AIR POWER

AIR POWER

Journal of Air Power and Space Studies Vol. 12 No. 3 • Monsoon 2017 (July-September)

Contributors

Shri NN Vohra • Dr Manpreet Sethi • Ms Sana Hashmi • Dr Temjenmeren Ao • Ms Pooja Bhatt • Air Marshal Bharat Kumar • Group Captain Ashok K Chordia • Group Captain Ashish Gupta • Dr Poonam Mann

CENTRE FOR AIR POWER STUDIES, NEW DELHI

CELEBRATING AIR FORCE DAY

85th

www.rafale.co.in

OVER 60 YEARS. 6 AIRCRAFT TYPES. 1 NATION
TOOFANI | MYSTERE IV | ALIZE | JAGUAR | MIRAGE 2000 | RAFALE

RAFALE INTERNATIONAL
DASSAULT AVIATION • SAFRAN • THALES

CENTRE FOR AIR POWER STUDIES

VISION

To be an independent **centre of excellence on national security** contributing informed and considered research and analyses on relevant issues.

MISSION

To encourage independent and informed research and analyses on issues of relevance to national security and to create a pool of domain experts to provide considered inputs to decision-makers. Also, to foster informed public debate and opinion on relevant issues and to engage with other think-tanks and stakeholders within India and abroad to provide an Indian perspective.

AIR POWER

CENTRE FOR AIR POWER STUDIES

New Delhi

AIR POWER is published quarterly by the Forum for National Security Studies for Centre for Air Power Studies, New Delhi.

AIR POWER Journal welcomes research articles on defence, military affairs and strategy (especially air power and space issues) of contemporary and historical interest. Articles in the Journal reflect the views and conclusions of the authors and not necessarily the opinions or policy of the Centre or any other institution.

CONTENTS

CONTENTS

➤ EDITOR'S NOTE

There was but one news item that dwarfed the others during this quarter. That was the Doklam standoff. Numerous articles and commentaries were written, and voices raised in all channels of the print and electronic media. The opinions varied from the imminence of war, at one end, to the impossibility of war, at the other. All felt a sense of relief when the standoff was lifted. A spate of post facto opinions followed that covered the spectrum, from the inevitability of a peaceful resolution to the need to be more watchful as the 'dragon' had been infuriated. Common sense will suggest that the path to follow is somewhere in between. We should be continuously on guard, work towards becoming better equipped, and improve our infrastructure. At the same time, we must retain our equanimity and remain confident that we are capable of confronting any military misadventure by China. The importance of China is well recognised at our Centre and we will continue to study and analyse what China says and does.

Our lead article in this issue of the Journal is the speech given by **Shri NN Vohra**, governor of Jammu and Kashmir, during the First BK Nehru Memorial Lecture under the aegis of the Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development. Besides justifiably praising the work and life of the late BK Nehru, the speech gave a good account of what ails India at present, and the author, in his inimitable style, gives remedial prescriptions. It is an interesting and engrossing article that makes good reading.

Arguably, the most destabilising factor in South Asia and, indeed, the region, is a nuclear Pakistan. Hence, it behoves us to continue to study the history of Pakistan's attempts at nuclear proliferation and to extrapolate

the possible implications for the future. **Dr Manpreet Sethi,** in a very well researched article, shows that in spite of many vociferous denials by Pakistan, the world has little doubt on the role of that country both as a recipient of nuclear technology and in furthering nuclear proliferation. More importantly, the threat of nuclear terrorism emanating from that country is live. The presence of so many terrorist groups in Pakistan and the country's support to many of them has the potential for nasty misdeeds. Unfortunately, in spite of clear knowledge of Pakistani perfidy, the world has done little to ward off a serious challenge facing all of us. The world will have to pay for the sins of allowing Pakistani nuclear capability to develop due to what can only be termed as opportunistic and other pressing concerns.

The next three articles study different aspects of recent Chinese history. **Sana Hashmi** discusses the deepening concerns about Chinese activities in the Asia-Pacific region. China's burgeoning economy, growing defence expenditure and being a major, if not the leading, trading partner with the countries in the region should have given China a great advantage in extending its sphere of influence. The influence of the US in the area is also apparently waning but China, by her actions and demands, has created considerable suspicion amongst the countries in her periphery.

The major organisational changes or 'military reforms' effected by China last year have excited many discussions and debates on their relevance to other countries, and their likely impact. China's new Western Theatre Command is geographically opposite the entire northern and eastern India and, hence, will play the lead role in the case of any Sino-Indian conflict. **Dr Temjenmeran Ao** describes the theatre command and its implications for India. He discusses the infrastructural developments in the region and cautions that India should maintain a watchful eye on the developments.

In July 2016, the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) gave its verdict in favour of the Philippines but China has categorically stated that it does not accept the verdict. However, non-acceptance of the verdict does not make it bad in law. **Pooja Bhatt** analyses the verdict and the Chinese position.

Sovereignty and ownership of tiny but contested islands is involved and the only thing we can say with some certainty is that the last word on the PCA verdict is yet to be written.

In an article intriguing titled "What If?" **Air Mshl Bharat Kumar** discusses selected decisions taken by the Indian Air Force in yesteryears and their outcomes. What might have been is the common refrain. The article is a journey down memory lane, and the author rues some, in his view, untimely decisions that were taken. Some may argue that the decisions were not really wrong given the limited information then available but no one can have any doubts on the scholarship behind the article. He cites a number of examples and his analysis in each case of how things could have been different makes good reading.

Operation Cactus, the operation mounted at short notice to save President Gayoom and his government in the Maldives is a heroic success story in the annals of the history of our air force. **Gp Capt Ashok Chordia**, who actively participated in the operation, compares this operation with the evacuation of Mussolini in September 1943 and the Israeli raid over Entebbe in 1976 to bring home the Israelis held in captivity. All three were brave, adventurous and successful operations and the author analyses the similarities and differences. The article suggests, without being prescriptive, how such operations could be conducted in the future.

The cyber world continues to excite us with the myriad possibilities it raises and the challenges we must face. It is a continuous study and the cyber realm increases in significance on a near daily basis. **Gp Capt Ashish Gupta** discusses a number of issues under the cyber rubric and his section on cyber activism between India and Pakistan is both revealing and instructive. The sections on cyber terrorism and cyber guerrillas are equally illuminating. The article should be read more than once to get its true import.

In the concluding article in this edition of the Journal, **Dr Poonam Mann** looks at the presumed expansion of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) into Central Asia and on how this will affect India. She has considerable

expertise on Central Asia. This becomes obvious as one reads the article. She makes sound recommendations but the salient message is that we must be watchful and engage the Central Asian regimes to mutual advantage.

Happy reading.

FIRST BK NEHRU MEMORIAL LECTURE

NN VOHRA

I compliment the Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development for establishing a lecture in the memory of Mr BK Nehru who rendered outstanding service to the country both during the period of British rule and after independence. I feel privileged to have been asked to deliver the First BK Nehru Memorial Lecture to remember this eminent administrator.

Born in 1909, Nehru was educated at the Allahabad and Oxford Universities and the London School of Economics where he was a favourite student of Harold Laski. He took the Indian Civil Service (ICS) examination while studying at London and was second in the list when he made it in 1933. He joined the ICS in 1934 in the Punjab cadre. At about this time, he got married to Magdolna, a fellow student from Hungary. Renamed as Shobha Nehru, this elegant lady learnt to speak Hindi, wear Indian dresses and prepare Indian delicacies. She had a very large hand in her husband's successes throughout his life.

In 1939, with only five years service, he joined the Government of India on deputation. The excellent quality of his work in the Ministry of Finance, particularly in the management of foreign exchange and sterling balances, led to his being picked up to join the finance and commerce pool. When

Shri **NN Vohra**, presently Governor, Jammu and Kashmir, has formerly been Defence Production Secretary, Defence Secretary, Home Secretary and Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister.

he had done twelve years of service, he was elevated as joint secretary and continued to deal with external finance related work for which he had already acquired the reputation of an expert.

In 1949, he was appointed as India's director on the World Bank and during this period, he established useful connections with influential personalities in the bank, US government, United Nations and with key ambassadors to the US from various countries. These relations proved invaluable in the coming years and enabled Nehru to advance India's interests on various fronts. Nehru's sustained initiatives in this period culminated in the Government of India being able to secure funding of US $ 995 million, the entire foreign exchange requirement for the Second Five-Year Plan, without any national policy having to be compromised.

On his return from the World Bank, Nehru was again entrusted with the handling of important issues in the Finance Ministry. As the Second Plan period drew to its closure, concerns arose about how, and from where, the foreign exchange requirements for the Third Plan (1961-66) would be met. As it appeared that Nehru would again be asked to handle this important task, his seniors in the Ministry of External Affairs were not at all happy about his being preferred over their claims, and assigned him a challenging diplomatic assignment in the USA. Meanwhile, on the basis of his earlier experience of working in the World Bank, Nehru had made it known that he would need to be given an adequately impressive title to be able to deal effectively with the World Bank and also approach leaders of world governments at the highest level. Notwithstanding the varied objections raised by the Ministry of External Affairs, Nehru was appointed commissioner general for economic affairs and ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary and, for the next three years, his work in Washington earned rich results.

The US government was not agreeable to funding more than half of US $ 5 billion, which was the foreign exchange requirement for the Third Plan, and the commissioner general was advised to find the remainder funds from other countries in the world. Nehru had a very successful round of negotiations with Soviet Russia which led to an Indo-USSR agreement under which Moscow agreed to provide a 12-year loan of Roubles 1,500 million at

two and a half percent interest. The vital element of this agreement was that the loan was repayable in Indian goods. In early 1961, when the Aid India Club met under the aegis of the World Bank, Nehru succeeded in securing a firm commitment that India would be provided US $1 billion per year for the first two years and, thereafter, the foreign exchange deficit of the remaining US $3 billion would be fully funded, till the end of the plan. This was truly an outstanding achievement, particularly as no unacceptable conditions were imposed by the Aid India Club.

Galbraith, who was among many who complimented the commissioner general for his notable achievement, is reported to have jestfully said that Nehru had succeeded in "moving more gold from one continent to another than anybody since Chengiz Khan". While recalling Nehru's successes, it may be mentioned that he had established excellent relations with President Kennedy and his wife. The president, who became strongly committed to supporting India's advancement, respected Nehru's views to the extent of seeking his suggestions, through Chester Bowles, about the kind of people he may include in his Cabinet!

After the Aid India Club's decision had been announced, Nehru advised the Government of India to wind up the post of commissioner general and give him another job in Delhi. However, this did not happen as he was destined to stay on in the USA for the next many years.

Around this time, the UN Secretary General, Dag Hammarskjold, was finishing his tenure and discussions were ongoing to find an equally eminent successor. Nehru's name was prominent among those who were being considered for this important post. For inexplicable reasons, India's Defence Minister, VK Krishna Menon, was unhappy with the prospect of Nehru being selected for this post and was opposed to his candidature, allegedly for the reason that he was holding a far more important post as India's ambassador to the USA and it would not be easy to find a replacement. Be the facts as they may, Nehru spurned this offer and, as he has recorded in his memoirs, never forgave himself for this foolish decision.

President Kennedy was assassinated in late 1963 and Lyndon Johnson became the next president. For the next five years, till 1968, Nehru remained

India's ambassador and served during the entire term of President Johnson. Among the many important events during this period, the Sino-Indian conflict took place in 1962. One of the consequences of India's humiliating defeat was that India's Defence Plan for 1963 and beyond had to be seen and cleared by the Americans before the US government agreed to supply some of the very large number of items listed in the pathetic telegram which Prime Minister Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru had sent to President Kennedy in December 1962. Yet another fallout was that India had to be visibly more friendly and supportive of the USA's desires and policies.

As head of the Indian Supply Mission, Nehru once again demonstrated his enormous skills and succeeded in persuading the US government for continuing to supply large quantities of food grains to India under the PL 480 Programme. As noted in Nehru's memoirs, the quantity of food grains being moved at that time was so large that ships carrying food grains to India were leaving American seaports every ten minutes! Meanwhile, back home in India, Prime Minister Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru passed away and was succeeded by Lal Bahadur Shastri who, unfortunately, died early and was succeeded by Indira Gandhi. Nehru returned home in 1968 after enjoying a very successful stint as India's ambassador to the USA.

On return to Delhi, while still in service, Nehru was appointed governor of Assam and Nagaland where he served his full tenure till 1973. One of Nehru's significant achievements during this period was the success of his negotiations for restoring peace in Nagaland, for which Prime Minister Indira Gandhi thanked him personally.

After his work in the northeast, Nehru was appointed as high commissioner to the UK where he served during 1973-77. Thereafter, for the following four years, Nehru remained unemployed till, in early 1981, he was appointed governor of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). In Kashmir, from around the end of 1983, Nehru ran into difficulties with the Government of India for not being able to carry out New Delhi's behest that the incumbent National Conference chief minister be replaced by the chief minister's brother-in-law, also a legislator in the National Conference, who would be supported by some elements of the National Conference and a larger number of legislators

from the Congress Party. Nehru's resignation on this issue was not accepted for the stated reason that this would cause embarrassment to the prime minister! Allowing the Centre to have its way, Nehru accepted a transfer from J&K and took over as the governor of Gujarat where he served (1984-86) for the remainder period of his five-year tenure as governor.

To sum up Nehru's career, he served as India's man in Washington for nearly half of his entire career, successively as India's director on the World Bank, commissioner general for economic affairs and as ambassador to the United States; four years as our high commissioner in London and for ten years as governor of Assam and Nagaland, J&K, and Gujarat.

Having spoken about Nehru's long and illustrious career in the civil service, I shall devote the remainder part of this lecture to making some observations on governance — as it obtained during the British period, the challenges faced after independence and the situation which obtains today.

Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, our first prime minister (for ease of reference hereinafter referred to as Pandit Nehru), was B K Nehru's uncle. Because of the constraint of time, I would not be able to comment on the numerous references in BK Nehru's memoirs which reflect on the personality, character, convictions, total commitment and high values of Pandit Nehru, who remained at the forefront of the struggle for freedom and, thereafter, served as the first prime minister of India for 17 years.

As BK Nehru has written, during India's prolonged struggle for freedom, Pandit Nehru remained deeply concerned that the aim of gaining independence should not be merely restricted to liberating the country from foreign rule. His vision was to also change the whole structure of Indian society for bettering the lot of the vast masses of the people of India. B K Nehru has said that Pandit Nehru, like Omar Khayyam's lover, was eternally seeking "to grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire" and "to shatter it to bits and then remould it nearer to the Heart's Desire".

Pandit Nehru's passing away in 1964 marked the end of an era which encompassed the entire period of struggle for freedom from the colonial rule and, thereafter, the very difficult years in which gigantic challenges were faced by the first national government. As BK Nehru has recorded, the death

of Lal Bahadur Shastri "laid the final seal on that era ..... hardly anybody was available any longer who would insist on Gandhian values being observed and who, in his own life and behaviour, practised such values".

Any talk about governance raises questions about the role and responsibilities of public servants. In this context, it would be interesting to recall that Ivan Jones, deputy commissioner of Hissar, advised Nehru, his trainee: "The duty of a civil servant is exclusively the pursuit of the public good with no attempt to take any credit for his work or to seek publicity for himself. The life of the civil servant was in some respects like that of a monk – devoid of all self-interests and serving not God but the people at large without any thought of aggrandisation".

A high percentage of those who served in the ICS were known for their impartiality and incorruptibility. It was for this reason that the public, particularly the poorer and uneducated people in the villages, had faith and trust in the functioning of the district officers during the period of British rule.

During the period when the British governed India, the entire Central Secretariat comprised only six departments, each of which was headed by a secretary. Besides, there were two secretaries to the governor general, one of whom was in charge of the Political Department and the other was responsible for constitutional reforms and other matters.

Till 1947, the Central Secretariat was strictly a policy-making body which drafted laws required to implement policies which had been agreed to by the government. The Secretariat also approved the rules and regulations required for implementing the various laws which were enacted to govern the country. It is noteworthy that the Secretariat did not take decisions in regard to individual cases which were examined in accordance with the extant rules and regulations and decided by the offices below the Secretariat, which were designated as "attached" or "subordinate" offices, among which were the Central Board of Revenue, Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG), Railway Board and Post and Telegraph (P&T) Department.

Each of the six departments in the Government of India was serviced and run by limited staff as compared to the gigantic size of the present day

ministries at the Centre. The Department of Education, Health and Lands, in which Nehru initially served, was run by a total of seven officers comprising the secretary, one joint secretary, two deputy secretaries and three under secretaries. The work of the department was shared between the secretary and the joint secretary.

The creation of a new post during the British period was made so difficult that very few could muster the courage to moot a proposal which would be critically examined at various levels before it could be forwarded, if at all, for consideration by the secretary of state for India, who sat in England. The situation which has existed in the states and in the Government of India in the past decades has been totally the opposite: any number of new posts can be created for purely political considerations, even if the state government is facing severe financial problems.

Having spoken about the time during which Nehru served the Government of India, I shall comment briefly about the situation which has evolved since independence.

The British ruled India for nearly two centuries to promote their own interests and left behind a backward and feudal agrarian economy, huge regional imbalances, large scale unemployment and widespread poverty. It was the unflinching commitment of the founding fathers and the front ranking political leaders of that time which enabled the first national government, led by Pandit Nehru, to bring under control the prevailing communal violence, arson, loot and killings and restore law and order. Millions of refugees were re-settled, food grains were efficiently distributed through thousands of ration shops, droughts and floods were faced and, in the midst of troubles on various fronts, the country rose to also deal with Pakistan's aggression in Kashmir. It would not be out of place to observe that these various challenges were successfully tackled because of the devoted hard work put in by the limited cadres of the civil, police, defence and other services which had been splintered and dislocated after the partition.

After the partition of the country was announced, some of the best minds in the country sat together and engaged in intensive debates to draft the Constitution of India which provides a framework of cooperative federalism

for the governance of free India. The Constitution, founded on four pillars of JUSTICE, LIBERTY, EQUALITY and FRATERNITY, contains specific provisions and the Directive Principles of the State Policy which provide the direction of the tasks to be carried out for building a strong and vibrant nation. The Constitution perceives a strong Centre for guiding and supporting the states in the collective endeavour of nation building and provides a uniform set of inter-related institutions which are envisaged to lay the basis for a common framework of governance.

During the debates in the Constituent Assembly, Sardar Patel had repeatedly stressed that the effective governance of free India and the harmonious working of Centre-State relations was crucially dependent on the collective pursuit of a national perspective. He strongly believed that the unity and integrity of India could be safeguarded by a federal administrative system in which the All India Services would be required to play a vital role.

It was realised, right in the beginning, that success in securing orderly change and stability would act as a bulwark against social unrest and violence. It is for this reason that the task of tackling the problems of poverty and unemployment was among the government's foremost priorities.

Looking back over the years past, it could be said that during the first two decades, notwithstanding the innumerable difficulties faced, the Government of India achieved reasonable success in several arenas. The foundations of the country's future growth were laid during this period, particularly in regard to the enlargement of the educational and health systems, establishment of universities and institutions for the promotion of science, technology and research, expansion of civil aviation, sea ports, highways, railways and public transport; implementation of land reforms, consolidation of holdings and provision of security of tenure to the actual tillers; construction of large dams and expansion of irrigation systems which enabled the phenomenal success of the Green Revolution; enhancement of power generation and steel and cement production; establishment of the Space and Atomic Energy Commissions and many other visionary initiatives which paved the way for the growth and advancement which we have achieved in recent years. During this period, the country faced external aggression on three occasions:

while we had to accept humiliation in the 1962 conflict with China, our armed forces acquitted themselves most creditably in the 1965 and 1971 Wars.

Around the end of the 1960s, the Congress Party, which had continuously ruled at the Centre and in most of the states since independence, was beset with internal feuds. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's resolve to cling to authority at any cost led to the enforcement of the Emergency (1975-77) which severely fractured the rule of law and the Constitution, and damaged the functioning of the Parliamentary and Cabinet systems.

While there was corruption and maladministration in the earlier years, the period of the Emergency saw the emergence of an unwholesome nexus between unprincipled politicians and the brand new breed of the so-called "committed civil servants". This led to the emergence of extra-constitutional elements playing an unlawful role in governmental functioning at the Centre and in the states.

The post Emergency years witnessed the growth of political instability and the exposure of a series of corruption scandals which involved allegations against the seniormost echelons in the government, including the prime minister. This period also witnessed the unearthing of alarming cases of gross abuse of authority in the states which involved high ranking civil and police officers, ministers and chief ministers.

Insofar as the evolution of the polity is concerned, there has been an over hundred-fold increase in the number of political parties which are registered with the Election Commission of India. Another worrying development is related to the unwholesome role which has continued to be played by money and muscle power in elections at all levels, none of which is contested on the basis of issues or ideologies.

Among the factors which have contributed to the failures of governance in the past years, the foremost is corruption which has spread unchecked, and presently permeates all levels of functioning. The continuation of corrupt and unlawful practices has resulted in seriously damaging the capability and credibility of the institutions of governance. It is a matter for grave concern that in many states, it has virtually become a practice for pliant officers of doubtful integrity being handpicked on considerations of

caste, community or political affiliations, and assigned to lucrative posts for gathering funds for their political masters. Resultantly, the best available public servants are perhaps not even considered for manning important posts in the administrative system. This phenomenon has bred frustration and demotivation among the competent and upright elements in the various cadres, all over the country.

Day-to-day political interference in the functioning of the governmental machinery has generated indiscipline and lack of accountability. Resultantly, it has become increasingly difficult for the common man to get any work done without paying bribes and this has led to the common man losing trust in the functioning of the administrative system.

The incessant interference in the functioning of police organisations has led to serious damage being caused to the morale, discipline and professionalism of the constabularies. A grave consequence of this situation has been the progressive deterioration in the maintenance of public order, open defiance of the law, and increase in incidents of varied serious crimes.

The past decades have witnessed the growing phenomenon of criminal elements enjoying the protection of politicians in power and a threatening nexus developing among unprincipled public servants, corrupt politicians and organised crime and mafia networks in the country. Side by side, while several major scams and scandals have been under investigation for decades, none of the alleged offenders has so far been brought to book. This is perhaps because the Central Bureau of Intelligence (CBI) and Central Vigilance Commission (CVC), the apex central agencies responsible for dealing with corruption among public servants, are no longer looked upon as professional agencies which are capable of resisting political pressures and extra-legal influences. This has rightly led to the general belief that the rich and those who hold high positions are not answerable to the laws of the land.

It is indeed a sad failure that successive governments at the Centre have not as yet succeeded in establishing an effective law to curb corruption in the highest echelons, including at the level of the prime minister. After decades of discussion, the country is still awaiting the appointment of the first lok pal.

The time has come for leaders of all political parties, particularly those who wield power at the Centre and in the states, to recognise that the continuance of corruption shall damage and weaken the administrative and legal framework to the extent of threatening the very foundations of our polity and society and, thus, endangering the unity and integrity of the country.

The rule of law cannot be enforced unless the criminal justice system functions with speed, efficiency and fairness. Unfortunately, we have failed on this front. It has been reported that well over three crore cases are pending trials, of which nearly two crore relate to criminal offences. Because of the virtual collapse of the justice system, the offenders get discharged for want of evidence, after awaiting trial for years, and there has been a worrisome decline in the conviction rates of the criminal cases put to trial. It is a matter for even greater concern that, besides the failures arising from infrastructural deficiencies, the judicial apparatus has also been facing complaints which reflect on its competence and integrity and, in the past years, members of the superior judiciary, even up to the level of the chief justice of India, have been the subject of serious allegations.

We also face serious challenges in regard to the management of national security. For the past several decades now, adversary external agencies and international terrorist groups have been continuing with their determined activities to subvert and destabilise India by spreading religious fundamentalism, inciting conflicts and perpetrating violence and killings. It is important that the highest attention is paid to ensure that there is no gap or deficiency whatsoever in the effective preservation of the country's territorial integrity.

Even after the terror attacks in Mumbai, on our Parliament and, more recently, on the air force base in Pathankot, we are still in the process of establishing the required country-wide apparatus which would have the capability of effectively safeguarding national security. Also, the required steps have still to be taken for securing firm and clear understandings between the Centre and the states for enacting a comprehensive federal law for establishing a fully empowered central agency which can take immediate

cognisance of, and promptly investigate, a terror attack which may take place at any time, anywhere in the country, without precious time being lost in securing multiple clearances.

It is of crucial importance, particularly at the current juncture, for the Centre and the states to join hands for working most closely together and tackling all major pending tasks for building a strong and vibrant India. In working towards such a goal, the very first steps required would relate to speedily de-politicising the entire administrative apparatus, curbing corruption, fearlessly enforcing the rule of law, ensuring impregnable national security management and creating a country-wide environment for re-energising, enlarging and strengthening the vital institutions of governance.

While the poverty ratios in our country have been progressively declining, about one-fifth of our population is still living below the international poverty line and, considering the large size of our population, the current level of unemployment is cause for serious concern. Even when the per capita incomes have marked a near ten-fold increase, we have still not achieved the requisite headway in securing meaningful reduction in inequality. As reported, 1 percent of the richest in our country are reported to own nearly 60 percent of the total national wealth of which only 2 percent is owned by the entire bottom half of the population.

It is, however, a matter for great pride that today we are amongst the leading exporters of food commodities while, in the earlier years, we were almost entirely dependent on imported food grains. The corpus of our scientific and technical manpower is the second largest in the world and India is among the top in the arena of nuclear power and space technology. As an industrial power, we do not stand very high, but India has the distinction of achieving the fastest growth among the major world economies. Another of our notable achievements is that in the past seven decades, democracy has got deeply rooted in our country and despite adverse geopolitical factors and influences in our neighbourhood and beyond, our democratic institutions are firmly established. In our last general elections in 2014, no less than 66 percent of the country's 834 million voters turned out to participate in the polls.

In looking towards the future, we need to recognise that among the most daunting challenges facing us is reduction in inequality, without losing any more time. The continuance of social and economic inequalities could unleash confrontations and conflicts which could trigger chaos and disorder across the country. For this reason alone, it is of vital importance to ensure that the administrative system, all over the country, functions in a manner which ensures against any injustice being done to our people, particularly to those who belong to the disadvantaged segments of our society and are already suffering.

Another cause for concern relates to the wanton manner in which rights and liberties are sought to be exercised in our country. This trend must not continue. It is also essential that our citizenry remains duly conscious of its obligations and duties to the nation. Side by side, it would be beneficial for the central and state governments to take sustained initiatives for promoting an environment which imbues our people with values founded in equality and secularism, and respect for the diversity of our numerous and far spread communities. For this purpose, we shall need to make conscious efforts to learn, understand and appreciate the diversities of our various communities in regard to their views, beliefs, cultural practices, customs and habits.

Already, in several parts of the country, community relations are being disturbed and disrupted by growing caste and religious divisiveness. This is resulting in time honoured socio-cultural traditions and practices being questioned with unjustifiable belligerence, leading to inter-community clashes and violence. While we may be rightly proud of our civilisational past and repeatedly keep reminding the world that the people of India are multi-religious, multi-cultural and multi-lingual, it is cause for considerable anxiety that our tolerance levels and traditional sensitivity to differing views and beliefs are witnessing erosion.

It is also necessary to devote due and timely attention to the upcoming generation. If we are to benefit from the youthful demographic profile of our large population, it is essential that gainful opportunities are provided to our youth and all the required steps are taken to ensure against their energies being exploited for generating disharmony or causing disruption.

For this reason alone, it is essential to ensure against there being any failure in providing clean, prompt and efficient governance which is aimed at achieving inclusive and equitable human, social and economic development to rapidly promote the welfare of all our people, in every part of the country.

It would be useful to keep in mind that meaningful governance can be provided if all the public services cadres, across the entire country, ensure efficient delivery of services and secure timely implementation of the nation-wide schemes and programmes which are aimed at poverty alleviation, removal of illiteracy and provision of employment, safe water, food, shelter and health care to all our people. These crucial goals cannot be achieved unless the entire administrative machinery functions with total commitment, efficiency and visible accountability.

If the country has to be liberated from corruption, maladministration and misgovernance, the political executive shall need to accept their responsibility, assume leadership and play a visibly proactive role in promoting productive governance. It would no longer do to attribute all our failures, on various fronts, merely to the deficiencies of the bureaucracy.

In conclusion, I would reiterate that we do not have the luxury of waiting endlessly for reforming the governance of the country. If we have to move forward and achieve the goal of eradicating inequality and discrimination and for all our people to become free from want and fear of any kind, then the entire administrative apparatus, effectively and honestly led by the political executive, shall need to perform with efficiency, speed and accountability, all over the country.

NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION FROM PAKISTAN: A PEEP INTO THE PAST AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

MANPREET SETHI

In 2001, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of Pakistan's Khan Research Laboratories[1] (KRL), the country's national research institute most famous for nuclear enrichment, then President Musharraf lavishly commended the work of Dr AQ Khan, widely known in Pakistan as the Father of the Bomb[2]. He described Khan's role in Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme as a "unique national success story… of selfless devotion, unbridled dedication, scientific brilliance, technological mastery and, above all, supreme patriotism and religious fervor" among the "general sea of disappointment" that Pakistan had long experienced.[3] The generous praise for the scientist who was to be virtually disowned by the Pakistan government a few years later was certainly true in at least two respects. The first of these related to

Dr **Manpreet Sethi** is a Senior Fellow and Project Leader, Nuclear Security at the Centre for Air Power Studies, New Delhi.

1. The KRL started as the Engineering Research Laboratories (ERL) in 1976 to build and operate a full scale centrifuge plant for uranium enrichment. President Zia renamed the lab in the name of A Q Khan after a visit to the place in 1981 that left him thoroughly impressed with the work under way at the facility.
2. A title bestowed on A Q Khan by former Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in 1992 after he became the first elected prime minister to tour the Kahuta enrichment complex.
3. Adrian Levy and Catherine Scott-Clark, *Deception: Pakistan, the United States and the Global Nuclear Weapons Conspiracy* (London: Penguin Books, 2007), p. 308.

the uniqueness of the success of Pakistan's nuclear programme, given that the country could claim hardly any successes in national socio-economic indicators or techno-scientific achievements. Secondly, for his country, and for a few others, AQ Khan certainly spelt the hope of realising their nuclear weapons ambitions.

Irrespective of how he is remembered at home, across the world, AQ Khan is the most well known face of the elaborate nuclear proliferation network run from Pakistan. He made a televised disclosure of his "unauthorized proliferation activities" on February 4, 2004, claiming that these were "only for personal financial gain and not as Pakistani state policy".[4] This statement was made under the watchful eye of the government of President Musharraf who then assured the US and the world that he "would share all the information he learns about the Khan network" and that "his country will never again be a source of proliferation". President Musharraf nevertheless demitted office without actually sharing any useful details of the proliferation network.

Indeed, successive Pakistani governments have denied any nuclear misconduct. But many publications[5] over the last 15 years have amply documented that the proliferation from Pakistan was done *in the knowledge, and with the complicity, of the Pakistan Army and the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI)*. To quote Husain Haqqani, adviser to four Pakistani prime ministers, "The military had been in sole control of KRL and PAEC [Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission] since Zia's days. They had always been in charge of Khan – in that, all of his activities were governed by their orders."[6] AQ Khan himself stated in an interview to *Der Spiegel* in 2011, a statement that was in sharp contrast to the one he had made seven years earlier, "Logistics and security at our plant were in the hands of the army and they checked each and every item that came in or left… I took sole blame for this whole episode

---

4. Husain Haqqani, *India Vs Pakistan: Why Can't We Just be Friends?* (New Delhi: Juggernaut Books, 2016), p. 76.

5. Gordon Correra, *Shopping for Bombs: Nuclear Proliferation, Global Insecurity and Rise and Fall of AQ Khan Network* (London: Oxford University Press, 2006); Levy and Scott-Clark, n. 3; William Langewiesche, *The Atomic Bazaar* (Farrar Straus and Giroux, 2003); Thomas C Reed and Danny Stillman, *The Nuclear Express: The Political History of the Bomb and its Proliferation* (Zenith Press, 2009).

6. As cited in Levy and Scott-Clark, n.3, p. 296.

because the political leadership urgently asked me to do so…."[7]

Given that its nuclear programme has always been run as such a tight ship by the Pakistan Army and that nuclear policy decisions have remained the preserve of the army, it is impossible that the smuggling or the coordination of the illicit procurement network on the scale at which it took place could have been possible without the knowledge of the highest echelons of the army. In fact, as William Langewiesche, an investigative journalist, points out, "AQ Khan had allies in high places who, rather

It is possible that the proliferation activities may not have taken place under a clear chain of command or with a formal process in place, but nevertheless these did occur with a tacit understanding amongst the elite in the military, the coopted politicians and the scientists from the nuclear establishment.

than ignoring his activities, were *directly involved and almost certainly approved. In Pakistan, this can only mean the generals….*"[8] For instance, in the case of the KRL, it has been reported that in the early 1980s, the ISI and the Intelligence Bureau manned the road from Kahuta to Islamabad international airport with everything being tracked and "any shipment, day or night, reported back to army headquarters."[9]

So, it was a clear-headed, conscious decision, or as one analyst has described it, "the foreign policy of a nation, plotted and supervised by Pakistan's ruling military clique"[10] to offer a nuclear weapon to Iraq in the early 1980s, and to undertake nuclear related transfers to Libya, Iran, North Korea, and possibly, Syria and Saudi Arabia. It is possible that the proliferation activities may not have taken place under a clear chain of command or with a formal process in place, but nevertheless these did occur with a tacit understanding amongst the elite in the military, the coopted politicians and the scientists from the nuclear establishment. The activities were undertaken with impunity till

7. Interview as cited in Ahmed Rashid, *Pakistan on the Brink: The Future of Pakistan, Afghanistan and the West* (London: Penguin Books, 2012), p. 63.
8. William Langewiesche, *The Atomic Bazaar: The Rise of the Nuclear Poor* (London: Penguin Books, 2007), p. 155.
9. Levy and Scott-Clark, n.3, p. 95.
10. Ibid., p.2.

such time the network was revealed to public view in October 2003 with the seizure of the German ship *BBC China* on its way to Libya with parts for a nuclear weapons programme. When Libya decided to renounce its nuclear ambitions and handed over nuclear material it had obtained illegitimately, the contents included the design of the Chinese bomb, Chicom 4, wrapped in a bag that belonged to the favourite tailor of A Q Khan.[11]

The fact that proliferation of a considerable extent and expanse took place from Pakistan is now well established, claims of innocence from within the country notwithstanding.[12] But even more intriguing is the fact that the countries that have benefitted from Pakistan's nuclear largesse, all except North Korea, have been Islamic nations. Was this by design? Was the peddling of nuclear wares by Pakistan a commercial or an ideological venture? Was the military trying to raise capital or build political influence by exporting the bomb to Muslim nations? What role did the 'Islamic' identity play in Pakistan's development and disbursement of its nuclear capability? What are the dilemmas that this poses for Pakistan itself? What are the future challenges that arise from Pakistan's proliferation? These are some of the questions that this paper seeks to answer.

Divided into four broad sections, the paper first highlights some facts about the Pakistani proliferation network. The second segment explores the role of the nuclear weapon in defining and sustaining Pakistan's Islamic identity. The third section exposes some of the dilemmas posed by Pakistan's projection of its nuclear weapon as an "Islamic bomb" and explains why this description has been abandoned or toned down in the last few years. The concluding section identifies the challenges that Pakistan's willful proliferation will pose for the future of nuclear and international security.

PROLIFERATION FROM PAKISTAN: "AN ALTERNATIVE REVENUE STREAM"

According to Western intelligence estimates that had been tracking AQ

---

11. It may be recalled that this was the same bomb that China had tested for the Pakistanis at its test site, Lop Nor, in 1990.
12. For instance, see the protestations of Gen Musharraf in his autobiography, *In the Line of Fire* (New York: Free Press, 2006).

Khan's deals in Europe and the USA in 1984-85, the Khan Research Laboratories had been spending anything between $550-700 million even though the official budget was shown at $18 million.[13] Much of this yawning gap between actual and projected spending was made up by siphoning the US assistance flowing into Pakistan for fighting the Soviets in Afghanistan. A British diplomat graphically explained the process as being conducted through a "raft of charities, educational set-ups and health groups that were named as legitimate beneficiaries [which] turned out to be covers, run by the military that skillfully drained, laundered and redirected the cash to the nuclear fund."[14] But with the withdrawal of the Soviets from Afghanistan, this money was going to dry up and Pakistan was well aware of this. Then Foreign Minister of Pakistan Agha Shahi expressed the need for Pakistan "to broker new alliances and develop a revenue stream that was dependable and outside the scope of the US-run Afghan war." It was in this context that the idea of using the KRL as a "cash cow" emerged and according to reports, "in early 1985, an elite group of principals, steered by the president, began at highly secretive meetings, to explore trading KRL's skills and assets".[15]

Amongst the early potential customers that were contacted by Pakistan's Foreign Ministry were Iran, Iraq and Libya. From Iran, which was caught in a war with Iraq at the time, the response was near immediate and in February 1986, AQ Khan had flown to Tehran to provide help for restarting its nuclear programme that dated back to the time of the Shah of Iran but which had been stalled in 1979 after the Islamic revolution.

