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EDITOR NOTE

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Dear Readers,

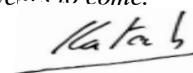
This issue of the India Foundation Journal draws attention to the state of India's defence preparedness, two decades after the Kargil War.

In a bid to foster peace in South Asia, India's then Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee undertook a historic bus journey to Lahore from the Attari-Wagah border on 19 February 1999. But even as the Indian premier was trying to pave the way for peace, the Pakistani establishment was preparing to infiltrate thousands of its soldiers masquerading as freedom fighters into the Kargil heights, in a bid to sever the lines of communication to Ladakh. The Indian establishment was caught by surprise and by the time the infiltrators were discovered, they were firmly ensconced on the controlling mountain heights.

The Kargil War to evict the invaders was thus fought under the most daunting conditions, in inclement weather and inhospitable terrain. Despite insurmountable odds, the Indian Army, ably assisted by the Indian Air Force, triumphed, and succeeded in recapturing the peaks, which many had thought would be an impossible task to accomplish. The real heroes of the war were the officers and men who showed exemplary grit and courage in retaking the peaks, foot by bloody foot, despite withering fire coming from well concealed positions from the upper heights. They looked death in the face, yet soldiered on, many never to return home again, yet others wounded but their spirits intact and their head held high. To all who fought this bitter war and brought success to the nation, this country owes a huge debt of gratitude. But the important lesson the Kargil War throws up is that we must never let down our guard and we must never ever be surprised again.

A lot has improved since the last two decades in terms of India's defence preparedness, but a lot more still needs to be done. Of vital import is the need to revitalise our decision making institutions, especially in terms of how military advice is rendered to the political authority. The civil services seem to have taken up too much of the space in decision making for which they lack the expertise, making it vital to see that at least 50 percent of all officers in the MoD are service officers. The time has come to think of having a defence secretary too from the Services. There is also a need to revamp the defence public sector and make it accountable to the user. Greater level of participation is also required of the private sector in defence manufacturing if India is truly to come of age as a strong military power.

This issue also marks a decade of the founding of India Foundation. A venture which began in 2009, with very limited resources, but with tremendous grit and determination, has a decade later blossomed into a major think tank dealing with four verticals—Centre for Security and Strategy, Centre for Constitutional and Legal Studies, Centre for Soft Power and Centre for Study of Religion and Society. Yeoman work has been done in all these fields and today, events hosted by the Foundation have a global impact. Founded by Shri Ram Madhav and Shri Shaurya Doval, the Foundation has received wide support from all sections of society and is set to grow further in the years to come.



Kargil: From Solitude to Surprise and Strategic Reckoning

Satish Tyagi*

Kargil is a small town located along the Suru River, a tributary of the Indus, in the Ladakh region. Historically, it served the purpose of transit and trading point between Skardu, Leh and Zaskar valley. Approximately 200 kilometres from Srinagar and situated on the Srinagar-Leh National Highway, the region is sparsely populated with diverse ethnic and religious groups. Isolated valleys, separated by some of the world's highest mountains in the Himalayas, offer very tough living conditions.

Historical Context of Kargil War

Historically, Kashmir region has seen little peace as invaders have come in hordes, for plunder, loot and rape. Over time, large scale conversions have also taken place, which has changed the demography of the region. The partition of India and the subsequent accession of the state of J&K left behind its own legacy for the future generations to cope.

When partition took place, Pakistan laid claim to the princely states of Junagadh, Hyderabad and Jammu and Kashmir. As Pakistan bordered J&K, it tried to wrest the state by force, sending in hordes of armed invaders duly supported by elements of the Pakistan army. For India, it was the first bitter taste of things to come and the future did not bode well. Fearing rout of its people, Maharaja Hari

Singh of Kashmir signed the "Instrument of Accession" with India, which enabled the Government of India to send in the Indian Army to restore the situation. The first unit of the Army was flown in to Srinagar airfield on 27 October 1947. The troops quickly moved out and made contact with the raiders who were on the outskirts of Srinagar. From then onwards, the raiders were steadily pushed back from the Kashmir valley.

The war however was far from over, with regions in Gilgit, Gurais, Skardu and Kargil still remaining under Pakistani control. Leh too was threatened and needed to be defended. Once again, the Indian Army played a stellar role. Leh airfield was captured by Indian troops by a small column sent under Major Prithi Chand. Under the command of Brigadier K.L. Atal, Lieutenant Colonel Rajinder Singh Sparrow deployed tanks on Zoji La Pass to open the Srinagar-Leh National Highway, a feat never attempted before by anyone in the world¹. The problem of weak bridges was circumvented by removing the parts like turrets of the tanks and moving them on mules. By November 1948 the entire area was liberated. Since the matter was referred to the United Nations (UN), it established a Commission—United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP). On 21 April 1948, another resolution was passed to secure withdrawal of all Pakistanis and tribesmen

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from Jammu and Kashmir and the Government of India was requested to reduce its forces to the minimum strength, after which the circumstances for holding a plebiscite should be put into effect on the issue of accession to either India or Pakistan. In August 1948 a further resolution was adopted by UNCIP along similar lines.

There were three main clauses of the UN Resolution; the first was to accept and implement the ceasefire, the second was the withdrawal of all Pakistani troops and raiders from the entire State of Jammu and Kashmir and finally, both the countries were to reaffirm that the future of the State shall be determined in accordance with the will of the people. The Indian position on the issue remains clear - that the Instrument of Accession on 26 October 1947 gave the right to control the defence, communications and external affairs of the state to India and that the Pakistani aggression violated legal norms and ground realities.

The ceasefire came into effect from 1 January 1949, and was monitored by UN Military Observer Group India Pakistan (UNMOGIP). Approximately one-third of the J&K state remained with Pakistan, effectively dividing the state of J&K. Despite the UN Resolution, Pakistani troops and raiders continued to remain in occupied areas at many places. In the meantime, on 2 March 1948, Sheikh Abdullah was installed as Prime Minister and Maharaja was obliged to relinquish control of the state. First round of elections in Kashmir were held in 1951.

An understanding of the First J&K war is necessary because it highlighted the use by Pakistan of irregular troops, intermingled with regular forces for achieving military objectives.

Pakistan's penchant for using irregulars or nonmilitary means to attempt annexing Kashmir from India has continued since then. Terrorism from across the border and fomenting trouble in Kashmir are part of the same design. Operation TOPAC, Operation GIBRALTAR and GRANDSLAM were launched by Pakistan to annex Kashmir which involved riding on the back of militants or terrorists. The fourth round at Kargil in 1999 was yet another attempt in the same series and was a manifestation of continuing India-Pakistan hostilities over Kashmir.

Destabilisation of Kashmir in one form or the other has continued ever since the days of UN Resolution. India has been willing to resolve differences and towards this objective, the then Prime Minister of India, Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee, took the initiative and visited Pakistan from 20-21 February 1999, on the inaugural run of the Delhi-Lahore bus service in response to an invitation by the then Prime Minister of Pakistan, Muhammad Nawaz Sharif.² Cordial discussions were held on the entire range of bilateral relations, regional cooperation within SAARC, and issues of international concern. Pakistan and India signed a Memorandum of Understanding on 21st February 1999, identifying measures aimed at promoting an environment of peace and security between the two countries and the two Prime Ministers signed the Lahore Declaration embodying their shared vision of peace and stability between the two countries and of progress and prosperity for their peoples.³

But, the peace seemed to be elusive and despite the overtures by the Indian Prime Minister, Pakistan continued with its old game. The bus from

Lahore had not yet reached Delhi when the Pakistani Army, once again, began pushing in regular forces, disguised as militants, into the Kargil heights, catching the Indian establishment by surprise. This was to be a costly failure for India.

Surprise and Detection of Intrusion

From a purely military point of view and taking into consideration the peculiar characteristics of the area, rugged, treacherous terrain and inhospitable climate, the area was divided into two separate parts based on the enemy threat and infiltration, namely the high threat and low threat areas. It was felt that any enemy movement into this area would be along the existing roads and tracks. Consequently, Indian deployment was based on this perception with strength varying according to the threat. The heavy snow accumulation along ridge lines made any movement impossible and hence the troops were deployed along various nalas and rivers to check infiltration during summers. Enemy intrusion to occupy heights and sustaining it during the harsh winters was considered impracticable and as such, the peaks were not patrolled. The planners of the operation in Pakistan took full advantage of this fact.

Pakistan's Strategic Calculations

Intrusion in Kargil was a result of miscalculations of the Pakistani military elites who felt that the successful management of insurgency in Kashmir by the Indian Army was diluting their Kashmir cause. According to Sumit Ganguly⁴, an expert on India Pakistan relations, the planners were emboldened by Pakistan's nuclear acquisition and resultant assumed annulment of Indian

conventional superiority. Under the nuclear umbrella, Pakistani military decided to risk the intrusion in Kargil.

Kargil was chosen as it presented the opportunity to dominate the National Highway from Srinagar to Leh, a lifeline to Ladakh region which if denied would isolate Ladakh from Kashmir. If this was successfully implemented, holding Siachen would have become untenable. But, it was not to be; Pakistani military elites miscalculated the might of the Indian Army and the will of the people.

Pakistani diplomats denied any intrusion and presence of their army by the simple expedient of calling the infiltrators as militants who were not under their control. Dr. Shireen Mazari, from Islamabad Institute for Strategic Studies and others from Pakistan, gave several arguments during Kargil Conference held at Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California in 2002. The Indian side was led by Gen. V.P. Malik and the author too was in the Indian side. Participants from Pakistan argued that Kargil was the continuation of the five-decade old India-Pakistan dispute over Kashmir. According to them, a small number of senior officials in the Pakistan army planned the Kargil operation as a reaction to the Indian army's forward military policy, which culminated in occupation of the Siachen Glacier in 1984. They contended that Pakistan's military planners worked on the premise that occupation of un-held areas in Kargil would enable them to choke Indian defences in Leh and Siachen. Hence, it was the Siachen dispute that eventually spilled over into a new territorial dimension in 1999 - Pakistan army's intended control over the Kargil heights.⁵

Pakistan further tried to mislead the world and

the lies made progressively were proved wrong in time:

- Initially Pakistan maintained that “*Militants had infiltrated in Kargil and it was not a military intrusion.*” Capture of Prisoners of War and the military equipment and personal diaries indicated Northern Light Infantry troops were dressed as Mujahideen who occupied the peaks. Pakistan denied Northern Light Infantry was part of regular army.
- Subsequent lie was, “*Kargil intrusion was an initiative taken by local military commanders who ventured to occupy a few places close to the LoC but found unheld peaks resulting into inching forward unopposed till they found themselves looking down at the National Highway around Kargil.*” In her recent publication Naseem Zehra maintains that, “*Operation KP (Koh Paima), planned as a smooth, unhindered military operation in IHK, had turned into a Pakistan-India mountain battle of attrition. The die had been cast. Op Kargil had turned into the Battle of Kargil.*”⁶

Kargil War

Kargil had been comparably peaceful with little or no incidents worth reporting taking place for long periods. Winter also meant vacating inaccessible posts for the season. Intelligence inputs did indicate some heightened activities across the LoC in this region but it did not raise any alarms and surprise and deception used by Pakistan was successful in taking advantage of it. Patrols in

Batalik sector did notice some movement in the area when a shepherd corroborated having seen presence of foreign troops in Banju in the month of May 1999. Quick reaction teams and patrols were rushed to several places confirming the worst of the doubts.

Indian military commanders read the inputs and realised the gravity of the situation. Although the troops were rushed from within the available resources, it was not enough. The number of peaks that were occupied in Batalik, Yaldor, Kargil and Mashkoh was large. Conventional military wisdom is to apply 3:1 ratio of troops for attacking enemy in the plains but in the mountains and especially high altitudes, the ratio can go as high as 9:1. It would take time to mobilise fighting echelons to arrive. Need for acclimatisation for few days compounded the situation. Attacks had to be launched soon to prevent the enemy firming up on the peaks. For a well coordinated attack, ground troops needed the support of the artillery and the Air Force.

Dynamics of War, Diplomacy and Indian Restraint

Strategy to deal with the situation presented a dynamic that needed swift and firm action but demanded restraint to be exercised. The movement of artillery across Zoji La would take time. Air effort could be provided immediately but the decision to use the Air Force against the militants and crossing of the LoC or violation of the Pakistan air space could only be taken with deliberations by the Centre as the situation could escalate and a localised battle could turn into a full-fledged war. A war between two nuclear-armed neighbours was a

source of concern for the international community. Diplomacy thereafter went into overdrive. 'Firm and swift response but with restraint' became the mantra to deal with the situation.

Indian Air Force began participating in the operations from the end of May 1999. The intruders shot down an Indian helicopter in Dras area on 28 May and thereafter the IAF decided to launch airstrikes to degrade the well entrenched enemy on the peaks. During the operations, India lost two MiG 27 air crafts to hostile fire. One of the pilots, Flight Lieutenant K. Nachiketa was taken prisoner of war and the other, Squadron Leader Ajay Ahuja, unfortunately, did not survive.

The young soldiers of the Infantry displayed exemplary valour and grit and rose up once again to show their true mettle. The first breakthrough came at Tololing in Dras sector and thereafter, there was no looking back.⁷ An Israeli media man in Kargil commented that it was only the Indian Infantry who could breach the strong defences at such high altitudes under freezing conditions⁸. Pakistanis were first driven out of Dras, then Batalik, Yaldor, Chorbat La and Mashkoh. By the first week of July 1999, it was clear to Pakistan that a rout of their forces was complete if they continued to hold on to their positions.

Prime Minister of Pakistan, Nawaz Sharif flew to the United States on 4 July 1999 to seek US intervention and halt of Indian operations, but Indian diplomacy too was in an overdrive. None of the countries condemned India's response; instead they tacitly approved it. Pakistan stood isolated and beaten very badly. Upon ceasefire Pakistani troops were allowed to withdraw. Pakistan violated 'DGMO's Understanding' several times during

their withdrawal. Operation Vijay in Kargil finally terminated on 26 July 1999.

Aftermath of the Kargil War

Loss of face in Kargil resulted in turmoil in Pakistan and a military coup awaited Nawaz Sharif on his return. General Pervez Musharraf took charge as the President of Pakistan. Pakistan Army was yet again exposed. *Pakistan as a country had lost but the army in Pakistan had won in their designs to own a nation.* The history of Pakistan would indicate that the prosperity of its people dips each time military rulers have usurped power and this time it was no exception. Pakistan's economy has nosedived to such an extent that today, Pakistan is out with a begging bowl to survive. It is not difficult to conclude that the current reality is a direct outcome of military rule in Pakistan for long periods of time. Pakistani military officers have become the landlords of large tracts of land and the military has taken control of large corporations. Even though Kargil was a decisive diplomatic and military defeat of Pakistan, it has still not abandoned harbouring, mentoring and pushing terrorists across the LoC into Kashmir.

Strategic Reckoning

On the Indian side, the victory was euphoric but loss of lives and casualties was tragic. Indian Army had restored the pride of the country and Indian diplomacy had very successfully secured the international opinion in favour of the country. Introspection however was needed regarding the failure of intelligence that cost the nation gravely. The Government of India appointed a Kargil Review Committee (KRC) a few days after the

Kargil war was over. The Report brought out grave deficiencies in India's security management system, particularly in the areas of Intelligence and Border and Defence Management. Following the KRC Report, Prime Minister of India constituted a Group of Ministers (GoM) to go into the Report and formulate specific proposals for implementation.⁹

Based on the recommendations of the GoM, several issues pertaining to the national security, such as setting up of Integrated Defence Staff, efforts to integrate the intelligence agencies and having a full time National Security Advisor have been made or addressed. The progress on the

organisational changes with respect to appointment of a Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) to provide single point military advice to the Government, to improve the jointness and resolve inter-service doctrinal, planning, policy and operational issues however remain.¹⁰ The pace of modernisation of defence forces has been slow and deficiencies in the inventories must be made up and the process is to be expedited. Kargil war threw up many security challenges but none of them could stand in front of the competence, courage and determination of the armed forces; will of the government, and the support of the nation.

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‘Make in India’ and the Defence Sector: Progress and Challenges

Mrinal Suman*

The Indian army faced its moment of truth in Kargil in 1998. It was caught totally unprepared when large scale intrusions by the Pakistani elements were detected in May 1998. Decade long counter-terrorism operations had shifted the focus of the army away from its primary task of defending the country against external aggression. Kargil War found the army ill-equipped for conventional war in high altitude areas with extreme climatic conditions. For such a challenge, it was neither psychologically oriented nor possessed the necessary wherewithal. Shortages of essential arms, equipment and ammunition were alarming. The country still remembers the statement made by the then Army Chief, Gen VP Malik on 23 June, “We will fight with whatever we have.”¹ It was an admission of grave vulnerability as every single item was in short supply. With a single sentence, he exposed the abysmal state of indigenous defence production and the gross incompetency of the procurement regime.

The government was rightly concerned. Soon after the war, it constituted a committee of ‘Group of Ministers on National Security’. In its report, submitted to the Prime Minister on 26 February 2001, the committee suggested the creation of a separate and dedicated institutional structure to undertake the complete gamut of procurement functions to inject a higher degree of professionalism and reduce delays.² Consequent

to the acceptance of the report, a new acquisition set-up was created in the Ministry of Defence (MoD) in October 2001.³ Broad guidelines for the formulation of a new defence procurement procedure were also issued. Need to achieve self-reliance was duly emphasised. The said procedure has been undergoing periodic revisions.⁴

The question that begs answer is whether the measures initiated after the Kargil War have borne fruits. Has the state of indigenous defence industry improved? To what extent has India achieved self-reliance in defence production, thereby reducing its dependence on imports? Is the modernisation of the Indian armed forces taking place as per the plans? This article attempts to examine all the facets of the above posers.

Indian Defence Industry: a Saga of Criminal Neglect

Defence industry comprises of all industrial undertakings engaged in the production of hardware and services for use by the defence forces.⁵ Founding of Gun and Shell Factory at Cossipore in 1801 is generally considered to mark the establishment of the Indian defence industry. India had 16 ordnance factories producing low-tech items at the time of the Independence. Additional factories came up in due course and India has 39 of them now.⁶ In 1954, Bharat Electronics Ltd was established as the first Defence Public Sector Undertaking (DPSU).

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Currently, there are nine DPSUs under MoD, including four shipyards.⁷

The Industrial Policy Resolution of 1956 divided industry into three parts:-

- Schedule A: Basic industries which are the preserve of the state, including defence and heavy engineering.
- Schedule B: Industries in which private industry was allowed to operate.
- Schedule C: All other industries.⁸

As defence was put under Schedule 'A', it became an exclusive reserve of the public sector. After a long gap of 35 years, manufacture of components, assemblies and sub-assemblies was thrown open to the private sector in 1991. It took MoD another 11 years to allow the private sector to participate in defence production. A policy directive was issued in January 2002 allowing 100 percent private equity with 26 percent Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).⁹ Subsequently, the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion issued detailed guidelines for the issuance of licence for the production of arms and ammunition.¹⁰

The Department of Defence Production (DDP) was set up in 1962, in the aftermath of the Chinese aggression to create a self-reliant and self-sufficient indigenous defence production base.¹¹ It deals with matters pertaining to defence production, indigenisation of imported stores, equipment and spares.¹² Its functioning suffers from acute conflict of interests. It controls all DPSUs and the ordnance factories. All ploys are tried to ensure regular flow of orders to the public sector units. The private sector is kept at bay through cleverly introduced provisions of nominating public sector units for major contracts. Thus, the nation remains deprived of the technological prowess acquired by the private

sector and its enormous potential remains untapped. Most knowledgeable observers consider DDP to be primarily responsible for the current pitiable state of the indigenous defence industry and regard it as the biggest impediment in India's quest for self-reliance.¹³

The government is fully aware of the fact that the goal of self-reliance will remain a pipe dream unless full potential of the private sector is harnessed. A number of well-intentioned policy initiative have been taken towards that end during the last two decades. Yet, the ground situation has not changed. Even today, all major orders are grabbed by the public sector and the private sector continues to be a peripheral participant with the production of some low-tech items and indigenisation of components.

In 2004, the government constituted a committee under Mr Vijay Kelkar to, inter alia, examine and recommend modalities of integration of the user, MoD and the Indian industry (both private and public) in the acquisition process and defence production.¹⁴ The committee made many innovative recommendations, to include establishment of a professional acquisition agency (like the DGA of France) and nomination of select private sector industry leaders as 'Raksha Udyog Ratnas' (RURs), to be treated at par with DPSU for all defence acquisition purposes, including receipt of technology for undertaking licensed production. Selection for RUR was duly carried out in 2006.¹⁵ As the government could not overcome the resistance put up by the public sector, it decided to abort the scheme.

