water naval force, will only grow in salience.

The trend is now clear that having achieved remarkable success in terms of development on its land territory, China will also focus more on its maritime areas. This serves a dual purpose and hence it is no surprise that China has, since the 18th Party Congress, made it clear that it intends to build itself into a strong maritime country.

China's footprint, in economic terms, is already well established across the world. This will grow in the years ahead. It is China's argument that its overseas developmental interests are a core concern of its national defence policy. Concrete actions in the latter context and on territorial issues will no doubt be manifest in the coming years and can lead to confrontation unless China strictly adheres to international law including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)

Equally, China will be uncompromising in the pursuit of what it believes are its territorial claims. It has a strangely unilateral view of its historical territorial rights and is un-budging in its claims. This does not gel with its stated desire to establish an international community with a shared future for mankind. Nor does it contribute to (as stated by President Xi at the 19th Party Congress) China's "ability to inspire" in matters of global peace and development.

The use of ambiguous phrases and its track record notwithstanding, the stage appears to be set for a confident and aggressive China, to use the contemporary state of confusion, complexity and divided leadership in the international community to try and fill the void. There will be push back though that has already begun and will determine the extent to which China will succeed in its quest for leadership, first in Asia and thereafter in those parts of the world on which it is dependent for resources, technologies and markets. It is not in China's own interest that "the Chinese Dream" becomes a nightmare for other members of the international community or the international system as the

latter continues to evolve in the face of the changing balance of power in the 21st century. China will be judged by its actions on whether it fulfils its own description of itself as a “major and responsible country”.

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Note 1: All quotations are either from Xi Jinping's report to the 19th P.C. or Hu Jintao's report to the 18th P.C.

China's Revolutionary Military Reforms; Salient Imperatives: Strategic Implications

Maj Gen (Dr) G G Dwivedi, SM, VSM & Bar (Retd)[@]

Abstract

Two most powerful organs which are critical for the very survival of current Chinese authoritarian regime are the Communist Party and the Army. The latter historically has been controlled by the Party. The underlying rationale behind the critical reforms were twofold; firstly, prepare the military for China's expanding global role and secondly, establish Party's firm control over the PLA through revamped CMC. China has therefore, formulated a long-drawn strategy, with well-defined national objectives. These are stability, sovereignty and modernity i.e. sustained economic development. In this milieu, 'Stability' implies unchallenged authority of the CPC and its continuation in power.

Background

Two most powerful organs which are critical for the very survival of current Chinese authoritarian regime are the Communist Party and the Army. While the Communist Party of China (CPC), was founded on 01 July 1921 at Shanghai, People's Liberation Army (PLA) traces its roots to the 'Nanchang Uprising' of 01 August 1927, when stalwarts like Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai revolted against the Nationalist Forces¹. Both share a unique symbiotic relationship. This historic bonding was formalised in December 1929, at the Ninth Meeting of the CPC convened at Gutian, a town in Fujian Province. During the conference, Mao addressed the men of Fourth Army and clarified the role of military; "to chiefly serve the political ends"².

Thus, absolute control of the CPC over the Red Army became entrenched. Since then, People's Liberation Army (PLA) has remained the Army of Communist Party and not of the nation. Incidentally, President Xi Jinping visited Gutian on 30 October 2014 to address 'Military Political Work Conference'. In his speech, he reiterated what Mao had asserted eight and half decades earlier i.e.; "PLA still remains Party's Army and must maintain absolute loyalty to the political masters"³. Traditionally, PLA has been well represented in the apex political policy making bodies. China's highest defence body, Central Military Commission (CMC) is exclusively composed of senior most military commanders, headed by the President.

PLA played a pivotal role during the Communist Revolution as an armed wing of the Party. Its top commanders namely Mao and Deng emerged as the icons of First and Second Generational leadership. Barely a year after its establishment in 1949, People's Republic of China (PRC) entered the 'Korean War 1950-53' to lock horns with the US-led UN Forces. Suffering over half million casualties, Chinese Forces succeeded in pushing the adversary back to the 38th Parallel, thus restoring 'status quo ante'. In 1962, PLA convincingly defeated the Indian Army in a limited conflict.

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However, it performed poorly against the Vietnamese Army in 1979. Here on began the process of restructuring and modernization the PLA.

Defence was one of the 'Four Modernizations' enunciated by Deng, to transform China. However, there was lack of strategic direction. In 1993, President Jiang Zemin directed the PLA to prepare for 'local wars under modern conditions' on observing the power of Revolution in Military Affairs' (RMA) displayed by the US military in the 1992 Gulf War⁴. This paved the way for the initiation of major doctrinal reforms in the Chinese defence forces towards late 1990s. The twin transformations (lianggezhuobian) were aimed to prepare the PLA to 'win local wars under high tech conditions' and facilitate transition from 'quantity to quality' based military. In 2004, President Hu Jintao laid down revised mandate for the military; 'to win local wars under informationised conditions'⁵.

However, the **Process** of radical reforms commenced only on President Xi Jinping assuming power as the 'Fifth Generation' leader in 2012-13. The sense of urgency could be attributed to the geopolitical considerations; US strategy of re-balancing from West to East, being a major factor. The underlying rationale behind the critical reforms were twofold; firstly, prepare the military for China's expanding global role and secondly, establish Party's firm control over the PLA through revamped CMC. The path breaking reform process kick started during the Third Plenum of 18th Central Committee of the CPC held in 2013, with the establishment of National Security Commission (NSC), headed by the President as Chairman. The on-going reform process is deep rooted and goes well beyond the structural changes. Its impact is expected to be wide and varied, having both regional and global implications. The paper undertakes a holistic overview of China's current military reforms phenomenon, with focus on salient imperatives, doctrinal dimensions, organizational restructuring and strategic ramifications.

Salient Imperatives

The on-going military reforms process is driven by multiple factors. Obama Doctrine of 'Pivot to Asia' enunciated in 2011 sought to deploy 60 per cent of US military assets in the Asia-Pacific region by the end of decade lent impetus to China's military reforms and modernization⁶. Even the Trump Administration has taken a tough stance against the Chinese growing assertiveness in South China Sea. Defence policy makers in Beijing are well aware of the prevailing wide gap in the military capabilities between the US and Chinese armed forces.

Chinese Communist leadership has laid down 2049 as the timeline for the nation to achieve status of 'developed socialist state'. During the 19th Party Congress held at Beijing in October 2017, President Xi Jinping unfolded his grand design, referring to China entering 'new era', advocating greater role in the world affairs⁷. To realise its global ambition, China has formulated a long-drawn strategy, with well-defined national objectives. These are stability, sovereignty and modernity i.e. sustained economic development.

'Stability' implies unchallenged authority of the CPC and its continuation in power. Absolute systematic control of the Communist Party over the military remains sine qua non. During the inaugural ceremony of newly constituted 'Theatre Commands' on 01 February 2016, President Xi had stated; "Centralisation of military was vital. All the theatre commands and PLA should unswervingly follow absolute leadership of the Communist Party and CMC to the letter"⁸. 'Sovereignty' besides external non-interference entails protecting core national interests which encompasses unification of Taiwan with the motherland and exercising control over South China Sea; perceived by Beijing, as its backyard. Lately, Arunachal Pradesh which China claims as South

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Tibet has also been included in the list of core interests. Diminution of US influence in Asia-Pacific and containing Japan are extended agendas of sovereignty. Nationalists Government gaining power in Taiwan also contributed towards accelerating the military reforms. For the Communist Party to remain in power, 'economic development' is the key. Hence, sustaining rapid pace of growth is not an option but imperative for the Chinese leadership. Strong central authority and peaceful periphery are considered essential prerequisites for prosperity and progress.

Doctrinal Dimensions

Concept of 'Comprehensive National Power' (CNP) which includes both hard and soft power is central to Chinese thinking. Acquisition of hard power is seen as a key component towards enhancing nation's CNP. As per President Xi Jinping, military reforms are the key to realisation of 'China Dream'⁹. This is also vital for the implementation of 'Belt-Road Initiative' and 'Maritime Silk Route' projects. In fact, Chinese military strategic culture lays great emphasis on exploiting propensity of things i.e. 'strategic configuration of power'-Shi to achieve one's objectives¹⁰. The core of strategy is not to fight the adversary, but to create disposition of forces so favourable that fighting is unnecessary, in consonance with Sun Zu's dictum, "to subdue enemy without fighting is the acme of skill." The on-going military reforms are oriented towards capacity building and force projection.

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The general trend of the Chinese strategic thinking is defined in the White Papers on National Defence issued periodically since 1998. The theme of 'Ninth White Paper' published in May 2015 titled 'China's Military Strategy', was 'active defence', with stress on winning 'local wars in conditions of modern technology'¹¹. The thrust was on expounding maritime interests, priority being accorded to navy and air force vis-à-vis the ground forces.

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 which includes IT, digital and artificial intelligence applications. It implies network centric environment and waging information operations to ensure battlefield domination. In essence, aim is to achieve complete security of PLA networks while totally paralyzing that of adversary's. This encompasses electronic warfare including computer networks, psychological warfare and deception to attack enemy's C4ISR systems, employing both hard and soft kills¹². Joint operations and integrated logistics are inherent components of the doctrine.

Thrust Areas

The main thrust of the on-going military reforms is on revamping the systems and structures across the board, at all levels i.e. political, strategic and operational. At the macro level, major changes that have been instituted are about deepening national defence through military reforms with Chinese Character, in keeping with the guidelines issued by the CMC. The focus is on civil-military integration to achieve unity of command, joint operations and optimization. The composition of the CMC itself has been balanced out to eliminate erstwhile ground forces bias. With the redefined role, CMC will now be responsible for formulating policies, controlling all the military assets and higher direction of war. As a sequel to the military reforms, PLA, People Armed Police Force (PAPF) and Theatre Commanders directly report to the CMC.

The erstwhile PLA Headquarters had four key Departments-General Staff, Political, Logistics and Armament. These have been reorganized and integrated into the restructured CMC, ensuring centralised control at the highest level. In the new set up, there are fifteen bodies. These include five departments and three commissions besides seven offices¹³.(diagram below refers). With the integrated Joint General Staff under the CMC, the decision-making process at the apex level has been streamlined. In the restructured CMC, President as the Commander in Chief now exercises direct operational control over the military through the 'Joint Operational Center'.

CENTRAL MILITARY COMMISSION (CMC)			
CMC General Office	CMC Joint General Staff Office	CMC Political Work Dept	CMC Logistics Dept
CMC Equipment Development Dept	CMC Training Management Dept	CMC Military Defence Mobilization Dept	CMC Discipline Inspection Commission
CMC Political and Law Commission	CMC Science and Technology Commission	CMC Strategic Planning Office	CMC Reform and Establishment Office
CMC International Military Cooperation Office	CMC Auditing Administration Office	CMC Administration Affairs Management Office	

Besides the existing PLA Navy (PLAN) and PLA Air Force (PLAAF) Headquarters, three new Service Headquarters have been created. These are 'Ground Forces Command' making it a service, Rocket Force-an upgrade of Second Artillery which operates both strategic as well as conventional missiles and 'Strategic Support Force' to control as also secure cyber and space assets. These structural additions will greatly facilitate prosecution of 'Informationised Local Wars'.

At the operational level, erstwhile 17 odd army, air force and naval commands have been reorganized into five 'theatre commands'; Eastern, Western, Central, Northern and Southern. With all the war fighting resources in each battle zone placed under one commander will ensure seamless synergy in deploying land, air, naval and strategic assets in a given theatre. In addition, 84 corps level organizations have been created including 13 operational corps, as well as training and logistics installations. 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.

Theatre Commands (TCs) – Deployment of Corps



Source: South China Morning Post & <https://googleweblight.com>

- **Eastern TC** - **Nanjing** (Taiwan, East China Sea) - **71, 72 & 73 Corps**
- **Southern TC** - **Guangzhou** (Vietnam and South China Sea) - **74 & 75 Corps**
- **Western TC** - **Chengdu** (India & Internal Security) - **76 & 77 Corps**
- **Northern TC** - **Shenyang** (Korean Peninsula & Russia) - **78, 79 & 80 Corps**
- **Central TC** - **Beijing** (Internal Security & Reserves) - **81, 82 & 83 Corps**

Capacity Building

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 Force¹⁴. 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.

In consonance with the strategic direction, KRAs for the services have been clearly defined. PLA Army (PLAA) is required to reorient from ‘theatre defence’ and adapt to precise ‘trans-theatre mobility’ missions. This entails elevating capability through restructuring in undertaking multi-dimensional, joint offensive and defensive operations. PLA Navy (PLAN) while gradually shifting its focus from ‘off shore waters defence’ to a combined strategy of ‘offshore

waters defence with open sea protection' is required to build a combined, multi-functional and efficient maritime force structures. It has been tasked to enhance capabilities for strategic deterrence, counter attack, joint operations at sea and provide comprehensive support. PLAFF in line with the strategic requirements to execute informationised operations is to build requisite structures by shifting focus from erstwhile territorial air defence to building air-space capabilities. It is also in the process of boosting strategic capabilities for early warning, air strike, information counter measures and force projection¹⁵.

The Rocket Force to be lean and effective will be adopting transformational measures through reliance on technology upgrades, enhance safety and reliability of missile systems-both nuclear and conventional, thus strengthening strategic deterrence. Strategic Support Force will deal with challenges in the outer space and secure the national space assets. Besides, it will also expedite the development of "Cyber Force" by enhancing situational awareness, cyber defence and security of national information networks. People's Armed Police Force (PAPF) is to undertake multiple and diversified tasks including contingency tasks under informationised conditions.

President Xi is the lead architect of the current phase of the path breaking reforms. His ideology which has been enshrined into the Party constitution during the 19th Party Congress also encompasses army rebuilding. It expects PLA to "Obey the Party, be able to win wars and maintain good conduct"¹⁶. The Supreme Commander has also pronounced three tenets for a strong military i.e. confidence, competence and commitment. Unlike his immediate predecessors, Xi has maintained close relations with the armed forces, obvious from his frequent appearances at PLA events and visits to remote military bases in various parts of the country. The process is being supported by requisite budgetary allocations; evident from the fact that 2017 defence budget of \$151 bn (actual spending estimated to be far higher) marks an increase of over 7 per cent¹⁷.

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Strategic Implications

The on-going China's military reforms as a phenomenon are possibly one of the biggest generational shake of its kind. Steered by President Xi as the Chairman of the CMC, these radical reforms are in line with the PRC's envisioned future role as a global player. Although the framework of reforms does not follow traditional Western model or template, yet these are in sync with the key trends in modern warfare. While the primary aim is to scale up national defence capability with Chinese characteristics, the process is geared to serve multiple objectives, with far reaching ramifications.

Domestically, predominance of the Party over PLA stands revalidated with centralization of power structure under the reorganized CMC. By ensuring implicit obedience and absolute loyalty of the armed forces through rejigged structures and reshuffles in the PLA hierarchy, President Xi has reinforced unity of command; most critical for any professional war fighting organization. Total control over the military has ensured that reformed PLA is resistant to the external influences. President Xi's emergence as an unquestionable leader with titles such as the 'paramount leader' and *Zhu Xi* (Chairman) puts him in the league of Mao and Deng. As per the Chinese public opinion, Mao made China great, Deng made it rich and Xi is striving to make it strong. Described as a person with 'an iron soul' by former statesman late Lee Kuan Yew, Xi is expected to pursue his stated vision relentlessly.

From the external perspective, exponential accretion in China's military capability is a cause of concern, particularly in PRC's neighbourhood. Beijing is already seen to be more assertive towards realising its national objectives. It will be rather naïve to believe that the 'Belt- Road' and 'Maritime Silk Route' projects are only driven by economic considerations.

In fact, these are path breaking initiatives to facilitate China to enlarge its strategic footprint, an essential pre-requisite for the global superpower in making. Communist leadership's repeated claims that China's rise will be peaceful, bely its actions on the ground. After all, 'a dragon remains a dragon'. As per Trump Administration's Security Strategy, China and Russia are its main rivals. As Washington is expected to play a greater role in protecting its interests besides assuaging the concerns of its allies and partners in the Asia-Pacific, the region is set to be the scene of intense inter- power rivalry.

Being India's biggest neighbour with disputed border, clashing geostrategic interests and complex relations, China's critical military reforms and rapid build-up of its military potential are stark realities which cannot be wished away. It is a matter of serious security concern. From the strategic perspective, India's current higher defence organizational structure is service specific, lacking integration and jointness. We are yet to formulate comprehensive National 'Limited War Doctrine'. Due to bureaucratic gridlocks, the procurement procedures of armament and equipment are rather tenuous, proving to be major impediment in modernization process. Current piecemeal and knee jerk approach to augment the defence capability needs to be replaced by long term national defence policy. Restructuring of the higher defence organization to meet the emerging security challenges is no more an option but an imperative.

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In operational terms, before the current reforms, it was PLA's Chengdu and Lanzhou Military Regions which were responsible for operations against India's Eastern and Northern borders. Post reorganization, it is now the Western Theatre with integrated Army, Air Force and Rocket Force assets, under a single commander that faces own four army commands (Northern, Western, Central and Eastern) and three air force commands (Western, Central and Eastern). This configuration will pose enormous coordination challenge in the event of a major conflict. Even during the 1962 War, China had constituted single Headquarters for controlling operations in Ladakh and Arunachal (then NEFA) while we fought isolated battles even within the theatre. Ironically, five and half decades on, we remain oblivious to this glaring short coming.

China has avoided major military confrontation since 1979. However, it has cleverly pursued the strategy of 'nibbling and negotiating' (yibiandanyibian *da*-talking and fighting concurrently). Doklam type stand-offs or confrontations in South Sea are part of this strategy and ought to be accepted as the new normal in dealing with PRC. Frequent incursions by the Chinese and hardening claims to Arunachal which it claims as South Tibet need to be seen in the light of the above realities. To realise Xi's 'China Dream', Beijing does not enjoy the luxury of indulging in a major conflict. Therefore, while probability of a major confrontation between the two giants remains low, local skirmishes cannot be ruled out, especially in the contentious locations. As limited engagements demand speedy deployment and a flatter logistics chain, inadequate infrastructure in the border areas stands out as a major constraint for India while the adversary has a distinct edge. This shortcoming needs to be addressed on the highest priority.

The revolutionary military reforms initiated under the current Chinese Communist leadership are indeed of monumental nature. With President Xi all set to be at the helm well beyond his stipulated two terms i.e. 2023, the military reforms process will continue till 2035, the timeline laid by him for PLA to 'emerge as a modern fighting force capable of winning wars'. Incidentally, today China faces no external threat and its main security concerns are internal. Continued maintenance of CPC's unchallenged hold over the system being prime concern of the Communist Leadership, PLA's identity as the 'military of the Party' remains sacrosanct. To further its aspiration as emerging superpower, China's Military reforms aim to enhance nation's war waging capacity and power projection capabilities.

The PLA transformation process, its magnitude notwithstanding, is on the fast track. It will take a few decades before the Chinese Armed Forces as a modern military can stake claims to be at par with the Western Armies. PLA undoubtedly is poised for a 'Great Leap'; in the process set to seriously disrupt the existing 'balance of power' dynamics. In the Chinese strategic lexicon, military strength is an important component of the CNP. The global strategic community will constantly struggle to decode the intent of Chinese Leadership; as to how it will deploy exponential accretion in country's military potential.

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Section IV

India's Extended Neighbourhood

India's Engagement with Middle Powers in East Asia

Shri Skand Ranjan Tayal, IFS (Retd)[@]

Abstract

India has 'Strategic Partnership' with all the important 'Middle Powers' in East Asia, sharing a strong commitment to the maintenance of peace and tranquillity in the region. However, the US dominated strategic balance in the Indo-Pacific, established since the end of the Cold War is now in a state of flux and there are uncertainties on the horizon. China's rise and its assertive pursuit of its expansive territorial claims has the potential of adversely affecting the stability of East Asia. The questions, regarding a continued robust US presence, are a matter of concern to India and the middle powers. In this context, it is incumbent upon India to engage in a comprehensive strategic dialogue with all its important partners and attempt to develop co-ordinated positions on issues of common concern. India is energetically engaging with the middle powers in the region and is giving focused attention, to increase the strategic and defence content of its relations with Japan, Republic of Korea, Vietnam, Australia and Indonesia. This policy serves well with the core interests of India, and the countries of the region.

Introduction

The Indo-Pacific region is emerging as an area of great power contestation and shifting security and economy equations, among the countries of East Asia. Since, the end of the Vietnam War in 1975 and political stabilisation of Indo-China in the 1980s, the East Asian region - stretching from India to Australia has witnessed remarkable peace and stability, coupled with unprecedented economic growth. India and the middle powers in East Asia need to be watchful, that this period of relative peace and tranquillity in the region continues, despite ongoing tectonic shifts in the existing power balance.

After the end of the Cold War and taking note of the rapid economic advancement of the 'Asian Tigers', India had turned its gaze towards the East and embarked on a 'Look East Policy' in the early 1990s. Closer political strategic and economic engagement with all the countries of East Asia followed, and has been further energised by the NDA government, when Prime Minister Narendra Modi pushed for an 'Act East Policy'.

India has pursued its multi-dimensional interaction with East Asian countries, both, bilaterally and under the auspices of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and its regional structures like the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), East Asia Summit, ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting+ etc. The relations have reached a status of maturity and predictability. While there is broad convergence of perceptions on strategic issues, India needs to have a continuous dialogue with the major countries of the region on how to deal with the current and emerging challenges.

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In the last three decades, East Asia has undergone a steady shift in strong economic partnerships. For all the countries of the region, China has replaced United States as the major foreign trade partner. Chinese State companies have emerged as major investors. China is now challenging the US dominated security architecture of the region. President Donald Trump's, 'America First' policy, has sown seeds of distrust among the leaders, as well as the strategic analysts of the region.

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A multipolar East Asia is critical for the continued peace and tranquillity in the region. There is also a need for the major countries of the region to be more articulate and adopt a co-ordinated approach towards contentious issues. It is disappointing that in the face of a potential conflagration on the Korean peninsula, the entire conversation is limited between US and China and other regional powers are excluded from playing any significant role in mitigating the differences and averting the danger of a nuclear conflict.

The concept of G-2 where US and China were to develop a joint approach on global issues, has now been abandoned, since the US has realized that China is a revisionist power as explicitly stated in the December 2017 National Security Strategy. China has been assiduously pushing the objective of a 'Unipolar Asia' and reduction in the US presence in the region. At the fourth Summit of Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building in Asia (CICA), in Shanghai in May 2014, President Xi Jinping, had proposed a new Asian security mechanism and said that, "the security problems in Asia should eventually be solved by Asians themselves through co-operation".

The ASEAN centric regional forums like East Asia Summit (EAS) and ARF have been ineffective in even seriously discussing major security and strategic issues. There is an urgent need for looking at possible alternatives or new arrangements.

India is preparing to be an anchor for peace, prosperity and stability in the wider Indo-Pacific region. Besides China, India's strategic partners in East Asia are Australia, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea (ROK), Malaysia, Singapore and Vietnam. India is systematically and purposefully strengthening the strategic content of the growing bilateral relations with all these countries.

India could foster an informal 'Coalition of Middle Powers' in East Asia, which could include countries like ROK, Japan, Indonesia, Vietnam and Australia. It could evolve as an effective platform to harmonize and articulate views in important matters, so that their voice is heard and discussions are not confined to the established global players.

The regional powers are following with interest the tentative steps towards consolidation of the Quad comprising of India, Japan, US and Australia. The Quad idea is being pushed primarily by Japan and the US; however, India is also getting more enthusiastic about it. But the continued participation of Australia would be doubtful, if there is a left-leaning government in Canberra in future.

There is extraordinary convergence in the strategic perceptions of India and Japan. In Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's vision, Japan's strategy would foster the confluence of a rapidly growing Asia and Africa, with a yet un-tapped potential for growth, as well as of the Pacific and Indian oceans. Both India and Japan are working assiduously to give spine to their 'Special Global Strategic Partnership'.

The Vision Statement 2025 adopted during PM Shinzo Abe's visit in 2017, lays the roadmap for the rapidly deepening bilateral security and economic cooperation. The signing of the Civil Nuclear agreement has great symbolism, as it overcomes a psychological barrier in the Japanese psyche, against co-operating with a non-signatory of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Japan has been making a significant contribution to India's technological modernisation and infrastructure development, through its investments and Official Development Assistance (ODA). Suzuki's investment in Maruti car, transformed India's automobile sector. Assistance for Delhi and other Metros has changed India's urban transport sector. The Rs. 100,000 crore Bullet Train project between Mumbai and Gandhinagar, may have invited criticism about wrong priorities, but would certainly trigger a technological leap, in all sectors of railway technology. Now, the ongoing investments and assistance for our rickety infrastructure including the industrial corridors have the potential to give a quantum jump to our manufacturing sector.

India and Japan are working together to develop a 24-nation maritime arrangement, enabling real-time sharing of data of all shipping operations, in the Indian Ocean and disputed waters off the Vietnam shores. The ongoing talks for India's possible purchase of amphibian 'Utility Seaplane Mark II' need to be speeded up. Its conclusion would mark a historic milestone as it could be the first export by Japan of finished defence equipment to any country. India's interest to acquire Sorya-class submarines also needs to be pursued vigorously.

It needs to be noted that the present muscular neighbourhood policy of Japan is closely identified with the perceptions and worldview of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. Whether there could again be a more cautious and inward looking foreign policy under a future Prime Minister, is a matter for the future, but needs to be assessed carefully.

There is strong bipartisan support in both India and ROK, for deepening the multi-sectoral ties. The relations rest on very strong foundation, based on the common heritage of Buddhism and a shared commitment to democracy and regional peace and stability. India and ROK have 'Special Strategic Partnership', but content of the relationship continues to be mainly economic. Korean Chaebols (Industrial Conglomerates) were effective in modernising India's consumer electronics and white goods sectors, after the economic liberalisation of the 1990s. Now the ground has been prepared for the second wave of Korean investments, which have plateaued at about \$ 5 billion. Korean companies still find the Indian investment environment challenging despite dramatic improvement in our 'Ease of Doing Business' rankings. Even before the recent spat with China on the Terminal High Altitude Area Defence (THAAD) issue, Korean conglomerates had been looking to diversify their investments which were largely concentrated in China. But the sobering fact is that diversion of Korean investments has been towards Vietnam and other East Asian countries and not towards India.

The two governments have identified the defence production sector as an area with vast potential. Technology transfer and our justified insistence on sizable value addition in India are issues which have delayed finalisation of the minesweeper deal and need to be overcome in a pragmatic way. Koreans need to appreciate that with India it can no longer be a simple 'Buyer-Seller' relationship. Korean companies will have to come to India as investors and co-producers in partnership with Indian companies. The agreement for production of Howitzers in India by Larsen and Toubro (L&T) in collaboration with Hanwha Techwin is the way to move forward.

Korea and Japan can play a major role in our 'Act East Policy', by participating in the connectivity projects in the North-East. Korean engineering companies need to be involved in building bridges and tunnels in Myanmar, where significant gaps remain for the completion of the 'India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway'. Japanese, Korean and Indian ODA could be mobilized to finance such projects to complete the much-delayed project.

On the negative side the uneasy relations between ROK and Japan—both our 'Special Strategic Partners', are a matter of concern to India. Also, ROK is a member of the 'Coffee Club' and has not yet supported

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India's candidature for a permanent seat in UNSC. Going forward, it needs to be noted that ROK is unlikely to take a stand in our favour on issues like Kashmir or border with China, even when India has taken a clear pro-ROK position on the North Korean nuclear program. It is understood, though, that ROK has advised the Korean companies to stay away from any projects in POK. It may be noted that ROK concentrates on its main foreign policy issue which is North Korea and avoids taking a clear stand on controversial issues like South China Sea.

In recent past, the political relations between India and Vietnam have steadily become stronger. Vietnam is an important regional partner in East Asia and the two countries closely cooperate in various regional forums such as - ASEAN, East Asia Summit, Mekong-Ganga Cooperation and ARF. Vietnam is also an important pillar in India's Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam (CMLV) partners, for development assistance.

PM Narendra Modi visited Vietnam in 2016 to mark the 10th year of Strategic Partnership. The Joint Commission at Foreign Minister level, and regular Foreign Office Consultation and Strategic Dialogue at Secretary level provide the roadmap for bilateral cooperation. There is also an annual Security Dialogue at Defence Secretary level.

India is among the top ten trading partners of Vietnam. Bilateral trade is hovering around US\$ 6 billion and the ambitious target set in 2013 to raise the trade to US\$ 15 billion by 2020 is unlikely to be met. India is the 27th largest investor in Vietnam with 111 projects and estimated investment of over US \$ 1 billion.

The Indian Armed Forces have been engaged with capacity building programs of the Vietnamese Armed Forces particularly the Navy. The focus areas have been training, repairs and maintenance support, study tours and ship visits. In the years ahead, the two countries could forge even closer ties by conducting joint military exercises and enhancing their surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities.

The visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given a timely boost to the relations. The defence dimension of the growing partnership was emphasised with a new US\$ 500 million line of credit for Vietnam, to facilitate deeper defence cooperation. India will also invest US\$ 5 million to set up a software park in Vietnam.

Vietnam is confident of joining regional Free Trade Agreements FTAs as it has a state controlled economy. Vietnam is a member of the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP). India and Vietnam need to work together as India negotiates its entry into the ASEAN led Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership. The concept of Mekong-Ganga cooperation is ambitious and has many challenges. It can take off only when the trilateral highway from India to Thailand through Myanmar is completed and becomes operational.

India supports Vietnam's claims in the South China Sea, which are based on United Nations Law Convention on the Laws of Sea (UNCLOS). Oil and Natural Gas Cooperation Limited (ONGC)-Videsh has not responded to China's warnings not to operate in off shore areas of Vietnam claimed by it. This decision signals a willingness of India to stand by Vietnam in its assertion of rights over its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

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The 2017 Australian Foreign Policy White Paper takes note of the power shifts in Indo-Pacific and states that "The future balance of power in the Indo-Pacific will largely depend on the actions of the US and China and major powers such as Japan and India." Australia and India have a common objective in keeping the Indian Ocean peaceful, considering the clouds of strategic competition initiated by China are clearly on the horizon. C Raja Mohan has proposed that Delhi, Tokyo and Canberra could build the first of multiple middle power coalitions for regional resilience.

Australian people and strategists have been wary of the growing Chinese power and seek diversification of Australia's regional relationships. In this context Australia-India security ties are getting stronger as indicated by an anti-submarine warfare exercise in the Bay of Bengal in 2016. Abe-Turnbull Joint Press statement of 14 January 2017 notes the similarities in their Indo-Pacific strategies and the shared importance of cooperation between Japan and Australia for engaging India. An annual trilateral dialogue has already been initiated between the Foreign Secretaries of the three countries. The priority areas of concern to the three countries could be regional security, intelligence sharing, sharing of maritime surveillance data and co-ordinating positions in regional forums like East Asia Summit.

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Australia is world's 12th largest economy and India's growing middle class market, a large services sector and shift to more resource intensive manufacturing sector, present new opportunities for economic partnerships. A strong bond is provided by half a million Australians of Indian origin, who are doing well both in professions and businesses. Also, there are 53,000 Indian students in Australia who are spread out in all corners of this vast country. The 'Strategic Partnership' established in 2009 has flourished. Civil nuclear cooperation agreement entered into force in 2015 and after initial hesitation, Australian Parliament approved export of Uranium to India in 2016.

Australia would, in future, be a key partner of India in the energy sector. By 2020, Australia is expected to overtake Qatar to be the largest exporter of LNG. Long-term sourcing of LNG from Australia would diversify India's current highly concentrated imports of gas from the Gulf. Trade in goods and services between India and Australia was US\$15.6 billion in 2016 with India's exports at US\$4.6 billion. A Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) is currently under negotiations.

India and Indonesia forged a 'Strategic Partnership' in 2005. Indonesia, having the largest Muslim population in the world with a secular polity, is very important as a face of liberal, inclusive and democratic country with an overwhelming Muslim majority. India and Indonesia have deep trade and economic ties. Indonesia is India's second largest trading partner in ASEAN with bilateral trade of over US 17 billion. India is the largest buyer of Indonesian palm oil and coal and exports petroleum products, pharmaceuticals and commercial vehicles to Indonesia. Indian companies have invested over US\$ 15 billion in Indonesia mainly in power, textiles, steel and consumer goods.

During Indonesian President Joko Widodo's visit to India in December 2016, a statement on Maritime Cooperation was signed. The two countries also commenced Strategic and Security Dialogue and are negotiating a new Comprehensive Defence Cooperation Agreement. India and Indonesia are working to expand their defence ties including military exercises and submarine training for Indonesia. The joint army exercise 'Garuda Shakti', has been held four times and a Maritime Exercise was first held in 2015. There is an expressed objective to boost defence industry collaboration, which could include shipbuilding and military aerospace programs. But any cooperation in this area is in a nascent stage and quick results are unlikely.

Indian and Indonesian Navies have been carrying out 'Coordinated Patrolling' (CORPAT), twice a year, since 2002 near the International Maritime Boundary Line, to contribute to the safety of that part of Indian Ocean Region. CORPAT reflects the shared concerns for a peaceful Indian Ocean and its 27th series was held in May 2017. India hopes to join the Malacca Straits Patrol Framework, which is currently being conducted by Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand since 2006.

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Indonesia's approach to the South China Sea disputes has moved from an active player in efforts to find a peaceful solution to the broader Chinese '9 Dash line' claims, to one focused on protecting its own claims around the Nantuna Islands. This shift has been caused by an increase in Chinese incursions around the Nantunas as well as Indonesia's hopes of attracting massive Chinese investments in its infrastructure.

India's robust engagement with middle powers of Indo-Pacific region, would send a strong signal for constructing, (along with its strategic partners), a region based architecture, where there is adherence to rules that would deliver lasting peace and prosperity, where the rights of all the states are respected, and where all the countries are free to pursue their own chosen path of socio-economic development. The middle powers of the Indo-Pacific region have a remarkable convergence in their strategic perceptions and are in favour of a continued pro-active presence of the United States in East Asia.

India is perceived as a benign power and the energetic outreach of the Modi Government has ushered an era of assertive dynamism in its foreign policy. It is expected that India would continue on this path and strive to add more strategic content in its partnerships with the middle powers in East Asia. This policy would serve well the core interests of India, middle powers as well as the other countries of the region.

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The Security Scenario in West Asia: Challenges and Opportunities for India

Shri Talmiz Ahmad, IFS (Retd)[@]

Abstract

West Asia is in the throes of acute insecurity and disorder, marked by raging conflicts that have caused state breakdown and severe humanitarian crises, burgeoning threats from sectarian divides and extremist violence, doctrinal and strategic competitions between the regional Islamic giants, Saudi Arabia and Iran, that threaten to deteriorate into direct war, and the breakup of the two principal regional institutions – the Arab League and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). The Trump administration has affiliated itself strongly with regional powers Saudi Arabia and Israel, and is encouraging a robust “Sunni” alliance against Iran, and the erosion of Iran’s regional influence through US withdrawal from the nuclear agreement, imposition of new sanctions on the Islamic Republic, and threats of regime change through fomenting internal disorder and possibly even war in bastions of its influence – Syria and Lebanon.

The paper notes that this scenario has grave implications for India’s interests: India’s energy security, economic well-being, its strategic linkages with Afghanistan and Central Asia, and the welfare of its eight million-strong community in the GCC countries, all of these are crucially dependent on a secure and stable West Asia. The paper argues that the preservation of India’s interests demands that, in a departure from its traditional posture, India lead a diplomatic initiative to promote confidence-building measures and dialogue between the Kingdom and the Islamic Republic. Some aspects of this initiative are discussed in the paper.

Introduction

Since the momentous events of 1979 – the Islamic Revolution in Iran, the occupation of Haram Sharif in Mecca, the occupation of the US embassy in Tehran, and finally the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan – West Asia has been in the grip of conflict and disorder. The 1980s saw two wars, the “global jihad” in Afghanistan and the Iran-Iraq war. While the 1990s began with the first Gulf War, the Gulf then experienced the consolidation of US military presence, its sanctions-inspections regime, no-fly zones in Iraq, and the “dual containment” of Iraq and Iran, through the decade.

The first decade of the new century began with the 9/11 attacks and the unprovoked assault on Iraq, while the second decade began with the promise of the Arab Spring and descended into destructive civil conflicts in Syria, Libya and Yemen. The Afghan war both anointed and gave credibility to transnational jihad in the shape of Al Qaeda, which in the 1990s opened several fronts in its confrontation against the “far enemy”, culminating in the attack on the US homeland on 9/11. Following this, the US war on Iraq spawned jihad in the country, led by the Afghan war veteran Abu Musab al Zarqawi, whose movement culminated in the setting up of the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI) that evolved into the Islamic

The US war on Iraq spawned jihad in the country, led by the Afghan war veteran Abu Musab al Zarqawi, whose movement culminated in the setting up of the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI) that evolved into the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) under the leadership of the Iraqi religious scholar, Abu Bakr al Baghdadi.

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State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) under the leadership of the Iraqi religious scholar, Abu Bakr al Baghdadi.