Amongst the early potential customers that were contacted by Pakistan's Foreign Ministry were Iran, Iraq and Libya. From Iran, which was caught in a war with Iraq at the time, the response was near immediate, and in February 1986, AQ Khan had flown to Tehran to provide help for restarting its nuclear programme that dated back to the time of the Shah of Iran but which had been stalled in 1979 after the Islamic revolution. In fact, one of Khomeini's first acts

---

13. Levy and Scott-Clark, n.3, p. 124.
14. Ibid., p. 126.
15. Ibid., p. 133.

was to dismantle the nuclear programme in order to avert any "westoxification" of Iran. On June 17, 1980, an official suspension of the programme was declared with a statement that claimed that the construction of reactors was "harmful for the country from the economic, political and technical points of view, and was a cause of greater dependence on imperialist countries."[16] But the view on the nuclear programme began to change during the course of the Iran-Iraq War. Baghdad's attack on the half finished Iranian nuclear reactors in 1984 and 1985 was met with International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inaction and its subsequent use of chemical weapons against Iranian soldiers heralded the victimisation syndrome in Iran when it felt completely isolated. It is hardly surprising that then Parliament Speaker Hashemi Rafsanjani expressed that his country should plan to equip itself in both the offensive and defensive use of chemical, bacteriological and radiological weapons.[17]

Outreach by AQ Khan at this time came in timely and helpful. The two countries entered into a Nuclear Cooperation Agreement in 1986 wherein Pakistan offered to train Iranian nuclear scientists in return for financial support for its own nuclear programme. According to the Iranian opposition sources, both countries also signed an agreement for joint development of nuclear weapons, under which Iran was to provide funding while Pakistan contributed its expertise, including for training of Iran's nuclear physicists at the Pakistan Institute for Nuclear Science and Technology (PINSTECH) and KRL. Iran was also provided with P-1 centrifuges, though this was not the latest technology then available with Pakistan since it had advanced to P-2 centrifuges. But the KRL had a warehouse full of spare P-1 machines and components ready for sale and AQ Khan wanted to put them to some use. These were priced in such a manner that "even if the Iranians bought the bare minimum, the deal would net the KRL in excess of $ 2 million", according to some IAEA estimates done later. Over the years, Iran received, through Dubai, "nearly 18 tons of materials, including centrifuges, components and drawings."[18]

---

16. David Patrikarakos, *Nuclear Iran: The Birth of an Atomic State* (London: IB Tauris, 2012), p. 110.
17. As cited by Arun Vishwanathan, "Iran's Nuclear Programme: Where is it Headed?", in A Vishwanathan and R Nagappa, eds., *Troubling Tehran: Reflections on Geopolitics* (New Delhi: Pentagon Press, 2013), p. 24.
18. n. 3, p. 294.

By 1991, the supply of the P-1 centrifuge parts had been completed along with some fully functioning centrifuges. Soon thereafter, Gen Beg travelled to Tehran to offer the Iranian Revolutionary Guards a "complete nuclear warhead or blueprints for a weapon" for hundreds of millions of dollars, to be transferred through Kazakhstan.[19] The deal, however, never materialised allegedly because Pakistan's President Ishaq Khan had reservations about equipping a Shia dominant regime in Iran. Later reports, nevertheless, establish that "a full set of general P-2 centrifuge drawings"[20] was given to Tehran in 1994-96. IAEA has reported 13 meetings between Iran and A Q Khan during 1994 and 1999.

Meanwhile, Pakistan's link to Libya goes back even further to 1972 when then Prime Minister of Pakistan, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto visited Libya soon after authorising the start of the nuclear weapons programme in his own country. Libya agreed to generously contribute its petro-dollars and even facilitated the transfer of uranium from Niger for this programme.

Even as the relationship with Iran continued, interestingly enough, two months after Iraq invaded Kuwait, Baghdad received a letter dated October 6, 1990, carrying a proposal from AQ Khan offering to help Iraq "establish a project to enrich uranium and manufacture nuclear weapons".[21] This fact has been corroborated by an official Iraqi declaration sent to the UN in 2003 which claimed that an emissary of AQ Khan had offered nuclear assistance to Baghdad at the time of the Gulf War.[22] The proposal included a weapon for US $150 million in three years compared to Pakistan itself having spent double this amount and ten years in building the weapon. On sale were also detailed designs and actual blueprints of the bomb for as little as US$ 5 million.[23] However, Saddam Hussein was suspicious of the offer and it was never taken up.

---

19. As revealed by the Iranian dissidents, and cited in Levy and Clark, n.3, p. 225.
20. Patrikarakos, n. 16, p. 158.
21. Wilson John, *Pakistan's Nuclear Underworld :An Investigation* (New Delhi: Samskriti, 2005), p. 106.
22. Ibid., p. 106.
23. David Albright, *Peddling Peril: How the Secret Nuclear Trade Arms America's Enemies* (Free Press, 2010).

Meanwhile, Pakistan's link to Libya goes back even further to 1972 when then Prime Minister of Pakistan, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto visited Libya soon after authorising the start of the nuclear weapons programme in his own country. Libya agreed to generously contribute its petro-dollars and even facilitated the transfer of uranium from Niger for this programme. In return, it received centrifuge equipment and plant designs. However, the country did not have the technological sophistication to be able to use these imports for building its own weapon and much of the equipment was found in its original packing by the IAEA when Libya renounced the programme in 2004.

Syria too is suspected of having received help akin to that provided to Libya, though significant tangible evidence of this is yet to surface. A 2006 Kuwaiti news report hinted at Syria's clandestine efforts. The IAEA then scrutinised overhead images of the complex and discovered that it was significantly similar in layout to the plans for a uranium enrichment site obtained from Libya. However, Syrian President Bashar Assad clarified in 2007 that though he had received a written statement apparently penned by Khan, his government had not responded. Damascus has maintained that the Dair Alzour site, which was bombed by Israel in 2007 on suspicion of being a plutonium production facility, was actually a military installation with no nuclear component.[24]

Meanwhile, Pakistan's nuclear link with Saudi Arabia is also extremely interesting. Both nations have shared a close relationship owing to their geographical proximity, religious affinity, and historic relations that have thrived owing to congruence of their individual needs. Nowhere is the last aspect more true than in the case of their nuclear relationship. Saudi Arabia has been flush with cash while Pakistan has had the wherewithal to develop nuclear weapons, and it was almost inevitable that the two should have decided to help one another. In fact, instances of military cooperation between the two can be found from 1969 onwards when pilots of the Pakistan Air Force had flown Saudi Air Force jets to defend the country against South Yemen. Pakistan Army soldiers have defended the Saudi oil fields, and stood

---

24. Global Security Newswire, November 1, 2011, at NTI website www.nti.org/gsn/article/iaea-finds-signs-of-syrian-ties-to-khan-network/

on standby to guard the Saudi kingdom. Why then should this relationship not have a nuclear dimension?

In 1989-90, Pakistan brokered a deal for 36 CSS-II long range, nuclear capable missiles between China and Saudi Arabia. This brought it renewed financial assistance from Saudi Arabia based on an understanding that as and when Pakistan developed the nuclear bomb, it would be available to Saudi Arabia too "to stash away in case of emergency".[25] In another indication of the closeness of their nuclear relationship, in May 1999, Saudi Defence Minister Prince Sultan bin Abdal Aziz was allowed to visit the KRL, a complex normally out of bounds for outsiders, including Pakistan's own elected leaders. More recently too, there has been speculation that Pakistan has ramped up the number of its nuclear warheads to cater for a contingency when it might have to supply some to Riyadh, especially in the eventuality of Iran becoming an overt nuclear weapon state.

As is evident from the clients of Pakistan's nuclear proliferation network – Iran, Iraq, Libya, Syria and Saudi Arabia—the religious identity of all, except North Korea, has been the same. They are all Islamic nations. Was this by design? Or, were there motivations other than religious in the choice of these customers? It has been concluded by some analysts that President Zia, in whose time the conscious decision to proliferate was taken, was clearly inspired by the idea of a "crescent of nuclear-armed Islamic nations [that] would match NATO in power and influence".[26] But for the other military and ISI officers engaged in the enterprise, it was money that was the primary motive. For instance, as stated earlier too in this paper, President Zia's Chief of Army Staff (COAS), Gen Mirza Aslam Beg, justified the transfer of nuclear technology, materials and weapon designs as a means of earning foreign exchange "in an honourable way" since he thought it was "the best way for Pakistan to pay off her debts."[27] In his opinion, it was legitimate to sell nuclear technology and material. He opined, "Why can nuclear technology not be used for constructive enterprises, and also fetch money to get rid

---

25. Levy and Scott-Clark, n.3, p. 174.
26. Ibid., p. 219.
27. Ibid., p. 219.

By the end of the 1990s, the KRL was sending its sales representatives to international arms shows in Malaysia, Indonesia, UAE, etc to advertise its products. Even more interestingly, in July 2000, only two years after demonstrating its nuclear capability in six tests, then President Musharraf decided to legitimise proliferation by publishing an advertisement in national newspapers offering the same list of items for sale that AQ Khan had covertly been peddling to Iran, Iraq, North Korea, Libya and Syria.

of economic hardships Pakistan is currently facing? It is indeed a very sagacious way to pay off debt which is an enormous burden on the national 'psyche'. Pakistan has a right to earn legitimate dollars."[28]

Several deals were struck in a clandestine fashion to translate this idea into reality. In fact, by the end of the 1990s, the KRL was sending its sales representatives to international arms shows in Malaysia, Indonesia, United Arab Emirates (UAE), etc to advertise its products. Even more interestingly, in July 2000, only two years after demonstrating its nuclear capability in six tests, then President Musharraf decided to legitimise proliferation

by publishing an advertisement in national newspapers offering the same list of items for sale that AQ Khan had covertly been peddling to Iran, Iraq, North Korea, Libya and Syria. The only difference in approach was the mention that such deals in the future would be subject to the approval of the Defence Control Committee and, hence, under some kind of export controls. The list included materials for making nuclear weapons, including natural, depleted or enriched uranium, thorium, plutonium or zirconium, heavy water, tritium or beryllium, nuclear grade graphite, etc, besides equipment for the production, use or application of nuclear energy, gas centrifuges, UF6 mass spectrometers and frequency changers.[29] Gen Beg, a staunch supporter of the idea of using Pakistan's nuclear capability for commercial gains, hailed

28. Gen Mirza Aslam Beg, "Nuclear Substances and Equipment for Sale", http://www.friends.org.pk, cited in John, n. 21, p. 45.
29. *The News* and *Dawn*, July 24, 2000, reproduced in *The Times of India*, July 25, 2000.

the step as "Islamic Atoms for Peace". Following up on this, in November 2000, the Pakistan Army held an international munitions fair called IDEAS 2000, where, along with other defence equipment on display, was a booth set up by the KRL to promote the sale – installation, repair and maintenance – of centrifuges, including after sales service![30]

It is indeed evident that a major motivation for the nuclear sales from Pakistan was commercial and it lost no opportunity to tout the 'economical' wares on sale. By the early 1980s, the country's nuclear programme had blossomed into a successful though expensive venture. As long as the US kept on handing over money to the Pakistan Army to run the covert operations against the Soviet occupation in Afghanistan, funding the nuclear programme was not a cause of concern. But once this stream of revenue was expected to dry up, Pakistan found it expedient to sell a technology and material that was not normally available off-the-shelf and, hence, had the potential to fetch huge profits.

The reason for Pakistan finding its main customers amongst Muslim nations is explained in the following section that explores the Islamic identity of Pakistan's nuclear weapons. But it must be highlighted here that besides being Islamic states, these countries had another common characteristic. They were all also anti-West in their ideological orientation and for each one of them, the ambition for acquiring the nuclear weapon arose from a desire to break the imperialist monopoly. It is also worth considering that Pakistan's support for such nations perhaps was also influenced by the fact that it received assistance for its own nuclear weapons from China – a relationship that started when Mao Tse Tung ruled Beijing. Mao was a strong supporter of

Mao was a strong supporter of efforts that could degrade/erode the influence of Western imperialist states and he perceived nuclear proliferation as one way of doing so. The same strategy continued through the 1980s, when under Deng Xiaoping, China decided to proliferate nuclear technology to Communists and Muslims in the Third World.

---

30. Levy and Scott-Clark, n.3, p. 299.

efforts that could degrade/erode the influence of Western imperialist states and he perceived nuclear proliferation as one way of doing so. The same strategy continued through the 1980s, when under Deng Xiaoping, China decided to proliferate nuclear technology to Communists and Muslims in the Third World. "They did so deliberately with the theory that if nukes ended up going off in the western world from a Muslim terrorist, well that wasn't all bad. If New York was reduced to rubble without Chinese fingerprints on the attack, that left Beijing as the last man standing."[31]

Whether Pakistan was a *complicit pawn* in this Chinese strategy or whether it became an *inadvertent facilitator* can only be matter of speculation till such time as some official documents prove it either way. But there can be no doubt that Pakistan had little compunctions about proliferating for profit, and if it happened to be to its Muslim brethren, it was so much the better. And, in the process, if it could fulfill a strategy of China, with which it has a friendship that is "higher than the mountains and deeper than the oceans", it did not mind it at all.

ROLE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN PAKISTAN'S ISLAMIC IDENTITY

The nuclear weapon has played a clear role in reinforcing and accentuating the Islamic identity of Pakistan and in making it a credible claimant to the position of leadership of the Muslim world. During the course of the development of its bomb – whether through theft of technology from the Uranium Enrichment Company (URENCO) in the Netherlands, or through clandestine acquisition of components and equipment from several European suppliers, and nuclear materials and weapons designs from China – Pakistan found it useful to characterise the weapon as an Islamic bomb in order to gain moral and financial support for the enterprise from other Muslim countries. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who started the Pakistani nuclear weapons programme in 1972, claimed in his testament written while he was in jail in the late 1970s, "We know that Israel and South Africa have full

---

31. Thomas Reed in an interview to US News, January 2, 2009, as available at http://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2009/01/02/why-china-helped-countries-like-pakistan-north-korea-build-nuclear-bombs. Accessed on June 20, 2012.

nuclear capability. The Christian, Jewish and Hindu civilizations have this capability. The Communist powers also possess it. Only the Islamic civilization was without it, but that position was about to change."[32] Saudi Arabia and Libya are particularly known to have contributed generously to the Pakistani nuclear weapons programme because they perceived it as an achievement for the Islamic community.

Islam was invoked yet again in 1998 when, after the Indian nuclear tests on May 11 and 13, 1998, Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was dithering under American pressure that sought to restrain him from conducting nuclear tests. At the time, the

Bestowing an Islamic identity on its nuclear weapons capability certainly had its advantages in terms of the financial benefits and moral backing received from Muslim nations, including for Pakistan's cause in Kashmir against India. However, the depiction of the pan-Islamic flavour has also posed several dilemmas for the country.

Pakistan clergy and right wing Muslim parties quoted from the Quran to convince him that he would be an apostate if he did not test the nuclear weapon in response to the Indian action. He was warned that he would be "violating Sura Al-Anfal of the Quran" which says, "And make ready against them all you can of power, including steeds of war (tanks, planes, missiles, artillery) to threaten the enemy of Allah and your enemy, and others besides whom you may not know but whom Allah does know."[33] For a military significantly Islamised by the concerted efforts of Gen Zia-ul Haq, such an interpretation carried immense traction.

At the same time, for the religious parties waging *jihad* in Kashmir, the bomb has been perceived as an umbrella under which to fight against India without fear of conventional reprisal. The idea has obviously also appealed to the military. It was well nigh impossible for Sharif to stand up to such ideological pressure and he approved the conduct of the tests in June 1998. Thereafter he said, "Not only the whole nation, but the *whole Islamic ummah*

32. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, *If I am Assassinated…* (Vikas Publishers, 1979).
33. Khaled Ahmed, *Pakistan: The State in Crisis* (Lahore: Vanguard, 2002), pp 71-72.

hailed Pakistan for its great achievement and expressed happiness over the decision".[34] Indeed, overjoyed Palestinians paraded models of the Hatf missile and it was hailed as "triumph of Islam".[35] Hamas leaders described it as "an asset to the Arab and Muslim nations". Pakistan portrayed a distinct wider pride in its nuclear capability and used it to seek material and moral patronage for its nuclear weapons programme.

Pakistan's Dilemma over the 'Islamic Bomb'

Bestowing an Islamic identity on its nuclear weapons capability certainly had its advantages in terms of the financial benefits and moral backing received from Muslim nations, including for Pakistan's cause in Kashmir against India. However, the depiction of the pan-Islamic flavour has also posed several dilemmas for the country. The first of these is evident in Pakistan's dealing with the US, owing to the importance that the US attaches to non-proliferation.[36] Therefore, Islamabad has had to perform a tight balancing act in ratcheting up, or down, the intensity of the Islamic content of its nuclear enterprise.

Through the 1970s and 1980s, Pakistan had no compunctions in hailing the Islamic identity of its nuclear weapons. In fact, during the period when Pakistan was the frontline state for the US proxy war against the USSR in Afghanistan, Islamabad engaged in proliferation with open abandon. And, the US too was willing to even ignore/suppress information from its own intelligence agencies on the activities that were being undertaken by Islamabad. But, the stance changed substantially after 9/11 when Pakistan was compelled to join the US-led global war on terror and even more so after the AQ Khan revelations. Then onwards, Pakistan took pains to mellow the Islamic identity of the bomb and focussed more on signalling a firmer control and more responsible attitude towards its nuclear assets. Instead, for the American audience, the nuclear weapon has been consistently upheld

---

34. *Summary of World Broadcasts*, Part 3 (Asia Pacific) FE/3241, June 1, 1998, p. A1. Emphasis added.
35. Surendra Chopra and Kusum Lata Chadda, *Islamic Fundamentalism, Pakistan and the Muslim World* (New Delhi: Kanishka Publishers, 2009), p. 139.
36. It is a different matter that Washington has not hesitated to ignore, suppress, deny or overlook information on proliferation when it has not suited its national interest.

by the Pakistan Army as being necessary to meet the threat posed by the superior conventional military of India.

A second dilemma in portraying the weapon as belonging to the greater Islamic *ummah* is posed by the sectarian divides within the religion itself. For instance, while Zia was generally open to sharing the weapons technology with other Muslim nations, as a devout Sunni and follower of the Deobandi sect, he had misgivings about providing the technology to a Shia dominated Iran. It was Iran's offer of $3.2 billion to finance Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme in exchange for transfer of nuclear technology that proved to be a huge temptation.[37] According to a former Pakistan Cabinet Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan, Gen Beg had negotiated with Iran for a nuclear deal and had bragged that Iran was "willing to give whatever it takes".[38] The proliferation to Iran was justified on the basis that Tehran was facing a war with Iraq in the west, had the Soviets fighting in Afghanistan to its east, and was hemmed in by the US backed Sunni regimes in Islamabad, Riyadh, Amman and Cairo. Also, it was presumed that the "severely depleted and possibly irretrievably damaged" scientific community after the 1979 revolution would never be able to make much from the first generation uranium enrichment technology that Pakistan was planning to pass on to Tehran.

Over time, Iran's nuclear weapons ambitions came to be perceived as a threat to Saudi Arabia and there has been enough speculation on Pakistan being prepared to provide readymade nuclear weapons to Saudi Arabia in

While Zia was generally open to sharing the weapons technology with other Muslim nations, as a devout Sunni and follower of the Deobandi sect, he had misgivings about providing the technology to a Shia dominated Iran. It was Iran's offer of $3.2 billion to finance Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme in exchange for transfer of nuclear technology that proved to be a huge temptation.

37. "Iran's $3.2b Aid Offer for Sharing N-Knowhow Declined", *Dawn*, December 20, 1994.
38. Kathy Gannon, "Explosive Secrets from Pakistan", *Los Angeles Times*, January 30, 2004.

Pakistan's proliferation activities and its 'use' of the weapon for multiple purposes pose many challenges for the nuclear future. The single most important concern confronting international security in these times is the threat of nuclear terrorism.

order to provide nuclear deterrence against Iran.[39] A Saudi defector, Mohammed Abdalla al-Khilewi, the No 2 official in the Saudi mission to the UN, has claimed that Riyadh had paid up to $5 billion to Iraqi President Saddam Hussein to build it a nuclear weapon. But since this did not materialise, the country threw in its lot with Pakistan.[40] He produced documents to show that Riyadh helped bankroll Pakistan's clandestine nuclear project and signed a pact that ensured that in the event Saudi Arabia was attacked with nuclear weapons, Islamabad would immediately respond against the aggressor with its own nuclear arms. The widening Shia-Sunni divide in more recent times has brought new issues for the Islamic identity of Pakistan's nuclear weapons.

In more recent times, a third dilemma on how much Pakistan must showcase its Islamic identity as attached to the nuclear weapon has arisen in the context of the country's bid to present itself as a responsible nuclear power, ripe for membership of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG). Claiming parity with India in order to join the NSG, Pakistan has been trying to downplay its proliferation activities and, in this context, has had to dilute the Islamic identity of the bomb, a linkage that it was earlier more open to accepting.

FUTURE CHALLENGES

Pakistan's proliferation activities and its 'use' of the weapon for multiple

---

39. Amir Mir, "Is Pakistan Helping the Saudis with a Nuclear Deterrent", http://www.rediff.com, October 4, 2011.

40. In May 1999, Defence Minister Prince Sultan bin Abdul Aziz visited Pakistan's uranium enrichment and missile assembly factory and was briefed by Dr Khan. In 2005, the United Stated claimed to have acquired fresh evidence, suggesting that a broader government-to-government Pakistan-Saudi atomic collaboration is still on. Subsequent news reports in American media said that a chartered Saudi C-130 Hercules plane made scores of trips between Dhahran military base and several Pakistani cities, including Lahore and Karachi, between October 2003 and October 2004, and thereafter, considerable contacts were reported between Pakistani and Saudi Arabian nuclear scientists. Between October 2004 and January 2005, under the cover of Haj, several Pakistani scientists visited Riyadh, and remained missing from their designated hotels for 15 to 20 days.

purposes pose many challenges for the nuclear future. The single most important concern confronting international security in these times is the threat of nuclear terrorism. The US Nuclear Posture Review of 2010 placed this threat above others such as those arising from the nuclear weapons of Russia or other near-peers like China. The rationale for this change in the US' prioritisation of threat perceptions was the increasing evidence

A convergence of availability of nuclear weapons capability in a country that sponsors terrorism is obviously a huge challenge.

of the extent of the proliferation enterprise. Simultaneously, the American threat perceptions are also heightened by recognition of the fact that the ISI and the Pakistan Army deem the use of terrorism as a foreign policy tool. Therefore, they are engaged in the raising, training and sustaining of a number of terrorist outfits that today pose an equal threat to the USA, India, or Pakistan itself. A convergence of availability of nuclear weapons capability in a country that sponsors terrorism is obviously a huge challenge.

Every now and then, reports have surfaced on the interest of the Al Qaeda, and, more recently, of the Islamic State of Syria and Iraq (ISIS), in procuring nuclear weapons. The most concrete evidence of this was the reported meeting of the two Pakistani nuclear scientists Sultan Bashiruddin Mahmood and Chaudhiri Abdul Majeed with Osama bin Laden some time just before 9/11. They offered to be nuclear advisers to bin Laden, but he was keen to have the bomb rather than consultants. Whether this was a one-off instance, or there are others yet to be found in the shadows of the underworld of terrorism, can only be a matter of speculation. But there is no escaping the conclusion that the challenge of nuclear terrorism is accentuated when states possessing nuclear weapons are also sponsors of terrorism. One potent example of this is the fact that the two scientists mentioned earlier were allowed to set up charity organisations such as the Ummah Tameer-e-Nau (UTN), supposedly for providing medical and humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan. This organisation served as a cover for them to procure sensitive nuclear technology or materials since the nature of their declared activity exempted them from a UN embargo. On the US' insistence, when

A second challenge is posed by the example set by the Pakistani behaviour in showcasing the nuclear weapon as an effective bargaining chip. The use of the nuclear weapon or material for monetary benefits by governments in dire economic straits has been established by Pakistan, and subsequently demonstrated by North Korea too.

the organisational hierarchy of the UTN was investigated, it was found to include two senior Pakistani military officers, and a former Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) scientist known to have extensive links with the Taliban.[41] Gen Hamid Gul, the former head of the ISI, the chief orchestrator of terrorism from Pakistan was the honorary patron of the organisation. By the end of 2001, the US had found enough evidence to declare the UTN a terrorist organisation, but President Musharraf was never keen to follow through the investigations and dismissed any possibility of the two scientists having passed on any nuclear arms to the Taliban. It might well be true that *no nuclear weapon may have been physically passed on* in 2001, but the relationship between the nuclear scientists, who were described by an ISI investigator as "very motivated" and "extremist in their views,"[42] and terrorist organisations animated by the ideology of religious extremism, cannot be dismissed. The implications of this could only become more severe as information about greater radicalisation of the military and nuclear establishments of Pakistan comes in. It is not surprising, therefore, that nuclear terrorism remains high on the agenda of international security concerns. Even more worrisome is the reinforcement of the belief, especially since the start of the global war on terror, that Islam is under attack from the West.

A second challenge is posed by the example set by the Pakistani behavior in showcasing the nuclear weapon as an effective bargaining chip. The use of the nuclear weapon or material for monetary benefits by governments in dire economic straits has been established by Pakistan, and subsequently demonstrated by North Korea too. Given the current economic situation of

41. Levy and Scott-Clark, n.3, pp. 320-322.
42. *Washington Post*, December 12, 2001.

Pakistan, there could be players in influential places who may be tempted to do so again, including to the non-state actors, in order to make some money. As has been stated by a leading Pakistani journalist in his book, "When a nuclear state experiences nuclear difficulties, it sells nuclear technology to avert economic collapse…. When COAS General Aslam Beg was touting his 'strategic defiance' theories during the Gulf War, unsigned documents distributed by his media managers clearly mentioned the sale of nuclear technology to boost the economy under sanctions."[43] For the economic survival of the nation then, the sale of nuclear technology offers a lucrative possibility. This obviously does not bode well for non-proliferation since other countries could learn the same lessons.

The possibility of such an occurrence is further aided by the fact that no action at the international level has been taken to punish any of the proliferation activities of nations. Whether it was the initial proliferation from China to Pakistan or from Pakistan to other nations, despite the mounds of official documents on the subject, there has been a general tendency to brush this aside instead of confronting the actors and punishing them for the acts against international security.

Nuclear proliferation from Pakistan has not only caused direct harm in terms of material and technology transfers, but also considerable intangible damage by showcasing the value of the weapon as a political instrument for undertaking bargaining. Non-proliferation definitely becomes more difficult to sustain in such an environment. In order to stem future cases of proliferation, it is necessary to take steps that ensure a devaluation of the weapon, and Pakistan's actions have instead pushed the trend in the opposite direction. The inability and unwillingness of the international community to deal with this behaviour with a firm hand has led to the impression that countries with nuclear weapons can 'get away with' activities that may otherwise be considered unacceptable. International security will have to bear the consequences of this in the years to come.

---

43. Khaled Ahmed, *Religious Developments in Pakistan 1999-2008* (Lahore: Vanguard, 2010), p. 20.

CHINA IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC: RISING OPPORTUNITIES, DEEPENING CONCERNS

SANA HASHMI

INTRODUCTION

In the 1990s, the end of the bloc system and subsequently the end of the Cold War brought about remarkable alterations in the global order. However, since then, it is China's ambitious and much-talked about One Belt, One Road (OBOR) initiative which is changing the global discourse. Since the 1990s, China's rise has been one of the significant developments. China, one of the poorest countries in the 1960s, has become one of the most formidable economic as well as military powers today. With a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of approximately US\$ 10 trillion in 2016, it is the second largest economy in the world after the United States. It surpassed the economy of Japan to become the second largest economy in 2010. It is predicted that by 2018, China's contribution to the global GDP will surpass that of the United States and its economy will become more significant than that of the US.[1] Though this conclusion seems far-fetched, there is substantial evidence

Ms **Sana Hashmi** is a Consultant at the Ministry of the External Affairs, New Delhi.
Disclaimer: The views expressed are those of the author and do not represent the views of the Ministry of External Affairs and Government of India.

1. Mike Patton, "China's Economy will Overtake the US in 2018", *Forbes,* April 29, 2016, http://www.forbes.com/sites/mikepatton/2016/04/29/global-economic-news-china-will-surpass-the-u-s-in-2018/#1c2659a6474b. Accessed on March 4, 2017.

China's defence budget and military spending have also witnessed huge growth in the past two decades. As of 2016, China's defence budget stood at a whopping figure of US$ 152 billion, three times higher than that of India (US$53.5 billion) and four times less than that of the United States (US$ 654 billion).

indicating that China's economy will be stronger than the American economy in a decade or so. China is now referred to as the manufacturing hub of the world and is well integrated with other economies of the Asia-Pacific region. China's defence budget and military spending have also witnessed huge growth in the past two decades. As of 2016, China's defence budget stood at a whopping figure of US$ 152 billion, three times higher than that of India (US$53.5 billion) and four times less than that of the United States (US$ 654 billion). Over the years, the successful economic reforms by China's Paramount Leader, Deng Xiaoping, along with the consistently impressive growth output have helped China to build military capabilities, on the one hand, and raise its international profile by establishing trade relations with other countries and by using aid diplomacy to get closer to weaker neighbours, on the other.

China's rise as a major regional power has been inevitable. John Mearsheimer argues that like the rise of the United States in the 19th century, a rising China "would surely pursue regional hegemony" with its own Monroe Doctrine.[2] It is predicted that this Chinese Monroe Doctrine would push US forces out of the Asia-Pacific region.[3] At the least, China's economic clout in the Asia-Pacific has become unmatchable. After the 1997–98 Asian financial crisis, China emerged (or projected itself) as a responsible economic actor in the region.[4] In the words of Chinese President Xi Jinping, "China's interaction with the outside world has deepened.

---

2. John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001), p. 401.
3. John J. Mearsheimer, "The Gathering Storm: China's Challenge to US Power in Asia", *The Chinese Journal of International Politics*, vol. 3, no. 4, 2010, pp. 381-396.
4. Shaun Breslin, "Towards a Sino-centric Regional Order? Empowering China and Constructing Regional Order(s)", in Christopher M. Dent, ed., *China, Japan and Regional Leadership in East Asia*, (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2008), pp. 131-158.

And, indeed, we have friends all over the world".[5] With the successful launch of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa (BRICS) New Development Bank (NDB), China has proved that its policy has become more proactive and it has been successful in wooing several countries. This is particularly true in the context of the failure of the United States to stop its own allies, South Korea and Australia, from joining the AIIB. In addition, with US President Donald Trump's fading engagement with the Asia-Pacific and the acceptance of OBOR by close to 60 countries from three continents (Asia, Africa and Europe), the United States is losing its grip in the Asia-Pacific region.

China is not only the largest trading partner of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member countries, it is also the biggest source of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) for these countries. So is the case with China's cooperation with the countries of the Central Asian region.

CHINA'S RISE IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC

During the Cold War period, China's relations with the Asia-Pacific countries were inconsequential since most of the countries belonged to the non-Communist bloc and China was viewed as an exporter of Communism to the region. However, after the end of the Cold War, China re-initiated its 'good neighbourly policy' and attempted to improve relations with countries in its immediate neighbourhood. That was mainly because of the initiation of the economic reforms and repairing of its image amidst its rise. Other major reasons for initiating the good neighbourly policy were the Tiananmen Square incident and unrest in China's restive provinces, Xinjiang and Tibet. The countries of the Southeast Asian and Central Asian regions turned out to be the major focus areas for China. In fact, today,

5. Xi Jinping, "Keynote Speech by H.E. Xi Jinping, President of People's Republic of China, at the Opening Ceremony of B20 Summit: A New Starting Point for China's Development a New Blueprint for Global Growth", *People's Daily*, September 4, 2016, http://en.people.cn/n3/2016/0904/c90000-9110023.html. Accessed on April 5, 2017.

China is not only the largest trading partner of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member countries, it is also the biggest source of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) for these countries. So is the case with China's cooperation with the countries of the Central Asian region. With the success of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), China's presence in the region has become more formidable. Today, China may be considered to be as important a player as Russia, perhaps even more powerful than Russia when it comes to trade and investments in the Central Asian region. Some would argue that China's (economic as well as military) influence in the Central Asian region has gone up to the extent that it is now bigger than Russia's.

China's influence in the current Northeast Asian security scenario is equally significant. China is considered as the most important friend of North Korea, and has the ability to influence Kim Jong-un, the current leader of North Korea. More than 70 percent of North Korea's trade is with China; it is a significant partner of South Korea too. The significance of China in the Northeast Asian security environment is evident in the fact that China has been involved in the Six-Party Talks, which involve North Korea, South Korea, Japan, China, Russia and the United States, since April 2003 when these were convened for the first time. Therefore, it is regarded as a significant player to work towards regional stability, and a significant actor in putting pressure on Kim Jong-un to denuclearise the Korean peninsula.

While China has been successfully exercising influence in its neighbourhood and developing good relations with neighbours, it has also focussed on having a greater presence in the multilateral settings. China's attempts to make the SCO a success, its efforts in setting up the BRICS' NDB and the AIIB may be named as a few of these. China has also been successful in elevating its ties with organisations such as ASEAN and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). In addition, China is an active member of groups such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Partnership (APEC), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN Defence Minister's Meeting Plus (ADMM+) and East Asia Summit (EAS).

At the bilateral level, China has shown an impressive record in building strong ties with the United States' allies, including South Korea and Australia, to the extent that, today, these countries need to work to find a balance in their relations with the United States and China, rather than favouring just one side. While China has sovereignty issues in the East China Sea and South China Sea, it has not impacted their economic relations much. China is the largest trading partner of countries such as Japan, South Korea, and Australia.

As a consequence of its military and economic growth, China has also tried to exert its influence in the Asia-Pacific region. Clearly, it is rising in the international arena and is likely to make its presence felt in terms of altering the regional and international strategic equilibrium. Former United States President Barack Obama's rebalancing strategy towards Asia/pivot to Asia was, indeed, an attempt to stop that offset of balance in terms of strategic status quo. However, with the new president of the United States and China's ever-increasing push for OBOR, China is at the centre of the world stage.

UNITED STATES AS 'THE RESIDENT SUPERPOWER' IN THE REGION

Ever since the term Asia-Pacific came into existence, in geostrategic terms, it has been considered a United States-led region where it has been exercising unchallenged military superiority and significant economic influence. The Five-Power Defence Agreement and the formation of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO) during the Cold War days, the setting up of the APEC in 1989, the United States' rebalancing strategy or the pivot to Asia in 2009 and the Obama-led Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) demonstrated that the United States is interested in maintaining its steady presence in the Asia-Pacific. In addition, the United States is under obligation to support its allies in the Asia-Pacific region, namely, Taiwan, Japan, the Philippines, and Australia among others. Furthermore, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and Australia are dependent on the United States' nuclear umbrella for their national security.

Nevertheless, the situation is altering with the United States continuing to be the security provider to the countries of the region and China becoming

the economic guarantor of most of the countries. Though the United States' rebalancing to the Asia-Pacific region strengthened its military alliances with countries such as Japan, Australia and the Philippines, this has not only disturbed the strategic balance and relatively stable status in the region, but also intensified geopolitical conflicts as well as disputes over sovereignty and maritime rights and interests.[6] In fact, the United States is losing out on its allies in the region. There have been trust issues among these countries now and they doubt the United States' capability and willingness to counter and contain China in the region. To cite an example, for years, the Philippines sided with the United States to contain China in the Asia-Pacific region. However, of late, bilateral relations between the United States and the Philippines have encountered a low point with the coming of the new President of the Philippines, Rodrigo Duterte to power. He is infamous for making anti-United States statements. On September 28, 2016, during his visit to Vietnam, Duterte stated that he would inform the US, his country's long time ally, that joint exercises between the US and the Phillipines would no longer take place. Duterte said, "I will maintain the military alliance because there is an RP-US pact that our countries signed in the early 1950s." However, Duterte also said that he hopes to establish new trade and commercial alliances and the scheduled war games were something "which China does not want."[7] Further, in December 2016, he asked the United States "to prepare for repeal of an agreement on deployment of troops and equipment for exercises," declaring "bye-bye America", and "we do not need your money".[8] In fact, he has praised the Chinese leadership time and again. While taking a friendly stance towards Beijing, he lashed out at the United States for criticising his brutal campaign against illegal drugs; he also thanked President Xi Jinping for the renewed friendship and return of normal trade relations, terming

6. He Yafei, "New Security Order in the Asia-Pacific Region", *China Watch (China Today)*, September 2016, p. 16.
7. "Rodrigo Duterte to End Joint US and Philippine Military Drills", *The Guardian*, September 29, 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/sep/29/rodrigo-duterte-to-end-joint-us-and-philippine-military-drills. Accessed on March 24, 2017.
8. "Philippines' Duterte: 'Bye-Bye America' and We Don't Need Your Money", *Reuters*, December 16, 2016, http://www.reuters.com/article/us-philippines-usa-idUSKBN14528Q. Accessed on March 27, 2017.

the Chinese leader as very kind.[9] Strengthening economic and military ties with China would be beneficial for the development of the Southeast Asian country, hence, he will be more inclined to improve relations with China and may also opt for bilateral talks on the issue of the South China Sea. In the past, he has also expressed willingness to elevate ties with Russia.

Also, with the coming of Trump to power, the United States' Asia-Pacific policy has gone haywire. Trump not only withdrew from the TPP negotiations, but has been quite ambiguous with respect to his East Asia policy. Annoying China by accepting a congratulatory call from Taiwan's President, Tsai Ing-wang and later taking a U-turn on the One-China policy may be cited as examples. This uncertainty is sending mixed signals to the United States' allies. Trump's preoccupations at home mean that the United States will be less engaged with regional and global issues, and this hands an advantage to China.[10] It is in this context that countries such as Australia and South Korea are wary of the United States' retrenchment from the region and fear being forced to choose between the United States and China.[11] In fact, Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, in February 2017, stated, "If America-China relations become very difficult, our position becomes tougher because then we will be coerced to choose between being friends with America and being friends with China. That's a real worry."[12] The probable withdrawal of the United States under the Trump Administration will make the countries of the Asia-Pacific region realise that the United States will not be diplomatically present when China again resorts to assertiveness on the issues of the South and East China Seas.[13] However, amidst OBOR, the possibility of such an act is bleak.

