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# Indian Defence Diplomacy A Handbook

Roby Thomas



MANOHAR PARRIKAR INSTITUTE FOR  
DEFENCE STUDIES AND ANALYSES

मनोहर पर्रिकर रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

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A HANDBOOK

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# CONTENTS

<i>Introduction</i> .....	5
---------------------------	---

## **Section I: Primer**

### *Chapter 1*

DEFINING DIPLOMACY .....	11
--------------------------	----

### *Chapter 2*

FACETS OF DEFENCE DIPLOMACY .....	26
-----------------------------------	----

## **Section II: Indian Experiences**

### *Chapter 3*

INDIAN OVERSEAS MILITARY OPERATIONS .....	47
---	----

### *Chapter 4*

DEFENCE DIPLOMACY IN INDIA .....	54
----------------------------------	----

### *Chapter 5*

INDIAN EXPERIENCES IN COOPERATIVE DEFENCE DIPLOMACY.....	68
---	----

### *Chapter 6*

REVITALISING DEFENCE EXPORTS .....	117
------------------------------------	-----

## **Section III: Stakeholders and the Way Ahead**

### *Chapter 7*

STAKEHOLDERS OF DEFENCE DIPLOMACY IN INDIA .....	129
--	-----

### *Chapter 8*

PROPOSALS TO VITALISE DEFENCE DIPLOMACY .....	137
---	-----



## *INTRODUCTION*

Diplomacy as a means of statecraft has not always been within the understanding of the common man. It has mostly been a discipline better understood by its practitioners in the Foreign Service. Similarly, military diplomacy as a discipline has been limited to the understanding of an even smaller community within the armed forces. Though rightfully an oxymoron (since the use of the word ‘military’ construes the use of ‘force’ to settle differences, while ‘diplomacy’ means the exact opposite), the term and its practice has gained currency with a majority of the armed forces since the end of the Cold War.

Within the armed forces, sailors of the navy by virtue of their job and reach, while having practical exposure to dealing with foreign navies from a young age, have limited theoretical knowledge in defence diplomacy to back their practice. This becomes more evident with the men of the Army and the Air Force, except for a few who have had the good fortune of participating in bilateral, multilateral exercises or Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) missions with foreign armed forces or have been posted to foreign missions or to foreign cooperation directorates at Service Headquarters.

Military diplomacy being an instrument within the larger foreign policy ‘tool basket’ of a country, is also practiced by a wider audience outside the uniformed community, which includes bureaucrats, military equipment exporters and importers, military infrastructure developers, military trainers, etc. This larger umbrella of practice, which, in addition to the uniformed services, brings in other arms of the government as also civilian counterparts, is referred to as Defence Diplomacy.

Having served in the Indian Navy for 30 years, with my last appointment being in the Naval Foreign Cooperation Directorate, it became evident to me that there was a need for focussed literary impetus on military

diplomacy to add to the literature already available. This was because it was obvious that practitioners of all hues, both uniformed and otherwise, normally took up jobs in this discipline without too much of pre-structured training, and relied mostly on experience gained ‘on-the-job’ to guide them along. This apparently was not a very efficient system of practicing military diplomacy. By the time a uniformed person gained sufficient proficiency in a military diplomatic appointment, it would be time to move on to the next job.

The solution to this was to help educate the practitioners of military diplomacy, and thereby enable them to start their practical innings on the new job from a certain take-off level, which is definitely better than starting at ‘ground-zero’. This would require a would-be practitioner to delve a little into the basics, including theory, before getting into the more intricate interpretations of the discipline.

This required compiling a simple body of work that could ostensibly cater to a broad level of practitioners, including the young officer or sailor on a warship yearning to sail on his first overseas deployment to a relatively senior officer or sailor taking up appointment in a foreign-cooperation directorate. This would also cater to the newly designated military attaché, bureaucrat dealing with the subject or even a keen student at the degree level who wishes to expand his/ her horizons in the environs of practical statecraft.

All this and more led to the yearning to put down a short work on military diplomacy. The attempt is not to lay down a structured book of training, but to put forth some basic information that will cater to the categories of people described above. Accordingly, the endeavour has been to amalgamate the theory and practice of military diplomacy, as seen from a practitioner’s perspective, thus enhancing effective application by professionals and understanding of the subject by amateurs at the same time.

The monograph has been divided into four sections. Section I is titled as a ‘Primer’ and essentially delves into the theoretical side of diplomacy, elaborating on definitions and tracing its origins in a purely Indian context. Within this, Chapter 1 explores the origins of the word ‘diplomacy’ while fleshing out the subtle differences between the terms

Statecraft, Foreign Policy and Diplomacy, which remain generally obscure to a novice. It thereafter traces the practice of diplomacy in India from its Vedic routes till modern times. It also explores the role of military or defence agencies in the overall diplomatic practice between states. The chapter ends by comparing the military diplomatic practices of few prominent state practitioners. Chapter 2 introduces the reader to the concepts of 'power' as wielded by nation states. As the focus is on 'soft power', the reader is acquainted with the ideas of 'coercive defence diplomacy', which includes the terms compellence and deterrence. The chapter thereafter goes on to elaborate on the term 'cooperative defence diplomacy' and its divisible sub-sets that have lately come to be associated with the more operative part of military diplomacy.

Section II, titled as 'Indian Experiences', examines the evolution of military diplomacy from India's point of view. Here we start with Chapter 3, which explores Indian overseas military operations, both pre- and post-Independence. Chapter 4 discusses Indian experiences in coercive diplomacy, which are more recent in nature, including the limited military action carried out by India under the threat of nuclear retaliation by Pakistan.

This section continues to analyse the more practical application of the different facets of defence diplomacy from an Indian context. Chapter 5 analyses India's more expansive pursuit of 'cooperative defence diplomacy', especially within the Indian Ocean Region. The chapter explains the reasons, impetus and methods by which India and its armed forces have been pursuing this and the capabilities it has managed to share and achieve among partner nations. Chapter 6 provides a glimpse of the Indian arms import and export environment, which has been in a constant state of flux. The reader is exposed to a gist of latest initiatives taken by the Department of Defence Production to turn from being one of the world's largest importer of arms into an exporter, thus fulfilling the clarion call of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat', as enunciated by the Government of India.

Section III, titled 'Stakeholders and the Way Ahead', briefly discusses the various government departments, military directorates and other agencies involved in formulating policies and executing defence



diplomacy initiatives at various levels. Here Chapter 7 explains the directorates and units within the armed forces that are responsible for the formulation and the final execution of military diplomacy initiatives. In the final chapter, the discussion highlights four specific practical proposals that could charter a possible future course and the way ahead for military and defence diplomacy within the government.

**SECTION I**

**PRIMER**



## **DEFINING DIPLOMACY**

This chapter introduces diplomacy as a concept and explains its differences with the often analogously used terms of statecraft and foreign policy. It is important that both students of international relations and proponents of diplomacy alike, clearly understand the nuanced difference between the terms as they decide to wade deeper into the subject.

Furthermore, the tools of statecraft and thereby that of diplomacy have never been alien to India, considering our ancient and rich cultural heritage. This chapter accordingly traces the origins of these mechanisms in the Indian context through history. It is interesting to follow these threads from the Vedic times to one of its greatest proponents of all time namely, Chanakya before weaving a canvas of stories that pass through our more rapacious medieval and colonial history.

It might be appropriate also to familiarise the reader with the intricate linkages that the term military or defence has created with diplomacy in the modern times. It is pertinent to point out that though, as brought out in the introduction, a combination of the two terms justifiably makes it an oxymoron (since the use of the ‘military’ construes the use of ‘force’ to settle differences, while ‘diplomacy’ means the exact opposite), the term and its practice has gained currency in recent times and is discussed as such in the chapter.

Today, waging a war has become an exceedingly expensive way to settle differences, both by way of material and manpower costs for nation states. This along with other non-traditional threats like terrorism and climate change has forced nations to explore possibilities of collaborative security. This environment establishes compelling conditions for nation states and their armed forces to form loose alliances, coordinate operations, work towards interoperability, thereby familiarising themselves better to extend, expand and maintain the peace. Accordingly, military diplomacy is now a predominant device in the

toolbox of major militaries, thus the chapter ends by carrying out a perfunctory exploration of military diplomacy practiced by few prominent world militaries.

## ETYMOLOGY

The term diplomacy is a derivative of the ancient Greek word *diploma* as acknowledged by Freeman and Marks in their essay on diplomacy.<sup>1</sup> As per their hypothesis, the word *diplo*, meaning ‘folded in two’, and the suffix *-ma*, meaning ‘an object’, came to denote documents through which princes granted favours. It was later applied to all sovereign documents issued by chancelleries, especially those containing agreements between monarchs. The term ‘diplomacy’ thereafter came to signify international relations, while its references to documents slowly receded. Towards the 18th century, the French term *diplomate* came to refer to a person authorised to negotiate on behalf of a state. In more contemporary times, the term ‘diplomacy’ has been distilled to refer to an established method of influencing the decisions and behaviour of foreign governments and peoples through dialogue, negotiation and other measures short of war or violence.<sup>2</sup>

## STATECRAFT, FOREIGN POLICY, DIPLOMACY

To understand diplomacy, we need to comprehend its complex association with the terms ‘statecraft’ and ‘foreign policy’. Historically, these concepts were arguably first addressed by the great Indian scholar and philosopher Kautilya<sup>3</sup> in around 321 BCE in his famous treatise, the *Arthashastra*, which dealt with issues of statecraft, diplomacy,

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<sup>1</sup> Chas W. Freeman and Sally Marks, “Diplomacy”, *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, inc. 17 January 2019, available at <https://www.britannica.com/topic/diplomacy>, accessed on 14 April 2020.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Kautilya or Chanakya was the royal advisor and Prime Minister to King Chandra Gupta Maurya, the founder of one of the largest empires in the Indian subcontinent, the Mauryan Empire.

intelligence, security and political economy.<sup>4</sup> Incidentally, this is also about the same time that another great thinker in the field, ‘Aristotle’, was tutoring Alexander the Great on the same subjects. Following this, many centuries later in the 15th century AD, the works of Niccolò Machiavelli had an equally profound impact on Western political thought.

The term ‘statecraft’ was highlighted by more contemporary scholars such as Sir Herbert Butterfield, who in the middle of the 20th century defined statecraft as the skilful management of state affairs, and emphasised on its central role in political science, which, in turn, has been attributed in no small part to Niccolò Machiavelli.<sup>5</sup> Another renowned professor of international relations, Angelo Codevilla elaborates on this by presenting statecraft as incorporating multiple levers of state power, including diplomacy and military action; it is about managing reality, coupling ends and means in ways that advance the state’s interests.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, Pauline Kerr and Geoffrey Wiseman define statecraft as “the development and use of instruments ... diplomacy, intelligence, force, economic leverage, and the law to secure the states interests in the international system”.<sup>7</sup> David Kilcullen, an Australian strategist, views statecraft as a blend “of the individual, the nation, the state and all their internal and external relationships, which unifies approaches to all areas of policy”.<sup>8</sup>

Foreign policy, on the other hand, is pursued to advance a nation’s national interest. This is derived from a country’s values to safeguard

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<sup>4</sup> P.K. Gautam, “One Hundred Years of Kautilya’s Arthashastra”, *IDSIA Monograph Series*, No. 20, July 2013, p. 7.

<sup>5</sup> H. Butterfield, *The Statecraft of Machiavelli*, London: G. Bell & Sons, 1955, pp. 10–11.

<sup>6</sup> Angelo M. Codevilla, “Tools of Statecraft: Diplomacy and War”, *Foreign Policy Research Institute*, Vol. 13, No. 1, 2008, p. 17.

<sup>7</sup> Pauline Kerr and Geoffrey Wiseman (eds), *Diplomacy in a Globalizing World: Theories and Practices*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2013, p. 358.

<sup>8</sup> D.J. Kilcullen, “Australian Statecraft: The Challenge of Aligning Policy with Strategic Culture”, *Security Challenges*, Vol. 3, No. 4, 2007, p. 45.

its integrity, which could be political, social, economic, moral and territorial as well as preserving national freedom—values that are seen as its prime commitments. For Ernest Satow, “foreign policy is formulated by governments, not diplomats,” with the diplomat’s role being to carry out that foreign policy through diplomacy.<sup>9</sup> Likewise, Steve Smith, Amelia Hadfield and Tim Dunne present foreign policy as “the sum total of decisions made on behalf of a given political unit (usually a state) entailing the implementation of goals with direct reference to its external environment”.<sup>10</sup> Whereas Harold Nicholson believes that “Foreign policy is based upon a general conception of national requirements . . . diplomacy on the other hand, is not an end but a means, not a purpose but a method”.<sup>11</sup> Accordingly, the elected governments of sovereign states formulate their foreign policy, while adjusting national policies to align with the external environment to obtain maximum benefit for their citizens.

However, the term diplomacy has often been wrongly used synonymously with foreign policy. While foreign policy sets the political goals and prescribes the broad strategies and tactics, diplomacy is the primary, but not the only instrument for achieving them. Hans Morgenthau, a foremost figure in the 20th century International Relations theory, is quoted by Paul Sharp as describing diplomacy as what diplomats do whilst engaging in “one of the lesser tools of foreign policy”.<sup>12</sup> Chas Freeman and Sally Marks opine that within this broad

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<sup>9</sup> Ernest Satow, *A Guide to Diplomatic Practice* (2nd ed.), London: Longmans Green & Co., 1922, pp. 1–4.

<sup>10</sup> Steve Smith, Amelia Hadfield and Tim Dunne, *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases* (2nd ed.), Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2012, p. 392.

<sup>11</sup> Harold Nicholson, *The Evolution of Diplomatic Method. Being the Chichele Lectures Delivered at the University of Oxford in November 1953*, London: Constable, 1955.

<sup>12</sup> Paul Sharp, “Diplomacy in International Relations Theory and Other Disciplinary Perspectives”, in Pauline Kerr and Geoffrey Wiseman (eds), *Diplomacy in a Globalizing World: Theories and Practices*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2013, p. 110.

definition, nations may employ other means like subversion, operative intelligence or other means of violence leading to war to achieve its national objectives.<sup>13</sup> Bringing all this together, the famous political scientist Joseph Nye coined the term ‘soft power’, wherein he theorised that diplomacy (soft power) is the primary instrument used as a substitute for military force (hard power), wherein a country’s comprehensive national power is applied to achieve a peaceful resolution to conflicts between nations.<sup>14</sup>

## DIPLOMACY—THE ACTIVITY

Diplomatic activity has certain inherent tendencies that make it strongly inclined towards using negotiation as a tool to resolve issues between nations. It aspires to increase a country’s leverage without using force or causing resentment while striving to maintain the peace.<sup>15</sup> Christer Jönsson and Martin Hall claim that contemporary diplomacy operates as “a relatively stable collection of social practices consisting of easily recognised roles coupled with underlying norms and a set of rules or conventions (which) proscribe behavioural roles, constrain activity, and shape expectation”.<sup>16</sup> Patrick Blannin argues that diplomatic activity is something that simplifies analysis of different perspectives between nations and translates a compromise adjustments through cooperation, reconciling the vanquished and stabilising relationships.<sup>17</sup> Whereas, the Oxford English dictionary defines diplomatic activity as ‘the profession, activity, or skill of managing international relations, typically by a country’s representatives abroad’.<sup>18</sup> However, diplomacy is often used out of

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<sup>13</sup> Freeman and Marks, “Diplomacy”, no. 1.

<sup>14</sup> Joseph Nye, “Soft Power”, *Foreign Policy*, No. 80, Twentieth Anniversary, 1990, p. 156.

<sup>15</sup> Freeman and Marks, “Diplomacy”, no. 1.

<sup>16</sup> C. Jönsson and M. Hall, *The Essence of Diplomacy*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, p. 25.

<sup>17</sup> Patrick Blannin, “Defence Diplomacy in the Long War”, *Diplomacy and Foreign Policy*, 2017, p. 13, available at [brill.com/br](http://brill.com/br), accessed on 27 April 2020.

<sup>18</sup> Oxford English Dictionary definition of diplomacy, 2011 edition.



context, as a default all-purpose term to describe a complex process of conflict resolution. Even then, diplomacy may involve coercive actions, both military and economic, aimed to impose unilateral solutions to the advantage of the state it serves. Above all, diplomatic activity is carried out with the intention of building relations to safeguard own interests, ensure external cooperation and create an environment conducive towards the non-violent resolution of disputes.

## **DIPLOMACY IN INDIA**

### **Ancient Period**

Being among the world's oldest civilisations, India, naturally, had evolved her own ancient concept of statecraft, which included elaborate and mutually agreed traditions of diplomacy. Ancient Indian scriptures abound with several diplomatic illustrations. In the ancient epic *Ramayana*, Lord Hanuman was dispatched to King Ravana's court in Sri Lanka as Lord Rama's *Rajdoot* (diplomat in Sanskrit) to get Sita released, and to persuade him to avoid war and destruction. King Ravana was prevented from killing the envoys as it was inviolable under the established diplomatic practice. In the other epic *Mahabharata*, Lord Krishna played the role of an envoy from the side of the Pandavas to prevent war with the Kaurvas. The war of *Mahabharata* was preceded by feverish diplomacy as both sides sent envoys to form military alliances with other kings. The war itself was a *Dharmayuddha* (or War of Righteousness) with the concepts of immunity and amnesty well established and respected.<sup>19</sup>

### **Kautilya's *Arthashastra***

As mentioned earlier, in the fourth century BC, the great political scholar Kautilya, wrote his magnum opus, the *Arthashastra*, the world's first

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<sup>19</sup> Amb (Retd) M. K. Sachdev, "Indian Diplomacy through Ages", *Distinguished Lecture Series*, November 2014, Indira Gandhi National Tribal University Amarkantak, available at <https://mea.gov.in/distinguished-lectures-detail.htm?174>, accessed on 14 April 2020.

comprehensive treatise on political science and international relations. This monumental treatise occupies centre-stage in any narrative of Indian diplomacy. Being the Prime Minister and mentor to the great emperor Chandragupta Maurya, Kautilya was able to overthrow the Nanda dynasty and remove the Greeks from India's north-west regions.<sup>20</sup> Through the *Arthashastra*, he laid down detailed guidelines on social, political, economic and military matters, including international relations. His ideas on diplomacy and foreign policy are articulated in his famous 'Mandala Theory', which is a geographical concept for the *Vijigishu* (conqueror king) to mark out the nations diplomatically favourable to him. *Arthashastra* also discusses the classification of ambassadors, their qualifications, status, immunity, duties, salary etc. in great detail. A successful adviser (minister) was deemed suitable for the post of an ambassador, a practice followed by many nations even now. In the final analysis, *Arthashastra's* discourse on foreign policy and diplomatic practice can only be described as a profound timeless classic book of realism, even ahead of its peers that came two millennia later.<sup>21</sup>

## **Ancient India**

During the same period, Megasthenes, the then Greek ambassador to Chandragupta's court, wrote his account of India in his famous book *Indika*. Subsequently, Delmachos, the Syrian came to the Mauryan court as an envoy of King Antiochus and Dionysius was King Ptolemy's Egyptian ambassador to Bindusara's court in the 3rd century BC. In the 2nd century BC, Emperor Ashoka in his endeavour to propagate Buddhism, established diplomatic relations with the kingdoms of Ceylon, Syria, Egypt, Macedon and Cyrene among others. While the Indian king Pulakesin II, in the 7th century AD, had established diplomatic relations with Khosru Parwez, the Shah of Persia, there is evidence

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Tridib Chakraborti, "Contemporary Relevance of Kautilya's Mandala Theory and Diplomacy", *Politico*, Vol. 5, No. 2, 2016, Jadavpur University, available at [https://www.academia.edu/33923280/KAUTILYAs\\_Concept\\_of\\_Diplomacy](https://www.academia.edu/33923280/KAUTILYAs_Concept_of_Diplomacy), accessed on 15 April 2020.

that King Harasha Vardhana had diplomatic relations with the Imperial Court of China.<sup>22</sup>

### **Medieval Period**

Similarly, during the medieval period, the Afghan and Turk kingdoms based at Delhi had established diplomatic relations with kingdoms in Central Asia, Arabian Peninsula, Levant, Greece and in some cases with Tibet and China as well. Likewise, the rulers of Malabar in Kerala had well-recognised diplomatic and trading relations with kingdoms in the Middle East, Southeast Asia and China. Similarly, the Tamil, Andhra and Orissa kingdoms maintained strong cultural and in some cases family relations with the kingdoms in Ceylon, Burma, Thailand, Indonesia and Malaya. In few cases, these countries were even conquered and colonised by South Indian kings.<sup>23</sup>

### **Mughal Era and Beyond**

During the period of Mughal rule in India, diplomatic relations were maintained with most kingdoms of that time. The Mughal kingdom in India, the world's largest economy at that time, is also known to have had envoys from various European trading nations like Portugal, France, Britain, Holland etc. During this period, Sir Thomas Roe was the designated envoy of British Queen Elizabeth I to the court of Emperor Jahangir. The later Indian kings, like Hyder Ali, Tipu Sultan and others, also maintained diplomatic relations with countries in the Arab world, Ottoman Sultans and European powers (especially Napoleonic France) in order to obtain support in political and defence technology and training. Subsequently, as part of mobilising support for India's struggle for independence, the Indian National Congress had contact with similarly inclined political parties in other countries, while Indians staying abroad used their influence to launch diplomatic campaigns against colonial rule in India and sought diplomatic and

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<sup>22</sup> Amb (Retd) Sachdev, "Indian Diplomacy through Ages", no. 19.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

material assistance from foreign powers such as Japan (e.g., Azad Hind Fauz during Second World War).<sup>24</sup>

## **SIGNIFICANCE OF DEFENCE IN DIPLOMACY**

### **Military in Diplomacy**

The concept of diplomacy across the world is mainly civilian and implies conducting relations between countries in numerous dimensions. This is the core function of the foreign office. Also, woven into the larger diplomatic role are the essential functions of conflict avoidance, promotion of peace, perception management, changing mindsets and improving understanding with external interlocutors. It is into these functions that the military arm, that is, the Army, Navy and Air Force can contribute with a shared coherent perspective that will make diplomacy more effective. Therefore, the efficient integration of our military assets into effective foreign policy making enhances the role of the military in diplomacy.

### **Leveraging Military Power**

Contextually, the need for application of military power for achieving a nation's foreign policy objective starts where the effectiveness of its diplomatic outreach has been exhausted. This predicates the use of military power and diplomacy on two opposite ends of the spectrum of a country's international relations toolkit. Giles Harlow and George Maerz had postulated that, "you have no idea how much it contributes to the general politeness and pleasantries in diplomacy when you have a little, quiet armed force in the background".<sup>25</sup>

During periods of prolonged peace, the country's armed forces must always be in a state of readiness to carry out their responsibility as a hard power executioner for the government. At the same time, the

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> G.D. Harlow and George C. Maerz (eds), *Measures Short of War: The George F. Keenan Lectures at the National War College 1946–47*, Washington D.C.: National Defence University Press, 1991.

defence establishment is employed in numerous ‘short of war’ situations and peacetime foreign cooperation activities with the intention of creating a favourable external environment to achieve national foreign policy objectives, which in broader terms is a definition for defence diplomacy. In the existing multipolar world order, the propensity for war between major powers is highly unlikely. This, in turn, raises the spectre of sub-conventional conflicts and limited wars. In such a scenario, defence diplomacy assumes greater significance as an international relations tool.

Though the words ‘defence’ and ‘military’ might seem substitutable, the term ‘defence’ has a certain salience in the existing context. The term ‘military’ signifies particularly, the personnel and assets of the three wings of the armed forces, that is, the Army, Navy and Air Force. While the word ‘defence’ implies all arms of the defence establishment assisting the armed forces of the country, which includes all offices under the purview of the Ministry of Defence. This is considered justifiable as the engagement carried out covers a wide spectrum, which includes pure military cooperation like military exercises, exchange of military personnel, military training, structured talks etc. and more than pure military such as signing of Agreements/Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), defence dialogues, provision of military equipment from public sector or private sector undertakings, intelligence sharing etc.<sup>26</sup>

This has also been amplified by Anton du Plessis, a professor of political science in Pretoria, in his essay on defence diplomacy, where he broadly defines military diplomacy as the “use of military personnel, including service attaches, in support of conflict prevention and resolution. Among a great variety of activities, it includes providing assistance in the development of democratically accountable armed forces”. Du Plessis goes on to give a broader definition of military diplomacy as

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<sup>26</sup> Amb (Retd) Kanwal Sibal, “Role of Military Diplomacy in India’s Foreign Policy”, 22nd Colonel Pyara Lal Memorial Lecture, 19 September 2018, United Services Institute, New Delhi, available at <https://usiofindia.org/publication/usi-journal/role-of-military-diplomacy-in-indias-foreign-policy>, accessed on 16 April 2020.

“the use of armed forces in operations other than war, building on their trained expertise and discipline to achieve national and foreign objectives abroad”.<sup>27</sup> Andrew Cottey and Anthony Foster offer a more comprehensive definition of defence diplomacy as “the peacetime use of armed forces and related infrastructure (primarily defence ministries) as a tool of foreign and security policy” and more specifically the use of military cooperation and assistance.<sup>28</sup> Sun Tzu dictates “diplomacy and war are not just closely related—they comprise a continuous, seamless activity (with diplomacy) the best means of attaining his ideal of victory without bloodshed”.<sup>29</sup> Peter Leahy proclaims that “in an increasingly complex global security environment defence diplomacy adds a new and very useful dimension to traditional diplomacy”.<sup>30</sup> Bhubhindar Singh and Tan See Seng define defence diplomacy as “the cooperative activities undertaken by militaries and the related infrastructure during peacetime”.<sup>31</sup> The Ministry of Defence, Government of India, in its Annual Report for the year 2014–15 states that “Defence cooperation is an important part of diplomacy to strengthen our bilateral cooperation with friendly foreign countries and

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<sup>27</sup> Anton Du Plessis, “Defence Diplomacy: Conceptual and Practical Dimensions with Specific Reference to South Africa”, *Strategic Review for Southern Africa*, Vol. 30, No. 2, November 2008, pp. 87–119, available at [https://repository.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/2263/10381/DuPlessis\\_Defence%282008%29.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://repository.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/2263/10381/DuPlessis_Defence%282008%29.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y), accessed on 16 April 2020.

<sup>28</sup> A. Cottey and A. Foster, “Reshaping Defence Diplomacy: New Roles for Military Cooperation and Assistance”, Adelphi Paper 365, The International Institute for Strategic Studies, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2004, pp. 5–6, 69.

<sup>29</sup> M. Handel, *Masters Of War: Classical Strategic Thought*, London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2005, p. 24.

<sup>30</sup> P. Leahy, “Military Diplomacy, Defence Diplomacy: Is the Game Worth the Candle”, *The Centre of Gravity Series* (Paper 17), Australian National University, Canberra, 2014, p. 15.

<sup>31</sup> B. Singh and S.S. Tan, “From ‘Boots’ to ‘Brogues’: The Rise of Defence Diplomacy in Southeast Asia”, *RSIS Monograph*, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Singapore, 2011, pp. 1–128.

to advance our foreign policy objectives. It encompasses activities undertaken by the Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces to avoid hostilities, build and maintain trust and make significant contribution towards conflict prevention and resolution”.<sup>32</sup>

The world over, military assets remain powerful instruments of advancing a country’s diplomatic efforts. This stems from the fact that the primacy of use of force in settling differences between nations has not lost its value. Though there exist established international institutions to enforce a value and rule-based international order, the importance of power politics has never waned. For this to ring true, actual military power need only be wielded and not actually used. It might be relevant here to quote what Chas Freeman, a former US Ambassador had theorised, “War and diplomacy are different but intimately related aspects of national policy ... diplomats and warriors who recall this will therefore act as brothers in a potentially lethal common endeavour ... they will consider together when to fight and when to talk and when to press and when to stop”.<sup>33</sup> Likewise, in most cases, the opposite state would more often than not want to avoid a direct military confrontation and accordingly accommodate the demands of its militarily strong adversary. Therefore, even today in addition to other factors like technological prowess, economic capacity, human capital etc., the international standing of a nation has a strong correlation with its military capabilities.

## COMPARISON OF FEW PRACTITIONERS

### United States

The United States, with its overwhelming military capabilities, has the capacity to intervene in a crisis anywhere in the world. This therefore is the best example of a nation leveraging the strength of its armed forces as an effective instrument of its foreign policy. To effectively execute its foreign policy objectives, the United States has formed

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<sup>32</sup> *Annual Report 2014–15*, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, p. 159.

