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DIALOGUE AND DENUCLEARISATION

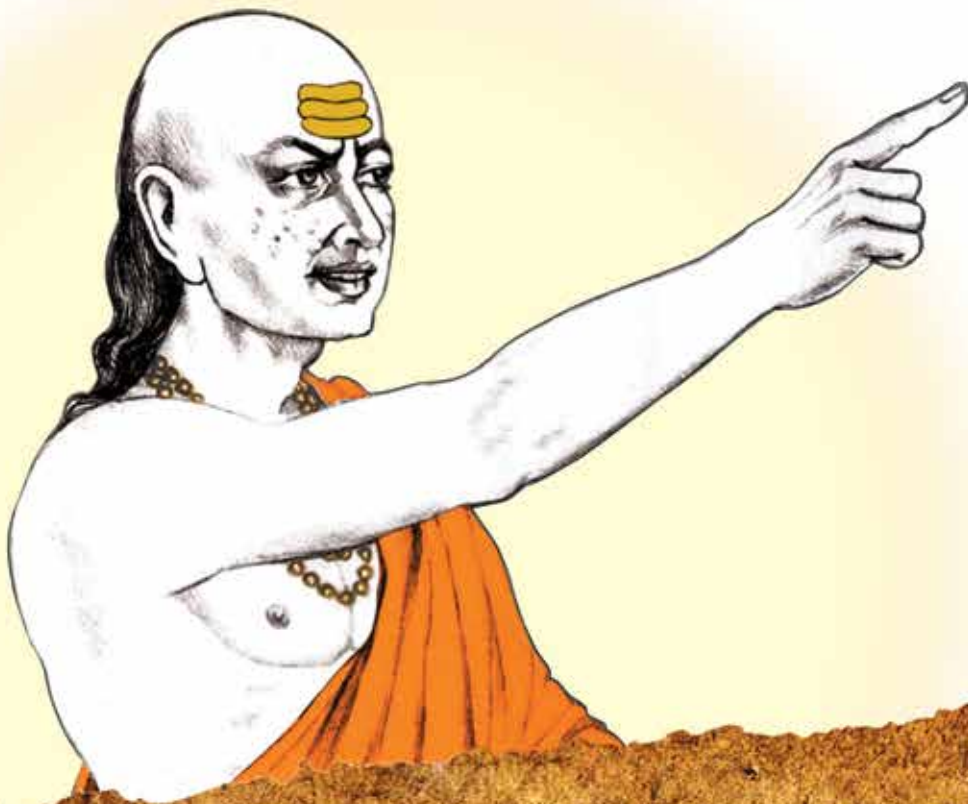
STILL IN SEARCH OF DIRECTION





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!



The world, being so interconnected and globalised, as it is, there isn't much that happens anywhere which doesn't impact elsewhere and everywhere. It isn't simply the weather that makes the world so interdependent, but everything else that is manmade. From technology, to manmade political events; each has a bearing on the other, across the world. And the speed at which the impact happens is in itself staggering. So, the latest ghastly school shooting incident in Florida, USA, (one of the deadliest mass shootings in modern US history) gets instant analysis in India. The world that exists online lives seamlessly, and jumps boundaries in a flash.

Similar is the see-saw game of stock market where if one goes down, it pulls the others down too, drastically at the global level. And they all rise together, in a similar fashion. Such is the inter-connectivity of the world of finance. But, this is also apparent in other aspects of global life. Not least the politics and security events, where the footprints created are far larger and deeper. Political events cast an even longer shadow on discussions. Such is the nature

of political developments across the world that they resonate for longer, over a wider impact area, and ask more serious questions than they answer. This is the greatest challenge facing 21st century society.

India doesn't live in isolation and is as connected globally as any other country. Political events in neighbouring countries, or far-away lands, are as important as they've ever been. Each posits questions, and, demands answers and attention. It behoves a global player to have the questions ready and the answers in advance, too. But that is easier said than done. Not all systems are always in place, and not all events carry the same traction as others. But then the ones that happen in the neighbourhood demand greater scrutiny, for they also come with opportunities.

In the recent past, there is much that has happened in the neighbourhood that deserves greater focus, and which India could gain from, if it plays the game. Even as Bangladesh has sent its former prime minister to jail for corruption, Nepal and Maldives seem to be witnessing upheavals of tectonic levels.

Political plates are shifting in the two countries, and India must be seen to be heard. And, it must also be perceived to be doing something active. Vacating space isn't an option any more. Though, reactions needn't be along predictable lines of yore.

Nepal and Maldives are developments that come as challenges, and at the same time, provide opportunities for India to assume a role bigger than it has hitherto played. There is every reason to believe that both opportunities continue to exist, for closing all options is not really an option anymore in this interconnected world. Staying engaged is always useful, smart diplomatically, politically, and economically too, in the long run. The goal of every policy has to make India economically secure, vibrant, and sustainable. The impact of global developments must, therefore, always be analysed as opportunities for sustaining Indian political and economic policies and growth. And this is an analysis that can only be done by Indians, for India.

Manvendra Singh



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DEVELOPMENT AS FACTOR FOR PEACE



Finance rules in every aspect of human existence. In economics, as we know it today, there are certain current expenses and there are certain expenses planned for the future, which sometimes become a challenge. These challenges can be countered only with advanced planning for such contingency expenses by keeping some buffer for any urgent requirement.

In the headlong rush for the tools that facilitate the projection of raw power—both conventional as well as nuclear—nations, people and communities lose sight of the truism that development is the forerunner of peace and coexistence. That, it is imperative for the well-being of its people that development permeates the urban/rural landscape a nation has to find a balance between security and growth. Yet, we witness on a daily basis nuclear-powered nations indulging in dangerous brinkmanship. A huge arc of instability has been exacerbated from the northern Pacific seaboard from the Korean peninsula across the Indian Ocean littoral (India/Pakistan salient) to the nations around the Persian Gulf (Iran) and the Mediterranean (Israel) in which the threat of use of nuclear weapons is a daily mind-boggling occurrence.

Having acquired nuclear weapons capability through collusion, clandestine operations and downright theft nations are using nuclear weapons to browbeat neighbours and to secure territorial aggrandisement or regime change. China, Pakistan, North Korea nexus, in particular, has colluded amongst themselves to sell nuclear weapons and missile delivery systems in as widespread an area as Iran, Libya and South Africa. The racist regime in South Africa shut down its programme when it discovered that its demise is a foregone conclusion. To prevent the weapons falling into the hands of the Blacks, the racists destroyed their stockpile; Gaddafi of Libya hoped to curry favour with the US-led coalition by agreeing to destroy its nuclear programme. He had to pay his life; Iran signed a deal with the US which the latter is threatening to rescind. India is being threatened with terrorists operating from behind nuclear shields.

That development suffers, is best illustrated by the North Korea/South Korea comparison. The fruits of development appear to have bypassed North Korea while South Korea is a bustling outward-bound economy. South Korea may not possess the nuclear weapons but it has developed a lot in the other fields.

The Winter Olympics has become occasion for both Koreas to bury the hatchet and seek out avenues of cooperation and peaceful coexistence. The world is waiting with bated breath.

In this edition, DSA has decided to change its format, dear readers. You will find more assorted contents in each edition covering defence, security and world affairs to keep you updated about swift-changing national and international developments. We remain committed to a research-based excellent content in each edition we publish.

Happy reading!

Pawan Agrawal



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INDIA MOMENT AT HAND

As India deservingly strives for a seat on the global 'high table' and to become a 'net security provider' for the region, it will have to put its house in order and ensure clarity in its geo-strategic aspirations, a unity of purpose and harmonious growth within. Political parties will have to rise above their transient, petty interests. It is painful to observe that some in India are adept at unnecessarily stoking the fires of communalism and casteism which strike at the core of India's internal cohesion, integrity and thus, progress.



The look of 'String of Pearls' and China's possible encirclement of India.

Violence in myriad forms, great and small wars between nations attributable to territorial ambitions or historical disputes, religious or ideological divergences have characterised the roller-coaster passage of mankind down the ages. A

similar narrative, unfortunately, continues unabated, underscoring geopolitical turbulence in the world and our region today. Peace may be the dream and endgame



of the wise but, regrettably, conflicts in diverse forms, remains the world's unchanging history. India situated in a troubled region with a relatively unstable neighbourhood, despite its traditional linkages with them, its size and a global influence, too, confronts its share of vicissitudes and travails.

Background

At the end of the Cold War in the late 1980s and early 1990s the world acknowledged its unipolar transformation with the US emerging as the sole super-power and Russia, the inheritor of the erstwhile Soviet Union, fading as a power in global reckoning. But the scenario after the turn of the century and especially in the last decade has, however, seen the arrival of a newer, unstable and gravely violence-afflicted geopolitical paradigm. Multi-polarity has emerged as a reality in today's world with an economically and militarily resurgent China closing the overall power-gap between itself and the US. Russia, too, gradually sees itself back—recovering as a major global player—and middle-level powers like India, Japan, UK, France, Australia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Brazil along with regional groupings like the European Union, BRICS, ASEAN, SCO, OPEC among others, set to play a significant role in global affairs. One aspect which glaringly stands out and most strategic experts, universally, are in agreement is the none-too-peaceful rise of a formidable China out to reshape the world order in keeping with its mounting ambitions.

Proxy Warriors

Some issues which have impacted geopolitics in recent years, across the world, and are likely to do so in the foreseeable future, also need to be factored by the global community. The rise of terrorism in many parts of the world and its exploitation by a plethora of extremist non-State actors and as an extension of State policy by some nations is, indeed, a harsh reality of our times. In addition, the rise of authoritarian leaders in some nations who not only are centralised in their governance orientation but periodically stoke the fires of hyper-nationalism contributes to lessening the chances of compromise and reconciliation among recalcitrant nations. Further, the availability and spread of advanced technologies across the entire world has manifested itself in both a positive and negative manner. As nations reap the benefits of a continuing technological revolution, they have to scrupulously guard against non-State actors and rogue nations utilising cutting-edge lethal technology for their nefarious ends. Regrettably, the UN and its Security Council which should have become an influential institution and the global watchdog in ensuring a peaceful and harmonious world, has been found wanting notwithstanding its noble intentions. The UN remains hostage to big power rivalry with certain nations utilising its portals only to further their own petty national interests.



**LT GEN KAMAL DAVAR
(RETD)**

The writer, a distinguished soldier is a veteran of the 1965 and 1971 ops and has served in all theatres of ops in India in his 41 years of service.

He has been GOC of the entire Ladakh sector, Chief of Staff of a Corps HQ in J&K and subsequently commanded a Corps responsible for the defence of Punjab. After a short stint as DG Mech Forces, he was especially selected by the GOI to raise the Defence Intelligence Agency.

As the founder DG DIA, many innovative intelligence initiatives, both at home and abroad, were taken. After retirement, he writes and lectures on security and strategic subjects. Is also involved with Track 2 initiatives and is widely travelled.

His debut book on the Pakistani Deep State captioned **TRYST WITH PERFDY** has just been released.

**THAT MASSIVE
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Waning US Influence

The US, since years the global policeman, is a pale image of its original avatar in the last decade or so. Financially weary and appearing militarily fatigued now, the US' influence over the world and even over its allies has diminished to a large extent. That President Donald Trump, since assuming office in January 2017, has been trumpeting, rather vociferously, that he will restore America's original glory in the world, keep its adversaries at bay and wipe out international terrorism will not be as simple as heralded. However, the US is now making some attempts to regain its sphere of influence in the global community with Trump declaring his intention to put an end to the US "era of strategic patience." The US, in its countervailing efforts, primarily vis-à-vis China in the Indo-Pacific region wants India to play a lead role in Asia and the maritime commons. Additionally, the US and Indian interests are also attaining strategic convergence in strife-torn and politically unstable Afghanistan. America, notwithstanding the nearly US \$32 billion military and financial largesse to Pakistan since the launch of GWOT in Afghanistan, remains seen as one and only enemy in the minds of Pakistanis. It appears to be in a bind when it comes to dealing with its perfidious protégé—a factor long exploited by the Pakistanis who continue to fan instability in the South Asian region, especially in its neighbourhood. The US, as it admonishes its one-time favourite, has to 'walk the talk'



The Rise of China: Peaceful or Menacing?

and cut-off the financial tap to restrain Pakistan from its devious activities.

China's Unbridled Ambitions

A major defining point in geopolitics, in recent times, has been the meteoric rise of China. Its phenomenal growth, economically, makes it now the world's second largest economy

and in the coming decade, according to many financial institutions, China will surpass even the US. It is extensively employing its burgeoning financial clout all across the world and, in military preparedness, speedily endeavouring to close the capabilities gap between itself and the US. Its economic brow-beating of many nations across the world, especially in Asia, and,



its growing strategic footprint across the Asian mainland and in the Indian and Pacific Oceans portends, unquestionably, geopolitical turbulence in the years ahead. China's assertiveness in these maritime commons, its current flouting of internationally promulgated and recognised laws of the seas and, importantly, its countless billions of dollars Belt and Road Initiative all across the Asian mainland and with efforts to link it with Europe

and the African continent is an apt example of China's regional and global ambitions.

Anti-India Phalanx

China's financial, military and nuclear patronage of Pakistan and employing it as a low-cost option against India is too well-known to be recounted. China's efforts via Pakistan to keep India boxed in South Asia itself are part of its well-crafted strategy. Apart from establishing a

'String of Pearls' around India, its unsolved boundary problems with India and its decision to construct the US \$56 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) through a disputed territory, namely Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) portends adversarial relations with India in the foreseeable future. China's veto at the UN in favour of Pakistan based anti-India terrorist, Azhar Masood, its recent mischief in Doklam (along the Sikkim-Bhutan border) and lately warning India regarding the Maldives are all glaring examples of China's anti-India stance.

Naval Bases

China has also commenced the creation of quasi-civilian and military bases from many small islands in the South China Sea to Hambantota in Sri Lanka, Gwadar in Pakistan to Djibouti in Africa. It is also simultaneously carrying out major reforms in its armed forces and it is expected to reach its stated goal of Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) by 2020. Apart from major revamping in its military structures including the revision of military regions, massive upgradation in equipment for its armed forces, building aircraft-carriers and increasing its submarine fleet, the Chinese have created a Strategic Support Force comprising of Space, Cyber and Electronic Forces. It is well on its way to attain supremacy in a fully informationalised warfare environment. The Indian security establishment will have to factor in all these developments, individually and in concert with friendly nations,

to counter the ever-growing Chinese hegemonistic forays in its immediate and extended neighbourhood including in the Indian Ocean Region where the Chinese are making all-out efforts to limit Indian influence.

Pakistan's Geo-Strategy

Though Pakistan's anti-India policies and its Kashmir obsessions have persisted since 1947, yet in the last couple of years, Pakistan has substantially upped the ante with increasing number of cease-fire violations along the Line of Control (LoC) in J&K and even along the International Border (IB). It has maximised its efforts to keep the pot boiling in

owing to unnecessary collateral damage resulting to innocent civilians.

