2. The Larger Context: India's Grand Strategy, National Security Strategy and Military Strategy

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Abstract

A common refrain among security practitioners in India is that there is no formal security planning guidance available from the higher authorities in the form of a national security strategy and a military strategy, on which they can base their follow-on strategies and doctrines. A predictable effect of this situation is that the three Services have independently drafted their respective single-Service doctrines, without serious coordination with each other. A joint military doctrine has also been recently disseminated, in its second edition, but fails to provide the required guidance, in the absence of joint operational structures and practices.

The military is the primary instrument of 'hard power' available with the state. Military strategy outlines the 'ways' for employing military means for achieving security aims and objectives. It is axiomatic, therefore, that the military strategy must outline the ways adopted for employing military means to deal effectively with the external military threats to the territorial integrity, strategic autonomy and security interests of the nation. In India's case, this essentially entails developing credible military deterrence by building and demonstrating a military capability to wage war successfully as well as ensuring constant preparedness to take to war at short notice, all this backed up by credible nuclear deterrence. Optimal use must be made of space capability and cyber warfare to achieve military goals, while also ensuring adequacy of defensive measures in these domains. Shortfalls in military capability, where existing, can be addressed, to some extent, by developing strategic partnerships with powerful countries with common strategic interests. But

clearly, shortfalls in core capabilities should not be accepted. And, it is a moot point whether we can bank on our strategic partnerships in case of critical need. And, finally, the military must also be developed as an instrument of India's comprehensive national power to support India's aspirations at the regional and global levels – aspirations which are clearly non-hegemonic in character. Towards that end, the Indian military is involved in United Nations peace-keeping operations and also provides military training assistance to many countries, especially some of India's immediate neighbours. These are aspects that needs to be strengthened even further.

As an adjunct to its primary role, the Indian military is also required to undertake sub-conventional operations to deal with threats like proxy war, terrorism, militancy and insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) and some affected states of northeast India. The armed forces are also mandated to provide assistance to civil authorities for restoring law and order or for providing humanitarian relief and assistance during natural disasters, for which they have to be ready at all times.

The Larger Context

On the completion of 70 years of independence, India stands at the cusp of history, ready to move forward from its current status as an 'emerging regional power' to a likely future status as a 'major global power,' which it plans to achieve in the next two to three decades[1]. Undoubtedly, India can achieve such a status only if it sets itself a visionary and time-bound roadmap, continues to develop comprehensive national power – a combination of political, economic, diplomatic, military and informational capabilities – and maintains internal peace as well as socio-economic and cultural stability among its diverse peoples. Notwithstanding the focussed aim and intent to grow economically in the best interests of its people, there will be several diversionary challenges which India will have to confront along the way, some of which will have their sources in India's two adversarial neighbours[2], who have a multi-dimensional nexus – especially on economic and military matters – between them. Nonetheless, India will have to be guided by its hopes of success rather than its fear of lurking dangers as it makes progress towards achieving its aims and aspirations for the future.

Possession of a modern military, of the appropriate size and structure, is an essential prerequisite for achieving India's aims and aspirations[3]. Articulating

a military strategy is an important adjunct of this requirement. A military strategy for India would need to flow from a formal national security strategy, which currently does not exist[4]. Thus, the broad contours of possible national aims, grand strategy and national security strategy need to be enunciated, to serve as a backdrop for articulating a 'military strategy' for India. The national aim, grand strategy and national security strategy articulated herein cover a period up to the first half of the 21st century, viz. 2050, so that a broader long-term perspective can be covered. The military strategy, however, is intended to cover a 15-year period, in conformity with the long-term perspective plan period of the armed forces.

India's National Aims

All planning at the national level should commence with articulating the 'national aims'[5] for India, which should broadly summarise the most important goals for the Indian nation-state and its people. More importantly, these should be achievable within a reasonable timeframe. Thus, the national aims for India, encompassing three complementary aspects, are articulated as follows:

- To achieve momentous economic development and focussed technological prowess for India and its people in a sustainable environment of human security, discernible stability and significant prosperity.
- To create a conducive environment where individual aspirations and genius can flourish, leading to the collective well-being of the state.
- To progressively assume India's rightful role and place in the emerging regional and global orders i.e. a regional leader by 2030 and a major global power by 2050.

A Grand Strategy for India

The grand strategy of a nation encapsulates the ways and means it applies to achieve its long-term aims and objectives. A grand strategy[6] for India to achieve its long-term national aims would need to include the following:

- **Achieve India's Economic Growth Targets:** Sustain India's economic growth by ensuring a growth rate of 7 to 10 percent over the next few decades[7] to actualise estimations that it will become the world's third largest economy by 2030, and the world's second largest economy by 2050. A serious effort must also be made to enhance per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP), to improve the quality of life of the people. These goals will entail undertaking focussed and coordinated measures to enhance

investment, net trade, consumption, skill development and employment generation in a sustained manner.

