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# DSA

THE ONLY MAGAZINE AVAILABLE ON  
THE INTRANETS OF IAF, CISF AND BSF



## INDO-PAK WAR 1965



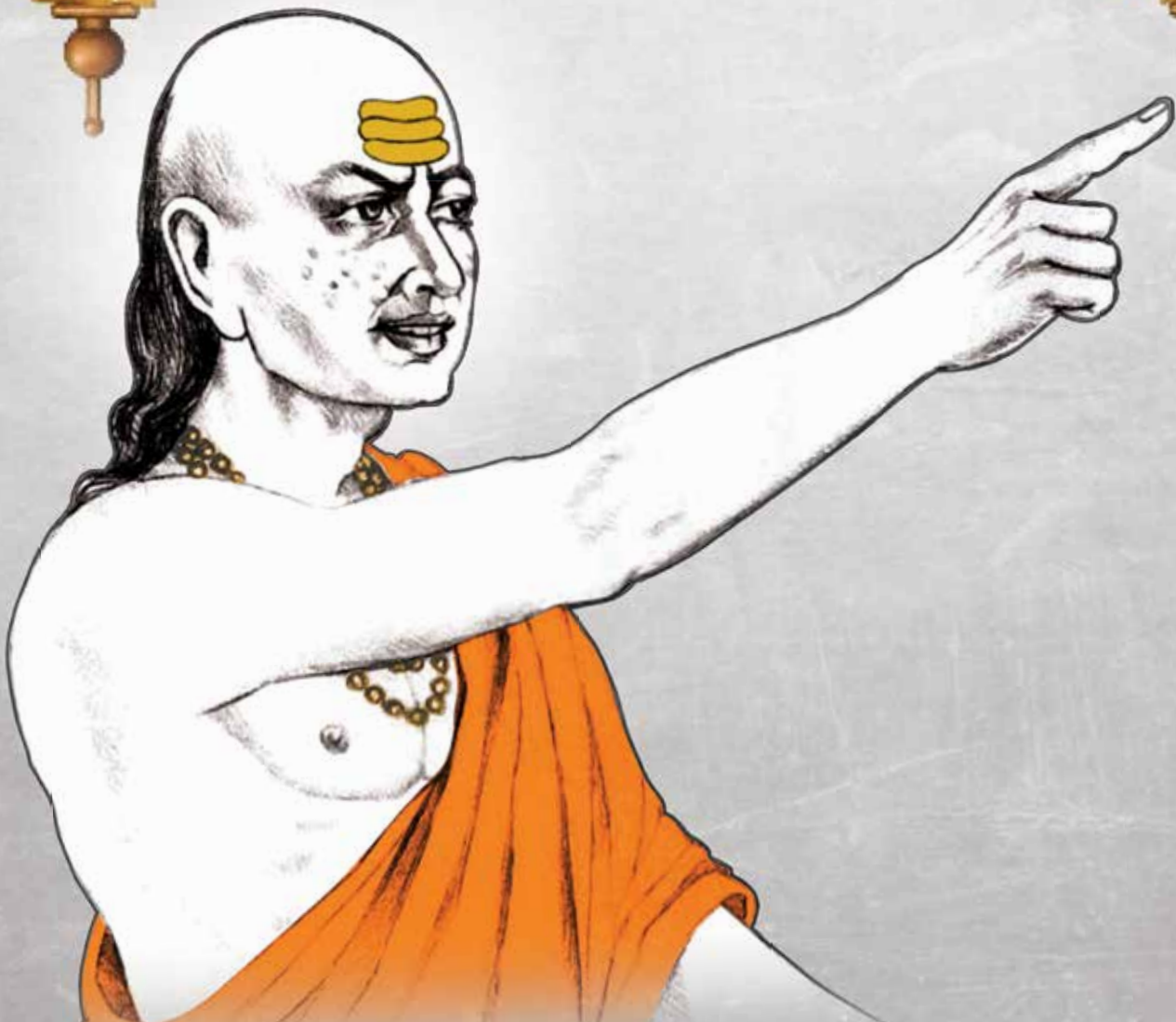
### JAMMU & KASHMIR A FESTERING CHASM



## MISSION

*The power of a King lies in his mighty arms ...  
Security of the citizens at peacetime is very important  
because State is the only saviour of the men and women  
who get affected only because of the negligence of the State.*

**— Chanakya**





# DSA is as much yours, as it is ours!

The fighting that began in April 1965 culminated at the end of September 1965. That is a really long-time to keep at it and yet not produce a result. Which is broadly what happened in the 1965 War between India and Pakistan. There are narratives and counter-narratives of what is the only really indecisive conflict between two neighbours constantly at it. All of the other wars, 1947-48, 1971 and even the localised 1999 Kargil conflict, produced results. But this one was a strange one, because having ended in the manner in which it did and yet a result is claimed by both. When both claim victory it is fair to say neither won.

The war began in the salt flats of the Rann of Kutch in April and ended in the shadows of the snowy peaks of Kashmir at the end of September. This is not to say that it was an endless contest of lead all along. The Pakistan Army initiated forays into the Rann of Kutch, to check Indian resolve and preparation. They found both wanting in Kutch and thought Kashmir was available for plucking. So they did what they did in 1947 and sent infiltrators in the garb of civilians to stir the hive, hoping to collect the honey when it would drop into their lap.

As in 1947 the infiltrators were soldiers in the guise of civilians, except that they didn't plunder and rape as they had done earlier. They were inducted to incite the local population that was 'reeling under the brutalities of Indian rule', as the Pakistani narrative has all to believe. The assumption that the locals would now welcome them as saviours, rise in revolt against India and Kashmir would become a part of Pakistan. This simplistic plot was code-named 'Operation Gibraltar', borrowing from a romanticised episode from the mythical period of Islamic history.

Once the people of Kashmir revolted 'Operation Gibraltar' was to be converted into 'Operation Grand Slam'. Except that Kashmir shepherds informed Indian authorities well in advance that there were infiltrators, which gave India time to respond. Which it did by sending 1 Para to capture Hajipir Pass on a rainy August night, thus cutting a critical Pakistani link. Pakistan had to prepone 'Operation Grand Slam', by which time the Indian Army was well advanced in its campaign. So much so that 3 Jat under Lt Col Desmond Hyde crossed Ichhogil Canal on the outskirts of Lahore on 3 September with negligible losses.

This was not the case elsewhere, for the main aim of 'Operation Grand Slam' was to cut Akhnoor from India and all communication lines thereafter. The losses in this sector were heavy and were to remain so through the war. Since Pakistan began the war in Kashmir and India took it to Punjab, Pakistan took it further south to the deserts of Rajasthan and captured territory in Barmer district. Each country opening a front that suited it, to relieve pressure on the other fronts. And that is where the narrative of the war gets muddled, for each has a version at variance with the other. The initiator became the defender and the defender became the attacker, so on and so forth.

Pakistan celebrates 6 September as the Defence Day. This is in recognition of the success in thwarting Indian gains into Lahore. Lt Col Desmond Hyde, who had almost crossed into Lahore, was left perplexed when asked to withdraw from his position of strength. And that is really where the lessons of 1965 War begin. This stalemated war is an episode rife with incidents of immense unit level leadership and bravery, juxtaposed with an astonishing shortfall in generalship. The opportunities that commanders of 1 Para and 3 Jat and others like them, provided to the higher military leadership were squandered by timidity, at times, misinformation, sometimes and downright absence of foresight, many many times.

There is no antidote to that other than greater professionalism. Having been bested in 1962 by China and brought Pakistan's ambitions to a halt in 1965, India was well prepared to instil greater professionalism into its armed forces by the time 1971 came. The result of that war is plain to all. Which is the greatest lesson to learn of all, that there are no shortcuts to professionalism. What of Pakistan? The one pointer is that it has tried the same formula three times, 1947, 1965 and 1999. None of its objectives were met, yet narratives persist. There is a lesson in that too.

**Manvendra Singh**



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## WARS AND LESSONS

No one needs war; but when it happens, it generates an inexorable momentum of its own. India, the Golden Bird, has been a victim of foreign assaults from time immemorial and the incursions have continued even after the moment of our emergence as a sovereign, independent nation. It is significant, that in the five wars that we have had to fight after independence in 1947, some part of the former princely state of Jammu and Kashmir has been involved, as Pakistan and China, singly

and in collusion, have sought to delink it from the rest of India. Kargil in 1999 was the last such manifestation. Hence the rationale to bracket wars and locale in this edition of **DSA**.

Irrespective of the logic and comprehension, every war has taught crucial and imperative lessons for sharpened preparedness of the forces involved. There had been a paradigm shift in the war scenarios of ancient times till the Second World War and then subsequently from Second World War till date. India had to face the first of these five battles immediately after independence in 1947 when Pakistani troops, disguised as tribals, invaded the princely state to try and give credence to the spurious Two-Nation Theory. They managed to reach the gates of Srinagar, compelling the Maharaja to seek help from Indian troops to sweep away the invaders. This was only partially achieved before the UN-sponsored Ceasefire was imposed. Because of this unfinished business, India has had to revisit the battlefield, time and again. The second Indo-Pakistani conflict was also challenged over Kashmir and started without a formal declaration of war. This war began on August 5, 1965 and concluded on September 22, 1965.

In many ways, the Chinese attack of 1962 across a broad front from Aksai Chin in J&K in the west and Arunachal Pradesh in the east was a predecessor and template for the Pakistani attack of 1965 – the Pakistanis hoped that they would be able to do the same to a psychologically depressed India. But that was not to be because of the lessons our political and military leadership had learned.

The 1962 War was an extensive and crucial lesson for the preparedness of our forces. The infantry and the artillery divisions of Indian Army were well equipped to counter the Pakistan Army. The role of Indian Army was outstanding and well-supported by the Indian Air Force. Our courageous Prime Minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri motivated the entire defence force and even went to the borders to boost the morale of our army personnel and the peasantry on whose land the war was being fought (remember the slogan *Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan?*)

As we commemorate and celebrate 50 years of a victorious abrogation of this Pakistani invasion in 1965, **DSA** attempts an introspective of invaluable lessons learnt, game changers of the war, vulnerabilities then and our preparedness to frustrate any future Pakistani misadventure while Islamabad persists in its self-destructive militarism.

Stagnant minds create immobile systems which become roadblocks to growth. India demands creative thinking in governance that enables fast-track development and ensures social harmony and secure environs for its citizens. The nation has to be placed above partisan impulses.

Team **DSA** extends warm greetings to fellow Indians and salutes our soldiers in uniform along with extraordinary men and women who have sacrificed their todays for our tomorrows, as India unfurls the 'Tricolour' in honour of its 69th Independence Day.

**Stop Press:** Team **DSA** joins me in paying homage to former Indian President Dr APJ Abdul Kalam who passed away on 27th July 2015.

*Jai Hind!*

**Pawan Agrawal**

**Bharat Ratna  
Dr APJ Abdul Kalam**



**1931-2015**

**Like Rishis of yore the epitome of  
simple living and high thinking and  
a modern day achiever par excellence!  
Rest in peace Dr Kalam!**

**Team *DSA***

# August 2015

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# BATTLE OF ASAL UTTAR

**Despite heavy enemy fire for long spells, Lt Col Caleb exercised his command with calmness and fortitude and inspired his officers and men to fight against the enemy fearlessly. In this action 15 enemy Patton tanks were destroyed and nine others which were in good working condition were captured. His cool courage, leadership and foresight contributed greatly to this outstanding success.**

**E**arly in 1965, the already strained relations between India and Pakistan worsened and war seemed imminent. In April 1965, fighting broke out in the Rann of Kutch. Indian Police outposts were constantly shelled, followed by an attack by the Pakistan Army. Thus, a full-scale but undeclared war erupted along the Rajasthan and Gujarat borders. American built Pakistani Patton tanks entered India and demonstrated their effectiveness under Indian desert conditions.

### **From Babina To The Battlefield**

The fighting in the Rann of Kutch Sector had come to an end by April 29, 1965. A boundary

agreement was signed on 30 June, 1965. Later it transpired that the attack in the Rann of Kutch was a diversionary attack to the one contemplated in Kashmir to draw Indian Forces to the south and, away from Kashmir. However, Pakistan failed in its aim.

The unprovoked attack in Kashmir was not long in coming. On 05 August, 1965, raiders from Pakistan-occupied Kashmir began infiltration (Pakistan's 'Operation Gibraltar'). These intruders were pushed back across the ceasefire line. Pakistan however, persisted with its broadcasts of a revolution in Kashmir taking place to overthrow the Indian Government.





In April, 1965, 3 Cavalry, part of 1 Armoured Brigade had moved from Babina, Central India. To reduce the time taken by rail to move to the concentration area, 3 Cavalry was located in Punjab itself. Nabha was the place selected. It was from here that it was moved on 01 September, 1965, to battle.

By the end of August, 65 Indo-Pak relations had reached a very dangerous stage. On 01 September, 1965, All India Radio in its morning news broadcast announced, that Pakistan's forces had crossed the International Boundary in Kashmir. Pakistan had attacked Indian troops in the Chamb Sector with two Regiments of *Patton* tanks.

Thus, started the Indo-Pak Conflict of 1965. On 06 September, 1965, India in riposte attacked along the Indo-Pak borders in the Amritsar and Khemkaran Sectors (Punjab).

### Change Of Operational Area

Prior to its move to Punjab in September, 1965, 3 Cavalry was an integral part of 1 Armoured Brigade of 1 Armoured Division. 1 Armoured Division was earmarked for operations in the Shakargarh salient. As such, all pre-operational tactical planning, reconnaissance and tactical exercises without troops (TEWT) had been focused on that area. However, someone changed 3 Cavalry's operational role to the Amritsar Sector at the last minute (After the war, on a query by the Commandant, General JN Chaudhuri, Army Chief, replied that he himself had changed the regiment's destination).

This sudden change in the area of operations caused some consternation in the minds of 3 Cavalry officers. But, there was little time to worry about the reasons for the change, 3 Cavalry had to move to an area in the Amritsar Sector. Thus the Regiment, as part of 1 Armoured Division, came to be in Punjab, under a new formation, with a fresh task, under directions of a different formation commander. The 3 Cavalry moved to Punjab on 01 September, 1965, with the following officers on its establishment.

### Indian Tank Deployment

XI Corps was responsible for the defence of Punjab. The 3 Cavalry's operational area lay between Amritsar and Khemkaran. It was plain agricultural

land interspersed by streams/canals of various dimensions. The subsoil water level was high. Slight rain or watering of ground would make it boggy. The 3 Cavalry was equipped with *Centurion* tanks while the enemy held *Patton* and *Chaffee* tanks in its establishment. The disposition of own troops in this XI Corps area was as follows:

- 15 Infantry Division with 14 Horse (Scinde Horse) with *Sherman* tanks, in the Amritsar Sector in the north.
- 7 Infantry Division with CIH (Central India Horse) Khalra Sector in the centre.
- 4 Mountain Division, with 9H (Deccan Horse) *Sherman MK IV* tanks in the Khemkaran Sector in the south.

2 Independent Armoured Brigade was earmarked as XI Corps reserve and positioned in the area. The 3 Cavalry on arrival in Punjab was finally placed under the Command of 2 Independent Armoured Brigade. Its task was to 'Counter any tank threat in the XI Corps area'.

### Mobilisation And Concentration

As 3 Cavalry tank column was now moving during daylight, there was understandable fear of an enemy air attack. Soon enough, aircraft appeared over 3 Cavalry tank column. Anti-aircraft precautions were taken but, fortunately the aircraft turned out to be of the Indian Air Force. Perhaps out on a reconnaissance sortie. With own aircraft in the area no enemy aircraft could approach the tank column unchallenged. Thus 3 Cavalry's move to Chabal Kalan remained unknown to the enemy. Some Regimental tanks got bogged down near Chabal Kalan but, were soon recovered with the help of the local farmers and, their tractors. Civilian help would remain a commendable feature throughout the ensuing operations.

On reaching Chabal Kalan, the Commandant's request to move further south towards Bhikhiwind was accepted by 2 Independent Armoured Brigade. The Bhikhiwind area being preferred as it was in the centre and in depth of 2 Independent Armoured Brigade's operational area. At this stage 2 Independent Armoured Brigade was located at Bundala (Punjab) and 3 Cavalry was in Bhikhiwind area.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. RHQ           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Commandant</li> <li>ii. Second-in-command</li> <li>iii. Adjutant</li> <li>iv. Intelligence Officer</li> </ul> </li> <li>b. 'A' Squadron</li> <li>c. 'B' Squadron</li> <li>d. 'C' Squadron</li> <li>e. 'HQ' Squadron</li> <br/> <li>f. Quartermaster</li> <li>g. Regimental Medical Officer</li> <li>h. Light Aid Detachment (EME)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lt Col Salim Caleb</li> <li>- Major Bachan Singh Grewal</li> <li>- Captain Dilip Kumar Kundu</li> <li>- 2/Lt Rameshwar Singh Pathania</li> <li>- Major Suresh Chander Vadera</li> <li>- Major Prabhakar Shripad Belvalkar</li> <li>- Major Narindar Singh Sandhu</li> <li>- Officiating Risaldar Jagat Singh also performed duties of 2IC vice Major Bachan Singh Grewal SOS - 08 September, 1965</li> <li>- Captain Satpal Singh</li> <li>- Captain Jitendra Nath Bhargava</li> <li>- Captain TP Chandran</li> </ul> |
|--|--|



Meanwhile, enemy activity continued all along the border. Heavy fighting was reported in the Khemkaran area. 3 Cavalry's hour of destiny had arrived. The volume of civilian movement north along the Khemkaran-Bhikhiwind road indicated a considerable and sudden increase in activity.

### Four Fateful Days (8-11 September)

The Regiment completed its move to Bhikhiwind on 08 September, 1965. Its fighting elements, deployed as follows:

- 'A' Squadron in general area Patti.
- 'B' Squadron in general area Bhikhiwind.
- Regimental Headquarters and 'C' Squadron less two troops, in area Kacha Pakka.

### Moulding The Battleground

The frontage available to the enemy was restricted between the Sutlej River on the east and Pakistan border on the west. Within this area, the Commandant had two options. Option one was to hold fast to the Bhikhiwind area (the area of its present location). This would gain 3 Cavalry more time for preparation of its defences, but would allow the enemy the additional advantage of a broader frontage for manoeuvre – a frontage beyond 3 Cavalry's strength of three Squadrons.

Moreover, 3 Cavalry would have to withdraw all its echelons which by now, had concentrated to its immediate north. This would lead to chaos and confusion, resulting in irreparable damage to its morale.

Option two was to move south and attack the advancing enemy. This would restrict the enemy, from enlarging its frontage to boundaries within 3 Cavalry's capability. It would necessitate offence and prove excellent for the morale of a Regiment on its very first wartime action. And most importantly, 3 Cavalry by attacking would not be surrendering large areas of good agricultural land and, a number of populated towns/villages to the enemy without a fight. Commandant 3 Cavalry adopted option two. He chose to move southwards to Khemkaran – and bring the enemy to battle.

### 08 September, 1965

By 11:00 hours the Regiment had commenced its move southwards on the Bhikhiwind-Khemkaran road. 'B' Squadron was leading with Regimental Headquarters and, 'C' Squadron, less two troops following. 'A' Squadron was to move along road Patti-Valtoha-Khemkaran. Thus the main routes of enemy's advance were blocked.

Major PS Belvalkar thereafter sped forward to contact Lieut Colonel AS Vaidya (later Chief of Army Staff) of Deccan Horse and, returned to confirm that Deccan Horse was actually in contact with enemy's *Chaffee* and *Patton* tanks and any assistance from 3 Cavalry would be most welcome. The two 'C' Squadron troops guarding Kulluwal Bridge were recalled to join the Regiment.

On his way towards Khemkaran, the Commandant met Major JM Vohra in his *Sherman* tank heading northwards. During the short briefing that ensued, Major JM Vohra confirmed that *Patton* tanks were heading towards Bhikhiwind.

### First Patton Tank Destroyed

With the leading elements of 'B' Squadron having reached south of Chima Village the Regiment scored its first hit on the *Patton*. ALD Charan Singh sighted, what he described as a strange form suddenly take shape of a *Patton* in his gunner's sight. However, with sure but sweating hands and a short prayer he pressed the trigger. The enemy tank burst into flames. The first blow had been struck. A good omen indeed! The time 14:37 hours, the date, 8 September, 1965. 3 Cavalry was at war. Within minutes a second *Patton* tank was hit. The *Patton* tank's invincibility was now crumbling. 'A' Squadron meanwhile was trying to outflank the enemy on the eastern flank.

Number of *Patton* tank casualties added further to their misunderstanding and disbelief. That night (8/9 September, 1965) the majority of enemy positions were withdrawn. The enemy pulled out his *Patton* tanks from the eastern flank and diverted his attention to the western flank. The dispositions were as follows at this stage:

- 'B' Squadron on the Centre Line (Bhikhiwind-Khemkaran road).
- Regimental Headquarters on the centre line.
- 'C' Squadron on the western flank.
- 'A' Squadron in reserve in place of 'C' Squadron on the centre line (in rear).

A fierce tank battle now developed. As the first day closed (8 September, 1965), no casualties had been reported on the Indian side. The Regiment's tank crew had taken to battle with mastered ease and without much fear or tension. Meanwhile, 2/Lt PA Joseph's *Centurion* was hit by a *Patton* from 800 yards, it shook as the shot hit the *Centurion* mantlet (metal shield protecting the base where the gun enters the turret). 2/Lt PA Joseph got the impression that his tank gunner had fired without permission. On being corrected and, after a little inspection, it became clear that a *Patton* shell had fired but had not pierced the *Centurion*'s turret mantlet. This information was quickly relayed



to the rest of Squadrons who were instructed to face their tank towards the enemy when engaging.

### 09 September, 1965

On 9 September, 1965, the Squadron dispositions were as follows:

- 'A' Squadron readjusted its tank position to milestone 29 on road Bhikhiwind-Khemkaran.
- 'B' Squadron stayed on the centre line and was shelled by enemy medium guns.
- The balance of 'C' Squadron tanks were redeployed on the Mohamed Pura Chitt Kui track. The day came to a close with the enemy constantly probing *Centurion* defensive positions but, withdrawing without a fight. Obviously reconnoitring in preparation for an assault.

At 23:00 hours 8 September 1965, Captain Nagindar Singh along with the two composite troops was ordered to return to Raja Tal to protect the Kulluwal Bridge area. Troops were in position by 07:00 hours on 9 September 1965. These two troops were commanded by Captain Nagindar Singh and Naib Risaldar Chander Bhan.

To meet this western flank tank threat, 3 Cavalry now deployed in two roughly formed semicircles. With tank troops at Madar-Algun-Khurd along the main road Dibbi Pura-Mohamed Pura-Lakhna. The mouth of this horse shoe was left open between Lakhna and Madar. The second semicircle was formed partly with the same tanks, that is, tanks at Lakhna-Mohamed Pura, the Khemkaran Minor, where 'C' Squadron had placed six tanks further south on the road upto Chima and beyond. Regimental Headquarters tanks were ordered to place themselves north of the Rohi Nala Bridge, on the main road under Command of the Adjutant, with instruction to allow the enemy to come through 'only over his dead body'.

### Spotters On Treetops

'A' Squadron had in the meantime readjusted their tank positions to meet the *Patton* tank's assault, which were persistently trying to establish a road block on Bhikhiwind-Khemkaran road. 'A' Squadron headquarters accompanied by a troop of tanks moved into area Dibbi Pura-Mohamed Pura. By 13:00 hours 'A' Squadron was heavily shelled. Because of restricted visibility at ground level due to high sugarcane crops in the area, observation posts (OPs) were established at selected treetop heights at Regimental Headquarters.

On 10 September, 1965, as the day progressed it appeared that the enemy was likely to launch a tank assault in the Mohamed Pura area. After advising 'A' Squadron Commander the Commandant's message to Major SC Vadera ended with a bit of hard advice – "Anyone who remains cooler under this stress longer will win – Identify, take a good aim and then shoot well, God be with you." Identifying of tanks became a difficult task, as both *Centurions* and *Pattons* kept continuously on the move inside the thick growth of sugarcane fields.



'A' Squadron thus watched and waited with bated breath. Around 17:30 hours, 'A' Squadron reported *Pattons* sighted. The Squadron Commander's gunner Sowar Dhirpal Singh destroyed three *Pattons* roughly in as many minutes. Two *Pattons* were destroyed by Naib Risaldar Jagdeo Singh's *Centurion*. The enemy tank assault thus calmed down in fury and finally came to a halt. Five enemy tanks lay damaged in the fields.

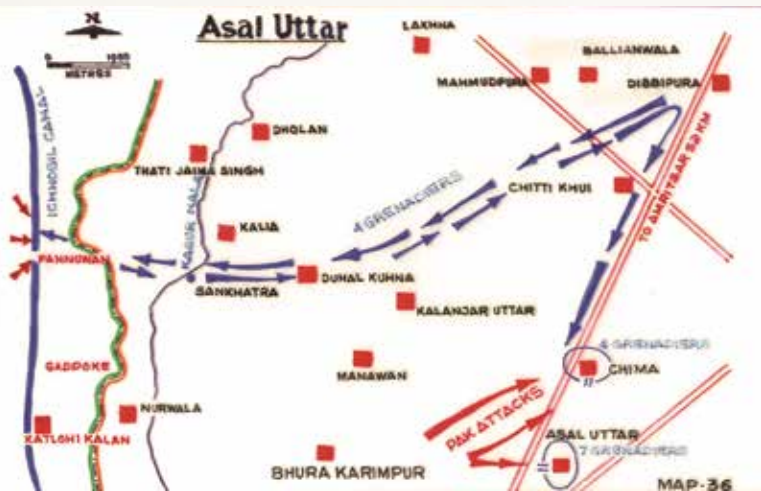
### Show Of Strength

Thereafter the Commandant ordered all *Centurions* to 'Open Up' with both main gun and machine gun fire to show that 3 Cavalry's defended position was held in strength. The enemy would have to do better than his last attempt. As darkness set in, an Infantry assault was expected soon. The Artillery Op with the Regiment was directed to lay down maximum fire on likely enemy tanks and Infantry assembly area and start lines. However, no Infantry attack was launched. By now, *Centurions* generally needed immediate replenishment of ammunition. 'A' Squadron Commander reported a balance of one AP (armour piercing) and two HE (high explosive) rounds. Tank commanders now requested permission to withdraw for replenishment. But, the Commandant directed that "No one will change position or withdraw, everyone will stay in their respective positions." Later, jeeps from the Intercommunication troop were used to replenish tanks requiring ammunition. This proved a little difficult to execute at first but, after some time all tanks were reasonably replenished.

### First Patton Tank Captured

Major SC Vadera mounted *Patton* tank BA No 77651 and, was able to start it with the help of instructions clearly recorded and prominently displayed by the manufacturers. The news of the capture was radioed to Regimental Headquarters and relayed to Brigade Tactical Headquarters and to 4 Mountain Division. It caused much jubilation all around.

GOC 4 Mountain Division, Major General Gurbaksh Singh, after having cross-checked with the Brigade Commander and the Commandant the



accuracy of the information regarding Pakistani tanks crews having left their tanks, visited the Regiment. He just wanted to be sure that what he had heard was true.

Thereafter plans were immediately undertaken to drive the serviceable *Patton* tanks into own territory. The decisions arrived at were that:

- Major SC Vadera would report when he started his move forward;
- The main gun of the captured tank would point towards the enemy;
- His tank would fly a white flag. A white flag not being readily available, a white vest had to suffice;
- Although it was daylight, tank BA No 77651 would be driven with its headlights switched 'ON'.

Asked about the time required to complete his journey to Regimental Headquarters – “about fifteen minutes” replied the Squadron Commander. Fifteen minutes later, *Patton* tank BA No 77651 turned into Regimental Headquarters and was parked there. Captain Kundu, the Adjutant and Naib Risaldar Nasib Singh were ordered to study the mechanism of the gun and, to get it into action. An inspection later revealed all captured *Pattons* were overloaded with ammunition. Petrol tanks were low in case of those left running. A detailed search later disclosed many more *Patton* tanks lying abandoned over a large area. Risaldar Jagat Singh, the Officiating Risaldar Major and 2/Lt PJS Mehta were ordered to immobilise them.

Since some Pakistani tanks crews were still seeking shelter in the sugarcane fields, it was feared, that some attempt may be made by them to recover their abandoned tanks. To foil any such attempt, certain precautions were taken. The banks of a nearby minor canal were broken and, the area flooded. Brigade Headquarters then ordered the EME to remove some vital electrical parts from these tanks. Major SC Vadera was later awarded a *Vir Chakra*, for his commendable work.

All India Radio broadcast the news of capture of these *Pattons* in their afternoon news bulletin.

It now became evident that the enemy had launched his attack with squadrons one after the other in a ‘staggered’ manner. A large percentage

of 4 Cavalry’s tanks had perished. In fact, so many tanks casualties littered the area that the Commandant requested the Brigade Commander to arrange for numbering the enemy tanks with paint in order to make counting easier. All captured enemy tanks turrets therefore showed a number in white paint, in addition to their original *Urdu* serial numbers, Photographs of these were taken later.