<sup>33</sup> C. Freeman, *The Diplomats Dictionary*, Washington D.C.: National Defence University Press, 1994, p. 124.

multilateral military alliances and coalitions in addition to having bilateral agreements with countries, which as a stronger partner, give it overwhelming influence to direct their foreign policies. The United States also leverages its military strength during sale of military assets, delivery of military aid, provision of military training, bilateral and multilateral military exercises, military exchanges and publication of strategic material by its many military-related think tanks and armed forces colleges. This ensures that the armed forces of the United States remain institutionally involved with its foreign policy landscape. Further, many retired armed forces officers in the United States have been absorbed or elected to critical appointments in the civilian administration, which includes presidents, vice-presidents, national security advisors, secretaries of various important departments etc. In addition, the regional combatant commanders of the United States armed forces have an important advisory capacity for key foreign policy decisions taken in the areas of their jurisdiction.<sup>34</sup>

## **China**

China's military diplomatic footprint has expanded exponentially in the last few decades. This has happened in tandem with its overwhelming economic capacities and increasing military capabilities. The Chinese Navy has been continuously engaged in the Gulf of Aden since 2008 ostensibly for anti-piracy patrols, for which it has maintained a three-ship task group in addition to having nuclear and conventional submarines augmenting the effort. More recently it has also commissioned its own military base in Djibouti. Its numerous infrastructure projects ring the Indian Ocean Region, which can be safely assumed to be dual military use projects. China has also, over the past few years, more than doubled its defence wing capacities in its embassies the world over. It has considerably boosted its military involvement in Africa by increasing arms exports, providing military training, establishing military infrastructure projects, providing soft loans and lines of credit to buy Chinese military equipment. It is also a well-

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<sup>34</sup> Amb (Retd) Kanwal Sibal, "Role of Military Diplomacy in India's Foreign Policy", no. 26.



known fact that China has also been enhancing the military capacities of India's neighbours, which has been inimical to India's national interests. The more coercive part of China's military diplomacy has been visible in the way it has militarily conducted itself in the South China Sea to advance its national objectives. This is a prime example of a country actively using its military as an instrument in achieving its foreign policy ambitions.<sup>35</sup>

## **Russia**

In spite of its fall from superpower status, Russia has continued to keep its strong military engaged in various geographical regions to expand its diplomatic headroom. Its military intervention in Ukraine followed by its occupation of Crimea was an important example of the use of military force to achieve national aims. Its continued military involvement in Syria and increasing military cooperation with Turkey has been vital to it expanding its foreign policy footprint in the Middle East. Russia has also significantly increased the scope of its military exercise umbrella by recently conducting naval exercises with China and South Africa in the Indian Ocean and China and Iran in the Persian Gulf. The Russian president also conveyed a strong diplomatic message to the world when he chose to publicly unveil many advanced military technologies developed by the Russian military complex.<sup>36</sup>

## **Pakistan**

In the case of Pakistan, the overwhelming preponderance of its military in its day-to-day governance has ensured that the armed forces also have a major wager in the shaping of its foreign policy goals. Its neighbourhood policy has been primarily shaped by the desires and insecurities of its army than any pragmatic direction of foreign policy. Its relations with the Arab nations chiefly rests on Pakistan providing training to their armed forces as well as on providing trained manpower

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

as military advisors. It presently has its former Army Chief Raheel Sharif heading the Islamic anti-terror coalition set up by Saudi Arabia. Its political relations with China are primarily hinged on the leverage of a lopsided military dependency on Chinese weapon systems. Pakistan is a unique example where foreign policy gets emasculated under the bigger umbrella of its defence diplomacy.<sup>37</sup>

## CONCLUSION

A popular quote that has often been adduced to the US Marines and alternately to General Norman Schwarzkopf states, “The more you sweat in peace, the less you bleed in war”. This is very apt for any professional military force and is often bandied to under-trainees in military academies. However, with the metamorphosing of the strong arm of the government, that is the military, into a more benign form in peacetime to promote diplomacy, it might be appropriate to reword the quote to read, “The more you cooperate with partners in peace, the less you bleed in war”.

As would have been evident from preceding paragraphs, statecraft and diplomacy have been part of the Indian ethos from the beginning of written history. There was therefore a natural transmission of this capability to the organised Indian armed forces, pre-independence, which has been carried forward dextrously post-independence. Today, as India has risen in economic strength and political stature on the global stage, it is but *di rigueur* that our armed forces also strategize ways of expanding its influence in the Indo-Pacific in keeping with its current capabilities. This will require armed forces personnel to clearly understand the ideations that combine to form the concepts of ‘national-power’ and the means to execute it. This hypothesis has been discussed in detail in the subsequent chapter.

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<sup>37</sup> Amb (Retd) Kanwal Sibal, “Role of Military Diplomacy in India’s Foreign Policy”, no. 26.

## **FACETS OF DEFENCE DIPLOMACY**

National power has been defined as the sum of all resources available to a nation in the pursuit of national objectives. They are expressed as diplomatic, economic, informational and military.<sup>38</sup> Traditionally, this has been a combination of a nation's military, economic and political powers. This, over a period of time, led many a study and think tank to formulate and proffer their analyses of the definition and quantification of national power. These efforts also helped to make strategic comparisons between the two superpowers during the Cold War.

As the world transitioned into an era of multipolarity, we observed the more traditional definitions, formulations and methods of quantification of national power undergo a paradigm shift. In addition to the more perceptible hard power wielded by nation states, soft power in its many multifarious forms along with 'smart power' started being employed by nations and numerous players like non-state actors, non-governmental organisations, multinational companies, special interest groups and fundamental movements. All this made accurate measurement of national power or comprehensive national power, as it is now referred to, a confusing and arduous task.

This chapter acknowledges these modern complexities, but concentrates on introducing the reader to the concepts of power as employed in

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<sup>38</sup> "Instruments of National Power" in US NATO Military Terminology Group (2010). JP 1 (02) "Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms", 2010 (As amended through 15 February 2016) (PDF). Joint Chiefs of Staff, US Department of Defense, Pentagon, Washington, p. 112. Available at [https://fas.org/irp/doddir/dod/jp1\\_02.pdf](https://fas.org/irp/doddir/dod/jp1_02.pdf), accessed on 5 February 2021.

the realm of diplomacy, particularly in military diplomacy. Here it is instructive to observe the many facets that soft power has managed to branch into, which over time have been effectively employed by nations for coercion and cooperation. This becomes more discernible in present-day geopolitics as nations sidestep the employability of the more expensive hard power, keeping it in reserve, instead opting for a wide expanse of tools using soft and smart power to fulfil national objectives.

It thus becomes imperative that practitioners of military and defence diplomacy familiarise themselves with the facets of employability of soft power by armed forces. Among these, coercive diplomacy is better documented while cooperative diplomacy, though practiced, has not been largely propagated.

### **THE CONCEPTS OF POWER**

The concept of national power was put in perspective by Joseph S. Nye Jr, the well-known American author and political scientist when he defined power as ‘the ability to affect the behaviour of others to get what one wants’. He further qualified this by defining hard power as ‘the use of coercion through military or economic means’, soft power as ‘the ability to obtain preferred outcomes through appeal and attraction’ and smart power as a combination of the two using ‘contextual intelligence’. He also defined contextual intelligence in a foreign policy perspective, as the intuitive diagnostic skill that helps policymakers align tactics with objectives to create smart strategies.<sup>39</sup>

Nye went on to define a country’s soft power to include the major elements of its culture (when it is pleasing to others), its values (when they are attractive and consistently practiced) and its policies (when they are seen as inclusive and legitimate).<sup>40</sup> However, for Gregory Winger,

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<sup>39</sup> Joseph S. Nye Jr, “Get Smart: Combining Hard and Soft Power”, *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 88, No. 4, July/ August 2009, pp. 160–163.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

Nye's terminology (hard and soft power) has been shackled to specific individual practices, suggesting that the military has been mistakenly linked "as an institution of hard power as practice has blinded us to its capacity to be used in other ways".<sup>41</sup> Winger further seamlessly blended the two by defining defence diplomacy as "an exercise of soft power practiced by the defence establishment of one country ... to mould the strategic thinking and institutions of another".<sup>42</sup> Though when actually put into practice, the instruments in a country's arsenal to implement its soft power policies include public diplomacy, cultural interactions, positive broadcasting, exchange programmes, development assistance, disaster relief and defence diplomacy among others, which are executed by different arms of the government. To be completely effective, a country needs to have policies that integrate this with its hard power strategies to develop a comprehensive national security strategy.

### **SOFT POWER—DEFENCE DIPLOMACY**

Contemporary scholars have waded further into the theory of defence diplomacy while considering it as a component of a country's soft power. However, if conceptualised to be effective, it will need to encompass all actions taken by the country's armed forces, short of war. See Seng Tan and Bhubhindar Singh define it as, "the collective application of pacific and/or cooperative initiatives by national defence establishments and military practitioners for confidence building, trust creation, conflict prevention, and/or conflict resolution". Thus, they view defence diplomacy's role as an important area of theory and practice that warrants greater study.<sup>43</sup> While for James Willard, the 'essence' of defence diplomacy is its ability to influence "future outcomes

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<sup>41</sup> G. Winger, "The Velvet Gauntlet: A Theory of Defence Diplomacy", in A. Lisiak and N. Smolenski (eds), *What Do I Do*, Vol. 33, IWM Junior Visiting Fellows Conference, Vienna, 2014, p. 8.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

<sup>43</sup> S.S. Tan and Bhubhindar Singh, "Introduction", *Asian Security*, Vol. 8, No. 3, 2012, pp. 221–231.

by shaping the environment to one's advantage".<sup>44</sup> Patrick Blannin argues that the utility of defence diplomacy is "in the management of conflict as a process which creates and maintains relationships by enhancing capabilities, building trust through transparency and accountability, identifying commonalities and shaping world view".<sup>45</sup>

However, when it comes to diplomatic negotiations, Blannin describes that the threat of military force lingers on the periphery of the discussions. Therefore, he stresses that nations would use it as a complimentary choice (defence diplomacy) than a binary one (war) to support their national interests through coercion, deterrence or cooperation by flexing its military superiority or peacefully conveying its desire to the other side.<sup>46</sup>

Defence diplomacy would therefore be better understood if divided into the sub-components of *coercive defence diplomacy* and *cooperative defence diplomacy*. The coercive component would include all 'coercive actions' taken by the armed forces, short of war in protection of a nation's national interests. Whereas the cooperative component would include all 'supportive/ coordinated activities' undertaken by the department of defence to shape a favourable foreign policy environment for the parent country.

## COERCIVE DEFENCE DIPLOMACY

In today's toolkit of international relations, coercive diplomacy becomes an attractive proposition considering, as Alexander George predicted, it can "achieve reasonable objectives in a crisis with less cost; with much less, if any, bloodshed; with fewer political and psychological costs; and often with less risk of unwanted escalation than is true with traditional military strategy"—the 1962 Cuban missile crisis being the

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<sup>44</sup> J. Willard, "Military Diplomacy: An Essential Tool of Foreign Policy at the Theater Strategic Level", School of Advanced Military Studies, United States Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 2006, pp. 1–71.

<sup>45</sup> Blannin, "Defence Diplomacy in the Long War", no. 17, p. 8.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35.

case in point.<sup>47</sup> As is obvious from the term, it signifies punishments in the form of military action or economic sanctions for the target country if diplomatic overtures are not complied with. Coercive diplomacy applies pressure in a manner and magnitude that “seeks to persuade an opponent to cease aggression rather than bludgeon him into stopping. . . just enough force of an appropriate kind to demonstrate resolution and to give credibility to the threat that greater force will be used if necessary”.<sup>48</sup> In his seminal work, *Arms and Influence*, Thomas C. Schelling, the Nobel laureate argues that brute force would succeed when used, however, the power to hurt is most useful when held in reserve. “[I]t is the threat of damage, or of more damage to come, that can make someone yield or comply. It is latent violence that can influence someone’s choice—violence that can still be withheld or inflicted, or that a victim believes can be withheld or inflicted”.<sup>49</sup>

In their detailed study of President JF Kennedy’s handling of the 1962 Cuban Missile crisis, Alexander George, David Hall and William Simons have correctly pointed out why coercive diplomacy is an inherently difficult proposition. Based on the Russian side’s reactions to the crisis, they very succinctly brought out the variables and conditions that would affect a nation’s implementation of such a coercive defence policy. These variables and conditions are paraphrased below.<sup>50</sup>

- Even a strongly motivated and responsible leader will draw back from the risks of giving an ultimatum to an opponent who is also strongly motivated and commands formidable military capabilities of his own.

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<sup>47</sup> Alexander L. George and William E. Simons (eds), *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy* (2nd ed.), Boulder: Westview Press, 1994, p. 9.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>49</sup> Thomas C. Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, USA: Yale University Press, 1966, p. 87, available at [www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt5vm52s](http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt5vm52s), accessed on 24 April 2020.

<sup>50</sup> Alexander L. George, “The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962”, in Alexander L. George, David K. Hall and William E. Simons (eds), *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy Laos, Cuba, Vietnam* (2nd ed.), Boulder: Westview Press, 1994, pp. 130–136.

- A leader must consider whether an ultimatum is credible or will the recipient regard it as a bluff. If so, is he willing to demonstrate seriousness or will it provoke the recipient into seizing the initiative himself, leading to a major escalation of the conflict.
- Coercive diplomacy requires that a sense of urgency be conveyed to the opponent for his compliance. However, this will have to be weighed against the need to give the opponent acceptable time to receive the message, reflect on and reconsider his objectionable actions or policies.
- Though ultimatums are important in theory, in coercive diplomacy it may not be very easy to practice. Therefore, in such cases it is important that the aggressor convinces his opponent of his resolve to inflict pain while keeping in mind that flexibility and timing are of utmost essence.
- Another important factor in coercive diplomacy is to assess the opponent's motivation to do what is demanded of him. That is, the carrot should be bigger than the stick. In other words, what is demanded should be more attractive than the threatened consequences if he doesn't acquiesce.
- Ultimately, the timing of the carrot and the stick is critical. An otherwise workable quid pro quo may be offered too late, after one's military operations have hardened the opponent's determination and made it more difficult for him to accept what is demanded of him.

In his essay on coercive diplomacy, Bruce Jentleson argues that for a coercive strategy to be successful, the coercer would need to balance three main criteria, that is, proportionality, reciprocity and coercive credibility. He reasons that balance in all three elements is more likely to be achieved if disapproval from the coercer states that the opposition is limited and there is support from all major international actors.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Bruce Jentleson, "Coercive Diplomacy: Scope and Limits in the Contemporary World", *Policy Analysis Brief*, Stanley Foundation, December 2006, p. 3, available at <http://reports.stanleyfoundation.org>, accessed on 20 April 2020.



Here, the counter-strategy of the target state is also of consequence, which would greatly depend on the domestic compulsions of it being a democracy, dictatorship or something in-between. George, Hall and Simons further describe coercive diplomacy as an instrument to apply pressure in a manner that “seeks to persuade an opponent to cease aggression rather than bludgeon him into stopping. . . just enough force of an appropriate kind to demonstrate resolution and to give credibility to the threat that greater force will be used if necessary.”<sup>52</sup>

Lawrence Freedman while defining coercion, reasons the need for it to be further bifurcated as coercion is an attempt to influence the behaviour of the adversary by the threat of use of force. This requires the adversary to weigh all its options and those in particular that are against the coercer’s wishes. Freedman defines the two branches of coercive action, namely, ‘compellence’ and ‘deterrence’; while compellence demands that the adversary undertakes a particular action under threat of use of force, deterrence requires the adversary to refrain from undertaking a particular action under threat of use of force.<sup>53</sup>

Coercion action is employed when pure diplomacy has failed, and the use of all-out military force is not the best option at the time. Military force can be considered most effective and potent when the objective is achieved by the use of credible threats than by the actual application of full-frontal violence. This theory was best explained by Thomas C. Schelling when he said, “[B]rute force succeeds when it is used, whereas the power to hurt is most successful when held in reserve. It is the threat of damage, or of more damage to come, that can make someone yield or comply. It is latent violence that can influence someone’s choice—violence that can still be withheld or inflicted, or that a victim believes can be withheld or inflicted.”<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> George, “The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962”, no. 50, p. 10.

<sup>53</sup> L. Freedman, “Strategic Coercion”, in L. Freedman (ed.), *Strategic Coercion: Concepts and Cases*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1998, pp. 15–36.

<sup>54</sup> Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, no. 49.

Schelling elaborated on the theory of coercion by quoting the example of the violence carried out by British settlers against native Americans in the early 16th century. He illustrates that to fight native Americans head-on, British settlers had to use brute force. However, they resorted to a more ingenious and less-expensive method of settling scores with native Americans by burning their settlements. This is an example of using the ‘power to hurt’ to achieve objectives, hence coercive diplomacy.<sup>55</sup> Andrew Mach explains another basic insight from coercion theory that warrants mention. He states that coercive action is intrinsically ingrained with the promise of both punishment and reward for the adversary. Application of pain is the punishment while relieving of it is the reward, which could be construed as ‘carrots’ and ‘sticks’. This can be further reinforced with the promise of incentives—additional carrots—if the adversary complies with alacrity to the coercer’s demands.<sup>56</sup>

## Compellence

This was a term coined by Thomas C. Schelling, in his book *Arms and Influence* (1966),<sup>57</sup> who described it as a direct action that persuades an opponent to give up something that is desired.<sup>58</sup> Gary Schaub Jr opines that in a situation of compellence, the coercer would demand that the

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid., pp. 92–125.

<sup>56</sup> On this point, see Andrew Mack, “Why Big Nations Lose Small Wars: The Politics of Asymmetric Conflict”, *World Politics*, Vol. 27, No. 2, 1975, pp. 175–200. On a critique of this theory, see Ivan Arreguin-Toft, “How the Weak Win Wars: A Theory of Asymmetric Conflict”, *International Security*, Vol. 26, No. 1, 2001, pp. 93–128.

<sup>57</sup> Scholars have long argued about the most effective way to compel action. Schelling’s work, though ground-breaking, is not without its critics. Schelling focused on the threat of escalating violence against civilian targets, but American political scientist Robert Pape contended that compellence depends on making enemies feel that their military forces are vulnerable. Other scholars argue that carefully targeted economic sanctions can influence the behaviour of other states. In these cases, non-military tools of statecraft assist national security objectives.

<sup>58</sup> Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, no. 49.

adversary undertakes an action that would reduce the overall utility of an impending activity directed against it.<sup>59</sup> Schelling has further elaborated that in compellence, the threat of pain could change the adversaries' motive; the power to hurt has to be communicated by a certain enactment of it. It could involve "sheer terroristic violence to induce an irrational response, or cool premeditated violence to persuade somebody that you mean it and may do it again, it is not the pain and damage itself but its influence on somebody's behaviour that matters".<sup>60</sup> Schelling further divided compellence into its sub-elements of 'immediate compellence' and 'demonstrative compellence'. Immediate compellence involves verbal threats and promises. Show of force also assist this kind of coercion with the underwriting of the unspoken possibility of military action. Demonstrative compellence, on the other hand, involves a limited use of force coupled with the threat of escalating violence to come if the demands are not met. This was referred to by Schelling as the "diplomacy of violence". A state can decide to wage a limited military campaign with strategic pauses, which will encourage the opposite party to consider the consequences of not complying with the threat.<sup>61</sup>

## Deterrence

Deterrence is the concept of conveying a threat to discourage the other side from initiating some form of costly action. This is less provocative and less expensive as the deterring party incurs little cost by making the threat and needs to only imply setting the stage for action. While differentiating between the two, Gary Schaub Jr theorised that deterrence requires lesser effort than compellence, and the effort for the coercer further decreases as the adversary's stakes and costs grow.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Gary Schaub Jr, "Deterrence, Compellence, and Prospect Theory", *Political Psychology*, Vol. 25, No. 3, Special Issue (Part Two): Prospect Theory, June 2004, International Society of Political Psychology, pp. 389–411, available at <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3792549>, accessed on 24 April 2020.

<sup>60</sup> Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, no. 49.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Gary Schaub Jr, "Deterrence, Compellence, and Prospect Theory", no. 59.

Schelling brought out that the difference between action and deterrence as between brute force and intimidation is in the undiplomatic recourse to military force in the case of ‘action’ or coercive diplomacy, in the case of ‘deterrence’, which has the latent power to hurt. Here the coercive use of the power to hurt (deterrence) was exploitive of the adversary’s wants and fears.<sup>63</sup> Unlike compellence, in deterrence, the adversary finds it relatively easier to deal with being deterred as it does not have to particularly ‘act’ to comply, it can simply continue with its previous behaviour by avoiding initiating of any ‘higher form’ of action. This also helps both parties to ‘save face’.

### COOPERATIVE DEFENCE DIPLOMACY

Quantitatively, the more significant side of defence diplomacy lies in its comparatively gentler component, that is, cooperative defence diplomacy. In this, the defence department uses all its cooperative tools to manage the foreign policy landscape. This being a relatively bigger basket, it requires to be compartmentalised into manageable portions for ease of understanding. This has been further underlined as ‘harnessing the collective military competency’ by Admiral Karambir Singh, India’s Chief of Naval Staff, when he addressed a conclave of defence attaches in October 2019. During the conclave, Singh postulated ‘four pillars’ or the ‘four C’s’ under which foreign cooperation initiatives are being undertaken: (i) capacity building (provision of military assets and military infrastructure development); (ii) capability enhancement (military training, technical and hydrographic assistance, Exclusive Economic Zone [EEZ] surveillance etc.); (iii) constructive engagements (military-level talks, military exercises, ship visits etc.); and (iv)

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<sup>63</sup> Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, no. 49.

<sup>64</sup> “Indian Navy Committed to Enhance Cooperation with Like-minded Navies: Admiral Singh”, *The Economic Times*, 18 October 2019, available at <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/indian-navy-fully-seized-of-its-role-in-maritime-cooperation-navy-chief/articleshow/71645073.cms>, accessed on 1 July 2020.

collaborative efforts (symposiums, constructs, conclaves etc.).<sup>64</sup> These pillars of defence diplomacy are discussed at length below.

### **Capacity Building**

As the name signifies, capacity building means increasing the military capacities of the target country by providing it with military equipment of all types, large and small, including arms and ammunition. As the capacity to absorb military equipment and technologies are different for different countries, this would differ vastly between recipient countries though the donor country may remain the same. Capacity building will also greatly depend on other factors like the level of confidence in the relationship between the countries, the terms of agreement signed, the paying terms and capacity of the recipient country and national interests of the supplying country among others. Provision of major hardware like ships, tanks, aircraft, helicopters, vehicles, weapons, sensors, arms, ammunition etc. would all come under this. Capacity building, in addition, includes building of fixed or movable infrastructure to be used for military purposes in the recipient country. Examples of such infrastructure include ports, airfields, buildings, bridges, roads, radar chains and any other infrastructure that could have strategic significance including dual use. As would be inferred, for a country to be recipient of capacity-building efforts, its relationship with the supplying country would need to be one of trust and confidence at the strategic level.

### **Capability Enhancement**

In comparison, this form of cooperation has more flexible terms and is undertaken by a donor country under more liberal conditions. Accordingly, the canvas is relatively large and forms the first and primary mode of cooperative defence diplomacy. The different ways in which a country can undertake military capability enhancement of a recipient country is as given below:

#### ***Military Training***

This encompasses all forms of military training carried out by the donor country, and could geographically be carried out in either the host country, the donor country or even a third country, depending on

the situation. This would include training in niche fields or training at ab-initio, mid or senior levels, training on equipment or platforms, specialised or generalised training of all types, classroom or field training, individual or group training, training by individual instructors or training teams etc. Military training would also include combined training for candidates from numerous countries under one format and facility of the donor country. The cost of training is normally based on the bilateral relationship between the countries and the level of understanding. This could vary from a training package that is completely free with travel, training material, food and stay being catered for, even with the additional provision of a stipend, by the host country, to a training package that is completely paid for by the recipient country.

### *Military Technical Assistance*

Any support provided for maintenance of military hardware or infrastructure already provided by the donor country under capacity building efforts or commonly held equipment by both the countries comes under this category. This could range from minor repairs to major refits and overhauls of military equipment or infrastructure. In addition to repairs, assistance in the form of technical know-how, labour and associated financial assistance could also be provided. This would include related spares for the repairs or overhauls. To maintain a higher rate of serviceability, the donor country could also place a maintenance team at the recipient country. All this, including the financial part of the engagement would normally have already been previously agreed to by the countries under a bilateral agreement or MoU.

### *Exclusive Economic Zone/ Border Surveillance*

Today, the external threats that intimidate countries are more inclined to be from a non-traditional scenario than a traditional threat perspective. This includes cross-border terrorism, piracy, drugs and arms smuggling, human trafficking, Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) fishing etc. On the maritime front, a country's borders have a graded extension from the shoreline with full territorial sovereignty up

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<sup>6</sup> As per UNCLOS article.

to 12 NM and scaling down to an exclusive economic zone up to 200 NM.<sup>65</sup> For an island or archipelagic country, this area of responsibility can be vast, in many cases larger than their respective landmasses. This exerts excessive stress on the governments of countries that are unable to raise sufficient assets to police such large borders, thereby making them more vulnerable to non-traditional threats. Filling this void, donor countries can loan or provide assets to carry out surveillance of these areas at periodic intervals. This can be done using ships, aircraft, manpower, combined patrols provided by the donor country along with an embarked component of the recipient country or as previously agreed.

### *Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR)*

Climate change has vastly increased the incidents of natural disasters worldwide, especially in the late 20th and early part of 21st centuries. This along with sporadically occurring cases of manmade calamities has greatly enlarged the ambit of disasters that require HADR assistance worldwide. Today, very few countries have the capacity to handle large disasters by themselves, while others have to typically seek assistance from friendly partner countries to tide over the crisis. The assistance provided could be material, manpower, financial, technological or even HADR-related training. As these are unpredictable events, the specific assistance that follows from donor countries would depend on its capacities and capabilities at that time.

### *Mapping/ Geospatial/ Hydrography Assistance*

Terrain mapping using geospatial means or seabed mapping by means of hydrography are specialised fields that require separate training and specific equipment, which are not available with all countries. This becomes all the more critical today as resources become scarcer, which encourages nations to accurately mark out their territories and zones of responsibility to prevent encroachment and also to fulfil legal necessities. To this is added the fact that the information gathered by either geospatial or hydrographic means is of strategic interest to the effected country and therefore, not easily shared with another country. However, due to lack of resources, many countries need to seek assistance from countries with expertise in the field to undertake this

specialised work. This requires the recipient country to be comfortable and trusting of the donor country's intentions to not use the gathered data in a manner detrimental to its interests. This is painstakingly slow work and requires extended deployment of the donor country's resources. This being a sensitive field, it would normally be preceded by the signing of a bilateral agreement between the two countries.

### *Land/ Air/ Maritime Domain Awareness*

As discussed earlier, in view of the substantial rise in non-traditional threats coupled with the considerable increase in jurisdictional responsibilities of countries, improving domain awareness has become a top priority of nations. Various means can be adopted to achieve this, which could range from satellite or remotely piloted aircraft surveillance, aircraft, ship, vehicle or human patrols, fixed/ moving electronic, radar, electro-optical surveillance systems and intelligence gathering by various methods. Technology has further simplified the process by ensuring networking of systems and centralised processing and presentation of information, thereby reducing the manpower requirement for the job. Moreover, borders and EEZs being common and adjacent for neighbouring countries, a threat for one country would subsequently transform into a threat for another. Therefore, with respect to domain awareness, countries cannot work in isolation but will need to extensively collaborate with each other. However, all these assets, both fixed and moving, involve substantial costs, depending on the area to be kept under surveillance. Accordingly, this will require countries with capacities to aid those without, so that they can concentrate their energies on other vital sectors.

### **Constructive Engagements**

This can normally be classified as the first line of engagement between militaries, which can progress to become more regular, periodic and complex levels of engagements. This would involve engagements at all levels, from cabinet ministers to lower officials, simple small military components to complex larger formations, depending on the level of interoperability. These engagements obviously also involve the civilian component of the defence ministry, making it an all-encompassing 'defence' matter. The different types of constructive engagements are as elaborated below:



### *Delegation Level Talks*

Exchange of delegations for structured or one-off talks is one of the more basic levels of engagements in diplomacy. This could happen at the Track 1 (formal and official) or Track 1.5 (informal and unofficial) levels. Though Track 2 and 3 level talks exist but are rarely between serving defence ministry officials. The discussions can be held between larger delegations led by a cabinet minister or ministers with large, structured agendas or between smaller specialised delegations on specific issues. Such ‘talks’ could be planned to take place periodically based on bilateral agreements or could be ‘one-off’ as per requests. Normally, structured engagements would have a pre-approved agenda and a post-engagement follow-up mechanism to make the discussions more result oriented.

### *Multilateral and Bilateral Exercises*

Military exercises are usually held between similar components of two or more armed forces. This can vary in complexity depending on various factors like the commonality of equipment and procedures, communication protocols, level of compatibility, duration of engagement etc. Exercises between militaries are primarily carried out to improve the level of interoperability and comfort factor in working together, which could simultaneously act as a warning signal or deterrent for a common adversary of the two countries or as a confidence booster for friendly countries. Certain basic exercises like Passage Exercises (PASSEX) between warships can be done without much pre-exercise planning. However, large complex military exercises require detailed planning that could involve numerous delegates over many sittings, many months before commencement of the exercise. Conduct of complex military exercises between militaries generally signals the level of confidence and compatibility between the two countries.

### *Specialised Exercises and Coordinated Patrols*

Unlike bilateral or multilateral military exercises, specialised exercises are carried out between small specific components of the militaries having similar skillsets. These are carried out primarily to develop interoperability, provide training or build and improve on standard operating procedures. Examples of military components that carry

out such exercises include special forces, naval divers, cyber-groups, special engagement platforms like maritime patrol aircraft, fighter aircraft/ helicopters or special ordinance groups etc. Notwithstanding that coordinated patrols are a step below bilateral exercises, these require a high level of confidence between the militaries and the political leadership of the countries. Such patrols would generally be carried out between countries having common borders where non-traditional threats in the form of cross-border terrorism, piracy, drugs and arms smuggling, human trafficking, IUU fishing etc. exist. Usually, land-based patrols would involve army/ border security force units while at sea it would involve naval patrol vessels. Being a less-complex engagement, a single planning meeting between the militaries would generally set the stage for conduct of the coordinated patrol with a more formal opening and closing ceremony. The patrol is conducted with units generally remaining on their side of the border or international maritime boundary lines, and signals a unity of effort between the countries to inimical elements.