Another noteworthy recommendation of the Kelkar Committee related to the projects entailing indigenous development under 'Make' procedure. It was duly incorporated

in the Defence Procurement Procedure (DPP) of 2006.¹⁶ DRDO was to concentrate only on projects requiring sophisticated technology of strategic, complex and security sensitive nature. Responsibility for developing ‘High Technology Complex Systems’ was assigned to the Acquisition Wing.¹⁷ To start with, two major projects, i.e. Futuristic Infantry Combat Vehicle (FICV) and Tactical Communication System were initiated for indigenous development. Both were to get government funding support to the extent of 80 percent. The balance 20 percent was to be contributed by the PAs. Production agencies were duly shortlisted after much uncertainty. However, both the projects have made little headway and remain embroiled in bureaucratic impediments and doubts about ownership of the intellectual property rights.¹⁸

Launch of ‘Make in India’ Mission

Mission ‘Make in India’ was formally launched on 25 September 2014. It aims at persuading indigenous and foreign companies to invest in manufacturing in India by making it an irresistible destination, both for capital and technological investments. To start with, 25 sectors of economy have been identified and defence manufacturing is one of them.¹⁹ With a view to align and delineate DPP towards the achievement of the objectives of ‘Make in India’, an expert committee under Dhirendra Singh was constituted by MoD in May 2015.²⁰

In an innovative suggestion, the committee suggested that a conceptual ladder be evolved to correspond to progressive development of competence level in the defence industry, from the

very basic level of repair and maintenance to the level of acquiring ability to design, develop, manufacture and test systems. Different stages in the ladder were to be correlated with various categories in the capital procurement. The committee also recommended higher indigenous content across all defence purchases.²¹

The committee was of the view that the objectives of ‘Make in India’ could never be achieved without integrating the private sector. For that, two types of well-defined partnership models — depending upon the strategic needs, quality criticality and cost competitiveness — were advocated. In the case of platforms of strategic importance, ‘Strategic Partnership’ model was suggested to create capacity in the private sector on a long-term basis; over and above the capacity and infrastructure that exists in the public sector. The committee identified six segments for the purpose.²²

Consequent to the receipt of the recommendations of the expert committee, DPP-2016 was promulgated with effect from 01 April 2016.²³ The procedure has adopted a three-pronged approach to support ‘Make in India’ initiative - institutionalisation, streamlining and simplification of the procedure to promote indigenous design, development and manufacturing of defence equipment, platforms, systems and sub-systems; refinement of the ‘Make’ procedure to ensure increased participation of the Indian industry; and enhancement of the role of MSMEs.²⁴

Creation of a new category called ‘Buy (Indian-IDDMM)’ with overriding preference over all other modes of procurement is certainly the most radical change. It refers to the procurement of products from an Indian vendor meeting one of

the two conditions — products that have been indigenously designed, developed and manufactured with a minimum of 40 percent Indigenous Content (IC) on cost basis of the total contract value; or, products having 60 percent IC on cost basis of the total contract value, which may not have been designed and developed indigenously.²⁵

‘Buy (Indian)’ category comes at the second place. It refers to the procurement of products from an Indian vendor, having a minimum of 40 percent IC on cost basis of the total contract value. Next in the priority is ‘Buy & Make (Indian)’ category. It implies initial procurement of limited quantity in fully formed state from an Indian vendor engaged in a tie-up with a foreign OEM, followed by indigenous production in a phased manner through technology transfer. ‘Buy & Make’ category refers to an initial procurement of equipment in fully formed state from a foreign vendor, in quantities as considered necessary, followed by indigenous production with transfer of critical technologies.²⁶

More importantly, DPP-2016 has streamlined the ‘Make’ procedure that aims at developing long-term indigenous defence capabilities. The revised ‘Make’ procedure seeks to address the multiple objectives of self-reliance; wider participation of Indian industry; impetus for MSME sector; sound implementation; transparent execution and timely induction of equipment. Successful development under this scheme would result in acquisition with indigenous design and development. There are two sub-categories of ‘Make’ route. Projects under ‘Make-I’ will involve government funding of 90 percent. Usually, these projects will involve a development period of not less than three years. Projects under ‘Make-II’ will involve prototype

development of equipment or their upgrades, or their sub-systems with a focus on import substitution, for which no government funding will be provided for prototype development purposes. With a view to provide impetus to MSMEs, DPP-2016 directs that preference be given to them for ‘Make-1’ and ‘Make-2’ projects costing less than Rs 10 crore and Rs 3 crore respectively for prototype development.²⁷

A Reality Check

The government has been earnestly trying to make mission ‘Make in India’ a success. A number of far-reaching decisions have been taken to encourage indigenous production. FDI norms have been liberalised. Validity of industrial license has been increased from 3 to 15 years with a provision for further extension. Offset threshold has been raised to Rs 2,000 crore, thereby freeing a large number of contracts from the encumbrances of offset obligations.²⁸

Most significantly, to kick-start ‘Make in India’ mission, MoD has announced that 23 fresh projects will be taken up under ‘Make-I’ and ‘Make-II’ sub-categories. In a complete departure from the past practices, MoD has also indicated the likely quantity requirements and the time lines. It will certainly help industries to take well-informed investment decisions. The range of products is highly varied; and includes thirteen projects for the army, six for the navy and four for the air force.²⁹ It is a path-breaking initiative and provides a unique opportunity to all companies to enter the sector and establish their credibility. If this initiative proves successful, MoD will be encouraged to widen the scope further by adding more complex projects.

MoD’s initiatives have generated visible euphoria. Both the public and the private sectors

are excited about the business prospects. The defence public sector has already recorded 20 percent growth, increasing its turnover from around Rs 43,000 crore to Rs 51,000 crore.³⁰ OFB has earned acclaim for developing Howitzer Dhanush from the Bofors drawings. An initial order for 114 guns has been placed, providing a big boost to the indigenous capabilities. First consignment of six guns was handed over to the army in April 2019.³¹ OFB has also been tasked to manufacture AK 203 rifles, the latest version in Kalashnikov series with Russian collaboration at Amethi.³² Other defence undertakings are equally keyed up. Things are looking up for them as well: HAL is going to manufacture Kamov (Ka-226T) helicopters with complete technology transfer.³³

As regards the private sector, all major players are eagerly gearing up for the anticipated business opportunities. L&T has already procured Rs 4,500 crore order for 100 pieces of K9 Vajra-T 155mm/52 calibre tracked self-propelled (SP) Howitzers, developed in partnership with Korea's Samsung.³⁴ L&T is also going to manufacture Lakshya-1 (pilotless target aircraft) and develop Laksha-2 with DRDO. It is also eyeing refit and upgradation of Russian Kilo class submarines at its shipyard at Kattupalli.

Tata Group has 14 group companies in the defence sector. Tata Motors have bagged a repeat order to supply 619 6x6 High Mobility Vehicles, in addition to the earlier order for 1,239 vehicles.³⁵ It has also tied up with Bharat Forge and General Dynamics to develop FICV. Whereas modernisation of infrastructure of 67 air fields is already being undertaken by Tata Strategic Division, Tata Sons is joining hands with Airbus Industries to manufacture medium transport aircraft.³⁶

Reliance Defence Limited has 11 subsidiaries in niche defence segments.³⁷ Mahindra Defence Systems is collaborating with BAE Systems of the US for the manufacture of a total of 120 M-777 Ultra Light Howitzers.³⁸ Furthermore, an agreement to produce medium and heavy lift helicopters is being finalised with Airbus. Bharat Forge is fast emerging as a serious player in the defence sector. It is partnering many Indian and foreign companies to develop and manufacture guns and fighting vehicles. In addition, it is planning to build AD systems with SAAB. There are numerous other companies like the Dynamatic Technologies, TVS Logistics and MKU that are participating aggressively in defence production.³⁹

The government has demonstrated its earnestness and determination to make mission 'Make in India' a success. A total of 34 joint ventures have been approved for manufacturing defence equipment and 50 companies with industrial licenses have commenced production.⁴⁰ Most of the proposals that were being processed for procurement from abroad have been aborted. They are being reinitiated for manufacture in India.

The Way Forward

Geographically, India is located in the centre of a highly volatile environment and knows that it has to be militarily strong to safeguard its national interests. It is also aware of the fact that no nation can feel secure without self-reliance in defence production. Therefore, neglect of the Indian defence industry is inexcusable. Radical measures must be initiated to set the things right.

To start with, the government must show sincerity in integrating the private sector. Public sector companies possess huge infrastructure; experience in systems integration with imported

technology; trained engineering and manufacturing manpower; and access to defence research facilities. On the other hand, private sector companies excel in management, marketing and financial skills; are innovative and market driven; and have experience in component and sub-

The above categorisation should be dynamic in nature and reviewed periodically. Maximum items should be in the open competitive list, especially those being imported.

Even in areas earmarked for public and private sectors, a relationship of associate functioning can

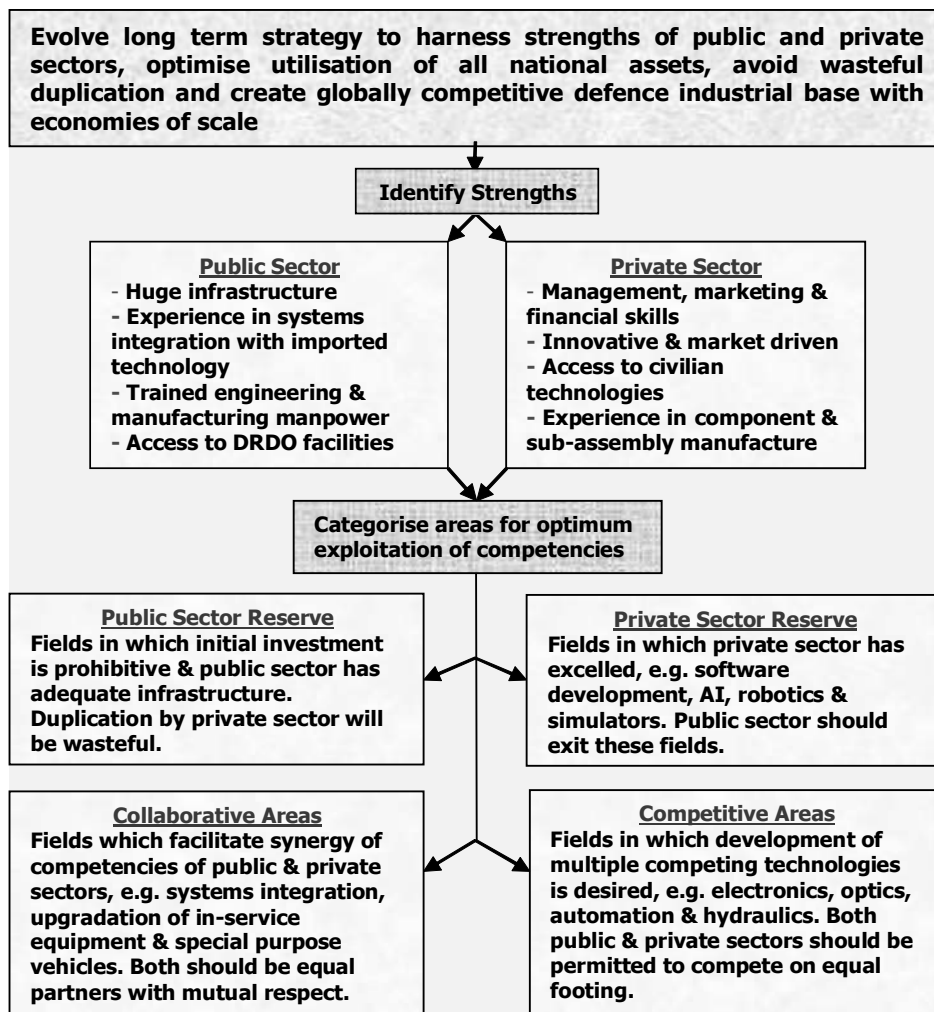


Illustration: Harnessing Potential of Public and Private Sectors

assembly manufacture. A well-blended fusion of both will result in synergising their respective strengths through economies of scale and prove mutually beneficial.⁴¹ See Illustration.

be profitably established.

There is a need for an effective institutionalised interface between the MoD, the services and the private sector for regular interaction at

the policy making level. Presently, the government is unaware of the capabilities and potential of different private sector companies. On the other hand, many private sector companies have the capability to manufacture the whole range of defence requirements but do not know whom to approach to ascertain details.⁴²

Indigenous production should be given purchase and price preference, thereby providing incentive to foreign companies to collaborate with Indian companies for production in India.⁴³ Any nation that covets FDI in defence has to tailor its policies to position itself as the most irresistible destination. Foreign investors are not enthused by India's FDI policy. They consider it to be highly dissuasive and irrational – a foreign investor is expected to invest his resources and technology in a venture where he has no significant control while the venture is bound by strict capacity/product constraints, has no purchase guarantee, no open access to other markets (including exports) and where preference may be accorded to the local

public sector.⁴⁴ It is time India revisits the policy to assuage the apprehensions of the investors.

In addition, the government should pay heed to five critical recommendations of the Dhirendra Singh Committee – corporatisation of the management structure of the Ordnance Factory Board; merger of shipyards under MoD into one corporate entity (retaining the yard facilities in their present geographical locations but working under one single management); expeditious implementation of the strategic partnership scheme; and creation of an independent agency to oversee the complete gamut of activities related to defence industry and procurements.

Defence business is a painstaking affair and results will be visible only after a long gestation period. In the interim, the government must remain wary of unscrupulous elements and not let the well-intentioned 'Make in India' mission degenerate into an 'Assemble in India' sham.⁴⁵ That shall be highly detrimental to national interests.

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Kargil and Beyond: Air Aspects

TP Srivastava*

Year 1999 C.E. was a unique year in more ways than one. Y2K syndrome had gripped the world with fear and anxiety and every organisation, big or small, was busy downloading and/or taking printouts of entire data base because no one was sure as to what will happen after 23:59:59 on 31st December 1999. Whether the computers will seamlessly switch over to year 2000 C.E. or revert to 1900 C.E. was creating a scare across the globe. Thankfully, the computer software allowed seamless switch over to year 2000 C.E.

For India too, the year 1999 was an extremely significant one, besides the Y2K anxiety and fear. In April 1999, the NDA government led by Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, which had come to power in 1998, failed to win a no-trust vote by a single vote, after its coalition partner, the AIADMK withdrew support. The BJP led National Democratic Alliance (NDA), secured 269 votes while the opposition got 270. The opposition under the leadership of Congress' Sonia Gandhi also failed to come up with the numbers, forcing the dissolution of the House and the holding of fresh elections. Shri Vajpayee remained the "caretaker" Prime Minister until the elections were held. And it was during this period that Pakistan 'nearly' succeeded in severing Ladakh region from India by positioning her well-armed soldiers all along Kargil Heights, leading to the Kargil War.

So much has been written about the Kargil War that any further mention would be counterproductive, both from operational as well as record of events point of view. The K. Subrahmanyam Committee report is the most comprehensive and authoritative information document on this issue.¹ However, the most 'substantive issue' must be mentioned even at the cost of repetition and that is "Kargil took place because of monumental failure of intelligence agencies" over a period of at least two years preceding Kargil Operations, which commenced on 23 May 1999. This paper, will look into certain aspects of the Kargil War, but will focus on the fundamental question whether India is today, two decades later, better placed to face such a contingency.

Army personnel gave an outstanding and exemplary account of bravery and determination while operating in the most inhospitable terrain against an adversary, which had the advantage of position/ location by being at higher ground and vantage point. No army in the world has ever fought a battle at these heights and in such difficult terrain. Kargil War was won not because of superior weapons; it was won due to sheer dint of hard work, exemplary bravery and determination by Indian Army personnel on the ground and Air Warriors in the air. Indian Military was ill-equipped to fight in this terrain - a sad reflection of profligacy

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in planning for such contingencies by the military planners. Certain fundamental issue that merits attention, with respect to the employment of Air Power, are discussed in the succeeding paragraphs.

Target Location: Unlike plains, where even a camouflaged target can be easily acquired, target in the hills, specially bunkers etc present a vastly different picture. Natural camouflage is inherent nature of a target in the hills. Spotting a bunker opening is well-nigh impossible even from 2 km. Target dimensions are small which further add to the complexity of detection. Target location information, therefore, has to be absolutely precise, may be with an error of no more than few meters. Meandering valleys and high hill features on either side of the direction of attack create severe limitation in spotting and tracking the target before weapon delivery.

Target Illumination: One of the most effective ways of successful hit on the target is illumination by laser (ground/air based) and/or by smoke indicators by ground forces. Smoke indicators, however, do not provide pin point accuracy for guidance. Laser illumination is the most precise method of target illumination.

Factors Affecting Target Identification: Problems created due to natural camouflage, angle of the sun at the time of attack, shadow of adjoining hill on the target, presence of 'significant cloud' at or near point of weapon launch, deception by enemy by painting 'doors/windows outline' near actual target creates enormous problems for the pilot in spotting, tracking and finally delivering weapon on the target.

Target Destruction/Neutralisation: Only a 'Direct Hit' can result in target destruction/

neutralisation. There are two reasons. Firstly, in hilly terrain such as in Kargil region, a miss by ten meters will almost certainly mean an unsuccessful weapon delivery. Secondly, the blast effect damage is not as much as in case of target in plains. Error margin, therefore, is almost negligible.

Reconnaissance: Conventional photo reconnaissance even from ultra-low level may not provide accurate information, which would be sufficient for targeting. Visual reconnaissance from vantage point around the hill feature and/or specific heliborne mission for reconnaissance is the only option. However, it must be categorically stated that heliborne reconnaissance will have to take into account enormous threat from man portable Surface to Air Missiles (SAM) and hand held weapons. In fact, infrared (IR) reconnaissance by night might produce better results and may be more helpful in pin-pointing bunker location. Power supply in all bunkers is invariably dependent on small portable generators. Even a one kilo-watt portable generator emits significant heat signature, which can be picked up by the IR pod of reconnaissance aircraft. Superimposing the heat signature thus obtained on IR film on the area map will clearly indicate the location of heat source, the bunker. Humint (human intelligence), however, remains the most important source of actual target location.

Let us now examine the means to engage targets in the hilly terrain such as Kargil.

Fighter Aircraft: A fighter/bomber carrying conventional rockets/bombs has extremely little chance of successfully engaging a target in hills such as a bunker and/or gun position. A successful hit, if at all, is more by stroke of luck than precise

aiming. A free fall weapon and/or unguided rockets can, at best create noise due to exploding bombs and falling rocks. Only a precision guided munition (PGM) such as a laser guided bomb can meet the desired objectives. Laser guided bombs will hit the target only and only if these are launched at precise range from a target which is being continuously illuminated until the bomb strikes. 'Litening Targeting Pod' acquired during the Kargil operations enabled the Mirage-2000 aircraft to not only assist in weapon launch at precise range but also helped in illuminating the target until the point of impact. Lasing of the target can also be accomplished from ground (if the target is visible from ground) and/or helicopter equipped with suitable lasing equipment.

Attack Helicopter/Armed Helicopter:

Even an attack/armed helicopter will find it difficult to engage a bunker/gun position embedded in hills with conventional (unguided) weapons.

Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicles (UCAVs): Targets in Kargil type terrain can be best attacked and neutralised by UCAVs. USAF experience in Afghanistan clearly highlights the need for such platforms. We have, however, not kept pace in terms of weapons acquisition on terrain specific case. India's indigenous effort 'Rustom' is still under development, with the Rustom 2 undergoing various trials.² The Rustom 2 is a Medium Altitude Long Endurance (MALE) unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV), and is slated to replace/supplement the Heron's currently in service with India's Armed Forces. It is designed for surveillance and reconnaissance. India is however unlikely to have an armed UCAV of Indian origin before 2030 C.E.

Weapons required to engage targets in hills

have to be different from those used in plains. Guidance from launch to impact is an essential and integral part of a successful strike. Irrespective of the 'tonnage' of the bomb viz 500 kg or 1,000 kg, it is imperative to understand that if the point of impact is even 10-20 meters above/below and/or left/right of the intended target, it just might cause no damage to the bunker. While we are yet to think of and acquire more modern weapons viz 'Advanced Precision Kill Weapon Systems (APKWS)', which are essentially laser guided rockets launched in salvo. This provides for better dispersion, thus exponentially increasing the chances of a successful engagement of target. Global Positioning System (GPS) guided weapons of varying weights have their own limitation. Suffice to mention that an error of merely 'one minute' in GPS coordinate will result in the weapon impacting about 20 meters from the target, if the bomb was launched 60 km from the target. Weapons like Crystal Maze and SPICE-2000 bombs are reasonably accurate and can achieve single digit CEP provided target coordinates are accurate to the last digit. Targets located in such terrain can be engaged by strike fighters and/or attack helicopters during day only. Target engagement at night even under flare illumination is nearly impossible.

Threat to Strike Aircraft and Attack/Armed Helicopters

SAM Threat: Shoulder launched SAMs pose the most potent and important threat to strike fighter/helicopters. Due to light weight nature of SAM equipment comprising of launch tube with mounted tracking device and at least two missiles weighing less than 15 kg, the composite weapon

system can be carried by a single soldier even in hilly terrain to the top of the hill features in surrounding area. Shoulder launched SAMs have a kill range from about 800 meter (near boundary) to about 6.5 km (far boundary) and can operate autonomously. An input about the impending attack from friendly radar station is a bonus. A typical SAM battery complement comprises of six independent teams of two soldiers each, who act as 'look out,' 'load carriers' and 'launch control'. In order to provide overlap for kill at near boundary, they are normally located about 500 meters from each other. Thus, a battery can provide unbroken cover at near boundary for nearly 3 km on either side of the target. Nearly 'Fixed Direction' of attack due to valley orientation makes their job of spotting and engaging a hostile aircraft fairly simple. Identifying and neutralising such teams is nearly impossible because they do not radiate on any frequency. A strike aircraft, therefore, has to remain outside the 'kill' envelope of shoulder launched SAM at the time of weapon delivery with sufficient margin to pull away after the launch.

Light Weight Anti Aircraft Guns: If the adversary can place even few Anti Aircraft guns on the watershed facing the probable approach direction of strike fighter and/or attack helicopter, it can cause severe attrition as well as induce errors in tracking causing weapons to miss the target.

Weapons and Platforms Required

To achieve operational success, it is mandatory to have the following combination of weapons/platforms and capability:

1. PGMs, UCAVs, Targeting Pods, Advanced Precision Kill Weapon Systems viz Laser Guided Rockets and Target Illumination Capability from Ground/Air

2. **Heliborne Attack Capability:** It must be remembered that helicopters are vulnerable due to proximity from target, low speed, advance warning of approach, limited manoeuvrability in narrow valleys, load carrying capacity and restrictions on hover.

3. **Reconnaissance Capability and Ability to Identify Targets:** Problem areas in target identification are due to natural camouflage, sun angle at the time of attack, adjoining hill shadow, vegetation, presence of 'significant cloud' at the time of delivery, deception by the enemy by painting 'doors', 'windows' on nearby rocks. Problems in target location are due to meandering valleys, proximity of high hill features on either side of direction of attack and smoke screen at the time of attack. Severe limitations lie in predictable direction of attack, sun angle at the time of attack and threats that exist from shoulder launched SAMs, high rate of fire of Gattling guns and small arms fire in the cone of attack.

Development in other parts of the World

The U.S. government has developed a specially designed, secret missile for pinpoint airstrikes that kills terrorist leaders with no explosion, drastically reducing damage and minimising the chances of civilian casualties. Both the Central Intelligence Agency and the Pentagon have used the weapon while closely guarding its existence. A modified version of the well-known Hellfire missile, the weapon carries an inert warhead. Instead of

exploding, it is designed to plunge more than 100 pounds of metal through the hardened shelters, tops of armoured cars and buildings to kill its target without harming individuals and property close by. R9X is also called 'Flying Ginsu'.³

The US Navy together with Raytheon successfully test fired another round of Excalibur N5 munitions.⁴ N5 is a 5-inch or 127mm artillery projectile. Excalibur impacts at a radial miss distance of less than two meters from the target. The precision-guided projectile has been fired more than 1,400 times in combat.

