

NATIONAL SECURITY, LEADERSHIP & GOVERNANCE

1. Honoured and humbled to stand in front of this distinguished audience and make No Mistakes of your Imp – To our Nation & to the Society at large – You are the backbone on which our Nation progresses - & we'll talk of the state of our backbone as we progress in the talk.
2. As we progress in the 21st Century, many issues confront our Nation & are therefore of great concern to us all.
3. I will structure my talk
 - National Security Challenges including strategy to combat them.
 - Leadership issues
 - Will dwell a little on the Indian Armed Forces &
 - Lastly, a few thoughts on “Governance”.
4. Will take on Questions on any related issue.
5. So that we can be free and frank request `Chatham House Rules’

Part-I – NATIONAL SECURITY

6. **Concept of India:** India's culture is marked by a high degree of cultural pluralism, being a centre of numerous cultural and religious traditions. Notwithstanding its ancient civilization and inherited wisdom, India remains somewhat tentative and insecure about the use of power. In the process, our efforts to define and shape a coherent strategic identity have also been adhoc and arbitrary and sometimes not in our best interests.

7. The Preamble to the Indian Constitution spells out the basic philosophy underlying the Indian nation state – the key aspects are: Sovereignty; A Democratic Republic that is socialist and secular and one that provides its citizens JUSTICE; social, economic and political, LIBERTY, of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; EQUALITY of status and of opportunity and to promote among all its citizens - FRATERNITY, assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the nation.

Achievements in the last 6/7 decades:

8. To start with, Let's do a status check and talk of the "State of our Nation". Given the challenges that faced India at birth, not many had given her a chance to succeed, in the manner we have. The story of emerging India is therefore catching the imagination of the world. And whether we want it or not, India will be a player on the world scene – our growing economy and ack Mil Power ensures so.

9. India is today a major 'Stake Holder' power, using this power to reconfigure relations with the major powers of the world. For ex:-

(a) With the US, a people & trade driven relationship into strategic partnership;

(b) With France a defence relationship, moving towards wider trade and security stakes & so also with other major powers (the only exception being China!, where we are still struggling to define our course).

10. Shedding its non-alignment & wanting to retain strategic autonomy, India is leveraging its stakes into positions of influence – Thus giving credence to its Policy of Omni Alignment.

11. There are many **positives** in the Emerging India story:-

(a) **Economy** : An emerging economy.

(b) **Vibrant middle class**, that has raised consumption levels significantly, thereby creating a huge internal market.

(c) A vigilant and powerful media which works as the perfect watchdog.

(d) I think the most important leap of faith taken by emerging India is a change in our attitude from ‘Let me Not lose’ to ‘I can win, I will win’.

12. Notwithstanding this huge leap; ‘Going Forward’, would mean enormous challenges in the areas of rural development, urban sustainability, national infrastructure, and human capital. The priority now must be not only on growth, but on the triple canons of growth, inclusion and environmental sustainability. As one of the world’s most crowded country, India faces this challenge more urgently than others.

Challenges

13. Despite great economic and political progress, India remains a fragile State and Society with:-

- (a) Religious fault lines.
- (b) Regional fault lines
- (c) Economic Polarization. Obscene wealth and abysmal poverty living side by side is an unpalatable truth of 21st Century India.
- (d) Hunger still stalks large nos. – foodgrains are overflowing but the distribution is warped
- (e) Corruption – seems to be wide spread, which has generated the current backlash.
- (f) Demographic Discontent – Growing population from 1.04 Billion in 2000 to 1.21 Billion in 2010 to 1.6 Billion by 2050. The demographic dividend comes as a package. The good news is that the world is scared of India's Young entrepreneurial Youth Power because they are the game changers of a competitive India. But this Youth Bulge can also be a ticking time bomb, if we are unable to create the right opportunities and the hope of progress. A million graduates every year sounds good – but are they 'employable'?? Dangers related to 'under employment' is lurking at our doors.

Security issues:

14. External Environment. India has the disadvantage of being situated in close proximity to what is being described as ‘the epicenter of global terrorism’. Tribal region near the Afghanistan-Pakistan border is constantly drawing attention of America’s Global War on Terror (GWOT) since 2001. India’s increasing relevance to the US strategic canvas, troubled relationship with Pakistan since independence, deteriorating/unpredictable relationship with China and unstable political climate in the neighbouring countries (Nepal, Bangladesh & Srilanka) have rendered any fair estimation of Indian preparedness to deal with these security challenges an onerous task.