Pakistan also persists in its evil machinations in Afghanistan without a let-up. Afghanistan continues to suffer heavily with near-daily gruesome violence attributable to Pakistan's patronage of the Taliban, the Haqqani network, remnants of the Al Qaeda and now, even the ISIS terrorists. Pakistan's mischief in Afghanistan and to keep the Kabul regime under siege is acknowledged by the international community. The US, as stated by President Donald Trump, is poised to improve the security situation in Afghanistan and has sternly

Other Regional Players

Russia, in the last 2-3 years, appears to be undertaking some radical changes to its age-old policies in South Asia. Owing to differences with the US in many of its global policies and with a modest rise in its political and economic fortunes, Russia is endeavouring to revive its past glory as was prevalent during the existence of its original avatar, the Soviet Union. Russia is warming up to China and, surprisingly, to Pakistan also in its policies as regards South Asia, especially for Afghanistan. That Russia is opening up channels of communication to the extremist Taliban is rather incomprehensible to say the least. That is not good news for India which has, over many decades, enjoyed Soviet Union/Russia's unstinted support, both militarily and in global affairs. Even today over 60 per cent of India's military equipment is of Russian origin.

The other major regional power, Iran, has since decades, had adversarial relations with the US, especially as regards Iran's anti-Israel policy and its attempt in becoming a nuclear power. Nevertheless, oil-rich Iran wields tremendous influence in the region in relation to Pakistan and Afghanistan. Iran's sway over the members of the Shia Muslim community, existing and spread over the entire region is unprecedented and makes it a regional player of consequence.

Southeast Asia Melange

Importantly, nations to India's east are awakening to the

INDIA HAS TO NOW IMPLEMENT A FIRM, KINETIC AND A CONSISTENT POLICY TO RAISE THE COSTS FOR PAKISTAN—DIPLOMATICALLY, MILITARILY AND ECONOMICALLY

J&K through its paid agents and augmented considerably its efforts to induct large number of terrorists in the State. Pakistan's "higher than the mountains and deeper than the oceans" friendship with China and being the recipient of generous military, nuclear and financial aid from it has made Pakistan far more belligerent in its anti-India stance. That massive Indian retaliation along the LoC and IB, has not deterred Pakistan, is a cause of concern to the Indian establishment

warned Pakistan to desist from mischief there. As Pakistan will continue to support its so-called "strategic assets" there, overall, Pakistan cannot, however, alter some of the endemic faultlines, in its favour, as far as Afghanistan is concerned. The Pashtun loyalties to themselves (read Afghanistan) will never subvert itself to the wily Punjabi nationalism of Pakistan. Afghans of all hues, even today, do not accept the Durand Line as the official border between Pakistan and Afghanistan—notwithstanding Pakistan's machinations.



economic challenges and opportunities which may emerge from collaboration among them in trade, energy, infrastructure, education and cyber connectivity. Nations led by Japan and other members of the ASEAN and East Asian Summit, like Vietnam, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Laos, Philippines are gradually getting to move closer to each other. Most of these nations also are wary of China's assertiveness in the region and some have lingering disputes with China in terms of the freedom of navigation and sovereignty of small islands in the East China and South China Seas, some of which China has forcibly occupied. And very recently, China has had the temerity to caution India to keep away from tiny Maldives—an island nation of significant strategic importance in the Indian Ocean.

To balance the power equation in the choppy waters of the Indo-Pacific, with an aggressive China in mind, the US is seriously endeavouring to revive the concept of the QUAD, namely, the quadrilateral grouping of itself, India, Japan and Australia. Joint naval exercises and efforts to ensure better interoperability between the navies of these four nations are being planned.

Options For India

It brooks no elaboration to state that, since the turn of the century, India's economic resurgence and its influence is a matter of global reckoning. Notwithstanding even the current internal economic

sluggishness, India is the sixth largest economy by nominal GDP, the third largest in purchasing power parity and currently, the world's fastest growing economy even surpassing China. It is a matter of a few years that India will be the world's third largest economy after the US and China. However, this reality can only be ensured if the nation conceives and implements a pragmatic economic and security strategy discarding petty and partisan politics within. Additionally, India has to appreciate that development and defence are two sides of the same coin and economic resurgence is only possible if the nation is secure from both external and internal threats. Accordingly, the Government of India has to allocate additional finances for the Defence Budget, which is currently, merely under 1.60 per cent of the nation's GDP.

INDIA HAS TO APPRECIATE THAT DEVELOPMENT AND DEFENCE ARE TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN

India-US Rapprochement

One of India's major geostrategic policy transformations, since the Kargil War in 1999, has been the steady convergence in India-US

relations. Apart from the George Bush-Manmohan Singh-led nuclear deal between the two nations, export of modern weaponry to the Indian armed forces, there is near similarity between the two democracies on dealing with China, on peace-making in Afghanistan and importantly, now on Pakistan directed terrorism activities, both inside India and Afghanistan. That US President Donald Trump has not only severely admonished Pakistan for supporting terror activities in Afghanistan but also curtailed US financial and military aid to this rogue state is a welcome development. The US also is influencing India to play a larger role in the Indo-Pacific. However, India, as it warms up further to the US, must not put all its eggs in the US basket and sustain its strategic autonomy in global and regional affairs. However, in the current crisis in the Maldives, India-US cooperation is vitally warranted including military intervention to restore democracy in that nation, which otherwise, will succumb to China's great game in the Indo-Pacific. In addition, India must also play a proactive role in the formation of the QUAD. Nevertheless, even if India-China rivalry is a foregone conclusion in the future also, efforts by India to resolve the outstanding India-China border problems must be strived for and the boundary mechanisms to prevent incidents at the border regions strengthened. However, India will have to vastly upgrade its armed forces to ensure effective deterrence vis-à-vis China for the latter only respects military power. The Chinese mischief at



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Afghanistan President Dr. Mohammad Ashraf Ghani at Hyderabad House in New Delhi.

Doklam last year should have brought some urgent lessons for India to introspect upon and institute corrective measures including capacity-building. India must also endeavour to keep at bay China's growing footprint in South Asia though the China-Pak nexus is here to stay in the future.

Cut Ties With Pak

As regards Pakistan, notwithstanding efforts by successive Indian Prime Ministers to improve relations with Pakistan, the latter has shown no inclination to improve the turbulent relationship with its larger neighbour. Pakistan has vastly upped the ante in J&K, including along the LoC/IB and continues with its nefarious activities, both inside India and Afghanistan. Though war may not be an option in the minds of many, but, India has to now implement a firm, kinetic and a consistent policy to raise the costs

for Pakistan—diplomatically, militarily and economically. It should be made clear to Pakistan that India does not need it and we should be prepared to cut off all relations with them apart from making all efforts to isolate them internationally. Pakistan is not likely to change and has to be taught stern lessons for it has shown no appetite to behave as responsible and good neighbour.

Use Soft Power

Importantly, India must step up its soft power forays in its immediate neighbourhood including in Bangladesh, Nepal, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka. Notwithstanding Pakistan's persistent anti-India efforts in the region, India, as the largest and strongest power, must make all out efforts to make SAARC an effective institution. Nevertheless, India must unstintedly support the current friendly governments in Bangladesh and Afghanistan.

Nepal, now under a pro-China leftist dispensation, requires deft handling by India.

Unify India

As India deservedly strives for a seat on the global 'high table' and to become a 'net security provider' for the region, it will have to put its house in order and ensure clarity in its geostrategic aspirations, a unity of purpose and harmonious growth within. Political parties will have to rise above their transient, petty interests. It is painful to observe that some in India are adept at unnecessarily stoking the fires of communalism and castism which strike at the core of India's internal cohesion, integrity and thus, progress. Notwithstanding the geopolitical turbulence around India, the current era is clearly a defining moment in India's fortunes. We must not miss the India moment. **USA**



THE LEOPARD WILL NOT CHANGE ITS SPOTS

In India, many analysts are hoping that the increased US pressure on Pakistan will deter it from supporting anti-India terrorist groups. This is not happening. Pakistan continues to support terrorism in J&K. The ceasefire violations on the LoC have registered a sharp increase. These trends are likely to continue in the future.

In his first tweet of the New Year, US President Trump took on Pakistan in as unambiguous terms as he could. He said, “The United States has foolishly given Pakistan more than 33 billion dollars in aid over the last 15 years, and they have given us nothing but lies and deceit, thinking of our leaders as fools. They give safe haven to the terrorists we hunt in Afghanistan, with little help. No more!” He announced blocking of the \$255 million aid under the Coalition Support Fund, followed by the suspension of \$1.1 billion security assistance.

A tweet as strong as this would normally mean that US aid to Pakistan would stop straightaway and Pakistan would come under sanctions. There is no more pressure on Pakistan than what has been the case before. On the contrary, there have been series of high profile attacks in Kabul in which hundreds of civilians have been killed. Pakistan has not been deterred by the threats from US President.

The reality is that the previous US administrations have also been aware of Pakistan’s duplicity and have reduced assistance to

In US \$ billion during 2002-2017	
Total Security related	8.259
Total Economic	11.095
Coalition Support Fund	14.573
Total	33.927

Source: Adapted from CRS figures



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**PAKISTAN IS
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PAKISTAN IS
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PAKISTAN HAS ADJUSTED TO US AID CUTS BUT HAS NOT CLOSED ITS US OPTIONS ENTIRELY. NOR HAS THE US ABANDONED PAKISTAN

Pakistan. But, US have not been able to reduce its dependence on Pakistan entirely. Not only has Pakistan gone undeterred, it has also drifted closer to China.

US Aid

How much aid has Pakistan been given by the US from 2002? According to the data compiled by the US Congressional Research Service, the total aid and military disbursements to Pakistan during 2002-2017 come to US \$33.9 billion. The following table shows the breakup.

Broadly, US aid is classified into three components, namely, \$8.26 billion in security related heads, \$11.095 billion in economic head and \$14.57 billion via Coalition Support Fund. However, Pakistan regards CSF as reimbursement of the expenditure it has incurred and not as aid. It has complained that the US has not fulfilled its promise of reimbursing through CSF. Two thirds of this assistance was given in the first ten years i.e. 2002-2011. It is worthwhile looking at the security related assistance provided by the Pentagon during these years.

US Aid to Pakistan 2001-2017 in US \$ million, All agencies.

Year	Commitment	Disbursement
2001	177	92
2002	831	798
2003	563	537
2004	401	346
2005	712	630
2006	888	818
2007	824	752
2008	873	715
2009	1,200	960
2010	2,700	1,900
2011	1,900	2,100
2012	1,200	768
2013	812	756
2014	999	974
2015	1,100	1,100
2016	778	988
2017	485	473
Total	15,743	14,707

Source: USAID

This table shows that the primary component of security related assistance has been Foreign Military Financing (FMF), amounting to about US \$4 billion. The FMF assistance has continued at about US \$250-300 million annually during 2012-17. Pakistan also got large amount of counter-insurgency assistance, about US \$2.3 billion in 2002-03, which stopped thereafter.

Between Financial Year 2012 and 2017, the security related assistance to Pakistan less than halved from \$849 million to \$303 million, of which the maximum cut came from Non-proliferation, Anti-terrorism, De-mining and Related (NADR) category, reduced from \$452 million in 2012 to zero in the following years.

According to the USAID's figures, during 2001 to 2017, the total aid committed by all US agencies to Pakistan has been US \$15.7 billion of which actually disbursed is US \$14.7 billion, excluding CSF. Year-wise breakup of aid given to Pakistan shows that there has been a sharp decline from the level of US \$2.1 billion in 2011 to US \$473 million in 2017. Still, Pakistan remains one of the highest recipients of American aid.

In the economic-related disbursements, worth noting is the decline in the Economic Support Fund, which after averaging almost \$750 million per annum between 2002-2011, and rising to \$1.06 billion in FY 2012, fell sharply to \$223 million by FY 2017.



America's dependence on Pakistan for supply routes and intelligence-sharing makes it difficult for it to sever ties, especially at a time when Taliban has increased its engagements with Iran, Russia and China, forming a broader anti-America consensus. Pakistan is adept at playing on US vulnerabilities. While Pakistan exercises influence on the core leadership of Taliban and the Haqqanis, it has assisted Americans with intelligence inputs against some of the Haqqani terrorists at the same time. On 30th January, the Pakistani Foreign Office said that it had handed over "27 individuals suspected of having ties to the Afghan Taliban and Haqqani Network to Afghanistan". Again, on 2nd February, it stated that Pakistan had killed 17,600 militants in counter-terror operations post 9/11 and cleared over 46,000 km of land. Along with this, by erecting a fence along the Durand Line, the Pakistani leadership is trying to convince Washington of its efforts in countering cross-border terrorism.

What To Expect In Future?

Pakistan has adjusted to US aid cuts but has not closed its US options entirely. Nor has the US abandoned Pakistan, as American officials clarified that the aid cut was not irreversible. Rhetoric is high on both sides and the bilateral relationship is passing through a rough patch. The US' pressure on Pakistan will increase. Trump can be more decisive than his predecessors. Security related assistance may have been frozen

Assistance under security related Pentagon Programmes, 2002-2017.

Programme	US \$ million
Counter-narcotics	326
Foreign Military Financing	4,086
International military education and training	52
International narcotics control and Law enforcement	949
Non-proliferation, anti-terrorism, demining and related	182
Pakistan CI fund/CI capability building fund	2,352

Source: CRS figures




Handling the burden of millions of refugees, disputed border, absconding of militants across a dubious borderline and with accusations of creating instability in each other's state of affairs.

SECURITY RELATED ASSISTANCE MAY HAVE BEEN FROZEN FOR THE TIME BEING BUT ECONOMIC AID MAY CONTINUE

for the time being but economic aid may continue, albeit at reduced levels. One should not be surprised if a face saving method would be worked out.

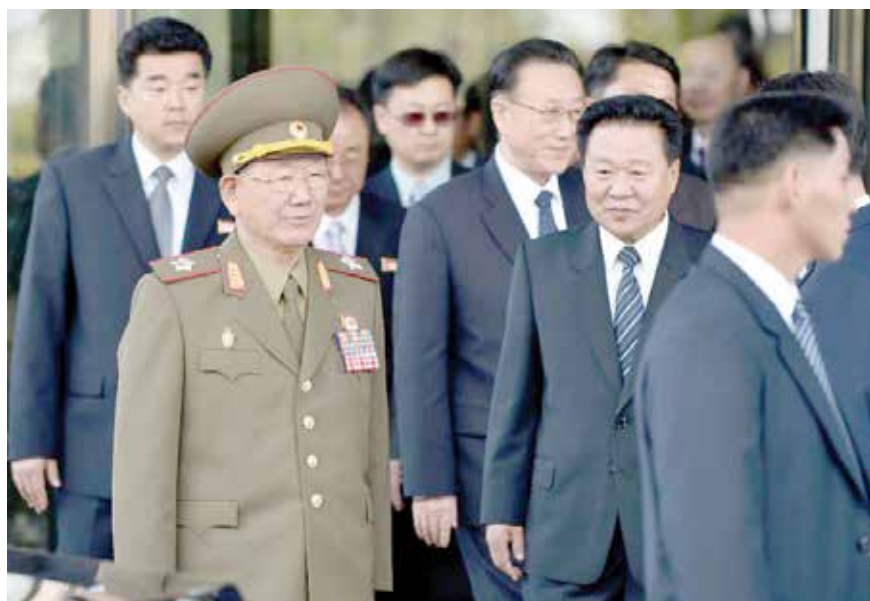
Pakistan is likely to play the China card vis-a-vis the US. Pakistan is likely to get even closer to China. The China-Pak relationship is being transformed into a broad-based strategic partnership of which CPEC is a manifestation.