- **Build Comprehensive Economic and Natural Wealth for India:** Enhance India's 'comprehensive wealth'[8] by adding value to its existing capital in three fields, namely, manufactured capital (infrastructure, buildings, machinery, and so on), human capital (the population, in relation to their numbers, age profile, education and employment-oriented qualifications and skills) and natural capital (including lands, forests, fossil fuels and minerals). Efforts must continue to ensure assured availability and access to meet critical needs of metals and mineral resources which are critical for our national interests, including our nuclear reactors.

- **Build World Class Infrastructure[9]:** Build modern high-quality infrastructure for transportation, habitation, digitisation, communication, education and power generation, to speed up economic growth, create jobs for India's youthful workforce and produce comprehensive wealth for the country. Water security and energy security, especially access to renewable energy forms, must be ensured by exploiting technology and undertaking innovative efforts, with long-term sustainable effects.

- **Maintain Conditions of Peace and Stability on the Borders and Within the Country[10]:** Through a combination of means involving the military, paramilitary, police and intelligence agencies, maintain conditions of peace and stability on the borders and within the country, by proactively addressing external and internal challenges that face the country, in the current and future perspectives.

- **Develop a World Class Modern Military:** Transform India's armed forces into a strong and modern military[11], which is not only capable of deterring our foes and defending the country from external threats and internal challenges but is also capable of projecting power and protecting the nation's regional interests, for achieving India's aspirations as a major power of the future.

- **Transform 'Young India' into a Demographic Dividend[12]:** Create a demographic dividend for the country by positively empowering and leveraging India's estimated 'youthful workforce' of the future, through provision of meaningful education, appropriate skill development and suitable jobs, all these within an umbrella of peace, stability and social harmony.

- **Assume a Leadership Role in the Asian Region[13]:** Achieve a non-hegemonic leadership role in Asia and the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) with a view to support pan-Asian interests and progressively play a more influential role in global affairs.

- **Promote Universal Recognition of India as a Future Major Power:** Employ political, economic, and diplomatic influence and leverages, including military diplomacy, to promote universal recognition and acceptance that India is a major power of the future multipolar world order, worthy of a permanent seat in the UN Security Council.

- **Promote Value-Based Principles of Global Governance[14]:** Promote and support value-based universal principles of global governance and functioning viz. democracy, freedom, human rights, rule of law, social equality and gender equality.

- **Develop Cooperative Strategic Partnerships[15]:** Build and leverage strategic partnerships with leading global players and other nations of India's strategic interest, while also developing multilateral relationships as part of international organisations and groupings.

- **Become a 'Rule-Shaper' on the Global Stage[16]:** Transform from being a 'rule follower' to becoming a 'rule-shaper' on the global stage by becoming a permanent member of the UN Security Council and playing a more prominent role in global and regional organisations, especially those functioning under the aegis of the United Nations.

- **Leverage India's Scientific and Technological Prowess[17]:** Leverage India's prowess in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), especially Information Technology (IT) and space prowess, to promote technological awareness and progress among the Indian people, build up a scientific temper, leap across technologies, generate employment as well as achieve economic wealth for the country.

- **Ensure Human Security and Socio-Economic Balance in India:** Target poverty specifically as well as other shortfalls in human security and human development by ensuring security in the fields of food, nutrition, health, drinking water, education, skill development and employment. Bring about a better quality of life and longevity among the Indian people, while concurrently, taking actions to exemplify 'unity in diversity', improve the 'criminal justice system', promote social and gender equality, and serve as a beacon for multicultural coexistence all over the world.

- **Leverage and Support the Indian Diaspora[18]:** Leverage the knowledge and influence of members of the Indian diaspora to promote India's national interests. Concurrently, the government must be able to intercede on their behalf, whenever possible, and support them when they need help and assistance.
- **Contribute to Conflict Resolution at the Regional and Global Levels:** Employ India's stature as well as the expertise and mediatory skills of its officials to play a more active role in resolving inter-state conflicts and even intra- state conflicts in Asia and other regions.
- **Thwart the Challenges that Come in the Way of Becoming a Major Power:** Thwart the challenges that can negatively impact on India's big power ambitions. This entails monitoring the important parameters of India's rise and taking timely corrective actions whenever there is a need.