Apart from the *Pattons* captured on 11 September, 1965, a serviceable Armoured Personnel Carrier (APC), BA No 078915 belonging to 10 FF (Pakistan) was also captured. This APC had logged only sixty hours at the time of its capture. For the next few days this APC was to become an object of delight and curiosity for subalterns who mastered its mechanism and drove it around.

### Pak Operational Plans Captured

Later in the evening enemy’s 4 Armoured Brigade’s Operational Order Number G-3548 (Copy No 3) dated 08 September, 1965 was recovered by the Regiment. It disclosed the mission of 4 Armoured Brigade Group. This briefly stated that 4 Armoured Brigade Group was to advance on axis Kasur-Khemkaran-Valtoha-Nabipur astride Sabroan Branch on orders and secure Beas Bridge on main Grand Trunk Road.

It was signed by its Brigade Major Sarup Khan. The original Copy No 3 of this order now hangs in the Regimental Officers’ Mess. (This operational order was later published by DR Mankekar in his book – *Twenty-Two Fateful Days*). This operational order revealed the details and scope of a “colossal enemy dream come untrue” as Lieut Colonel Caleb later remarked.

On 17 September, 1965, All India Radio announced the award of a *Maha Vir Chakra* to Lieut Colonel Salim Caleb. The citation read:

“On 10 Sep, 1965, Lt Col Salim Caleb was in Command of a Cavalry Regiment which was engaged in a tank battle with Pakistan tanks near Khemkaran. Despite heavy enemy fire for long spells, he exercised

his command with calmness and fortitude and inspired his officers and men to fight against the enemy fearlessly. In this action 15 enemy *Patton* tanks were destroyed and nine others which were in good working condition were captured. His cool courage, leadership and foresight contributed greatly to this outstanding success.” **D-S-A**



**Comdt Lt Col Salim Caleb**



*The Committee of Experts headed by Dhirendra Singh presenting the Report to RM Manohar Parrikar*

## AMENDED DPP REPORT SUBMITTED TO RM

**M**anohar Parrikar led Defence Ministry constituted a committee of Experts for Amendments to DPP 2013 including a Policy Framework for aligning it with the 'Make in India' initiative of the Modi government.

The committee submitted its report to the hon'ble RM on 24 July 2015. Highlights of the report are as follows:

The report is intended to suggest measures for enabling implementation of 'Make in India'

vision of the government and also make the Defence Procurement procedures more friendly in implementation. Many suggestions ranging from making the procurement executive more enabled to easing of offset norms for effective engagement to take place are in the report. The report has addressed aspects beyond DPP by suggesting incorporation of certain institutional mechanisms for facilitating industry including MSMEs, skill development as part of offsets and enabling exports. **DSA**

# THE INDO-PAK



In the opinion of some, the 1965 Indo-Pak War was a pointless stalemate. Others feel that India achieved its strategic aims by breaking the taboo on crossing international borders and established a historical precedent for strategic decision-making which paid rich dividends in 1971. The master sequence can be said to have been initiated almost from 1963 onwards, on a staggered dateline commencing with the *Moe-e-Muqaddas* riots in Srinagar in 1963 with the ultimate finale at the Tashkent Declaration on 10 January 1966.

It would not be incorrect to state that the roots of the Indo-Pakistan War of 1965 lie in the partition itself that vivisected India in 1947, a bloody and traumatic affair that permanently scarred the India-Pakistan psyche and drove Pakistan into a quest for military balance with India at all costs. In the search for a military sheet anchor against its 'natural enemy', Pakistan was an early and willing candidate for membership in the overlapping 'collective security' zones created by the USA after the Second World War to keep the territorial ambitions of Soviet Russia in check as also to prevent the ideological expansion of Communism in the post-Second World War world. Pakistan accordingly became a member of the South East Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO) in 1954 and the Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO – also known as MEDO or Middle East Defence Organisation) in 1959 to pursue its own strategic agenda which totally diverged from that of the United States.

## Pakistani Agenda

Pakistan's own aims were focused on the takeover of the entire state of Jammu and Kashmir, which Pakistan visualised as the unfinished agenda of the Partition. Membership of SEATO and CENTO was merely a means towards this end. The results were gratifying and military aid poured in including *M47* and *M48 Patton* tanks, *M113* Armoured Personnel Carriers and heavy artillery for the Pakistan Army, *F-86 Sabre* and *F-104 Starfighter* combat aircraft for the Pakistan Air Force and *Gearing* Class destroyers for the Pakistan Navy. This large-scale blood transfusion of military equipment greatly enhanced the offensive edge of the Pakistani Armed Forces *vis-à-vis* India, where their putative adversaries the Indian Armed Forces had been accorded a very low-priority in the national priorities post-Independence. Even as the Pakistani armed forces surged ahead in

# WAR OF 1965

their capabilities, the Indian Armed Forces were struggling under a backbreaking burden of obsolete outdated equipment of World War II vintage, with no replacements or refurbishments in sight.

## Shadow Of '62

The lead-in to the India-Pakistan War of 1965 actually commenced with the Sino-Indian border war of 1962 which came to be internationally symbolised by the Indian military shambles at the Sela Pass in what is now the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh. The prestige of the Indian Army and that of the nation plummeted and touched rock bottom. But, as always, even the darkest cloud has a sliver of silver in its lining. The blow which had humiliated India had also jolted it hard. The debacle at Sela had shaken up the entire country politically and a wrathful Parliament forced the exit from office and public life of VK Krishna Menon, the close confidante of Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and his *de facto* 'National Security Adviser', though the term had not yet come into vogue. Repairing the torn fabric and broken scaffolding of the Indian Armed Forces was taken urgently in hand by new and energetic commanders and the task of reconstruction proceeded apace. But, heavily influenced by the 1962 experience, the new army was naturally oriented towards the terrain along the Himalayan borders, where infantry would be predominant. The plains and desert terrain towards Pakistan was given little attention.

## American Intrusive Inspections

During this period, some limited intakes of light equipment came from the United States, but it was a trickle, besides being subject to periodic snap inspections by the American authorities to ensure that they were deployed only on the Himalayan front facing the Chinese threat and not facing west against Pakistan. It was a humiliating time for the Indian Army and its commanders and all for some scraps of semi-obsolete ironmongery.

Pakistan meanwhile looked speculatively at the dismal performance of the Indian Armed Forces and probed for further opportunities. As part of its game plan, it took a hand in the internal politics of Jammu and Kashmir state and managed to create an opening in 1963 when Pakistani covert agencies, possibly ISI, managed to surreptitiously make away with the *Moe-e-Muqaddas*, a revered sacred relic attributed to the Prophet Mohammed, from its traditional shrine within the complex of the Hazratbal Masjid at Srinagar on 26 December 1963. The loss was immediately broadcast to the public in Srinagar and though the relic reappeared a week

later just as mysteriously as it had disappeared, the incident instigated a violent religious frenzy that exploited and took advantage of the strong anti-India feeling in Srinagar. Major separatist demonstrations broke out in the Kashmir Valley, while in the Jammu region south of the Banihal Pass; counter-demonstrations were launched against pro-Pakistani separatism in Srinagar.

## Pak Opportunism

The actual authors of the mischief remain untraced even to the present day. Anti-India, pro-Pakistan sentiments have always been strongly entrenched in the Valley region of Kashmir and the widespread public disorder during the *Moe-e-Muqaddas* riots of 1963-64 provided Pakistan with the opportunity it was looking for.

With 1965 just around the corner and, the Indo-Pakistan War, when it came that year, would be a largely plains and desert oriented conflict this time around, where tanks, artillery and air power would be the determining factors, in all of which India

was still grossly deficient. Pakistan had succeeded in 'shaping the battlefield' to its own advantage and any war in 1965 was unlikely to be of India's time and place of choice. The situation looked strategically unpropitious for India.

Meanwhile, Pakistan was already well into refurbishment of its operational capabilities for mechanised warfare and, felt that having been softened up by China in 1962, the Indian elephant could now be pushed and prodded in other areas as well, amongst them the Indo-Pak border in the Gujarat region, specifically along the parallel of latitude 24 degree North in the Rann of Kutch. In this run-up Pakistan's military planners had first methodically strengthened the defence of its Punjabi heartland by constructing the Ichhogil Canal as a barrier against any direct Indian threat towards Lahore along the Grand Trunk Road. A similar network of 'ditch-cum-bund' canal systems to protect Sialkot and other urban centres located close to the Indo-Pakistan border was also constructed.



**Gen  
S Roychowdhury  
PVSM, AVSM (Retd)**

The writer is a former Chief of Army Staff of the Indian Army and a former member of the Indian Parliament. He was commissioned into the 20 Lancers of the Indian Army Armoured Corps on 9 June 1957, after graduating from the Indian Military Academy. He took part in the Indo-Pakistani War of 1965 in the Chamb-Jaurian sector and in Jessore and Khulna during the Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971. He commanded the 16 Corps in Jammu and Kashmir from 1991 to 1992. He is a graduate of the National Defence Academy, Indian Military Academy, Defence Services Staff College, Army War College; National Defence College and also DLitt (Honoris Causa).

**Prime Minister Shastri ordered the Indian Army to take the war into Pakistan across the international border**

Having secured the homeland (in some senses the 'Al Qaeda' – ie the Base), Pakistan's military planners for offense had come up with a broad three part plan, to be made operative at times and places of their choosing. These were: *Operation Desert Hawk* in the Rann of Kutch to draw Indian reserve forces away from Kashmir and southward towards the Gujarat border. This was launched on 10 April 1965 against the Indian border outpost of Sardar Post held by the CRPF spearheaded by *M47 Patton* tanks of Pakistan's 24 Cavalry, grouped with 51 Infantry Brigade Group under 8 Infantry Division of the Pakistan Army. India reinforced the sector with minimum forces only – the ready-to-go 50 Independent Parachute Brigade in a ground holding role, to be replaced by a newly raised 31 Independent Infantry Group, hurriedly created out of the erstwhile local Sub-area Headquarters and very weak in all types of supporting arms and services, particularly armour. *Jugaad* is admirable, but there are limits beyond which it cannot (and should not) be exploited.

### **Pak Army Infiltration**

An offensive by infiltration into the Kashmir Valley by six columns of predominantly Punjabi speaking mujahideen forces raised, equipped and trained for covert warfare by the US trained Special Services Group (SSG) of the Pakistan Army, to enter Srinagar coinciding with the festival of Id and create riots and civil disorder to build-up a popular resistance movement against the Indian presence in the Valley. This had been designated 'Operation Gibraltar' and there is certainly room for speculation whether the *Moe-e-Muqaddas* riots in Srinagar which fitted almost too neatly into this scheme of things, were in fact a preliminary to the main operation itself. 'Operation Gibraltar' did not succeed. The Kashmiri speaking *awam* of the Valley did not respond in adequate measure to their Punjabi speaking co-religionists with whom they had little cultural or social linkages, an aspect totally overlooked by the Punjabi-centric Pakistan Army. The Indian Army soon got its act together and created 'V' Sector, an ad hoc headquarters for a composite force for urban counter-insurgency composed of military and police forces. The Indian Army had stumbled almost by default on to an almost ideal solution to resolve the situation. Mistakes were committed on the Indian side, but ultimately the Gibraltar columns were decimated and defeated and the remnants fled into the countryside where they were hunted down. 'Gibraltar' was defeated, but not permanently, as the future revival in the Kashmir Valley of the Hurriyat, Lashkar-e-Taiba and above all Al Qaeda and the Islamic State were to show. But all these were still in a future as yet distant.

'Operation Grand Slam', an armour predominant offensive to be launched in conjunction with 'Operation Gibraltar', to capture the Akhnoor Bridge on the River Chenab and interdict the

Jammu-Rajouri-Poonch road and cut-off the entire Poonch-Rajouri-Naushera region from the remainder of Jammu and Kashmir and then acquire it at leisure.

### **The Shastri Manoeuvre**

'Operation Grand Slam' opened with an intense artillery barrage in the Chamb Sector on 15 August 1965, coinciding with the entry of the Gibraltar columns into Srinagar. This was followed on 1 September 1965 with an overwhelming onslaught of two Pakistani armoured regiments and follow-up infantry, which were initially opposed by the Indian 191 (Independent) Infantry Brigade Group of three infantry battalions, but only one under strength squadron light French *AMX 13* tanks. Reinforcements in the shape of a newly organised 10 Infantry Division were parcelled in piecemeal from far away Bangalore and the Indian Army held on here, but only just. It was then that the newly elected Indian Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri made a grand strategic decision which must surely rank amongst the greatest and most decisive by any Indian Prime Minister before or since – he ordered the Indian Army to take the war into Pakistan across the international border. The war that followed was fought along the western borders only, from Jammu and Kashmir in the north to Rajasthan in the south possibly because in another instance of well judged geopolitical sagacity, India chose not to escalate the war into what was then East Pakistan. This non-involvement was to pay overwhelming strategic dividends subsequently, in 1971, when India under a different Prime Minister, won a true strategic victory over Pakistan and created the new Republic of Bangladesh. But that is a separate story, a *Mahabharata* by itself. Indo-Pak hostilities in the 1965 War concluded on 23 September 1965, followed by Indo-Pak talks at Tashkent chaperoned by Soviet Russia culminating in the Tashkent Declaration of 10 January 1966.

**The 1965 Indo-Pak War also brought before the Indian people the undimmed valour of their Armed Forces**

### **Post-war Assessment**

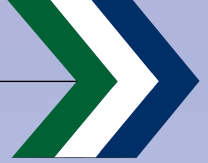
In the opinion of some, the 1965 Indo-Pak War was a pointless stalemate. Others feel that India achieved its strategic aims by breaking the taboo on crossing international borders and established a historical precedent for strategic decision-making which paid rich dividends in 1971.

The 1965 Indo-Pak War was in fact a composite of all these segments. The master sequence can be said to have been initiated almost from 1963 onwards, on a staggered dateline commencing with the *Moe-e-Muqaddas* riots in Srinagar in 1963 with the ultimate finale at the Tashkent Declaration on 10 January 1966 and the tragic and some say mysterious demise of Indian Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri the very next day. But what it also brought before the Indian people was the undimmed valour of their Armed Forces, always a beacon of hope and inspiration to the people of India, especially in the troubled times of Al Qaeda and the Islamic State. **D&A**



sneak peek

**DSA**<sup>TM</sup>



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# ANNOUNCES

## SEPTEMBER 2015 ISSUE ON



**NATIONAL SECURITY**



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# THE ELUSIVE CDS

More than a decade after Kargil Group of Ministers' recommendations, many of the decisions with the exception of the most crucial one – that of the appointment of a CDS – have been implemented. The CDS envisaged as a single-point military adviser continues to remain elusive mainly because there is no political or military consensus and the bureaucracy is happy to play along.

There seems to be a renewed vigour in the discussion circles not only in and around Delhi but the cognoscenti all over the country. For the uninitiated and the unwashed the uproar is about OROP, a very touchy subject for many. I would like to submit that there are a few who are thinking beyond OROP and suchlike on 'Enterprises of great pith and moment'. One such issue being addressed is important yet not in the public eye: The issue of the 'Elusive' CDS (Chief of Defence Staff).

During my tenure as Chief of Air Staff I had a lot of occasions to address the topic of CDS because there seemed to be a misconception doing the rounds of power corridors that the IAF was the only Service opposed to the idea of a CDS. This was wrong and I used every opportunity to put forward the IAF point of view. I thought I had, by and large, succeeded. Recently I came across a 2013 article by a senior officer which showed a total lack of understanding

of what I had said. I thought it was more than likely that there were more minds which needed a better explanation and this situation needed to be rectified.

The fundamental questions arising out of the issue of CDS, in my opinion, are three:

- Do we need a CDS?
- What model of CDS do we need?
- Is the present compromise formula acceptable?

## Bureaucratic Sleight Of Hand

I am sure everyone knows the history behind the idea of CDS. However, it would be worthwhile recalling relevant facts. According to Gen Sinha (the erudite Vice Chief, Governor and more), at Gallipoli during WW I, Gen Sir Ian Hamilton, commanding the Royal Army was desperate for Naval gunfire support. He did not get it because the Admiral of the Fleet had ordered his warships to clean the boilers. After the First World War, the British introduced



a Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC), comprising the three Service Chiefs in their Defence High Command. This arrangement was also adopted by other countries. During the Second World War, the concept of a Supreme Commander in all theatres of war was evolved. Within a few years after that war, the appointment of Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) was made at the national level in all countries, except India. Preying on Nehru's suspicions of Indian Armed Forces, the civilian bureaucracy by an innocuous government note on May 27, 1952 declared the Armed Forces Headquarters as 'attached offices' of the Defence Ministry. In one stroke the bureaucracy divested the Armed Forces Headquarters of policy making roles as the government manual of office procedures decreed that while Ministry of Defence could make policy, their 'attached offices' merely implemented it. In essence the decision-making process was to have the benefit of independent inputs from the Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC), the Defence Minister's Committee (Service Chiefs were members of this Committee) and the Defence Committee of the Cabinet. These in turn signified representation of the Services, mechanism for the bureaucratic processing and of course political control. The Service Chiefs interacted directly with the Cabinet through the Defence Cabinet Committee.

Through the seventies, eighties and the nineties, the bureaucracy continued to acquire disproportionate powers *vis-à-vis* the Service Chiefs. The bureaucracy conveniently points to the 'Government of India Transaction of Business Rules'. Framed in 1961 under the constitutional powers of the President of India these documents continue to guide the conduct of business by the Government of India. It is instructive to read the document. Under these rules, the three Service headquarters were designated as 'Attached Offices of the Department of Defence' and are therefore placed in a position subordinate to the DoD. The Service Chiefs, as professional heads of the three Armed Forces and with an experience garnered over a period of at least four decades, found no mention in these rules. The Secretary Department of Defence on the other hand, according to these rules, is responsible for Defence of India and every part thereof including preparation for defence and all such acts as may be conducive in times of war to its prosecution and after its termination to effective demobilisation. The Armed Forces of the Union, namely, Army, Navy and Air Force, Integrated Headquarters of the Ministry of Defence comprise Army Headquarters, Naval Headquarters, Air Headquarters and Defence Staff Headquarters.

### Politico-military Interface

Sixty-eight years after Independence, it is no secret that the politico-military interface is all but absent in India's institutional set-up. The Armed Forces are completely under the day-to-day as well as policy control of the MoD. The desirable politico-military interface is now reduced to weekly, sometimes fortnightly meetings chaired by the Defence Minister.

These meetings are informal, without any agendas or note taking and have no official status although in theory, the Defence Minister is deemed to have given policy directions in these meetings! Following Kargil in 1999 the work of the Kargil Review Committee (KRC) is well-known. Their recommendations followed formation of a Group of Ministers (GoMs) who came out with some futuristic recommendations. Some major ones are:

- Creation of the post of Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), whose task was to include inter-services prioritisation of defence plans and improvement in synergy among the three Services
- Creation of Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff (IDS)
- Formation of a tri-Service Andaman and Nicobar Command and a Strategic Command
- Establishment of tri-Service Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA)
- Creation of The National Technical Research Organisation (NTRO) for gathering electronic and other technical intelligence

More than a decade after these recommendations, many of the decisions with the exception of the most crucial one – that of the appointment of a CDS – have been implemented. The CDS envisaged as a single-point military adviser continues to remain elusive mainly because there is no political or military consensus and the bureaucracy is happy to play along.

### Do We Need A CDS?

Well, what are our reference points? USA, UK, France, Australia, Israel, all have a CDS, though under different names. China and Russia also enjoy a similar dispensation but their political systems are totally different from ours. Even the democracies have adopted different models of CDS. The USA with global commitments has independent theatre commands, such as the Pacific Command, Central Command etc. Each of these are equipped with land, air and sea units, bureaucrats and political departments needed for independent campaigns. The theatre commander, a four-star General or Admiral, reports directly to the



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US President, through the Secretary for Defense. In Washington, there is a centralised Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (JCSC), headed by a five-star chairman. The Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps chiefs plan, train and develop human resources, leaving the theatre commanders free to handle operations independently. The smaller British, French, Canadian and Australian Militaries place their Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine units directly under their respective four-star Service chiefs. These Service chiefs answer to a five-star Chief of Defence Staff, who could be from any Service. The CDS reports to the minister in charge of defence.

Our requirement for India must be seen through the lens of our strategic perspective, our threat evaluation, the future environment over our region and future battle scenarios which include an assessment of our capability build-up. In the foreseeable future our main concerns will continue to be China and Pakistan and the two-front scenario. We are unlikely to develop large-scale autonomous expeditionary capabilities. Our chief requirements would continue to be deterrence against aggression and safeguarding our territory. Non-state actors will continue in J&K Sector. Although chances of war are remote, future wars will be hi-tech, short, with high energy, day/night, with high transparency of battlefield and heavy rate of consumption of resources. It will involve rapidly shifting scenarios and use of Remotely Piloted Aircraft will proliferate. I do not envisage operations away from mainland. Some out-of-area contingencies, however, cannot be ruled out.

Successful handling of above scenarios requires quick decisions; a high-level of synergy between the government and military leadership; a thorough understanding of hi-tech and availability of resources to match the pace of battle. All these and many other factors lead me to the conclusion that a CDS in the future will become inevitable. Now it is not like waving a magic wand. You wave and say 'CDS' and, hey presto, there he is. We have to prepare the ground for progressing onto a viable CDS regime. So what do we need to do?

### **Integrating Three Services With MoD**

This is mandatory. If this does not happen we cannot move forward. Governments over the last six decades have ignored this issue. What this has done is that ours is the only country in the world where the security apparatus functions without military participation in decision-making. What is worse is that the benefit of years of operational experience and advice is denied to the government. The MoD has paid lip service to integration. Nothing has happened on the ground. The bureaucracy is quite happy because they have the ear of the ministers and any failures or delays can, conveniently, be attributed to the 'attached offices'. Integration cannot happen overnight. I had suggested to the then RM time and again to start small, let us say at Director level. Let some civil Directors work in Service HQs and some Colonel / equivalent Service officers work in MoD. We need to

start small and when confidence builds, up the ante. The next major setback is the total absence of any document concerning National Strategy spelling out where we are and where we want to be in 20 years from now. We not only need to define our national strategy but publish a 'White Paper' so the other countries are also aware of our thinking.

### **Military Ego**

Within the Services, we must set our egos aside and genuinely embrace jointness. We should concentrate on jointness in Intel gathering; Training; Perspective Planning and, finally Acquisitions, to exploit advantages accruing through economies of scale. We need to train for jointness. We need to create joint billets right from the rank of Major or equivalent. We need to modify our promotion policy to ensure that performance in joint billets (living space) has a major effect on promotion.

A look at most countries shows that the CDS has had to be thrust upon the militaries. For example the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 of USA which made the most sweeping changes to US Department of Defense required it to be made a law before the military accepted it. Therefore we need to have a parliamentary debate, not only to educate but to iron out differences, if any. Now in a democracy all these things take time. Therefore the post of CDS would be realistically tenable only 8-10 years from now.

### **What Model Of CDS Do We Need?**

This is the second fundamental question to be addressed. In USA the chain of command runs from the President, through the Secretary of Defense to the Theatre or Combat Cdr. The Service Chiefs support the Combat Cdr by providing facilities like Spl Ops, Transport support, Strategic forces etc. The Combat Cdr now has a force using all assets required to employ the Air/Land doctrine. The CDS or, in this case the Chairman, Jt Chiefs of Staff, is the principal military adviser to the President, the National Security Council and the Secretary of Defense. He heads the Jt Chiefs of Staff Committee of which the three Service chiefs are members along with the Marines component.

USA has global interests. For operations far from homeland the policy of having Theatre Commands works efficiently. What this also implies is that each Theatre has to be by and large self-sufficient. This is costly and only a couple of countries could afford it. Similarly other models of CDS exist. We have to choose a model based on our strategic environment and not blindly adopt foreign models. We must see what improvements our model can provide over the present system. The guiding principle is that policy, resource allocation and setting of priorities must be the exclusive domain of the Central Staff.

Individual Services will manage their own Service within the framework centrally set. Something akin to centralised planning and decentralised execution with a policy oriented CDS or central staff and management oriented Service staffs. This



involves striking a delicate balance between the central planning staff and the management tasked Service staffs. Ultimately, however, decisions on the central issues of policy and resources must be taken by the Central Staff. Where the advice of individual Services is rejected, it must be for reasons that are openly stated. There is, therefore, a need to put these proposals to wider debates and discussions so that those who have to ultimately make them successful are indeed convinced of the benefits that are likely to accrue.

### **‘Senior Service’ Syndrome**

There is an unstated agenda in Army minds that being the senior Service they must get first shot at CDS. There is discussion on whether it should be a four or five-star rank. Whether he should be deep selected or an outgoing Chief and what should be his tenure. In my opinion, the appointment of CDS should be by rotation among the three Services. I think the selection should be on merit from the serving Chiefs after finishing a minimum two year tenure. We need to appoint not only the CDS but his Deputy also who could be a four-star officer. This will reduce seniority problems and provide a cushion or overlap during changeover. I think their tenure must be three to five years to be effective. As far as rank is concerned, it must be a five-star appointment. We keep quibbling about four or four plus stars for what reason, I do not know. If he has to have control over the Chiefs, he must be five-star. There is a misplaced fear of a coup if so much power is vested in one person. History tells us that while there have been many coups by Army Chiefs in different countries there is no case of a CDS effecting a coup.


Now that we have got the mundane details out of the way let us come to the crux. The appointment of CDS should have the following characteristics:

- Five-star General/equivalent at par with Cabinet Secretary. Senior most single-point adviser to the PM and the government through the Raksha Mantri on matters military with the Defence Secretary handling Defence Production, DRDO, HAL, OFB and inter-ministry issues.
- CDS should be a member of the Cabinet Committee on Security and not an invitee.
- He should look after Jt Comds like the Strategic and ANC as well as future Jt Comds like Cyber and Spl Forces Comds.
- He should provide the strategic vision and be responsible for strategic, perspective and contingency plans.
- He should be in charge of tri-Service Acquisitions so that we gain by utilising economies of scale and avoid infructuous duplication.
- The CDS must be viewed as the ‘Head’ of our Armed Forces providing strategic planning and the vision, while, at the same time each Chief continues to head his Service as before.

Coming on to the last fundamental question whether the present compromise formula of having a permanent head of COSC in lieu of CDS is acceptable.

It may be a way out of the muddle but is definitely not a solution. On ground nothing has changed. There is no integration with MoD. The Chiefs are not likely to give the poor fellow the time of the day. The bureaucracy would be laughing all the way at successfully having added another appendage in the process without affecting their sphere of influence. The main function of ‘a single-point of military advice’ would not be achieved. I feel this would just be an exercise in lip service. It is better to reject it outright than muddle through for the next ten years.

The Kargil Review Committee (KRC) says, “there is both comfort and danger in clinging to any long established *status quo*”. It goes on to say, “While this is true we must be careful not to effect change for the sake of change” lest we throw the baby out with the bathwater as the cliché goes. The idea of CDS needs acceptance by not only the government but other political parties also. More than that the MoD bureaucracy must be made ready to handover a large and lucrative part of their power to the Services. Integration with MoD and the subsequent transparency and accountability has to be acceptable. The Services, within themselves have to get rid of their individual egos and think jointness. In my opinion the idea of Theatre operations which many feel is a natural fallout of the CDS system is not viable in our scenario. It will lead to unnecessary duplication of resources. A cost penalty that the country can ill afford. This proposal stems from a mistaken belief that personnel of all three Services will perform better if ‘Under Command’. However the fact remains that officers and men need to accept the importance of functioning in a joint organisation. Lastly, the importance of Service Chiefs, their freedom and initiative must be maintained with the CDS directing policy and the Chiefs managing within those policy guidelines.

The discussions above would bring home to the reader how difficult a transformation this is. The initial framing of rules must be experimental. They should be finalised only after sufficient experience is acquired. I would like to state a few home truths before I end. The whole process of CDS must start with integration of the Armed Forces with MoD. As can be seen, the time frame is about 8-10 years by which the Services need to set their house in order and the government needs to remain committed to the idea. Management of Armed Forces in future will require a CDS type of system. Our strategic imperatives will dictate the type of CDS we need. This would be refined with experience. Whichever model is chosen, I say go all out without compromises like a permanent chairman of COSC. I would like to end by quoting from an Australian ‘White Paper’ on Defence, 2000 on how the Armed Forces should be viewed. It states, “The Armed Forces are not only a Service provided by the Government. They are part of Australia’s national identity”. Our Armed Forces, too, have, over the last seven decades more than proved that they are a part of the national identity and not just a Service. 

# STATE OF THE



Though the outcome of the 1965 War cannot be considered an outright victory for the Indian Armed Forces, it went a long way in restoring the pride, confidence and self-esteem of the forces that had taken a battering in 1962. It also restored the image of the forces in the eyes of the general public. As a consequence, Indian Army units responded with added determination to the provocations along the Ceasefire Line in Jammu and Kashmir in later years, at Nathu la Pass in 1967, in securing the outstanding victory in 1971, at Sumdorong Chu in 1987 and most recently during the Kargil operations.