With quick victories over the under-manned and demoralised Iraqi army, al Baghdadi's forces took Mosul in June 2014 and declared the caliphate of the "Islamic State" (IS). With capture of more territory in Syria, the IS emerged as a proto-state, with functioning government structures, armed forces numbering about 100,000, and assured financial resources of millions of dollars through sales of oil, ransom and sale of artefacts.

The IS not only allured youth to its cadres from across West Asia, Central, South and Southeast Asia, and even Europe, it also obtained backing from several existing regional jihadi organisations, whose splinter groups declared their allegiance to the caliphate. These included factions from the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, the Afghan Taliban, Al Shabaab in Somalia, and Boko Haram in Nigeria. The IS itself also penetrated the conflict zones in Yemen and Libya.

External interventions

The ongoing conflicts and breakdown of state order also opened the doors for regional and extra-regional powers to intervene in the wars to mold them in favour of their own interests. Saudi Arabia is playing a central role in this regard.

The kingdom viewed the expansion of Iranian influence in West Asia with alarm: from Riyadh, it appeared that Iran was the dominant power in large parts of West Asia. This was mainly on account of its ability to mobilise support through its links with Shia entities in different countries – Syria, Lebanon, Yemen and even neighbouring Bahrain, which had a Shia majority population. Now, with the US-sponsored "empowerment" of the majority Shia population in Iraq after the US invasion and regime change in 2003, the kingdom agreed with the Jordanian monarch, King Abdullah II, and the Egyptian leader, Hosni Mubarak, that a "Shia crescent" was now in place in West Asia.

Saudi Arabia saw this as an "existential threat", which became more acute with the fall of its strategic partner, Mubarak in Egypt in 2011, in the wake of the Arab Spring, and the popular demand for reform in Bahrain, which if conceded would have inevitably empowered the Shia majority. The kingdom responded to these strategic and sectarian threats with the decision to confront Iran in the theatres of its influence.

It began with its military intervention in Bahrain in March 2011 to end the agitation for reform, followed by its decision to seek regime change in Syria, Iran's long-standing ally in the region. The kingdom calculated that a pro-Saudi regime in Damascus would re-establish the regional balance of power vis-à-vis Iran and would also end Iranian support for the Hezbollah in Lebanon. In the absence of US air presence to bomb the Assad regime out of existence, Saudi Arabia, in association with Turkey and Qatar, mobilised Salafi militia against the Syrian government headed by Bashar al Assad. Iran countered by providing Assad with Hezbollah militia and elements from its own Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC). However, the ground situation tilted firmly in favour of the Assad regime only when Russia entered the war in September 2015, with its air force, armour and intelligence support. From end-2016, with the Assad regime now secure, Russia has initiated a peace process that seeks to bring together Syria's numerous opposition factions to work on a new constitution to be followed by free elections. Russia rejects the opposition demand that Assad step down before the elections, arguing that the elections should decide the Syria's new leadership.

Saudi Arabia, in association with Turkey and Qatar, mobilised Salafi militia against the Syrian government headed by Bashar al Assad. Iran countered by providing Assad with Hezbollah militia and elements from its own Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC). However, the ground situation tilted firmly in favour of the Assad regime only when Russia entered the war in September 2015.

The Russia-led peace initiative has been boosted by Turkey abandoning the anti-Assad coalition. Turkey has viewed with deepening concern the territorial expansion of the Syrian Kurds, so that they controlled the entire band of territory across the Syria-Turkey border, which they described as their “Rojava” (western homeland). Turkey sent its troops up to 50 km inside Syria to break the contiguity of the Kurdish homeland. Then, to ensure that its interests are safeguarded in Syria, it has joined Russia and Iran in the “Astana process” that is leading the peace initiative.

The Trump administration has given up Obama’s hands-off West Asia policy: its military have trained the Iraqi national army, while its special forces joined the latter in the fight against the IS, which led to the eviction of IS militants from Mosul late-2017. In Syria US forces set up and trained the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), made up largely of Kurdish fighters, which have evicted the IS militia from its “capital” in Raqqa.

Saudi Arabia has also entered the Yemen conflict zone, opening up one more front in its proxy war against Iran. Here, in Saudi eyes, the military success of the Houthis, who belong to the Shia Zaydi community, in taking Sanaa and then moving south to Aden was another sectarian achievement of Iran that further consolidated the Shia crescent that was encircling the kingdom. The Saudi Air Force began the bombardment of Yemen from March 2015, while its ground forces, in alliance with some regional Arab armies, began to clear Houthi presence from the south.

Though the Saudi-led coalition now controls large parts of Yemen, the principal cities like Sanaa, Taiz and Hodeidah are still under Houthi control. The two-year war seems to have ground to a stalemate, as has the UN-sponsored peace process, with several million Yemenis experiencing a serious humanitarian crisis.

Trump visited Riyadh in May 2017 on his first foreign trip and articulated what amounts to a “Trump Doctrine” for West Asia. It affirms visceral hostility for Iran and full support for Saudi Arabia and the “Sunni” military alliance led by it. It also envisages Israel and Saudi Arabia working together against Iran and in the promotion of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

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Again, in response to domestic pressure from his Christian evangelist supporters and right-wing Jewish donors, Trump has complicated the regional scenario by declaring that the US recognises Jerusalem as Israel’s capital and will move its embassy to the disputed city, though no date has been announced. Trump has also declared his hostility towards Iran by threatening US withdrawal from the nuclear agreement, and threatening imposition of fresh sanctions.

Trump’s fulsome backing has encouraged the kingdom to be more belligerent towards Iran, even describing recent Houthi missile attacks on Saudi targets as an act of war by Iran. Saudi Arabia is also benefiting from the backing it enjoys from Washington by coercing Qatar through comprehensive sanctions to change what it sees as Qatar’s pro-Iran and pro-Muslim Brotherhood positions. These have had the effect of encouraging Turkey and Iran to spring to Qatar’s assistance, thus putting in place a new regional alliance system in West Asia. The region now seems dangerously poised for an escalation of conflict that could embrace the whole region.

India-West Asia relations

India’s ties with West Asia go back several millennia, defined by maritime, commercial, religious, intellectual and philosophical exchanges that have shaped a shared cultural ethos. These ties have remained uninterrupted over the centuries, with India continuing to provide foodstuffs, textiles and items for gracious living. Following independence, India’s political ties in the Cold War were mainly with the revolutionary Arab regimes, while the traditional monarchies

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were part of the US-led alliance and thus had close security and military ties with Pakistan, and, in association with the US, backed Pakistan on the Kashmir issue and in the 1965 and 1971 wars.

However, with the oil boom and the associated developmental activity in the oil-producing countries, there was a massive demand for Indian human resources; so, by 1990 Indians had emerged as the preferred expatriate community in the Gulf monarchies. This pattern has continued, and now Indians number eight million in the six countries of the GCC and are the largest expatriate community in every country. They also constitute the majority in three countries – the UAE, Qatar and Bahrain. The Indian community remits about \$ 35 billion annually to the mother nation. Again, as India began to achieve high growth rates, it became a major importer of oil from the Gulf, which now provides about 80 per cent of its imports.

Political ties with the Gulf monarchies began to change after the events of 9/11, when Saudi Arabia saw the importance of India as energy and economic partner and an important associate in its quest to diversify its engagements to include non-western nations. The first important interaction after several years of political distance took place in January 2001, when Indian external affairs minister Jaswant Singh came to Riyadh. Saudi foreign minister Prince Saud Al Faisal, then affirmed the importance, the kingdom attached to its ties with India, further, asserting that these ties were valuable in themselves and would not be affected by ties the kingdom had with any other country, a clear reference to its relations with Pakistan.

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Following this, from 2006-08, India hosted the head of state or government from every GCC country. They included King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz of Saudi Arabia, who was chief guest at India's Republic Day celebrations in January 2006 and signed the New Delhi Declaration pledging a "strategic energy partnership" between the two countries. The two countries then set up a "strategic partnership" during the visit of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to Riyadh in February 2010, which provided for strengthening of political, security, defence and intelligence cooperation.

Modi's West Asia engagement

Prime Minister Narendra Modi imparted a new vigour, content and direction to India's relations with West Asia with his visits to four countries – the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Iran and Qatar – between August 2015 and June 2016. These visits were followed by two visits to India by the crown prince of Abu Dhabi and de facto ruler of the UAE, Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed, in February 2016 and later in January 2017, as chief guest on India's Republic Day.

The joint statements issued at the end of all these visits convey the deep appreciation of the countries for their historic ties with India and their respect for India's political and economic achievements. They also call on the two sides to work together in frontier areas, such as: space, nuclear technology, electronics, bio- and nano-technology, healthcare and food security.

All of them speak of putting in place a "strategic partnership" with India and envisage a role for India in promoting regional peace, stability and security and their joint commitment to combatting terrorism. The UAE statement of 2015 speaks of the two countries' "common ideals and convergent interests" and their shared endeavour to realise "the vision of an Asian Century". The UAE statement of 2017 welcomes the signing of the "Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Agreement" during the visit, highlighting the importance of defence, security and maritime cooperation.

In the statement with Saudi Arabia, the two countries recognise “the close inter-linkage of the stability and security of the Gulf region and the Indian sub-continent and the need for maintaining a secure and peaceful environment for the development of the countries of the region”. It also notes the responsibility of the two countries “for promoting peace, stability and security in the region and the world”. In the Qatar statement, the two leaders agree on promoting defence cooperation and on the need to work together on maritime security and adopt a “comprehensive approach” to combat terrorism.

The Iran statement anchors the strategic partnership of the two countries on “multi-modal connectivity within and across their region” and their “common interests” relating to maritime trade and security. It also speaks of the two countries having a “stake in the stability of the region” and the importance of their cooperation in relation to maritime trade and security and against terrorism and violent extremism.

In the joint article penned by Prime Minister Modi and Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed that appeared in the UAE and Indian media on 26 January 2017, the two leaders said:

“We [PM Modi and Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed] are using the springboard of our friendship to give our partnership a bold new vision that goes beyond our bilateral relations. We will contribute to a regional order that reflects our shared interest in stability, prosperity and tolerance. That is the promise we have made to each other”.

An Indian diplomatic initiative in West Asia

Prime Minister Modi’s interactions with the principal countries of West Asia have affirmed the acceptance of India as a credible player in the security scenario of the troubled region and have prepared a fertile soil for an initiative to promote regional peace and stability. This has become particularly urgent since India has crucial and abiding stakes in West Asia stability in terms of its energy security, its substantial economic interests, its logistical connectivity projects through Iran, and the safety and welfare of its community. Through behind-the-scenes diplomacy the Indian effort will be to promote confidence between the two estranged neighbours and then encourage dialogue between them.

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This will have to begin with ensuring that the principal participants eliminate references to sectarian identity and the sectarian divide from their discourse. After this, the initiative will need to encourage the two Islamic giants to pursue an accommodative approach in the three theatres of contention – Syria, Yemen and Iraq.

In Yemen, Saudi Arabia would be urged to accept the Houthis as part of the national political and economic order so that a viable national unity government can be set up. Iran on its part would need to accept that the kingdom has legitimate interests in Yemen, given that it shares a 1400-km border with it. Given its limited strategic interests in Yemen, Iran is likely to accept this position. Both countries would then need to cooperate in Yemen to provide relief and humanitarian assistance and re-build the damaged infrastructure and civic life. Otherwise, the country will sink further into fratricidal conflict and, as the bastion of extremist elements, endanger the stability of the whole region.

In Syria, Iran would have to accept the Astana/ Geneva peace process, the constitutional shaping of a federal order in the country and the possible departure of Bashar al Assad after a reasonable transition period, followed by free elections. Given the age-old Syria-Iran strategic partnership, and the interests of Russia and Turkey in the country, Saudi Arabia will have to accept that it will have to work with these four countries to stabilise Syria.

India's Extended Neighbourhood

In Iraq, the sponsors of the peace initiative will urge Iran to accept the systematic dilution of the sectarian discourse and its replacement by a genuinely composite political order by the Haidar Al-Abadi government. This will involve the dismantling of the powerful Shia militia and the gradual strengthening of the national army. Iran will be persuaded to note that a united Iraq with a federal system will be more accommodative of the Iraqi Kurds and should help to dilute demands for a sovereign Kurdish state, which is a matter of deep concern for Iran. Both Saudi Arabia and Iran will need to recognise that Iraq is a multi-ethnic and multi-confessional society and its stability lies in the accommodation of these diverse identity groups, with minimum of outside interference.

All these are daunting challenges and will require a patient and sustained engagement by India at diplomatic and political levels. The effort will need the mobilisation of a variety of approaches and platforms. These could include preparatory Track 2 or 1.5 interactions to identify the problem areas. These could be supported by wide-ranging consultations with regional and extra-regional players.

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Once contentious issues have been identified and some ideas developed on the way forward, platforms would be set up for dialogue and consultations between the two principal nations. These interactions could initially be informal or non-face-to-face to avoid acrimony and mudslinging in the early stages and later get formalised and institutionalised as common positions are developed on matters of mutual concern.

Speaking at the Raisina Dialogue two years ago, then Indian foreign secretary Dr S Jaishankar had highlighted the importance of India's ties with West Asia and had affirmed that India would be pro-actively involved in regional matters; he had said:

“[West Asia] also holds possibilities of building on the (energy) inter-dependence generated by market forces that is likely to make connectivity more sustainable. The point, however, that I wish to emphasize is that we are no longer content to be passive recipients of outcomes. The combination of human and energy connectivity offers immense opportunities, magnified by the prospect that this region can serve as a bridge to nations further beyond. Our growing capabilities and stronger national branding, in fact, makes us a credible partner. We ourselves also have a more nuanced view of recent developments in the region. The interplay among these nations actually offers us new avenues of cooperation”.

Clearly, India has the will, motivation and capacity to lead the initiative and promote stability in West Asia.

Changing Perspective on Eurasia and India-Russia Relations

Prof. Nirmala Joshi @

Abstract

After the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991, the vast Eurasian land mass was open. It began to undergo fundamental shifts. Its geopolitical location and wealth of natural resources attracted major regional powers, thereby, changing the Eurasian geopolitical environment. The changes at the regional level brought about new alignments/partnerships. At the same time the rise of non-traditional threats in Afghanistan and Eurasia added a new dimension to the shifting landscape. In the process the friendly and cordial ties between India and Russia also witnessed changes. The shared geological and strategic considerations which augured well for the relations had been affected. The shared geopolitical space had shrunk. New actors the United States of America and China have emerged on the Eurasian landscape. Secondly, from the security perspective the need for a multilateral approach was keenly felt, as the challenges necessitated such an approach. The focus on a multilateral approach diluted the relationship. India was one of the countries, and till now not a member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, a multilateral grouping of the region. The article analyses these issues and explores the future possibilities.

After the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1991 watershed geopolitical shift began occurring in the global order. It was a shift from Europe to Asia particularly to the huge Eurasian landmass. In the evolving regional dynamics, British geographer Halford Mackinder's theory of geopolitics was revisited and gained a new vigour and currency. According to Mackinder's thesis, Eurasia was the 'Heartlands' and "Pivot of History". As is well-known Eurasia attracted world attention because of its geostrategic location flanking two potential powers, the Russian Federation and the Peoples Republic of China, and the abundance of natural resources. Today geopolitics is shaping the future of nations as well as that of the world order. In the process, the framework for analysing a nation's interest has also changed. It is primarily a change from the previous way of thinking of a zero-sum game to a new attitude of national interest and cooperation.

A critical factor in the evolving regional matrix was the widening of the concept of security to include non-traditional threats such as religious extremism, international terrorism and aggressive nationalism. Non-traditional threats are transnational in character and carried out by non-state actors. These are powerful forces and have the capacity to challenge a nation's integrity as well as international stability and security. With the rise of non-traditional threats Afghanistan emerged as the epicenter of these dangerous forces under the Taliban rule.

However, the presence of North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) forces in Afghanistan fundamentally altered the geopolitical map of Eurasia. The access of coalition forces to base facilities in Central Asia and other areas of cooperation was perceived by both Russia and China with concern and apprehension. After over a decade the bulk of NATO forces have withdrawn without achieving their objective. Despite the withdrawal of its military presence from Afghanistan, Western geopolitical interests in the region have not decreased, while insurgency is resurgent and

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confident. The recent enunciation of American policy towards Afghanistan and South Asia by President Donald Trump amply indicates its interests.

In the swift shifts in the region, the role of multilateralism assumed high significance especially for Russia and China. This was the beginning of an emerging partnership between the two former rivals, at times even bitter foes. This commonality led to the formation of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in 2001. The SCO is a multilateral regional grouping comprising of countries of the region. In the last decade, several regional groupings have appeared on the Eurasian landscape, though these are independent initiatives of Russia and China. Both the powers are aware of the tremendous significance of Eurasia in their respective foreign policy goals. Nevertheless, today Russian-Chinese partnership is a strong factor to reckon with in Eurasian politics.

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Amidst these geopolitical shifts in Eurasia, India's relations with Russia have come under strain. The question is, to what extent will the shifts impinge on India- Russia relationship? Can the two countries find a new basis to create the past friendly and cordial relationship? Or will the ties continue to remain on the plateau?

Changing Perspectives on Eurasia

By the turn of the century major regional actors had established their presence in the region. The scramble to control the energy resources of Central Asia had already begun. The aim of laying export pipeline infrastructure was, not only to secure this vital resource, but also to expand the strategic leverage of the involved nations. As a consequence, Eurasia emerged as the arena for competition for the external actors and is witnessing an interplay of interests.

In the midst of this interplay Russia's pivot to Asia or eastward in its foreign policy began to take shape. In fact, throughout its history a recurrent theme for debate among thinkers, scholars, diplomats etc. was "where does Russia's destiny lie? Did it lay with Europe or Asia or both?" In the process, diverse views and explanations emerged. In the present context Russia's pivot to Asia had strong geopolitical underpinnings. It was President Vladimir Putin who gave a decisive thrust to the Eurasian vector of its policy. Under his Presidency the major focus was, on restoring Russian position in the post-Soviet space particularly in Central Asian Republics (CARs). The CARs were crucial in Russia's emergence as a centre/pole in a multi polar world. The following statement by former Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov makes this amply clear. In his view "Considering Russia's history, intellectual resources, huge size, natural resources and finally the level of development of its Armed Forces this country will not agree to the status of a 'State that is led'."¹

Russia's turn to Eurasia often elicited two diverse interpretations. Dr. Alexander Lukin, a well-known Russian scholar, opines that the "turn to Eurasia or 'Pivot to Asia' was a response not to a worsening of relations with the West, but two purely objective challenges ... the need to establish relations with a region that is gradually becoming the center of world economic and politics, and to Russia's strategic goal of developing its Siberian and Far Eastern region".² On the other hand an equally well-known American analyst of Eurasian affairs Stephen Blank wrote "... this American policy of defending the independence, integrity and security of these States extends the long established vital geostrategic interests of the US in forestalling the rise of any Eurasian empire".³

On the other hand, Russia's emphasis on its Eurasian vector coincided with China's westward turn towards Eurasia. In Chinese strategic thinking utmost importance is accorded to the periphery. China is a huge land mass sharing land boundaries with several countries. Its western periphery has always been highly vulnerable that includes its restive

province of Xinjiang. The spread of extremism from Afghanistan to Central Asia could not but be a source of concern to China in view of the Uyghur insurgency. Besides China is of the view that the Western military presence in Central Asia especially the Manas air base in Kyrgyzstan was an attempt to encircle its periphery, for Manas is a mere 200 km. from the Chinese border. This shared perception of vital geopolitical and strategic interests and the commonality of approaches to the issues resulted in a strong partnership. Developments such as the sanctions imposed by the West in the wake of the incorporation of Crimea into the Russian Federation and the Chinese Dream “put forward by President Xi Jinping aimed to utilize the markets on its western side to counter the Asia Rebalance strategy of the US on its eastern flank. The Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB) an overland connectivity aims to link Xinjiang with Central Asian countries and further to Europe. President Xi Jinping is pursuing his Chinese Dreams with vigour, which further cemented the partnership.

Subsequently President Putin broadened the concept of Eurasia by putting forward the idea of ‘Greater Eurasia’, unlike the earlier one which included the states of post-Soviet space. This idea was initiated at the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum in 2016. He proposed a new vision for cooperation in Eurasia, a ‘great Eurasian partnership’, most commonly known as Greater Eurasia. “This would involve a network of bilateral; and multilateral trade agreements between the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), China, India, Pakistan, Iran, members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and other interested countries ...”²⁴ Similarly the crux of Chinese perception of Greater Eurasian idea is firmly anchored in its flagship projects; Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) with two prongs SREB in combination with its Maritime Silk Road (MSR). A Chinese scholar Tingyi Wang of the Tsinghua University explained that “the Chinese interests are driven by the vision of a ‘greater Eurasian idea’ that calls for strengthening economic and cultural integration across the whole swathe of territory...”²⁵ In short the idea of ‘Greater Eurasia’ implied “Asia for the Asians”.

A noticeable development is that the Eurasian security landscape underwent a sea change with the rise of non-traditional threats. All the countries in the region are multi-ethnic, multi-religious and pluralist societies. All have been afflicted with the scourge of religious extremism, terrorism and drug trafficking. Some of the pernicious groups/organizations in the region are Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), East Turkistan Liberation Movement (ETLM), East Turkistan Islamic Movement and Chechen insurgency. The emergence of Federal Area of Tribal Administration (FATA) in Pakistan as the hub of insurgency providing safe havens, training in arms and equipment and imparting religious education in theological seminaries has encouraged insurgency which is now difficult to control. These forces have undoubtedly changed the character of Eurasia; from a placid to one of turmoil. The countries are focusing on framing policies to counter them. In the process developmental activity, economic and political reforms are stymied.

A noticeable development is that the Eurasian security landscape underwent a sea change with the rise of non-traditional threats. All the countries in the region are multi-ethnic, multi-religious and pluralist societies. All have been afflicted with the scourge of religious extremism, terrorism and drug trafficking.

The withdrawal of western coalition forces from Afghanistan instilled a new confidence among the insurgents and they are now in a resurgent mode. What has complicated further the Eurasian security landscape is the growing presence of the Islamic State (IS) or Daesh a highly dangerous group with aspiration of establishing an Islamic Caliphate. It is believed that the IMU, initially affiliated with the Taliban, is now with the IS. The IMU is the most feared group in Central Asia. It is not easy to completely defeat insurgency, for it is an ideological struggle between modern democracy and secular state and the Islamic order. These forces may not be powerful enough to overthrow existing regimes, but have the capacity to destabilize a country. In all likelihood insurgency will continue to simmer. Tackling insurgency requires a concerted and a collaborative approach in an attempt to marginalise insurgency.

India's Extended Neighbourhood

Several multi regional groupings have emerged such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Russia has initiated the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), Russia-India-China (RIC) Forum, Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa (BRICS) and now the idea of Greater Eurasia, China has launched Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB) and Maritime Silk Route (MSR), the defining feature of Chinese foreign policy. It needs to be noted that both Russia and China are aspiring to emerge as a centre/pole in a multi polar world. The respective projects aim to gain strategic leverage. What is evident at this juncture is an alignment of interests between Russia, China and Pakistan as the two leading Eurasian powers need each other's support and cooperation in order to counter Western attempts at isolating them. The Pakistan connection is believed to be necessary to control the extremist forces. On the other hand, a new alignment between Afghanistan, India and the US is emerging in an attempt to control the extremist forces in the interest of peace and stability in Afghanistan. This will have a salutary impact on the region, if the objective is fulfilled. For them the Central Asian space is crucial. The projects are being pursued vigorously by Russia and China largely on a bilateral basis rather than at the regional level. Consequently, the multilateralism that has emerged is not cohesive, because countries tend to view multilateralism through the prism of national interest. Will the nature of multilateral groupings that has emerged be able to achieve their objectives?

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India Russia Relations in a Changing Eurasia

After the break-up of the Soviet Union and the rapid geopolitical changes in the Eurasian land mass, India's ties with Russia also underwent a change. During the Soviet, period the bedrock of their ties lay in a mutually compatible strategic and geopolitical interests. For instance, Sino-Soviet acrimony coincided with Sino-Indian adversarial relations after the border war of 1962. Similarly, India's troubled relations with Pakistan coincided with a down turn in their relations. Pakistan's role in facilitating an axis between the US and China negatively affected their relationship. By the turn of the century the global order had also undergone a change. The bipolar world order of a zero-sum game accorded priority to national interests. As mentioned new actors like the US and China had already established not only their presence, but new alignments were also taking shape.

Consequently, the geopolitical basis of the relationship also underwent a change. The geopolitical space between India and Russia had shrunk. Russia's growing all round ties with China and its overtures of friendship towards Pakistan further added strains in the ties. Given the changed environment of Eurasia and the nature of threats, Russian policy began to focus on a multilateral approach. Such an approach diluted the relations, for India was one of the countries in Eurasia. Russia and China had launched the SCO, a multilateral regional grouping of which India was not a member. In 2003 Russia initiated the CSTO comprising of countries belonging to the post-Soviet space. However, in the emerging multilateralism Russian and Chinese interests coincided a great deal. For the present, the dictum of Asia for the Asians is the core of their partnership. As noted earlier their visions for Asia and strategic goals differ considerably. At the same time, there has been active diplomatic engagement between Russia and Pakistan. In this regard Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov's Islamabad visit in April 2007, first by a Russian Prime Minister is a milestone. Apart from high level diplomatic exchanges, Russia was able to make inroads in Pakistan's economic and defence sectors. In 2015 Russia agreed to sell four MI 35 attack helicopters. A defence analyst Ruslan Pukhov said "...Delhi's attempt to diversify its defence supplies of new weapons, increasingly from Western countries, is making Russia flinch Russia can also diversify its military technical ties by means of a rapprochement with Pakistan".⁶ However, Russia surprised India by

opposing an Indian move seeking to censure Pakistan in view of its inaction against terror groups Lashkar-e-Toiba and Jammāt-ud-Dawa at an anti-terror financing meet in Brisbane.⁷

Moreover, India’s growing strategic and defence ties with the US added new strains on the relationship more so when Russia’s own relations with the West had suffered a major setback. President Donald Trump’s enunciated a new policy on Afghanistan and South Asia in a speech in August 2017, hinted at a renewed focus on the region. In the new strategy on Afghanistan the US was keen to elicit the cooperation of India.

In the early years of the last decade India and Russia differed on their perception of Central Asia. Russia viewed Central Asia as its “Near Abroad” or zone of special interest, while for India it was its extended neighbourhood. After the broadening of India’s strategic vision, Central Asia came to occupy a key position in its foreign policy. On this issue Russia differed with India and did not wish India to play an enhanced role in the region.

Another major area of disagreement was on the strategy on non-traditional threats. Initially the Indian and Russian approaches were similar; they both shared the perception that there was no good or bad Taliban. Hence involving them or even discussing the issue of stability of Afghanistan. Today the Russian perception is close to that of China and Pakistan. The following statement by Zamir Kabulov President Putin’s envoy to Afghanistan clearly demonstrates this shift. Kabulov accepted that Russian and Taliban interests objectively coincided with each other to fight the IS.⁸ However, of late IS being is seen as a bigger threat to Russia, than the Taliban, which according to Kabulov has been mostly behaving like a ‘national liberation movement’ opposing foreign occupation of Afghanistan.⁹ This expectation on the part of Russia is flawed. These divergences in their strategic thinking have undoubtedly impinged on India Russia relations. At the same time given the past record of friendly and cordial ties both the countries are striving hard to rejuvenate their ties. After all, if India’s strategic vision has broadened considerably, it is because of its growing national power – economic development, militancy and strategic consolidation, its knowledge industries – all added to its rising international profile. From Indian perspective relations with Russia should occupy a priority position.

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It should be noted that Russian-Chinese partnership should not be taken for granted. It is primarily tactical in nature. Russia and China are two huge potential land powers located on the Eurasian land mass. They are contiguous sharing a lengthy land boundary. Historically both have been expansionist empires and have witnessed periods of accommodation as well as of rivalry. It is possible to conjecture at this juncture, that the partnership will continue in view of the commonality of their national interests. What is evident is that the competitive element is also surfacing. Hence as in the past their will be periods of accommodation as well as that of rivalry. Besides, Russia would not like to be considered as a ‘junior partner’ of China. Similarly, Russia’s overtures to Pakistan have limited objectives; ideologically both are diverse.

India’s growing ties with the US should not be viewed as a zero-sum game. Similarly, India should not view Russia-China partnership in a similar framework. India is also aspiring to play a leading role in Asia. Its moorings are in the Eurasian region. Its interests are basically regional in nature. Its aim is to strengthen democratic institutions, secularism and assist economic development of Afghanistan and the CARs. Consequently, aligning completely with one leading power – the US – will not be helpful in fulfilling its aspirations. There are, however, differences of approach to non-traditional threats. In the final analysis, the goal of both countries is stability, peace and security in Afghanistan and the region.

India's Extended Neighbourhood

In the recent past Russian attitude to Central Asia is no longer exclusive, but now more inclusive. Probably China's increasing footprints in Central Asia may have led Russia to change its view of Indian engagement in the region. The idea of Greater Eurasia involving several countries, the rejuvenation of the RIC Forum, and attempts to revitalise the International North South Transport Corridor are instances which demonstrate Russian-Indian intention to put their relations on a forward path. India's full membership of the SCO has opened new opportunities to collaborate and cooperate on issues of common concern. In this regard Russia has been championing India's inclusion in all regional groupings, except the CSTO. In a multipolar world India and Russia have the potential to emerge as players of consequence. They can help each other in maintaining a favourable balance of power in Asia.

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Conclusion

The shifts in Eurasia indicate that in the post-Cold War world order, a new attitude of national interest and cooperation emerged as the prime goal for nations. The basis was geopolitics. In this changing approach, what came to the fore were two tendencies; cooperative and competitive both co-existing side by side. Eurasia has been witnessing interplay of these tendencies, which largely explain the evolving regional matrix. In this vortex of regional dynamics India and Russia are seeking a new basis to infuse robustness in their relationship. Both realize that equilibrium of power is necessary to maintain stability in the region. This striving requires the requisite political will which they will have to generate.

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Geopolitics of Emerging Transit and Energy Corridors in the Indo-Pacific Region: Indian Response to the Chinese Challenge

Shri Sanjay Singh, IFS (Retd)[@]

Abstract

The launch of the Chinese Belt and Road initiative focused the attention of the world on yet another manifestation of growing Chinese influence in the Indo-Pacific region. However, the connectivity that China is putting in place in the region did not occur overnight. The region's and China's own rapid growth and its growing centrality in the global economy have provided the economic resources and the rationale for it. China's actions have significant consequences for the rest of the world, notably by constraining the economic and strategic space of other countries and forcing them to respond to the challenge. This essay examines China's actions and the Indian response to them.

Introduction

The Indo-Pacific region, with over 3.5 billion people and a combined GDP today of over \$ 20 trillion, has been the fastest growing region of the world over the past few decades. Its economic resurgence, aided by the forces of globalization, has been steadily shifting the global economic and political center of gravity towards the region. The Indo-Pacific contains six of the world's largest economies and members of the G-20 - China, Japan, India, South Korea, Australia and Indonesia. Regional growth is providing impetus for greater economic interactions within the region itself and with other regions, resulting in increasing connectivity, creation of new Infrastructure, energy and trade corridors and the revival and upgradation of historical trade routes.

This growing connectivity is in both soft and hard infrastructure; the transport infrastructure based on road, rail, waterways, sea and air; the energy grids of oil and gas pipelines and power lines; telecommunication networks and digital connectivity, as well as new trade regimes, changing financial infrastructure, and rules governing the utilization of global commons. These supplant the connectivities that existed earlier linking Asian countries to metropolitan centers in Europe and North America, a legacy of colonial domination.

These new connectivities stimulate trade and investments and as they expand, a virtuous circle emerges by way of multiplier effects on national economies, leading in turn to further infrastructure and trade corridors. Ideally, the underlying aim of the growing connectivity should be to enhance cooperation to mutual benefit. However, this can only happen if regional interactions are underpinned by commonly agreed international norms, rules and practices and respect for the global commons.

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The rapid growth in the Indo-Pacific has ushered in a period of ever increasing change, with resurgent economies creating new geo-economic and strategic paradigms. However, the accumulation of economic power has been uneven, leading to the consequent redistribution of comprehensive national power. This has led to an increasing propensity on the part of China, whose growth has been more rapid, to try and dominate the region, especially its economic space, and to exclude others from it. It is doing this through new China centered connectivity. This is being challenged by other regional powers who see a strategic threat to their own interests and wish to safeguard them and preserve their own strategic economic space. This is especially true of the members of the ‘Quad’, and within the ‘Quad’, of India.

The Chinese Challenge: Manifestations of a New Imperialism?

China is today the largest economy, largest investment and trading partner of virtually every country in the region. Its enormous markets and massive requirements of oil & gas and other natural resources make it an indispensable partner and its deep pockets have assisted in rapid expansion of Chinese influence in the countries in its immediate neighbourhood. Consequently, its role has become central in fora such as the East Asia Summit (EAS), Conference for Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), and now even in the Af-Pak region.

China’s desire clearly is to change the existing order, and to change the rules to its advantage. It has pursued this objective through unilaterally claiming ownership in the East and South China seas, setting up financing institutions in which it has controlling interest such as the AIIB (Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank), the BRICS (Brazil Russia India China South Africa) Bank, and making efforts towards getting the Chinese Yuan accepted as an international currency. China is also attempting to monopolise the sources of oil, gas and other natural resources in the countries on its periphery and even further afield in Africa and Latin America in a classical colonial manner of harnessing natural resources to fuel its own economy.

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China today boasts of world class domestic infrastructure. Its railway over permafrost in the Himalayas and the high-speed lines connecting cities in its Pacific coast are only some examples. China has created new facts on the ground by expanding infrastructure and developing additional connectivities with and within Central Asia, South East Asia, and North Asia. Its massive investments in transport corridors (rail, road and maritime) and in pipelines, power and other associated projects, are projected to be over \$ 4 trn.

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)

BRI launched by China, in 2013, consisting of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the Maritime Silk Road and covering over 70 countries only formalise growing Chinese influence in the regions it traverses. The ‘Belt’ includes countries in Central Asia, West Asia, the Middle East, and Europe and seeks to integrate them into a China centered economic space. Other areas included in the extension of the ‘Belt’ are South and Southeast Asia. Nearly all of India’s immediate neighbours are members of the BRI, with China committing considerable financial assistance towards the development of their infrastructure and thereby diminishing Indian influence.

BRI, the Chinese led and aided development of new economic corridors, includes: the new Eurasian Land Bridge, running from China to Western Europe; the Silk Road Railway, running from China up to England; the North Belt running from Northern China to Eastern Russia, which includes development of pipelines transporting oil and gas from

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Russia to China; the Central Belt, running from Western China to Turkey and other West Asian countries through Central Asia, which includes projects such as the 'Pan Asian Energy Grid' in Central Asia consisting of oil and gas pipelines leading to China and the power grids; the South Belt, running from Southern China to Indonesia; and the Maritime Silk Road, running from the Chinese coast through South China Sea and the Indian ocean to the Mediterranean. China and Russia are also cooperating to develop a Northern Sea Route—the 'Ice Silk Road' through the Arctic waters, focusing on cooperation in oil and gas and transit.

China is developing a number of ports along the Indian Ocean littoral, where its Navy could be deployed to ostensibly support and protect its maritime trade. But these could well be used to project its power. This development of ports starts from the South China sea which it has converted into its own pond and continues along the 'string of pearls', the Coco Islands off Myanmar, Hambantota in Srilanka, Gwadar in Pakistan and now Djibouti. It also has arrangements with Bangladesh- Chittagong, Oman- Duqm and Kenya- Mombasa, and now with the Maldives.

Linked to BRI are the BCIM (Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar) Corridor and the CPEC (China Pakistan economic Corridor) running from Western China through Pakistan. CPEC links China's maritime and overland Silk Road at the Pakistani port of Gwadar on the Arabian Sea. This is supplemented by the railroad to Mashad in Iran through Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan, which will give China added access to the Persian Gulf from where it imports most of its oil & gas requirements. In order to protect its assets abroad, especially in Central Asia and the Af-Pak regions, China has amended its constitution to allow the PLA to be deployed abroad to meet threats from terrorists and extremists. It is also actively engaged with Central Asian countries and the SCO towards this objective.

The BRI is supported by financial institutions such as the AIIB, structured to addressing infrastructure needs across Asia, and the Silk Road Fund whose role is to invest in businesses along the road. It is also supported by Free Trade agreements and exclusive trading arrangements that China has fashioned with individual countries as well as regional Associations such as the ASEAN.

Capping the BRI, China launched the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, in May 2017 in Beijing, which attracted high-level representation from more than 130 countries and 70 international organizations. The Forum is to provide a platform for working out action plans to implement the Initiative.

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The Indian Response

India believes that it is important to build connectivity through a consultative process and not through unilateral decisions. While this may be a slower process it is a more enduring one. India is taking steps through several initiatives to preserve its own strategic and economic space and provide the region with non-China centered connectivity in which all participants would have a stake. India is not a member of the BRI as it objects to its lack of transparency and its unilateral approach and importantly, as CPEC violates Indian sovereignty over POK, an area through which it traverses. In short, Indian policy has been to work towards arrangements which are inclusive and enhance trust and confidence.