### *Unit/ Ship Level Visits*

Warship visits to ports of foreign friendly countries for 'showing the flag' has been the ubiquitous form of naval diplomacy since time immemorial. Its significance lies in the fact that warships are synonymous with being a movable piece of sovereign territory of the visiting country and hence the crew are treated as national guests by the host country. Normally, this also means that the host nation exempts the visiting crew of the otherwise mandatory requirement to carry official passports or to apply for visiting visas to come ashore. As the warship exemplifies the visiting country's technological prowess, financial muscle and military strength it is normally kept open for visitors to shape a positive perception in the foreign country. The ship/ ships would also customarily host foreign dignitaries on board to deepen the bonds of friendship between the militaries and the countries. A visit by a foreign warship to a port also signals the growing diplomatic rapport between the countries.

### **Collaborative Efforts**

This signifies a level of engagement that could be indirect and collective and doesn't necessarily have to be strictly bilateral. Collaboration between militaries can happen at forums and platforms and at levels where

both the countries share common interests and aims. Instead of armed forces being seen only as ‘proponents of kinetic force’, engagements within the realm of ‘collaborative efforts’ bring out those elements in the military that espouse peace and cooperation for the greater good of the globe or the region, depending on the grouping it joins. Collaborative efforts can be undertaken in the following ways:

### *Combined Operations*

These types of operations are normally undertaken under the umbrella of a combined command like a military alliance, independently by a nation to protect individual national interests or collectively for the protection of a common cause. A combined operation would gravitate to tackle a common threat with resources being pooled in by all participating countries, depending on their capacities. The level of cooperation among partner countries and command and control structure can be quite flexible in such cases. Some examples of such operations include Operation Enduring Freedom that commenced in 2001 in Afghanistan, which was thereafter succeeded by Operation Freedom with close to 25 partner countries; the Multi-National Force in Iraq consisting of more than 45 partner countries since 2003; the anti-piracy coalition for tackling piracy off the coast of Somalia, which has more than 33 partner countries. This would also involve operations where a country could request for a better equipped military partner to bail it out in times of crisis. Examples of these where the Indian armed forces were involved include the Indian Peacekeeping Force (IPKF) operations in Sri Lanka from 1987 to 1990; Operation Cactus in Maldives in 1988; Operation Juniper in Doklam, Bhutan, in 2017 and the numerous HADR operations that the Indian armed forces have undertaken in the Indian Ocean Region over the years.

### *Multilateral Initiatives*

Like-minded countries may come together in voluntary regional or issue-based groupings that involve their armed forces, but unlike a military alliance these are mostly benign in nature and are classified under the term multilateral initiatives. These initiatives, based on the issue for which these are created, would involve military delegations of various ranks or sizes and could include military assets that would

normally be put to use for benign tasks such as HADR or purely training activities. The membership criteria, structure, size, responsibilities, periodicity of meetings and guidelines for such agreements are generally brought together in a 'Charter Document' that guides members. Few military multilateral initiatives that the Indian armed forces are part of include the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS), Western Pacific Naval Symposium (WPNS), ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus (ADMM+) and India–Brazil–South Africa Maritime (IBSAMAR).

### *Defence Seminars and Commemorative Events*

Defence seminars are periodic events conducted to advertise the theoretical or practical military capabilities available with the armed forces of various countries and could be shared or sold to partner countries. Such events could bring scholars from military think tanks and vendors of military assets and equipment on a common platform to advertise new techniques or technologies, which, as decided by the organisers, could be classified or unclassified. Some events are synonymous with the cities where these are conducted and are keenly anticipated by both the military fraternity and civilian population alike. Few examples of these are the Aero India at Bangalore, the Dubai Airshow, the Paris Airshow and the Farnborough Airshow.

### **CONCLUSION**

The global threats of the 21st century necessitate a broader security agenda for countries. This is because threats of the future would include pandemics as seen with the global reach of COVID-19, natural disasters associated with climate change, intra-state terrorism built on religious/ethnic contours, deprivation due to freshwater scarcity, mass migration due to war/ poverty etc. A majority of these security issues are non-traditional in nature, have a military component and spill across national borders and regions.

Therefore, as has already been experienced in the first half of the 21st century, these transnational threats will need to be tackled through regional, sub-regional and global security partnerships. This will require the armed forces to evolve from institutions that primarily deal with

kinetic force into organisations that will be ‘key’ in coordinating the national security apparatus. This, in turn, will require a ‘whole-of-government’ approach to amalgamate different wings of the government (soft power), including the defence component (defence diplomacy) to deal with these non-traditional threats through bilateral or multilateral mediums.<sup>66</sup>

It is therefore instructive that personnel who by virtue of their job, appointment or deployment in the armed forces and are fortunate to carry out a military–diplomatic role, should as far as possible be better informed of the scope, possible mechanisms and accompanying complexities of the military-diplomatic discipline. This would go a long way in making informed decisions, leading to better outcomes for both interacting sides. As we go further into this discussion, we will see many situations that India faced and the decisions India took in tackling many a military diplomatic issue. After all, knowledge and analysis of our past experiences would guide us to do better in our future interactions overseas.

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<sup>66</sup> Blannin, *Defence Diplomacy in the Long War*, no. 17, p. 2.

**SECTION II**

**INDIAN EXPERIENCES**



## **INDIAN OVERSEAS MILITARY OPERATIONS**

India's current defence orientation and potential to contribute to international security politics in the 21st century, has been correlated in some quarters with it becoming one of the world's major economies that fields a large and highly professional armed force. It has therefore often been strategized by overseas scholars, that the Indian armed forces should rightfully bear some of the military burdens of maintaining regional and, maybe in time to come, global order.

Most political analysts have not always appreciated the fact that the Indian armed forces contributed significantly to Allied efforts in the two World Wars. What is more surprising is that this unique amnesia not only permeated the Western thinkers, but also Indian political theorists. India's rich pre-Independence military traditions have mostly been forgotten while safely pretending that our foreign policy began after 1947.

This chapter briefly discusses India's experiences in extending its expeditionary legs or worded differently, overseas military operations. India by virtue of its non-violent Independence movement and thereafter its undertaking of a leadership role among the newly independent non-aligned countries has always maintained a safe distance from deploying its armed forces overseas. India made an exception to this rule in the late 1980s when it deployed boots on the ground by sending the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) to Sri Lanka. This was followed by other successful overseas missions, though limited to being undertaken by Indian naval warships, which are discussed below.

### **THE COLONIAL PERIOD**

The Indian armed forces' expeditionary history predates the 19th century, when in the 18th century they were used as an expeditionary force by the British Raj in theatres ranging from Egypt to Japan, from Southern



Africa to the Mediterranean. Thereafter, in World War I close to 1.2 million Indian soldiers served in the British Indian Army and when it ended, about 9.5 lakh Indian troops were serving overseas, with 62,000–65,000 Indian soldiers being killed in that war. In World War II, the British Indian Army was engaged on a wider geographical expanse. It saw action on fronts ranging from Italy and North Africa to East Africa, West Asia and East Asia. In Southeast Asia alone, 7 lakh Indian troops fought to oust the Japanese Army from Burma, Malaya and Indo-China. By the end of World War II, the British Indian Army had 25 lakh men, the largest volunteer force in the world.<sup>67</sup>

Unlike certain countries with large militaries, the Indian armed forces after Independence, have very rarely been deployed as an expeditionary force independently and never as part of a military alliance. Such operations can become very debilitating, both financially and militarily, for the country undertaking the operations, leading to loss in political capital and international standing and therefore needs careful political and strategic consideration before committing. India has, however, contributed immensely to UN-led peacekeeping operations all over the world as one of the largest contributors of troops, which does not qualify here as military expeditionary operations.

## **POST-INDEPENDENCE OPERATIONS**

Post-Independence, the Indian armed forces undertook two expeditionary operations, which are now termed as Out of Area Contingency (OOAC) Operations. These operations undertaken at the behest of the elected government of the recipient country were the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) operation in Sri Lanka from 1987 to 1990 and Operation Cactus in Maldives in 1988. In addition, the Indian armed forces have undertaken two Non-combatant Evacuation Operations (NEO) from active military zones, the first in 2006 from Lebanon and the second in 2015 from Yemen.

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<sup>67</sup> Amb (Retd) Sachdev, “Indian Diplomacy through Ages”, no. 19.

## INDIAN PEACE KEEPING FORCE (IPKF), SRI LANKA

The IPKF was inducted into Sri Lanka on the request of the then Sri Lankan President JR Jayewardene under the terms of the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord, which he had signed with the then Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi on 29 July 1987. The mandate of the IPKF was to disarm the different terrorist groups, including the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), which was to be followed by the formation of an Interim Administrative Council in the Tamil dominated northern districts of Sri Lanka, thereby ending the bloody civil war.

At the peak of the conflict, the Indian armed forces had close to 80,000 personnel deployed in Sri Lanka. This included one mountain and three infantry divisions, including supporting arms and services from the Indian Army, various ships, aircraft, helicopters and the marine commandos from the Indian Navy, transport aircraft, ground attack and transport helicopters from the Indian Air Force, elements of the Indian Coast Guard and Central Reserve Police Force.<sup>68</sup>

The IPKF commenced withdrawing in 1989 with the last contingents leaving Sri Lanka mainland by March 1990. The IPKF suffered close to 1,200 casualties with many wounded in the operations. Commemorating the fallen IPKF soldiers, a memorial was erected in Colombo in 2008 and in Jaffna in 2015.

### Operation Cactus, Maldives

While Operation Pawan was in progress in Sri Lanka, there was an attempted coup d'état in Maldives on 2/3 November 1988, wherein 300–500 armed Tamil/Sinhala-speaking mercenaries captured key locations in Male and tried to take over the government. During this attempted coup, President Gayoom went into hiding and sought India's immediate intervention.

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<sup>68</sup> S. Kalyanaraman, "Major Lessons from Operation Pawan for Future Regional Stability Operations", *Journal of Defence Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 3, 2012, p. 39.

Taking swift action, India airlifted elements of the parachute brigade directly from Agra to Male within hours of the request. The Indian Army paratroopers secured strategic locations and restored control of the capital to President Gayoom within hours of landing at Male. Meanwhile, few mercenaries fled Male by hijacking a merchant vessel, 'Progress Light'. They also took few Maldivian VIPs hostage and set course for Sri Lanka. However, Indian naval ships INS Godavari and Betwa thwarted this attempt. The Indian warships were already on their way to Maldives as per the initial government orders. On sighting MV Progress Light, the two warships used their main guns and helicopters to stop and sink the merchant vessel, while rescuing all onboard including hostages, mercenaries and crew. The mercenaries were handed over to the Maldivian government, where they were sentenced and imprisoned.<sup>69</sup>

Operation Cactus is a shining example of a swift and successful operation where all elements of the armed forces came together in complete coordination to avert a major political crisis in our neighbourhood.

### **Operation Sukoon, Lebanon, 2006**

The war in Lebanon in July/ August 2006 and the consequent bombing campaign by Israel had put the lives of many Indian nationals working in Lebanon at risk and required their immediate evacuation. It was estimated that around 2,200 people including Sri Lankan and Nepalese nationals required evacuation from the war zone in Beirut.

The Indian Navy was tasked with the operation and accordingly it diverted Task Force 54, consisting of Indian naval ships Mumbai, Brahmaputra, Betwa and fleet tanker Shakti, which were on overseas deployment to the Mediterranean. The ships carried out four sets of

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<sup>69</sup> VAdm (Retd) GM Hiranandani, *Transition to Eminence: The Indian Navy 1976-1990*, New Delhi: Lancer Publishers, 2005, pp. 12–13.

evacuation from Beirut harbour, which was an active war zone from 20 July to 30 July 2006. A total of 2,280 civilians were evacuated from Beirut to Cyprus, which included 1,764 Indians and foreign nationals from Sri Lanka and Nepal.<sup>70</sup>

This was the largest evacuation operation carried out by India till that time and one of the largest by any navy. It showcased the capability of the Indian armed forces to operate confidently in an active war zone, 4,000 NM away from the mainland.

### **Operation Rahaat, Yemen, 2015**

Military intervention in Yemen by Saudi Arabia and its allies commenced in March 2015 with the Royal Saudi Air Force bombing the Houthi rebel positions. The escalating hostilities had prompted the Indian government to issue advisories to its nationals to leave the country. However, even after the issue of three advisories more than 5,000 Indian citizens were trapped in Yemen, who required immediate evacuation before the situation deteriorated any further.

The Indian armed forces were ordered to lead the evacuation effort, and accordingly, the Indian naval ship Sumitra, which was on anti-piracy patrol in the Gulf of Aden, was immediately diverted to the Yemeni port of Aden to commence with the evacuation. In addition, two Indian naval ships were dispatched from Mumbai to augment the effort. The Indian Air Force meanwhile pressed two C-17 Globemaster heavy lift aircraft with a capacity of 600 passengers into service from Djibouti.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> VAdm (Retd) Anoop Singh, *Blue Waters Abov! The Indian Navy 2001–2010*, Noida, UP: Harper Collins India, 2018, pp. 102–103.

<sup>71</sup> Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Suo-Motu statement made in Lok Sabha on 20 April 2015, “Recent Developments in the Republic of Yemen and Efforts Made for Safe Evacuation of Indian Nationals from There”, Press Information Bureau, Government of India, available at <https://pib.gov.in/newsite/mbErel.aspx?relid=118364>, accessed on 17 April 2020.

The evacuation commenced on 1 April 2015, with INS Sumitra evacuating the first set of Indian citizens. Subsequently, two Indian naval ships, Mumbai and Tarkash, joined the effort in evacuation from Aden and Al Hudaydah with the C-17s evacuating people from Djibouti.

More than 5,500 people were evacuated, out of which 3,000 were evacuated by warships and the rest by aircraft. These included 960 foreign nationals from 41 countries. The operation univocally established the capacity of the Indian armed forces to react in quick time to developing situations with an extended reach, thereby cementing India's place as the 'first responder' in the Indian Ocean Region.<sup>72</sup>

## CONCLUSION

What has been presented in the chapter is only a brief overview of the better-known overseas operations carried out by the Indian armed forces. It should be able to give a contemporary practitioner of military diplomacy, a basic direction and understanding to bolster his/ her quiver of foreign cooperation tools. This might also help a student of international relations to understand the reasons for India's deliberate and calibrated approach to overseas operations.

However, as India increases its overall influence in the geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific and accordingly develops, equips and bolsters its armed forces, especially the Indian Navy to protect its overseas interests, it is likely that India will see more such operations for which India will need to be prepared. In addition, India has a certain responsibility towards the vast Indian diaspora and transnational population, which as per a report by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) totals to 18 million, the largest in the world. Further the report states that the countries hosting the largest number of Indian

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<sup>72</sup> VAdm (Retd) Anoop Singh, *Blue Waters Abov! The Indian Navy 2001–2010*, no. 70.

migrants include UAE (3.5 million), the US (2.7 million) and Saudi Arabia (2.5 million).<sup>73</sup>

For these reasons and many more, India will need to bolster the strength of its diplomatic influence and the reach of its military diplomacy initiatives to be able to protect its benign interests in areas across the globe, starting from closer home. Therefore, as we move to the next chapter, we will take a closer look at India's experiences in the whole basket of defence diplomacy engagements, which include both coercive and cooperative elements.

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<sup>73</sup> PTI, "Indian Diaspora Largest in the World, 18 Million Living Outside India in 2020, Says UN", 16 January 2021, *The Print*, available at <https://theprint.in/india/indian-diaspora-largest-in-the-world-18-million-living-outside-india-in-2020-says-un/586624/>, accessed on 9 February 2021.

## **DEFENCE DIPLOMACY IN INDIA**

There has been a perception that unlike the major military powers, India has not been leveraging the capacity of its armed forces as an instrument of its foreign policy. Though this may be true to an extent till the late 20th century, since the early 21st century, in addition to being increasingly involved in shaping India's foreign policy, albeit in a rather nuanced way, the Indian armed forces have been playing a bigger diplomatic role.

India's international posture over the past decades has been fundamentally non-military. This is notwithstanding the fact that India has fought a few wars during that period. Having won independence through a non-violent struggle from an imperialist power, India is philosophically committed to non-violence, which is rooted in its heritage. Indian foreign policy accordingly has been essentially based on its reluctance to project power and support military interventions. India has mostly called for peaceful resolutions to disputes, opposed the use of force as a tool of international relations and actively supported international disarmament. India's normative political outlook has been to avoid joining military alliances, refuse providing military bases on its soil or sending its troops or military assets to take part in overseas coalition operations. India in the past, has also been seen as limiting in providing military assets to nations in civil unrest, which inevitably paved the way for other powers to increase their influence in its neighbourhood.<sup>74</sup>

At present, India has one of the largest standing armies in the world, the most powerful navy in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and the

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<sup>74</sup> Amb (Retd) Kanwal Sibal, "Role of Military Diplomacy in India's Foreign Policy", no. 26.

fifth largest air force. India has a credible nuclear deterrence with proven sea-launched nuclear capability. Indian armed forces have been seen and accepted as the ‘first responder’ for the numerous natural and manmade disasters that have afflicted the IOR in the last few decades. When supported by firm political resolve, India has also shown military firmness to support the larger diplomatic effort in avoiding a larger conflict, like with the Chinese in Doklam. Therefore, though India may not project military power beyond its shores like the major powers, in the last few decades it has used its armed forces in more subtle ways to support its foreign policy.

In earlier chapters, the justification of dividing defence diplomacy into two main sub-components, namely, *coercive defence diplomacy* and *cooperative defence diplomacy* was deliberated. This chapter will elaborate on India’s experiences in the coercive sub-component, which, since post-2014, has become India’s preferred method of retribution for terror strikes from across the border. In recent times, such coercive actions have found favour as they have had the desired effect of reducing both terror strikes and cross-border infiltration originating from the soil of our western neighbour. However, these will have to be executed as a very deliberate and calibrated policy, as there will always be an ‘ever-present’ danger that such limited military actions could spiral out of control to evolve into a least desired larger conflict.

## INDIAN EXPERIENCES IN COERCIVE DEFENCE DIPLOMACY

As elaborated in previous chapters, the concept of coercion has been reflected as a coercer’s use of intimidations to influence the conduct of an adversary. Most scholarly discourses on coercion have elaborated on the theory based on certain basic assumptions about both parties, namely, the coercer and his adversary. The first assumption is that they both are singular rational actors and the second is that the threats from the coercer’s side need to be conveyed to the adversary as comprehensible messages over an extended period.<sup>75</sup> However, in reality the actors are

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<sup>75</sup> Patrick Bratton, “Signals and Orchestration: India’s Use of Compellence in the 2001–02 Crisis”, *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 34, No. 4, 2010, pp. 594–610, DOI: 10.1080/09700161003802786, accessed on 27 April 2020.



normally two governments, working in the standard bureaucratic style of many interrelated organisations. It would therefore be most difficult to orchestrate a synchronised singular message from such a leviathan in the same way an individual coordinates his or her movements.<sup>76</sup> Most democratic governments, like India's, need to connect with several audiences at the same time: the adversary, the domestic constituency and the international environment. This means that states do things 'in twos'.<sup>77</sup> The result is often mixed signals that could set to question the specific requirement and resolve of the coercing state.

According to some scholars, unlike the US, where the power system is divided between the White House and the Congress, it is assumed that unitary parliamentary governments, like that of India or the United Kingdom, should be better at orchestration. As David Auerswald writes, "Parliamentary governments, because of their fusion of powers into one body, are often assumed to be more effective at signalling and orchestrating than democracies that formally separate the executive from the legislature".<sup>78</sup> It has been argued by scholars that the Vajpayee government had executed a 'compellence coupled by an escalation control strategy' during the 1999 Kargil War.<sup>79</sup> However, in the case of this paper, the Kargil War would be classified as a proper military action, while briefly discussing the other less than war situations executed by the Indian administration.

As also discussed earlier, coercion can be executed in two primary methods, for example, by compellence (threats to make an adversary take an action or not to take a particular action) or by deterrence (threats

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<sup>76</sup> Thies Wallace, *When Governments Collide: Coercion and Diplomacy in the Vietnam Conflict, 1964–68*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982, Chapter 6.

<sup>77</sup> Robert Jervis, "Complexity and the Analysis of Political and Social Life", *Political Science Quarterly*, 112, 1997–98, p. 589.

<sup>78</sup> David Auerswald, *Disarmed Democracies: Domestic Institutions and the Use of Force*, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 2000, pp. 43–44.

<sup>79</sup> Kartik Bommakanti, "Coercion and Control: Explaining India's Victory at Kargil", *India Review*, Vol. 10, No. 3, 2001, pp. 283–328, DOI: 10.1080/14736489.2011.596787, available at <https://doi.org/10.1080/14736489.2011.596787>, accessed on 27 April 2020.

to keep an adversary from acting). Further recall would remind us of Thomas C. Schelling's division of compellence into its sub-elements of 'immediate compellence' and 'demonstrative compellence', where 'immediate compellence' involved verbal threats and promises while 'demonstrative compellence' involved a limited use of force coupled with the threat of escalating violence to come if the demands are not met.<sup>80</sup> Elaborated in the paragraphs below are few instances where India has made use of coercive diplomacy to protect its national interests.

### **Operation Parakram (December 2001–October 2002)**

On 13 December 2001, the nation was shaken to its core by a dastardly terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament in New Delhi. Being in session, both houses of the legislature and a substantial number of government ministers were in the building. Though the causalities of the attack were limited to the five terrorists and seven security personnel, the attack signified an invasion on the very foundations of Indian democracy. Understandably, there was a large upwelling of popular sentiment and public anger in India, which necessitated a suitable response by the government against the perpetrators.<sup>81</sup>

Accordingly, the decision to launch Operation Parakram was taken by the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS), the main Indian decision-making body for national security, on 16 December 2001. This was a massive mobilisation exercise involving around eight lakh troops, movement of three strike corps, activation of forward airfields by the Indian Air Force and shifting of the Indian Navy's Eastern Fleet to the western seaboard. The then Defence Minister also confirmed the readiness of the strategic *Prithvi* missiles in late December.<sup>82</sup> The

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<sup>80</sup> Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, no. 49, p. 87.

<sup>81</sup> Bratton, "Signals and Orchestration: India's Use of Compellence in the 2001–02 Crisis", no. 75, p. 596.

<sup>82</sup> "India's Missile System in Position: Fernandes", *The Hindu*, 27 December 2001, available at <https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/indias-missile-system-in-position-fernandes/article27993900.ece>, accessed on 27 April 2020.

Operation was envisaged to attack terrorist training camps across the Line of Control (LoC) using shallow thrusts and ensuring attrition of military capabilities on the Pakistani side.<sup>83</sup> The military mobilisation by India was of a magnitude where it was conceivable to extend the incursions over a wide area of the India–Pakistan border, possibly precipitating towards a full-scale war. So here was a developing situation where Pakistan was pushed into a corner, faced with the prospect of shielding short-strategic thrusts into its territory, possibly developing into a full-scale conventional war if did not comply with India’s demands.<sup>84</sup> This was reported in the media as India’s strategy for coercive diplomacy.<sup>85</sup>

Patrick Bratton observes that at the time, the Indian government was applying two types of coercive strategies, one on Pakistan and the other on the United States. Here both cases could be classified under the sub-category of ‘immediate compellence’. The reasoning for this is that India, in the first case, was threatening to escalate the situation into a full-scale war if Pakistan did not take visible action against the terrorists operating from its soil against India. While in the second case, it was pressurising the US into coercing Pakistan into taking the same action. For the US, a full-scale war launched by India on the Pakistani eastern front would mean an immediate unravelling of its strategy in the then ongoing war against terror on the Pakistani western front with Afghanistan. This would have had the additional danger of escalation to the nuclear realm, an unacceptable outcome for the US.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> G. Kanwal, “Military Dimensions of the 2002 India–Pakistan Standoff—Planning and Preparation for Land Operations”, in Davis Z.S. (ed.), *The India–Pakistan Military Standoff. Initiatives in Strategic Studies: Issues and Policies*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, pp. 67–95.

<sup>84</sup> General Sood and Pravin Sawhney, *Operation Parakram: War Unfinished*, New Delhi: Sage, 2003, pp. 73–79.

<sup>85</sup> Stated most articulately by C. Raja Mohan, “India’s Coercive Diplomacy”, *The Hindu*, 31 December 2001, available at <https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/indias-coercive-diplomacy/article27994521.ece>, accessed on 10 May 2020.

<sup>86</sup> Bratton, “Signals and Orchestration: India’s Use of Compellence in the 2001–02 Crisis”, no. 75, pp. 603–604.

In the final analysis, whether coercive diplomacy decided the outcome of the engagement would be a moot question. S. Kalyanaraman feels that coercion on both fronts did work to an extent in the short term. He reasons that after being proscribed by the US, the assets of the terrorist organisations Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) were frozen by Pakistan on 25 December 2001.<sup>87</sup> This was followed by President Musharraf's promises, via his televised addresses on two occasions, to not allow Pakistani soil to be used to export terrorism anywhere in the world.<sup>88</sup>

However, in retrospect it can be inferred that in the long-term everything that President Musharraf promised came undone. Therefore, Kalyanaraman's assertion that "in the overall analysis, New Delhi cannot be said to have been successful in its exercise of coercive diplomacy" rings true.<sup>89</sup> International focus, as reported in this case, unfortunately, moved from the unresolved issue of Pakistan sponsored cross-border terrorism to the possibility of a nuclear war between India and Pakistan, which got reported as "Coercive diplomacy as practised by New Delhi had blurred its own case as to which was the aggrieved party and which the belligerent".<sup>90</sup>

### Special Forces Surgical Strikes (September 2016)

The attack on 18 September 2016, by four Pakistan-based JeM terrorists on the Army camp at Uri, Kashmir, can be seen as a watershed moment

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<sup>87</sup> "The Lashkar's finances were frozen on December 20 and they were designated as 'foreign terrorist organisations' on December 26", *The Hindu*, 22 and 27 December 2001, available at <https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/us-brands-lashkar-jaish-terrorist-outfits/article27993888.ece>, accessed on 10 May 2020.

<sup>88</sup> S. Kalyanaraman, "Operation Parakram: An Indian Exercise in Coercive Diplomacy", *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 26, No. 4, 2002, pp. 478–492, DOI: 10.1080/09700160208450063, accessed on 10 May 2020.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 487.

<sup>90</sup> Rodney W. Jones, "The US War on Terrorism: Religious Radicalism and Nuclear Confrontation in South Asia", South Asian History Academic Paper, Institute for the Study of Indo-Pakistan Relations, Media House, New Delhi, 2004, p. 68.

in India's responses to such attacks. The dastardly attack led to the death of 19 Indian Army soldiers.<sup>91</sup>

For nearly two decades prior to these attacks, the Indian establishment had wrestled to address a suitable military response to the cross-border terrorism unleashed by Pakistan with impunity. Since the conduct of the nuclear tests in 1998, India had been exploring the possibility of conventional space, below the nuclear threshold, which was reflected in the possibility of a Cold Start Doctrine being devised by the Indian Army.<sup>92</sup> However, this time India's response was a distinct departure from its past approaches. The government decided to directly target the terrorist launch pads along the LoC in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK).<sup>93</sup>

This was the first time after 1971 that the Indian government had acknowledged the sanctioning of a cross-border incursion into Pakistan. From India's side the strategic communication was unequivocal and clear, Prime Minister Narendra Modi promised that the attack would not go unpunished.<sup>94</sup> He, in turn, authorised the Indian Army to

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<sup>91</sup> "Uri Terror Attack: 17 Soldiers Killed, 19 Injured in Strike on Army Camp", *The Times of India*, 20 September 2016, available at <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Uri-terror-attack-Indian-Army-camp-attacked-in-Jammu-and-Kashmir-17-killed-19-injured/articleshow/54389451.cms>, accessed on 10 May 2020.

<sup>92</sup> For more on the Cold Start doctrine, see Walter C. Ladwig III, "The Indian Army's New Limited War Doctrine", *International Security*, Vol. 32, No. 3, Winter 2007/2008, pp. 158–190.

<sup>93</sup> Vivek Chadha, Rumel Dahiya, Neha Kohli and Shruti Pandalai, "Uri, Surgical Strikes and International Reactions", *MP-IDS A Issue Brief*, 4 October 2016.

<sup>94</sup> Sheela Bhatt and Anand Mishra, "Uri Attack: PM Narendra Modi Says Attack will Not Go Unpunished, Rajnath Singh Calls Pak a Terror State", *The Indian Express*, 19 September 2016, available at <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-newsindia/pm-narendra-modi-says-attack-will-not-go-unpunished-rajnath-singh-calls-pak-a-terror-state-3037864/>, accessed on 15 May 2020.