Threats and Challenges to India's National Security

Identification of threats and challenges is a major factor in formulating national security aims, objectives and strategy. The threats and challenges that India faces in the current and future contexts[19] can be described as follows:

- **The military threats and related challenges India faces from its unfriendly/hostile neighbours, both 'nuclear armed', over existing territorial disputes, exacerbated by strategic competitiveness, differences in core values and ideology as well as an ongoing narrative of collusive actions between them.** Recourse to war, 'all out' or limited, in a nuclear shadow, remains a possibility. Manifestations of antagonism in peace-time include efforts at strategic encirclement, sub-conventional warfare, cyber attacks and possibility of attacks by Chemical, Biological, Radiation and Nuclear (CBRN) means. The western neighbour sustains a hostile relationship with India, in line with its 'two-nation' theory, and continues a policy of building military and nuclear capability against India, while concurrently sponsoring terrorism and violent extremism in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), while also promoting terror attacks in the state and the rest of India. The northern neighbour sponsors the western neighbour militarily and economically as its proxy, to undertake actions to keep India's influence and ambitions restricted to the South Asian framework.
- **Heightened internal security threats in the form of proxy war, terrorism, militancy or insurgency** in parts of J&K and some northeastern states due to historical, political or ethno-cultural reasons, abetted in some cases by

external sources or secessionist influences. There are also challenges posed by the possibility of exploitation by inimical forces of cultural and religious 'faultlines' among the Indian population.

- **Left Wing Extremism (LWE) due to socio-ethno-economic-political causes in some areas in central and eastern India**, known as the 'red corridor,' inhabited largely by tribal population.,

- **Problems related to lack of basic human security and economic development among a sizeable section of the Indian people**, who are threatened by poverty, hunger, illiteracy, malnourishment, and lack of health facilities and employment opportunities. Energy, water and environmental security also pose unique problems to the country and its people.

- **Challenges by potential adversaries, individually and in concert with each other, to undermine India's claim to leadership position in Asia and the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and its growing influence at the global level**. These include concerted efforts at preventing grant of permanent membership of the UN Security Council and entry of India into the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG).

India's National Security Objectives

India's national security objectives, which flow from the national aims, national interests and the related threats and challenges, are as follows:

- **Defence of national territory and resources** against external threats and challenges.

- **Maintain a peaceful and secure internal environment**, free from instability, insecurity and violence.

- **Empower the Indian nation and its people**, by promoting human development, economic prosperity, equal opportunities, gender equality, meaningful education, good health, access to latest technology and a fair and efficient criminal justice system, for all sections of the population.

- **Strengthen India's role and position in Asia and the IOR**, with a view to enhance India's influence towards maintaining peace and security in its immediate and extended neighbourhood as well as enhance the security and well-being of its regional diaspora.

- **Promote and enhance India's role as an emerging global power**, by developing economically, building bilateral and multilateral strategic relationships as well as promoting core values of global governance.

National Security Strategy

A national security strategy defines the ends, ways and means to achieve India's national security aims and objectives. In the case of India, the national security strategy would largely aim at achieving the aforesaid five purported national security objectives and, thus, its formulation should generally conform to these objectives. Broadly, the recommended ends, ways and means for achieving India's national security aims would be as follows:

- **End (Objective) 1 – Defence Against External/ Military Threats[20]**
  - ❍ **The Ways:** Build conventional military deterrence and war-fighting capacity as well as capability to ensure credible nuclear deterrence, while also being able to deal effectively with sub-conventional threats along disputed borders and/ or in 'disturbed' areas. Further, ensure effective border security and surveillance, optimise use of space assets for defence needs, maintain rapid response military capability, counter efforts at strategic encirclement and develop self-sufficiency in defence procurement. Develop strategic partnerships with friendly countries with which we share common security interests.
  - ❍ **The Means:** Military (armed) forces, namely the Army, Navy and Air Force, backed by the Strategic Forces, are primarily responsible for the external security and territorial integrity of the nation. They are supported in this role by the Border Security Force, police and para-military, Coast Guard, intelligence agencies, cyber security agencies, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), public and private defence industry, space agencies and assets. Capability development and modernisation of the military and other security forces is a continuous process, which must be ensured by allocation of an adequate budget and formulation of efficient procedures which facilitate timely procurement of defence needs, like arms, equipment, ammunition and logistics. Characteristics like training, motivation and morale of the personnel are critical, though intangible and varying attributes, which determine the effectiveness of the security forces.

- **End (Objective) 2 –Maintenance of Internal Security[21]**
  - ❍ **The Ways:** Prevent/deal with internal threats like proxy war, militancy, insurgency, violent extremism and disturbance of public order, including Left Wing Extremism (LWE); deal proactively to prevent, and deal with, terrorism, separatism and secessionism; protect India's

core values like unity, democracy, secularism, pluralism, freedom, social equality and human rights; prevent/deal with communal violence or socio-cultural conflagrations; prevent and mitigate natural and man-made disasters, as well as provide humanitarian relief and disaster assistance, when required.