15. Due to shortage of time, I will confine myself to Pak and China.

- (a) Pak will continue to remain the Principal National Security threat in the short term and in all the military dimensions – sub conv/conv and Nuclear. The Pak Army remains fixated to implacable hostility towards India as a Strat Fundamental and despite India extending its hand of friendship on numerous occasions. Moreover, irrationality of response from Pak cannot be excluded from our calculus, more so on account of its internal contradictions.
- (b) **Strat for Pak:** Friends & Foe: Iron Fist in a velvet glove; + measured response; calling its bluff.
- (c) China There are issues of convergence & issues of divergence. Despite the positive progress in India –China relations in the past three decades, unresolved border issues and mutual distrust remains; added to the often repeated unpredictable behaviour of various organs, spl PLA. We also cannot ignore the massive devp of

infrastructure in TAR and related rapid deployment capb of PLA and the PLAFF. China therefore remains the major long term challenge for our National Security.

- (d) Strat for China - Engage on Multiple levels – Trade, Commerce; But from a Position of strength, we need to build up our strength urgently.

16. Internal Environment

- (a) While there are large positives in our growth story – there are significant challenges.
- (b) India’s internal security challenges can be categorized under two heads-insurgency and extremism including the LWE. There has to be a consensus on several things if India is to avoid continued and serious internal conflict. First, we need to build a credible state that makes citizens feel secure. Second, we need to further develop models of inclusive governance that can address the sense of disempowerment in certain sections of the population. Third, we need a political culture that is attuned to defusing conflict rather than exacerbating it. Fourth, fair & transparent law enforcement and quick, efficient judicial apparatus are required to stem the tide of religious extremism in the country. Fifth, Good governance, Delivery of services and Socio-economic justice commensurate to the ideals enshrined in the Constitution become imperative.
- (c) It is indeed a complex task to determine which of the two threats (external or internal) will be greater for India. In fact, in a highly dynamic external security situation and rapidly evolving internal socio-economic developments, the relative strengths of these challenges cannot be determined with certainty. Continued insurgency can provide a fillip to

external aggression from our adversaries, sensing internal weakness. Thus both threats need to be tackled comprehensively if India is to emerge strong.

(d) Do we have a Policy for Internal Security? In practice the following parameters emerge:-

- (a) Patience – Exhaust into Submission
- (b) Inclusive Growth – Bring into Mainstream w/o compromising on National Sovereignty.
- (c) Use of Mil Power –Win Hearts and Minds –Iron Fist in a velvet glove.

17. Capability Development



18. (a) In the last 5-6 decades – There have been approx 20-25 Major conflicts – but over 100, sub conv ones.

- (b) Open Armed conflict waged by one State against another have become the exception rather than the rule.
- (c) We can club them under 2 groups: Most likely & Most Dangerous.

19. What choices do we have in developing our Mil Power

(a) Common sense says we prepare for the “Most Likely”

(b) But can we afford to ignore the “Most Dangerous”

(c) Each Nation has to make a choice based on the security environment it faces.

- USA & NATO – No direct land threat: Prep for Most Likely & be ready to Adapt to “Most Dangerous”
- In India’s case, we have disputed borders, with 2 inimical neighbours – can’t ignore the “Most Dangerous” but with an adaptability to “Most Likely” (RR, AR)

Strategy

20 (a) Indian Grand strategy de-emphasizes the use of force and consequently, the mil receives little strat guidance from the Pol leaders. Indian defence needs reform & we need to start at the beginning with a clear vision of the role of the mil & use of force in the country’s rise as great power. This vision must balance domestic & external threats to security incl non-mil challenges.

(b) An example of this Fuzziness is reflected in the way we conduct Def Coop; mil exchs have become an end in themselves – The counterparts often ask – “What Now’?? We have no clarity.

21. But there have been exceptions: Food Security through “Green Revolution” Enabled our finest hour - 1971
22. We are beginning to realize the imp of strategy but still disinclined to articulate it openly and clearly. In the 21st century we need to move from “Power of Argument to Argument of Power”: A combination of Soft & Hard Power.

Matters Military

Gen

23. Of late the Armed Forces are getting more & more into the news, specially the electronic media – recently I was taken aback to see full-fledged discussions on operational matters by Arm Chair Journalists, strategists & of course those out of uniform; It is a domain that should remain sacred to those who have responsibility & accountability.

24. Having been in uniform for over 40 years, it is my pleasure to use this forum to share a few thoughts on matters military (These are personal thoughts & may have much in common with the official thought process – May I request for Chatham house code to be applied).

I won't go into the issues of Nat Interest, Nat strategy & current/futuristic threats but would come straight to Armed Forces.

Role

25. We have a primary and a secondary role, which you are well aware of

- but we also have a derived role which encompasses.
- National building specially in remote areas.
- Employment generation
- Enhancing India's image through our conduct & professionalism (Trg Teams & Def Co-op)
- Pool of Disciplined & Skilled manpower (60000) every year – contribute to society.
- Sports, environment etc.