“examine all feasible military options that could deliver an ‘effective response’”.<sup>95</sup>

Vivek Chadha and Rumel Dahiya have explained how an Indian Special Forces contingent, divided into smaller groups, crossed over the LoC at multiple locations on the night of 28–29 September 2016, and carried out daring raids on the terrorist launch pads in PoK. The Special Forces raid resulted in substantial attrition to the terrorist numbers and infrastructure in PoK, while having no losses themselves.<sup>96</sup>

If we have to attempt to politically classify this action into the sub-elements of compellence within the umbrella of coercive diplomacy then we need to recall the definitions of the sub-elements. We had earlier discussed Thomas C. Schelling’s classification of these elements, where he had elaborated that in compellence the threat of pain could change the adversary’s motive and where the power to hurt has to be communicated by a certain enactment of it. Here it could be “sheer terroristic violence to induce an irrational response, or cool premeditated violence to persuade somebody that you mean it and may do it again, it is not the pain and damage itself but its influence on somebody’s behaviour that matters.”<sup>97</sup> Further recall would remind us of the division of compellence into its sub-elements of ‘immediate compellence’ and ‘demonstrative compellence’, where ‘immediate compellence’ involved verbal threats and promises while ‘demonstrative compellence’ involved a limited use of force coupled with the threat of escalating violence to come if the demands are not met.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Rajiv Kumar, “Surgical Strikes: Here’s when PM Narendra Modi Decided to Avenge Uri Attack”, *The Financial Express*, 30 September 2016, available at <http://www.financialexpress.com/india-news/surgical-strikes-when-pmnarendra-modi-decided-to-avenge-uri-attack-teach-pakistan-lesson-indianarmy-loc/398739/>, accessed on 15 May 2020.

<sup>96</sup> Vivek Chadha et al., “Uri, Surgical Strikes and International Reactions”, no. 93.

<sup>97</sup> Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, no. 49, p. 87.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

Going by the above definition, it is clear that the Indian government's action to carry out the Surgical Strikes on 28–29 September 2016, was a classic attempt at 'demonstrative compellence'. Here a 'limited use of force' was applied with an implied threat of escalating violence. However, were the demands met, was the strategy of 'demonstrative compellence' actually effective? It would be interesting to do a cursory exploration of the terrorist infiltration figures, pre and post the Surgical Strikes.

As per data compiled from the answers to parliamentary questions in the Rajya Sabha on 12 December 2018, by the Minister of State for Home Affairs<sup>99</sup> and in the Lok Sabha on 25 July 2018, by the Minister of State for Defence,<sup>100</sup> the following figures emerge.

**Table 4.1** Summary – Indo-Pak Cross Border Incidents 2015–17

Year	Personnel Killed (CFV) (CBF)			Terrorists Killed	No. of Incidents*	Infiltration Attempts	Net Estimated Infiltration
	Army	BSF	Civilian				
2015	06	04	16	108	208	121	33
2016	08	05	13	150	322	371	119
2017	15	04	12	213	329	419	139

\* Number of incidents include the violence committed by terrorists during anti-militancy operations

(CFV – Ceasefire violations, CBF – Cross-border firings)

The figures in Table 4.1 above may not tell the whole story and the inferences are clearly debatable. However, it may be observed that

<sup>99</sup> "Terrorist Violence and Infiltration in J&K", Press Information Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, 12 December 2018, available at <https://pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1555641>, accessed on 17 May 2020.

<sup>100</sup> "Ceasefire Violations", Press Information Bureau, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, 25 July 2018, available at <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1540074>, accessed on 17 May 2020.

though the numbers are higher across all parameters in the year following the Surgical Strikes, that is, in 2017, it is lower than the percentage increase *vis-à-vis* year 2015 to 2016. Therefore, in the final analysis, at an academic level, it may be arguable whether India achieved its political aims by conducting the Surgical Strikes in 2016. However, on a more practical level, the decisive message of ‘demonstrative compellence’ applied on Pakistan by the Indian government did go through, that ‘future terrorist attacks will be met by definitive retribution’ was clearly demonstrated. Prime Minister Modi put this in perspective when he said, “*Ek ladai se Pakistan sudhar jayega, yeh sochne mein bahut badi galti hogi. Pakistan ko sudarne mein abhi aur samay lagega* (It will be a big mistake to think that Pakistan will start behaving after one fight. It will take a long time for Pakistan to start behaving)”.<sup>101</sup>

### **Balakot Air Strike (February 2019)**

One of the deadliest terrorists strikes against security forces in Kashmir was carried out on 14 February 2019. The Pakistan-based terrorist group, JeM carried out a suicide attack on a Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) convoy passing through the town of Pulwama (16 km from Srinagar), claiming 40 lives. Pakistan’s response was on expected lines, where on one hand it condemned the attack, it asked for specific proof or actionable intelligence from India to proscribe the JeM on the other.<sup>102</sup>

Considering the magnitude of the attack and the Government of India’s resolve for ‘quick retribution’ displayed by the Surgical Strikes in 2016,

<sup>101</sup> “Come Back before Sunrise, PM Modi told Soldiers before Surgical Strikes”, *India Today Web Desk*, 1 January 2019, available at <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/pm-narendra-modi-interview-surgical-strikes-1421276-2019-01-01>, accessed on 17 May 2020.

<sup>102</sup> Maj Gen (Retd) G.G. Dwivedi, “The Balakot Strategic Shift – Needed a ‘Counter Proxy War’ Doctrine”, *MP-IDS Commentry*, 28 March 2019, available at <https://idsa.in/idsacomments/balakot-strategic-shift-counter-proxy-war-gg-dwivedi-280319>, accessed on 26 May 2020.



it was a matter of time before India decided to strike back in equal measure. This was conveyed by Prime Minister Modi when he warned on 15 February 2019, “I want to tell terror groups and their supporters that they have made a big mistake. I want to assure the nation that those behind this attack will definitely be punished”.<sup>103</sup>

India’s response was as promised by the Indian Prime Minister. On 26 February 2019, India carried out a ‘non-military’ pre-emptive air strike to specifically target the JeM training camps near the town of Balakot in PoK. The Foreign Secretary of India, Vijay Gokhale, in his statement reiterated that the operation was ‘intelligence led’, and that “a very large number of JeM terrorists, trainers, senior commanders and groups of jihadis who were being trained for fidayeen action were eliminated” by the strikes.<sup>104</sup>

While analysing the possible political signalling that this strike achieved, we may have to evaluate the official statements made by important Indian government functionaries post the airstrike. In a seminar on the first anniversary of the airstrikes on 28 February 2020, the Indian Defence Minister provided an insight into the Indian government’s thinking. He described India’s response to the terrorist attack with surgical airstrikes as ‘out-of-the-box’ and highlighted that this specific Indian action would now require the adversary to ‘think 100 times’ before contemplating to undertake any future misadventures. He assured the audience that the Indian government would respond appropriately to any future threat to India’s national security. The Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), General Bipin Rawat, while speaking at the same event

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<sup>103</sup> “Pulwama Terror Attack Revenge: PM Modi Says Forces Given Full Freedom”, *India Today Web Desk*, 15 February 2019, available at <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/pm-narendra-modi-pulwama-terror-attack-1456697-2019-02-15>, accessed on 26 May 2020.

<sup>104</sup> “Statement by Foreign Secretary on 26 February 2019 on the Strike on JeM training camp at Balakot”, Press Information Bureau, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 26 February 2019, available at <https://pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=188948>, accessed on 26 May 2020.

reiterated that ‘deterrence’ was achieved by the ‘will’ of the military leadership and ‘intent’ of the political class to take tough decisions, which he described was amply clear from India’s response to the attacks at Kargil, Uri and Pulwama.<sup>105</sup>

These statements are important to understand the Indian government’s intent for the airstrikes, especially since the analyses of available anti-terrorism data does not help at arriving at a possible hypothesis. Accordingly, from introspection of the above statements, it is clear that India focussed on taking ‘limited military action’ to ensure that Pakistan would need to ‘think 100 times’ and restrain its Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) supported terrorist groups from undertaking a ‘large-scale’ strike in India in the future. Matching this intent with the definitions of the sub-elements of coercive diplomacy, this style unmistakably gets equated as a classic case of ‘demonstrative compellence’, that is, a ‘limited military action’ to restrain Pakistan-based terrorist groups from planning future action.

## CONCLUSION

The examples discussed above are indicative of the successful application of coercive military diplomacy by the Indian state. However, experts and exponents of diplomacy remind us that in addition to the coercive military component there exist other long-term coercive strategies under the diplomatic umbrella, which India should exploit especially against a country like Pakistan. This is because coercive military action in the long run cannot change Pakistan’s behaviour to use terrorism as an extension of state policy against India. It is therefore prudent that India should adopt new self-reliant tactics that could compel Pakistan to curb state-sponsored terrorism while avoiding military escalations. These tactics include targeting Pakistan’s economy, strangling the waters flowing into Pakistan and cyberaggression.

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<sup>105</sup> “Balakot Airstrikes was a Message that Cross-border Terrorism Will Not be a Low-cost Option for the Adversary, Says Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh”, Press Information Bureau, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, 20 February 2020, available at <https://pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=199626>, accessed on 20 June 2020.

Pakistan's economy has remained stymied for various reasons since many decades. With the absence of internal drivers to lift the Pakistani economy, the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was predicted to boost the faltering Pakistani economic engine in the short run. However, with a decade having passed since the CPECs inception, the Pakistani economy does not seem to have taken off as expected. A visible irritant to Pakistan's fortunes has been the constant spotlight it has been under for its inaction against anti-terrorism financing.

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) had asked Pakistan to demonstrate that terrorism financing probes had resulted in effective, proportionate and dissuasive sanctions. This has been a result of its stated support and nurturing of Islamist militant groups and their proxies to carry out attacks against India and Afghanistan. Therefore, unless Pakistan implements tougher legislations and measures against terror financing, it remains a prime target for FATF blacklisting, notwithstanding the unstinted support of its 'iron-brother', China. This consistent surveillance of its terrorism activities by an UN approved independent agency, which indirectly applies pressure on its economy, is slowly forcing Pakistan to limit its open support to terrorist organisations and play by the book. India should continue to support such UN-led initiatives.

Similarly, as an upper riparian state, India has never dishonoured its obligations towards the Indus Water Treaty of 1960. The Indus, Jhelum and Chenab rivers that flow into Pakistan uninterruptedly, are major contributors to Pakistan's economy and agriculture. Any disruption in their supply would severely strangle Pakistan's economy. Notwithstanding all the hostilities between the two countries, India has not violated the treaty. However, it may be time for India to develop long-term projects, such as building reservoirs and dams across the region. Whether this tactic is in fact deployed or not, development of such infrastructure alone would force Pakistan to reconsider its strategy of propagating cross-border terrorism.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> G.S. Aditya, "Use Coercive Diplomacy on Pakistan", *The Statesman*, 6 May 2020, New Delhi, available at <https://www.thestatesman.com/opinion/use-coercive-diplomacy-pakistan-1502884862.html>, accessed on 26 June 2020.

India is today being increasingly viewed as an anchor for peace, security and stability in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). The Indian armed forces are the primary instrument and manifestation of the nation's military power, whose role in protecting and promoting regional security continues to be pivotal. Accordingly, over the decades, the Indian armed forces have played an important role in furthering our national and foreign policy objectives through active cooperation and engagement with not just IOR littorals, but other nations across the globe. As this forms the important second component of defence diplomacy, we shall discuss this in the following chapter.

## **INDIAN EXPERIENCES IN COOPERATIVE DEFENCE DIPLOMACY**

The need for peace and stability in its neighbourhood is essential for India's growth and development in the 21st century, and this need cannot be overstated. A regional environment conducive to nation-building and economic consolidation necessitates active engagement with regional nations to not only shape perceptions and enhance trust, but also to protect and promote India's core national interests in the region. The economic prosperity and overall development of the region will depend on factors that include managing a peaceful security environment and will ensure free flow of trade and commerce between countries.

The Indian Ocean Region (IOR) has been central to global economic and geopolitical affairs for several millennia. Historically, due to extensive trade and cultural linkages, maritime commerce flourished among the littorals of the Indian Ocean. The post-Cold War geopolitical-strategic trade and environment, independence of globalised economics, regional instabilities and the threats of maritime terrorism, piracy and power play witnessed confrontations and coalitions, leading to disturbances in the tranquillity in the IOR.

The forecasting of India's continuing economic growth presents us with an opportune time to further India's national objectives and shape a favourable regional environment through constructive engagement and cooperation by utilising the strengths and capabilities of all arms of the government effectively. India's efforts for capacity building and capability enhancement in the region can be made more effective and result oriented through the articulation of a sustainable action plan, especially in the maritime domain.

This can best be done by leveraging the Indian armed forces' established capability and professional reputation to provide substance and visibility

to the country's strategic vision and policy initiatives. Due to the support of the government, the Indian armed forces' presence, visibility and engagement has resulted in several nations eagerly seeking India's assistance/ cooperation as the 'First Port of Call'. Consequently, the Indian armed forces are well positioned to become a very suitable coordinator in several capacity building projects in the region.

The Indian armed forces have leveraged these inherent advantages while simultaneously building on the ongoing government diplomatic initiatives by adding a military cooperation component to India's Act East Policy, Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) initiatives, SAGAR and SAGARMALA projects etc. In the last few decades, these military cooperation initiatives have helped elevate the existing relations with partner countries in the region. This chapter accordingly analyses in detail, the considerations, logic and mechanisms used by India for effective utilisation of its armed forces to expand its diplomatic initiatives in the wider Indo-Pacific, while using the same mechanisms to engage with countries outside India's areas of interest.

## **ADDRESSING CAPACITY DEFICIT**

Political instability in some nations in the region have led to the emergence and proliferation of non-traditional threats. These security concerns do not recognise international borders and the homogenous character of the seas further allows them to proliferate from one region to another. The Indo-Pacific has also experienced some of the worst natural disasters. Furthermore, this region is highly diverse in its political, geographical, cultural, economic, military and environmental complexion, and has pronounced sub-regional personalities with unique sets of challenges. Most nations amongst the Indo-Pacific littorals are developing economies with limited access to modern technology and maritime infrastructure and have numerous capacity shortfalls. This significant capacity deficit, limited resources and capabilities among the IOR littorals, inhibits their capacity to address the full spectrum of threats and challenges that impinge upon their regional maritime security.

## TACKLING THE CHINESE PRESENCE

Given the region's geostrategic importance, extensive deployments of extra-regional powers continue in the Indo-Pacific. Some of these extra-regional powers, which have enduring geopolitical and economic interests in the region, have undertaken capacity building initiative with regional partners. Prominent among these is China. The large-scale Chinese investments in infrastructure projects in various IOR littorals, as well as in most coastal countries of the African continent, have created economic and military dependencies. These investments have served the Chinese interests well, and are the building blocks for future development of Forward Operating Bases (FoB) for the People's Liberation Army Navy [PLA (Navy)] in the Indian Ocean, as demonstrated by the 'logistics' base in Djibouti. Participation in international anti-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden (GoA) has provided a legitimate reason for Chinese naval ships to deploy continuously in the Indian Ocean since 2009. Under the garb of protecting own trade and nationals, PLA (Navy) deployments in the region have expanded to include nuclear and conventional submarines, submarine support vessels, ocean research and intelligence gathering ships, several of which have made port visits to countries in India's immediate neighbourhood. The IOR is also a pivotal part of China's ambitious flagship the One Belt One Road (OBOR) initiative.

## INDIAN GOVERNMENT'S INITIATIVES

The Indian government's focus and thrust is on high economic growth, development and progress. In order to achieve the desired growth rates, a period of relative peace and tranquility on all fronts would be highly desirable. Thus, whilst maintaining national security essentials, both internally and externally, creating a favourable environment would facilitate in realising this national goal. Recent policy and project initiatives such as 'Act East', Project 'Mausam', 'Sagarmala' and 'SAGAR' (Security and Growth for All in the Region), 'Make in India', 'Maritime India', 'Digital' and 'Skill India' clearly indicate the national vision and underscore a 'Whole of Government' (WoG) approach to strengthen relations and developments in the Indo-Pacific in a mutually supportive and cooperative manner. These initiatives have demonstrated the government's resolve to shape a favourable regional environment for national growth and prosperity.

## NEED FOR COOPERATIVE DEFENCE DIPLOMACY

The vast and varied challenges of addressing the existing and future non-traditional threats in the Indo-Pacific, *vis-à-vis* the limited capacity and capability of partner countries necessitate a cooperative and collaborative approach to ensure economic progress of the region. Regional cooperative mechanisms with capability/ capacity building support structures would enable lasting peace and stability. Considering the limited maritime capability and capacity of many countries in India's neighbourhood, it is incumbent on India to seize the initiative and adopt a proactive approach for engagement with these partner countries, as well as with other willing like-minded nations to create a favourable balance in the region.

Along with India's rising international status, the Indian armed forces have already established a leadership role amongst the armed forces in the region. Today, the Indian armed forces have emerged as the first port of call and a dependable partner for regional armed forces to address their security requirements. The Indian armed forces have constructively engaged with regional partners in an effort to build their capacities and enhance their capabilities so that the collective ability to effectively deal with regional security challenges are strengthened. This also reinforces India's regional responsibilities as a responsible, credible and strong security partner. Accordingly, as brought out earlier and for ease of understanding, we will discuss India's scope of cooperative defence diplomacy under the broad categories of capacity building, capability enhancement, cooperative engagement and collaborative efforts.

### CAPACITY BUILDING

The Indian government's efforts in defence cooperation towards capacity building of friendly foreign countries transcend many sectors. These include the provision of military hardware, military infrastructure, Coastal Surveillance Radar Systems (CSRS) etc. The supply of military hardware includes military assets/ platforms (land warfare systems, military aircraft, and warships) and military equipment (indigenous weapons and sensors), which are the primary requirements for military capacity building of partner countries. With the Indian defence industry slowly growing in confidence, it would be easier to facilitate the transfer



of Indian-made military hardware to partner countries at highly competitive rates. In addition, such military platforms and equipment need to be provided with lifetime maintenance support that includes technical assistance. Supply of military platforms and equipment would also help promote the 'Make in India' initiative.

Military infrastructure is vital for developing the capabilities of any armed forces to carry out its duties optimally in its areas of responsibility. Accordingly, India continues to remain involved in military infrastructure development of partner countries, which includes marine infrastructure building in the littoral island states. Towards this, the Indian government has been extending the benefits of the Sagarmala project to India's immediate neighbourhood (Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Maldives), while specific infrastructure projects in other countries are being identified and pursued through an Whole of Government Approach. Here it is felt that a 'public-private partnership model' with Indian industry and infrastructure companies would be ideal to execute such projects in partner countries.

India's capacity building initiatives have spanned many decades. India has gifted or supplied military platforms like ships, aircraft and vehicles to friendly neighbouring countries along with associated maintenance for the past many decades. As far back as April 1973 and July 1974, India gifted two Seaward Defence Boats (SDBs), Akshay and Ajay, to Bangladesh, which were inducted into the Bangladesh Navy as Padma and Surma respectively.<sup>107</sup> At about the same time, India also gifted another SDB, Amar, to Mauritius, which was followed by a Dornier maritime patrol aircraft in the 1980s and another SDB in the 1990s.<sup>108</sup> Since then India has gifted or supplied a large amount of defence hardware to many friendly foreign countries. Some of the recent examples are the Goa Ship Yard Ltd (GSL) constructed, modified offshore patrol vessel, Barracuda, to Mauritius Coast Guard, which

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<sup>107</sup> VAdm (Retd) G.M. Hiranandani, *Transition to Triumph: History of the Indian Navy, 1965–1975*, Lancer Publishers, 2000, pp. 387–388.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., p. 387.

was commissioned by Prime Minister Modi during his visit to Mauritius in 2015.<sup>109</sup> In addition, two Water Jet Fast Attack Crafts were supplied in 2016 and 2017 as well as a second ship named Valiant was commissioned at Mauritius in August 2017.<sup>110</sup> Similarly, India has had a very old capacity building association with Seychelles wherein India gifted the patrol boats PS Topaz and PS Constant to Seychelles in 2005 and 2014, respectively, and Indian Coast Guard's Fast Interceptor Boat C-405 (rechristened 'PB Hermes') was gifted to Seychelles in 2016. For maritime surveillance, India gifted two Dornier maritime surveillance aircraft to Seychelles, one in 2013 and the second in 2018.<sup>111</sup>

Notwithstanding India's chequered political history with Maldives, the defence association has always remained close. In 2006, India gifted a SDB, rechristened as Maldivian Coast Guard ship Huravee,<sup>112</sup> and in 2019, India gifted a Fast Interceptor Boat, which was rechristened as Kaamiyaab.<sup>113</sup> India also gifted two Dhruv Advanced Light Helicopters

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<sup>109</sup> "Text of the PM's Remarks on the Commissioning of Coast Ship Barracuda", Press Information Bureau, Prime Minister's Office, 12 March 2015, available at <https://pib.gov.in/newsite/printrelease.aspx?relid=116881H>, accessed on 15 July 2020

<sup>110</sup> "Second Water Jet Fast Patrol Vessel Supplied by India to Mauritius", *Navy Recognition*, 26 August 2017, available at <https://www.navyrecognition.com/index.php/news/defence-news/2017/august-2017-navy-naval-forces-defense-industry-technology-maritime-security-global-news/5514-second-water-jet-fast-patrol-vessel-supplied-by-india-to-mauritius.html>, accessed on 20 July 2020.

<sup>111</sup> "India-Seychelles Relations - Political Relations", *MEA Country Brief*, Ministry of External Affairs official website, available at India [https://www.mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/sey\\_dec.pdf](https://www.mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/sey_dec.pdf), accessed on 25 July 2020

<sup>112</sup> "India and Maldives Defence Cooperation", *MP-IDS.A, Resources*, available at <https://idsa.in/resources/documents/India-MaldivesDefCoop.20.8.09>, accessed on 25 July 2020.

<sup>113</sup> D.R. Chaudhury, "India Gifts Patrol Vessel to Maldives as Net Security Provider of Region", *The Economic Times*, 5 December 2019, available at <https://idsa.in/resources/documents/India-MaldivesDefCoop.20.8.09>, accessed on 5 August 2020.

in 2013, which are primarily being used for search and rescue and emergency medical evacuation.<sup>114</sup> To Sri Lanka, India gifted a naval Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) in 2006, christened as SLNS Sayura in the Sri Lankan Navy, which was followed at that time with the lease of two Indian Coast Guard OPVs.<sup>115</sup> This was followed by the supply of two Advance OPVs specifically constructed for the Sri Lankan Navy by GSL. One OPV that was commissioned in 2017 was named SLNS Sayurala and the second one that was commissioned in 2018 was named SLNS Sindhurala.<sup>116</sup> With Myanmar, the capacity building efforts have included gifting of four Islander maritime surveillance aircraft, light artillery guns, mortars and grenade launchers in 2013.<sup>117</sup> In 2017, the Myanmar Navy contracted for Indian-made anti-submarine warfare suite for its Kyan Sittha-class frigates along with Indian-made torpedoes as part of a deal worth \$ 37.9 million.<sup>118</sup> Two Fast Interceptor Boats

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<sup>114</sup> Aditya Sharma, “Not Threat to Having Indian Personnel on Our Soil”, *News18 World*, 21 January 2019, available at <https://www.news18.com/news/world/indian-pilots-for-maldivian-maritime-security-pose-no-threat-bilateral-ties-important-for-both-nations-says-maldivian-defence-minister-2008879.html>, accessed on 5 August 2020.

<sup>115</sup> “Admiral Nirmal Verma Visits Sri Lanka on the Occasion of Sri Lankan Navy’s 60th Year Celebrations”, Press Information Bureau, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, 9 December 2010, available at <https://pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=68321>, accessed on 5 August 2020.

<sup>116</sup> “GSL Delivers 2nd AOPV to Sri Lankan Navy Ahead of Schedule”, Press Information Bureau, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, 23 March 2018, available at <https://pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=177908>, accessed on 5 August 2020.

<sup>117</sup> Bibhu Prasad Routray, “Defence Diplomacy between India and Myanmar: State of Play”, *ISPSW Strategy Series: Focus on Defense and International Security*, Issue No. 600, February 2019, p. 3, available at <http://www.ispsw.de>, accessed on 25 September 2020.

<sup>118</sup> Saurav Jha, “India and Myanmar are Sending a Strong Message to China – With a Submarine”, *The Print*, 5 August 2019, available at <https://theprint.in/opinion/india-is-giving-a-submarine-to-myanmar-and-both-are-sending-a-strong-message-to-china/272240/>, accessed on 25 September 2020.

(FIBs) were handed over to Mozambique by the Indian Defence Minister in July 2019.<sup>119</sup>

For a majority of IOR littoral nations, one of the primary security challenges on the maritime domain is the danger of non-traditional threats. These threats are in the form of terrorism, drugs trafficking, arms smuggling, Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, human smuggling, natural disasters etc. To mitigate such challenges, nations require to develop a viable surveillance network, which requires operating and maintaining costly military assets. This is an expensive proposition for any country. To overcome these challenges and plug the gaps in its coastal maritime surveillance, India has set up a chain of Coastal Surveillance Radar Systems (CSRS) along its entire coast. This network is connected to various regional hubs and centrally to the Information Management Analysis Centre (IMAC) at Gurgaon. This has helped in substantially enhancing India's coastal maritime domain awareness to tackle non-traditional threats from the sea. India has also offered the same solution to its partner littoral nations in the IOR, which is especially viable for archipelagic nations with numerous far-flung islands. Accordingly, India has assisted in the setting of a five-station CSRS at Mauritius in 2012, an eight-station CSRS at Seychelles in 2015 and a six-station Automatic Identification System (AIS) at Sri Lanka.<sup>120</sup> India has also installed a ten-station CSRS at Maldives and has inked agreements to install CSRS systems in Bangladesh and Myanmar in the near future.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> "India and Mozambique Sign Two MoUs to Further Strengthen Defence Co-Operation", Press Information Bureau, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, 29 July 2019, available at <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1580691>, accessed on 25 September 2020.

<sup>120</sup> "India to Extend Defence Help to Indian Ocean Countries", *The Economic Times*, 9 March 2015, available at [economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/india-to-extend-defence-help-to-indian-ocean-countries/](http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/india-to-extend-defence-help-to-indian-ocean-countries/), accessed on 25 September 2020.

<sup>121</sup> Indrani Bagchi, "India Plans to Extend Coastal Surveillance Radar System to Maldives", *The Times of India*, 21 January 2019, available at <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/india-plans-to-extend-coastal-surveillance-radar-system-to-maldives/articleshow/67627493.cms>, accessed on 25 September 2020.

## CAPABILITY ENHANCEMENT

Military capability enhancement of partner countries is one of the primary forms of cooperative defence diplomacy. This includes military training, technical assistance including maintenance of military assets gifted by India, Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) surveillance, hydrographic surveillance and assistance in improving land/ air/ maritime domain awareness.

### **Military Training**

International military training is one of the largest components of cooperative defence diplomacy. Due to the unique nature of their work, most armed forces across the world need to maintain and run training institutions that cater to training of personnel right from the ab initio stage up to the senior commander. Further, armed forces would be one of the only institutions wherein most of the ab initio trainees are inducted just after they finish their schooling. This requires the armed forces, in most cases, to manage some of the largest training infrastructures and manpower for any singular institution in a country.

Maintaining an operationally efficient and functionally proficient armed force is a requirement for all countries. This can only be achieved if its personnel are suitably trained by the best institutions. However, due to lack of resources and budget constraints, smaller nations are unable to build and maintain such institutions. They find it more cost effective and strategically relevant to get their military personnel trained at foreign military institutions of repute. Here an important factor that most nations consider is the culture and language of training in the host country, which should not become barriers to learning and functioning of their personnel. Towards this, India has become one of the most sought-after training destinations for the armed forces of South Asia.

The basic structure and functioning of the armed forces being the same across countries, the general periodic training requirement is also very similar. Such training does not include the specific specialist training that may be unique to a particular type of equipment, terrain, situation etc. General periodic military training enables large training institutions to manage under one roof armed forces personnel from different countries enrolled in the same training curriculum. The Indian armed

forces being one of the largest, manages some of the biggest and best military training institutions in the world. India offers structured training to foreign armed forces personnel right from the ab initio stage up to the 'one-star' level. India in addition to carrying out specialised training in many fields and genres across the three Services also sends mobile training teams to countries when required.

To manage the diverse training requirements and differing financial positions of many nations, the Ministry of Defence (MoD), Government of India (GoI), conducts foreign military training under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) scheme, which is the financial umbrella provided by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). Under the ITEC (Scheme I), a foreign student's training is fully funded by the GoI, namely, the student's cost of tuition, airfare to and from parent country, boarding and lodging in India is fully paid for by the GoI. The ITEC (Scheme II) is only different in that the student's airfare to and from India is paid for by the parent country. Further, financial aid in the form of subsistence allowance is also provided to meet the living expenses for the entire duration of the course. In cases where ITEC funding is unavailable, training is availed under the Self-Financing Scheme (SFS) wherein the entire cost of training is borne by the trainees' own government.<sup>122</sup> The ITEC programme is applicable for all training programmes carried out by the GoI; it has completed 55 years since its institution in 2019, benefiting close to 160 partner countries.<sup>123</sup>

### *Indian Navy-Training*

The Indian Navy has been at the forefront of India's military capability enhancement initiative and has been providing training to foreign military

<sup>122</sup> *Annual Report 2018–19*, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, pp. 144–145.