India's efforts have focused over some decades on improving connectivity both within the country and with its South Asian neighbours as well as with the broader Indo-pacific region. While its capacities are more limited, its vision has been to create a framework which could be built upon as per the host country and its own requirements as well as those of the larger region. It has paid attention to both the hard infrastructure of road, rail, waterways, coastal shipping, power networks, oil and gas pipelines, and communication as well as the soft infrastructure to facilitate trade and

investment arrangements both within the country itself and connecting it to its South Asian neighbours and the broader region. Digital connectivity is an essential component of India's outreach to the region. India, given its capabilities, is an active player in setting up space-based communication systems which support connectivity within the region.

Within South Asia itself, India's rapid economic growth as well as increasing connectivity has been a significant factor in imparting new economic momentum to the region. While some of this has happened through SAARC mechanisms, and through bilateral and sub-regional arrangements such as the BBIN (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal) arrangement and BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-sectoral technical and Economic Cooperation), the most significant factor has been India's own economic resurgence over the past two decades.

In India, there is a new focus in recent years on port modernisation and port-led industrial development under the SAGARMALA programme consisting of expansion of coastal shipping and development of inland waterways. This development of its coast is accompanied by Road and Rail development projects aimed at improving internal logistical efficiency and creation of internal economic corridors linked to regional corridors such as the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor and the Mumbai-Bengaluru- Chennai Corridor. The latter is expected to connect to the Mekong-Dawei Corridor connecting Vietnam with Myanmar through Thailand. A new emphasis is being given to coastal shipping along the littorals of the Bay of Bengal from Singapore to Sri Lanka with support from both BBIN and BIMSTEC countries.

India's "Look East" policy, initiated in the 1990s and now upgraded to an 'Act East' policy, propelled India towards greater engagement with the Indo-Pacific, with a new emphasis on trade and the ocean surrounding it. It is but logical that recognising the importance of maritime trade for its own as well as for global economic growth, India supports freedom of navigation and over-flight and unimpeded commerce through international waters, in keeping with the principles of international law and UNCLOS. Towards this end India is strengthening its own naval forces and developing cooperation arrangements with the navies of the 'Quad' countries and other littorals of the Indian Ocean. The Malabar and Milan naval exercises and Indian participation in IONS (Indian Ocean Naval Symposium) are manifestations of this. India has also developed bilateral defence cooperation arrangements with ASEAN and other Indo-Pacific nations, particularly to address non-traditional threats and safeguard sea-lanes of commerce.

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India's trade and investment ties today with each of its ASEAN neighbours are substantive, supported by bilateral arrangements with a few countries and a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with ASEAN itself. India actively supports projects of international financial institutions in infrastructure creation in the region and has itself committed a Line of Credit of \$ 1.0 billion to promote projects that support physical and digital connectivity between India and ASEAN. A new thrust is being given to connectivity with South East Asia through projects such as the Kaladan multi-modal transport project that links Sittwe port in Myanmar to Northeast India and the completion of the India- Myanmar-Thailand trilateral highway with extensions to Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia. India's intent is to enhance connectivity with ASEAN countries and support the ASEAN Master-Plan on ASEAN Connectivity. This connectivity plan symbolizes ASEAN's success at integration despite China's divisive onslaught. India has given special attention to developing strategic relations with Indonesia, the main driving force behind ASEAN and in keeping ASEAN cohesive and with Singapore another key player in ASEAN. In India, itself special attention has been accorded to the Northeast part of the country to support connectivity with South East Asia. India is today fully engaged in the negotiations towards the creation of a ASEAN initiated regional trade bloc, the RCEP (Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership).

India's Extended Neighbourhood

Through India's vision of "SAGAR" (Security and Growth for All in the Region), India is providing technical and financial assistance to enhance maritime capabilities in Sri Lanka, Maldives, Mauritius and Seychelles and other littoral neighbours in order to enable them to fully utilise the advantages of the Blue Economy and build infrastructure to create onward connectivity from India.

India is also engaged in its own efforts to re-establish the historic connectivities that existed around the Indian Ocean through initiatives such as the Project Mausam, the Spice Route and the Cotton Route. It believes that these initiatives will be mutually beneficial in reawakening connectivities across the Indian Ocean Littoral.

India has also given new impetus to its connectivities with Central Asia and is strengthening trade, transport, energy, digital and people to people links. These will be further strengthened through its membership of the SCO. India's participation in the INSTC (International North South Transport Corridor), the Ashgabat Arrangement that facilitates connectivity between the Indian Ocean and Central Asia, and the Chabahar Agreement, reflects this desire and intent. India is also a member of the ambitious IPI (Iran, Pakistan and India) and TAPI (Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India) pipeline projects expected to supply gas from Iran and Turkmenistan to South Asia.

India, Iran and Russia agreed in 2000 to develop the INSTC, a multi modal transport route from the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean through Iran, Russia and the Caspian Sea to Eurasia and to Europe. The completion of Turkmen-Kazakh section of the North South Railway line in May 2013 adds a new branch to the main INSTC route for connecting South Asia and the Indo-Pacific to Kazakhstan and beyond in Eurasia from the Iranian ports of Bandar Abbas and Chabahar. The Indian participation in the Chabahar port project in Iran and the trilateral agreement that Afghanistan, Iran and India have signed provides Afghanistan easy access to the sea and India will significantly improve its connectivity to Afghanistan and Central Asia.

It must however be said that while India has been working towards these broad objectives for several decades now, its record of implementation has not been particularly impressive. Projects have been often poorly planned and thereafter poorly executed and often delayed leading to a loss of credibility and confidence. This is especially so when compared to the Chinese track record of speedy implementations of promises made and follow-up.

The Role of the 'Quad'

India in concert with the members of the 'Quad' is working to establish joint regional infrastructure schemes. The first such scheme to be concertised is the Asia-Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC). The agreement to set it up was signed in May 2017 between the governments of India, Japan and African countries at the African Development Bank meeting in Ahmedabad. The objective is to develop infrastructure in Africa, assisted by a collaborative Indo-Japanese effort towards strengthening the sea corridors linking Africa with India and other countries of South-East Asia.

Japan has its own extensive trade and investment links with countries of the Indo-Pacific. Similarly, Australia and South Korea, though smaller economies, bring their own strengths to the table. These countries have revived the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) after the US pullout, have FTAs with ASEAN and are actively involved in Regional Cooperation Economic Partnership (RCEP) negotiations. India has concluded Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) with both Japan and Korea and is in negotiations with Australia and New Zealand. Cooperation between India and these countries creates a strong alternate economic network for the region.

However, the actions of the US, another member of the Quad, have sent mixed signals, particularly under the Trump administration. The US pivot to Asia has remained mainly a military one. It has withdrawn from the TPP.

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Geopolitics of Emerging Transit and Energy Corridors in the Indo-Pacific Region: Indian Response to the Chinese Challenge

However, it is exhibiting new interest in two major infrastructure projects in South and Southeast Asia. These are the Clinton 'New Silk Road' initiative, focusing on connectivity and development of Afghanistan and its neighbours, and the Indo-Pacific Economic Corridor linking South and Southeast Asia. US financing towards these projects is expected to spur involvement of regional countries, other bilateral donors, multilateral development banks, and the private sector to realise them. India is expected to be a central player in these initiatives.

To sum up, India is a key player in all initiatives which aim to support the economic growth of the Indo-Pacific region through creating new non-Chinese centric connectivities and economic corridors. These initiatives build on historical ties and precedents but are powered today by the economic forces driving the Asian revival. They also seek to build on the regional desire for an inclusive and cooperative response to Chinese unilateralism and hegemonic ambitions.

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A Perspective on Indo-US Relations

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Abstract

The Indo-US relations have witnessed a constant upswing in a multifaceted strategic relationship. The gargantuan dimension of the cooperation level can be understood by the scale of bilateral and multilateral engagement India has with the US covering trade and investment, defence and security, education, science and technology, cyber security, high-technology, civil nuclear energy, space technology and applications, clean energy, environment, agriculture, health, and people-to-people contact. India's broad-based and multi-sectoral relation with the US is based on shared democratic values and increasing convergence of interests on bilateral, regional and global issues. The growing convergence of interests has also opened enormous future potential for transfer and collaborative projects in defence equipment and technology, security of maritime and cyber domains, deepen regional cooperation and integration, and strengthen regional economic and security forums.

Introduction

The US and India have the distinction of being the world's oldest and largest democracy respectively. However, the trajectory of relations between the two countries has been somewhat chequered. The US had rendered support to India's independence as part of its global decolonization policy. Washington supported India during the 1962 war with China. However, the relationship waned due to the US perception that India was aligned with its ideological rival the Soviet Union. In the meanwhile, there was growing proximity between Pakistan and the US that manifested in Pakistan becoming a member of the US, led Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) and Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) and being a major recipient of military hardware from the US. During seventies, Pakistan played a key role in establishing a rapprochement between the US and China. Both during the 1965 and 1971 wars, the US supported Pakistan. Post 1998 nuclear test, the US had imposed economic sanctions on India. However, post the Cold War era, the geopolitical developments led to improvement in the Indo-US relations. Today, the US and India have become global partners, with growing strategic convergence of interests. Indo-US partnership stands upon a shared commitment to democracy, upholding the rule of law, freedom of navigation, universal values, and free trade.

Indo-US Strategic Calculus in the Evolving World Order

It is a common knowledge that the center of gravity of global power has shifted from the Euro-Atlantic to the Indo-Pacific region. The evolving balance of power is characterized by relative decline of the US and rise of China. The US strives to retain its hegemony in the region, whereas, China is asserting for strategic parity, particularly in the Western

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Pacific. The US ‘Pivot to Asia’ and China’s counter intervention strategy are rooted in the strategic brinkmanship pursued in achieving a balance of power in quest for promoting national interests. While, the US strives to retain the primacy of a US led economic and security architecture, China on the other hand, is promoting its own brand of economic and security order, China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) participation in the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), Asia Infrastructure Bank (AIIB), BRICS bank, the Silk Route Fund, the proposed Shanghai Cooperation bank, are the harbingers of China-led new economic architecture. The dynamic strategic milieu in the region is complicated by nuclear strategic brinkmanship by North Korea, geopolitical realignments by ASEAN, Russia’s own Pivot to Asia, India’s Look East Policy and aspirational Asia-Africa Economic Corridor and the Indo – Pacific Economic Corridor.

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In the security arena, China has embarked upon a massive military modernization plan and has undertaken dramatic reforms; thus enhancing its capacity to project power up to the second chain of islands. It has exhibited creeping assertiveness on the Sino-Indian border. The assertive behaviour of China in the Western Pacific such as 9 dash line claims, assertion over Sankaku Island, creation of Air Defence Identification Zone (ADIZ) in the East China Sea, strategic coercion of small neighbours, and utter disregard of Hague verdict on the East Sea created conditions for the US to reinvigorate its regional security alliance with East Asian countries. Another significant development that has led to renewed reliance on extended security cover by Japan and South Korea is nuclear brinkmanship by North Korea. North Korea’s nuclear weapons tests and ballistic missiles pose a clear and imminent threat to the security of the US, our Asian allies, and to all other nations. Another important development to be watched is the possibility of creation of QUAD (India - US – Japan – Australia). It is in this backdrop that the US perceives India as a major strategic balancer to China. India too needs a reliable partner on the world stage in pursuance of its multi-vector foreign policy.

Indo-US Global Strategic Partnership

The year 2017 marks the tipping point in the US-India Strategic Partnership where the geopolitical imperatives have brought about political and strategic convergences between these two powerful democracies to a new coincident point. Recently, the US Secretary of State Tillerson highlighted the Trump Administration’s commitment to “building an ambitious partnership” with India that would “dramatically deepen” the US-India Global Strategic Partnership¹, under the motto — “Chalein Saath Saath: Forward Together We Go”, and “Sanjha Prayas, Sab kaVikas” (Shared Effort, Progress for All). Today, the India-U.S. bilateral cooperation is broad-based and multi-sectorial.

The US President Donald Trump on December 18, 2017 released the US National Security Strategy 2017 paper, documenting its strategy for promoting global security and safeguarding American interest.² The National Security Strategy (NSS) articulates the strategic importance of the Indo-Pacific region primarily due to belligerent display of Chinese hegemonic intentions and expanding instability in the Korean peninsula. The NSS identifies the extent of the boundaries of the region’s geo-political area and by projecting India as a vital defence and strategic partner in this region. It highlights the US intention to expand defence and security cooperation with India.

Determinants of the Indo-US Relations

Political: The frequency of high-level visits and exchanges between India and the U.S. has gone up significantly. Indian Prime Minister visited US in June 2017 to meet the President Donald Trump. Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the visit to the US alluded to “United States and India: Prosperity through Partnership”.³ “The statement emphasizes profound cooperation on counter-terrorism, with the two leaders “stressing that terrorism is a global scourge that

must be fought and terrorists' safe havens rooted out in every part of the world." There is growing congruence on maintaining a rule based and liberal world order and promoting economic initiatives that are transparent, non-predatory and that do not put aid recipient countries in a debt trap. During the Doklam crisis, the US encouraged India and China to engage in direct dialogue aimed at reducing tensions and free of any coercive aspects⁴. On the issue of Kashmir, the US strongly feels India-Pakistan need to solve the Kashmir problem through bilateral channel, and refrain from any third-party intervention that has been red line for successive Indian governments. Similarly, The US backs India's opposition to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), saying it passes through a disputed territory and no country should put itself into a position of dictating the Belt and Road Initiative⁵.

Indio – US Strategic Dialogue Architecture. Political relations are steered by comprehensive Indo-US strategic dialogue architecture. There are more than 50 bilateral dialogue mechanisms between the two governments, including the Strategic and Commercial Dialogue at the level of foreign ministers and Minister of State (Commerce & Industry)⁶. It adds a commercial component to the five traditional pillars of bilateral relations, namely: strategic cooperation; energy and climate change, education and development; economy, trade and agriculture; science and technology; and health and innovation.

Defence and Security. Defence relationship has emerged as a major pillar of India-US strategic partnership with the signing of 'New Framework for India-US Defence Relations' in 2005⁷. India and the US have launched a Defence Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI) aimed at simplifying technology transfer policies and exploring possibilities of co-development and co-production to invest the defence relationship with strategic value⁸. In June 2017 the US recognized India as a major defence partner⁹. In August 2017 a new representative body-US-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF) was set up to further enhance business relations between the two countries¹⁰. The US Defence Secretary James Mattis rightly pointed out that the world's two greatest democracies should have the two greatest militaries.

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In the span of about a decade, India-US defence trade between India-US shot from \$1 billion to over \$15 billion. The U.S. recorded an intense growth in its arms exports to India, recording over 550% growth in 2013-17, compared with the previous five years.¹¹ Indian Navy was the first overseas user of the P-8 maritime surveillance aircraft, Indian Army has received two of the 145 M-777 ultra-light howitzers as a part of a deal from BAE Systems. As per the deal, 25 ready-to-use weapons are to be supplied by the BAE over the next two years, 120 remaining howitzers would be produced in India under the 'Make in India' programme¹². India acquired 6 Apache attack helicopters for the Indian Army. Indian Air Force will procure one more C-17 Globemaster III heavy-lift transport aircraft to add to the existing fleet of 10ⁱⁱⁱ. The US had formally submitted its "pricing and availability" proposal for the sale of 22 Guardian UAVs to India at around \$3 billion. The US has agreed to release the technology for the billion-dollar advanced "Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System" (EMALS) for its second indigenous aircraft carrier, INS Vishal¹³. The US has very transformational offers for two advanced fighter jets-F-16 and F-18 in partnership with industry. The proposals envisage co-production and transfer of technology¹⁴.

The two countries now conduct more bilateral exercises with each other than they do with any other country. The military exercises include, MILAN, a biennial exercise of navies; Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercise; MALABAR Trilateral Naval Exercise¹⁵.

The agreements signed by the two countries during the past few years include, Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Association (LEMOA) signed in August 2016, Fuel Exchange Agreement signed in November 2015, Technical Agreement (TA) on information sharing on White (merchant) Shipping signed in May 2016 and the Information Exchange Agreement on Aircraft Carrier Technologies signed in June 2016¹⁶. The remaining two pacts under discussions are Communication and Information Security Memorandum of Agreement (CISMOA) and Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA).

India-U.S. Counter-Terrorism Cooperation Initiative was signed in 2009¹⁷. India and the US decided to strengthen their cooperation against terrorist groups including Al-Qaida and ISIS¹⁸. The inaugural India-US Designations Dialogue was held in New Delhi, on December 18-19 to discuss increasing bilateral cooperation on terrorism-related designations. The initiation of the Dialogue process reflects shared Indian and U.S. commitments to strengthen cooperation against terrorist threats in the region. The second India-US Designations Dialogue in 2018 will be hosted by the US¹⁹. On the global war against terrorism, India and the US have emerged as natural allies with their interests coinciding in Afghanistan vis-à-vis Russia, China and Pakistan, who are inclined to give the Taliban a primacy in the future of Afghanistan. Cooperation in counter-terrorism has seen considerable progress with intelligence sharing, information exchange, operational cooperation, counter-terrorism technology and equipment. Homeland Security Dialogue was announced during President Obama's visit to India in November 2010 to further deepen operational cooperation²⁰. Earlier this year, the army instructors from the two countries came together to build a U.N. peacekeeping capacity among African partners.

Points of Divergence

Pakistan-US Relations: Under President Trump's new South Asia policy, Pakistan has been severely warned for providing safe havens to terrorists. Pakistan-US relations have reached a new low. Weeks after the US president warned Pakistan to eliminate terrorist havens in Pakistan, the US president applauded Pakistan for helping the US in countering terrorists in the region. Later, Pakistan's rescue of a Canadian-American family from the clutches of the Haqqani network was reciprocated by several drone strikes in Afghanistan and eliminating Jamaat-ul-Ahrar leader Omar Khalid Khorasani, the mastermind of many mass-casualty attacks in Pakistan²¹. The uncertainty over the US-Pakistan relation is a source of concern for India. Pakistan continues to enjoy the status of a Most Favoured Non – NATO Ally (MFNA) and recipient of Coalition Support Fund, purportedly to combat terrorism.

The China-US Relations: Today, both India and the U.S. have relationships with China that have elements of cooperation, competition and, potentially, conflict-though in different degrees. Indian policymakers worry both about a China-US condominium (or G-2). There are valid concerns in India as to how much support will the US extend to India in the event of Sino-India faceoff.²²

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US goods and services trade with China totalled an estimated \$648.2 billion in 2016. The US goods and services trade deficit with China was \$309.6 billion in 2016. China's FDI in the United States (stock) was \$14.8 billion in 2015 (latest data available), up 50.6% from 2014. China's vast holdings of US government debt jumped from \$44 billion to \$1.15 trillion in June, 2017. The US Treasury Department has ranked China as the biggest foreign creditor to the US for the past nine years²³.

Chinese diaspora is the third-largest foreign-born group in the US, after Mexicans and Indians. The population has grown more than six-fold since 1980, reaching 2.3 million in 2016, or 5 per cent of the approximately 44 million of immigrants. In the 2015-16, close to 329,000 Chinese were enrolled in US higher education institutions. They accounted

India's Extended Neighbourhood

for nearly one-third of the 1 million foreign students studying in the US. In FY 2016, Chinese citizens accounted for 9 per cent of the 345,000 H-1B petitions.²⁴

Indo-Russia Relations

Russia is a country with which India has had a strategic relationship for decades. In last few years, the US has become New Delhi's strongest partner. Russia is still India's main arms supplier. Military assistance from Russia, as opposed to the US, comes with fewer strings: Moscow is less likely to care just how or against whom India uses those weapons. Many analysts in India believe, the Americans meddle in India's internal affairs and the Russians do not. Strategic autonomy is what India values above all else in its foreign policy, and that is why Indo-Russian relations are still strong even after growing bonhomie between India and the US.

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US – Iran Relations

The vexed US – Iran relations and economic sanctions against the latter had impinged on the development of India's connectivity corridors to Eurasia, namely International North – South Transit Corridor (INSTC), development of Chabahar port and energy imports from Iran²⁵. Post the signing of nuclear agreement the prospects of operationalizing transit, trade and energy corridors were showing up. However, Trump has again raised the Iranian nuclear bogey - a development that is casting a shadow on regional integration. Iran's opposition to continued US presence in Afghanistan does not augur well for India-US alignment in the conflict torn country.

Conclusion

Presently there is growing convergence of strategic interests of India and the US in the Indo-Pacific and Af-Pak region. The trilateral security dialogue is being developed into a quadrilateral (India-US-Japan-Australia). Likewise, India-Afghanistan and the US have signed trilateral security dialogue in peace building in Afghanistan. The Trump's new South Asia policy alludes to a key role by India in the economic development of Afghanistan. The two countries have developed robust frameworks and mechanism to broaden and deepen their strategic partnership. US are supportive of India's Act East Policy and favours India playing a balancer's role in Central Asia. The congruence of interests in creating alternative connectivity corridors such as Indo-Pacific Economic Corridor and Asia-Africa Growth Corridor offers promising prospects. While the trajectory of Indo-US relation looks promising, the stringent US conditions on transfer of technology, balancing relation with Pakistan and China vis-à-vis India and the unpredictability of Trumps administration need to be factored in the future of growth of Indo-US relation.

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Section V

India's Comprehensive National Power

Policy in India Must ‘Come of Age’ in the 21st Century

Prof M D Nalapat[@]

Abstract

To fully absorb the benefits of being a great power, India must act as a great power. The country must locate and seize the opportunities offered by circumstances rather than be guided by the needs of other powers that they camouflage as ours. India, China and the US are destined to increasingly interact with each other. This dynamic has to be channelized in ways that speed up growth and stability in what will be the world's third superpower, after the US and China.

Introduction

India is a patchwork of multiple centuries, and comprises of human and territorial segments. A few of which are still existing and reacting as they would have in the 15th century, while others in their mind space, range from that period to the present. Too few of the 1.26 billion citizens of the Union of India as yet, are being fully acculturated to the needs and capabilities of the 21st century. In contrast, those from the same ethnic mix who are living and working in countries such as the UK, Singapore, the US and even South Africa have much higher per cent that are current with the 21st century, with the rest being almost entirely in the 20th, with only a negligible number still anchored to the 19th century in their mores and beliefs. As a consequence of the inadequate attention paid by post-1947 policymakers to empowering the country's human capital through an adequate education, there is leakage in India in the case of food grains, capital expenditure and in items as important for the future, as the nurturing of talent in the fields of science, technology, culture and the social sciences. The state organisation that has best nurtured human capital is the military, and this has been achieved despite shortages in equipment and in other essentials.

Empowering Military

The men and women of the three services ensure through both, “jugaad”, as well as extraordinary human efforts that the overall war machine of the country remains in a state of preparedness to deal with threats. This, despite India being perhaps the only major power to have (since the 1950s) excluded those in uniform from direct participation in the processes and platforms, which collectively comprise the Ministry of Defence. Not to mention the sole major power that is dependent on external sources for more than 80 per cent of its higher-end stock of weaponry. Prime Minister Narendra Modi needs to integrate the military into the defence policy matrix, as is already the case in the two largest global powers, the United States and China. Integration is called for not only into the presently exclusively civilian Defence Ministry bureaucracy, but among the three services as well. An integrated Chiefs of Defence Staff Command needs to be formed, while officers in the higher echelons of each of the three services must be acculturated to viewing

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the conduct of operations in a holistic rather than three services - segmented manner. As for India, it is testimony to the professionalism and dedication to democratic values of the Army, Navy and Air Force, that there was never any move to replicate in India the sorry history of military coups in Pakistan and Bangladesh, not to mention nearby countries such as Indonesia and Thailand. This flawless record of loyalty (like fealty) to democratic values and professionalism merits a swift end to the post-1947 practice of the uniformed services remaining outside the personnel matrix of the Union Ministry of Defence.



Why is empowering each citizen through proper education important? Why is integrating the uniformed services into the formal echelons of the Defence Ministry crucial for the future?

It is because, the superstructure that the military relies for its substance and salience in a nationwide foundation of productive citizens, and the economic growth that such human power would generate. Just as China grew substantially above double digits from the 1980s, to grow to a size second only to the US (and soon to overtake it), so too must India be provided with the policy matrix needed for sustaining such growth. As for the 7% annual rate that politicians are complimenting themselves on, even 9% is insufficient to ensure that demography work to our advantage rather than otherwise. Lack of genuine employment is affecting tens of

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millions of youths, thereby making it relatively easy to collect large groups together for creating mayhem. Large-scale confidence in PM Narendra Modi as a 21st century change agent, by the close of 2012, led to a steady decline in the civil unrest that was being witnessed in the country from the close of 2010 to end-2012. The period when it became obvious that Modi would emerge as the leader of choice for the rising number of Indians. Today, because of the particular growth path that the Prime Minister has chosen and its short-term travails, once again a sullen mood seems to be settling within large sections of the youth, sending them into the streets agitating for a variety of issues that are either irrelevant or peripheral to the nation's future. Now is the time to substantially expand programmes such as the National Cadet Corps (NCC), that instil in the young, some of the discipline and values that have remained the tradition of the armed forces of the Republic of India for a considerable period of time, as also to create a National Service Corps (NSC) that could be trained and motivated to improve standards in literacy, health and habitation. Both the NCC as well as the proposed NSC would have as its "steel frame" men and women who have served (or still continue in the service of) the armed forces as well as civilians' active in the chosen fields of endeavour. Diverting millions of youth (who are each awaiting but not securing regular employment) from agitation to nationally productive channels needs to have priority within the national security plan. At present, millions of youth are permitted to drift on their own, with the result that many are fuelling the caste, communal, regional and other agitations launched by politicians inside as well as (in some cases) external actors. Both the NCC as well as the proposed NSC needs to reach a level of enrolment such that these millions will imbibe values and habits that promote national regeneration rather than degeneration.

Pakistan-China Factor

India is on course to be the third largest economy in the world in 20 years provided governments continue to design and implement suboptimal policies and within 10 years if these policies designed for growth are framed and implemented effectively. Geopolitically, therefore, countries across the world are seeing and reacting to India in this light, with two exceptions, Pakistan and China. In both, it is their respective militaries that have the decisive (and in the case of Pakistan, the sole) influence over policies relating to India, and the PLA has bought into the Pakistan army narrative that India's ascent to the global Top Three is not pre-ordained but can be blocked and even reversed by asymmetric methods. India is the only country that has the potential to leap ahead of China in the overall growth stakes within the next thirty years, and for this reason, the PLA has ensured that their card against the growth and significance of India, the Pakistan military, be pampered at the cost of the Chinese exchequer. Rather than deal with India as an inevitable great power,

both China and Pakistan look at the world's most populous democracy through lens that constantly search for ways designed to slow down economic growth and multiply strains within society and the polity.

In the case of China, the Chinese Communist Party has especially since the advent of Deng Xiaoping, followed a policy of using opportunities available, to ensure the steady rise of the Peoples Republic of China into the First Power, within the international order, displacing the US, which has had that rank since 1945. While the Peoples Liberation Army has substantially outsourced its policy on India to Rawalpindi General Head Quarters (GHQ), State Owned Enterprises (SOEs) in China see India, as an opportunity too big, to continue to remain secondary to Pakistan's interests. This segment of the PRC power structure has begun to look at India not as an inevitable threat to a Sinic (Chinese) version of the unipolar world, but as an opportunity for Chinese industries to expand into, a phenomenon already taking place in infrastructure, telecom and energy. Trade in the three could grow substantially, were the obstacles to such cooperation created by the Rawalpindi GHQ-centered policy of Beijing towards Delhi, were diluted and subsequently reversed. The Chinese Communist Party under General Secretary Xi Jinping should move away from a PLA-sourced policy towards the more respectful and conciliatory line sought by the SOEs. During the 73-day Doklam standoff, what kept the PLA from ramping up the confrontation, the way the Pakistan army wanted was the realisation that doing so would end any hopes of India becoming one of the top markets for Chinese products, even while Pakistan is becoming a growing drain on PRC resources. Given the fact that Rawalpindi GHQ has failed to contain and constrict India, the remaining value of the Pakistan armed forces as a primary source for information about US weapons and tactics, is also decreasing. Now that Washington is becoming warier of the duplicity of the Pakistan military towards itself, military to military cooperation between the two sides is getting reduced to a level that will soon make Pakistan of negligible value, as far as source of secret input into the US military is concerned. In contrast, economic and commercial cooperation between China and India has the potential of reaching \$300 billion annually in 2-way business, but only provided there is a change in the Chinese Communist Party policy towards India, from containment to cooperation. Significant Rawalpindi GHQ-inspired "bad behaviour" towards India should be promptly punished through immediate curbs on Chinese business entities. As a start, any company from any part of the world operating in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir should be blocked from the Indian market. Such a move would reduce considerably the attraction of investments in PoK, even for Chinese entities.

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Coming now to Pakistan, the interests and rights of the people of that artificially constructed country would be best served by a further breakup of the country, following on from the 1971 secession of what was then East Pakistan. It was unfortunate that the Government of India failed to take advantage of the desire of the Baloch and Pashtun territories to attach themselves with India. Even a task as geopolitically essential as liberating the whole of Jammu & Kashmir was shunned by the leadership which took charge on 15 August 1947. India is a great power whose governance mechanism still seems to suffer from an inferiority complex, and has often balked from full scope measures to protect vital national interests. However, its roots in a tradition and history going back five and more millennia have made (even the truncated version of) India, a distinct and cohesive geographic and cultural entity. In 1965, the statesmanlike decision of Prime Minister LB Shastri to decline to impose Hindi on states that were not welcoming of the primary role being given to that language, helped preserve the Union of India. On the other hand, the Sinhala fanaticism of the ruling elite of Sri Lanka in the 1950s ignited a civil war that had grievous effects on the country. Although, the largest language group, the Hindi-speaking people of the country have never sought to impose their will on the rest of India, the way the Punjabi population of Pakistan has done through their control over the Pakistan military. Pakistan has pulled away from

the traditions of the Indian subcontinent, thereby rendering it fragile society kept together only by force. Even religion is not a unifying factor, given the manner in which Wahabbism (with its supremacist and exclusivist doctrine) has sought to monopolise the religious space in a country, whose people are overall still moderate. It may be recalled that it was the Central Provinces and Bihar from where most of the supporters of Partition came from, and not West Punjab, Sindh, Baluchistan or the Pashtun territories. Devoid of a uniting factor, the provinces of Pakistan have little in common with each other, and those who argue that India must expend effort in keeping Pakistan, united the way first the US and China have sought to do, are in effect arguing that India must help the Punjabi-dominated Pakistan army to continue to oppress Christians, Hindus, Sindhis, Baloch and Pashtuns in the name of a “united” Pakistan.

India must instead give moral and diplomatic support to the oppressed in Pakistan, including the many who are Muslims. The people resident in that territory will do the rest within 10-12 years, or around the time India emerges as the globe's third biggest economy. China is welcome to spend tens of billions of dollars each year trying to preserve the control of the Pakistan army over that unfortunate state and its people. India ought not to waste even a paisa in such an exercise, which in its own way, would be as futile in inducing a change in behaviour by Rawalpindi GHQ as the periodic candlelit vigils held at Wagah. Nourishing the Pakistan military through heavy expenditure of treasure may be a priority of Beijing, but any form of assistance to a state that is the endemic focus of terror in India ought not to be a priority for India, which for too long has accepted what ought to be the burdens of other powers as its own, when limited resources and multiple needs necessitate an exclusive focus on solutions that are of direct benefit to India. Care should be taken to ensure, however, that moral and diplomatic support for self-determination be extended only to the Pashtun and Baloch areas within Pakistan, and not to those regions forming part of Iran and Afghanistan, both of which countries need to be brought by Delhi into a regional alliance system that would focus on rolling back extremism and promoting modernity and growth, including in Central Asia.

China is the second most important priority of Indian strategic policy, with the US the top. Because of policy imperfections that were allowed to be continued since 1947, India's economy is as yet only \$2 trillion, or less than half what is needed to ensure self-sufficiency in defence capabilities. A new security paradigm has to be implemented that reflects 21st century needs, rather than 20th/19th century approaches to practical geopolitics. India is not the polity or society that it was in the 1950s nor the US. The 1950s were the period when Washington and Delhi began to separate from each other geopolitically, even as Pakistan and the US grew close. It was clear from the start that the only target of the Pakistan military was India and not China, yet the fiction was maintained in Washington that the former had joined the US-led anti-communist alliance. It must be admitted that India's record in identifying and making use of alliance opportunities has been dismal, an example being turning away from the informal offer of ASEAN to include India as a member, a situation that appears to be on the way towards rectification, as shown by the Heads of Government of the 10 ASEAN states, joining hands with the Prime Minister of India, during the 2018 Republic Day celebrations. For most of the 21st century, China will be the largest economy within the international order, followed by the US, India and ultimately Brazil, the country which is on course to overtake an ageing Japan.

Engagement with the US

Whenever the world's primary power changes, instability gets created around its periphery, as a consequence of the natural assertiveness such a situation engenders in the new primary power. Even before climbing to the top position, China has begun muscle flexing in a manner that brings back memories of the Middle Kingdom era, when the Imperial Court at Beijing saw every other country as vassals needing to give it tribute. Given such a propensity, what is needed is for the US and India to work

China has begun muscle flexing in a manner that brings back memories of the Middle Kingdom era, when the Imperial Court at Beijing, saw every other country as vassals needing to give it tribute. Given such a propensity, what is needed is for the US and India to work seamlessly together to ensure stability within the Indo-Pacific rim.

seamlessly together to ensure stability within the Indo-Pacific rim. This calls for them to concert their actions in the military sphere, and this is possible once both countries sign appropriate protocols that would facilitate the seamless collaboration that is needed by the imperatives of national interest of both the US as well as India. Ensuring freedom of navigation and ensuring the absence of the appearance of hegemony within the Indian Ocean segment of the Indo-Pacific has to be the primary responsibility of the Indian armed forces, especially the Navy. The Indian contingent would of course join with others in this task, but as the lead component. Similarly, ensuring a similar equilibrium in the Pacific Ocean is a task that the US armed forces need to undertake, of course with other militaries including that of India participating. In such a context, there is need to expand the India-Japan-Australia-US Quadrilateral Alliance to include Indonesia, Vietnam and the Philippines as well.

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Prepare for Out of Area Missions

In ensuring that militaries retain their superiority over potential foes, there is no substitute for experience on the actual field of different types of war. In such a context, this writer had in end-2014 suggested that two squadrons of top-quality military aircraft and around 4000 Special Forces be deployed in extremist-infested locations in Iraq and Syria so as to bring kinetic force to bear on the Islamic State of Syria and Levant (ISIS) threat. Although the advice was not taken, this line of action is precisely what Russia subsequently did in 2015, despite the many forecasts of doom from the same sources that worked to discourage Delhi from adopting such an "adventurist" line. In the way Sri Lanka's Mahinda Rajapaksa did in 2009 when he brushed aside calls and commands from several countries to save the Liberation Tiger of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) from annihilation by ordering a cease-fire the way every one of his predecessors had, Vladimir Putin showed that he had enough faith in the capabilities of the Russian armed forces to go ahead with such involvement. The consequence has been the defeat of both ISIS as well as NATO-backed groups that are often indistinguishable in their ideology and objectives from the first. The two squadrons of aircraft and around 4000 Special Forces in Syria ensured the centrality of Moscow as a global Great Power. This was established for the first time since the 1980s, that too despite having a much weaker economy than was the case at that time. Had India moved in the same way, Delhi's indispensability as a participant in global negotiations on matters of security would have been ensured, as also the re-emergence of Delhi as a key voice in matters dealing with West Asia, as indeed was the case until the close of the 1940s, during which period the Indian rupee was the dominant currency in much of that region. Prime Minister Modi has called for the world to unite against terror, and indeed such unity is essential. As of now, however, the Indian contribution to the war against ISIS has largely been restricted to statements of official intent. These needs to be supplemented with military force, and in such a way that India's strategic independence is visible, which would be by allying with Russia in Syria and with the US in Iraq, as well as of course the governments in both Damascus and Baghdad. Certainly, there needs to be close defence cooperation with the US, but this must rest on the fact that the methods pursued by each may differ even while the objectives may be similar. In the past, France under Charles de Gaulle was an ally of the US with a mind of its own in certain matters, and this would be the case with India as well, even after entering into a much closer military and defence relationship with the US, including by ensuring that key items of military hardware get sourced from locations within the country. Another means of cooperation would be to set up joint surveillance facilities in the Indian Ocean that would assist in securing real time information to both Delhi as well as Washington of the moves (on land, air, space and sea) of countries that are of security concern to both. Broadening the geographical ambit of military intervention against global threats such as ISIS is essential in a context where the boundaries of asymmetric conflict have moved far beyond the SAARC zone. Both interests as well as deployment must reflect such a change in circumstances.

Conclusion

To fully absorb the benefits of being a great power, India must act as a great power. The country must locate and seize the opportunities offered by circumstances rather than be guided by the needs of other powers that they camouflage as ours. India, China and the US are destined to increasingly interact with each other. This dynamic has to be channelized in ways that speed up growth and stability in what will be the world's third superpower, after the US and China.