**T**he defeat at the hands of the Chinese in October/November 1962 reflected poorly on the capacity of the then political leadership to handle issues of governance and national security. The military setbacks having been the result of the neglect of the vital aspects of organisation, equipment and operational readiness of the Armed Forces, as also political interference in its internal affairs, there was a great trust deficit between these two vital pillars of the Indian establishment. The credibility of the country's foreign policy thrust based on non-alignment and appeasement of the Chinese was perceived as flawed and the intelligence apparatus was not only suspect, but seemed to be in some disarray.

The Pakistanis no doubt perceived the political situation in India as one where the political leadership under Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri was weak, divided and in any case pacifist. How wrong they were proved is another matter altogether; Shastri came out as a hero to us youngsters in the Indian Army.

### **The Efforts At Resuscitation**

In the aftermath of the 1962 debacle, the Government of India undertook measures to expand, re-equip, modernise and reorganise the Indian Armed Forces. While these measures were long overdue and needed to be implemented urgently,



# TWO ARMIES



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PVSM, AVSM, VrC  
(Retd)**

The writer was a young captain with just under eight years commissioned service when the conflict started and took part in the operations in the Jammu-Sialkot sector.

they put the establishment under some strain. The additional manpower requirements for the newly raised units and formations of the Indian Army were met by increased intake at all levels; at officer grade through short service commissions and shortened training periods and similar arrangements at the level of the rank and file. Needless to say, core personnel for the new raisings were found through 'milking' of existing units and formations which to that extent, stood diluted in terms of trained manpower and operational capability. Newly raised formation headquarters and units had not yet had time to develop integration as effective entities; personnel inducted from various military stations in the country and from regimental centres were just about beginning to function in a cohesive manner within units; training on old and new equipment was underway in real earnest, as were efforts to ensure operational readiness of units and formations. There were inevitable imbalances in organisational capabilities as also in training standards, both at the individual level and of formations and units.

## The Politics Of The Time

In so far as Pakistan was concerned, the practical wisdom then prevalent was that if India was to be defeated on the battlefield, it had to be dealt with before the expansion, reorganisation and re-equipping of the Indian Armed Forces was completed. Hence 'the earlier the better'.

Given the scale of the military defeat inflicted by the Chinese and the background to the debacle in political terms, as also because of the poor state of military equipment and the questionable quality of some sections of the senior military leadership, it was inevitable that there was a degree of turbulence in the senior ranks of the military. Fortunately, the repositioning of senior military commanders of proven professional competence and credibility and the inherent resilience of the Indian Army units and establishments, ensured that there was no serious debilitating impact on the morale of the Service as a whole.

A major contributing factor to this quick recovery was, in my view, the fact that the impact of the 1962 debacle on the morale at junior leadership level and the rank and file was only marginal. As someone with five years commissioned service at the time of the Chinese aggression, one can claim to speak with some credibility on the subject. Though deployed at that time, on the Ceasefire Line in the Uri Sector and not therefore having had the privilege of fighting against the Chinese, one is fully aware of the fact that while the Indian Army suffered some major reverses, on the whole, the performance of the junior leadership and the rank and file in most cases was unexceptionable. Notwithstanding the outdated weaponry, inadequacy of ammunition in many cases and poor quality clothing

and equipment, (all of which one had personal experience of), the Chinese were made to pay a heavy price for the relative success they achieved. To that extent, it may be stated without fear of serious contradiction, that while that generation of officers and men may have found it difficult to forgive the then political leadership, our intelligence agencies and sections of our senior military leadership, for not taking the appropriate strategic and operational decisions at that time and most inexcusably, not providing us with the tools to deal with the adversary, we largely retained our professional competence and composure. We knew through the experience of battle, that 'man-to-man' the Indian soldier was a match for any adversary; that the Chinese soldier was no 'superman'. Hence our generation never suffered from any irretrievable 'trauma' of the military defeat in 1962. This assertion stands proven by the events at Nathu la Pass in 1967 and at Sumdorong Chu in 1987; on both occasions, we gave the Chinese a 'run for their money'.

This reality could not have been factored in by the Pakistani political and military leadership who were possibly of the view that the morale of the Indian Army was in its boots. And that it would therefore be a 'cakewalk' before the Indian establishment could resurrect the situation. How wrong the Pakistanis were in their analysis was more than borne out by the outstanding performance of our units and formations in the 1965 operations.

## Operational Philosophy

Though the Indian political leadership of the time had displayed commendable initiative and resolve in dealing with immediate post-Independence situations like the invasion of Jammu and Kashmir by tribal irregulars supported by the Pakistani military, Junagadh and Hyderabad, as also Goa/Daman/Diu etc the overall philosophy in so far as dealing with disputes on our boundaries with neighbours like Pakistan and China was perceived at the tactical levels as defensive and reactive rather than offensive or proactive; possibly with good reason given the equipment state of the Indian Armed Forces. To that extent, the decisions taken in 1962 to occupy forward positions on our borders with Tibet in Ladakh and NEFA appeared to be out of character; with of course, the disastrous results that followed because they were so obviously misplaced.

On the other hand, in Pakistan a military dictatorship led by Field Marshal Ayub Khan was

in power and had put in place an offensive defence concept through the creation of a formidable obstacle system using the existing canal system adjacent to the border, boosted with ditch-cum-bunds in the more vital sectors, thus releasing significant force levels for offensive operations against what was presumed to be a numerically larger Indian Army.

### **Equipment Status**

The equipment held by units and formations of the Indian Army was largely of World War II vintage: personal weapons of infantry units being the .303 bolt action *Lee-Enfield* rifles and light machine guns; tank holdings based on four regiments equipped with *Centurions* and the remainder with vintage *Shermans* and *Stuarts*, together with a couple of *AMX-13* light tank regiments; artillery regiments based on vintage 25 pounder and 76 mm mountain guns; vintage 40 mm anti-aircraft guns and so on. Consequent to the 1962 conflict, some spasmodic induction of equipment did take place. Even so, at the onset of the 1965 conflict the Indian Army was still far from being modernised in terms of weapons and equipment. Units and formations were still largely organised and equipped in the traditional British Indian Army mode (It is another matter altogether that the British Army had itself shed much of its traditional philosophy in context of being part of the Cold War Western military alliances like NATO, SEATO, CENTO etc).

On the other hand, having joined up in military alliances like SEATO and CENTO, the Pakistan Army had absorbed much of the American-led Western equipping philosophy that dominated these alliances. For instance, each infantry battalion of the Pakistan Army had eight medium machine guns and eight 106 mm anti-tank weapons, as also two light machine guns in each section against one in each section in the infantry battalions of the Indian Army; giving the Pakistani units the capacity to bring to bear greater automatic firepower and anti-tank capability in the battle zone. Of even more significance in terms of giving them significant capabilities, each infantry division of the Pakistan Army had, on its order of battle, a reconnaissance and support battalion that had an imposing inventory of 48 mobile 106 mm anti-tank weapons and 48 medium machine guns that provided the flexibility of considerable additional firepower. Pakistani tank regiments were largely equipped with the more state-of-the-art *M-47* and *M-48 Patton* tanks provided by the USA together with their holdings of vintage *Sherman* and *Chaffee* tanks.

### **The Kutch Episode**

Given the perception of the Pakistani military and political leadership about the state of affairs on the Indian side both politically and militarily, it was not surprising that in March 1965 they decided to 'test the waters' as it were, by initiating military action in the Rann of Kutch in support of ostensible territorial claims in the area. A series of military actions by both sides with debatable results ensued

during April and May 1965. This was brought to a halt through a ceasefire negotiated by Prime Minister Harold Wilson of the United Kingdom on 30 June 1965. In due course, this was followed by arbitration through a three member International Tribunal.

The leadership in Pakistan was apparently buoyed by the outcome of these operations in the Rann of Kutch which they perceived as a vindication of their belief about the lack of preparedness of the Indian Armed forces, as also the fragility of the Indian political leadership. This perception obviously propelled the Pakistani leadership to initiate action for induction of infiltrators into Jammu and Kashmir, to be followed by military action against India.

### **Major Pakistani Errors Of Judgement**

The first major error of judgement was the presumption about the Rann of Kutch operations best summarised by quoting from a Pakistani analyst, Brigadier Shaukat Qadir who writes: "Early the same year Pakistan Army had successfully defended itself against the Indian attempted incursion in the Rann of Kutch, but that chapter was closed since the dispute had been referred for arbitration. Why therefore should Pakistan embark on a venture that might lead to war remains an unanswered question to date, particularly when we were aware that such a venture in which we were considered the aggressor would result in the severance of aid from the US, which ultimately happened? It is a matter of historical record that Bhutto, then foreign minister, convinced Ayub Khan, the president, that the Indian response to our incursions in Kashmir would not be across the international boundary and would be confined to Kashmir. He must have offered powerful diplomatic arguments as forcefully and articulately as he could, but despite that I find it difficult to comprehend how Ayub accepted such an argument which was militarily untenable and, while Ayub could be accused of many things, he was far from being militarily unwise."

The second error was the presumption about local support for the infiltration into Jammu and Kashmir about which Shaukat Qadir has this to say: "For some obscure reason, Pakistan undertook Operation Gibraltar, without preparing the grounds for it or seeking guarantees of local support or even attempting to assess the mood of the Kashmiri people. Pakistan went into Operation Gibraltar without any preliminary preparations and undertook a guerrilla operation inside Indian held Kashmir with a large number of regular soldiers, some SSG elements and a smattering of irregulars, expecting to be welcomed by the local population and raise them up in arms against the Indian Government. They were destined to be rudely disillusioned. Far from rising up in arms, the local population denied any support and, in many instances handed over the infiltrators to Indian troops. An act for which they should not be held to blame in any way, since by then they were reconciled to staying within the Indian Union and Pakistan had made no preparations for such a venture. It was to take another twenty four years for





them to rise indigenously against the Indian Union. Gibraltar soon became a disaster. The majority of the infiltrators were captured by the Indian troops, though some managed to exfiltrate.”

On Operation Grand Slam, Shaukat Qadir writes: “... was one of a number of contingency plans that had been prepared to support Gibraltar. Since Gibraltar’s failure was considered inconceivable, this plan intended to sever the road link between India and Indian held Kashmir once the valley was up in flames. Now that Gibraltar had not just failed but had resulted in the loss of some key positions in Kashmir (like Hajipir), the operation was undertaken to relieve pressure on the troops defending Kashmir. Operation Grand Slam was four phased; the capture of Chamb, the crossing of River Tawi and consolidation, followed by the capture of Akhnoor and finally severing the Indian lines of communication and capturing Rajouri. Despite the difficulties of terrain, specially entailing a river crossing, the possibility for success lay in the bold audacity of the plan, which necessitated speed in execution, since if there was sufficient time permitted to the Indians, they would reinforce Akhnoor and it would be impossible to capture.” As it happened, the operation did not succeed and in fact turned out to be the third error of judgement; because it led to Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri giving the Indian Armed Forces clearance to enlarge the scope of operations as deemed militarily necessary.

**The war proved that it will always be the man behind the weapon that matters**

That therefore was the state of play when the Indian Army launched operations across the international border in Lahore, Sialkot and Sind Sectors in September 1965.

### Some Reflections

Though the outcome of the 1965 War cannot be considered an outright victory for the Indian Armed Forces, it went a long way in restoring the pride, confidence and self-esteem of the forces that had taken a battering in 1962. It also restored the image of the forces in the eyes of the general public. As a consequence, Indian Army units responded with added determination to the provocations along the Ceasefire Line in Jammu and Kashmir in later years, at Nathu la Pass in 1967, in securing the outstanding victory in 1971, at Sumdorong Chu in 1987 and most recently during the Kargil operations.

The performance of the junior leadership was outstanding as always. It is a measure of the commitment and dedication of the junior leaders that the officer to rank and file casualty ratio during the 1965 war was 1:14 against a rank structure ratio of 1:60.

The war proved (if such proof is necessary) that it will always be the man behind the weapon that matters and not so much the weapon system itself. The Indian Army *jawan* proved his worth once again. **DSA**

# JAMMU AND KASHMIR

## THE BONE OF CONTENTION



The one major lesson which must go down for posterity with the Indian security establishment is the fact that Pakistan was, is and will always remain obsessed with J&K. Its acts to initiate and secure a military advantage will never be dictated by a sense of rationale and deniability is something it has mastered. The irrational is something that we can always expect which makes the task of defence of J&K that much more challenging.

There are three things about the 1965 Indo-Pak Conflict which draw attention. First is the strategic scenario in the subcontinent which attracted General Ayub Khan and Zulfikar Bhutto to undertake the botched operations (conflict initiation). Second is the strategy which Pakistan establishment followed through 1964-65, to primarily aim at wresting J&K (conflict progression). Third and last is the negotiation which resulted in the handing back of the crucial gain India made, the Hajipir Pass (conflict termination). In these three events the story of the two years of conflict (not 22 days as is customarily believed) can be told threadbare. I intend to do that briefly from my perspective and understanding of Conflict Initiation, detailing the operations in J&K and only mentioning the other theatres of conflict – Punjab, Rajasthan and Kutch. In doing so, I also wish to dilute all perceptions which exist in Pakistan that its Armed Forces won for it a decisive military victory.

### The Strategic Scenario

Examining the strategic scenario should commence from 1962, the year of India's unfortunate defeat in a brief border war with China, but the tenor of Pakistan's perception about India's military capability goes back to the fifties. The stark difference between India's soft approach towards enhancing its strategic interests and Pakistan's aggressive stance by joining US-led anti-communist blocs developed the perception that India's leadership was out of sync with its military resulting in weakening of the Armed Forces. In Pakistan, with Pakistan Army in power from



1958, its say in defence policy was far more marked than that of the Indian Army in the functioning of Indian democracy. This contrast helped develop a perception that when it came to war fighting Pakistan's politico-military leadership could outmatch Indian leadership where the influence of the military would be marginal and the politicians would be unwilling to take risk of a wider conflagration. The events of 1962 with reference to the developing situation and the response from India must have been closely analysed by Ayub and Bhutto to surmise that the coordination of politico-military decisions in India was flawed. The frequent utterances about the invincibility of the Pakistani soldier in comparison with his Indian counterpart also helped in this self-delusory game that Pakistan's leadership indulged in.

### Chinese Gambit

Pakistan developed its relationship with China on the basis of the belief that 'enemy's enemy is a friend'. It reinforced it with a border agreement in 1963 ceding the Shaksgam Valley in Baltistan to China despite its disputed status. While Pakistan did not have China's nod to initiate hostilities it perceived that it had China's tacit support. In the context the Chinese only postured on the eastern front to prevent India from comprehensively defeating Pakistan with additional military resources it could mobilise from the east.

### US Calculus

The US was in a quandary having supported India with basic arms and finances to rebuild its Army, also providing Pakistan with modern military equipment such as *Patton* tanks and *F-86 Sabre* jets as part of its commitments to nations of the security blocs. While it may not have perceived India as a close friend or ally it did recognise India's democratic culture and was not in favour of further weakening of India's military capability. It also knew the human fallout of war between two impoverished nations and thus was neutral in attitude as far as potential hostilities were concerned, although its political support rested with Pakistan.

While India was in the non-aligned group of nations it was progressively displaying socialist ideology and could be perceived as getting closer to the then Soviet Union without a decided tilt. Much as analysts would like us to believe there were no clear cutlines of support from the two poles of the then existing world order. There was obfuscated and mere perceptual support than anything else. The one thing that was reasonably clear that neither the US nor the Soviet Union was happy to see another military defeat for India which would have decimated its self-esteem and the very idea of existence as a nation. Such a situation would not have been to the advantage of those who perceived the dangers of a rising and irrational China under its dogmatic leader Mao Zedong.

### Flawed Pak Perception

Ayub had an abiding belief that the US would support his war efforts once they were underway,

with India labelled the aggressor. Bhutto egged him on, as the Foreign Minister. Besides belief in their own infallibility and the questionable fighting capability of the Indian soldier there were other paradoxes; among them was the fact that Ayub's pre-partition unit was one which comprised Hindus and Muslims, yet his perception of Indian soldiers was decidedly flawed. The prime trigger in Pakistani thinking was that India was suffering from loss of confidence, its political leadership was weak and would not respond adequately, its Army was reorganising and re-equipping and China would support Pakistan's war effort too. If the Indian Army was allowed more time the resultant growth in confidence would not afford the advantage then available. Intelligence was weak even at the strategic level and deductions were self-delusional eg that the Kashmiri Muslims would rise in support of Pakistani infiltrators or that India would never have the courage to expand a conflict if triggered by Pakistan in J&K.

In hindsight the presumptions with which Ayub worked were irrational displaying a poor strategic mind. This has been the trend with most Pakistani leaders – excellent executors of Conflict Initiation and clueless Conflict Terminators. The chain of operations and the sequence supports this deduction.

### Kutch-Kargil Operations, April-June 1965

The Bhuj stand-off was essentially testing of waters by Pakistan with aggressive patrolling evicting Indian troops from Kanjarkot and capturing Sardar post occupied by Indian Forces in 1956 and four other posts in the Kanjarkot area. In Kargil the Indian Army recaptured Pt 13620 and Black Rock, two features which had been occupied by the Pakistan Army along the Dras-Leh Road. A brokered ceasefire by the British Government brought an end to hostilities on 01 July but Pakistan appeared to perceive a victory, as per analysts Altaf Gauhar and Air Marshal Asghar Khan who surmise that the continuation of hostilities in J&K was due to this confidence gained by Ayub.

### Operation Gibraltar, August 1965

This was the irregular operation that Ayub launched in J&K to wrest ground advantage preceding the main conventional war, in early August 1965. With compulsory military training for recruitable young men in PoK, Pakistan created a joint force of civilians and military men. The strength was between 5,000 and 8,000. Eight to ten infiltrating columns of approximately 300-400 men were created, named after Islamic Generals of folklore and armed with



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Browning machine guns, mortars and explosives, to exploit the wide gaps in the Indian Army defences. Their task was to execute stealth attacks on the Indian Army, cause panic, create turbulence in the rear areas, tie-down reserves, interdict the Jammu-Srinagar highway and finally converge at Srinagar where a Revolutionary Council was to be set-up after the overthrow of the State government. Ayub personally spoke to the commanders of the various columns promising them that the people of Kashmir were awaiting their arrival and would join them in battling the Indian Army. Some of the known forces were:

- Salahuddin Force: Gulmarg, Srinagar and Mandi
- K Force: Uri
- Khalid Force: Tithwal
- Nusrat Force: Rajouri-Mendhar
- Ghaznavi Force: Poonch-Rajouri
- Babar Force: Nowshera-Chamb
- Tariq Force: Kargil
- Qasim Force: Gurez
- Khilji Force: Kel-Minimarg

The operations under ‘Operation Gibraltar’ are well described by Maj Gen Afsir Karim of the Indian Army, one of the well-known personalities of India’s strategic community and a famous paratrooper. Although he has mentioned that the Gibraltar Force had a strength of almost 30,000 men alternative sources appear to suggest a lower strength. The HQs of the Force was at Murree alongside the Pakistan HQs 12 Division and probably placed under command of Maj Gen Akhtar Malik the GOC of that division. The simultaneity of launch may have caught the Indian troops off guard as trans Line of Control intelligence was sketchy although the contiguity and the similarity of ethnicity should have given the Indian Army enough scope to detect such concentrations and intent. The Gibraltar Force elements were discovered mostly by nomads in the high altitude areas where they intended to mingle with the Bakarwal population which abounds there in the summer months. The deployment of the Indian Army was not as dense as it is today, with only 19 (Dagger) Infantry Division looking after both the Line of Control (then Ceasefire Line or CFL) and the rear area security in the Valley. The area south of Pir Panjal was the responsibility of 25 (Ace) Infantry Division where at least three to four such forces of varying strength were infiltrated. The Indian Army did suffer casualties particularly in the Tangdhar Sector but Nasta Chun (Sadhana) Pass remained secure from the infiltrators. The forested area between Gulmarg and Baramulla along Sultanpur Kandi, Odur and Tangmarg remained a potent area for bases which had to be destroyed by deliberate search and destroy operations as much as in the Khag-Sutharan forest of Budgam.

The intended occupation of Srinagar, the airfield and the radio station did not materialise as the Force was detected well in time and engaged before it reached the outskirts of Srinagar. The major factor

which Ayub imagined was in his favour, the support of the Kashmir people, had obviously been assumed without any preparations. ‘Operation Gibraltar’ failed to achieve its objectives and was virtually over by 12 August 1965. It set the stage for an Indian riposte in the Uri sector.

**India’s Riposte**

“India cannot go on pushing the Pakistanis off its territory. If infiltration continues, we will have to carry the fight to the other side.” Thus spoke Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri, whose personality had been assessed by Ayub as one incapable of hard military decisions. It was virtually the hot pursuit of today which the Prime Minister authorised the Army for its mission. Attacks were carried out in Uri and Bugina bulge to recapture some heights occupied by the Pakistan Army but the *coup de main* was the decision to capture the Hajipir Pass and thus the Hajipir Bulge, straighten the bulge and link Poonch and Uri. The same had been achieved in 1947-48 but could not be retained under intense Pakistani pressure.

The 68 Infantry Brigade under Brig Zoru Bakshi, MVC (later Lt Gen), which was placed under 19 Infantry Division was tasked to capture Hajipir with a pincer astride the Uri-Poonch Road from the direction of Uri. The operation was called ‘Operation Bakshi’ and was supplemented from the south by 93 Infantry Brigade conducting ‘Operation Faulad’. As an ex Commander of today’s Uri Brigade and also ex GOC 19 Infantry Division it is my honour to write about the operations conducted over the terrain which I have had the pleasure to walk over several times and appreciate it on the map too. Hajipir Bulge was held by a brigade with a full battalion deployed on the

defences of the pass. The operation was planned as a set piece one with five battalions, two launched from the west (direction of Sar and Sank) and two from the east (direction of Bedori) with one in reserve and was launched on the night of 26 August. On the eastern thrust a battalion was to capture Bedori and exploit up to the defences close to Hajipir and link-up with the western thrust. The latter involved the capture of Sar and Sank and thereafter another battalion passing through and capturing the western shoulder. In the event it was the western thrust by 1 PARA that succeeded in early capture of Sar and Sank. Thereafter, in a classic case of manoeuvre in the mountains Major Ranjit Dayal, company commander 1 PARA, sought permission to exploit the opening and continue to the pass to capture it. He rapidly advanced to the base of Hajipir leading his exhausted men with personal example, overcame the resistance on the northern slopes and captured the western shoulder. A unit followed in the wake from the west capturing Bisali. The strategic importance of Hajipir was well realised by the Pakistan Army which counter-attacked in strength evicting the unit

**Presumptions with which Ayub worked were irrational displaying a poor strategic mind**



from Bisali and forcing it to return to Sank. The eastern thrust succeeded after being beaten back twice, leading to occupation of the eastern shoulder. The operation was over by 28 August 1965 but link-up with 'Operation Faulad' from the south could only be achieved by 9 September 1965. The operations against Hajipir were supported with diversionary attacks against Tilpatra, Mehandi Gali and Lunda in the current Torna battalion area.

Praise for the leadership of the GOC Dagger Division, Commander 68 Infantry Brigade and Major (later Lt Gen Ranjit Dayal, MVC) can never be too much. Major Dayal exemplified the true spirit of an Indian infantryman, displayed valour beyond the call of duty and proved the thinking capability of the junior leadership under stress and strain. Lesser men would have wilted. The operations helped ensure that Pakistan's focus from the Gibraltar Force was lifted and measures had to be undertaken by it to stabilise the CFL lest India further built on its marked success.

### Operations In Akhnoor Sector

On 01 September 1965, Pakistan launched 'Operation Grand Slam' with the aim of relieving pressure from the Uri-Poonch Sector where the Hajipir operations had upset their equilibrium. 'Operation Grand Slam' was launched in the Akhnoor Sector of Jammu division. It was India's major vulnerability with the iron girder bridge over the Chenab River as the prime objective; that was the lifeline for 25 Infantry Division at Rajouri and its formations deployed in Poonch and Mendhar. With Indian forces of 15 Corps involved in stalling the progress of infiltrators of the Gibraltar Force the Akhnoor Sector was lightly held, a risk that had to be taken. Pakistan read the situation well and had the requisite intelligence. It was one of the better decisions it made through the course of the war because if 'Operation Grand Slam' had succeeded the Indian Army would have little to respond with. Four battalions and a squadron of tanks held the Akhnoor Sector. It is well-known that 'Operation Grand Slam' was a deliberately planned operation and not just an operational response. Its strategic connotations were clear; the securing of the Jammu-Rajouri communication artery would throw Indian responses out of gear making it difficult for it to proactively engage anywhere else. However, it was launched as a response to the successful operation by the Indian Army in the Hajipir area of Uri sector.

### Akhnoor Highlights

Space does not permit the narration of the fascinating run of events in Akhnoor Sector in early September 1965. However, a few highlights are necessary. Pakistan brought in 7 Division for the offensive but placed its resources under command of 12 Division the holding formation. The initial operations were undertaken by two brigades but both failed to make the crossing over the Tawi River

on the first day, 01 September 1965. It probably instigated a change of command with the Pakistan Army Chief flying into the battle zone and relieving Maj Gen Akhtar Malik and replacing him with Maj Gen Yahya Khan, the GOC of 7 Division. It led to a tactical pause on the part of the Pakistani operations, the one major factor which changed the course of the operations and destinies in the battle in Akhnoor Sector. Twenty-four hours is a long-time in a conventional battle. In this time the Indian leadership got its act together, redeployed, reinforced and placed its bets on a strong defence around the Akhnoor Bridge, even as the Indian Army fought to defend the narrow space which provided depth to the Akhnoor Bridge. A little known fact is that the current HQs 10 Infantry Division which today holds the Chamb-Jaurian Sector had been under raising at Bangalore and assumed operational responsibility from 191 Infantry Brigade only on 01 September, just while 'Operation Grand Slam' was launched.

### Indian Thrust Into Punjab

The destiny of 'Operation Grand Slam' underwent further change due to the Indian Army's decision to open the Sialkot and Lahore fronts with offensives by 1 Corps and 11 Corps almost simultaneously forcing the troops of the attacking Pakistan 7 Division to retract and divest some of its resources towards the defence of Sialkot. The operations on the Punjab front are described in detail elsewhere in this issue of **DSA**. What is important for the reader is to link the individual operations of 1965 in a continuum to silently deduce how the actions and responses played out from April to September 1965.

As to the question why Hajipir was returned to Pakistan and the strategic victory not exploited at the Tashkent talks the explanation offered by military historians points to the trade-off necessary to regain the lost territory in Chamb-Jaurian which was affording the Pakistan Army a virtual launch pad to capture the Akhnoor Bridge in a future stand-off. However, there is perhaps much more to it that has not been sufficiently analysed. Post conflict negotiations are about understanding both conflict and diplomacy. India displayed a similar lack of understanding of politico-military dynamics at the strategic level in the talks post the spectacular victory in 1971 leading to the signing of the Shimla Agreement 1972.

Space does not permit discussion and analysis of the lessons learned from the military operations in J&K in 1965. Yet, the one major lesson which must go down for posterity with the Indian security establishment is the fact that Pakistan was, is and will always remain obsessed with J&K. Its acts to initiate and secure a military advantage will never be dictated by a sense of rationale and deniability is something it has mastered. The irrational is something that we can always expect which makes the task of defence of J&K that much more challenging. **DSA**

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other side

# 1965 WAR WITH PAKISTAN

**We have learned no lessons from history, old and more recent. Now when Pakistan is arming itself with Chinese and Russian military equipment and China has been busy building military infrastructure in Tibet, India appears to be in no better state than that of 1962 period. Though we are now faced with the prospects of a two-front war.**

**A**s the Indian Army gets down to recalling the 1965 War with Pakistan, there is the need to know some basic facts about this conflict. The genesis of 1965 War goes back to Pakistan's failed attempt to grab J&K soon after independence. India's defeat in 1962 at the hands of China and the serious weaknesses that surfaced in the Indian Army during that conflict encouraged Pakistan to try one more time to grab J&K.

There was the impression in Pakistan that if sufficient numbers of infiltrators are pushed into the valley, there would be a general uprising and then Pakistan Army could move in and take over Kashmir Valley. Military rule in Pakistan made it easier for it to follow this line of thinking. To divert India's attention towards the south-west, Pakistan, during June 1965, did some ingress into the Rann of Kutch area.

## Phase One

Sometime later, this was followed by large-scale infiltration into the valley. Indian Army reacted with alacrity and was able to check infiltration, strike across the Line of Control (LoC) at some of the bases of these infiltrators and captured Hajipir Pass, where Major Ranjit Dayal won his *Maha Vir Chakra* (MVC).