Recommendations

Acquisition of 'Terrain Specific' weapons and weapon platforms

Prevailing concept of weapon acquisition is based on 'generalities'. Even in post Kargil era, we have not moved forward in a cohesive and constructive manner towards acquisition of platform and weapon combination that would be ideally suited to successfully engage targets in high altitude or hilly terrain. For now, we will have to make do with litening pods, crystal maze and SPICE-2000 bombs because this is the best we have. Concentrated artillery bombardment is no solution to neutralise the targets embedded in steep

gradient hills. A hit by an artillery shell is more by chance than aim. To put it simply, as on date we are not adequately equipped to engage a well entrenched adversary positioned in embedded and well camouflaged bunker.

The Future

Twenty years have gone by since Kargil. A digital appreciation of existing capability from the air in form of strike fighters and attack helicopters does not project a rosy picture notwithstanding recent acquisition of Apache Helicopter from USA and Heron UAV from Israel. While the CEP details of air launched BRAHMOS are not known, it is unlikely to be less than 10 meters at its maximum launch range of around 250 km. In any case we have not achieved operational mating of BRAHMOS with Su 30 MKI. Currently we are at trial stage.

As on date we are not operationally equipped to engage miniature targets viz bunkers, gun position etc in 'Kargil' type terrain. Bravery of our 'Brave Hearts' is the only weapon in our store. 'We will fight with whatever we have' - a syndrome and malaise that afflicts the top military leadership, will get us nowhere. Second time around, we may not be as lucky.

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India's Defence Preparedness: Naval Aspects

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Within the ambit of India's overall defence-preparedness, an understanding of the prevailing state of India's 'naval' preparedness requires considerable and consistent conceptual clarity. The succeeding paragraphs attempt to offer some brief examples of both, conceptual clarity (in which cases the Indian Navy has done well) and conceptual ambiguity (in which cases the Indian Navy's contribution to overall defence preparedness has fallen short of the level expected twenty years after Kargil).

Basic Rationale of Naval Growth: Since successive governments of the Republic of India have consistently, consciously and deliberately abjured any formal military/naval alliances with other regional and/or extra-regional maritime powers, the Indian Navy is unable to afford (and has never been able to do so) to ape any of the 'niche-navies' of the world such as the British Royal Navy, or, for that matter, any of the navies of either NATO or the European Union. It has no option but to develop holistically, rather than being able to 'specialise' in one or another strategic or operational facet while leaving other facets to be dealt-with by some other navy.

Balance: As a consequence, the Indian Navy has always had to strive to attain at least three levels of balance in terms of its combatant and support platforms. The first is a balance between surface, sub-surface, aerospace and cyber

capabilities. The second is a balance between its 'brown-water' (near-shore) capabilities and its 'blue-water' (distant, deep-water) ones. The third is a balance between its combat-capabilities at sea and its shore-support capabilities. Despite negligible funding support - especially in the immediate aftermath of the 1962 Indian military debacle against China - naval planners have always held firm to the developmental-axiom that it is only through such balanced development and deployment that the Indian Navy can remain relevant and significant across the entire spectrum of conflict.

Doctrinal Underpinnings: A major change over the two-decades that have elapsed since the Kargil Conflict is the far greater recognition of the criticality of providing an intellectual and doctrinal foundation upon which the organisational and material structure of the Indian Navy could be rationally built. In the intervening years since the Kargil conflict, it became widely acknowledged in naval circles that the acquisition and sustenance of the aforementioned '*balance*' involves doctrinal and conceptual prerequisites that needed to be successfully completed before combatant-platforms - and the infrastructure required to man, equip, maintain and support them - could be sensibly and logically built / acquired and optimally deployed. Over the period under reference, it has become very nearly an article of faith that India's 'maritime strategy' must necessarily be the plan

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or design by which the nation seeks to ensure that it is able to use the maritime space (the seas) in ways that are to its advantage while dissuading, deterring, and preventing others from using the seas in ways that are to India's disadvantage. The reasons for India desiring to use the seas in ways that are to her advantage while denying others the ability to use them in ways that are to her disadvantage are collectively termed India's 'Maritime Interests'. These 'Maritime Interests' flow out of the country's core national interest (i.e., *to assure the economic, material and societal well-being of the people of India*) and, in turn, the preservation, promotion, and protection of each of these 'maritime interests' in environmental conditions of peace, tension and conflict, feed back into the country's core national interest.

However, India's current military maritime strategy has a few significant - and tantalising - deficiencies in this regard. For one thing, it does not squarely articulate the 'Naval Objectives' that the Indian Navy must achieve in order to 'preserve', 'protect' and 'promote' each of the country's Maritime Interest, in times of peace, tension, and, hostilities. As such, there is some loss of coherence between the parts and the whole. Another obvious error-of-omission is any mention of the Prime-Ministerial statement-of-intent for India to be a net provider of security in the Indian Ocean and beyond. This is a critical lack, because it misses the opportunity to spell out just how the Indian Navy — as the principal instrument of India's maritime-security policy — would contribute to the provision of this net regional-security.

ORBAT. Great caution must be exercised in

reading too much or too little into the ORBAT of any given navy, and, 'bean-counting', *per se*, is mostly a meaningless activity undertaken by a few ill-informed members of the media. It nevertheless merits reiterating that compulsions of 'balance' shape the Navy's present and future combat-holdings, as witness the following indicative 'Order of Battle' (ORBAT):

- 01 x Aircraft Carrier (+ 3 under construction / planned-induction)
- 10 x Guided-missile Destroyers (+ 4 under construction / planned-induction)
- 13 x Guided-missile Frigates (+ 12 under construction / planned-induction)
- 08 x Guided-Missile Corvettes (+ 07 under construction / planned-induction)
- 8 x Guided-Missile 'Light Corvettes'
- 03 x ASW Corvette (+ 9 under construction / induction)
- 03 x ASW 'Light-Corvettes' (+ 16 under construction / planned-induction)
- 10 x Offshore Patrols Vessels [OPVs] (+ 5 under construction / planned-induction)
- 1 x LPD (+ 4 x LPD under procurement / planned-induction)
- 3 x LST (L)
- 4 x LST (M)
- 8 x LCU Landing Craft [Utility]
- 12 x Fast Attack Craft (FAC [G])
- 06 x MCMV Mine Counter-Measure Vessels (+ 12 under construction / planned-induction)
- 04 x Fleet Tankers (+ 05 under construction / procurement)
- 08 x Survey Ships
- 04 x CHSV Catamaran-Hull Survey

Vessels

- 01 x Research Vessel
- 01 x Ocean-going Tug
- 01 X Training Ships (+ 3 under construction / planned-induction)
- 02 x Sail Training Ships
- Total Ships: 114 (+ 77)
- 02 x Nuclear-powered submarines (+ 5 under construction / planned-induction)
- 13 x Conventionally-powered submarines (+ 12 under construction / planned-induction)
- Total Submarines: 15 (+ 17 under construction / planned-induction)
- Shore-based Long-Range Maritime-Patrol [LRMP] & Anti-Submarine Warfare [ASW] Fixed-wing Aircraft: 17 (+ 10 under planned-induction)
- Shore-based Medium-Range Maritime-Patrol Fixed-wing Aircraft (Dornier): 40 (+ 12 under construction / planned-induction)
- Carrier-borne fixed-wing aircraft: 45 MiG 29K/ KUB (+ Tejas [Navy] aircraft that are under indigenous construction and planned-induction).
- Integral (Ship-borne) rotary-wing aircraft.

Force Multipliers. The two decades that have elapsed since Pakistan's costly misadventure in Kargil have seen Indian naval-preparedness increase significantly through enhancements in 'force-multipliers' such as the indigenous *Rukmini* data-communication satellite (GSAT-7) dedicated for naval communications, UAVs and UCAVs — both indigenous and from abroad, offensive and defensive Information Warfare capacities and capabilities, Maritime Domain Awareness capacities and capabilities (ranging from the

Information Management and Analysis Centre [IMAC]), mid-air refuelling (provided by the Indian Air Force) for carrier-borne fighter-aircraft, a steadily-accelerating process of 'constructive engagement' with other global and regional navies, and, perhaps most significant of all, the development of a vibrant and dynamic MSME Sector that is unafraid of pitting its technical and business acumen against established powers anywhere and everywhere on the planet. This last-named force-multiplier is often neglected but is actually a game-changing one.

To return to more conventional arguments, the Indian Navy's 'sea-control' missions are largely predicated upon its established 'blue-water' capacity and capability. The Navy's prevailing doctrine and strategy documents emphasise that in times of peace and tension, this capacity and capability involves 'dissuasion', 'deterrence', the 'shaping of the probable battle-space' through 'perception-management' and 'presence' missions, the maintenance of 'Maritime Domain Awareness' (MDA) through direct as well as cooperative surveillance, the gathering and collation of intelligence on a regional basis, and, the efficient discharge of the 'diplomatic', 'constabulary' and 'benign' roles of the Navy. In times of active conflict, however, it implies the ability to routinely and efficiently mount and sustain naval operations-of-war at significant distances — of the order of several hundred nautical miles — from the Indian coast. Not only is 'air power' — or, given the contemporary technological context, 'aerospace power' — critical to sustain both 'offensive' and 'defensive' operations at these distances, but this air-power must be available both 'here' and 'now'.

For the most part, modern, technology-derived, shore-based airborne platforms such as air-to-air refuellers (tanker aircraft) have overcome the ‘here’ component of this twin requirement for the sustenance of blue-water combat-operations. However, the ‘now’ component requires aerospace power that is an ‘embedded’ or ‘integral’ component of fleet-capabilities at sea. This is why integral air-power, as embodied by the combat-component known as a ‘Carrier Battle Group’ (CBG) has long been (and remains) a central operational concept of the Indian Navy. This is a synergistic and mutually-supporting conglomerate of warships centred upon an aircraft carrier. The adjective ‘synergistic’ is particularly apt because the combat-capability of the group as a whole — which, for the most part, comprises an array of destroyers and frigates — is almost always greater than the sum of its parts. Thus, while critically analysing the strengths and vulnerabilities of a CBG, it is very important to bear in mind that it is the ‘group’ and not the aircraft carrier alone that must remain the central point of reference. Yet, aircraft carriers are so highly visible, so hugely symbolic, and, tend to attract so much attention, that many media-educated/informed analysts end-up developing sophisticated but nevertheless fallacious arguments relating to the real and perceived vulnerabilities of this single platform alone, without realising that the CBG is like a mathematical ‘integer’ that cannot be fractionalised. This is why analysing the growth-indicators of future inductions of destroyers and frigates — and their propulsion and power generation equipment, and, even more tellingly, their weapon-sensor suites — is quite so important.

Clearly, the warships of the Indian Navy need to be assessed for their efficacy, efficiency, lethality, vulnerability and survivability not merely against the surface combatants of an adversary-navy but also against air threats (including anti-ship missiles), underwater threats (emanating from both, conventionally and nuclear-propelled submarines), and threats emanating from the electromagnetic spectrum (which includes the exploitation of thermal, optical and electronic signatures). There is little doubt that the optimal solution for the detection, localisation and prosecution of submarines operating in the vicinity of a fleet or warship-formation at sea is provided by manned multirole rotary-wing aircraft, i.e., helicopters. Helicopter operations are, in addition, integral to the complete gamut of maritime operations — ASW, amphibious operations, hydrographic surveys, Over-the-Horizon Targeting (OTHT) in missile-firings, Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations, etc.

Both, the Pakistan Navy and the Chinese Navy, realising the Indian Navy’s vulnerability to submarine-based attrition (resulting from grossly inadequate heliborne ASW capability), have concentrated on building and fielding submarines as the principal military threat to Indian maritime interests. Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) within most parts of the northern Indian Ocean — most especially in the Arabian Sea — is adversely impacted by a ubiquitous negative temperature-gradient. This significantly shortens the detection range of hull-mounted sonars. On the other hand, as will be reiterated subsequently, towed-array sonars and ship-mounted variable-depth sonars

impose often-unaffordable operational penalties in terms of manoeuvrability and speed - quite apart from a host of maintenance-related technological challenges that need to be wrestled-with.

Indian ship designers have been eminently successful in designing the Indian Navy's guided-missile frigates (FFG) and destroyers (DDG) to have each such platform capably of the embarking and operating two 10-13 tonne multirole / ASW helicopters. This is no mean feat and ought to have given the Indian Navy a decisive edge over its potential adversaries. Indeed, a modern multirole/ASW helicopter, equipped with a variable-depth sonar with high-end processing capabilities, sonobuoys, a good EW suite, and weapon-stations optimised for anti-ship and anti-submarine prosecution, can do pretty much everything that a contemporary surface platform can. However, it lacks endurance and the logistic-support facilities that only a surface combatant can provide many miles to seaward of a friendly base or coast. Two such rotary-wing aircraft embarked on a given FFG/DDG provide a threefold increase in the warship's efficiency, efficacy and lethality. By avoiding the need for the surface combatant to close an adversary to within its own weapon-sensor range, each helicopter minimises the man-o'-war's vulnerability and hence enhances its survivability. While the physical ability to embark and deploy two 10-tonne helicopters remained a standard feature of indigenously designed and built frigates and destroyers of the Indian Navy, by the time that the Kargil conflict broke out, the Indian Navy had reached a stage of desperation in terms of the lack of rotary-wing aircraft that were integral to the Fleet. There were three principal reasons for this:

The first, which adversely affected the two Kamov variants (Kamov-25 and Kamov-28), was the break-up, in 1989, of the erstwhile-Soviet Union. Over the next several years, the aftershocks of this cataclysmic event put the entire supply chain management of spares for the Kamovs into total disarray. No longer was there a one-stop point (the Soviet Navy) for the facilitation and vetting of spares. Instead, there was a bewildering multiplicity of vendors distributed across the states of the erstwhile USSR, and later, grossly inefficient export-oriented entities such as Rosoboron Export. These interfaced with India's equally ponderous bureaucracy in a manner reminiscent of the mating of giant turtles. The net result was that by the first decade of the 21st Century, only four Kamov-28 helicopters could be scraped together, that too after cannibalising requisite parts from the others as spares. The situation has improved only in the last couple of years when a contract worth over 2,000 Crores was signed in 2016, for the upgrade of all ten Kamov 28 aircrafts.

The second, which severely impacted the IN's holdings of Sea King helicopters, was the fallout of the sanctions imposed by the USA's Clinton administration in the wake of India's nuclear tests of May 1998. This resulted in an acute shortage of critical spare parts for the already ageing Sea King fleet. This led to a policy of cannibalisation, wherein several aircraft were stripped of components, sub-assemblies and even entire assemblies, to keep at least a few Sea Kings in flying condition in the face of the protracted unavailability of spares.

The third is an old and well-known story. Bureaucratic ineptitude in the maritime domain is

staggering, as are the lack of accountability for decisions taken (or not taken) and the general sense of nonchalant apathy. These factors, coupled with a marked inability on the part of India's procurement agencies and processes to keep pace with a fast-moving and strongly capitalistic global defence market that is characterised by frequent mergers and acquisitions, and, a characteristic proclivity to take no decision at all rather than have decisions subjected to the Torquemada-like inquisition procedures of central vigilance, have made for a lethal combination.

Only in the area of Airborne Early Warning (AEW) helicopters is there some cause for quiet satisfaction. In the opening decade of the current century, the Indian Navy inducted first nine and then another five Kamov-31 helicopters from Russia for AEW. Four more Kamov-31 aircraft were inducted in 2013 and this helicopter is, today, the mainstay of integral Fleet surveillance-operations. They are deployed upon the aircraft carrier, INS *Vikramaditya*, as also upon frigates of the *Talwar* Class, six of which have been built in Russia specifically for the Indian Navy (four additional *Talwar* Class FFGs are understood to be under procurement). However, they are a poor substitute for fixed-wing AEW aircraft such as the E2C Hawkeye and, consequently, AEW capacity-building remains work-in-progress.

The bottom line of this somewhat depressing saga is that the hugely expensive and complex frontline warships of the Indian Navy may well be formidable in terms of their surface-to-surface and surface-to-air capability, but they are vulnerable to a submarine threat — and this is predominant threat posed by both, the Pakistan Navy and the

Chinese Navy. There is simply no way around this morass without an adequate number of 10-12 tonne multi-mission-capable (multi-role) helicopters. For us to exploit the design advantage provided by Indian Naval ship-designers, every indigenously built FFG and DDG must routinely deploy its full capacity of two such helicopters. This is essential to develop the procedures and processes required for the realisation of combat potential and includes such capabilities as Helicopter In-Flight Refuelling (HIFR), Recovery Assist, Secure and Traverse System (RAST), and air-stores/weapon-loading and handling skills relevant to torpedoes, missiles, depth charges, sonobuoys, chaff, etc.

Obviously, not everything that a balanced navy plans-for or does lies within 'blue-waters'. Indeed, there are a host of combat missions that must, of operational-necessity, be executed within 'brown waters' and, as such, a very large number of brown-water forces have both substantial (i.e., ample) and substantive (i.e., meaningful) offensive and defensive firepower (along with associated surveillance-chains) in multiple dimensions — surface, sub-surface, air and cyber-space — and some even extend these capabilities to space-based surveillance! Likewise, 'Coastal Security' encompasses a variety of operational missions that lie squarely within 'brown' or 'green' waters and also incorporates significant organisational and training activities that are designed to provide or enhance requisite capability. The Indian Navy's concentration upon the issue of seaborne-trade is driven by the fact that India and China both have an unusually high openness-of-trade ratio — i.e., the ratio of their respective overseas trade to their

respective GDP values (India has a decadal average of some 36%, while the decadal average in respect of China is even higher, at 42.7%!). All this, in aggregate, is what drives the demand for 'blue-water' assets as well as 'brown/green water' ones.

The Chinese SSN-Threat: At the operational level, China's submarines - especially nuclear-powered ones (SSNs) - increasingly prowl the inky depths of the Indian Ocean. Indeed, the SSN may well be considered to be the operational-level centre-of-gravity of the PLA Navy operating in the Indian Ocean. Chinese SSNs, sailing for combat patrols from their underwater tunnels from the Yulin Naval Base on Hainan Island, remain submerged right from their point of departure onwards. They are, thus, largely impervious to detection. However, to effect a transit from the Pacific Ocean into the Indian Ocean, a submarine must necessarily use one or another of the four narrow choke-points that connect these two oceanic spaces - the Strait of Malacca, the Strait of Sunda-Bangka, the Strait of Lombok-Makassar, and the Strait of Ombai-Wetar. Indonesia sits astride all four and this gives that archipelagic nation an enormous degree of strategic significance. While any of the chokepoints under discussion may be used by a submarine that is proceeding on the surface, three of the these four are unavailable for a large SSN wishing to undertake a submerged transit. The shallow-depths that obtain in the Strait of Malacca, along with the high density of shipping traffic, do not permit a large SSN to effect a submerged-transit through this strait. Farther south lies the Sunda Strait. Here, too, however, the abundance of navigational hazards and the

presence of strong underwater currents preclude an underwater-passage of a large SSN. Continuing south-eastward, the Strait of Lombok, which is located east of the island of Bali, is capable of being used by diesel-electric submarine (i.e., an SSK), but not by large SSNs. The latter, while submerged, can only use the Strait of Ombai-Wetar, which is the southernmost of the four choke points.

Since the process of tracking a submarine can only begin once the submarine has been detected, the central combat-question for the Indian Navy is how this detection is to be achieved in the case of a Chinese SSN that began its transit (ex-Yulin) entirely submerged and which will undertake its entire patrol-mission underwater.

Sound waves, rather than electro-magnetic ones (e.g., radar, light, etc.) are the option of choice for detection of objects within the underwater medium. Often, searching for submarines is done by surface-combatants, simply because of the long endurance of the latter. While the Indian Navy, in conjunction with the DRDO and industry, has developed a whole series of technically-advanced sonars and associated signal-processors, and has fitted them aboard its various Classes of warships, hull-mounted sonars suffer from several disadvantages, not the least of which is that the signal-interference caused by surface weather and the noise that the ship itself generates tend to obscure faint noise signals being received from distant submarines. One solution, which the Indian Navy, like many of the world's leading navies, has attempted is for the warship to tow or trail a hydrophone array at some distance behind it and at a predetermined depth, thereby removing the

deleterious effect of the ship's own propeller-noise and machinery noise, as also the interference caused by weather conditions at the sea-surface. However, the operation of streaming and trailing these towed arrays carries significant technical penalties and imposes severe limitations upon the ship's speed and manoeuvrability. These limitations notwithstanding, specialised warships of the Indian Navy are, indeed, deployed specifically to monitor low-frequency sound, using towed sonar-arrays. The attempt is to place the towed sonar-array within the SOFAR channel (an abbreviation for Sound Fixing and Ranging channel). The SOFAR channel is a horizontal layer of water in the ocean, which acts like a waveguide for sound. Within the channel, low frequency sound waves that are generated by submarines may travel thousands of miles before dissipating. This sort of mobile system is typified by what is known as SURTASS (Surveillance Towed Array Sensor System), which has the advantage of enabling the warship being able to get close to possible contacts and to thereafter follow them, but it can only be in one place at a time, and must eventually return to port.

In recognition of the formidable challenges of trying to search for a submerged submarine in a large area of the ocean, the option of mounting 'patrols' rather than 'searches', is often preferred. The essential difference between a 'search' and a 'patrol' is that in a search, the scout goes out to search for the object that is sought, while in a patrol, the scout waits for the object to come to it or to cross one or more pre-determined lines, known as 'barrier lines'. The 'barrier-lines' are patrolled in such a manner that a submarine cannot cross a barrier-line without being detected. SOSUS (Sound

Surveillance System) is an example of a remotely-monitored, unmanned-patrol of a barrier line. SOSUS comprises a chain of linked hydrophones that are laid upon the seabed to act as listening posts for low frequency sounds emitted by submarines. The sound-signals received by the hydrophones are transmitted by underwater cables to distant locations ashore, where they are monitored and analysed. In general, the lower the sound frequency, the longer it travels underwater without serious attenuation. Thus, hydrophones that are designed to receive low frequency signals may reasonably be expected to be capable of long-range detection of submarines. SOSUS-development began in 1949 and was initiated by the US Navy to counter the threat posed by the former Soviet Union's large fleet of diesel-electric submarines. Since the early 1950s, SOSUS chains placed on the seabed of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans have become commonplace, although the focus has steadily shifted away from the detection of SSKs and towards that of SSNs and SSBNs. The Indian Navy is striving manfully to develop this sort of capacity, but it is not quite there yet — even two decades after Kargil, largely because it has not adequately invested in developing its potential in terms of capability, and has largely remained mesmerised by 'capacity' alone. It is very important for India and its Navy to remember that 'capacity' is not the same as 'capability'. 'Capacity' is a term relevant to 'material wherewithal' — i.e., the provision of hardware. This could include platforms, infrastructure, equipment, or spares, any or all of which might be provided to entities that have a need to develop a certain capacity to undertake one or more maritime

(or naval) role or mission. 'Capability', on the other hand, is the creation of requisite skillsets through organisational, administrative, training, and, the development and exploitation of human skill-sets. The Indian Navy may well have shortfalls in terms of capacity, but its inability to leverage its abundance of 'capability' - especially in respect of its technical personnel - represents a serious deficiency, whose costs will be increasingly hard to bear as we shift our focus from Pakistan to China.