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India's National Power Needs a Dose of Synergy

Brig Rumel Dahiya, SM (Retd)[@]

Abstract

National power is the capacity of a nation to influence the behaviour of others and to direct their decisions and actions, and the ability to get a desired outcome. The determinants of power, natural and social or tangibles and intangibles, must be transformed into capability, that must be employed prudently, to achieve national objectives. Generally speaking the perceived relative power of nations is acknowledged by all others, till disproved in war. Many other factors such as national will, superior leadership, and determination of the people or even luck may influence outcome of a war. Military strength is not the only element of national power, but there is no real power without it. The expanded dimensions of security and complex nature of threats necessitate, a much closer interaction between various organs of the state to develop and sustain national power and ensure security. Some societies are more amenable to create synergy, and a helpful bureaucracy is necessary for this. India has not developed a tradition for working together with an all-of-government approach. India's aspirations to be a leading power will be determined by the degree of synergy achieved among its instruments of power.

Introduction

Power has been an integral element of interstate relations since time immemorial. Its perception determines hierarchy of nations in the global system. India's potential as a leading power has been talked about for a long time.¹ But for some, it is far way off from becoming one due to its structural problems. For various reasons, beyond the scope of discussion here, India's internal security management, economic growth, diplomatic successes and military preparedness have fallen short of their potential. There is a consensus, however, on one issue that its government machinery is an obstacle to India's progress rather than being a facilitator. It is not as if it is beyond redemption. It worked very well during the emergency and there are islands of excellence even today. But the main reason why India's power has been circumscribed is the lack of synergy between various organs of the state and absence of the unity of purpose. Let us first discuss the concept of national power and how it is measured.

National Power

As per one definition "Power in the international politics refers to the ability of one nation to exercise control over the behaviour (*sic*) or fate of the other...Power, constructed by combining total resources with the political capacity of governments, is used to predict accurately the outcome of major wars since 1900." Going further "The foundation of power in the global system is the relationship between state and society. Governments acquire the tools of political influence through the mobilization of human and material resources for state action."² Mobilization and proper employment of resources are considered necessary for acquiring the ability to exercise power.

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India's Comprehensive National Power

The factors that determine power are varied, based on the circumstances of the time and the place of a country in the international system. Kautilya, describes three manifestations of power of a state in terms of three shaktis: utsahashakti (power to provide drive, energy and direction to the state and its elements), prabhavashakti (the power to generate 'effects' in favour of state i.e. economy and military power of a state) and mantrashakti (the power to influence, attract and induce co-opting, i.e. good counsel and diplomacy). Kautilyan powers do not act in isolation. The three powers together are applied in varying manner to produce the Comprehensive National Power (CNP).³

Kautilya describes three manifestations of power of a state in terms of three shaktis: utsahashakti (power to provide drive, energy and direction to the state and its elements), prabhavashakti (the power to generate 'effects' in favour of state i.e. economy and military power of a state) and mantrashakti (the power to influence).

In 1948, Morgenthau propagated his conception of national power to include geography, food, raw materials, industrial capacity and military preparedness, technology, leadership, quantity and quality of armed forces, population, national character, morale and quality of diplomacy adding governance in 1954.⁴ In the American perspective at the turn of the Century, the instruments of national power were Diplomacy, Information, Military and Economic.⁵

A very useful explanation of power, elements that constitute power, role of intangibles like national will, morale and perceptions can be found in US Army War College Guide to Strategy, 2001.⁶ It describes power as "the strength or capacity that provides the ability to influence the behaviour (*sic*) of other actors in accordance with one's own objectives." The determinants of power are divided into natural – to include geography, natural resources and population- and, social - to include economic, military, political and psychological.

In a Rand Corporation study, Ashley Tellis and his co-authors, define national power thus:

"National power can be defined simply as the capacity of a country to pursue strategic goals through purposeful action. This view of national power suggests two distinct but related dimensions of capacity: an external dimension, which consists of a nation's capacity to affect the global environment through its economic, political, and military potential, and an internal dimension, which consists of a nation's capacity to transform the resources of its society into "actionable knowledge" that produces the best civilian and military technologies possible.⁷

There are many factors and indexes, advocated by countries and scholars, to measure national power but most studies yield similar findings in terms of their rank ordering of national capabilities. Thus, irrespective of the variables measured or the formula of measurement employed, the most powerful countries in the system turn out to be the same across all indexes.⁸ But the perceived relative power of adversaries, based on traditional determinants, does not always get reflected in the outcome of war. Capitulation of France in 1940, breakup of Soviet Union in 1991 and victory of a small, resources-deprived Israel over numerically superior Arabs in 1967 and 1973 go to prove this point. Israel prevailed because it had the advantage of morale, technology, strong desire to survive, unity of purpose, strong internal cohesion, able military leadership and support of the leading super power.

Diplomacy, economy and military strength complementing one another are often considered adequate to achieve success in crises. But possession of economic and military strength and diplomatic heft also do not assure victory in war as the outcome in Vietnam proved. Similarly, in the Manchurian War in 1931-32, China was stronger than Japan in terms of manpower and resources but lacked the will to fight and therefore lost the war. The Soviets, on the other hand, fought under extremely adverse

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circumstances in Leningrad and Stalingrad forcing the adversary to turn back with heavy losses thus turning the tide of war against Nazi Germany in World War II. Soviets had the advantage of geography, population, resources and national character. Ability to combine, harmonize and efficiently convert various determinants of power into usable product ensures victory. That requires synergy between all instruments of the state and society.

History also teaches us that power is relative and prone to shifting because elements contributing to it and the efficiency of their utilization are constantly changing. Normally, power does not have to be used to be effective as long as the others acknowledge possession of power by a country and its will to exercise that power. Often that is enough to deter the adversaries, but the perception lasts only, till it is tested in war or a crisis, whose outcome decides new power hierarchy. It is always preferable to be perceived as powerful rather than exercising the power recklessly because power, being relative (over whom?); contextual (with respect to what?) and dependent on many variables, does not always beget victory in war. Kautilya's advice is very apt when he postulates that, "When the advantages to be derived from peace and war are equal, one should prefer peace, for disadvantages such as loss of power and wealth are ever attendant upon war".⁹

Importance of military capability as an instrument and determinant of national power can be judged by the fact that Japan despite being the second largest economy, before China overtook it in 1916, was never a super power. Russia on the other hand, despite its economy being less than half of the size of US economy at the height of Cold War, was acknowledged as a super power because of its military strength and diplomatic reach. In the recent times, unchallenged occupation and militarization of South China Sea by China has enhanced its power status, something its economic strength alone had not achieved. This leads us to the conclusion that without being militarily strong, mere economic strength is not sufficient for a country to be acknowledged as a power although, economic capacity, human capital and technology are essential for developing military capability.

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Since the understanding of security has expanded, the requirement of tools required to manage it successfully has also increased. Most observers now believe it is the Comprehensive National Power (CNP) and not any single element that determines power of a country. A simple definition of CNP is the 'degree of ability to mobilize and utilize strategic resources of a country to realize national objectives.' The Chinese concept of CNP¹⁰ has been in focus for some time now. Development of CNP would be dictated by national goals and objectives and will contribute to attainment by facilitating identification of possible gaps which may also create vulnerabilities.

Why Synergy

Simply defined, synergy is the combined interaction or cooperation of two or more organizations to produce a combined effect greater than the sum of their separate effects. Only those states can create synergistic force multiplying effects that have highly developed abilities to coordinate and synchronize their instruments of power. A country like India which balances aspirations of global recognition of an increasingly young and informed population while battling demons of poverty and social injustice, often finds itself in a bind over issues of national security and development priorities. An India integrated with the global economy and polity can ill afford delayed responses which will lead to lost opportunities. Joint national decision-making structures and inter agency coordination is thus the need of the hour. This would also achieve synergy and thus, contribute to CNP.

The present model of exercising authority in India is based on its inheritance from the British system which comprised of a bureaucratic hierarchy with multiple layers each responding sequentially. This was adequate for an era when the challenges of national governance were limited and size and spread of population along with their aspirations constrained. The complex challenges and threat of hybrid warfare¹¹ to national security in the twenty-first century will require intelligent integration of resources and unity of effort and purpose within the government and society. India needs to optimize its power for its survival, to secure its vital and important interests, and to achieve its goals, objectives, and aspirations.¹²

A suitable environment helps as brought out by eminent sociologist, Professor Peter Evans, who says that “state-society synergy” is most easily fostered in societies characterized by egalitarian social structures and robust, coherent state bureaucracies.

He opines that “synergy is constructible (*si*), but cautions that “the relevant properties of government institutions may take decades or generations to change.”¹³ The problem with the Indian government functionaries is that they have, as a class, become defensive control freaks and guard their turf because they feel threatened. This is because they cannot deliver services expected of them, perhaps due to demand overload and deficiency of resources. Subtle ways have, therefore, been devised to shirk responsibility without accountability.

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To a great extent Indian policy makers are to be blamed for not building up national power. The legendary strategic thinker, K. Subrahmanyam had opined in early 1970s about the attitudes of the elites in India towards nation building saying that the Indian policy makers were “neither concerned with development nor with defence.”¹⁴ He went on to say, “Our so-called pragmatism has been a convenient euphemism to tide over today’s problems and sweep under the carpet all inconvenient issues of tomorrow and the day after”¹⁵

The need for crosscutting and integrated responses involving all organs of the state was succinctly brought out by Shyam Saran, India’s former Foreign Secretary. Inter alia, he stated that “The pursuit of foreign policy goals will be influenced by the country’s economic and military capabilities, but foreign policy can also contribute significantly to the acquisition of these capabilities.”¹⁶ US Secretary of Defence, Gen Mattis, expressed similar views, that “diplomacy stands the best chance of preventing a war if America’s words are backed up by strong and prepared armed forces.”¹⁷

Events around Depsang, Demchok and Doklam have demonstrated the limitations of economic and diplomatic engagement to prevent conflicts. Only a forceful military posturing and display of resolve helped de-escalate the situation in all three instances. It was only learnt later that China’s 4th Mechanized Division was training at Shahidullah, within striking distance of Depsang, for months before the incursion. Obviously, something was amiss, perhaps due to lack of synergy between various organs of the state. It had happened before in Kargil in 1999.

Examination of the shortcomings that bedevilled Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) operations in Sri Lanka, undertaken at the request of the government of Sri Lanka, bring out the necessity of not only integration of military resources but also an imperative need for synergy between all agencies of the state.¹⁸ The need for restructuring of the Ministry of Defence and to remove the barriers to interaction between the military and the foreign office were highlighted clearly in Chapter VI, Management of Defence of the Group of Ministers (GoM) Report on National Security, 2001.¹⁹

That the problems exist with regard to working together in the Indian system is an understatement. The National Security Council (NSC) that has an advisory and deliberative role to develop long-term perspectives, examine policy recommendations by ministries to the CCS and monitor their implementation from the security point of view. In order to play its role effectively the NSC needs long-term as well as current inputs from many sources. Unfortunately, for much of its life it has not been able to co-opt optimum mix of experts. Besides, Ministries also do not take kindly to advice or directions from NSC. More important, “it lacks powers to enforce anything. The departmental interests are very strong and it becomes difficult to synchronise them. There is no common understanding among various segments of the government of what national security constitutes”.²⁰ A clear example of how the Indian system so completely militates against development of military strength is the MEA culpa from Ministry of Defence admitting the problems with defence acquisitions saying, “multiple and diffused structures with no single point accountability, multiple decision-heads, duplication of processes, delayed comments, delayed execution, no real-time monitoring, no project-based approach and a tendency to fault-find rather than to facilitate.”²¹ How synergy helps can be seen from some examples. It is known that safety and security of Indian diaspora and migrant workers across the world is a high-visibility responsibility of the government. In the last 30 years, major evacuation operations were undertaken from Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya and Yemen with less than optimum speed and efficiency. Speedy and timely evacuation could have been ensured if contingency plans were made and there was synergy amongst various organs of the state.²²

Maritime Security, a key aspect of National Security, is a good example where working together by all stake holders is absolutely necessary. While India has a significant naval force capability, it is not a maritime power. Ability to influence maritime space of interest to a country depends not merely on its naval strength but also its ship building capacity, size of shipping fleet, modern ports, large share of world trade, maritime domain awareness and cooperation with friendly maritime stakeholders. It also needs diplomatic strength to prevent any hostile power from establishing foothold in India's maritime neighbourhood and law enforcement mechanism to deal with transgression of its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) or breach of law therein. This would only be possible if all stakeholder institutions are aware of the magnitude of the challenge and work together towards achieving a common goal. The Group of Ministers as far back as 2001 had proposed the creation of a National Maritime Commission to act as an inter-agency coordinating body for various elements operating at sea including coastal security.²³ This needs to be activated without delay for effective maritime security as well as to coordinate maritime power.

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There is enough literature that proves lack of synergy even within the three Services in India. Jointness, meaning functioning together in a coordinated manner – particularly in operational planning and execution—while maintaining their separate identity and organizational structure, has been the mantra for over two decades now. However, it has not been embraced in either spirit or in form. Integration, a requirement for entire national security apparatus, on the other hand is farther away. Only tri-service command, the Andaman & Nicobar command has constantly faced neglect from the Ministry of Defence and the three Services.

The Defence Forces must remember that economy of effort is fundamental to the art of war and without economy there is no art in warfare. This can be best achieved through integration, not within the Defence services but among all organs of the state. Out of box solutions such as introducing IT based, time bound response mechanism for making decisions and assigning single point responsibility in a task force mode, for execution of all major projects. Present rules of business which have become obsolete must be replaced by new ones that privilege efficiency and accountability over cadre interests.

Conclusion

National power most often exists as a perception and power relations are dynamic and contextual. Countries that convert their natural endowments into capability and develop systems to convert that into usable instrument to achieve their objectives become more powerful. Efficiency of any system depends upon working together of all stakeholders with a unity of purpose. However, greatest need for synergy is for creating and sustaining national power. Despite the necessity, achieving synergy is not easy because of legacy of system, character of the population, quality of the leadership etc. The US system places the maximum emphasis on interagency process of consciously developing and deploying all the instruments of national power. But even there, the coherence in policy and its effectiveness is not always guaranteed. Pentagon and CIA are known to have been supporting different actors in Syria, for example. In an autocratic state like China, decisions taken at apex level can be implemented quickly since there is no room for dissent. India possesses abundant resources but is hopelessly deficient in fostering unity of purpose. Unity of purpose also means the ability to identify, negotiate and resolve differences. The government machinery still works in silos, more interested in guarding its turf than solving problems, leave alone being accused of possessing a vision. This is most glaring in the defence field. The structure of civil-military relations in India loosely translates into a system where, according to K. Subrahmanyam, 'politicians enjoy power without any responsibility, bureaucrats wield power without any accountability, and the military assumes responsibility without any direction.'²⁴Complex challenges to national security in the twenty-first century will require intelligent integration of resources and unity of effort within the government and without.

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India as a Net Security Provider

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Abstract

By providing 'net security', one entails enhancing 'mutual security', by addressing common security concerns. In the maritime domain, it implies reducing common threats & challenges and building conditions, whereby, these will be monitored, contained and countered. Net Security Provider (NSP) entails: assisting friendly countries, on request, safeguard their national sovereignty; capacity building and capability enhancement; rendering humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR); ensuring freedom of movement and maintaining rule of law in the ungoverned global commons. While India has the stature and willingness to take on the role of a NSP, its capability is constrained by: politico economic limitations; existence of a nebulous national strategic perspective for this role; a time consuming democratic decision-making process; inadequate joint tri service structures and limitations on strategic decision making due to being largely import dependent for defence hardware. Thus, while India has a credible NSP in the maritime domain and for the regional HADR roles, it has limitations of assisting in capacity building and in resolution of regional disputes/ crisis. To overcome these, India needs to evolve a strategy for the role including incorporating economic, diplomatic and technological dimension. India, as a NSP must however continue retaining its characteristic benign approach within norms of international rule of law.

Introduction

Many a global and national leaders have ascribed to India the status of a 'Net Security Provider (NSP)'. The erstwhile US Secretary of Defence Robert Gates, was the first to acknowledge India's role as a regional NSP at the Shangri La Dialogue in the Year 2009 when he stated, "... we look to India to be a partner and net provider of security in the Indian Ocean and beyond¹ ...". Similar status and envisaged role for India, is inherent in the recent US policy pronouncements on Afghanistan and South Asia², National Security Strategy (NSS)³, and the National Defence Strategy (NDS)⁴. Willingness on part of India to accept this role is evident from the assertions of the former Raksha Mantri, Shri AK Antony, who while addressing the Naval Commanders Conference in October 2011 stated that, 'the Indian navy has been mandated to be a NSP to island nations in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR)⁵'. This finds a reflection in the Indian Navy's Maritime Security Strategy of 2015, which states that the "maritime security objective (of the Indian Navy) is to shape a favourable and positive maritime environment, for enhancing net security in India's areas of maritime interest"⁶. Similar views were also expressed by Shri Manmohan Singh, the Prime Minister then, who while laying the foundation stone of the Indian National Defence University (INDU) in May 2013 stated that, 'India was well positioned to become a net provider of security in our immediate region and beyond'.⁷

A cautious note however, was sounded by the erstwhile National Security Adviser (NSA), Shri Shivshankar Menon, who, while delivering a lecture on 'India in the 21st Century World' in February 2014 said that, "India needs to

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take a call on the request from certain countries of the region (Southeast Asia) to become a 'net provider of security', including maritime security." He was of the view that India should not step into that role.⁸

India's global stature is on the rise economically as well as militarily. It is perceived by the countries of the region as a democratic alternative to assertive China. US and India have also mutually identified each other as partners and key components of their grand strategy in the Indo – Pacific. It becomes imperative, under these circumstances for India to prepare itself to further strengthen its periphery, and to shoulder greater international responsibility, contributing to regional stability and security. A deeper understanding of the concept of being a NSP would help India calibrate the extent of commitment.

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A Net Security Provider (NSP)

The basic concept of being a NSP is of a country enhancing mutual security of themselves, and other countries by addressing common security concerns, such as terrorism and maritime security⁹.

The concept of Net Maritime Security (NMS) according to the Indian Navy's Maritime Security Strategy entails reducing common threats and challenges and building conditions whereby these will be monitored, contained and countered¹⁰

Certain analysts are of the view that the ambit of providing 'net security', is restricted to the military domain, and includes: capacity building, military diplomacy, military assistance and direct deployment of military forces to aid or stabilize a situation¹¹. In the maritime domain, it entails : presence and rapid response, maritime engagement, capacity building and capability enhancement, developing maritime domain awareness, conduct of maritime security operations and developing strategic communications¹² There is however, another perspective according to which it can be suggested that a credible NSP needs to aggregate its political, diplomatic, economic, military and technological power, to present itself as a viable security provider of choice, in a competitive power game between the nations.

Analysing the Concept of Net Security

A consideration of the broader concept of 'net security' suggests the following: -

- Net security' extends beyond the responsibility of own national security, which is an obligatory function of maintaining national sovereignty, territorial integrity, stability and security of the state. In one context, net security is provided to other countries in a manner so as to contribute to enhancing the security of the NSP itself, the relationship being mutual in nature, for eg. the presence of the US in the Indo – Pacific, Afghanistan, West Asia, Europe or other regions of the world as a NSP is ultimately aimed, at enhancing its stature and the security of its own homeland.
- Providing 'net security' entails extending security umbrella to other countries (in the immediate/extended neighbourhood, sub region/region/in maritime domain or globally) to address traditional and non-traditional concerns for which the recipient nations lack adequate integral capability. This umbrella may also extend to 'ungoverned global commons' against transnational threats. A thematic think piece by UN system task force, on 'Global governance and governance of global commons in the global partnership for development beyond 2015'¹³ highlights, the increasing relevance of the governance of global commons for achieving sustainable

development. This is because increasing interdependence amongst the states has not been accompanied by sufficient adjustment in global governance regimes, resulting in inadequate mechanisms to regulate issues of transnational security, migration, trade, freedom of movement, exploitation of resources in high seas, exploration of outer space etc. For the present, this void needs to be filled by more powerful states who volunteer to maintain (or enforce) the international rule based order, as the NSP. India falls into the category of the countries which ought to shoulder such global responsibility.

- The NSP could be an individual state which has greater resources, capabilities and political 'heft' (e.g. USA). Alternatively, it could be a regional partnership or alliance (e.g. NATO) or a bilateral treaty alliance (e.g. US – Japan/ South Korea treaties of mutual cooperation and security). Net security may even be provided by non-military regional groupings (e.g. ASEAN), which add political and diplomatic weight to the issues of concern, to the countries of the region. This is evident from the efforts of ASEAN to develop a code of conduct for the countries which are party to the dispute in the South China Sea. The footprint of the NSP depends on the capability and concerns of the umbrella country or grouping.

Net security is provided against mutually agreed threats, which impact all stake holders concerned i.e. there needs to be a convergence in the identification of what constitutes a threat and acceptance of the capability and credibility of the NSP. In the Indian context, while most countries of Southeast Asia and South Asia recognize India as a NSP for most of the common regional threats, Pakistan with its characteristic antagonist attitude continues challenging this proposition. This was evident in the August 2017 statement of Pakistan PM Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, who stated that India cannot be a NSP, due to its 'conflictual relationship' with its neighbours¹⁴. The fact realized by other Asian neighbours though is that Pakistan itself is the source of international terrorism and being an 'all weather' ally of China, is a contributory factor to the assertive and exploitative rise of the latter. Reigning in these very threats is the primary responsibility of any NSP of this region, a void which India endeavours to fill.

Expectations from a Net Security Provider

Assistance to Safeguard National Security (On Request)-Most nations endeavour to address the issues of national security by themselves, unless the external challenges are disproportionate and beyond the military capability of a state to handle. In that eventuality, the legitimate government may invite UN, or an acceptable NSP, to assist in safeguarding national security. If the perception of threat and force asymmetry is perpetual, the country may, as a policy, forge an appropriate 'alliance', to permanently obtain the security umbrella of a chosen NSP. Treaty alliance of Japan, Republic of Korea, and a few other countries in Southeast Asia and Southern Pacific regions with the US, are designed for this concept of net security, primarily against perceived threats from China and Russia. A NSP may also be invited to assist in cases of acute national crisis, which cannot be handled from within. In 1987, Sri Lanka entered into an accord with India and invited its armed forces to assist in ending the civil war, with the Sri Lankan Tamil militants. In November 1988, President Abdul Gayoom of Maldives invited India through the UN, and other friendly countries to quell an attempted coup and to apprehend the perpetrators. Both tasks were undertaken by India, as a benign regional NSP. In both cases the Indian troops returned, on completion of the task that they were invited to undertake. On a different note, during the Maldives crisis of February 2018, despite call by some significant leaders of that country, India did not intervene, for want of 'invitation' from an elected government. However, an ongoing tri service maritime exercise, 'Paschim Lehar'¹⁵ on India's Western seaboard involving over 40 ships, submarines, maritime reconnaissance, fighter aircrafts, helicopters, unmanned aerial

Ongoing tri service maritime exercise, 'Paschim Lehar' on India's Western seaboard involving over 40 ships, submarines, maritime reconnaissance & fighter aircraft, helicopters, unmanned aerial vehicles(UAVs) and amphibious troops created a secure regional environment inhibiting any extra regional powers from intervening, leaving it to the Maldivians themselves to address their internal affairs.

vehicles(UAVs) and amphibious troops created a secure regional environment inhibiting extra regional powers from intervening, leaving it to the Maldivians themselves to address their internal affairs. India thus, demonstrated its intent and ability to be a net security provider, within the propriety of international norms and upholding its self-imposed principle of not intervening in neighbours' affairs, unless invited explicitly.

Capacity Building and Capability Enhancement of Friendly Nations-There is an expectation on part of smaller countries from the potential NSPs, to extend assistance in their capacity building and capability development. Militarily, it may be in the field of provision of arms and equipment, training, helping evolve security strategy, doctrine, tactics, evolve higher defence organization structures, share critical technology, render assistance in developing defence industrial base and development of military / critical national infrastructure etc. This is amongst the most critical facets of seeking / providing net security, for it entails a long-lasting relationship, for at least a few decades and coincides with the life cycle of the equipment. India made a (tacit) choice of selecting erstwhile USSR as its NSP and despite diversification of its defence relationship over the years; Russia remains a vital component in the scheme of India's net security calculus. Countries in India's immediate neighbourhood are in the midst of a similar exercise, of structuring and strengthening their armed forces, seeking assistance from chosen NSP(s). Whatever choices of NSP are made by Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, it will stay with them at least for the next three to five decades, with regional security implications.

Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR)-The experience of December 2004 Tsunami, April 2015 Nepal earthquake and various other major natural disasters suggests, that nations which lack adequate resources, expect larger nations of the region to come forth, to extend human security umbrella, by rendering humanitarian assistance and disaster relief support. The potential NSP(s) therefore, needs to build capacity for strategic air and sea lift (for men, material, plant and machinery), trained disaster relief teams, critical care equipped air evacuation facilities, hospital ships/ medical teams, shelters, power generation equipment, inter operable communications and the like. This is perhaps the most common and least controversial expectation from a NSP.

Ensure Freedom of Movement across Global Commons- High seas, atmosphere, outer space and Antarctica have been identified as the four global commons by the International law¹⁶. Being a common heritage of mankind, the unhindered use and exploration of these is the right of all nations. Hindering freedom of movement, enforcing Anti-Access Area Denial (A2/AD) by some states, piracy and transnational terrorism have disrupted free trade across the sea lanes of communication (SLOCs). Also, there is an increasing militarization of the space. In the absence of a strong UN, the responsibility rests on the countries with greater resources, to be the NSP for ensuring freedom of navigation and flights over the global commons. India, as a NSP acknowledges its responsibility of maintaining free, secure and open seas in the Indo – Pacific in general and the Indian Ocean in particular.

Maintenance of International Rule Based Order-A secure and stable global environment can only be maintained, by adherence to the international rules based order in the conduct between the states. The larger and stronger states with the potential of being the NSP, while providing an 'umbrella' (economic, diplomatic or military), need to contribute towards promoting a sense of prosperity and wellbeing, amongst smaller states rather than evoking mistrust and anxiety, which invariably gets caused by non-transparent agreements, forceful occupation of disputed spaces, exploitation of cyber space, proliferation and tacit support (or inaction against) terrorist groups and organizations. It was in the spirit of upholding the international rule based order respecting the sovereignty of its smaller neighbour Bhutan, that India was involved in a 73 days standoff with PLA at Doklam, opposite East Sikkim in mid-2017. Indian intervention was under the provisions of the Indo – Bhutan Treaty of Friendship of 2007 and was a case of helping safeguard the security of a smaller neighbouring state while concurrently enhancing own mutual security. This is a case of classic adherence, to the concept of net security.

Challenges to India Being a Net Security Provider-India is considered to be a NSP primarily from two perspectives: from a strategic perspective of maintaining a secure, open and democratic environment in the Indo – Pacific Region

and secondly, as a regional power capable of contributing towards governance of global commons and countering transnational threats. The primary geographic foot prints for this role overlap with the area of interest to China. A competition to emerge as a NSP of choice, for the neighbouring nations is thus, inherent in this geopolitical relationship. The challenges that consequently emerge for India in being a NSP are as follows: -

- **Politico – Economic Limitations**-India's 'political weight' as a NSP is constrained by virtue of China (the alternative NSP of the region) being a permanent member of the UN Security Council. Economic advantage also rests with China, the second largest, US \$ 11.8 trillion economy (in terms of nominal GDP) in comparison to India's US \$ 2.45 trillion economy (nominal GDP)¹⁷. This provides China greater political muscle and surplus of funds for investing in potential partners. This remains a challenge to India being a NSP (The non-transparent nature of Chinese investments and the implications of debt trap become evident much later!).
- **Nebulous Strategic Perspective**-India has not yet published its National Security Strategy and has not laid out the road map for becoming a regional net security provider. Absence of this strategy results in capabilities of the armed forces/ forces earmarked for disaster management not getting developed to take on these responsibilities. As of now the combat equipment on the establishment of the forces gets employed for rendering assistance as a NSP. This, at best, can be an ad hoc arrangement and remains a challenge to being a NSP.
- **Constraints of Decision Making Process, Structures and Resources**-The decision to employ Indian armed forces or other agencies for providing net security, whether to assist friendly nations (on request), or for maintaining an overall secure regional environment needs to follow the democratic process. Divergence of views on considerations of ethnicity, religious affinities and various other internal and external considerations results in slowing the speed of response. The process gets further delayed due to absence of permanent tri service joint command, control and staff structures. Commitments of security forces along the active borders and on internal security also place limitations on the level of resources that can be spared without making own situation vulnerable.
- **Inadequate Defence Industrial Base and Reliance on Defence Imports**-India has an unenviable situation of being the largest importers of defence equipment, with nearly 60 per cent of the inventory of the armed forces being imported. The indigenous defence industrial base is weak and many of the arms and equipment are manufactured under license. This results in India's inability to export even those few weapons and equipment that are manufactured domestically. Also, the dependence on other countries for weapons, ammunition and technology, impacts India's strategic independence in taking decisions as a NSP.

Is India a Net Security Provider?

As would be evident from consideration above that India is viewed as a NSP and the expectation is of "leadership role in Indian Ocean security and throughout the broader region". Its capability as a NSP would be considered in the context of following roles:-

- Enhancing mutual security by assisting neighbouring countries address their concerns, if invited to do so.
- Capacity building and capability development of friendly nations to enable them to address their security challenges independently, while working towards common strategic goals.
- Presence and rapid response in maritime domain to reduce common threats and facilitate unhindered movement across seas.
- Providing assistance in the event of natural disasters.
- Play a decisive role in addressing regional security issues.

An objective analysis would suggest that India's primacy as a NSP presently lies in the maritime domain, where its nearly 135 ships and 235 aircraft navy has substantial capacity to provide a reasonably secure environment at sea, and to provide HADR. Numerous successes of navy and coast guard in the anti-piracy operations, regular joint exercises and friendly port calls to the countries of Indo Pacific, towards East and West make it a potent instrument, of maintaining a rule based order in the un governed global maritime commons. To enhance its presence in the Indian Ocean region, India is interacting with Seychelles to jointly develop "Assumption Island"¹⁸ and with Mauritius to develop the "Agalega Island"¹⁹. To make up for the limited foot-print of its navy, India is engaged in joint exercises/ dialogues like MILAN, MALABAR and Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) with neighbours and partners in security.

Towards capability development of friendly nations, India is assisting friendly countries in military training, hydrographic survey and building domain awareness. It is also exporting/ providing limited military hardware like ships (fast attack craft), coastal surveillance radars, helicopters (Dhruv) and aircraft (Dornier) to Seychelles, Mauritius, Maldives and Sri Lanka etc. Considerable scope for enhancing such cooperation however exists.

However, with respect to assisting its neighbours in maintaining security, India has remained circumspect by adhering to the norms of international behaviour. The response to requests, from Sri Lanka, Maldives and in the recent case of Bhutan (Doklam) has been in accordance with either treaty provisions, or on specific requests by the concerned government.

The primary weakness of being a strong NSP lies in the field of playing a decisive role in addressing regional security situations, be it the dynamics of stability in Afghanistan, Maldives, Nepal or playing a role in addressing the Rohingya crisis. This requires further crystallization of National Security Strategy, and enhancement of political weight in organizations like the UN. It also requires combining military, diplomatic, economic, technological and soft power dimensions of India's capabilities to emerge as a multifaceted security provider of choice in this 'contested area of influence'.

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Conclusion

The idea of India being a 'Net Security Provider (NSP)' still seems new to the strategic community, even within India. This is not as much about lack of India's capacity, as for want of a considered discourse on the multifaceted subject of net security, and for lack of convergence over the perception of 'threats', against which the security needs to be provided. Various perspectives of being a NSP have been highlighted in this paper and India's capability in each of these dimensions has been critically commented upon.

In essence, India needs to define its strategy for being a NSP, as part of its overall National Security Strategy. It also needs to evolve a shared security perspective with its neighbours and friendly partners, and develop a common approach to addressing these. Concurrently, India must develop capacities and enhance capabilities for a speedy and assured response. Finally, as India's stature grows, it would become imperative to complement its response capabilities with economic assistance and political heft. This must however be done with characteristic Indian approach of adherence to international rules based order, benign and transparent approach.

Conscious of the expectations from a NSP and aware of the challenges, India should work towards filling this void for enhancing peace and stability for unhindered economic growth of the region.

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Comprehensive UN Reforms and India

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Abstract

Effective international cooperation is at the heart of a functional and responsive multilateral system in the 21st century. While all major UN structures created by the UN Charter follow the democratic principle of equity in decision-making, only the UN Security Council continues to remain outside this framework. India has a direct interest in reforming the UN. India's own experience so far of not being part of an equitable decision-making process in the Security Council has major implications for India's strategic interests. These include its territorial integrity, effective international cooperation against terrorism, the rational deployment of Indian UN peacekeepers, and a peaceful international environment to enable India's massive programme for national transformation to be successful. Opposition to Security Council reform comes primarily from the five current permanent members of the Security Council, led by China, who do not want to give up their privileged status and participate in the work of a reformed Security Council organized on democratic principles. However, existing UN procedures can be used for reforming the Security Council through a UN General Assembly resolution which needs 129 countries to co-sponsor it. This should be a major goal for the 75th anniversary of the UN in 2022.

Introduction

The modern multilateral system is poised on the cusp of its 100th anniversary. This is an opportune moment to reiterate why original stakeholders in multilateralism like India are advocating comprehensive United Nations (UN) reforms and focus on the way ahead to achieve this objective. The fundamental organizing principle of multilateralism is effective international cooperation. The Treaty of Versailles of 1919, created the League of Nations “to promote international co-operation and to achieve international peace and security by the acceptance of obligations not to resort to war.”¹ Although, the League of Nations failed in its objective, its successor organization, the UN, incorporated the principle of international cooperation “to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war”.² Effective international cooperation on the basis of equality in decision-making lies at the heart of comprehensive UN reforms.

Democratic and Equitable Representation in Decision-making

The concept of equality in decision-making already exists in the UN Charter. Article 18 of the Charter, gives each country one vote in the UN General Assembly (UNGA). This principle also applies to structures of global governance under the UNGA, such as the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).³

The Charter applies democratic principles for decision-making by the UNGA and its subsidiary bodies (i.e. those which submit reports to it). In the absence of consensus, decisions are taken by majority vote. For “important

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questions”, including elections to the non-permanent seats of the UN Security Council (UNSC), and the ECOSOC, a two-thirds majority vote is required.⁴ When the UNGA voted to establish the Human Rights Council (HRC), consisting of 47-member countries, in 2006, its decision was taken through a majority vote of 170-4, with the USA, Israel, Palau and Marshall Islands opposing it.⁵ The ECOSOC and HRC, in turn, apply the same democratic principle of majority voting while taking decisions.

When the UN Charter was amended by the UNGA to reform and expand the UNSC and the ECOSOC in 1963, and then in 1971 to further expand the ECOSOC, the decision of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) was taken through this democratic method by adopting resolutions with two-thirds majority, without any veto. The effectiveness, relevance and sustainability of democratic decision-making in the UN was most recently seen in the consensus UNGA decision of September 2015, on adopting Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, with its core 17 Sustainable Development Goals.⁶

India’s advocacy of UN reforms comes as part of a global “surge to democracy” that is the hallmark of international relations during the past 70 years.⁷ India’s advocacy of the democratization of multilateral relations as the core of comprehensive UN reforms is intrinsically linked to India’s emergence as the world’s largest functioning democracy since August 1947. As Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in his maiden address to the UNGA, in September 2014, “India speaks not just for itself, but also for the cause of justice, dignity, opportunity and prosperity around the world. It is also because of this timeless current of thought, that India has an unwavering belief in multilateralism.”⁸

The UNSC

The UN Charter gives “primary responsibility” for maintaining international peace and security to the UNSC, and all UN member-states affirm their agreement to “carry out the decisions” of the UNSC. However, Article 27.3 of the UN Charter deviates from upholding the principle of equality when regulating decision-making in the UNSC. It stipulates that decisions by the UNSC on non-procedural issues can be taken only with the “concurring votes” of all its five permanent members.⁹ Often referred to as the “right to veto”, this provision was a result of negotiations between the USA, USSR and UK at Yalta in early 1945.¹⁰ The “right to veto”, was extended to all five permanent members, in the final text of the UN Charter, signed by the 51 original members of the UN (including India) on 26 June 1945. The contradiction between the process of decision-making in the UNSC and decision-making in the UNGA is a major anomaly in the functioning of the UN. It has an impact on the work of the UN in all its three pillars – peace and security, socio-economic development, and the upholding of fundamental human rights.

