

Committed To Defence And Security Worldwide

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MISSION

We endeavour to sound **ALERTS** and create **AWARENESS** about the myriad dimensions and manifestations of **DEFENCE** and **SECURITY** in India and around the world.



The power of a King lies in his mighty arms...

Security of the citizens at peace time is very important because State is the only saviour of the men and women who get affected only because of the negligence of the State.

- Chanakya

DSA IS AS MUCH YOURS, AS IT IS OURS!



In the backdrop of the gruesome 14 February 2019 suicide attack on the Central Reserve Police Force convoy in Pulwama, Jammu & Kashmir, the subsequent air strikes and all that followed since then once again raises the question about India's ability to deal with security crises. And that question comes loaded with the fundamental query about the nature of India's preparations and planning. All of which then raises the essential issue of how India has thought through its defence apparatus, what its long term preparations are, and how it hopes to get there. These can only be answered by first understanding the process of defence finance.

The defence budgeting process in India continues to be based on the age old practice of plan and non-plan expenditures. As well as the recurring revenue section of the budget that is ever growing but which barely helps the process of modernising the armed forces. It is with this dilemma that the country's defence budgeting process has been mired over the last few years. The process is, in itself, the problem rather than a

solution. For, it is based on an age old practice that has long outlived its utility and functional efficiency.

Defence budgets are actually a mix of two major aspects. Firstly, the recurring revenue budget which covers aspects that cannot really be tinkered with, or affected, other than by new policy initiatives. A pay commission grant, for example, makes a major change for the revenue budget, but aspects of it have always existed in this section in the past. The other is the capital budget, on which greater scrutiny happens than in any other aspect of even the general budget. As this is the section that explains and elucidates the government's vision of military modernisation, as this takes care of equipment acquisition.

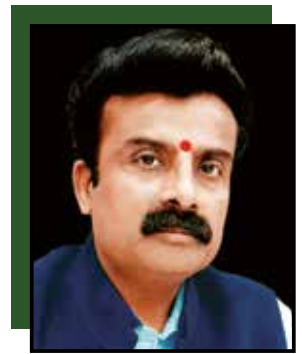
Which is where major changes are required; especially in the defence budgeting part of the general budget. Defence purchases, of the big ticket variety, have a long period of design, development, purchase and then indication. Just as technologies evolve rapidly, so do national security threats.

Keeping pace is not always possible, and many a times, it also is not advisable from a financial perspective. This keeping apace pushed the former Soviet Union into bankruptcy and oblivion. But there is still a requirement to be in touch with the latest, so obviously something needs to be done for the budget to be dynamic.

Keeping all these factors in perspective, there is a dire need to change the defence budgeting process, from an annual exercise to one that encompasses a long term national security vision which factors in technological changes as well. The Ministry of Defence, in consultation with the armed forces headquarters, must constitute a cell that creates a long vision document, and for the realisation of which funds are allocated as a commitment, rather than as an annual announcement. Committed long term funds release pressures on developers, as well service headquarters which have to complete acquisitions within the financial calendar year or the monies lapse. This can only be prevented with a long term vision, and financial commitments.

Manvendra Singh

ADEQUATE BUDGET FOR DEFENCE



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 Editor: Manvendra Singh**

Defence budget is the most vital element of the budget of the Union of India. Without adequate budgetary provisions for defence requirements, it is not at all possible for the defence forces to fight the challenges, prevailing as of now, for the world's biggest democratic country like India. After Independence, the scenario for our country has changed drastically to a two-front war with both our adversaries also instigating terror strikes with the intention of undermining Indian unity and cohesiveness through a low-cost game-plan of 'death by a thousand cuts' of the kind just perpetrated in Pulwama. Though successive governments have tried to empower the defence forces, the outlays for defence have proved to be inadequate to deal with the prevailing challenges.

An assessment of the security scenario brings to the fore the tremendous difficulties faced by India's defence forces in defending against the continual attacks by Pakistan in Jammu and Kashmir and against the Chinese along the Line of Actual Control over more than 7,000 km. Frequent attempts by Pakistan to infiltrate terrorists into J&K and trying to capture the Siachen glacier and China's intrusions across the Himalayas saw a long confrontation in Dokhlam near Bhutan last year. The conflict in the north perforce demands constant vigil in the southern oceanic expanse by the Indian Navy and the IAF. Insufficient funding has brought the armed forces to "make do" with obsolescent equipment and still get the better of Pakistan in Kargil and more recently in J&K where a refurbished MiG-21 Bison aircraft flown by Wg Cdr Abhinandan shot down a supposedly superior F-16 of the Pakistan Air Force. These skirmishes underscored the superior skills and guts and bravery of the Indian warriors.

But this is an untenable situation and cannot be allowed to be the norm. Both the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Finance must now trawl the national budget to raise the outlay for the armed forces to at least two per cent of the Gross Domestic Product as suggested by the Parliamentary Committee on Defence some decades ago.

This edition, dear reader, is dedicated to the defence budget, its short-falls and possible solutions to make the defence apparatus more strong and efficient. Team DSA feels that the first thing our next government should do is to increase the defence budget in the coming years to make the Indian Armed Forces the best on the globe. That is only possible when the sufficient funds are being made available to our defence forces.

The situation with Pakistan is worsening every day and I think that it is important now that every citizen of India should be more aware about the defence and security concerns by and large. And, being the CEO and Publisher of DSA magazine, I am committed to bring more awareness and clarity on the subject in a much more effective way with the support of the entire team of DSA!

Jai Hind!

Pawan Agrawal
 CEO - DSA



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