9. "Rodrigo Duterte To US: Why Did You Not Send The Armada?", *Al Jazeera*, March 29, 2017, http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/03/duterte-confronts-china-man-islands-170329143607042.html. Accessed on March 20, 2017.
10. Shyam Saran, "In Year Four, Modi's Foreign Policy Needs Some Course Correction", *The Wire*, May 29, 2017, https://thewire.in/140933/modi-foreign-policy-course-correction/. Accessed on May 29, 2017.
11. David Shambaugh et al, "Assessing US-Asia Relations in a Time of Transition", The National Bureau of Asian Research, Asia Policy 23, January 2017, p. 2.
12. Nyshka Chandran, "Singapore PM Offers Blunt Assessment of US Relationship", *CNBC*, February 28, 2017, http://www.cnbc.com/2017/02/28/singapore-pm-on-us-china-relationship-we-must-choose-sides.html. Accessed on May 24, 2017.
13. For detailed analysis of China-United States relations under the Trump Administration, see Sana Hashmi, "Prospects of China-United States Relations under Trump's Administration", *Defence and Diplomacy*, vol. 6, no. 2, January-March 2017, pp. 35-44.

There are no doubts that the United States wanted to be pronounced a Pacific Power, but the shift away from Middle East is yet to take place in entirety, though the Obama Administration had attempted to exhibit the United States' interest in the Asia-Pacific region in the past seven years.

INTENSIFYING CHINA-US COMPETITION IN ASIA-PACIFIC

The United States has particularly been a major factor in shaping the Asia-Pacific security and economic architecture since the end of the Cold War. The rise of Asian powers such as China and India, as also changes in Japan's approach towards the Asia-Pacific, have further influenced the regional strategic and economic dynamics. Of late, the Asia-Pacific region has turned into a fertile ground of hostilities as well as cooperation. The role of China has evidently been one of the major game changers in the Asian power politics. China's influence on its neighbours, territorial disputes with some of them which also happen to be US' allies, and its attempts to shape the regional order in its favour have led to the popular perception among the policy-makers, media houses as well as strategic experts that the China-United States rivalry in the Asia-Pacific is rising at an unprecedented pace, and has the potential to bring the two major powers into a fierce competition. There have also been intense debates on the rise of China and its possible implications for the United States.

While the current United States Administration seems to be more focussed on domestic issues, former United States' President Barack Obama had taken several landmark decisions during his tenure. The lifting of the sanctions from Myanmar and his visit to Vietnam may be named in this context. In order to re-strengthen its foothold in the Asia-Pacific region, the United States introduced its rebalancing to Asia strategy. Rebalancing to Asia marked a clear shift in the orientation of the United States foreign policy under President Barack Obama's Administration. Some would also like to argue that the attempt was a part of the United States' decision to shift from a Middle East-centric foreign policy to an Asia-Pacific-centric one. In addition, it was a new phase in its foreign policy, away from its so-called

war on terror. As soon as President Obama assumed power in 2009, he chose Japan for his maiden Asian visit and proclaimed himself as "America's first Pacific President". There are no doubts that the United States wanted to be pronounced a Pacific Power, but the shift away from Middle East is yet to take place in entirety, though the Obama Administration had attempted to exhibit the United States' interest in the Asia-Pacific region in the past seven years. In November 2011, then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton gave a speech titled "America's Pacific Century" wherein she remarked:[14]

It is becoming increasingly clear that in the 21st century, the world's strategic and economic centre of gravity will be the Asia-Pacific, from the Indian subcontinent to the western shores of the Americas.

> The Obama Administration embraced the importance of the Asia-Pacific region. It is becoming increasingly clear that in the 21st century, the world's strategic and economic centre of gravity will be the Asia-Pacific, from the Indian subcontinent to the western shores of the Americas. And one of the most important tasks of American statecraft over the next decades will be to lock in a substantially increased investment – diplomatic, economic, strategic, and otherwise – in this region… And there are challenges facing the Asia-Pacific right now that demand America's leadership, from ensuring freedom of navigation in the South China Sea to countering North Korea's provocations and proliferation activities to promoting balanced and inclusive economic growth.

In the 2012 Shanghri-La dialogue, then US Secretary of Defence Leon Panetta expressed the United States' rejuvenated interest in the Asia-Pacific and outlined the detailed features of the rebalancing strategy. He stated:[15]

---

14. Hillary Rodham Clinton, "America's Pacific Century", US Department of State, (November 10, 2011, http://www.state.gov/secretary/20092013clinton/rm/2011/11/176999. Accessed on December 6, 2016.

15. Leon Panetta, "The US Rebalance Towards the Asia-Pacific: Leon Panetta", *The IISS Shangri-La Dialogue*, June 2, 2012, http://www.iiss.org/en/events/shangri la dialogue/archive/sld12-43d9/first-plenary-session-2749/leon-panetta-d67b. Accessed on March 3, 2017.

In the 21st century, the United States recognises that our prosperity and our security depends even more on the Asia-Pacific region… The United States will play a larger role in this region over the decades to come. We take on this role not as a distant power, but as part of the Pacific family of nations. Our goal is to work closely with all the nations of this region to confront common challenges and to promote peace, prosperity, and security for all nations in the Asia-Pacific region... Our approach to achieving the long-term goal in the Asia-Pacific is to stay firmly committed to a basic set of shared principles – principles that promote international rules and order to advance peace and security in the region, deepening and broadening our bilateral and multilateral partnerships, enhancing and adapting the United States military's enduring presence in this region, and to make new investments in the capabilities needed to project power and operate in the Asia-Pacific.

Apart from statements by the officials, US leaders have made several visits to the countries of the region. The most recent as well as landmark visit was by President Obama to Vietnam in May 2016. He became the third American president to visit Vietnam since the restoration of bilateral diplomatic relations between the two countries in 1995. During his visit, President Obama also announced lifting of the arms embargo from Vietnam. These sanctions were imposed on Vietnam for several decades. However, in 2014, the Obama Administration eased the decades-old arms embargo to allow its former Cold War enemy to buy maritime surveillance and "security-related" systems to strengthen it, with China in mind.[16] Clearly, China's rise in the Asia-Pacific is one of the major factors in bringing the United States and Vietnam closer. Vietnam is finding it difficult to deal with an increasingly assertive China. The oil rigs put up by China near the Vietnamese claimed waters, and its uncompromising attitude on the Spratly and Paracel Islands dispute in the South China Sea make the situation grim for Vietnam. Understanding that it cannot militarily counter China alone, it has attempted to align its strategic priorities with the United States.

16. Matt Spetalnick, "US Lifts Arms Ban on Old Foe Vietnam as China Tensions Simmer", *Reuters*, May 23, 2016, http://www.reuters.com/article/us-vietnam-obama-idUSKCN0YD050. Accessed on May 30, 2016.

Amid China's rise, questions have inevitably arisen about the sustainability and credibility of the United States' alliances in the Asia-Pacific region and it now faces real challenges in keeping its shrinking financial and military resources in alignment with its commitments in the region.[17] To be sure, the United States will remain one of the powerful military forces in Asia for a long time to come, but its forward presence is coming under stress amidst the proliferation of advanced military capabilities in the littoral and the adoption of asymmetric strategies by its competitors, most notably China and Iran.[18]

To substantiate that the presence of the United States is waning in the Asia-Pacific, it is apt to cite the father of Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew who believed that China's rise is inevitable. On being asked about whether the United States can stop China's rise, Lee Kuan Yew remarked: [19]

> The United States cannot stop China's rise. It just has to live with a bigger China, which will be completely novel for the United States, since no country has ever been big enough to challenge its position. It is not possible to pretend that this is just another big player. This is the biggest player in the history of the world. Must this necessarily lead to war? No: This is not the Cold War. The Soviet Union was contesting the United States for global supremacy. China is acting purely as China in its own national interests. Current situation would not lead to war between the United States and China.

United States President Trump, it seems, has made the job of the Chinese easier. With the withdrawal from the TPP, he has already allowed China to increase its economic reach to the countries of the region.

---

17. C. Raja Mohan, "India and Australia: Maritime Partners in the Indo-Pacific", *Asia Link* (University of Melbourne), http://asialink.unimelb.edu.au/asialink_diplomacy/commentary-and-research/the_asialink_essays/past/india_and_australia_maritime_partners_in_the_indo-pacific. Accessed on June 15, 2016.
18. Ibid.
19. Graham Allison, "The Thucydides Trap: Are the US and China Headed for War?", *The Atlantic,* September 24, 2015, http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/09/united-states-china-war-thucydides-trap/406756/. Accessed on May 4, 2016/

CHINA'S RESPONSE AND INFLUENCE IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC

To counter the United States' rebalancing strategy, China came up with its own connectivity initiative, OBOR. The Chinese have left no stone unturned to ensure that the United States does not expand its influence in the region which would directly be a threat to China's interests. While for the rebalancing strategy, China introduced OBOR; for the TPP, China urged ASEAN to fast-track the negotiations for the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP); and for the United States-dominated World Bank and Japan-led Asian Development Bank, China has floated the AIIB. And such initiatives have so far been successful. For instance, with the United States' withdrawal, the future trajectory of the TPP is uncertain given that the deal would have had to be ratified by February 2018 by at least six countries that account for 85 percent of the group's economic output and the United States would need to be on board to meet that last condition.[20] With respect to OBOR, already 65 countries are on board.

OBOR is China's attempt to link with the neighbourhood as also with countries of the West Asian and European region. With the help of the Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB) and the 21st century Maritime Silk Road (MSR), China wants to build infrastructure and connectivity links with the countries of three regions, at least. While several countries have supported the idea, there are countries such as Japan that do not find the OBOR initiative transparent. India too has not yet supported OBOR on the ground and thinks that it is not a transparent system. Also, India has concerns about the controversial and much-talked about China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) that passes through the disputed Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (PoK). The successful implementation of the projects under OBOR will bolster China's presence in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), which is also a concern for India. Noticeably, OBOR, once fully implemented, will enable China to strengthen its foothold in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond. It will act as a catalyst to China's unchallenged and unprecedented presence in the region.

---

20. "TPP: What is it And Why Does it Matter?", *BBC*, January 23, 2017, http://www.bbc.com/news/business-32498715. Accessed on May 3, 2017.

However, the China-led AIIB initiative has attracted the attention of the international community, and countries across the world, including India and South Korea, that have supported the AIIB. In fact, India is well represented in AIIB as an Indian has been appointed a vice president and chief investment officer in the bank. The primary aim of the AIIB is to provide funds for infrastructural initiatives in Asia and improve connectivity amongst the countries of the continent. Headquartered in Beijing, the bank is expected to play a key role in plugging the infrastructure gaps in Asia, which have been estimated at US$ 8 trillion between the years 2010 and 2020.[21] While the AIIB is an attempt by the Chinese leadership to promote China's economic influence across the world, OBOR aims to achieve China's politico-strategic and soft power influence through strengthening of regional and global integration; therefore, the AIIB and OBOR initiatives have the potential to challenge the United States' economic hegemony in the Asia-Pacific in the long run.[22] To keep its presence strong in the region in economic terms, China has also come up with the proposal of the Free Trade Area in the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP). The idea behind that is to improve economic linkages amongst the APEC member countries. The ASEAN-led RCEP gives China an opportunity to be part of the East Asian regional economic integration mechanism, but that is definitely not enough for China, which has global ambitions.

While China has been trying hard to cooperate effectively with the countries of the region, concerns about its rise and assertive behaviour loom large. A major trouble area for China and its rising influence in the Asia Pacific region is the South China Sea dispute. The dispute has put Southeast Asian countries such as Vietnam and the Philippines at loggerheads with China. Moreover, the ongoing dispute and uncompromising approach and antagonistic stand on the part of both China and the disputants have brought the United States into the situation. The United States is a firm supporter of freedom of navigation in the South China Sea. There has already been a tussle between the United States and China

---

21. Rahul Mishra, "Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank: An Assessment", *India Quarterly,* vol. 72, no. 2, 2016, pp. 1-14.
22. Ibid.

In May 2017, a US Navy warship sailed within 12 nautical miles of an artificial island built up by China in the South China Sea, the first such challenge to Beijing in the strategic waterway since President Donald Trump took office, marking the latest attempt to counter what Washington sees as Beijing's efforts to limit freedom of navigation in the strategic waters.

in the Asia-Pacific and the Chinese have referred to this interference by the United States as intervention in China's internal matters. Further, China's land reclamation activities in the South China Sea and its stern insistence on going for a bilateral approach for the resolution of the dispute are adding to the problem. Amid such issues, the moves of the United States in the Asia-Pacific overshadow China's strategic reach and influence in the region.[23] Another problematic area for China is the concern of the countries of the Asia-Pacific region over China's inability to persuade North Korea to give up its nuclear programme. Countries such as Japan and South Korea have accused China of mishandling the issue and there is a sense of wariness towards it vis-a-vis North Korea's nuclear ambitions. Additionally, Australia has been raising concerns over the Chinese overtures in the region. At the 2017 Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore, Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull stated, "It is natural that Beijing will seek strategic influence to match its economic weight. But we want to see China fill the leadership role it desires in a way which strengthens the regional order that has served us all so well. It would be a dark future if China isolated those who stand in opposition to its interests while using its economic largesse to reward those toeing the line".[24] Such lingering issues have long-term implications for China's image in the region.

---

23. Robert G. Sutter, "China's Rise in Asia: Promises, Prospects and Implications for the United States", *Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies Occasional Paper Series,* February 2005, p. 5.
24. Dennis Shanahan, "Turnbull Warns China to Play by the Rules", *The Australian,* June 3, 2017, http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/foreign-affairs/turnbull-warns-china-to-play-by-the-rules/news-story/ed82fa8feeaa9fbed783bc06437a3f08. Accessed on June 3, 2017.

CONCLUSION

The level and scope of China's influence and profile in the Asia-Pacific are not likely to go down in the years to come. China's interests in the region are much broader and important than they have ever been before. With its Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st century MSR programme, along with AIIB, BRICS, NDB, FTAAP, and RCEP, China is likely to remain closely integrated in the political and economic dynamics of the Asia-Pacific. Obviously, because of these initiatives or

China is likely to remain a major player in the Asia-Pacific region and will do everything to increase its clout. Assessing China's profile in the Asia-Pacific, it can be safely said that today's China is firmly positioned as a major power in the Asia-Pacific, a position it did not have just two decades ago.

participation in these regional multilateral initiatives, it is highly likely that the competition between China and the United States will get intensified, and the United States is working hard to contain China's influence. Despite the fact that President Donald Trump is less confrontational than his predecessors, the Asia-Pacific will remain one of the most important areas in America's foreign policy. In May 2017, a US Navy warship sailed within 12 nautical miles of an artificial island built up by China in the South China Sea, the first such challenge to Beijing in the strategic waterway since President Donald Trump took office, marking the latest attempt to counter what Washington sees as Beijing's efforts to limit freedom of navigation in the strategic waters.[25] Such incidents will continue to take place and the friction between the two countries will be here to stay.

Nonetheless, China's influence in the Asia-Pacific region will also be determined by how its handles its own initiatives and participates in regional ones. It must be cautioned that its aggressive stand on the lingering territorial disputes in the South China Sea and with India along the boundary would only weaken its position and pose challenges to its image in the region,

---

25. "US Warship Challenges China's Claims in South China Sea", *Al Jazeera,* May 25, 2017, http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/05/warship-challenges-china-claims-south-china-sea-170525021338426.html. Accessed on May 25, 2017.

thereby working in favour of the United States' interests. Such behaviour on China's part has the potential to limit China's influence in the region. While China's own initiatives have plenty of potential for their materialisation, that too would depend on its position in the region.

To sum up, as China aspires to become a dominant power, the Asia-Pacific is a focal point of China's ambitions to become a global power from being a well-placed regional power. Considering the ongoing trends and the fact that Asia-Pacific is at the heart of OBOR, specifically the MSR, it is clear that China is likely to remain a major player in the Asia-Pacific region and will do everything to increase its clout. Assessing China's profile in the Asia-Pacific, it can be safely said that today's China is firmly positioned as a major power in the Asia-Pacific, a position it did not have just two decades ago.

CHINA'S WESTERN THEATRE COMMAND: IMPLICATIONS FOR INDIA

TEMJENMEREN AO

INTRODUCTION

The military reforms currently underway in China are leading to a major overhaul of the prevailing Chinese military system. While the process was initiated in January 2016, over the course of the past year and a half, what seems to have emerged is a major shake-up of the military structure, unlike the ones witnessed in the past. With the dissolution of the four very powerful General Departments, namely the General Staff Department, General Political Department, General Logistics Department and the General Armament Department, these have been replaced by 15 functional units. These 15 functional units have been divided into three categories – seven departments, three commissions and five affiliated offices. The intent of this is to ensure more accountability and transparency in the running of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) administration.

Further, there is also the introduction of new divisions within the Services, along with the upgradation of an existing division into a fully independent Service in the case of the PLA Second Artillery Corps into the PLA Rocket Force. Similarly, there is also the establishment of a new entity called the

Dr **Temjenmeren Ao** is a Research Fellow at the Indian Council of World Affairs, New Delhi.

PLA Strategic Support Force (PLASSF) for carrying out cyber and technical reconnaissance, including information warfare. This has been established after the closure of the four General Departments that were under the Central Military Commission (CMC). In this, the PLA General Staff Headquarters was responsible for collecting military information and overseeing military intelligence collection, and the Foreign Affairs Bureau of the former PLA General Political Department was responsible for political warfare and propaganda, carrying out technical reconnaissance, cyber intelligence and electronic warfare. It can be said that the newly established entity, PLASSF, would act as an information umbrella for the various military Services. These are ongoing reform processes and are expected to be completed only by 2020; it is only then that we would have a clearer picture.

The newly established Western Theatre Command (TC) is more of a concern for India and this paper attempts to look into some of the possible threats that could emerge from this development. This threat perception is based on the assumption that a unified theatre command along with the various military reforms that are under way would create a more cohesive, agile and lethal PLA force. Given the relations between India and China— along with the persisting territorial dispute – it becomes imperative for India to study these developments carefully and gear up in terms of its own defensive as well as its offensive capabilities.

THE WESTERN THEATRE COMMAND

One of the major outcomes of the ongoing military reform process is the restructuring of China's seven Military Regions (MRs) into the more American military styled and oriented Theatre Commands (TCs), leading to the reconfiguration of the seven MRs into five TCs. Each of these five new TCs will focus on combat operations and enhancing joint training of subordinate forces based on war-time missions. The formation of the five TCs will ensure better streamlining and the quick and more efficient deployment of military assets on land, air and sea. Furthermore, unlike the old MR system that was oriented for multi-layered defence, the new TCs are for head-on and proactive defence.

Fig 1: Representative Western Theatre Command in the Map of China[1]

The new commands include the Eastern TC based on the former Nanjing MR responsible for Taiwan operations and territorial disputes with Japan; the Southern TC, based on the Guangzhou MR, responsible for operations against Vietnam and the South China Sea region, as well as providing forces for operations in a Taiwan conflict; the Northern TC based on Shenyang MR plus Inner Mongolia and Shandong provinces, responsible for responding to potential instability on the Korean peninsula or possibly supporting operations against Japan; and the Central TC, based on the Beijing and Jinan MRs, with responsibility for capital defence and serving as a strategic reserve to reinforce the other theatres. The Western TC is the largest of the five commands in terms of size as it encompasses almost half of China's

1. China Map, "Maps of China", http://www.mapsofworld.com/china/. Accessed on March 30, 2017.

One major inference from the ongoing PLA military reorganisation is that the PLA Army has managed to retain its traditional control over the PLA – with many of the army generals being just reshuffled into the various departments, including being given charge over the newly formed TCs – mainly to ensure continuity during this reform transition and prevent dissent within the ranks and Services.

land territory. The map in Fig 1 is a rough representation of the area covered under the newly formed Western TC.

The Western TC has been established by merging the former Chengdu and Lanzhou MRs, and would represent the most expansive amongst the newly established Theatre Commands, with complex internal and external operational requirements, as it covers the entire Indian subcontinent, including the countries along the Mekong river. The Western TC, headquartered in Chengdu, includes the services, departments and other specialised elements. Embedded into this TC would be the ground forces from the army, all air support, including combat and defence from the PLA Air Force (PLAAF) and the additional missile support force from the PLA Rocket Force. There would also be the PLA Strategic Support Force that would provide an information umbrella in order to ensure information symmetry and, thus, ensure coordination during the conduct of military operations. However, it must be reiterated here that since the reform is still an ongoing process, each TC established will require some time to fully transition from the army dominated MR Headquarters (HQ) towards establishing joint commands since it will take a considerable amount of time for the now integrated Services to gain familiarity, as well as train personnel, in their newly joint positions. Furthermore, one major inference from the ongoing PLA military reorganisation is that the PLA Army has managed to retain its traditional control over the PLA – with many of the army generals being just reshuffled into the various departments, including being given charge over the newly formed TCs – mainly to ensure continuity during this reform transition and prevent dissent within the ranks and Services. The next decade could see some changes in this trend, with the first major overhaul

of the CMC due in 2017, when as many as half of the present generals will retire. Furthermore, we have the former PLAAF chief, Gen Xu Qiliang, who has been appointed as one of the two vice-chairmen of the CMC, with President Xi Jinping as the chairman. This indicates a further change in the structure of the PLA in the future, with a more diverse representation from the various Services of the PLA.

PLA Army Deployment

The commander of the Western TC is Army Gen Zhao Zongqi, former commander of the Jinan MR. Gen Zhao had participated in combat against Vietnam, served as commander of the 52nd Mountain Brigade in the early 1990s, and was commander of the 14th Group Army (GA). These experiences provided him extensive

The Western TC, with its headquarters in Chengdu, came as a consequence of the merging of the Lanzhou MR with the Chengdu MR. The Chengdu-based Western TC is already experienced in steering the military operations of the Tibet military command – whose status had been elevated in 2016 by one level compared to other provincial-level military districts placed under the PLA Army – while most provincial-level military districts are under the National Defence Mobilisation Department of the CMC, with responsibility for reserves, militia and conscription.

operational knowledge of mountain warfare, which will be valuable while dealing with the topography of the region under the Western TC.[2] Gen Zhao came to India for an official visit on December 8, 2016. During his three-day visit, he met the Indian Chief of the Army Staff (COAS), the deputy chief as well as the Eastern Army Commander, Lt Gen Praveen Bakshi. In the meetings, both sides agreed to pay attention to the cooperation between the PLA Western TC and the Indian military. The two sides also agreed to jointly implement the important consensus reached by the leaders of the

---

2. Kevin McCauley, "Snapshot: China's Western Theater Command", *China Brief,* The Jamestown Foundation, vol. 17, issue: 1, https://jamestown.org/program/snapshot-chinas-western-theater-command/. Accessed on March 30, 2017.

two countries and the relevant agreements between the two countries and militaries, promote mutual understanding, enhance pragmatic cooperation, safeguard peace and stability in the border areas and try their level best to make positive contributions towards the healthy and stable development in the relations between the two countries and their militaries. It must be realised that the Western TC, with its headquarters in Chengdu, came as a consequence of the merging of the Lanzhou MR with the Chengdu MR. The Chengdu-based Western TC is already experienced in steering the military operations of the Tibet military command – whose status had been elevated in 2016 by one level compared to other provincial-level military districts placed under the PLA Army – while most provincial-level military districts are under the National Defence Mobilisation Department of the CMC, with responsibility for reserves, militia and conscription. The military action in the Tibet military command requires specialist mountain skills and long-range capabilities, which need the deployment of special military resources; the selection of Gen Zhao is very strategic, given his experience in operating in this kind of topography that includes desert and high mountains.[3]

The Tibet Military Command will be responsible for operations against India, at least in the Arunachal Pradesh area, training forces for specialised high-altitude mountain warfare and long-range mobility for any future military contingency. Further, the Xinjiang Military District is also under PLA Army command. Some of the main army units that would be under the Western TC are the 13th, 47th and 21st Group Armies (GAs) typically consisting of 46,300 troops and up to four divisions that include infantry, armour, artillery, air defence, airborne, and air support elements. The 47th GA is a 'Category B', unit indicating that it still has outdated equipment and is smaller than the 'Category A' army unit. It is headquartered in Lintong, Shaanxi, and comprises a division of motorised infantry brigade, an armoured brigade, an anti-aircraft artillery brigade and an artillery brigade

---

3. Atul Aneja, "Head of China's Western Theater Command Vists India", *The Hindu*, December 15, 2016, http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/Head-of-China%E2%80%99s-Western-Theater-Command-visits-India/article16833513.ece. Accessed on April 13, 2017.

with speciality in operating in complex terrain.[4] The 21st GA is a 'Category A' unit, well-endowed for defensive as well as offensive capabilities along with a mobile force.[5] Both the 47th and 21st GA units were originally from the former Lanzhou MR that represents the troublesome regions of Tibet and Xinjiang, as well as minding the long borders with India. The 13th GA, formerly of the Chengdu MR, is much better equipped than the 14th GA that was allocated to the Southern TC. It has superior mobility, which is appropriate since it must cover a larger swathe of territory.[6] The 13th GA consists of two divisions, an armoured brigade, an anti-aircraft artillery brigade, a field artillery brigade and a communications regiment. The unit is considered to be a 'Category A' unit, indicating that the 13th GA's subordinate units are fully trained and have been fully equipped with modern weapons.[7] Its inclusion into the Western TC indicates that the Indian frontier is the primary area for any future combat operations, while the other two GAs would lend support.

PLA Rocket Force Deployment
The PLA Rocket force is an upgrade of the PLA Second Artillery Corps (SAC) – an outcome of the ongoing PLA military reform. The PLA Rocket Force has become an independent service under the CMC and has been defined as "the strategic deterrent for the PLA" by President Xi. It will absorb all conventional as well as nuclear weapons carrying missiles under one command and will command all the three legs of China's nuclear triad that include its strategic bombers, intercontinental ballistic missiles and submarine launched ballistic missiles. The former PLA SAC was the component of the PLA that controlled China's nuclear ballistic and conventional missiles.

---

4. "47th Group Army", *Global Security.org,* http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/china/47ga.htm. Accessed on April 6, 2017.
5. "Group Armies/Combined Corps", *Global Security.org,* http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/china/ga.htm. Accessed on April 6, 2017.
6. Gordon Arthur, "PLA Theatre Commands Outlined", *Shephard,* http://www.shephardmedia.com/news/defence-notes/pla-theatre-commands-outlined/. Accessed on March 29, 2017.
7. "13th Group Army or Chuan Army", *Global Security.org,* http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/china/13ga.htm. Accessed on April 6, 2017.

The PLA Rocket Force has become an independent service under the CMC and has been defined as "the strategic deterrent for the PLA" by President Xi. It will absorb all conventional as well as nuclear weapons carrying missiles under one command.

In the past, because of budget constraints and a primary focus on homeland defence, China focussed more on its missile arsenal as against the modernisation of its other Services such as its air force. This meant that discussions on the use of air power by China were confined to neutralising an attacking air force through the use of anti-aircraft artillery, missiles, and forms of information warfare, such as jamming enemy targeting systems, and so on. This provided the platform for the PLA to build a well-endowed missile defensive as well as offensive capability. Thus, even before the official establishment of the PLA SAC on June 6, 1966, the Surface-to-Surface Missile (SSM) units were under the PLA artillery corps. China's total nuclear arsenal size is estimated to be about 240 nuclear weapons, with about 180 of them actively deployed. The SAC comprised approximately 90,000-120,000 personnel and six ballistic missile brigades.[8] With the upgradation of the PLA SAC into the PLA Rocket Force, there would also be integration of the triad of China's nuclear carrying capacity, that is, the submarines, missiles, and strategic bombers. This would further create cohesiveness in terms of deployment and operations in the event of a conflict.

Fig 2 shows a rough representative map of China's current deployment of the PLA Rocket Force missile bases in the Western TC. India's concern is with Base 56 in Xining, Qinghai, and Base 53 in Kunming, Yunnan, which, post the formation of the theatre commands, comes under the single Western Theatre Command. The area is well connected through China's high speed railway line between Lanzhou and Lhasa (represented by the broken bold lines in Fig 3) that would

---

8. "PLA Second Artillery Corps", *Scholar Warrior,* Centre for Land Warfare Studies, Spring 2011, http://www.claws.in/images/journals_doc/Spring%202011-%20Final%20Issue.41-42.pdf. Accessed on April 3, 2017.

make for quick deployment of men and equipment in the case of any military operations. Furthermore, the area is also well connected with roadways, as highlighted by the broad bold lines, connecting to Lhasa; these are all-weather roads and there is also the Lhasa-Kathmandu roadway (part of the Sino-Nepal Friendship Highway) shown by the bold black line. Another major roadway is from Nagqu to the provincial capital, Chengdu; this road network would be of great strategic significance in the case of a Sino-India conflict, as it would ensure the quick mobility and deployment of troops and equipment.

Fig 2: Representative Map of China's Missile Base, High Speed Railway Lines and Roadways[9]

9. n. 1.

Base 53 in Kunming is more of a concern due to its proximity to India; the facility was the headquarters for one of the six divisions of the former Second Artillery Corps, with SSM related installations at Tienwei and another missile complex eleven nautical miles southwest of Kunming. The images taken by US imagery intelligence satellites in 1996 had revealed that large scale training on the DF-3 was being undertaken at the Kunming missile training facility. The US Air Force (USAF) also acquired a videotape of the exercises that involved three launch units practising to use the DF-3. The missile garrison near Kunming was one of six DF-3 deployment areas, operational as of early 1998, with a total of eight missiles deployed. The 80303 Unit, headquartered in the eastern suburbs of Kunming, Yunnan province, has two brigades. One of the brigades is equipped with DF-21s, located in Chuxiong, approximately 100 km west of Kunming, while the other is located at Jianshui, south of Kunming. These missiles have the range to engage several targets in India and Southeast Asia.[10] Further, Kunming, under Yunnan province, is densely populated, with the largest number of ethnic minorities in China who do not seek any kind of political separation from the Mainland, unlike in the Tibet Autonomous Region and Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region. This makes the region very stable, and being well connected to the more developed eastern sectors of China, can provide a strong lifeline in the case of any sustained military engagement.

PLA Air Force Deployment
The PLAAF was established on November 11, 1949, with its headquarters in Beijing. Since its establishment, the PLAAF's primary responsibility has been the territorial air defence for China's major cities. Like the US Air Force (USAF), the PLAAF was founded as part of China's army. However, unlike the USAF which has developed employment concepts and doctrine independent of the US Army, the PLAAF's doctrine, despite

10. "Kunming Base 53/ 3 Division 25°04′N 102°41′E", *GlobalSecurity.Org* http://www. globalsecurity.org/wmd/world/china/kunming.htm. Accessed on April 3, 2017.

progression since 1949, has struggled to move out of the army's shadow. The PLAAF doctrine has mostly evolved in step with that of the PLA ground forces. However, the Gulf War of 1991 and the Taiwan Strait crisis of 1996 renewed the Chinese military strategies to further modernise their air force capabilities as well as enhance the air force's role during military operations. Thus, the ongoing PLA reform, along with China's own internal as well as external engagements such as its military outreach in the East and South China Seas have today further enhanced the role of the PLAAF within the PLA. With the abolishment of the seven MRs, today, we have the PLAAF, like the other Services, also getting embedded into the five newly created theatre commands.

The ongoing PLA reform, along with China's own internal as well as external engagements such as its military outreach in the East and South China Seas have today further enhanced the role of the PLAAF within the PLA. With the abolishment of the seven MRs, today, we have the PLAAF, like the other Services, also getting embedded into the five newly created theatre commands.

The map of China in Fig 3 shows the existing PLAAF divisions within the Western TC. Starting from the top, we have the 37th Fighter Division in the west, which is based in Urumqi in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region; the 6th Fighter Division in Yinchua, which is the capital of the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region; the 36th Bomber Division at Lintong, that is one of the nine districts of Xi'an – the capital of Shaanxi province; the 4th Transport Division in Qionglai – a county level city under the jurisdiction of Chengdu in Sichuan province; and, finally, we have the 33rd Fighter Division at Dazu, a district under Chongqing in Sichuan province.

Fig 3: PLAAF's Divisions in the Western Theatre Command[11]
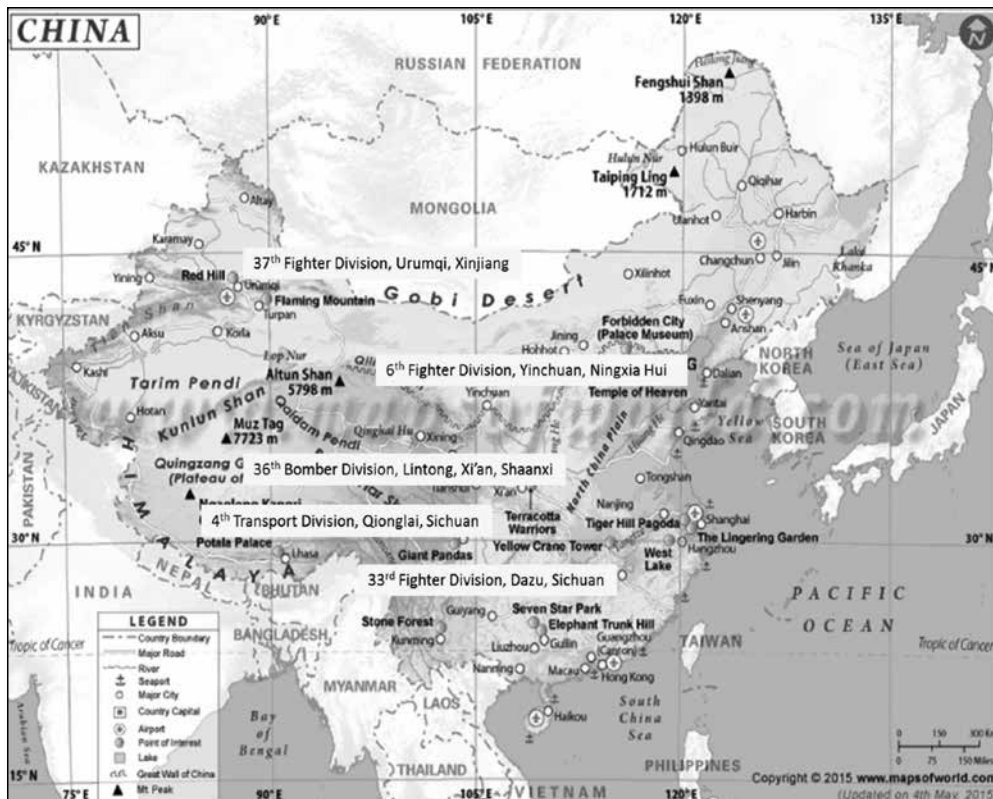
The integration of the former Lanzhou MR (that covered the Xinjiang and Aksai Chin sectors) with the Chengdu MR (that covered the Tibetan region) has led to the unification of these PLAAF divisions under the command of a unified Western Theatre Command that would incorporate the Services from the PLA Rocket Force, along with the necessary tactical and information support from the PLA Strategic Support Force, creating a cohesive unit as well as a more agile and lethal entity in the case of any military operations.

However, it has been argued that the high altitude plateau in the region of Tibet presents a major operational challenge for the PLAAF.

11. n. 1.

Tibet is a high altitude plateau, with airfields mostly at altitudes of more than 3,000 m amsl (above mean sea level). At these high altitudes, aircraft operations suffer from load penalties due to the reduced density of air. This will be a serious limitation for the PLAAF considering that its mid-air refuelling tanker fleet has limited numbers.[12] Chinese airfields facing the northeast of India are located in Pangta, with an elevation of 4,334 m and a runway length of 5,500 m; it is about 170 km from the Indian border. Another airfield is at Linzhi which is just 30 km away from the India border. One of the prerequisites for any successful and sustained air campaign is the need to have airfields at a reasonable distance from each other so that they can be mutually supporting; this is not so in the case of the Chinese airfields, especially in the western region. For instance, in the northern sector, there are only three airfields, namely Hotan, Kashgar and Korla. It can be seen from Fig 4 that the distance between Hotan and its nearest airfield, Kashgar, is 450 km; between Hotan and Korla, it is 750 km; and from Hotan to Gargunsa, it is 550 km. Thus, there is no mutual support between these airfields.[13]

Tibet is a high altitude plateau, with airfields mostly at altitudes of more than 3,000 m amsl (above mean sea level). At these high altitudes, aircraft operations suffer from load penalties due to the reduced density of air.

---

12. However, it should be mentioned here that China is attempting to overcome this limitation by its jumbo military aircraft transport carrier, the Y-20, having with the capability for mid-air refuelling.
13. Ravinder Chhatwal, *The Chinese Air Threat: Understanding the Reality*, (New Delhi: Knowledge World, 2016), pp. 195-198.