Pakistan struck back in the Chamb-Jaurian Sector of J&K, where it enjoyed great advantage due to terrain and India's limitations to deploy sufficient troops, more so armour. Indian Air Force responded well, but unfortunately targeted own troops. Further, Pakistan by restricting this aggression in the Chamb-Jaurian Sector was under the mistaken impression that India would confine fighting to J&K only. Upto here one could term as phase 1 of the war.

The only course open to India to relieve pressure in the Chamb-Jaurian Sector was, to launch counteroffensive in the plains sectors of J&K and in Punjab. This counteroffensive took Pakistan completely by surprise and proved a game changer in this war. Indian Armoured Division, which was initially located in the Amritsar Sector, was sidestepped to Samba-Jammu Sector, in complete secrecy, adding to the element of surprise. Indian offensive was essentially aimed at relieving pressure against Akhnoor, (Chamb-Jaurian) which provided vital link to Poonch-Rajouri Sector and an opening to Jammu.

## Insufficient Weaponry

However Indian Army was in no state to go to war with Pakistan, but was left with no option other than to react.

There were serious disparities in the capabilities of the two opposing armies. Indian Army had been locked into a futile argument with the Ministry of Defence to have 21 instead of 17 infantry divisions. Ministry of Defence had also worked overtime to keep the Indian Army starved of contemporary weapons systems, especially when Pakistan Army was being armed with the state-of-the-art weapon systems under the American Aid programme.

Indian Army had in all 608 tanks of Second World War vintage, (including 180 *Centurion* and 90 *AMX* light tanks of mid-forties period) 625 artillery pieces of various calibre and 35 infantry brigades for the western front, which included a number of mountain brigades/divisions as well. These mountain formations were neither equipped nor trained for plains warfare. As against this Pakistan had 765 tanks (which included 352 state-of-the-art *Patton* tanks) 552 artillery pieces of all calibres and 26 infantry brigades and 9,000 Razakars. Pakistan had two armoured divisions against one with the Indian Army. Pak guns had better range and higher calibre. It is only in infantry (if one included mountain formations) that Indian Army had some advantage, whereas Pak had distinct advantage in the quality and number of tanks and was to conduct operations on the 'interior lines'. Even the uninitiated would know that tanks play dominant role in plains warfare. Therefore, one may ask as to how this disparity, in capabilities had come about against another belligerent neighbour, so soon after the 1962 debacle!

## Phase Two

The Indian war plan was simple. On the Punjab front it was to advance and establish bridgeheads across Ichhogil Canal and threaten Lahore and no more. India had no obstacle system of its own in this sector to base its defences. It was expected that Pak would expend its offensive potential in its efforts to eliminate this threat to Lahore. However reserves were held in this sector to deal with any counteroffensive by Pak. To ensure safety of the Punjab sector, one *Centurion* regiment from the armoured division was left behind in this sector. *Centurion* was the only tank with the Indian Army, which could stand up to the *Patton* tank with which Pakistan Army was equipped. Though this shedding of one *Centurion* regiment weakened the armoured division and with it, Indian Army's offensive potential, it ensured safety of the Punjab sector. Where resources are limited, allocating these to tasks is a Hobson's choice. Compromises have to be made and risks accepted.



On the Jammu-Samba front, plan was to launch an offensive into Pak territory with the dual aim of relieving pressure in the Akhnour Sector on one part and on the other bring to battle Pak Forces in this sector and destroy these. Indian offensive, both in the Punjab and Jammu sectors achieved complete surprise.

On the Punjab front there was some hard fighting and Indian Forces came under heavy air attacks by Pak Air Force, before troops could get to the Ichhogil Canal. However existence of aqueducts under the Ichhogil Canal were not known to Indian Army and it is through these that Pakistan launched its counteroffensive with its 1 Armoured Division, achieving complete surprise.

On the Jammu-Samba front Indian Army failed to exploit surprise it had so successfully achieved. One of the regiments of Indian Armoured Division was badly mauled by the enemy. There followed a self-imposed and inexcusable freeze of 48 hours by the Indian Forces. On the Punjab front there were some goof-ups. So far the battle on both fronts could be termed as phase 2 of this very short war.

### Phase Three

Hereafter the war entered into its phase 3. On the Punjab front Pakistan's counteroffensive was brought to a halt and better part of its 1 Armoured Division was destroyed. On the Jammu front, in a series of brilliantly executed manoeuvres Pakistan's 6 Armoured Division was decimated.

When the fighting ended, Pakistan's offensive potential had been comprehensively destroyed. That in brief is the story of 1965 War with Pakistan. Some have tried to belittle Indian Army's achievements in this war. Lt Gen Harbaksh Singh, the highest field commander, in his book, *War Dispatches*, records, "I have heard that our concept of operations lacked offensive dash and dimension, forgetting elementary wisdom that unless ends are balanced against the means available, a campaign is foredoomed to failure." Given force equation, to expect dramatic results or a resounding victory was unrealistic, bordering on foolishness.

With the existence of high value population centres close to the border on both sides and other considerations, neither country was willing to concede territory and therefore pitched battles took place within a few kilometres on either side of the border. That was and will remain the dominant reality of offensive-defensive battles in the plains sectors of J&K and the two Punjabs.

### India's Plus Points

The complete destruction of Pakistan's offensive potential by a weaker force was indeed a miracle. It was the skills of our commanders, the daring and proficiency of tank crews, the grit of infantry and gunners which brought about this miracle. When the war ended, undoubtedly and undeniably Indian Army was decisively on top with Pak offensive capability completely shattered. The dynamics of a short war, a very short war, are quite apart from our more common knowledge of conflicts between large forces spread over longer duration.

There were many acts of gallantry both on the Punjab front and during the armour battles of Phillora in the Jammu Sector. Maj Gen Rajinder Singh Sparrow added a bar to his MVC. On the Punjab front Havildar Abdul Hamid of Grenadiers won *Param Vir Chakra* by standing upto Pak *Patton* tanks with his anti-tank gun. Beside these two, there were innumerable acts of gallantry by the troops and officers of the Indian Army: Some noticed and some that went unnoticed.

There were indeed some anxious moments during this war, as there are in any hard fought battles. Indian security and intelligence establishment had failed to anticipate threat from Pakistan. No effort was made to identify those in the MoD who had worked overtime to keep Indian Army starved of contemporary weapon systems, especially when Pakistan was being armed so heavily. Finally it is time we declassified complete war records with the MEA, RAW, MoD and Army headquarters for a clearer picture of the war to emerge.

### Perennial Unpreparedness

India seems to repeatedly find itself unprepared for a war, be it 1962 War with China or 1965 War with Pakistan or later at Kargil. Even now one can see little change in this attitude of Indian defence establishment.

We have learned no lessons from history, old and more recent. Now when Pakistan is arming itself with Chinese and Russian military equipment and China has been busy building military infrastructure in Tibet, India appears to be in no better state than that of 1962 period. Though we are now faced with the prospects of a two-front war.

### Chief Of Defence Staff

Without the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) system in its full spectrum, it would be impossible to meet fully the challenges of a two-front war and yet there is no move to adopt the CDS system any time soon. Historically India has never paid adequate attention to national security and this malady persists to this day. Over 6 decades after independence India still imports nearly 70 per cent of its defence weapons and equipment. We have scaled down the essential requirement of fighter planes to mere 36 numbers. The mountain strike corps for the Tibet border is being reduced to half. Indian Navy is in no position to counter Chinese moves in the Indian Ocean. There is no long-term national security architecture in the making. **D-A**



**Lt Gen  
Harwant Singh  
PVSM, AVSM (Retd)**

The writer was commissioned in 1955 and joined armoured corps. He has been Brigade Major of an Independent armoured brigade, General Staff Officer-1 of an armoured division and commanded School of Armoured Warfare. Has been senior instructor at the War College. Commanded a mountain brigade and an armoured brigade.

Was Deputy Director Operational Logistics and Director General Weapon and Equipment at Army Headquarters. Raised first Reorganised Army Plains Infantry Division (RAPID) and fielded it in Exercise Brass Tacks as defending commander.

Commanded a corps in J&K and retired as Deputy Chief of Army Staff in August 1992.

# INDO-PAK WAR 1965

## ROLE OF INDIAN AIR FORCE

**Air Commodore PM Wilson, a distinguished IAF bomber pilot, encapsulated his assessment of the air operations as follows: ‘My impression about all air force operation whether east or west was that nobody seemed to know what to do. The lessons learned in 1965 were all negative ones; in other words, what not to do, should there be another conflict. These lessons were so numerous and so cogent that they were more valuable than any positive lessons’.**

**O**n 01 August 1964, Air Marshal Arjan Singh took over as the Chief of Air Staff from Air Marshal AM Engineer. He was charged with the responsibility of supervising the swift expansion and training of the Indian Air Force (IAF). It was then expected that within a period of five years, the Indian armed forces would total a million men and be equipped with modern weapon-systems. It was firmly believed that once the modernisation process was completed, Pakistan would have little chance of a successful military adventure against India.

Nonetheless, in April 1965, the first indication of Pakistan’s nefarious intentions became apparent; when its forces started encroaching into Indian Territory in the Kutch area of Gujarat. This was well before the military ‘balance of power’ had tilted decisively in favour of India. The continued inflow of massive American military aid had made the Pakistani Armed Forces overly confident. Furthermore, as things stood then, its governance was a military dictatorship under Field Marshal Ayub Khan. These factors predisposed Pakistan to even have the temerity to deploy Main

Battle Tanks (MBTs) in a border skirmish between the paramilitary patrols of the two neighbours.

On 01 September, with the Pakistani forces pressing across the Jaurian Sector; the Indian Army found that it could not fight entirely on its own; since the Pakistan Air Force (PAF) was also harassing it constantly. The Army needed air defence and tactical support; but the necessary arrangements for the same had never been made in conjunction with the IAF.

grown into a well-equipped, highly-trained force of about 17 squadrons. Its inventory had *B-57* bomber, *F-104 Starfighter* and *F-86 Sabre* as fighter aircraft, *SA-16 Albatross* amphibian aircraft, *H-43* helicopter for maritime recce and air-sea rescue, *RB-57* for high altitude recce and *C-130 Hercules* and *Bristol* as transport aircraft. The *F-104 Starfighter* was, indeed, the ‘star’ fighter of the PAF. It was among the first airplanes that were capable of flying at twice the speed of sound (Mach 2) and was armed with a rapid-firing 20 mm gun and two Sidewinder heat-seeking missiles (*AIM 9B*). It had a radar for interception and fire control. It was expected to be of particular use towards intercepting and shooting down of the night bomber.



**IAF Gnat**

The IAF, on its part, was equipped with 26 fighter and four bomber squadrons; there were also 13 squadrons of transport aircraft and five helicopter units, making it a formidable force of 43 squadrons. On its inventory, the IAF fighter aircraft fleet included *Hunter*, *Gnat*, *Mystere*, *Vampire*, *Toofani (Ouragon)* and *MIG-21* (a single squadron was under ‘raising’ at the time). The bomber fleet was represented by the *Canberra* only. *Dakota*, *Packet*, *Ai-12*, *Il-14*, *Caribou* and *Otter* comprised the transport ‘line-up’. The *Mi-4* and *Alloutte* represented the helicopter component.

Numerically speaking, in 1965, the IAF was approximately three times the strength of the PAF. It is pertinent to note that six squadrons of *Vampire* and three of *Toofani* fighters were definitely outdated



**Air Marshal Arjan Singh, DFC  
(later Marshal of the  
Indian Air Force)**

### **The Contending Forces**

By 1965, both the IAF as well as the PAF had come a long way since the partition of 1947. The PAF had



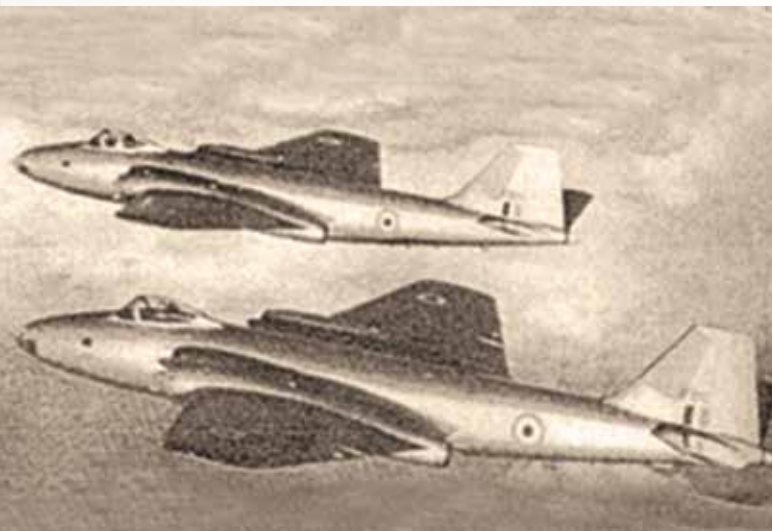


*vis-a-vis* a modern air force such as the PAF. A few of the remaining 17 fighter squadrons and many bomber aircraft, had to be earmarked for location to the east, as a deterrent against the Chinese threat. The contending air forces to the west, therefore, were well and truly matched. The IAF *MiG* was comparable to the *F-104*, but was not, as yet, fully operational or, even integrated in the offensive matrix.

*Hunter* and *Gnat* were comparable to *Sabre*, but were bereft of air-to-air missiles. *Hunter* was less agile; whilst the *Gnat* had an ongoing control problem, with its guns also prone to jamming. *Mystere*, on the other hand, was a dedicated ground-attack aircraft and could not hold its own against the versatile *Sabre*. The PAF radars and electronics were also superior to what was then available with the IAF; the latter force being critically dependant on the radar unit at Amritsar. The IAF superiority in quantity was, to a significant extent, offset by the PAF advantage of quality equipment that had been gifted to it by the USA.

### Operation Grand Slam

Its insidious attempt at annexing Kashmir, through ‘Operation Gibraltar’ having been foiled, the desperate Pakistani Army made a major armour-cum-infantry thrust into the Chamb area. The offensive, code-named ‘Operation Grand Slam’, threatened the vital Akhnoor Bridge on the Jammu-Poonch road. At this juncture, General Chaudhuri, the Indian Army Chief, along with Air Marshal Arjan Singh, the IAF Chief, held an urgent audience with YB Chavan and PRV Rao, the then Defence Minister and Defence Secretary, respectively. The primary agenda was for permission to use the IAF decisively. The ‘Go Ahead’ was immediately given; with the offensive air support aircraft being launched within the hour to stem the enemy onslaught.



**Canberra – the IAF bomber aircraft**

### Air Operations In East

Although, the policy of the Indian Government, at the time, was to preclude the conflict into East Pakistan, the IAF ordered a *Canberra* probe sortie to Chittagong towards neutralising any PAF aircraft on the ground.

Unfortunately, the raid proved fruitless, as no enemy aircraft were spotted on the ground. Notwithstanding this, the first *Canberra* dropped its bomb-load on the runway itself. The second aircraft was then called in, but its bombs undershot and exploded on the flying control building. Later, Wg Cdr Wilson was awarded the *Vir Chakra* (VrC).

The Chittagong raid was followed up by the *Vampires* of No 24 Sqn striking Jessore and the *Toofanis* (*Ouragons*) from Nos 4 and 29 Sqn striking Lalmunirhat. Also, four *Hunters* of No 14 Sqn carried out fighter sweeps over Dhaka. In these efforts, nothing tangible could be achieved, since there were no enemy aircraft to be seen either on the ground or for that matter, even in the air.

### PAF Attack On KKD

As the IAF aircraft could not locate the lone PAF *F-86* Sqn of twelve aircraft located in East Pakistan, this Sqn later destroyed a sizeable number of Indian aircraft on the ground. When the two *Canberras* and four *Hunters* returned to Kalaikunda after their futile missions at about 06:00 hours on 07th September, the PAF struck Kalaikunda (KKD) at 06:40 hours after flying at low-level and partly over the sea. Six *F-86s* destroyed two *Canberras* and four fully armed *Vampires*. One airman was also injured. The PAF aircraft did not face any air opposition since the Indian *Hunters* were patrolling between Dum Dum and Kalaikunda at that time. This Pakistani raid was a complete surprise.



**Wg Cdr Wilson being awarded the VrC by President Radhakrishnan**

### No More Offensive Ops In East

Indian offensive operations in the east were restricted to the early missions mentioned above. After these raids, instructions were received from Delhi on 7 September itself, that no offensive action was to be undertaken in East Pakistan. After receipt of these instructions, all the aircraft were prepared for air defence duties and they flew Combat Air Patrol (CAP) sorties only for the remaining period of hostilities.



Map showing air-bases in 'West Pak'

Prior to the 1965 conflict, the Army and IAF had not carried out sufficient joint exercises. This was due to the lack of joint planning. Both the Army and IAF had their sight firmly fixed on their respective objectives. Cooperation between them was incidental rather than well planned. In the absence of joint plans, large gaps remained in the air cover over the combat zone. There was no reliable and quick system by which the Indian Army could call for aircraft from IAF, when attacked by PAF.

There was almost a complete lack of air intelligence at the commencement of hostilities. The IAF could not locate the PAF aircraft in East Pakistan at all. In the west, it was not known for quite some time that almost all the PAF's air effort in the Jammu and Punjab sector was launched from the Sargodha area and Peshawar.

**Implications Of 'Lessons Learnt'**

The lessons of the '65 War were well imbibed by the IAF. A significant weakness, that was observed, related to airfield protection. It was a fact that a mere couple of PAF raids on IAF airbases, namely those against Pathankot and Kalaikunda, accounted for nearly 40 per cent of the IAF loss. Although this had little effect on its overall combat capability, the attrition was a definite pointer towards the poor dispersal and protection procedures of the IAF. The learning, then, led to greater camouflage measures and subsequently, the development of hardened aircraft shelters (HAS), duly protected with concrete and earth works, thus offering relative immunity to parked aircraft from enemy air attacks.

The radar coverage, of airfields and vital areas, was also found to be extremely deficient. The solitary radar unit at Amritsar proved to be inadequate in providing coverage over the entire western region. The deficiency, of radar coverage, was more pronounced in the eastern sector; wherein, the PAF Sabres put in their attack undetected in most of the raids. The shortage of radar coverage was addressed before the 1971 War.

The training facilities, being located along the western front, were found to be prone to attacks. Consequently, these were moved to the south, being concentrated around the Hyderabad area. New bases were constructed and the unused ones were activated. Forward airbases were earmarked for operations during a period of war. New strategies were built around the lessons learned from the 1965 War; the result of which were evident during the 1971 conflict – in an exhilarating and unequivocal victory for the Indian Armed Forces and the nation.

**Epilogue**

The 'general war' of September '65, that followed the initial skirmishes, showed the armed forces of both the sides, Pakistani as well as Indian; in poor light. There was lack of professional competence and good leadership on the part of both the sides. Although, by a military yardstick, the contest was a draw; it was a victory for India in the overall context. The Indian aim was to preserve *status quo* in J&K, whilst defeating the Pakistani attempt at annexing the same. The limited and rather defensive, aim was fully achieved on the Indian side. On the other hand, Pakistan's military objectives during 'Operation Gibraltar' and 'Grand Slam' having come to naught, its nefarious designs on J&K through proxy and direct action, lay in tatters. India still remained an integrated nation. The war resulted in the Indian military developing and improving upon, its strengths, whilst weeding out certain weaknesses; thus, preparing it for conflicts in the future. The results showed themselves in the subsequent conflict of 1971.



Prime Minister Mrs Indira Gandhi with Air Staff Officers shortly after the war

Taking holistic view of the 1965 air war, it appears that neither side won a decisive victory. It may, then, be worthwhile to quote Air Commodore PM Wilson, a distinguished IAF bomber pilot, who encapsulated his assessment of the air operations as follows:

'My impression about all air force operation whether east or west was that nobody seemed to know what to do. The lessons learned in 1965 were all negative ones; in other words, what not to do, should there be another conflict. These lessons were so numerous and so cogent that they were more valuable than any positive lessons'. **D-A**

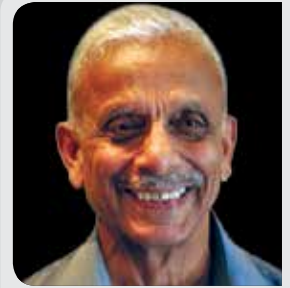


# AYUB'S MISCALCULATION

Although many have termed the result of the 1965 War with Pakistan as a stalemate, it would be more appropriate to say that it was Pakistan that lost the war. Pakistan failed miserably once again in her aim of annexing Jammu and Kashmir by force although all factors were in her favour. On the contrary, it resulted in the near total destruction of one of her armoured divisions.

**P**akistan's obsession to take Jammu and Kashmir by force tempted her early in 1965 to replicate her earlier failed attempt of 1947-48. General Ayub Khan who had come to power through a military coup apparently felt that the situation was too good to be ignored. India had suffered a severe reverse in the Sino-Indian War of 1962 – her economy had suffered substantially, reorganisation of her forces was incomplete, arms-aid after the war with China was only for the mountains and that too had yet to be absorbed. Pandit Nehru had died and the new leadership had yet to be tested. Taking these factors into consideration, Pakistan felt that the opportunity needed to be taken advantage of. Her own economy was sound due to a good agricultural harvest and her industries were picking up. Significant economic assistance and

massive military aid had been received from the United States amounting to US\$ 1.5 billion. This included 200 *M-45 Patton* tanks, one squadron of *M-114* supersonic *Starfighters*, four squadrons of *F-86 Sabre* jet fighters and two squadrons of *B-75* bombers. This completely upset the military balance and relative strength between India and Pakistan. Diplomatically Pakistan had excellent relations with the USA and she had substantially improved her relations with China.



**Maj Gen  
Ian Cardozo  
AVSM, SM (Retd)**

The writer was commissioned at the Indian Military Academy into the 1st Battalion the Fifth Gorkha Rifles (Frontier Force) where he received his basic grounding as a young officer. Wounded and disabled at the battle of Sylhet in Bangladesh in 1971, he overcame the handicap of losing a leg and became the first officer of the Indian Army to be approved for command of an Infantry Battalion and subsequently, also the first war-disabled officer to command an Infantry Brigade. Thereafter, he commanded an Infantry Division and retired in 1993 from his appointment as Chief of Staff of a Corps in the East.



### **Miscalculation**

General Ayub conferred with his corps commanders and they came to the conclusion that success could come their way with the implementation of three operations – ‘Operation Desert Hawk’, ‘Operation Gibraltar’ and ‘Operation Grand Slam’. They felt that these three operations launched one after the other would forever solve the intractable issue of Jammu and Kashmir.

The aim of ‘Operation Desert Hawk’ was to take the measure of Indian military and political leadership by launching a limited offensive in the desert area of the Rann of Kutch. This would also give her the opportunity to test the calibre of her newly acquired armour, arms and equipment from America. The acquisition of ground intelligence which would come with this experience would be useful for future operations in the Rann.

Pakistan carried on with her plans. She however needed to lull India into a false sense of security so that she could go ahead with her plans for the annexation of J&K and to therefore convince India that there would be no further offensives. So, she agreed to a ceasefire and *status quo ante* in the Rann, while at the same time preparing for ‘Operation Gibraltar’ and ‘Operation Grand Slam’. India remained oblivious of Pakistan’s plans and intentions. India ought to have known better and looked at Pakistan’s legacy of duplicity of the past. While ostensibly agreeing to the ceasefire, she began to initiate a series of violent incidents across the Ceasefire Line (CFL) in preparation for her subsequent offensives.

### **Deniability In Its Genes**

Although Pakistan denied complicity in ‘Operation Gibraltar’, there was clear-cut evidence of her involvement. Statements by captured personnel blew her game away and revealed that plans for the guerrilla operation were made in the month of May, a month before the Rann of Kutch operation and that President Ayub had himself addressed the force commanders at Murree in the second week of July.

Unfortunately for Pakistan and contrary to her expectations, it was the civilians of Jammu and Kashmir who alerted the Army in J&K about the infiltrating columns and who helped to hunt them down. ‘Operation Gibraltar’ was a failure. The guerrilla groups were destroyed and most of the infiltrators were either killed or captured. Those who escaped the Indian Army dragnet broke up into small groups and exfiltrated back into Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK). The expected revolt did not take place and it became known to the UN through their military observers that the infiltrators were from Pakistan and not Kashmir. This was conveyed by them to the United Nations Secretary General who made a statement in the UN to this effect.

Towards the latter part of August, it became clear that the main infiltration routes from Pakistan needed to be captured. It was therefore decided

that Hajipir, the strategic pass in PoK opposite Uri should be captured to eliminate the threat to Uri. This pass, at a height of about 2,600 metres and strongly held by Pakistan was captured in a daring night operation on 10 September 1965. Concurrently, a similar operation was successfully launched in the Tithwal Sector and Pir Saheba another strategically important hill feature was also captured.

### **Consecutive Operation Grand Slam**

Soon after ‘Operation Gibraltar’, Pakistan launched ‘Operation Grand Slam’ with her regular Army across the international border and the CFL. The intention of these two congruent operations was to destroy the Indian Army units on the CFL in a hammer and anvil operation with the Pakistan Army units as the hammer and the insurrection which they hoped to instigate, as the anvil. In effect, the aim was to sandwich and crush the units of the Indian Army on the CFL between the Pakistan Army on one side and the infiltrating forces on the other. Simultaneously, her Air Force attacked our airfields and her Navy bombed Dwarka.

### **Pakistan Punjab Ripped Open**

India’s patience was now pushed beyond the restraint that she always exhibited when dealing with Pakistan. Fortunately, India had a Prime Minister who had broad enough shoulders to take a strong decision. Since Pakistan had enlarged the war by attacking across the international border in J&K, he allowed the Indian Army to open a second front by launching a counteroffensive in Punjab to take the pressure off Akhnoor, on grounds that J&K was an integral part of India and therefore India had the right to attack Pakistan across ground of her own choosing.

In accordance with Indian plans to cross the border in areas of our own choosing, the Indian Army’s 11 Corps was given the task of securing the line of the Ichhogil Canal, establishing bridgeheads across the canal and posing a threat to Lahore.

The Indian Army fought some brilliant battles in this area, most memorable being the battle of Dograi in Punjab, Pakistan. After some very hard fighting, elements of the Indian Army reached the outskirts of Lahore but further advance was not possible as neither the main elements of the attacking formation could link-up with the troops who had reached the Bata factory on the outskirts of Lahore nor was it desirable to get involved in street fighting in built-up areas.

### **Armoured Trap**

The threat to Lahore, as anticipated, would cause Pakistan not only to take the heat off Akhnoor but also to launch a counteroffensive in accordance with her plan to attempt a breakout and to go for Amritsar. This is just what 11 Corps wanted, in order to destroy Pakistan’s counteroffensive. It was decided that Asal Uttar and Khemkaran



would be the ideal killing ground to destroy Pakistan's Armoured Division. Asal Uttar covered both, the Khemkaran-Amritsar axis as well as the Khemkaran-Patti axis. The Pakistani Armoured Division attacked exactly as anticipated on 9-10 September 1965. Massive tank battles were fought in the areas of Asal Uttar, Khemkaran and Patti and this area soon became a graveyard for Pakistani tanks. It is said that this battle was second only to the battle of the Bulge fought during World War II. Despite repeated attempts to break through the Indian anti-tank defences deployed in this area, the Pakistanis were unable to make any headway and suffered tremendous losses. A total of 97 *Patton* tanks were lost by Pakistan in this area of which 32 were in running condition. It is here that Company Quartermaster Havildar Abdul Hamid won his *Param Vir Chakra* for knocking out seven *Patton* tanks.

### The 'Jai Kisan' Element

A vital factor that helped the Indian Army to destroy the Pakistani Armoured Division was that the Indian farmers of that area, knowing that a big battle was brewing in that area, cut their irrigation channels so that their fields could get watered during their absence. As a result the Pakistani armoured offensive got bogged down in the slushy fields and their tanks became sitting targets for the Indian armour and anti-tank guns. It is perhaps because of this that the slogan *Jai Jawan Jai Kisan* was coined.

Having lost the ability to continue the offensive any further, the Pakistani Commander-in-chief called off the offensive. Thus came to an ignominious end, Pakistan President's boast that "My tanks will reach New Delhi along the Grand Trunk Road in a matter of hours!"

In the meanwhile, India's newly raised 1 Corps was given the task of isolating Sialkot from Lahore. The capture of Chawinda was part of the overall design of 1 Corps in its operations in the Sialkot Sector. To meet this threat, Pakistan planned to use her 1 Corps with her 6 Armoured Division to prevent an Indian breakthrough from the north and to destroy the Indian forces in the Sialkot-Jassar Sector.

Although many have termed the result of the 1965 War with Pakistan as a stalemate, it would be more appropriate to say that it was Pakistan that lost the war. Pakistan failed miserably once again in her aim of annexing Jammu and Kashmir by force although all factors were in her favour. On the contrary, it resulted in the near total destruction of one of her armoured divisions.

In facing the Pakistani offensive, India decided that the best alternative open to her was the destruction of Pakistan's offensive forces and in this she substantially succeeded. The timely occupation of the Asal Uttar position and the conduct of its brave defenders turned the tide of the war.