In India, many analysts are hoping that the increased US pressure on Pakistan will deter it from supporting anti-India terrorist groups. This is not happening. Pakistan continues to support terrorism in J&K. The ceasefire violations on the LoC have registered a sharp increase. These trends are likely to continue in the future. 

CAN IT BE SUSTAINED?

A strong section in the US is apprehensive of 'South Korea falling' to the design of the North Korean leader. This section maintains that North Korea continued its provocative behaviour and kept testing nuclear and ballistic missiles because sanctions imposed on it were rendered ineffective by China. By entrapping South Korea, the section fears that North Korea wants to further weaken the sanction regime.

After spewing fire for months, Winter Olympics appeared bringing some warmth in the relationship between the Koreans. The North Korean Supreme leader surprised the world by making a highly reconciliatory statement in his 2018 New Year address. In his address he told, "This year is a year of significance, both for the north and south of Korea as our people will celebrate the 70th birthday of the DPRK as a great auspicious event and there will be the Winter Olympic Games in the South. In order to host the great events of the nation with splendour and demonstrate the dignity and stamina of the nation, we should melt the frozen north-south relations, thus adorning this meaningful year as a year to be specially recorded in the history of the nation." North Korea's positive approach towards the South's proposal for athletes from both



Hwang Pyong-So (2nd L), Director of the Military's General Political Bureau, the top military post in North Korea, walks with other North Korean officials.

sides to march together in the Olympic opening ceremony looked like breaking the ice.

Reciprocal Stand-down

The promised North Korean change in the approach was well reciprocated by South Korea. Hosting a peaceful Olympics in an otherwise tense East Asian security situation could be the

primary reason for the South Korean gesture for accepting the dialogue to resolve tension with North Korea. But for a long period, Moon had relentlessly pressed the US to start a dialogue with North Korea to diplomatically settle the North Korean nuclear quandary. He viewed that sanctions alone would not end the North Korea's



Kim Yo-jong with his army officials.

nuclear weapons programme. In the past, he did not favour a preemptive strike on North Korea or its suspected nuclear facilities. The possibility of a full-blown war, in which South Korea will be the real casualty, may have shaped his thinking.

Before the winter Olympics and after the January 1, 2018 announcement, both Koreas met at Panmunjom in the demilitarised zone on January 9, 2018, for the first inter-Korean talks since 2015. South Korea had sent a delegation. Both Koreas agreed to revive a military-to-military hotline closed since February 2016. South Korea kept insisting on denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula before and after the meeting. Possibly, it was under pressure from Japanese and Americans. A strong section in these countries was urging South Korea to be careful, and do not become a victim to North Korea's plan of wedging a difference between the US and South Korea.

Kim Jong-Un, the North Korea Supreme leader sent his younger sister, Kim Yo Jong, to lead the delegation for Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang. Kim Jong-Un underlined "warm climate of reconciliation and dialogue" after the inauguration of the Winter Olympics game was over. It raises the possibility of more inter-Korean engagement in the future. Officially, South Korea sees the PyeongChang Games a true "Peace Olympics".

Lasting Thaw?

This surprised the world, but needless to say, the North Korean gesture was welcomed all over the world, although many were highly sceptical of the move of Kim Jong-Un. The UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres welcomed the developments and found the moves of the two countries "critical to lowering the risk of miscalculation". Even Trump found "good thing" about these positive developments, starting from talks.



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**THE SUDDEN
SERENITY OF
THE NORTH
KOREAN
LEADER CAN BE
MAINTAINED
ONLY WHEN
CHINA AND
RUSSIA
CONTINUE TO
WORK WITH
THE US**

North Korea invited South Korea to a summit in Pyongyang. North Korea also requested Moon to play a prominent role in reunification of Korea after nearly seven decades. Media is speculating a special South Korea envoy playing a new role for peace. Will there be a new era in the region? Will North Korea agree to give up its nuclear weapons?

At this stage, definitely, it is difficult to answer. Officially, no country is supporting that North Korea continues with the possession of its nuclear weapons. Even after the New Year address, South Korea has been insisting on denuclearisation. The leaders of the six party talks, including China and Russia, are talking about denuclearisation in February 2018. However, so far all the declarations have been towards mitigating nuclear risks and unification of Korea, not much has been spoken about nuclear disarmament by the supreme leader of North Korea.

For example, the January 9, 2018, joint press release issued by both Koreas noted, "The South and North will put joint efforts to ease military tensions, create a peaceful environment on the Korean Peninsula, and promote national reconciliation and unity. Both sides recognised the need to resolve current military tensions, and agreed to hold inter-Korean military dialogue. The two sides will activate contact, come-and-go, and exchange and cooperation in various fields, and promote national reconciliation and unity." The last section of the press release



talks about both the countries respecting all the previous inter-Korean agreements. This section also underscored the relevance of talks for improving inter-Korean relations.

Military Exercises: An Irritant

In order to reduce tension in the region, the United States and South Korea had postponed the annual "Foal Eagle" joint military exercises till the Winter Olympics in South Korea and work for security of the Winter Olympics. One of the demands of the Supreme leader was to end the US military exercises in the region. Even North Korea did not conduct its tests—nuclear or missile. It is difficult to say that the current moratorium will continue for a long period.

When, in 2006, North Korea had conducted its first nuclear test, many expected a rising tension in the world and a big threat to the US because even at that time, North Korea had possessed the missiles reaching and hitting at least two of the US States; but nothing happened. Instead, the North Korean leadership continued to seek financial assistance from the US. It did not want to talk to its 'unfriendly' neighbours.

Now the situation is just reverse. North Korea is talking to South Korea, and at least officially, it maintains that it is not interested in talking to the US. On February 8, 2018, the Director General of the Foreign Ministry of North Korea stated, "We have never begged for dialogue with the US,



Winter Olympics, PyeongChang 2018.

BOTH KOREAS AGREED TO REVIVE A MILITARY-TO-MILITARY HOTLINE CLOSED SINCE FEBRUARY 2016. SOUTH KOREA KEPT INSISTING ON DENUCLEARISATION

nor in the future, too. Explicitly speaking, we have no intention to meet the US side during the stay in North Korea.” North Korea states that Japan and the US are scuttling the dialogue process between the two Koreas. On the other hand, America’s vice-president expressed his willingness to talk to North Korea.


Trap For South Korea

Even after the New Year address, the North Korean leader did not stop his rhetoric against the US. It kept threatening to press

nuclear button. Of course, in return, President Trump also remembered his nuclear button. This exchange will continue to vitiate the atmosphere. As mentioned, a strong section in the US is apprehensive of ‘South Korea falling’ to the design of the North Korean leader. This section maintains that North Korea continued its provocative behaviour and kept testing nuclear and ballistic missiles because sanctions imposed on it were rendered ineffective by China.

By entrapping South Korea, the section fears that North Korea wants to further weaken the sanction regime. The attempt of opening up of the Kaesong Industrial Complex is seen in this regard. The Kaesong Industrial Complex is a business production zone, which is in North Korea. This complex gets its ‘infrastructure and knowhow’ from South Korean companies and North Korea sends its labour force. North Korea’s fourth nuclear test in January 2016, led to the closure of this complex. The general concern is that if South Korea gets involved in such activities, the impact of sanctions will end and North Korea will continue with its nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles. The North Korean leader may continue with his provocative statements as well.

Sino-Russian Role

The sudden serenity of the North Korean leader can be maintained only when China and Russia continue to work with the US and other regional actors of East Asia. China will not allow North Korea to dismantle its nuclear stockpile because it will use it to balance rhetoric of the American president and intervene in security dynamics of East Asia in general. In fact, the North Korean provocation tested the limit of American power. Year 2018 may witness a relative calm. The focus will be to get North Korea out of sanctions. The final outcome will be interesting for 2019 New Year address of the Supreme leader. 

STILL IN SEARCH OF DIRECTION

Considering that it is virtually the last regular budget to be presented before the general elections, it would have been nice had the Finance Minister given some account of what has been achieved in the past four years, especially in regard to Make in India in defence or for setting up of cyber, space and the special forces commands, which are critical for beefing up India's strategic capabilities to meet the challenges of an uncertain future.

Delivering his first budget speech on July 10, 2014, Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said, "There can be no compromise with the defence of our country", and then proceeded to enhance the allocation made in the interim budget a few months earlier by his predecessor by a princely sum of Rs 5,000 crore. It is another matter that even this enhancement left a gap of more than Rs 71,000 crore between the requirement projected by the armed forces and the allocation made to them.

This was not the first time that there was a gap between projection and allocation, nor was it to be the last. In 2010-11, the gap was a little over Rs 23,000 crore which rose to more than Rs 92,000 crore by 2017-18. The possibility of some amount of over-projection by the Services cannot be completely

ruled out but this cannot explain the increasing magnitude of the gap. This growing mismatch is an unmistakable pointer to underfunding of the defence needs and a complete disconnect between defence planning and fiscal realism.

Platitudinous Promises

No serious thought seems to have been given to this problem either by the Ministry of Defence

or the Ministry of Finance. The platitudinous promises made routinely by the finance ministers in their budget speech, practically every year, that adequate funds will be provided for defence, therefore, do not inspire much confidence.

The Standing Committee on Defence, too, has been dealing with this issue rather superficially. The committee generally rests content with

DEFENCE BUDGET 2018-19



berating the Ministry of Defence for not providing adequate funds to the armed forces and often recommending that the defence allocation be pegged at three per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

The committee does not seem to realise that no amount of berating will help as the Ministry of Defence can allocate to the armed forces only what it gets from the Ministry of Finance. It has also made no effort to analyse why the successive governments have failed to hike the defence budget in accordance with the committee's recommendation.

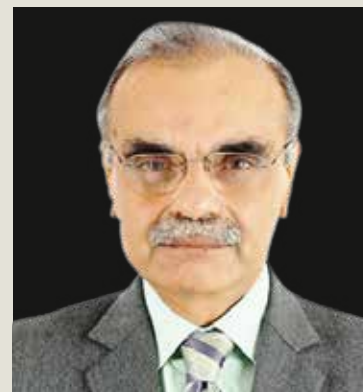
Meanwhile, the total defence outlay as a percentage of the GDP has declined marginally from 2.18 in 2014-15 to 2.16 in 2018-19. This may not have been so alarming, especially because as a proportion of the total central government expenditure has gone up from 15.61 per cent to 16.56 per cent, but for the fact

that within the overall defence outlay, the allocation exclusively for the armed forces has declined from 1.61 to 1.39 per cent during the same period, representing a year-on-year growth of just about six per cent.

Lack Of Income Generation

What accounts for this state of affairs? The primary reason seems to be the inability of the government to raise its earnings to be able to allocate higher outlays for various sectors, including defence. Between 2014-15 and 2018-19, the revenue and capital receipts (other than borrowings) increased by approximately Rs 5.5 lakh crore but during the same period, expenditure increased by Rs 6.5 lakh crore, thus necessitating higher borrowings.

Even if there is a dramatic improvement in the government's revenue earnings, it will continue to face two other macro challenges:

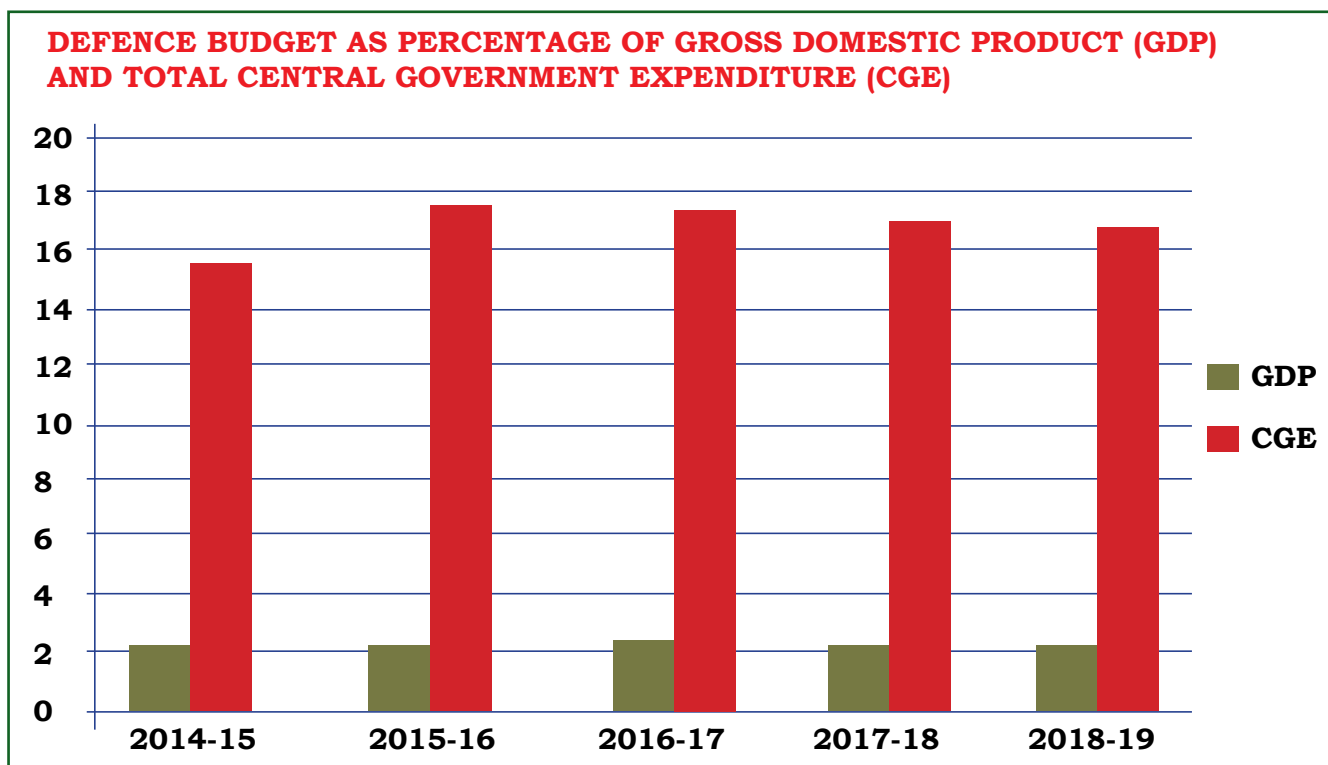


AMIT COWSHISH

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After building light combat aircraft (LCA) Tejas - India's target is to build fifth-generation fighter aircraft (FGFA) indigenously.