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This is the context for the current campaign for comprehensive UN reforms. The objective of the campaign is to amend the provisions of the UN Charter, applicable to the UNSC, according to the mandate already given by the leaders of all UNGA member states at the World Summit of 2005. The wording of the mandate is specific and emphasizes why UNSC reform is urgently required. World leaders mandated “early reform of the Security Council – an essential element of our overall effort to reform the United Nations – in order to make it more broadly representative, efficient and transparent, and thus to further enhance its effectiveness and the legitimacy and implementation of its decisions.”¹¹

The first reform of the UNSC took place in 1963, when the UNGA adopted a resolution by two-thirds majority to amend Articles 23 and 27 of the UN Charter. This was a result of the admission of a large number of former colonial “developing” countries into the UNGA, following the adoption of the UNGA’s historic Decolonization Resolution in

1960.¹² India played an active role in this process, imbued by its own historical experience of breaking free from colonial rule, and by its expectations of effective international cooperation to create a more equitable and prosperous world. The 1963 amendment to the UN Charter expanded the membership of the UNSC from 11 to 15, with the addition of four more non-permanent members essentially representing newly independent developing countries.¹³ As India stated in the UNGA, “The negotiations have been successful because the African-Asian delegations were solid on this question.”¹⁴

Decision-making in the UNSC

For many former colonial countries who were elected non-permanent members of the UNSC, the reality remained that as far as decision-making was concerned, nothing had changed after the amendment to the UN Charter in 1963. The permanent members dominated decision-making, invoking the arbitrary “right to veto” powers of Article 27.3 of the UN Charter when confronted with issues they opposed. This habit was adopted even by “new” permanent members which had not been imperial powers. For example, the first UNSC veto cast on 25 August 1972 by communist China, which replaced the Republic of China in the UN in 1971, opposed the admission of newly independent Bangladesh to the UN.¹⁵ It is relevant to recall today, in the context of the process of UNSC reforms, that the entry of the People’s Republic of China into the UN as a permanent member of the UNSC was a direct result of a UNGA resolution, and not part of any “back-room deal” between the major powers or “consensus”. The decision of the UNGA was adopted by a majority vote of 76 for, 35 against, with 17 abstentions.¹⁶

Permanent members of the UNSC led by China today, form the core of the status-quo countries, opposed to the democratic reform of the UNSC. The position of the permanent members on protecting their “right to veto” privilege, has been significantly hardened, through a decision of the UNSC invoking its “provisional” working procedures (which have not been finalized since 1946) to exercise the power to initiate decisions (as “pen-holders”) on specific issues on the UNSC’s agenda, without reference to the UNGA. The function of “pen-holders”¹⁷ effectively adds another barrier to attempts by the UNSC’s non-permanent members to influence decision-making.

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This background is essential, to appreciate why comprehensive reform of the UN must focus on the decision-making provisions of the UN Charter. The proposals for reforming the UNSC by adding a few countries, without “the right to veto” as permanent or long-term members, hence, do not address this issue.

The Process of UNSC Reform

The question today is how can the UNGA implement its mandate to reform the UNSC, and what should be India’s role in this effort?

The reform of the UNSC, requires the UNGA to pass a resolution to amend the UN Charter¹⁸, creating additional permanent seats, to offset the existing dominance (and shortcomings) of the five permanent members. Only then, can countries be elected by the UNGA to become additional permanent members. Any UNGA resolution to amend the UN Charter for reforming the UNSC will also have to look at Article 27.3, which contains the “right to veto”.

The current process for reforming the UNSC began on 14 November 1979, when India’s Permanent Representative Ambassador Brajesh Mishra, led a successful effort of 10 developing countries to seek greater equity and representation in the UNSC by putting this issue on the agenda of the UNGA.¹⁹ In December 1992, 35 members of the nonaligned movement, including India, moved the UNGA to ask the UN Secretary General (UNSG) to table a report on a “possible review of the membership of the Security Council”.²⁰ Based on the report of the UNSG, the UNGA decided in

December 1993 to set up an Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) for member states to “consider all aspects of the question of increase in the membership of the Security Council”.²¹

Contrary to some perceptions, UNSC reform does not require complete consensus. In 1998, the UNGA unanimously decided that UNSC reform requires “the affirmative vote of at least two thirds of the Members of the General Assembly”²². This was also consistent with the provisions of the UN Charter, which require a two-thirds majority vote on “important questions”.²³

The UNGA’s mandate of “early reforms” of the UNSC given in 2005 has been implemented in an incremental manner so far. First, the UNGA has given a formal structure to the mandate by launching inter-governmental negotiations (IGN) in 2007.²⁴ Second, the UNGA has decided in 2008 on five interlinked parameters for IGN negotiations: categories of membership; the question of the veto; regional representation; size of an enlarged Security Council and working methods of the Council; and the relationship between the Council and the General Assembly.²⁵ Third, on 14 September 2015 the UNGA has adopted unanimously, a text authored by 122 member states (including India, the UK, France, Germany, Japan, Brazil, the entire African Group and many developing countries) containing their views on each of the five issues being negotiated in the IGN, for integration into a Resolution on UNSC reforms.²⁶ This text has been referred to as the “Kutesa Consensus”.²⁷

Gauging the mood of the UNGA, against the arbitrariness of UNSC decision-making, as reflected in the “right to veto” provision, France took the initiative in 2013 to “regulate the use of the veto”, by seeking a voluntary “collective” commitment from the five permanent members of the UNSC not to use the veto “where a mass atrocity has been ascertained”.²⁸ So far, none of the other four permanent members have responded positively to this initiative, although some calculations project that more than 75 member states of the UNGA support the French move.²⁹ This may be seen as a first sign of flexibility, by one of the permanent members of the UNSC, on the “right to veto” provision, which can influence the UNGA negotiations on this issue in the broader context of UNSC reforms.

Current Situation

Since September 2015, momentum on UNSC reforms in the UNGA has faltered. This is due to the “missed opportunities by pro-reform States”³⁰ and the aggressive diplomacy of communist China,³¹ which has reportedly used “levers of power and influence, including economic pressure”.³² The result has seen an abrupt replacement of the IGN’s successful Chairman, a distortion of the agreed parameters of text-based negotiations³³, and, most significantly, a visible dilution³⁴ in the rock-solid African Group support, for the ‘Kutesa Consensus’. During the period between 2015 and 2018, China has succeeded in diverting the UNGA’s attention away from efforts to table a UNGA resolution based on the President of the UNGA’s document of 14 September 2015, and preoccupy the UNGA instead with responding to “food for thought” papers, which seek to pre-empt the tabling of any possible UNGA resolution.³⁵ However, a growing body of opinion in the UNGA against the arbitrary privileges of the permanent members of the UNSC provides fertile ground to carry forward the initiative for UNSC reforms.³⁶

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Implications for India

Since 1948, India has understood the need for reforming the UNSC, to enable it to participate on an equitable basis in decision-making. India was not a member of the UNSC in January 1948 (having conceded the UNGA election to Ukraine in November 1947) when the UNSC deflected India’s complaint on the violation of its territorial integrity

in Jammu and Kashmir.³⁷ India was not in the decision-making process of the UNSC and its Sanctions Committee, when action to fetter terrorists who had attacked India, including in the infamous 26 November 2008 terror attack on Mumbai, was blocked by the veto of China.³⁸ India has not been in the decision-making process at critical periods when the UNSC formulates, or renews, or changes mid-stream, its mandate for UN peacekeepers, despite contributing thousands of Indian UN peacekeeping troops, especially in the beleaguered UN peacekeeping missions in Africa and West Asia.³⁹ Today, as a major contributor to the success of Agenda 2030, whose overarching goal is the eradication of poverty by December 2030, India has to be in the decision-making structure of the UNSC, to ensure a supportive external environment of peace and stability for sustainable development.

The Way Ahead

In the light of the push-back by the status-quo countries led by China, it is now necessary for pro-reform countries like India to think innovatively on the strategy of tabling a UNGA resolution to amend the UN Charter and reform the UNSC.

The necessary procedural framework already exists to table such a resolution, both within and outside the IGN process. Every year, the UNGA adopts a “roll-over decision”, proposed by the outgoing President of the UNGA, to inscribe the “Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Related Matters” on the agenda of the next UNGA Session.

Under this agenda item, any member state is allowed by the working procedures of the UNGA to “sponsor” a draft resolution, which contains the key issues and a recommendation. In the case of UNSC reforms, the key issues are already identified by the UNGA’s decision, accepted by all the member-states on the five areas for reform.⁴⁰ The recommendation has to focus on amending specific provisions of the UN Charter as a consequence of these reforms. A successful UNGA resolution would need 129 co-sponsoring countries. Conducting a diplomatic outreach to get these co-sponsors should be a priority for India and other pro-reform countries as the UN approaches its 75th anniversary in September 2020. The success of UNSC reforms would be significant, at a time of emerging confrontation between the United States and China for dominance of the multilateral system. Peace and development are intrinsically interlinked in a globalized world.

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Section VI

India's Defence Capability

The Enunciation of India's Military Strategy

Lt Gen (Dr) Rakesh Sharma, UYSM, AVSM, VSM (Retd)[@]

Abstract

It is a strange paradox that India, an emerging power, aspiring to be a regional power, does not have a formal 'National Security Strategy' (NSS). It is obvious hence that the decision making on the typology of future wars remains in an imbroglio, under the overall ambit of the Government, exercised through the bureaucrats, only when and if the need arises! The NSS from which should flow the defence policy or military strategy will remain undeclared as a formal enunciation. In the absence of a NSS, the biggest gap that persists in our security system is that we do not have a formal, coherent, and updated 'national defence policy' which is integrated with national security policies. Evolution of military strategy is two-way traffic between the Government and the military professionals, in which, in a democratic dispensation like ours, the final call will rest with the Government.

Introduction

There is enough mystification in typologies of security related strategies a nation needs to enunciate. In larger context the confusion emanates from the Western literature, especially the USA, in the form of National Security Strategy, Joint Doctrines, Military Strategies, Quadrennial Defence Reviews, Service Specific Strategies, Guidelines and the like issued in regularity. Similar content is now being placed forth by Russian Federation, People's Republic of China (PRC), and many other nations. China's Military Strategic Guidelines is the document of China's military strategy. India has sporadically followed suit on Service/operation specific ones; however, those enunciated have also not kept abreast with the dynamism of the current and prospective environment. The foremost question for India is that though we have fought many a conventional war, and are thickly mired in insurgencies, counter infiltration and counter terrorism, we have managed without formal enunciation of strategies at regular intervals. The moot enquiry, hence, is that does India require enunciated formalised documents, or that the vagueness of status quo is sufficient to cope with any situation that the nation may face.

India is a nation that has unsettled borders, and is also incessantly deployed in countering infiltration and terrorism, and left-wing extremism. The transformation evident in the Chinese military is of great significance, in all its manifestations, ostensibly the force modernisation plans are linked with the Chinese dream of becoming a great power by 2049. Pakistan's intransigence to support terrorist organisations and proxy war in J&K is well chronicled. In matters of China-Pakistan collusion, Pakistan has already upgraded its security calculus with China through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a 15-year plan starting 2015, that is to be completed by 2030. The collusive nuclear warhead-ballistic missile-military hardware nexus between China and Pakistan, described by both as an 'all-weather friendship', has grown to menacing proportions. Pakistan has long been a difficult and disruptive neighbour to

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Afghanistan, hoping to limit India's influence there, and cultivating radical groups within Afghanistan as proxies. It has augmented Afghanistan's instability by providing intelligence, weapons, and protection to the Afghan Taliban and the Haqqani network.¹ It is obvious that the anti-Indian-ness that is a DNA of the Pakistan Army – which virtually controls the polity of the nation, is unlikely to be done away with, in foreseeable future. In a similar context, despite regular interactions at the highest level, little movement is evident on the India-China Boundary question. The Indian Ocean Region portends of an arena that behaves for capabilities to stand firm under grave provocation.

The standing affirmation of 'short intense wars' if any notwithstanding, even assurance of conventional deterrence against traditional adversaries demands a military strategy blessed by the Government. The central theme of this treatise, to delve into the rationale of making a military strategy, and what would constitute as backgrounder and perspectives.

The Paradox of India's National Security Strategy

It is a strange paradox that India, an emerging power, aspiring to be a regional power, does not have a formal 'national security strategy'. Consequently, 'contingency driven adhocism', derived from individual inclinations of the leadership and the bureaucracy of the day, can describe India's response to most security crises.² Enunciating a military strategy has to commence with a National Apex vision statement and strategy. Contextually, the National Security Strategy (NSS) is a broad course of action or statements of guidance adopted by the government at the national level in pursuit of national objectives. It is a truism, that the NSS is underscored by the capabilities of the military.

It is a strange paradox that India, an emerging power, aspiring to be a regional power, does not have a formal 'national security strategy'. Consequently, 'contingency driven adhocism', derived from individual inclinations of the leadership and the bureaucracy of the day, can describe India's response to most security crises.

If Clausewitz has to be believed and war is continuation of politics by other means, then indeed the Government has the right to dictate on the typology of next war to be prosecuted by the military. The Generalship and the equivalence may war game the planning and conduct of campaigns and battles, the movement and disposition of forces incessantly; in finality, all these have the potential for reaching a naught at the zero-hour, on the altar of lack of Governmental nod. It has been put across in distinct and pointed framework that "...the principle of civilian supremacy means not only carrying out the policy directives of civilian authorities, but also refraining from pre-empting them. By discussing in public, questions of force or when and how to deploy it, generals can pre-empt their leaders or vitiate policy choices."³ The Indian military, despite growth in its geostrategic importance, increased technological and organizational sophistication and use in internal security operations, stands firmly subordinate to civilian leaders of all parties and ideologies.⁴ On the involvement of politicians in military issues, it is has been stated that, '...the Indian politician, in spite of his strident emphasis on the principle of civil control, keeps his distance from the military and delegates the responsibility for security related matters to civil servants or technocrats.'⁵ Again on similar lines, '...the Indian politician is intuitively aware that there are serious flaws in the national security structure, but political survival remains his first priority. His comfort level with the bureaucrat being high, he is happy to leave the management of defence and security matters in his hands.'⁶ It is obvious hence that the decision making on the typology of future wars remains in an imbroglio, under the overall ambit of the Government, exercised through the bureaucrats, only when and if the need arises! The NSS from which should flow the defence policy or military strategy will remain undeclared as a formal enunciation.

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The Indian 'National Security Strategy', in the current context, must not only deal with threats to our strategic autonomy as well as the external military threats to the nation, it must also deal with internal threats, threats to our core values and other non-traditional threats that face the nation. It must also take into account that external and internal threats need to be countered not only by the armed forces and other elements of hard power, but also require political and diplomatic means to deal with them. Further, the national security strategy must also aim to achieve our national aspirations in the domestic, regional and global contexts, in a time-bound manner. These goals would include achievement of non-traditional aspects of security like economic and human development, which contribute to human security, as well as aspects like energy and environmental security. In the absence of a 'NSS', the biggest gap that persists in our security system is that we do not have a formal, coherent, and updated 'National Defence Policy' which is integrated with national security policies.⁷ The fact of the matter is that the NSS may not be forthcoming as an enunciated document. Again, if military strategy is compounding of ideas to be implemented by military organizations to pursue desired strategic goals, then how can the strategy be formulated in a vacuum? The duty of military leaders is to see that political leaders do not fail because they were poorly advised or poorly served by soldiers. Politics creates war, so success or failure in war is ultimately the responsibility of the political leadership.⁸ The military professionals have to plan to prosecute the next war – which will be way unlike any previous wars, and cannot but conceptualise the military strategy, create capabilities and train for it. This is even if at the times of conventional war in future, the military strategy is underscored by restrictions by the Government, and needs modifications at the stage of executing it.

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Enunciation of India's Military Strategy

“In theory, foreign policy determines military strategy...Reality is rarely so simple.”⁹ Though Military strategy is an offshoot of all-encompassing NSS, many military strategies are created as post-script to major events, internal political and bureaucratic compromises and inter-service differing priorities and hence may not be fully adapted to the external threat/s. It is also understandable that war fighting is a national endeavour, military strategy is therefore but one (though major) component of the national power, as it encompasses the entire spectrum of social, economic, diplomatic, and psychological efforts.

It is necessary to distinguish between doctrine and strategy, terms which are sometimes taken in as synonymous. Both the UK and NATO define doctrine as, ‘fundamental principles by which military forces guide their actions in support of objectives. It is authoritative but requires judgement in application’.¹⁰ “At the very heart of war lies doctrine. It represents the central beliefs for waging war in order to achieve victory. Doctrine is of the mind, a network of faith and knowledge reinforced by experience which lays the pattern for the utilisation of men, equipment and tactics. It is fundamental to sound judgement.”¹¹ Military doctrine is an important part of the building material for military strategy. It represents central beliefs or principles for how to wage war in order to achieve the desired military ends. Military strategy uses the available military means in specific ways to achieve military strategic ends (objectives) in a given strategic context. The key point is, while doctrine has implications for present and future force structure, training, and equipment (to the extent that these are endorsed politically), military strategy in a given situation must use the available force structure, training, and equipment. Military doctrine is an important part of the building material for military strategy. It represents central beliefs or principles for how to wage war in order to achieve the

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desired military ends. Doctrine thus provides ways to use military means against a given type of threat or scenario.¹²

What then is military strategy? In ancient Greece, it was the “art of the general.” In the USA, it is defined as the art and science of employing the armed forces of a nation to secure the objectives of national policy by the application of force, or the threat of force.¹³ It has also been defined as consisting of objectives, ways and means, as an equation: Strategy = Ends + Ways + Means, broadly:-

- Ends -Objectives towards which one strives
- Ways -Course of action
- Means -Instruments by which some end can be achieved¹⁴

Military strategy consists of the establishment of military objectives, the formulation of military strategic concepts to accomplish the objectives, and the use of military resources to implement the concepts. The equation above clearly denotes that military strategy has to be enunciated with deep forethought and analysis, and not in the heat of the battle, to achieve the ends, with the means at hand, in ways or concepts of employment as pre-decided. It is also imperative to mention that the ‘ends’ as contemplated by the political hierarchy will need translation to military ‘end state’ – both of which will be different. Paraphrasing it, military strategy becomes a plan that signifies utilisation of means and concepts of employment of military, to achieve political ends. If achieving deterrence – credible, punitive or dissuasive, is the strategy, then it has to be proven by enunciation of military doctrines and concepts, creating requisite military capabilities to operationalise them and to train or exercise in a composite manner to attain the military aims.

In India, the enunciation of a military strategy is singularly problematic due to the sheer cleavages that exist with the polity, especially what it desires of the military in the eventuality of war or in internal situations. Inter-service issues too abound in formulation of one. As an example, the cold start/proactive strategy articulated post 26/11 terrorist attack on Indian Parliament and Operation Parakarm on 2002, was an Army-specific one, as the other two services had their reservations. Certain significant issue in formulation of military strategy for India area as below:-

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- In military strategy the ultimate objectives are those of national strategy. While conventional wars may be passé or limited, the military hierarchy must involve the polity at the highest of levels – to obtain guidance and directions.
- Some may say that it is unwise, impossible, or even dangerous to enunciate openly a military strategy. However, enunciation formally denotes arrival of India in international stage as a nation in league with others who do so. Military strategy may however be declaratory and/or classified or even deceptional.
- Indian Military Strategy must be joint in all its forms as its wont should be, cumulating utilisation of national power holistically. It will be subsequently necessary to translate into Service –Specific Concepts and Plans, at strategic and operational levels – in the latter case also with corresponding tri-services echelons.
- Long-range strategies must be based on estimates of future threats, objectives, and requirements, and are therefore not constrained by current force posture. Military objectives and military strategic concepts of a military strategy establish requirements for resources, and are in turn influenced by the availability of resources. If we fail to consider military resources as an element of military strategy, we may be faced with what has been called a strategy-capabilities mismatch. That is why operational strategies must be based on capabilities, and not

threats alone.

- India will need more than one military strategy at a time. For instance, against known adversaries conventionally, combating insurgencies and terrorism, information warfare and cyber security, utilisation of Special Forces, nuclear war, as a net security provider in the region, and the like.
- Military strategy can change rapidly and frequently, since objectives can change or shifting precepts of warfare. War fighting strategies may have failure rate or achieve less than the envisaged end state. The latter requires in-depth analysis and revalidation, to repeat known pitfalls. A duly empowered tri-service standing organisation (including academics and veterans) contemplating Doctrines, Strategies and Concepts is imperative in this fast-changing world.

In Sum

It is the duty of military leaders to ensure that political leaders are adequately advised or appraised, to ensure that sufficient energies in peace time are cumulated between the military and the polity to evolve military strategy. The perceptible political (and national) will and commitment to order execution of the military plans, conceptualised in peacetime, is a force multiplier. In this formulation, it is apparent that the political dynamism is part and parcel of the national security apparatus and peace time planning process for evolving the military strategy. Any cleavage in this is bound to be evident by the hesitancy in committal of military power when need be, in assuring deterrence or in stipulating grave restrictions that would shackle the military in optimal utilisation of its power towards war-winning strategies.

In this matter, since ‘...politics creates war, so success or failure in war is ultimately the responsibility of the political leadership.¹⁵ In a conjoined manner, national policy “ends” can be expressed as military objectives and “ways” are planned and trained for various methods of applying military force, through creation of “means” or military resources (manpower, material, money, forces, logistics, etc.). In essence, this becomes an examination of courses of action (termed military strategic concepts) that are designed to achieve the military objective. Inevitably, evolution of military strategy is two-way traffic between the Government and the military professionals, in which, in a democratic dispensation like ours, the final call will rest with the Government. As has been argued earlier conduct of a military campaign will ever remain for political ends. As a corollary, the Government and the military conjoined have to be accountable to the populace on the success or otherwise of the military strategy, in retrospective.

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Force Structuring and Development of Land Forces

Lt Gen Arun Kumar Sahni, PVSM, UYSM, SM, VSM (Retd)[@]

Abstract

For India, the existing threats along the national boundaries, demands capability enhancement of the Indian military, backed by adequate financial support. A sound and modern military is to be conceptualized, based on an enunciated National Security Strategy (NSS), Joint Operational Doctrines and Military Strategies, rooted in ground realities, and evolving RMA. Injection of niche and disruptive technology and raising of Pockets of Excellence Forces have become a sine qua non for Indian military to prevail in future conflict scenarios. The primary requirement is to raise the Special Forces Headquarter, while seeking the official mandate for its employment in strategic out of area contingencies. There is a need to internalize capacity building within the Army for tackling the cyber threat and the other disruptive changes, without waiting for Government sanctions for Cyber and Space Commands. There is no dearth of technical and domain expertise within the Army itself and it only needs to be harnessed. There is also a need for capability development to undertake 'Out of Area Operations', and HADR missions, while ensuring the agility of our reserves. Towards this there is a need to restructure the resources under 12th plan.

Introduction

The regional and global security environment is presently getting polarized and vitiated like never before, due to a multitude of reasons, with corresponding security overtones for India. The impact of geo-economics in the Indo-Pacific has focused greater attention towards this region, resulting in jostling for space/influence by the sole super power and the emerging contender China. India due to its geographical location and national interests, cannot be a non-committal bystander, and has become an anchor for the democratic world order to counter the growing belligerence of China in the region. Much against China's desire, this looks as a nexus by the US, towards its global aspirations. This coupled with other events like border stand-offs along the large unresolved border between the two neighbours, India's divergent views on China's 'Belt Road Initiative' and opposition to its overt support to Pakistan and increasing influence with the other South Asian States, has created an underlying tension in the India-China relations. With respect to Pakistan and the existing animosity, there is a hardening of political resolve against its machinations and direct involvement in supporting separatist and terrorist acts within India. This has exacerbated the unique external security challenge for India. It has to guard its disputed and largely un-demarcated international border from two inimical neighbours. The collusivity between Pakistan and China against Indian interests and the fact that the three countries are nuclear powers, adds a unique complexity to the security dimension. In addition, the dissonance in the internal security canvas, within the country, adds another facet to the security challenges that the Armed Forces in general and the Indian Army in particular has to be prepared to address.

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India's Defence Capability

The existing threats along the national boundaries, demands a capability enhancement of the Armed Forces/ Indian Army, which in turn is only possible with timely and adequate financial support. Their resources are limited due to the nations other competing priorities, for allocating financial resources for equally critical socio-economic activities. Therefore, Indian Army's approach towards capacity building and force structuring has to be innovative and incremental, while ensuring at all times that it is capable of mitigating the existing and emerging threat vectors to the nation. The process has to be conscious of not falling prey to the age-old axiom that "militaries always prepare for the last war". Crystal gazing to the shape and contours of future war are therefore a necessity that needs to be examined in detail. This demands a periodical veracity check for timely modulations that need to be undertaken based on extensive and deliberate examination of the ground realities contextual to changing geo-political equations and geo-economics.

For the process of force structuring/ restructuring and capability development to be holistic and all encompassing, requires that it be conceptualized based on an enunciated NSS, Joint Operational Doctrines and Military/War Waging Strategies. In the absence of the national document and the generalized content of the Joint doctrine released last year, the anchor for the present capacity enhancement in the respective Services is based on the Long Term Integrated Perspective Plan (LTPP), covering a span of 15 years, commencing from 2012. It is this document that leads to evolving Service specific policy planning and force development matrix. The basis for the above documents has been the 'Raksha Mantri's Operational Directive' issued in 2009. This process has been extremely time consuming and inflexible to accommodate the dynamic changes required. In addition, where the change is a whole package, it gets approved piecemeal, resulting in damaging the efficiency of the existing set ups and the new set is inefficient due to the shortcomings in the initial approval. The fear of this has made the Services hesitate to initiate restructuring in time. It is in this framework that the issue of enhancing operational preparedness will be examined and measures recommended.

For the process of force structuring/ restructuring and capability development to be holistic and all encompassing, requires that it be conceptualized based on an enunciated NSS, Joint Operational Doctrines and Military/ War Waging Strategies.

The aim of this article is to determine the contours for Force Structuring /Restructuring and Capability enhancement for the Indian Army.

Changing Nature of Conflict

Capability development is contingent on the threat spectrum faced by the nation. The canvas is chequered, for conflicts across the world, the last few decades are indicative of alternative means of achieving political objectives, in addition to the traditional use of kinetic power, necessitating that the militaries relook at their capabilities to meet the emerging challenges/ threat spectrum. This is substantiated when we critically examine the conflicts commencing from the First Gulf War (Operation Desert Shield followed by Desert Storm), to the operationalization of 'Gerasimov Doctrine/ GibrinayaVoina' by Russia, in Ukraine. This resulted in the seizure of Crimea and the turmoil in the Donbass region of Ukraine.

Capability development is contingent on the threat spectrum faced by the nation. The canvas is chequered, for conflicts across the world, the last few decades are indicative of alternative means of achieving political objectives, in addition to the traditional use of kinetic power, necessitating that the militaries relook at their capabilities to meet the emerging challenges/ threat spectrum

The first highlighted the technological advancement in the classical weapon delivery systems/ platforms, munitions, force-multipliers, advent of standoff weapon systems, enhanced lethality and accuracy in the ammunition systems, including terminal guidance and revolutionary enhancements in the means of real time Intelligence Surveillance and

Reconnaissance (ISR) systems. The latter has shown the effectiveness of exploitation of non-traditional means to influence the outcome of conflict, in combination with kinetic forces to achieve the desired results. It heralds the need for large armies to harness skills to combat and wage 'hybrid warfare'.

The future threat spectrum for India with immediate and long-term implications can be classified as under: -

- **Threats by Non-State Players**-The increasing threat posed from non-state actors and at times supported by an inimical State, eg the on-going 'proxy war' or State sponsored terrorism or in the State of J & K. Its manifestation could be propagated in the form of terrorist / extremist action, supporting insurgency and waging an unrestricted war. It could be in the form of the Sub Conventional War or similar to the ongoing militancy of LWE. The increased fundamentalism and radicalization of segments of the society are of concern, especially due to the growing footprint of ISIS and such like international radical groups.
- **Disruptive Threats**- These are the threats that are a result of breakthrough technological developments in the field of warfare i.e. Information, Cyber, Space and Directed Energy Weapons. The Information Warfare exploits cyber, media including social media in impacting perception management and cognitive decision making of the adversarial nations leadership. This is an area of high vulnerability and high probability. These are also classified as instruments of Non-Contact Wars and India has to take urgent measures to safeguard itself. Chinese focus on 'domination of the electronic spectrum' by 2050, demands a look at India's capability and the counter measures to defeat exploitation by Electronic Warfare
- **Conventional Threats**- These are the existing military threats from Pakistan and China, in the conventional domain. India has already had four major conflicts with the neighbours and the 'bone of contention' still remains unresolved. Our ability to respond effectively will be made harder by the growing use of asymmetric and hybrid tactics by these States, combining economic coercion, disinformation, proxies, terrorism and criminal activity, blurring the boundaries between civil disorder and military conflict.
- **Threats due to Instability/ strife in the near abroad**- India's cannot insulate itself from the ongoing strife in its immediate and extended neighbourhood. An outcome of the state of development, internal dissonance within these States and in some cases tacit support to radical and fundamentalist forces. It has therefore to be prepared to counter / insulate itself from the internecine conflict between competing interest groups in areas like Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria, with their negative influences on a portion of the Indian population. Their instability can further fuel terrorism and lead to creation of sympathetic support groups (sleeper cells) within the country. It is important to differentiate the threats emanating from these countries for the nature of threats that emanate from the weakness of the smaller countries and those from the intentions of the bigger countries are different and need different responses.
- **Catastrophic Threats** -Acquisition, possessing and possible use of weapons of mass destruction by terrorists, non-state actors or inimical states would be catastrophic. This is a threat that all security agencies need to be conscious of and institute measures for constant monitoring.
- **Resource Related Threats** -India like the other nations of the developing world, in the foreseeable future is likely to see conflict for resources like water, food, and energy. This is a result of unfettered population explosion in the region, leading to sharing of the available tangible resources. Therefore, the impact and likelihood of pandemics can be a cause of internal and external strife. There is a need to be conscious of the impact of environmental degradation and demographic changes and its impact on the security canvas.

Guiding Parameters for Capacity Building

It is imperative that changes in military organizations' and structures be dictated by ground realities and evolving military concepts / doctrines. Towards this we need to address a few contextual questions and study the responses. Has the likelihood of conventional conflict on the Western and Northern borders diminished over the last few decades? Or is it that only the nature of conventional conflict has transcended to the 'hybrid' domain, ie 'co linear' wars – a combination of conventional and asymmetric warfare? Has there been progress in resolving the seven-decade old border disputes? Has India's Strategic nuclear arsenal helped us a total guarantee from the likelihood of a conflict in the conventional space? The unanimous answer in case of all these questions is a big No. There is therefore a need for great caution not to fall into the trap of initiating force re-structuring and capability development, based on the 'shape of future conflicts' being propounded by the major/developed nation states with corresponding changes in their structures. This is critical as the same is being resonated by some of our very senior strategic mandarins, which are influencing perceptions of an unaware polity and a civil officialdom that favours status quo or requires precedence for initiating change. It is influencing perceptions that the Indian military organisations are not as flexible, agile and integrated for the evolving threats, in comparison to some of the other major nations. Also, the threat of conventional conflict has receded and India's focus should shift to the maritime domain. Whereas there is a need for the other Services to grow as per their appreciated responsibilities/threats, the ground situation along approximately 11000 km of international borders continues to remain unchanged, if not more sinister due to increased irregular/non-state threats.

It is imperative that changes in military organizations' and structures be dictated by ground realities and evolving military concepts / doctrines.

This narrative will have to be countered by the army professionals forcefully, for it can adversely influence the political leadership and axiomatically the civilian bureaucracy in pushing for changes that may have some negative ramifications on the operational preparedness of the army. A case in point is that to steer integration in the forces, there is a need for restructuring for integrated commands of the three services. This is when there is no change to the type and shape of existing threats in the ground and maritime domain. On the other hand, the Integrated Command raised for Andaman and Nicobar has failed and responsibility once again vested on the Navy. The aim of stating this is not to debate if the decision is correct, or incorrect, but to highlight that personal egos and 'change for the sake of change' should not be undertaken.

A few issues that need to be looked at closely for guiding modulations in the Land Forces for enhancing operational efficiency are:-

- **Impact of Technology.** There is a need to harness the revolutionary technological improvements for the army in the future acquisitions and platform upgrades. The increased lethality, longer ranges and pin point accuracy, coupled with the impact of Artificial Intelligence, machine learning, advanced Robotics, Nano technology and material innovations, have increased the potency and efficiency of the traditional means of war waging systems. Advanced capabilities in drones, space based systems and now the likelihood of the pilotless aircrafts, need to be looked at as future inductions and study on their impact to the current method of war fighting formalized. The major upgrades in the ISR systems, means for synthesis / analysis of information and network enablement are other areas of changes that need to be incorporated for effectiveness of the force.
- **Emergence of New Frontiers.** The Information Communication Technology (ICT) revolution with its unique characteristic has permeated into the functioning of almost all aspects of governance, provisioning services and management of security. The salient characteristic of cyber space to transgress land frontiers with impunity, deniability and anonymity has resulted in opening of new frontiers of warfare, namely, Cyber

and Space. Restructuring in the near time-frame with existing resources is necessary to mitigate this threat. As the gestation period for maturing of a resilient and effective counter strategy can be anything from a decade upwards.

- **Terrain.** The terrain astride the northern borders and in the mountainous sub theaters along the western borders precludes ‘en masse’ application of combat forces. The deployability, at the point of application is restricted due to the terrain and the axis leading to the borders for build-up of reserves echelons, along the multiple avenues also has limited space. To facilitate speed of build-up, across mutually separate valleys there is a need for vertical lift capability. This could be either fixed wing assets with Vertical Take Off and Landing (VTOL) capacity in the future or use of rotary wing medium lift capability. Implying in both cases their availability/ procurement and construction of suitable fixed assets for their employment.
- **Infrastructure.** The two facets with respect to infrastructure development are the issue of connectivity and of billeting and logistic support facilities for the army. Both these are woefully inadequate, if not poor in this day and age. The road, rail and air infrastructure along the Northern borders requires to be build up to the LAC with China. There are large tracts that are not road connected and the present army deployment is largely dependent on-air replenishment or on porters & ponies. Also, the fact that the terrain is primarily sedimentary rocks does not make the road construction task easier. The sparse population, ethno tribal feelings/ aspirations, lack of building material and resources, fragility of the terrain for construction, needs to be overcome by a combination of ways. Piecemeal survey of projects vis a vis the advantages of ‘end to end’ survey for provision of the roads and rail linkages is a priority for shortest and most stable connectivity. Also, the other major aspect is realistic allocation of budgets, based on the reality of inadequacy of building material and resources in the border areas and not on officiously pegged yardsticks applicable in the Indian heartland/ western borders.
- **Address Existing Shortfalls/ Adhocism.** The present PAS of the Indian Army is hinged on duality of divergent tasks with various Headquarters. It is not efficient and requires giants in intellect and capability for smooth functioning, during active conflict. These should be addressed with suitable restructuring.
- **Pakistan – China Activities.** China’s ongoing modernization of its armed and nuclear forces, though focused towards the Western Pacific region, can be easily utilised against India. Be it the capacity building for its ‘Anti Access and Area Denial’ strategy or the ASAT weapons. Its formidable cyber warfare capability is capable of attacking the military decision-making processes, weapon systems, and to cripple critical infrastructure. Counter measures need to be factored into our capabilities. Pakistan continues with its belligerence and the ‘Deep State’ controls the India centric policy. The impact of ‘CPEC’ accord and development of the land link with Gwadar are issues that will have to vector in the review of our strategies.

In his book Future Shock, Alvin Toffler has categorically stated that Change is inevitable but the disconnect happens, when the adaptive process for individuals and institutions is disoriented. This is when the direction and pace of change is not appreciated in time or controlled. Let us therefore take corrective measures in time without turf protection and myopic silo based approach to change.

Contours of Capacity Enhancements

The future capability of the Army along with the other Services is to maintain military superiority for a full spectrum war, including space, cyber and psychological domains. The Army should be capable to meet the two-front threat. Its strategy could be to fight one war at a time, but if forced, it must deny the objective to one and impose unacceptable costs on the other. It would be apt to state that the Army’s capability development should ensure the following: -

India's Defence Capability

- Be capable of defending the nation's sovereignty and territorial integrity, with the other Services, both in the external and internal dimension. The Army should be able to address the different hues of irregular warfare being countered within the country.
- Maintain the military advantage and extend it to meet the challenge of emerging frontiers of cyber and space.
- Harness the gains of revolutionary technological innovations and advancements.
- Develop force projection capability for 'Out of Area Contingencies (OOAC)', including humanitarian assistance, disaster response, and rescue missions.
- Ensure effective deterrence including nuclear deterrence.
- Capacity and capability to function in an international collaborative security paradigm and safeguard national interests in the near abroad.
- Competency to work alongside the other Security Forces /Para military forces/ CPOs and intelligence agencies to meet the challenge of terrorism, fundamentalism and radicalization.

The defence allocation for the financial year 2018-19 is a meager 1.58% of the GDP, the lowest since the 1962 conflict with China. Correspondingly the share of the army is also a new low. Implying that whilst efforts should continue to procure major modern weapon platforms/ Force Multipliers and modernize the 'in service' equipment, there is a need for a 'de novo' look at the incremental restructuring from the existing resources to execute own responsibilities with élan. While the endeavour should remain to raise ab-initio relevant structures for emerging threats, restructuring should be undertaken to start the nucleus organistaions that are necessary to counter the new threats. Experiential learning, based on the experience of the developed nations, tells us that there is a gestation period of 10 to 12 years, for maturing of new stratagem.