<sup>123</sup> "Keynote Address by External Affairs Minister on Celebration of 55 years of ITEC", 7 October 2019, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, available at <https://mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/31914/Celebration+of+55+years+of+ITEC++Keynote+Address+by+EAM+October+07+2019>, accessed on 12 October 2020.

personnel for more than four decades. The Indian Navy has trained more than 15,000 foreign students from 41 countries. At any given time, there are more than 500–600 international trainees in Indian naval training establishments. This includes ab initio training for foreign naval cadets carried at the Indian Naval Academy at Ezhimala from 2015 and specialised training of foreign naval officers and sailors at naval institutions across India.<sup>124</sup> The Indian Navy has also imparted training in niche fields like aviation, submarines, asymmetric warfare to foreign partners, which include Vietnam, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Maldives. INS Satavahana in Visakhapatnam has carried out short submarine familiarisation courses for naval trainees from Indonesia, Myanmar, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, and full-fledged basic submarine courses for South Africa and Vietnam.<sup>125</sup> The Navy has also taken the initiative to institutionalise practical training for junior naval officers of IOR littoral countries by embarking them as sea riders for Overseas Deployments on the cadets training ships of the 1st Training Squadron. Further, officers from select countries are invited as ‘International Observers’ for the tri-Service Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) exercise undertaken by the Indian Navy on a yearly basis.<sup>126</sup> The Navy also conducts the Regional Maritime Security Course (RMSC), an eight-week course for mid-level officers at the Naval War College in Goa, which is subscribed for by major countries in the IOR.<sup>127</sup>

As demand for training of foreign sailors and officers at Indian training establishments has increased, the Indian Navy has taken the initiative to depute mobile training teams abroad. These teams undertake customised training as requested for by foreign navies. The Indian Navy has sent

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<sup>124</sup> *Annual Report 2018–19*, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, p. 145.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 146.

<sup>126</sup> VAdm (Retd) Anoop Singh, *Blue Waters Ahoy! The Indian Navy 2001–2010*, no. 70, p. 130.

<sup>127</sup> “Naval War College, Goa”, *Indian Navy website*, available at <https://www.indiannavy.nic.in/content/naval-war-college-go>, accessed on 12 October 2020.

mobile training teams to Sri Lanka, Oman, Myanmar, Kenya, Vietnam, Mauritius, Bangladesh and Nigeria. This not only helps in reducing the training load on training establishments in India but also increases the Indian training footprint across the region. A few examples of these are the yearly diving refresher course undertaken at Maldives, training of Special Forces at Mauritius, training on naval communications for Oman and logistics and shipyard management for trainees in Myanmar.<sup>128</sup>

### *Indian Army–Training*

The Indian Army has the experience of operating in vastly varying climates and terrains that range from the very high mountain ranges and glaciers in the north, to the large desert regions in the west, from the thick jungles of the northeast to the seas in the southern peninsula including the island territories. This ensures that the Indian Army has a vast institutional experience to run some of the finest training institutions in jungle, high-altitude, snow and desert warfare. In addition to the experience in contrasting terrain, the Indian Army has been almost continuously operating in the entire spectrum of conflict, from operations other than war, to low-intensity conflict and conventional war fighting.<sup>129</sup> This has been responsible for the Indian Army building a great tradition of professional training in almost all spheres of warfighting, which is supported by state-of-the-art facilities, updated and refined constantly with live combat experience from the field. This enormous expertise has, therefore, been gainfully utilised to impart meaningful training to the armies of partner countries, which has helped in building closer military ties and healthy, mutually beneficial bilateral relations.<sup>130</sup>

<sup>128</sup> *Annual Report 2018–19*, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, p. 146.

<sup>129</sup> Arjun Ray, “India’s Experience in Peacekeeping, Capacity Building and Training of UN Peacekeepers”, Proceedings of the Seminar on UN Peacekeeping: Assessment, Prospects, New Delhi, Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, 17–19 March 1999, p. 98.

<sup>130</sup> B.S. Sachar, “Cooperation in Military Training as a Tool of Peacetime Military Diplomacy”, *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 27, No. 3, 2003, available at <https://doi.org/10.1080/09700160308450097>, accessed on 15 October 2020.



During the training year 2018–19, the Indian Army offered 2,821 vacancies in 238 different courses to foreign trainees from 56 different countries. This included personnel from all ranks including non-commissioned and officers. In many instances the Army planned tailor-made courses based on the requirement of partner countries. This has been done for 1,205 personnel from Central Asian Republics, countries in Africa, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.<sup>131</sup> The Army has also been undertaking training at the ab initio stage for officer cadets from foreign countries in the National Defence Academy, Khadakwasla, where over the years it has trained over 700 cadets from 28 partner countries.<sup>132</sup> The Indian Military Academy (IMA), Dehradun, has undertaken training for foreign officer cadets since 1948, wherein officers from over 30 countries have passed out till date.<sup>133</sup> The Officers Training Academy, Gaya, since 2011 has trained 71 cadets from countries like Vietnam, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Myanmar,<sup>134</sup> while the Officers Training Academy, Chennai, has trained 49 foreign cadets from Sri Lanka and Uganda till the training year 2018–19.

The Indian Army also has the unique distinction of catering to the complete training requirement of a foreign armed forces, that is, the Royal Bhutan Army through the Indian Military Training Team

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<sup>131</sup> *Annual Report 2018–19*, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, p. 23.

<sup>132</sup> “Foreign Cadets”, *National Defence Academy website*, available at [https://nda.nic.in/foreign\\_cadets.html](https://nda.nic.in/foreign_cadets.html), accessed on 22 November 2020.

<sup>133</sup> “Indian Military Academy”, *Indian Army official website*, available at <https://www.indianarmy.nic.in/Site/FormTemplate/frmTempSimple.aspx?MnId=rB6dob9j6j/e7Lc4Uk/ZXA=&ParentID=INB7miI8epkOnK0GJKdhA=&file=8CKP96uz96kLwaWdRQ==>, accessed on 22 November 2020.

<sup>134</sup> Abhilash Bhalla, “Indian Army’s Military Diplomacy to Get Training Push for More Foreign Cadets from Neighbourhood”, *India Today*, New Delhi, 8 December 2019, available at <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/indian-army-military-diplomacy-to-get-training-push-for-more-foreign-cadets-from-neighbourhood-1626366-2019-12-08>, accessed on 22 November 2020.

(IMTRAT) based at Thimphu, Bhutan. The IMTRAT was established in 1958 by the then Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. It is manned by personnel mainly from the Indian Army and a few from the Indian Air Force and provide the pre-course training for all ranks of the Royal Bhutan Army.<sup>135</sup>

Taking advantage of Indian Army's vast experience in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, India established the Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping (CUPK) at New Delhi. Additionally, since 2005, CUPK is also the Secretariat of the International Association of Peacekeeping Training Centres (IAPTC). The centre undertakes various courses for officers from both the Indian armed forces and foreign armed forces as well as a host of international conferences and seminars on United Nations peacekeeping.<sup>136</sup>

Among the other major military training institutions where foreign officers are trained include the Defence Services Staff College (DSSC) at Wellington (Nilgiris). Here mid-level foreign officers have been trained since 1950 at the rate of approximately 30 international officers per course every year.<sup>137</sup> Similarly, the prestigious National Defence College at New Delhi, established in 1960, has been training senior defence and civilservice officers in strategic, economic, scientific, political and industrial aspects of national defence. The college has trained over 826 senior officers from 69 countries since its inception.<sup>138</sup> The College of

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<sup>135</sup> Brig (Retd) V.K. Atray, "Indian Military Training Team ( IMTRAT ) Strengthens Indo-Bhutan Ties", *Aviation Defence Universe*, 31 October 2018, Thimphu, available at <https://www.aviation-defence-universe.com/indian-military-training-team-imtrat-strengthens-indio-bhutan-ties/>, accessed on 22 November 2020.

<sup>136</sup> "Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping (CUNPK)", *Indian Army official website*, available at <https://indianarmy.nic.in/Site/FormTemplete/fmTempSimple.aspx?MnId=KNhQNsJL09BBF64jurNmA==&ParentID=+BnSIZErhxSgL7QbLAon3w==&flag=8CKP966uzg96kLov0aWdfQ==>, accessed on 27 December 2020.

<sup>137</sup> "Defence Services Staff College (DSSC)", *HQIDS official website*, available at <https://www.ids.nic.in/dssc.php>, accessed on 27 December 2020.

<sup>138</sup> "History of NDC", *National Defence College official website*, available at <https://ndc.nic.in/History.aspx>, accessed on 27 December 2020.

Defence Management (CDM) at Secunderabad, established in 1970, conducts various courses in defence management, which are also attended by mid-level officers from various countries.<sup>139</sup>

### ***Indian Air Force–Training***

The Indian Air Force has also been training personnel from partner countries in both flying training and ground duty subjects at its premier training institutes for many decades. The Air Force Administrative College, established at Coimbatore in 1943, is one of the oldest training establishments of the Indian Air Force. The college has undertaken the training of more than 12,000 officers from partner countries, namely, Myanmar, Indonesia, UAE, Qatar and Sri Lanka.<sup>140</sup> The Air Force Technical College (AFTC), established at Bangalore in 1949, has trained more than 276 officers from 19 partner countries. The Flying Instructors School, established at Tambaram, Tamil Nadu in 1954, has trained pilot instructors from over 17 partner countries, which include USA, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Nigeria, Kenya and Botswana. Apart from this, the graduates of this school have been sent to train ab initio and operational pilots in countries like Iraq, Egypt, Botswana and Malaysia. The Air Force Academy, established at Dindigul, Hyderabad, in 1970, trains officers in ab initio flying training and has also trained officers of different friendly foreign countries.<sup>141</sup>

The Indian Air Force has also been sending mobile training teams to partner countries to provide flying training. From 1958 to 1989, the Indian Air Force had provided flying instructors to Iraq to train Iraqi

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<sup>139</sup> “History”, *College of Defence Management official website*, available at <https://cdm.ap.nic.in/index.php/college/history>, accessed on 28 December 2020.

<sup>140</sup> “AF Administrative College”, *Indian Air Force website*, available at <https://indianairforce.nic.in/content/af-administrative-college>, accessed on 28 December 2020.

<sup>141</sup> “Training Establishments”, *Indian Air Force official website*, available at <https://indianairforce.nic.in/>, accessed on 28 December 2020.

cadets at the flying academy at Tikrit and to conduct operational fighter, transport and helicopter conversion training at other bases.<sup>142</sup>

## Technical Assistance

The Indian armed forces' commitment to capability enhancement is also linked to the sustenance of the military hardware that has been given by India to partner countries. This includes providing lifetime support in terms of technical assistance by positioning Indian technical experts to meet day-to-day maintenance requirements, ensuring availability of spares as well as undertaking major repairs when required. Accordingly, India has positioned an Afloat Support Team at Maldives to help maintain their Indian-provided ships,<sup>143</sup> while the Indian Navy has undertaken two major refits for Maldivian Coast Guard Ship Huravee at Visakhapatnam in 2015 and 2018.<sup>144</sup> For Mauritius, India has provided engines, spares and also refitted on more than one occasion the Indian-made SDB Mauritius Coast Guard Ship (MCGS) Guardian. India has also been continuously provided spares and maintenance support for the Indian-provided Dornier 228 maritime patrol aircraft since the first one was gifted in 1990, the second in 2004 and the third purchased through a line of credit in 2016.<sup>145</sup> India has undertaken the long maintenance refits of the Indian-gifted Seychelles Coast Guard

<sup>142</sup> Air Marshal Rajkumar, "The Indian Air Force in Iraq, the Last Quarter 1972-99", *Bharat Rakshak*, 16 June 2017, available at <http://www.bharat-rakshak.com/IAF/History/1970s/1168-Rajkumar-Iraq.html>, accessed on 28 December 2020.

<sup>143</sup> Sitanshu Kar, "Defence Cooperation For Stability and Security", *Sainik Samachar*, 1 October 2012, available at <http://sainiksamachar.nic.in/englisharchives/2012/oct01-12/h8.htm>, accessed on 28 December 2020.

<sup>144</sup> "Indian Navy Completes Refit of Maldivian Coast Guard Ship Huravee", Press Information Bureau, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, 15 November 2018, available at <https://pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=184770>, accessed on 28 December 2020.

<sup>145</sup> Sanjay Badri-Maharaj, "The Mauritius – India Naval Relationship: Naval Diplomacy 2.0.", *MP-IDS Africa Trends*, April–June 2016 Cover Story, available at <https://idsa.in/africatrends/the-mauritius-india-naval-relationship%3A-naval-diplomacy>, accessed on 28 December 2020.

ships Patrol Ship Constant in 2014, high speed interceptor boat Hermes and SDB Topaz in 2017.<sup>146</sup> India has also undertaken regular refit and maintenance of Indian-provided ships to Sri Lanka like that of SLNS Sayura from time to time.

### **Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR)**

Climate change has vastly increased the incidents of natural disasters worldwide especially in the late 20th and early part of 21st centuries. This along with sporadically occurring cases of manmade calamities has greatly enlarged the ambit of disasters that require HADR assistance worldwide. Today very few countries have the capacity to handle large disasters by themselves, while others have to typically seek assistance from friendly partner countries to tide over the crisis. The assistance provided could be material, manpower, financial, technological or even HADR-related training. As these are unpredictable events, the specific assistance that follows from donor countries would depend on its capacities and capabilities at that time. India's approach to HADR has been driven by the principles that form the core values of its foreign policy, that is, the emphasis on the centrality of territorial sovereignty and the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of nation states. Moreover, India's contributions towards humanitarian assistance over the years can be traced to India's enduring spiritual values that "espouse solidarity with suffering and giving without expectations in return". "India conceives humanitarian assistance as 'extending sympathy' to the disaster-affected or as 'a goodwill gesture'. Because of India's deep cultural tradition of giving, the population generally endorses relief efforts by the government".<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> Oscar Nkala, "Indian Navy Completes Refit of Seychelles Coast Guard Patrol Boat", *Defenceweb*, 1 March 2017, available at <https://www.defenceweb.co.za/sea/sea-sea/indian-navy-completes-refit-of-seychelles-coast-guard-patrol-boat/>, accessed on 28 December 2020.

<sup>147</sup> Claudia Meier and C.S.R. Murthy, "India's Growing Involvement in Humanitarian Assistance", *GPPI Research Paper*, No. 13, Berlin: Global Public Policy Institute, 2011, p. 7.

The Indian armed forces have always played a crucial role in extending India's reach to provide HADR assistance to countries in the IOR. The Indian Navy particularly has been the lead Service in this field by far, partly because of its natural ability to 'externally engage' with our international partners. Two of the largest HADR operations launched by the Indian armed forces in recent times include the relief efforts after the 2004, Indian Ocean Tsunami and the 2015, Nepal earthquake. The tsunami that originated at Banda Aceh in Indonesia in the morning of 26 December 2004, was by far one of the deadliest natural disasters recorded in recent history. In response, almost immediately, the Indian armed forces launched a series of operations, both for providing relief on the Indian mainland and overseas. In the overseas domain, India launched Operation Rainbow to provide relief to Sri Lanka, Operation Castor to provide relief to Maldives and Operation Gambhir to provide relief to Indonesia.<sup>148</sup> A total of ten ships, five fixed-wing aircraft and six helicopters were deployed for the relief operations. This effort provided for 1,870 tons of relief material, while flying 860 sorties to airlift 1,750 personnel to safer areas. Further, 14,800 patients were treated in one army field hospital and two hospital ships, and eight medical camps were erected for the purpose.<sup>149</sup>

The Indian armed forces launched Operation Maitri within hours of the devastating earthquake of magnitude 7.8 on the Richter scale that struck Nepal on 25 April 2015. The operation lasted till 4 June 2015. It was a combined effort by the Indian Army, Air Force and National Disaster Relief Force (NDRF). The Indian Army effort in Nepal comprised of 18 medical teams, five Engineer Task Forces (ETF) and five Advanced Light Helicopters (ALHs). The Army helicopters flew a total of 546 sorties, while rescuing 381 people, moving 775 people, inducting 567 Nepalese troops and dropping 198.43 tons of stores and supplies in the affected areas. The Army medical teams extended

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<sup>148</sup> VAdm (Retd) Anoop Singh, *Blue Waters Abooy! The Indian Navy 2001-2010*, no. 70, pp. 119–124.

<sup>149</sup> *Annual Report 2005–2006*, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, pp. 168–169.

medical assistance to 4,831 injured people, including handling 300 surgeries, 214 hospital admissions and 4,190 OPD cases. For the Indian Air Force, this was the largest overseas disaster relief operation. It flew a total of 1,636 sorties towards evacuating 780 casualties (including 121 foreign nationals) and rescue of 5,188 personnel from various earthquake affected areas.<sup>150</sup>

Other prominent overseas HADR operations launched by the Indian armed forces in recent times include Operation Sahayata in May 2008 for relief operations for Myanmar and Bangladesh, which were struck by Cyclone Nargis, relief operations for Cyclone Roanu that struck Sri Lanka in May 2016 as well as flood relief operations for Sri Lanka in May 2017. Further, operations were launched to provide relief to Myanmar which was struck by Cyclone Mora in June 2017 and relief material was sent to Bangladesh in September 2017 to overcome the Rohingya refugee crisis. The Indian armed forces were also the first responders for Cyclone Idai that struck Mozambique and Madagascar in March 2019 and Operation Vanilla was launched to provide relief to Madagascar in January 2020 when struck by Cyclone Diane.<sup>151</sup>

### **Exclusive Economic Zone Surveillance**

Though the oceans connect us through the vast maritime commons, they also invariably act as the gateway to the possibility of diverse non-traditional threats that could infiltrate a nation. Such threats can only be kept at bay by improving the domain awareness in a nation's maritime area of interest. This can be achieved by maintaining a constant watch, surveillance through electronic means or by ship and aircraft patrols. India has historically been conscious about its dealings with the littoral nations in its maritime neighbourhood and accordingly keeping the aforesaid in mind, India has been assisting small island developing states

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<sup>150</sup> Ibid., pp. 152–157.

<sup>151</sup> “Indian Navy Launches ‘Operation Vanilla’ to Provide Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief at Madagascar”, Press Information Bureau, Government of India, 29 January 2020, available at <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1600896>, accessed on 20 January 2021.

in the IOR, which is an example of the trust that these nations have in India's maritime diplomacy. To maintain surveillance in their maritime zones up to their respective EEZs, these island nations require resources, training and assistance. Moreover, island nations like Maldives, Seychelles and Mauritius have very large EEZs that require resources beyond the capacity of these island states.

To put things into context, we can compare the land and EEZ areas of these island states. Maldives has a land area of 227 sq. km and an EEZ of 859,000 sq. km.<sup>152</sup> While Seychelles has a land area of 455 sq. km and EEZ of 1.37 million sq. km,<sup>153</sup> Mauritius has a land area of 2040 sq. km and EEZ of 2.3 million sq. km.<sup>154</sup> This can also be put into perspective when we compare it with India's EEZ of 2.02 million sq. km.<sup>155</sup> These figures are indicative; all have a huge responsibility to keep vast areas of the ocean under surveillance. This surveillance, as brought out, is required to check non-traditional threats, such as illegal poaching, exploration or exploitation of sea-based resources by others, emanating from the sea. In addition, there is a need to keep an eye on all vessels transiting a nation's EEZ to maintain peace and good order. This is a huge task, for which small island states do not possess the necessary resources and capacities and that is where India has been helping by providing the required resources.

Based on specific requests from the host country, India deploys ships and aircraft for EEZ surveillance of Mauritius and Seychelles every six

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<sup>152</sup> "Fifth National Report to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, 2015", *Ministry of Environment and Energy*, Government of Maldives, 4 January 2016, available at <http://www.environment.gov.mv/biodiversity/archives/1195>, accessed on 20 January 2021.

<sup>153</sup> "Seychelles marine special plan initiative", *Government of Seychelles initiative*, available at <https://seymsp.com>, accessed on 20 January 2021.

<sup>154</sup> "National Report of the Republic of Mauritius", *Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States*, published by Republic of Mauritius, available at <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/1109215Mauritius%20National%20Report.pdf>, accessed on 20 January 2021.

<sup>155</sup> VAdm (Retd) Anoop Singh, *Blue Waters Aboyl! The Indian Navy 2001–2010*, no. 70, p. 259.



months.<sup>156</sup> While for Maldives, the Indian Navy and Coast Guard deploy ships and aircraft once a month to undertake joint EEZ surveillance of areas promulgated by the Maldives National Defence Force Coast Guard.

### **Hydrographic Assistance**

Hydrographic applications in marine coastal development for environmental preservation have developed into a major growth area the world over. However, according to a UN study, approximately 50 per cent of coastal states have no hydrographic capability, while another 25 per cent have only limited capabilities. India forms part of the remaining 25 per cent, which have adequate hydrographic capabilities. There is, therefore, immense scope for international cooperation in hydrography, particularly in Asia and Africa, where 36 per cent and 64 per cent of the waters, respectively, are yet to be surveyed systematically.<sup>157</sup>

The Indian Naval Hydrographic Department (INHD) has extensive experience with state-of-the-art equipment and modern infrastructure. It has already assisted a number of countries in the littoral region for surveys under bilateral mechanisms. The INHD extends assistance in areas of conduct of hydrographic, oceanographic and coastal surveys, hydrographic training, setting up of hydrographic infrastructure, exchange of personnel, production of Electronic Navigational Charts (ENCs) and EEZ/continental shelf surveys for delineation of maritime areas under the provisions of United Nations Conventions on the Laws of the Sea (UNCLOS).<sup>158</sup>

The National Institute Hydrography (NIH), which is established at Goa, has been classified as the Regional Hydrographic Training Centre for Africa, Persian Gulf and Southeast Asian region. Training on both

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<sup>156</sup> *Annual Report 2018–2019*, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, p. 37.

<sup>157</sup> “International Operations”, *Indian Naval Hydrographic Office, official website*, available at <https://hydrobharat.gov.in/international-co-operation/>, accessed on 15 February 2021.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*

basic and advanced hydrography has been imparted to around 500 trainees from countries like Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Seychelles, Thailand, Malaysia, Maldives, Kenya, Nigeria, Oman, Iran, Mauritius, Indonesia, Singapore, Tanzania, Sudan, Iraq, Iran, Vietnam, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Australia, Fiji, Mozambique and Philippines.<sup>159</sup>

Hydrographic cooperation now forms an important component of defence diplomacy for India, which started in 2001 with Indian naval ships Jamuna and Sutlej conducting foreign cooperation surveys in Indonesia. India signed an MoU on Defence Cooperation with Seychelles in September 2003, which required both the nations to strengthen mutual cooperation in the area of hydrography. Accordingly, INS Nirdeshak was the first ship to undertake hydrographic surveys in Seychelles in November 2003. Thereafter, regular joint surveys have been undertaken, which has enabled Seychelles' claim to its continental shelf. A total of three navigational charts were published as a result of the various surveys carried out in Seychelles.<sup>160</sup> Likewise, India signed an MoU with Mauritius in October 2005. This MoU catered to hydrographic surveys of important ports, harbours and designated sea areas around the Mauritian islands. Subsequently, INS Sarvekshak was the first ship to carry out a survey of Mauritius waters in 2005. Thereafter, numerous surveys have been carried out in Mauritius, resulting in the publication of seven navigational charts. In addition to navigation safety surveys, the department also undertook surveys to determine the continental shelf claim of Mauritius.<sup>161</sup>

India signed an MoU for cooperation in the field of hydrography with Maldives in June 2019.<sup>162</sup> However, India has been providing hydrographic assistance since 2004, when first requested by Maldives.

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<sup>159</sup> Ibid.

<sup>160</sup> VAdm (Retd) Anoop Singh, *Blue Waters Abov! The Indian Navy 2001–2010*, no. 70, p. 265.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> “List of Agreements/MoUs Signed during the State Visit of Prime Minister to Maldives”, Press Information Bureau, Prime Minister’s Office, Government of India, 8 June 2019, available at <https://pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=190326>, accessed on 15 February 2021.

Thereafter, during the visit of the Indian Chief of Naval Staff to the Maldives in November 2005, it was agreed to provide hydrographic assistance to the islands by carrying out surveys of its various regions. A total of five surveys have been undertaken, including a survey for delineation of the Maldives Continental Shelf. In addition, personnel from the Maldives National Defence Force have been trained in hydrography in India. India has also signed an MoU on hydrographic cooperation with Tanzania in June 2015 and has carried out hydrographic surveys on request for Kenya, Mozambique, Oman, Sri Lanka and Tanzania.

### **Improving of Land/ Air/ Maritime Domain Awareness**

The IOR is home to a vast majority of the world's population while also being the economic highway that drives global commerce. It is responsible for carrying over 75 per cent of the world's maritime trade and 50 per cent of daily global oil consumption. The IOR is also a fragile environment, with threats such as maritime terrorism, piracy, human and contraband trafficking, illegal and unregulated fishing, arms running and poaching being prevalent. Response to these challenges requires enhanced situational awareness of the maritime activities in the region so as to enable security agencies to function effectively. However, the scale, scope and multinational nature of the maritime activities make it untenable for individual countries to address the requirements of situational awareness and law enforcement. Therefore, it is imperative that maritime nations use collaborative efforts to deal with these challenges.

Every maritime nation, thus, has felt the need to ensure adequate surveillance with an intention to improve their own Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA). This encompasses identification, monitoring and constant tracking of vessels to prevent any potential threat from the sea from impinging on the coastal and offshore security of the country. In today's interconnected world, security issues in one country have the potential to affect not only its neighbours but the wider region. This is especially true in the maritime domain where porosity and expanse of maritime borders means that illegal activities can sometimes go undetected, despite the best efforts of national maritime enforcement agencies. Towards this, India has operationalised bilateral maritime

information sharing agreements with 22 countries and one multinational construct the Virtual Regional Maritime Traffic Centre that facilitates 30 other countries to create a virtual network for exchange of information under the international cooperation framework. India is also undertaking capacity building measures with a number of IOR littoral countries, where requested.<sup>163</sup>

There was also a need to address the requirement of a dedicated centre for undertaking collation, fusion and dissemination of maritime information data being exchanged with all partners. The growing realisation was that collaborative information sharing at the national and international levels would provide compelling value propositions for all. Accordingly, India took the initiative in 2018 to establish linkages between various national and multinational networks by launching an Information Fusion Centre–Indian Ocean Region (IFC–IOR) in Gurugram in December 2018. In addition to ensuring situational awareness, the IFC–IOR will collate, analyse and disseminate information related to maritime safety and HADR requirements at sea.<sup>164</sup> Additionally, towards enhancing capability building, the IFC–IOR will undertake the conduct of exercises and training capsules in maritime information collection and sharing, and is also likely to host International Liaison Officers from partner nations in the near future.<sup>165</sup>

The IFC–IOR is collocated with the Information Management and Analysis Centre (IMAC) at Gurugram and forms part of the National Maritime Domain Awareness (NMDA) Project, in accordance with the Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s vision of SAGAR (Security and

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<sup>163</sup> Gayathri Iyer, “Sense for Sensibility: Maritime Domain Awareness through the Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region”, *Raisina Debates*, 28 January 2020, available at <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/sense-for-sensibility-maritime-domain-awareness-through-the-information-fusion-centre-indian-ocean-region-ifc-ior-60811/>, accessed on 15 February 2021.

<sup>164</sup> *Annual Report 2018–2019*, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, p. 2.

<sup>165</sup> “Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Centre”, *Indian Navy official website*, available at <https://www.indiannavy.nic.in/ifc-ior/about-us.html>, accessed on 15 February 2021.

Growth for All in the Region). The IMAC monitors the movement of more than 1,20,000 ships passing through the Indian Ocean each year. These ships carry the equivalent of 66 per cent of the world's crude oil, 50 per cent of the world's container traffic and 33 per cent of the world's bulk cargo each year. Thus, IMAC performs a vital role in collecting shipping information, analysing traffic patterns and sharing these inputs with the user agencies.<sup>166</sup>

The mainstay of the SAGAR's architecture is international cooperation. Therefore, intricately connected to SAGAR is India's capacity building programme for IOR littorals, wherein India is setting up CSRS projects to enhance international maritime domain awareness. These CSRS projects have been established by India in Mauritius (2012), Seychelles (2015), Sri Lanka (AIS) and Maldives (2019). These projects are linked to IFC-IOR, which, in turn, is also fed from over 50 sites on the Indian coast with the primary objective of coastal surveillance, including monitoring small vessels that escape traditional radars. Recently, in October 2019, Bangladesh signed a pact with India to develop a coastal surveillance system. A similar arrangement is also supposed to be underway with Myanmar and Thailand.<sup>167</sup>

## CONSTRUCTIVE ENGAGEMENTS

Constructive engagements in cooperative defence diplomacy are normally the first line of engagement between militaries. Beyond the initial set of engagements like staff level discussions, constructive engagements between militaries ensure that bilateral relations between countries have the capacity to mature into more regular, periodic and

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<sup>166</sup> "Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh Reviews Functioning of IMAC and IFC-IOR", Press Information Bureau, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, 19 August 2019, available at <https://pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=192709>, accessed on 15 February 2021.

<sup>167</sup> Gayathri Iyer, "Sense for Sensibility: Maritime Domain Awareness through the Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region", no. 163.

complex levels of engagement. Therefore, starting with the more basic level of engagement, namely, structured delegation level talks, they can extend to the more complex and operational defence engagements, like military exercises between the forces. Over the years, Indian defence diplomacy has matured and expanded military engagements with a number of countries. These engagements are at all levels and in different genres. Examples of constructive defence engagements that the Indian defence establishment engages in are elaborated in the succeeding paragraphs.

### **Delegation Level Talks**

Defence diplomacy as a diplomatic interaction tool is unique. It has the flexibility to enable structured interaction across many formats and at various levels, from the tactical, namely, ships visits or platoon level exercises to the strategic, namely, dialogue between ministerial delegations. Out of these, normally, nations would need to pass through the strategic, that is, a dialogue between delegations being a first ice-breaking step before transitioning to the more tactical though complex interactions of military exercises.