Source: Budget at a Glance and Demands for Grant of the Ministry of Defence for the relevant years.

Note: The total defence budget includes the outlays provided under all the Demands for Grant of the Ministry of Defence, including Defence Pensions.

One, striking a balance between the competing demands from other sectors like health, education and infrastructure; and two, containing the fiscal and revenue deficits as mandated by the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act, 2003.

Salaries And Pensions

The more proximate reason for the declining allocation for the armed forces seems to be a steep increase in the expenditure on salaries and defence pensions as a proportion of the overall defence outlay. The allocation for salaries of the armed forces personnel and the civilians working with them (excluding those working with the integrated defence staff) has gone up from Rs 75,392 crore in 2014-15 to

Rs 1,15,669 on 2018-19. During the same period, the allocation for defence pensions has more than doubled from Rs 51,000 crore to Rs 1,08,853 crore.

After providing for other obligatory expenses on ration, clothing, fuel and transportation, the amount left is prima facie inadequate for other operational requirements which, significantly, include procurement and stocking of ammunition, maintenance of the in-service equipment and weapon systems, training, and upkeep of the civil infrastructure, to name a few.

To put it into a sharper perspective, the allocation under the 'stores' budget head of the armed forces, which

caters for all these expenses except infrastructure maintenance, has gone up by a meagre sum of Rs 3,490 crore from Rs 28,027 crore in 2014-15 to Rs 31,517 in 2018-19 and the allocation for infrastructure upkeep, which is met from the 'works' budget head in the revenue budget, has gone up only by Rs 2,450 from Rs 9,635 crore to Rs 12,085 crore during the same period.

Self-Delusion

Some analysts argue that the expenditure on salaries and pensions, especially the latter, should be kept out of the defence budget. This is not going to be of much help since all expenditure is ultimately met from the overall revenues of the Central government. The



Prototype is an autoloader from ELBIT first seen on their Bharath 52 howitzer.

solution ultimately lies in the government's ability to raise higher revenues so as to meet the competing demands of all the sectors to a greater extent than is the case at present.

The overarching budgetary constraint impacts not just the revenue segment of the defence budget but also its capital segment which, for the sake of better understanding, can be sub-divided into the 'capital acquisition' and 'other-than-capital-acquisition' sub-segments. While expenditure on acquisition of new equipment, weapons systems and various platforms, associated with modernisation of the armed forces, is met from the former, all expenditure on acquisition of land and execution of capital works projects is met from the latter sub-category.

The allocation of Rs 6,952 crore for land and capital works of

the armed forces (excluding the integrated defence staff) in 2014-15 has gone up to Rs 8,397 crore in 2018-19 but the allocation for capital acquisition sub-segment has actually come down from Rs 74,458 crore to 73,293 crore (which includes

Going by the past averages, about 90 per cent of the capital acquisition budget is spent on making contractual payments against the ongoing contracts, commonly referred to as the committed liabilities. This implies that in 2018-19, just about

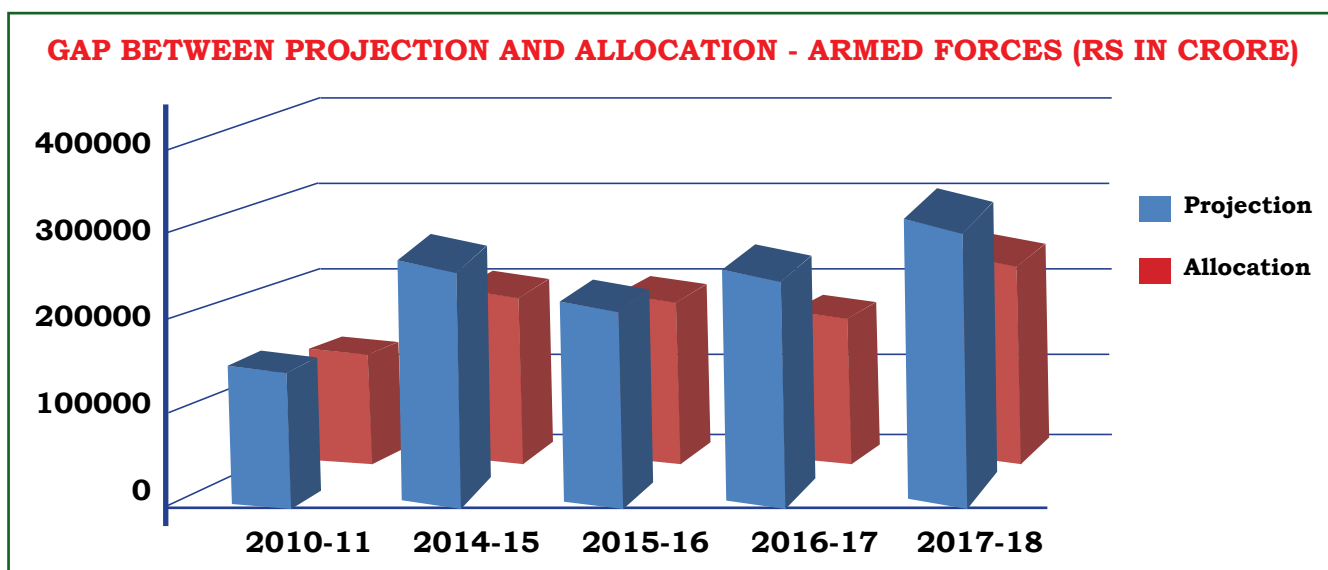
THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE, TOO, HAS NOT ANALYSED WHY SUCCESSIVE GOVERNMENTS HAVE FAILED TO HIKE THE DEFENCE BUDGET IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITS RECOMMENDATION OF THREE PER CENT OF THE GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (GDP)

the allocation for procurement of aircraft and aero-engines, heavy and medium vehicles, other equipment, naval fleet, naval dockyards and projects, and prototype development under the 'make' procedure).

Rs 7,300 crore will be available for signing new contracts. Is this going to be enough?

New Contracts Jeopardised

In the last four years, new contracts worth a total sum of



Source: Report No 6 of the Standing Committee on Defence (15th Lok Sabha) and Reports No 3,4,7,8, 20 and 29 of the Standing Committee on Defence (16th Lok Sabha).

Note: The graph represents the gap between the requirement projected by the Armed Forces (including the National Cadet Corps, Military Farms, Rashtriya Rifles, Ex-servicemen Health Scheme, and Joint Staff) and the allocation made at the Budget Estimates (BE) stage.

Rs 2,40,000 crore have been signed at an yearly average of Rs 60,000 crore. Considering that generally only an advance payment of 15 per cent of the contract value is made at the time of signing a new contract, and the remaining payment is made in the subsequent years as and when the deliveries take place, a sum of only Rs 9,000 crore would have been required for signing new contracts every year in the past four years.

Going by this analysis, the amount available for the next fiscal may not be adequate to maintain the pace of signing of new contracts in keeping with the past average. However, slippage in payment of the committed liabilities, which is not uncommon, could make up for the marginal shortfall in the amount required for maintaining this average. This also implies

that the ministry will find itself in a tight spot if the total value of the new contracts to be signed in 2018-19 is in far excess of the past average.

But it is unlikely that the ministry will face this problem for there is no indication that steps have been taken to expedite the procurement process. To be sure, the inordinate time it takes to conclude new contracts is not entirely because of the budgetary constraints. There are other factors too, such as the absence of an overarching acquisition organisation, procedural complexities and inefficient decision-making.

Bad Record of Decision-Making

The Ministry of Defence has set up a 13-member committee on February 7, 2018, to, among other

things, identify the bottlenecks in the ongoing critical capital acquisition projects and suggest the way forward. The efforts of the committee could come to a naught if ultimately it is found that budgetary constraints constitute a major bottleneck or the Ministry of Defence is unable to improve its track-record of decision-making which has been the bane of all capital acquisitions in the past.

The defence budget is not just about armed forces or defence pensions. It also includes the outlay for at least four other important organisations: Coast Guard, border roads, research and development, and ordnance factories. In comparison with the armed forces, these organisations have done pretty well, especially the Coast Guard and the research and development organisations, since 2014-15.



ADECS 2018: India's silent arm progresses slowly.

This provides a glimpse of the government's priorities but also places a huge responsibility on these organisations to deliver. Sadly, there has been no attempt to give an outcome orientation to the allocations made to these organisations or to introduce outcome-budgeting in other areas of the defence budget, such as capital acquisitions and infrastructure development, which are ideal for outcome-oriented monitoring.

Outcome Targets

In its 22nd report submitted in May 2016, the Standing Committee on Defence had recommended that "with a view to monitoring the specific items, there is a need for converting this Budget into an "outcome"-oriented budget of specified categories / projects, viz., programmes and schemes for acquisition of Artillery and Air Defence Guns, Bullet-Proof Jackets, Helicopters, Missiles,

Submarines, Naval Ships, Fighter and Transport Aircraft, Mid-Air Re-Fuellers, etc."

It went on to say that the "annual targets could be set for each

THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT STEPS HAVE BEEN TAKEN TO EXPEDITE THE PROCUREMENT PROCESS

such programme/scheme and allocations made accordingly, thus, paving the way for outcome-oriented monitoring. Since the outcome of each such project would be measurable, it would be possible to assess the progress made by the Ministry during the year, pinpoint the reasons for shortfall and take remedial measures."

No Evidence

If any earnest efforts have been made to implement this decision, it is not evident from the union budget or the demands for grant of the Ministry of Defence which were restructured twice in the past three years ostensibly to facilitate outcome-oriented monitoring of the utilisation of funds. If it wants, the Ministry of Defence can set the targets for these organisations even now.

Considering that it is virtually the last regular budget to be presented before the general elections, it would have been nice had the Finance Minister given some account of what has been achieved in the past four years, especially in regard to Make in India in defence or for setting up of cyber, space and the special forces commands, which are critical for beefing up India's strategic capabilities to meet the challenges of an uncertain future. **DSA**



AEROSPACE UNLIMITED

For long, military aviation, doctrines and requirements drove technology. Today, technologies are offering enhanced capabilities that are driving operational employment and tactics. Artificial Intelligence (AI), smart structures, and hybrid systems will dictate the future.

The US Air Force (USAF) and US Navy (USN) are leading the evolution of next generation platforms and technologies. Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), US Air Force Research Labs (AFRL), Boeing 'Phantom Works', Lockheed Martin's 'Skunk Works' and NASA are all aiding the work on concepts of 'Air Dominance' for 2040 and beyond. The Americans, Chinese and Russians are all working on the Sixth-generation fighters which will be inducted from 2028 onwards. Fighter bomber as a platform, therefore, is still here to stay. More and more of these will become uninhabited, or optionally manned. There will be dramatic changes in the aerial platform performance and aerial weapons. The clear line defining Atmosphere and Space will get smudged. Aerospace will soon become a common domain with more aerospacecraft routinely transiting up and down, taking advantage of each. Combat engagements will be at much faster speeds and much greater distances.

Aerospace Superiority

The one who controls Space will control the Air in future. Aerospace craft will aim to seize control establishing dominance/supremacy over the enemy's aerospace assets. They will operate under the control/co-ordination of space-based Early Warning and Control satellites with increased Artificial Intelligence (AI). Satellite/aircraft-based kinetic and Directed Energy Weapons (DEW) will soon be a reality and will be used for aerial or surface attack. Even if aerospace supremacy cannot be established, a "degree of dominance" in the air-space bubble in a given area and given time-space without prohibitive interference by opposing air forces will be desired.

Evolving Air Threats

The world already has eight overt nuclear powers, one covert nuclear power (Israel), and at least two nuclear aspirants (Saudi Arabia and Iran). Non-Proliferation (nuclear weapons) Treaty (NPT) is still not fully effective. More and more countries are



Sukhoi T-50 PAKFA stealth fighter.

acquiring missile technology. Missiles are becoming faster, more accurate, have longer range and larger multiple warheads. The weapon delivering air platforms are becoming faster and more efficient for deeper penetration. The non-State actors and rogue regimes which follow no international norms and ethics are trying to acquire weapons of mass destruction. They could be a difficult-to-define threat. Any future air platforms would have to factor in all this.

Uninhabited Fighters

Uninhabited aircraft technologies are already proven, and the future is Uninhabited Aerial Systems (UAS). World is in transition. There are some who see the JSF F-35 as the last manned fighter/bomber. Solar-powered UAS are already flying. Currently, the solar-powered Zephyr holds the endurance record for UAVs, with 14 days in the air. Dual use (optionally manned) aircraft are also flying.

The USAF has already modified F-4s and F-16s to fly them remotely. In France, Dassault leads a multi-nation delta wing UCAV 'Neuron' of the size of Mirage 2000. UK has a Strategic UAS programme 'Taranis'. The UAS are taking-off and landing by themselves including on the moving aircraft carrier (Northrop Grumman X-47B). Autonomous air refuelling has been tested. Lockheed Martin's UCLASS drone 'Sea Ghost' looks rather like a stealth bomber and is expected to carry 1,000-pound class weapons. The US is also working on hypersonic (Mach 6) aircraft. The Strike Bomber is likely to be optionally manned. Uninhabited helicopter convoys will deliver supplies to troops deployed on combat front lines. The US Army's dramatic shift to a nearly all-unmanned flight over the next three decades is embedded in the UAS roadmap. The USAF's UAS vision document indicates that by year 2047, every mission would be unmanned.



AIR MARSHAL ANIL CHOPRA
PVSM AVSM VM VSM
(RETD)

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**SIXTH-GENERATION
FIGHTERS ARE
EXPECTED TO
USE ADVANCED
ENGINES SUCH
AS 'ADAPTIVE
VERSATILE ENGINE'
TECHNOLOGY
TO ALLOW
LONGER RANGES
AND HIGHER
PERFORMANCE**



U.S. Air Force Technical Sergeant James Anderson, 354th Maintenance Squadron, provides insight into sheet metal operations to Airmen with the Indian Air Force.