To return to SSN-detection, geography and hydrography play very important roles in determining where best to site these SOSUS arrays. Conscious of these imperatives, the USA and Japan have jointly developed and deployed a new string of SOSUS chains. The colloquial name for this network - 'Fish Hook' - is derived from its shape. Complementing and extending Japan's older SOSUS chain across the Tsushima Strait that separates Japan from South Korea, the new chain begins near Kagoshima in the south-west part of Japan's Kyushu Island (the southernmost of the four main islands of Japan). It then runs down Japan's Ryukyu Islands, where it is joined by a branch running from the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands, before proceeding across the Bashi Channel between Taiwan and Luzon (Philippines). Within the Philippines, it runs from off Subic Bay to Balabac Island (east of the Spratly Group), before emerging again from the southern tip of Laut Island, located off Indonesia's East Kalimantan province of Borneo. It moves due south, fencing in the Java Sea before curving westwards to the north-eastern tip of Java. The curvature of the fish-hook covers the Sunda Strait between Java and Sumatra, from where the general alignment is intended to move

from northern Sumatra towards India's own Andaman and Nicobar Islands. It is widely expected that the data generated by this 'fish-hook' of SOSUS sensors will be networked with the Indian Navy's Gurgaon-based Information Management and Analysis Centre (IMAC). The IMAC is the hub of the high-bandwidth National Command Control and Communications Intelligence network (NC3I), set up under the National Maritime Domain Awareness (NMDA) project.

The SOSUS option is critical to the success of Indian endeavours to track Chinese submarines, and New Delhi needs to consider the straits of Lombok and Ombai-Wetar as the Indo-Pacific equivalent of the Greenland-Iceland-UK (GIUK) Gap of the Cold War era. Towards this end, it is important to bear in mind that advancements in SOSUS arrays have been continuous over time. These include the augmentation of arrays that are themselves mounted upon the seabed with vertically-arranged arrays that are inherently buoyant but are moored (anchored) to the seabed by a suitable tether. Likewise, there have been very large improvements in the physical (cables) and electronic means in which data from individual SOSUS arrays is communicated to shore-based monitoring and analysis stations located several hundreds of miles away. Current efforts are geared towards a new system called DRAPES (Deep Reliable Acoustic Path Exploitation System) which, like SOSUS, will be a fixed passive listening system with a new and state-of-the-art communications capability to transmit its data. While in the US Navy, these monitoring and analysis stations are known as Navy Operational Processing Facilities

(NOPFs), the Indian Naval one would probably have to be the IMAC. Apart from undersea cables, communications satellites have also been pressed into service for the rapid transmission of data. However, the most significant advances have been in signal-processing techniques and the incorporation of very high-speed computing.

Fixed systems like SOSUS, and now DRAPES, are integrated with SURTASS and other tactical towed arrays, as also with aircraft and space-assets and this integrated system is generically known as an Integrated Undersea Surveillance System (IUSS). In practice, SOSUS/DRAPES have the advantage of providing permanent coverage over target areas and then ‘cueing’ a mobile sensor capability, like a ship or aircraft, to zero in on a submarine it detects.

However, no single sensor/platform combination provides all the answers to the problem of submarine detection and tracking. Every sensor has its limitations. As a result, each application usually involves a suite of sensors, platforms and computer-based models. Thus, the Indian Navy needs to expend considerable effort in the field of non-acoustic submarine-detection, bearing in mind that satellites, in particular, are making a real and meaningful impact. Over and above their proven efficacy in enabling near-instantaneous transmission of large volumes of data from SOSUS/DRAPES sensor-arrays to the NOPFs, ocean-surveillance satellites can track submarine wakes, which are persistent and stretch out for

miles. Of course, they cannot do so continuously and not in all underwater environments. Nevertheless, with the Chinese ‘Gaofen-4’ ocean surveillance satellite building upon the successes of the earlier ‘Haiyang’ and ‘Yaogan’ series, space-based maritime surveillance has become a top priority for the Chinese Navy. The Indian Navy needs to follow suit.

The foregoing issues offer strong strategic reasons for Indian Naval advocacy and pursuit of an India-US-Japan-Australia-Indonesia alignment. Such an alignment holds out tremendous promise in a host of newer anti-submarine technologies, including the joint development of submarine-tracking unmanned, surface-drones such as the Sea Hunter and underwater ones such as the SHARK Class. Indian naval investment in underwater drones is an imperative that ought to have been pursued with vigour. Big data is another Indian strength-area and needs to be exploited. For instance, IT with the right algorithms and adequate computing-power, it is possible to refine a fuzzy picture to the point that low-frequency sonar becomes tactically useful.

So, after all is said and done, how does the India Navy’s defence-preparedness report card read? Middling Fair, I would say. There is much ground that has been covered and there is much that needs to be covered. As one of the only Trump-ian statements worthy of being quoted has it, *“The time for empty talk is over. Now arrives the hour of action.”*



Strengthening the Indian Intelligence Edifice

Kamal Davar*

Down the ages, the edifice of a nation's Intelligence machinery and proficiency in this vital expertise has been a critical constituent for not only thwarting strategic and security challenges to it, but importantly, in the successful pursuit of its statecraft. Additionally, ever evolving global and regional geopolitical threats, constantly accelerating warfare-waging capabilities coupled with revolutionary and highly lethal technological advances, available to not only nations but alarmingly to non-state actors and unknown entities, has made the responsibilities and tasks of intelligence agencies more than exacting and nightmarish.

History is replete with examples that whenever a major security or strategic lapse occurs, the first convenient fall-out is to ascribe it as an intelligence failure! A cataclysmic or a major tragedy may be attributable to a systemic shortcoming, a failure of leadership, lack of requisite resources, inadequate vigilance or sheer negligence but more often than not, supposedly, the lack of intelligence becomes the most expedient fall back option. Nevertheless, it is also a cardinal truth that lack of accurate and timely intelligence has often led to national failures and wrong decision making; even countless fatalities and destruction. Thus countries, their governments and its security institutions must confer, on this critical tool, adequate weightage in their national strategic preparedness.

Challenges for Indian Intelligence Agencies

India is located in one of the most violent expanses in the world with some not so friendly neighbours. What needs analysis is that since its independence in 1947, whether the desired level of import to the art and science of intelligence to counter challenges to its political integrity, security and economic resurgence has been accorded. The answer perhaps is not very encouraging. India has reacted to developments only after being harshly surprised, and only then has taken steps to review and improve its intelligence edifice!

India's strategic domain extends from the Strait of Malacca in the East to the Gulf of Aden in the West, running southwards along the eastern African coastline and down to the southern expanse of the Indian Ocean. In addition, the entire Asia-Pacific region (now being increasingly referred to as the Indo-Pacific) also impinges on India's security calculus. India's land borders exceed 15,000 sq. kms which it shares with seven nations, including a small segment with Afghanistan (at present India's border with Afghanistan adjoins Gilgit-Baltistan in Pakistan Occupied Jammu and Kashmir).

India has a coastline that is 7,683 km long and an EEZ of over 2 million sq. km in size. With an adversarial "string of pearls" being assiduously established around the Indian rim coupled with a

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few “sieges within” emanating from terror sponsored from across India’s frontiers and a credible Left Wing Extremism (LWE) insurgency, the responsibilities of and challenges to Indian intelligence are mind boggling!

The phenomenal growth of China, both economically and militarily, in India’s immediate neighbourhood, which has led to its alarming assertiveness in Asia and its ever expanding global and regional ambitions has to be carefully monitored. Not only owing to the unresolved border dispute with China, but threats along India’s vast coastline due to the growing rivalry between India and China in the Indo-Pacific maritime commons and the consequent security challenges from China in this entire strategic region has to be scrupulously watched. China expanding its footprint in India’s north-west by its China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) initiative, which passes through Indian territory (Gilgit-Baltistan) illegally occupied by Pakistan, has also to be kept under surveillance.

Military dominated, nuclear sabre-rattling Pakistan remains firmly entrenched in its myopic anti-India agendas employing terror and fomenting anti-India unrest in J&K. Pakistan’s devious role of keeping the pot boiling in fratricidal violence stricken Afghanistan in its efforts to install a Taliban and Islamabad friendly regime in Kabul, and keep at bay even India’s soft power forays in Afghanistan compounds the diverse challenges already existing for Indian intelligence. The devious activities of Pakistan’s protégés in Afghanistan, namely the Afghan Taliban, the al-Qaeda elements and those of the Haqqani network - and now the

emerging footprint of the ISIL/IS - will have to be constantly screened by Indian intelligence as they plot against Indian interests at the behest of Pakistan’s notorious ISI. In addition, threats to India from Pak sponsored non-state actors like the Lashkar-e-Toiba, Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, Jaish-e-Mohammed, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi etc, are likely to intensify in the years ahead.

India, which has been afflicted by the scourge of terrorism, since the last three decades or so, has to also vastly upgrade its economic intelligence capabilities. Terror needs adequate funding support and thus the tools for revenue and economic intelligence gathering, including effective liaison with friendly foreign nations, has to be ensured. Strict and discreet monitoring of the sizeable fund availability through financial laundering to the separatist leaders in J&K, insurgent groups in India’s Northeast and equally to the LWE chieftains and Indian Mujahideen elements has to be scrupulously ensured besides on other anti-national elements and suspect NGOs. It is a matter of satisfaction that recent raids on certain suspect separatists in the Kashmir Valley by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) have yielded some tangible results against money laundering criminals engaged in anti-national acts.

Intelligence agencies, importantly, also have to analyse the innovative transformations in terrorism developing across the globe and especially in the volatile region around the country. Asymmetric threats from land, sea and air will also have to be factored. In addition, serious security threats emerging in the cyberspace domain and

narco-terrorism et al, will also require Indian intelligence to be geared to counter these diverse threats.

With the global terror conglomerate, the rise and influence of the ISIL, also referred to as the Islamic State (IS) - though currently under acute pressure in Syria and Iraq - will need to be watched and counter measures adopted before it becomes a potent threat. Indian Intelligence will have to keep under surveillance, the spread of this evil terror outfit's influence towards the borders of India. In cooperation with the police organisations of the states, intelligence agencies will need to check the efforts of the IS to recruit volunteers for itself from the Indian hinterland. Regrettably, there have been some re-energised efforts by Pakistan's ISI and some in the misguided Sikh community, once again, to revive 'Khalistani militancy' in the Punjab which too needs monitoring by our intelligence agencies. Similarly in Punjab, the major problem of drugs is also related to a direct Pakistani hand and Indian intelligence agencies have to work assiduously to thwart the spread of this evil.

In summation of the challenges faced by the Indian intelligence community, these are similar to those that are confronted by their counterparts across the world and all these relate to strategic intelligence, anticipatory intelligence, current operations, cyber intelligence, counter-terrorism, counter proliferation and counter intelligence. Historically, as stated earlier, intelligence agencies are forced to reform and restructure because of crises and failures! In India, notwithstanding some of our major intelligence lapses occurring, hardly

anyone, if at all, is held accountable for serious failures on this front. Some glaring examples are:

- The inability to assess Chinese intentions during the 1959-62 period.
- Inability to pinpoint Pakistan's raising of an additional armoured division in 1965.
- Inability to detect Pakistan plans for Operation Desert Hawk (the Akhnur attack in 1965 operations)
- Inability to gauge Pakistani intentions in failed Operation Gibraltar (mid 1965 attempt by Pakistan to create a popular uprising in the Kashmir Valley)
- Being taken by surprise in Operation Grand Slam (the launch of Pakistan armoured division in the Khem Karan sector in Sep 1965).
- Being unable to prevent the assassination of Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi.
- Inability to gauge the LTTE's reaction to the India-Sri Lanka Accord of 1987.
- Being taken by surprise by the Kargil incursions in 1999.
- Being surprised by the attack on India's Parliament in 2001, Mumbai terror attacks of 2008, and the many major attacks since then.

Overall, the accountability of intelligence agencies also must be ensured.

Indian Intelligence: Defining Benchmarks

There are currently 14 intelligence agencies operating in India with different and sometimes overlapping mandates. Most of these intelligence agencies have come up into being as a response

to the changing regional dynamics but largely whenever there was some national embarrassment owing to faulty or the absence of timely and actionable intelligence. The oldest intelligence set-up is the Intelligence Bureau (IB) which was established by the British in December 1887 as part of the Indian Special Branch to monitor all anti-British activities which had commenced gaining momentum owing to the stirrings of the Indian freedom movement. Amazingly, to date it has no legislative authorisation! Similarly, barring the National Investigative Agency (NIA), no other intelligence organisation too has!

Post-independence, a few efforts were made by some governments at the Centre to institutionally review the adequacy or otherwise of India's intelligence organs and some restructuring was implemented. Following the debacle in the 1962 war with China, the Directorate General of Security (DGS) was set up within the Intelligence Bureau (IB), with its operational unit, the Aviation Research Centre (ARC) tasked with obtaining intelligence on China. Following the failure of the IB in providing the requisite inputs in the 1965 war against Pakistan and the Mizo revolt in 1966, the government decided to hive off external intelligence under a new agency, the Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW) and linked the DGS with it. The proposal to raise the R&AW (1968) was enthusiastically and speedily cleared by the then PM Indira Gandhi for she appreciated the value of external intelligence in the pursuit of the nation's strategic goals.

In recent years, the other significant

benchmark in the evolution of Indian intelligence has been as a consequence of the Kargil War in 1999. India was taken totally by surprise as regards major incursions by Pakistani troops crossing the Line of Control (LoC) and occupying some of the Kargil heights dominating the Srinagar-Kargil road in the Ladakh sector. The Kargil crisis led to a major and much required review of India's higher defence management, security and intelligence architecture. The Kargil Review Committee (KRC) was chaired by the eminent strategic analyst, the late K. Subhramanyam and subsequently the comprehensive KRC Report was vetted by a high powered Group of Ministers (GOM). The GOM appointed four task forces to go into the details and various aspects of higher defence management. The Task Force on Intelligence Reforms was headed by former R&AW chief Gary Saxena who, after analysing the entire gamut of intelligence structures in India made some stellar recommendations which were incorporated in the final GOM Report (chaired by then Deputy PM LK Advani) and approved by the Vajpayee government in 2000-01.

The KRC had succinctly observed "...there is no institutionalised mechanism for coordination or objective oriented interaction between intelligence agencies and consumers at different levels. Similarly, there is no mechanism for tasking the agencies, monitoring their performance...nor is there any oversight of the overall functioning of the agencies." The KRC also opined "The resources made available to the Defence Services are not commensurate with the responsibility

assigned to them. There are distinct advantages in having two lines of intelligence collection and reporting with a rational division of functions, responsibilities and areas of specialisation... Indian threat assessment is a single process dominated by R&AW... Indian intelligence structure is flawed since there is little back-up or redundancy to rectify failures and shortcomings in intelligence collection and reporting...”

The Task Force on Intelligence had recommended the creation of a tri-service Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA) as the nodal agency for the analysis of all military intelligence and to synergise the functioning of the three Services Intelligence Directorates (SIDs). Strategic intelligence assets of the Services like satellite imagery and Signals Intelligence were placed under the DIA. In addition, the GOM’s recommended the establishment of the National Technical Facilities Organisation (now renamed as the National Technical Research Organisation - NTRO) as the nodal agency to procure and provide all forms of TECHINT to the nation. The DIA came into existence in March 2002 and the NTRO in early 2003 after taking over some erstwhile technical assets of the R&AW’s ARC.

The Saxena Committee had also called for a Multi-Agency Centre (MAC) and a Joint Task Force on Intelligence (JTFI) to be set up under the IB. The MAC was to collect and coordinate all terror related information and the JTFI to share information with the state governments. In addition, the GOM report had rightly concluded that it was “neither healthy nor prudent” to endow R&AW

with “multifarious capabilities” for both HUMINT and TECHINT responsibilities. Subsequently, while the Vajpayee government whole heartedly approved the GOM recommendations, it also streamlined and established the National Security Council (NSC) and the National Security Advisory Board (NSAB) and various coordination groups for the macro-management of intelligence in a more cohesive manner. It also established the Intelligence Coordination Group (ICG), chaired by the National Security Adviser (NSA) to task various intelligence agencies at the apex level.

Mumbai Terror Attack 2008 and the Need for Synergy

Over the years, systemic shortcomings in India’s intelligence structures and functioning are unanimously accepted by most veteran security analysts in the country. Despite some much needed changes having been made in the intelligence edifice in India post Kargil operations, the intelligence failure seen during the dastardly Pakistan sponsored Mumbai 2008 terror attack had again shown the intelligence community in India in poor light. Once again, the lack of intelligence coordination between not only the various intelligence agencies but importantly between the IB and the police forces of the various states came to fore. The then Government of Maharashtra established the Ram Pradhan Committee to go into various aspects of countering terror and streamlining governmental responses for similar terror attacks. The UPA government, after some in-house deliberations, announced the setting up

of the National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC) and the National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID). Owing to acute professional differences, the former never got to be established and the functioning of the NATGRID, according to some analysts, requires further Agency Centres (SMACs) for effective liaison and coordination with the Ministry of Home Affairs at the Centre.

A significant fall-out of the post Mumbai terror attacks was the UPA government establishing the National Investigation Agency (NIA) for investigation of terror related matters. It is the only federal agency, chartered to supersede the state police forces in investigation and prosecute offenders for particular offences as required. Legally sanctioned by an Act of Parliament, according to most security analysts, the NIA is doing a reasonably effective job.

In June 2011, the UPA 2 government also constituted a Task Force under former Cabinet Secretary Naresh Chandra, to carry out a holistic review of the nation's security preparedness. This committee had recommended the creation of a new post of Intelligence Adviser to the NSA and the National Intelligence Board, which will coordinate and oversee the functioning of all civil and military intelligence agencies in the nation.

Recommendations to Energise Indian Intelligence

It will be stating the obvious that challenges to India's integrity, internal stability and economic resurgence will only multiply in form and formidability in the near future. The myriad and

plethora of challenges to Intelligence agencies in India requires them to make all efforts to keep themselves fully geared to counter these multiple threats. The first step should be to put into sync the national intelligence collection policy with national security objectives. Subsequently, other measures to energise Indian intelligence are enumerated in the succeeding paras.

- (a) It will be prudent on the part of the government to carry out institutionalised reviews of our intelligence agencies on a fixed time basis, like a 10 yearly Pay Commission review or what is referred to in the UK as Blue Ribbon Commission reviews. This will ensure that we move beyond the reactive and every 10 years, stock is taken of our intelligence outfits to fulfil their mandates and corrective measures instituted.
- (b) It is the considered opinion of many security analysts that the NSA is overburdened with exacting geopolitical, external affairs and internal security responsibilities apart from advising the PM on countless and diverse matters of national import! It is thus recommended that a separate post of a Director National Intelligence (DNI) for coordination of all intelligence, from civil and military intelligence agencies, liaison with friendly foreign countries intelligence outfits be created. This appointment would thus be an independent intelligence adviser to the PMO/NSA as also provide, as necessary, integrated intelligence inputs/advice to

various ministries of the government. The NSA, in his present avatar, need not be over taxed with also being the chief coordinator or analyst of the nation's intelligence endeavours.

- (c) With India being the largest established democracy, it is only proper that its intelligence agencies must be subjected to some form of parliamentary oversight and scrutiny. It is suggested that an Apex Board for Intelligence Norms and Scrutiny be constituted, by an Act of Parliament and all intelligence agencies function under its oversight. This board could be headed by the Vice President of India and have the PM, Home Minister, the Defence Minister, the Speaker of the Lok Sabha, leaders of Opposition of the two houses of Parliament as its members.
- (d) Notwithstanding revolutionary accretions in TECHINT, our HUMINT capabilities need vast improvement. This aspect must be given adequate weightage and we develop sufficient penetrative intelligence capabilities in HUMINT, across the concerned regions/outfits. Covert capabilities to install, if required, the 'fear of God' in rogue states/terror outfits must be ensured. Our DAs abroad, who are supposed to be military diplomats, can be suitably tasked - but unofficially only. External military intelligence acquisition should be handed over to the DIA.
- (e) Intelligence agencies must ensure seamless,

sincere and honest sharing of intelligence with each other in larger national interest avoiding all forms of 'one-upmanship' and turf battles. For ensuring synergy amongst all intelligence agencies, the National Geo Intelligence Framework which affords provisioning of a common platform to all intelligence agencies to share and update data should be implemented.

- (f) The government must speedily implement police reforms in all the states, as suggested by many committees constituted for this purpose earlier. Policing and its effectiveness at the grassroots level is sine-qua-non in gathering intelligence at the ground level, especially in terror and insurgency infested regions and currently its effectiveness leaves much to be desired.
- (g) Indian intelligence's linguistic skills, both in different vital languages and dialects and in the required numbers, is sadly lacking and needs to be substantially augmented. Languages which need emphasis are the ones spoken in our neighbourhood as also India's own regional languages. Schools, colleges, our military institutions and governmental institutes for foreign languages must be suitably encouraged to produce a large number of linguists for employment by the government and intelligence agencies.
- (h) With China, in particular, having acquired breath-taking capability to hack/disrupt the cyber networks of even advanced western

nations, India needs to take immediate action, both in the offensive cum defensive aspects of cyber warfare. China now possesses absolutely phenomenal skills in ensuring “electronic paralysis” in its target countries and India needs stern counter measures to meet the Chinese cyber challenge. In addition, the Armed Forces must go full speed ahead to raise the recently sanctioned Inter-Services Cyber Division to meet the complex challenges in cyberspace. The Services will have to be adept in all nuances of Information Warfare in the coming years. Embedded technological threats in many electronic systems being imported will have to be monitored.

- (i) The government must ensure cross-posting, at various ranks, among personnel of different intelligence agencies. This step will ensure better flow of information and camaraderie between these agencies as also better integration.
- (j) In today’s seamless and highly interactive world, a fair amount of intelligence is available in the media, the internet, social media, governmental records, travelers, academia etc. By conservative estimates, nearly 80 percent of the information sought is available as open sources intelligence (OSINT). Selective outsourcing can be resorted to while intelligence veterans should be encouraged to maintain their old contacts in their areas of specialisation/ interest.