○ **The Means:** The state police as well as state armed police forces, backed by special police forces like the Greyhounds in Andhra Pradesh and Special Operations Group in J&K, to ensure law and order and maintain public order as well as prevent and investigate crime and criminal activity; central police and paramilitary forces, including police commando forces on the lines of COBRA of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) to provide support to state police forces; counter-terrorism investigative agencies and quick response forces like the National Investigation Agency (NIA) and National Security Guards (NSG); intelligence agencies and cyber agencies at the national and state levels, including technological intelligence agencies; central and state disaster management agencies like the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and State Disaster Management Authorities (SDMAs). All these, backed by military forces (where mandated or requisitioned), including Special Forces and Rashtriya Rifles counter-insurgency forces, to deal with sub-conventional warfare, heightened law and order problems or to restore public order.

- **End (Objective) 3 – Empowerment of the Indian Nation and People**[22]
  ○ **The Ways:** Ensure continued economic growth of the nation through concerted efforts at enhancing GDP, to include macro-restructuring of the economy, increasing infrastructure development, enhancing exports, attracting foreign and domestic investment, improving tax and revenue collection, incentivising start-ups and job creation, enhancing foreign exchange reserves and cutting down external debt and fiscal deficits; energy security, in terms of adequate energy for industrial and agricultural needs as well as adequate and clean fuel and electricity for individual needs, at affordable costs; water security, in terms of adequacy of water for agricultural and industrial needs as also for needs of human consumption; human development through improved quality of life and increased longevity of the population

at large; provision of human security, including poverty alleviation and security against hunger, illiteracy, disease and unemployment; ecological and environmental security; and, development of a scientific temper to empower the people technologically.

○ **The Means:** The finance department (ministries) and other concerned departments of the central and state governments dealing with trade, investment, food, health, agriculture, infrastructure, education, skill development, employment generation; agricultural, manufacturing and service sectors; public and private industries, corporates, businesses and banks, Medium, Small and Micro Enterprises (MSMEs); stock exchanges; infrastructure agencies, including ports, shipping, aviation, airports, railways, roads, highways, power generation and distribution; fuel and energy procurement and refining agencies; water distribution including external and internal water dispute resolution agencies   .

• **End (Objective) 4 – Achieving a Leadership Role in Asia and the Indian Ocean Region[23]**

○ **The Ways:** Adopt non-coercive, non-hegemonic and non-intrusive cooperative mechanisms for economic development, security of regional and global commons, counter-terrorism, cyber security and anti-piracy cooperation, through policies like 'Act East' for East and Southeast Asia, 'Look West' for West Asia, 'Connect Central' for Central Asia, and SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) for the Indian Ocean Region; develop inter-connectivity via land, air and maritime routes; promote trade and other economic initiatives; provide economic assistance through grants in aid and credit on easy terms; promote cultural exchanges in keeping with shared history, language, culture and religion; build capacity to respond speedily to security and humanitarian contingencies in the region – providing humanitarian relief and assistance during natural and man-made disasters; protect the diaspora against serious threats to their interests; and, play a meaningful role in regional organisations.

○ **The Means:** Political outreach and diplomacy (through political leadership, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Indian Embassies and diplomats), supported by economic diplomacy (promotion of trade, provision of financial assistance through grants and loans, banking and credit organisations) and cultural diplomacy (education, skill

development, cultural activities, tourism, etc). Also, military diplomacy (three Services and embassy staff, especially defence attaches), supported by defence cooperation and confidence building through individual training, combined training, visits and combined exercises like Exercise Malabar (Japan, Australia, US), Exercise Mitra Shakti (Sri Lanka), Exercise Hand in Hand (China), Exercise Surya Kiran (Nepal), Exercise Lamitye (Seychelles), Exercise Garuda Shakti (Indonesia), Exercise Maitree (Thailand); Exercise Prabal Dostyk (Kazakhstan), Exercise Sampriti (Bangladesh), Exercise Khanjar (Kyrgyzstan), Exercise Al Nagah (Oman), Exercise Bold Kurukshetra (Singapore) and Exercise Nomadic Elephant (Mongolia); regional organisations and initiatives like the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), ASEAN-India Free Trade Area (AIFTA), Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC), Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), Indian Ocean Region-Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC), Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS), Quadrilateral Security Dialogue and Delhi Dialogue.