Sixth Generation Fighters

The USAF also seeks a new fighter for 2030-50 named the “Next Generation Tactical Aircraft”. Such aircraft would have to have enhanced capabilities in reach, persistence, survivability, net-centricity, sustained awareness, human-system integration and weapon effects. Boeing is proposing a replacement for the F-22A Raptor. The project is currently limited to concept images and the US Air Force remains non-committal. Boeing envisages the F/A-XX, F-X and a possible Unmanned Combat Air Vehicle (UCAV) comprising an all-encompassing future strategy for the USAF. Boeing is also responding to the US Navy’s

request for information regarding a new F/A-XX aircraft that could replace its fleet of the latest Super Hornet variants (larger) in the 2030s. The regular Hornet aircraft is being replaced by the F-35s. Lockheed Martin’s proposal calls for greater speed, range, stealth and self-healing structures; developments that will require new breakthroughs in propulsion, materials, power generation and weapon technology. Self-healing structures, in particular, would pose a significant advantage over modern-day aircraft, remaining airborne despite taking heavy fire. The system comprises pockets of epoxy resin and a hardener, installed around vulnerable parts of the aircraft such as the

underbelly, hatchways and wheel wells. If the area is damaged, the contents of the pocket are released to form a temporary plug, helping the aircraft to operate in spite of the damage. New generation of engines will allow ultra-high altitude super-cruise. The avionics are supposed to withstand next generation electronic attack and cyber-attack, have passive detection, and integrated self-protection. The tailless flying wing, “cranked kite” design concept currently appears the way forward for future fighter aircraft. The sixth-generation fighters are expected to use advanced engines such as ‘Adaptive Versatile Engine’ technology to allow longer ranges and higher performance,



The US Air Force has successfully fired an X-51A Waverider hypersonic cruise missile from a B-52 Stratofortress.

where the ratios of bypass and compression airflow can be made variable to improve efficiency. Major action is unfolding. The combat pilot still has backers and still has a place on-board.

Future Weaponry

Future weaponry would utilise scramjets for the production of faster missiles. Despite failing its recent tests, Boeing's X-51A Wave-rider scramjet remains in development as it hopes to reach hypersonic speeds approaching Mach 6, a speed at which a missile could not be stopped by conventional air defence technology. Continued experiments with DEW and lasers, used for defensive as well as offensive measures, delivering effects at the speed of light, are also likely to shape precisely what sixth-generation fighters are equipped with. New aircraft will be as much about reusable weaponry (lasers) as it is about expendable weaponry. The USAF is interested in three categories of lasers: low-power for illuminating, tracking, targeting, and defeating enemy sensors; moderate-power for protection to destroy incoming missiles; and high-power to offensively engage enemy aircraft and ground targets.

USAF is developing a new air-to-air missile, dubbed the Small Advanced Capabilities Missile (SACM) for 2030s. The SACM would promise an improved solid rocket motor having synergised control enabled by combined aero, attitude control and thrust vectoring. The missile will have improved 'high off bore sight' for rear hemisphere kills and 'lower cost per kill.' The missile would also incorporate energy optimizing guidance, navigation and control. The Miniature Self-Defense Munition (MSDM), will enhance future platforms' self-defence capability, without impacting the primary weapon payload. A sixth-generation missile could replace AMRAAM. A survivable, long-range missile with combined air-to-air and air-to-ground capabilities is being evolved. Range would be a big factor to counter potential adversaries with Chinese PL-15. It will be multiband, broad spectrum – which aids it in survivability and reaching the target. DARPA's, the Triple Target Terminator (T3) Programme, envisions combined capabilities of Raytheon's AIM-120 and AGM-88 High-speed Anti-Radiation Missile (HARM). No aircraft is invisible, and using standoff weaponry early in an air

campaign to open up weaknesses in an enemy's air defence will be required even for fifth-generation fighter aircraft to operate in the area without assuming excess risk. Development of solid-state airborne laser capability is already underway. The solid-state laser systems defensively create a sanitised sphere of safety around the aircraft, shooting down or critically damaging incoming missiles and approaching aircraft with the laser turrets. Even attacking targets on the ground, such as individual people, with pinpoint precision, or shooting down ballistic missiles and other traditional targets are possibilities. Controlling aircraft's heat signature while using laser weaponry will be an issue. One option is to develop a thermal accumulator. Alternatively, off-board venting is to manage the heat. New liquid-based lasers promise enough energy to bring down an aircraft (about 150KW), yet are small enough to fit on a truck, and should be able to be mounted on a jet fighter.

Evolving Technologies

For long military aviation, doctrines and requirements drove technology. Today, technologies are offering



*FGFA Nausena
(Naval Variant).*

enhanced capabilities that are driving operational employment and tactics. Artificial Intelligence (AI), smart structures, and hybrid systems will dictate the future. Demand for streaming high-quality data requires bandwidth, which involves innovating sensor/processing systems. Mission computer systems and network-centric payload processing units enable onboard data fusion prior to sending to digital links. Thermally efficient, high-performance computing onboard the aircraft is essential. Next-generation avionics would

THE SUKHOI/HAL FIFTH GENERATION FIGHTER AIRCRAFT (FGFA) OR PERSPECTIVE MULTI-ROLE FIGHTER (PMF) IS A FIFTH-GENERATION FIGHTER BEING JOINTLY DEVELOPED BY INDIA AND RUSSIA

be smaller, more efficient and capable of operating under extreme conditions. Gallium Nitride (GaN) is a semiconductor material that is more efficient, easier to cool, and improves reliability for radars. Any system must be designed with aim

for maintaining a competitive advantage in an austere budget environment. The Passive Aeroelastic Tailored (PAT), a uniquely designed composite wing will be lighter, more structurally efficient and have flexibility compared to conventional wings. This wing will maximise structural efficiency, reduce weight and conserve fuel. Hypersonic cruise, fuel cell technologies, hybrid sensors, improved human-machine interface using data analytics and bio-mimicry, combination of materials, apertures and radio frequencies that ensure survival in enemy territory are under development. Things will build faster, better and more affordably, using 3D printing yet ensuring quality and safety standards. Additive 3D manufacture creates a world with spare parts on demand, faster maintenance and repairs, more effective electronics, and customized weapons. The development of



F-35 Lightning II may have finally turned a corner.



*The European Meteor
Air-To-Air Missile*


a hypersonic aircraft would forever change ability to respond to conflict. Nano-materials will control sizes, shapes and compositions, and significantly reduce weight creating stronger structures for air and spacecraft, thus driving down the costs.

Heavy Stealth Revolution

Fighters like the F-35 and F-22 may be stealthy, but their support assets, like aerial tankers—KC-135R, KC-10A, KC-46A are not. The USAF needs ‘heavy stealth revolution’ for low observable tankers, transports, bombers and ‘flying sensor and communications trucks’, as these will be targeted. The USAF could adapt the new stealth bomber design for the stealth tanker role. It will also give ability to insert special operations teams deep behind enemy lines via a stealthy high-altitude penetrating transport.

Action India

Japanese sixth-generation fighter would be based on concept of aircraft informed, intelligent and instantaneous. Japan already conducted the first flight of the Mitsubishi X-2 Shinshin test-bed aircraft for this project. Russia says the aircraft will most likely be pilotless. For now, the FGFA Sukhoi Su-57 is being inducted. The Mikoyan MiG-41 is a sixth-generation jet fighter interceptor aircraft, currently, being developed for the Russian Air Force. France and Germany announced they would jointly develop a new combat aircraft to replace the Eurofighter, Tornado and Rafale. It is likely to be a twin-seat “system of systems” aircraft acting as a combat platform as well as controlling UCAV’s. The UK is committing to a next generation fighter programme to potentially replace the Eurofighter Typhoon post-2030, however, the Eurofighter

Typhoon has since had its intended service life extended to around 2040. China is still evolving its J-20 and J-31. Some Chinese publications are talking of a sixth-generation aircraft, referred to as Huolong (Fire Dragon). But, as on date, China has serious limitations on radar, avionics, and engine technologies. The Sukhoi/HAL Fifth Generation Fighter Aircraft (FGFA) or Perspective Multi-role Fighter (PMF) is a fifth-generation fighter being developed by India and Russia. The Indian version will be a two-seater for pilot and co-pilot/Weapon Systems Operator (WSO). The HAL Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA) is an Indian programme of a fifth-generation fighter aircraft. It is a single-seat, twin-engine, stealth super-maneuverable all weather multirole fighter aircraft. India needs to think ahead, lest we get left behind again. 

ARMS CONTROL

An effective arms control regime is a prerequisite for conflict de-escalation. In Syria, where global and regional powers have their vested interests, the UN Arms Trade Treaty has been flouted by one and all. Civilians trapped in the Syria's numerous war zones have paid a heavy price of this wilful connivance between arms exporting and importing countries and the intermediaries. It would not be difficult task to trace the origin and destination of arms consignments, if a fair investigation is allowed. Certain nations rake in moolah, while Syria bleeds.



Protesters perform as victims and rescuers during a demonstration against chemical attacks in Syria.

Syrian civil war is a misnomer. Starting from a feeble unrest staged by students in the southern city of Deraa in March 2011, cataclysmic events have turned it into a

complex conflict situation having domestic, regional and global dimensions. Multiple interests—religious, regional and strategic, fanning the conflict are at work. The plight of a nation, which was once peaceful and moderately

prosperous, until the Arab Spring-inspired protests broke out and the government chose to crush the movement, is almost neglected. Population centres have been destroyed. About half a million people have lost lives, six million



have been displaced internally and an equal number having been migrated to the neighbouring countries. The collateral damage of war in terms of civilian casualties and destruction of civil amenities has been extensive. The war in Syria is truly a global conflict.

Syria has been ruled by Assad family since 1971. Bashar al-Assad, the present President succeeded his father in 2000. Assads' belong to a minority Alawite sect aligned to Shia Islam, who wields power in a Sunni majority country. The ongoing war is a *magnum opus* of a sordid kind; protagonist galore – global and regional powers; neighbours, pro and anti-government forces; foreign militias, terrorists, mercenaries and warlords.

Global Powers

The United States has always played a key role in the Middle East. It supports Israel, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and other oil-rich Gulf states. The US has observed restraint in supporting anti-Assad groups, as most of them have linkages with terrorist organisations. Timber Sycamore, a CIA-run covert programme launched in early 2013 to support rebel groups in Syria was called off by Trump Administration. The US-led coalition of Western and Middle Eastern countries has been striking at the Al Qaeda, the Islamic State (IS) and pro-Assad forces in Syria and Iraq since 2014. Of late, US' support to Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) has irked Turkey, its NATO ally, which has serious stakes in the conflict.

Russian interest in Syria dates back to 1970s for maintaining presence in the Mediterranean and countering the US influence in the Middle East. Conflicts in Iraq, Libya and Syria had weakened the Russian position in the region. In 2015, Russia entered the conflict to support beleaguered Assad regime through its sustained air strikes against anti-Assad forces—Al Qaeda and IS. The Russian support has proved crucial for Assad. Its aerial bombardments have relieved pressure on Damascus and helped the government forces to wrest back control of many enclaves held by rebels and terrorists. Syria receives its military hardware from Russia, most of it bankrolled by Iran. Syrian port of Tartus in the Mediterranean Sea and Hmeimim air base in Latakia province has been given to Russia on a 49-year lease in December 2017. Russian diplomatic support at the United Nations (UN) has been crucial. It has used its veto power to block Western-sponsored sanctions on Syria on many occasions. China, too, has supported Russia at the UN.

Regional Powers

Iran, a Shia majority country, is a major stakeholder in the conflict. Despite the opposition from the US and its allies, Iran counters the regional influence of Saudi Arabia and other Sunni-majority Gulf countries effectively. It has been propping up Assad regime with men, material and money. Much to the chagrin of Israel, Iran also supports Hezbollah in the neighbouring Lebanon. Thousands of Shia fighters drawn from Iran, Iraq,



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Afghanistan, Pakistan and Lebanon are fighting in Syria drawing support by Iran.

Amidst all the destruction and chaos, Israel – a US protégé, sits pretty, consolidating its position and economic development. It is watching the situation in Syria keenly. Besides Hezbollah, there are far too many terrorists groups in the fray—too close for comfort. It occasionally hits out at Syria and Lebanon to attack Iranian and Hezbollah targets. Iran and Saudi Arabia are its traditional adversaries, though the latter has mellowed down under the US influence. A stable Syria is in the interest of Israel.

Saudi Arabia is a major patron of rebel and Islamists groups doling out military and financial aid. Kingdom's main worry is the rise of IS and the spread of Al Qaeda in the Middle East and Africa. Riyadh and Tehran are locked in a rivalry in the Middle East. Saudi Arabia and other Gulf States are part of US-led coalition. Jordan, Syria's southern neighbour, serves as a conduit for covert aid to rebels and Islamist groups.

Syria's northern neighbour, Turkey, is a military power to reckon with. It is faced with an internal security situation due to its Kurd population. Sizeable population of Kurds live in south-eastern Turkey as well as in the contiguous areas of Syria, Iraq, Iran and Armenia. Turkish Kurds have been fighting for autonomy for three decades and their Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) has been proscribed by

Turkey. Turkey fears unification of Kurd population of Syria, which is jubilant after their victory over IS.

The US' decision to raise a 30,000-strong border security force from SDF – a dominant force, which has driven out IS from Syrian soil, including the caliphate's capital Raqqa, has not gone down well with Turkey. It sees the SDF dominated by Kurdish People's Protection Units

SAUDI ARABIA, TURKEY, JORDAN AND UNITED ARAB EMIRATES HAVE SECURED ARMS EXPORT LICENCES OF WEAPONRY WORTH US \$1.4 BILLION FROM EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

(YPG) militia and accuses that it is an extension of banned PKK. Turkish forces attacked Afrin – a YKK-held Syrian enclave jutting into Turkey's southern borders in January 2018, prompting Syrian forces to enter the fray.

Non-State Actors

The Free Syrian Army (FSA) is a major constituent of the rebel forces opposing Assad's regime. Formed by the Syrian Army defectors, it is withering under the resource crunch and lack of patronage. The FSA has been reduced to

fragmented militia operating in northern and southern Syria with some 25,000-30,000 fighters. Its ranks have also defected to other nationalist *jihadi* and terrorist outfits operating under the banner of Syrian Islamic Front. Wary of the shifting ideology and loyalty of the ranks and file, the US has refrained from supporting FSA with military aid. FSA's splinter groups having radical Islamist ideology have joined groups like Jaish al-Islam and Ahrar al-Sham.

Al Qaeda had wielded influence in the Middle East and Africa through its physical presence or proxies. It entered Syrian conflict in January 2012. Mutating into many strains – Al Nusra Front, Jabhat Fateh al Sham, it dominates the Idlib province. In 2013, a merger offer by Islamic State in Iraq to form Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant was turned down by Al Qaeda. While the focus and efforts of the western forces has been on the IS, the Al Qaeda quietly thrived and consolidated in Syria. Several Islamist rebel and terrorists groups have joined to form Hayat Tahrir al Sham (HTS). Internecine skirmishes with rival group Ahrar al Sham and IS for dominance of Idlib have been common. Espousing the local issues in Syria, Al Qaeda has emerged as a dominant rebel organisation.

Growing from the Al Qaeda in Iraq, the IS have had a meteoric rise in Syria and Iraq. It entered Syrian conflict in 2011. Between 2013-2015, it captured large territories in Syria and Iraq, including



the cities of Raqqa, Mosul and Kirkuk, and, oil and gas fields of Deir ez-Zur in Syria. A US-led coalition and ground fighting by SDF and YPF forces in Syria and Iraq Army, Kurdish forces and Shia militias gradually wrested control of the population centres and country side from IS. The IS, which once ran its Caliphate from Raqqa, has been routed.