### Navy Not Used

In this war, the Indian Navy was not allowed to launch offensive operations on the western seaboard. The Government of India passed strict orders to the Navy that they would remain on the defensive on the western coast and should not cross the 24th parallel which passes through Dwarka. This was because the Indonesian Navy had posed a threat to the Nicobar Islands and the bulk of the Navy had to meet that threat. This order was passed despite the Naval Chief, Admiral Soman's, persistent plea that he should be allowed to take offensive action on the western coast with whatever resources.

During this war, the Army felt that air support to the troops on the ground was inadequate as a substantial part of the air effort was directed towards strategic tasks and air defence. Also, the available air effort was kept centralised at Advance Air Headquarters Western Air Command and it took time for formations to receive air support. The IAF *Gnats* did exceedingly well in shooting down PAF *Sabres* that earned them the sobriquet of *Sabre Slayers*. IAF *Canberras* raided PAF bases at Sargodha and Chaklala

at night, flying over 200 counter-air and interdiction missions at these and other Pakistan air bases. The virtuosity of the *Hunters* also was showcased as they were used in the counter-air, interdiction and close air support roles. The *Mysteres* were very effective in the ground attack role and proved particularly effective against enemy armour. The 1965 War was the first full-scale war in which the IAF was involved and many lessons were learnt.

### Bold Political Decision

It is the leadership and courage of brave officers and men that sometimes changes the course of history and the destiny of nations. Indian leadership at all levels proved strong and effective. Most of the fighting was done in Pakistani territory, thanks to the bold political decision to open the second front and considerable losses were inflicted on the enemy, particularly in armour. The bulk of the *Patton* tanks gifted to Pakistan by the USA were destroyed and the area around Asal Uttar, the graveyard of Pakistani tanks, was appropriately christened as *Patton Nagar*. The correct appreciation and timely occupation of the Asal Uttar position and the aggressive conduct of the defensive battle was primarily responsible for the defeat of the Pakistani war machine and the failure of their boastful slogan of *Delhi Chalo*. Most importantly, it forced Pakistan to realise that she had miscalculated India's response and underestimated her military capabilities. A lesson she had to learn again in 1971 and 1999. 

The 1965 War resulted in the near total destruction of one of Pakistan's armoured divisions



## PAKISTAN MISSES A TRICK OPERATION GRAND SLAM

Among the many reasons proffered for the change in command, three have some semblance of credibility. One explanation was that Yahya was a close friend of Ayub and with the fall of Akhnoor imminent, he lobbied with Ayub to give him command and Ayub obliged to help an old friend. Another reason that has been proffered was that Malik belonged to the Ahmadiyya sect and Ayub did not want an Ahmadiyya to become a war hero. Both these theories while possible, appear unlikely. Perhaps the change had something to do with Ayub's belief that the capture of Akhnoor would lead to a general war with India – a possibility that he wished to avoid. Why then did Ayub sanction the operation if he feared such a possibility? The reasons for the change will perhaps remain an enigma.

In the summer of '64, voices within Pakistan favouring the use of force to wrest Kashmir from India started becoming stronger and louder. The President of Pakistan, Field Marshal Ayub Khan had just formed the 'Kashmir Publicity Committee', with a mandate to 'keep the Kashmir issue alive' and this Committee, in February 1965, put together a proposal to send troops of the Pakistan Army, disguised as Kashmiri guerrillas, into the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir, to foment an uprising against the government. The underlying belief was that such an uprising, in conjunction with armed military intervention, could wrest the state from India. The proposal mooted by the Committee was supported by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the then foreign minister of Pakistan, but was not too well received by Ayub and his Army Chief, General Musa, who feared that such an act could lead to war with India. It received a quiet burial, but strangely, two months later, Ayub accorded approval to the proposal, despite the fact that the Army Chief still had serious

reservations about the viability of the project. Ayub gave Major General Akhtar Malik, the commander of Pakistan's 12 Infantry Division the authority to plan and execute the military operation. 'Operation Gibraltar' and 'Grand Slam' thus came into being.

### **Invasion By Infiltration**

General Malik's plan consisted of two components. The first, code named 'Operation Gibraltar', envisaged the infiltration of thousands of regular and irregular troops dressed as Kashmiri guerrillas into Jammu and Kashmir, to create an uprising in the state and tie down Indian security forces in combatting the guerrillas. This was to be followed by an armoured thrust by 12 Infantry Division across the Chamb Sector to threaten Akhnoor. While approving the plan, Ayub increased its scope to the capture of Akhnoor for which additional resources were allotted to the Division. Preparations for 'Operation Gibraltar' then commenced in earnest. On 1 August 1965, the



various columns of 'Operation Gibraltar' crossed the Ceasefire Line (CFL) to move into their designated areas. 'Gibraltar' had been set in motion with D day set for 7 August to commence operations.

### India Surprised

Meanwhile in India, not a whiff of such stirring happenings permeated to any of the intelligence agencies. The 19 Infantry Division, deployed along the Ceasefire Line in Kashmir, too was unaware of what lay in store for them. On 1 August, at the moment that the infiltrators were moving into India across the CFL, the divisional commander had moved to Srinagar, en route to visit the holy *Amarnath* Shrine. His principal staff officer, the GSO 1 of the Division had just received his posting orders on that very day and was required to move forthwith to Wellington. He too proceeded to Srinagar to inform his family and thereafter planned to meet the forward formations on a farewell visit. The Pakistanis could not have asked for a better situation than this. However, at times, as said by the Scottish poet, Robert Burns, "the best laid plans of mice and men, often go awry". 'Gibraltar' was detected in time, more by chance than design and thereafter, the situation was brought under control, with Indian Forces also capturing the Hajipir Pass in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. And then Pakistan launched 'Grand Slam' on 1 September.

### Reaching For Jugular

For the second time, the Indian intelligence agencies were taken by surprise. The Chamb Sector where Pakistan attacked was the area of operational responsibility of India's 191 Infantry Brigade Group. The Commander had taken over the Brigade just 15 days earlier, following the death of the previous commander in enemy shelling. The Brigade was directly under the Corps, but a newly created headquarters had been designated to assume responsibility of this sector from 15 September. This was HQs 10 Infantry Division, under raising in Bangalore and Belgaum. Elements of the HQs moved into the area only on 28 August. When the enemy struck on 1 September, the Divisional Commander, who was yet to visit this sector, was at Jhangar, carrying out a reconnaissance of the 80 Infantry Brigade Sector. He was told to assume operational responsibility of the area with immediate effect and this he proceeded to do with the skeleton staff at his disposal. In the timing and scale of her attack, Pakistan had achieved total surprise. In the words of the Army Commander, General Harbaksh Singh, "Pakistan scored one over us in keeping us guessing regarding the timing and area of her intended offensive even up to the eleventh hour. Our intelligence service had once again failed to penetrate the fog of war." That Pakistan still failed to exploit the opportunity was for India, indeed providential. Just a day earlier, the Army Chief had visited Srinagar and was briefed by GOC 15 Corps about the operational situation. Both the Chief and the Corps Commander were cognisant of the possibility of Pakistan officially associating

herself with 'Operation Gibraltar' and launching an offensive in support of the infiltration forces either in the Jhangar-Naushera area or in Chamb, the former being assessed as the more probable course of action that the enemy would take. It was also assessed at that time that should an offensive be launched in Chamb, it would not be able to get very far. This, as events were to prove, was a gross underestimation of Pakistan's intention and capabilities.

### Force Levels: India

The 191 Infantry Brigade Group had four infantry battalions, 9 Punjab, 3 Mahar, 6 Sikh Light Infantry (Sikh LI) and 15 Kumaon. In addition, it had 3 J&K Militia and a Punjab Armed Police Battalion. The artillery component consisted of 14 Field Regiment, 85 Light Battery and a troop of medium guns from 39 Medium Regiment. B Squadron 20 Lancers had recently been inducted into the area and formed the armoured component of the Brigade. It was equipped with *AMX 13* tanks, a light tank of French origin. As the Akhnoor Bridge was a Class 18 bridge, only vehicles with gross weight below 18 tonnes could ply over it. The *AMX 13*, at 13 tonnes was hence inducted into the area, but no heavier tank could be so inducted.

The 9 Punjab and 3 Mahar were deployed in the Hill Sector on the Kalidhar Range. 6 Sikh Light Infantry (Sikh LI), which was destined to face the brunt of the Pakistani attack on 01 September 1965, was deployed in the plains sector in several isolated pickets along the IB and the CFL. The Battalion was scattered in company minus and platoon pickets. This was a new Battalion, raised just two years earlier, on 1 October 1963 at Meerut. It took over the operational role in the Chamb Sector under 191 Infantry Brigade on 3 May 1965. The 3 J&K Militia, a paramilitary force was interspersed with both 3 Mahar and 6 Sikh LI. Some border outposts along the IB were also manned by the Punjab Armed Police. The fourth infantry battalion, 15 Kumaon, was deployed in depth at Mandiala, along with the Brigade HQs. Two troops of the armoured squadron were deployed in an extended manner to cover the entire front upto Burejal. A troop was in the south in Munawar area and one troop in reserve was at Barsala. Of this force, three tanks were under repair in the rear. To the rear of Chamb, upto and inclusive of Akhnoor, there were no forces deployed. A breakthrough at Chamb, would hence give a free run to the enemy upto Akhnoor.

### Force Levels: Pakistan

The forces allotted for the offensive gave Pakistan overwhelming superiority in terms of tank and artillery support. The Armour component consisted of two armoured regiments, 11 Cavalry and 13 Lancers,



**Maj Gen  
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each equipped with two squadrons of *Patton* tanks and one squadron of *Sherman M-36B2* tank destroyers. These regiments were from Pakistan's newly raised 6 Armoured Division. Artillery was massed to give the force tremendous firepower. This consisted of 4 Corps Artillery Brigade and the 7 Division Artillery Brigade. The total firepower was a formidable 110 artillery guns plus a light anti-aircraft gun battery and artillery locating resources. Three infantry brigades were made available for the offensive.

In terms of Infantry, the force levels were 2:1 in favour of Pakistan, but in armour the ratio was 6:1 in their favour. More importantly, the *AMX 13* tank held by 20 Lancers was a light tank which was decidedly inferior to the newly acquired *Patton* tanks deployed by Pakistan, both in terms of the main gun and armour protection. Pakistan also had a 6:1 superiority in artillery. In addition, the two locating regiments available with them gave them a further advantage in terms of locating the Indian gun positions and making their neutralisation easier through counter-bombardment. This restricted the Indian artillery capability to retaliate and to support their own forces.

### Execution Of The Plan

The overall plan for 'Grand Slam' involved three phases. The first phase was the most critical and envisaged a move up to the Manawar Wali Tawi after overrunning the defences of 191 Infantry Brigade west of Tawi, in Laleali, Deva, Sakrana and Chamb by 4 Sector and 102 Infantry Brigade. The second phase envisaged the capture of Akhnoor by 10 Infantry Brigade. The third phase envisaged exploiting success by 102 Infantry Brigade on axis Akhnoor-Jhangar-Dharmshal, link-up with the infiltrating forces operating there and thereafter capture Rajouri. Alternately, if feasible, the plan called for the capture of Jammu.

The Pakistani plan was bold, but was dependent on speed if Akhnoor was to be captured. At the point of application, the two enemy assaulting brigades had only a thinly strung out battalion, 6 Sikh LI opposing them. Against the might of two armoured regiments, equipped with the latest tanks, were just two troops of *AMX 13* tanks. The terrain favoured the movement of armoured forces and in real terms, the enemy had a superiority in excess of 10:1 at the point of decision. It still took them the better part of the day to breach the defences of 6 Sikh LI. The 15 Kumaon, deployed at Mandiala, however held on and withdrew only later on orders after last light. The enemy made no attempt to bypass the opposition, breach the Munawar Wali Tawi and isolate the brigade. Had it done so, it would have had a clear run to Akhnoor on the next day, 2 September. That was the first stroke of luck for India.

### Change Of Command

On 2 September, for some strange and inexplicable reasons, the command of the enemy forces changed hands. Malik was relieved of the command of the offensive forces and the same was handed over to General Yahya Khan. There was a lull in the battle and Yahya took up a defensive posture, ostensibly to guard


against an Indian counter attack! The advance was resumed only after last light on 3 September. This gave India just the time needed to reinforce the defences at Jaurian and at the Fatwal Ridge – two positions which the enemy had to overcome if he was to reach Akhnoor.

Among the many reasons proffered for the change in command, three have some semblance of credibility. One explanation was that Yahya was a close friend of Ayub and with the fall of Akhnoor imminent, he lobbied with Ayub to give him command and Ayub obliged to help an old friend. Another reason that has been proffered was that Malik belonged to the Ahmadiyya sect and Ayub did not want an Ahmadiyya to become a war hero. Both these theories while possible, appear unlikely. Perhaps the change had something to do with Ayub's belief that the capture of Akhnoor would lead to a general war with India – a possibility that he wished to avoid. Why then did Ayub sanction the operation if he feared such a possibility? The reasons for the change will perhaps remain an enigma but Pakistan lost a grand opportunity to capture Akhnoor and place India on the back foot – an opportunity which she was not to get again.

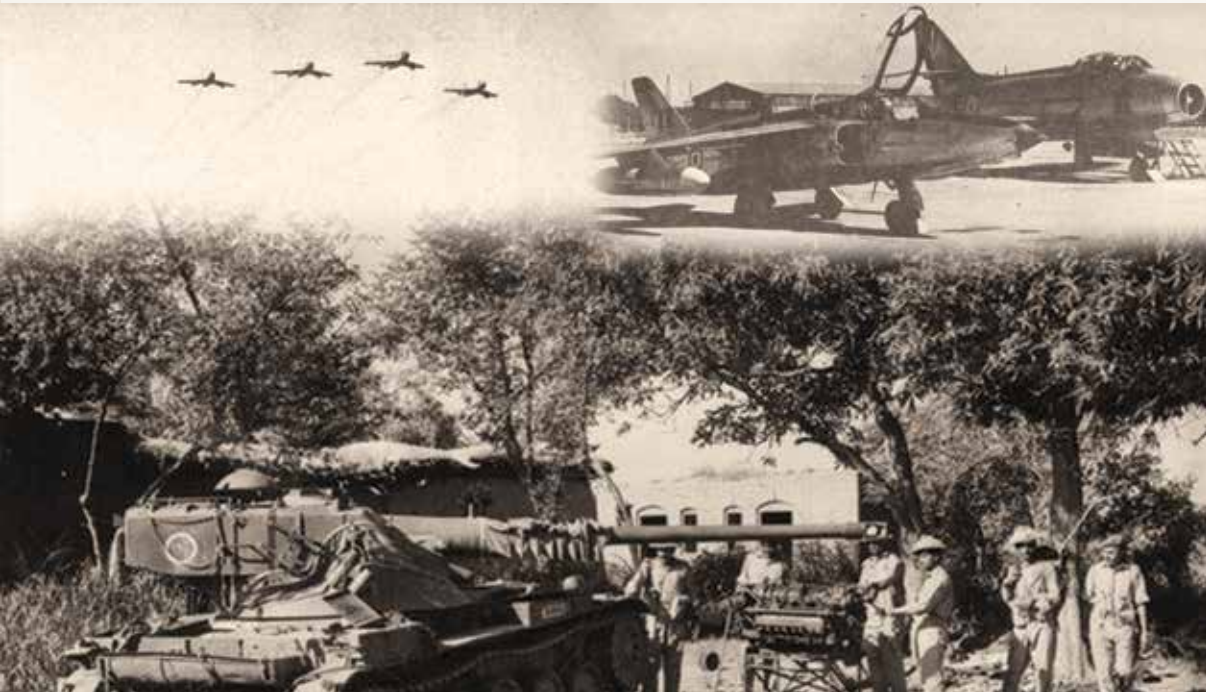
With the launch of operations by India across the International Border on 6 September, Pakistan was forced to pull back the major component of its offensive forces from the Chamb Sector and a stalemate developed in the sector which was to continue till the declaration of the ceasefire.

Undoubtedly, Pakistan missed a golden opportunity to capture Akhnoor, which lay ripe for the picking, had they moved with speed on day one itself, bypassing opposition en route and making a breach over the Munawar Wali Tawi. That would have turned the defences of 191 Infantry Brigade. A dash to Akhnoor on 2 September would have met with no opposition, but the impact on India would have been catastrophic. The entire defences of the sector stretching from Poonch to Naushera were dependent on the single bridge across the Chenab River at Akhnoor and would have been impossible to maintain. The National Highway to Srinagar would have been threatened and Jammu would have remained extremely vulnerable. Indeed, the course of the war would have changed. Pakistan would have been able to justify the aggression, stating that it had been necessitated by India's capture of the Hajipir Pass and world opinion would largely have remained ambivalent to Pakistani aggression.

### Heroes Of Akhnoor

That India was saved the blushes can be attributed to the resistance put up by 191 Infantry Brigade Group, especially to the heroism and courage of 6 Sikh LI, 15 Kumaon and the squadron of 20 Lancers, which delayed the enemy on the critical first day. After all, the enemy had to advance just 5 to 7 km in open country where no natural obstacle existed upto the Munawar Wali Tawi and no anti-tank mines too had been laid to hinder the attacker. On the second day, it was providence that intervened with the inexplicable change in command. Truly, Pakistan missed a great opportunity to change the course of the war, even before it had begun. 





**Brig  
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# 1965

## A TRIBUTE TO COURAGE AND RESOLUTENESS

**Today our national goal remains that of securing economic growth and development. This precludes strategic offensive and it is generally perceived that the nation will not go to war unless it is forced to. This is evident from the operational tasks assigned to the Indian Armed Forces as are evident in discussions in the open domain. The three Services are required to be prepared for a war to dominate Pakistan and deter China. Thus a two-front war scenario is realistically appraised and in both the cases strategic defensive remains the primary option with variation for a more robust posture to ‘dominate’ Pakistan.**

**I**ndo-Pak War 1965 was one of the finest hours in the history of independent India which saw Indian Armed Forces triumph after the perceived humiliation of 1962 by an adversary who was better armed. The Indian military demonstrated admirable resilience in coming on top of an opponent that was fed on a false sense of superiority in strategy, tactics and military equipment and was led by a dictator who lacked the sagacity to appreciate the intrinsic strength of India’s leadership.

### **Underestimating India**

Pakistan’s President Field Marshal Ayub Khan’s gross misreading of the diminutive yet resolute personality

of Indian Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri led him to commit the blunder of launching his nation into a war which was unwinnable. Shastri’s unwavering determination was reflected by the military leadership led by Chief of the Army Staff General JN Chaudhuri and Lt Gen Harbaksh Singh General Officer Commanding in Chief Western Command. To General Harbaksh goes the credit of successes on the Western Front, which covered the entire belt from Jammu and Kashmir up to Ganganagar in North Rajasthan. The Indian Air Force under Marshal of the Air Force the then Air Chief Marshal Arjan Singh similarly distinguished in outmatching the Pakistan Air Force equipped with superior aircraft and technology provided by the United States.

In 1965 India traditionally adopted a defensive strategy given the necessity for restraint, preservation of national power, adverse impact on the economy and providing greater options for effective employment of military force. Today the Indian Armed Forces leadership tempered in the War of Liberation of Bangladesh in 1971, the misadventure by Pakistani regular forces in Kargil in 1999 and many years of fighting insurgency and terrorism has the aura of confidence which was relatively untested in 1965. Thus there would be infinite wariness in the opposition for an adventure. Moreover force accretion provides a distinct advantage to India *vis-à-vis* Pakistan which could be assessed as anything from 1:2 to 2.5 considering not just the numbers but the combat potential of the tanks, fighter aircraft and warships. However despite these advantages the strategy remains defensive.

A comparison of the strategic defensive as adopted in 1965 and as envisaged today will therefore be relevant to understand advantages of the same and measures to be undertaken for a successful outcome in the case of a conventional war including the nuclear option.

### India's Defensive Strategy

India operated on the premise of the strategic defensive in 1965. This was a well-considered option based on holistic appraisal of the need for national and military rebuilding as a consequence of the trauma of 1962. There was the food crisis of the 1950's which had led to import of wheat from the United States under PL 480, Soviet Union and others. While military strength, capability and morale had been restored, there was natural aversion to, 'testing the sword', in another confrontation with uncertainty of outcome. Moreover on the west, Pakistan had been equipped with modern American military equipment while India fought with dated *Gnat* fighters and *Centurion* tanks. Strategic defensive was thus a natural preference.

On the other hand Pakistan adopted the strategic offensive in 1965. This was based on the reverse logic of superiority in arms and a military leadership that was not accountable to the travesty imposed by war on its people. Pakistan's offensive strategy mainly comprised of launching operations in the Rann of Kutch as a prelude to 'Operation Gibraltar' and 'Grand Slam' in Jammu and Kashmir.

India checkmated the first phase in Kutch and Prime Minister Shastri was quick to warn Pakistan not to misread Indian intention and avoid a larger conflagration. As Major KC Praval highlights in his seminal historical work, *Indian Army After Independence*, speaking in the *Lok Sabha* on 28 April 1965 Shastri said, "If Pakistan continues to discard reason and persists in its aggressive activities, our Army will defend the country and it will decide its own strategy and the employment of its manpower and equipment in the manner it deems best."

The statement reflected the advantages of the strategic defensive. Prewarning the opponent of consequences of abandoning restraint is in-built in the same while in the military field it enables choosing the most appropriate response in terms of timing and theatre of operations.

Underlying the strategic defensive is the principle of restraint borne out of the logic of war avoidance and retention of military power for effective employment at the place and time of one's own choosing. A sagacious political and military opponent would read the intent and flexibly readjust aims and objectives

### Pak Misreading

Pakistan's military leadership lacked accountability to its people and thus was intent on following the predetermined offensive strategy. This was despite heavy losses suffered in the Rann of Kutch by Pakistan which were estimated to be 300 or three times the Indian number of 98. Ayub Khan completely misread Prime Minister Shastri's resolve and his deeper understanding of matters military and persisted with the second phase of the 1965 offensive in Jammu and Kashmir.

Pakistan infiltrated the Gibraltar Force in the Kashmir Valley with the aim of raising the civil population to revolt in August 1965. On 1 September 'Operation Grand Slam' was launched by Pakistan in the Chamb Sector with the aim of capturing the Akhnour Bridge and cutting off areas in the North in the Rajouri belt. These operations were undertaken even as ceasefire post the Kutch action was signed by both sides on 1 July.

### Chaudhuri Doctrine

Having anticipated this perfidy, Indian Chief of the Army Staff General JN Chaudhuri issued orders to implement plans for an offensive in Punjab threatening the most vital political objective Lahore. This was the offensive component of India's defensive strategy, wherein when forced upon by circumstances of the campaign or a threat to a vital area, an aggressive response is initiated on a front of one's own choosing. The aim of such a manoeuvre is to threaten the vitals of the enemy with a view to force him to retract and review his own offensive.

In this the selection of Lahore was seminal as it hurt the core of Pakistani national pride and prestige situated on the Grand Trunk Road connecting Delhi-Amritsar and Lahore in pre-partitioned India. As Indian 11 Corps undertook an offensive on a broad front with a view to contact the Ichhogil Canal, one of the battalions, 3 Jat crossed over the same and reached the outskirts of Lahore in Batapur locality on 7 September creating a storm in the General Headquarters in Rawalpindi. While lodgement could not be sustained, this set the stage for a considerable campaign of attrition that followed in the Western Theatre. This included destruction of

**Selection of Lahore was seminal as it hurt the core of Pakistani national pride and prestige**



the potent 1 Armoured Division of Pakistan which had been composed with a view to make a breakthrough to the Beas in the Battle of Khemkaran. By 15 September Field Marshal Ayub Khan was personally humiliated and was publicly calling for a ceasefire.

### War Waging Strategy 2015

While the defensive strategy was eminently successful in 1965 and achieved the war aims of preservation of territorial integrity and destruction of enemy combat power, what are the environmental dynamics today that may impact its application and thus suitability needs examination.

War as an option for nation states in the world where economy dominates polity and globalisation has brought nations together on a common platform has generally receded in the 21st century. As the recent discourse on declared military strategy by China and the United States in May and June 2015 reveals the possibility of state on state conflict has considerably reduced though not ruled out.

Emergence of political militias such as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and closer home terrorist groups as Pakistan ISI sponsored Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) have been identified as the key adversaries against whom nations will have to wage a war. In the Indian context the Pakistani state will remain relevant even in the non-state scenario as it is actively supporting groups like the LeT.

### Pak Nuke Intentions

Nuclear is another dimension that is relevant to the discussion. For India and so far to China as well the nuclear weapon remains a political option, not so for Pakistan. By developing and deploying the *Nasr*, battlefield ripple firing rocket, Pakistan has declared the intention of using the same as a military weapon of war.

Today our national goal remains that of securing economic growth and development. This precludes strategic offensive and it is generally perceived that the nation will not go to war unless it is forced to. This is evident from the operational tasks assigned to the Indian Armed Forces as are evident in discussions in the open domain. The three Services are required to be prepared for a war to dominate Pakistan and deter China. Thus a two-front war scenario is realistically appraised and in both the cases strategic defensive remains the primary option with variation for a more robust posture to, 'dominate', Pakistan.

Given the environmental conditions and national military objective of war avoidance; the military strategy remains that of strategic defensive. Options such as Cold Start in response to a major terrorist attack by Pakistan, though increasingly negated publicly and nuclear, 'no first use', denotes such a reactive approach. A discussion of the role and tasks of the 17 Mountain Strike Corps (MSC) also suggest



that the main objective is to deter grab actions of territories in dispute such as the Tawang tract and of vital importance like the Siliguri Corridor.

### Key Factors Of Success

While the strategic defensive does not imply passivity, it is reactive in nature and denies the military commander seizure of initiative during pre-hostility period. The advantage lies in the discretion in employment of force as was seen in the 1965 War. This would denote the need for envisaging options for employment of the offensive force to regain the initiative and force the enemy in turn, first on the tactical defensive, followed by an operationally retrograde manoeuvre and finally calling for cessation of hostilities.

Development of force capability is analogous to the above aim with focus on a balance of the defensive and offensive components in the conventional and the nuclear dimension. Unlike in 1965, a maritime component of the military strategy is an important advantage that India has in 2015. Thus evolving a joint tri-Service response, validating the same through simulation and rehearsing all components of the force in symphony will ensure that a strategic defensive strategy will be as successful in 2015 as it was in 1965 even in the 'Two-front' scenario.

A word of caution is also necessary: Much will depend on an all-pervasive surveillance architecture that can provide real time situational awareness and an all source analysis intelligence system that ensures that the military and nation are not surprised. In addition strong denial of access to critical areas of national significance is necessary to ensure that loss does not create a situation that cannot be retrieved in the short window of opportunity before triggering the nuclear threshold. **D&A**

**Unlike in 1965, a maritime component of the military strategy is an important advantage that India has in 2015**



INS MYSORE WITH INS VIKRANT

## THE INDIAN NAVY AND THE INDO-PAK WAR OF 1965

**A**fter China's attack on India's northern frontiers in 1962, the Army's hands were more than full and the Indian Navy had been charged with the garrisoning of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

Commencing 1964 onwards, Indonesia's stance was markedly pro-Pakistan. Indonesian leaders started voicing claims to Great Nicobar Island, which was closest to Sumatra and there was an increase in the sightings of unidentified submarines and aircraft in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. It was this vulnerability in July/August 1965 that impelled Naval Headquarters to keep the Indian Fleet in the Bay of Bengal for as long as possible, so as to deter adventurist Indonesian naval moves.

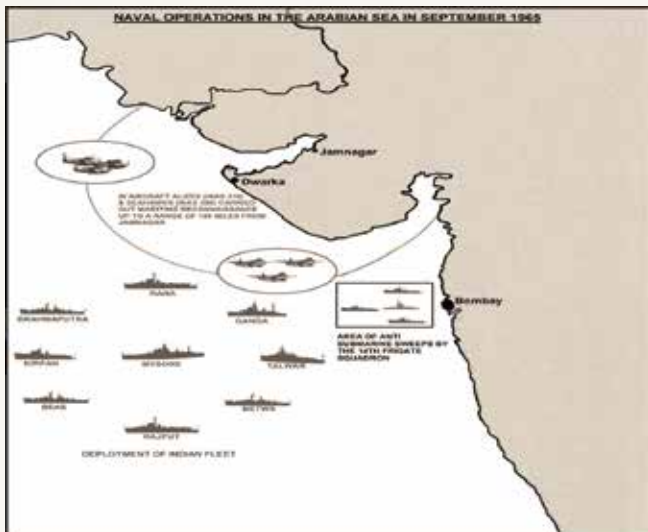
The Indian Fleet comprising *Mysore* (Flagship), *Brahmaputra*, *Beas*, *Khukri*, *Kirpan*, *Kuthar* and *Ranjit* sailed for the Bay of Bengal in end June 1965. It had been arranged for a British Submarine *Astute* to be available off Madras in July for anti-submarine training, after which it was planned that ships of the Fleet deploy off Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Calcutta and Visakhapatnam.