(k) It is natural that intelligence heads exhibit loyalty to the government of the day. However, intelligence professionals must understand that the ultimate loyalty of all intelligence agencies remains to the nation and no political pressures get them to sway from their supreme duty to the nation and all intelligence inputs, available to them, are utilised exclusively in national interest. Thus, they must cultivate, retain and be proud of an apolitical orientation.

- (l) As regards defence intelligence is concerned, the DIA raised in 2002 is now doing a commendable job but it has to be provided with additional resources by the Services for it to truly live up to expectations. All the three Service Intelligence Directorates (SIDs) must be put under its command. The Army Intelligence School at Pune must be upgraded to a Defence Intelligence College for training personnel from the three SIDs in the craft of intelligence.
- (m) The DIA must improve its HUMINT acquisition capabilities and its expertise in covert operations.
- (n) The NTRO and the DIA must coordinate their respective TECHINT acquisition responsibilities for better cost-effectiveness, redundancy and a clearer intelligence mosaic.
- (o) It is imperative that the nation builds a national intellectual capacity also in the intelligence domain by introduction of

specialised courses in the fields of cyber, cryptology, artificial intelligence, big data analytics et al in our education system.

- (p) Constant efforts to improve our capabilities in the domains of SIGINT, ELINT, cyber intelligence, political intelligence, economic intelligence, IMINT, MASINT (Measurement and Signature Intelligence) and OSINT must be earnestly strived.

Conclusion

It is unmistakably evident that threats to Indian security and our economic growth are only likely to intensify in the immediate future. Thus Intelligence, which is not only a reckonable force

multiplier but the first line of defence, needs constant upgradation in its skills, competence and reach. To meet current security challenges and those of the foreseeable future, the government must strengthen the edifice and sinews of Indian intelligence as required. For a nation which seeks its rightful place on the global high table, a formidable, well rounded intelligence capability remains a primary pre-requisite.

Thus, India's decision makers need to rid themselves of their endemic and bureaucratic sluggishness and endow this vital instrument of the state its necessary primacy and the wherewithal for it to adequately support laid down national objectives.



Shaping the Indian Military Instrument

Prakash Menon*

Introduction

Unity in diversity provides utmost strength for India's national developmental process. But diversity also begets divergent perspectives that shelter narrow interests and are naturally resistant to higher purposes. Diversity is substantially anchored in identity whereas unity seeks to derive a common identity from the 'thali'¹ of national identity. This 'thali' does not seek to demolish specific identities but instead attempts to merge them into a bigger mass for a larger purpose. The 'thali' process seeks integration wherein the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. India's ultimate strength will largely depend on the degree of success it achieves in creating integrated institutions across all levels of government and society.

Achieving optimum integration in shaping an effective military instrument remains a work in progress. This, despite the fact that twenty years ago, the deficiencies of integration were highlighted by the Kargil conflict and triggered wide ranging reforms in the national security and higher defence management structure. This paper attempts to focus on the twin issues of civil military relations and the higher defence management.

Civil Military Relations

Civil Military Relations (CMR) in democracies are naturally encumbered by forces that create

tensions in the relationship. At one end there is a perpetual fear of a military takeover to the other end when limited resources are perceived as being spent on an institution that mostly enjoys the fruits of peace. CMR is also enacted in different domains. In the governmental domain, different segments of the Central / State governments at various levels interact with counterparts in the military. The most important relationship is the one between the apex political and military leadership.

In the societal domain, the CMR relationship is a product of perceptions of one another. At the national level, the state of relationship could vary considerably depending on geographic location. Societies where the military has been engaged for a long time in internal security like Kashmir and states in the North East would have a relatively negative outlook. However, in the rest of the country, by and large the society views the military positively as the ultimate defenders of the State. In the recent past, primarily due to pressure of expanding population and space limitations, some degree of tensions in CMR has been experienced. It is an issue that will continue to propagate and requires to be handled deftly by the apex political and military leadership.

The main area of concern in CMR is the inability of political and military institutions to harmonise their understanding of each other's requirements and thereby shape the military

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instrument that meets the demands of national security. This deficiency is the core issue. This is unfortunate as the central purpose of having good CMR is to optimise the efficiency of the military instrument.

The problem is not the lack of sufficient political guidance to the military but the fact that developing such guidance requires a sustained dialogue between the political and military leadership. Such a dialogue is a victim of the lack of appreciation of the other. Politicians lack understanding of the dynamics of military power. In India, they are mostly advised by a bureaucracy whose expertise lies in the knowledge of rules, regulations and procedures. Political sensitivity to defence scams has also ensured that bureaucratic processes have captured political decision making and procedures are privileged over outcomes.

On the other hand, the military leadership's grasp of political dynamics is weakened by a professional education system that keeps understanding of politics at an arm's length. What little educational exposure is provided at the Brigadier and equivalent level is too little and too late. Members of the higher military leadership are exposed to political nuances only towards the end of their careers and is left to learn everything on the job. Perhaps this deficiency is related to a closely held institutional ethos of being apolitical. This is of course a misinterpretation. Because apolitical nature is about institutional loyalty to the Constitution rather than to the party in power. Understanding politics is imperative for the military professional as the military is an instrument of politics. Military actions through threats or applications of force have to be carried out to achieve strategic and tactical effects that support

the achievement of political objectives. The need to translate effects of military actions into political outcomes demands an understanding of politics that extends beyond merely reading the surface currents of political forces at play. Modern conflicts are inherently people centric that demands of the military leadership, an understanding of political forces at play. There is need to understand the difference between being apolitical player and grasping political forces at play.

A natural element that makes interactions between the political and military leadership challenging is the natural proclivity of politicians, the short-term nature of their outlook. Quick returns are what ignites their enthusiasm and interest with less regard for longer term. But the shaping of the military instrument is a long-term affair which provides little dividend in the contemporary world. Military planning even when provided reasonable guidance is fraught with deep uncertainty which makes it difficult to explain to the politicians the quest of varying types of military assets. The politico-military dialogue is asymmetric in time, perspective, and understanding the other view point.

The lack of a politico-military dialogue affects the long-term planning and resource allocation the most. But the silver lining in CMR is the national ability to deal with the short-term crises. In the recent past, the Uri, Doklam and Balakot inter alia provides sufficient proof of successful civil military cooperation. The area of concern is what matters for the unknown future.

The only solution is an institutionalised dialogue in perpetuity and hosted through mechanisms supported by institutional memories and human capital. Post Kargil this problem was identified and

therefore a host of new agencies and institutions were created to deal with it. So, the natural question to ask is why is there no document that provides guidance for shaping the military instrument?

Human Capital Problem

The answer is not that we lack the institutions but that we lack the institutional capacity which inheres ultimately on the quality of the human capital that populates institutional structures. The National Security Council (NSC), the apex political structure that needs to oversee and approve the National Security Doctrine and Strategy has failed to do so. This failure is a reflection of political will and the weakness in institutional support systems like the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS), National Security Advisory Board and Strategic Policy Group (SPG).

It is not the case that supporting institutions have not evolved a National Security Doctrine or Strategy. They have however, failed to gain political approval. The need for such a document was acknowledged when a Defence Planning Committee under the NSA was tasked to evolve a National Security Strategy in early 2018. However, the exclusion of the Cabinet Secretary and the Home Secretary from the committee and the anchoring of the committee in the Headquarters of the Integrated Defence Staff (IDS) makes the committee unsuitable for this task which requires a holistic consideration beyond the realm of defence which is only a subset of national security though an important one. The NSCS is best suited for such a task.

There is also a case for first evolving a National Security Doctrine before a National Security Strategy. The doctrine's first approach will provide

political clarity in terms of direction and broad approaches to the complex geopolitical situations. The doctrine would have a longer life span while strategy keeps adjusting to the varying dynamics of forces at play. The creation of both these documents not only requires the best minds but must also have the support of high calibre domain specialists². The problem here is the inability of the system to induct such specialists into the institutional structure. Instead the dominant presence is of personnel from the civil services cadre who being generalists have to learn on the job. The Ministry of Defence (MOD) and several other ministries are similarly afflicted. The GOM had recommended that a study be carried out to create a cadre of specialists that will rotate within the ministries/departments dealing with national security like NSCS, MOD, MHA, MEA and Intelligence agencies. But the study opined that due to cadre management issues such an arrangement was not feasible. The domain specialisation problem endures and in terms of CMR, the MOD best characterises the issue.

Staying Apart - MOD vs Armed Services

Despite the GOM highlighting the need for integration of some elements of the military in the MOD, there has been only cosmetic changes and over the twenty years since Kargil, the relationship between the military and the bureaucracy has gone from bad to worse. The MOD has with rare exceptions in mechanisms like the Defence Acquisition Cell and some others, continued to populate itself with a generalist civil services cadre that mostly are experts in processes but lack subject expertise. The solution to the issue is the integration

of the military into the MOD and doing away with the notion of subordinate offices. This GOM approved change has not been implemented and instead a mere change of nomenclature to 'Integrated Headquarters of MOD' has in reality retained the status quo. Moreover, bureaucratic resistance and the non-implementation of the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) are both major contributing factors.

The GOM had recommended that in order to remove the impression that the Armed Forces Headquarters do not participate in policy formulation and are outside the apex government structure, they should be renamed 'Integrated Headquarters of the MOD'. Therefore the Transaction of Business Rules and standing orders should be appropriately amended.³ This recommendation in implementation morphed into a structure that preserved the original character of the MOD but still kept uniformed personnel out. Creation of the Defence Acquisition Council with some uniformed personnel as 'technical managers' was touted as integration.

Nearly a decade later, the Naresh Chandra Committee too accepted the need to integrate but its recommendation was feeble in terms of the reform proposed. It recommended that there should be a system of cross posting between civilian and uniformed personnel in mutually identified posts in the MOD and Service Headquarters. But it added that for the initial five years it should be restricted to Director level posts. However, this recommendation was never implemented like most of the other recommendations. Non-implementation keeps the issue alive and worse the normative state of relations between the civilian bureaucracy and the armed forces headquarters has been

described as 'Us vs Them'. Issues of equivalence and status between Civil and Military have remained unaddressed for several decades and is now worsened by the social media which has created a sense of victimhood among some sections of the military. Such a state of relationship is impacting India's defence preparations and is begging for attention and reform. What should be done?

Integration

The answer as they say has been blowing in the pages of the GOM report. Integration means that civilian and military identities are merged wherever required and there are several areas where they have to be separated. Essentially, integration should be based on functional principles. Defence acquisition and veteran's welfare could be integrated while personnel matters like promotions and postings need not be. But a critical change required is the creation of a Military department that consists of the CDS assisted by those elements that supports the function of using military expertise in the fields like defence acquisitions and deciding the allocation of budgets to different services. Essentially those elements of IDS required for the CDS function should be moved from IDS to the Military department. There is even a case for the department of Ex Service Welfare to be placed under the Military Department because of the organic relationship between serving personnel and veterans for all serving personnel are future veterans. This will require an amendment in the Allocation of Business rules in the First and Second Schedule.

The CDS as per GOM will perform the following functions -:

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- To Provide Single-Point Military Advice to the Government
 - To Administer the Strategic Forces
 - To Enhance the Efficiency and Effectiveness of the Planning Process Through Intra and Inter-Service prioritisation
 - To Ensure the Required “Jointness” in the Armed Forces.

The GOM had recommended that the Defence Secretary function as the ‘Principal Defence Adviser’ and be responsible to the Defence Minister for the following: -

- Policy Advice.
- Supervising the Department of Defence.
- Coordinating the functioning of all departments in the Ministry.
- Coordinating the finalisation of the complete MoD Long Term Defence Perspective Plan (LTDPP), 5 year Plan, and the annual budget for approval by the Defence Minister.
- Advising the Defence Minister on all matters relating to Parliament, Central Government and State Governments, in addition to advice generated by individual departments, and
- Coordinating all matters relating to personnel policies, terms and conditions of service, foreign postings and the like, with cadre controlling authorities in the MoD and with the Department of Personnel and Training (DoP&T) when required.

The GOM had specially commented on the relationship between the Defence Secretary and CDS – “The Defence Secretary will function as “Principal Defence Adviser” to the Defence

Minister in a manner similar to the role to be performed by the CDS as the “Principal Military Adviser” and both will enjoy an equivalent status in terms of their working relationship as distinct from the Warrant of Precedence. Similarly, the Defence Secretary must enjoy an equivalent status vis-a-vis the Chiefs of Staff, in so far as their functional relationship is concerned. Meetings convened by the Defence Secretary on issues concerning him shall be attended by the CDS as necessary and vice versa. The Chiefs of Staff will also attend the meetings convened by the Defence Secretary, if required and vice versa. The purpose of this arrangement is to ensure that the aspect of Warrant of Precedence does not vitiate the working environment of the Ministry”.⁴

If there is to be any meaningful integration between the MoD and Service Headquarters, the institution of the CDS as visualised by the GOM is an imperative first step that must also be accompanied with a series of structural reforms like Military Department and Integrated Theatre Commands.

Vice Chief of Defence Staff (VCDS) which was also not instituted but de facto exists as the Chief of the Integrated Staff (CISC). However, the GOM had visualised that creation of CDS and integration with MOD cannot be the golden key to resolve the manifold problems of integration. Integration will also be problematic if issues of equivalence between Civil and Military posts/ranks are unresolved.

The pressing need for a CDS due to India becoming a nuclear power was also stated in the GOM which also recommended the establishment of a Strategic Forces Command to manage all strategic forces. Notably the CDS was to exercise

administrative control and be the channel of control between the Government and the Strategic Forces Commander. Without the CDS and the Chairman COSC being rotational and some even having a tenure of a month or two coupled with the prime responsibility of being Chief of a Service, the required oversight of the strategic forces has been weak. But what requires reform is the erroneous assumption that any Service Chief performing the Chairman COSC function during a conventional war or crisis will be able to devote enough time and attention to be providing advice and updates on the strategic situation to the Prime Minister and on deployment and employment of strategic forces. So apart for reasons mentioned earlier, there is no doubt that a CDS is also vital for improving India's nuclear decision making structure. Another critical task of the CDS is to ensure Jointness of the Armed Forces.

Jointness

While integration alluded to thus far is between the Civil and Military components, the arena of Jointness in essence is about synergizing the various components of the military. All of the components utilise these geographies of Land, Sea, Air, Space and Cyber⁵. All of the components utilize these geographies to varying degrees while being primarily dedicated to one. This heady functional mix has made achieving Jointness a formidable challenge for the military. The major reform needed is one of structural re-engineering.

While the CDS and VCDS will resolve the major inadequacies of the extant Chief of Staff Committee system, the CDS will have to be politically mandated to carry out the necessary structural reforms. The most important structural

reform is the establishing of Integrated Theatre Commands (ITC). Modern conflicts require coordinated application of military power and presently each service has its own Commands that are not even geographically co-located. There is a total of 14 service specific operational Commands and two integrated Commands.

Contemporary battle space environment consists of a diverse constellation of elements that could include elements of the three services within a common geographic boundary. If the conflict zone involves Gujrat and its adjacent areas, planning and execution will have to be coordinated from an integrated headquarters and existing operational structures are inadequate for the task. So, both at the highest level of Services Headquarters and the Theatre level there is a need for integrated Joint Services Headquarters and ITC. This issue has been debated ad nauseum and implementation is long overdue.

Even the integration of training and logistics institutions have been halted after some small steps were taken following the GOM. Integration of these institutions especially training has become the victim of service parochialism. Difficulty to reform cannot be overcome without the oversight and push has to come from the CDS who is expected to have a military perspective rather than one that weighed down by an individual service outlook.

There should be no doubt that structural integration will be extremely difficult to implement if left to the uniformed fraternity. The political leadership must therefore mandate these changes and get it implemented through the CDS. The onus for reform must shift from the military and bureaucracy to the political leadership. There is

need for political will and definitely no requirement to appoint a committee. We know what needs to be done but so far we have not been able to get it done.

Conclusion

Any substantial improvement in civil military relations and higher defence management structures would have to involve restructuring that privileges integration as the cardinal principle. The military instrument is unique and involves violence as the currency of power. Normatively, the political leadership have to depend on military advice that involves continuous interaction for creating the military instrument that is suitably shaped to fulfill potential political objectives and also applying it when required.

Amongst the plethora of defence reforms that demands attention, the integration of the MOD and

the three Services coupled with creation of ITC are the objectives that the present government must prioritise. Without doubt it will have to start with a CDS. In due course, an Indian Model of ITS with theatre commanders reporting to the CDS would have to be evolved with the role of the Chiefs being restricted to procurement, administration and training of their respective services. This is a humungous task that needs an enlightened and visionary political leadership.

The newly elected government must focus on the major changes and not tinker with the edges. Resistance to reform is the natural proclivity of entrenched interests. The military instrument is the ultimate guardian of the state and its effectiveness should not be allowed to be sacrificed at the altar of narrow and parochial institutional interests both Civil and Military. Nation first should be the bugle call and nothing less will suffice.

References:

- 1 *The Indian Thali is a traditional style that serves a wholesome meal in a single plate/ banana leaf. It preserves the individual identity of the dishes but is easily amenable to mixing to create a wide variety of tastes suited to the palette of the individual.*
- 2 *This issue is being addressed by the government but is still in early stages of implementation.*
- 3 *Para 6.14 Group of Ministers Report.*
<https://www.vifindia.org/sites/default/files/GoM%20Report%20on%20National%20Security.pdf>
- 4 *ibid para 6.27*
- 5 *Strictly Cyber pertains to the Electro-Magnetic Spectrum. But is definitely a separate medium which for the purposes of understanding is given a geographic equivalence.*



20 Years After Kargil: Report Card on Northeast India

Shokin Chauhan*

Immediately after the Kargil conflict ended in July 1999, a Kargil Review Committee, chaired by the renowned strategic affairs analyst K. Subrahmanyam, was instituted and subsequently, a Group of Ministers (GoM) was set up thereafter. Both these reports highlighted the weaknesses in the lack of coordination between the R&AW, the IB and the military intelligence just prior to the war, and their inability to share information due to lack of inter-agency coordination. Further, R&AW's human intelligence gathering techniques were found to be weak. Later, a review of the entire national security system by a credible body of experts was recommended and a full time National Security Adviser (NSA) was instituted.

The GoM Report

The GoM report was mandated to comment on broadly four major areas of national security i.e. Intelligence, Internal Security, Border Management and Management of Defence. Further, as a part of its mandate, these recommendations were forwarded for implementation to the concerned Ministries/Secretariat i.e. the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) for Intelligence, Ministry of Home Affairs for Internal Security and Border Management and the Ministry of Defence for Management of Defence.

Vulnerabilities of Northeast India

Northeast India is the easternmost region

of India and comprises eight states: Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, and Tripura. The Siliguri Corridor in West Bengal, with a width of 21 to 40 kilometres (or 13 to 25 miles), connects the North Eastern Region with the rest of India. The region shares an international border of 5,182 kilometres, with the neighbouring countries, 1,395 kilometres, with Tibet Autonomous Region, China in the north, 1,643 kilometres, with Myanmar in the east, 1,596 kilometres with Bangladesh in the south-west, 97 kilometres with Nepal in the west and 455 kilometres with Bhutan in the north-west. It comprises an area measuring 262,230 square kilometres, almost eight percent of that of India. The total population of Northeast India is approximately 46 million with 68 percent of that living in Assam alone. Assam also has a higher population density of 397 persons per km² than the national average of 382 persons per km². The literacy rates in the states of the North eastern region, except those in Arunachal Pradesh and Assam, are higher than the national average of 74 percent. As per 2011 census, Meghalaya recorded the highest population growth of 27.8 percent among all the states of the region, higher than the national average at 17.64 percent; while Nagaland recorded the lowest in the entire country with a negative 0.5 percent. It has over 220 ethnic groups and equal number of dialects. The hill-states in the region like Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Nagaland are predominantly inhabited by tribal people with a degree of diversity

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even within the tribal groups. The region's population results from ancient and continuous flows of migrations from Tibet, Indo-Gangetic region, the Himalayas, present Bangladesh, and Myanmar. What distinguishes these states from the rest of country is the sensitive geopolitical location with the existence of diverse ethnic groups with different historical backgrounds. The Northeast as a whole is not a single entity with a common political destiny; rather it comprises eight states. The Tribal communities in Northeast India are living on the fringe of three great political communities, India, China and Burma. Historically, some of them played roles of buffer communities, and others the roles of bridge communities between these three great political communities.

The NE region of India is of immense geo-political importance to the Indian sub-continent due to its terrain, location and peculiar demographic dynamics, and is one of the most challenging regions to govern. However, its 40 million population accounts for only 3.1% of the Indian population. Post-independence, the history of this region has been marred by bloodshed, tribal feuds and under-development. Protracted deployment and operations by the army and the Assam Rifles have been instrumental in the abatement of the levels of violence and restoring the security situation to ensure that civil governance elements can function. At present, a delicate, uneasy peace prevails in the region. Having realised the futility of violence, several insurgent groups have resorted to Suspension of Operations (SoO) or ceasefire, thus paving the way for negotiations and hopefully, a resolution of problems.

Indo-Myanmar Linkages

India-Myanmar relations are rooted in shared

historical, ethnic, cultural and religious ties. India shares a 1643 km-long border with Myanmar in the four North-Eastern states of Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram with Myanmar's Sagaing Region and Chin State. The Singrouphos and the Tai groups such as the Ahoms, Khamtis, Phakes, Aitons, Turungs and the Khamyangs moved to North East India from the Shan state of Yunnan and Myanmar. In the same way Nagas, Kukis, Mizos, and the Lushais entered North East India from Burma. The people collectively known as Chins by the Burmese live along the border of North East India and Myanmar. Similarly, there are still a good number of Naga tribes inhabiting western Myanmar adjacent to the Indian state of Nagaland. All these people still maintain their language, traditions, arts, crafts, lifestyle as well as traditional religious practices. The interests are protected by the **Indo-Burma treaty of 1951 on Border Affairs** which allows free movement of the local ethnic tribals on both sides for the purpose of carrying on local trade and social visits within 16 km either side of the international border.