Hezbollah, a potent force from neighbouring Lebanon is fighting alongside the pro-Assad forces in Syria since 2013. Its support to Assad regime has been crucial in averting a near certain capitulation. Being a Shia organisation, it is backed by Iran. Israel, which sees it as a potent threat keeps attacking it inside Syria and Lebanon.

The Arms Control

NBC Weapons

Syria had pursued a nuclear programme with North Korean help. A nuclear reactor on the banks of the Euphrates at Deir ez-Zur, capable of producing weapon grade plutonium was under construction, but in September 2007, Israel bombed the site before it could go critical.

It was long suspected that Syria had chemical weapons means of delivery through bombs, missiles and rockets. The Syrian Government had acknowledged the possession of chemical weapons in July 2012. In March and August 2013, rebel forces' strongholds in the North and in Damascus were attacked with chemical weapons killing

hundreds of civilians. The UN constituted investigation team confirmed the use of deadly sarin nerve gas in the attack, but failed to apportion the blame on the perpetrator(s).



President of Syria Bashar al-Assad and Secretary of the Russian Security Council Nikolai Patrushev.

Anticipating an armed retribution from the UN Security Council (UNSC), Syria joined the Chemical Weapons Convention in September 2013. In June 2014, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), confirmed that it had disarmed the Syrian Government of its chemical weapons. The suspicion of international community that Syria did not reveal its entire stockpile for elimination was proved right when in August 2015, the Assad regime again used chlorine gas on civilians in the besieged area.

A year later, the OPCW indicted the government forces in two incidents and the IS in one incident of using the chlorine gas. Undeterred and emboldened

by Russia's entry into conflict and a joint veto by Russia and China on UNSC resolution calling for sanctions against the Syria Government, Assad regime in April 2017, again used sarin

on the rebel-held town of Khan Sheikhou in Idlib. The attack had killed 58 people and injured many others.

Despite the robust denial by Syria and Russia about their complicity in the attack, US on April 6, 2017, in a sudden development, launched a barrage of Tomahawk cruise missiles on Shayrat air base in central Syria. It was suspected that Syrian or Russian jets carried out the attack from here. The OPCW-UN joint investigative mechanism indicted the Assad regime guilty of using sarin nerve agent in Khan Sheikhou.

Syria is a signatory to Biological Weapons Convention since 1972. In 2012, the Syrian Government

acknowledged possessing biological warfare capability and in 2014, admitted having production facility and stocks of Ricin (a bio-toxin derived from the seeds of the castor plant - *Ricinus communis*).

The Arms Trail

Like the complexities of this multi-layered conflict, the issue of arms control in Syria is equally intricate and challenging. Its dimensions include the chemical and biological weapons, short and long range missiles, anti-aircraft guns, tanks, artillery, machine guns, assault rifles, explosives, mines and munitions. The inventory is exhaustive and covers the entire requirement of military hardware to sustain a long drawn war. Supply of arms to the warring factions comes from armed intervention, direct transfer, diversion, black market, smuggling, barter and battlefield captures. The most common form is, of course, the consignment diversion. It happens at every level to obliterate the trail of weapon transfer. Arms and ammunition under export licence are delivered to a frontline State and the consignment is distributed to various groups.

With multiple players, espousing disparate regional and geostrategic interests, supply of arms and ammunition in the Syrian conflict is an open violation of UN Arms Trade Treaty (UNATT) – 2014. There are governments, non-State actors, arms brokers, smugglers and warlords involved at every stage.



Saudi Army artillery fire shells towards Houthi positions from the Saudi border with Yemen.

Iran, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, United States, Qatar and Jordan have emerged as major countries, bankrolling the arms purchases from different sources.

Beleaguered Assad's regime receives support from Iran and Russia. Iran uses land routes via Iraq to supply arms to Syria and Hezbollah in Lebanon. Russia, which joined the conflict on the side of Syria in September 2015 by bombing rebels' positions uses sea and air route to ensure supply.

To arm Syrian rebel groups like SDF and YPG, the CIA and Pentagon were running a clandestine arms supply programme since 2013. According to a joint report in

September 2017, by Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Programme and the Balkan Investigative Reporting Network, Soviet era arms worth US \$2.2 billion procured from East European countries were supplied to rebels. It is widely alleged that the documentary evidences, which could trace the entire supply chain from supplier to end users were tampered. A generous cache of arms so delivered, found its way to terror factions fighting in Syria.

Saudi Buys Ex-Soviet Weapons

Armies of Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Jordan and United Arab Emirates are equipped and maintained on western arms and had not evinced any interest in erstwhile Soviet arms. Since 2012, these countries




THE EUROPEAN UNION (EU) HAD A BAN IN PLACE; BRITAIN AND FRANCE FORCED THE EU TO LIFT THE BAN

(including artillery and anti-aircraft guns) in black markets thriving on the Syria-Turkey and Iraq-Turkey borders. It is nothing but an irony of fate that even Syria purchased oil and gas from the IS.

Arms supply to Syrian conflict is not limited to small arms and ammunition alone; the inventory includes heavy weaponry like tanks, armoured personnel carriers, artillery, anti-aircraft guns, heavy machine guns, etc. Even man-portable surface to air missiles found their way into conflict. Many aircraft have been lost to either ground fire or missiles in the conflict.

Conclusion

An effective arms control regime is a prerequisite for conflict de-escalation. In Syria, where global and regional powers have their vested interests, the UN ATT has been flouted by one and all. Civilians trapped in the Syria's numerous war zones have paid a heavy price of this wilful connivance between arms exporting and importing countries and the intermediaries. It would not be difficult task to trace the origin and destination of arms consignments, if a fair investigation is allowed. Certain nations rake in moolah, while Syria bleeds. 

have secured arms export licences of weaponry worth US \$1.4 billion from East European countries. Scrutiny of air and sea transportation data has indicated the cargo landed in Syria through Jordan to arm the Islamist rebels.

Russia has also availed this opportunity to test its new weapons in a war zone on the 'live targets'. According to Russia's Deputy Defence Minister Yury Borisov, over 600 new weapons and military equipment items have been put on combat trial in Syria.

Syrian conflict has proved to be a catalyst to arms trade in the region. Arms manufacturers, traders, brokers and smugglers are raking in moolah. Arms industries in eastern and

central Europe have stepped up their production to meet the surge in demand.

EU Jumps In

The European Union (EU) had a ban in place on arming the Syrian opposition forces since May 2011. In May 2013, Britain and France forced the EU to lift the ban paving way for supply of arms to rebels from European nations.

The rise of IS during Syrian conflict has added a whole new dimension to arms procurement through clandestine means. Straddling large swathes of territory in Syria and Iraq, IS had oil and gas assets of Deir ez-Zur in eastern Syria and Mosul in Iraq under its control. Awash with oil revenues (to the tune of US \$1 million a day), it sold its oil and bought weapons



Chinese and Pakistani ministers during a meeting.

BEIJING SUPPORTING PAK PROXY WAR

US have been harsh and blunt with Pakistan in the last one year and have cut down on military assistance. But has this shown result in terms of Pakistan's alteration of its strategic calculus? The answer is 'No'. Pakistan continues to support Taliban and Haqqani network in Afghanistan and has continued its sub-conventional war in India. Clearly, suspension of US assistance does not deter Pakistan anymore.

US - P a k i s t a n relations have been on a decline for the last six years and Washington has been regularly expressing its dissatisfaction and anger to Pakistan regarding its active support to terror groups. The

relationship took an unyielding shift with the announcement of President Trump's Afghan policy which talked about four pillars, including Washington's dealings with Pakistan. Trump's announcement carried a firm message for Pakistan. While Trump acknowledged that "Pakistan has been a

valued partner"; he excoriated Pakistan for harbouring criminals and terrorists. Washington has been quite unhappy with Islamabad's support to the Taliban and the Haqqani network, which have been targeting the US soldiers in Afghanistan.



Frustrated America

The American frustrations with Pakistan came out, once again, very harshly in President Trump's New Year Day tweet. Trump, in his tweet, blasted Pakistan, "The United States has foolishly given Pakistan 33 billion dollars in aid over the last 15 years, and they have given us nothing but lies and deceit, thinking of our leaders as fools. They give safe haven to the terrorists we hunt in Afghanistan, with little help. No more!"

Trump's tweet generated livid reactions in Pakistan resulting in firm, defensive statements from their policy-makers and angry protests on the streets of Karachi raising anti-Trump/US slogans. Pakistan's Defence Minister responded to Trump's tweet:

"Pak as anti-terror ally has given free to US: land and air communication, military bases and intel cooperation that decimated Al-Qaeda over last 16 years, but they have given us nothing but invective and mistrust. They overlook cross-border safe havens of terrorists who murder Pakistanis."

Last year (2017), post-announcement of Trump Afghan policy, Pakistan Army Chief Qamar Javed Bajwa, during a meeting with David Hale, US ambassador to Pakistan, said, "We are not looking for any material or financial assistance.... but trust, understanding and acknowledgement of our contributions". (*Al Jazeera*)

A readout from a meeting of Pakistan National Security Committee said that Trump's statement "negated the decades of sacrifices made by the Pakistani nation – a nation that has contributed so significantly to regional and global security and peace."

Recalcitrant Pakistan

While the US stance with Pakistan is not new and the Obama Administration openly condemned Pakistan's support to terror groups, what is new is *Pakistan's response to the US positioning*. Islamabad's response to the US has been blunt, indicating that it is not ready to absorb Washington's accusations.

Islamabad has received lavish American financial and military assistance amounting to approximately \$33 billion from 2002-2017. However, there has been a steady decline in US aid post Osama's killing in 2011, which convinced a majority of Americans that Islamabad was not sincere in its efforts to counter terrorism. Taking a taut stance, Washington has slashed its Foreign Military Financing (FMF) to Pakistan from US \$255 million to US \$100 million for 2018 fiscal. Recent reports suggest that the US Congress has been asked to approve \$336 million of civil and military aid to Pakistan for the next fiscal year. The proposed military assistance includes \$80 million from the FMF fund, \$20 million less as compared to the last fiscal year. (*DAWN*)



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**ISLAMABAD'S
RESPONSE TO
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Pakistan Swings Towards China

US and Pakistan alliance goes back to the late 1950s and early 1960s when Pakistan joined the military alliance created by the US (SEATO and CENTO) to counter Soviet Union's military and strategic moves. Pakistan became a recipient of US aid and equipment and the qualitative boost which came from the training of the Pakistan Army in the US military training schools. Suspension of the US aid on April 12, 1967, created tremendous confusion in Pakistan's defence planning and added to Pakistan's desperation to look for options in order to acquire high technology weapons. This development contributed largely to Pakistan's inclination towards China for weapon supplies and further military assistance. Pakistan-China alliance started in the 1960s and in the late 1960s and 1970s, Pakistan received significant amount of interest free economic aid and military equipment from China.

Afghan Jihad Years

The second US-Pakistan alliance commenced following the Soviet Union invasion in Afghanistan. Islamabad, under General Zia's regime, received an aid of \$3.2 billion from the US and the much desired F-16s. In the 1980s, while Pakistan was the frontline state for the US, Chinese military assistance continued. Although arms from China were technologically not as superior as from the West, however they were capable systems, were affordable and provided quantity to boost

Pakistan's military power. In fact, by the early 1980s, China had provided Pakistan about 65 per cent of its aircraft and roughly 75 per cent of its tanks (*Cheema*). Pakistan faced strict US sanctions in 1990s because of its ongoing nuclear programme, and the American military and economic aid came to a halt. The sanctions were highly damaging in nature as they not only suspended the US military aid and assistance but the procurement of essential spares was also blocked. Sino-Pakistan military partnership flourished under the umbrella of US sanctions and both nations entered into significant defence deals including deal for the production

LAST TWO DECADES OF AGGRESSIVE CHINESE SUPPORT HAS HELPED PAKISTAN'S MILITARY BUILD-UP SIGNIFICANTLY

of the Karakoram-8 jet trainer and eventually, the co-manufacturing of JF-17s, which supposedly will form the backbone of the Pakistan Air Force.

GWOT Interlude

The 9/11 led Pakistan into its third alliance with Washington and Islamabad became an ally in the global war on terror. Pakistan

received substantive military and security US aid, was designated a non-NATO ally and acquired American equipment including F-16s and P3Cs under the Excess Defence Equipment (EDAs).

The China-Pakistan alliance grew at a much more rapid pace given Beijing's strategic interests in the region and its strong desire to neutralise India's growth and counter US influence. Over the last five decades, China has provided all out military assistance to Pakistan on three critical fronts; export of defence equipment, assistance in building Pakistan's indigenous defence capability and its nuclear arsenal. Pakistan's military modernisation and evolving military and nuclear muscle owes a lot to Chinese assistance. With the commencement of the projects under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and Beijing's proposed investment of over \$50 billion, Islamabad is expected to reap significant economic and strategic dividends in the future.

Chinese Gameplan

Beijing has adopted an extremely supportive posturing for Pakistan in response to US warnings and statements. Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang reacted to Trump's criticism of Pakistan and said, "Pakistan has made enormous efforts and sacrifice for the fight against terrorism and has made very outstanding contribution on the global cause of terrorism. The international community should acknowledge that."

BEIJING HAS NEVER QUESTIONED PAKISTAN'S STRATEGIC CALCULUS AND ITS SUPPORT FOR TERROR

In a significant move, a day after Trump's tweet, Pakistan's central bank announced its decision of replacing the dollar with the yuan for bilateral trade and investment with Beijing.

US have been harsh and blunt with Pakistan in the last one year and have cut down on military assistance. But has this shown result in terms of Pakistan's alteration of its strategic calculus? The answer is 'No'. Pakistan continues to support Taliban and Haqqani network in Afghanistan and has continued its sub-conventional war in India. Clearly, suspension of US assistance does not deter Pakistan anymore. Pakistan's state of military modernisation today is very different from where it was in 1970s or 1990s (when US suspended its assistance). Last two decades of aggressive Chinese support has helped Pakistan's military build-up significantly. Pakistan sees CPEC as a game changer although how much it actually gains remains to be seen.

The US and Pakistan will continue to require each other's support. The US wants to maintain its



Chen Zhu addresses Asia-Pacific parliamentary forum in Hanoi.

military presence in Afghanistan and Islamabad's support is critical in this context. Pakistan would require US support on the international economic forums; International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. However, Pakistan's dependence on the US has reduced significantly given Beijing's military, economic and diplomatic support.