Fig 4: Chinese Airfields in the Northern and Western Sectors[14]
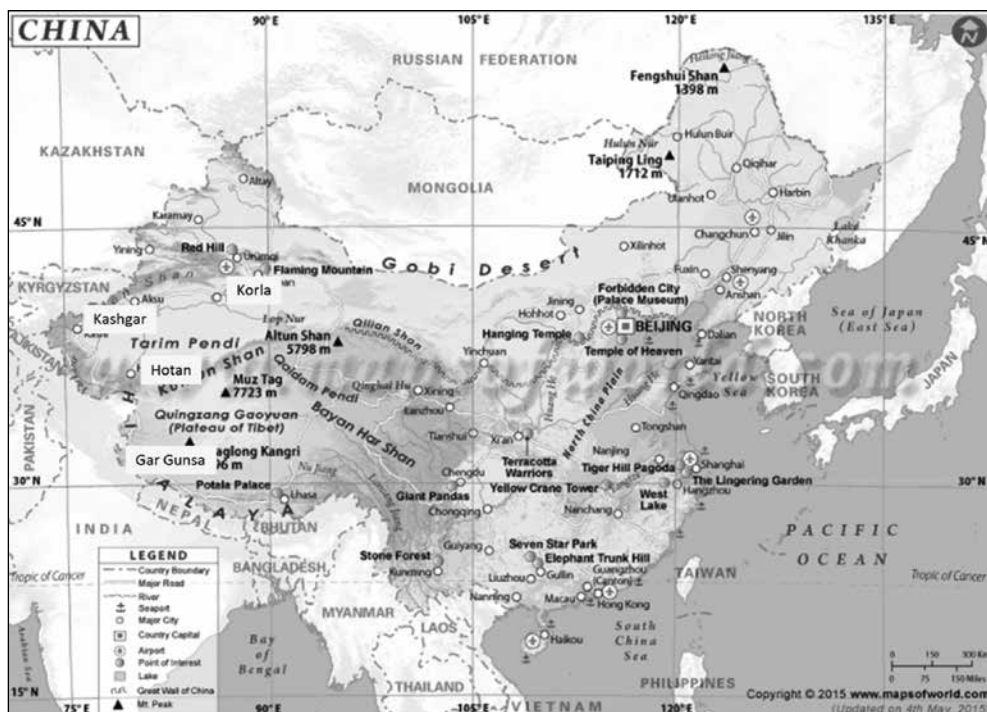
China is likely to be well aware of the shortcomings in its airfields which currently do not possess the infrastructure and capabilities for sustained fighter operations against India. However, as of now, China appears to have addressed these shortcomings through the deployment of its missiles that include its anti-aircraft artillery and the placement of surface-to-air missile defence systems. India, on its part, needs to constantly monitor any new developments undertaken by China for establishing or even upgrading its current infrastructure, since this would indicate that it is attempting to overcome its current shortcomings, and also indicate its future intent which could be against India's interest.

---

14. n. 1.

CHINA'S INFRASTRUCTURAL CONNECTIVITY TO OVERCOME CONSTRAINTS

Any map of China would show the difficult terrain in the regions that would be under the Western TC. This physical challenge poses a major obstacle for quick and efficient mobility of troops and equipment during military operations. China is attempting to correct this shortcoming by undertaking massive connectivity infrastructural projects in the region. Since 2006, China has made huge investments in railways, especially in high-speed routes both north-south and east-west of China with the aim of creating deep linkages aimed towards military deployments in its regions of unrest, Tibet and Xinjiang, while, at the same time, creating economic opportunities in the remote and relatively underdeveloped regions of China. This undertaking by China's central leadership is more to do with the high priority given by Beijing for ensuring the containment of any kind of instability in the two troubled regions. Now that the Lanzhou and Chengdu MRs have been abolished and replaced by a single Western TC, the establishment of these high speed railway lines would help in speedy movement of military assets into the Tibet and Xinjiang regions. With this in view, China has announced, that as part of its 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-20), it will fund, and proceed with, a highly ambitious rail line from Chengdu to Lhasa that would cover a time period of three successive Five-Year Plans.

According to China's state news agency, China started building the Lhasa-Nyingchi railway in December 2014, with an investment of over Yuan 36 billion (about US$ 6 billion), and projected to be completed within seven years. The Lhasa-Nyingchi railway line will be 433 km long, of which 402 km would be newly built.[15] A few days prior to this report, China's top economic planning agency, the National Development and Reform Commission, had approved the plans for

---

15. "China to Have Built Lhasa-Nyingtri Railway by 2021", *Tibetan Review*, November 5, 2014, http://www.tibetanreview.net/china-to-have-built-lhasa-nyingtri-railway-by-2021/. Accessed on April 17, 2017.

the Lhasa-Nyingchi railway line or the Xigaze-Nyingchi line[16] making it the third railway line in its Tibet Autonomous Region and more of a concern for India since Nyingchi, as shown in Fig 5 below, is only 50 km from the Indian border – a border China does not recognise, while routinely naming the neighbouring Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh as "South Tibet" on all official maps of Tibet.[17]

Fig 5: Proposed Railway Line from Nyingchi to Lhasa[18]
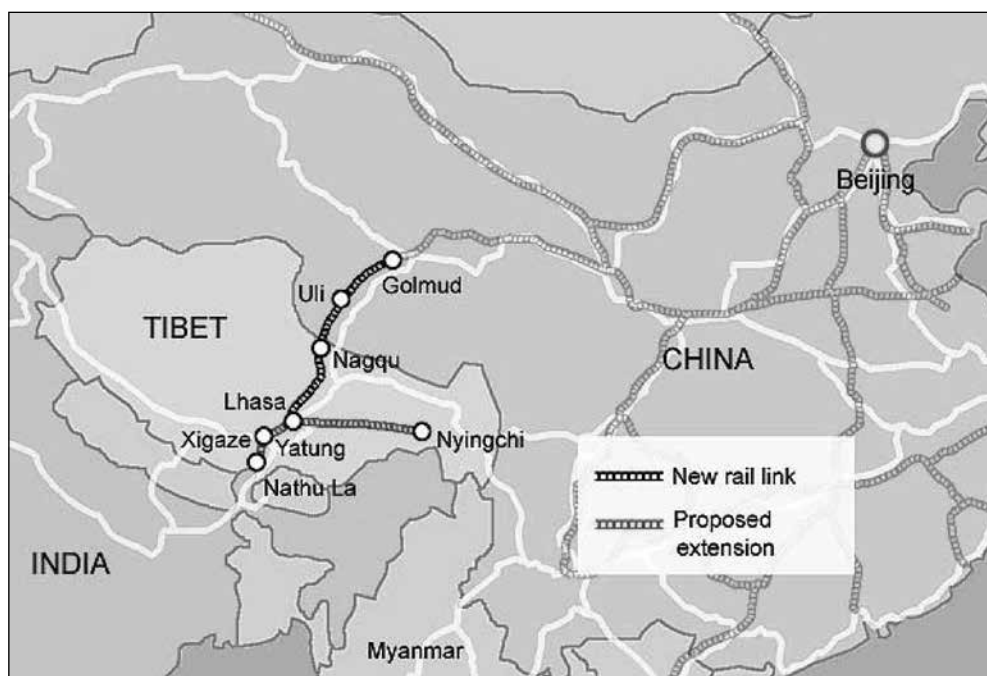
Construction is also underway on the 1,838 km track which starts in Chengdu, passing through the city of Ya'an and Kangding in Sichuan

16. The Lhasa-Nyingshi Railway line has also been called the Xigaze-Nyingchi line in various Chinese media because the line also stops at Xierong, located 32 km from Lhasa.
17. "China Approves Building of Third Railway Line in Tibet", *Tibetan Review*, November 1, 2014, http://www.tibetanreview.net/china-approves-building-of-third-railway-line-in-tibet/. Accessed on April 17, 2017.
18. "China Approves Building of Third Railway Line in Tibet", *Dilemma X*, November 1, 2014, https://dilemma-x.net/2014/11/01/china-approves-new-railway-for-tibet/. Accessed on May 22, 2017.

province, then merging with Nyingchi in the Tibet region and then onwards to Lhasa. The completion of this line, would cost an estimated Yuan 216 billion and would establish a high speed railway line with trains travelling at the speed of 200 km/h, connecting the Western TC headquarters at Chengdu with the strategically important capital of the Tibet Autonomous Region, Lhasa. This railway line project, which is still under construction, is expected to be completed by 2025, with construction having first begun in 2014. It will make the travel time between the two places only thirteen hours,

Now that the Lanzhou and Chengdu MRs have been abolished and replaced by a single Western TC, the establishment of these high speed railway lines would help in speedy movement of military assets into the Tibet and Xinjiang regions.

which is important for the fact that the Chengdu-Nyingchi-Lhasa rail line has a very strong military undertone.[19]

In the southeast of the Western TC, China completed the railway line from Kunming to Dali in 2008. In the second half of 2009, a one-way railway line connecting Dali to Lijiang was also operationalised at a cost of Yuan 4.55 billion (US $699 million). This line is said to have 47 tunnels and 76 bridges and has been designed to ensure a high speed of 120 km/h. Another railway line between Lijiang and Shangri-La in Deqon is under construction at a cost of Yuan 9.2 billion.[20] According to China's National Development and Reform Commission, the 139-km- long Lijiang-Shangri-La railway is a Level 1 national railway, which means that electric traction is employed in the entire length of the line, and the designed speed of the line is 120 kmph. The intent of the construction of this line was made very clear by the Vice Governor of Yunnan province, Luo Zhengfu, who stated that apart from the significance of this line for promoting economic and social development in the region, it would also help in maintaining

---

19. "Sichuan-Tibet Railway to be Completed in 2025", *Ecns.cn*, November 8, 2016, http://www.ecns.cn/2016/11-08/233106.shtml. Accessed on April 18, 2017.
20. "China Completes 'Lifeline' Railway in Yunnan", *China.org.cn*, September 28, 2009, http://www.china.org.cn/china/news/2009-09-28/content_18621794.htm. Accessed on April 19, 2017.

India needs to be watchful of these undertakings by China since these infrastructural developments, with the ostensible objective of establishing connectivity, have a dual purpose and would also enhance China's military capabilities in the case of any military conflict between the two nations in the future.

stability in the Tibet region.[21] However, the realisation of a complete railway line from Lhasa to Kunming would prove to be a major hurdle due to the very difficult topography – as can be seen from the map in Fig 6– that prevails in this sector.

CONCLUSION

India needs to be watchful of these undertakings by China since these infrastructural developments, with the ostensible objective of establishing connectivity, have a dual purpose and would also enhance China's military capabilities in the case of any military conflict between the two nations in the future. Therefore, India needs to improve its defensive as well as offensive capabilities in its border regions to counter as also to deter any future Chinese transgression. For this, there is a need to further improve the infrastructure in the region to ensure quick deployment of ground troops and equipment. The establishment of Advanced Landing Grounds (ALGs) in Arunachal Pradesh by the Indian Air Force (IAF) is a right move towards this end. Currently, there are six ALGs in the state of Arunachal Pradesh, namely in Walong, Ziro, Along, Mechuka, Vijaynagar, and Pasighat, with two more coming up in Tuting[22] and Tawang. The establishment of ALGs in the region would also lead to a permanent settlement for IAF personnel for maintenance and repair of aircraft and also the deployment of mobile surface-to-air missiles in order to

---

21. "The Second Tibet Railway is Going to be Built", *Indian Defence Forum*, September 5, 2009, http://defenceforumindia.com/forum/threads/the-second-tibet-railway-is-going-to-be-built.5030/. Accessed on April 19, 2017.

22. It is also reported that in December 2016, the IAF has also activated the ALG at Tuting that lies in Arunachal's Upper Siang district. See "Eye on China, India to Base First Squadron of Rafale Fighter Jets in Bengal", *The Times of India,* January 7, 2017, http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/eye-on-china-india-to-base-first-squadron-of-rafale-fighter-jets-in-bengal/articleshow/56384484.cms. Accessed on April 21, 2017.

protect assets; this would be a major deterrent against any Chinese intent.[23]

Taking note of China's road links closing in to the Line of Actual Control (LAC), India's former Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar, on July 20, 2016, had revised the deadline of 39 strategic Indo-China border roads projects and had stated that these projects would be completed within three years. The Indian government has also cleared the deployment of a special version of the BrahMos cruise missile for the northeastern sector. The Indian Army

The Indian government has taken note of the developments taking place close to its borders and already prepared the necessary roadmap to not only defend but also surge against any kind of threat that may emanate from the newly established Western TC.

has so far raised three regiments equipped with the two earlier versions of the BrahMos. The new regiment to be raised that has been cleared by the Cabinet Committee on Security, chaired by the prime minister, would have 100 missiles, five mobile autonomous launchers on heavy-duty trucks and a mobile command post.[24] Lastly, as reported, the IAF has also finalised plans for the first 18 Rafales to be stationed at the Hasimara air base in Bengal from late 2019; replacing the MiG-27s currently in operation at the air base.[25] Thus, it can be said that the Indian government has taken note of the developments taking place close to its borders and already prepared the necessary roadmap to not only defend but also surge against any kind of threat that may emanate from the newly established Western TC. Finally, it must be realised that the current reorganisation of the Western TC would be an 'uphill' task (for the PLA), given the restructuring needed in the current command and control organisation, along with the additional limitations presented by the geography that obtains in the regions covered under the Western TC.

23. Temjenmeren Ao, "Advanced Landing Ground (ALG) In India's Eastern Sector: Further Enhancing Defence against China", *In Focus*, Centre for Air Power Studies, August 26, 2016, http://capsindia.org/files/documents/CAPS_Infocus_TJA_09.pdf. Accessed April 19, 2017.
24. Maj Gen Deepak K Mehta, "Rising Chinese Threat on the Border: India Flexes its Muscles", *Indian Military Review*, vol. 7, September 2016, pp. 36-37.
25. "Eye on China, India to Base First Squadron of Rafale Fighter Jets in Bengal", *The Times of India*, January 7, 2017, http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/eye-on-china-india-to-base-first-squadron-of-rafale-fighter-jets-in-bengal/articleshow/56384484.cms. Accessed on April 21, 2017.

ANALYSIS OF PERMANENT COURT OF ARBITRATION'S VERDICT ON THE SOUTH CHINA SEA

POOJA BHATT

INTRODUCTION

Fashioning issues of mutual interest, fostering cooperation, and bringing about a peaceful resolution of conflicts between the Westphalian states are the main drivers of international regimes as they exist today. The nature of these regimes is shaped by the issues they deal with, such as economic relations, socio-cultural cooperation, strategic partnerships, and so on. The liberal world order provides an opportunity to the states to join these regimes wilfully and according to their respective national interests, with other like-minded states. However, the issue of 'participation' of the states in these regimes forms an interesting topic of study. These regimes arise out of the need to formulate a rules-based international order. Membership of these international regimes is voluntary, but once the states become members, they are obliged to adhere to the charter of responsibilities of the respective regime. In fact, these charters form the very basis of the regimes. However, it has been increasingly noticed that the member states do not abide by the rules set out by these regimes and even disregard any strictures given out against them for not adhering to the charter. Additionally, the execution of arbitration remains a difficult step to achieve by most of the international regimes.

Ms **Pooja Bhatt** is a Research Associate at the Centre for Air Power Studies, New Delhi.

Not only China, but other neighbouring countries such as Vietnam, Indonesia and Philippines also have competing claims in the region. The NDL does not conform to the maritime laws and, hence, cannot be considered as a maritime boundary of China. China, on the other hand, has made historical claims dating back 2,000 years to bolster its claim to the region.

The purpose of this paper is to examine one of the recent judgements by the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) delivered in July 2016 on the South China Sea issue. As the verdict will celebrate its first anniversary this year, the area remains one of the most controversial maritime boundaries in the contemporary geostrategic realm,with the ambiguous claims over the Nine Dash Line (NDL) of the South China Sea. Also known as the ten dash and eleven dash line, it refers to the demarcation line used by the Governments of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and Republic of China (ROC) to claim the waters, islands and resources within the region, based on their 'historical rights'. The growing narrative on the NDL and South China Sea highlights China's 'aggressive posture'. The recent judgement by the Permanent Court of Arbitration was against the Chinese claim and in favour of the Philippines with respect to claims in the NDL region. Not only China, but other neighbouring countries such as Vietnam, Indonesia and Philippines also have competing claims in the region. The NDL does not conform to the maritime laws and, hence, cannot be considered as a maritime boundary of China. China, on the other hand, has made historical claims dating back 2,000 years to bolster its claim to the region.

The territorial claims, the military installations, and the Chinese overt conduct in the nine dash line have security implications. A shift in the security dynamics has been witnessed among the countries in the region and also by major powers like the US in the South China Sea. As the South China Sea is an important Sea Line of Communication (SLOC), countries such as the US, Australia, Japan and India, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries are stressing upon freedom of navigation and the open seas policy.

BACKGROUND

On July 12, 2016, the Permanent Court of Arbitration unanimously declared that there was no evidence that China had historically exercised exclusive control over the waters or resources of the South China Sea, hence, there was "no legal basis for China to claim historic rights" over, the NDL in the South China Sea. China did not become a party to the case since its inception in 2014 and the judgment went in favour of the Philippines—the other party in the dispute. The judgement immediately came in for debate amongst academics, practitioners and policy-makers from various fields to examine its implications on the sovereignty issues in the South China Sea. Besides the technical aspects of the maritime sovereignty claims by China in the NDL region, the judgement has other geostrategic, economic and security implications for decades to come.

On July 12, 2016, the Permanent Court of Arbitration unanimously declared that there was no evidence that China had historically exercised exclusive control over the waters or resources of the South China Sea, hence, there was "no legal basis for China to claim historic rights" over, the NDL in the South China Sea.

On May 7, 2009, the Chinese government forwarded two Notes Verbale[1] to the UN secretary general, requesting that they be further circulated to all member states of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) as well as the member states of the UN. The notes contained China's statement of its indisputable sovereignty over the islands of the South China Sea and the adjacent waters. It also established its rights and jurisdiction over the relevant waters, seabed and subsoil thereof. Notably, the notes were a response to the joint submission by Malaysia and Vietnam on May 6, 2009, to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (concerning the outer limits of the continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles). The Chinese government requested the commission not to consider the requests made by the two countries and provided the map of the South

---

1. United Nations (May 2009), "Note Verbale No. CML/18/2009". URL: http://www.un.org/ depts/los/clcs_new/submissions_files/vnm37_09/chn_2009re_vnm.pdf;

China Sea with nine dashes in a U shape wherein it claimed its undisputed sovereignty.

> "China has indisputable sovereignty over the islands in the South China Sea and the adjacent waters, and enjoys sovereign rights and jurisdiction over the relevant waters as well as the seabed and subsoil thereof (see attached map). The above position is consistently held by the Chinese government, and is widely known by the international community."
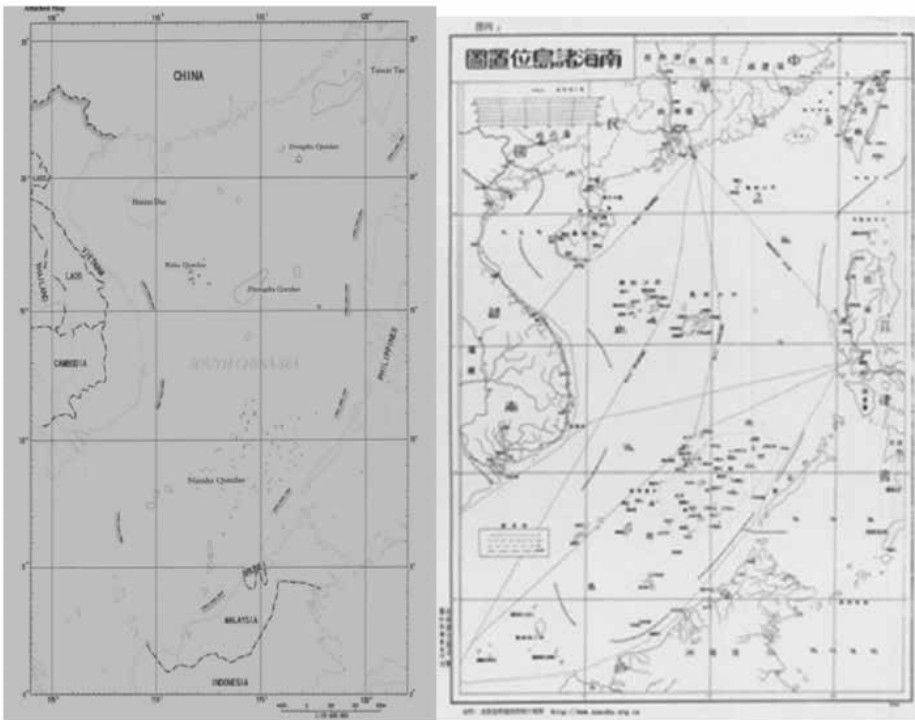
Map 1 (left): Map Attached with Note Verbale sent by China to the UN on May 7, 2009
Source: United States Department of State, Bureau of Environmental and Scientific Affairs, "Limits in the Seas, No. 143, China: Maritime Claims in the South China Sea". Published 2016-12-05. Page 2.

Map 2 (right): Original Map Produced by the Kuomintang Government in 1947, Showing Eleven Dashes.
Source:: United States Department of State, Bureau of Environmental and Scientific Affairs, "Limits in the Seas, No. 143, China: Maritime Claims in the South China Sea". Published 2016-12-05. Page 3.

Through the map attached to the Notes Verbale, China exhibited its sovereignty claim over the U shaped 'Nine Dash Line'. Separate academic studies place the date of establishment of the NDL in 1946-47. The government of the People's Republic of China removed two dashes inside the Gulf of Tonkin as the area was delimited between Vietnam and China in 2004.

Philippines vs. China (PCA case number 2013–19), also known as the South China Sea Arbitration, was an arbitration case brought by the Republic of the Philippines against the PRC under Annex VII to the UNCLOS concerning certain issues in the South China Sea, including the legality of China's "nine-dotted line" claim[2].

UNCLOS[3] AND MARITIME DISPUTES

China claims that these dashes have "historic origins" and that they predate UNCLOS that was established in 1982. UNCLOS is an international agreement that defines the rights and responsibilities of the member nations with respect to their use of the world's oceans, establishes guidelines for businesses, the environment, and the management of the marine natural resources. It replaced the following four treaties:

- Convention on the Territorial Sea and Contiguous Zone, entry into force: September 10, 1964.
- Convention on the Continental Shelf, entry into force: June 10, 1964.
- Convention on the High Seas, entry into force: September 30, 1962.
- Convention on Fishing and Conservation of Living Resources of the High Seas, entry into force: March 20, 1966.

UNCLOS introduced a number of provisions. The most significant issues covered were setting limits, navigation, archipelagic status and transit regimes, Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs), continental shelf

---

2. "Arbitration between the Republic of the Philippines and the People's Republic of China", Permanent Court of Arbitration, October 15, 2015. Retrieved on February 13, 2017.
3. United Nations Convention on the Laws of the Sea. Accessed online. URL: http://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/unclos_e.pdf.

jurisdiction, deep seabed mining, the exploitation regime, protection of the marine environment, scientific research, and settlement of disputes .The convention set the limit of various areas, measured from a carefully defined baseline.

It was opened for signature on December 10, 1982, and entered into force on November 16, 1994, and has been ratified by 168 states, which include 167 states (164 member states of the UN plus the UN observer state Palestine, as well as the Cook Islands, Niue and the European Union) .

UNCLOS is widely accredited and recognised as the "Constitution for the Oceans[4]" by the states, and plays a vital role in conducting inter-state relations in the oceans. At the same time, UNCLOS is also a treaty under international law and provides the governing aspects of the ocean affairs. Article 38 of the Statute of the International Court of Justice provides four sources of international law:

- International conventions, whether general or particular, establishing rules expressly recognised by the contesting states.
- International custom, as evidence of a general practice accepted as law;
- The general principles of law recognised by civilised nations.
- Subject to the provisions of Article 59, judicial decisions and the teachings of the most highly qualified publicists of the various nations, as subsidiary means for the determination of rules of law.

The convention also creates an innovative legal regime for controlling mineral resource exploitation in deep seabed areas beyond national jurisdiction through an International Seabed Authority and the common heritage of mankind principle. The Charter of the United Nations requires all members of the organisation to settle their international disputes by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security are not endangered. UNCLOS builds on this commitment by providing a compulsory and binding framework for the peaceful settlement of all related disputes.

---

4. Tommy K.B. Koh (1982), "A Constitution for the Oceans". Accessed online on June 19, 2017. URL: http://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/koh_english.pdf

Where, however, no settlement between the disputing parties has been reached, Article 286 of the convention instructs that the dispute be submitted at the request of any party to the dispute to a court or tribunal having jurisdiction in this regard. Article 287 of the convention defines those courts or tribunals as:

- The International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea or ITLOS (established in accordance with Annex VI of the Convention) including the Seabed Disputes Chamber.
- The International Court of Justice.
- An arbitral tribunal constituted in accordance with Annex VII of the convention.
- A special arbitral tribunal constituted in accordance with Annex VIII for one or more of the categories of disputes specified therein.

In practice, all UNCLOS related matters go either to ITLOS or the arbitral tribunal under Annex VII. ITLOS comprises a permanent body of 21 judges, whereas the latter is composed of five judges whose membership and rules of procedure are prescribed at length. No further consent is required from any nation that has ratified the convention and has a relevant claim brought against it.

It is under Annex VII of the convention that an ad hoc arbitration tribunal was established on June 21, 2013[5]. In January 2013, the Philippines formally initiated arbitration proceedings against China's territorial claim on the "Nine Dash Line", which it said is "unlawful" according to UNCLOS. The line, first inscribed on a Chinese map in 1947, had "no legal basis" for maritime claims, deemed the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague. In July 2016, the PCA tribunal judged that there was no evidence that China had "historically exercised exclusive control" over the waters or resources within the NDL. The legalities of the claims for the

---

5. Permanent Court of Arbitration Press Release, "The South China Sea Arbitration", published on July 12, 2016. Accessed online on June 19, 2017. URL: https://pca-cpa.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/175/2016/07/PH-CN-20160712-Press-Release-No-11-English.pdf

Within the larger ambit of China's maritime and territorial sovereignty claims within the NDL region, there are several disputes amongst the neighbouring countries of the region. The disputes involve both maritime boundaries and islands.

The NDL area—claimed by the Republic of China and later by the People's Republic of China—covers most of the South China Sea and overlaps the EEZ claims of Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan, and Vietnam.

NDL also focus on the concept of *terra nullius*[6], which forms the basis of China's territorial claims on the island features in the South China Sea. The same concept has been used to further its maritime claims to form the controversial NDL, as we see today.

SPECIFIC BILATERAL/ TRILATERAL DISPUTES WITHIN THE NINE DASH LINE

Within the larger ambit of China's maritime and territorial sovereignty claims within the NDL region, there are several disputes amongst the neighbouring countries of the region. The disputes involve both maritime boundaries and islands.

- The NDL area—claimed by the Republic of China and later by the People's Republic of China—covers most of the South China Sea and overlaps the EEZ claims of Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan, and Vietnam.

- The maritime boundary along the Vietnamese coast involving the PRC, Taiwan, and Vietnam.

- The maritime boundary north of Borneo involving China, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Taiwan.

- Islands, reefs, banks and shoals in the South China Sea, including the Paracel Islands, Pratas Islands, Macclesfield Bank, Scarborough Shoal

---

6. A Latin expression derived from Roman law that means "land that is unoccupied or uninhabited for legal purposes". Used in international law to describe territory which has never been subject to the sovereignty of any state, or over which any prior sovereign has expressly or implicitly relinquished sovereignty. Sovereignty over territory which is *terra nullius* may be acquired through occupation

and Spratly Islands between China, Taiwan, and Vietnam, and parts of the area also contested by Malaysia and the Philippines.

- The maritime boundary in the waters north of the Natuna Islands contested by China, Indonesia and Taiwan
- The maritime boundary off the coast of Palawan and Luzon involving China, the Philippines, and Taiwan.
- The maritime boundary, land territory, and the islands of Sabah, including Ambalat, involving Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines.
- The maritime boundary and islands in the Luzon Strait claimed by China, the Philippines, and Taiwan.

The PCA verdict in favour of the Philippines will bring these disputes to the fore. These disputes involve the issue of maritime delimitation as well as sovereignty over the islands. It can't be definately stated that these countries will use the arbitration method in the event of the failure of Beijing's bilateral rapprochement to produce optimal results. However, it provides a platform for intervention by the recognised international entity under international law to counter China's unilateral actions, for maintaining peace and stability in the region.

CHINESE POSITION ON THE PCA AD HOC TRIBUNAL

The PRC started negotiations over the UNCLOS in 1973 and finally signed and ratified it in 1996. It was the first multilateral negotiation that it signed and ratified since it joined the United Nations in 1971. According to Chinese scholars, the three basic reasons for joining UNCLOS in those years were: first, anti-hegemonic stand against the US and USSR; second, to return the favour of Third World countries that had helped in the establishment of the PRC government's membership in the UN; and, lastly, to protect its national interest[7]. China has been an UNCLOS member-state since 1996.

---

7. Zheng Wang (2016), "China and UNCLOS: An Inconvenient History", *The Diplomat*, published on 11 july 2016. Accessed online on June 19, 2017. URL:http://thediplomat.com/2016/07/china-and-unclos-an-inconvenient-history/

Article 288 of the UNCLOS provides: "In the event of a dispute as to whether a court or tribunal has jurisdiction, the matter shall be settled by a decision of that court or tribunal." The Philippines had unilaterally initiated arbitration proceedings to the Hague-based PCA against China over the South China Sea disputes in 2013. Accordingly, the tribunal convened a hearing on jurisdiction and admissibility in July 2015 and rendered an Award on Jurisdiction and Admissibility on October 29, 2015, deciding some issues of jurisdiction and deferring others for further consideration[8]. The PCA ruled in 2015 that it has jurisdiction over the case, taking up seven of the 15 submissions put up by Manila.

The website of the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA)[9] explicitly mentions its status and functions as given below:

It is an intergovernmental organization established by the 1899 Hague Convention on the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes. The PCA has 121 Member States. Headquartered at the Peace Palace in The Hague, the Netherlands, the PCA facilitates arbitration, conciliation, fact-finding, and other dispute resolution proceedings among various combinations of States, State entities, intergovernmental organizations, and private parties. The PCA's International Bureau is currently administering 8 interstate disputes, 73 investor-State arbitrations, and 34 cases arising under contracts involving a State or other public entity. The PCA has administered 12 cases initiated by States under Annex VII to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

China repeatedly refused to participate in the arbitration case initiated by the Philippines to resolve the maritime dispute in the South China Sea (SCS). It strongly argued that the arbitral tribunal had no "jurisdiction" and that

---

8. Xinhua News (2016), "Interview: PCA Tribunal Verdict Unfair, not Legally Binding for China: U.S. Professor", published on October 6, 2016. Accessed online on June 19, 2017, URL: https://www.pcacases.com/web/sendAttach/1801
9. PCA Press Release (2016), "The South China Sea Arbitration (The Republic of The Philippines V. The People's Republic of China). Accessed online on June 19, 2017. URL: https://www.pcacases.com/web/sendAttach/1801

arbitration was counter-productive to peaceful negotiations. China explained its stand by arguing that the ICJ is a "totally different institution from the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) under whose secretariat assistance an arbitral tribunal has issued an award on the South China Sea dispute[10]."

Beijing further stated that the arbitral tribunal is neither related to the ICJ nor "backed up by the United Nations." Both the ICJ and the arbitral tribunal are based in The Hague. The ICJ is a totally distinct institution and has no involvement in the SCS case. "China premised that the PCA "arbitration is not part of the international judicial system. Its arbitration may have some judicial validity but it is far from the adjudication of the ICJ in terms of sanctity and solemnity. Therefore, the PCA is not the best mechanism to settle disputes between states."[11] Interestingly, Article 288[12] of the convention provides: "In the event of a dispute as to whether a court or tribunal has jurisdiction, the matter shall be settled by a decision of that court or tribunal."

In its Position Paper[13], China advanced the following arguments:

• The essence of the subject-matter of the arbitration is the territorial sovereignty over several maritime features in the South China Sea, which is beyond the scope of the convention and does not concern the interpretation or application of the convention;

• China and the Philippines have agreed, through bilateral instruments and the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea, to settle their relevant disputes through negotiations. By unilaterally initiating the present arbitration, the Philippines has breached its obligation under international law;

10. Ibid.

11. Xinhuanet (2016), "Backgrounder: International Court of Justice Totally Distinct from Permanent Court of Arbitration". Accessed online on June 18, 2017. URL: http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2016-07/15/c_135515304.htm

12. United Nations Convention on the Law of the Seas, "UNCLOS Settlement of Disputes". Accessed online on June 18, 2017. URLhttp://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/part15.htm

13. PCA Case No.2013-19 An Arbitral Tribunal Constituted Under Annex VII to the 1982 United Nations Convention on The Law of The Sea- between -The Republic of The Philippines - and -The People's Republic of China, published on October 29, 2015. Accessed online on June 18, 2017. URL: https://www.pcacases.com/web/sendAttach/1506

- Even assuming, *arguendo*[14], that the subject matter of the arbitration was concerned with the interpretation or application of the convention, that subject matter would constitute an integral part of maritime delimitation between the two countries, thus, falling within the scope of the declaration filed by China in 2006, in accordance with the convention, which excludes, *inter alia*, disputes concerning maritime delimitation from compulsory arbitration and other compulsory dispute settlement procedures.

The precise text of the award or decision identified the PCA, the deciding body, as "an arbitral tribunal constituted under Annex vii to the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea". In other words, it did not claim to be the "International Court of Justice." If a UNCLOS member-state, like the Philippines, has not expressed any preference for any of these four tribunals, the default means of settling disputes is Item 3 (ad hoc arbitration). More accurately, therefore, the adjudicating body of this dispute is "ad hoc"or temporary because it was constituted only for this particular dispute. Despite its temporary nature, the tribunal's proceedings and "awards"or decisions, when issued according to the provisions of UNCLOS, are nonetheless binding on UNCLOS signatories like the Philippines and China.

On issues concerning territorial sovereignty and maritime delimitation, China argued that it would not accept recourse to any third party settlement, or any means of dispute settlement that is imposed on it.

THE COMPOSITION OF THE AD HOC TRIBUNAL

The ad hoc tribunal, constituted on June 21, 2013, was composed of five members. Judge Rudiger Wolfrum, a German, was chosen by the Philippines. A second member was to be named by China. Since China opted not to participate, the president of ITLOS—pursuant to the provisions of UNCLOS—appointed Judge Stanislaw Pawlak, a Pole. Subsequently, the president of ITLOS named three more—Judge Jean-Pierre Cot, a Frenchman, Prof. Alfred H. A. Soons, a Dutchman, and Judge Thomas A. Mensah of Ghana, as the presiding arbitrator.

14. Latin term for "assuming for the sake of argument".

After it was constituted, the ad hoc tribunal issued Administrative Directive No. 1 appointing the PCA as its "Registry,"the rough equivalent of the Office of the Clerk of Court. On July 15, 2013, the secretary general of the PCA advised the tribunal and the parties that Ms Judith Levine, PCA senior legal counsel, would serve as "registrar,"the rough equivalent of the clerk of court. The PCA has acted as "Registry"in 11 out of 12 arbitration cases filed under Annex VII of UNCLOS. The PCA is not a "court."As the "Registry,"it provides administrative services to the parties and the arbitrators. Precisely, it transmits oral and written communications from the parties to the arbitral tribunal and vice versa, and

Several satellite images available online show progression in island reclamation by China and installation of military infrastructure on all the seven islands that are claimed by it. The three noticeable islands are Fiery Cross, Mischief Reef, and Subi Reef (also known as the Big Three) that have full-fledged runways, hangars and even installation of Surface-to-Air Missiles (SAMs) on them.

among the parties; maintains an archive of official documents; arranges the arbitrators'fees; holds the arbitration funds, and pays expenses and similar functions. The tribunal played an important role in the landmark verdict on the contentious claims by China in the South China Sea. The verdict came out in favour of the Philippines, which was also the complainant party in the verdict.

CONCLUSION

China has rejected the PCA verdict of July 2016 on the grounds that it lacks jurisdiction over the matter. Moreover, Beijing has been trying to strengthen its hold on the South China Sea, with specific focus on the Spratly (Nansha) group of islands. The islands are one of the other three groups of islands in the contested NDL; the other two being the Paracel (Xisha) Islands and Scarborough Shoal (HuangYan Islands). The Spratly group of islands is located approximately 400 nautical miles from the

coastal baseline of China and well exceeds the EEZ of 200 nautical miles defined under UNCLOS 1982. The Spratly group of islands lies well within the EEZ of the other claimant, i.e. the Philippines, which is barely 130 nautical miles from the islands. Several satellite images available online show progression in island reclamation by China and installation of military infrastructure on all the seven islands that are claimed by it. The three noticeable islands are Fiery Cross, Mischief Reef, and Subi Reef (also known as the Big Three) that have full-fledged runways, hangars and even installation of Surface-to-Air Missiles (SAMs) on them. There have been similar developments on Gaven Reef, Hughes Reef, Johnson Reef and Cuarteron Reef since 2015. This rapid development is creating an unstable situation, with the neighbouring countries such as Vietnam, Philippines, Taiwan and Malaysia in the South China Sea having also reclaimed islands and built runways on them. These developments are militarising the region and are also having an adverse effect on the health of the coral reefs in the region due to the harmful and destructive process of island reclamation.

However, under UNCLOS, the Permanent Court of Arbitration forms the rightful body for adjudicating on the issue of the South China Sea dispute. Beijing hopes for a bilateral rapprochement with its neighbouring countries to solve the issue[15]; it has done so in the case of the Philippines that has responded favourably. In fact, as recently as on March 8, 2017, China formulated the draft for the Code of Conduct (COC) in the South China Sea along with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries[16]. The COC had been stuck for 15 years in the form of a Declaration on the Conduct (DOC) of the parties in the South China Sea. This might give shape to a regional multilateral organisation pushed by China's bilateral relations with each of these ASEAN countries. This, however, means sidelining of the bigger multilateral organisation– UNCLOS. Nevertheless, as the COC is yet to see the light of day, one can only speculate about the principles and

---

15. n. 8.
16. Reuters, "China says First Draft of South China Sea Code of Conduct Ready". Published on March 8, 2017. Accessed online. URL: http://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-parliament-southchinasea-idUSKBN16F0JR

objectives of this COC-based South China Sea regime and the technicalities of its execution. The details of the documents are yet to be made available in the public domain; but the framework of the COC is said to be ready and undergoing further negotiations with all the parties. However, the contentious issues of territorial disputes or maritime delimitation issues are expected to be kept out of the purview of the final draft of the COC. Therefore, it remains to be seen which regional/international entity or regime will be responsible in the case of future maritime and territorial disputes in the region.