Core Values

26. A political, secular & high levels of Personnel & Professional integrity. A true reflection of the Constitution of India.

Tenets of Indian Military Philosophy

27. Operational Imperatives:
- a. Multi Front obligations
 - b. India not part of any military alliance or grouping; therefore need an Independent Deterrent Capability.
 - c. A versatile capability across the spectrum of conflict.
28. **Capabilities Desired.** To achieve the National Aspirations, the Armed Forces possess the following capabilities:-

- a. Deterrence, both conventional and strategic
- b. Conventional War fighting capability against Nuclear backdrop
- c. Sub-conventional capability against Proxy War, Terrorism etc.
- d. Contingent capabilities for out of Area contingencies like UNPKO, humanitarian assistance etc.
- e. Cyber & Space capabilities.

Where do we stand & what are the challenges

- 29. The Armed Forces are the last resort of the Nation; We can't afford to fail or think of being runners up even once- And the Armed the very conscious of this responsibility.
- 30. Operationally we are capable of fulfilling our assigned roles; Yes there are shortfalls, some severe - but we do have the minimum wherewithal even though we may not have the optimum.
- 31. The biggest Challenge we have is in the human Resource Domain.
 - a. It still remains our biggest strength, bulk of the Armed Forces are focused on their jobs with sincerity & integrity.

Morale is high, specially at the cutting edge; leaders still lead from the front & by example & put their lives at risk, even to avoid collateral damage. Still live by the honour code of Imandari, Wafadari & Izzat.

b. Having said this, let me also say this also remains our biggest challenge. How to continue to nourish our human resource so that they remain upto the task. The deterioration of values in our society has also affected the Armed Forces, though to a lesser extent. A transparent environment and assertive media has highlighted many failings – but I am absolutely certain these remain isolated cases & do not reflect a trend. Its just that there is more transparency & less tolerance. Let me also say it isn't that all was well earlier & all is bad now. The challenge is to identify such people early enough and weed them out. Integrity both Personal & Professional has to be reinforced & the way is “Top Down – Top First”

c. The next challenge is to develop & nurture combat leaders as distinct from Event Managers. Leaders who lead from the front, look after their men & stand up when the chips are down. While we are doing well on this front, being critical we have to continuously reinforce this. In fact as Southern Army Cdr, my recipe for a Good military Leader was;

“ Humility in his Persona”

&

“Arrogance in his Uniform”

An Arrogance based on his integrity, his competence & commitment.

d. Officer-men relationship is another domain receiving the attention of the Armed Forces. The recent incidents have been taken note of and correctives are being applied – but at the end it is still all about good leadership.

32. Leadership in every Sit has 3 Constituents: The Leader, the Led & the Environment.

So how leadership differ in the Armed forces – 3 things.

a. Unliability contract

b. Deal with Life & Death Issues not profit/gain: Need Leaders not Event Managers – Leaders who will lead from the front. Who will stand up and be counted. Who will choose the Harder Right than the Easier Wrong. Who are Forthright, Bold and Transparent.

c. We are the last Resort of the Nation and therefore cannot be Runners up even once.

GOVERNANCE

1. Its at the core of what Govt does or are supposed to do.
2. So what is Governance – how does one define it and more imp measure it.
3. Governance is a Govt’s ability to make & enforce rules & to deliver services.
4. It can be measured against a variety of Parameters, some of which are
 - Accountability of the Executive
 - Rule of law rather than Rule by Law
 - Effectiveness of service delivery
 - Regulatory quality
 - Control of Corruption & other unethical practices.
5. India ranks rather low on most parameters – 94th/177 in the Corruption Perception Index.
6. Lets cover this very Imp subject through a key question.
 - I. Why is there a perception that the Quality of Bureaucracy & Governance has gone down. Is this true?? If yes what are the reasons??
 - a. Bureaucratic Autonomy vs Pol Interference.

Samuel Huntington makes Autonomy one of his 4 criteria of institutionalisation.

- Highly Institutionalised Pol systems have bureaucracies with high autonomy
- The opposite of this is subordination

b. Autonomy -vs- subordination.