In conformity to the budgetary allocations, future acquisitions and modernization should focus on prioritized and qualitative upgrades. The procurement of new weapon platforms/ systems should incorporate the breakthrough technological improvements. Simultaneously, there should be a continuous effort to modernize the existing systems and sub systems

In the case of restructuring the first step towards its actualization is the need to pragmatically review the mandate and thereafter existing doctrines and strategies to address the changing complexity of conflict. There is a need to create/ carve out new structures to address the threats from the new frontiers of Space and Cyber. The Airforce is looking at space as it is a logical extension to their role, but cyber is something that the army needs to address on priority. New Stratagem will have to be conceptualized with increased relevance cum effectiveness of 'information operations' and 'perception management' in the realm of asymmetric warfare. The key issues for restructuring are: -

In the case of restructuring the first step towards its actualization is the need to pragmatically review the mandate and thereafter existing doctrines and strategies to address the changing complexity of conflict.

- Raising a Special Forces Division.
- Restructure the recently raised accretion forces to increase agility, mobility and in tune with the terrain dictates. This will also assist in provision of additional Headquarters to redress the existing adhocism.
- Raise Cyber Warfare units.

- Accord pre-imminence to Information Operations while refining kinetic options.
- There is a need to disband superfluous units and rationalize duplicity in near similar units. The pool of savings here can be used for raising organisations for dealing with emerging threats.

Special Forces (SF) Division

In conformity to India's aspirations to be a regional power in the near future, the country cannot be dependent on intelligence inputs from major powers/ USA. It will have to be proactive to dominate its volatile and unstable extended neighbourhood. This will empower the army and the nation to be in the driver's seat to tackle the irregular threats emanation from these regions. Be it the threat of LeT, Jaish, Taliban affiliates, ISIS or other such like fundamentalist groups/ elements. This requires capacity building of the SF for overt and covert employment, independently or under the cover of intimate support at the official Indian establishments/ projects, in the target countries.

The primary requirement is to raise the SF Headquarter, while seeking the official mandate by the government for its employment/ engagement in the neighbourhood. The nucleus, to be raised by re-designating ADG MO Special Operations as Commander SF, along with the existing staff support. He be empowered with planning, training, equipping and tasking of the resources. Their employment be for strategic and out of area tasks, directly under the future CDS (presently the CISC), to facilitate the operational effectiveness, it be allocated a training center, have dedicated (earmarked) assets for training and execution of tasks and suitable logistic resources. This is not a major hurdle for it only requires identification and reassignment of its command and control, within the army.

Road Map to Counter Cyber Threats

There is a need to internalize capacity building within the army for tackling the cyber threat and the other disruptive changes, without waiting for Government sanctions for Cyber and Space Commands. There is no dearth of technical and domain expertise within the army itself and it only needs to be harnessed. The raising of Cyber Department to harness this talent can be done by reassigning of duties. Presently there is duplication in the functioning of the ARTRAC Commander and the DGMT. The latter under the aegis of the former can be nominated as the Cyber Force Commander and an organization carved out under his charge. The mandate would also be to dominate the social networking platforms to arrest its misuse for malicious propaganda that can have a negative impact on the morale & motivation within the forces and that of the nation at large. The footprint of these 'cyber warriors' can be increased to the military establishments/ formations across the country. The challenge will be to have certain amount of secrecy and non-rigidity in the organization. The evolutionary process in the US army, from the time of the first Gulf War to slowly increase the footprint of its cyber organisations, responsible for the defensive and offensive aspects of Cyber Warfare, is a good example for us to carve our road map. The key issue is to start now with recalibrated resources from within the army. The recent report of 'Shekatkar Committee' has already started the downsizing by closing down of non-essentials units and organizational set ups. This provides a readymade pool of manpower.

There is a need to internalize capacity building within the army for tackling the cyber threat and the other disruptive changes, without waiting for Government sanctions for Cyber and Space Commands. There is no dearth of technical and domain expertise within the army itself and it only needs to be harnessed.

The urgency to create cyber units/ teams is to formally commence the process of planning, identifying and putting in place offensive and defensive elements. This will create awareness and capability to meet the challenges in time as we move towards network enablement. The experience of some of the advanced nations in this field is that it requires a minimum of ten years to mature your capabilities.

Modulations for OOAC and Agile Reserves

There is no doubt that the changed threat spectrum, demands balancing of forces astride the Western and Northern borders. However, we need to be conscious that conflict with the western neighbour has a higher probability in the near and midterm. So, any restructuring of forces/formations may impinge on the future conduct of conflict.

However, there is a need for capability development to undertake 'Out of Area Operations', and HADR missions, while ensuring the agility of our reserves. Towards this there is a need to restructure the resources under 12th plan raising, primarily the strike corps for the northern borders.

The deployability and application of combat power along a major portion of the Northern borders is only suitable for brigade sized forces, as highlighted earlier in the deliberations. The tenuous lines of communication also favour move of such like forces. Also, these are manageable and have the desired agility, both for speedy movement by ground and/ or by air. Therefore, the two infantry divisions and the combat arms and services raised/ under raising under the accretions approved by the Government can be tailored to form independent infantry brigades. These can be then dynamically deployed, with the command and controls being under a controlling headquarter. Thereby a few headquarters could be released for reassigning to meet the existing adhocism.

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One of the spare Headquarter can be reassigned to operationalize the static formation headquarter responsible for the central sector, astride the Northern border. The other Headquarter can be reassigned to the Corps in the Jammu sector, to avoid the duplicity of both defensive and offensive tasks being undertaken by the same Formation Headquarter. This is because of the proximity of NH 1 to the Western borders and it being an identified sensitivity for being a major road link for the state of J & K. The logistic and services element can be suitably deployed to meet the support required along the road connectivity being developed along the northern borders.

These brigade sized forces are also then available for employment for other tasks. Or responsibilities can be reassigned within the existing Order of Battle (ORBAT) of the army for earmarking resources for the envisaged OOAC and Human Assistance and Development relief (HADR) missions.

Conclusion

Wars of the future will be complex with manifestation in both the kinetic and asymmetric domain in sequential, tandem or simultaneous. There will be no clear distinguishable boundaries, and will be what is termed as 'unrestricted'. However, in the case of India with two inimical neighbours the probability of conventional conflict is still a reality. Therefore, capability development should be for all forms of threat, simultaneously we should re-engineering the existing resources for optimization and efficiency.

Roadmap for India: Achieving a Favourable Maritime Balance in the Indian Ocean Region

Vice Adm Satish Soni, PVSM, AVSM, NM (Retd)[@]

Abstract

The 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 Hong Kong and forfeiture of control of their sea ports¹. Now as an ascendant economic and military power, they are as aggressive as their colonisers were, and after agglomeration of the islands in the South China Sea, have set their sights on the Indian Ocean. Obock in Djibouti, Hambantota in Sri Lanka, Gwadar in Pakistan and Feydboo Finolhu in Maldives can be viewed as potential Chinese bases under varying degrees of development. As yet, there is no clear indication of the end state of the Chinese intent, but India needs to ingeniously orchestrate a cohesive response with the support of the littorals to ensure that the maritime balance is maintained in favour of the resident maritime powers.

Introduction

Oceans are a medium to influence events on land and therefore, become important strategic spaces in the game plays of major powers. The Indian Ocean is no different. And yet these waters have not witnessed much acrimonious competition and rivalry- a maritime order in these waters having been maintained by the more capable western powers who could not be challenged by any regional player. Post-World War II, developing countries like China and India, which bore the colonial yoke, were able to chart a path of economic revival because maritime security of the Sea Lines of Communication of the global common was ensured by other Navies, predominantly the United States of America. However, power equations are changing and as the Navies of the hitherto strong economies shrink in their maritime out-reach; China and India are emerging as the resurgent maritime powers seeking to occupy vacant strategic space in the Indo-Pacific. As India looks beyond its primary area of interest to the Western Pacific and China increases its maritime footprint into the Indian Ocean, the growing rivalry between the Asian giants is causing anxiety amongst the smaller countries of the region that are awakening to the potential of Blue economy. They are keen to improve their capabilities at sea and feel that they may be forced into making a difficult choice for partners. What must India do to address the emerging challenge, and achieve a favourable maritime balance in its own backyard – The Indian Ocean?

As India looks beyond its primary area of interest to the Western Pacific and China increases its maritime footprint into the Indian Ocean, the growing rivalry between the Asian giants is causing anxiety amongst the smaller countries of the region that are awakening to the potential of Blue economy.

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Chinese forays into the Indian Ocean

In 1986, under the astute leadership of General Liu Huaqing, the PLA (Navy) shifted from a strategy of “Coastal Defence” to “Offshore Defence” and adopted a vision of becoming a world maritime power by 2050². Their Navy has since been modernising at a steady pace with the 2015 defence white paper proclaiming an ‘Open Seas Protection Strategy’, a euphemism for projecting naval power to distant shores. In 2008, two small frigates supported by two old logistic ships entered the Indian Ocean for the first Chinese anti-piracy patrol in the Gulf of Aden. They were relieved on task, and over the last ten years their presence has become a permanent one with the Chinese flotilla becoming more capable and the deployments extending for longer durations. But what must worry India are the overtures China has made in the recent past to cement a Chinese presence of a more permanent nature.

Obock

As if guided by the grand vision of General Liu Huaqing, on 11 July 2017, two Chinese warships sailed from the port of Zhanjiang for establishing the first Chinese overseas military base in Obock, Djibouti which was formally inaugurated on 01 August 2017. A 90-acre naval base with 23,000 square meters of underground facility is likely to host 10,000 troops and will have repair facilities for ships/helicopters. Reportedly many Chinese fishermen have already set up home in the port city to add flesh to the Chinese muscle. China Merchant Holdings (International), the port operations division of the China Merchants Group, acquired a 23.5 per cent stake for \$185 million, which includes two-thirds of the port's Doraleh Container Terminal. The Doraleh Container Terminal, with its 18-metre draft and 1,050-metre quay, can handle three million TEU of cargo capacity a year, which is perhaps the most advanced in East Africa. China is among Africa's main trading partners and home to an estimated one million Chinese nationals, with many employed in infrastructure projects backed by the Chinese government. Djibouti is becoming the core of a strategy to provide logistic and military support to Chinese engagement, the need for which became clear, ostensibly in the aftermath of the Arab Spring in 2014/15, when it evacuated 35,680 nationals from Libya and 629 more from Yemen by chartered commercial planes. However, Chinese engagement with Djibouti commenced in 2002 and the seeds for commissioning a base were sown in 2014, when China concluded a Defence and Security agreement, wherein it was agreed that China would be permitted to open a naval base in Djibouti.

With the acquisition of its first overseas base in Djibouti, China has indicated a strategic shift in its foreign policy as it aspires to become a global power and seeks a proactive role in the Indian Ocean. For India, it is important to realise the impact of the Chinese initiative on the security matrix in the Indian Ocean. Seen in conjunction with the likely PLA (Navy) support bases in Gwadar, Hambantota and Maldives, the Chinese Naval influence is set to be greatly enhanced over the island nations which currently depend on the Indian Navy for surveillance of their vast Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ). The biggest impact will be in the basing of Long Range Maritime Patrol Aircraft and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles which could threaten the western approaches to India's west coast, barely 1500 nautical miles from Obock. Basing of the Chinese fishing militia could add to the woes of local fishermen and security agencies as the Chinese fishermen are known to harass even maritime security forces including warships³.

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Hambantota

Leaders of less developed neighbours who marvel at the China miracle and sense an opportunity to improve infrastructure for economic development of their constituencies are being tempted to accept weighted proposals for a quick electoral dividend. The Magampura Mahinda Rajapaksa Port project, involved turning President Mahinda

Rajapaksa's constituency Hambantota town's harbour into a deep-sea port with loans from China at high commercial interest rates. The port became operational in 2010 and has not done too well. It handled 19 ships in 2015, 14 ships in 2016 and a similar number in 2017. Saddled with a low return on the projects combined with a high interest rate to be paid to the Chinese, Sri Lanka has got shanghaied into a debt trap. The government accepted the Hobson's choice and converted the mounting Chinese debt into equity by concluding a deal with China on 29 July 2017. China Merchants Ports Holding, an arm of the Chinese government now formally has a 70 per cent ownership for 99 years. Sri Lanka gets \$1.1 bn in return for the loss of sovereignty⁴. Defence analysts from Sri Lanka shrug and admit that their leaders made mistakes for selfish gains, as the price their country has had to pay will have graver consequences than the burden they aimed to alleviate. For India, it is time for contemplation as other maritime neighbours could well be ensnared into similar debt traps thereby complicating the security matrix of the Indian Ocean region.

Maldives

Maldives is yet another example of the success of China's outreach in the Indian Ocean. The first ever visit by the Chinese President to the Maldives in September 2014 resulted in Maldives joining the Belt and Road Initiative. On 22 July 2015, the People's Majlis, the unicameral parliament of the Maldives, passed a bill amending the 2008 Constitution to allow foreign ownership of land. President Yamin Abdul Gayoom ratified the bill the very next day. The bill amended Article 251 and added a new chapter to the Constitution that permits foreigners to own freehold land in the islands. In Dec 2016, Feydhoo Finolhu, the nearest uninhabited island to the capital Male was leased to a Chinese company for 50 years at a cost of about \$4 million. Whilst this island may well be developed as a logistics base as part of the Belt and Road Initiative, China would be eyeing the World War II base in the Gan island, which though being in a state of disuse hasn't been populated extensively by the local population giving credence to the speculation that it may once again find its lost glory as a foreign navy and military base. Maldives has become the second country in South Asia, after Pakistan, to enter into a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with China. This is the first bilateral FTA to be signed by Maldives and according to the presidential office's communique, will "enable exemption of duties on fisheries products exported to the world's largest consumer market". With India's relations with Maldives not the warmest, signing of the China-Maldives FTA consolidates Chinese influence in the strategically located archipelagic nation⁵. An increased economic linkage is bound to improve political and military relationships and would be inimical to Indian interests.

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Gwadar

Another Chinese initiative which merits attention is the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, often referred to by the acronym CPEC. A collection of projects currently under construction at an estimated cost of \$62 billion, the initiative will rapidly expand and upgrade Pakistani infrastructure as well as deepen and broaden economic links between Pakistan and China. The corridor is considered to be an extension of China's ambitious Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), and its importance to China is reflected by its inclusion as part of China's 13th five-year development plan. Gwadar is one of the key nodes of the CPEC and more than \$1 billion worth of projects are to be developed around the port. India is wary of this development as Gwadar will bring the Chinese Navy at our doorstep but there is criticism in Pakistan as the deal is balanced in China's favour. In November 2017, Pakistan's federal minister for ports and shipping, Mir Hasil Bizenjo, disclosed that China will bag a 91% share in gross revenues from Gwadar port and 85% from the surrounding "free zone," under a 40-year deal finalised by Pakistani authorities with the China Overseas Port Holding Company. He also disclosed that Pakistan will pay back \$16 billion in loans obtained from Chinese banks for the development of Gwadar port, the free-trade zone and all communications infrastructure, at rates of over 13%, inclusive of 7% insurance

charges⁶. Like Hambantota, it is a matter of time before Pakistan falls into a debt trap and loses its sovereignty over this strategically located port.

Initiatives by India

Speaking at the Indian Ocean Conference in Sri Lanka in August 2017, the external affairs minister emphasised the Prime Minister's concept of SAGAR (Security and growth for all in the Region) as a clear, high-level articulation of India's vision for the Indian Ocean. She underscored the importance of connectivity to improve maritime logistics in Sri Lanka, Maldives, Mauritius and Seychelles citing 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. However, our engagement with our regional neighbours falls well

short of what the Chinese have been able to achieve as we do not seem to have the economic wherewithal to walk the talk. Whilst comparisons may not be fair, but these are indicative of how we are perceived by others. India earmarked \$36 million to Sri Lanka in 2016-17 against \$ 340 million by China. For Bangladesh, our most friendly neighbour, India extended a \$4.5 billion line of credit for development and infrastructure, and a \$500 million line of credit for defence purchases, with China signing a financial package of \$24 billion⁷. Inspired by India's historical role as the focal point for trade in the Indian Ocean, Project Mausam was considered to be Indian government's most significant foreign policy initiative designed to counter China's Belt and Road initiative (BRI). It was to re-establish India's ties with its ancient trade partners and re-establish an "Indian Ocean world" stretching from east Africa, along the Arabian Peninsula, past southern Iran to the major countries of South Asia and thence to Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia. The project has come under the purview of Ministry of Culture to be implemented by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) as the nodal agency with a focus on archaeological and historical research in order to document the diversity of cultural, commercial and religious interactions in the Indian Ocean. In the preceding two years, i.e. 2015-2017, an amount of ₹ 12, 26,362/- has been utilised⁸. In comparison to India's maritime outreach initiatives, China plans to invest \$750 billion in its Belt and Road Initiative and if the vision is realised, it would create the most promising economic corridor, directly benefiting a population of 4.4 billion people or 63 per cent of the global population, with a collective GDP of 2.1 trillion U.S. dollars that accounts for 29 per cent of the world's wealth⁹. We need to do some serious introspection on what if it is indeed a success?

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Indian Navy

The Indian Navy has done well to become the flagship of India's international maritime cooperation efforts to engage all our maritime neighbours. It is formally mandated to be the net provider of maritime security to the smaller states in the Indian Ocean and lists 'constructive maritime engagement' as one of its missions in the Indian Naval Doctrine²⁰¹⁵. The Indian Navy enjoys an extremely good reputation as a professional, hi-tech Navy. Regional and extra regional Navies are keen to discuss initiatives to enhance interaction. We routinely exercise with the navies of USA, Russia, UK, France, South Africa, Singapore, China, Australia, Japan, Malaysia, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Cambodia and South Korea. The location of joint exercises varies from our own backyard to other locations such as the South China Sea and the Western Pacific Ocean. The Indian Navy has been carrying out coordinated patrols with Indonesia and Thailand for a

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few years now, and has recently started similar patrols with Myanmar. Staffs Talks are held regularly wherein, apart from ongoing initiatives, additional avenues for cooperation with other navies are also explored. Our ships are deployed for EEZ surveillance missions in friendly countries that have a large EEZ, but lack the wherewithal to patrol it. We train over 800 foreign personnel in our institutions every year. Ships, aircraft, equipment and spares have been given gratis to several friendly countries; Islander aircraft to Myanmar, Patrol boats to Mauritius, Maldives and Seychelles, Dornier aircraft to Seychelles, indigenous Advanced Light Helicopter to Maldives.... the list runs long. Friendly navies use our dockyards for refitting their ships. Our survey ships are also 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 is a key constituent of our foreign policy. Malabar series of exercises are now a part of the strategic discourse and have gained much traction as the participation and scope have increased substantially. Our Prime Minister announced his SAGAR vision at the commissioning of the Mauritian Coast Guard Ship Barracuda and reiterated it in Visakhapatnam in February 2016, where over 100 ships from 50 countries had assembled for the second International Fleet Review in the history of independent India. However, force levels of the Navy need to be augmented. Low budgetary allocations, excessive bureaucratic oversight and political indifference has stalled many important projects and serious capability gaps have arisen which must be expeditiously addressed.

What must India do?

If India has to seek a favourable maritime balance in the Indian Ocean, we must focus on our strengths and exploit the vulnerabilities of our emerging rival, China. Firstly, China has severe challenges of geography and dependence on raw materials which is only going to increase with her economic progress. Dominating the sea lines of communication so far from their mainland will remain a Chinese predicament, notwithstanding their envisaged permanent presence in the Indian Ocean. Collectively, navies of the region enjoy a distinct advantage over

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the Chinese, provided we support a common cause. Secondly, China is an authoritarian state that brooks no dissent, be it from the local populace or its neighbours. Almost all maritime neighbours in the South China Sea are being arm twisted and bribed into accepting Chinese diktats. Laying aside of the judgement of the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) on the South China Sea, the elusive Code of Conduct and development of military infrastructure on islands are examples of an increasingly assertive Chinese behaviour. In an era of liberal outlook, desire for free speech/thought and instant exchange of information, the Chinese model of coercive diplomacy is resented and is unlikely to be successful with a larger comity of nations. On the other hand, India's 'Neighbourhood first' policy is soft and civilisational and we aspire to promote an inclusive approach in our engagements with maritime neighbours. The PCA judgement on the maritime boundary dispute with Bangladesh was accepted and the matter resolved in an amicable manner even though the ruling was not in our favour. India is better poised for a more proactive maritime engagement of our maritime neighbours so that the Indian Ocean can remain clear of extra-regional interference.

Macro Issues

A bouquet of India's variegated responses includes formation of the Indian Ocean Regional Association, the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium, the India-Maldives-Srilanka Trilateral, articulation of SAGAR and Mausam, the Africa Asia Growth Corridor and recent efforts to breathe new life into BIMSTEC. Joining the Quadrilateral and giving impetus to the Malabar naval exercise is being viewed as giving up our strategic reticence shaped by the policy of non-alignment and strategic autonomy, even though there is no formal enunciation of such intent. Firstly, we need to articulate a well thought out Indian Ocean Strategy and revise it year on year, akin to the Defence Security Strategies brought out by major powers. Whilst we may not yet be ready to form an alliance, strategic alignments must be lucidly defined for easy

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comprehension by all participating agencies. Secondly, we need to create administrative structures for bringing diverse stakeholders in the maritime domain under an institutional mechanism which is not generalist in nature. And finally, we must delegate decision making so that every minor interaction in the maritime domain does not need a political/bureaucratic oversight.

Indian Ocean Rim Association

The Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) was to promote economic and technical cooperation, including expansion of trade and investment. A key priority of IORA was to ensure reliable, uninterrupted and safe movement of people, goods, energy and resource supplies throughout the Indian Ocean with an aim to build upon existing national, regional and multilateral measures and address issues related to maritime safety and security. There was ample scope to build cooperative mechanisms, but achievements so far have been modest though we see a renewed vigour with the first ever summit being held last year. There is room for speedy reforms. To begin with there must be institutionalised linkages with the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium and a commonality of membership. Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Maldives and Myanmar are some of the important countries who are not members of IORA. An all-pervasive agreement for combating transnational non-traditional security challenges such as piracy, smuggling, maritime terrorism, illegal fishing, trafficking of human and narcotics, which can be legally enforced merits early discussion by all members. Notwithstanding the shortcomings and criticisms, IORA remains the best framework on which we can build structures for maritime cooperation. The onus is on India to lead the way.

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Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS)

The Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) was pioneered in 2008 by the Indian Navy to enhance maritime cooperation amongst littoral states of the Indian Ocean. In a few years, the significance of this initiative has grown. 35 countries including Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Iran, UK and France are members with China, Japan, Malaysia and Madagascar as observers. The Charter of Business has been finalised and three working groups on Human Assistance Disaster Relief, Maritime Security and Information sharing/ Interoperability have been formed. The first Search and Rescue exercise was held in the Bay of Bengal in November 2017. Whilst developing cooperative mechanisms must remain a priority, the emphasis must be on meeting the aspirations of the smaller navies as they seek to meliorate their response to the waters around them. IONS must study the feasibility of setting up cooperative mechanisms such as a Humanitarian Assistance Disaster Relief Coordination Centre for preparing and responding to arising situations and an Information Fusion Centre for providing Maritime Domain awareness to all littorals of the Indian Ocean. With over 100 warships from different countries operating in the Indian Ocean an inadvertent escalation could be avoided by concluding a Code for Unaltered Encounters at Sea. A permanent secretariat would greatly help in better administration and realisation of its potential. The United States, the predominant contributor to maritime security in the Indian Ocean must be included in its membership. Since the concept of Indo-Pacific is widely accepted, an institutionalised linkage with the Western Pacific Naval Symposium should be explored. Finally, to accelerate maritime engagement, the Indian Navy, the mentor of IONS needs to be empowered and not be a mere adjunct needing governmental oversight at every step.

Whilst developing cooperative mechanisms must remain a priority, the emphasis must be on meeting the aspirations of the smaller navies as they seek to meliorate their response to the waters around them.

Conclusion

Yuanmingyuan or the ‘Garden of Perfect Brightness’, where Chinese emperors built a complex of resplendent royal residences, and filled them with exquisite artefacts, was their summer palace. These days the site is just ruins, burnt down during the second Opium War in 1860 and never restored. Hordes of Chinese visitors are taken to this ‘Palace of Shame’ as part of government sponsored “patriotic education” programmes to remind citizens of the 19th Century humiliation¹⁰. Stung by a persecution phobia, the Chinese seek world leadership at any cost. An uncontested control of the Indian Ocean is a prefiguration for achieving their vaulting ambitions as their vulnerabilities lie in the Sea Lines of Communication that crisscross the Indian Ocean. Regional countries of the Indian Ocean are finding it difficult to resist the gravitational pull of the Chinese economy and the Chinese are leveraging this advantage for gaining coercive military dominance of the region. India has to provide astute and persuasive leadership for a collective response by the regional maritime countries.

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Impact of Niche Technologies in Aerospace Deterrence

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Abstract

Asymmetric warfare tools include niche technologies to create out of proportion effect, such as communicative unmanned combat aerial vehicles, hypersonic, anti-satellite weapons, artificial intelligence, laser weapons and advancement of ballistic and cruise missile technologies. The emerging weapon systems would make the art and science of war disproportionate because of the technologies employed. It is here that the asymmetric effect caused by niche technologies would play an important role in the prosecution of future wars. Time has come for India to take urgent steps to ensure that our research and development organizations become more accountable in quickly developing niche technologies to provide enhanced Aerospace deterrence.

Introduction

Aerospace Power operates at the upper end of technology spectrum. A minor technological innovation gives out of proportion results in the effectiveness of aerospace deterrence. The major post- Cold War innovations include stealth, precision, extended reach, night sensors, space and computing power. These capabilities provide improved intelligence evaluation, enhanced accuracies, better economy of effort, higher potency, greater redundancies, improved integration as well as enhanced effectiveness. The technologies that are likely to revolutionize aerospace effectiveness in the future are zero fuel aircraft, advanced space propulsion systems, advancement in material science, smart automation, block chain and 3D technologies¹. In addition, artificial intelligence, big data analytics, additive manufacturing, virtual and augmented reality, unmanned systems, remote sensing, hypersonic technologies, electro-magnetic weapons, quantum computing and directed energy are central to most modern militaries' efforts to enhance the effectiveness of people, platforms and systems in a technologically advanced future battlefield².

China's tools for asymmetric warfare include developing niche technologies to create out of proportion effect, such as cyber warfare capabilities, anti-satellite weapons, different types of lasers, development of Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicles (UCAV), advancement of ballistic and cruise missile technologies and refinement of anti-ship ballistic missiles to target aircraft carriers to promote its anti-access area denial strategy. The emerging weapon systems in the world are small, fast and varied and are likely to create a complex environment for human beings to comprehend and direct³. This would make the art and science of war disproportionate because of the technologies employed. It is here that the asymmetric effect caused by niche technologies would play an important role in the prosecution of future wars.

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Time has come for India to take urgent steps to ensure that our research and development organizations become more accountable in quickly developing niche technologies.

Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicles (UCAVs) to Smart Drones with Communicative Abilities

Whilst aerospace technology has moved from Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) towards Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicles to smart drones with the ability to locate, identify and destroy targets accurately, the U.S. Air Force has recently released a video showing how tiny drones will soon swarm together for undertaking surveillance, targeting, and destruction activities and Boeing is creating a swarming system for larger drones⁴. The future scenario could include large number of small unmanned drones entering adversary's air space with low observability characteristics. This would saturate enemy air defence and simultaneously cause significant damage to a number of geographically dispersed high value target systems. These drones would have interactive ability with the result air and ground situation picture would be available with all the elements and simultaneously multiple targeting could be carried out.

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The availability of unmanned combat drones may also obviate the need to employ highly expensive manned air dominance fighters. This implies that slowly the shift is taking place from manned combat and surveillance aircraft to small and highly maneuverable smart unmanned combat aerial vehicles that saturate air defence and yet are significantly potent in destroying well defended targets with precision. The unmanned systems would interface intimately with their manned counterparts as technology develops capability multiplication elements. This progress is expected to bring effectiveness in surveillance, navigation, response to different variables such as climate and in direct combat action⁵.

The US Congress at the beginning of the 21st century stated that progressively they would increase the unmanned element strength to 10% and subsequently to 15% in fifteen years. Though the progress in incremental accretions of unmanned platforms has been slow, the intent of the US armed forces, however, is clear. Developments are also taking place in unmanned rotor aircraft. China is working closely in drone technology and has developed 500 km range V-750 unmanned helicopter, which successfully test fired anti-tank missiles in Jun 2017⁶. These developments would bring about a paradigm shift in the manner in which future aerial warfare is conducted.

Drones enhance security even in peace time in disputed areas by providing greater ability to monitor contested regions persistently at lower cost, leading to reassurance that potential adversaries are not attempting to change the status quo through force⁷. The key role of the UAVs primarily is that of Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance, it later expanded to combat roles. UCAVs during combat operations are initially used for Suppression of Enemy Air Defence (SEAD) by pre-emptively destroying enemy's Integrated Air Defence (IAD) and provide continuous vigilance with the capability to prosecute high value and time critical targeting. This results in providing "no win" tactical deterrence and also in ensuring air superiority⁸.

In the near term, a mix of manned and unmanned aerial combat platforms would participate in warfare with unmanned elements taking on high risk missions of locating and targeting Air Defence elements or/and heavily defended Centre of Gravity targets. This would reduce the risk on manned aerial elements. In future, manned assets would mostly be used in situations where discrimination is required between

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target systems, especially in a fast changing battle situation or to attack quickly moving targets.

By 2050, the unmanned platforms would constitute a significant proportion of the combat forces and manned platforms would reduce in numbers. It is here that efforts are required by India to develop unmanned combat platforms quickly. Even in UAVs, Stealth will make them less vulnerable. China is currently developing a stealth drone, Sharp Sword, which has already undergone initial flight testing. This drone would have low observability characteristics which would make it harder to detect⁹. Aeronautical Development Establishment (ADE) in India is developing Rustom, a Medium Altitude Long Endurance UCAV, the progress, however, is extremely slow. Israel built 10 Heron TP-armed drones are ready for delivery to India. These drones are capable of detecting, tracking and attacking targets with air to ground missiles. Under Make in India initiative, the production of these drones may shift to India¹⁰. The US Government's decision to export 22 Guardian drones to India will address gaps in India's maritime surveillance capabilities and help free Boeing P-81s for anti-submarine warfare (ASW) role. This acquisition will be critical given the increasing forays of Chinese submarines in the India Ocean region¹¹. At the same time, these numbers are quite less and the requirement of UCAVs is considerably high. In addition, there is a need for India to move towards developing stealth capability in drones.

Stealth as a Major Force Multiplier

Stealth has given leverage to penetrate lethal Air Defence (AD). It is also being debated whether China has acquired the ability to interfere with the links between Ground Control Station (GCS) and UAVs with the help of LASERS or with jamming equipment. If this capability has been operationalized, then it would create significant interference with Indian UAV operations leading to loss of UAVs and thereby considerably affecting our surveillance capability. It is for this reason that stealth features in UCAVs is considered essential. Stealth provides high survivability as it significantly reduces radar, IR and visual signatures. The J-20 stealth planes are being developed on the US stealth design with high performance avionics and the prototype of this aircraft carried out taxi tests in Jan 2011; precisely four years after China's first anti-satellite (ASAT) test in 2007 and one year after its first anti-ballistic missile (ABM) test in 2010. It has since carried out flight tests of J-20 too.

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The development of J-20 fighter poses considerable strategic challenge to India because the Indian Air Forces' existing SU-30, MiG-29, upgraded Mig-21 and Mirage fighters match up to China's fourth generation J-10 and older J-7 aircraft, but would be significantly disadvantaged, when the J-20 becomes fully operational by 2022 with advanced super-cruise and stealth features. We need to advance our FGFA program quickly and whilst the development of FGFA is taking place, instead of going for more single/multi engine fighter aircraft, there is a need to procure less numbers but appropriate stealth fighters such as F-35/Su-57 aircraft. Overall, they may prove to be more cost effective, if survivability issue is factored. If 36 Rafael aircraft are costing around \$9-10bn, then probably appropriate numbers of stealth fighters could be procured instead of 126 single/multi engine such aircraft in future. The mix of numbers could be supplemented with additional LCA/Mirages/Su-30 fighters.

Space Capability Leading to Star Wars

The offensive capability of an air power is significantly force multiplied by integrating it with space based systems. The enhanced aerospace capability assumes significance in a nuclear environment where territorial violations may become difficult to prosecute. China's military space capabilities currently are focused in five distinct areas. These include space

India's Defence Capability

launch capabilities, Tracking, Telemetry & Command Network (TT&C Network), space orbital systems, providing connectivity to military operations and counter-space technologies¹². The Beidou navigation system is operational since December 2011; it is stable since then and also has been improved¹³. These capabilities are complemented by a robust surface to surface cruise and ballistic missiles program. The ranges of the Chinese missiles extend from 180 km to over 13000 km. This implies that they can cover all parts of India and all critical target systems. Added to the missile capability, different calibers of nuclear weapons, enhances the potency of the missile capability significantly.

Since 1990s, the conventional missile component of the PLA's rocket forces has emerged as centerpiece of China's military modernization program. This missile force has grown in size and sophistication and China has developed a potent doctrine for its employment. It therefore plays an important role in deterrence and warfighting¹⁴. DF-31/31A ICBMs, DF-21s and DH-10 cruise missiles have become operational and China is gradually building such integration that exploits rocket forces as a major offensive arm that can paralyze the functioning of the adversary's combat potential from long ranges.

China has also pursued a robust and comprehensive array of counter-space weapons including ground-launched anti-satellite (ASAT) missiles, directed energy weapons, satellite jammers and computer network operations as well as co-orbital ASAT systems¹⁵. It had tested its Anti-satellite weapon in Jan 2007 to destroy one of its weather satellites. In May 2013, China tested a rocket carrying no payload over 10,000 kilometers suggesting that the rocket could be designed as an anti-satellite weapon and it has experimented with green and blue laser weapons with US military accusing China of firing laser beams at their satellites (laser pulses can disrupt/destroy satellite communication)¹⁶. This implies that not only China has developed the ability to target reconnaissance satellites operating in Low Earth Orbit (LEO), but they are also developing capability to target Medium Earth Orbit (MEO) and subsequently High Earth Orbit (HEO) satellites. In MEO come GPS satellites at around 22000 km altitude and at HEO are Communication satellites at 36000 km.

It is appreciated that China currently has the ability to target LEO Satellites, which indicates that our Surveillance and Reconnaissance satellites would be under severe risk. This implies that we need to have a number of satellites ready for launch including mini and micro satellites and in the event of our satellites being targeted, we would need to launch them at short notice. It also implies that we need to develop our own anti-satellite weapon technology quickly as well as work towards researching on developing stealth technology in satellites.

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Hypersonic Technology and Enhanced Global Reach

Hypersonic flight is undertaken below 90km and at speeds above Mach 5. In 1961, X-15 experimental plane was flown at speeds above Mach 6. Hypersonic vehicles propelled by air breathing systems or scram jet technology may include long range missiles, and space launch vehicles¹⁷. Such platforms fly at high speeds and in those parts of the atmosphere that their detection and destruction would become extremely difficult. This would provide significant survivability against Air Defence weapon systems as well as provide with global reach in extremely short period of time. Furthermore, as the response time reduces significantly, crisis situations could be tackled more swiftly in any part of the globe. This dual use capability would help not only in attacking far-away targets quickly with high degree of survivability, but also provide

the ability to transport combat forces globally in quick time. Hence, the technology could be exploited both in combat elements as well as in transport aircraft.

China is developing manoeuvrable hypersonic re-entry vehicles, which could be used as weapons to defeat missile defences. Its hypersonic vehicle flew till 30 km altitude reaching Mach 7 speed. The most promising Chinese program is turbo-aided rocket-augmented ram/scramjet combined cycle (TRRE), which uses integrated liquid-fueled rockets to boost performance of ramjet stages and make smoother transition to Mach 10. With key components like engine inlet, cooling and combustion developed, full-scale TRRE are expected to begin flights by 2030¹⁸. This would then become a significant challenge for Indian Aerospace deterrence.

Meanwhile, the Indian Defence Research and Development Laboratory's Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle (HSTDV) is aimed to attain Mach 6.5 speed at 32.5 km altitude. Flight testing of a full-scale air-breathing model powered by a 1,300-lb thrust scramjet engine would soon be carried out¹⁹. This would also place India in the hypersonic technology league. In the missile field, Shauryais a tactical missile developed by Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) with a range between 750 to 1,900 km and it is capable of carrying a payload of one ton, either with conventional or nuclear warhead. It has been successfully tested three times. India is also developing Brahmos-2K (around 600km range) and Zircon based hypersonic missile (tested to Mach 8 speeds). Brahmos-2K is likely to be fielded around 2022-24 whilst HSTDV similar to Boeing's X-51 and Chinese WU-14 hypersonic vehicles²⁰ may take time for operationalization.

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Automation and Artificial Intelligence

Robotic Process Automation tools can help military forces define processes and manage different actions with reduced human intervention. Artificial Intelligence-based assistants (bots) will handle complex problem resolutions and service requests whilst using tools such as natural language processing to make informed decisions²¹. India is poised to create a revolution in Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the coming decades, thereby powering niche technologies that could be exploited in many different fields. Currently, the research is moving from Machine learning to Artificial Intelligence. Machine learning is an approach where you teach the machine to interpret data, while in deep learning, the software learns from data patterns and their interpretations. In AI, the software itself makes decisions. In the next 30 years, it will multiply intelligence billion-fold²². There is clearly a need to focus on the development of Artificial Intelligence both for aerospace deterrence and commercial purposes.