Dialogues on their part can be structured, which means that there is a commitment from both countries to conduct dialogues at pre-decided hierarchies on a regular basis. This could be on a biennial, annual or biannual basis between high-level delegations led by heads of state down to those led by junior officials. While unstructured interactions of delegations are a more frequent occurrence in diplomacy, structured interactions indicate a more commitment-oriented approach between the countries. In defence diplomacy, generally the highest level of dialogue at a military strategic level is undertaken by delegations led by the defence ministers of both countries. In the case of India, though the Indian Defence Minister may visit many countries, structured interaction at ministerial level presently exists with only four countries, which are Japan, Singapore, Russia and the US. With Japan and Singapore, such structured interaction is called the annual Defence Ministers' Dialogue; with Russia it is termed the annual Inter-Governmental Commission on Military Technical Cooperation; while

with the US it is called the Defence and Foreign Ministers 2+2 Dialogue.<sup>168</sup>

### *Service Chiefs–Goodwill Visits*

The Service Chiefs of the three defence services in India including the newly formed Chief of Defence Staff carry out important standalone bilateral exchanges with foreign countries, which are termed as ‘goodwill visits’. Such visits are important bilateral interactions, which include a certain amount of ceremonialism that invariably accompanies interactions of this nature. Such visits are significant considering that a majority of the armed forces the world over maintain considerable influence in their respective governments. These visits also help in establishing bonds of trust and understanding between the respective Chiefs and their counterparts in the foreign country. The Service Chief also gets a first-hand experience of the country being visited, its military capabilities and possible defence cooperation avenues, which is reported back to the government on his return. These visits are also reciprocated by the Service Chiefs of the visited countries, ensuring the development of a strong bond of friendship between the reciprocating Chief and their Services.

### *Ministry of Defence (MoD) Level Talks*

Defence-related delegation talks are also carried out at the level of the Defence Secretary or the Additional Secretary / Joint Secretary in the MoD. The Defence Secretary leads delegation level structured talks with a number of countries, which include the Foreign Secretary and Defence Secretary led 2+2 dialogue with Australia, South Korea and Japan. In addition he leads the Defence Policy Dialogues with China, Bangladesh, France, Germany, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Maldives, Russia, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, UK, Uzbekistan and Vietnam. The Additional Secretary/ Joint Secretary in the MoD leads the Joint Defence Cooperation Committee Meetings or Joint

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<sup>168</sup> *Annual Report 2018–2019*, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, pp. 198–204.

Working Groups on Defence Cooperation with countries including Armenia, Australia, Brazil, Czech Republic, China, Egypt, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Mongolia, Mozambique, Nigeria, Oman, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Tajikistan, Thailand, Ukraine and UAE. In addition, delegation level talks pertaining to cooperation in defence-related equipment are conducted with countries which include Australia, Japan, Kazakhstan, South Korea, Russia, Singapore and the US.<sup>169</sup>

### *Service Level Staff Talks*

The institutionalised periodic interactions carried out between delegations of uniformed personnel of the armed forces from any two countries is termed as Service to Service Staff Talks. In view of the better understanding and assimilation of issues pertaining to individual Services, such interactions between similar Service personnel from different countries is qualitatively more operational in nature. The agenda for the talks having been set by the MoD, such interactions help in fleshing out the details and working out the nuts and bolts for the execution of the MoD-set agenda on the field. These also help in developing a working relationship and line of communication with the similar Service of the opposite country, which smoothenes out interactions at all levels. The seniority of the military delegation leaders from the two sides would depend on the level of engagement between the countries and can vary from ‘three-star’ officers to ‘one-star’ officers.

The Indian Navy accordingly undertakes Navy-to-Navy Staff Talks with 19 partner navies, which include Australia, Bangladesh, France, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Malaysia, Myanmar, Oman, South Korea, Russia, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Thailand, UAE, UK, USA and Vietnam. Similarly, the Indian Army undertakes Army-to-Army Staff Talks with 15 partner armies, which include Australia, Bangladesh, France, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, UK, USA and Vietnam. The Indian Air

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<sup>169</sup> *Annual Reports 2016–17, 2017–18 and 2018–19*, Ministry of Defence, Government of India.



Force also undertakes Air Force-to-Air Force Staff Talks with 15 countries, which include Australia, Bangladesh, France, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Malaysia, Myanmar, Oman, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, UK, USA and Vietnam.<sup>170</sup> These talks are complemented by separate tri-Service talks conducted by Headquarters, Integrated Defence Staff with their partner organisations in Bangladesh, France, Germany, Italy, Maldives, Russia, USA and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF).<sup>171</sup>

### **India–China Confidence Building Measures**

Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) have been important components of the conflict resolution process between India and China since 1950s. This was evident from the conclusion of the Panchsheel Agreement in 1954. Since then, both countries have had numerous discussions at many levels towards resolving the border-related issues that divide the countries. The CBMs were intended to limit military deployment and activities, increase transparency and openness so as to reduce misunderstandings and increase mutual confidence to diminish the possibility of military conflict. However, this could not prevent a war in 1962 and the numerous border skirmishes that have taken place between the two countries since then. As CBMs are designed to enhance assurance in trustworthiness of states, they involve both military and non-military CBMs. The military CBMs are classified into transparency, communications and constraint measures and perform the related functions of information, notification, observation and stabilisation.

After the war in 1962, bilateral relations between the countries were re-established in 1976. However, the relations saw substantial improvement only after the visit of the then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1988, which saw the establishment of the Joint Working Group (JWG) to settle the border issue and promote peace. Subsequently, two very important agreements were signed, namely, the

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<sup>170</sup> Ibid.

<sup>171</sup> “Brief on International Defence Cooperation”, *Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff official website*, available at <https://www.ids.nic.in/international-defence-co-operation.php>, accessed on 20 March 2021.

Agreement on Maintenance of Peace and Tranquillity signed during the visit of Prime Minister Narasimha Rao to Beijing in 1993 and the Agreement for CBMs for Line for Actual Control signed during the visit of the Chinese President Jiang Zemin to New Delhi in 1996. The latter agreement particularly addressed the military CBMs between India and China along the border areas. Few of the CBMs that were agreed for implementation by the governments of the two countries include the following:<sup>172</sup>

- 1990: Established meetings between the soldiers on both sides of the actual control.
- 1992: Established a hotline between the meeting stations on both sides of the actual control.
- 1993: The Agreement on Maintaining Peace and Stability in the Region agreed to the following:
  - ◆ Establishment of a JWG composed of diplomats and military experts to meet annually
  - ◆ Not to use force or threaten to use force
  - ◆ Strictly respect and obey the actual control line
  - ◆ Keep military strength to the minimum
  - ◆ In the areas along the actual control line, reduce the strength of armed forces to the mutually agreed limit
- 1995: Agree to withdraw from the two confronting outposts near the actual control line and agreed to never enter them; agreed to carry out mutual visits by the personnel from the military agencies; organise joint expeditionary part for exploration of

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<sup>172</sup> G. Thanga Rajesh, "Revisiting Sino-Indian Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) On the Eve of 60th Anniversary of Panchsheel", *Chennai Centre for China Studies*, 5 July 2014, available at <https://www.c3sindia.org/archives/revisiting-sino-indian-confidence-building-measures-cbms-on-the-eve-of-60th-anniversary-of-panchsheel/>, accessed on 20 March 2021.

ventures; forbid hunting, firing guns and explosion in the area near the actual control line

- 2005: Agreement on ‘political parameters and guiding principles for settlement of the boundary dispute’ signed
- 2008: Established Hand-in-Hand: Joint Military Exercise
- 2010: Agreement to establish a hotline between the Prime Ministers or heads of the two countries
- 2013: India and China signed a set of CBMs called the Border Defence Cooperation Agreement (BDCA)

### **India–Pakistan Military Confidence Building Measures**

The first CBMs between India and Pakistan were seen during the skirmishes along the Rann of Kutch that preceded the 1965 War. The infantry and mechanised armour of both armies were devoid of any natural cover and stood exposed to airstrikes in vastness of the Rann. To avoid a virtual slaughter by airstrikes, the then Indian Air Chief, Air Marshal Arjan Singh and his counterpart Air Marshal Ashghar Khan reached an informal agreement to not use the air forces in the Rann. This remained honoured through the duration of the skirmish.<sup>173</sup> A similar agreement saw the ‘City Avoidance Strategy’ being implemented during the 1971 War, though there were no explicit formal arrangements, such informal norms were respected.<sup>174</sup>

Some of the other important military CBMs signed between India and Pakistan are as listed below:

- 1971: Dedicated hotline established between the Director Generals of Military Operations (DGMOs)

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<sup>173</sup> Jyoti M. Pathania and Ajay Saksena, *India and Pakistan: Confidence Building Measures*, New Delhi: Deep & Deep Publications, 2012, xviii, p. 80.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 80.

- 1988: Attacking each other's nuclear installations and facilities was prohibited
- 1990: Hotline re-established between the DGMOs on a weekly basis
- 1991: Exchange of updated list of nuclear sites on 01 January each year
- Advance notifications of military exercises, manoeuvres and troop movements and various supplementary agreements
- 1992: Attacks on nuclear facilities prohibited. Annual exchange of lists was updated to include details of the location of nuclear facilities in both the countries
- Agreement on prevention of airspace violations by military aircraft was signed along with various supplementary agreements
- Accord on prohibition of the usage of chemical weapons. Restricted development, production and use of chemical weapons
- 1998: Lahore Declaration. Agreement concluded on the prevention of incidents at sea to ensure the safety of navigating naval vessels and aircraft
- 1999: MoU on Ballistic Missile Flight Test. It was mandatory to provide a three-day notice prior to the commencement of a testing window
- 2003: Informal ceasefire along LOC/AGPL prohibited; joint patrolling along the international border, and periodic flag meetings made mandatory; development of new forward posts not allowed
- 2004: Bi-annual meeting between Indian Border Security Forces and Pakistani Rangers held for first time
- 2005: Link between the Indian Coast Guard and the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency established

- 2007: Agreement on reducing risk from nuclear weapons related accidents signed and reaffirmed for a five-year term until 2012
- 2018: India announced ceasefire in Kashmir during the month of Ramadan for the first time in nearly two decades
- Agreed to restore terms of the 2003 Ceasefire Agreement
- 2021: The DGMOs jointly announced reverting to the 2003 Ceasefire Agreement along the Line of Control<sup>175</sup>

Source: n.175.

### **India–Bangladesh Border Management**

India shares its longest border totalling to about 4,096 km with Bangladesh. Though while having a very fruitful relation with Bangladesh, the Indo-Bangladesh border has been marred by problems of non-traditional security. The issues at this border mainly pertain to illegal migration, smuggling, cattle trafficking, fake currency and transborder movement of insurgents.

India had set up a three-tier bilateral institutional mechanism between the two countries in 1994 to settle border management issues. This was followed in 2011 by the signing of a Coordinated Border Management Plan (CBMP) for proper management of the international border. Further, as part of a comprehensive approach to border management, various development works have been undertaken in the border areas under the Border Area Development Programme (BADP).

Both countries have instituted the mechanism of regular Director General Level Talks between the border guarding forces of the

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<sup>175</sup> Jyoti M. Pathania, 'Military Confidence Building Measures between India and Pakistan, An Analysis', Issue Brief No. 284, Centre for Land Warfare Studies, New Delhi, April 2021, available at [https://www.claws.in/static/IB-284\\_Military-Confidence-Building-Measures-between-India-and-Pakistan-An-Analysis.pdf](https://www.claws.in/static/IB-284_Military-Confidence-Building-Measures-between-India-and-Pakistan-An-Analysis.pdf), accessed on 20 June 2021.

countries, which has become a platform for better coordination. This is in addition to the regular border coordination conferences held between Regional Commanders of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) and the Frontier Inspectors General of Border Security Force (BSF) to discuss management and security of the India–Bangladesh land border.

### **Multilateral and Bilateral Exercises**

Conduct of bilateral military exercises between two militaries is generally indicative of the level of comfort, trust and confidence both militarily and politically between the two countries. As brought out earlier, these exercises are normally held between similar components of two or more armed forces and may vary in the level of complexity depending on various factors like the commonality of equipment and procedures, communication protocols, level of compatibility, duration of engagement etc. Such bilateral/ multilateral exercises help in improving the level of interoperability between forces, which would, in turn, assist in jointly handling traditional or non-traditional threats in the future.

Bilateral exercises between countries can start from the very basic such as formation sailing of ships to the more complex, which includes live weapon firing. The most basic of maritime exercise is the Passage Exercise (PASSEX), which requires minimal advance planning and involves basic manoeuvres at sea while sailing together. For the land component, platoon level exercises form the basic level while for the air force, exercises involving the transport and rotary wing heavy lift components form the basic level. The Indian Navy undertakes bilateral naval exercises with 19 countries and participates in about 16 multilateral exercises. The Indian Army participates in bilateral exercises with 25 countries and in 11 multilateral exercises, while the Indian Air Force participates in bilateral exercises with seven countries and five multilateral exercises. The details of exercises are given in Tables 5.1 and 5.2.<sup>176</sup>

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<sup>176</sup> “Military Exercises”, Press Information Bureau, Government of India, 4 March 2020, available at <https://pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=199791> and MoD, annual reports for various years, including 2016–17, 2017–18 and 2018–19, accessed on 1 July 2020.

**Table 5.1. India's Bilateral Military Exercises**

<b>Bilateral Military Exercises</b>				
	<b>Country</b>	<b>Army</b>	<b>Navy</b>	<b>Air Force</b>
1.	Australia	Austrahind	Ausindex	-
2.	Bangladesh	Sampriti	Bongo Sagar	-
3.	China	Hand-In-Hand	-	-
4.	Egypt	Cyclone	-	-
5.	France	Shakthi	Varuna	Garuda
6.	Indonesia	Garuda Shakthi	Smudra Shakthi	-
7.	Japan	Dharma Guardian	Jimex	-
8.	Kazakhstan	Kazind	-	-
		Prabal Dostyk	-	-
9.	Malaysia	Harimau Shakthi	Samudra Laxmana	-
10.	Maldives	Ekuverian	Ekatha	-
11.	Mongolia	Nomadic Elephant	-	-
12.	Myanmar	Imbex	Inmex	-
13.	Nepal	Surya Kiran	-	-
14.	Oman	AL Nagah	Naseem-Al- Bahar	Eastern Bridge
15.	Qatar	-	Zaire Al Bahr	-
16.	Russia	Indra	Indra Navy	Aviandra
17.	Saudi Arabia	To be named	To be named	
18.	Singapore	Bold Kurukshetra	Simbex	Joint Training
		Agni Warrior		
19.	Seychelles	LA'mitye	-	-
20.	Sri Lanka	Mitra Shakthi	Slinex	-
21.	Thailand	Maitree	Not started Bharat	Siam
22.	UAE	Desert Eagle	Gulf Star	-
23.	UK	Ajeya Warrior	Konkan	Indradhanush
24.	USA	Yudh Abhyas	Malabar	Cope India
		Vajra Prahar		
25.	Uzbekistan	Dustlik	-	-
26.	Vietnam	Vinbax	To be named	-

Source: 'Military Exercises' and MoD Annual Report (various years), n. 20.

**Table 5.2. India's Multilateral Military Exercises**

Multilateral Military Exercises				
	Country	Army	Navy	Air Force
1.	African Countries	AFINDEX (conducted by India)	-	-
2.	ASEAN	ADMM+ Exercises		-
3.	Australia	-	KAKADU	Pitch Black
			Black Carillion (Submarine escape)	
4.	BIMSTEC countries	Conducted by India	-	-
5.	Bangladesh	-	-	Samvedna
6.	Brazil	-	IBSAMAR (South Africa + Brazil)	-
7.	Indonesia	-	KOMODO (HADR exercise)	-
8.	Israel	-	-	Blue Flag
9.	Japan	-	EOD J2A (Ordnance disposal)	-
10.	Malaysia	-	-	Hope Ex
11.	Mongolia	KHAN QUEST	-	-
12.	Russia	TSEINTR	-	-
13.	SCO Countries	Peace Mission Exercise	-	-
14.	Singapore	-	SITMEX (Singapore + Thailand)	-
			MARISEX (IFC – Singapore)	
15.	Sri Lanka	Cormorant Strike	-	-
16.	Thailand	Cobra Gold	-	-
17.	UK	Cambrian Patrol	-	-
18.	USA	-	RIMPAC (US INDOPACOM)	Red Flag
			CUTLASS EXPRESS (US AFRICOM)	
			SALVEX (Salvage exercise)	
			SANGAM (Ordnance disposal)	
			SEACAT (Anti-Piracy exercise)	
19.	IONS Countries	-	Conducted by IWG Chair	-
20.	MILAN	-	Conducted by Indian Navy	-

Source: 'Military Exercises' and MoD Annual Report (various years), n. 20.



Note: ADMM: ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting; BIMSTEC: Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation; SCO: Shanghai Cooperation Organisation; IONS: Indian Ocean Naval Symposium; IWG: IONS Working Group.

## **Naval Coordinated Patrols**

The maritime littorals that lie on both sides of the Indian subcontinent are geographically and politically very different regions. Geographically, our maritime boundaries along the Andaman and Nicobar Islands to the east are much closer to Myanmar, Thailand and Indonesia, than to Oman and North Africa to the west. Politically, the Arabian subcontinent along with the Arabian Sea have presented a very different set of challenges as compared to the Bay of Bengal. The Bay of Bengal area has been historically impacted by poverty and conflict, which has driven vulnerable communities towards dangerous maritime migrations. This in turn has enriched criminal networks that have enabled human smuggling, drug trafficking and IUU fishing that threatens the marine ecosystem of the region. Coupled with this, the vulnerability of the region due to climate change has always been a looming challenge. Accordingly, the littoral nations of the Bay of Bengal have understood these challenges and with an idea of improving maritime domain awareness have been working together to surmount these challenges using a variety of solutions.

One of the solutions that India devised to overcome these challenges with its partners in the Bay of Bengal littorals, was to establish a system of coordinated patrols (CORPATs) by the partner navies. These coordinated patrols are carried out by ships and in some cases maritime patrol aircraft on either side of the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) to deter and stop non-traditional maritime threats and cultivate an operational familiarity between the operating navies. These patrols are periodic and structured. The patrol usually commences with an 'opening ceremony' in one of the partner nations and is followed by two to three days of coordinated patrols. A 'closing ceremony' in the other country signifies the end of the patrol. The Indian Navy normally uses smaller patrol ships based at its Andaman and Nicobar tri-Service Command to undertake these patrols. The partner navies

with which India undertakes these patrols include Indonesia since 2002, Thailand since 2015, Myanmar since 2013 and Bangladesh since 2018.<sup>177</sup>

## **India in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations**

India has been a founder-member of the United Nations and one of the first and largest contributors to the UN for maintaining international peace and security. India's first participation was in 1950, soon after India's independence, when Indian Army's 60 Parachute Field Ambulance was dispatched to provide medical cover to UN forces engaged in the Korean War. This ended up being the single-longest tenure by any military unit under the UN flag for a total of three and a half years (November 1950–May 1954). Since then, India has contributed more than 2,49,000 troops, the single-largest contributor and has participated in more than 49 missions with 173 Indian peacekeepers making the supreme sacrifice.<sup>178</sup> Stressing on India's contribution, at the September 2015 Leaders' Summit in New York on UN Peacekeeping, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said, "The foundations of the United Nations were laid by the brave soldiers on the battlefields of the Second World War. By 1945, they included 2.5 million men of the Indian Army, the largest volunteer force in history".<sup>179</sup>

### ***Important Previous Contributions***

India has provided two military advisors and two deputy military advisors to the Secretary General of the United Nations along with 17 force commanders to UN missions. Lady Officers from the Indian

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<sup>177</sup> "Coordinated Patrols", *India Navy official website*, available at <https://www.indiannavy.nic.in/search/node/CORPAT>, accessed on 30 March 2021.

<sup>178</sup> "Brief on India and United Nations Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding", *Permanent Mission of India to the UN*, available at <https://www.pminewyork.gov.in/>, accessed on 30 March 2021.

<sup>179</sup> "India's Commitment to UN Peacekeeping Remains Strong and Will Grow": PM Modi at the Summit on Peace Operations", United Nations, 28 September 2015, available at <https://www.narendramodi.in/statement-by-prime-minister-at-the-summit-on-peace-operations—356824>, accessed on 30 March 2021.

Army have also participated as military observers and medical officers. Some of India's early important contributions include deployment in the UN Emergency Force (UNEF 1) from November 1956 to May 1967, to maintain peace between Israel and her Arab neighbours; 27 Indian UN peacekeepers lost their lives in this operation. India also participated in the United Nations Operation in Congo (ONUC), to counter partition and re-integrate the country, between July 1960 and June 1964. Indian peacekeepers lost a total of 39 personnel, among which Captain Gurbachan Singh Salaria became the only UN peacekeeper to receive India's highest military award, the Param Vir Chakra, for laying down his life in defence of the UN mandate in Congo.<sup>180</sup>

### *Indian Peacekeepers for Political Transition*

Indian peacekeepers have also been vital and pioneering contributors to the use of UN peacekeeping to ensure a country's political transition to peace. Such UN Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKOs) include United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in the former Yugoslavia from 1992 to 1995, whose first Force Commander was India's Lt General Satish Nambiar; United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) from 1992 to 1993; United Nations Observer Group in El Salvador (ONUSAL) Salvador from 1992 to 1995; United Nations Operations in Mozambique (ONUMOZ) from 1992 to 1994; United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) from 1993 to 1994; United Nations Angola Verification Mission I (UNAVEM) from 1889 to 1999; United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) from 1999 to 2001; United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) from 2006 to 2008; and United Nations Integrated Mission in East Timor (UNMIT) from 2006 to 2012.<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>180</sup> Amb (Retd) Asoke Kumar Mukerji, "Peacekeeping: India's Contributions", *MEA Official website*, 8 November 2019, available at [https://mea.gov.in/articles-in-indian-media.htm?dt1/32014/UN\\_Peacekeeping\\_Indias\\_Contributions](https://mea.gov.in/articles-in-indian-media.htm?dt1/32014/UN_Peacekeeping_Indias_Contributions), accessed on 30 March 2021.

<sup>181</sup> "Brief on India and United Nations Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding Permanent Mission of India to the UN", *Permanent Mission of India to the UN official website*, available at <https://www.pminewyork.gov.in/>, accessed on 15 April 2021.

India was also one of the first countries to effectively deploy women as peacekeepers in UN peacebuilding. India deployed the first all-female police unit (FFPU) to the UNPKO in Liberia (UNMIL) in 2007. During the winding up of UNMIL in February 2018, President Sirleaf of Liberia commented: “The contribution you have made in inspiring Liberian women, imparting in them the spirit of professionalism and encouraging them to join operations that protect the nation, for that we will always be grateful”. In current peacekeeping operations, India is the fourth largest troop contributor with 6,183 personnel (170 police personnel) serving in 09 out of 13 UN Peacekeeping Missions.<sup>182</sup>

### **Anti-Piracy Operations Commencing 2008**

The scourge of piracy off the coast of Somalia, particularly in the Gulf of Aden, ostensibly germinated as a retaliation by small groups of armed Somali fishermen who were retaliating against international ships dumping illegal waste in their waters. The fishermen perceived this as adversely affecting their catch of fish. Compounded by abject poverty on the Somali mainland, IUU fishing in Somali waters and lack of credible law enforcement on both land and sea, piracy was fuelled by large payoffs for merchant ship hijacking, which turned into a lucrative business.<sup>183</sup>

As far as India is concerned, a large percentage of India’s trade, including oil and fertilisers, passes through the Gulf of Aden. The Ministry of Shipping has estimated that India imports through the Gulf of Aden route were valued in the order of US\$ 50 Billion and exports at US\$ 60 Billion. The safety and unhindered continuity of maritime trade, through ships that use this route, is a primary national concern as it directly impacts our economy. Although this task accounts for only 13 per cent of our trade (the remainder is carried in foreign ‘bottoms’), the crew of most foreign flagged vessels comprise Indian nationals, as India’s large seafaring community (approximately 1,00,000 in number)

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<sup>182</sup> Ibid.

<sup>183</sup> VAdm (Retd) Anoop Singh, *Blue Waters Aboy! The Indian Navy 2001–2010*, no. 70, pp. 109–113.

accounts for 6–7 per cent of the world’s seafarers. Accordingly, the Indian Navy commenced anti-piracy patrols in the Gulf of Aden from October 2008, from whence an Indian Naval ship has been deployed continuously for the past 12 years. Besides escorting Indian flagged vessels, ships of other countries have also been provided protection by Indian Naval ships. No ship under Indian escort has thus far been hijacked by pirates.<sup>184</sup>

The initial spread of piracy to the east Arabian Sea led the international shipping industry, in June 2010, to extend the piracy High Risk Area (HRA) to 78° E longitude, bringing the West coast of India into the circle of HRA. This triggered the consequent issues of private security personnel on merchant ships and floating armouries coming closer to the Indian coast along with increase in merchant ship insurance costs. However, based on the changed threat perception and on India’s insistence the piracy HRA was revised in October 2015 and brought closer to the African peninsula. This assuaged India’s maritime concerns of floating armouries, proliferation of private security personnel closer to the Indian coast in addition to saving on insurance and associated operating costs.<sup>185</sup>

The Indian Navy has maintained a continuous deployment of one warship on its anti-piracy patrol mission in the Gulf of Aden since 2008. Up till March 2019, the Indian Navy has deployed a total of 72 warships, while safely escorting more than 3,440 (including 413 Indian flagged) ships with over 25,062 mariners embarked. This is while thwarting 44 confirmed attempts of piracy and apprehending 120 pirates.<sup>186</sup> Moreover, in synchronisation with its modified operational

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<sup>184</sup> “Frequently Asked Questions”, *Ministry of Defence (India) official website*, available at <https://mod.gov.in/dod/faq?page=1>, accessed on 15 April 2021.

<sup>185</sup> “Piracy High Risk Area Limits at Sea Revised”, *Indian Navy official website*, available at <https://www.indiannavy.nic.in/content/piracy-high-risk-area-limits-sea-revised>, accessed on 15 April 2021.

<sup>186</sup> *Annual Report 2018–2019*, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, pp. 34–35.

philosophy of placing warships on ‘mission based deployments’ in the IOR, the Indian Navy has shifted its Gulf of Aden patrol from an ‘Escort Cycle’ based deployment, to a ‘Free Patrol’ deployment. Considering the reduced threat of piracy in the Gulf of Aden, this offers the Indian Navy more flexibility to participate in other activities like escorting ships of the World Food Programme, participating in bilateral naval exercises with partner navies in the region and undertaking capacity building/ capability enhancement initiatives in its areas of interest. As all Indian naval ships on deployment carry adequate number of ‘HADR Bricks’, this also enables the Indian Navy to be the ‘first responder’ for disaster relief requirements in the region.<sup>187</sup>

### **Indian Ocean Naval Symposium**

The Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) is a unique maritime initiative of the 21st century that was launched in February 2008 by India. It is both inclusive and voluntary. This initiative has brought together a total of 32 littoral nations of the Indian Ocean Region, 24 of which are members and 08 are observers. It is a cooperative mechanism, which provides a forum for discussion, policy formulation as well as focus on numerous aspects of naval operations. The IONS aims to promote a shared understanding of issues relating to the maritime domain so as to formulate common strategies, strengthen capacities, establish cooperative mechanisms and develop interoperability in terms of doctrines and procedures to deal with the wide canvas of maritime challenges that plague the Indian Ocean Region littorals.<sup>188</sup>

The IONS works on a system of rotating chairmanship, where the IONS Chair is rotated sequentially between the four sub-regions of the Indian Ocean Region to ensure that challenges peculiar to each sub-region receive due emphasis. The inaugural Chair of IONS was

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<sup>187</sup> “INS Trikand Escorts World Food Programme Ship”, *Indian Navy official website*, available at <https://www.indiannavy.nic.in/content/ins-trikand-escorts-world-food-programme-ship>, accessed on 15 April 2021.

<sup>188</sup> “About IONS”, *Indian Ocean Symposium website*, available at <http://www.ions.global/about-ions>

India from 2008–2010, followed by UAE from 2010–2012, South Africa from 2012–2014, Australia from 2014–2016, Bangladesh from 2016–2018 and Iran from 2018–2020. France has taken over responsibilities of the IONS Chair from 29 June 2021 and accordingly conducted the Conclave of Naval Chiefs virtually on 1 July 2021 from its Indian Ocean territory of Reunion Islands.<sup>189</sup>

The IONS has also instituted three functional working groups that meet on a regular basis to execute the IONS charter. The first of these is the IONS Working Group (IWG) on Maritime Security, the present chair of which is jointly held by Iran and UK and has 14 member nations including India and Pakistan. The second is the IWG on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR), the present chair of which is India with 11 member nations including Oman and Maldives; and the third is the IWG on Information Sharing and Interoperability, the present chair of which is jointly held by India and Australia and has 10 members that include Bangladesh and Pakistan. Each IWG has progressed their particular fields by developing a concept paper, brainstorming the same by convening workshops and finally ratifying the concept by conduct of a tabletop exercise. Towards this, Bangladesh conducted the first operational exercise under IONS Charter by organising the International Multilateral Maritime Search and Rescue Exercise (IMMSAREX) in November 2017, next India conducted a multilateral tabletop HADR exercise in September 2018 and finally Iran conducted the IONS maritime exercise in March 2020.<sup>190</sup>

India celebrated the 10th anniversary of the establishment of IONS in November 2018 by inviting naval Chiefs and heads of maritime agencies of IONS member and observer nations. The celebrations, hosted at

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<sup>189</sup> “7th Indian Ocean Naval Symposium at La Reunion concludes”, ANI News, 1 July 2021, available at <https://www.aninews.in/news/world/asia/7th-indian-ocean-naval-symposium-at-la-reunion-concludes20210701213242/>, accessed on 25 July 2021.