- **End (Objective) 5 – Transforming India into a Major Global Power**[24]
  - ❍ **The Ways:** Meeting substantive economic growth targets, while building economic wealth of the country and improving the quality of life of its people in an environment of peace, harmony and stability; building and maintaining a world class modern military; developing strategic and meaningful partnerships with friendly powers and organisations; supporting value-based principles of global governance; and becoming a 'rule shaper at the global level by seeking appropriate positions in global organisations, including permanent membership of the UN Security Council.
  - ❍ **The Means:** All resources available to the Government of India – political, diplomatic, economic, military, security, informational – must be employed in a coordinated and time-bound manner to achieve the national aim. India must engage with current and future powers across continents to develop mutual trust and understanding. It must

also leverage the vast and influential Indian diaspora to support India's changed profile.

Military Components of India's National Security Strategy

Primary Role (Against External/ Traditional Threats)[25]

- **Building Strong Military Capability for Deterrence and War-Fighting: Build and maintain 'credible military deterrence' in the form of strong, cross-spectrum capability (nuclear, conventional and counter sub-conventional) of the Army, Navy, Air Force and Joint Services Organisations, backed by robust military doctrines as well as constant operational preparedness. The military should be capable, at short notice, of prosecuting war – even a two-front war – and achieving successful/favourable outcomes.** The foregoing requires the country to maintain a strong and modern military of appropriate size, structure and capability – well equipped, trained and motivated – to carry out its role and tasks as well as deal with the threats and challenges that the country may face in the future. An adequate budget must be allocated annually to ensure that the military is always maintained and equipped optimally.

- **Ensuring Credible Nuclear Deterrence: Ensure credible nuclear deterrence, consisting of an appropriately sized 'second strike capable' nuclear arsenal backed by a suitable nuclear doctrine, to ward off threats of nuclear attacks from potential adversaries.** India's potential adversaries are armed with nuclear arsenals of ever increasing size, range and capabilities. Thus, India's security perspective also includes the challenge of dealing with nuclear attacks. India must maintain adequate numbers of nuclear weapons as well as delivery systems by land, air and sea, including second strike capability in terms of submarine launched missiles. The security of nuclear weapons must remain an aspect of special focus.

- **Development of Strategic Partnerships with Friendly Powers/ Countries: Enhance national and military power by development of strategic partnerships with friendly powers/ countries and conduct of military diplomacy and defence cooperation activities, including combined exercises and manoeuvres**. India maintains an independent military capability and is not desirous to be part of any military alliance. Nonetheless, India should leverage its relationships with other friendly countries, especially those with common strategic challenges, like the

Indo-Pacific Quadrilateral, in pursuit of its security interests. Towards that end, India also needs to strengthen relations with friendly countries towards its west like Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Oman and Iran as well as countries of East Asia like Vietnam, Indonesia, Mongolia, Japan, Taiwan and South Korea. Further, in addition to strengthening its strategic and military relations with the US, India must continue to look for opportunities to engage with Russia and strengthen its mutual partnership.

- **Border Guarding and Surveillance: Strengthen border guarding and surveillance, including technological surveillance, of land, air and maritime borders and assets**, **especially guarding of the disputed borders**, **in a coordinated manner**, **to detect and neutralise/prevent unauthorised move of people and material**. The Indian military, primarily the Army, in coordination with the Air Force, is responsible for guarding of the disputed land borders, known as the Line of Control (LC), Actual Ground Position Line (AGPL) in Siachen with Pakistan and the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China. The paramilitary, namely, the Border Security Force (BSF) and the Assam Rifles (for the northeast), are responsible for the security of the borders in other areas. The Navy and Coast Guard, in coordination with the Army, Air Force and state police forces, are responsible for the security of the maritime borders from seaborne threats and challenges.

- **Rapid Response Capability: Develop and maintain a tri-Service rapid response force, backed by technological intelligence and surveillance, to respond at short notice to security challenges to the nation, its assets and interests.** The rapid response force should be able to operate effectively in the military, internal security and disaster management domains, in both the national and regional (Asian) contexts. It should be 'modular' force, capable of being transported at short notice, by land, sea or air. Initially, it should be equally effective in peace and war.

- **Cyber Defence: Defend and respond against cyber attacks which target our defence and civilian networks and capabilities while ensuring close coordination with all internal agencies tasked for the same.** Cooperation and coordination with external agencies must be ensured at the regional and global levels to enhance cyber defence capabilities. In the case of cyber attacks against own military and civilian systems, the perpetrators must be identified and acted against.