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Bill Gates had once observed that robotics and artificial intelligence were entering a period of rapid advancement. For example, Google, Apple, and Microsoft are competing to transform vehicle transport with self-driving vehicles. The military worldwide is funding research to produce more autonomous and self-aware robots to diminish the need for human soldiers to risk their lives²³. This is also true in the development of unmanned combat aerial vehicles. Artificial Intelligence would find significant usages in unmanned aerial platforms, intelligence gathering and evaluation, identification of new construction activities and in targeting.

The future of AI in military is directly related to the ability of the scientists to design autonomous systems that demonstrate independent capacity for knowledge and expert based reasoning that relies on coupling the perception–cognition–action loop, which effectively means that actions must typically come within seconds of a stimulus²⁴. It is for this reason that one cannot completely rely on the DRDO or on government research organizations to be able to develop niche technologies. There is a need to combine commercial applications with defence use by collaborating with the private sector to share costs of development and expertise. Currently, the Indian Armed Forces are closely working with Centre for Artificial Intelligence and Robotics (CAIR) on its project dealing with Multi Agent Robotics Framework (MARF). This development should jointly focus on Image interpretation for target identification and classification and in systems for missiles that focus on trajectory analysis for prediction of kill zones²⁵.

Other Technological Developments Including Direct Energy Weapons (DEW)

China's military is developing powerful lasers, electromagnetic railguns and high-power microwave weapons for use in a future “light war” involving space-based attacks on communication and navigation satellites²⁶. China's science, technology, and industrial system has been undergoing a far-reaching transformation over the past two decades and the single biggest factor behind this turnaround is the role of external technology and knowledge transfers and the defence industry's improving ability to absorb these inputs and convert into localized output²⁷. In India, websites of Ministry of External Affairs, Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, National Informatics Centre and National Security Council Secretariat have been attacked²⁸. It implies that prior to the commencement of a conflict; China is likely to attack adversary's information systems and networks, thereby affecting their Command and Control and information dissemination systems.

China is also experimenting with high-altitude detonation of a nuclear weapon that creates destructive Electro Magnetic Pulses (EMPs), which could cripple and disrupt large areas of infrastructure and technology. Forms of electrical pulse weapons, such as radio-frequency weapons, high-power microwave and particle beam systems are a key focus area in Chinese technology development²⁹. High Energy Lasers (HEL) are also being developed to be used against satellites in Low Earth Orbit (LEO).

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China had successfully conducted a satellite-blinding experiment using a 50-100 kilowatt capacity mounted laser gun in Xinjiang province³⁰. It has recently tested an anti-ballistic missile during the mid-course segment, thereby implying that it is developing capability to intercept ballistic missiles in outer space rather than only in the terminal phase.

Meanwhile, Indian research organizations are nearer to achieving Laser weaponry; though it is still some time away from operational use. This is also true of development of non-lethal technology. A test was conducted in Nov 2017 and a beam from 1kW laser weapon system mounted on a truck hit a target located 250m away. In 36 seconds, it made a hole on the metal sheet. Kalyani Group and Rolls-Royce too are intending to develop DEWs in India³¹. The Government of India has released Rs 115 Crores in Feb 2014 to Centre for High Energy Systems and Sciences (CHESS) to develop experimental technology modules for Directed Energy Laser Systems. Development of DEWs and EMP weapons has been classified as top priority area in the “15-year Technology Perspective and Capability Roadmap”. The Laser Science and Technology Centre (LASTEC) is also working on developing Chemical Oxygen Iodine Lasers (COIL) and High Power Fibre Lasers.³²

In addition, LASTEC has developed Gas Dynamic Laser (GDL) and COIL and has demonstrated 100 kW (multi-mode) and 20 kW (single mode) COIL. LASTEC's Aditya Project is an experimental test bed to seed critical DEW technologies³³. Development work is also taking place to build both hardware and soft technologies. These developments, however, are extremely slow and are currently being undertaken by different organizations that need to be coordinated effectively to obtain maximum gain.

Way Forward

There is an attempt today by different MNCs to set up research facilities in India to tap the vast intellectual human capital that exists in our country to undertake research on niche technologies for commercial exploitation. It is here that defence ministry could do well to collaborate with the private sector or make Defence Research and Development Organizations to collaborate with them for developing niche technologies to take advantage of the 30-50% offsets that the nation is likely to receive whilst procuring defence equipment from abroad. It is here that a collaborative arrangement could be worked out to connect transfer of technology obtained from the procurement of high end or fourth/fifth generation equipment with “Make in India” projects for both commercial and defence exploitation of these technologies to bring in economies of scale.

On 07 Dec 2017, India became the 42nd member of the Wassenaar Arrangement, a global grouping that regulates transfer and access to conventional and dual use technologies³⁴. This implies that India would be able to acquire state of the art dual-use technology more easily. A combined strategy therefore needs to be evolved by the Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Department of Atomic Energy as well as with Ministry of Science and Technology as how best to take advantage of the defence offsets and at the same time augment research in different niche technologies for defence and commercial use.

Conclusion

As nations progress technologically, armed forces are transiting from a military doctrine based on massed forces, positional combat and employment of large units to doctrines based on employing niche technologies in creating substantial local superiorities in the form of asymmetric warfare. Niche technologies would revolutionize the way warfare is prosecuted. The armed forces that employ these technologies would have significant advantage in quickly neutralizing adversary’s strengths. The future wars are therefore likely to be won or lost based on the ability of a side to generate technological superiority. It is here that Indian DRDO organizations dealing with these technologies are extremely slow and inefficient in making them operational for combat use.

There is therefore a need today to make the research organizations more accountable and correlate the different and multiple researches that are taking place in niche technologies by different research centers and organizations including those in the private sector. Thereafter, work out a collaborative road map with the help of the private organizations so as to exploit each other’s strengths and capabilities and ensure that technologies developed for defence have commercial applications too and vice versa, where commercial technologies developed can be utilized to power systems in the defence sector as well. This would bring in significant synergized cost benefits, economies of scale, sharing of technological expertise and utilization of optimum effort. Besides the DRDO, the armed forces too should be intimately integrated with the development of these technologies, if we have to prepare for an asymmetric war in a technologically advanced and integrated battlefield.

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Restructuring India's Special Forces

Lt Gen Navkiran Singh Ghei, PVSM, AVSM & Bar (Retd)[@]

Abstract

India's position as a Regional Power had come to the fore after the resounding victory over Pakistan and creation of Bangladesh in 1971, but it was reluctantly accepted by the world, at large. Further Politico-Military associations in Sri Lanka with the air drop of supplies over Jaffna in 1987, followed by the deployment of the IPKF, and the rescue of President Abdul Gayoom from an attempted coup in Maldives in Nov 1988, the latter an extremely successful operation, was carried as the cover story by both the Times and News Week magazines. While India continues to face conventional military challenges from its Western and Northern neighbours, the unconventional and hybrid threats that India faces, come with regional and global linkages, which need a different strategy and tools to tackle. SF are ideally suited for this Out of Area role as they can operate with a low profile, with the advantage of speed, surprise, precision and lethality, on their own or in conjunction with more conventional elite. The author discusses various scenarios and proposes the structure to deal with those threats.

Introduction

Despite a very large and continued contribution to UN Peace Keeping Operations around the world, starting with the Suez deployment in 1956, India's focus had remained Sub Continent based. This however, is changing with India taking a much larger interest in the whole of the Indian Ocean Region. India's Act East Policy, projects the India-Myanmar-Thailand Highway, the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation agreement for connectivity between India and five ASEAN Nations, the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), the Bangladesh Bhutan India Nepal Motor Vehicles Agreement (BBIN), possibility of Bangladesh China India Myanmar (BCIM) connectivity, the Kaladan Multimodal Project in Myanmar, Power sale agreements between India, Bhutan, Nepal and Bangladesh etc. are all indicators of India's growing interests and commitments in the East. In the West, Chabahar Port investments by India and possibly by an Indian Corporations in the future, with proposed road-rail connectivity to Bamiyan in Afghanistan, India's interests and investments in Central Asia (CAR), our large Diaspora in the Middle East and business and oil interests there, are all indicative of the expanding Indian footprints in the Region. Added to this are our increasing interests and investments in Africa and our security imperatives related to the Indian Ocean Island Nations.

In a world where wars and conflicts are receding but new age hybrid threats are escalating, Special Forces (SF) have come into higher prominence. There is a general acceptance that SF are better suited to achieve politico-military aims and goals in today's complex geo-

There is a general acceptance that Special Forces are better suited to achieve Politico-Military aims and goals in today's complex Geo-Political environment, by deploying small teams of Special Operations specialists, than by the employment of larger and politically more unacceptable conventional forces.

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political environment, by deploying small teams of Special Operations specialists, then by the employment of larger and politically more unacceptable conventional forces. There has thus been a proliferation of SF across the world. India's security concerns also need a well oriented and coordinated SF response to augment our conventional capacities and capabilities.

India's experience with commando forces in modern times began with the Meghdoot Force during the 1965 War and was followed by the raising of Para Commando battalions that carried out successful raids during the 1971 War. Subsequently, there has been intense employment of these forces to counter terrorism both in Jammu & Kashmir and the Northeast. In this journey, there has over the time been an expansion of these forces and a slow transition from a commando orientation of specially trained personnel of the hunter class, able to hit and run, conduct raids to disrupt, carry out counter terrorist operations in remote and difficult areas with small teams, to a modern SF. This has been visible in recent times and is more than a mere change in designation from Para Commando to Para SF. Our SF today are capable of undertaking a much wider ambit of roles and tasks if suitably oriented and structured. The Naval MARCOS has had a fairly long experience in counter terrorist operations in Kashmir and has displayed their competence during the Maldives and other operations. The Air Force GARUD is maturing fast but need to evolve their Service role and employment concept. Expending so much energy, effort and resources for passive protection of air assets alone, appears to be inappropriate. Before proceeding further let us have a look at the evolution that is taking place in modern SF as commonly known in the West.

Modern SFs

The Special Air Service (SAS) of UK is widely acknowledged as the first modern SF. There has however, been a major evolution since then. While the basic traditional traits and skills like marksmanship, field craft, endurance, unconventional tactics, high mobility, flexibility, ability to operate without any direct support, etc. remain more or less the same, modern SF are more effective at all levels of conflict, may it be tactical, operational or strategic. At strategic level, the approach may both be direct or indirect, as explained by Admiral Mc Raven, a former commander of the US Special Operations Command, "The direct approach is characterised by technologically enabled small unit precision lethality, focused intelligence, and inter agency cooperation. The indirect approach includes empowering host Nation forces, providing appropriate assistance to humanitarian agencies, and engaging key populations". Besides being economical as compared to conventional forces, SF provide expanded alternatives and choices both at the political and military levels. They are more joint today and have the capability to undertake a wide range of operations in a complex global environment. The availability of well trained, equipped and structured SF allows a nation to use military force minimally, precisely and flexibly. Colin S Gray in his book 'Explorations of Strategy' mentions seventeen reasons as to why Special Operations provide economy of force and effort. He also argues that Special Forces (SF) are innovative, contribute to morale, showcase a force's competence, provide reassurance, humiliate the enemy, control escalation and shape the future. With their 'tailor to task' capability the canvas is indeed very vast. Post 9/11, one of the most important roles played by Western SF is Offensive Counter Terrorism, in more than 100 countries as indicated by Thomas O'Connell a US Assistant Secretary of Defence for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict. There are many lessons for us to learn from this. The pressure points that could be targeted against terrorist groups may be ideological support, weapons, funds, communications, movement, safe havens, foot soldiers and the leadership in the affected areas and following them to the source.

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Defining Special Operations

There are various explanations and definitions that have been given for Special Operations. These have conventional, unconventional, war, peace and 'No War No Peace' connotations. A traditional definition could be, 'They are military operations that are special or unconventional and are carried out by dedicated Special Operations units using unconventional methods and resources. They may be performed independently or in conjunction with other military operations'. Another one is, 'self-contained acts of war mounted by self-sufficient forces' or 'small scale, clandestine, overt or covert operations of an unorthodox and high-risk nature, undertaken to achieve significant political or military objectives'. A more modern definition is, 'These are operations conducted in hostile, or politically sensitive environment to achieve military, diplomatic, informational and or economic objectives, employing military capabilities for which there is no broad conventional force requirement'. Each of these definitions explains what Special Operations constitute, and vary from one another as the extent and range of such operations is so wide.

Role of SFs in the Indian Context

The Geo-strategic environment and the challenges facing India have been discussed in many strategic fora, debates and discussions. What clearly emerges is that while India continues to face conventional military challenges from its Western and Northern neighbours, the unconventional and hybrid threats that India faces, come with regional and global linkages, which need a different strategy and tools to tackle. SF are an important instrument for both purposes. Thus, there is a need to restructure and orient our SF to operate as 'Force Multipliers' in the conduct of conventional high intensity operations, while performing the role of Offensive Counter Terrorism during peace. With the No War No Peace situation persisting along the Line of Control and parts of the International Border with our Western neighbours, and its continued active support to terrorists, the SF provide an option of deterrence through punitive action. For this strategy to be effective, however, the range and depth of such operations needs to be expanded to include areas which may not be contiguous. This will need enhanced capacities in terms of intelligence support, technological superiority, effective coordination with other national agencies, jointness within the services and oversight at the highest level.

While India continues to face conventional military challenges from its Western and Northern neighbours, the unconventional and hybrid threats that India faces, come with regional and global linkages, which need a different strategy and tools to tackle.

As discussed above a positive facet of India's economic growth has been its expanding interests beyond the shackles of the subcontinent. These extend from Africa in the West to South East Asia. The Island States of the Indian Ocean have a special relevance for our security. Moreover, India's economic engagements in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) have been steadily increasing. Including direct aid, lines of credit, soft loans, corporate investments, disaster relief, and Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) assistance by India, the total amount is more than about \$25 billion. The economic interest is likely to increase in the years ahead. India's security capacity thus needs to expand to protect these interests, and the large Indian diaspora in the region. SF are ideally suited for 'Out of Area' contingency, since they can operate incognito, with speed, surprise, precision and lethality. They can operate on their own or in conjunction with Airborne, or Marines forces.

SF are ideally suited for this Out of Area role as they can operate with a low profile, with the advantage of speed, surprise, precision and lethality, on their own or in conjunction with more conventional elite, but larger units like the Airborne or Marines once created.

Covert and Clandestine

Special Operations may constitute overt, covert and clandestine actions. While overt operations are easily understood, there is a need to understand the nature of covert and clandestine operations. Covert operations are planned and executed by concealing the identity of the executers, or permitting plausible and a high degree of deniability to the sponsor. Emphasis is on concealment of the operation. Covert operations are carried out by non-uniformed military or/and civil operatives in such a manner that their involvement can be denied. These operations have political or diplomatic fallout, if identity and culpability is established. Such operations would need the highest level of oversight. Clandestine operations are characterised as actions that are conducted in complete confidentiality. If conduct of such operations is exposed and admitted inadvertently, though it will have huge politico-diplomatic pitfalls, but the sponsor can exercise the option of acknowledging the operations to safeguard and secure release of military personnel under Geneva Convention. The legal implications of overt and covert/ clandestine operations are different and needs to be understood in that context.

India's Experience with SF

Before we ascertain the employment scenarios for India's SF, it would be useful to have a look at the type of tasks performed, or calls made on them since inception. As we have briefly seen above, these commenced with commando type small operations by the Meghdoot Force in the 1965 War-a raid on a gun position by 9 PARA (Commando) in the J&K Sector, and a deep vehicle borne raid by 10 PARA (Commando) in the Desert Sector during the 1971 War with limited involvement of the Special Frontier Force in erstwhile East Pakistan to support local forces before the outbreak of hostilities. As per Gen AS Kalkat, the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) Commander, the intensive employment of 1, 9 and 10 PARA (Commando) along with the Naval MARCOS in Sri Lanka in support of the IPKF was very useful. They conducted some extremely useful and critical special operations and stayed deployed throughout the duration of the IPKF in Sri Lanka. Almost at the same time in Nov 1988, the Airborne troops carried out intervention operations to prevent coup by mercenaries in Maldives. Maldives remained indebted to India and both nations enjoyed a very special relationship till recent times. The SF have seen extensive employment for Counter Terror operations in J&K and the Northeast, which continues till date. In 1999, we saw not so successful employment of the SF in the Kargil conflict, which I would like to attribute to a misunderstanding of the role and employment of these forces. Besides this, there have been sporadic punitive actions across the LoC from time to time, the recent strike against a militant camp in Myanmar and the coordinated punitive action across the LoC, termed as surgical strikes. The tasking of the GARUDs for airbase protection is a recent phenomenon though it may not qualify as a special operations task. Besides this employment there have been various instances when the airborne forces along with the SF have been put on readiness for tasks in our neighbourhood - for Nepal, after the assassination of almost the entire royal family; for Bangladesh after the mutiny by Bangladesh Rifles (BDR); and for Maldives on a couple of occasions in recent years, since the sacking of President Nausheed.

Employment Scenarios

It emerges that India's SF have three broad employment scenarios. First, SF employment as force multipliers in conventional operations and to reduce the enemy's overall ability to prosecute war by disruption of his plans and cohesion, in conjunction with, or without other military forces to impact outcomes particularly at the Operational and Strategic levels. Second, employment in a No War No Peace and/or peace scenario for punitive deterrence and to conduct specialised counter terrorist and Offensive Counter Terrorist Operations in affected areas to include the sources of support for terrorist operations. Third, is to operate for protection and furtherance of India's strategic, diplomatic,

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informational and economic interests in our area of interest panning from East Africa to South East Asia. The basic skills and equipment for the role and tasks for these three scenarios would overlap. The major differences would be in terms of jointness, level of intelligence support, degree of technological superiority, coordination with other national agencies and level of supervision of operation.

In the first scenario, Special Operations will primarily be service specific. Intelligence will be mainly available from own forces in close proximity deployed, military intelligence, imagery available from within the services, Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA) and at times federal intelligence agencies like the Aviation Research Centre (ARC). Oversight may be at different levels not below the Corps level for the Army and Command Level for the Navy and Air force. Command and control may shift for specific operations to lower levels for specific purpose or pa particular phase of the operation.

The second scenario could be hybrid situations. The operating parameters would be dictated by the depth of the operation in a hostile environment, the risk factor, the political sensitivity of the operation. It is presumed that by and large these would be beyond the command and control of field formations and at least the Service HQ would have control through the Director of Military Operations (DGMO), with oversight being even higher in some cases, as seen during the recent surgical strikes across the LoC.

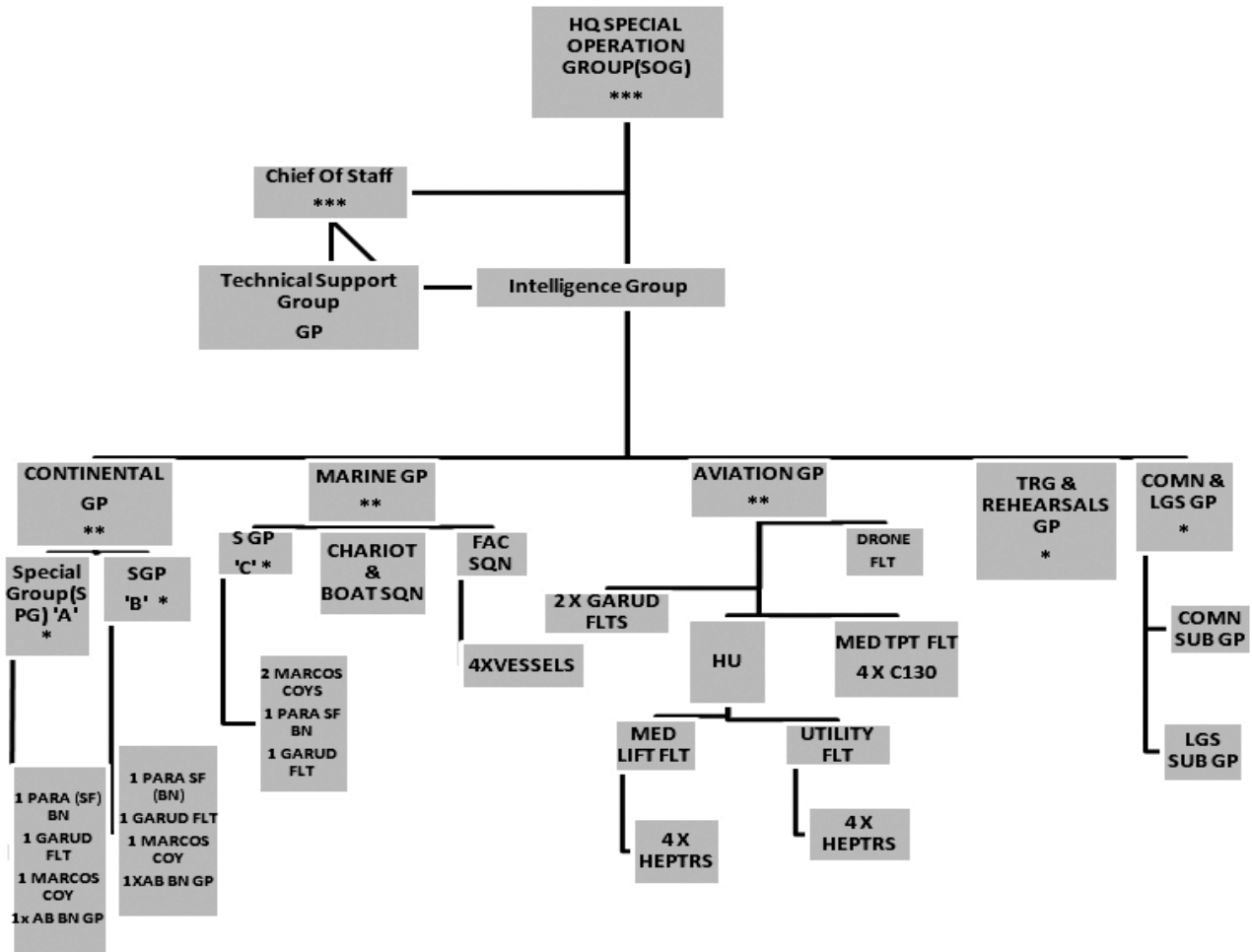
In the third scenario, operations will be at the National Level. Involvement of **Special Forces** of all the three Services will be the norm. Intelligence support will need to be of the highest level with direct access to the Joint Intelligence Council (JIC) and support of the lead and other Intelligence agencies, besides diplomatic inputs. Technological superiority of a high level will be a prerequisite. Agencies like Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) may have to be on board, depending on the nature of the mission. Oversight will be at the highest level not below the National Security Advisor (NSA).

At the National Level, involvement of Special Forces of all the three Services will be the norm. Intelligence support will need to be of the highest level with direct access to the JIC and support of the Lead and other Intelligence Agencies.

Structural Need

To meet the requirements of these scenarios a special structure will be needed. For the first scenario, Service specific forces that is the Army SF, the Naval MARCOS, and the Air Force GARUD will be employed by respective services for Service specific tasks and roles as is in vogue. For the third scenario, a joint structure will have to be created with centralised command and control. This would be the Special Operations Command (SOC). A structure somewhat akin to what the Naresh Chandra Committee had recommended. It is proposed that the forces needed for this structure be provided by the three services from within their resources, including the planned accretions/acquisitions, with minimum additionalities where unavoidable. First, we most certainly don't need the quantum of SF that each Service has raised or are planning to raise as per approved plans, for Service specific tasks. A number of units, suitably equipped and technologically strengthened can meet the dedicated service tasks. Allocation down to Corps level as in the case of the Army, leads to employment of SF for tasks that are not meant for them or can be performed by other regular units/sub units suitably trained, like Ghataks. Additionalities which are unavoidable can be accrued incrementally as we gather experience with the functioning of this structure, or as genuine Service needs emerge. Third, a seamless Human Resource (HR) policy, with command and control remaining within the Services through the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS)/Permanent Chairman Chief of Staff Committee (COSC), resources unused will be available for either kind of employment, thus providing optimal utilization of these forces in all scenarios. Requirements of SF for the second scenario will primarily be met by the SFS. However, tasks requiring higher levels of oversight because of their sensitivity, as discussed above, would be in the preview of the SOC. Both structures will have an umbilical cord connecting them as far as Human Resource (HR) Management, training and to some extent equipping is concerned. These aspects will be discussed subsequently.

Proposed Structure



Note:- S-Special, GP-Group, FLT-Flight, AB-Airbore, FAC-Fast Attack Craft, BN-Battalian, SQN-Squadron, TPT-Transport, COMN-Communication, LGS-Logistics, TRG-Training, MED-Medicals

Command and Control

The proposed SOC HQ should be placed directly under CDS/Permanent Chairman COSC. The Commander of the SOC is proposed to be a three-star General from the Army as maximum quantum of forces are from the Army. He is recommended to be made a member of the Special Policy Group under the National Security Council (NSC), and a member by invitation of the NSC itself, based on need. The HQ, will thus, have oversight of the NSA on important and sensitive issues of national importance and would remain under military command and control through the CDS/Permanent Chairman COSC.

Chief of Staff

The proposed HQ should have a three-star officer as a Chief of Staff (COS), he will be in rotation from the three services on a two to three-year tenure. He will be responsible for coordination within the HQ and depute the SOC

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Commander. He will have an Intelligence Sub Group and a Technical Sub Group directly reporting to him. The Intelligence Sub Group will maintain a data bank of intelligence and information related to likely target areas. It will have Liaison Officers (LOs) of appropriate seniority and experience attached with the Joint Intelligence Council (JIC) and the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) for coordination with our Diplomatic Missions abroad. It will have spare LOs available for temporary attachment with any other Agency as per need. It will arrange for updated digital maps for all areas of interest. The Technical Support Wing will have support of civil scientists and will maintain liaison with agencies like DRDO, ISRO, NTRO, ARC and AEC as and when needed. This Sub Group will also be responsible for research and technical support for procurement of special weapons, equipment, devices and materials needed to maintain a technological edge.

The proposed HQ should have a three-star officer as a Chief of Staff (COS), he will be in rotation from the three services on a two to three-year tenure. He will be responsible for coordination within the HQ and depute the SOC Commander. He will have an Intelligence Sub Group and a Technical Sub Group directly reporting to him.

Continental Group

This Group would be headed by a two star from the Army. It will command two Special Ops Groups with geographical alignment. Group 'A' would be Westwards looking, responsible for Pakistan, Afghanistan, Central Asian Republics and the Middle East. Group 'B' would be North and Eastwards looking, responsible for Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Myanmar and South East Asian Countries. Each Group will constitute of one SF Battalion, one Company of MARCOS, a Flight of GARUD and an Airborne Parachute Battalion Group. Each group will be commanded by a One Star from the Army.

Marine Group

This Group will be headed by a two star from the Navy. It will be responsible for the Island territories and the Island Nations in the Indian Ocean. It will command one Special Operations Group which will consist of two MARCOS Companies, one PARA (SF) Battalion and a Flight of GARUD. It will also have a Chariot and Boat Squadron which will hold 4xChariots and a number of miscellaneous boats and Dinghies needed for Marine Special Operations. A Squadron of three suitably armed fast attack craft will be a part of this Group.

Aviation Group

Headed by a two star from the Air Force it will be responsible for coordination with the Air Force for availability of various aircraft for training and operations as needed. It will also have dedicated air effort under command in the form of a Medium Transport Special Operations Flight with 4xC-130 aircraft, a Helicopter Unit with a Medium Lift Flight of 4xMedium Helicopters and a Utility Flight of 4xUtility Helicopters. It will also have an attack Drone Flight with 4x Birds. It will command two Flights of GARUD for Suppression of Enemy Air Defence (SEAD), Air Ambush and other offensive tasks.

Communications and Logistics Group

This Group will be headed by a one star from the three services in rotation and will provide support to the SOC. The communication sub group will provide communication support based on Satellite Communication linked on the Rukmani Naval Satellite with adequate redundancy based on other National satellites. Combat radio support will be based on Software Defined Radios for flexibility and ease of communications. This Group will also have an Electronic Warfare

Combat radio support will be based on Software Defined Radios for flexibility and ease of communications. This Group will also have an Electronic Warfare component for Mobile Communication interception and remote through the wall Electromagnetic Sensors.

component for Mobile Communication interception and remote through the wall Electromagnetic Sensors. Logistics support will be based on a palletised system based on road transport, medium transport aircraft and helicopters. The Logistics Sub Group will also include a Medical Support Team and a Disaster Relief Brick.

Training and Rehearsals Group

Responsible for all specialised training needs of the SOC. Training will be based on the existing infrastructure created by the three services for this purpose. The Army Special Forces Training School (SFTS) will be upgraded and moved to its permanent location on priority. An Advanced Training and Rehearsals facility will be established for the SOC co-located with the SFTS. All foreign training and joint training with other Special Forces will be coordinated by this group.

Service Component of Special Forces for Dedicated Tasks

Respective services will continue to retain all SF not on the Order of Battle of the SOC. These forces will be available for conduct of dedicated operations under the First and Second Scenarios. After shedding the three SF battalions the Army will retain seven battalions, including the one under planned to raise. This will permit allotment of three battalions to the Eastern Theatre, two to the Northern one and one each to the Western and Southern Theatres. In a conventional scenario, it is expected that most of the forces from SOC would be available to augment the war efforts of the three Services directly or indirectly. The Army will retain the Airborne Brigade after allotment of two Airborne Battalions to the SOC. These two battalions will follow normal rotation with the other Airborne Battalions to maintain operation readiness of the Parachute Brigade.

The Naval MARCOS component after shedding three company equivalent to the SOC, should be able to retain a Company each for dedicated operations on the Western and Eastern Seaboards and a Company for the Island Territories. The present and the planned strength should enable this.

The GARUD already have strength of about 15 flights with a planned final strength of 21 flights. Shedding five flights to the SOC is therefore feasible. Tasking this well-trained force for air asset protection alone needs a rethink.

Human Resource Management

The manpower for the SOC will be provided from the three Services as explained above. Personnel will move between the Service Special Forces and the SOC. The recommended tenure with SOC will be 4 to 5 years followed by reversion to the parent unit. This swinging door policy will ease HR issues, take full advantage of the skilled SF manpower, and retain additional skills and techniques learned while with the SOC, in the SF fold. This will also help expand avenues of upward mobility for the SF personnel, which is necessary for morale and a continued high level of motivation.

While the SOC HQ is proposed to be located within the National Capital Region (NCR), the Continental Group could be located at Agra/Chandigarh. The Marine Group could be located on the Western Seaboard (Karwar) or the Eastern Seaboard (Vizag). The Aviation Group could be located at Agra/Hindan. With dedicated high-speed communications available with adequate spectrum width and the location of all components close to Air, Rail and Road hubs, with adequate flexibility for rapid mobilization to achieve rapid response.

Equipment Acquisition

Experience has shown that the biggest hurdle in capacity building for the SF of all the three services is acquisition of weapons and equipment.

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On the other hand, the SF under the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) or the Cabinet Secretary, like the National Security Guard (NSG) or the SG, are the best equipped and they never seem to be having any shortage of resources. This hurdle must be overcome if SOC has to achieve the desired capabilities and capacities. It is therefore, important that separate funds are made available for their needs and the procurement process is taken out of the scrutiny and procedural constraints of normal defence expenditure.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that a country of India's size, potential and aspirations should rightly possess a comprehensive and credible Special Operations capability, with well-defined roles, mandate and organisational structure. As explained in this paper, we can do this by optimising the existing SF and resources of the three services, without a reduction in their key capabilities. There is likely to be opposition from the three services to the proposal, but then there is no new proposal that talks of shedding resources, that has not been opposed. This will therefore need a push at the highest levels within the services and the MoD.

While the SF have an increasing importance at the National level, there is no denying the fact that they have an important role in conventional operations and are a key component of Theatre Commanders plans. The proposed structure takes this into account and achieves the following: -

- All services retain the needed component of their SF.
- Permits employment of SF by the Theatre Commanders and down to Corps level in the Eastern and Northern Theatres.
- The SOC HQ provides a closer link to the political authority for speedy decision making and employment in time critical and sensitive situations, which need a higher level of oversight.
- The capacity of the SF to execute sensitive tasks gets enhanced considerably by the interface provided by the SOC with other National agencies and joint employment.
- The preparation and execution capacity gets greatly enhanced, with critical resources being dedicated to the SOC.
- Ensures optimal employment of all SF and creates the needed structure at minimum cost, increasing feasibility manifold.

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Indigenisation of India's Defence Industry

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Abstract

The prevailing security scenario in India's neighbourhood necessitates continuous modernisation of its Armed Forces. The modernisation process over the years has been rather slow; even stagnant in certain areas. India is one of the largest importers of defence equipment in the world despite vast investments in Ordnance Factories (OFs), Defence Public Sector Units (DPSUs) and the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). Participation by the Private Sector, permitted since 2001, is yet to really take off. In order to achieve a meaningful indigenisation and reduction in imports of defence equipment, it is of utmost importance to improve the functioning and efficiency of the OFs and DPSUs which account for 85 to 90 per cent of the present levels of indigenous manufacturing by value. This can best be achieved through strategic sale and transfer of management control to the Private Sector.

A number of policy decisions have been introduced by the Government to facilitate entry of the Private Sector into defence manufacturing. As a result, a number of Joint Ventures (JVs) and Transfer of Technology (TOT) agreements have been concluded or are in the pipeline. Some of the policies and procedures, however, still need refinement and streamlining. Role of Department of Defence Production (DODP) requires a structural change to that of a regulator, rather than an administrator. Utilisation of entire budgetary allocations for capital acquisitions is a must every year. Improvement in the functioning of DRDO and adherence to laid down timelines and budgetary allocations for completion of projects requires special attention.

Introduction

The complex security challenges faced by India have compelled retention of a large strength (1.4 million)¹ in the Armed Forces. Ensuring operational readiness of such a large force is an ongoing process achieved through progressive modernisation, regular update of doctrines and pragmatic training. Unfortunately, the modernisation process has been rather slow due to unwarranted delays in procurement and failure on part of the Indian Defence Industry to meet the Armed Forces requirements.

India ranks amongst top 10 countries in the world in terms of military expenditure. However, over 60² per cent of the defence related requirements are still met through imports. Successive Governments did endeavour to achieve self-sufficiency in defence manufacturing

India ranks amongst top 10 countries in the world in terms of military expenditure. However, over 60 percent of the defence related requirements are still met through imports. Successive Governments did endeavour to achieve self-sufficiency in defence manufacturing primarily through Ordnance Factories (OFs) and Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs). Participation by Private Sector was finally allowed in 2001 with permission for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) up to 26 percent, but the progress remained slow.

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primarily through Ordnance Factories (OFs) and Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs). Participation by Private Sector was finally allowed in 2001 with permission for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) up to 26 per cent, but the progress remained slow.

On coming to power in 2014, Modi Government provided a major push to indigenisation through its “Make in India” initiative. A number of reforms were introduced which were received enthusiastically by the Private Industry. On ground, however, there have not been any significant results visible towards indigenisation and reduction in import levels as some of the policies and procedures will take time to settle down. Improvement in the functioning and efficiency levels of OFs, DPSUs and DRDO will be a major contributory factor.

The aim of this paper is to analyse the issues affecting defence production in India and suggest a way forward to accelerate the process of indigenisation.

Indian Defence Industry

Ordnance Factories. 41 OFs distributed at 24³ different locations all over the country have enabled India to possess the largest defence industrial base amongst the developing nations. Product range of OFs is rather vast to include small and medium caliber weapons, artillery guns, armoured vehicles and general stores including clothing. Performance of the OFs has, however, been rather poor as evident from succeeding paragraphs.

About 90⁴ per cent of the ammunition for Indian Army is sourced from various OFs. As per a Comptroller and Audit General (CAG) report, the shortfall in respect of different types of ammunition varied from 54 to 73⁵ per cent during the period 2009 to 2013. This fell to 64 to 95 per cent during 2013-2017.

The foundation stone for setting up of OF Nalanda for the production of Bi-Modular Charge System (BMCS) for 155 mm Artillery guns was laid by the then Prime Minister of India, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee on 14 April 1999⁶. 2650 acres of land was acquired and vast infrastructure created at an expenditure of over INR 910 crore. The factory, which was to be completed by 2005, remains incomplete and is unlikely to become fully operational before 2022 as the process for remaining plants is still in tendering stage.

The Transfer of Technology (TOT) for the manufacture of 155 mm FH77B (Bofors) guns had been paid for, by the Indian Government and received by OFB in 1986-87. However, no effort was made for the indigenous manufacture of these guns till 2011. The “Dhanush” 155 mm Gun Programme which finally commenced based on this TOT in 2012, is awaiting fructification.

Manufacture of rifles and carbines had commenced at OF Ishapore during the British days on 20 September 1904. At present small arms are also being manufactured at OFs Kanpur, Tiruchirapalli and Karwa. Despite such a rich legacy and vast experience, OFB has failed to design even a single world class rifle, carbine, LMG or Sniper rifle.

Production of T-90 tanks was delayed by six years on account of inability to translate documents from Russian to English⁷. Due to considerable delays, only 227 tanks out of the ordered 945 were produced by 2014-15. HVF has failed to indigenise and even now 70 % of the components by value are imported⁸.