<sup>190</sup> “Iran Maritime Exercise”, *Indian Ocean Symposium website*, available at <http://www.ions.global/ions-maritime-exercise-iran-29-february-05-march-2020>, accessed on 15 April 2021.

Kochi, India, centred on the theme of ‘Security and Growth for All in the Region’ (SAGAR). The occasion included a seminar, release of a commemorative stamp and the conduct of the Tall Ships Regatta from Kochi to Muscat and back, covering a distance of over 3,000 nautical miles.<sup>191</sup> In the existing configuration, IONS presently has 24 member nations, which include Australia, Bangladesh, France, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, India, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Myanmar, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand, Timor-Leste, UAE and UK. The eight observer nations of the IONS include China, Germany, Italy, Japan, Madagascar, Netherlands, Russia and Spain.<sup>192</sup>

### **MILAN Series of Multilateral Exercise**

In 1995, the Indian Navy took the initiative to bring together the navies of the region in a ‘sub-regional maritime togetherness’ by organising a set of naval interactions at Port Blair in the Andaman Islands. This event was given the generic name MILAN (a Hindi word for ‘a meeting’). The first edition saw the participation by four littoral navies. Since then, the event has witnessed growing participation, which is testimony to the success of this multilateral initiative.<sup>193</sup> The event normally includes activities in harbour, which comprises a theme seminar, a city parade and a tabletop exercise, which is followed by a passage exercise at sea. Over the years, the event has grown into a meaningful forum for young and middle-ranking naval personnel to exchange professional viewpoints on a number of regionally relevant and

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<sup>191</sup> “10th Anniversary of Indian Ocean Naval Symposium to be Hosted on 13-14 November 2018”, *Indian Navy official website*, available at <https://www.indiannavy.nic.in/content/10th-anniversary-indian-ocean-naval-symposium-be-hosted-13-14-november-2018>, accessed on 15 April 2021.

<sup>192</sup> “Member Countries”, *Indian Ocean Symposium website*, available at <http://www.ions.global/ions-working-groups>, accessed on 15 April 2021.

<sup>193</sup> “Andaman & Nicobar Command to Host Milan 2018”, Press Information Bureau, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, 25 February 2017, available at <https://pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1521660>, accessed on 15 April 2021.



common maritime issues, which include ‘search-and-rescue’, establishment of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for effective multinational communications at sea.<sup>194</sup>

MILAN has been held once every two years. Successive editions have been held on India’s eastern seaboard in 1997, 1999 and 2003. The 1999 edition was held in Kochi and saw participation from Maldives, Mauritius, Oman, Sri Lanka and the United Arab Emirates.<sup>195</sup> The 2001 edition was not held due to the conduct of the International Review that year. The 2005 edition was cancelled after the December 2004 tsunami. However, the event resumed in 2006 (thereby changing the cycle from ‘odd’ to ‘even’ years).<sup>196</sup> The 2006 edition saw participation of eight navies including the Myanmar Navy, which was counted as one of the most isolated navies at the time.<sup>197</sup> Amongst the more regular participants at MILAN editions have been delegates and ships from the navies of Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

MILAN 2008 was conducted at Port Blair in January 2008 and saw the participation of eight ships from partner navies and 15 delegates from 11 countries.<sup>198</sup> MILAN 2010 was also held at Port Blair in February 2010 and was attended by warships from eight countries and delegates from 12 countries. MILAN 2012, held at Port Blair, saw participation of 14 countries, while in the next edition, which was held in February 2014, 17 countries attended.<sup>199</sup> MILAN was not held in 2016 due to the conduct of the International Fleet Review in

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<sup>194</sup> VAdm (Retd) G.M. Hiranandani, *Transition to Guardianship, The Indian Navy 1991–2000*, New Delhi: Lancer, September 2009, p. 32.

<sup>195</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 31–33.

<sup>197</sup> *Annual Report 2006–2007*, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, pp. 31–32.

<sup>198</sup> *Annual Report 2008–2009*, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, p. 37.

<sup>199</sup> *Annual Report 2013–2014*, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, p. 14.

Visakhapatnam. MILAN 2018 was conducted at Port Blair and saw participation from 30 delegates from 16 countries and 11 ships from eight countries.<sup>200</sup> MILAN 2020 was planned to be held on a larger scale at Visakhapatnam in March 2020, with participation from around 30 countries, with invitations going out to 41 countries. However, in view of the outbreak of COVID-19 across the world and the consequent restrictions, the exercise was postponed.<sup>201</sup>

## Goa Maritime Conclave

Due to the variety of maritime challenges unique to the region, there has been a growing need to institutionalise a forum where Chiefs of navy and maritime agencies in the region can directly address and discuss such issues among themselves. Towards addressing this requirement, the Indian Navy institutionalised the Goa Maritime Conclave (GMC) in 2017. The inaugural edition, addressed the theme ‘Addressing Regional Maritime Challenges’ and discussed issues that included emerging maritime threats and force structuring, maritime domain awareness, maritime security architecture, and maritime security challenges in the IOR. The conclave was held over two days and saw speakers of national and international repute bring together like-minded nations to evolve and formulate collective responses to emerging challenges in the maritime domain.<sup>202</sup>

GMC-2017, which was conducted at the Naval War College, Goa, in November 2017, was inaugurated by the then Raksha Mantri Smt

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<sup>200</sup> *Annual Report 2017–2018*, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, p. 34.

<sup>201</sup> Shaurya Karanbir Gurung, “Indian Navy Postpones Multilateral Exercise Milan 2020 due to Coronavirus”, *The Economic Times*, 3 March 2020, available at [https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/indian-navys-multilateral-exercise-milan-2020-postponed-due-to-coronavirus/articleshow/74461918.cms?utm\\_source=contentofinterest&utm\\_medium=text&utm\\_campaign=cppst](https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/indian-navys-multilateral-exercise-milan-2020-postponed-due-to-coronavirus/articleshow/74461918.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst), accessed on 27 April 2021.

<sup>202</sup> “Goa Maritime Conclave Inaugurated by Hon’ble Raksha Mantri at Naval War College”, *Indian Navy official website*, available at <https://www.indiannavy.nic.in/content/goa-maritime-conclave-inaugurated-honble-raksha-mantri-naval-war-college>, accessed on 27 April 2021.

Nirmala Sitharaman. The event saw participation by Chiefs of navies, heads of maritime agencies and representatives of Bangladesh, Indonesia, Maldives, Malaysia, Mauritius, Myanmar, Seychelles, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand.<sup>203</sup> The second edition, GMC-2019 was conducted at the same venue in October 2019 with the theme ‘Common Maritime Priorities in IOR and Need for Regional Maritime Strategy’. The conclave focussed on naval capacity building in the IOR to tackle emerging maritime threats, and also discussed strategies for enhancing interoperability among maritime agencies. The conclave was inaugurated by Shri Ajit Doval, KC, the National Security Advisor of India, and saw participation by Chiefs of navies and their representatives from 10 Indian Ocean littoral countries, which included Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Seychelles, Mauritius and Maldives. As the focus of the 21st century landscape is shifting to the vicinity of the Indian Ocean, going forward, the GMC is expected to evolve strategies, policies and implementation mechanisms in the maritime domain and will be held on a biennial basis.<sup>204</sup>

## **Defence Attachés**

A Defence Attaché (DA) is an officer of the armed forces who serves in an embassy or high commission where he represents his/her country’s defence establishment abroad, enjoying diplomatic status and immunity in this capacity. Defence Attaché is a generic term that covers officers from all branches of the armed forces, although larger countries may appoint a separate attaché to represent an individual Service, such as from the air force and navy. The DA is normally responsible for all aspects of bilateral defence relations; however, in some countries, attachés are asked to handle larger security issues, such as migration and justice matters. Armed forces officers are also seconded to serve

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<sup>203</sup> *Annual Report 2017–2018*, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, pp. 33–34.

<sup>204</sup> “Goa Maritime Conclave– 2019 A Diplomatic Initiative of the Indian Navy in the Maritime Domain”, *Indian Navy official website*, available at <https://www.indiannavy.nic.in/node/24306>, accessed on 27 April 2021.

as part of military missions in other international organisations such as the UN. Such officers are usually designated ‘military advisors’, where the assignment is primarily multilateral.

Historically, DAs are believed to have emerged during ‘Thirty Years’ War in the 17th century. The Duke of Richelieu in France is understood to have dispatched military officers to various allied powers to liaise, monitor military developments and collect intelligence. Towards the 18th century, this practice gained momentum by assigning DAs to embassies and by the 19th century, most countries were employing DAs. This trend was further encouraged by the emergence of colonial empires and the building of national defence establishments. By the dawn of the 20th century, the need for attachés was reinforced by the increasingly complex nature of their weapons systems and the enhanced importance of intelligence gathering. With the growing number of states, this brought about a dramatic change in the number and background of DAs. The Vienna Convention of 1961 codified the rights and responsibilities of diplomats, wherein DAs were given the same status.

The end of the Cold War brought about substantial changes in the security environment which made the DA’s role considerably more challenging. The DAs were now expected to handle diverse set of issues, which included export of defence equipment, coordinating HADR response operations, terrorism and a host of other matters that gave him/ her a key role in national defence diplomacy. To adapt to this increase in task load and broadening range of relationships, the demands on a DA’s technical expertise and political skills have grown significantly. Therefore, going forward, while facing an increasingly complex security environment, the job profile of a DA is only going to grow. This background has prompted many countries to review the DA system. Changes are being brought about in the selection and training process of DAs while also endeavouring to keep him/her more engaged and in tune with the parent government’s agenda. The challenge today is to adjust the DA system to contemporary requirements while at the same time observing budgetary constraints, which can be considerable.

The Indian armed forces in 2019 had 70 Military/Defence Attachés positioned in 44 Defence Wings, including 31 from the Army posted

in 27 Defence Wings abroad. Similarly, 70 countries are represented by resident 113 DAs in New Delhi including five countries through accredited DAs in foreign embassies.<sup>205</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The defence cooperation mechanisms discussed in this chapter have been progressively developed over decades of experience and interactions with partner countries. These remain unique to the priorities and requirements of the region. Being the largest military force in the region, the Indian armed forces have accordingly taken the initiative to weave a colourful tapestry of enterprising activities, which has significantly helped in coordinating and collaborating collective military efforts.

Moreover, the larger objectives of India's defence cooperation efforts are being progressed in an effort to not only improve security and stability in India's neighbouring regions, but also to shape a favourable and positive regional environment that is conducive for regional growth. This is coupled with an ever-present need to enhance interoperability with the armed forces of friendly foreign countries, and is aimed at improving response and capabilities for Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR), Out of Area Contingencies (OOAC) and Military Operations Other Than War (MOTW), including Non-Combatant Evacuation Operations (NEO).

Therefore, the mechanisms put forward in this chapter address the need to upgrade the existing capability and capacity gaps for IOR littorals and other friendly foreign countries in India's areas of primary interest. These mechanisms would automatically provide economic opportunities for harnessing Indian industry (for construction of ports, ships, marine infrastructure and equipment, communication facilities) and defence exports to their full potential. In the following chapter, we shall briefly discuss India's defence industry and the substantial initiatives taken by the present government to ramp up local defence production, thereby restricting defence imports while increasing export of 'Make-in-India' defence equipment.

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<sup>205</sup> *Annual Report 2018–2019*, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, p. 23.

## **REVITALISING DEFENCE EXPORTS**

Any country aspiring to be a global strategic player invariably needs to have a robust defence industry that is fully capable of supporting and supplying all the necessities of its armed forces, in addition to a healthy export potential. As India's potential, standing and stature grow in the comity of nations, the defence sector will continue to see major government expenditure towards modernisation and maintenance. Such expenditure is further accentuated by the fact that our armed forces have to deploy and fight over a diverse topography and with extreme variations in climate. Moreover, the Indian subcontinent has seen increasing challenges of traditional and non-traditional threats. This ensures that India's armed forces when not deterring external threats are usually the 'first responder' in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) for partner countries deluged with Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) requirements.

Since independence, the Indian armed forces have fought many wars and engaged in numerous skirmishes across its land borders. In most of these cases, the mainstay of the Indian armed forces has been imported defence equipment and continues to be the case in the 21st century. Through the medium of defence imports, India has cultivated and maintained strategic partnerships with many countries, who have contributed significantly to India maintaining one of the strongest armed forces in the world. However, the downside to this has been the limited success that India has had in cultivating a dependable and robust domestic defence manufacturing base, either to support its armed forces or to build potential for defence exports. As India's role and prestige increase in global affairs, it is imperative that India develops a strong military industrial base. This has to form the backbone of India's defence diplomacy crusade, similar to how defence exports have helped developed countries garner immense military influence with partner countries for the good part of the 20th century.

India had its opportunity in 1991, when the 1990–1991 economic crisis accelerated the industrial liberalisation process. The removal of

regulatory controls in numerous sectors unleashed market forces thus incentivising private sector players. This brought about a sea change in sectors like information technology, pharmaceuticals, automotive and infrastructure. It was 10 years later in 2001–2002 that the Indian government encouraged private participation in the defence industry by removing the policy of reserving all defence equipment to be manufactured by the public sector. Though this participation was to still be under licence, it further expanded our defence agreements with many countries. This procedure was further modified in 2002 with the promulgation of the Defence Procurement Procedure (DPP), a detailed procedural guideline that changed the acquisition architecture completely. The inclusion of *Buy and Make* through imported Transfer of Technology (ToT), further enlarged the scope of the procedure in 2003.

The DPP has since been revised numerous times and broadened to include *Make, Buy and Make* (Indian) categories etc. The renewed emphasis on indigenisation and indigenous products ensured the inclusion of making *offsets* mandatory for specified high value projects since 2005. The clarion call of ‘Make in India’ post 2014, set a vision for the defence sector to benefit from the liberal policies laid out for the domestic industry and increase self-reliance. This was followed by relaxation in export controls, grant of No Objection Certificates (NOCs) and ease in industrial licensing. India also successfully became part of three international export control groups, namely, Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), Australia Group and the Wassenaar Arrangement.

This chapter attempts to briefly understand trends in India’s defence imports and exports in the last two decades by comparing the trends in global defence trade of certain key countries across geographies in the same period. The data used has been compiled from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) Arms Transfer Database and indicates major conventional weapon deliveries using the Trend Indicator Value (TIV).<sup>206</sup> The chapter thereafter briefly discusses few

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<sup>206</sup> The Trend Indicator Value (TIV) is based on the unit production costs of a core set of weapons and represents the transfer of military resources rather

key initiatives progressed by the government that are expected to boost export of 'Made-in-India' defence equipment in the coming decades.

## DEFENCE IMPORTS

The trends of defence imports for certain key countries have been drawn from SIPRI Arms Database and tabulated from the year 2000 to 2019 in Table 6.1. From the Table and the associated Graph No. 6.1, it is evident that India has been one of the three largest arms importer consistently from the year 2000 right up to the year 2019. This is a trajectory that India constantly maintained for over two decades. In 2019, India became the second largest importer by value with a TIV of US\$ 2,964 million, with a CAGR (%)<sup>207</sup> increase of over 5.91 per cent from the import values of the year 2000, which was second only to Saudi Arabia which saw a great leap to a TIV of US\$ 3,673, a CAGR increase of 21.92 per cent from its year 2000 import values.

When we analyse the other countries listed in Table 6.1, we observe that nine out of the 10 countries have also shown a positive trend in their defence imports year-on-year in the period under consideration. In most cases the increase is largely linear; however, periodic spikes indicate specific large-scale arms procurement by countries during those years.

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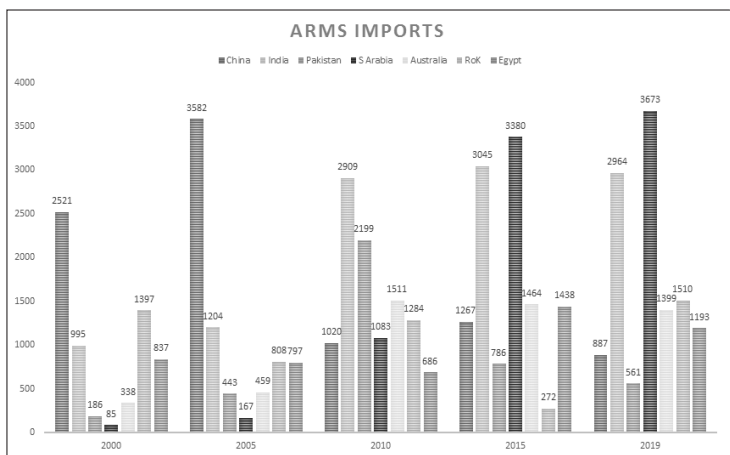
than the financial value of the transfer. Weapons for which production cost is not known have been compared to weapons based on their size and performance characteristics. SIPRI calculates the volume of transfers between countries using TIV and the number of weapon systems delivered in a given year. As the figures do not represent sales price for arms transfer, therefore these values should not be directly compared with Gross Domestic Product (GDP) while measuring the economic burden of arms imports or exports.

<sup>207</sup> CAGR refers to the mean annual growth of a given parameter over a specific time duration. The value of the parameter is assumed to be compounded over the period. Though a useful concept, CAGR has many limitations. Primary among that is that calculations using CAGR only refer to the start and ending values. It assumes that growth over the entire duration is constant and does not consider that aspect of volatile changes in the middle values.



**Table 6.1. Arms Import by Select Countries (2005–2019)**

	2000	Share	2005	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Share	CAGR
	%	%								%	%
China	2521	<b>13.03</b>	3582	1020	1267	1142	1371	1633	887	<b>3.26</b>	-5.34
India	995	<b>5.14</b>	1204	2909	3045	2985	2931	1488	2964	<b>9.90</b>	+5.91
Pakistan	186	<b>0.96</b>	443	2199	786	840	851	792	561	<b>2.06</b>	+5.98
S Arabia	85	<b>0.43</b>	167	1083	3380	2947	3934	3760	3673	<b>13.50</b>	+21.92
UAE	247	<b>1.27</b>	2171	643	1222	955	965	1197	644	<b>2.36</b>	+5.17
Australia	338	<b>1.74</b>	459	1511	1464	1025	1671	1575	1399	<b>5.14</b>	+7.76
RoK	1397	<b>7.22</b>	808	1284	272	1059	1056	1106	1510	<b>5.55</b>	+0.41
USA	334	<b>1.72</b>	529	1083	516	458	524	380	1048	<b>3.85</b>	+6.20
Egypt	837	<b>4.3</b>	797	686	1438	1684	2406	1674	1193	<b>4.38</b>	+1.88
Japan	494	<b>2.55</b>	398	403	329	330	453	572	891	<b>3.27</b>	+3.15

**Graph 6.1. Arms Imports Graph**

If we further dissect India's import mechanics over the years based on SIPRI Arms Database figures, we observe that India's market share in the overall import market rose from 5.14 per cent in the year 2000 to 9.90 per cent in 2019. Out of this, as per 2019 import figures, India's primary arms import source remains Russia, with 40 per cent of all arms imports coming from the erstwhile Soviet Union. This is followed by France at 24 per cent, United States at 21 per cent, South Korea at

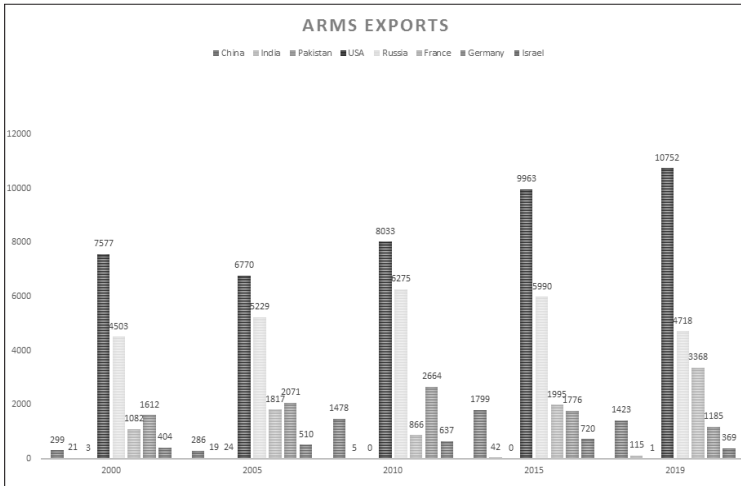
6.4 per cent and Israel at 4.2 per cent. Out of this, when we analyse India’s arms imports of major systems procured, we observe that aircraft procurement constitutes 59.31 per cent of our total imports by value, followed by ships and missiles at approximately 10 per cent of our total import value, followed by engines and artillery.

**DEFENCE EXPORTS**

When we analyse global defence exports using SIPRI Arms Transfer Database, United States has maintained its considerable lead in the arms export market by continuing to keep a total market share of close to 40 per cent in the two decades under consideration with a CAGR per cent increase of a modest 1.85 per cent. Russia is a distant second at 17.3 per cent market share, which is a considerable decrease from the year 2000 when it held a market share of 23.3 per cent. Here, Russia seems to have conceded space to France which comes in as the third largest exporter of arms with a market share of 12.38 per cent, against 5.59 per cent which it had in the year 2000, with a healthy CAGR per cent increase of 6.15 per cent. The dark horse here, of course, is China, which claims a market share of 5.23 per cent in 2019, up from 1.54 per cent in 2000 with an increase in CAGR of 8.55 per cent.

**Table 6.2. Arms Export by Select Countries (2005–2019)**

	2000	Share	2005	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Share	CAGR
	%	%								%	%
China	299	<b>1.54</b>	286	1478	1799	2372	1346	1140	1423	<b>5.23</b>	8.55
India	21	<b>0.10</b>	19	5	42	45	56	43	115	<b>0.42</b>	9.36
Pakistan	3	<b>0.01</b>	24	-	-	1	3	2	1	<b>0.003</b>	-5.61
USA	7577	<b>39.18</b>	6770	8033	9963	9855	12050	10414	10752	<b>39.53</b>	1.85
Russia	4503	<b>23.28</b>	5229	6275	5990	6841	6015	6506	4718	<b>17.3</b>	0.24
France	1082	<b>5.59</b>	1817	866	1995	2041	2367	1773	3368	<b>12.38</b>	6.15
Germany	1612	<b>8.33</b>	2071	2664	1766	2514	1982	1071	1185	<b>4.35</b>	-1.60
RoK	10	<b>0.05</b>	108	197	101	479	751	1066	688	<b>2.52</b>	24.94
Israel	404	<b>2.08</b>	510	637	720	1392	1195	655	369	<b>1.35</b>	0.47

**Graph 6.2. Arms Exports Graph**

As for Indian defence exports, it has come a long way since 1991. As per SIPRI Arms Trade Database, India was ranked at a lowly 41st position in 1991 and continued to maintain the position in the global defence export hierarchy until recently. It was only lately that India's position has changed substantially to now have reached the 19th position in 2018–2019.<sup>208</sup> This marked change has been made possible by the unstinted efforts of the government to boost defence diplomacy, frame export friendly policies, digitize clearances, instruct Indian missions abroad to support export initiatives and support private industry to market their products by advertising them at prominent Global Defence Exhibitions.

At the Defexpo India trade show in February 2020, Prime Minister Narendra Modi called for an export target of Rs 35,000 crore (\$5 billion) by the year 2025. This is an optimistic jump of 26 per cent CAGR from the current levels of around INR 11,000 crore (2018–2019).<sup>209</sup> Achieving this target would require the provision of substantial

<sup>208</sup> Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), "Trade Register", available at [https://armstrade.sipri.org/armstrade/html/export\\_toplist.php](https://armstrade.sipri.org/armstrade/html/export_toplist.php)

<sup>209</sup> Abhishek Bhalla, "India Sets Defence Exports Target of Rs 35,000 Crore, Aims to Double Domestic Procurement in 5 Years", *India Today*, 4 August 2020, available at <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/india-sets-defence-exports-target-of-rs-35-000-crore-double-domestic-procurement-in-5-years-1707667-2020-08-04>, accessed on 6 January 2021.

enablers from the side of the government as well as the ramping of defence production in terms of quality first and quantity second by both public and private players in the Indian defence industry space to compete with foreign defence companies. Enumerated below are few of the more prominent enablers that have already been operationalised.

### **Lines of Credit**

Line of Credit (LoC) is a loan extended on concessional interest rates to governments of developing countries. Such loans help to promote India's export of goods and services. India has been extending LoCs to different countries for various fields and sectors, which include agriculture, defence, infrastructure, telecom, railways, renewable energy etc. The condition for obtaining this LoC is that 75 per cent of the value of the contract needs to be sourced from India.<sup>210</sup> India has extended LoCs for procurement of defence equipment to many partner countries which include Bangladesh, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, Seychelles etc. This has greatly facilitated the sourcing of defence-related equipment from India and thereby defence exports for these countries.<sup>211</sup>

### **Empowering Defence Attachés**

Defence Attachés (DAs), due to their background and nature of work, are considered key enablers for promoting Indian defence exports in their resident and accredited countries of responsibility. Recognising this, the Department of Defence Production initiated a scheme in 2019, whereby all DAs will be provided funds to promote defence exports by way of undertaking marketing studies, publicity campaigns, participating in exhibitions, seminars and publishing material for publicity. The amount of funding was based on the envisaged export potential

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<sup>210</sup> "Line of Credit", Press Information Bureau, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 23 December 2015, available at <https://pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=133835>, accessed on 6 January 2021.

<sup>211</sup> *Enhancing Indian Defence Exports*, Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers, Ernst & Young LLP, available at [https://sidm.in/assets/pdf/publications/1582713845\\_Enhancing\\_Indias\\_export.pdf](https://sidm.in/assets/pdf/publications/1582713845_Enhancing_Indias_export.pdf), accessed on 6 January 2020.

of the target country, which have been divided into three categories A, B and C, with the funding varying from \$ 20,000 to \$ 50,000 annually. The scheme was to be reviewed on a yearly basis and extended based on feedback and requirement.<sup>212</sup>

## Defence Industrial Corridors

Industrial corridors are set up recognising the interdependence of various sectors of a particular discipline like defence and offers effective integration between industry and world class infrastructure such as high-speed transportation. Accordingly, with the aim of promoting India as a manufacturing hub for defence equipment and enhancing export capacity, the Government of India announced in the Annual Budget of 2018–2019, the setting up of two Defence Industrial Corridors, one in Uttar Pradesh with six nodes and the other in Tamil Nadu with five nodes.<sup>213</sup> These Corridors will provide Plug and Play support to defence industries with assured water supply, uninterrupted electricity, 4-lane highway connectivity, single window approvals, flexible labour permits and overall simplified procedures.

## Offsets

The offset clause was first announced in 2005. Under this clause, foreign companies winning MoD contracts worth INR 300 crores or more were required to plough back 30 per cent of their foreign exchange component of the contractual value to Indian defence enterprises.<sup>214</sup> This has been continually modified over the years as part of the updates

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<sup>212</sup> Funding for Defence Attaches for Export Promotion, DPP, EP Cell, 20 May 2019, available at <https://www.defenceexim.gov.in/showfile.php?filename=attach-scheme#:~:text=The%20scheme%20aims%20to%20support,the%20Public%20and%20Private%20sector>, accessed on 20 January 2021.

<sup>213</sup> “Defence Corridor”, Press Information Bureau, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, 17 July 2019, available at <https://pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1579096>, accessed on 6 January 2021.

<sup>214</sup> Laxman Kumar Behera, *An Agenda for Make in India*, IDSA: Pentagon Press, 2016, p. 10.

issued on the Defence Procurement Procedures. The Defence Acquisition Procedure 2020, which was published on 30 September 2020, states that the offset clause would be applicable for Buy (Global) categories, where the estimated Acceptance of Necessity (AoN) cost is INR 2000 crores or more. In this case also, 30 per cent of the estimated cost of the acquisition was required to fulfil the offset obligations. This could be waived off fully or partially by the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) in certain cases. The offset obligation does not apply for procurements undertaken under the Fast Track Procedure.<sup>215</sup>

### **Encouraging Strategic Partnerships**

One of the major thrusts of the Defence Acquisition Procedure 2020 was to provide thrust and clarity while encouraging Indian private firms to participate in the Make in India in high end defence equipment as Strategic Partners (SP) to foreign Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEM). The SP in this case is expected to play the role of a System Integrator by creating an extensive ecosystem of development partners, specialised vendors and suppliers mainly from the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) sectors. The SP was expected to be identified based on their experience in integration of multi-disciplinary defence systems and was accordingly required to enter into relevant tie-ups with foreign OEMs. The government had assured support for licensing, transfer of technology and provision of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) issues. The initial segments identified for SPs included fighter aircraft, helicopters, submarines and main battle tanks and armoured fighting vehicles.<sup>216</sup> One of the first examples of the successful execution of this model has been the \$2.5 Billion contract signed with Airbus Defence for the supply of 56 C-295 transport aircraft. This contract is being jointly executed with Tata Advanced

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<sup>215</sup> “Defence Acquisition Procedure”, Department of Defence Production, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, 30 September 2020, p. 109, available at [https://www.mod.gov.in/dod/sites/default/files/DAP2030new\\_0.pdf](https://www.mod.gov.in/dod/sites/default/files/DAP2030new_0.pdf), accessed on 6 January 2021.