The PCA ad hoc tribunal presented its verdict on the following issues:

- No legal basis for China to claim historic rights to resources within the sea areas falling within the 'nine-dash line'.
- "[R]ocks which cannot sustain human habitation or economic life of their own shall have no exclusive economic zone or continental shelf".
- China had violated the Philippines' sovereign rights in its exclusive economic zone by (a) interfering with the Philippines fishing and petroleum exploration; (b) constructing artificial islands; and (c) failing to prevent Chinese fishermen from fishing in the zone.
- The effect on the marine environment and the coral reef ecosystem due to China's recent large-scale land reclamation and construction of artificial islands at seven features in the Spratly Islands.
- The tribunal found that it lacked jurisdiction to consider the implications of a stand-off between the Philippine Marines and Chinese naval and law enforcement vessels at the Second Thomas Shoal, holding that this dispute involved military activities and was, therefore, excluded from a compulsory settlement[17].

From the above mentioned points, it is evident that the PCA ad hoc tribunal took a careful approach while considering the Philippines case against China. It refrained from any issue related to territorial sovereignty and maritime delimitation beyond the jurisdiction provided by UNCLOS and thereby the four ad hoc tribunals under Article 287, as explained earlier in the paper.

17. n. 13.

In the 20th century, the PRC government led several expeditions in the waters of the South China Sea where the explorers located and named several islands in the region. These discoveries later transformed into territorial claims. The same has been done by the Governments of Philippines, Vietnam, etc.

This brings another issue under question: the precedence of domestic interests over international law. Most of the multilateral international regimes came into existence in the mid and late 20th century, whereas the formation of states started taking shape since the 16th century Treaty of Westphalia. Dynasties and empires preceded both by centuries all over the world. China was one such empire that had its trade and cultural interactions for centuries. When the PRC came into existence in 1949, it too signed and ratified several multilateral treaties. The ratification of a treaty makes it binding on the signatories to conform to the rules and guidelines of the treaty. Additionally, international law takes precedence over the domestic laws of the country. Drawing both the clauses together, it seems appropriate for China to abide by the delimitation of the maritime boundaries as defined by UNCLOS. Beijing's argument for not accepting the PCA verdict shows it in poor light and places it on a shaky foundation to defend itself. As a signatory of UNCLOS, a state is expected to abide by all the clauses as prescribed in the regime.

Beijing has been a member of UNCLOS since 1996. At the same time, it reinforces its claims over the South China Sea since the 5th century B.C. when the ruling dynasties carried out their trade with the rest of the world. In the 20th century, the PRC government led several expeditions in the waters of the South China Sea where the explorers located and named several islands in the region. These discoveries later transformed into territorial claims. The same has been done by the Governments of Philippines, Vietnam, etc. The sheer number of islands in the South China Sea and multiplicity of local names made the task more complicated for scholars and practitioners to determine the territorial rights in the region.

China's stand towards the PCA tribunal verdict provides us an opportunity to understand its attitude towards multilateral organisations and, more precisely, international tribunals as its foreign policy tools. In this increasingly interconnected world, China cannot afford to remain isolated from the rest of the world. It has two options: either merge with the existing world order, or create a new one that suits its domestic as well as global interests. Nonetheless, the international multilateral institutional framework is a phenomenon that is here to stay. How China will treat and shape the international regimes by participating as a member and accepting their rulings forms an important subject of continuous study. The analysis of the 2016 PCA verdict on the South China Sea, therefore, provides an important landmark judgment for further study and analysis of the international regimes from the vantage points of the member states.

WHAT IF? ANALYSIS OF MILITARY DECISIONS

BHARAT KUMAR

Looking backward, reflecting on the past, in retrospect, or in hindsight are some phrases which, when applied to military decisions that were taken or not taken, throw light on the impact that these decisions would have had on the history of the world. As applied to the air forces of India and Pakistan, these become even more significant and hold several lessons. But, unfortunately, most of these have never been discussed. This piece is about some such decisions – and, if alternatives had been selected – how these could have changed the course of history. These decisions not only pertain to those taken in relation to various conflicts that the country has been involved in but also some that were taken in peace-time and which have had a major impact on the Service.

While the Royal Flying Corps was established in the UK in 1912, the "Indian Flying Corps" was established in India in 1914. Its officers, as in the rest of the Indian Army, were British. Most of the technicians or "airmen" were drawn from the Indian Army. The corps saw action in Egypt where it performed valuable service in reconnaissance connected with the Turkish attack on the Suez Canal. After the failure of the attack, the unit was relieved by a squadron of the Royal Flying Corps, and its personnel were released for service in Mesopotamia (present day Iraq). The unit, along with other British and Australian units, provided excellent support. However, the

Air Marshal **Bharat Kumar** PVSM AVSM (Retd) is an Honorary Distinguished Fellow at the Centre for Air Power Studies, New Delhi.

It is a little-known fact that the decision to seize J&K by hook or by crook had been taken by the Pakistani politicians and their supporters in the armed forces as early as in July 1947. This is evident from the fact that Col Akbar Khan, who was in Army Headquarters in India, took away all the maps of J&K from Army (HQ), leaving none for the Indians.

composite force suffered the loss of a great part of its stores, and some of its personnel, in the retreat to Kut and in the siege. By the middle of 1915, many more squadrons were inducted and the process of reorganisation saw the demise of the Indian Flying Corps as a separate body.[1]

What would have been the course of history had the Indian Flying Corps not been disbanded? It is more or less certain, that the Indian Air Force would have been established along with the Royal Flying Corps in 1918 instead of waiting for its rebirth in 1932.

"A" Flight of No.1 Squadron was formed on April 1, 1933. The flight lost three of its five Indian pilots within the first year of its formation: Pilot Officers Amarjit Singh and Bhupinder Singh were killed in an accident while Pilot Officer Sircar was cashiered following another accident. Immediately thereafter, in mid 1934, an offer was made to then Pilot Officers Mukerjee and Awan to give up the air force and instead become assistant commissioners as part of the Indian Civil Service. This offer was promptly rejected.[2] What if Awan and Mukerjee had accepted the offer? If it is assumed that similar offers would have been made to other officers who had by that time joined 1 Squadron, it is more than certain that it would have been perhaps the end of the Indian Air Force (IAF) and it would have taken many more years before it was revived again.

After independence, the first challenge that the Indian Air Force faced was in October 1947 when Pakistan invaded the state of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). Lord Mountbatten had announced the decision on the partition of India on June 3, 1947. The Armed Forces Reconstitution Committee was

---

1. *The Army in India and its Evolution* (New Delhi:Anmol Publication), p. 175.
2. Wg Cdr AB Awan, *The Winged Wagon* (Self-Published, 1965), pp. 109-110

constituted on June 23, 1947, and its various sub-committees commenced work on the division of the assets of the armed forces between the two new dominions almost immediately. It is a little-known fact that the decision to seize J&K by hook or by crook had been taken by the Pakistani politicians and their supporters in the armed forces as early as in July 1947. This is evident from the fact that Col Akbar Khan who was in Army Headquarters in India and later took over as director, weapons and equipment at the Pakistan Army Headquarters and who was given the responsibility of planning and

In hindsight, Pakistan made a big blunder by launching the invasion on October 22. If it had delayed its invasion by two or three weeks when the snow would have covered the Banihal Pass, the runway at Srinagar would also have been covered by snow, making it unfit for any air operation.

executing the plan to capture the state, took away all the maps of J&K from Army (HQ), leaving none for the Indians. Wg Cdr Mohammad Khan Janjua, the senior-most Royal Indian Air Force (RIAF) officer to opt for Pakistan Air Force (PAF), also talks of the transfer of 4,000 rifles to the tribals well before the partition.

Pakistan, in its wisdom, launched the attack on October 22, 1947. There is firm evidence of at least one PAF aircraft's involvement in a reconnaissance mission on October 4, 1947. Kashmir was saved by the massive airlift of the Indian Army into Srinagar on October 27, 1947. In hindsight, Pakistan made a big blunder by launching the invasion on October 22. If it had delayed its invasion by two or three weeks when the snow would have covered the Banihal Pass, the runway at Srinagar would also have been covered by snow making it unfit for any air operation. In these circumstances, the story would have been altogether different. Imagine the situation if the Indian Air Force Dakotas that went onto save Kashmir had not been able to land in Srinagar: the ground induction of troops and stores through the Banihal Pass would have been extremely slow and difficult. It is extremely doubtful if the J&K state forces would have been able to meet the challenges posed by the invaders. The raiders would have, thus, been able to consolidate

their position in the Valley, making its liberation a nearly impossible task for the Indian forces and the course of history would have been altogether different.

The siege of Skardu and its consequent fall is a black mark on the history of the Indian armed forces. Gilgit had been gifted to Pakistan on November 3, 1947, by the treachery of Maj Brown. On November 21, 1947, Lt Col (later Brig) Sher Jung Thapa was asked to move to Skardu from Leh and defend Skardu. His task was not easy as he had just 40 Sikh and 31 Muslim troops and hundreds of refugees. His force was somewhat augmented by the arrival of reinforcements from Kargil in February 1948 when the combatant strength grew to around 285. He had over 600 hostiles facing him and only limited amounts of rations, water and ammunition.

The Indian Army's two attempts to relieve and reinforce the force at Skardu had come to naught as the tribals located at vantage points were able to ambush and interdict the incoming force. The army soon realised that the air force was perhaps the only answer to save the garrison and thwart the immediate danger posed to it by the hostiles. Rightly, a request was made to No. 1 (Opl) Group to strike in the areas in the vicinity of Skardu any time between February 24 to 27, 1948. The Skardu fort in which Thapa and his force, along with the refugees, were located had not been fully besieged by this time. A major engagement between the defenders and the raiders took place on February 24, but the defenders were able to hold back the raiders. There is no doubt that any air action by the IAF at this juncture would naturally have relieved some pressure on the besieged garrison and demoralised the hostiles around Skardu. It is also quite likely that the latest reinforcing column would have been able to make its way to Skardu during this period when the hostiles would have been worried about air attacks. Unfortunately, the army's request was not agreed to by Headquarters No. 1 (Op1) Group. It cited two reasons for turning it down. Firstly, it was felt that a strike by a single-engine aircraft over a distance of 200 miles and flying at 20,000 ft over extremely hostile terrain was too risky – the ideal machine under the circumstances was a twin-engine aircraft which the RIAF did not have in its inventory. The second justification (though not

very plausible) for turning down the request was the likelihood of damage to the aircraft's oxygen system if the aircraft was flown for a prolonged period at these heights! These arguments were endorsed by the Chief of the Air Staff, and Air Marshal Commanding Royal Indian Air Force, Air Mshl Elmhirst. He also felt that after flying nearly 200 miles over the mountains with their tops at 17,000 ft or higher, the Tempest aircraft, fitted with long range tanks would be able to fire just two rockets and such a strike would hardly serve to check enemy pressure on the beleaguered garrison. He opined that such doubtful gains did not make it worthwhile to risk losing valuable aircraft and aircrew, and the risk of losses under these conditions was rather high.

The army took up the matter with Defence Minister Sardar Baldev Singh, who, after discussing the matter with Air HQ, turned down the army's plea. It was also appreciated by Air HQ that the diversion of the Dakotas for delivery of stores to Skardu would affect the air supply of Poonch, which was not desirable. There was also the risk of the Dakotas being shot down by the tribals who were positioned well above the height at which the Dakotas would have flown for the supply drop.

The situation in Skardu deteriorated in the next few days. The food and water stocks were running out. In May 1948, Thapa was cleared to withdraw but did not do so as there was no way the refugees could be saved. He requested for air support in April and again in May to alleviate his problems but the General Office Commanding (GOC), Maj Gen Thimayya, informed him that it was not possible for the Dakotas to fly over 4,570 m and that attempts were on to modify them to give them the requisite capability.

Prime Minister Nehru, as early as in January 1948, had written to the Commander-in-Chief (C-in-C) Army, Gen Bucher that he should be kept informed about developments in Skardu from time to time. Nehru considered it to be important because "Skardu holds the pass to a large portion of Kashmir and should be held in sufficient strength." The army either ignored the prime minister's directive or failed to realise the seriousness of the situation. Skardu was vital and was the key not only to the defence of Kargil and Dras but could also have been the stepping stone for the recapture of Gilgit. Apparently,

the army brass did not bring these facts to the knowledge of their RIAF counterparts till June 18, 1948. It was only on that day that the two Cs-in-C met and the army chief confirmed that Skardu was not a "side show" (as was the perception of most of the commanders) and the situation was grim and needed to be saved. The army chief also confirmed that he was willing to forego some of the air effort earmarked for the Valley. The Chief of Air Staff (CAS) then directed that two Tempest aircraft be detailed to attack the besieging hostiles with guns and reconnaissance be carried out to confirm if a Dakota could drop arms and ammunition with at least 50 percent of the load falling into the Dropping Zone (DZ). The first such mission, with two Tempest aircraft, on June 19, was a resounding success and was followed by another one the next day. The pilots on these missions were flying without oxygen – the exact reason for doing so is not known. Supplies were urgently required but with the hostiles occupying all the vantage points at heights, the risks for any Dakota were too high. The RIAF innovated, and utilised the Tempests, with canisters hanging from their bomb racks to drop supplies on June 28 and July 1. Of course, these canisters had very limited capacity and each Tempest could carry just two of them. Some of the supplies landed outside the very small-sized DZ (Skardu fort with the besieged garrison served the purpose of DZ as well) and the defenders had to fight their way to retrieve the supplies falling outside the fort and, in the process, suffered casualties. Thereafter, such supply as well as strike missions were repeated whenever weather permitted – the good weather days were rather limited during that time of the year and these forays had to be restricted to the morning period due to cloud build-up later in the day. Unfortunately, even on the days when such missions were possible, only two aircraft were committed. These supplies were never going to be enough and provided only temporary relief and some hope for the future. The garrison finally ran out of supplies and tried to break out on August 14, 1948, but the hostiles captured all of them. Except for Thapa and his batman who had served directly under Gen Gracey, the Pakistan Army's C-in-C earlier, all the males were killed. The Pakistani commander in his message to Pakistan Army Headquarters signalled: "All Sikhs shot, all women raped"—evidence of how sadistic the hostiles were.

COULD THINGS HAVE BEEN DIFFERENT?

The RIAF had first ventured into the Skardu region as early as on January 26, 1948, but the mission had to be aborted as one of the two Tempests developed oxygen problems. The next mission could be executed only on February 9, 1948, because of bad weather during the intervening period. The target assigned was not Skardu but Rondu village which is slightly west of Skardu. But this attack had nothing to do with the situation at Skardu fort.

If the vital importance of Skardu had been conveyed to Air Cmde Mehar Singh and Air Vice Marshal (AVM) Mukherjee, one can assume that air support would have been provided right from November 1947 onwards. Secondly, the RIAF could have sent more than one mission per day whenever weather permitted, thus, providing badly needed supplies to the beleaguered garrison. Though only one of the three earmarked squadrons was deployed in J&K and committed for operational tasks at any one time, it is quite likely that Air HQ would have deployed some additional aircraft for supporting Skardu if only the RIAF had been briefed about its strategic importance.

ACQUISITION OF B-25 MITCHELL BOMBER

The need for a bomber aircraft was acutely felt right in the early stages of the war in Kashmir. India had only Spitfire and Tempest aircraft in its inventory and both these aircraft had limited weapon carrying capabilities. Col BM Kaul, India's defence attaché to Washington was specially directed by the prime minister to approach the United States government with a request for the sale of B-25 Mitchel bombers. India wanted to place an initial order for 12 B-25 for delivery by May 1948 and for an additional 31 aircraft for subsequent delivery.[3] The request was turned down due to the US embargo on arms sales to India and Pakistan. The United States suggested that India approach the UK for its needs. The British offer to sell the obsolete Blenheim

---

3. MS Venkataramani, "An Elusive Military Relationship" *Frontline,* April 9, 1999; and Memorandum of Conversation, by the Assistant Chief of Division of South Asian Affairs (Mathews) dated April 2, 1948, File 711.45/248, United States Department of State/Foreign Relations of the United States, 1948. The Near East, South Asia, and Africa (1948), Part 1, pp. 505-508

The decision not to use the IAF's combat aircraft emanated from faulty analysis of the Chinese air threat which presumed that India would bear the full brunt of the PLA Air Force (PLAAF) and the IAF would be unable to defend cities like Delhi and Calcutta from the Chinese air attacks. It was also feared that such attacks would lead to the wholesale exodus of population a la 1942 Japanese bombing.

bomber aircraft of World War II vintage was not acceptable to India. India had no choice but to utilise whatever aircraft the RIAF had in its inventory.

If this purchase had fructified, it would have had two implications. Firstly, the use of air power would have been far more vigorous and, in all probability, it would have changed the course of the war. Secondly, the Indians' ingenuity would not have come to the fore to meet urgent requirements and they would have not embarked on resurrecting the B-24 Liberators from their graves in Kanpur. Fifty of these were made serviceable and inducted into service and went on to serve the country for nearly two decades—the last of these aircraft was retired in 1968. Non-availability of bombers also led to a unique Indian innovation when the Dakota aircraft was converted into a bomber aircraft and utilised effectively in demoralising the hostiles and putting the fear of God in their minds.

NON-USE OF AIR POWER IN SINO-INDIAN WAR OF 1962

While the transport and helicopter force of the Indian Air Force did yeoman and commendable service prior to, and during, the Sino-Indian War of 1962, its combat elements were not permitted to see action. Why was this so has been shrouded in mystery though this author has dealt with the subject in detail in his book *Unknown and Unsung: Indian Air Force in Sino-Indian War of 1962*. It is generally believed that Prime Minister Nehru was influenced by a letter from Dr. BC Roy, chief minister of West Bengal on the threat of the Chinese bombing Calcutta if the Indians opted for use of air power against the Chinese. This does not seem to be correct as Dr. Roy passed away in July 1962 well before the emergence of the

Chinese threat. The decision not to use the IAF's combat aircraft emanated from faulty analysis of the Chinese air threat which presumed that India would bear the full brunt of the PLA Air Force (PLAAF) and the IAF would be unable to defend cities like Delhi and Calcutta from the Chinese air attacks. It was also feared that such attacks would lead to the wholesale exodus of population a la 1942 Japanese bombing, resulting in very high casualties – not due to the air attacks but due to stampedes during the panic evacuation by the population of the city of Calcutta and, to a lesser extent, of

The Indian intelligence authorities failed to take into consideration the high altitude of the airfields in Tibet as also the limited length of the runways and lack of infrastructure which would have greatly restricted the Chinese capabilities even if they had deployed all their resources against India.

Madras. What is also not commonly known is that Air Mshl AM Engineer, CAS, had proposed bombing of the Chinese targets in the Ladakh region in August 1962. At this meeting, BN Mullik, head of the Intelligence Bureau, gave out his highly exaggerated assessment of the capabilities of the PLAAF and Defence Minister Krishna Menon ruled against the use of air power. It has also been stated that the then Wg Cdr HC Dewan had written a note indicating a similar assessment and recommending that the IAF should not be used against the Chinese. However, the authenticity of such a note is doubtful as nobody seems to have seen it. If this was the view of Air HQ, then why was the combat fleet redeployed for possible action against the Chinese in both the eastern and western sectors?

What was the prevalent situation on the ground in October 1962? The declassified Chinese records show that not even a single aircraft of the PLAAF was deployed at airfields in Tibet; there were just three anti-aircraft regiments deployed against India covering both the eastern and western sectors. The Indian intelligence authorities failed to take into consideration the high altitude of the airfields in Tibet as also the limited length of the runways and lack of infrastructure which would have greatly restricted the Chinese capabilities even if they had deployed all their resources against

India. The American assessment of the Chinese capabilities was that one of the biggest problem that the Chinese would have faced was the supply of aviation fuel and even if the Chinese had deployed all their aerial transport resources for the provision of fuel for the air operations, the Chinese air effort would have been miniscule as compared to the assessed threats by the Indian intelligence.

Photographs taken by the Indian helicopter and transport pilots in the eastern sector indicated that one Chinese division in that sector was spread out in the open over a wide area and was extremely vulnerable to any air attack. While it would have not been possible to provide "intimate close air support" to our troops at Namka Chu Valley due to the terrain constraints, interdiction against the Chinese divisional assets not far from there would have ensured the slowing down of the Chinese build-up, if not altogether halted it. The Indian Air Force had been redeployed and was ready for strikes in both the Ladakh and North-East Frontier Agency (NEFA) sectors and would have had a free run. There is no doubt that the course of the war and that of Indian history would have been totally different, and India would have not suffered the humiliating defeat it did had the combat aircraft of the IAF gone into action against the Chinese.[4]

THE TRAGEDY OF HF-24

Though Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) performed a remarkable feat when India's first indigenous fighter aircraft – the HF-24 Marut – made its maiden flight on June 17, 1961, in less than five years from the time the project was conceived, and just 15 months from putting together the prototype to its first flight, the aircraft failed to achieve its full potential mainly due to lack of an appropriate engine for the aircraft. All aircraft designers base their airframe design around a known and, if possible, proven engine and Dr. Kurt Tank, the designer of the HF-24 was no exception. He had planned to have the 3,700 kg afterburning Orpheus B.Or 12 (Bristol Orpheus) engine – normally referred to as Orpheus 12—which was under development for

---

4.   Air Mshl Bharat Kumar, *Unknown and Unsung: Indian Air Force in Sino-Indian War of 1962* (New Delhi: KW Publishers, 2013).

the Royal Air Force. The development of the engine came to a halt after the British government decided not to fund the same as it did not need it. Bristol Orpheus wanted three million pounds—not a large sum even by the standards of 1961—for its development which the Government of India did not agree to. It was a short-sighted and wrong decision. India also failed to procure alternative engines like the RB-153, SNECMA Atar 09K-53, Super Atar M-53 and, finally, the RB-199—then available in the world market. It did evaluate the Soviet Tumansky RD-9F that had a thrust of 3,750 kg but rejected it for technical reasons. In the meanwhile, HAL adopted the non-afterburning 2,200 kg Orpheus 703 which powered the Gnat as an interim solution. These engines which were well short of requirements to meet the needs of the aircraft, continued with the aircraft throughout its short service life of mere a 15 years. Much later, a Gas Turbine Research Establishment (GTRE) designed reheat version of the Orpheus 703 engine was tried out but the same was given up after the accident in which HAL's legendary Chief Test Pilot Gp Capt Suranjan Das was killed. India joined up with Egypt and tried to develop the E-300 engine – it was a case of the blind leading the blind, and the effort was soon abandoned.

This was not the end of the story. In August 1961, Pakistan acquired the F-104 from the United States. India did not have anything to counter it. The United States refused to sell the F-104s to India, the British Lightning did not meet the Indian requirements and the French Mirage III was just too costly. India had no choice but to opt for the Soviet MiG-21s which were required to be paid for in Indian currency and could also be manufactured in India. The induction of the Soviet aircraft into the Indian inventory alarmed the USA. President Kennedy wrote to Prime Minister Nehru, offering to subsidise the cost of the UK's Lightning aircraft and the development of the Orpheus engine to the extent of around 75 percent of the cost. The US Congress tried to pressurise India by its threat to cut aid to India. These efforts failed as the West could not provide an acceptable alternative and India wanted only the F-104s. The Indian search for a suitable aircraft continued after the 1962 Sino-Indian War. The United States once again offered to help India develop the HF-24 as a supersonic combat aircraft provided India gave up its plan

to manufacture the MiG-21s and freeze its inventory of these aircraft to just one or two squadrons worth of aircraft. India finally accepted the American offer of help in the development of the HF-24 Mk II in January 1965, but subsequent events in April (Kutch) and the Indo-Pak War of 1965 ensured the end of negotiations on the American aid to the Indian armed forces.

Looking back, if India had accepted the Bristol Orpheus demand of 3 million pounds and had got the Orpheus 12 for its Marut fleet, the story of the Indian aircraft industry would have been altogether different. India could not afford two aircraft manufacturing lines simultaneously. It meant that India had to opt for either a MiG-21 or an HF-24 line. Obviously, it would have been a Mach 2 HF-24 line. These aircraft could have then been produced in large numbers and would have been the mainstay of the Indian Air Force much like the MiG-21 of which nearly 900 were procured by India in various variants. The HF-24 would have been upgraded from time to time to keep up with the latest technologies. This success would have enabled the designers and manufacturers to design and develop its successor aircraft. India would have then become self-sufficient for its need for combat aircraft or at least would have minimal need for the import of additional aircraft.

The story of not selecting an appropriate engine was to be repeated when the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) project was taken up. The Kaveri engine had been under development for some time though there were doubts if the GTRE would be able to overcome the various problems that it was facing. It was, thus, incorrect to design the LCA around this engine, thus, delaying the project inordinately and having the same problem of poor thrust-weight ratio as the HF-24 aircraft. It is imperative that any future aircraft design is around a proven engine with more than sufficient thrust and catering for weight over-run which is more or less a certainty in any aircraft design and development.

RESTRICTION DURING INDIA-PAKISTAN WAR OF 1965

The likelihood of a full-scale war between India and Pakistan emerged in April-May 1965 when Pakistan launched an offensive in Kutch. Indian policy-makers had not learnt their lessons from the non-use of air power

during the Sino-Indian War of 1962, and the fear of aerial attacks against Indian cities still loomed in their minds. Despite the best efforts by then CAS, Air Mshl Arjan Singh, the government directed that the IAF would not launch attacks against Pakistani air bases until the PAF took the initiative. Secondly, the IAF was prohibited from attacking Peshawar, the PAF's citadel, unless specific clearance was given by the government. Indian Air Force aircraft, thus, provided close air support to the army in Chhamb-Juarain sector from September 1, 1965, onwards and carried out airborne patrols trying to entice the PAF into aerial combat. While the IAF did manage to get the better of the PAF in these skirmishes, it did not take the initiative of attacking PAF airfields and installations. The IAF went into action against Pakistani air bases only on September 7, 1965, and that too after the PAF attacked Indian airfields in the western sector in the evening of September 6 and on the morning of September 7, in the eastern sector. It was during these strikes on September 6, that the debacle at Pathankot occurred where as many as seven aircraft were lost. At Halwara, both sides lost two aircraft each.

Imagine the scenario if the PAF had also launched its operations against Indian airfields on September 1, simultaneously along with its army thrust in Chhamb sector. That morning, at Pathankot, besides the Mysteres of 3 and 31 Squadrons, which were mostly in open blast pens, there were 11 Vampires of 45 and 220 Squadrons parked in one line on one of the tarmacs – the twelfth aircraft of the units fetched up that afternoon. There were no additional blast pens to accommodate these Vampires. Besides the Vampires, there were C-119 Packets of 48 Squadron operating from Pathankot, and parked in the open; they flew out of Pathankot that afternoon just before the first formation of four Vampires got airborne. Since the war had not started, there was no standing combat air patrol over Pathankot. In the absence of mobile observer posts and low level radars, Pathankot was devoid of any warning of approach of enemy aircraft flying at low level. There is no doubt that if the Pakistan Air Force had attacked on that day, it would have been able to knock out almost all the Vampires and Packets that were at Pathankot airfield besides any Mysteres that may have been

Pakistan had always believed that the key to the defence of East Pakistan lay in West Pakistan and this belief led to the formation of its war strategy in 1971. Accordingly, only one combat squadron was left in Dacca and the remaining air force was in West Pakistan.

on the ground and in the open. Such an event would have stunned not only the IAF but the entire country. The catastrophic event did not take place as Pakistan believed that it would be able to restrict the operations to the state of Jammu and Kashmir, and any air attacks outside the state would result in an all-out war which it wanted to avoid at all costs.

Let us see the second scenario. India opened a second front in Punjab with its forces advancing in three parallel thrusts. Initially, the most successful of these was the one across the Amritsar-Lahore sector where the Indian forces managed to reach Icchogal Canal but were beaten back mainly due to air attacks by the Pakistani Sabres. If the Indian Air Force had launched attacks on Pakistani air bases simultaneously along with the Indian Army's thrust in the Punjab, it is doubtful that the PAF would have been able to divert any forces for close air support of its army or against the advancing Indian Army columns. Most of its air effort would have been directed towards the air defence of the airfields. In any case, the quantum of force sent to repel the Indian advance would have been much less and the Indian Army would have been able to continue its advance though at a somewhat slower pace.

The Indian response to the Pakistani attacks on Indian airfields on September 6, was to attack almost all the airfields where the PAF could have deployed its aircraft, the exceptions being Peshawar and Kohat. The available intelligence had indicated that the PAF had its maximum assets at Sargodha, Karachi and Peshawar. If the Indian air effort had been directed against these airfields instead of taking on airfields like Pasrur, Chander, etc. the IAF would have been able to neutralise the PAF. With continuous and relentless attacks at Sargodha and the Karachi complex, Pakistani aircraft would have been tied up in air defence but there was a bigger possibility of greater losses on the ground, resulting in the demoralisation of the PAF.

India launched its attack on Peshawar on September 13, 1965. The IAF was unlucky that despite almost the entire fleet of B-57s being on the ground at Peshawar that night, there were many near misses and most of the Pakistani aircraft got away unscathed. The next raid took place on September 15, but with a much reduced force. If the attacks on Peshawar had been launched right in the beginning, the PAF B-57s would have suffered far higher attrition and their sortie generation would have been much lower than the three sorties per aircraft per night that they were able to achieve, thus, easing pressure on the Indian airfields.

It was different that in the 1971 War, the USA was absolutely pro-Pakistan and anti-India, unlike in 1965 when there was an embargo against both India and Pakistan. Jordan's loan of one F-104 Squadron to Pakistan in 1971 was with the tacit approval of the USA.

PAF'S STRATEGY IN 1971

Pakistan had always believed that the key to the defence of East Pakistan lay in West Pakistan and this belief led to the formation of its war strategy in 1971. Accordingly, only one combat squadron was left in Dacca and the remaining air force was in West Pakistan. It was also planned to carry out limited counter air operations as part of preemptive strikes and thereafter to preserve the resources to the extent possible. This policy was apparently based on the experiences of 1965 wherein the PAF had been faced with shortage of spares – the same story was to follow during the Kargil War when the PAF had to cut down the combat air patrols flown by its F-16s within a week of commencement of operations as it was running out of spares. It was different that in the 1971 War, the USA was absolutely pro-Pakistan and anti-India, unlike in 1965 when there was an embargo against both India and Pakistan. Jordan's loan of one F-104 Squadron to Pakistan in 1971 was with the tacit approval of the USA.

Pakistan had planned to launch a massive armoured thrust supported by the PAF in the southern sector of Punjab in the hope that the successes in this sector would serve Pakistan well at the negotiating table. The PAF,

in its wisdom, decided to hold back a major portion of its fleet in reserve to support this thrust. Since the reasons for holding back and not committing this portion of the PAF have not emerged in Pakistani writings, one can only speculate about the reason for the same. It could have been the PAF's apprehensions of likely spares shortage or rather high attrition of aircraft in counter air operations as well as support to the Pakistan Army in other sectors. The defection and desertion of the Bengali ground crew also may have had its psychological impact and may have led to this decision. It is also quite likely that the decision was forced by the Pakistan Army brass who did not want to take any chances with their trump card. It is different that this planned *blitzkrieg* did not materialise for reasons that need not be gone into here.

What impact, if any, would the commitment of this element of the PAF in the early stages of the Indo-Pakistan War of 1971 have had? As already stated, the PAF did not carry out any counter air missions after December 3. If attacks on the IAF airfields had continued, it would have suffered heavy casualties as the IAF air defence was able to plug the various holes in its air defence network and all the shortcomings of 1965 had, more or less, been overcome. The uncommitted force of the PAF would have been used for air defence and support to the ground forces and, in the process, would have suffered a high rate of attrition. The attrition rate would have been higher if the PAF had embarked on counter air missions against Indian airfields; India would, in all probability, have also retaliated in a similar manner. Of course, the IAF would have needed to step up its air effort for both air defence and ground attack missions. However, it must be remembered that the IAF had planned an aircraft utilisation of 3 sorties per aircraft per day for the entire duration of the war and had sufficient reserves to sustain this effort for the expected duration of the conflict. However, the actual utilisation was 1.1 sorties per aircraft per day or just 1/3rd of the planned effort. Hence, it can be said with certainty that there would have been no major impact if the PAF had committed its entire fleet of combat aircraft against India in the western sector. This is one situation where the "if" question does not bring out any new scenario.

There are many instances in equipment acquisition where the "if" question can be applied. For example, would India have opted for the purchase of Toofani aircraft if the UK had not intentionally slowed down the delivery of the Goblin engines for the Vampire being built in India – this was to enable Pakistan to catch up with India. Another instance was the Indian decision not to manufacture the Mirage-2000 and instead procure the MiG-29. Yet another one was the acquisition of the Westland helicopter after an assurance to the company had been given by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to the Parliament. Such instances – and there are many more – have not been discussed here because there were political implications in most of the cases and they were well outside the decision-making by the Service Headquarters.

OPERATION CACTUS:
SOME PARALLELS

ASHOK K CHORDIA

A touch of Otto Skorzeny and Entebbe. Good Show!

— Lt Col "Baboo"Sapru[1]

History is replete with examples of military operations which have tested the will and ingenuity of warriors to overcome odds. For long, Operation Eiche[2] (Italy, 1943) and Operation Thunderbolt (Uganda, 1976)[3] have stood out as textbook examples of perfection in the conduct of military operations in the face of uncertainty and high stakes. Operation Cactus (the Maldives, 1988) was a similar operation (Op) embarked upon by the Indian armed forces to provide succour to Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, the beleaguered president of the Maldives. Sometimes willingly, sometimes grudgingly, Op Cactus has been compared with two of those most daring operations of all times. What follows is a look at some aspects of these three operations with a view to bringing out similarities and differences. But first, a word about each of the three operations.

Group Captain **Ashok K Chordia** is a Senior Fellow at the Centre for Air Power Studies, New Delhi.

1. "About Op Cactus", cited by Brig Bulsara in Maj Gen Afsir Karim AVSM (Retd), ed., *The Story of the Indian Airborne Troops* (Lancer: New Delhi, 1993), pp. 234-235.
2. Operation Eiche is also called "Operation Oak" outside Germany.
3. Op Thunderbolt is popularly known as the Entebbe Raid.

Op Cactus projected the prowess of Indian diplomacy and showcased the remarkable synergy of the country's armed forces. Op Cactus was a success story in as much as the Indian armed forces achieved their aim, namely, the rescue of the president and the restoration of a legitimate government.

OP CACTUS (THE MALDIVES, NOVEMBER 1988)

If the Maldivians were caught with their pants down, 50 Bde's at best were half-mast.

— Brig FFC Bulsara[4]

In November 1988, some Maldivian nationals and their Sri Lankan allies attempted to overthrow the government of the Republic of Maldives headed by President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom. The president sought military assistance from the Indian Prime Minister (PM), Mr Rajiv Gandhi to save him and his country. On the advice of the military leadership, the PM gave the "go ahead!" The Indian response was prompt and decisive. In a daring airborne operation, the Indian Air Force (IAF) airlifted paratroopers who rescued the president and secured the airstrip; the Indian Navy coerced the fleeing terrorists into surrendering. Op Cactus projected the prowess of Indian diplomacy and showcased the remarkable synergy of the country's armed forces. Op Cactus was a success story in as much as the Indian armed forces achieved their aim, namely, the rescue of the president and the restoration of a legitimate government.

OP EICHE (ITALY, SEPTEMBER 1943)

May I suggest, sir, that we forget all about figures and trying to compute our chances; we both know that they are very small, but we also know that, however small, we shall stake our lives on success!

— Capt Karl Radl to his team leader[5]

---

4. Karim, ed., n. 1, p. 208.
5. Otto Skorzeny, *Skorzeny's Special Missions: The Memoirs of Hitler's Most Daring Commando* (S Yorkshire: Frontline Books, 2011 Kindle Edition), loc. 1292.

At the height of World War II, Italy suffered defeats in North Africa and Greece. The Italians despised those setbacks to such an extent that King Victor Emmanuel dismissed the country's military leader, Benito Mussolini, and put him under arrest. Despite his ouster, Mussolini enjoyed support from some quarters, therefore,his arrest was kept secret and he was moved to different locations, occasionally and secretly, to prevent a possible uprising.

Mussolini was important in Hitler's scheme of things. For Hitler, his absence meant Italy eventually falling into the hands of the Allies. Therefore, it was essential for the Germans to find Mussolini and to restore him at the helm in Italy. The Germans tried to extricate him from a naval fortress on the Italian island of Santa Maddalena in the Mediterranean. The plan had to be aborted in the final stages because Mussolini had been moved to a new location.

Later, Op Eiche was launched to evacuate the deposed dictator from the Albergo Campo Imperatore Hotel atop the Gran Sasso mountain. In a daring raid, gliderborne German troops landed in the vicinity of the hotel and evacuated Mussolini.

OP THUNDERBOLT (UGANDA, JULY 1976)

There were no perfect answers to a problem set by madmen.
There were only choices. And each choice invited disaster. Thunderbolt will either be a spectacular success or a terrible catastrophe for Israel.
— Yitzhak Rabin, prime minister of Israel (1976)[6]

Air France Flight 139 which originated in Tel Aviv with 246 passengers on board—a third of whom were Israelis—was hijacked by four terrorists after it got airborne from Athens on Sunday, June 27, 1976. After a halt at Benghazi (Libya), the terrorists took the aircraft to Entebbe (Uganda). Three more terrorists joined them later. They demanded the release of the Palestinians held in Israeli prisons on charges of terrorism in return for the hostages. They threatened to kill the hostages if the demands were not met

---

6. William Stevenson, *90 Minutes at Entebbe* (New York: Bantam, 1976), p. 56.

All the passengers held in the old terminal building of Entebbe Airport were freed on July 4, 1976, after a week-long tempestuous operation.

The farthest in range, the shortest in time, and the boldest in imagination, Op Thunderbolt was a turning point in the civilised world's response to acts of terror.

by the deadline of 1400 h (Israeli time) on July 1,1976. On the third day, the hostages were split into two groups: the Israeli and the non-Israeli. The non-Israeli group was released. The terrorists reiterated the demand for the release of their brethren held in Israeli prisons, including Kozo Okamoto[7] and a number of other Arab and German terrorists imprisoned in other countries in return for the remaining hostages who included the 12-member Air France crew who had stayed back in solidarity with their Israeli passengers. The Israeli Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin[8]

received the information about the hijack on the same day at 1330 h. By 1530 h, a crisis management team had been formed.