- **Developing Indigenous Defence Industry: Build and strengthen indigenous capability for manufacture of arms/ ammunition/**

equipment to enhance self-reliance in military capacity building and prevent related external pressures during crises. This must encompass the best of Indian defence industry in both the public and private sectors, backed by indigenous defence research in close collaboration with the three Services as well as with foreign industries and agencies for research, design, production and maintenance, as necessary. Cooperation in defence research and armament manufacture must be meshed into our bilateral strategic partnerships with friendly countries.

- **Maintain an Effective Intelligence System: Maintain a foolproof and well-coordinated intelligence mechanism**, **incorporating the efforts of all the intelligence agencies and resources, including technological and military intelligence resources, to provide early warning of threats, both external and internal.** An effective and well-coordinated intelligence system is the most cost-effective means of providing safety and security against external and internal threats. Technological means, including cloud computing and big data mining, must be used extensively to detect likely threats and provide early warning, to back up electronic, human and communication intelligence, and other sources.

- **Develop Space Technology and Assets for Defence Needs: Ensure optimal utilisation of space-based assets**, **to enhance the capabilities of the military and other security agencies, towards achieving credible deterrence as well as security preparedness in the military, nuclear and internal security fields.** Satellites are essential for space-based communications, surveillance, navigation and weather forecasting, all of which are critical for modern, technology-based military weapons and equipment, as also for counter-measures against cyber attacks. There will also be a need to protect Indian satellites from anti-satellite weapons.

Secondary Role (Against Internal/ Non-Traditional Threats)[26]

- **Support National Efforts for Preventing/Dealing with Internal Security Threats: Protect the Indian state and its people against internal threats emanating from terrorism, insurgency, militancy, proxy war, violent extremism, sabotage and subversion, with a view to negate secessionist, criminal and other destabilising efforts, both externally sponsored and homegrown, in order to maintain internal peace, security and stability.** The Indian state has inherited a number of internal problems as a legacy of its independence and partition. Some of them like militancy and terrorism

affecting J&K state in the north, insurgency in Nagaland, Manipur and Assam in the northeast, and LWE along the 'red corridor' in central-eastern India, have continued to defy resolution thus far. Militant groups in J&K, with cross-border support, continue to operate in parts of the state, especially in the Kashmir Valley, to undermine the writ of the state and central governments. Similarly, in the northeast, several insurgent groups, many of them located in camps across the border in Myanmar, continue to extort "taxes" from the local people and run campaigns against "outsiders" living and working in these states. Coordinated counter-insurgency operations involving the military, paramilitary, central and state police forces have largely succeeded in maintaining peace and stability so far. Care must be taken to ensure that, while carrying out counter-insurgency or counter-militancy operations, there are no human rights violations, and innocent civilians do not suffer any harassment or humiliation.

- **Support National Efforts to Deal Effectively with the Threat of Terrorism: Detect, prevent and neutralise terrorism and its manifestations like terror attacks, organisations, websites, funding and recruitment as well as its linkages to printing and smuggling of counterfeit currency and the narcotics trade.** India is vulnerable to targeting by a number of terror organisations, both global and regional, like the Islamic State (IS), Al Qaeda, Lashkar-e-Tayyeba (LeT), Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) and Hizbul Mujahideen (HM). There is a need to ensure an efficient, modern, technology-based counter-terror mechanism, with regional and global linkages, to effectively thwart terror attacks. The actions of the intelligence agencies must be optimised and coordinated to ensure that no gaps exist in our terror detection and prevention systems. Concurrently, comprehensive counter-radicalisation measures must be put into place to deal with the problem in a prophylactic manner. Military establishments, especially those which are in close vicinity of the border, must ensure physical, electronic and procedural measures to thwart terror attacks against them.

- **Protecting India's Core Values: Protect and promote the 'core values' of the Indian state, namely, democracy, secularism, pluralism, freedom, equality, unity and human rights, as enshrined in the Indian Constitution.** All threats to these values must be thwarted in an effective and timely manner in keeping with the spirit of the Indian Constitution and the interests of security and stability. "Unity in diversity" describes the Indian ethos, which serves as a model for multi-cultural societies throughout the

world. A deliberate campaign to promote these values must be implemented, with a view to enshrine them in our multi-cultural society.

- **Support National Efforts to Prevent/ Deal with Socio-Cultural or Communal Conflagrations: Ensure close surveillance and monitoring of the internal security situation in areas of heightened threat with a view to prevent exploitation of communal, religious, social, economic and cultural faultlines as well as respond proactively to related rumour mongering and violence.** Among the major threats facing the internal security of the nation are the efforts by vested interests to exploit socio-economic, cultural and religious faultlines to further their parochial interests. The state police, backed by the intelligence agencies, central armed police forces, the judiciary, as well as the military when called in, is responsible to restore law and order. While it is essential to bring the situation under control at the earliest, it must be kept in view that, in doing so, 'use of force' by the security forces must be well calibrated to specifically target the 'ring leaders,' while minimising the possibility of casualties among innocent bystanders.