Beijing And Terror Calculus

Although Beijing has been focussed on Pakistan's defence capabilities and now has high economic stakes in Pakistan, it has never questioned Pakistan's strategic calculus and its support for terror. Beijing needs to understand that though Pakistan can become strong with its military and economic assistance, Islamabad's tacit affirmation of the policy of supporting terrorism will not allow it to be a strong nation. The intensity and level of terrorism in

Pakistan today clearly indicates a blowback of its own policies. China, itself, is facing violence and unrest in Xinjiang province and has been concerned about extremists in the province being trained in Pakistan. Chinese nationals have been attacked in Balochistan and a senior Chinese executive Chen Zhu was shot dead in Karachi in February 2018. The incidents of attacks on the Chinese nationals were not unpredicted and CPEC is accompanied by severe security challenges.

Beijing needs to think seriously on these lines and needs to influence Pakistan's strategic choices. Pakistan's reliance and relationship with China has strengthened following Trump's stance. For regional peace and stability, China needs to utilise its clout and relationship with Pakistan to influence and change its policy of supporting terror groups. **DSA**



KERALA

THE EPICENTRE

There are reports of Maoists joining hands with *jihadis*. If the experiment of alliances between CPI (M) and the *jihadis* in Kerala succeeded in forming a counter against the nationalist forces, its impact will be disastrous not only for India but for the entire world.

The Love Jihad has become the latest menace in the Indian society. The Hadiya case brought this issue to the fore and many stories were framed for the Hadiya case. Many secular fronts and liberal thinkers wrote

that it was an imagined story by right wing organisations. As things moved and courts took cognizance of the matter, things became more transparent. The NIA found the involvement of a team who indulge in the process of conversion of Hindu and Christian girls to Islam. Further,

conversion leads to migration to Afghanistan and Iraq where girls are being deported. Hadiya case is not an isolated case, there are many girls who were being trapped and converted to Islam. Kerala is the epicentre but many other States are also finding cases of Love Jihad. There are



many questions which need to be probed? Why is it called Love Jihad? Who are involved in this nefarious design? Is it related to Islamic Terror outfits?

Concerted Effort

Jihad is an Arabic word, which is closely associated with Islam and its history. It literally means making a determined effort to oppose something or achieve an ideal or a noble goal. However, with the rise of extremism in many countries, it is now being used rather negatively to denote the use of violence. The phrase 'Love Jihad' is a rather recent development which means using love and sex to convert people to Islam or establishing dominance over them. It refers to any attempt made by religious zealots and Muslim fanatics to lure Hindu and Christian women into a conjugal or sexual relationship and use it as an opportunity to convert them by force, indoctrination and persuasion. Love Jihad or Romeo Jihad is a process under which young Muslim boys and men target young girls for conversion into Islam by pretending as real lovers. In December 2009, Justice KT Sankaran of Kerala High Court found indications of forceful conversions. He stated that from police reports it was clear that there was a "concerted effort" to convert women with the blessings of some outfits. Karnataka is also the target of this menace.

Splinter Groups

India's federal anti-terrorism agency, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) recently informed

India's Supreme Court that it was scrutinising 90 cases in the southern state of Kerala where Hindu women were allegedly lured or forced to convert to Islam and marry Muslim men over the last two years. The NIA suspects the role of the radical Muslim outfit, Popular Front of India (PFI). There are reports that around 5,000 people have converted to Islam over the past few years. There are many States which have passed anti-conversion bill in the Assembly. It is an organised effort involving many players working in sync to trap a girl. The recruiter is identified, trained and funded. In Kerala, there are many cases of the girls migrating with her husband to Gulf. The sources confirmed that the IS is very active in Kerala. The state government provides all kinds of support to expand Love Jihad due to vote bank politics and ideological affiliations.

The radical Islamist organisation, Popular Front of India (PFI), has deep roots in Kerala. There are reports that 22 Keralities have joined ISIS. After ban on SIMI, a radical Islamist organisation namely National Democratic Front (NDF) was formed. Simultaneously, Abdul Nassar Madani launched a Muslim outfit called 'Islamic Seva Sangh' aka ISS. The PFI is an umbrella organisation of various political and non-political entities and trusts like Campus Front of India, All India Imam Council Confederation of Human Rights Organisations. According to a Home Ministry Dossier, the PFI has around 60,000



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**LOVE JIHAD OR
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REAL LOVERS**

regular members and 85,000 sympathisers in Kerala. Sathya Sarani Islamic Dawa Institute, a mysterious Islamic conversion centre also comes under the PFI.

Kerala used to be known for 100 per cent literacy and overall development, leaving other states far behind. Since 1990s, Kerala erred and picked up many things which turned to be adverse and painful. Hadiya case has been propagated by left-liberals as a violation of individual liberty. It was not like any other girl who fell in love with a male of other religion through the web of social media and got married. The script seemed of a typical Hindi movie. It was properly planned and plotted by a group of people who are involved in conversion. The burqa revolution and symptoms of Arab culture spanning in the northern districts of Kerala are a wakeup call. The Akhil Bharatiya Vidhyarti Parishad took this issue seriously and staged a strong protest in Kerala. Top officials of ABVP including Sunil Ambekar, National Organising Secretary, ABVP, played a key role in highlighting the agenda which was not published in the public domain.

Modernity and Radicalisation

Post-Independence, India has a unique conceptualisation of modernity. The marriage of a Hindu girl with Muslim boy was considered a great leap of modernity. The Nehruvian socialism in the name of secularism collaborated and was planted in campuses. To a



A protest in Bhopal against alleged 'Love Jihad' cases.

large extent, the divisive agenda worked. It was more systematic because Kerala was under the political system of Left or the Congress combined. The change of political system at the centre

story. The youth of Kerala have been migrating to Gulf and other Islamic countries. Many of them move to Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Islamic countries. Kerala received huge

FUNDING FROM RADICAL ORGANISATIONS IN GULF COUNTRIES HAS NEVER BEEN ADDRESSED IN KERALA BY THE STATE OR PREVIOUS CENTRAL GOVERNMENTS

took it seriously and the issue was picked up by RSS. Many leaders of the organisation went to northern parts of Kerala and highlighted the matter with the Home Ministry. Ultimately, the ISIS recruitments and radicalisation caught the attention of the nation.

Factors For Radicalisation

Kerala is not a poor state. The mushrooming of Islamic organisations narrates a different

amounts of funds from Saudi Arabia which were systematically used to wean the minds of youth. Over a period of time, some of the northern districts of Kerala adapted the lifestyles of the Arabs. The girls started wearing Arab dress code with burqa. Schools and colleges also mushroomed with bearded males. TV evangelists like Zakir Naik became the most popular figures in the State. These were the early signals of radicalisation of a State



which was doing much better than any other state. In all cases, Muslim youth are radicalised by the educated class of Muslims such as Islamic clerics, Islamist editors, and mosque leaders. Hindu and Christians cannot open their shops during Ramzan. Charitable and black money has been pumped in Kerala in a major way, and mosques and churches are receiving lots of it. All NGOs of Islamists organisations have links with political parties. They enjoy influence and power over them. Popular Front of India (PFI) has been taking over control of mosques and some Muslims under its umbrella.

Babri Masjid Effect

The teaching of history in India is tilted towards the Nehruvian ideology. The attempt was to dilute the Hindu culture and its well-structured value system. On the name of liberal thought, Indian treasure of identity was distorted in favour of Muslim heroes. There are many examples which were placed in syllabi to train the young minds of India. One of them was the saga of Tipu Sultan. The attack by Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan were turning points in radicalisation of Kerala Muslims; the recent debate on Padmavati is a glaring example. This proves the fact the history has distorted the image of Hindu culture. The demolition of Babri Masjid led to a spree of initiatives in Kerala to sharpen the Islamic radicalisation.

Organised Radicalisation

The Mujahid movement preaches a puritan version of Islam and opposes Sufi practices. It is from

their corpus of ideas that grew the radical Islamist group National Development Front (NDF), now known as PFI which has roots in the Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI), a banned militant group which seceded from the Jamaat-e-Islami. By 1980, the Kerala branch of SIMI had declared slogans such as destroy nationalism, reinstate caliphate. Newspaper like Madhyamam, which is published by the Jammat-e-Islami, are radicalising Muslim youngsters. Radicalisation proposed to establish Islamic State. It creates a hate wave against the Hindu culture. There is an attempt to wean away Muslim youngster from local society.

IN MUSLIM DOMINATED REGIONS LIKE KOZHIKODE, MALAPPURAM AND KASARGOD, THERE IS SIGN OF ARABIAN CULTURE PERCOLATING DOWN

Communist/Jihadi Cocktail

Marxists are also rationalising Islamic extremism. Marxism thrives on poverty, but Kerala is not poor. In Muslim-dominated regions like Kozhikode, Malappuram and Kasargod, there is sign of Arabian culture percolating down. Keralite restaurants advertise Arabic foods.

Black Burqa especially Saudi version is also a major concern. Also, northern Kerala looks like a mini-Pakistan. Dattatreya Hosabale, Sahsanghchalak of RSS said, "There is definitely some nexus between *jihadi* terrorists operating in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) cadres". The same logic was endorsed by an historian. Tarek Fatah, author of Pakistan-origin, said, "The alliance between Islamist and Leftists-Sharia'h-Bolshevism is a dangerous threat to free speech and democracy". What needs to be added here is that the nexus between the radicals Islamists is not only limited to the southern states or in India, but it is a global event. In almost every country, radical Islamists are not only forming an alliance with the Communists but are also being *comrades de guerre* in a fight against the common enemies. The attempt to form unity and alliance between the Communists and the Islamists in India is not something new.

Moreover, in 1957, Kerala became the first State in India to choose a Communist government. It has substantial Muslim population. Every third house of Kerala has a person working in the Gulf and remittances constitute almost 35 per cent of Kerala's Gross State domestic product.

Political Implications

There are reports of Maoists joining hands with *jihadis*. If the experiment of alliances between CPI (M) and the *jihadis* in Kerala succeeded in forming a counter



The largest number of emigrants originated from the Muslim-dominated Malappuram district in Kerala.

against the nationalist forces, its impact will be disastrous not only for India but for the entire world. The outfits have links with the Lashkar-e-Toiba and the Hizbul Mujahideen. Saudi Arabia pledged 2.5 million Saudi Riyal to Islamic Mission Trust, Malappuram in Kerala, which was registered with the MHA. Funding from radical organisations in Gulf countries has never been addressed in Kerala by the State or previous Central governments.

PFI has a network with National Development Front (Kerala), Manitha Neethi Pasarai (Tamil Nadu), Karnataka Forum for dignity (Karnataka), and all organisations with radical ideology. There are many other organisations splashed in other states like Peace Educational Foundation (Kerala), Jamait

ul Mufihaat (Hyderabad), Discover Islam Education Trust (Bengaluru), Tauheed Educational Trust (Bihar), Islamic Research and Dawah Centre (Mumbai), Islamic Information Centre (Mumbai), have emerged during the last few years which have provided direct access to indoctrination materials.

Serious Consequences

Recently, Ministry of Home has identified the two districts of Kerala as Naxal-affected districts which is new development. It has evolved due to the Left government and Islamic terror outfits which were given free hand by the State government. The liberal cloak has swung from left to right. The perceived notion that Liberalism cannot move in the right direction has been proved wrong. Modi government is protecting the constitutional

rights of all sections of the society. Despite the concerted attempts by the opposition that minority are threatened, the public space has been scrapped; the freedom of press is curbed. These allegations have been proved wrong. The Communist regime in Kerala has expanded the radicalisation to a large extent. That is why Sunil Ambekar, National Organising Secretary of ABVP and thinker, said: "I would like to tell the comrades here that at least learn from your counterparts in China, Russia and Nepal, they are doing something for their country and they are not like you." His words are true. Indian polity has been facing the tremendous challenge from cocktail of *jihadis* and Communists. If Kerala is not reined in, India will have to face multiple challenges concerning national security. **DSA**



DIALOGUE AND DENUCLEARISATION

The suspension-for-suspension proposal, which calls for the suspension of nuclear and missile activities by the DPRK and the suspension of large-scale military exercises by the US and South Korea, seeks to bring the two sides back to the negotiating table, thus, initiating the first step of the dual-track approach, or rather the initial stage of this programme.

With their remarkable success in sending a joint team

for the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics in early February 2018, South (Republic of Korea) and North Korea (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) have demonstrated their diplomatic capability to de-escalate the crisis in the Korean peninsula which was getting intense with each passing day. The event has brought about a remarkable thaw in tensions between the two Koreas.

Indeed, the South Korean diplomatic efforts to reach out to North Korea have paid off. Such has been the impact of South Korean President Moon Jae-in's *Sports Diplomacy* that the two sides have already decided to discuss the possibility of a

Summit-level dialogue between North Korea's top leader Kim Jong-un and the South Korean President.

However, a few months ago, the situation was not as good as it is today. As a matter of fact, with growing war of words between North Korea's Kim Jong-un and Donald Trump, the President of the US, the Korean peninsula was inching dangerously close to a violent conflict involving North and South Korea with perhaps the US, and other powers also getting dragged into that.

Sighs Of Relief

The recent developments have brought in a sigh of relief to China as well. Conflict between the two Koreas, directly involving the US and Japan was a difficult proposition for China, which was looked at with suspicion by some



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**CHINA AND
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WOULD TOPPLE
KIM JONG-UN'S
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in the US administration as a country indirectly supporting the North Korean dictatorship. While China did try to come out clean on that front, gaining some appreciation of Donald Trump in the process, but apprehensions regarding China fueling the North Korean ambitions remained somewhat unchallenged. To steer clear of such allegations, China took steps such as blacklisting some of the companies from North Korea, which were involved in doing business with China. China also supported the recent United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions aimed at imposing stricter sanctions on North Korea. In 2017 alone, China voted in favour of three Security Council Resolutions (2371, 2375, 2397).