Israel regards the barter of innocents for criminals as immoral. For that reason, the Israeli passengers on the flight had to be treated as if they were "soldiers in the front line".[9] But under those extreme circumstances, the Israeli Cabinet fully supported by the opposition,took a unanimous decision initially to accede to the demands of the terrorists. The decision was made public.[10] Meanwhile, the terrorists extended the deadline until after Sunday, July 4, 1976. This extension was given,in all likelihood, because Idi Amin, the Ugandan president—who was supporting the cause of the terrorists covertly—was away in Mauritius, but it gave the Israelis time to reconsider a military option.

To launch a rescue operation at Entebbe nearly 3,500 km away from Israel where the environment was hostile, was a daunting task. Despite a slim chance, the Israelis succeeded. All the passengers held in the old terminal

---

7. A Japanese enlisted by the PLO, who killed 24 people at Lod Airport in 1972.
8. A retired general and a former chief of Israel's Military Staff.
9. Stevenson, n. 6, p. x.
10. Iddo Netanyahu, *Yoni's Last Battle: The Rescue at Entebbe, 1976* (New York: Gefen Books, 2001 Kindle Edition), loc. 483-486.

building of Entebbe Airport were freed on July 4, 1976, after a week-long tempestuous operation.

The farthest in range, the shortest in time, and the boldest in imagination, Op Thunderbolt was a turning point in the civilised world's response to acts of terror.

SOME PARALLELS

Three Rescue Operations, Each with a Difference
All three of these operations were meant to effect a rescue of some type. In two cases––Op Eiche and Op Cactus––a prominent leader had to be found and rescued. Thereafter, while Mussolini had to be evacuated to a safe haven, Gayoom had to be provided protection in his own country. In the case of Op Thunderbolt, the hostages had to be rescued from the terrorists and airlifted from Entebbe (in Uganda) to Israel. Op Cactus required positioning of the task force on an island nearly 2,600 km away. The scenes of action for Op Eiche (about 100 km away from the mounting base) and Op Thunderbolt (about 3,500 km away) were, strictly speaking, not islands. But then, the delivery of the task force in each case, had to be in an area surrounded by hostile elements—on islands of sorts. Even the passage for the Israelis, between Egypt and Saudi Arabia, was through hostile territory.

The Israelis risked their elite troops to rescue their own people; the Germans and the Indians undertook the operations to rescue a leader of a foreign country as a follow-up of a decision of their country's leadership.

The Decision and the Government's Backing
Mussolini's rescue was critical to Hitler's designs in Europe. The German dictator did not consult his general staff or ministers before deciding to send a force to rescue Mussolini. He just gave an executive order to rescue the Italian dictator. He chose the team leader, Otto Skorzeny, personally and left the decision-making, planning and execution to him and some other experts. He told Skorzeny that he would dissociate himself from the enterprise if it failed and would possibly disavow his (Skorzeny's) action

publicly, saying that it was an insane plan concocted by the officer along with the local commanders and acted upon without authority. He expected Skorzeny to be prepared to be thrown over for the sake of Germany.[11]

Op Thunderbolt was an Israeli action in accordance with their policy of not succumbing to the demands of terrorists. Although the decision was arrived at after a prolonged debate within the Cabinet and was supported by the opposition, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin had assumed full responsibility for the outcome before giving the "go ahead!" He had told his Cabinet that the government would have to resign if the operation failed.[12]

In the case of Op Cactus, the idea of sending the National Security Guards (NSG) to rescue President Gayoom was rejected in the early stages of decision-making. Since it was a request (read SOS) from the head of the state of a friendly country, Op Cactus had to be an overt operation with the full support of the Indian government. The prime minister, with inputs from the diplomatic staff,determined the necessity of undertaking the operation. The inputs from the Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) and the Vice Chief of the Army Staff (VCAS) assured him of its feasibility. Once the decision to go ahead was taken, the planning and execution was left to the field commanders.

The Odds and the Probability of Success
Two aspects of these three operations stand out: first, the high risk and the uncertainty at the time of launching; and, second, the spectacular outcome in each case. Given the circumstances, the *pundits* would have rated the probability of success close to zero.

In the case of Op Eiche, Mussolini was kept under house arrest in Hotel Campo Imperatore atop Mount Sasso in Italy. Armed Italians numbering nearly 250 guarded the building. The Germans landed in gliders in the vicinity of the hotel and raided the complex. A small mistake on their part could have led to the frisking away, or, in an extreme situation, the killing, of Mussolini. In Op Thunderbolt, the 104 hostages were held at gunpoint in

---

11. Skorzeny, n. 5, loc. 1072-1704.
12. Netanyahu, n. 10, loc. 2584-2593.

the old terminal building of Entebbe Airport. A wrong action by the Israeli raiding team would have resulted in carnage—it would have led to the killing of all the hostages. Op Cactus was no different—President Gayoom was hiding on Malé Island, which measured 1 km by 2 km (approx). Had the rebels carried out an organised search after they landed on the island, they would have found him. It was a challenge for the Indian troops to reach Gayoom before the rebels could find him.

In all the three cases, the assault teams—and the aircraft that delivered them—were extremely vulnerable at the time of landing. Foresight and prompt action on the part of the opposing forces would have turned the tables in favour of the Italians (in the case of Op Eiche) and in favour of the terrorists/ rebels in the case of Op Thunderbolt and Op Cactus respectively.

Method of Delivery and Anticipated Casualties
Time was of essence in each case. Use of the fastest means of delivery was a dire necessity. Therefore, use of surface means to position the task force was out of the question; the delivery of the force to the scene of action by air was an axiomatic choice. In all the three cases, the skills and the daring of the pilots mattered because, on their ability to deliver precisely, depended the rest of the operation.

Considering that the troops had to be delivered in a hostile environment, the landing of the aircraft was a very risky proposition. Therefore, in each case, paradrop was thought of as an option. But the idea was given up after some deliberations. In the case of Op Eiche, it was given up due to the small size of the drop zone atop Mount Gran Sasso. Accuracy of a paradrop would have been an issue. Then there was the issue of the rate of descent of the parachutes. In the rarefied air at that altitude (6,300 ft above mean sea level), the rate of descent of the parachutes would have been high, causing landing injuries.[13]Even with the use of gliders—at that altitude, without a prepared landing surface—they had feared the losses to be close to a staggering 80 percent.[14]

13. William H McRaven, *Spec Ops—Case Studies in Special Operations: Theory and Practice* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1996), p. 178.
14. Skorzeny, n. 5, loc. 1277.

In the case of Op Cactus too, paradrop was given considerable weightage during the planning stage. It was rejected mainly due to the small size of the likely drop zone (Hulule Airport) and its proximity to the sea.

Recordings of the inquiry into the Entebbe Raid, released by the Israeli Defence Ministry on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the operation, suggest that one of the plans considered by the Israelis was parachuting a force onto Entebbe airport and rescuing of the hostages after a fight. This was rejected outright because a paradrop on the airport would draw the attention of the terrorists and endanger the lives of the hostages. Another paradrop option over Lake Victoria (in the proximity of Entebbe Airport) entailed use of rubber dinghies. This idea was discarded since the lake was infested with crocodiles.[15]Besides, one of the rubber dinghies paradropped over the Mediterranean Sea during the trial runs, burst on impact.[16] As per simulation, the Israelis had estimated that 20 hostages could die. But if secrecy was lost, all the hostages and all the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) men could be killed.[17]

In the case of Op Cactus too, paradrop was given considerable weightage during the planning stage. It was rejected mainly due to the small size of the likely drop zone (Hulule Airport) and its proximity to the sea. There was apprehension that a large number of troops could drift because of the prevailing winds, and land in the water. The paratroopers using the D-5 parachutes[18]were handicapped: they could not carry their usual rifles [7.62 mm Self-Loading Rifles (SLRs)] and would not be able to discard the parachutes expeditiously if they landed in the water. Looking at the aerial photograph of the airfield in a coffee-table book, Brig Bulsara had assessed the chances of survival of the paratroopers (in the case of a paradrop) at 70:30.[19] Brig Vivek Sapatnekar too had estimated that a high percentage would land

---

15. Gili Cohen, "How the Entebbe Raid Could Have Unfolded: Declassified Recordings Reveal Alternative Plans," *Israel News*, July 3, 2016, available at http://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-1.728666. Page accessed on May 1, 2017.
16. McRaven, n. 13, p. 336.
17. Netanyahu, n. 10, loc. 2584-2593.
18. The D-5 parachute was the only parachute that could be jumped with from the IL-76 aircraft.
19. Bulsara in Karim, ed., n. 1, p. 212.

in the water. In his briefing to the prime minister, he had said:

> There is not enough open space to carry out a tactical paradrop of even thirty men either on the runway or anywhere around it. Secondly, the sea being all around, there are bound to be high winds; these will certainly carry away the men into the sea and with the load that they would be carrying—more than 60 kilograms—they will have no chance at all. They will drown. … The best option would be to capture the airfield by a *coup de main* landing on the runway itself by the paratroopers re-inforced by para commandos and capture the airport by night.[20]

A distinct advantage of deploying airborne troops is that unlike regular infantry troops, who can at best be airlanded, the paratroopers provide an additional delivery option of being paradropped.

In all the three cases, paratroopers, rather than regular infantry troops were assigned the task (although a paradrop was not resorted to). A distinct advantage of deploying airborne troops is that unlike regular infantry troops, who can at best be airlanded, the paratroopers provide an additional delivery option of being paradropped. Besides, in some ways, a paratrooper epitomises an ideal warrior—one determined to achieve the aim at *any* cost.[21] The trust that the leadership places in the paratroopers is summed up in these lines from Lt Gen William P Yarborough:[22] "A warrior who will bail out at night onto a battlefield deep in enemy country while carrying fifty pounds of equipment, weapons, and ammunition is not likely to perform poorly in combat."

Command and Control

Initially, the Führer Headquarters (FHQ) gave executive orders for a parachute assault on the island of Santa Maddalena to rescue Mussolini. But

---

20. Brig Vivek Sapatnekar (Retd), *Address C/O 56 APO: Location Unknown* (Copyright © VivekSapatnekar, 2008), pp. 164-165.
21. In the case of Op Neptune Spear (killing of Osama bin Laden, Abottabad, 2011) also, Team Six were qualified paratroopers.
22. Foreword to Lt Gen Edward M Flanagan Jr (Retd), *AIRBORNE: A Combat History of American Airborne Forces* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2002), p. x.

when Capt Skorzeny addressed Hitler and his top brass on the situation, Hitler withdrew his order and valued the junior officer's suggestions for an alternate plan.[23] All through, the German team was under the command and control of their leader, Otto Skorzeny.

The Israelis had maintained an airborne Command Post in a Boeing 707 through the operation. Among others on board to facilitate the mission were the Operations Branch Chief Maj Gen Yekutiel Adam and the Air Force Commander Maj Gen Benny Peled.[24] The presence of the airborne Command Post relieved the task force of some of the nagging worries. The airborne Command Post processed real time intelligence and facilitated the refuelling of the aircraft on the return leg.

In the case of Op Cactus, the Indian prime minister took the decision to launch the military operation to rescue Gayoom. The military Headquarters (HQ) tasked the lower formations and left the execution to them. A free hand was given to the field formations to plan and execute the operation. There was no interference from the higher-ups, except that there were frequent calls to update the status until the aircraft formation took off from Agra. Brig Bulsara and the duo of Gp Capt Bewoor and Gp Capt Goel were in absolute command.

Team Building

The Germans did not have a team earmarked and ready to undertake such operations. Hitler personally chose Capt Otto Skorzeny out of half a dozen shortlisted officers to lead in Op Eiche. He chose him because, beyond proving his military prowess like the others, he had travelled across Italy on a motorcycle[25] and knew the country and its terrain better than the others.

The Israelis had been dealing with the menace of terrorism. They had contingency plans and an organisational structure for the rescue of hostages from Lod Airport but the rescue from Entebbe was different. The Sayeret

---

23. Skorzeny, n. 5, loc. 1052-1063.
24. Netanyahu, n. 10, loc. 2356.
25. McRaven, n. 13, p. 170.

Matkal Counter Terrorist Unit (popularly known as the Unit)—trained and designated to undertake anti-terrorist raids—was tasked to rescue the hostages. The Israeli leadership depended on the military commanders at the functional levels to choose their teams. The local commanders, in turn, made use of the resources at their disposal to get the best people on board; age and background (civilian or military) were of less consequence. They mustered all the men—serving and/ or reservists—to meet their operational requirements.

In 1988, India did not have an earmarked force/ team to undertake missions like Op Cactus. The leadership in the case of Op Cactus was incidental (almost). Brig FFC Bulsara, being the brigade commander of 50 (I) Para Brigade, was at the helm. He preferred 6 PARA although on the fateful day, its men were scattered all over and only a skeleton strength was readily available. 6 PARA, under the leadership of Col SC Joshi, had the confidence of the commander. Gp Capt AG Bewoor, was the captain of the lead aircraft, and since he was the Commanding Officer (CO) of the only IL-76 Squadron of the IAF participating in the operation, he was the natural leader of the formation. Gp Capt AK Goel had been sent from Air HQ to brief the aircrew, but considering that the officer was an experienced IL-76 pilot and had commanded the IL-76 Squadron before Gp Capt Bewoor took charge, Air HQ authorised him to fly—the Operations Branch valued his go-getter approach in demanding situations.

Interestingly, some level of spoken Italian was a criterion for the selection of the German troops in Op Eiche. However, that knowledge of the language was not put to use. The Israelis gave weightage to appearance—they dressed like the Ugandan soldiers and even drove in a limousine like that of Idi Amin. This ploy was a big risk because it could have led to fratricide. There was no criterion of fluency of language for the Indian contingent. It is incidental that Capt (Indian Navy) Gopalachari's knowledge of the Tamil language (mother tongue of the rebels) came in handy while trying to reason with the rebels on the high seas.Many an expert negotiator will affirm that being spoken to in the mother tongue does dilute the resolve of a terrorist. That it did in this instance is a foregone conclusion.

Knowledge of the Area of Operation

First-hand knowledge of the area of operation is a bonus, particularly when there is dearth of reliable intelligence. Skorzeny had several days to gather intelligence for Op Eiche. He flew over the target before the operation and took aerial photographs of the proposed landing zone. He also sent a doctor to fish for information about the presence of Mussolini atop Mount Sasso.

The Israelis too had information about Entebbe Airport through individuals who had worked in Uganda. Muki Betser, who had served for a short time in Uganda in an Israeli military mission, remembered the layout of the old airport building. The hostages released by the terrorists were a reliable source of information on the situation as it developed. Mossad agents flew over Entebbe a day before the operation and provided pictures of the airport, which were handed over to the team.[26] The task force continued getting intelligence inputs until the last minute before they took off from Sharm al-Sheikh. Later, during the operation, the airborne Command Post continued receiving inputs.

In the case of Op Cactus, Mr AK Banerjee, the Indian high commissioner, who was in India at that time, had first-hand knowledge of the islands. He (as a civilian) accompanied the Indian task force in the operation. A telephone line, which was kept alive cleverly through the operation,was used to receive information—particularly on the availability of the runway.

Although Indian troops had operated in the Maldives during World War II and India had provided assistance in building the runway at Hulule, records were not readily available to clear the doubts of the decision-makers and planners.

Time at Hand: Affordability of a Rehearsal

The Germans had time on their side—although Mussolini had to be found and evacuated, his life was not under immediate threat. For four weeks, Skorzeny and his men followed each bit of information and rumour to locate Mussolini.[27]An abortive attempt was made to evacuate Mussolini

---

26. Netanyahu, n. 10, loc. 2395.
27. The Germans consulted even clairvoyants and astrologers in Berlin in the hope of learning about Mussolini's whereabouts. Skorzeny, n. 5, loc. 989.

from the island of Santa Maddalena. Even then, they had time to gather more intelligence and plan another operation. Skorzeny flew over the area of interest and clicked pictures to overcome the inadequacy of maps. The flying time from Patrica di Mare Airport, from where the German gliders got airborne, to Gran Sasso, was just about one hour.

The French airliner was hijacked on June 27, 1976. With the initial deadline given by the terrorists (July 1, 1976) fast approaching, the Israeli Cabinet had decided to accede to the demands. But when the deadline got extended, they had a breather in which they evaluated military options and tried out and rehearsed the raid. They paradropped rubber dinghies (to simulate paradrop over Lake Victoria) and practised night short take-off and landing without landing lights on an unlit runway. They also rehearsed raids on the mock-up of the old airport building they were going to raid in Entebbe. They managed to get a limousine and got it painted as the Ugandan dictator's staff car to work up a deception plan. The drivers of the land rovers and the limousine practised off-loading their vehicles from Hercules aircraft. They made the best of the lease of about five days that came their way. For the Israelis, it was an 8-hour flight to Entebbe.

The timeline for Op Cactus was much shorter. The Indian contingent could not afford elaborate planning. The first feelers of an impending requirement of a major airlift reached the functional levels in the air force at 0715 h in the morning of November 3, 1988. The executive orders were given by mid-day.

The timeline for Op Cactus was much shorter. The Indian contingent could not afford elaborate planning. The first feelers of an impending requirement of a major airlift reached the functional levels in the air force at 0715 h in the morning of November 3, 1988.[28] The PARA Brigade received similar inputs at about 1000h.[29] The executive orders were given by mid-day. The IL-38, the Maritime Reconnaissance (MR) aircraft of

---

28. Gp Capt AG Bewoor, "Indian Armed Forces Defeat Coup in Maldives," *Scholar Warrior*, Autumn 2014, p. 150.
29. Bulsara in Karim, ed., n. 1, p.208.

the Indian Navy, flew over the islands during the day on November 3, 1988. That reconnaissance was of little help to the Indian Army/ Air Force. There was just enough time (about six hours) to muster airlift resources and the task force,and get airborne.[30] There was little scope for elaborate planning and preparation as per the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). For want of time, a rehearsal was out of the question. It was a 4-hour flight from Agra to Hulule. A major part of the briefing to the company commanders and the troops was done in flight. Even the distribution of ammunition—an activity that was otherwise against flight safety norms—was done in flight since there was no other option.[31] To top it all,the second-in-command of the ground force was nominated by the PARA Brigade Commander (Bde Cdr) in flight. Lt Col KKK Singh (17 PARA) who was seated in the second aircraft could not be briefed on his role (as the second-in-command) at all by the Bde Cdr.

Enthusiasm

The men did not want to be left behind. Capt Karl Radl who was tasked by Skorzeny to muster a team, reported unrest in their unit. The men were rebellious; everyone wanted to be in the team.[32] The Israelis faced a similar dilemma. At first, reservists, including pilots were called to be part of the team. Then there was a tussle for being on the team; none of those called/ recalled, wanted to be left behind.

In the case of Op Cactus, young officers undergoing a cadre in the Army Air Transport Support School (AATSS) left their classes and rushed to their units when they came to know that something was brewing. Some of them rode bicycles to be there at the earliest.[33] Even those who were not trained and qualified to jump from the IL-76 aircraft were keen and volunteered to jump.[34]

---

30. The first wave of IL-76 aircraft was airborne at 1800 hrs.
31. Bewoor, n. 28, p. 154.
32. McRaven, n. 13, p. 172.
33. Interview with Brig GP Singh (3 PARA).
34. Interview with Col KKK Singh (17 PARA).

Secrecy

Hitler had warned Skorzeny to maintain absolute secrecy—only five people were to know about Op Eiche.[35]Heinrich Himmler[36] reprimanded Skorzeny when the latter tried to take notes during a briefing. Skorzeny, on his part, did not share all the available information with his men until they were airborne. To the pilots who flew to reconnoitre the hotel atop Gran Sasso, he declared that the aim of the mission was to clandestinely photograph the ports on the Adriatic Sea. To mislead the Italians, he directed the reconnaissance pilot to fly over some peaks other than those of his interest.

The Israelis took every step, small and big, to maintain secrecy.The five Hercules aircraft (including one reserve) that were to take part in the operation took off in different directions from Lod Airport and landed at Sharm al-Sheikh, the mounting base. They maintained Radio Telephony (RT) silence to avoid being heard by the Soviet surveillance team in the proximity of the Israeli coast.[37]The troops who took part in the operation changed into their battle fatigues only after reaching the mounting base, Sharm al-Sheikh.[38]

It would not be incorrect to say that secrecy was incidental in the case of Op Cactus, to an extent though. There was less scope for a security leak for several obvious reasons. First, very little intelligence was available and there was very little time—between the "go ahead!" and the execution—for leakage of information. Second, the plans were being firmed up until quite close to the take-off time. Many, including the author, who took part in the operation, came to know of the plan and the destination only after the aircraft took off. For a long time after the formation took off, the impression was that it was an operation in support of the Indian Peace-Keeping Force (IPKF) in Sri Lanka and that Sulur or Trivandrum in the south would be the mounting base. Television news about the attempted coup in the Maldives led to conjectures that India had launched a rescue operation. By the time the second wave got airborne, the ladies in the units had concluded that

---

35. McRaven, n. 13, p. 171.
36. Heinrich Himmler was the head of the Gestapo and Waffen SS.
37. Netanyahu, n. 10, loc. 2432.
38. Ibid., loc. 2610.

In the dark of the night, the rebels who numbered 80, miscalculated the strength of the Indian contingent to be much higher—close to 1,600 as per some accounts. So the numerical asymmetry as perceived by the rebels turned out to be 20:1 against them. This had a demoralising effect on the rebels and contributed to their hasty retreat.

their husbands were possibly heading for the Maldives.[39] That the rebels did not pay heed to such news was incidental.

Numerical Asymmetry

The Germans numbered 108 when they embarked on the mission. Two of their gliders abandoned take-off due to craters in the runway, depleting their strength by 22. A glider crashed into the mountainside at the time of landing, killing most of its occupants. Thus, they numbered about 80 when they finally landed. On landing, they did not wait to rendezvous—lest the surprise be lost—and proceeded to the lobby of the hotel. The numerical superiority of the Italians who numbered close to 250 was rendered meaningless because of Gen Soleti accompanying the German squad—the Italians staggered at the sight of their own general literally marching at the head of a group of German paratroopers. Soon, more German troops arrived by surface means and outnumbered the Italians at the hotel.

The Israeli team numbered nearly 200, including a medical team of 20 and a refuelling crew of 10. The actual strength of the *red force*—the terrorists and the Ugandans supporting them—is not clearly known. Four hijackers had hijacked the French airliner; three or four more had joined them at Entebbe. The airport terminal was guarded by 60 to 100 armed Ugandans and an estimated 1,000 Ugandan troops were stationed in a military base adjoining the airport. Pure numbers on either side do not explain the asymmetry in this case because the Ugandans were scattered. Besides, the killing of the four hijackers within minutes of the airlanding of the Israelis rendered the pure numerical asymmetry even more meaningless.

---

39. Interview with Maj Gen Harkirat Singh.

The Indian contingent outnumbered the rebels (3:1 approx.) when the first wave landed. In the dark of the night, the rebels who numbered 80, miscalculated the strength of the Indian contingent to be much higher—close to 1,600 as per some accounts. So the numerical asymmetry as perceived by the rebels turned out to be 20:1 against them. This had a demoralising effect on the rebels and contributed to their hasty retreat.

The Role of the Navy

Op Eiche ended with the rescue of Mussolini and safe take-off of the aircraft with the Italian dictator on board. Likewise, the lift-off of the Hercules aircraft with the rescued hostages on board marked the successful end of Op Thunderbolt. The navies of Germany and Israel had no role in the conduct of those operations.The Indian Navy too did not have a specific role in Op Cactus, when the decision to help Gayoom was taken in Delhi. The INS *Betwa* was launched in anticipation. The captain of the frigate got the bare essential briefing when it was launched from Cochin. He was told that there had been a coup in Malé and that Indian naval presence in the area was essential.

The operation would have ended with the rescue of President Gayoom but the rebels fleeing in a hijacked merchant vessel with hostages on board gave a significant role to the Indian Navy. It is a matter of chance that the INS *Godavari*, returning from an exercise in Australia, also joined the fray. The INS *Godavari* and INS *Betwa* chased the rebel ship and coerced the rebels into surrendering.

Going for Overkill

The adversary's actual strength, and, therefore, his capability,in each case was not fully known. Therefore, the Germans went into the operation well prepared—they carried two machine guns per nine men and Tommy guns for the rest of the paratroopers. They also carried grenades, tracers, rocket launchers, detonators,plastic explosive (65 lb), civilian clothing, radio sets, medical aid, and rations for three days.

The Israelis were well armed with silenced pistols, machine guns and shoulder-fired rocket-propelled grenades. They had two land rovers and

four Armoured Personnel Carriers (APCs) for mobility, and a limousine for deception. To cater to the need for refuelling, they had carried a special pump and a refuelling team of ten men. Anticipating heavy casualties, they had a full-fledged medical team on board.

The use of words like Tamil, Sri Lanka, Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE) etc. created a perception about the capabilities of the enemy. From the available inputs, it was construed that the adversary would be heavily armed. When the first wave was airborne, the Indian perception about the enemy was that they were armed with rocket launchers, machine guns and Rocket Propelled Grenades (RPGs). One account even suggested that they had Anti-Aircraft (AA) capability. The Indian task force, therefore, carried the Self-Loading Rifles (SLR), sten machine carbines, Carl Gustav Recoilless (RCL) rifles, howitzers and grenades. For the desired mobility between the islands, boats had been positioned at Agra airfield in the night of November 3 and 4 but were not airlifted to Hulule because the situation had come under control before the aircraft loaded with boats got airborne. De-induction of troops commenced within three days.

External Support

Mussolini enjoyed the support of a part of the Italian population that wanted to see him free, and at the helm. Some officers and men in the Italian Army had pledged support to the dictator. The Germans had an idea of this simmering dissent in the rank and file. They managed to coerce Italian Maj Gen Ferdinando Soleti to accompany them when they raided Hotel Campo Imperatore. The idea was to use him as a shield against the Italian carabinieri. The ruse succeeded—the armed Italian guards who came forward to retaliate, lowered their weapons when they saw one of their (Italian) general officers accompanying the Germans.

The Israelis did not enjoy such external support. They were on their own all along. In case of the Maldives, it is logical to assume that the locals who supported President Gayoom could have stood in support of the Indian troops too. But their identity and numbers were not known. Besides, they

were unarmed and, as such, their support was insignificant and could not be counted upon. The assistance of the controllers manning the airfield was invaluable.

Ingenuity

The success of such operations without the use of ingenuity is unimaginable. To cite just one—Skorzeny made use of a travel brochure to get information about Hotel Campo Imperatore where Mussolini was housed. The Indian task force, likewise, referred to a coffee table book to gain knowledge on the islands. Volumes can be written about the ingenuity of the Israelis who crafted Op Thunderbolt. Airlift of a limousine for deception is just one example of their ingenuity.

Casualties

One of the German gliders crashed into the hillside and most of its occupants were killed. There were no casualties in the little bit of firing that took place outside Hotel Campo Imperatore. In the Entebbe Raid, all the terrorists were killed[40] and an estimated 45 Ugandan soldiers died in action that the Israeli commandos sought to avoid.

The Israelis lost their leader, Col Jonathan Netanyahu in the operation.[41] In the case of Op Cactus, the Indian task force did not suffer casualties. The fleeing rebels, however, killed 19 people on their way to the harbour. Still later, they killed a hostage on board the hostage ship, MV *Progress Light*.

Dedicated Men

In the planning stage, for two days, Skorzeny and Radl did not step out of their uniforms. In freezing cold, Skorzeny leaned out of the reconnaissance aircraft to click pictures of Hotel Imperatore and the landing zone near it. Lt Warger, a teetotaller, consumed liquor to deceive the Italians and elicit information from them.

---

40. Some unconfirmed accounts suggest that three of them were captured alive.
41. Another account of the raid suggests that two Israelis and a hostage were killed.

The grit of the men involved in the three operations was certainly a factor that ensured success. Over the years, people have attached more reasons to these successful operations.

The Israelis had been on their feet for long hours on the days preceding the operation. Many of them were airsick after their low level flight from Lod Airport to Sharm al-Sheikh, the mounting base. Yet they sustained themselves. So tired was Netanyahu that after the last bits of briefing and discussion with his men in the aircraft, he went and slept on the flight deck.

Op Cactus was full of similar examples. Maj Dhillon and his men, who made the first contact with Gayoom, had been awake continuously for nearly 24 hours when they met him. The aircrew likewise had been on duty and had flown in trying conditions for a prolonged period. By the time they landed back in Agra, they had been awake continuously for nearly the same amount of time (24 hours). The air warriors [Parachute Jump Instructors (PJIs), the Air Traffic Control (ATC) officer and his men)] who disembarked the aircraft at Hulule with the paratroopers had not carried personal weapons. In the night, when the merchant vessel *Progress Light* with the rebels on board sailed past Hulule Island and there was an exchange of fire, these men had little choice but to hide behind the ATC tower to avoid stray bullets.

What Really Mattered/ Worked?

The grit of the men involved in the three operations was certainly a factor that ensured success. Over the years, people have attached more reasons to these successful operations.

The political allegiance of the Italian soldiers guarding Mussolini, and, hence, their will to fight, was doubtful. Moreover,the Italians did not expect a German assault atop the Gran Sasso mountain because there was practically no space to enable landing on a small green patch near the hotel. The German gliders were modified for landing in restricted areas: they had rockets in the nose and tail-chutes. The Germans cleverly manoeuvred past the asymmetry of numbers, which favoured the guards;they coerced

Gen Ferdinando Soleti of the Italian Army to accompany the German contingent entering the hotel. Seeing him, the Italians lowered their weapons and let the Germans walk away with Mussolini. According to Skorzeny, healthy optimism and unflinching resolution had triumphed over their trials and tribulations.[42]

The Israeli government's decision to go in for military action was perhaps the most difficult part of Op Thunderbolt—along with a hundred lives, the Israeli national pride and prestige were at stake. The political leadership's confidence in its armed forces laid the foundation for the success. Speed, surprise and secrecy did matter in the outcome of Op Thunderbolt.

In the case of Op Cactus too, it was a bold political decision, well supported by the military leadership. The lightning action and the synergy among the three Services and the diplomatic corps were unprecedented. Above all, it was the perception of the rebels—of the numerical asymmetry in favour of the Indian paratroopers—that forced them to withdraw.

The Rewards

Skorzeny was awarded the "Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross" by the orders of Hitler within about four hours of landing safely at Vienna with Mussolini. At midnight, Hitler himself called him, congratulated him and promoted him to the rank of "Stumbannfurer".[43] Next day, Goring awarded a "Gold Flying Badge" to Skorzeny. On Skorzeny's request, Goring agreed to award the "Knight's Cross" to two of his men. A propaganda film was made on the actual operation. Skorzeny and his men who rescued Mussolini were invited to a public function—"Harvest Thanksgiving"—where Skorzeny was asked to present three Knight's Crosses of the War Service Cross to civilian recipients.[44]

The Entebbe Raid, which was codenamed Op Thunderbolt initially, was renamed Operation Jonathan to honour the leader who sacrificed his life in the operation. A military base was also renamed "Camp Jonathan" after the raid.

---

42. Skorzeny, n. 5, loc. 1502.
43. Ibid., loc. 1540.
44. Ibid., loc. 1608-1635.

Op Eiche, Op Thunderbolt and Op Cactus have stood out for the daring of the men involved and their will to accept extreme risk. These operations have shown that all elements essential for the success of a military operation shall never fall in place simultaneously. If one were to wait for everything to be in order, it would never be possible to undertake such operations, let alone succeed in them.

Quite a few officers and men were given awards for their exceptional service in Op Cactus but none of those awards was a gallantry award. A Vayu Sena Medal (VM) awarded to Gp Capt Bewoor was later converted to VM (Gallantry). Brig Bulsara's efforts to get recognition of the gallantry of his men and a special recognition for Mr AK Banerjee were in vain. According to Brig Bulsara, the reason why Op Cactus was not given recognition and no medal was instituted to commemorate the success of the operation was that there was no casualty. In a letter to Mr AK Banerjee, he had lamented that perhaps a "butcher's bill" was a criterion for recognition.[45]Nassim Nicholas Taleb analyses this type of approach in his book titled, *The Black Swan*:

> We remember the martyrs who died for a cause that we knew about, never those no less effective in their contribution but whose cause we were never aware of—precisely because they were successful. Our ingratitude toward the poètesmaudits fades completely in front of this other type of thanklessness. This is a far more vicious kind of ingratitude: the feeling of uselessness on the part of the silent hero.[46]

Well-Reasoned Risk: A Common Thread

These three operations were Black Swan events. Black Swan events are characterised by three attributes. First, they lie outside the realm of regular expectations; the cognitive past does not point convincingly to their possibility. Second, they carry an extreme impact. And third, in spite of

---

45. Interview with Mr AK Banerjee.
46. Nassim Nicholas Taleb, *The Black Swan* (London: Penguin, 2010), p. xxvii.

their rarity, human nature makes people concoct explanations for them to be explainable and predictable. In summation, rarity, extreme impact and retrospective predictability constitute Black Swan events.[47]

In that regard, all three of these operations were rare and unexpected; and the result in each case was spectacular. For years,strategists have tried explaining their successful occurrence. Interestingly, if one or more of these operations had failed, the *pundits* would have explained (read *justified*) their failure, too.

Op Eiche, Op Thunderbolt and Op Cactus have stood out for the daring of the men involved and their will to accept extreme risk. These operations have shown that all elements essential for the success of a military operation shall never fall in place simultaneously. If one were to wait for everything to be in order, it would never be possible to undertake such operations, let alone succeed in them.

There are times to take well-reasoned risks, and victory is its own validation.
— Anthony S. Cordesman[48]

---

47. Ibid., p. xxii.
48. Anthony S. Cordesman, *The Iraq War–Strategy, Tactics and Military Lessons* (Dehra Dun: Natraj, 2006), p. 60.

CYBER VIGILANTISM, TERRORISM AND GUERRILLA WARFARE: NEW CHALLENGES, NEW PERSPECTIVES

ASHISH GUPTA

Many individuals and groups are responding to the opportunities and challenges that cyber space brings in ways that are significantly different and hardly in consonance with the earlier observed and reported events. The proliferation of the internet and the advent of the new cyber space technologies have introduced a new security paradigm, with challenges that are far more intractable and pervasive than ever before. For an understanding and appreciation of the new threats, and for capacity enhancement to thwart them, there is a need to focus on assets, strengths and capabilities build-up.

In recent times, the whole tenor and tone of the cyber security policy deliberations reflect the continuing attention and commitment of governments and military and law enforcement agencies to protect and defend cyber space against threats emerging from the evolving cyber technologies and operations. The inalienable significance of cyber space at multiple levels of individual and social functioning has heightened the quotient of vulnerability due to increased criminal and anti-national activities in cyber space. Such activities—ingenious in planning, inventive in execution and effective in accomplishment of objectives—have changed the global landscape for crime and anti-national activities. Utilising Twining's Cheshire Cat metaphor, the emerging challenge in cyber space resembles the Cheshire Cat in *Alice in*

Group Captain **Ashish Gupta** is a Senior Fellow at the Centre for Air Power Studies, New Delhi.

Cyber space provides a conduit and mechanism for propagation of propaganda, convoluted ideological and extremist rhetoric and a platform for planning and executing cyber enabled criminal acts.

Wonderland, who keeps appearing, fading away, and disappearing, so that sometimes one may see the whole body, sometimes only a head, sometimes just a vague outline, and sometimes nothing at all.[1] Buttressed by the cyber infrastructure, globalisation is changing the very nature and consequences of unlawful activities. Cyber space provides a conduit and mechanism for propagation of propaganda, convoluted ideological and extremist rhetoric and a platform for planning and executing cyber enabled criminal acts.

The terms *vigilantism, terrorism and guerrilla warfare*, as understood within mainstream conceptions of security and as used in the current social-political debate, have contextually different connotations in the cyber related lexicon. Over the last few years, acts classified by the media as online vigilantism have begun to attract public attention.[2] Vigilantes are those who take enforcement of the law or moral code into their own hands.[3] Acts of vigilantism often grab the headlines and capture the imagination of ordinary folk. Vigilantes are either revered or reviled but undeniably form part of the popular folklore. With the advent of social media, vigilante justice is also being meted out over cyber space. Similarly, the architects and perpetrators of terror—in order to retain/ propagate the potency of terrorist acts—rely heavily on cyber space to pervade the collective consciousness and to infest societies with terror and hatred. Terrorism thrives on publicity and cyber space facilitates terrorists to vicariously expose the global community to the pain and suffering of the victims and their families. Similarly, a new form of *cyber guerrilla warfare* has emerged in which states are often pitted against groups, capable of waging relentless asymmetric war, unlimited in scope and duration. While 'guerrilla warfare' is a specific way of waging asymmetrical war in a specific situation

---

1. William Twining, *Rethinking Evidence: Exploratory Essays* (Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1994), p. 197.
2. Smallridge, Wagner and Crowl, "Understanding Cyber-Vigilantism: A Conceptual Framework", *Journal of Theoretical & Philosophical Criminology*, vol. 8(1), January/February 2016, pp. 57-70
3. Vincent N. Parrillo, *Encyclopaedia of Social Problems* (California: Sage Publications, 2008), p. 998.

against a conventional army, cyber guerrilla warfare is more universal[4] and has been used, not only as a manifestation of political dissent, social unrest or conventional conflict but also as a form of voicing dissent against regressive and retrograde policies.