Accordingly, *Mysore*, *Brahmaputra* and *Beas*, after completion of the exercise off Madras, were deployed in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in August 1965

while the remaining four ships remained deployed off Madras (Chennai) to continue the anti-submarine exercises. In end August 1965, *Mysore*, *Brahmaputra* and *Beas* proceeded to Calcutta.

As is well known, Pakistan had been committing violations of the Indo-Pak border throughout the summer months of 1965 and the frequency of these violations had increased further during the first week of August culminating in a large number of armed infiltrators crossing the ceasefire line in Kashmir on 05 August 1965. In spite of continued efforts made by India to ensure peace, the situation soon aggravated and the Indian Army had to take preventive measures in Kashmir to plug the entry points of these infiltrators. Since Pakistan was likely to extend the war to the Arabian Sea as well, Karachi being its main naval base, the Indian Navy decided to initiate necessary actions to prepare the fleet for the probable war.

Thus, it was in the middle of the deployment of the Indian Fleet to the Bay of Bengal and before the second group of ships *Khukri*, *Kirpan*, *Kuthar* and *Ranjit* had finished exercising with the British submarine off Madras (Chennai), that the Indian Fleet was immediately recalled to Bombay, as Pakistan Army crossed the international border on 01 September 1965 and advanced towards Akhnoor.



Naval Operations in September 1965

The Indian Navy's role was the maritime defence of the Western and Eastern Coasts and the island territories. The tasks envisaged were: first, to carry out sweeps off the West Coast of Pakistan to disrupt the Port of Karachi and inflict heavy damage on port installations; next, the destruction of Pakistan Naval Forces if ordered; third, provision of general support for the defence of the major ports on the West Coast and fourth, the provision of general cover and protection to our merchant ships in the Arabian Sea, especially those plying to and from the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea.

India's policy, however, was not to escalate the conflict by a direct confrontation at sea. Given the Government's determination to limit the scope of the conflict as much as possible, the role assigned to the Navy during the war was mainly a defensive one.

Nevertheless, the Indian Navy remained vigilant to ensure the safety of Indian ports, guard the country's entire coastline and above all protect India's shipping from interference by the Pakistan Navy. Whereas most of Pakistani shipping was carried on neutral bottoms, India's shipping was largely borne by Indian ships – 250 of them were owned by India, while only 30 merchant ships belonged to Pakistan.

Intelligence on the disposition of the Pak naval forces had indicated that the Pak submarine *Ghazi* was at sea and was likely to have been deployed off Bombay for anti-shipping operations and the Pak Fleet had been proceeding to sea everyday for exercises and returning to its anchorage in the evening.

The Indian Fleet was led by the Flagship *Mysore* – a sleek cruiser powered by an 80,000 shaft horsepower steam plant with state-of-the-art command and control facilities. *Mysore's* nine 6 inch guns, controlled by the latest fire control equipment, could deliver two and a half tonnes of explosives a minute on the target. *Mysore* also had eight 4 inch guns for surface and anti-aircraft operations and twelve 40 mm *Bofors* AA guns. In fact her punch and looks were legendary and she was popularly referred to as the *Queen of the Orient*.

Flying the flag of Rear Admiral BA Samson, *Mysore* sailed for offensive patrols on the West Coast, accompanied by *Brahmaputra*, *Beas*, *Betwa*, *Khukri*, *Kirpan*, *Kuthar*, *Talwar*, *Rana*, *Rajput*, *Ranjit* and

*Ganga*. The Fleet carried out intensive patrols and sweeps in the Arabian Sea, in conjunction with the Navy's aircraft, throughout the duration of the war. On one occasion, the Navy's *Alize* aircraft sighted two Pakistani ships 60 miles off India's West Coast. The Ships of the Indian Fleet at once pursued the enemy, who without giving battle, scurried back to Karachi. In fact, for most of the duration of the war, Pakistani Navy was ensconced in Karachi, seeking safety behind heavy shore defences.

The Indian Navy's anti-submarine task force was keeping constant vigil and was particularly searching for the Pakistani submarine *Ghazi*, which was known to have closed to within 12 miles off Bombay harbour. On two occasions, *INS Kuthar*, Commanded by Commander DS Paintal, detected an underwater sonar contact of a possible submarine and launched attacks with full salvos from her anti-submarine mortars. The hide and seek went on for five continuous days and *Ghazi* was kept under continuous pressure by the Indian Navy's ships and aircraft. Because of this relentless anti-submarine action, *Ghazi*, which was the only submarine in the entire subcontinent (the Indian Navy only acquired its first submarine in 1967), could not make any impact on the war.

*Seahawk* aircraft of Indian Naval Air Squadron (INAS) 300, then located at Jamnagar in Gujarat, were placed under the operational control of the Indian Air Force on 02 September 1965 for offensive action against the enemy. All Naval Air Squadrons – INAS 300 (*Seahawk* fighter squadron), INAS 310 (*Alize* anti-submarine aircraft squadron), INAS 550 (*Seahawk* and *Alize* trainer squadron) and INAS 551 (*Kiran* jet trainer squadron) were deployed for reconnaissance and anti-shipping roles and for the air defence of Indian seaports.

On the eve of the ceasefire on 23 September 1965, a false statement broadcast by the Pakistan Radio claimed that an Indian frigate, *INS Brahmaputra* had been sunk in the Arabian Sea, by the Pakistani submarine *Ghazi*. After the war, the Indian Navy invited the world press and Naval Attachés of all countries accredited to India, to have a cup of tea on board *Brahmaputra* at the Naval Dockyard, Bombay, which was hosted by the Fleet Commander, Rear Admiral BA Samson.

In his letter to the Navy, the then Defence Minister YB Chavan expressed the government's appreciation for the role played by the Navy during the war as follows:

*"I greatly appreciate the silent but efficient role which the Navy played in the defence of the country. The Navy protected islands which were vital to our security, guarded our ports and the long Indian coast line. All merchant ships destined for our ports reached safely and our international trade was not permitted to be interfered with by the Pakistan Navy. I take this opportunity to emphasise again that the Navy has done and achieved all that the Government desired of it, within the bounds and compass allotted to it."* **DSA**

# PRAKASH MISHRA IPS

## DIRECTOR GENERAL CENTRAL RESERVE POLICE FORCE



**P**rakash Mishra joined the Indian Police Service in 1977 and he was allotted to the Odisha Cadre. He is a postgraduate in Applied Economics and also a Law graduate.

During his 36 years of Police career, he has held several positions of eminence both at the State and the Centre. In his home State Odisha he served as SP Security (1988-90), DIG (Security) to CM, DIG Bhubaneswar Range (1996-98), DIG Crime Branch (1988-89), Director (Sports & Youth Services) (1999-2000), IG (Admin) (2000-01), CMD (Police Housing Corporation) (2006-2009), DG-cum-Director of Intelligence (2009-2010), DG Home Guards and DG Fire Services (2010), DGP Odisha (2012-14) and CMD, Odisha State Road Transport Corporation. At the Centre he served as SP/DIG, CBI (1990-96), IG RPF (2001-2003), Joint Director NPA, Hyderabad (2003-05), ADG/Spl DG, NIA (2010-12) and Director General, National Disaster Reponse Force and Civil Defence (2012).

As Director Intelligence, Odisha he initiated a slew of measures against Naxals in the State. As the DGP of Odisha, during 2012-14, his effective anti-Naxal strategies could effectively contain the Naxal menace in the State resulting in the neutralisation of several Naxal leaders and in drastic reduction of SF casualties. As Spl Director NIA, he supervised investigation and trials of several important cases of national and international ramifications. As DIG, CID Odisha, he investigated the sensational Australian Missionary Graham Stains' murder case and the offenders were brought to justice. As SP/DIG CBI, supervised several important investigations including



the kidnapping of Ms Rubiya Sayeed, killing of Station Director of Doordarshan Srinagar, killing of Air Force personnel at Srinagar etc.

He has undergone several training courses of international repute, viz specialised training on interrogation, international Terrorism and non-verbal communication from FBI National Academy, USA, ATAP programme on interdicting Terrorist Organisation in New Mexico, USA and training on International Terrorism conducted by JICA, Tokyo.

Prakash Mishra is an eminent speaker on various police subjects, national security, intelligence, investigations, Left Wing Extremism, counter-terrorism etc.

He is recipient of Police Medal for Meritorious Service (1994), President's Police Medal for Distinguished Service (2001) and Odisha Governor's Medal (2006).

He has held the charge of Special Secretary (Internal Security) in Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi looking after the internal Security matters of the country with particular emphasis on the North-east, counter-terrorism and Left Wing Extremism from 8th July, 2014 to 21st December, 2014. **DSA**



# INDO-PAK WAR 1965 REFLECTIONS

The process of expansion and reorganisation of Armed Forces started post 1962. This was still in process when the 1965 War started. However having learnt the lessons they were in a better state to fight which was evident during the war. The performance of Armed Forces during 1971 conflict bears testimony to the fact of our ability to give a crushing defeat to Pakistan which led to its bifurcation and creation of Bangladesh. Modernisation and restructuring of Armed Forces is a continuous process which is based on various factors viz envisaged threat perception, geopolitical realities etc. This has enabled us to optimise our forces in a manner that the areas of responsibilities today are reduced and are much better managed.



**Lt Gen  
Munish Sibal  
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The writer is a Defence Analyst and Former GOC of 11 Corps (Punjab) and retired from the Indian Army as Quarter Master General.



*“What is the good of experience if you do not reflect.”*

— Frederick the Great

**T**he month of August 2015 will witness India and its Armed Forces commemorating fifty years of India-Pakistan War 1965. This war was significant in many aspects and

was a major morale booster for the nation and its Armed Forces. The success came in the backdrop of the debacle of 1962 Indo-China conflict. The political establishment had clearly understood the need to

strengthen its security apparatus and modernise its Armed Forces to meet the future challenges from its neighbours especially Pakistan and China. The focus shifted to the Armed Forces that went in for major expansion, reorganisation, restructuring and modernisation. It must be amply clear that the above process takes considerable time, resources and effort. The Pakistan establishment had never reconciled to its failure to annex Kashmir in 1948. Every government in Pakistan has focused on this unfinished agenda till date. It had clearly realised that given the size of both the countries, it was unlikely to succeed in any future conflict against India. Pakistan also felt that post-1962 debacle and the death of Prime Minister Nehru in 1964, India was both politically and militarily at its weakest. It therefore was a great opportunity once again to execute its nefarious designs.

### Commencement Of Operations

The skirmishes in Rann of Kutch in April-May 1965 emboldened Pakistan and were seen as a prelude to conduct of major operations in Jammu and Kashmir which were launched in August 1965. Both sides were able to gain success in various areas along the Ceasefire Line. The launch of 'Operation Grand Slam' by Pakistan to annex Akhnoor and cut-off Kashmir in early September was thwarted by the Indian Army. It was a major failure and an important turning point of the war. India in a brilliant strategic move, therefore decided to expand the area of conflict further south in Punjab for which plans had been well conceived by the Indian Army.

### Operations In Punjab

The overall strategy was to launch multiple operations towards Lahore and Kasur. Operations in Punjab ('Operation Riddle') were conducted under aegis of Vajra Corps, the oldest Corps of Indian Army. The operations were characterised by surprise, speed and aggressiveness and were launched along the Grand Trunk Road to Lahore, Khalra-Lahore and Khemkaran-Kasur road. Major gains were made in these areas. Indian forces crossed the Ichhogil Canal and soon were threatening the outskirts of Lahore. This area saw some hard fought and exemplary infantry actions in the battles of Dograi and Barki. The desperate Pakistan Army launched a counter-offensive further south in Khemkaran by its elite Armoured Division with the aim of threatening Amritsar. It met with stiff resistance and faced with major annihilation of its front line US made *Patton* tanks in the famous Battle of Asal Uttar. The area of Bhikhiwind came to be known as Patton Nagar. It may be pertinent to mention here the obituary of *Patton* tanks aptly made by President Radhakrishnan during his post-war visit to this area in following words "Born in Detroit, Died in Bhikhiwind". The proclamation of ceasefire on 22 September 1965 saw major territorial gains made by the Indian Army

*vis-à-vis* Pakistan. The war, as per experts, ended in a stalemate; however India had once again prevented Pakistan from annexing Kashmir. Indian Army displayed exemplary aggressiveness and highest level of morale to redeem its honour and bring glory to the nation.

### Present Day Scenario

While a lot has been commented upon by various analysts on the lessons learnt in war, what is imperative is to analyse our vulnerabilities then and how well are we prepared now. Accurate and timely intelligence of adversary is a major contributing factor for success in war. It may be worth recording the old saying "Forewarned is Forearmed". Unfortunately intelligence regarding activities of Pakistan and its intentions were found wanting. They were mostly inaccurate and misleading. Post 1965 War India went in for establishment of Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW) in 1968 to beef up its external intelligence both during peace and war. The intelligence apparatus also got reviewed post Indo-Pak conflict of 1971 and Kargil Operations 1999 in a major way. There is multiplicity of intelligence agencies and surveillance assets at the centre and state level. Lack of Intra and Inter-ministerial coordination as also the one-upmanship of various intelligence agencies to gain prominence continues to be a major impediment which needs to be corrected.

The quality of intelligence including tactical intelligence has considerably improved with the availability of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), satellites etc. The process of dissemination of intelligence has also been streamlined with the establishment of suitable structures. However intelligence can never be enough and we must continue with our present efforts to further improve this aspect.

**Our future planning will have to cater for a multiple front threat and prepare for related contingencies**

### Border Management

Infiltration along the Line of Control (LoC) and International border has been part of Pakistan strategy. It adopted the same during 1965 War and subsequently continues to support non-state actors to foment trouble in India. This vulnerability has got addressed in a major way with the construction of counter-infiltration obstacles along the LoC and fencing of International Border. The border is being effectively managed by deployment of paramilitary forces, beefing up by army in critical areas as also deployment of modern surveillance assets. These actions have seen a visible drop in infiltration. The paramilitary forces and other assets must be integrated in overall plans so as to optimise given resources for better application in war. They can play a prominent role for rear area security. We must continue with effective vigilance and further strengthen the counter-infiltration posture to defeat Pakistan's nefarious designs.

The war clearly brought out the importance of plains sector of Punjab and Jammu region where Pakistan launched its determined armour thrust to





capture maximum territory and cause criticality. This to a large extent has been addressed by strengthening of the obstacle profile including both artificial and natural as also deployment of additional resources based on envisaged threat.

### Restructuring Of Forces

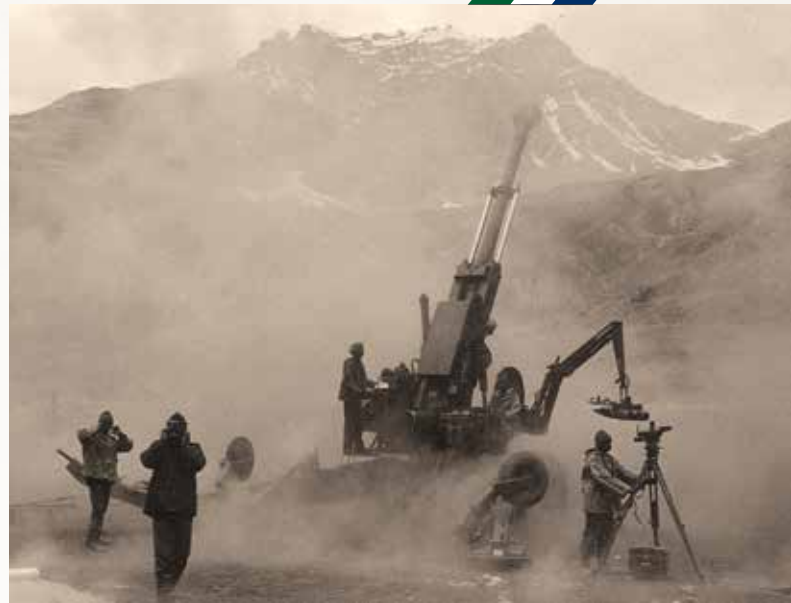
The process of expansion and reorganisation of Armed Forces started post 1962. This was still in process when the 1965 War started. However having learnt the lessons they were in a better state to fight which was evident during the war. The performance of Armed Forces during 1971 conflict bears testimony to the fact of our ability to give a crushing defeat to Pakistan which led to its bifurcation and creation of Bangladesh. Modernisation and restructuring of Armed Forces is a continuous process which is based on various factors viz envisaged threat perception, geopolitical realities etc. This has enabled us to optimise our forces in a manner that the areas of responsibilities today are reduced and are much better managed. We have also been able to create dedicated forces for offensive operations. We need to equip our forces with the best and latest weapon platforms to meet the future challenges. Our dependence on external purchases has to reduce which can only be done by indigenisation of defence industry and restructuring of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and making them more accountable. Modernisation requires tremendous resources and time but also the political will to take hard and timely decisions for acquisition. Any delay in this regard will be at the cost of national security.

### External Linkages And Diplomacy

The war did witness some movements by China in support of Pakistan with minimal effect. However in future conflict we will have to factor the growing strategic relationship between these two countries. This can be seen in the form of build-up of infrastructure in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and other areas, provisions of latest weapons, nuclear and missile technologies, support in various international forums etc. Our future planning will have to cater for a multiple front threat and prepare for related contingencies. Our diplomacy will have to play a major role in mitigating such linkages and creating our own support base in international forums.

### Joint Planning And Integration

Another issue of concern has been lack of integration of Services to jointly prosecute plans. Lack of coordination between Indian Army and Indian Air Force was visible during 1965 operations. Air power in future wars will play an important role. The success of any future conflict will be dependent upon integration of effort at national



level. While we have gone in for establishment of Integrated Defence Staff, the one point advice to the government is still not possible for want of Chief of Defence Staff despite recommendation by various committees. Creation of above is imperative to bring in greater synergy between Services, joint planning, integration and optimum utilisation of resources.

### Integrated Training

Success in war for a country is directly proportional to how well-trained, equipped and motivated are its Armed Forces. The 1965 War brought out a number of shortcomings in our training at tactical and operational levels. These have been reviewed and the curriculum has been suitably modified at formation and training establishments. Integrated training at formation levels and with other Services continues to be a focus area based on envisaged threat perception.

### Logistics Sustenance

History bears testimony to the fact that wars can be won if the country has a strong economic base and has the ability to sustain the efforts of its Armed Forces for a prolonged period of operations. We have made reasonable progress in this regard. However what is required is to make up the deficiencies of our weapon systems, ammunition and equipment as also build-up our infrastructure and logistic facilities in border areas.

### Conclusion

The Indian Army today is one of the most professional, well-trained and motivated armies in the world. It can justifiably be proud of its valour and dedication to the nation. The need of the hour is to speed up the process of modernisation, acquisition, build-up of infrastructure, making up of the deficiencies and restructuring of its Armed Forces to meet the future challenges. **D&A**

Another issue of concern has been lack of integration of Services to jointly prosecute plans

# THE 1965 INDO-PAK WAR

## NO VICTOR NO VANQUISHED?

Is this caption a fair, valid summation of the 1965 Indo-Pak War? Is it a judgement that needs reinterpretation? The writer critically examines the evidence available on record.



*“Friends! There are no friends!” – Aristotle.*

*“Because things are the way they are, things will not stay the way they are.” – Bertolt Brecht.*

**W**inning or losing wars is sometimes a matter of perception; a matter of the mind more than of clinical analysis. Matters become rather more complicated when narrow nationalism, sepia mindsets and clever propaganda enter the fray to dilute harsh reality with euphemistic myth created by clever spin doctoring. When realisation does seep in as it eventually must, apologists on the losing side use the tactic of rationalisation to suggest that the winning side used unethical means; that their (the losing sides) soldiers won but obtuse politicians, inept diplomacy, luck, chance and even God failed the nation. German apologists did exactly this at Versailles post World War I; the American establishment has rationalised their near and far abroad wars post 1945 in this manner. Pakistan has done similarly with

pronounced naivety for its wars with India since 1947 till date and now with homegrown terrorists within the Pakistani heartland. Not the least, Indian apologists rationalise the disastrous 1962 Sino-Indian War and ‘Operation Pawan’ in Sri Lanka in a like manner.

Globally, it is rare that any claim of **Victory** has been unanimously accepted as reality. For instance, in the past 100 years, the credit for untrammelled total victory belongs only to USA which led a consortium of nations to win World War II decisively. This point is better understood when one realises, still using USA as an example that since its ‘total Victory’ in August 1945, America has **‘won’ all its military campaigns, battles, engagements and skirmishes but ended up ‘losing’ the war** ... Korea, Vietnam, Iraq and its redux a decade later and now Afghanistan; they all offer staggering proof of this reality.



## Judging The 1965 War

Closer home, 50 years after the bruising 1965 Indo-Pak War was fought, the adrenalin-triggered rush of nationalism demands that both India and Pakistan stake a strident claim to victory. Look beyond narrow jingoism and you see an increasing number of reality checks: official accounts, enlightened politicians, think tanks, defence analysts, journalists and war veterans; all of whom have, in varying degrees begun to see the 1965 War as a stalemate; an unnecessary war replete with mind-boggling missed opportunities at the politico-strategic, military-strategic and tactical levels of functioning. In general, it is now assessed that 1965 had **'No Victor; No Vanquished.'** The reader is cautioned not to take this broad assessment at its face value because such branding is contingent upon who is doing it; with what intent and purpose; from what perspective and with which target audience in mind.

### Some Astute Observers Think Otherwise

There is however another school of thought stretching across the continuum of the warring nations to some evolved subcontinent watchers and international analysts. This school suggests that the No-Victor-No-Vanquished categorisation is a trifle unfair. **It opines that even if the line of separation was very slim, it was India that had nosed ahead** as the war was ending, if only just. India wasn't a victor in the rarefied sense of 'Victory'; NOT by a long shot. However, India edged ahead of an exhausted Pakistan blighted by its senior leadership and grim ammunition deficiencies (by comparison, India had spent only 14 per cent of its ammunition). Pakistan was trapped in its Bhutto-authored propaganda hype which created a slipstream of macho myth versus harsh reality that severely degraded Pakistani takeaways from the 23 day land/air slugfest fought in the autumn of 1965. To be fair however to Pakistan and to history, army Chief Choudhary when asked by government had said that ammunition was running out. He was misinformed; it wasn't.

The 2011 official MoD approved Indian history of the 1965 War by Dr SN Prasad and Dr UP Thapliyal states that India's **"Faulty strategy led to stalemate on all fronts"**. Some scholars, however, feel otherwise. The famous American defence correspondent of that time, Stanley Wolpert summed this status admirably when he noted that "India was in a position to inflict grave damage to, if not capture Pakistan's capital of the Punjab (Lahore) when the ceasefire was called and controlled Kashmir's strategic Uri-Poonch bulge, much to President Ayub Khan's chagrin".

### What Comprises 'Victory' In War?

Readers will doubtless insist on understanding what 'victory' is all about and why is it so elusive as to be practically non-attainable. First of all, it must be understood – contrary to existing hard-wired global mindsets – that when war happens, whole **Nations go to war; not just their Armed Forces.** Pronouncements of win/loss/*status quo* are thus more applicable to

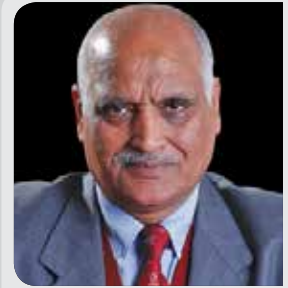
nations rather than to their military forces. Equally importantly, when a nation goes to war, its entire range of force-multipliers come into play of which the military is but one. By implication this means that war-fighting, diplomacy, economy, financial reserves, commerce, trade, industry, R&D, stocking levels, media, societal support, internal cohesion, culture, historical underpinnings, morale, demography, regional and world groupings, coalitions; communication infrastructure in all planes physical, electronic, cyber, technological, spiritual; the nation's work ethic, systems, processes, war-fighting doctrines, all come into play singly and in concert with each other. The list includes post-war rehabilitation, reconstruction and relocation of people.

**It is axiomatic that neither India nor Pakistan had the political will, vision, compulsion or the skill sets to seek such synergised 'Victory' as its desired end-state.** Instead, the war was, fought along predictable linear lines, albeit with a few strategic surprises in the military and diplomatic realms. Let us examine some relevant macro aspects of what transpired before we arrive at our takeaways.

### The External Environment

With USA and USSR locked in 'Cold War' conflict in Europe, China had emerged as a regional Asian power after its Korean War and Sino-Indian War performances and Lop Nor nuclear explosion in 1964. USA needed support for its anti-Communist stance but found India obsessed with non-alignment; this despite the generous military aid USA had given to India during and after 1962. Pakistan, having signed the US-Pak Mutual Security Pact of 1954 was flooded with quality military supplies which helped it draw near parity with India. It willingly joined the US promoted SEATO/CENTO anti-Communist alliances and by clever diplomatic juggling, found favour, material and moral support from USA, NATO, Russia, China and most Muslim nations. Better off economically than India, Pakistan supped on the world's high table and sneered at India.

In exchange for US largesse, Pakistan aided it in sea-domination in the oil-rich Gulf region, besides helping it to keep electronic and aerial surveillance on USSR off Pakistani bases. Pakistan also started accessing Gulf oil with US backing. East Pakistan



**Maj Gen Raj Mehta  
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helped USA keep a tight watch over Southeast Asia, China and the Malacca Straits. Unhappy with the Pakistani proximity to USA, USSR started helping India militarily and politically but without openly antagonising Pakistan or China. NATO also played a balancing act and post 1962 assisted India by way of limited access to weapons and supply systems.

Pakistan had secretly hoped that the help India was getting from USA/NATO/Russia could be cashed in later by getting the same powers to get India to agree to Pakistan's stand on Kashmir and avoided criticising these supplies. Realising around 1963 that its expectation of diplomatic support for Kashmir wasn't going to happen, Pakistan became critical and started courting China, ceding the geostrategically important 5,000 sq km Shaksgam Valley to it. This caused India grave concern. Pakistan was (wrongly, it turned out) playing up to China assuming that it would use force against India in the event of an Indo-Pak war. Bhutto had averred in the Pakistan National Assembly in 1963 that, "in the event of war, Pakistan would be helped by the most powerful nation in Asia". It was with this aggressive Pakistani mindset that Kutch happened in 1965; followed by the 23 day long September war.

## The Pakistani Swagger

It was substantial and, from the Pakistani perspective, justified, fuelled by what Pakistani spin-masters presented to the world as a runaway victory in Kutch in April 1965 with India left sulking and defensive. The swagger hinged on:

- An antediluvian conviction highlighted by US author Stephen Cohen in *The Pakistan Army* whereby one Pakistani equalled ten Indians; were push-overs for macho Pakistanis. With the 1947-48 Indo-Pak War left undecided, this core belief of superiority; of carrying the Mughal legacy forward got reinforced.
- Field Marshal Ayub Khan and his Foreign Minister both held the Indian PM in contempt. Post an airport lounge meeting at a stopover at Karachi Airport, both of them are on record deriding the Indian PM; a feeling which was reinforced when the Kutch skirmish showed the Indian leadership as timid, tentative and unsure.
- An obsession that Kashmir must be militarily won since diplomatic annexation was untenable and that Kashmiri Muslims would aid Pakistani annexation. The decision taken was that it was Kashmir 'now or never'.
- A perception abetted by China that India post 1962 was in disarray; a state that India was fervently seeking to improve with new raisings and weaponry after which period India could not be defeated. This was magnified in the Pakistani mind by a belief that if Pakistan attacked, close ally China would open a second front; keeping India's forces tied down.
- The endless flow of state-of-the-art American arms fuelled brash confidence in the US trained officers about winning. Under the **5 and a half Division plan**, Pakistan fielded nine regiments of *M47/48 Patton* tanks to add to its *Sherman*

and *Chaffee* Regiments. The 1965 London-based *IISS handbook on Military Balance* revealed that Pakistan had tank parity with India but better quality tanks. Pakistan's artillery too was far superior in quality compared to India's.

- It also received 100 *F-86 Sabre* jets, one squadron of *F-104 Starfighters*, 30 *B-57* bombers and four *C-130* transport aircraft.
- Not the least, Foreign Minister Bhutto and his foreign office and military confidantes created a deliberate euphoria that the Indians were down and out and that Pakistan must take military advantage of this vulnerability while it had a chance. The Kutch settlement in Pakistan's favour removed the last vestige of doubt and emboldened Bhutto's assertions. 'Operation Gibraltar' and its attendant 'Operation Grand Slam' were thus planned contingencies premised on 'Victory' in its widest application.

## The Indian Situation

During this period, India was on a relative low. The 1962 War had crushed Nehru in spirit and reputation; singed and scarred the Indian psyche. Dying a broken man, he was succeeded by low-profile, understated and under-rated Lal Bahadur Shastri as PM. Left bereft of many friends, the country was slowly picking itself up from the despair and shame of 1962; reorganising its forces and struggling with serious food shortages; accepting US PL-480 food aid and facing widespread anti-Hindi language riots. **On the positive side, steel-nerved Shastri empowered the Armed Forces to plan for war including taking proactive action if push came to shove.** In fact, 'Op Ablaze' (May-July 1965) war-gamed India's offensive options, some of which were fielded in August-September 1965. This government support for aggressive action positively affected the mojo of the Armed Forces and restored their self-belief and this reflected in the war that followed.