<sup>216</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 109.

Systems Limited (TASL), wherein 16 aircraft will be supplied by Airbus in flyaway condition while 40 will be assembled in India by TASL.<sup>217</sup>

## CONCLUSION

It has always been encouraging to observe that notwithstanding copious international restrictions at various periods, India has been able to blaze a trail of glory in sectors like space exploration and missile technology. India has also achieved phenomenal progress in its civil nuclear programme. It is therefore imperative that India lives up to its potential and achieve strategic independence in the defence equipment sector as well.

A nation cannot march on the path of greatness if it remains shackled and dependant for essential military equipment on foreign vendors, the tap of which could be turned off with economic sanctions. To achieve true strategic independence, India would need to substantially lower defence imports while simultaneously increase defence exports and increase domestic consumption of indigenous military products.

The government has progressively created the right atmosphere towards achieving this target. The Indian armed forces have also been increasingly involved in the development of indigenous defence equipment, its acceptance, testing and absorption. The time is now ripe for the Indian defence industry, both public and private to accept the challenge to place India in the ‘top five’ places in the global defence export map.

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<sup>217</sup> Rahul Singh, “India to Sign \$2.5-billion Contract for 56 Transport Planes for IAF”, *Hindustan Times*, 5 January 2021, available at <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/india-to-sign-2-5-billion-contract-for-56-transport-planes-for-iaf/story-2wPztr38s2bNoQPhzTj2SJ.html>, accessed on 7 January 2021.

**SECTION III**

**STAKEHOLDERS**

**AND**

**THE WAY AHEAD**





## **STAKEHOLDERS OF DEFENCE DIPLOMACY IN INDIA**

In today's world of transformational geopolitical challenges, a nation can be termed successful if it is capable of focussing all the elements that constitute Comprehensive National Power (CNP) in a timely fashion to address the threats to its national interest. The diverse elements that combine to form a nation's CNP include economic strength, industrial and technological competences, infrastructure, demographic dividends, educational and medical spread, military capabilities etc. Among these many ingredients of CNP, an important dynamic in geopolitics is a nation's 'diplomatic prowess' to influence decisions in the comity of nations, of which 'military diplomacy' forms an inseparable vital part.

As with other constituents of CNP, the effectiveness of India's military diplomatic outreach will largely depend on the synergy that exists between the numerous government departments that contribute towards its success. This would mean a synergised effort on a 'whole-of-government' level because of the multiple government agencies involved in its progress at various stages.

It is well understood here that the primary ministry within the government that is responsible for calibrating India's engagement level with a foreign country, military or otherwise, is the Ministry of External Affairs. The 'military-diplomatic' portion of this 'politically approved' engagement is carried forward by the Ministry of Defence and executed by the three Defence Services. Therefore, for any straightforward 'military-activity' like military exercises, the stakeholders involved would be the executing Service, the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of External Affairs.

Such an arrangement would be the case in 90 per cent of the military-diplomatic activities, the details of which have been elaborated in preceding chapters. However, in certain exceptional cases, like for instance, the execution of the Hon'ble Prime Minister's vision of 'Security

and Growth for All’ (SAGAR) or Sagarmala for the IOR, the Ministry of External Affairs would need to coordinate with other dealing ministries like the Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Shipping, etc., in addition to the Ministry of Defence to ensure successful implementation of associated projects and schemes. Accordingly, this chapter intends to expose the reader to the structures available with the primary stakeholder for military diplomacy within the Indian government namely, the Ministry of Defence.

## **MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**

At the apex level at the Ministry of Defence is the Raksha Mantri (Defence Minister), who is responsible for all matters related to the three Defence Services and this includes military diplomacy. At an individual appointment level, the Raksha Mantri personally participates in all Defence Minister level dialogues with his counterparts from friendly foreign countries, which also include institutionally scheduled 2+2 dialogues with few countries like US and Japan. The Defence Minister also approves all policy issues related to military foreign cooperation in terms of capacity building, capability enhancement, constructive engagements and collaborative efforts that are forwarded to him/ her from either the newly created Department of Military Affairs (DMA), Department of Defence (DoD), Department of Defence Production or Department of Defence Research and Development, all of which delve in matters related to military foreign cooperation in varying degrees.

### **Department of Defence (DoD)**

This has been the primary department of the Ministry of Defence, which gave shape to policy in all military matters. This was till the creation of the DMA on 1 January 2020, when this responsibility got suitably bifurcated. This department is headed by the Defence Secretary, an IAS officer, who is additionally responsible for coordinating the activities of the five departments in the Ministry.<sup>218</sup> To coordinate all

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<sup>218</sup> “Organisational Set-up and Functions”, About MoD, *Ministry of Defence official website*, available at <https://www.mod.gov.in/about—ministry>, accessed on 15 February 2021.

policy matters related to International Cooperation in the Ministry of Defence, the Defence Secretary is assisted by the Joint Secretary (International Cooperation). The JS (IC), as he/she is referred to, leads a 'Wing' divided into five sections, each led by either an officer of equivalent rank of Lieutenant Colonel from one of the three Services or a Deputy-Director rank officer from any of the allied services, with the necessary staff under them.<sup>219</sup> These sections are designated different geographical regions of the globe, to ensure smoother management of day-to-day functions.

### **Department of Military Affairs (DMA)**

In line with the 'allocation of business rules' within the Ministry of Defence, the DMA has been authorised to deal with matters of more 'operational nature' in all spheres including revenue procurement. A similar division is observed in issues relating to military diplomacy, where the approvals for 'ongoing military cooperation initiatives' are overseen by the DMA. To ensure this, the DMA has a two-star level officer designated as the Joint Secretary (Military International Cooperation), or JS (MIC). The officer is assisted in his functions by three Director level officers from the three Services with their associated staff. As would be obvious, the division of work between the three Directors is fairly straightforward and would be based on the particular Service allocated the initiative for execution.

### **Department of Defence Production (DDP)**

The DDP has been the prime mover behind the 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan' of the central government. In addition to laying the ropes for reducing India's dependence on arms imports, this department has also been responsible for laying the policy map for creating a conducive environment to transform the Indian arms industry into an export driven industry. The department is divided into five main 'Wings' each

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<sup>219</sup> "Organisational Chart", Joint Secretary (International Cooperation), *Ministry of Defence official website*, available at <https://www.mod.gov.in/dod/wingsindod/js-international-cooperation>, accessed on 15 February 2021.

headed by a Joint Secretary level officer from the Civil or Allied Services and other minor Directorates. The five main Wings are the Aerospace Wing, Defence Industries Production Wing, Land Systems Wing, Naval Systems Wing, Personnel and Coordination Wing and Defence Offsets Management Wing. Distributed within these Wings are the Ordnance Factories and the many Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs).<sup>220</sup> While each of the Ordnance Factory Boards and the different DPSUs would have their separate organisations to coordinate defence exports, the overall coordination is carried out at DDP by the Secretary, Defence Production.

### **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)**

The DRDO has been in existence for more than six decades and has been responsible for the design, development and production of state-of-art weapon systems, sensors and platforms for the armed forces. More than 1,800 industries have joined hands with the DRDO in delivery of platforms or technologies for the armed forces. Some of these industries have become part of the global supply chain and have started exports of DRDO developed systems. To publicise its export-ready equipment, DRDO publishes a ‘compendium of proven systems’ at regular intervals on its website with details of the concerned production agency. The central agency within DRDO that manages all export interests and acts as an interface with outside agencies is the Directorate of Industry & Technology Management (DIITM), based at DRDO Headquarters at New Delhi.

### **ARMED FORCES**

Policymaking structures within the Ministry of Defence have been in a state of flux since the creation of the DMA and is expected to remain so till the execution and settling down of the Theatre Commands. A

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<sup>220</sup> “Who’s Who”, *Department of Defence Production official website*, available at <https://www.ddpmod.gov.in/whos-who>, accessed on 15 February 2021.

similar flux would have been observed during the implementation of the Goldwater–Nichols Act of 1986, which had the underlying assumption that civilian policymakers and military personnel operate in separate spheres. However, in the current information age, defence officers must be ready to work closely alongside other governmental agencies, foreign governments, and non-governmental organisations. This will require a better understanding of international relations and inter-organisational coordination and a commitment to seeking innovative solutions to solve complex problems.

### **Headquarters, Integrated Defence Services (HQ IDS)**

The Headquarters of the Integrated Defence Staff (HQ IDS) was set up in 2001 after the Kargil conflict. This was based on the recommendations of the Group of Ministers which made specific proposals for implementation based on the analysis carried out by four task forces.<sup>221</sup> Within the HQ IDS, the Division of International Defence Cooperation (IDC) has been directed to execute tri-Service Defence Cooperation as mandated by foreign policy instructions of the government.<sup>222</sup> The Division functions under the Director General Defence Intelligence Agency (DG DIA), a three-star rank officer and is headed by a two-star officer within the tri-Service Intelligence Branch, namely an Assistant Chief of Integrated Defence Staff (ACIDS). The Division is further sub-divided into two directorates headed by one-star rank officers.

The IDC is responsible for coordinating all tri-Service military cooperation functions, which includes collating strategic and military environment analysis and briefing foreign delegations on India's strategic and security perspective, coordinating tri-Service military exercises,

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<sup>221</sup> “History of HQIDS”, *Official website of Integrated Defence Staff*, available at <https://www.ids.nic.in/pdf/history.pdf>, accessed on 10 May 2021.

<sup>222</sup> “International Cooperation”, *Official website of Integrated Defence Staff*, available at <https://www.ids.nic.in/international-co-operation.php>, accessed on 10 May 2021.

coordinating participation of foreign countries in tri-Service Humanitarian and Disaster Relief Exercises, coordinating all joint-Services Staff Talks like the Military Steering Group (MSG), Military Cooperation Group (MCG) Meetings with the United States, Russia, France, Germany, Italy, Maldives and ASEAN Regional Forum.<sup>223</sup>

## **Indian Navy**

Owing to its larger geographical responsibility and reach, the Indian Navy has been the primary driver of India's military diplomacy. Its current strategy of 'mission-based deployments' across the length and breadth of the Indian Ocean has ensured that it has placed combatants closer to foreign shores, necessitating periodic 'operational turn-arounds' in foreign ports. Notwithstanding these recent developments, since early 1990s, naval foreign cooperation has shown an exponential increase. Accordingly, the Directorate of Foreign Cooperation (DFC) was created in 2006 to function under the Assistant Chief of Naval Staff (Foreign Cooperation and Intelligence), ACNS (FCI), who in turn was functioning in the Staff Branch II of Naval Headquarters, which was headed by the Deputy Chief of Naval Staff (DCNS).

Due to the ever-increasing width of naval foreign cooperation, the DFC was upgraded to be headed by a one-star officer called the Principal Director (Foreign Cooperation), PD (FC), from that of a Captain in 2016, and also had a suitable increase in the number of officers and staff handling various naval foreign cooperation responsibilities. The DFC continues to remain the nodal directorate for coordinating all foreign cooperation activities, while the individual directorates within Naval Headquarters execute their specific responsibilities based on directions from DFC. For example, all operational activities are executed by the Directorate of Naval Operations, training activities by the Directorate of Naval Training, hydrography activities by the Directorate of Hydrography, procurement related activities by the respective procurement directorates etc.

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<sup>223</sup> "Directorate of International Defence Cooperation", *Official website of Integrated Defence Staff*, available at <https://ids.nic.in/pdf/Script-IDC%20Website.pdf>, accessed on 10 May 2021.

## **Indian Army**

The Indian Army has a very long history of foreign deployments that extends back to pre-Independence days. Post-Independence the Indian Army has been one of the largest contributors to the United Nations Peacekeeping Forces. This has been discussed in detail in preceding chapters. However, apart from this, the Indian Army has an independent defence cooperation division at the Integrated Headquarters of Ministry of Defence (Army), New Delhi, the brief details of which are enumerated below.

The International Cooperation Division at the Army Headquarters is headed by the Assistant Director General, International Cooperation [ADG (IC)], a two-star officer, who functions under the Director General Military Intelligence (DGMI), a three-star officer. The Brigadier International Cooperation [Brig (IC)], heads the Directorate, which is further divided into the Foreign Protocol Department, headed by a Colonel rank officer. This Department liaises 'high-level' foreign visits of army dignitaries and coordinates requirements and interactions with Indian Army Defence Attachés posted abroad and foreign Army Attachés posted in India. In parallel is the Defence Cooperation Department. It has Colonel rank officers managing army defence cooperation being undertaken in various geographical regions of the world, which are suitably divided further into desks. The third department under the Brig (IC) is the Department of Foreign Training, which looks into all facets of foreign training including Indian Army personnel being trained abroad, foreign army personnel being trained in India or cadet level training being undertaken in the Indian Military Academy for foreign armies.

## **Indian Air Force**

Likewise, to the other two Services, foreign cooperation in the Indian Air Force is overseen by Assistant Chief of Air Staff (Intelligence) [ACAS (Int)] in Air Headquarters at New Delhi. Under him, a Group Captain rank officer is responsible for all matters related to defence cooperation with foreign countries as well as foreign liaison and protocol for the Indian Air Force. It might be instructive to clarify here that matters related to liaison with foreign entities for procurement or



maintenance related issues of the equipment of the Indian Air Force, are not the responsibility of this directorate.

With the advent of the Theatre Commands in the near future, it is likely that structures that execute defence diplomacy at the Ministry and Service Headquarters level may see change. With the more operational responsibilities expected to be delegated at the level of the Theatre Commanders, it can be expected that responsibility for driving defence diplomacy in their respective domains will also be accordingly delegated.

However, the challenge to consult, coordinate and bring together a coherent defence diplomatic strategy for India will still remain. This will bring about two clear demarcations, where the DMA will need to drive defence diplomacy policy, coordination and approvals with other departments of the government, while the Theatre Commands would be responsible for executing the military cooperation initiatives. This demarcation would not include the coordination required between departments to handle the projected increase of Indian defence exports in the future.

All that has been discussed above highlights the necessity to bring about a certain coordination in matters relating to defence diplomacy within the country. With multiple equitable stakeholders in the form of MEA, DMA, DoD, Service HQs, DDP, NSCS, etc., at Delhi, which in due time will be supported by the Theatre Commands, there is a definite need for better world geographical area/ country-wise coordination among all to ensure a coherent, lucid strategy. Some suggestions towards this will be discussed in the concluding chapter.

## **PROPOSALS TO VITALISE DEFENCE DIPLOMACY**

As the 21st century unfolds, it is bringing about a change in the global power equation that is slowly but surely indicative of a bipolar world divided between the US and China. Though not as well demarcated as NATO and Warsaw Pact countries during the Cold War years, this choice is more compelled towards countries wanting to push back against Chinese coercion and intimidation in all forms including military, financial, geographical, political, etc. The incident in Galwan in 2020, had therefore become the ‘tipping point’ for India to seek partnerships with like-minded countries to trim-the-beard of the Chinese dragon. Accordingly, partnerships such as the ‘Quad’ between India, US, Japan and Australia and any Quad+ partnerships that might fructify in the future, will be substantially biased towards military and more so, naval cooperation.

While balancing larger geostrategic compulsions, India will need to be continually alive to the ever-changing political power equations in its larger neighbourhood or primary areas of strategic interest. It is in this ‘backyard of India’ that China has constantly shown effervescent interest in cultivating regimes to India’s inconvenience. Such geographical areas will therefore require India’s continual engagement with a ‘whole-of-government’ approach of which a large component will include ‘all-pillars’ of India’s military foreign cooperation as brought out at preceding chapters.

All these factors point towards a requirement of more focussed, coordinated and coherent approach towards Indian defence diplomacy. As discussed in preceding chapters, the stakeholders are understandably many, however, the efforts of all departments will require to be synchronised to ensure India reaps the maximum benefits for its efforts in defence diplomacy. Accordingly, this concluding chapter discusses some possible ‘ways-forward’ to ensure a more nuanced and harmonised approach to the subject. Therefore, while taking a more

broad-based approach, the subject of defence diplomacy will need to form part of the curriculum of officers from the armed forces, foreign services and other government services who eventually will deal with such issues later in their Service. While on a more focussed frontage, it would mean tweaking to the existing government structures.

## **REGION-WISE EXTERNAL COORDINATION MEETINGS**

While proposing a structure to coordinate a multifaceted discipline like defence diplomacy within the government, it might be instructive to look at similar previous efforts to coordinate such large multidepartment matters. Intelligence is one such subject, which has a wide span over many departments, both internally looking and outwardly dealing. Almost every arm of the government has an 'intelligence-wing' in some form, which provides rationale to its future actions. However, as brought out in various committee reports to examine failures to India's national security, invariably, intelligence has been the 'fall-guy'. Accordingly, intelligence gathering within the country and the dealing agencies have been repeatedly modified based on the recommendations of committees like the Kargil Review Committee of 1999, Naresh Chandra Task Force on National Security of 2012 etc.

Evolving from these recommendations was also the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) chaired by the Deputy National Security Advisor (DNSA) at the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS). Though this entity was later subsumed in 2018, till it existed, the JIC brought about a modicum of coordination within the various arms of the government handling 'external intelligence'. Each world 'geographic-region' was allotted a certain time every week, when all the relevant 'desk-officers' from all government agencies handling that particular geographic region would congregate under one roof to share notes. Though simplistic in execution, it was telling in its effect. Now every department 'desk-officer' knew the 'where' and 'why' of happenings within his region of responsibility. This led to a better understanding of issues, more focussed collation and better coordination between the various arms of the government, not to mention the comradery, familiarity and better flow of information between officers handling similar responsibilities.

Though not as widespread as ‘external-intelligence’ nor as confidential, defence diplomacy suffers from similar problems in coordination, information flow, overlapping responsibilities within different government entities, leading to less than coherent execution and not so fruitful outcomes. Though numerous briefs, reports and papers are brought out on a periodic basis, it does little to stem the information chasm that exists between different agencies wanting to achieve the same goal. To solve this, it would be naïve to think of a ‘mother central agency’ as a solution. After all, the operative part of military diplomacy has to be executed by the individual Services, namely, the Navy, Army and Air Force, which necessitates the individual Services maintaining foreign cooperation directorates to coordinate Service level activities. With the advent of Theatre Commands, this might change.

As previously discussed, the main stakeholders of defence diplomacy include the three Services HQs, HQ IDS, DMA, DoD, DDP, NSCS and MEA. To these internal stakeholders we need to add arguably the most important component and that is the Indian Defence Attaché of the target countries or designated personnel in Indian Missions where Indian Defence Attachés are not posted. To this frontend mix we need to add the important backend support of the primary government and Service Think Tanks that have scholars and academics dedicated to researching these regions for years. For instance, in the Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis (MP-IDS), which is the only MoD funded Think Tank, there are seven Research Centres dedicated to region-specific studies, these include East Asia, West Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia and Oceania, North America, Europe and Eurasia and Africa, Latin America, Caribbean Islands and the UN.

To ensure a modicum of coordination between these diverse stakeholders, there needs to be an agreed common place of contact, where notes can be exchanged, ideas built upon and familiarity bred between desk officers handling the same region. For this we can look to borrow the simplistic model of the JIC, as discussed above, where desk-intelligence officers of the same region, from diverse organisations, met periodically at one place to discuss issues of importance.

The prerequisites for such meetings would be a comfortably accessible central location in Delhi with sufficient seating room and technical capabilities of projection and communication. The meetings will need

to be chaired by a senior ranking person to ensure compliance and coordinated outcomes. Further, such meetings will need to be sufficiently spaced to prevent fatigue, like once a month or once in two months. The regional groupings to call for the meetings can be kept fairly simple, for instance, the first being India's land neighbours, second, the countries in the Indian Ocean Region, third being Russia, Southeast Asia and Far East countries, fourth being the Middle East, Africa and Europe and the fifth being the Americas, Caribbean and Antarctica. These groupings are only suggestive and obviously will be modelled on a common understanding between the various stakeholders. It goes without saying that the Defence Attachés of the region being discussed would need to compulsorily attend such meetings through online visual mode. Further, other government stakeholders like ministries related with defence projects, intelligence agencies, defence PSUs or Indian companies dealing in defence exports to the region may be special invitees to such meetings, as the case may be.

It is suggested that though attendance for all stakeholders be made mandatory, the agenda for such monthly meetings be kept fairly simple and lucid. Where unless there is a particular high-level issue of common interest to be discussed, participants may share their immediate on-goings, perceptions, seek clarifications and ask for feedback on ideas that may resonate with other participants. Such meetings could also be attended by senior functionaries from stakeholder organisations who wish to convey specific inputs or seek feedback on regional initiatives being progressed.

### **INTRODUCE DEFENCE DIPLOMACY AS A SUBJECT**

As brought out in preceding chapters, defence diplomacy in a broader sense and foreign military cooperation as a specific subject is not widely studied or taught in either military or civil/ foreign service academic institutions. This leaves the individuals eventually dealing with these disciplines, temporarily or permanently to either dither through the requirement or learn on-the-job, both ways not a comfortable proposition. Therefore, foreseeing the increasing utility of defence diplomacy in our international strategic dealings of the future, it is but natural that we should be looking to cultivate a curriculum for educating our officers at appropriate levels. Some argue that the problem with

military influence in policymaking is that officers tend to see foreign affairs purely through the security lens; that military personnel effectively lack a sufficient understanding of diplomatic and political tools and are thus more inclined to rely on force to conduct statecraft. However, this characterisation disregards the diverse responsibilities of modern-day defence officers, whose diverse duties require them to have a broad strategic perspective. Accordingly, today's complex threat environment requires that officers understand and work with military, diplomatic, and political tools of statecraft.

It is therefore proposed that defence diplomacy as a discipline should be introduced at the level of the National Defence University (NDU) to feature as a departmental vertical. Similarly, defence diplomacy and military foreign cooperation as subjects can be elaborated with structured syllabus in military academies and other service institutions like the Defence Services Staff College, War Colleges, etc. The same could be extended to the other parallel civil services training institutions. It is felt that such efforts will go a long way in laying the foundation for mature and worldly-wise defence diplomats who will be equally important to increasing our Comprehensive National Power alongside military warriors of the future.

### **CREATING A CADRE FOR DEFENCE DIPLOMACY**

As brought out in preceding paragraphs, there exist separate directorates in each Service to handle, collate and act upon region-wise external intelligence. While this is separate from the directorate that handles foreign military cooperation under the same Service Headquarters, it mostly is the similar information from the same source being handled differently. Understandably, both these departments of external intelligence and foreign military cooperation report to the same two-star ranking officer in the Service Headquarters. A similar hierarchy is followed in the Headquarters of the Integrated Defence Staff. Here it is important not to confuse external foreign intelligence with internal counterintelligence for which the men, material, training and sources are completely different with nothing in common between the two.

Officers from the rank of Major and Lieutenant Colonel upwards, staff the various offices and directorates that handle military foreign

cooperation and external intelligence at various headquarters and offices. These include the various Command Headquarters, Service Headquarters, Integrated Headquarters, DMA, MoD, DDP, MEA, NSCS and RAW including defence attachés. This would, at a very rough estimate, amount to anywhere between 250–400 officers. These officers are mostly performing their duties without any formal training or indoctrination in the subject of foreign military cooperation, sources of external intelligence or structured academic exposure to countries and regions they report upon. They primarily learn on the job, become better with experience as time passes only to hand over these duties to the next incumbent when they are at the top of their efficiency in the chair.

Some may say, but this happens with all jobs in the defence services. However, there are few important arguments that make the case for continuity of officers in this business critical. As argued previously, no country can exist as an island and therefore needs to pursue effective and efficient diplomatic engagements on all fronts to achieve its national goals. Intertwined with this diplomatic quiver is the main arrow of defence diplomacy. Being as important a component to Comprehensive National Power as hard power, this discipline needs to be manned by professionals—a requisite that we can only develop through continuity of experience on the job.

It is therefore proposed to create a separate cadre of defence officers, who would be given the option to migrate or volunteer for such a cadre from their parent cadre at the rank of Major or Lieutenant Colonel equivalent. Though this would entail moving away from a more operational role, they would be encouraged by the opportunity to study foreign countries, foreign intelligence collection and the comparative stability the job would offer. This cadre of officers while initially joining at the lowest rung as desk officers at Command and Service HQs, foreign military cooperation and foreign intelligence directorates, will form the pool of officers for selection to Defence Attachés. They would also form the base for officers to be selected for deputation to other military foreign cooperation appointments at the DMA, MoD, DDP, MEA, NSCS, etc. Upwards, they would also be heading the various foreign cooperation and external intelligence directorates as one-star officers, connected divisions as two-star officers

and finally tenant appointments such as Director General of Military Intelligence and Director General (Defence Intelligence Agency) as three-star officers.

### **ESTABLISH A DEFENCE EXPORT AGENCY**

It has been the Indian government's endeavour to boost defence equipment exports by a significant percentage. With the aim of matching its intentions with policy directives, the government has made necessary changes in Indian defence production and export policy. Various SOPs and incentives have been laid out to boost domestic defence equipment production, both in the public and private space. This has led to discernible enthusiasm in all stakeholders, which was reflected in the substantial increase in Indian defence exports in the FY 2018–2019. However, this rising graph could not be sustained in FY 2019–2020 and 2021, partly due to the onset of COVID-19 and partly due to shrinking financial spaces in recipient countries. Another probable reason that can be discerned is the lack of focussed direction that would come from 'single-agency' coordination. This would mean a single-window government agency for managing defence exports, both for the potential customers and the domestic exporters.

Such a transition to a single-window agency for managing domestic defence exports can be seen across major arms exporters across the globe. Israel raised the Defence Exports Control Agency in July 2006 as a means to protect the country's defence export interests and licensing. It has since evolved into an agency that provides a wide variety of services to Israeli defence exporters including outreach to ensure general awareness and adherence to legal requirements.<sup>224</sup> Similarly the Russian Federation established the Rosoboronexport State Corporation in the year 2000 to support the Russian Government in all military arms export operations. This agency wields the necessary guarantees of the

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<sup>224</sup> "Defence Export Control Agency", *Israel Ministry of Defence official website*, available at <http://www.exportctrl.mod.gov.il/English/Pages/default.aspx>, accessed on 25 May 2021.



Russian Federation to offer the international market the whole range of Russian armaments officially allowed for export. It is presently one of the leading arms export operators in the international arms market.<sup>225</sup>

The United States established the Defense Security Assistance Agency (DSAA) in 1971 to administer and supervise the Department of Defense security assistance programmes for transfer of arms and services to foreign countries. Over the years, this agency has transformed into the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) now encompassing a wide variety of initiatives such as International Military Education and Training (IMET), Foreign Military Sales (FMS), Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR), etc. The DSCA also manages close to 43 MoD advisors in over 15 countries to oversee the whole gamut of foreign military assistance that is closely linked to defence trade and arms transfer.<sup>226</sup>

Ideally, the proposed Defence Export Agency has to be closely associated with Indian Military Assistance and form a complimentary package that rightfully appeals to the potential customer. The customer should be offered not just one product, but a complete package that includes training on the platform for personnel and guarantees for future spares and maintenance. The product could also be offered on a discount, if bought as part of an extended contract with the Indian Defence Forces. There could also be clauses offered, for 'buy-backs' and upgrades to Indian defence systems. For all this, the Defence Export Agency will have to be suitably empowered and staffed by personnel with experience in defence and military engagements, ideally personnel from the above proposed defence diplomatic cadre. The same agency would also be the 'single-window' counter for arms exporters from within the country, both defence PSUs and private players, to obtain the necessary clearances within and outside, while the Indian government stands guarantor for the product.

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<sup>225</sup> "Rosboronexport Agency", *Official website*, available at <http://roe.ru/eng/rosboronexport/>

<sup>226</sup> "Defence Security Cooperation Agency", *Official website*, available at <https://www.dsca.mil/50th-anniversary>, accessed on 25 May 2021.

## CONCLUSION

Over the past two–three decades, with the end of the Cold War, India has witnessed a multi-fold increase in its military diplomatic engagements. These have been necessitated by the fast-changing sub-regional, regional and geostrategic diplomatic arrangements that India has had to engage in during that period. Accordingly, this has led to a mushrooming of new government departments and directorates at the various headquarters and ministries with the necessary increase in administration and staffing. These additions being largely ad hoc, the military diplomatic engagement requirement has been constantly outstripping the existing structures, conveying a stretch in resources, both tangible and intangible. It is therefore time that we foresee what is looming on the horizon and took the necessary steps to streamline our defence diplomatic structures to ensure that India maintains the required influence to protect its national interests across the globe.

**T**he discipline of defence diplomacy picked up salience as an important component of foreign policy with most major militaries by the end of the Cold War. Particularly, in the last three decades, it has become a vital instrument in the diplomatic tool-bag of most countries.

However, notwithstanding its increasing utility to matters of national security, there is very little in the realm of ready-use academic literature available on the subject. This monograph has been accordingly conceived to introduce the concepts of defence diplomacy in a language easily understandable to the lay-reader.

The monograph is divided into three Sections. Section I starts by tracing the origins of the discipline and clarifies the basic concepts. Section II walks the reader through Indian specific experiences and its more contemporary military foreign cooperation practices. Section III acquaints the reader with the stakeholders in the government and concludes with proposals to vitalize the discipline.



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