CYBER VIGILANTISM

The word vigilante is of Spanish origin, meaning 'watchman' or 'guard'. It has its roots in Latin: "vigil" means "awake," "watchful," or "observant." The term has been loosely used to describe a variety of forms and degrees of violence, in various spatial and temporal settings, perpetrated by individuals or groups. There is no consensual definition of what constitutes vigilantism. Various authors have used different concepts and dimensions to define vigilantism. In one of his seminal works, Johnston argues that vigilantism has six necessary features.[5]

- First, it involves planning and premeditation by those engaging in it;
- Second, its participants are private citizens whose engagement is voluntary;
- Third, it is a form of "autonomous citizenship" and, as such, constitutes a social movement;[6]
- Fourth, it uses or threatens the use of force;
- Fifth, it arises when an established order is under threat from transgression, potential transgression, or imputed transgression of institutionalised norms;
- Sixth, it aims to control crime or other social infractions by offering assurances or guarantees of security both to the participants and to others.[7]

> **Cyber guerrilla warfare is more universal and has been used, not only as a manifestation of political dissent, social unrest or conventional conflict but also as a form of voicing dissent against regressive and retrograde policies.**

---

4. Jelle van Haaster, Rickey Gevers and Martijn Sprengers, *Cyber Guerilla* (Massachusetts: Elsevier Inc., 2016), p. 2.
5. L Johnston, "What Is Vigilantism?", *British Journal of Criminology,* vol. 36, issue 2, Spring 1996, pp. 220-236.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.

Like a myriad meanings and innuendos associated with the word "vigilantism", the term cyber vigilantism has been loosely associated with a wide range of acts. Some of the activities—including, but not limited to hacktivism, cyber stings, scam baiting, cyber crowdsourcing—are defined as acts of cyber vigilantism. One way to clarify the ambiguity in defining acts of cyber vigilantism would be to fall back on Johnston's conceptualisation of traditional vigilantism. The act must be perpetrated as a premeditated one by private citizens voluntarily participating in it, without any support or authority granted to them by the state. The act must be in response to a perceived crime or social deviance, with an implicit or explicit threat of the use of force. Lastly, the central objective of the act must be to assure, or guarantee, security, both to the participants and to others.[8]

However, there are many cases that could be construed as fit for inclusion under the broader definition of 'cyber vigilantism' though they fail to comply with Johnston's definition of vigilantism. This variance is not due to the contextual differences between 'traditional vigilantism' and 'cyber-vigilantism' but is largely attributable to the disparate and idiosyncratic nature of cyber space. With a little tweaking, Johnston's definition will become more contemporary and will help in delineating other forms of cyber deviance from cyber vigilantism. By keeping the focus firmly on the first three requirements of Johnston's definition of traditional vigilantism—i.e. planning and premeditation by perpetrators; engagement on voluntary basis by private citizens; part of a social movement (whether genuine or pseudo)—a broader framework can be formulated for defining activities as cyber vigilantism. The remaining three criteria are not necessary for an activity to qualify as an act of cyber vigilantism. Most of the cyber attacks perpetrated through computer technologies and networks do not have a streak of violence, but sometimes, threats of violence, if not real violence have also been encountered.

---

8. Smallridge, et.al., n. 2, pp. 57-70.

SCAM BAITING

The advent of the internet is closely linked with the emergence of a new breed of scammers, keeping a look out in cyber space for unsuspecting victims, luring them into financial traps and fleecing them monetarily. The most well known among these is the Nigerian '419' scam. The community of scammers in many variants of this scam was initially operating from Nigeria and as an act of mocking defiance, took its name from the Nigerian criminal code, Article 419.[9] The unsuspecting targets were promised large monetary rewards in return of a small sum of money as fee or for circumvention of some fabricated problem. If a target responded in an accommodative manner, the con artists kept extorting money from him on one pretext or another..

In one of the first instances of cyber vigilantism, as a counter-measure to 419 and similar scams, an online community of cyber vigilantes '419Eater.com' came into being. Established in September 2003, it advocated a form of cyber vigilantism termed as 'scam baiting' in which "the vigilante poses as a potential victim to the scammer in order to waste his time and resources, gather information that will be of use to the authorities, and publicly expose the scammer". Under the guise of a fake identity, a scam baiter responds to a scam mail and while enthusiastically feigning excitement, tries to divert the resources, and waste the time, of the scammer for as long as possible. The scam baiter also tries to lure the scammer into revealing some personal information which later could be handed over to the law enforcement agencies. In a sense, it is a case of deceit pitted against deceit.

HACKTIVISM

This neologism was coined by combing two terms, 'hackers' and 'activism' by members of the hacking group Cult of the Dead Cow (cDc). As per Oxblood Ruffin, a member of cDc, hacktivism "uses technology to improve human rights. It also employs non-violent

---

9. "Offences Relating to Property and Contracts," http://www.nigeria-law.org/Criminal%20 Code%20Act-Part%20VI%20%20to%20the%20end.htm. Accessed on July 20, 2017.

Since 'hacktivism' perpetrators can remain anonymous or disguised, their chances of getting caught or being meted retributive punishment or oppressive retaliation are reduced considerably.

tactics and is aligned with the original intent of the internet, which is to keep things up and running."[10] Hacktivism was fundamentally a non-violent conception which has now mutated into many forms of protest; some righteous, some innocuous, some dubious and some even harmful. Over the internet, the hacktivists employ two types of methods: Mass Virtual Direct Action (MVDA) in which many people simultaneously use the internet to launch a kind of digital disobedience movement; and Individual Virtual Direct Action (IVDA), which can manifest in the many forms such as defacements, Denial of Service (DoS) or network penetrations.[11]

The political and social activism paradigm gained traction in cyber space because of three primary reasons. Firstly, the internet provides protestors a platform to propagate their ideological precepts among the populace almost instantaneously. Secondly, since governments or institutions have a recognisable and legitimate presence over the internet, the acts of acktivism against these garner the same effects as physical or street protests. Thirdly, since 'hacktivism' perpetrators can remain anonymous or disguised, their chances of getting caught or being meted retributive punishment or oppressive retaliation are reduced considerably.

In the late 1980s, hacking was no longer an activity for just amusement or monetary profitability but had become a threat of noticeable proportions. During the same period, the hacktivist subculture also emerged. Examples of early hacktivism included "Worms Against Nuclear Killers (WANK)," a computer worm unleashed by anti-nuclear Australian activists into the

---

10. L. Allnitt, "Old-school Hacker Oxblood Ruffin Discusses Anonymous, and the Future of Hacktivism", http://www.rferl.org/content/hacker_oxblood_ruffin_discusses_anonymous_and_the_fuure_of_hacktivism/24228166.html. Accessed on July 20, 2017.
11. Tim Jordan and Paul A. Taylor, *Hacktivism and Cyberwars: Rebels with a Cause?* (London: Routledge, 2004), p. 69.

networks of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) to protest against the launch of a shuttle which carried radioactive plutonium.[12] The repository of the hacktivists' arsenal grew with the addition of DoS attacks. The so-called "Intervasion of the UK" took place in 1994 in the form of electronic civil disobedience when the UK's Criminal Justice Bill sought to outlaw outdoor dance festivals and "music with a repetitive beat". In protest, a group called 'The Zippies' from San Francisco's 181 Club brought down the government websites for at least a week by Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attacks. [13]

The term hacktivism became popular in the mainstream media during the 1998-99 Kosovo conflict, when websites of countries participating in the aerial bombardment of Yugoslavia under the umbrella of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) came under DoS attacks.

On December 21, 1995, a one-hour "Netstrike", organised by Italian activists, targeted the websites of French government institutions in protest against the nation's nuclear policies. The participants were asked to direct their browsers at government sites and keep clicking, thereby orchestrating a DDoS attack. The Netstrike per se, was not an act of cyber space vandalism, but a new form of virtual civil disobedience.[14] The term hacktivism became popular in the mainstream media during the 1998-99 Kosovo conflict, when websites of countries participating in the aerial bombardment of Yugoslavia under the umbrella of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) came under DoS attacks.[15] The American-based group Team Spl0it, the Russian Hackers Union and the Serb Black Hand Group (Crna Ruka) attacked, defaced and hijacked websites as a form of protests against the war as well as against countries engaged in it.[16] In the aftermath of the accidental bombing by the US of the Chinese Embassy, the hacktivists

---

12. Peter W. Singer and Allan Friedman, *Cybersecurity: What Everyone Needs to Know* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), p. 77.
13. A. Kiyuna and L Conyers, *Cyberwarfare Sourcebook* (North Carolina: Lulu Press, 2015), p. 193.
14. Barney Warf, *Global Geographies of the Internet* (New York: Springer, 2013), p. 156.
15. Kenneth Geers, *Strategic Cyber Security* (Tallinn: NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence, 2011), p. 14.
16. Ibid.

from China also got involved in defacing US websites and launching DoS attacks. [17]

CYBER ANTAGONISM BETWEEN INDIA AND PAKISTAN

The belligerence between India and Pakistan continues unabated and has become a determinant of strategic posturing by both nations. In spite of the fact that both nations possess a formidable arsenal of nuclear weapons, the mutual hostility between the two shows no signs of waning. The prevailing atmosphere of hatred and trust deficit between these South Asian neighbours has metastasised in cyber space and has even sucked the common citizens from both sides into the vortex of distrust. This spiralling antagonism, primarily in the wake of state-sponsored terrorism by Pakistan, has given rise to a breed of netizens from both countries, competing with each other in cyber space in a contest of one upmanship to express their anger, frustration and antagonism.

In one of the major cyber attacks, the Indian website owned by the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) came under attack by a group called 'milw0rm'. The website of BARC was breached and defaced and it was also reported that megabytes of e-mails and data were stolen by the attackers. The attack was allegedly perpetuated in response to the testing of nuclear weapons by India on May 11 and 13, 1998, as claimed through a message put up on the defaced site.[18]

At first, it was believed that these attacks were the work of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) of Pakistan, but later investigations revealed that it was the handiwork of a group of teenagers who were operating under pseudonyms and had different nationalities.[19] The insidious nature of the Pakistani intent unfolded in the year 1999, when it was revealed that at least four attacks on Indian cyber networks were carried out from Pakistan. In the following years, the numbers and severity of the attacks increased. Some

---

17. Laura Lambert et. al., *Internet: A Historical Encyclopedia, Volume 2* (Santa Barbara: ABC CLIO, 2005), p. 156.
18. http://ces.iisc.ernet.in/hpg/envis/doc98html/miscbarc69.html. Accessed on July 14, 2017.
19. William C. Boni and Gerald L. Kovacich, *I-way Robbery* (UK: Butterworth-Heinemann, 1999), p. 142.

Indians responded in a similar manner and unleashed a series of cyber attacks against Pakistan rivalling or surpassing in severity the ones originating from Pakistan.

In the meantime, many new hacking groups, with varying capabilities and motivations, forayed into cyber space. Of these, one group, the Z Company Hackers Crew (ZHC) gained tremendous notoriety and media attention when it claimed to had attacked 1,846 Indian websites, both government and civilian.[20] Other hacking groups like Pakistani Hackers Club (PHC) and the G-Force also attacked Indian websites. On the Indian side, many hacking groups emerged, of which, 'H2O' or the 'Hindustan Hackers Organisation' become popular among the cyber hacking community. Another group called 'TEAM NUTS' claimed to have achieved a record feat by hacking and defacing 57 commercial sites in Pakistan in one day in 2010.[21]

These hacking groups from both countries become more ingenious and methodical and tried to target each other in ways that had a greater symbolic as well as coercive dimension to the cyber attacks. In one such case, on the second anniversary of the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks i.e. on November 26, 2010, members of the Indian Cyber Army (ICA) launched an all-out attack on 87,012 Pakistani websites, of which 34 were crucial government websites belonging to the Pakistan Navy, Maritime Security Agency, Foreign Ministry, the chief minister of Sindh, etc.[22] The ICA, on the website called Hacker Regiment claimed that the main objective of these cyber attacks was to pay homage to the martyrs of 26/11.

On December 3, 2010, the most powerful group called Pakistan Cyber Army, on the pretext of recalling the 39th anniversary of the 1971 Indo-Pak War, attacked 270 Indian websites. Of all the attacked sites, the worst affected was the website of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) which could only be restored with great difficulty, after remaining offline for almost one

---

20. http://www.hackread.com/read/hackread/3289. Accessed on July 14, 2017.
21. http://thehackernews.com/2010/12/57-pakistani-websites-hacked-by-team.html.   Accessed on July 14, 2017.
22. Sandeep Unnithan," Inside the Indo Pak Cyber Wars", *India Today*, March 18, 2011.

month.[23] The retaliatory cyber attacks were swift and the ICA defaced the website of the Oil and Natural Gas Regulatory Agency (ONGA) of Pakistan in response to hacking of the CBI's website.[24]

It is evident that many Indian and Pakistani agencies/ organisations/ individuals are being caught in the crossfire of these cyber skirmishes between the hacking communities of both countries. Hacker groups from both the countries keep coming up with new and imaginative names and driven by misplaced patriotic fanaticism, target their victims with fervour. On the Indian side, the websites of the National Green Tribunal, Parbhani District Police and Bihar State Electronics Development Commission were attacked and vandalised. Similarly, multiple Pakistani government websites and the Pakistan Army website were hacked. Concerns are being raised that any escalation of tension in cyber space can spill over and exacerbate already heightened tensions between the two South Asian neighbours.

CYBER CROWD SOURCING

Cyber vigilantism has many forms and variations, some of which closely resemble acts of vigilante justice committed in the physical world, while some have taken a form different in intent, methodology, and results. 'Cyber Crowdsourcing', a neologism is believed to have been coined in China, and is known as *renrou sousou* in the Chinese vernacular, literally meaning "Human Flesh Search" (HFS).[25] In response to real or perceived social injustices/ wrongs, the netizens congregate and use the internet for meting out punitive justice by posting personal details of the perpetrators— ranging from the phone number and address to the blood type—online for administering punitive retribution. It also involves tracking down the activities of a perpetrator and putting the information on the internet so that it might lead to his/her arrest or detention. There are two types of groups

---

23. Alamzeb Khan, "Pakistan Cyber Warfare and Internet Hacking", January 17, 2012, http://www. simple-talk.com/opinion/opinion-pieces/pakistan-cyber-warfare-andinternet-hacking/. Accessed on July 14, 2017.
24 Ibid.
25. Anastacia Kurylo and Tatyana Dumova, *Social Networking: Redefining Communication in the Digital Age* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016), p. 156.

which practise this form of cyber vigilantism – the first group comprises relatively organised individuals who react to activities falling in the category of perceived societal injustice, while the second group crops up in response to a particular social wrong for a short period of time.

The netizens who participate in online cyber crowd sourcing perceive that the formal justice system is inadequately resourced, ineffectively manned and lacks the capacity to deliver justice commensurate with the perceived heinousness of the crime. They consider themselves to be informal guardians of society, meting out justice to deviants—who are too powerful, too clever, and know the ins-and-outs of circumventing the judicial system. They use the internet and social networking platforms for enforcing social justice against wrongdoers who either circumvent the law or commit infringements that are not punishable by law.

In one such case, a vigilante group, 'Perverted Justice' joined forces with Chris Hansen, the host of NBC's popular network television series "To Catch A Predator" to identify child sex offenders and paedophiles, by luring them to a prearranged place for a meeting between them and potential victims. Then, with Chris Hansen and the news crew from NBC, the offender was confronted with a series of questions, presented with the details of the sexual chat log with the decoy and after his admitting to be the perpetrator of the chat log, the offender was informed that he was being filmed for national TV. Subsequently, the predator was arrested by the police and sent for trial. 'Perverted Justice' claims to have facilitated 623 convictions of predators since June 2004 due to its website Perverted-Justice.com.[26] The website contains details of full transcripts of online conversations between the predator and the decoy, including the photo of the predator. Groups like 'Perverted Justice' that track criminals online, cannot be categorised as 'cyber vigilantes' in the strict sense of the term, as these groups not only have a legitimised existence but also the support and resources of law enforcement agencies. Such groups are driven by the mission to rid society of the "scourge of child predators", who seek out vulnerable and unsuspecting victims through the internet.

---

26. "Perverted Justice", http://www.perverted-justice.com/. Accessed on July 14, 2017.

Terrorism thrives on publicity and cyber space facilitates terrorists to penetrate the collective consciousness and vicariously expose the global community to the pain and suffering of the victims and their families.

In addition to such well-organised groups, there are groups that crop up temporarily in response to some specific instance of perceived wrong or injustice. After the initial furore over some perceived social injustice, end with waning impact of their cause, these groups eventually dissipate into oblivion. Some groups feel that the scourge of corruption and misconduct by public officials and citizens is taking a toll on the general population. To mete out justice of some kind for the acts deemed ethically/ culturally offensive but not illegal, a group of netizens carry out online surveillance to identify the perpetrators. Cyber crowd sourcing or HFS is deemed by them to be an online instrument for identifying and meting out their version of social justice. The netizens use HFS to mobilise public opinion in instances where the legitimacy of a particular incident is questionable or where inaction on the part of law enforcement agencies is palpable.

CYBER TERRORISM

The scourge of terrorism continues unabated, exacting a heavy toll in terms of human lives, suffering, depletion of resources and imbalance in the demographic structure. Terrorism, in various forms and manifestations, has been practised throughout history and across a wide variety of political ideologies.[27] There is no single accepted definition of terrorism and a multitude of meanings may be inferred in different contextual settings by different people. Similarly, the fluctuating ideological profiles and organisational structures as well as changing means and methods of most of terrorist organisations have led to the circumvention of efforts by many to categorise terrorism in one genre. Most definitions of terrorism hinge on three factors: the method (violence), the target (civilians or the government),

---

27. Harvey Kushner, *Encyclopaedia of Terrorism* (California: Sage Publications, 2003), p. xxiii.

and the purpose (to instil fear and force political or social change).[28] The efforts of many sovereign states to annihilate the scourge of terrorism and its dangerous consequences are proving to be a chimera. Transnational terrorism is like a hydra that will keep growing new heads if any of the heads is severed or decapitated.[29]

The loosely connected network of individuals, subgroups and groups of a modern terrorist organisation finds the internet both ideal and vital for inter- and intra-group networking. The internet enabled facilities and functions such as email, chat-rooms, e-groups, forums, virtual message boards, YouTube, and Google Earth have added to the terror potency of such organisations.

Terrorism thrives on publicity and cyber space facilitates terrorists to penetrate the collective consciousness and vicariously expose the global community to the pain and suffering of the victims and their families. Besides, by propagating their convoluted ideological discourses with pseudo-religious fervour, the terrorist organisations partially succeed in bringing potential fence-sitters, sympathisers and ideologically aligned individuals into their fold.[30] Cyber space is used by terrorists as a key medium not only for coercion, enticement, indoctrination, proselytisation and propaganda but also for planning attacks after garnering information from cyber space about the potential target's location, security arrangements, and post attack impacts. Cyber terrorism is the convergence of terrorism and cyber space, perpetrated for the attainment of potential objectives such as damaging critical information infrastructure, disrupting vital networks, stealing trade secrets, provoking societal disharmony, and radicalising groups along sectarianism and religious fault lines.

The information revolution has allowed many organisations to dispense with the hierarchical structure and centralised control, and provide much

---

28. Ibid.
29. Wolfgang Sachs et al., *Fair Future: Limited Resources and Global Justice* (New York: Zed Books, 2005), p.231.
30. Ashish Gupta, *Cyber War: Conquest over Elusive Enemy* (New Delhi: KW Publishers, 2017), p. 241.

larger greater functional autonomy and operational flexibility to dispersed groups. In any organisation, moving away from the hierarchical to the network paradigm brings in resilience, flexibility and adaptability, and ensures its survivability by removing the single point of failure. Similarly, in the present times, we are witnessing a new form of terrorism which has many functional similarities with a network form of organisation. In the case of terrorist organisations, the network may be made up of loosely linked autonomous entities varying from individuals to small groups of individuals of sleeper cells to groups of armed militants to groups of radicalised youth, etc. These groups use various means of communication facilitated through cyber space. The loosely connected network of individuals, subgroups and groups of a modern terrorist organisation finds the internet both ideal and vital for inter- and intra-group networking.[31] The internet enabled facilities and functions such as email, chat-rooms, e-groups, forums, virtual message boards, YouTube, and Google Earth have added to the terror potency of such organisations.

In a report published by Europol, it was claimed once again that the internet has become the principal means of communication for terrorist and violent extremist individuals and groups.[32] The online presence of such groups is frighteningly disturbing and horrifyingly substantial and provides these groups means and platforms for the facilitation of activities contributing to, or enabling, terror. The internet is used for a range of purposes, including instruction, propaganda, recruitment, dispatch of members to conflict areas, fund-raising, cooperation with other terrorist organisations, and planning and coordination of attacks.[33] Presently, and in the foreseeable future, tackling cyber terrorism is a challenge of enormous magnitude. The use of cyber technology for committing, aiding, abetting and facilitating terrorism, and for coercing, enticing, indoctrinating, proselytising or radicalising others to commit primary or secondary terrorist acts can be described as 'cyber

---

31. Gabriel Weimann, *Terrorism in Cyberspace* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), p. 14.
32. Europol "EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report", https://www.europol.europa.eu/ newsroom/news/eu-terrorism-situation-and-trend-report-te-sat-2012. Accessed on July 20, 2017.
33. Ibid.

terrorism'. Cyber terrorism has emerged as an attractive and cost effective option for terrorists offering significant benefits from a logistical, operational and consequential standpoint and a wider media appeal perspective.

Terrorists have relied on high profile violent acts, committed to bring into sharp focus their ideology, cause and narrative, as well as to showcase their capabilities and intent as terror outfits. In addition, contemporary terrorist groups leverage the internet for exerting psychological pressure over a global audience, heightening the fear psychosis and communal polarisation. While analysing the dimensions and dynamics of international terrorism, Brain Jerkins observed, "Terrorist attacks are often carefully choreographed to attract the attention of the electronic media and the international press. Terrorism is aimed at the people watching, not at the actual victims. Terrorism is a theatre."[34] While undertaking a terrorist attack, terrorists aim for a theatrical spectacle and use the body counts as a measure of success. Besides, their main focus remains on the emotional and psychological impacts rather than on the material impacts. The spectacle of carnage and violence is played out over and over again in the news and social media, watched by a global audience. For the terrorist, as Schmid and de Graaf have pointed out, the "immediate victim is merely instrumental, the skin of a drum beaten to achieve a calculated impact on a wider audience. As such, an act of terrorism is in reality an act of communication. For the terrorist, the message matters not the victim".[35]

Publicity is a means of sustenance and survival of terrorism and the internet provides the necessary scaffolding to publicise, plan and orchestrate terrorist activities and attacks. The emergence of "mass-mediated" terrorism is largely attributable to the exploitation of global networks and information highways by terrorists to propagate their mistaken and misplaced ideology as well as to expose the masses to the spectacle of violence as vividly as possible.

---

34. B Jenkins, "International Terrorism:A New Mode of Conflict", https://www.ncjrs.gov/App/ Publications/ abstract.aspx? ID=30518. Accessed on July 20, 2017.
35 Brigitte Nacos, *Mass-Mediated Terrorism:The Central Role of the Media in Terrorism and Counterterrorism* (Plymouth: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007), p. 14.

THE IS APOCALYPSE: BOLSTERED BY CYBER SPACE

Digital technology is responsible in more than one way for setting in motion the juggernaut of terror and violence by the Islamic State (IS). Political *faux pas*, the misinterpretation of historical events, misreading of cultural sensibilities and a sense of collective victimisation, all have facilitated a 'limited Islamist insurgency' transforming into one of the most dreaded terrorist organisations, the Islamic State (IS). By using technology in many ingenious ways, the IS has been able to capitalise on the alienation and existential concerns of a large population and become the most brutal extremist *jihadi* terrorist organisation the world has ever seen.

IS—a scourge that overran large swathes of northern and western Iraq and eastern and northern Syria, and killed and displaced millions of civilians—tries to retain its terror potency by permeating the public consciousness with fear and infesting societies with hatred. The transformative power of the internet and social networking platforms has been woven into the terrorist enterprise of the IS almost from its inception. In the wake of the IS offensive in June 2014, a number of Twitter accounts came up claiming to represent the IS in Syria and Iraq. During the initial days of the offensive, the various Twitter accounts were giving live updates and images of the IS' advances in Syria and northern Iraq. The IS' digital footprint on social media kept pace with its advances in Syria and Iraq. The images of captured Iraqi security personnel went viral, garnering an even wider online audience. In an attempt to fan religious jingoism, information, including on the number of bombings, suicide missions and assassinations that the IS had carried out, was shared on the growing number of Twitter accounts, with large followings. In an attempt to expand its digital reach on social media, the IS branched out to other platforms like YouTube, Facebook and Instagram. It shocked and enraged the whole world when it posted the video of the beheading of American and British journalists and other innocent individuals. The deliberate attempt of the IS to take its social media strategy to a whole new level probably stemmed from its belief that the overly shocking and terrifying events posted online attracted the maximum viewership and

could accomplish the objectives of their propagandist campaign.

The IS has proven to be highly apt and proficient in using the power of the social media and internet as a key instrument for waging its own version of modern *jihad*. Its operatives use sophisticated forms of encryption to evade detection. Messaging apps like WhatsApp, Viber and Telegram are increasingly being used by the IS and other militant organisations. As these messaging apps use sophisticated and end-to-end encryption, the shared messages—despite their dark and insidious contents—cannot be decrypted even by the app's creators, owners and developers. Other IS members have switched to the internet's dark web— its shadowy alter ego populated by illegal sites which enables routing of a user's communication through an unfathomable maze of networks, obliterating the possibility of tracing its source. Some IS operatives have even resorted to offensive cyber tactics. A group called Cyber Caliphate urged its followers to use Twitter to spread propaganda. IS extremists posted the hacked personal details online, which included the mobile phone numbers of the heads of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and National Security Agency (NSA).

The IS' use of advanced technology of the present century is, paradoxically, diametrically opposite to their *Salafist-jihadist* interpretation of Islam and their ardent advocacy of emulation of a lifestyle practised in the 7th century.

CYBER GUERRILLA WARFARE

Since World War II, insurgency and terrorism have become the dominant forms of conflict—a trend likely to continue into the foreseeable future.[36] Inter-state conflicts have become aberrations rather than existential threats; while, on the other hand, terrorism has become an increasingly regular, visible, repugnant and violent feature of the contemporary international landscape, infested with a number of insurgent, terrorist and guerrilla groups. The term "guerrilla" literally means "small war" and it gained currency during the Spanish resistance to Napoleonic French occupation

---

36. Max Boot, *Invisible Armies: An Epic History of Guerrilla Warfare from Ancient Times to the Present*, (New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2007), p. 12.

Cyber guerrillas have created a sense of unease and apprehension for authoritarian regimes in many parts of the world. These regimes are caught in a dichotomous dilemma of reaping economic benefits by adopting information technologies juxtaposed against the political risks presented by these same technologies.

from 1808 to 1814.[37] However, evidence suggests that its various traits in various manifestations had been practised since the acceptance of conflicts/ clashes as a mechanism of achieving specific goals. It is centrally dependent on hit-and-run tactics employed by a small armed group against a much larger and more powerful group or institution for a myriad reasons varying from the political to social to religious. In guerrilla warfare, there are no delineated frontlines and set-piece manoeuvres and the focus always remains on surprise, ambush and tactical agility.

In 1962, Samuel Huntington articulated a clear and succinct definition for this type of warfare: "Guerrilla warfare is a form of warfare by which the strategically weaker side assumes the tactical offensive in selected forms, times, and places."[38] A certain amount of anecdotal folklore and revolutionary romanticism has been linked with guerrilla warfare and many of its proponents and practitioners were able to garner a cult following due to their exploits and exaggerated claims of successes. After all, in a David vs Goliath struggle, it is the underdog David who obligatorily elicits an emotional response from most of us. The accounts of Che Guevara and revolutionary guerrilla movement of Mao Tse-Tung made them legends in their time.

Since cyber space is adept in assimilating and emulating many of the virtues, vices and features of the real world, it was a matter of time for the term 'guerrilla' to be prefixed with 'cyber' and enter the lexicon of cyber warfare. The basis of concepts and convictions in 'cyber guerrilla' stems from the fact that a nondescript and non-threatening entity can suddenly

---

37. Ibid.
38. Samuel Huntington, *Modern Guerrilla Warfare: Fighting Communist Guerrilla Movements, 1941-1961* (New York: The Free Press, 1964), p. xvi.

spring to life and engage a large, powerful and resourceful organisation. The term 'cyber guerrilla' has a wider connotation. While conventional guerilla warfare includes small, asymmetric and revolutionary conflicts/ wars for liberation or for social, political and economic betterment, cyber guerrilla warfare is not limited by temporal, spatial, political or situational particularities. It is characterised by a number of activities, some of which fall within the classical definition of guerrilla warfare while some may take divergent forms, depending upon the context of the usage and the user's intent.

The cyber guerrilla is characterised by the use of methods which leverage the internet without a possible physical confrontation. The first fundamental characteristic of cyber guerrilla tactics is asymmetry.

The political and psychological impact of guerrilla acts may far exceed the consequences realisable through regular armed engagement. Some of the tactics applied in guerrilla warfare aim at generating momentum and garnering support for a particular cause. The revolutionary underpinnings of some of the most important guerrilla movements have manifested in armed insurgency and acts of physical terrorism. Cyber guerilla tactics can stir up revolutionary sentiments but cannot lead to,or achieve, a physical revolution on their own.[39]

Cyber guerrillas have created a sense of unease and apprehension for authoritarian regimes in many parts of the world. These regimes are caught in a dichotomous dilemma of reaping economic benefits by adopting information technologies juxtaposed against the political risks presented by these same technologies. In its earliest days, the internet was seen as a harbinger and catalyst of democratic movements and political liberalisation against authoritarian regimes.[40] In a seminal paper published in 2005, Mavhunga describe cyber space as an enabler and instrument of liberation for "cyber guerrillas" in Zimbabwe as well as a new addition to the diverse

---

39. Robert Reardon and Nazli Choucri, "The Role of Cyberspace in International Relations: A View of the Literature" (MIT, Paper Prepared for International Studies Association Annual Convention, San Diego, CA., April, 2012), p.18.
40. Ibid.

As most communications, including sharing of intelligence, coordination among various entities, requests for arms, ammunition, equipment, personnel, etc., take place over networks of computers, any disruption, damage or destruction of these networks due to cyber guerrilla warfare can undermine the operational preparedness and efficiency of the opponent.

arsenal of weapons being used against the Mugabe regime. The internet empowered and enabled them to "refute the misleading and ostensibly distorted narrative with its counter-narrative."[41]

"War is always a struggle in which each contender tries to annihilate the other. Besides using force, they will have recourse to all possible tricks and stratagems to achieve the goal."[42] This statement by Che Guevara effectively touches upon the dimensions and dynamics of war and how these have transformed in contemporary times. The definition of 'war' as used and understood within the context of today's politically charged and terror infested environment has acquired a wide connotation to include armed skirmishes, hybrid war, territorial war, ideological war, demographic war, low intensity conflicts, counter-insurgency operations, war against terrorism and many other forms of conflict. The tactics, strategies and technologies have evolved and all the warring sides try to take advantage of this evolutionary process by changing/ modifying/adapting existing ones. Methods, which are effective but do not rely on any overt use of force or violence in response to provocations, are increasingly being employed as adjuncts to conflicts and rivalries. Within this category, the cyber guerrilla is characterised by the use of methods which leverage the internet without a possible physical confrontation.

The first fundamental characteristic of cyber guerrilla tactics is asymmetry.[43] Guerrilla Warfare Strategy (GWS) is centred around the objectives of imposing costs on an adversary in terms of loss of combatants, severance of

41. Mavhunga, Clapperton, "The Glass Fortress: Zimbabwe's Cyber-Guerilla Warfare," *Journal of International Affairs,* 62.2 (2009), p. 160.
42. Ernesto Guevara, *Guerrilla Warfare* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985), p. 53.
43. Haaster, et.al.,n. 4.

lines of communication and supply, damage to infrastructure, deprivation of peace of mind and, most important, time. With the exception of neutralising soldiers, the cyber guerrilla can achieve all the objectives of GWS. As most communications, including sharing of intelligence, coordination among various entities, requests for arms, ammunition, equipment, personnel, etc., take place over networks of computers, any disruption, damage or destruction of these networks due to cyber guerrilla warfare can undermine the operational preparedness and efficiency of the opponent. Cyber guerrilla warfare can also be effectively waged against the opponent's Critical Information Infrastructure (CII), vital to its security, economic and political stability, essential services and safety.

The constant evolution of cyber threats is a cold hard reality which will continue to cause cataclysmic upheavals in the social, political, and economic landscapes. Their scope, magnitude and implications are limited only by the ingenuity and intent of the perpetrators, and technological advancements.

Successful guerrilla warfare is flexible, not static, and the same principle extents to cyber guerrilla warfare as well. Flexibility and adaptability are two key attributes which are inextricably linked to the success of any guerrilla operation. Constant adaptation to complex and evolving situations during and after termination of operations are the hallmarks of an effective guerrilla strategy. The same notion has applicability for cyber guerillas as well. When pinned down, cyber guerillas try to break up and melt away in the labyrinth of cyber space. When a cyber guerrilla effort is pitted against a technologically superior and resource-rich opponent, the outcomes may not be always favourable for a cyber guerrilla. Therefore, cyber guerillas adopt techniques which are flexible in their approach and execution, and operate incognito in amorphous formations.

CONCLUSION

The constant evolution of cyber threats is a cold hard reality which will continue to cause cataclysmic upheavals in the social, political, and economic

landscapes. Their scope, magnitude and implications are limited only by the ingenuity and intent of the perpetrators, and technological advancements. The impact of information technology on individuals, societies and nations, at the intrinsic as well as extrinsic levels, has resulted in the imputation of new meanings to traditional forms of social deviance and crime. Cyber technology has ubiquitously infringed our daily lives and made deep inroads into several global corners, redefining the parameters of social subsistence and provision of human necessities. As a consequence, new paradigms of social deviance have arisen, old definitions have been reworded, and new challenges have been identified, leading to new paradoxes.

Some commentators view cyber technology as cataclysmic and repeatedly disparage it with apocalyptic exaggeration. They tend to overlook the fact that cyber technology is a cultural construct that does not exist in isolation from the social system. To rein in the tide of cyber crimes, manifesting in terrorist and sabotage acts, it is imperative to have situation specific and contextual knowledge, discerning dispositions and homogenised actions. Such actions, coupled with intuitive ingenuity and intuitional perceptions may stem the spate of insurgency and terrorism in cyber space.

ISIS AND ITS PRESUMED EXPANSION INTO CENTRAL ASIA: IMPLICATIONS FOR INDIA

POONAM MANN

During the Soviet period, it was predicted by some analysts that Islamic radicalism would be the cause of the demise of the Soviet Union. Their belief was based on the fact that underground Islamic activism, which had persisted through the Soviet times, would emerge to challenge the successors to the Communist rule.[1] However, these apprehensions did not prove to be real. Then in 1991, again some voiced the fear that religious extremism, led by radical Islam, would be a serious destabilising factor to the newly independent Central Asian Republics (CARs)[2]. This time, these fears proved to be true, as post-independence, a closer analysis of radicalisation in the CARs reveals that both internal and external factors played an important role in fuelling it.

Central Asia is a complex geopolitical region whose geographical location at the crossroads of the Eurasian continent, together with the abundance of important natural resources not only increases its strategic value within the international arena but also places it at the "heart of

Dr **Poonam Mann** is an Associate Fellow at the Centre for Air Power Studies, New Delhi.

1. Alexander Bennigsen and Marie Broxup, *The Islamic Threat to the Soviet State* (New York: St. Martin's Press,1985) as cited in ICG Asia report, no.14 "Central Asia: Islamist Mobilization and Regional Security", March 1, 2001, p.7.
2. Svante E. Cornell and Regine A. Spector," Central Asia: More than Islamic Extremists", *The Washington Quarterly*, vol. 25, no. 1, 2002, p. 194.

War in Syria and the emergence of the ISIS in 2014 has completely changed the scale and face of the terrorist threat. A growing number of people from the Central Asian region are travelling to West Asia to fight for or otherwise support, the ISIS.

risks and challenges". Internally, the region has its own local terrorist formations like the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) and Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT), etc. Externally, it is surrounded by territories that are deeply impacted by extremist attacks. For example, Afghanistan in the south is a breeding ground for the Taliban, and more recently home to an increased presence of terrorist groups affiliated to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS); in the Chinese province of Xinjiang to the east, the Uighur separatist groups are active; and to the west, the region faces the Caucasus, where *jihadist* groups are fighting to establish a North

Caucasian Emirate[3]. Moreover, war in Syria and the emergence of the ISIS in 2014 has completely changed the scale and face of the terrorist threat. A growing number of people from the Central Asian region are travelling to West Asia to fight for, or otherwise support, the ISIS. A number of Central Asian extremist groups are active in Iraq and Syria, where many are taking up leadership positions, and a number of radicalised fighters are returning home assumedly to wage a *jihad* against the ruling regimes.[4] The ISIS, through its radical propaganda, has also been successful in creating its "sleeping cells" and so-called "lone wolves" in the region.[5] Further, it should also be noted that the internal terrorist groups are extremely adaptive. For example, initially the IMU positioned itself as an ally of Al Qaeda and the Taliban, but in 2015, it pledged its allegiance to the ISIS. All these factors are serving to amplify the threats and risks to regional

3. "Central Asia's Growing Role in the War on Terror", Eurasian Council on Foreign Affairs, ecfaenglis.objects.dreamhost.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/ECFA-Occasional-Paper-Central-Asia-Growing-Role-in-the-war-on-terror_rev.pdf?dm_i=25TR.3PQGD.FNWMR4. DD8H3.1. Accessed on April 3, 2017.
4. Nodirbek Soliev," Central Asia's New Threat Landscape: An Assessment", *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analysis*, vol. 7, issue 6, July 2015, pp. 38-39.
5. Erlan Karin, "Central Asia: Facing Radical Islam", *Russie.Net.Visions*, No.98, ifri, February 2017. Accessed on April 24, 2017.

stability and security. In fact, the recent terrorist attacks in Istanbul (January 2017), St. Petersburg (April 2017) and Stockholm (April 2017), committed by perpetrators with their origin in Central Asia and their probable affiliation with the ISIS underscore the increasingly important role of Central Asians in the ISIS' transnational operations.