- **Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Management: Ensure optimal mitigation and management of disasters, both natural and man-made, to include mechanisms for efficient emergency response and post disaster restoration and reconstruction.** India is located in a fragile seismic zone and is also vulnerable to other natural and man-made disasters like earthquakes, floods, cyclones and tsunamis. Prevention of disasters, as well as the capacity to provide emergency response and succour must be given due attention and subjected to constant improvement. Use of the latest technology as well as close cooperation with regional and global organisations must be implemented to facilitate early prediction and dissemination of alerts. The armed forces must be employed for disaster response as a back-up for the disaster response mechanisms at the national and state levels. Rehearsals and workshops must be conducted regularly to check out existing means and methods, and where required, improvements must be implemented.

- **Support National Efforts to Deal with Non-Traditional Threats: Ensure close surveillance and speedy response capability against non-traditional threats like cyber, informational and CBRN attacks to thwart such attacks against the Indian state and minimise their effects.** Potential adversaries as well as other elements inimical to the Indian state are likely to use non-traditional means like cyber attacks to undermine Indian interests, especially financial networks, aviation, nuclear and other

critical infrastructure. Terrorists and other non-state actors may also use Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) to cause casualties, damage and panic in parts of the country. The social media may be utilised to spread disinformation to exploit socio-cultural faultlines. A concerted and coordinated effort will be required, applying all the resources available, to detect proactively and respond speedily to such threats.

- **Provide Assistance for Maintenance of Essential Services: On request, in case of an emergency, provide assistance to the civil administration for maintenance of essential services, like electricity, water supply, health services, transportation, etc**. However, it needs to be kept in view that military resources utilised for such assistance, both personnel and equipment, must be reverted at the earliest.

India's Military Strategy

India's military strategy, which would flow from the military component of its national security strategy, would perforce be a combination of several military oriented strategies, reflecting the need to deal with existing and potential security threats and challenges of a military nature as well as achievement of specific national goals and aspirations in which the military has a role to play. In India's context, its military strategy would need to keep in view the following:

- The mandate to defend India's territory over land, sea and air, including territorial waters, islands and offshore assets, in the context of military threats from potential adversaries, both nuclear armed, with whom India continues to have territorial disputes. The fact that these countries have a growing strategic nexus between them implies that India should be prepared to deal with the worst-case scenario of a 'two-front war'[27].

- The changing nature of war, in that, rather than all-out war India's potential adversaries would resort to 'hybrid warfare'[28] – a potent combination of traditional and non-traditional forms of warfare, to include limited war, nuclear coercion, asymmetric warfare (terrorism), cyber war, informational war, economic warfare, etc. – in the case of conflict. Some of these methodologies, in the form of cross-border terrorism, cyber attacks, and sponsoring insurgency in border states are ongoing even during peace-time.

- Need to provide humanitarian assistance and disaster relief[29], especially during natural disasters like cyclones, tsunamis and earthquakes, to friendly countries in the region.

- Need to share responsibility for protection of the global commons[30], to include maritime trade routes, cyber space and outer space.
- Need to participate in military peace-keeping missions, normally under UN aegis, in various strife-torn parts of the world.

In the above context, India's military strategy would reflect a well-considered mix of a number of subordinate strategies and military requirements, which would provide guidance for developing military capabilities, structures and doctrines to deal effectively with India's security needs. These are discussed below.

- **Deterrence Strategy[31]:** Build credible military deterrence in terms of strong and modern military capability based on clear politico-military intent, backed by robust war-fighting doctrines and training, with a view to deter hostile actions by potential adversaries, which threaten or affect the territorial integrity and the strategic autonomy of the Indian nation. The deterrence strategy must cater for the worst-case scenario of a simultaneous 'two and a half front threat', to also include use of sub-conventional means by the adversary. In the current context, the deterrence strategy would entail timely modernisation of the Indian military by acquiring 'state-of-the-art' equipment, technological upgrades of select quantities of old equipment and making up existing deficiencies of arms and ammunition. It would also entail infusion of modern structures and technology-assisted 'best practices' and processes.

- **War-Fighting Strategy[32]:** With regard to Pakistan, in case India's military deterrent proves ineffective to prevent a large-scale terror attack or a conventional attack by Pakistan, India should look to exploit a perceived conventional window, within the nuclear backdrop, to launch multiple land-based attacks into Pakistan to punitively destroy its military capability – in a speedy timeframe. Regarding China, in case it resorts to military adventurism in any form to resolve mutual border disputes with India, the Indian military should be prepared to strongly defend our territory and national assets through a strategy of 'offensive-defence' and achieve war termination at favourable terms for India.