## Events Leading To The September War

Despite a UN mediated ceasefire (CF) effective January 1949, relations between the two countries remained blighted. Kashmir remained the main issue which led to the 1965 War. The 'Uneasy Ceasefire' was evident in the number of border violations by Pakistan: 488 in 1963, 1,522 in 1964 and over 1,800 in January-July 1965.

On 09 April 1965, Pakistan 'tested the waters' as President Ayub would unabashedly confess later, by transgressing in Kutch. Though India thwarted this offensive, Pakistan felt emboldened by the 'silent spectator' stance of the world community led by USA. The UN negotiated settlement was also in Pakistan's favour.

The Bhutto driven 'Op Gibraltar' of August 1965 that followed was Pakistan's last effort to resolve the 'K' Question militarily by an 'Algerian' type of 'people-supported' struggle. The 8,000 strong force (planned to expand to 30,000) comprised men from the Regular Army, Azad Kashmir Militia, Frontier Scouts, Mujahids and Razakars. On 05 August 1965, the armed infiltrators crossed the CFL between Jammu and Kargil into J&K to 'liberate' Kashmir but were defeated at launch itself.



## Overview Of The September War

The totally unexpected aggressive Indian response at Tangdhar, Kargil and the brilliant, unorthodox capture of Hajipir on 28 August following the miserable failure of 'Op Gibraltar' panicked the Pakistani leadership into launch of 'Op Grand Slam' on 1 September; an operation that President Ayub had himself identified in a rare Eureka moment during an 'Op Gibraltar' briefing at Murree. The operation was intended to capture Akhnoor; threaten/capture Jammu and thereby cut off all Indian forces in J&K.

This article is not intended to detail what happened in the many battles that were fought during the war except to crisply summarise that both sides made modest gains even as they suffered debacles, with India taking a slight edge. A summary:

- **Kutch.** Pakistan had the edge.
- **Operation Gibraltar.** Strategically brilliant, Pakistan's failure was soul-wrenching. Initially surprised, the Indians reacted aggressively and won.
- **Tangdhar, Kargil, Hajipir.** Pakistan was strategically shocked and found militarily deficient. India was a clear winner.
- **Chamb.** India was strategically shocked yet again. Pakistan's strange reluctance to take Akhnoor; inexplicable change of command on the cusp of victory and delay thereto saved Akhnoor. The factor of luck also played an important role in saving India much embarrassment.
- **Sialkot-Lahore-Kasur Sectors.** Pakistan was caught strategically off balance with India's strategic intent, stage-management and synchronisation of its offensives and was compelled to fight back-to-the-wall. Overall stalemate with the edge with India in Kasur and Lahore; with Pakistan at Sialkot.
- **The Desert.** A diversion of little operational consequence.
- **Diplomacy.** Pakistan had the edge; at the UN; with the great powers; certainly with China whose repeated ultimatums eventually led to an abrupt ceasefire with India winning. Even Tashkent was a Pakistani success far more than India's.
- **Perception Management.** Pakistan made spectacular initial gains but eventually lost out; certainly with its domestic clientele as it's people and institutions felt betrayed. Indian perception management was muted as was domestic criticism.
- **Apex Leadership.** India won because Shastri and Army Chief Choudhary assumed a new, resolute and strong persona with that of Ayub and Army Chief Musa rapidly declining. Gen Harbaksh, the Western Army Commander became iconic even as Gen Bakhtiar Rana his counterpart was seen with contempt as inadequate and ill-prepared.
- **Middle and Junior Level Leadership.** This was the strong point of both countries, with some stunning examples of battle leadership of the transformational kind. On balance, India had a slight edge, which helped it touch the tape ahead of Pakistan if only just.
- **Combat Edge.** Indian tank, Infantry and Artillery handling was better even when Pakistan was

technologically superior. Indian communications were certainly better as were the Sappers. So far as the Air Battle was concerned it was probably 'No Victor No Vanquished' even if India would have won, had the war been extended because it had more resources to bank upon

- **Surprise and Intelligence.** Pakistan won hands down here. The Indians were taken aback in Kutch; by 'Operation Gibraltar'; at Chamb. At Kasur, both were surprised but India adapted better. At Sialkot and Lahore, Pakistan was surprised but ensured *status quo*.


## In Summation: A Town; A Bridge; A City ...

Eminent Pakistani analyst Dr Ahmed Faruqui sums up the despair of Pakistan at Akhnoor; a stunning strategic near victory which was abandoned when victory was in sight; a victory whose impact would have been profound; perhaps even compelled India to call off its Sialkot offensive to save J&K. Akhnoor, he writes poignantly, turned out to be '**A town too far**' ... Indeed it was, as much as the Beas Bridge was a bridge too far; Srinagar, Amritsar, Lahore cities that were too far. There were missed opportunities galore and on both sides of the border. When it came to offensive operations, both sides were found wanting even as the defensive battles were largely well fought.

Pakistan as the initiator of the war had obviously more chances of taking early-bird advantage. An example is illustrative. Asked for his opinion by counterpart ZA Bhutto at a stopover at Karachi airport, **Chinese Foreign Minister Chen Yi suggested that Akhnoor was like a thumb, which, if cut off – he made an incisive (sic) gesture – would render the hand useless.** Pakistan failed to do just that.

From an earlier time, it failed to follow the pragmatic advice of Chinese PM Zhou Enlai (Chou En-lai) as quoted in the memoirs of Pakistani Gen Tariq Majid. Zhou Enlai had advised Pakistan with typical Sun Tzu restraint to "**go slow, not to push India hard; and avoid a fight over Kashmir, for at least, 20-30 years, until you have developed your economy and consolidated your national power.**" Obsessed with Kashmir and with Bhutto's brazen lies, Pakistan launched prematurely without a quality well-thought-through plan B and plan C in place.

On balance, therefore, it isn't quite right to suggest that 1965 was a war in which there was 'No Victor No Vanquished'. There was a winner and it wasn't Pakistan. When you win, margins of winning become irrelevant and academic. Pakistan paid a heavy price for misreading India and failing to realise an empirical truism: "**Because things are the way they are, things will not stay the way they are**" – Bertolt Brecht.

India changed from the way it was in 1962 but Pakistan remained in Mughal mode. This demanded a price and Pakistan paid it; the full payment being deferred to 1971 and the surgical loss of East Pakistan; the birth of a brave new nation; Bangladesh. 

# THE CAPTURE AND RETURN OF HAJIPIR PASS MYTH AND REALITY

As far as the captured territory is concerned, it was decided that all territories across the International Border and ceasefire line will be returned and *status quo ante* will be restored. This posed a serious dilemma for the Indian military establishment which had briefed the Prime Minister prior to his departure. However, allowing Pakistani dagger to keep pointing at Akhnoor and Jammu was thus both militarily and politically unacceptable. Shastri therefore, had no option but to agree to return Hajipir Pass.

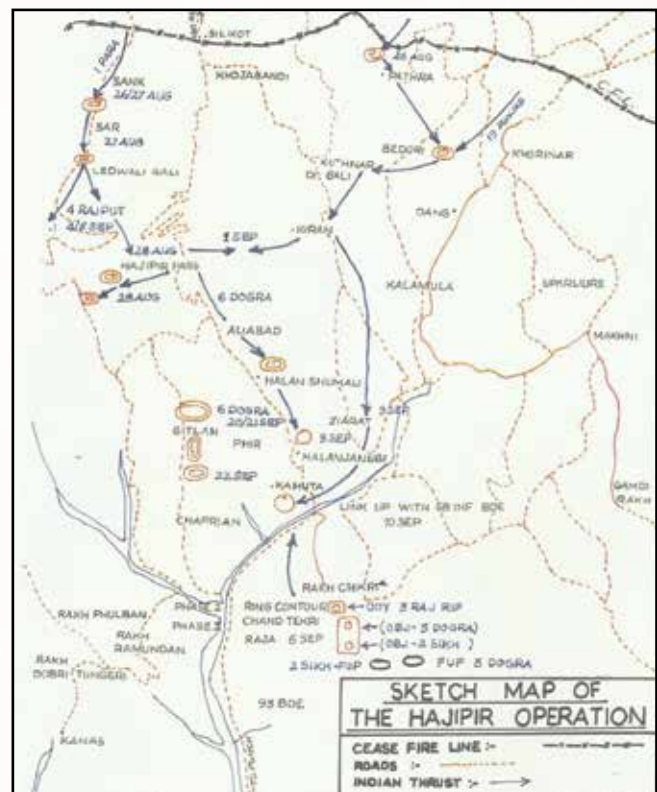
**E**mboldened by its success in Kutch in April 1965, Pakistan evolved operation Gibraltar in J&K which was launched in August-September 1965. This was a massive infiltration campaign designed to create chaos in J&K and incite the populace to revolt against the government. Operation Gibraltar failed because while launching this operation, Pakistan failed to assess the ground realities inside the state of J&K. The expected open support from locals never materialised. Even pro-Pakistan political parties did not come out in open support of the infiltrators. Moreover, the quick and firm retaliation of the Indian security forces made sure that Pakistan Army could not make gains anywhere.

## Capture Of Hajipir Pass

In order to cut-off the vital link in the scheme of Pakistan infiltration into J&K, it was decided to capture Hajipir Pass in Uri-Poonch bludge which was the lifeline for infiltrators in the area. The operation was planned as a major pincer movement by launching an offensive from Uri towards Poonch and at the same time launching an operation from Poonch towards Uri. The link-up would have ensured that the Uri-Poonch bulge was not available to Pakistan for infiltration. The task of capture of Hajipir Pass was given to 68 Infantry Brigade of 19 Infantry Division and given the code name *Operation Bakshi* named after the Brigade Commander Brig (later Lt Gen) ZC Bakshi, who is the highest decorated officer of the Indian Army. The capture of Hajipir Pass was successfully accomplished by 1 PARA under Major (later Lt Gen) Ranjit Dayal on 28th August, 1965.

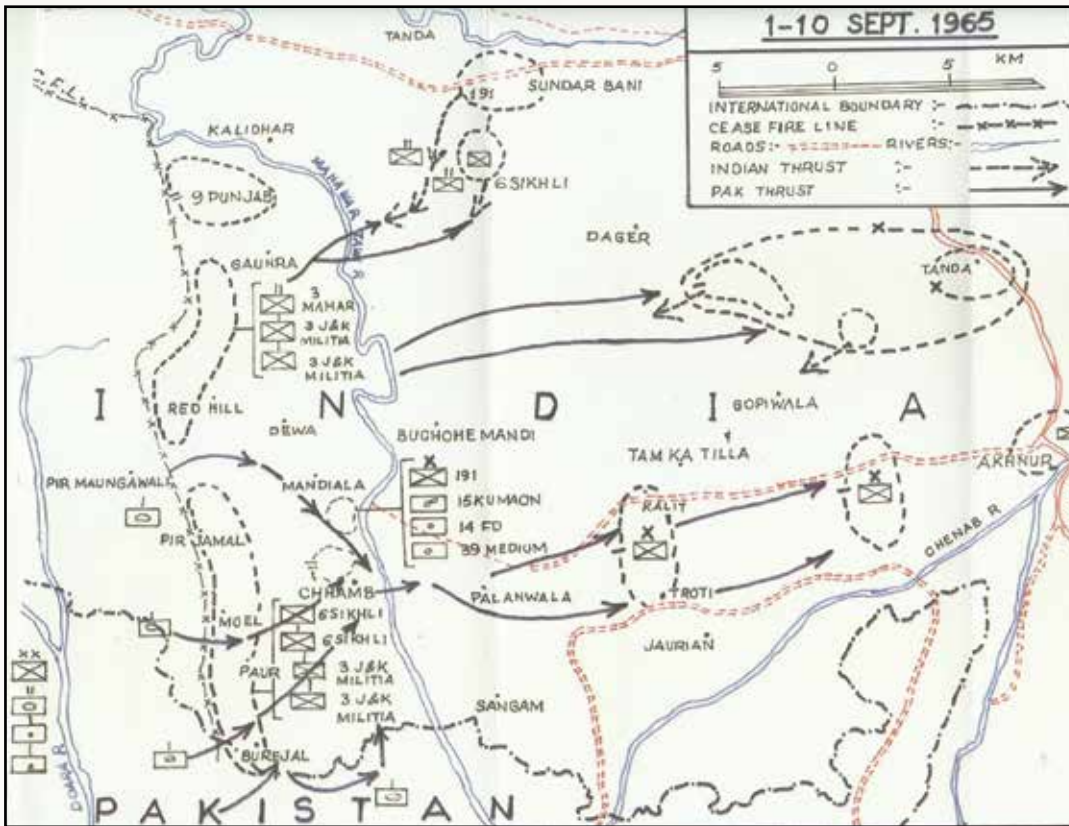
## Operation Grand Slam

Following the failure of Operation Gibraltar, the massive infiltration attempt in J&K, Pakistan decided to launch an offensive in Chamb Sector in order to capture Akhnoor and cut-off the Indian lines of communications to Poonch Sector. Later the operation was to be programmed to Jammu thereby



cutting off the Kashmir Valley from the rest of the country. The Pakistani plan was bold in conception but its tardy execution denied them success. Nevertheless the end state in Chamb Sector was highly favourable to them with their forces halting at Fatwal Ridge only 4 km from Akhnoor when the war was ended on 23rd September, 1965.

The selection of Chamb-Jaurian sector for launching the offensive was well considered. The area is bound in the west by the ceasefire line, in the south by Chenab River and in the north by Kalidhar Range. The terrain was suitable for employment of armour and the only river obstacle in the area – Munawar Tawi was fordable by tanks in dry weather. From the Indian side the terrain was unfavourable. There was only one road link – the 180 km road from Pathankot. The



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bridge over Chenab River at Akhnoor could not take heavy tanks which had to be ferried across.

The Pakistanis launched their offensive on 1st September, 1965 with an infantry division supported by two regiments of tanks. Indian 191 Infantry Brigade, deployed west of River Munawar Tawi was quickly overrun on the first day itself. Thereafter an inexplicable delay of two days took place when the Pakistanis did not progress their operations. There was a change in command also by the Pakistanis when Maj Gen Akhtar Hussain Malik was replaced by Maj Gen Yahya Khan. This gave the Indians much needed time to organise their defences. However, it was clear to the Indian planners that if Pakistani Chamb offensive was to be halted, it was imperative to launch counteroffensive across the International Border in the south. Accordingly India launched its two counteroffensives in Sialkot and Lahore sectors on 6/7th September, 1965. This forced the Pakistanis to thin out Chamb Sector by moving some forces from here to the south. The Pakistani momentum was thus halted but not before their forces had reached Fatwal Ridge, a mere 4 km from Akhnoor.

Thus, when the ceasefire came about on 23rd September, Pakistan was well poised in this sector with its forces posing a grave threat to Akhnoor and subsequently to Jammu, a mere 30 km away.

**Soviet Intervention**

Since a war on its southern flank did not suit the Soviet Union, it made sincere efforts to restore peace in the subcontinent. Soviet Premier Kosygin wrote to Prime Minister Shastri and President Ayub Khan on 20th August and 4th, 11th, 17th September and appealed for a peaceful solution to the conflict. He also added that both sides could count on Soviet Union's goodwill and good offices. The Soviet's

aim was also to ensure that neither Britain nor USA could get a say in the region. The last letter of 17th September invited the leaders of India and Pakistan to hold peace talks in Tashkent or any other part of the Soviet Union. India accepted the proposal on 22nd September but Pakistan accepted it later. Initially, talks were to be held on 15th November, but since the situation on the Indo-Pak border was still fluid, the conference was postponed to 4th January, 1966.

In the opening session Kosygin did not refer to Kashmir problem and strongly advocated friendly relations between the two countries. Prime Minister Shastri proposed an agreement to renounce recourse to war to resolve differences between the two countries. Ayub Khan proposed a No-war Pact after the core issue of Kashmir was resolved. The conference was thus deadlocked. Kosygin held long discussions with both leaders and on 9th January succeeded in persuading both countries to agree to a Joint Declaration. As far as the captured territory is concerned, it was decided that all territories across the International Border and ceasefire line will be returned and *status quo ante* will be restored. This posed a serious dilemma for the Indian military establishment which had briefed the Prime Minister prior to his departure. However, allowing Pakistani dagger to keep pointing at Akhnoor and Jammu was thus both militarily and politically unacceptable. Shastri therefore, had no option but to agree to return to Hajipir Pass. It was weighing so heavily on his conscience that it was the reason for his heart attack. Shastri has therefore, been unfairly blamed for return of Hajipir Pass. He had no option. May his soul thus rest in peace. **DA**

# CELEBRATING VICTORY

**General Ayub Khan had failed to assess his adversary, Shastriji. Shastriji was a votary of *Ahimsa* but once it came to killing the enemy to defend the motherland, he was second to none. Both Ayub and later Yahya made a mistake in assessing the fighting spirit of the Hindu soldier and what they mistakenly called *Hindu India*. With the result the puffed up Generals across the border lost all the wars they fought against *Hindu India*.**

**L**al Bahadur Shastri, Prime Minister of India ordered the Indian Army to cross the international border in Punjab and launch a two-pronged attack on Pakistan. It was a magnificent masterstroke of high-level strategy that broke the back of attacking forces of Pakistan in the Chamb-Akhnoor Sector of Jammu and Kashmir. The wily attackers had no choice but to withdraw from their winning position and rush to the defence of their homeland – Punjab. Shastriji's strategic move to cross the international border and attack towards Lahore and Sialkot was indeed a game changer.

Pakistan Army, thereafter, could never achieve its Aim of War to wrest Kashmir by force and annex it with Pakistan. That was a long cherished dream of their founder, Muhammad Ali Jinnah. It may be recalled that Jinnah's dreams were dashed in 1947 when the Indian Army had landed at the Srinagar Airport to turn the tide and stop the attacking of Pakistan tribals commanded by regular Pakistan Army officers in their tracks. Jinnah kept waiting at Abbottabad cantonment for a green signal from its army to move ceremonially into Srinagar to accept the surrender of representatives of the Hindu Dogra ruler, Maharaja Sir Hari Singh but returned home deeply disappointed.

## **Pakistan's Game Plan**

Pakistan's military rulers had made the Himalayan blunder of underestimating the will power of Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri and the fighting capability of the Indian Army. President Ayub Khan of Pakistan made the greatest mistake of his life by launching 'Operation Gibraltar' and sending thousands of his army soldiers into Kashmir in disguise in the summer of 1965 to sabotage lines of communications of the Indian Army and incite the Kashmiri Muslims to rise in revolt against occupation of their homeland by the Hindus of Indian Army. The aim was not achieved as the said operation failed to take-off. In fact the local Kashmiri *kisans* and *Gujjar* herdsmen were the first ones to inform the Indian Army of the massive enemy infiltration. Their element of surprise was lost and their 'Operation Gibraltar' collapsed like a house of cards.

General Ayub Khan, the then President of Pakistan made the second major mistake of launching 'Operation Grand Slam'. Their tanks and crack infantry regiments were ordered to cross Chamb-Jaurian and capture Akhnoor to fan out in the plains of Jammu and cut the vital lines of communications and supply of the Indian Army located in J&K. His supposed master move was to paralyse the Indian Army by starving them of rations, ammunition and weaponry, not forgetting reinforcements.

The Pakistan Army initially met with major successes as their armour cut deep into the Indian Territory. Gen Ayub Khan had issued a special Order of the Day congratulating Generals, officers and troops of his army on their major military achievements. The Indian Air Force fighter jets were not a bugbear to their tanks as the old time planes were shot down. "You have pierced the enemy flesh with your teeth, bite deep and let him bleed", said old Ayub in one of his statements to his soldiers.

## **The Blunder**

And yet for no rhyme or reason Gen Ayub Khan made a major mistake of his military career. He ordered a change of command at their advancing infantry division level by replacing the GOC and putting Major General Yahya Khan in the saddle. The change of command halted the fast pace forward and there was a period of inaction for a day plus. It gave time to the Indian Generals to regroup their forces and tie their loose ends. It remains unexplained why Gen Ayub Khan changed the General Officer Commanding of the strike division at a crucial moment.

The morale of the Indian soldiers in the Akhnoor area was rather low. They did not perceive any major reinforcement coming from India nor was there any material change in the battle plan. The civil population was also perplexed. They had never anticipated such ferocious attack from Pakistan, an underdog until then. What had emboldened Pakistan's planners and executors was their information that the Indian Army was incapable of fighting against Pakistan. Its disastrous defeat in the 1962 India-China War and





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running away from battle of both officers and soldiers was a proof of lack of training and poor quality of weapon system. Although some mistakes had been rectified between 1962 and 1965 but that was not perceived to be enough to make them fighting fit.

### Surfeit Of American Arms

Pakistan, on the other hand, had been preparing for a war with India for quite some time to avenge their failure in J&K in 1947-48. They had joined CENTO and SEATO and the USA poured military armaments much more than what Pakis needed. The US strategists had organised a seminar to assess the military situation in South Asia where the consensus was that should there be a military engagement in South Asia, Pakistan was sure to defeat India.

Pakistan Army officers had been brainwashing their junior commissioned officers and *Jawans* with the concept that man to man a Pakistani soldier was miles ahead of an Indian soldier. It was indeed a morale booster for the Pakistan Army. But their officers had overplayed their hand in this game of cards.

### Shastri Factor

A diminutive figure physically but Rishi-size mentally and saint like spiritually, Lal Bahadur Shastri had a humble beginning but drew on his reserve of honesty, tenacity, perseverance and problem-solving. Never Say Die was his motto and he lived by it. Will To Win was a trait of his character and mental personality. No wonder he made it to the high office of Prime Minister of India and made an impact on the history of the Indian subcontinent.

General Ayub Khan had failed to assess his adversary, Shastriji. Shastriji was a votary of *Ahimsa* but once it came to killing the enemy to defend the motherland, he was second to none. Both Ayub and later Yahya made a mistake in assessing the fighting spirit of the Hindu soldier and what they mistakenly called *Hindu India*. With the result the puffed up Generals across the border lost all the wars they fought against *Hindu India*.

The Indian nation had great confidence in its national leader, Lal Bahadur Shastri. When USA made a veiled threat of stopping grain supply under PL-480, Shastriji advised the nation to miss a meal once a week and more often, if need be. Like a good leader, he followed his own advice. It inspired all Indians to acquire moral courage, a quality that had enriched personality of the diminutive man.

No wonder Shastriji ordered the Indian Army to cross the international border and launch a

two-pronged attack on the enemy country. He achieved success. When departing for Tashkent to attend the peace negotiations with Pakistan after the war was over, a journalist asked him, "Sir, you are short statured but President Ayub is so tall, how would you face him?" Shastriji's prompt reply in Hindi was: "*Wo sar jhuka kar baat kreinge aur main sar utha kar baat karunga*". The questioner was left speechless.

### Assessing '65 War

Many a time the question crops up: Who won, who lost? In any case both *Bharat* and Pakistan are celebrating their Victory Day on 6th September 2015. It was 50 years ago that India had launched its forces across borders towards Lahore and Sialkot. They fought for 22 days when the Security Council of the United Nations brokered peace and ordered a Ceasefire on 23 September 65 at 03:30 hrs.

Going by territorial gains, India had won 720 sq miles of Pakistan. The enemy had captured about 400 sq miles of the Indian Territory. Casualty on Indian side was 30,000 whereas on their side it was 30,800. Who knocked out how many tanks is a much debated point. However, all agree that after WWII, Chawinda and Asal Uttar were the two biggest tank battles of the 1965 India-Pakistan War. The graveyard of Paki *Patton* tanks in the Khemkaran area is a glaring proof of incapacity of American tanks to win a war. One may emphasise again that it is the man behind the gun and not the gun that becomes a battle winning factor.

Gallantry awards were given to the bravehearts by both the countries. India honoured one officer and one *Jawan* with *Param Vir Chakra*, the highest gallantry award for displaying extraordinary bravery above the call of duty in the face of the enemy. Pakistan gave one award of this nature.

Let us assess what was the aim of Pakistan when they launched 'Operation Gibraltar' and 'Operation Grand Slam'. Pakistan wanted to snatch Kashmir from India and make it a part of Pakistan. Did they succeed in their aim? The answer is a big NO. What was India's aim in going to war against Pakistan? Well, to defend every inch of India and not let Pakistan wrest any part of India. Did India succeed in achieving its aim? The answer is a big YES. India won the war and Pakistan lost. **DSA**

# AUDACIOUS



Three brave men across three theatres of operation, bound together by their audacity and good fortune. Each of them survived to personally play a significant role in ensuring ultimate victory for the country, providing decisive leadership at critical junctures. It was as if fortune was actually watching over them, indulgently placing a protective hand to keep them from harm's way, knowing their sheer audacity would prevent them from looking out for themselves.

**T**he correlation between ability to toil and corresponding returns in terms of better fortune was aptly put by Hollywood producer Samuel Goldwyn when he said, "The harder I work, the luckier I get". In the case of soldiers this concept is better epitomised in the adage "Fortune favours the brave". Reading the exploits of some of the heroes of the 1965 Indo-Pak War, I came to a conclusion that while there is a lot of wisdom in these words, there is room for slight modification. In a battlefield with bullets flying thick and fast, shrapnel from a hundred projectiles seeking their unfortunate prey to kill or maim, difference between finding the bullet with your name on it and giving it a skip is often a matter of chance and probability. But to actually cheat the projectile even after it has been delivered to the correct address can be attributed to nothing but pure luck. Bravery in war is so commonplace that lady luck is probably too hard pressed to serve every instance. But there are some notable instances during that war when she did manage to reach on time.

Major (Later Lt Gen) Ranjit Singh Dayal, became a household name after leading 1 Para attacks on successive enemy held features over three days, ultimately capturing the vital Hajipir Pass. Beginning on 25 August 1965, this was the first large-scale foray by Indian Forces across the Ceasefire Line (CFL) at a time when war had not been formally declared. Pakistani infiltrators had been coming across in large numbers, supported and augmented by their regular troops, in a repeat of the tribal invasion of 1947. The



# FORTUNES

capture of Hajipir Bulge including the pass of the same name was meant to strike at the infiltration bases and send a strong message to deter Pakistan.

## Victor Of Hajipir Pass

Major Dayal led the action from the front all along the way. He lost many men during those fateful days, but remained unscathed himself despite tantalisingly tempting fate several times. It was after the most critical battle was over and Hajipir Pass captured that the bullet with his name finally traced him. The Paras were in the process of consolidating their hold over the pass by occupying heights around it when Maj Dayal was hit by a burst from an enemy automatic weapon. It hit the housing of his sten gun and pierced through his Denison Smock (the iconic loose coverall jacket worn by paratroopers) without wounding him. He was subsequently awarded the *Maha Vir Chakra*, lived to serve his country for another 49 years, retired as an Army Commander and subsequently served as a Lt Governor of Puducherry and the Andamans.

## Pak Counter-attack In Chamb

As a reaction to the loss of Hajipir, Pakistan upped the ante, launching a full scale attack into the adjoining Chamb Sector. On 1st September 1965, two Pakistani armoured regiments crossed the CFL and the International Boundary (the junction of the two lies in this sector) with almost a division worth of Infantry following in their wake. Pakistani plan was simple but daring – to head for Akhnoor and capture the solitary bridge on Chenab River there. They could then reinforce this success by capturing Jammu and cutting off Indian access to Kashmir completely. Preponderance of armour in composition of this force meant that the Indian Infantry Brigade deployed ahead of Chenab could be bypassed or overwhelmed with impunity. The only Indian elements that could pose any deterrence to Pakistani tanks were one squadron of light tanks and the few anti-tank weapons of the infantry battalions. Besides, of course, the indomitable spirit and courage of Indian troops manning these.

Major Bhaskar Roy was commanding the squadron of 20th Lancers located in the sector, equipped with French *AMX-13* tanks. The 13 tonne light tanks, favoured for that sector since they were the only ones which could be taken across the Akhnoor Bridge, were no match for the 40 tonne *Pattons* which had a bigger gun, longer range and much thicker armour. Yet, undeterred by the overwhelming odds, Maj Roy and his squadron fought a valiant battle to halt the tide of enemy armour for as long as they could. Maj Roy, mounted on his tank, was in the thick of the very first engagement with enemy *Pattons* near the border village of Burejal. The shorter ranged *AMXs*

had waited, hidden in turret down positions, allowing the larger *Pattons* to come nearer. As they came within range, Maj Roy ordered his tank gunner to open fire on a selected tank target and the other tanks followed suit.