There are myriad ex of excessive subordination leading to poor performance. One of the worst forms is where Bureaucracies lose control over internal recruitment and promotion to the Political Authorities and are staffed by Pol appointees & clients.

c. Capacity/Quality vs Autonomy

- The 2 area interlinked
- Area bureaucrats in authority of the right capacity.
- Those not having adequate capacity or even Passion for their job become slaves to excessive rules & procedures & using other means.

d. Risk Taking capacities

- Lack of faith in the system
- Judicial Activism and Hyped Media
- Lack of Pol consensus
- Unscrupulous colleagues – who will use this to exploit gains
- Avoidance of Accountability

e. Leadership Deficit – Are we producing leader–Managers or Manager-leaders.

f. How do you rate Governance in India on a scale of 1-10

II. Having established that All is not well – What is the Recipe for Improvement

Political and Legal Interventions

A conflict free society may not be attainable in India in the short term but there is much that can be done to harmonise it. Central to this is the idea that political class, bureaucracy and judicial authorities can play a role in improving public trust in the justice system. India is a country that has shown itself prone to crime and corruption in high numbers and with a persistent regularity. This merits a justice system that can provide a verdict within weeks or months as opposed to years and decades. Not only would this provide resolution to all those involved but also unburden the system. To that end, there is a need for a review of the laws and protocols that have carried on

since British colonial rule, especially those that pertain to criminal litigation.

Social and Economic Interventions but with Efficient Delivery

It can be said that for the common person in India, the priorities are basic i.e. access to food, employment and healthcare. These should in fact be the priorities of the government in power and the political class as a whole, both in rhetoric and practice. A healthy and skilled citizenry is what makes a nation powerful. Social and economic interventions in a country as populous as India should be viewed as investment in an asset. There is an ethical, moral and electoral responsibility for those in the corridors of power to ensure that the underprivileged sections of society especially women and children are guaranteed access to nutritious food, medical care, education and vocational training. This requires capacity building, dedication of funds, manpower and a dogged implementation of policy measures in place.

Rights & Duties. As enshrined in the Constitution have become lopsided with an exaggerated sense of Entitlement spurred by one & all, but with no focus on the citizens corresponding duties to the Society and country.

And lastly my word of advice to the Bureaucrats:
Believe in yourself – only then will the others believe in you
– Have Passion for your Job, pride in Public Service for
there is nothing more Noble than this.

So my final suggestion or Recipe

Integrity – Competence & commitment

Tez Hawaon se na ghabra Tu Agib – woh toh chalti hain

tujhko aur uncha uthane ke liye

Nikle thee akele manzil ki oar – log milte gaye aur caravan
Ban Gaya

The Youth Bulge – An asset or??

- India's work force aged 20-24 yrs will number 116 million in 2020, while for China the fig will be around 94 m. This could be India's strongest competitive advantage in the years ahead.
- While China & Japan like the West are facing a demographic squeeze, India has 516 m indls under 25 yrs, 225 m between the ages 10 & 19.
- Within 2 decades the average age will be 40 in the US 46 in Japan, 47 in Europe & almost 50 in China, but India will still be at 29.
- If this Youth is not equipped with skills that the 21st century offers, the results would be horrendous; a ticking time bomb.
- We therefore need to not only create a knowledge based Society, but also focus on `skill development – More white collar focus- vocational training.

The Great Game (C Raja Mohan) – OIL DOMINANCE

1. The Oil Dominance.

a. In what could turn out to be a tectonic shift in global energy markets, China has overtaken the United States as the World's largest importer of oil.

b. According to preliminary data on World Petroleum trade in Dec 12, China's net oil imports surged to 6.12 mill bls per day (Mbd) while America's net imports declined to 5.98 mbd. The lowest figures since 1992.

c. As America's domestic oil production grows amidst the shale gas boom, the US is closer than ever before to reducing its massive dependence on energy imports from OPEC countries.

d. The use of new technologies – most notably hydraulic fracturing or fracking and horizontal drilling – have opened up massive hydrocarbon.

e. According to Int Energy Agency's latest report, America will overtake Saudi Arabia as the leading oil producer by 2017 and will become a net oil exporter by 2030.

Implications

f. As China replaces the US as the largest importer of oil, can Beijing step into US shoes as the principal Security guarantee of the oil rich Persian gulf.

- Does Beijing have that capacity: Not in the foreseeable future, though China has started to reinforce its presence and seek more avenues – Gwadaï, Sri Lanka, Maldives.
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- With its ever growing def budget and the pressure to reduce it, the US will soon start asking, why China, Japan & India should have a free ride.
- Therefore, the future would certainly see a more collaborative effort with US, EEU, China, Japan & India.
- But if this doesn't happen and the US still reduces its mil presence the vacuum may portact manifold challenges & dangers.

Iraq War & Oil Dominance

The 2nd gulf war was about oil dominance shaped by the Neocons vision for American dominance in the 21st century many believe the 2nd gulf war was hoisted on the American people by the Quest for oil dominance by the large petrol/oil firms whose leading champion and (ex-Chairman) was VP Dick Cheney.