Being a neighbour, Myanmar played a significant role in the spread of Indian culture, trade, commerce, philosophy, customs, religious practices and belief systems through land to South East Asian Countries. **As the land of Lord Buddha, India is a country of pilgrimage for the people of Myanmar** (89% population in Myanmar follow Buddhism). A large population of Indian origin (estimated about 2.9 million) live in Myanmar. North Eastern States of India and Myanmar had strong people-to-people contacts since ancient times and therefore had a lot of ethnic and cultural linkages. Saigang Region bordering with Nagaland

and Manipur has Bamar, Chin, Shan and Naga population practicing Buddhism and Christianity.

Security challenges along the India-Myanmar border

Indian and Myanmar insurgents often cross the international border and establish camps in the vast jungles and largely ungoverned areas of Myanmar. Since the inception of insurgency in the Northeast in the 1950s, Naga, Mizo, Meitei, and Assamese insurgents have been crossing over into Myanmar to set up bases, especially in the Chin state and Sagaing Region, where they rest, recoup, train, plan and launch future offensives, and take shelter when pursued by the Indian security forces. There are today approximately 55 such camps that have been established by the existing insurgent groups. Earlier tacit approval of the Myanmar army and fraternal ties with the population across almost guaranteed their safety. This coupled with other insurgent groups combining to facilitate the establishment of these safe havens was indeed alarming. In fact, this shelter and support that the Indian insurgent groups received from across the border was one of the most important factors which helped them in sustaining their insurgency.

Further, these insurgent groups procured arms from the existing black markets of Southeast Asia as well as from Myanmar-based insurgent groups such as the United Wa State Army (UWSA). While the bulk of the weapons from Thailand and Cambodia were smuggled through the sea route, some of them are also smuggled overland through the India-Myanmar border with the help of Chin and Arakanese insurgents. Weapons produced in China are also routed across the Myanmar border at Ruili and then trucked via Lashio, Mandalay and Monywa to enter the Indian border through

Phek, Chandel, Churachandpur and Champai.

Narcotics and the ‘Golden Triangle’
Proximity to the ‘Golden Triangle’ makes the India-Myanmar border vulnerable to trafficking of heroin and amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS) produced in Myanmar. These narcotics are trafficked into India through the states of Mizoram, Manipur, and Nagaland from Bhamo, Lashio and Mandalay. The most important trafficking route is the one which enters Moreh in Manipur through Tamu and travels thence to Imphal and Kohima via National Highway-39. Reverse trafficking of precursor chemicals such as ephedrine and pseudo-ephedrine as well as codeine-based medicinal preparations from India to Myanmar takes place through the same route. While the bigger insurgent groups are not directly involved in drug trafficking to generate funds, they do so indirectly by demanding protection money from drug mafia for allowing safe passage to the drug consignments through their area.

The 1967 boundary agreement

The susceptibility of the India-Myanmar border to these threats and challenges stems from a number of factors. First, even though the international boundary between the two countries had been formally delimited and demarcated (except the northern tri-junction where India-Myanmar and China meet, pending the final resolution of the India-China boundary dispute) following the boundary agreement on March 10, 1967, the boundary has not crystallised on the ground as lines separating two sovereign countries. This is because like most of the boundaries that India shares with its neighbours, the India-Myanmar boundary is also superimposed on the socio-cultural landscape of the borderland, dividing several tribes and forcing them to reside as citizens

of different countries. These tribes, however, refuse to accept the artificial line and continue to maintain strong cross-border ethnic linkages. Such linkages are often exploited by the insurgents to find shelter across the border among their own kinsmen who are sympathetic towards their 'cause'.

Genesis of Insurgency

North East India has been in turmoil since independence. The oldest insurgency dates back to 1947 with the Nagas raising the issue of self rule and sovereignty. Since then, myriad insurgent movements have sprung up in most parts of the constituent states of the Region. Due to several common and specific abetting factors, violence mushroomed in different areas and during varied time periods.

The reasons for insurgency differs from state to state. Several factors like common ethnic stock, similar historical background and comparable geopolitics are responsible for abetting insurgency in the region. In addition, certain other factors specific to states, regions or tribes also acted as abetting factors for insurgency in the NE.

Assam: The roots of insurgency in Assam began with the protests/ agitations of the All Assam Students Union (AASU) against **illegal influx of Bangladeshi immigrants**. A break-away faction of the AASU formed the ULFA in 1979 with an objective of creating a '**sovereign socialist Assam**'.

With signing of the Assam Accord in 1985, the AASU ended its agitation and constituted the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP). This regional political party participated in elections and subsequently formed the government. However, ULFA continued with its struggle, with sovereignty as the

prime motive. Apart from ULFA and Bodo insurgents, the Dimasa groups of North Cachar Hills (now Dima Hasao District) had been claiming 'Dimaraji', a Dimasa state based on historical records and presence of Dimasas in majority.

These demands were in direct clash with the interests of Nagas who claimed the overlapping areas as parts of 'Greater Nagaland/ Nagalim'. The Dimasa insurgency was brought under control with the signing of Memorandum of Settlement (MoS) in 2012 with consequent formation of North Cachar Hill Autonomous Council (NCHAC). However, splinter Dimasa groups continue to venture out and carry out acts of kidnapping and extortion.

Manipur: The roots of insurgency in the State date back to 1964 with the creation of United National Liberation Front (UNLF). The discontentment was for the alleged forced merger of Manipur and delay in conferring Statehood. Subsequently, groups like People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK) in 1977, People's Liberation Army (PLA) in 1978, Kangleipak Communist Party in 1980 and Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup (KYKL) in 1994 emerged in Manipur. **All insurgent groups propagated the idea of an independent Manipur with minor variation in ideologies.**

In the Hill districts, contiguity with Nagaland and inhabitation by Naga Tribes enabled spillover of Naga insurgents into the State. NSCN (IM) has laid claim over these hill districts in the scheme of 'Nagalim' or Greater Nagaland. Kuki-Naga clashes in the Hill districts of Manipur in early nineties instigated the creation of several Kuki groups in the State. The groups which were initially formed to resist oppression by Nagas subsequently started demand for a separate '**Kukiland**' state

encompassing the Kuki-inhabited areas of Manipur, Assam, Mizoram and even parts of Myanmar. However, most of these groups are now under SoO with GOI.

Islamist groups like the People's United Liberation Front (PULF) have also been founded to protect the interests of the '**Pangal Muslims**'. Links with other insurgent groups of the NE and camps in Myanmar have been corroborated. The insurgents have been broadly divided into Valley Based Insurgent Groups (VBIGs) and others comprising the Nagas, Kukis, Muslims and those representing minor tribes.

Nagaland: Nagaland is home to the oldest insurgency in the North East. The idea of a sovereign nation was conceived by the Nagas even before the independence of India. Nagaland attained Statehood in 1963 and today comprises 18 districts divided on the basis of Tribal affinities.

The Naga struggle for sovereignty commenced with the formation of **Naga National Congress (NNC)** in **1946**. The entry of the Indian army in 1953 to prevent armed rebellion resulted in the party forming an armed wing called the **Naga Federal Army (NFA)**. An underground government called **Naga Federal Government (NFG)** was also formed.

The first major effort towards peace was the signing of the **Shillong Accord** in 1975. However, the peace accord led to rebellion within the NNC which led to the creation of the NSCN in 1980. Difference of ideologies between the top leaders of the NSCN led to the splinter in the group in 1988 resulting in the formation of NSCN(IM) and NSCN(K). Both groups pursued the objective of creating a sovereign Nagalim encompassing areas of the present Nagaland state, Naga inhabited areas of Assam, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh and

Myanmar. NSCN (K) further split in 2011 to form a splinter group called NSCN (Khole-Khitovi (KK) which further split into NSCN (Khitovi-Neokpao or NSCN(KN)). In the same year, a split by the Zeliangs in NSCN (IM) resulted in formation of **Zeliangrong United Front (ZUF)**.

In 1997, NSCN (IM) entered into a Ceasefire with the Government of India followed by NSCN (K) in 2001. On formation, NSCN (KK) also signed a Ceasefire with the government. In 2012, NSCN (K) further entered into a Ceasefire agreement with the Government of Myanmar. This agreement granted autonomy to NSCN (K) in the districts of **Lahe, Leshi** and **Nanyun** in **Sagaing** province of Myanmar. In 2015, **NSCN (K) unilaterally abrogated the Ceasefire agreement**. This decision of the group led to another split and resulted in the formation of NSCN (Reformation). NSCN (K) further went on to join hands with ULFA (I), NDFB (S) and KYKL to form the United National Liberation Front of Western SE Asia (UNLFW). In 2018, the NSCN (K) further split after the death of its founder Khaplang and now a smaller portion consisting mainly of Indian origin Nagas under the leadership of Khango Konyak left the group and have entered into a Cease Fire with the GOI as NSCN (Kango) and have joined the peace talks as a part of the NNPGs (Naga National Political Groups).

Situation Post Kargil GoM Report

Narcotics-Arms Nexus: The narcotics trade and the smuggling of arms and explosives are intimately linked and adversely influence the security and the social fabric of the affected region. India is located between two drug producing areas of the Golden Crescent in the West and the Golden Triangle in the East, which has resulted in drug

trafficking through the country as well. The drug mafia has been improving its network and escalating its level of activities. Many of the existing insurgent groups are receiving weapons mainly from across the borders with the assistance of organised smuggling groups. Most of the arms are being smuggled via Bangladesh and Myanmar. **These continue with a lesser degree despite a number of measures being taken by the security forces and the Ministry of Home Affairs.**

Fake Currency and Money Laundering: Along with narcotics and illicit weapons trade, generation of black money and money laundering, there is a progressive blurring of lines between legal, financial and business operations and criminal activities; these create ample space for collusion between organised criminal and legitimate enterprises. **A large amount of fake Indian currency continues to be smuggled into this region.** This reduced to an extent during demonetisation but has re-started to almost the previous levels. Laundering of proceeds continues to sustain a large variety of criminal activities, including kidnapping and blackmail. Co-operation and collusion between organised crime and insurgent elements continues. Given the law and order as well as insurgency situation in the North east the narcotics trafficking, arms smuggling, fake currency and money laundering rackets, provide a boost to the already fragile adverse situation. The prevention of money laundering is essential for safeguarding internal security. The MHA and the Ministry of Finance have taken substantial action and provided additional allocation for strengthening the resources of Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI), the Enforcement Directorate (ED), Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), Central

Bureau Narcotics (CBN) and Foreigners Division (MHA) in the North East especially in the vulnerable areas of the NE, like Manipur, Mizoram, Arunachal and Nagaland. These arms of the state need further strengthening.

Illegal Migration: The law and order problems of the North East were aggravated by large scale unchecked migration from Bangladesh. Post 1971 illegal migration from Bangladesh into various States of the North East is estimated to be of the order of approximately more than 12 million people. This has generated a host of destabilising political, social, economic, ethnic and communal tensions. Politically, the Bangladeshi migrants are in a position to influence the results of the elections in a large number of constituencies in the North East (about 32% of the constituencies in Assam). Economically, increased pressure on land, resulting in depletion of forest wealth, undercutting of wages of unskilled jobs, forcible occupation of Government land by the migrants and a host of other such issues, generate a ripple effect in the entire North East creating social and ethnic frictions which finally lead to violence. **Illegal migration has decreased to a substantial level mainly due to untiring efforts of the security forces both the Assam Rifles and the BSF, the completion of the fence along the Indo-Bangladesh border and the forward movement of the Assam Rifles to the Indo-Myanmar International Border.** Also with the recent measures being carried out due to the implementation of the NRC and the likelihood of the passage of the Citizenship Amendment Bill in the parliament, further reduction in illegal immigration is expected.

The Free Movement Regime

The India-Myanmar border has a unique arrangement in place called the Free Movement Regime (FMR). The FMR permits the tribes residing along the border to travel 16-km across the boundary without visa restrictions. While the FMR has helped the tribes continue maintain their age old ties, it has also become a cause of concern for the security establishment as its provisions are exploited by the Indian insurgents to cross over to Myanmar unrestricted and establish safe havens. Today a 16 km free movement regime MOU has been promulgated post the acceptance by Myanmar Government. However, in this situation, due to the existence of only two border control points at Moreh and Zorawathor in Mizoram available along the 1635 kms long border and the lack of effective border control mainly due to an extremely difficult jungle terrain, lack of effective policing on the Myanmar side and the existence of insurgent camps in Myanmar, illegal trade activities in a variety of contraband items flourish along the Indo-Myanmar border. In order to check these practices, the several measures as under were recommended by the GoM to be adopted, these are as given below:-

(a) Trade should be regulated only through one gate. This less the trade between the residents of the Free Move Regime (16 km belt) is in the process of being enforced. Now, an Integrated Check Post (ICP) at Moreh located on NH-39 on the India-Myanmar border in the Tengnoupal district at about 110 km. from Imphal, the State capital of Manipur has started functioning w.e.f. 31 March 2018. Tamu is the corresponding town in Myanmar opposite to Moreh. And in addition, the Asian Highway (AH-1), a part of the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway is

being developed that will connect Moreh to Mae Sot in Thailand, via Mandalay and Yangon in Myanmar. Later, this road will be further linked to Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam. Moreh will also be an entry/exit point for ASEAN and would thus be instrumental in facilitating India's trade with ASEAN region

(b) Border Fencing on a 10 km stretch along the Manipur-Myanmar border at Moreh was started in 2011 mainly to check free movement of insurgents and illicit trade. However this was abandoned after fencing an area of only 1.6 km on either side of the Land port at Moreh, due to public pressure of the locals living on both sides of the International Border.

(c) Free movement regime should be restricted to tribals moving with head loads, comprising authorised local produce. An MOU was prepared and shared with the Myanmar Government in 2017-18. This is in the process of being implemented on ground.

(d) Establish additional trading points in Tirap and Changlang District of Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram. Border trade with Myanmar is expected to not only lead to economic upliftment but also wean away the populace from insurgency. Other than Moreh and Zorawather, no other established trading points exist.

(e) Further, a construction of a road running roughly parallel to the Indo-Myanmar border along its entire length was considered. At present this project has not been implemented but needs to be expedited.

Assam Rifles

The Assam Rifles needed to be conferred with powers under the Customs act and Criminal

Procedure Code (Cr.PC), as in the case of the BSF. This is in the process of being completed and will bring about a change in the ability of the Assam Rifles to effectively manage the Indo-Myanmar border. To that end, 16 additional AR units were raised mainly for the difficult task of Border management between 2005- 09 and are in the process of moving to the international border.

The GoM had further recommended that “In order that for the Assam Rifles play its role effectively, it should be placed under the complete control of the MHA. The DG, Assam Rifles should be selected and appointed by the MHA and report to it directly. This issue however needs a rethink and is not recommended especially since at present the Assam Rifles enjoys seamless interface with the Army in an extremely difficult task of both managing a live and difficult Indo-Myanmar international border as well as deal with an ongoing difficult insurgency in many parts along the international border. Further, it would be prudent to take a historical perspective of AR to understand the full potential of its utilisation. Assam Rifles traces its beginning to 1835 when it was raised as Cachar Levy. Its current strength is 46 battalions. 80 per cent of its officers are from the Army, while the balance 20 per cent are promotes from the ranks.

To their credit, AR battalions have participated in the 1962 Sino-Indian operations and even the Indian Peace Keeping Operations in Sri Lanka. In 1966, when the MNF uprising overran the state, it was only the AR battalion at Aizwal that held its ground providing a foothold for launching operations to beat back the insurgents. It also allowed the use of IAF resources from within the state.

During the 1971 Bangladesh War, AR

relieved regular army units in the northeast for employment in erstwhile East Pakistan. A few AR battalions were deployed in Sri Lanka during Operation Pawan in 1987. AR units were deployed in J&K during the initial stages of the insurgency. During Operation Vijay in 1999, AR battalions manned the Line of Actual Control with army formations moving out to the western theatre. Then there is the question of ethos, tradition and practices followed by the Assam Rifles. Since 80 per cent of AR officers are from the army, the organisation has developed military ethos in sync with the Indian Army. It is these intangibles like ethos of a battalion, morale and ethics that have decisive influence on the operational efficiency of a force. The best of equipment and training cannot bring about the culture of sacrifice for achieving victory in battle.

What would placing Assam Rifles under the MHA achieve? Making the AR a pure police force will dilute its operational efficiency. It takes years to build a battalion and hardly any time for the force’s combat capability to slide without the strong leadership and environment that is required to sustain the state of morale.

As is also evident from the history of employment of the force, it has been utilised in difficult war situations to take on priority tasks in the depth and also hold lesser threatened sectors where the army units and formations had been relieved. The threat from China to our North eastern Borders has not reduced. Infact, over the years it has only enhanced. Such arrangements require very agile units that have the grit and determination as well as training to undertake such frontline tasks.

The over 1635 km of Indo-Myanmar border that the AR guards is difficult mountainous cum jungle terrain. It has no fence, nor will a fence

prove to be of much use in such areas. Across the border are camps of Indian insurgent groups. The insurgents are well trained, armed and experienced. To guard such a difficult border, there is a need to have a para-military-force that is steeped in the military culture and operates shoulder to shoulder with the army. The army officers who lead these battalions provide them the kind of leadership required to be effective in the terrain and environment that the AR operates.

Improved Security Situation-2019

Recently from February 2019 onwards, the Tatmadaw (Myanmar Army) conducted a series of counter insurgency operations against the camps of the Indian insurgents groups based at the Naga self-administered zone in Sagaing region of Myanmar and were able to destroy a number of these camps, seized arms and ammunition, and arrested several cadres of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland – Khaplang (NSCN-K) and Meitei insurgent groups. The Tatmadaw has also asked all non-Myanmar insurgents to leave the country and warned the NSCN (K) against giving shelter to any Indian insurgent groups in their headquarters at Ta Ga. If this continues, the security situation will greatly improve along the Indo Myanmar Border.

Border Area Development Programmes (BADP)

Border Guarding Forces should also be given the responsibility of assisting the state in its Border Area Development Programmes (BADP) especially since they are deployed in areas where no other arm of the government exists. People living on India's international borders, particularly on land borders, face myriad problems, like difficult

terrain, harsh living conditions and lack of access to public amenities. Frequent extortion by insurgent groups along the border is the norm along with thinly spread out administration and inadequate social and economic infrastructure, which add to their misery. Concerted efforts are being made by our neighbours through allurements, subversive propaganda and promotion of religious fundamentalism to generate a feeling of alienation among the border population. The remoteness of the local administration, its low visibility, illegal immigration, smuggling of arms, explosives and narcotic substances, further accentuate this problem. The Border Area Development Programme (BADP) has been enhanced and now is able to address the special needs of our border population. In addition, Border Guarding Forces like the BSF and Assam Rifles are now involved in execution of community welfare schemes like holding of medical camps, construction of school buildings and water harvesting structures, building sports facilities etc., where local institutions are weak. This action greatly enhances their ability to influence the needs of the border villages in a positive manner. This needs to be further enhanced.

Disinformation and Subversive Propaganda

Forces hostile to India have tended to occupy the vacuum created by inadequate reach of national media. It is, therefore, necessary to initiate measures to combat the subversive propaganda and disinformation unleashed against India through a series of measures which include enabling Internet, mobile and TV coverage for the border areas. Here though many plans exist on paper, there is on ground very little movement in this area. Many villages along the international border still

utilise communication networks of Myanmar which is a grave security risk. This needs to be completed with urgency.

Conclusion

What is abundantly clear is that national security is a function of a country's external environment and the internal situation, as well as their interplay with each other which is influenced by the prevailing international order, its immediate and extended neighbours and the major powers. Further, the internal situation encompasses many aspects of national life, ranging from law and order to economic fundamentals and from the quality of governance to national cohesiveness. The external environment and internal situation of a country do not subsist in watertight compartments but act and react on each other in ways which affect its security. In today's interdependent world, this earlier distinction between the internal and external security concerns have got blurred thus altering the traditional concept of national security, which in itself has undergone fundamental changes and is no longer synonymous only with sufficient military strength. This now includes economic strength, internal cohesion and technological prowess. The fundamental security of the individual citizen includes security of life and property, food security, energy security, clean environment, education and health. A strong sense of nationalism and good

governance also form an integral part of national security; as does the ability to retain political and economic sovereignty and autonomy of decision making, in an era of globalisation and increasing economic interdependence. The rise of China, has forever changed the external and internal environment in the North East of India, and now coupled with improvement in nuclear weapons and missiles, the use of cyber technology as a form of warfare, increasing cross-border terrorism, the emergence of non-state actors, the growth of Islamic fundamentalism, the narcotics-arms nexus, illegal migration and left wing extremism, gravely impact upon the security of this region. These rapid technological developments underway at the same time not only facilitate these events by reducing our reaction time but add entirely new dimensions of threats and challenges, forcing us to now plan our own Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) and enhance our capabilities to plan and fight in the domain of information warfare.

Over the last 20 years since the GoM report, the challenges that face the North East have only increased and once again institutions that were created 20 years ago or merely tinkered with following the report, now need to be once again strengthened and restructured in order to cope with the continuing new and emerging challenges facing us in the areas of Intelligence, Internal Security, Border and Defence Management in the North East.



Climate Diplomacy and South Asia: Is there Room for Cooperation?

Dhanasree Jayaram*

Introduction

The international climate change negotiations have been marked by fragmentation since the beginning, even before the establishment of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 1992. The fragmentation in the negotiations has been attributed to varying interests, concerns, vulnerabilities, resources and other factors among the negotiating parties. It has led to formation of various groupings and blocs within the UNFCCC that negotiate based on issues of common concern. These formations, which emerged at different points of time during the course of the negotiations, are characterised by geographical proximity (regional) and common/shared interests (such as development) among others. It is also important to note that these formations are not 'exclusive' and are mostly overlapping, with the members of one grouping or bloc also being represented in others. The fragmentation need not necessarily be seen as either positive or negative, as differing interpretations and perspectives have brought out possibilities of both conflict and cooperation among nation states in the realm of climate change.

South Asia is considered one of the most climate-vulnerable and politically fragmented

regions in the world. On the one hand, due to the similarities in geographical features and socio-economic contexts (to a lesser extent), the vulnerabilities (due to climate change impacts such as extreme weather events, sea level rise, glacial recession, health hazards, food insecurity, water stress and so on) are comparable. And on the other, due to varying interpretations of these vulnerabilities and (geo)political/(geo)economic imperatives, they tend to adopt different positions at the climate change negotiations. India, the biggest (in size and economy) country in the region, has played a major role in the negotiations since the beginning, but more so since the Copenhagen Summit in 2009. Bangladesh and the Maldives, two of the most vociferous voices at the negotiations, by framing climate change as an 'existential threat' to their survival, have played a pivotal role in driving the negotiations forward. Other countries, namely Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Afghanistan have also been leading voices for climate action at the UNFCCC, but to a lesser extent. South Asia, as a region, cannot be treated as a monolith and there is no one-size-fits-all approach to framing or responding to climate change among its countries.