Need For Constructive Dialogue

One cannot possibly say that China has never aided North Korea. While it is not possible to assess with precision the quantum and extent of Chinese influence on North Korea, it is evident that China, too, did not want North Korea to be provocative and aggressive beyond a certain threshold. This is obvious from the fact that the first time when the leaders from the two countries met since December 2015, China termed the meeting as 'the right

track of settlement through dialogue and consultation.' China's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Geng Shuang in his regular press conference on January 3, 2018 stated:

"China maintains that relevant parties of the Korean Peninsula issue should seize the positive tendency in the situation on the Peninsula and work for the shared goal. China is willing to continue to play a positive and constructive role in bringing the issue back to the right track of peaceful settlement through dialogue and consultation and achieving the denuclearisation and long-term peace and tranquillity of the Peninsula." ^[1]

From the above, it is clear that for China, it is in the interest of the Korean peninsula as well as its own self that the peninsula remains tranquil. Realising that from mid-2017, the US administration was getting increasingly involved in the inter-Korean tensions, China called upon both North Korea and the US to maintain calm. The Chinese leadership also advised Donald Trump-led US administration to show more diplomatic finesse in dealing with North Korea. China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi had made several statements in that

THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE, HOWEVER, WOULD BE TO NOT LET SOUTH KOREA LOSE HOPE THAT PEACE WITH NORTH KOREA IS IMPOSSIBLE

regard in the past. For instance, on September 18, 2017, he stated, "The current deepening vicious cycle must be broken. Resuming peace talks is an equally important step in implementing Security Council Resolutions." ^[2] While both China and Russia, the two key members of the UNSC, voted against North Korea, they also made their position clear that they do not support tough measures that would topple Kim Jong-un's regime and agreed to cooperate over the matter in bringing peace back to the region. ^[3]

Buffer Against US

China considers North Korea as a buffer state, which has been successful in pushing the US away from Chinese borders. China would never wish to lose that strategic advantage. One of the

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^[1] "Foreign Ministry spokesperson Geng Shuang's Regular Press Conference", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, January 3, 2018
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^[2] "Foreign Ministry spokesperson Geng Shuang's Regular Press Conference", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, January 3, 2018
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^[3] "China calls for peace talks to halt 'vicious cycle' in North Korean nuclear crisis", South China Morning Post, September 19, 2017
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South Korea and U.S. soldiers watch from an observation post during a joint live firing drill.

primary strategic objectives for China in the Korean peninsula has been to reduce, if not minimise, the level of US intervention in the inter-Korean tensions. With that objective in mind, at the height of the inter-Korean tensions, China, in March 2017, suggested the “dual suspension” or “suspension-for-suspension” proposal. At the core of the dual suspension was the aim that both South Korea and the US should agree to halt their joint military exercises and war games in return for North Korea to halt missile and nuclear tests. The Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs strongly pitched for the proposal, calling it ‘a practical step to resolve the crisis.’^[4]

Dual Track Approach

According to the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, China’s proposal for full suspension was based on the dual-track approach. The


dual-track approach was aimed at ‘promoting parallel progress in the denuclearisation of the peninsula and the establishment of a peace mechanism in a synchronised and reciprocal manner, ultimately achieving both goals together. The suspension-for-suspension proposal, which calls for the suspension of nuclear and missile activities by the DPRK and the suspension of large-scale military exercises by the US and South Korea, seeks to bring the two sides back to the negotiating table, thus, initiating the first step of the dual-track approach, or rather the initial stage of this programme.’^[5]

Clearly, for China, the joint military exercises between the US and South Korea has been one of the major hindrances in bringing about the peace in the region. Both China and Russia strongly hold the view that the US-South

Korea military exercises have done more harm than promoting peace and stability in the region. It is, indeed, true that intense US military pressure not only provoked North Korea but also made Kim Jong-un insecure.

South Korean Initiative

Moving forward, it is clear that for coming months, South Korea will try to keep the baton for peace initiative in its hands, overlooking the Japanese or even the US proposal for joint exercises. For China, this is a good situation and in conformity with the Chinese Premier Xi Jinping’s ‘Asia for Asians’ mission, but it demands more ‘out of the box’ initiatives. Persuading North Korea to cut down on its nuclear programme and stop missile testing would be a difficult but essential task before China. At this juncture, when the Trump Administration is moving away from Asia, which is evident from his lack of interest in ASEAN multilateral meetings and withdrawal from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), China would not like to attract the US attention towards Asia solely because of North Korea.

The biggest challenge, however, would be to not let South Korea lose hope that peace with North Korea is impossible. Keeping hope for peace and stability alive in the Korean peninsula is essential but China has to shoulder some responsibility to realise that goal. 

^[4] “China calls for peace talks to halt ‘vicious cycle’ in North Korean nuclear crisis”, South China Morning Post, September 19, 2017 <http://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy-defence/article/2111823/china-calls-talks-halt-vicious-cycle-north-korean>

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DELIVERING A THOUSAND CUTS

Immediately after the killing of Osama bin Laden in Abbottabad in May 2011, Pakistan was put on the watch list of the FATF but that was specifically for money laundering. This time it has been given time till June to confiscate funds available with groups designated by the UN as global terrorists. Pakistan has made a show of shutting down bank accounts and lockers but the heart of the problem is that it is the Pakistan Army Inter-Services Intelligence that distributes financial largesse. According to the anti-India and anti-Afghanistan operations, these groups execute on behalf of ISI.

It should come as no surprise that China has consistently and stridently prevented the global community to take action against Pakistan for its role as the fountainhead of international terrorism, more particularly against its immediate neighbourhood, India and Afghanistan. Chinese diplomacy is replete with instances of interference and bellicosity against its neighbours. Against India, it has encouraged the insurgencies in the northeast by providing sanctuaries, training and weapons to many ethnic groups which have sought separation from India, the Nagas being the first, since before Indian Independence.

Chinese Ambitions

As long ago as the late 1950s, China had floated the idea of a "confederation of Himalayan States inclusive of Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, the North East Frontier Area (now Arunachal Pradesh) and Nagaland". It has



President Xi Jinping meet in Islamabad with Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee Rashad Mahmood and other Defence Chiefs of Pakistan.

already assimilated Nepal within its grand design and is using its military might to intimidate the peace-loving Bhutanese to join its bandwagon. All this is in consonance with the Chinese Quing dynasty's "five finger" claim on territories bordering China ranging from the Himalayas to the Mekong Delta (inclusive of Indochina States of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia).

It taught a military lesson to India in 1962 and attacked Vietnam all along its northern border in 1979 for dislodging the China-supported ultra-hardcore communist Khmer Rouge regime in Cambodia (ex-Kampuchea) which had systematically massacred millions of its own people (highlighted in The Killing Fields movie) to try and establish a utopian State. Hundreds of



skulls of Khmer Rouge victims are still preserved in the former Toul Sleng prison near Phnom Penh. Modern day Cambodia has very close relations with China. It was an early illustration of how far China will go in its game plan of using its proxies to destabilise nations on its periphery that do not subscribe to its expansionist aims.

Before the 1971 liberation of Bangladesh, the former East Wing of Pakistan was being used as a sanctuary and launchpad for terrorist operations by insurgent groups. The Chittagong Hill Tracts was a notorious venue for such operations. The creation of Bangladesh broke this nexus for a while but with the assassination of its founder, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the pro-Pakistan military took over the country and Bangladesh began to be used as a sanctuary for anti-India terrorist organisations. Among them was the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA), whose leader, Paresh Baruah, is currently a guest of China in the Hunan Province

For some years China made out that it had stopped supporting insurgent groups in the northeast of India but events on the ground proved its lie. What, for instance, is Paresh Baruah doing on its lap?

Rise Of Islamic Fundamentalism

In the mid-1980s, during the US-led war against Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, a new phenomenon rose out of the ashes of Afghanistan – the Islamic fundamentalist



Al Qaeda terrorist group led by Osama bin Laden. Based on the ultra-conservative Wahabbi cult precepts, the Pakistani political-military establishment found it to be a veritable goldmine to

FOR SOME YEARS CHINA MADE OUT THAT IT HAD STOPPED SUPPORTING INSURGENT GROUPS IN THE NORTH-EAST OF INDIA BUT EVENTS ON THE GROUND PROVED ITS LIE. WHAT, FOR INSTANCE, IS PARESH BARUAH DOING ON ITS LAP?

fund the war against the Soviets in Afghanistan. Even as the US-led coalition forces were funding Pakistan to deal with the Soviet troops, Pakistan was creating new djinn in its *madrassas* – the Taliban.

As soon as the Soviet troops withdrew from Afghanistan, the Afghan tribal groups that had

opposed them fell to internecine warfare. Pakistan saw in this disarray the answer to its dreams of having a pliant/dependent client government in Kabul with an expansion of its strategic depth as far from India as it could get to avoid reprisals for what the Pakistan Army Inter-Services Intelligence was planning for India.

The Khalistan Debacle

Based on the “two-nation” rationale for its own existence, Pakistan began stoking the Khalistani separatism in revenge for the manner in which India excised its east wing to create Bangladesh during the 1971 War. After a decade of bloodletting, the Khalistan unilateral declaration of independence was crushed putting paid to Pakistani machinations for unraveling the Union of India.

All this suited China because it kept the Indian Armed Forces deployed in internal security duties even as the Chinese People Liberation Army made frequent inroads into vital sectors of the Line of Actual Control in the northern Himalayas.

But the Pakistan Army Inter-Services Intelligence soon changed tack realising that for Muslim Pakistan to stoke Sikh terrorism in Punjab had an intrinsically short shelf-life. It turned its full attention to stoking the Kashmiri separatism based on the Islamic ideology using the splinter groups of the Al Qaeda, United Jihad Council, the Lashkar-e-Toiba and the



The British forgery at the heart of India and China's Tibetan border dispute.

Jaish-e Mohammed and the Hizbul Mujahideen. For more than a decade now, Jammu and Kashmir has been on the boil with daily exchange of heavy artillery fire across Line of Control.

The China Connection

At first, China was chary over the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in the Afghan-Pakistan hinterland because it was facing a deadly separatist movement of Uighurs of the East Turkistan Islamic Movement in its Xianjiang province. Many Uighurs had fought alongside the Al Qaeda and Taliban against the Soviet troops and were battle-hardened and intrepid. There were several cases of attacks on Chinese engineers and workers inside Pakistan and China feared that the desolate Wakhan corridor of northeastern Afghanistan was a likely corridor for the infiltration of ETIM fighters into its vulnerable underbelly. There have been reports and photographs showing Chinese patrols purportedly in the Afghan Wakhan corridor.

That China has made peace with the Pakistan-based Islamist fundamentalist organisations is obvious in the manner in which it shielded the head of the Lashkar-e-Toiba (renamed Jamaat-ud-

FROM NOW TO JUNE, THERE IS ENOUGH TIME FOR BEIJING AND ISLAMABAD TO FIND NEW WAYS TO DUCK INTERNATIONAL SANCTIONS AND CONTINUE THEIR OPERATIONS AS BEFORE

Dawa for camouflage) Hafeez Sayeed and the mastermind of the Jaish-e Mohammad from the concerted Indian attempt to have both of them declared to be global terrorists and a condemnation of Pakistan for allowing them to operate from its soil. China has used the victim card to try and protect its protégé by suggesting that Pakistan, too, has paid dearly in terrorist attacks.

The ISI Conduit

After several warnings to Pakistan to curb the activities of terrorists operating from its soil, US President Donald Trump initiated the plenary meeting of the Financial Action Task Force

(FATF)—an international body tasked with monitoring terrorist funding operations—which has given Pakistan time till June to show concrete results in shutting off the taps that resuscitate terror groups and facilitate their attack operations. Immediately after the killing of Osama bin Laden in the “house with the high walls” in Abbottabad in May 2011, Pakistan was put on the watch list of the FATF but that was specifically for money laundering. This time it has been given time till June to confiscate funds available with groups designated by the UN as global terrorists. Pakistan has made a show of shutting down bank accounts and lockers but the heart of the problem is that it is the Pakistan Army Inter-Services Intelligence that distributes financial largesse. According to the anti-India and anti-Afghanistan operations, these groups execute on behalf of ISI.

China's open advocacy of Pakistani terror groups is part of the strategy of keeping the Indian Army off-balance. From now to June, there is enough time for Beijing and Islamabad to find new ways to duck international sanctions and continue their operations as before. **USA**



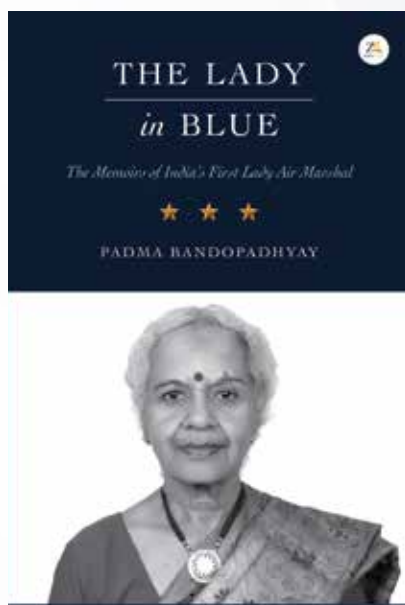
SAGA OF HISTORIC FIRSTS



The first lady Air Marshal of the Indian Air Force **Dr. Padma Bandopadhyay** takes up the pen to narrate a gripping tale of her war with challenges in her autobiography titled **'THE LADY in BLUE'**.

Her narrative captures the soul-stirring struggle of a simple South Indian girl from lower middle-income group. At a time when she should have been playing with dolls, she chose, instead, to take care of her ailing mother. Later, she picks up studies from her brother's books. For higher studies, she had to fight against all odds, language barriers, and cultural differences but mastered them in her own inimical way and becomes **the Lady of Many Firsts viz The First Lady Aviation Medicine Specialist in the whole of Southeast Asia, The First Indian lady to do research in the icy Arctic during winter months, The First Lady Air Marshal and The First Lady Director General Medical Services (Indian Air Force) to name a few.** Her marriage to Dr SN Bandopadhyay (*late Wing Commander of Indian Air Force*) was itself the stuff of legends and they together became **The**

First Couple to be awarded the President's medal together at the same investiture parade creating a world record.



This book travels back in time to address the gender issues of a nearly forgotten era. Set in a backdrop of 1960s, Dr. Padma is seen juggling between the duties of her personal life and a completely contrasting life at the battlefield. From the Indo-Pak War of 1971 to breaking traditional taboos at home, she has seen it all. Hers is a life of action, both on and off duty. The book is full of incidents narrated in the form of captivating stories that led to the making of this incredible woman of honour and determination.

The book presents a vivid description of the simple life which she had. India's unity in diversity is well exemplified in day-to-day activities which are at times hilarious. The book will act as a guide to prod young girls, who are not so lucky to be born with a silver spoon and also burdened with family problems, and would also encourage them to achieve their cherished goals. Written in simple language illustrating the real-life experiences, the book sheds light on the importance of a well-knit family.

In 2014, Limca Book of Records recognised her extraordinary contribution towards empowering women. Even today, she continues to serve the underprivileged as a doctor, counsellor and a teacher. The book fulfils her late husband's desire to see her charismatic life on paper and what we have is a spine-chilling autobiography that inspires.

Team DSA takes pleasure to mention that **Defence and Security Alert** had carried a candid interview of **Air Marshal Dr. Padma Bandopadhyay (retd)** in its inaugural edition in **October 2009.** **DSA**

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Eradicate smells and air pollution quickly, economically and sustainably with **nature's own powerful air purifier – OZONE.**

Watership Down Technologies Aquila Series of Ozone generators, powerfully oxidise all smells within minutes. If left on overnight, it will eradicate bacteria and viruses leaving rooms with Pure, Clean Air ready for the next day, all automatically.

AQUILA Specifications:

Ozone output:	3, 5, 10 Grams per hour
Ozone control:	Fully adjustable O ₃ output
Control:	Automatic on flow
Cabinet:	Stainless steel
Dimensions:	3gm - 460 x 160 x 220 mm 5gm - 460 x 160 x 220 mm 10gm - 580 x 260 x 280 mm (w x d x h)
Weight:	5.4, 5.5, 8.5 KG



WatershipDown
TECHNOLOGIES



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