Against this background, this paper aims to analyse the threat posed by the creeping expansion of militant extremism and religious radicalism in the Central Asian region. An attempt will be made to explore the extent of the ISIS' presence in the region. Finally, the paper will discuss how India and the CARs can cooperate with each other in fighting terrorism.

The independence of the Central Asian Republics brought along a deep crisis for the region, with a leadership that appeared to be directionless and fearful of the future. The apprehensions were genuine as their security, economy, social services, etc., were all enmeshed with Russia.

BACKGROUND: RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM IN CENTRAL ASIA

The independence of the Central Asian Republics brought along a deep crisis for the region, with a leadership that appeared to be directionless and fearful of the future. The apprehensions were genuine as their security, economy, social services, etc., were all enmeshed with Russia. From electricity grids to oil pipelines to roads and the military, these republics were tied to Russia. Moreover, their view of the outside world was also dependent on Moscow. Thus, the leaders of these republics inherited, along with independence, a huge management crisis i.e. problems of inflation, economic development, job creation, foreign policy, security, etc. Consequently, deteriorating economic conditions heightened the local political and ethnic tensions, which led to the rise of ethnic and border disputes between the states. Further, the leaders were aware that the policies of *Perestroika* and *Glasnost* had exposed the Central Asians to new political ideas and new religious trends, which could threaten their own political survival. Therefore, to deal with the

crisis, the leaders of all these republics adopted very repressive policies and forced the politically active elements—intellectuals, mullahs, new politically parties, etc.—to go underground.[6] Further, the ruling elites also strengthened their positions by introducing different constitutional reforms and justifying these as necessary steps in that transitional period.

On the other hand, Gorbachev's[7] policy of *Glasnost* had a dramatic impact in reviving Islam, which as a religious tradition and as a form of cultural identity, acquired new meaning. People increasingly started observing Islamic rites like adoption of *Assalam walekum* as a form of greeting, religious marriages, performance of daily prayers and attendance at mosques, etc. There was also a phenomenal increase in the construction of religious places. The number of unaccredited mullahs increased and there was proliferation of mosques, particularly in the rural areas. Where there were no mosques, *chaikhanas* (teahouses) were used as prayer houses.[8] At the beginning of 1992, M. Abdulla Islamailov (in charge of international relations at the Spiritual Administration of Religious Affairs of Central Asia) enthusiastically declared, "Three years ago, Uzbekistan had eighty mosques. Today, there are one thousand in the Namangan region alone (Namangan is one of the most religious regions). We had only two *madrassas* in the whole of the Soviet Union for the instruction of religious leaders. Today, there are twelve"[9]. The main reason for this explosion was that Islam had always been the dominant religion of the CARs but under the Soviet rule of seven decades, it had been repressed. However, even during the Soviet period, it was the "unofficial" Islam that sustained the true faith, despite the fact that it had gone underground.

Also, the revival of Islam in the CARs was a cultural, social and religious phenomenon as people publicly wanted to demonstrate their separateness

---

6. For details, see Ahmed Rashid, *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia* (Hyderabad: Orient Longman Private Limited, 2002).
7. Mikhail Gorbachev, the president of the erstwhile Soviet Union, introduced the policies of *Perestroika* (restructuring) and *Glasnost* (openness) in the 1980s.
8. K. Warikoo," Soviet Central Asia in Ferment", in K. Warikoo and Dawa Norbu, eds., *Ethnicity and Politics in Central Asia* (New Delhi: South Asian Publishers, 1992), pp. 62-70.
9. Giampaolo R. Capisani, *The Handbook of Central Asia: A Comprehensive Survey of the New Republics* (London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 2000), p. 124.

from the Communist system. Yet, popular knowledge of the religion of Islam was minimal and information on political activism, ideas and debates in the Islamic world beyond Central Asia was almost non-existent. But the arrival of funds, Korans, literature and mullahs from the neighbouring countries enabled the spread of their particular version of Islam in these countries. Thus, the new religious environment was further strengthened by the arrival of new Islamic missionaries from outside the Central Asian region specially from Saudi Arabia, Iran, Pakistan and many other Islamic countries. Thousand of mosques were built, Korans and other Islamic literature was brought in from these countries and distributed free amongst the people and itinerant mullahs became public prayer leaders overnight.[10] Obviously, this new Islam was based on the ideas from the Islamic world outside Central Asia. The growing involvement of outside powers increased as the Wahhabi groups from Saudi Arabia, the Iranian Revolutionary Guards and some Sunni fundamentalist parties in Pakistan took advantage of the unprecedented political opportunities. The vacuum created by the lack of leadership from the official Islamic hierarchy allowed fundamentalist groups to proliferate. The refusal of the governments of the CARs to allow Islamic education in government schools resulted in the spread of unofficial Islamic schools. People learned to bypass official Islam as they set up their own mosques and other structures.[11]

Further, Afghanistan has always been crucial in the security of the Central Asian states. The rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan set in place a model of the extremist Islamic fundamentalism unknown in this part of the Muslim world. With the help of Saudi extremist Osama bin Laden, the Taliban ruled Afghanistan became a base for exporting Islamic militancy to these neighbouring countries. It became the centre for training terrorists and spreading instability in the region.[12]

---

10. Rashid, n.6, p.43.
11. Ahmed Rashid, *The Resurgence of Central Asia: Islam or Nationalism* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 244-45.
12. Meena Singh Roy, "Terrorism in Central Asia: Imperatives for Regional Cooperation" in Mahavir Singh, ed., *International Terrorism and Religious Extremism- Challenges to Central and South Asia* (New Delhi: Anamika Publishers, 2004), p. 187.

THE IMPORTANCE OF FERGANA VALLEY

It needs to be mentioned here that in the Fergana Valley, which has always been the most religious part of the region, radical Islamic elements were on the rise and had transformed the area, using radical Islam, into a stronghold for the Islamic Renaissance Party (IRP). It became the "educational centre" for Central Asia's fundamentalists. Most of Central Asia's religious figures were still in the 'proselytising phase', more interested in training new clerics and increasing the level of religious learning among the population than in getting the laws of society to conform to those of Islam.[13] A massive propaganda operation was underway in outlying villages in order to reconvert the population. "First Fergana, then Uzbekistan and then the whole Central Asia will become an Islamic state", said Imam Abdul Ahmad in Namangan. Imams in the Fergana Valley aspired to overthrow the 'Communist government' of Uzbek President Karimov and spearhead an Islamic revolution throughout Central Asia.[14] Thus, the discussion of radicalism and extremism would be incomplete without mentioning the importance of Fergana Valley. The valley, comprising the territories of Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, has been the centre of many radical or Islamist movements. At first, four radical Islamist groups were active here: Adolat(Justice), Baraka (Blessings), Tauba (Repentance), and Islam Lashkarlori (Warriors of Islam). These groups existed underground during the Soviet period, but emerged in the era of Gorbachev's reforms. Over time, other groups also became active in the region, including the Hizb-ut-Tahrir and its splinter groups Akramiya and Hizb-un-Nusrat, as well as Uzun Soqol (Long Beards), Tablighi Jamaat and Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU).[15]

The development of these groups was not spontaneous as they were promoted and supported by many foreign organisations. In early 1992,

13. Jed C. Snyder, *After Empire: The Emerging Geopolitics of Central Asia* (Washington D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1995).
14. Rashid, n.11, p. 100.
15. Zeyno Baran, S. Frederic Starr and Svante E. Cornell," Islamic Radicalism in Central Asia and the Caucasus: Implications for the EU", Central Asia-Caucasus Institute Silk Road Studies Programme, http://www.silkroadstudies.org/resources/pdf/SilkRoadPapers/2006_07_SRP_BaranStarrCornell_Radicalism.pdf. Accessed on February 1, 2017.

missionary groups from Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Afghanistan illegally entered the Fergana region and had negotiations with local religious leaders, aiming to establish an Islamic republic.[16] Apart from the Fergana Valley, other areas where radicalism flourished were Tajikistan (Tajikistan went through a murderous civil war from 1992-97) and southern Kyrgyzstan which was very much the result of the growing interaction between Tajikistan and Afghanistan during the Soviet occupation of the latter. However, northern Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan were not affected by the same degree of radicalisation.[17]

In view of the increase in Islamic sentiments, the Central Asian governments tried to fit the bill by embracing Islam. Most of the presidents of the CARs performed *Hajj*, the pilgrimage to the Islamic holy sites; Uzbek President Islam Karimov was sworn into office holding the Koran; and Islamic structures and symbols were restored in all the five republics, etc. At the same time, they maintained strict control over the religious groups to avoid the formation of any sort of political opposition, thus, undermining the autonomy of important religious institutions. Further, funds from foreign Islamic organisations were banned and all communications with them (banking, commercial, charitable, etc.) were closely monitored.[18] In Uzbekistan, large-scale operations were conducted to confiscate weapons, and the activities of the IRP were banned and many Islamist activists were arrested.[19]

The control exercised by the governments of the five republics, along with other internal and external factors, set the stage for the spread of religious extremism and the resultant unrest in the region. To understand the threat from the religious extremist groups, it is imperative to know about the nature and activities of these groups in the region.

16. V. Nagendra Rao," Religious Extremism in Central Asia: Towards A Conceptualisation", in V. Nagendra Rao and Mohammad Munir Alam, eds., *Central Asia: Present Challenges and Future Prospects* (New Delhi: Knowledge World, 2005), p. 102.
17. Murat Laumulin,"Islamic Radicalism in Central Asia", in K.Warikoo, ed., *Religion and Security in South and Central Asia* (London: Routledge, 2011), pp. 140-141.
18. Sebastiano Mori and Leonardo Taccetti, "Rising Extremism in Central Asia? Stability in the Heartland for a Secure Eurasia", www.eias.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/EIAS_Briefing_2016_Mori_Taccetti_central_asia.pdf. Accessed on January 19, 2017.
19. Rao, n.16, p. 103.

The IMU received critical support and training from the Taliban in Afghanistan. In fact, it acquired the permanent infrastructure in the form of training camps over there. It not only supported the Taliban's fight against the Northern Alliance but also intensified its contacts with other terrorist organisations such as Al Qaeda.

EXTREMIST GROUPS OF CENTRAL ASIAN REGION

At present, the several Islamic groups that are operational in the region, are quite different from each other. Some are deeply extremist while others are comparatively moderate in their outlook. For example, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) is the most aggressive among them all.

Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan

This group was formed by the leaders of the Adolat, Islam Lashkarlori and Tauba movements i.e. Tahir Yuldashev and Juma Namangani, in 1998. Juma Namangani was the military leader of the group while Tahir Yuldashev was the political leader. Both were formerly from the Namangan province located in Uzbekistan's portion of the Fergana Valley. It had its headquarters in Afghanistan. Several thousand Uzbek and Tajik religious extremists underwent training in Afghan-based camps for fighting and acts of terror and sabotage.[20] Several terrorist attacks aimed at overthrowing the Uzbek government and at establishing an Islamic state were perpetrated by this group in the last two decades. Among the attacks attributed to the IMU was a series of bomb attacks in Tashkent in February 1999, targeted against the then Uzbek President Islam Karimov, incursions in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan, in August 1999 and August 2000 respectively, hostage taking in Kyrgyzstan, and violence in the Batken region of Kyrgyzstan, etc.[21] In a bid to widen its scope, in 2001, the group renamed itself as Hizb-i-islami or the Islamic Party of Turkestan, thus, declaring that all its members

---

20. Valentin Kunin,"Kabul to be Centre for War against all Infidels", *National Herald*, September 17, 2000. Also see, Tatiana Sinitsyna,"Uzbekistan- Nine years in company with Independence", *National Herald*, September 1, 2000.
21. For details, see Poonam Mann, "Religious Extremism in Central Asia", *Strategic Analysis,* vol. xxv, no.9, December 2001, pp. 1032-35..

were not only Uzbeks but also Uigurs, Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, Tajiks and Chechens. This also reflected the expanding aspirations of its leadership. Now they wanted to liberate the whole of Turkistan—from Xinjiang to the Caspian Sea. They hoped that the overthrow of Uzbek President Karimov would have a domino effect and make the other Central Asian states weaker.[22]

The first phase of radical Islamic militancy in Central Asia was quite violent, with attempts by the extremists to take over power by a revolution or military actions by exploiting the weakness of the newly formed state structures of the CARs.

Further, the IMU received critical support and training from the Taliban in Afghanistan. In fact, it acquired the permanent infrastructure in the form of training camps over there. It not only supported the Taliban's fight against the Northern Alliance but also intensified its contacts with other terrorist organisations such as Al Qaeda. In the post September 11,2001 crisis, when the United States started its attacks against Taliban, the IMU offered full support to the latter.[23] In fact, it became a vanguard of the Taliban forces in the north of the country, with Namangani becoming the commander-in-chief of all Taliban forces in the north. During the course of the fighting, the movement suffered heavy losses and its fighters were forced to flee to the tribal territories in Pakistan. This also ended the first phase of radical Islamic militancy in Central Asia that was quite violent, with attempts by the extremists to take over power by a revolution or military actions by exploiting the weakness of the newly formed state structures of the CARs.

Of course, the enormous losses, including the death of Juma Namagani, after September 11, comprised a big blow to the radical Islamists in Central Asia, but it was also considered mainly as a temporary lull. As the series of events that have occurred since 2004 indicate, the problem of violent extremism has not gone away. These groups have managed to adapt to the new reality, changed their shape, methods and tactics and

---

220 Daan van der Schriek, "The Central Asian Taliban", *The Times of Central Asia*, vol. 3, no. 42(137), October18, 2001, p.5.
23. Ibid.

started to achieve some successes. For example, Uzbekistan was hit by two waves of terrorist attacks in 2004, including the region's first ever female suicide bombing. The first attack was aimed at the Uzbek police and private and commercial facilities, while the second one targeted the US and Israeli Embassies in Uzbekistan as well as the prosecutor general's office. Further, the Kyrgyz 'Revolution' and Andijan events of 2005 explain the strengthening of the radical groups. Incidents like January 2006, when terrorists raided a Tajik prison, killed the warden and freed a prisoner with alleged IMU ties, and the May 2006, armed men's attack at a border post killing several guards and seizing a stockpile of weapons in Batken region of Kyrgyzstan, raised the concerns of the authorities.[24] Furthermore, Kazakhstan, which was till now considered as being free from the occurrences of Islamic terrorism, witnessed several violent and terrorist attacks in 2011. The attacks which included shooting, bombings, suicide attacks and skirmishes with the law-enforcement forces, were carried out by a new organisation, the Jund al-Khilafa (Soldiers of the Caliphate) with a goal to radicalise the Salafist community in Kazakhstan. It is believed that the organisation is not an independent one but only a cell within the Islamic Jihad Union (IJU) which represents the IMU's armed splinter.[25]

Throughout these years, the governments of these republics have managed to control the situation and these extremist groups have not succeeded in achieving their desired objective in the region. However, in due course of time, the IMU, by forging an understanding with the Taliban and Al Qaeda, has evolved beyond the traditional region of interest and is now reaching a global scale i.e. waging global *jihad*. As revealed in one of their statements, "IMU is continuing its *jihadi* activities in the Khorasan region which started 12 years ago…And we hope from Allah that the opening of Khorasan is very near following future conquests in Mawarounnahr region".[26] Along

24. Baran, et.al., n.15.
25. Jund al-Khilafa [Kazakhstan], http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/jak.htm, Accessed on February 17, 2017.
26. Bill Roggio, "IMU, Taliban Launched Joint Suicide Assault in Panjshir", http://www.longwarjournal. org/archives/2013/06/imu_taliban_launched.php. Accessed on February 16, 2017.

with the Taliban, the IMU has participated in fighting in the provinces of Kunduz, Takhar, Balkh, Baghlan, Samangan, Jowzjan, Faryab, Badakhshan and Badghis, which border Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan. The IMU, along with the IJU, has imparted extensive militant training to terrorists from around the world and their fighters have experience of combat fighting. They possess a wide arsenal of weapons and equipment. They have their own websites and are active on the internet *jihadi* forums and online social networking services, produce and publish audio-visual propaganda materials in a number of languages. Thus, through the use of digital technology, they have been successful in widening their social support and social recruitment base.[27]

Another significant move by the IMU in recent years has been the pledging of its allegiance to the ISIS, despite the fact that there exist fundamental differences between the Taliban, the IMU's long-term ally, and ISIS. However, it is claimed that when Usman Gazi, the leader of the IMU, announced his loyalty to Abu Bakr al Baghdadi of the ISIS, he was killed by the Taliban in 2015 as punishment for his betrayal.[28] However, serious concerns still remain about terrorism in Uzbekistan as a large number of Uzbek fighters have been united under the Kateebat Imam Al- Bukhari (KIB), a Central Asian militant unit fighting in Syria since 2013.[29] In the process of shifting loyalties, while the IMU's leaders remained the militants from Uzbekistan, and its declared goal the establishment of an Islamic state in Central Asia, it lost its Central Asian character and focussed on fighting in Afghanistan and Pakistan on the side of the Taliban and Al Qaeda and later on, in Syria, along with the ISIS (treating Central Asia only as a source of recruits, rather than a theatre

---

27. Jozef Lang," The Radical Islamic Militants of Central Asia", OSW Report, Centre for Eastern Studies, November 2013, https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/osw-report/2013-11-13/radical-islamic-militants-central-asia. Accessed on February 1, 2017.

28. Jacob Zenn, " The IMU is Extinct : What Next for Central Asia", www.css.ethz.ch/en/services/digital-library/articles/articles.html/053530b5-59e6-47d5-a9e7-e320823796d7. Accessed on January 16, 2017.

29. KTB is a subsidiary branch of the Taliban in Syria. See Nodirbek Soliev ," Annual Threat Assessment : Central Asia", *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analysis*, vol. 9, issue 1, January, 2017, www.rsis.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/CTTA-January2017.pdf. Accessed on February 10, 2017.

of operations).[30] As a result of the civil war in Syria since 2011, the influx of recruits to the IMU also significantly decreased, yet it remained a serious security threat. It not only served as a source of potential recruits, but mainly as a cultural role model of the modern post-Soviet *jihad* – that enabled the phenomenon of mass departures of volunteers to Syria and Iraq.[31]

Hizb-ut Tahrir (HT)

The comparatively moderate Hizb-ut-Tahrir is a transnational Islamic religious-political organisation which has presence over 20 countries across the world. It seeks implementation of the pure Islamic doctrine and the creation of an Islamic Caliphate in Central Asia with an ultimate goal of uniting the entire *ummah*, or Islamic world community into a single Caliphate.[32] According to the organisation, the creation of an Islamic state in Central Asia is to be realised in three different stages:

- First, members of the group will undertake underground work, recruiting young people into the party and providing training to them. This underground work will help create a leadership structure.
- After establishing the structure, the members will openly declare their objectives through distributing leaflets and organising meetings, processions and public appeals.
- Once the structure is deemed sufficiently strong, the organisation will overthrow the incumbent constitutional and secular regimes and then will build the Islamic state according to the *Shariah*.[33]

The group has a large following in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan. It is estimated that there are more than 10,000 followers. Though the group has not been involved in any violent action or any known terrorist activity as it wants to achieve its objectives through non-violence, its radical ideology is

30. Maciejfalkowski, Józeflang, "HOMO JIHADICUS: Islam in the Former USSR and the Phenomenon of the Post-Soviet Militants in Syria and Iraq" (Warsaw: Center for Eastern Studies, September 2015), available at https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/194511/homojihadicus. pdf. Accessed on July 5, 2017.
31. Ibid.
32. "Hizbut-Tahrir al Islami (Islamic Party of Liberation)", available at www.globalsecurity.org/ military/world/para/hizb-ut-tahrir.htm. Accessed on July 5, 2017.
33. As quoted in Col T.J. Razakov, " Religious Extremism in Central Asia", *The Times of Central Asia*, vol.3, no.44(139), 01 November, 2001, p.1.

considered a major threat to stabilty in the region. Even if the HT opposes the aggressive *jihad*, it uses the same "pre-violent *jihad*" strategies and tactics as the Muslim Brotherhood to achieve the creation of an Islamic state in Central Asia and beyond.[34]

Further, an important point to be noted is that the radical threat present in the Central Asian region is transnational in nature. The radical groups mostly operate via Central Asia into their immediate neighbourhood and beyond. The porous borders of the region make it simple for them to move with relative freedom and intensify their links with other extremist and violent movements active in the Heartland. One such group that operates from Xinjiang to Waziristan is the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM), which is considered a terrorist organisation by China, and has perpetrated several attacks in Central Asia and China. The members of ETIM are supposedly getting training in Pakistan and Afghanistan, work in close contact with the IMU and are getting finance from Al Qaeda.[35]

Central Asia and ISIS

The war in Iraq and Syria has been a game changer so far as religious extremism is concerned. The ISIS' skillful marketing has given it a global reach. Manifestations of the ISIS' reach have shown up in places where dramatic *jihadist* terrorism was not an expected threat, such as Brussels and Paris, etc. It has built up its ranks by recruiting fighters from across the globe. The potential for fighters to return to their home states with an objective to undertake organised *jihad* is a major international security concern. Central Asia is no exception. Rather, Central Asia is considered to be the third largest source of foreign fighters in Syria. The advent of the ISIS has led to the comparative decline in the old militant organisations in the Central Asian region, on the one hand; and, on the other, popularised the trend to travel to distant lands to engage in *jihad*. There are divergent view-points among the analysts on the issue of the ISIS' threat to the Central Asian region. Some

---

34. Sebastiano Mori and Leonardo Taccetti, "Rising Extremism in Central Asia?: Stability in the Heartland for a Secure Eurasia", Briefing Paper, available at www. eias.org/wp-content/ uploads/2016/04/EIAS_Briefing_2016_Mori_Taccetti_central_asia.pdf, accessed on January 19, 2017.
35. Ibid.

experts are of the opinion that because of the geographical distance between the two regions and the Central Asians defining themselves as different from people of the West Asian region—psychologically, politically, culturally—the fear of the ISIS has been exaggerated.[36] On the other hand, the ISIS' ultimate plan to expand its territories to West Asia, North Africa, mainland Spain, Iran, Russia's southern territories, Central Asia and the Indian subcontinent is a major concern. The fact that a number of Central Asian groups are active in Iraq and Syria, with many taking up leadership positions, and a number of radicalised fighters returning home, assumedly to wage a *jihad* against the ruling regimes, increases the fear.[37] Hence, the emerging threats should not be ignored.

The militants from the CARs are divided into *jamaats* on the basis of ethnicity and language. This has led to the formation of the 'Kazakh Jamaat' and 'Tajik Jamaat' that are fighting alongside the ISIS. The Uzbeks, however, have established the Kateebat Imam al Bukhari (KIB) and Kateebat at Tawhid wal Jihad (KTJ), and they are fighting alongside the Al Qaeda-affiliated Jabhat al Nusra.[38] These Jamaats and Kateebats are also using digital /social media for propaganda and attracting more people from the region.

Though there is no reliable data on ISIS fighters from Central Asia, some estimates reveal that there are 500 Uzbeks, 360 Turkmen, 250 Kazakhs, 350 Kyrgyz and 190 Tajiks fighting with it.[39] The Soufan Group, which provides security and intelligence assessment to countries and multi-national organisations has estimated that Central Asian militants comprise the third largest component of foreign fighters in the ISIS.[40] This shows the presence of ISIS "sleeper cells" in the region. The emergence of an ISIS flag on a Tashkent bridge in September 2014, further sent shock waves across the region. This

36. Timur Toktonaliev, " Does Islamic State Threaten Central Asia?", http://iwpr.net/global-voices/does-islamic-state-threaten-central-asia. Accessed on February 7, 2017.
37. Nodirbek Soliev,"Central Asia's New Threat Landscape: An Assessment", *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analysis*, vol. 7, issue. July 6, 2015, pp.38-39.
38. Ibid.
39. Andrei Kazantsev, " Fragile Central Asia: Secular Statehood Challenged by Radical Islam", *Russia in Global Affairs*, vol. 14, no. 1, January-March 2016, p. 205.
40. "The Rising Islamic State Threat in Central Asia", available at www.timesrecordnews.com/story/opinion/editorials/2017/02/06/rising-islamic-state-threat-in-central-asia/97555516/. Accessed on February 7, 2017.

was followed by Abu-al-Baghdadi appointing a Tajik *jihadi* as the *amir* of Syria's Raqqa province[41] and the defection of Tajikistan's Head of Special Forces, Col. Gulmurod Khalimov, to the ISIS in May 2015.[42] Thus, the ISIS has been successful in attracting recruits from the region. As mentioned earlier, it is not any one single factor that can be cited as a motivation for them to join the ISIS ranks. It could be money, employment, spirit of *jihad*, anger, finding meaning to life, adventure, ignorance, deception, better living standards, permission to take the family along….the list

The prospect of the ISIS setting a goal of expanding its influence in the northern regions of Afghanistan and gaining access to the border regions of the Central Asian states as well as to the Chinese Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region cannot be ruled out.

is long. But for the ISIS, the Central Asian region offers the ideal geographical space and the economic resources (oil/gas) to spread its ideology. Also, the ISIS' idea of establishing the Khorasan State is becoming inspirational for the Central Asian *jihadis*.[43] Hence, the possibility that after suffering setbacks in Iraq and Syria, the ISIS is seeking to shift the main focus of its activity from Syria and Iraq to Afghanistan and the neighbouring states, needs due attention. Obviously, it is looking for new territories. As Gen. Andrey Novikov, the head of the Anti-Terrorist Centre (ATC) of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), while addressing two UN Security Council committees, emphasised, "The Taliban never laid claim to territories outside Afghanistan, while the Islamic State in 2015 announced the creation of a new *'province'* with a center in Afghanistan that should also have included the territories of the Central Asian states."[44]

Presently, the ISIS fighters are engaged in a bitter confrontation with some Taliban forces over control over some Afghan territories. Therefore, the

---

41. P.Stobdan,"ISIS in Central Asia",www.idsa.in/issuebrief/isisinCentralAsia_pstobdan_221014?-q=print/15154. Accessed on January 12, 2017.

42. Soliev, n.37.

43. Stobdan, n. 41.

44. "ISIS Shifting Focus to Afghanistan, Threatens Central Asia: CIS Anti-Terrorism Chief", available at https://www.rt.com/news/393817-isis-focus-activity-afghanistan/. Accessed on July, 4 2017.

prospect of the ISIS setting a goal of expanding its influence in the northern regions of Afghanistan and gaining access to the border regions of the Central Asian states as well as to the Chinese Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region cannot be ruled out.[45]Also, since the ISIS fighters include people from Central Asia and other post-Soviet republics, the Afghan branch of the ISIS is definitely specialised for Central Asia, and Russian is one of its working languages.[46] How far, the ISIS will be able to achieve its goals is yet to be seen. Considering the Central Asian region's geographical proximity to Afghanistan and West Asia, the porous borders, ethnic linkages and internal weaknesses, the risk factor cannot be ignored. Also, its geographical location (situated at the heart of Eurasia) implies that developments here will have wider implications for the Eurasian region. Hence, all the major regional and global powers have a key stake in ensuring durable peace and stability in the region.

IMPLICATIONS FOR INDIA

Extremism and terrorism comprise a global phenomenon. The process of universalisation and globalisation of religious extremism has intensified the interdependence between Islamic organisations, widening their social support and social recruitment base. Religious extremists have been able to attract recruits from different backgrounds, professions and countries. Therefore, an unstable extended neighbourhood could pose a major security challenge to any country. India is no exception. Besides, India has been bearing the brunt of this menace in its state of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) and elsewhere for more than two decades. The militants, who receive support, safe sanctuaries and training from across the border, have declared a *jihad* against India and their activities are posing a challenge to India's integrity. Therefore, given their transnational nature, the *jihadist* groups of the Central Asian region , including their links with the Taliban and other militant groups in the

---

45. Ibid.
46. "10,000 ISIS Fighters in Afghanistan , Trained to Expand to Central Asia and Russia", available at https://www.rt.com/news/340200-isis-afghanistan-threaten-russia/. Accessed on July 4, 2017.

Af-Pak region, could create problems for India. The radical forces will continue to whip up *jihadist* ideologies in the region and, if not checked, will eventually pose a serious threat to India's security, especially in the state of Kashmir.

Secondly, instability in Central Asia could be a challenge because of the median position of Afghanistan. The defeat of the Taliban and the ongoing war on terror has not succeeded in destroying the terrorist infrastructure in Afghanistan or in stabilising the country. In fact, it is been argued that terrorism has received a new lease post 9/11 situation. The hub of terrorist activities has gradually shifted to the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of Pakistan. It is primarily from bases in the FATA that terrorists are carrying out their attacks and spreading insurgency in Afghanistan.[47] With the footprints of the ISIS there, the situation is getting worse. Destabilisation of Central Asia, which is tensely connected to the developments in Afghanistan, can produce rapid strengthening of all kinds of Islamic radicalism in the area and increased competition between the major powers, with their attempt to use the chaos there to their own advantage.[48] It will become difficult for India to balance its interests with all the big powers. For example, at the moment, the IMU is more active in the FATA region and its aim largely is to fight for the global *jihad* . Due to the past collaboration with other *jihadi* groups, it would be difficult to negate the possibility of the IMU joining hands with the *jihadi* outfits that target India. To add to this potent mix, the ISIS has already declared its aim to establish the Khorasan State which borders India. The perception of the threat by India and by the other regional / major players like Russia, China, Pakistan, etc. seems to be different, with the latter three wanting to involve the Taliban in a negotiated settlement with Afghanistan. The CARs have not indicated until now what line they will follow. But from the Indian perspective, this is a very important challenge.

47. Nirmala Joshi, ed., *Reconnecting India and Central Asia-Emerging Security and Economic Dimensions* (Central Asia-Caucasus Institute and Silk Road Studies Program, 2010), available at https://www.silkroadstudies.org/resources/pdf/Monographs/2010_03_MONO_Joshi_India-Central-Asia.pdf. Accessed on July 6, 2017.
48. Fyodor Lukyanov, "India and Central Asia-Responses", *FPRC Journal,* no.2, 2012, available at http://www.fprc.in/pdf/J-10.pdf. Accessed on July 6, 2017.

Thirdly, with the rise of terrorism and extremism, there is fear that the terrorists could target the hydrocarbon resources of the Central Asian region, which energy-hungry India is also keen to access.

Fourthly, closely associated with the rise of religious extremism and terrorism is the relative growth in other nefarious activities such as drug trafficking, smuggling of small arms and organised crime. These negative tendencies have given rise to powerful cartels which, in turn, sustain religious extremism and terrorism. In this context, both India and particularly some of the CARs, are being used as transport corridors. Such activities pose another challenge for India and the CARs on the security front.

Thus, India has a critical interest in maintaing close and cooperative relations with all the CARs in this task of securing itself and its extended neighbourhood against terrorism. In fact, both have taken various steps to counter religious extremism. For example, India has set up Joint Working Groups (JWGs) to deal with extremism and counter-terrorism with Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, The aim of each JWG is to review and analyse the regional security scenario, coordinate information, and share experiences. The JWG frameworks also envision the training of paramilitary personnel. Regular meetings are held to share information and concerns on this crucial area. Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan are also India's declared strategic partners in the region.[49]

Secondly, another major area of cooperation for India and the CARs is in peace and stability of Afghanistan where both have major stakes. India and the CARs previously cooperated in helping the Northern Alliance against the Taliban. The CARs are also appreciative of the Indian efforts with project financing and training of people that India has undertaken in Afghanistan. They have done their bit by throwing open transit facilities, providing power and collaborating with India and Afghanistan.

---

49. Address by Secretary (East) at a seminar on "Enhancing India-Central Asia Engagement Prospects and Issues", organised by the United Service Institution of India, March 18, 2013, available at http://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/21540/Address+by+Secretary+East+at+a+Seminar+on+Enhancing+IndiaCentral+Asia+Engagement+Prospects+and+Issues+organized+by+The+United+Service+Institution+of+India. Accessed on February 20, 2017.

Thirdly, both are working together through various multilateral and regional organisations like the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building Measures in Asia (CICA), etc. Among its structures, the SCO has established the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) which serves to promote cooperation among member states against terrorism, separatism and extremism, and for intelligence sharing and military exercises and cooperation in the defence context. Now, after acquiring full membership of the SCO in June 2107, India can jointly work with RATS for getting key intelligence information on cyber security and the regional terror outfits and their networks. The mutual exchanges on counter-terrorism issues would be beneficial for all the stakeholders.

But, perhaps, this is not sufficient. A lot more needs to be done. The above mentioned measures are just the one aspect of the solution. The answer lies in bringing back the disillusioned people by winning their "hearts and minds". India needs to get engaged on a large scale in the economic development of the CARs as these republics are still struggling with their low socio-economic conditions. Till date, India has mostly relied on its soft cultural power and earlier goodwill, dating back to the time of the erstwhile Soviet Union. But today, there is a whole new generation of young unemployed people, who may not have the same feelings for India, and who can be radicalised very quickly. Therefore, economic activity is vital to engage these young people. Economic development will also help to undercut the appeal of the Islamic radicals. Given India's economic potential, vast experience and institutional capabilities, the country can add value and share best practices at both bilateral and regional levels.

CENTRE FOR AIR POWER STUDIES
RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS – 2017-2019

Centre for Air Power Studies (CAPS), New Delhi, invites applications from Indian citizens for two years research fellowship, at four levels:

1. **Senior Fellow (SF):** PhD with 05 years of experience in research or 15 years experience in defence; remuneration-Rs 40,000-46,000.
2. **Research Fellow (RF):** PhD or 10 years experience in defence; remuneration-Rs 30,000-36,000
3. **Associate Fellow (AF):** MPhil or equivalent with 03 years of experience in research or 05 years experience in defence; remuneration-Rs 22,000-27,000
4. **Research Associate (RA):** MA/MSc and reading for MPhil/PhD; remuneration-Rs 18,000-22,000.

Procedure

Duly filled-in application along with the research proposal of not more than 1,000 words must be sent to **Director General, Centre for Air Power Studies (CAPS), P-284, Arjan Path, Subroto Park, New Delhi 110010** or by email at **capsnetdroff@gmail.com** with the subject line 'Application for the position of SF/RF/AF/RA.'

The application form and research proposal format can be downloaded from **http://capsindia.org/vacancy.**

For more details, visit us @ **www.capsindia.org**

RESEARCH AREAS
- National Security
- Strategic Studies
- Foreign Policies
- India and the Neighbourhood
- Aerospace
- Nuclear
- Space and Cyber Issues
- Energy.

JOB REQUIREMENTS
- Research experience
- Excellent communication skills, including inter-personal, oral and written communication skills
- Proficient in Microsoft Office applications.
- Able to multi-task, work under pressure and meet deadlines.

NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Articles submitted to Air Power Journal should be original contributions and should not be under consideration for any other publication at the same time. If another version of the article is under consideration by another publication, or has been, or will be published elsewhere, authors should clearly indicate this at the time of submission.

Each typescript should be submitted in duplicate. Articles should be typewritten on A4/ Letter paper, on one side only, **double-spaced (including the notes)** and with ample margins. All pages (including those containing only diagrams and tables) should be numbered consecutively.

There is no standard length for articles, but 5,000 to 8,000 words (including notes and references) is a useful target. The article should begin with an indented summary of around 100 words, which should describe the main arguments and conclusions of the article.

Details of the author's institutional affiliations, full address and other contact information should be included on a separate cover sheet. Any acknowledgements should be included on the cover sheet as should a note of the exact length of the article.

All diagrams, charts and graphs should be referred to as figure and consecutively numbered. Tables should be kept to a minimum and contain only essential data. Each figure and table must be given an Arabic numeral, followed by a heading, and be referred to in the text.

Articles should be submitted on high-density 3~ inch virus free disks (IBM PC) in rich text format (RTF) together with **an exactly matching double-spaced hard copy** to facilitate typesetting; notes should be placed at the end of each page. Any diagrams or maps should be copied to a separate disk separately in uncompressed TIF or JPG formats in individual files. These should be prepared in black and white. Tints should be avoided, use open patterns instead. If maps and diagrams cannot be prepared electronically, they should be presented on good quality white paper.

Each disk should be labelled with the journal's name, article title, author's name and software used. It is the author's responsibility to ensure that where copyright materials are included within an article, the permission of the copyright holder has been obtained. Confirmation of this should be included on a separate sheet included with the disk.

Copyright in articles published in *Air Power* rests with the publisher.

STYLE

Authors are responsible for ensuring that their manuscripts conform to the journal style. The Editors will not undertake retyping of manuscripts before publication. A guide to style and presentation is obtainable from the publisher.

Current Journal style should be followed closely. Dates in the form January 1, 2000. Use figures for 11 and above. British spellings are to be used. Authors should provide brief biographical details to include institutional affiliation and recent publications for inclusion in About the Contributors. Sub-headings and sub-sub-headings should be unambiguously marked on the copy.

NOTES

Notes should be **double spaced** and numbered consecutively through the article. **The first line of a note must align with subsequent lines. Each note number should be standard size and have a full point**.

a) References to books should give author's name: title of the book (italics); and the place, publisher and date of publication in brackets.

e.g. 1. Samuel P. Huntington, The Common Defense (NY: Columbia UP, 1961), Ch. 2, pp. 14-18.

b) References to articles in periodicals should give the author's initials and surname, the title of the article in quotation marks, title of the periodical (italics), the number of the volume/issue in Arabic numerals, the date of publication, and the page numbers:

e.g., Douglas M. Fox, "Congress and the US Military Service Budgets in the Post War Period," Midwest Journal of Political Science, vol. 16, no. 2, May 1971, pp. 382-393.