The division among the South Asian countries in terms of their positions at the UNFCCC, is also somewhat reflected in the South Asian Association

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for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), wherein despite the push for regional action plans on climate change targeted at specific sectors or issues, there has been little progress towards achieving climate goals or even reaching a consensus/common position on climate change, unlike other regional groupings such as the African Union (AU). At the same time, all the South Asian countries are also members of the G-77 group of developing countries, a negotiating bloc that is deeply fissured but strongly advocates for equity and climate justice in unison (mainly through the principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities or CBDR-RC). In addition, India is a part of major formal and informal groupings such as the BASIC (along with Brazil, South Africa and China), and Major Economies Forum on Energy and Climate among others that makes it distinct from the other South Asian countries in terms of its growing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (world's third largest emitter) and growth-first agenda. Bangladesh, the Maldives, Afghanistan, Nepal and Bhutan are members of the 'Vulnerable Twenty' (V20), constituted by the world's 20 most affected states by the catastrophic effects of climate change. In fact, the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) was founded by the Maldivian Government before the 2009 Copenhagen Summit, in order to enhance the level of awareness about the disproportionate effects of climate change on countries that are considered most vulnerable at the international level, despite contributing least to the global GHG emissions.

In this context, this article attempts to analyse the positions of the South Asian countries, which helps provide insights into the existence of various

negotiating blocs that consist of the South Asian countries (such as G-77, BASIC and CVF), as well as reflect on the rationale for the differences in their positions. It also attempts to explore opportunities for cooperation among the South Asian nations, using the cases of the International Solar Alliance (launched by India and France in 2015), and the Loss and Damage Mechanism.

Drivers of Negotiating Positions of South Asian Nations

While the South Asian nations have been and continue to be somewhat firmly anchored within the G-77 group of developing countries, they have chosen to forge alliances with "like-minded countries" on different occasions to safeguard their interests. In some cases, their interests converge, while in others they diverge significantly, which is why their negotiating positions are at times poles apart. These divergences were most explicitly displayed at the 2009 Copenhagen Summit, wherein India joined hands with the other leading emerging economies (BASIC) with the primary aim of opposing the industrialised countries' attempts to impose a deal that dilutes 'differentiation' between developed and developing countries on the rest of the world, most other countries of South Asia formed the CVF to voice their demand for more urgent climate action and more importantly, limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels. Interestingly, while the BASIC was reportedly engineered by India, the Maldives played a pivotal role in the envisioning of the CVF.

South-South Cooperation is at the heart of the G-77, with emphasis on development cooperation

that is delinked from North-South Aid, which all South Asian nations identify with in principle. Under North-South Aid, the 'rich' or industrialised countries began to provide financial and other forms of assistance/aid to the developing countries, their erstwhile colonies or war-torn economies in the 19th century. The foundation for South-South Cooperation was laid during the 1955 Bandung Conference (wherein most South Asian nations were present) that aimed to pursue an "international partnership for development" based on "respect for national sovereignty, equality and mutual benefit."¹ In the climate change negotiations, the G-77 has consistently demanded greater level of climate action from the developed countries, based on the historical responsibility of the latter in contributing the largest share of GHG emissions in the atmosphere as well as their historically 'unjust' act of accumulating 'relative' or 'differentiated' capacities to undertake climate action through colonialism, imperialism and similar other means.

The South Asian nations have used the platform of G-77 to project a united stance on issues such as CBDR, equity, adaptation as well as financial and technological support. Since poverty alleviation/reduction and economic development/growth are their primary priorities, they have reiterated repeatedly that their climate commitments would be hinged on the principle of equity (equitable allocation of the limited GHG emissions space to meet their developmental needs), and that they would be contingent on support from the industrialised countries. In addition, since their per capita emissions continue to be low, it is morally justifiable to set differentiated

goals that do not deprive the developing countries of their right to develop.² Therefore, some countries of G-77 have also advocated an agreement based on equitable per capita cumulative emission rights, "national emission quotas based on population" etc., especially in the case of an abatement regime that deals with the distribution of costs – of both reduction of GHG build-up in the atmosphere and the impacts of climate change³ – on account of their differentiated/disproportionate responsibility, vulnerability and capacity.

On the issue of adaptation, in general, the South Asian countries, as part of the G-77, have been critical of the industrialised countries' unwillingness and slowness in funding adaptation efforts in their countries, and concentrating largely on mitigation-related projects/initiatives that are considered more profitable, especially for the private sector. As far as climate finance is concerned, the group has traditionally preferred public sources over private sources and has called for a shift from donor-dominated "assistance formula" to "rights-based resource transfers", also underscoring the need for "new and additional funds" instead of dislodging the existing development assistance.⁴ The developing countries have therefore, been always in favour of the UN agencies being in control of the financial mechanisms rather than the Bretton Woods institutions, which already have a major influence on their economic policies due to the development assistance provided by them and which may not strike a balance between socio-economic advancement and environmental gains.

Despite the existence of various common interests and positions at the climate change

negotiations, the G-77 is known to be an increasingly fragmented group, split into various groups such as BASIC, Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), CVF, Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) and among others, rendering the sub-groups more influential in agenda-setting and decision-making. Some of the G-77 countries are also members of groupings and coalitions that consist of developed countries. For instance, the Cartagena Dialogue for Progressive Action includes industrialised countries such as the United Kingdom (UK), Germany, France and Australia as well as developing countries such as Bhutan, Bangladesh, the Maldives and Nepal. This informal group was formed after the 2009 Copenhagen Summit with the aim of working towards an ambitious legally binding Post-Kyoto agreement.

The formation of the Cartagena Dialogue, when seen in the light of the failure of the Copenhagen Summit to reach an agreement of consequence, provides insight into the way in which the BASIC emerged as the most instrumental and decisive group, side-lining the developed countries as well as the G-77 to a great extent (since the Copenhagen Accord was accepted only by a select group of 26 countries).⁵ This was primarily driven by the ‘solidarity’ shown by the BASIC countries to thwart attempts by a few developed countries to push forth the leaked Danish text, which allegedly sought to undermine the role of the UN in climate change finance, scrap the Kyoto Protocol, and force the developing countries also to adopt binding emissions cuts.⁶ The decision of the BASIC countries to break ranks with G-77 to safeguard its economic interests and the continued

framing of climate change as an existential issue by the most vulnerable countries within the G-77 pulled them apart.

One of the significant moments in the history of climate change negotiations was the 2007 Bali Summit, wherein for the first time, the developing countries were also called upon to undertake “nationally appropriate mitigation actions” (NAMAs). In addition, on the decision of “long-term cooperative action”⁷, the strict differentiation between developed and developing countries, as in the Kyoto Protocol, was also watered down. The international climate regime had moved towards an architecture that did not view the developing countries as a single, homogenous group. Hence, developing countries that are economically better off (including India) would be expected to commit to emissions reduction in a more proactive manner; and by linking all forms of support to mitigation efforts, it was made sure that the post-Kyoto regime would put emphasis on making the former contingent on the latter.

What should also be taken into consideration is the financial crisis that hit the industrialised world in 2007 that spared the emerging economies such as India to a large extent, thereby elevating the latter’s geopolitical weight in the international system considerably. In addition, the framing of climate change as a security threat or a “threat multiplier” began to gain momentum, with the introduction of the issue in the UN Security Council (UNSC) in the same year, under the United Kingdom’s presidency.⁸ This move has been endorsed by CVF countries, but India has largely been opposed to the idea of introducing the security implications of climate change in the UNSC on

the grounds that “a security approach to a critical challenge facing humanity may in fact hinder the global collective effort” and that the UNSC is “structurally unrepresentative institution with an exclusionary approach”, as pointed out by India’s Permanent Representative to the UN Syed Akbaruddin.⁹

The growing proportion of developing countries’ GHG emissions in the run up to the Copenhagen Summit is considered to have influenced the discourse on the responsibility of the emerging economies towards finding solutions. China overtook the US as the world’s largest emitter of carbon dioxide in 2007.¹⁰ India became the third largest emitter of GHGs in 2009, surpassing Russia, whose emissions reduced due to economic recession.¹¹ In addition, the BASIC countries’ contribution to global Gross Domestic product (GDP) and collective share in global trade grew significantly in the 2000s, partially also due to the economic downturn in the developed economies. They have been among the fastest growing economies in the world, particularly China and India¹², leading to the assumption/understanding that with growing emissions and economies, they have a bigger responsibility towards international climate action than before (they did not have any commitments under the Kyoto Protocol). Even the developing countries from the CVF had started to demand more climate action from them.

At the Copenhagen Summit and thereafter, the AOSIS and CVF supported an ambitious, legally binding agreement that would limit the temperature rise to below 1.5 degrees Celsius and would require both the developed and developing countries to act

in terms of climate change mitigation with the precondition that the latter group would receive support from the former.¹³ However, the BASIC countries were in favour of a bottom-up approach that is not necessarily legally binding and ensures less intrusiveness NAMAs), thereby also insisting on a loose MRV (Measuring, Reporting and Verification) framework. The BASIC countries, primarily India and China advocated a MRV framework under which, all mitigation actions undertaken by non-Annex I parties (COP) would be subject to domestic MRV, while the ones with international support would be subject to international MRV, as stated in the Copenhagen Accord.¹⁴ In the meantime, there has been a mushrooming of bilateral engagements and agreements on climate change, particularly in energy cooperation, between the developed and emerging countries, which is considered to be undermining the G-77 further.¹⁵ At the same time, the developed world is also known to be engaged in attempts to split the G-77 by pressurising the poor countries based on their “donor-based relationships”, as alleged by Nozipho Mxakato-Diseko, the leader of G-77 for the Paris Agreement.¹⁶

Exploring Opportunities for Cooperation among the South Asian Countries

Ideas and norms coupled with power politics and geopolitical alignments have led to a situation in which India and the other South Asian countries have found themselves on the opposite sides of the climate change debate on many occasions. While on climate finance, there is still a general agreement on the way forward, on climate action,

India's neighbours demand swift action. Contrary to the development perspective that India usually clings to at the climate change negotiations, countries such as the Maldives, even while upholding the socio-economic development agenda, projects a human rights approach to climate change¹⁷, based on the question of their survival. Unlike the AU's officially stated "African Common Position on Climate Change"¹⁸, or a the ASEAN's (Association of South East Asian Nations) constant attempts to engage in common positions on issues related to climate change¹⁹, the South Asian equivalent of SAARC has barely scratched the surface as far as developing a common position on climate change is concerned. The geopolitical factors in South Asia have impeded any meaningful cooperation in the region, despite the existence of a SAARC Action Plan on Climate Change (adopted in 2008).²⁰ At the 2010 Cancun Summit, former Indian Minister of Environment and Forests, Jairam Ramesh made efforts to bring together the SAARC environment ministers, but such moves have been few and far between, having virtually no impact on the overall negotiations strategy as a regional bloc.²¹

However, despite the fact that in the run up to the Paris Agreement, the SAARC countries continued to negotiate through different groupings, there were various shifts in their positions that led to more convergences and coordination. In a regime that is 'applicable to all', which India was opposed to for a long time, all countries, including India, had to make compromises on various aspects of the agreement. India had already committed to decreasing emissions intensity at the Copenhagen Summit by 20-25 percent from 2005 levels by 2020;

and under the new regime, India has assumed greater responsibilities by not only coming up with a target of cutting emissions intensity by 33-35 percent from 2005 levels by 2030 in its Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC)²², which is a 75 percent "jump in ambition over 2020"²³ but also launching the International Solar Alliance (with France) at the Paris Summit in 2015, the first treaty-based organisation to be headquartered in India.²⁴ Evidently, the mood was more positive than before in South Asia, as also expressed by former President of The Maldives, Mohamed Nasheed, "In 2009, when Maldives was rooting for urgent action on climate change, India was on opposing side. Its position has changed over the years. Now, India is our most constructive partner. It is working to combat climate change and cares about safeguarding the planet and its neighbours in South Asia."²⁵

The opportunities for cooperation in practical terms are now redefined. The International Solar Alliance (ISA), launched in 2015 by India and France, for instance, is regarded as a diplomatic victory for India that provides impetus to its desire to be a leader in issues of global governance, thereby further transforming its image as a responsible global power that champions the rules-based global order.²⁶ This organization, that brings together sun-rich countries that lie fully or partially between the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn under one roof, with its focus on climate justice, is geared towards both climate change mitigation and access to affordable energy. While India has set a target of achieving 100 GW of solar power by 2022, it also plans to invest in solar projects in other countries, including South Asian ones. At the

inaugural summit of the ISA in 2018, it was declared that out of the 27 projects being supported by India, two each would be in Bangladesh (\$180 million) and Sri Lanka (\$100 million).²⁷ The South Asian countries are sun-rich and energy-poor at the same time. The renewable energy sectors in these countries face several policy, technical, economic and other challenges, including the lack of investment due to high initial costs and delayed profits/benefits, paucity of technical and technological capacities and information etc.²⁸ These obstacles could be overcome through cooperation at the ISA, translating into greater understanding at the UNFCCC as well, especially in developing the idea of climate justice.

The Paris Agreement came into force in 2016. However, there are several questions regarding the implementation of the treaty and ratcheting up of ambition that still need to be addressed in greater detail. One such mechanism is the Loss and Damage, which was established at the 2013 Warsaw Summit, at the initiative of world's most vulnerable countries (including CVF). The vulnerable developing and least developed countries worked towards institutionalising such a mechanism within the UNFCCC as a third pillar (the other two being mitigation and adaptation) for a decade, on the grounds that it is different from adaptation and that they are entitled to compensation (mainly from the developed countries) due to damage(s) caused by climate change.²⁹ The South Asian nations, having suffered losses due to several extreme weather events in recent times, stand united on this issue. By showing moral leadership on this issue, countries such as Bangladesh, the Maldives, India and Sri Lanka,

succeeded in setting up such a mechanism despite stiff and persistent opposition from the rich countries. However, there is a need to push for more action on issues such as 'resilience' and capacity-building through financial and technological means as an integral part of the post-2020 international climate policy to avoid a form of climate injustice.

Conclusion

The South Asian countries, with their distinct historical experiences (including the colonial past), have been marred by regional rivalries, conflicts, political differences and so on. However, on the issue of climate change – at the UNFCCC – even India and Pakistan have usually shared similar positions on account of their socio-economic imperatives, primarily their right to develop. As the negotiations progressed, these countries forged alliances with different parties at different points of time to get what they wanted in the agreement. Through G-77, they pushed for differentiation between the developed and developing countries, equity and climate justice through principles such as CBDR-RC, in light of different national circumstances. At the same time, the region has had a fragmented response when it came to the legally binding nature of the agreement, the level of ambition and the role of the emerging economies in the new regime, which led to the division between the South Asian countries, as manifested through the BASIC and CVF.

In recent times, with India in the process of throwing weight behind its goal of being on the global high table of climate governance through various initiatives, such as the ISA, other South

Asian countries expect constructive partnership with it, which is geared towards more urgent action on climate change. At the 2009 Copenhagen Summit, the BASIC and the CVF were on opposite sides, but since then, the gap has been bridged to some extent, particularly with more positive signals from the Indian side, reflecting its willingness and readiness to take on greater responsibility. Thus, the scope for cooperation among them has increased. Energy, being a common requirement in the region – with the growing population and developmental needs – is a sector in which cooperation has already been kick-started through international organisations such as the solar alliance, which could help build energy self-sufficiency and self-reliance in them. Nevertheless, whether this cooperation could facilitate common understanding and position on various issues concerning climate change at the

UNFCCC is debatable. This is not only due to the inherent political differences that pervade the region, but also because of the differentiation among the developing countries themselves. However, what could be deduced is the fact that by developing a common position, the South Asian nations can have greater bargaining powers than by staying alone. India has been isolated in the negotiations a number of times, especially before the Paris Summit when even the BASIC group began to wither. By forming a strong bloc with the other South Asian countries, India could strengthen its own footing. Similarly, countries like Bangladesh and the Maldives can leverage the status and power of a country like India to achieve its goals at the UNFCCC, whether it is in the case of mechanisms like loss and damage, or in terms of securing greater technological and financial support for adaptation and mitigation from the developed world.

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Myanmar – The Bridge to ASEAN

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India has been seen as fastest emerging economy of the world. This has been possible due to strengthening of internal economic system necessary for overall growth as well as transformation in the foreign policy especially towards economic ties with many countries. India has also been seen by the world as a believer of multilateral relations instead of unilateral favourism. India does not agree to uni-polar or bi-polar world order. It believes in mutual growth by means of cooperation in all fields with as many countries as possible given that the understanding is mutual.

Towards this, India has always been part of multilateral forums which are growth oriented. Being the key player in the South Asian as well as the Indian Ocean Region, India has been engaging many Asian and littoral countries on regular basis. It realised importance of the East Asian countries in 1990 and started active dialogue process with Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN). The then Look East policy has been transformed into Act East Policy and is the foundation of India-ASEAN relationship. Putting the Indian perspective for the IOR, of mutual growth in a secured environment as a priority, India also has shared vision SAGAR (Security And Growth for All in the Region) with all its oceanic neighbours. ASEAN is very important for India for competing in world economy especially against China. India aspires to grab 5% of global trade by 2020 and for that, friendship with ASEAN can prove to be an effective measure. China has been

ahead of India in trading with SE Asian countries for more than a decade because of lack of connectivity and institutional linkages between India and these countries.

India has also been paying great attention to its neighbours under the ‘neighbourhood first’ policy. Out of the 10 ASEAN countries, Myanmar is the only one which shares its borders with 4 states of India and hence attains great importance as a bridge to ASEAN-India future relationship. Myanmar’s membership of ASEAN, BIMSTEC and Mekong Ganga Cooperation has introduced a regional/sub-regional dimension to bilateral relations and imparts an added significance to Myanmar in the context of India’s “Act East” policy.

Myanmar : An Old and Important Neighbour

India shares a long land border of over 1600 kms with Myanmar as well as a maritime boundary in the Bay of Bengal. Four north-eastern states - Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram - have a boundary with Myanmar. Both countries share a heritage of religious, linguistic and ethnic ties. India and Myanmar share close cultural ties and a sense of deep kinship, given India’s Buddhist heritage. Building on this shared heritage, India is undertaking some key initiatives in the restoration of the Ananda Temple in Bagan and the repair and conservation of a large number of damaged pagodas. Work on restoring and renovating two historic temples in Bodh Gaya built

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by Myanmar rulers King Mindon and King Baygyidaw have also been completed.

The origin of the Indian community in Myanmar is traced to the mid-19th century with the advent of British rule in Lower Burma in 1852. Yangon and Mandalay had a dominating presence of Indians in civil services, education, trade and commerce during British rule. There are varying estimates of 1.5-2.0 million people of Indian origin living and working in various parts of Myanmar. A large number of the Indian community (nearly 150,000) live in Bago (Zeyawaddy and Kuayktaga) and Tanintharyi Region and Mon State, primarily engaged in farming.

Present Relations with Myanmar

Trade Cooperation : India is the fifth largest trading partner of Myanmar - its fifth largest destination for exports and sixth largest source of imports. Agriculture sector dominates the trade, particularly supply of beans and pulses to India (\$809 million in 2016-17) and timber (\$156 million). India's exports to Myanmar include sugar (\$424 million in 2016-17 & \$67 million in 2017-18), pharmaceuticals (\$178 million in 2017-18), etc. A bilateral Trade Agreement was signed in 1970. Bilateral trade has been growing steadily and reached US \$2.18 billion (2016-17) but declined to \$1.6 billion in 2017-18, mainly due to imposition of quantitative restrictions by India on import of beans and pulses. India is presently the eleventh largest investor in Myanmar with an approved investment of US \$743.642 million by 26 Indian enterprises. Most of India's investments have been in the oil & gas sector.

Defence Cooperation : Defence cooperation between the two countries continues to strengthen. Exchanges of high-level visits, enhanced training cooperation, capacity building and support in provision of specific equipment and technologies have led to a more wholesome relationship and better understanding of mutual security concerns. Present Chief of Indian Army and Chief of Air Staff have visited Myanmar in 2017 and 2018 respectively and we hosted senior officers of Myanmar defence forces in reciprocation. Myanmar Army has displayed enhanced understanding of India's security concerns and initiated measures to address them.

Disaster Relief : India has responded promptly and effectively in rendering assistance following natural calamities in Myanmar - during Cyclone Mora (2017), Komen (2015), earthquake in Shan State (2010), Cyclone Nargis in 2008 and the outbreak of influenza virus in Yangon in July-August 2017. Indian defence forces have actively participated in these HADR missions.

Development Cooperation : India has extended development assistance to Myanmar on generous terms and our assistance portfolio is now over \$1.75 billion. The bulk of the assistance is grant-funded. The projects include the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project (KMMTTP); the Trilateral Highway Project, which is an East-West corridor connecting our Northeast with Myanmar and Thailand; the Rhi-Tiddim road; assistance for border area development in Chin State and the Naga Self-Administered Zone by financing bridges, roads, schools and small health centres; assistance in

setting up institutions for higher learning and research, namely Myanmar Institute of Information Technology, Advanced Centre for Agricultural Research and Education, Myanmar-India Centre for Enhancement of IT Skills, India-Myanmar Industrial Training Centres; capacity assistance in public health by supporting upgradation of Yangon Children's Hospital and Sittwe General Hospital and the construction of a 200-bed women's hospital at Monywa; the Rakhine State Development Programme; restoration and conservation of Ananda Temple in Bagan and the repair and conservation of 92 earthquake damaged pagodas; reconstruction of Yamethin Women Police Training Centre, etc.

Ongoing Projects

According to a statement issued by the Indian Embassy in Myanmar, "the landmark Land Border Crossing Agreement between India and Myanmar, signed on May 11, 2018, has been brought into effect with the simultaneous opening of international entry-exit checkpoints at the Tamu-Moreh and the Rihkhawdar-Zowkhawtar border between Myanmar and India."