In addition, OFB has also suffered from poor focus on R&D, low absorption of ToT, inefficient utilisation of resources, quality control and over pricing.

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Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs) There are 9 DPSUs in India structured on the lines of Central Public-Sector Enterprises (CPSEs). Unlike the OFB, these are corporate entities governed by their board of directors as per guidelines laid down by DOPD. Fair amount of autonomy in their functioning is enjoyed by the DPSUs, though considerable directional control is still retained by DOPD.

Success rate of DPSUs has been better than OFs due to their somewhat autonomous status. However, considering the huge capital investments, infrastructure, skilled human resources and experience, their performance is much below the potential. Performance of DPSUs has also been mired by inefficiency, long delays in execution of programmes, lack of quality control, over pricing etc.

DPSUs cover a vast range of strategic products for the Armed Forces. Considerable indigenisation and import substitution has been achieved by DPSUs which can be greatly enhanced provided these function to their optimum potential and capabilities. The nine DPSUs are: -

- Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL).
- Bharat Electronics Ltd (BEL).
- Bharat Dynamics Ltd (BDL).
- Bharat Earth Movers Ltd (BEML).
- Mazagon Dock Ltd (MDL).
- Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers Ltd (GRSE).
- Goa Shipyard Ltd (GSL).
- Hindustan Shipyard Ltd (HSL).
- Mishra Dhatu Nigam Ltd (MIDHANI).

Private Industry

Private Sector's response to the liberalisation process and Prime Minister's 'Make in India' campaign has been extremely positive. About 209 large⁹ large, medium and small companies had obtained 342 Industrial Licenses (ILs) till June 2016, covering the entire spectrum of defence equipment to include aerospace, naval and land systems. However, just 25 to 30 per cent of the companies awarded ILs have commenced production. Private Sector contribution as part of the total indigenous production, still remains at about 10-15 per cent, while 85-90 per cent by value is contributed by the Public Sector. The major reasons for this slow progress are: -

- There was reluctance amongst foreign Original Equivalent Manufacturers (OEMs) to participate in JVs with 26% FDI. They have displayed greater interest once FDI was raised to 49%. Flow of funds, however, has been rather slow and setting up of JVs and TOT agreements in most cases remain confined to MoUs and Term Sheets on paper.
- Inordinate delays in fructification of defence programmes and frequent retraction of Request for Proposals (RFPs) are discouraging for the Private Sector and Foreign OEMs.
- A number of private companies accorded defence licenses do not have the requisite technology or satisfactory partnership with a qualified foreign OEM to execute hi-tech projects.

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- Till 2013, primary avenue open to private companies for participation in defence contracts was through “Buy Indian” category. “Buy and Make” category was through nomination by Secretary (Defence Production) and contracts were invariably awarded to OFs and DPSUs. Introduction of “Buy and Make Indian” Category in DPP 2013 has now facilitated participation of Indian companies as prime contractors in major contracts.
- A number of major foreign OEMs including their group companies remain blacklisted. A detailed policy on blacklisting was issued in Nov 2016, but decision regarding long standing cases and issue of a fresh list in which some of these companies may be exonerated is still awaited.
- “Make” procedure, introduced in Defence Procurement Procedures (DPP) 2006 to promote indigenous research and design has failed to take off. All the three projects initiated for the Army under this procedure i.e. Battlefield Management System (BMS), Tactical Communication System (TCS) and Future Infantry Combat Vehicle (FICV) remain stalled.
- Based upon Dhirendra Singh Committee Report recommendations and the issue of DPP 2016, three new categories for Private Sector participation viz “Strategic Partners (SP)”, “Indigenously Designed Developed and Manufactured (IDDM)” and “Make-II” were introduced. These are yet to fructify and not a single RFP has been issued under any of these categories.
- Private Sector companies will incur fresh capital expenditure towards creation of production facilities only if they win a contract or have reasonable chances of doing so. This works out quite well for the “Buy and Make Indian” programmes where initial expenditure is primarily on ‘No Cost No Commitment’ (NCNC) trials in conjunction with the foreign technology partner. Setting up of indigenous facility and commencement of production in India is envisaged within two to four years post the award of a contract. However, same does not apply to ‘Make-I, Make-II’ and ‘Indigenously Designed and Manufactured’ (IDDM) categories where indigenous manufacturing facilities show casing the laid down IC per centages must be in place prior to submitting response to the EOI/ RFP.
- Capital expenditure will need to be amortised by a company within the quantities and time frame stipulated in the contract unless additional future orders are assured. This entails a very high unit product cost, especially when the numbers are small and/or capex is high.

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)

DRDO comprises 52 Research Laboratories and Establishments with a workforce of 25,157 including 7476 scientists / engineers¹⁰. These encompass all possible dimensions of Defence Technology to include Aerospace, Land Systems, Missiles, Maritime, Life Science and Electronics¹¹.

The vast infrastructure, skilled manpower and investments are, however, not justified by the results achieved. The performance of DRDO laboratories and establishments has remained under severe criticism for the following reasons: -

- Extreme delays in completion of projects.
- Inability to develop the requisite technologies leading to dependence on imports.
- Foreclosure of a large number of projects since these did not meet requirement of the Services.
- Financial allocations exceeded by large margins.
- Far too many projects being undertaken without proper feasibility study and scrutiny.

- Lack of accountability in case of serious delays and undue cost overruns.
- Inadequate progressive training and technical competence amongst scientists and engineers.
- Collaboration between DRDO and production agencies, especially the OFB and DPSUs is inadequate.

Defence Procurement Process

Defence Procurement Policy. A number of innovative policy decisions have been introduced by the present Government to achieve self-reliance in the design, development and production of defence equipment and weapon systems. The new provisions in DPP-2016 have been framed with the intent to speed up procurement as well as create conditions conducive for private industry participation. However, a few aspects which merit consideration are:-

- **IDDMM.** This category envisages 40% Indigenous Content (IC) in equipment designed indigenously and 60% IC in equipment not designed in house. A committee comprising scientists from DRDO and members from respective service will need to certify the concerned equipment for IDDMM categorisation. All this entails that manufacturing facilities including the IC should be in place for a product, duly certified by the experts committee, well before the statement of case for categorisation is prepared by a Services HQ for fielding in the “Services Capital Acquisition Plan Categorisation Committee (SCAPCC). Even the Services Qualitative Requirements (SQRs) may need to be formulated before such a certification. Mere certification by the Committee will not suffice as the equipment will still have to go through the entire range of user trials and Commercial Negotiation Committee (CNC). Possibility of failure and retraction of RFP therefore remains. It is questionable whether a private company would take the risk of designing and manufacturing a product exclusively for indigenous procurement unless certain guarantees are available.
- **Make-I Procedure.** The erstwhile “Make” (now Make-I) procedure introduced in 2006 was for the manufacture of “high technology” complex systems. However, the procedures for selection of vendors for “Expression of Intent (EOI)” and subsequent stages are so complex and lengthy that none of the projects initiated since 2006 have made any appreciable progress. It is therefore preferable that equipment for which technologies are available world over and is in service with foreign armies, its procurement should be under the “Buy and Make (Indian)” category rather than ‘Make-I’ programme. Make-I procedure should be adopted only in cases where technologies are still to be developed or are not easily available internationally.
- **Make-II Procedure.** Aimed at import substitution, industry is required to bear the entire cost of funding with Government reimbursement only in the case of ‘successful development’. As most of the envisaged programmes pertain to import substitution, it may be prudent to go in for procurement under the “Buy and Make (Indian)” category. This obviates the design and development stage and establishment of advance facilities by industry, while still ensuring indigenisation.

Miscellaneous Issues - Budgetary Allocations

Considerable views have been expressed on the budgetary allocations for defence having been reduced from 3.4% of GDP to the present 1.56%. However, of greater concern should be the non-utilisation of even the allotted budget. Over the past six years, INR 6000 to 8000 Crores have been surrendered annually from the capital budget at RE Stage. As per norms, this amount would have formed the cash outgo against 15% advance for any of the concluded contracts. This translates into INR 40,000 to 50,000 Crores worth of contracts for each year, or an opportunity worth INR 2.5 to 3.0 lakh crores and six years modernisation time lost forever.

Bank Guarantees for Ship Building Projects

Government contracts for defence shipbuilding require milestone payments to be backed by equivalent amount of Advanced Bank Guarantee (ABG) as well as Performance Warrantee Bank Guarantee (PWBG). In all other industries such as infrastructure, the BG requirement is restricted to a PWBG of 5% and/or an ABG for the first advance. Given the programme size, this is a very challenging task for any shipyard.

The Way Forward: Recommendations

Significant improvement in functioning of the OFs and DPSUs is of utmost importance if any meaningful self-reliance is to be achieved in the foreseeable future. Privatisation of these Public-Sector entities through strategic sale with transfer of management control to the Private Sector as early as possible will provide the desired results.

Another fact which needs to be understood and accepted is the lack of R&D capabilities and culture both in Public and Private Sector. Hence, reliance and emphasis in the initial phases would necessarily remain on co-production and co-development in the form of JVs and TOT agreements with established OEMs. Quality R&D should be ensured alongside.

The role of MOD (DODP) needs a structural change with privatisation of OFs and DPSUs. DODP should be responsible only for issuing policy guidelines and its overall role restricted to that of a regulator.

OFB

Significant improvement in functioning of the OFB is necessary if the Government is really serious about its "Make in India" initiative. Vast infrastructure of 41 OFs and their skilled human resources need to be optimally utilised. Some of the measures by which this can be achieved are: -

- A serious consideration be given to privatisation of all OFs through outright sale and transfer of management control to the Private Sector. It is noteworthy that almost all the major OEMs in the USA and West Europe were Government owned entities at some point of time. Even the East European countries have moved towards privatisation albeit in a phased manner.
- In case privatisation is not considered appropriate at this stage due to political compulsions, corporatisation of OFB is definitely an immediate necessity as brought by LK Behera in his book "Indian Defence Industry – an Agenda for Making in India" and OFB must function as an autonomous body.
- As a beginning, BMCS project at OF Nalanda may be offered to the Private Sector for construction on turnkey basis and to be run as a JV with the OFB.
- Creation of effective in house R&D facilities is a must with all OFs. LK Behera has suggested a minimum 3% allocation of the turnover which is considered appropriate.
- OFB must exit its non-core business at the earliest. MoD, in May 2017, directed the Army to procure 87 items including 39 listed under weapons section, from the Private Sector¹².
- OFB must compete with the Private Sector wherever the programme permits the same. Issue of indents through nomination should not be resorted to whenever private sector is able to offer similar products.
- TOT contracts which could not fructify, mainly ammunition, due to technology gaps should be renegotiated.

DPSUs

DPSUs stand out to be the most formidable candidates to boost indigenous production and ensure import substitution. Like in the case of OFs, measures which can enhance their performance are:

- Privatisation of DPSUs through strategic sale and transfer of management control should be achieved in an earlier time frame than the OFs due to their already autonomous functioning.
- Besides earning revenue for the Government, the stake sale may be utilised to automatically provide 'Strategic Partners' to the Government in respective product sectors.
- In house R&D facilities must be enhanced by respective DPSUs. 3 to 4 per cent of the overall budget must be earmarked for this purpose.
- Co-production and co-development of products in collaboration with well-known OEMs should be undertaken so as to enable faster indigenisation and product improvement.
- DPSUs must also compete with the private sector.

DRDO

Public sector collaboration between DRDO and private companies has improved and it should be encouraged. Cooperation between DRDO and OFs/DPSUs however has remained on a low key and needs to be enhanced. A few important issues which merit attention are: -

- A detailed and realistic feasibility study must be carried out in respect of each project undertaken by DRDO to ensure adoption of correct timelines and budgetary allocations as well as avoidance of over ambitious projects.
- Adherence to timelines for completion of projects must be ensured. Responsibility and accountability in case of slippages must be fixed. Incentives must be given to the scientists / engineers for timely completion of projects.
- Setting up of "Technology Commission" to formulate the research and development policy including laying down areas and focus on research as well as specific deadline¹³ should be ensured earliest.
- As recommended by Lt Gen DB Shekatkar Committee, DRDO must concentrate primarily on development of defence platforms and its non-core research activities need to be stopped. The committee recommended 11 laboratories of DRDO to be closed¹⁴.
- Continuous training and up-gradation of technological knowledge and skills amongst scientists and engineers should be ensured through collaboration with premium institutes within the country and abroad. Additional qualifications acquired by individuals should carry incentives and count towards their promotions.
- As recommended by LK Behara, "institution of a third party review system for each major DRDO project" should be instituted.

Private Industry

Sincere efforts have been made by the Government to streamline procedures and facilitate participation of Private Sector in defence manufacturing. However, a few recommendations to further improve the system are: -

- In an effort to be eligible to receive an RFP, private companies invariably overstate the performance parameters and design specifications of their products in response to the RFIs. This needs to be curbed as it leads to formulation of ambitious SQRs and subsequent non-compliance of equipment during trials leading to retraction of RFPs.

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- Time bound completion of programmes by MOD is a must as it has financial and administrative ramifications for the participating companies.
- “Buy and Make (Indian)” should be the preferred option over “Make-I” and “Make-II” procedures. The former does not necessitate establishment of any manufacturing facilities or Capex prior to the award of a contract while in the latter case, these facilities have to be in place prior to introduction of a programme at the SCAPCC.
- Privatisation through strategic sale of OFs and DPSUs offers a much easier route for selection of Strategic Partners (SPs). A company or a group which acquires controlling rights of a particular OF or DPSU, should automatically be designated as SP for its existing product range.
- Assured maximum quantities in initial contracts over longer periods will enable phased amortisation of capex thus reducing per unit cost for the customer.

Miscellaneous Issues-Budgetary Support

- Increase in allocation of funds for capital acquisition to improve the pace of modernisation and make up for the lost opportunities must be ensured with immediate effect.
- Introduction of procedures to fix responsibility and accountability in case of under utilisation of capital budget due to omissions or neglect. Reasons for any surrender of funds and action taken must be put up by MOD to the CAG and the Standing Committee of Parliament every year.

Adherence to Timelines - There needs to be a procedure in place to monitor adherence to timelines at each stage as per DPP in respect of all programmes from the time AON is accorded by DAC. Every time slippage must be investigated and responsibility and accountability fixed as necessary.

Retraction of RFPs - All proposals referred to competent authority for retraction of RFPs must state the responsibility and accountability in case there have been any lapses.

Duplication of Effort between Service HQ and DG (Acquisition) - Duplication of effort between Service HQ and DG (Acquisition) during ‘Technical’ and ‘General Staff’ evaluations is time consuming and needs to be eradicated. A combined team from both the organisations should be responsible for scrutinising and preparing the Technical and General Staff Evaluation reports.

Bank Guarantees for Defence Shipbuilding Projects - Presently, DPSUs in case of orders on a nomination basis are allowed to submit indemnity bonds in lieu of BGs. Similar provision should be made applicable to Private Sector Shipyards. If considered necessary, along with corporate guarantees from Private Sector Shipyards, the under-construction ship and the material for which milestone payments have been made may be termed as property of the MOD.

SQRs (Staff Qualitative Requirements) - Formulation of pragmatic SQRs is of utmost importance by Service HQ. Except for propriety equipment, these should facilitate participation and, preferably, qualification by more than one vendor.

Blacklisted Companies - MOD must scrutinise the cases pertaining to blacklisted companies and issue a fresh list at the earliest.

Endnotes

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Artificial Intelligence in Military Operations: Technology, and Ethics - An Indian Perspective

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Abstract

Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies hold great promise for facilitating military decisions, minimizing human casualties and enhancing the combat potential of forces. This article focuses on development and fielding of Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems (LAWS) against the backdrop of rapid advances in the field of AI, and its relevance to the Indian security scenario. It gives a broad overview of the possible military applications of this technology and brings out the main legal and ethical issues involved in the current ongoing debate on development of LAWS. Further, international as well as Indian perspectives are given out on the development and deployment of LAWS. It reviews the status of AI technology in India, assesses the current capability of the Indian Army (IA) to adapt to this technology, and suggest steps which need to be taken on priority to ensure that Indian defence forces keep pace with other advanced armies in the race to usher in a new AI-triggered Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA).

Introduction

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become a field of intense interest and high expectations within the defence technology community. AI technologies hold great promise for facilitating military decisions, minimizing human casualties and enhancing the combat potential of forces, and in the process dramatically changing, if not revolutionizing, the design of military systems. This is especially true in a wartime environment, when data availability is high, decision periods are short, and decision effectiveness is an absolute necessity.

The rise in the use of increasingly autonomous unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) in military settings has been accompanied by a heated debate as to whether there should be an outright ban on Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems (LAWS), sometimes referred to as 'killer robots'. Such AI enabled robots, which could be in the air, on the ground, or under water, would theoretically be capable of executing missions on their own. The debate concerns whether artificially intelligent machines should be allowed to execute such military missions, especially in scenarios where human lives are at stake.

This paper focuses on development and fielding of LAWS against the backdrop of rapid advances in the field of AI, with special emphasis on legal and ethical issues associated with their deployment. It also reviews the status of AI technology in India, assesses the current capability of the Indian Army (IA) to adapt to this technology, and suggest steps which need to be taken on priority to ensure that we do not get left behind other advanced armies in the race to usher in a new AI-triggered Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA).

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AI – Current Status of Technology

AI – A Maturing Technology- A general definition of AI is the capability of a computer system to perform tasks that normally require human intelligence, such as visual perception, speech recognition and decision-making. Functionally, AI enabled machines should have the capability to learn, reason, judge, predict, infer and initiate action. In layman's terms, AI implies trying to emulate the brain. There are three main ingredients that are necessary for simulating intelligence: the brain, the body, and the mind. The brain consists of the software algorithms which work on available data, the body is the hardware and the mind is the computing power that runs the algorithms. Technological breakthroughs and convergence in these areas is enabling the AI field to rapidly mature.

AI, Machine Learning and Deep Learning- Year before last, in a significant development, Google DeepMind's AlphaGo program defeated South Korean Master Lee Se-dol in the popular board game Go, and the terms AI, Machine Learning, and Deep Learning were used to describe how DeepMind won. The easiest way to think of their inter-relationship is to visualize them as concentric circles, with AI the largest, then Machine Learning, and finally Deep Learning - which is driving today's AI explosion - fitting inside both¹. AI is any technique that enables computers to mimic human intelligence. Machine Learning is a subset of AI, which focuses on the development of computer programs that can change when exposed to new data, by searching through data to look for patterns and adjusting program actions accordingly. Deep Learning is a further subset of Machine Learning that is composed of algorithms which permit software to train itself by exposing multi-layered neural networks (which are designed on concepts borrowed from a study of the neurological structure of the brain) to vast amounts of data.

Machine Learning is a subset of AI, which focuses on the development of computer programs that can change when exposed to new data, by searching through data to look for patterns and adjusting program actions accordingly. Deep Learning is a further subset of Machine Learning that is composed of algorithms which permit software to train itself by exposing multi-layered neural networks.

AI Technologies- The most significant technologies which are making rapid progress today are natural language processing and generation, speech recognition, text analytics, machine learning and deep learning platforms, decision management, biometrics and robotic process automation. Some of the major players in this space are: Google, now famous for its artificial neural network based AlphaGo program; Facebook, which has recently announced several new algorithms; IBM, known for Watson, which is a cognitive system that leverages machine learning to derive insights from data; Microsoft, which helps developers to build Android, iOS and Windows apps using powerful intelligence algorithms; Toyota, which has a major focus on automotive autonomy (driver-less cars); and Baidu Research, the Chinese firm which brings together global research talent to work on AI technologies.

AI – Future Prospects- Today, while AI is most commonly cited for image recognition, natural language processing and voice recognition, this is just an early manifestation of its full potential. The next step will be the ability to reason, and in fact reach a level where an AI system is functionally indistinguishable from a human. With such a capability, AI based systems would potentially have an infinite number of applications².

The Turing Test- In a 1951 paper, Alan Turing proposed the Turing Test to test for artificial intelligence. It envisages two contestants consisting of a human and a machine, with a judge, suitably screened from them, tasked with deciding which of the two is talking to him. While there have been two well-known computer programs claiming to have cleared the Turing Test, the reality is that no AI system has been able to pass it since it was introduced. Turing himself thought that by the year 2000 computer systems would be able to pass the test with flying colours! While there is much disagreement as to when a computer will actually pass the Turing Test, one thing all AI scientists generally agree on is that it is very likely to happen in our lifetime³.

Fear of AI- There is a growing fear that machines with AI will get so smart that they will take over and end civilization. This belief is probably rooted in the fact that most of society does not have an adequate understanding of this technology. AI is less feared in engineering circles because there is a slightly more hands-on understanding of the technology. There is perhaps a potential for AI to be abused in the future, but that is a possibility with any technology. Apprehensions about AI leading to end-of-civilisation scenarios are perhaps largely based on fear of the unknown, and are largely unfounded.

AI in Military Operations

AI – Harbinger of a New RMA? Robotic systems are now widely present in the modern battlefield. Increasing levels of autonomy are being seen in systems which are already fielded or are under development, ranging from systems capable of autonomously performing their own search, detect, evaluation, track, engage and kill assessment functions, fire-and-forget munitions, loitering torpedoes, and intelligent anti-submarine or anti-tank mines, among numerous other examples. In view of these developments, many now consider AI & Robotics technologies as having the potential to trigger a new RMA, especially as Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems (LAWS) continue to achieve increasing levels of sophistication and capability.

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“LAWS” – Eluding Precise Definition. In the acronym “LAWS”, there is a fair amount of ambiguity in the usage of the term “autonomous”, and there is lack of consensus on how a “fully autonomous” weapon system should be characterised. In this context, two definitions merit mention, as under:-

- **US DoD Definition.** A 2012 US Department of Defence (DoD) directive defines an autonomous weapon system as one that “once activated, can select and engage targets without further intervention by a human operator.” More significantly, it defines a semi-autonomous weapon system as one that, “once activated, is intended to engage individual targets or specific target groups that have been selected by a human operator”. By this yardstick, a weapon system, once programmed by a human to destroy a “target group” (which could well be interpreted to be an entire army) and thereafter seeks and destroys individual targets autonomously, would still be classified as semi-autonomous⁴!
- **Human Rights Watch (HRW) Definition.** As per HRW, “fully autonomous weapons are those that once initiated, will be able to operate without Meaningful Human Control (MHC). They will be able to select and engage targets on their own, rather than requiring a human to make targeting and kill decisions for each individual attack.” However, in the absence of consensus on how MHC is to be specified, it concedes that there is lack of clarity on the definition of LAWS⁵.

Narrow AI – An Evolutionary Approach. There is a view that rather than focus autonomous systems alone, there is a need to leverage the power of AI for increasing the combat power of the current force. This approach is referred to as “Narrow” or “Weak” AI. Narrow AI could lead to many benefits, as follows: using image recognition from video feeds to identify imminent threats, anticipating supply bottlenecks, automating administrative functions, etc. Such applications would permit force re-structuring, with smaller staff comprising of data scientists replacing large organizations. Narrow AI thus has the potential to help the Defence Forces improve their teeth-to-tail ratio⁶.

Centaur: Human-Machine Teaming. Another focus area on the evolutionary route to the development of autonomous weapons is what can be termed as “human-machine teaming,” wherein machines and humans work

together in a symbiotic relationship. Like the mythical centaur, this approach envisages harnessing inhuman speed and power to human judgment, combining machine precision and reliability with human robustness and flexibility, as also enabling computers and humans helping each other to think, termed as “cognitive teaming.” Some functions will necessarily have to be completely automated, like missile defence lasers or cybersecurity, and in all such cases where there is no time for human intervention. But, at least in the medium term, most military AI applications are likely to be team-work: computers will fly the missiles, aim the lasers, jam the signals, read the sensors, and pull all the data together over a network, putting it into an intuitive interface, using which humans, using their experience, can take well informed decisions⁷.

LAWS – Legal and Ethical Issues

LAWS powered by AI are currently the subject of much debate based on ethical and legal concerns, with human rights proponents recommending that development of such weapons should be banned, as they would not be in line with International Humanitarian Laws (IHL) under the Geneva Convention. The legal debate over LAWS revolves around three fundamental issues, as under:-

- **Principle of “Distinction.”** This principle requires parties to an armed conflict to distinguish civilian populations and assets from military assets, and to target only the latter (Article 51(4)(b) of Additional Protocol I).
- **Principle of “Proportionality”.** The law of proportionality requires parties to a conflict to determine the civilian cost of achieving a particular military target and prohibits an attack if the civilian harm exceeds the military advantage (Articles 51(5)(b) and 57(2)(iii) of Additional Protocol I).
- **Legal Review.** The rule on legal review provides that signatories to the Convention are obliged to determine whether or not new weapons as well as means and methods of warfare are in adherence to the Convention or any other international law (Article 36 of Additional Protocol I).

Marten’s Clause. It has also been argued that fully autonomous weapon systems do not pass muster under the Marten’s Clause, which requires that “in cases not covered by the law in force, the human person remains under the protection of the principles of humanity and the dictates of the public conscience” (Preamble to Additional Protocol I)⁸.

“Campaign to Stop Killer Robots”- Under this banner, Human Rights Watch (HRW) has argued that fully autonomous weapon systems would be prima facie illegal as they would never be able to adhere to the above provisions of IHL, since such adherence requires a subjective judgement, which machines can never achieve. Hence, their development should be banned at this stage itself⁹.

Counter-Views- There is an equally vocal body of opinion which states that development and deployment of LAWS would not be illegal, and in fact would lead to saving of human lives. Some of their views are listed as under¹⁰:-

- LAWS do not need to have self-preservation as a foremost drive, and hence can be used in a self-sacrificing manner, saving human lives in the process.
- They can be designed without emotions that normally cloud human judgment during battle leading to unnecessary loss of lives.
- When working as a team with human soldiers, autonomous systems have the potential capability of objectively monitoring ethical behaviour on the battlefield by all parties.
- The eventual development of robotic sensors superior to human capabilities would enable robotic systems to

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pierce the fog of war, leading to better informed “kill” decisions.

- Autonomous weapons would have a wide range of uses in scenarios where civilian loss would be minimal or non-existent, such as naval warfare.
- The question of legality depends on how these weapons are used, not their development or existence.
- It is too early to argue over the legal issues surrounding autonomous weapons because the technology itself has not been completely developed yet.

Degree of Autonomy and Meaningful Human Control (MHC)- Central to the issues being debated are the aspects of degree of autonomy and MHC. LAWS have been broadly classified into three categories: “Human-in-the-Loop” LAWS can select targets, while humans take the “kill” decision; “Human-on-the-Loop” weapons can select as well as take “kill” decisions autonomously, while a human may override the decision by exerting oversight; and “Human-out-of-the-Loop” LAWS are those that may select and engage targets without any human interaction. Entwined within this categorisation is the concept of MHC, ie, the degree of human control which would pass muster under IHC. Despite extensive discussions at many levels, there is no consensus so far on what is meant by full autonomy as also how MHC should be defined¹¹².

Deliberations at the UN- Triggered by the initiatives of HRW and other NGOs, an informal group of experts from a large number of countries has been debating the issue of LAWS for three years now at the United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) forum, Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). In December 2016, countries agreed to formalize these deliberations, and as a result a Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) has been established, the first of which was held from 13-17 November 2017, chaired by Ambassador Amandeep Gill of India. Approximately 90 countries along with many other agencies participated in the meeting. Some of the conclusions arrived at during the meeting are as follows: states must ensure accountability for lethal action by any weapon system used by them in armed conflict; acknowledging the dual nature of technologies involved, the Group's efforts should not hamper civilian research and development in these technologies; and, there is a need to keep potential military applications using these technologies under review. It was also agreed that a ten-day meeting should be scheduled in 2018.

AI In Military Operations – International Perspective

LAWS – Current Status of Deployment- As of now, near-autonomous defensive systems have been deployed by several countries to intercept incoming attacks. Offensive weapon systems, in contrast, would be those which may be deployed anywhere and actively seek out targets. However, the difference between offensive and defensive weapons is not watertight. The most well-known autonomous defensive weaponry are missile defence systems, such as the Iron Dome of Israel and the Phalanx Close-In Weapon System used by the US Navy. Fire-and-forget systems, such as the Brimstone missile system of the United Kingdom and the Harpy Air Defence Suppression System of Israel, are also near-autonomous. South Korea uses the SGR-A1, a sentry robot with an automatic mode, in the Demilitarized Zone with North Korea. One example of an offensive autonomous system likely to be deployed in the near future is Norway's Joint Strike Missile, which can hunt, recognize and detect a target ship or land-based object without human intervention¹⁵.

The difference between offensive and defensive weapons is not watertight. The most well-known autonomous defensive weaponry is missile defence systems, such as the Iron Dome of Israel and the Phalanx Close-In Weapon System used by the US Navy.

US DoD Perspective and the Third Offset Strategy. The US has put AI at the centre of its quest to maintain its military dominance. In November 2014, the then US Secretary of Defence Chuck Hagel announced a new Defence

Innovation Initiative, also termed as the Third Offset Strategy. Secretary Hagel modelled his approach on the First Offset Strategy of the 1950s, in which the US countered the Soviet Union's conventional numerical superiority through the build-up of America's nuclear deterrent, and on the Second Offset Strategy of the 1970s, in which it shepherded the development of precision-guided munitions, stealth, and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) systems to counter the numerical superiority and improving technical capability of Warsaw Pact forces. As a part of its Third-Offset Strategy, the Pentagon is reportedly dedicating \$18 billion for its Future Years Defence Program. A substantial portion of this amount has been allocated for robotics, autonomous systems, human-machine collaboration, and cyber and electronic warfare¹⁴¹⁵.

Chinese Initiatives- China is also laying a huge focus to AI enabled autonomous systems. In August last year, the state-run China Daily newspaper reported that the country had embarked on the development of a cruise missile system with a "high level" of AI. The announcement was thought to be a response to the "semi-autonomous" Long Range Anti-Ship Missile expected to be deployed by the US in 2018. Chinese military leaders and strategists believe that the nature of warfare is fundamentally changing due to unmanned platforms. High-level support for R&D in robotics and unmanned systems has led to a myriad of institutes within China's defence industry and universities conducting robotics research. China's leaders have labelled AI research as a national priority, and there appears to be a lot of co-ordination between civilian and military research in this field¹⁶.

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AI in Military Operations – Indian Perspective

Perhaps as a result of being preoccupied with the huge challenges being faced on operational and logistic fronts including issues related to modernisation, the AI/ robotics/ LAWS paradigm is yet to become a key driving force in the doctrinal thinking and perspective planning of the IA. The above discussion dictates that this needs to change. The following paragraphs shed some light on the relevance of AI and LAWS in our context and what we need to do in order to keep pace with 21st Century warfare.

Employment Scenarios- The Indian military landscape is comprised of a wide variety of scenarios where autonomous systems (AS), and more specifically LAWS, can be deployed to advantage. With the progressive development of AI technologies, example scenarios in increasing degree of complexity can be visualised as under¹⁷:-

- **Anti-IED Operations.** Autonomous systems designed to disarm IEDs are already in use in some form, although there is scope for further improvement. Such autonomous systems are "non-lethal" and "defensive" in nature.
- **Swarm of Surveillance Drones.** An AI-enabled swarm of surveillance drones (as against manually piloted Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) or Unmanned Undersea Vehicles (USVs)) could greatly boost our surveillance capabilities. Such a system would be "non-lethal", but could support both offensive and defensive operations.
- **Robot Sentries.** There is scope for deployment of Robot Sentries, duly tailored to our requirements, along the IB/LC, on the lines of SGR-A1. Such a deployment would be categorised as "lethal" and "defensive" in character.
- **Autonomous Armed UAVs/ USVs.** We are currently in the process of procuring manually piloted armed UAVs. Future armed UAVs/USVs with increasing degrees of autonomy in navigate/ search/ detect/ evaluation/

India's Defence Capability

track/ engage/ kill functions may be visualised. Such systems would be classified as “lethal” and “offensive”.

- **Land-Based Offensive Robot Soldiers.** Offensive or ‘Killer Robots’ deployed in land-based conventional offensive operations would require a much higher technological sophistication to become a feasible proposition.
- **Robot Soldiers in Counter-Insurgency (CI) Operations.** If Robot Soldiers are to be successfully deployed in CI operations, a very high AI technology threshold would need to be breached. In addition to a more sophisticated “perceptual” ability to distinguish an adversary from amongst a friendly population, qualities such as “empathy” and “ethical values” similar to humans would need to be built into such systems. As per one school of thought, such capability can never be achieved, while others project reaching such a technological “singularity” within this century.

India's Stand at the UN

India's response in international fora has been to hedge against the future and, until such weapons are developed, attempt to retain the balance of conventional power that it currently enjoys in the sub-continent. At the Informal Meeting of Experts on LAWS held in Geneva in April 2016, India reiterated this strategy. Our permanent representative at the UN, Ambassador DB Venkatesh Varma stated that the UN CCW on LAWS “should be strengthened ... in a manner that does not widen the technology gap amongst states”, while at the same time endorsing the need to adhere to IHL while developing and deploying LAWS¹⁸.

India's Overall Strategy

International deliberations on legal and ethical issues related to LAWS is unlikely to slow the pace of their development and deployment by various countries. China is already well on its way to becoming a technology leader in this field, and Pakistan is expected to leverage its strategic relationship with China to obtain these technologies. India, therefore, needs to take urgent steps to ensure that it remains well ahead in this race. It can do this by leveraging the strengths of players from both the public and private sectors. The challenge for the Indian political leadership is to put together a cooperative framework where civilian academia and industry can collaborate with bodies like the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) to develop autonomous systems. Also, steps should be taken to ensure that the United States becomes India's strategic ally in autonomous technologies¹⁹.

R&D Initiatives by DRDO

The DRDO stated way back in 2013 that they are developing “robotic soldiers” and that these would be ready for deployment around 2023. Given DRDO's credibility based on past performance, these statements must be taken as an expression of intent rather than as the final word on delivery timelines. DRDO's main facility working in this area is the Centre for Artificial Intelligence and Robotics (CAIR), whose vision, mission and objectives all refer to development of intelligent systems/ AI/ Robotics technologies. CAIR has achieved some headway in making some prototype systems, such as “Muntra” UGV, “Daksh” remotely operated vehicle, wall climbing and flapping wing robots, etc. It is now in the process of developing a Multi Agent Robotics Framework (MARF) for catering to a myriad of military applications. However, in order to keep in step with progress in the international arena, these efforts alone may not suffice²⁰.

AI and Robotics – Perspective of the IA

The Indian Defence Forces, and the IA in particular, are still a long way off from operationalising even older generation technologies pertaining to Network Centric Warfare (NCW) and Information Operations (IO) in general and C4I2SR systems in particular²¹. As regards next generation technologies such as AI and Robotics, presently there appears to be a

void even in terms of concepts, doctrines and perspective plans. Occasional interactions with CAIR and other agencies do take place, mostly at the behest of the DRDO. Despite good intentions, DRDO is not likely to be successful in developing lethal and non-lethal autonomous systems without the necessary pull from the IA. It is also worth noting that world-wide, R&D in these technologies is being driven by the private commercial sector rather than the defence industry. Unfortunately, Indian equivalents of Baidu, Amazon, Google and Microsoft, etc, are yet to rise to the occasion, despite the strengths of our IT industry. Clearly, much more needs to be done.

IA – Need for a Lead Agency

Given the very high level of sophistication involved in AI/Robotics technologies, together with the fact that our public as well as private sector defence industry is not too mature, our project management interface with R&D agencies cannot afford to be based on purely operational knowledge. Therefore, while the MO and PP Directorates, in conjunction with HQ ARTRAC, would necessarily be central to formulation of concepts and doctrines, it is imperative to institute, in addition, a lead agency which, while being well versed with operational requirements, has a clear grasp of these sophisticated technologies. Currently, MCEME is the designated Centre of Excellence for Robotics. Since AI is a sub-discipline of Computer Science, MCTE appears to be best placed to play the role of a lead agency for the development of AI-based autonomous systems, provided the Corps of Signals develops AI as an area of super-specialisation. It would be prudent, at this juncture, to brainstorm this issue at the apex level and take urgent follow up action.

Conclusion

Given the extended borders with our adversaries on two fronts and the volatile CI scenarios in J&K and the Northeast, it is well appreciated that having sufficient “boots on the ground” is an absolute must. At the same time, it is imperative that the IA keeps pace with the changing nature of warfare in the 21st Century, driven by rapid advances in technology on many fronts. AI/ Robotics technologies, after decades of false starts, today appear to be at an inflection point, and are rapidly being incorporated into a range of products and services in the commercial environment. It is only a matter of time before they manifest themselves in defence systems, in ways significant enough to usher in a new RMA. Notwithstanding the world-wide concern on development of LAWS from legal and ethical points of view, it is increasingly clear that, no matter what conventions are adopted by the UN, R&D by major players in this area is likely to proceed unhindered.

Given our own security landscape, adoption of AI based systems with increasing degrees of autonomy in various operational scenarios is expected to yield tremendous benefits in the coming years. Perhaps there is a need to adopt a radically different approach for facilitating the development of AI-based autonomous systems, utilising the best available expertise within and outside the country. As with any transformation, this is no easy task. Only a determined effort, with specialists on board and due impetus being given from the apex level, is likely to yield the desired results.

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