- **Counter Sub-Conventional Strategy[33]:** In the case of cross-border terror attacks attributable to Pakistan, India should plan to respond strongly by undertaking a series of actions across the political and military domains, including calibrated military actions. These could vary from 'surgical strikes' employing the Indian Air Force, Special Forces and/ or other

military means at the lower end of the spectrum, to 'limited war' or 'all-out war' at the higher end, in concert with other actions in the political, diplomatic, economic and informational realms.

- **Nuclear Deterrence**[34]**:** Doctrinally, India's nuclear arsenal is essentially a means of credible deterrence and not meant for war-fighting. This is evident from India's 'No First Use (NFU)' policy, which makes it clear that nuclear weapons will not be used against non-nuclear weapon states. In response to a nuclear attack, in any form, by our potential adversaries, India retains the option of 'massive retaliation' by multiple nuclear attacks against both counter-force and counter-value targets in that country. The nuclear doctrine would be subject to review in case there are changes in India's military and nuclear threat perspective.

- **Counter-Encirclement Strategy:** Prevent/ dilute attempts at strategic encirclement of India in both the land and maritime domains by strategic counter-moves, sub-regionally and regionally, while continuing with preparations to thwart a military attack, if initiated at any stage. In the case of an India-Pakistan War, China would need to be made to understand – politically, economically and militarily – that any military intervention or interference in India's internal affairs at the behest of Pakistan would go against China's long-term interests.

- **Contribution to Regional Security:** India, as a responsible power, would progressively need to enhance its capability to protect its economic interests and offshore assets as well as provide security or humanitarian assistance to its strategic partners in the region, when requested. It would also need to provide emergency assistance to the Indian diaspora during security crises in the countries where they are employed. The military must maintain a capability of 'strategic lift' of troops and emergency stores by land, sea and air at short notice for humanitarian and other assistance.

- **Employment of Space Assets**[35]**:** The increasing use of satellites for military purposes has resulted in space constituting the fourth dimension of warfare. Thus, India's military strategy must include development of space-based capability for surveillance, reconnaissance, navigation and communications, as also for the defence of the country's space assets.

- **Cyber Defence**[36]**:** Today, cyber constitutes the fifth dimension of warfare. Cyber attacks pose a very serious challenge to India's security, especially in the military domain, even in peace-time. Cyber defence, by both offensive

and defensive means, is an important constituent of the military strategy in our context. To that extent, the armed forces must build up their cyber defence capability, especially by raising a tri-Services Cyber Command.

- **Military Diplomacy[37]:** Defence cooperation is a very important role that militaries perform in the current context, aiming to facilitate and concretise the cooperative relationships and partnerships that exist between countries. It also helps in developing interoperability and sharing best practices between partner countries. Provision of individual training slots, conduct of combined training exercises, sale/provision of military equipment and visits by commanders at various levels are the commonly used activities to develop bonds between militaries.

- **Provision of Aid to Civil Authority:** The military is mandated to provide aid to civil authority, when requisitioned, for restoring law and order during a breakdown or communal conflagration, for assistance during natural calamities or for provision of essential services. 'Minimum essential force' is a basic principle which is kept in view when troops are deployed for restoring law and order. Further, the military may also be requisitioned by the local civil authorities for 'counter-terrorism' tasks in the civil areas in case of such contingencies. Regular liaison and periodic civil-military conferences must form an essential part of the coordination activities carried out by military formations and units.

Conclusion

The fact that there has been no major war since 1971 and no limited war since 1999 does not imply that there will be no war in the future. Given the existing territorial disputes as well as the guile and assertiveness of our potential adversaries – indicating the intent to resolve these by force – India must possess credible military deterrence in the form of a strong military capability backed by sound military strategy, and robust single Service doctrines to achieve that strategy.

Lack of a formal military strategy and a Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), to meaningfully coordinate the plans and actions of the three Services, has resulted in the three wings of the armed forces developing their own doctrines, structures and capabilities independently, in an uncoordinated manner. Lack of effective coordination between the Services results in duplication of resources, and worse still, their working at cross-purposes with each other, which the country can ill afford in an era of serious budget crunch and discernible military

challenges. One of the primary reasons that a military strategy has not been articulated is that there is no keystone national security strategy from which the military strategy can draw formal guidance. It is high time that these base documents are formulated and disseminated so that the armed forces develop modern structures, capabilities and processes in an optimised and coordinated manner.

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