The idea is to have better connectivity by all means. It is in the interest of both the countries as Myanmar also is not a supporter of BRI and the infrastructure cooperation between India and Myanmar can counter Chinese debt oriented run-over. The tri lateral highway between India, Myanmar and Thailand is likely to be completed by next year. Similarly India-funded Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project (KMMTTP) will allow for sea-access for the landlocked North-

eastern states of India via the Kaladan River in Myanmar. As far as air connectivity goes there are hardly any flights flying to Yangon directly from Indian cities. There is only one weekly Air India flight from Kolkata to Yangon and twice in a week from Delhi via Gaya. Most other flight services such as Thai Airways reach Yangon via Bangkok. On the other hand, the flight services from Myanmar to other East and Southeast Asian countries like Singapore, Malaysia, Taiwan, Japan and Bangkok are much more frequent and larger in number.¹ Airlines from ASEAN countries carry twice the size of international passengers from and to India, compared to the passengers carried by all Indian airlines together.²

Connectivity of main land to NE states of India has been improving gradually and easy trans-border commute including by means of air, will further give an impetus to overall development of EAST.

Suggestions

Air Connectivity : Unlike earlier days, the NE states are better connected with major Indian cities nowadays. However it still has scope of getting better. Other than road connectivity, the air connectivity to major cities of NE can be improved. The Indian aviation sector is growing and is bound to prosper in future. Investment in NE aviation sector will not only connect local people better but also will offer faster and convenient passage to travelers from eastern neighbours, either for tourism or meeting business partners/relatives across borders. Given the terrain characteristics and short distances involved, small scale airlines having ATR aircraft with seating

capacity varying from 50 to 100 shall be encouraged for operations within the local air space including Myanmar or maybe Bhutan, Nepal and Bangladesh also. For example there is a flight from Bhutan to Dhaka via Guwahati already.

The airline operators from Myanmar can be given permissions to land in small airports of NE states. The IAF can regulate the prohibited air space of NE states depending on timing of inbound and outgoing flights from Myanmar and same can be tied up for Indian operators. The entry and exit points can be fixed for ease of traffic management.

Bus Services : Other than having better trade opportunities at two border opening points (mentioned earlier), we can also improve bus services to connect local villagers or commuters for deepening the cultural bond. Assisting Myanmar authorities in improving road conditions to reduce travel time to selected cities like Mandalay (region of Ananda temple), Yangon etc will also boost tourism across borders. For example with better roads and widened bridges, the present travel time of 11 hours from Moreh (Manipur) to Mandalay can be reduced to about five hours.

Port Connectivity : Work on the Kaladan project began after the governments of India and Myanmar entered into a framework agreement in 2008. The project aims to provide an alternate outlet to the landlocked North East which is heavily dependent on the narrow 'Chicken's Neck' at Siliguri. Originally, the project was scheduled to be completed by 2014, but is expected to be operational only by 2019-2020 as all components of the project, including Sittwe port and power, river dredging, Paletwa jetty, have been completed,

except the under construction Zorinpui-Paletwa road. However there is a need of actively pursuing the timely construction and starting the port to port service as soon as possible as we have seen that this delay is directly causing dent in India's ambition to boost trade and economy in East Asian countries.

Medical Tourism : More high standard hospitals should be constructed in NE region so that it not only benefits Indian citizens staying in far flung areas of the region but it can boost medical tourism from neighbouring countries. Delhi and Mumbai hospitals are generally full with patients for West Asian countries. Similarly, for East Asian countries, NE cities can be preferable destination.

Educational Tourism : Many students from Myanmar are studying in China because of the proximity and China has made few concessions in students' visa rules for Myanmar. But if we see number of Chinese students across the globe (mainly US, UK and Australia), we can understand that it is not China's education system but soft power policy that is drawing students from SE Asian countries. India has much affordable and well reputed educational institutes, not only in metropolitan cities but important cities of NE India as well. Imphal in Manipur has good Regional Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS), In Assam, Guwahati has Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) and Dibrugarh also has reputed technical colleges, Shillong in Meghalaya has North East Hill University (NEHU) and Indian Institute of Management (IIM) and then there are good National Institutes of Technology (NITs) in many states. We should boost educational tourism in order to attract students from Myanmar and other

SE Asian countries in order to have a positive image of India in young minds of these countries and ensure a long lasting relationship in years to come.

Defence Interaction: In Dec 2018, delegation of military personnel from both countries exchanged visits as CBM. The Indian Air Force facilitated the travel of the Myanmar's military officials in IL-76 aircraft, some of whom were accompanied by their spouses. It was a goodwill gesture and same if continued can further strengthen defence cooperation. Families of government officials can also enjoy touring if LTC facility is provided. Joint exercises between defence forces while paying attention on HADR drills also will have close ties established. The Myanmar air force has fleet of mix of Russian and Chinese aircraft. They should be invited for joint exercise in India as goodwill gesture to increase interoperability. These joint exercises will benefit both the counties in long run. The border areas are infected with rebel groups' activities

which are hampering timely completion of connectivity projects as well as economic growth of the region. These groups are funded and supported by other countries for thwarting the bilateral ties between India and Myanmar. Joint operations against such groups should be conducted as active defence cooperation.

Conclusion

Myanmar's opening-up in recent years has made the country an arena of competition among established and new players. The democratisation, along with economic reforms, has unleashed new opportunities for India, which is determined to make up for lost time. With a creative blend of diplomacy and culture, the India-Myanmar relations can only scale new heights in days to come. We need to ACT EAST using SAGAR vision to have credible and reliable relation with this strategically important neighbour which is also a key link between India and ASEAN partnership.

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India-Myanmar Conference

Connecting India's North-East with North-West Region of Myanmar: Roadmap for all-round Prosperity

Shristi Pukhrem*

India and Myanmar have a long history of friendly relations, tied by strong bonds of shared history and commonalities in culture and spirituality. For India, its relationship with Myanmar is integral to its Act East policy, in pursuit of a more stable, secure and prosperous region. India's Northeast Region and Myanmar's North-West region form a 'land-bridge' between South Asia and South East Asia.

In this context, to analyse the infrastructure deficit along the border region on both sides and enhance the connectivity, India Foundation, in collaboration with Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India and Government of Manipur, organised a Conference on the theme "Connecting India's North-East with North-West Region of Myanmar: Roadmap for all-round Prosperity" on 09-12 June 2019 in Imphal, Manipur. The participants in the conference included opinion makers from Myanmar and India including parliamentarians, politicians, academics, businessmen, government officials etc.

The High-Level Delegation from Myanmar included five members from the National League for Democracy (NLD) which is the ruling party in Myanmar. The Delegation was headed by His Excellency Dr. Aung Moe Nyo, Chief Minister of Magway Region Government, Magway, Myanmar. The other members of the NLD Party were U Htet Aung Myint (Sagaing Region Youth Industrial

Group, Kanbalu), U Myo Naing, Member of Parliament, House of Representatives (Pyithu Hluttaw), U Myint Naing Oo (Member of Parliament, Sagaing Region Hluttaw) and U Ral Hnin (Member of Chin State Parliament, Chairman, Chin State NLD, Chairman, State Audit Committee).

The main opposition party and former ruling party of Myanmar, Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP), also participated in the conference. The Delegation of USDP was led by Dr Myint Thein, Chief Executive Committee, Member of the USDP Party. The other members of the USDP Party were Cin Khan Pau, Representative, House of Nationalities (Amyotha Hluttaw), Daw Lum Lam (Representative, Kachin State Hluttaw), Khin Maung Shwe (Township Committee Member, Tamu), and Tun Lwin (Head of Dept, USDP Hq). His Excellency Mr. Moe Kyaw Aung, Ambassador of Myanmar to India also participated in the conference along with Mr Kaung Phyo Wint, Second Secretary (Political), Embassy of the Union of Myanmar.

The business delegation from Myanmar included Mr Hla Maung (Chairman, Myanmar-India Border Trade Chamber of Commerce), Mr Min Khant Ko (Operation Manager, Shwe Mandalay Express Co. Ltd.), KBZ Group, Mr. Soe Myint (Editor-in-Chief, Mizzima Media) etc. The Myanmar Delegation crossed over the border in



Delegation from Myanmar being received by Shri Thongam Biswajit Singh, Minister, Govt. of Manipur

the afternoon of 09 June 2019 at India-Myanmar Friendship Bridge at Moreh in Manipur.

On Indian side of the Delegation, the participants included Capt Alok Bansal (Director, India Foundation), Lt Gen Shokin Chauhan (Chairman, Cease Fire Monitoring Group (CFMG), Nagaland), Shri Nandan Singh Bhaisora (Consul General, Consulate General of India, Mandalay, Myanmar), Ambassador Preeti Saran (Former Secretary (East), MEA, Govt of India), Shri Rambabu (General Manager, Networking, Air India), Shri Radheshyam Oinam (President, Manipur Chamber of Commerce & Industry), representatives of CII, representatives of MCCI, representatives from Assam Rifles, academicians from Manipur University, senior officials from Government of Manipur, experts from Think Tanks etc.

The Delegation was welcomed in a traditional way by the cultural troupes and Shri Thongam

Biswajit Singh, Minister of Commerce & Industry, Public Works, Power, RD & PR, Information & Public Relations, Administrative Reforms, Textiles, Government of Manipur, received the High-Level Delegation of Myanmar on Indian side of the India-Myanmar Friendship Bridge at Moreh. Shri Ram Madhav, National General Secretary, BJP and Member, Board of Governors, India Foundation, also welcomed the Myanmar Delegation at Moreh and hosted Lunch for all the delegates at Hotel Elora in Moreh.

On 10 June 2019, the Myanmar Delegation visited Commonwealth War Cemetery, Kangla Fort, Regional Institute of Medical Sciences, Sky Hospital, Manipur University, and local markets in Imphal. They were impressed at the excellent medical and educational facilities available at Imphal and showed great interest in them. Dr Najma Heptulla, Hon'ble Governor of Manipur

hosted dinner for the visiting Myanmar Delegation at Raj Bhavan and the Governor interacted with all Delegates over dinner on 10 June 2019. Hon'ble Governor discussed various aspects of the bilateral relations of India-Myanmar with the visiting delegation especially focusing on connectivity, commerce, culture, tourism, people to people contacts, trilateral highway, medical tourism in Manipur etc.

On 11 June 2019, the Myanmar Delegation participated in the Conference on India-Myanmar Relations on the theme of "Connecting India's North-East with North-West Region of Myanmar: Roadmap for all-round Prosperity" at Hotel Classic Grande, Imphal, Manipur. Shri N. Biren Singh, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Manipur, in his inaugural address thanked India Foundation for this crucial initiative towards "Act East Policy". He assured that the discussions in the conference will certainly facilitate in shaping a way forward towards a

shared all-round prosperity of the North-East region of India and the North-West region of Myanmar. He said that India's Act East Policy is a reflection of our commitment to deepen ties with the ASEAN region, and more importantly with our immediate neighbour Myanmar and there are compelling reasons for the North East of India to establish itself as a land hub of India's Act East Policy. He also projected Manipur as a Land Gateway of India to South-East Asia. In his address, he talked about the work for widening and improving the Imphal to Moreh Road and told that it is progressing at a steady pace.

Shri N. Biren Singh also spoke on Trans Asian Railway Link and said that it has immense potential to uplift the socio-economic condition of the peoples further and he talked about the formalities for starting the Mandalay-Imphal bus service which are in final stages and outlined that the next stage would involve signing of Transport Protocol



Inaugural Session of the Conference



Shri N. Biren Singh, the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Manipur (second from left) speaking at the inaugural session of the conference

between the Government of India and the Government of Myanmar. He requested the High Level delegation to take up this issue on their return because once the bus service starts, Manipur will serve as a land gateway for Buddhist religious centres in Tawang, Rumtek and Bodhgaya.

The Chief Minister of Manipur also highlighted that Manipur has excellent air connectivity with major cities in the country and an Air Cargo Terminal is also being planned in the Imphal International Airport. He said, “We are keen for air links directly between Manipur and Myanmar to promote tourism, trade and to build greater people-to-people contact”. In this regard, Shri N Biren Singh proposed to start a flight between Mandalay-Imphal-Gaya in collaboration with Air India.

H.E. Dr Aung Moe Nyo, Chief Minister of Magway Region in Myanmar, in his special address said that India and Myanmar need to explore

possibility of cooperation in the education and health sector. He showed keen interest in the medical tourism and pointed out that medical services are much cheaper in India with best qualities as compared to other countries like Thailand and Singapore. He also said that both countries should find some mechanisms to institutionalise the collaboration in education and health sector.

After the inaugural session, there were two technical sessions focussing on “Physical Connectivity: The Infrastructure Deficit” and “Connectivity: The Way Ahead”. The final session was on the way forward with recommendations. Infrastructure has been one of the apparent constraints in the growth of North-eastern region of India and in the growth of border trade with Myanmar. It would be ironical to focus on improving border trade without giving due consideration to border infrastructure. Both India and Myanmar recognise the importance of building

up required infrastructure as a means of promoting commercial, cultural, touristic and other exchanges and hence improving connectivity has been one of the focal points during the sessions. Requirement of air connectivity with flights operating from Delhi-Imphal (Return) with a stopover at Gaya in alternate days was strongly proposed in the sessions.

Shri N. Biren Singh, Chief Minister of Manipur also hosted a cultural program followed by State Dinner in honour of the visiting High-Level Delegation from Myanmar on 11 June 2019. The Indian and Myanmar delegates of the conference interacted with the Chief Minister of Manipur over dinner and enjoyed the cultural evening highlighting the rich traditional culture of Manipur.

Way Forward (Recommendations from the Conference):

(1) India and Myanmar should sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Educational Cooperation which should include

recognition of Educational Degrees and facilitation of students in each other's educational institutions.

(2) A motor vehicle agreement needs to be signed between India and Myanmar so that people can drive in each other's country.

(3) Reconstruction of the bridges should be expedited. The four laning of Moreh-Imphal needs to be put on fast track.

(4) Imphal-Mandalay bus service should start and the signing of motor vehicle agreement should be completed, coordinated bus service between Mandalay-Imphal should start where passengers shift from one bus to another at Moreh/Tamu.

(5) Air connectivity needs to be improved. Flights between Imphal and Delhi could touch Gaya so that Myanmar tourists who are coming to Imphal via road, can visit Bodhgaya from Imphal. Apart from Yangon in Myanmar, India should have connectivity with Mandalay also and flights need to be introduced on routes like Kolkata-Mandalay etc.



Myanmar Delegates at the Conference



Group photos of all Delegates

(6) There should be an Indian Consulate or Visa office in Kalay in Myanmar. Indian Consulate in Mandalay should also deal with issues related to Magway Region and Kachin State besides Mandalay and Sagaing Region. The Consul General in Sittwe should accordingly deal with Rakhine and Chin State.

(7) Tourists with E-Visa should be permitted to cross into India from Myanmar across land border via Moreh. There should be requisite facilities for scanning the e-visa at ICP Moreh. Visa fee for Indian tourists visiting Myanmar, should be reduced.

(8) Manpower at Integrated Check Point (ICP) Moreh needs to be enhanced and it must

be equipped with modern infrastructure, gadgets and technological tools for better processing of passengers and goods traffic.

(9) Concerns of Myanmarese farmers growing pulses and beetle nuts must be taken into account to facilitate better import mechanism.

(10) A full-fledged Foreign Exchange facility at Moreh is required.

(11) Moreh should be developed as a Smart City or model town. Moreh should also have an India Mart/Mall where Indian goods could be sold to the tourists from Myanmar.

On 12 June 2019, the Delegation visited Loktak Lake and on 13 June 2019, the Delegation returned to Myanmar via Moreh-Tamu border.



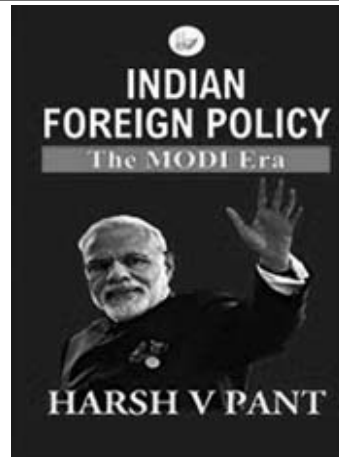
Indian Foreign Policy The Modi Era

Author: **Harsh V Pant**

Publisher: Har-Anand Publicatinos Pvt. Ltd.

Price: Rs.895/-

Book Review by: **Apurv Kumar Mishra***



In the run up to General Elections of 2014, one constant critique of Shri Narendra Modi's opponents was that India's foreign policy would suffer under his prime ministership since he had no experience in this field and his "divisive" personality would alienate our friends and allies. Instead, as Dr. Harsh Pant demonstrates in this book, the last five years have seen a "remarkable transformation" in PM Modi's first term, positioning India as a "leading global player".

Dr. Pant is one of India's leading scholars on International Relations and has been writing extensively on almost every major development in world politics. The book is a compendium of articles the author has written over the last five years tracing important developments in India's foreign policy including visits of foreign dignitaries to India, PM's visits to various countries and India's engagement with various international institutions.

The author sets the tone for the book in the Introduction by summarizing the key themes on which PM Modi in his first term has left a lasting legacy. These include, becoming an ambassador for Brand India, using our soft power resources strategically, resetting our relationships in the neighbourhood and deft management of our

relationship with P-5 countries, especially China. Several commentators over the last 5 years have tried to make an "all style, no substance" argument, criticizing the PM for making only cosmetic changes to India's foreign policy. Right from the first chapter, the author convincingly demolishes this narrative to make the case that PM Modi has fundamentally changed India's foreign policy agenda to realign it with our global aspirations and the diplomatic apparatus today is showing an element of boldness, energy and risk-taking that was absent previously.

The book is divided into seven parts- each containing a selection of articles on a major theme from PM Modi's first term. The first section focuses on the upward trajectory of India's relationship with the United States of America in which PM Modi's personality has played an important role in rescuing the bilateral ties from a low point when he took over. In resetting this relationship, PM showed remarkable graciousness to overcome the ideological trappings of a 10-year UPA government and his own treatment by US authorities who denied him a visa since 2005. This explains why in his 2016 address to the joint session of US Congress, PM Modi remarked that India-

**Mr. Apurv Kumar Mishra is a Senior Research Fellow at India Foundation.*

US ties “have overcome the hesitations of history”.

Global response to the rise of China has been the most important story in international relations over the last decade. The second part of the book is on India’s response to the “China Challenge” and includes writings on the Indo-Pacific construct that saw a lot of discussion during PM’s first term. One of the most enjoyable parts of the book were the articles in this section which diligently traced the simultaneous expansion of India’s engagement with Indian Ocean Region at the same time that China was deepening its presence in South Asia.

Part III critically examines India’s neighborhood policy and predictably a lot of ink in this section is spilled on Pakistan. The surgical strikes in 2015 and 2016, Dokhlam standoff in 2017 and Balakot airstrikes in 2019 completely changed the strategic landscape of South Asia and the articles in this section primarily analyse the region through a security lens. A notable exception is the analysis of India-Bangladesh ties which has now become a role model on relationship between neighboring countries.

It is in consolidating India’s relationship with West Asia that PM Modi has shown extraordinary dexterity, to the surprise of several experts. Our relationship with the Arab world is the best ever in recent history. We have deepened our cooperation with all major countries in West Asia without getting involved in intra-regional conflicts. De-hyphenation is a running theme in all chapters of Part IV in the book dealing with West Asia, and Dr. Pant demonstrates that PM Modi has maintained India’s healthy friendship with traditional rivals by treating each relationship on its own terms. In the short section which follows on the India-Africa relationship (Part V), the author contrasts India’s

approach of “developmental partnership” with the development aid provided by conventional donors and China’s aggressive investments.

The last two parts focus on India’s expanding global footprint and performance at multilateral fora. While PM’s efforts to upend the status-quo approach of traditional Indian bureaucracy and create a new foreign policy paradigm is a running theme in the entire book, it is in these two sections that the author reserves some of his strongest words (“non-alignment ayatollahs”, “ossified bureaucracy” being a few) for the foreign policy apparatus and their long-held shibboleths. Dr. Pant underscores the point made by Dr. Jaishankar (then Foreign Secretary, present External Affairs Minister) in 2015 that today’s India wants to be a leading power, not just a balancing power, and has shown the willingness to shoulder more responsibility with a proactive role in shaping global agenda through multilateral institutions.

To use a cricket metaphor, reading the book feels a bit like revisiting the highlights reel of a famous Indian victory in a 5-day test match complete with its highs and lows, prepared by an experienced commentator who had a front row seat to watch the game. Dr. Pant is one of the few IR scholars in the country who wants to engage with the larger public beyond the academia (he lectures in all parts of India and writes regularly in both English and Hindi) and his writing style suits a discerning layperson interested in the subject.

The book provides useful inputs to any young scholar or student looking to understand a transformative era in Indian foreign policy and is a valuable addition to the growing literature on India’s foreign policy agenda at an epochal moment in the nation’s history.



Upcoming Events

Young Thinkers Meet (YTM) – 2019

19 - 21 July, 2019; Bhubaneswar, Orissa

The eighth edition of Young Thinkers Meet (YTM) is being organised by India Foundation from 19 to 21 July, 2019 in Bhubaneswar, Orissa. The theme for this year's meet is 'New India - Ideas, Concepts, and Contestations'. The two-day meet will bring together young intellectuals, policymakers, professionals, media personnel, artists, and thought leaders from varied walks of life to a common platform to discuss and deliberate on issues facing modern India. Over the course of several sessions, talks, and interactions, the selected participants will closely engage with eminent dignitaries from Indian public life.

For further details, please write to shrutirao@indiafoundation.in

5th International Dharma-Dhamma Conference

27 - 28 July 2019; Rajgir, Bihar

India Foundation, in collaboration with Nalanda University, is organising the fifth International Dharma-Dhamma Conference on the theme "Sat-Chit-Ananda & Nirvana" in Dharma-Dhamma traditions on 27 - 28 July 2019 in Rajgir, Bihar.

The Sub-themes of the Conference for four Panel discussion sessions are: 1. Sat (Truth), 2. Chit (Consciousness), 3. Ananda (Bliss) & 4. Nirvana (Enlightenment).

For further details, please write to dharmadhamma@indiafoundation.in

4th Indian Ocean Conference (IOC) - 2019

3 - 4 September 2019; Maldives

The 4th edition of Indian Ocean Conference (IOC) is being organised by India Foundation in association with S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Singapore on 3 - 4 September 2019 in Maldives. The theme of IOC 2019 is "Securing the Indian Ocean Region: Traditional and Non-Traditional Challenges".

The conference will deliberate on developing effective regional institutional mechanism for implementation of prevailing norms and rules. In continuation with the past, this edition of the conference too will provide yet another opportunity for stakeholders of the Indian Ocean Region to deliberate on building an institutional framework for managing the threats to regional peace and human security through the strengthening of multilateral cooperation based on mutual respect, equality and in line with international law.

For further details, please write to indianocean@indiafoundation.in



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