## Saved By Cigarette Case

An intense tank vs tank battle ensued, with both sides taking several direct hits. The doughty crew in lighter tanks gave as good as they got, notching up several *Patton* kills and denting the cocky self-confidence of their adversaries. During this battle Maj Roy's tank took a hit and a piece of shrapnel came whizzing and struck him on his chest. The impact was hard and would have been fatal, but for the silver cigarette case in his chest pocket. It was a present from his father and Maj Roy generally carried it on his person – that day it saved his life; possibly one of

the few occasions when the habit of smoking was responsible for doing so to someone. His gunner wasn't as lucky and succumbed to another splinter. The battle continued for better part of the rest of the day, with the *AMXs* falling back to successive positions to contest enemy, delaying their advance.

Though the enemy tanks did ultimately succeed in advancing substantially, but the actions of this solitary squadron led by the audacious and lucky squadron commander ensured that they didn't have the free run-up to Akhnoor that they were hoping for. The delay gave time for Indian forces to build-up across the river and reinforce their positions, preventing the execution of the Pakistani plan. Maj Roy fought out the rest of the war without any major incident and was awarded the *Maha Vir Chakra* for his role in stopping the Pakistani advance. He died three years later in an unfortunate road accident.

## Frittered Opportunity

The Indian Government considered the violation of International Boundary in Chamb Sector by Pakistan as an act of war and gave the Army the go ahead to take necessary actions accordingly. The Army's plans in such a contingency were to launch offensives into Pakistani Punjab, threatening Lahore and Sialkot, forcing them to withdraw their armour and artillery from Chamb to protect these vital



**Lt Col Rohit Agarwal (Retd)**

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towns. This was put into action on 6th September and as part of this offensive 3 Jat under Lt Col (later Brig) Desmond E Hayde was tasked to capture a Pakistani village called Dograi. The village lay on the Grand Trunk Road between Amritsar and Lahore. Over the next 17 days, 3 Jat fought some of the fiercest battles of the war, capturing Dograi not once but twice. The first time was on 6th September itself, when the Indian offensive caught the Pakistanis ill-prepared and the Jats brushed aside minor opposition, rushing headlong and capturing their objective within 8 hours of crossing the International Boundary. Due to a series of unfortunate miscommunications or lack of adequate communications, they were ordered to fall back closer to the International Boundary, frittering away the territorial gains.

The Jat's next tryst with Dograi was on 21st September, when they attacked and captured it yet again. This time around it was a much tougher nut to crack, since it had been reinforced by an adequately warned and well-protected enemy. But Col Hayde led his battalion to the capture of Dograi for the second time, just before the war came to an end with the ceasefire being declared on 23rd September.

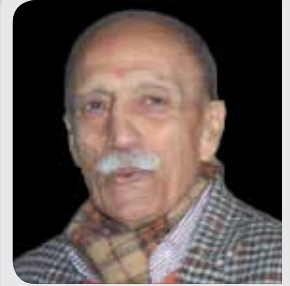
### Brushes With Death

During both the battles for Dograi and in the actions during the intervening period, Col Hayde continued to have the uncanny knack of being wherever the fighting was thickest. His utter disregard for personal safety led the Jat troops to label him as a *Bawla* (Mad) CO. Fate did take up the temptations he offered on several occasions and he had a couple of narrow brushes with death. The first two were on 6th September, the very first day of operations, when he suddenly came face to face with the enemy and his own carbine failed to fire. But Lance Naik Kunwar Lal, Col Hayde's orderly, disposed the enemy soldier off with a well-aimed shot

before he could fire at the CO. A little later Col Hayde narrowly missed being shot down by enemy aircraft which strafed their position, though his second in command, Maj Marwah, wasn't as lucky.

The next incident took place on 8th September, after the battalion had fallen back from Dograi and taken up position on the Upper Bari Doab Canal halfway between the border and Dograi. They had dug shallow trenches and the CO was sitting on the edge of one such trench when their position came under attack by enemy tanks. One tank shell landed very close to where he was sitting, killing Lt KP Singh, the Intelligence Officer, instantly. A shrapnel struck Col Hayde in the small of the back too and would have been fatal but for the fact that it hit his water bottle, causing a minor injury in his back instead of cutting through his spine. His lucky run didn't end there. The impact knocked him into the trench and moments later another shell landed precisely where he had been sitting. Two such narrow escapes within a span of a couple of minutes do show that Col Hayde's luck must have been working overtime. He survived, to lead the battalion to glorious victory at Dograi and was also awarded the *Maha Vir Chakra*, retiring as a Brigadier years later.

Three brave men across three theatres of operation, bound together by their audacity and good fortune. Each of them survived to personally play a significant role in ensuring ultimate victory for the country, providing decisive leadership at critical junctures. It was as if fortune was actually watching over them, indulgently placing a protective hand to keep them from harm's way, knowing their sheer audacity would prevent them from looking out for themselves. So, while there were many brave men in that war, not all of them were similarly favoured by fortune. I therefore like to believe that fortune may not always favour the brave, but it does do its bit for the audacious. **DA**



**Col  
Naresh K Rastogi  
(Retd)**

The writer had an eventful career in the Army including active participation in the 1965 War in Khemkaran as Signals officer and 1971 War with Infantry in Jessore-Khulna, now Bangladesh. After commanding 8 Madras he got a chance to serve overseas in the Italian and French multinationals for 12 years.

## AS I LOOK BACK

**Defences for the assaulting troops! I was bewildered. We had no defence stores, so digging of trenches was the only answer. Unfortunately Signals Company has the biggest problem. All the radio operators and linemen were busy. Just a few drivers available for this job. It was then one *Sabre* strafed us for about 45 minutes. We cursed the IAF. My regret was that though it was flying so low, I did not shoot it down with my sten gun.**

**T**he 1965 operations in Khemkaran Sector left a deep impression on my mind, which I would cover in three parts, restricting myself to my personal experiences and my personal views only.

On the 4th September 1965 the entire Corps was on the move including our 4 Mountain Division and 7 Mountain Brigade. My Signal Company moved with them but I had to wait till midnight to collect the Top Secret Operation Order. Our plan was very simple. On the morning of the 6th launch a surprise attack on the Ichhogil Canal converting the canal into anti-tank defence. Pakistan Armoured Division located in Quetta would take at least 48 hours to react; by then the defences should be made impregnable. However the unfolding was a comedy of errors on both sides. The dice only declared the partial winner.

### **Advance And Preliminary Operations**

On the 5th morning I reached Khemkaran Sector dressed in civvies but travelling in an army jeep with the tactical sign concealed. The driver had his helmet and rifle, I had my sten gun, so much for the secrecy and surprise. On the narrow roads, with the road signs missing; MPs in a state of bewilderment; tea and biscuit stalls all along the roads; all the heavy vehicles stuck-up; none knew where to proceed to; but my driver somehow managed to reach while I quickly glanced through the Op Order.

Linemen had laid the cables along the roads; but the unit locations were not decided nor of the Brigade HQs. First thing they asked me for food since our B echelon had not fetched up. I had only a few rupees in my pocket; in any case from which market do I

procure food for them? Luckily, the villagers were jubilant and helped us in many ways. Sitting on a charpoy with *chapatti* and *gur* and a glass of *lassi* was a memorable experience. The units that I met were anxious about their scattered troops, heavy weapons and ammunition and the B echelon vehicles. I located the Brigade HQs in a grove where all the vehicles had been parked. Radio Silence had been imposed and the lines mostly were not connected to the Unit exchanges so I had to depend on my jeep.

### **Confusion Confounded**

The 4 Grenadiers were to launch the attack at Theh Pannu at 0600 hours, preceded by H-hr bombardment; Engineers to blow up the bridge on the canal. Since the main party had not arrived the H-hr was postponed by two hours; however there was no way to contact the Engineer Company. They reached Theh Pannu at the scheduled time where they surprised the enemy post. But where was our Infantry? Own pre H-hr bombardment made them pull back only to find the gleaming rifles of 4 Grenadiers in the FUP (forming up place). Brigadier David Siddhu, Commander 7 Mountain Brigade, with the nerves of steel did not allow the fire to be opened as the FUP location would be given away though Lt Col Farhat Bhatti, Commanding Officer 4 Grenadiers was insistent that the Pak soldiers masquerading as Sikhs were fast approaching them for an assault. What a miraculous escape for the Engineers under my friend Maj Satish Thareja!

Attack by 7 Grenadiers was postponed till the evening. Radio Silence had been lifted partially, yet no contact with them. I, accompanied with GSO3, Capt Abdul Rasul Khan of 4 Grenadiers reached their location, leaving the jeep about 2 km behind the FUP. From a distance I could recognise the voice of the operator at Bde HQs shouting hoarsely but the operator at the Battalion had been forbidden to respond. His voice was feared to reach the enemy post and give away surprise. Having met their officers we waited at the nearby school rooftop. The pre H-hour bombardment was spectacular. On our way back it took considerable time to locate the jeep at night since the driver had selected a low-lying spot and pulled across the camouflage net. But it refused to start. Grudgingly after wasting about an hour we moved back on foot. Crops, shoulder high all along the border could be the places for the enemy to hide. Villagers at the dead of night were hospitable and directed us correctly. We made to the HQs by about 4 am. Luckily one of the radio operators was brewing tea. As I was sipping tea, Commander fully dressed in his red tabs appeared. After briefing him I enquired as to why should he make it easy for the enemy to single him out. "One sweats the whole life for these ranks and at the historic moment you want me to conceal these". He continued, "In any case why haven't you shaved yet?"

Soon after daylight I went back to fetch my jeep carrying a jerry can of petrol. I saw some wounded soldiers trudging back with hanging morose face, carrying some heavy equipment even. FUP area was

a complete chaos. Weapons, packs and many stores lying all around; number of vehicles lying exposed to air strike; A depressing sight. I retrieved three or four jeeps which I used during the operations. Their owners somehow did not come forward to claim these. While returning I gave lift to the wounded soldiers asking them where to drop them but they had no knowledge; luckily the villagers informed us the new location for Brigade HQs at Cheema village, with a feature 11r on the road side. Commander immediately asked me to forget everything else but prepare the defences.

### **Defensive Battle**

Defences for the assaulting troops! I was bewildered. We had no defence stores, so digging of trenches was the only answer. Unfortunately Signals Company has the biggest problem. All the radio operators and linemen were busy. Just a few drivers available for this job. It was then one *Sabre* strafed us for about 45 minutes. We cursed the IAF. My regret was that though it was flying so low, I did not shoot it down with my sten gun. Of course we had no anti-aircraft defence. The trench where I was crouching was just about 2 feet deep; 50 mm bullets on my left and on my right. Thank God no casualty.

It seems our information as usual was absolutely wrong. The Pak Armoured Division was not in Quetta but had assembled for launching their attack on the 8th. That explains the failure of the 7 Grenadiers attack. Organising defences around Asal Uttar was the best command decision ever made. 1/9 GR along with 18 Raj Rif of the neighbouring 62 Mountain Brigade was holding paper thin defences against the mighty armoured division of *Pattons*, at Asal Uttar just ahead of us – Brigade HQs and 4 Grenadiers astride the road Khemkaran-Bhikhiwind. On the 8th morning 1/9 GR were pushed back and the 4 Grenadiers front line came in direct contact. Fortunately Capt YR Khanna of Ordnance who would disappear every morning, hence the butt of our envy, would return in the evening to be the pet of Commander, managing to cut the miles of red tapes applied even during the actual war and brought in 106 mm Recoilless Guns and other necessities from the Ordnance Depots. What a relief! Also it speaks very high of the training and the motivation of the Infantry troops to put these in action immediately and achieve excellent results.

Luckily the terrain and the crops favoured us. The enemy tanks restricted to roads and tracks advanced in troops. Our tanks in support had to hold their fire since their range was much less and at a distance *Patton* armour would have just shaken off the shells. The 4 Grenadiers held their fire, opening only when the tanks closed in. Three tanks on the main road were damaged and the fourth abandoned. Perhaps it was a probing attack so they withdrew. They tried outflanking, but not much headway.

### **Abdul Hamid's Marksmanship**

On the 9th the defences were better prepared and early morning attack was well repulsed. CQMH Abdul Hamid had destroyed 3 tanks with his brand




new anti-tank gun mounted on jeep. In the evening I accompanied Commander where he satisfied himself by sighting the line of fire from the jeep at various angles. Immediately we sent an 'Emergency' Signal recommending him for *Maha Vir Chakra*. Commander with our team then proceeded to inspect the invincibles on the roadside. My boys pulled out instruction manuals in sealed condition along with the radio set and Infrared Binoculars. Inside the odour was of a hardly used brand new tank. At night one infantry platoon was moved ahead when it was reported that the enemy tanks trying to outflank were caught in the fields when the artillery fire had burst the irrigation channels. I must admire their sense of humour. Their commander asked the JCO Platoon Commander whether he had arranged morning cup of tea for them.

Reveille on the 10th as usual began with the tank rumblings. Abdul Hamid had destroyed their front tank but the tank behind fired to explode his jeep. Commander asked for a 'FLASH' Signal for *Param Vir Chakra* (Posthumous) which the AIR announced at 9 pm news the same day. Kudos to their efficiency. Again another troop approached along the road, but the deadly fire kept it at bay. They withdrew, but within an hour again approached but repulsed. Now Commander got suspicious; as the tanks withdrew, our one platoon moved forward. Open jeep of Enemy Artillery Commander with his body collapsed on the front seat was brought in. The main prize was his completely marked Artillery map and the Top Secret Operation Order. Muslim troops buried his body, but within an hour instructions from the Divisional HQs to rebury him with full military honours. In the meantime one enemy tank was reported just behind the Brigade HQs stuck-up in pond in a tilted condition. Tanks here and tanks there, of course only the enemy's. Our troubles were not over yet. Machine gun fire from the advancing tanks coming from behind us. That was the moment to forget everything since we were surrounded by the enemy tanks all around in day time. No chance of any escape. Holding my breath like everyone else I was lying doggo. Suddenly I heard a known voice shouting 'anybody around' as if he was entering the Officers Mess. After a few anxious moments I made up my mind and crawled forward to wave a soiled white kerchief. Maj Vohra of 3 CAV jumped down to hold me in bear hug. 'So you chaps are still kicking around'. What a relief after their deadly prophylactic fire!

### **Disaster Invited**

On the 11th morning an eerie silence. Nothing happening. Feeling restless. In the Ops Room telephone rings, 'This is Corps Cdr Extremely well done, my boy! We are proud of you all. Call your commander, Hurry up!' My chest puffed up. In the afternoon taking a few daring boys I moved forward towards Khemkaran in my jeep. On the way I met 8 CAV troop so asked them to provide covering

fire. In the jeep I had rifles with the boys and my sten gun. We must have moved about 2 km in the no man's land when we spotted a Sig Coy trailer in the middle of the road. My heart missed a beat. Could it be ours? Luckily it was sort of a gift from Pak. I immediately hooked it to rush back. 8 CAV troop had withdrawn for some other task. Raising a huge swirling column of smoke and dust I landed in the HQs to be admonished by commander for making the Brigade front line stand to. Fortunately they had orders to hold fire unless fully satisfied whether friend or foe.

Khemkaran town was still in the enemy hands so a brilliant plan to establish a road block behind them by 4 Sikhs coming from another division after sleepless engagements for the past six nights. Saragarhi Day, the saga of courage and valour to be re-enacted. 2 Mahar coming from Jodhpur travelling at night during blackouts, to assemble in our sector to launch a frontal attack where the enemies armour was still present. At about 4 am I met their Commanding Officer with a small group trudging past our HQs with his pack on the back. The only ammunition carried was on person. Our Radio detachment accompanied him. Before leaving he asked me the names of the officers in the Brigade HQs, the Units under command and support. I offered him a cup of tea but he refused, 'no time!' He had no proper map also, so I gave him my own. It can tell about the preparations made. About 7 am Commander moved forward to the designated FUP; I accompanied him. Before the Battalion could form up, murderous machine gun fire started and heavy artillery pounding. Luckily the shells were astray from the location Commander and I were standing. Very soon wounded soldiers started falling back. Commander gave up his jeep; in two jeeps I ferried in three or four trips many wounded soldiers to the RAP where I learnt later on that the surgeon continued to operate non-stop for more than 36 hours till he collapsed. Standing there Commander tried again to reorganise another attack; but the enemy gave no chance. Around 11 am we came back. But where was 4 Sikh? By then some of the Sikh troops escaping capture had entered our defence sector showing white clothes. They were assembled at the back. By their accounts 4 Sikh had been captured but the top brass were not convinced. Another frontal assault in the evening, again many casualties. Then Commander suggested night attack which was agreed to unwillingly. AIR at 9 pm gave us the shocking news that Lt Col Anant Singh with about 125 soldiers had been captured. Finally the attack was called off. What an ignoble Celebration of the 'Saragarhi Day'. Someone had to shoulder the brunt of this fiasco. None better than the CO 2 Mahar. But Commander like a true brave soldier accepted all responsibility. He was removed. But he had made his name in the annals of the Indian Army. The back of the mighty Pak armoured Division had been broken. Victory was his! 

# REVISITING 1965 INDIA PAKISTAN WAR

Till today the Indian leadership has made continuous efforts to 'organise peace', which is always marred by the cross-border terrorism, mistrust and lack of will from the other side to resolve the conflict. But one may keep the hope that we learn from our histories and give peace a chance, nevertheless the same history also taught us that fortune favours the brave one, the prepared one.

*"In the utilisation of our limited resources, we have always given primacy to plans and projects for economic development. It would, therefore, be obvious for anyone who is prepared to look at things objectively that India can have no possible interest in provoking border incidents or in building-up an atmosphere of strife ... In these circumstances, the duty of Government is quite clear and this duty will be discharged fully and effectively ... We would prefer to live in poverty for as long as necessary but we shall not allow our freedom to be subverted."*

— Lal Bahadur Shastri During Indo-Pak 1965 War

**D**espite knowing the fact that wars will only lead to bloodshed, irreparable damage and scarred histories, sometimes the untamed ambition of a few minds, blinded with power, force a peace-loving nation into war. The Indo-Pak War of 1965, also known as the Second Kashmir War, was one such conflict. The twentytwo days battle began in August 1965 and lasted till September 1965. It was a consequence of a series of border disputes that occurred between India and Pakistan. The border skirmishes increased the tensions between both the nations; this was followed by confrontation between paramilitary forces and subsequently between the armies of both the nations.

In words of former Director, History Division, MoD, UP Thapliyal, "The conflict which was engineered by Pakistan in the Rann of Kutch was subsequently carried over to Kashmir with the launch of 'Operation Gibraltar' – an ingenious military strategy to push the Kashmir question into centre stage internationally."

### Kutch Prelude

The immediate trigger for the war was the conflicting claims over the 'Rann of Kutch' in April 1965. As per the observations made by the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), "The early months of 1965 saw the increase in tensions between the Indo-Pak







### **Pak Proxy War**

In order to achieve its plan, the 'Operation Gibraltar' was initiated by Pakistan. It was code name for Pakistan's planned operation against India, formulated first by the foreign office but then taken up by Ayub Khan. The plan was based on self-preening and optimistic 'lessons' from the Rann of Kutch conflict and from limited Indo-Pak skirmishes fought earlier in the year. Pakistan engaged 30,000-40,000 men as Gibraltar force. The Gibraltar force comprised of 'mujahideens' and regular Pakistan Army men. One can trace the origin of Pakistan 'proxy war' against India from 'Operation Gibraltar'.

In response to the mayhem created by the Pakistan surrogate Gibraltar force in the valley, Indian Forces crossed the Ceasefire Line on 15 August 1965 and launched an attack on Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. The action saw Pakistan losing significant strategic mountain locations to India. Subsequently, India also withstood the adversary aggression in Tithwal, Uri and Poonch. Nevertheless, despite the damages Indian Armed Forces were able to capture the highly prized Hajipir Pass, eight kilometres inside Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.



**Kriti Singh**

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relationship over the conflicting claims over the Rann of Kutch. The situation steadily deteriorated during the summer of 1965 and, in August, military hostilities between India and Pakistan erupted on a large-scale along the ceasefire line in Kashmir."

Prior to main face-off, the months of March and April 1965 saw India Pakistan clash in the Rann of Kutch, when Pakistan made an attempt to seize the marshy wasteland located in Gujarat. The Kutch episode from Pakistan's side was only to check waters. In his book *India's Armed Forces: Fifty Years of War and Peace*, Maj General Ashok Krishna, AVSM opined, "The Kutch affair was a proving ground for Pakistani men and material. It gave the Pakistani military an opportunity to assess Indian strength and vulnerabilities. According to some, it was a rehearsal for the conquest of Kashmir before launching full-scale attack there, Ayub Khan thought it necessary to try his new American weapons, the steadfastness of his friends and India's capacity to resist".

The conflict of Rann of Kutch was prelude to Pakistan's bigger malevolent plan. This was to initiate the clandestine operation based on two wrongly placed assumptions. The first was that Indian Armed Forces won't be able to retaliate in short period of time and secondly to leverage sentiments of Kashmir population as Pakistan assumed that the Kashmiris are embittered with India. In this erroneous assumption, Islamabad expected to spark mass protest and use Kashmiris to its advantage in weakening India's stand and to unleash infiltrators to add fuel to the fire, thus snatching Kashmir from India.

### **UN Intervention**

The main confrontation between the two armies was battled on land, mainly in Kashmir and along with the International border. Subsequently, another Pakistan attempt to cut-off Jammu and Kashmir by initiating 'Operation Grand Slam' on 1 September 1965 to capture Akhnoor and to catch India off guard while the battle was on, also failed. On 6 September 1965 the Indian troops 'marched into Lahore sector.' The Pakistan Army's endeavour to seize Kashmir by coercion was marred by Indian Armed Forces. And subsequently resulted in an impasse, which was further affected by prevailing global politics of the Cold War. In his report of 3 September 1965, the Secretary-General U Thant stressed that the "ceasefire agreement of 27 July 1949 had collapsed and that a return to mutual observance of it by India and Pakistan would afford the most favourable climate in which to seek a resolution of political differences."

With the intervention of Great Powers, on 22 September 1965, India and Pakistan agreed to a UN mandated ceasefire, thus ending the war that had by that point reached a stalemate, with both sides holding some of the other's territory. Thereafter on 10 January 1966, the peace accord between the rival countries was formally brought about by signing declaration at Tashkent, the capital of the Republic of Uzbekistan in the Soviet Union. The Tashkent Declaration was signed between the then Indian Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri and Pakistan President Ayub Khan in the presence of the

Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin who mediated between them. The biggest challenge while negotiating the Tashkent Declaration was the negotiation for the return of territories captured by both the sides, particularly, on the issue of return of Hajipir in exchange of Chamb. Although New Delhi was willing to return Hajipir to Islamabad but simultaneously wanted Islamabad to relinquish the use of force. Nevertheless, this peace accord couldn't provide remedy to ailing relationship between both the countries.

### Post-war afterthoughts

The declassified documents from the United States from the period 1964-1968 also throw light on few important issues with regards to 1965 War. Firstly, it clearly underlines the Indo-Pak perennial conflict. A State Department memo of January 27, 1964 acknowledged the US 'low' leverage in respect of both and the futility of asking the UN Security Council to discuss Kashmir. Secondly, the intention of Pakistan to wage a war against India can be clearly seen. As per the record letter dated May 12, 1965, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, then Pakistan Foreign Minister argued, "that since India's military strength was growing" and "is at present in no position to risk a ground war, it was time to strike." Thirdly, the decision to go on war was later regretted by Ayub, which as per the declassified documents reveals, Ayub unwisely fell in with his plans, inflicting lasting damage on Pakistan and his own position. In April 1966 he told the Cabinet: "I want it understood that never again will we risk 100 million Pakistanis for 5 million Kashmiris – never again." Fourthly, there is substantial evidence, which indicates Pakistan's attempt to rope in China in war. The CIA was convinced that there was "some secret understanding" between China and Pakistan before the war but "China will avoid direct, large-scale, military involvement in the Indo-Pakistan War," the document revealed. Thereafter US warned China against interfering in the war.

### Unique Features

Apart from the display of the highest level of bravery, valour and unshakable determination of the Indian Armed Forces, the 1965 War was unique in many ways. The deployment of tanks was one of the high points of the battle. The Battle of Asal Uttar was the biggest tank battle fought after World War II. After 1947 India Pakistan division, the 1965 War witnessed one of the largest troops deployments in Kashmir region. The war largely saw main action between the foot soldiers and armoured units along with intermittent use of air power. The war spanned for twentytwo days and resulted in heavy casualties on both sides with no significant advantage to any of the sides. However the losses were relatively heavy on the Pakistani side, twenty aircraft, 200 tanks and 3,800 troops. The 1965 War exhibited the 'shock effect' generated by the Indian Air Force on


the adversary's leadership. The gallant air warriors, despite limitations in terms of lack of intelligence, radar cover, surface-to-air missiles, operational training and obsolete aircraft, tilted the battle in favour of India. The Indian Air Warriors created havoc in adversaries' mind and territory both.

Notwithstanding the IAF's constraints, Pakistan Air Force experienced an attrition rate that was 21 per cent higher than that of the IAF. In his book, *1965 War - The Inside Story*, while highlighting the limitations of IAF, author RD Pradhan writes, "What McNamara said was true, but nonetheless offensive. USA did not offer any aid and India's Air Force was mostly the same "museum". With that background, it was an exhilarating moment when some of those 'junk' planes, such as *Mysteres*, *Vampiers* and *Hunters* performed brilliantly against Pakistan's sophisticated *F-86s*. In fact, the indigenously built *Gnat*, a small beaver like fighter, brought down several *F-86s*."

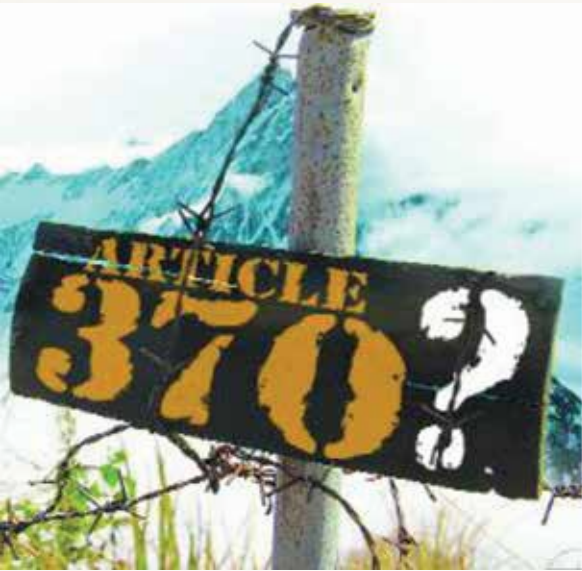
### Pak 'Imaginary Victory' Syndrome

The war also witnessed the failure on part of Pakistan to accept the idea of 'peaceful coexistence' advocated by India's *Panchsheel* principles and reiterated by the then Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri.

It also saw Pakistan's use of 'proxy war' as tool against India and to 'bleed India through a thousand cuts'. It also exhibit Pakistan's miscalculation based on the assumption that Indian Armed Forces won't be able to face Pakistan aggression after Indo-China 1962 debacle. China's position, especially after this war towards India, was seen in favourable light by Pakistan. It also highlighted the Pakistan's leadership's imprudent and reckless attitude not only towards India but also towards their own people. Quite well summarised by Altaf Gauhar, the Pakistan Secretary of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in Pakistan said, "The result: few people outside armed forces realise how close Pakistan came to disaster in the 1965 war ... unless all the facts of 1948, 1965 and 1971 are made public, our people will go on living in a false world scoring imaginary victories against fictitious adversaries."

To conclude, some 2,300 years ago around 300 BC ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle once said that "It is not enough to win a war; it is more important to organise the peace." And peace relies heavily on political will to do so. Fifty years back during 1965 War, the then Defence Minister YB Chavan's thoughts resonated the same idea when he wrote, "The ball is now in the political court again – where it should be – and not the military one. I hope we have the vision and courage to accept this challenge to (our) political leadership." And till today the Indian leadership have made continuous efforts to 'organise peace', which is always marred by the cross-border terrorism, mistrust and lack of will from the other side to resolve the conflict. But one may keep the hope that we learn from our histories and give peace a chance, nevertheless the same history also taught us that fortune favours the brave one, the prepared one. 

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**Lt Gen Kamal Davar  
PVSM, AVSM (Retd)**

The writer is a distinguished soldier having served in all theatres of operations in his 41 years of service. Has been Chief of Staff of a Corps HQs in Jammu and Kashmir and then as GOC 11 Corps responsible for the defence of Punjab. He was especially selected by the Government of India to raise the Defence Intelligence Agency after the Kargil War. After retirement he writes and lectures on security issues. He is widely known to passionately espouse the cause of jointness in the Indian Armed Forces. As the first DG, DIA, many intelligence initiatives including abroad were taken by him.

# JAMMU AND KASHMIR AND THE IDEA OF INDIA

**J&K is at the core of Indian nationalism and secularism on which the values of a multi-plural and inclusive Indian nationhood are based. Notwithstanding the mistakes and blunders of the past 68 years, successive governments at the Centre and State, may have made in J&K, it is time for us to discard the baggage of history and take all suitable and firm measures, both in the external and internal dimensions, to fully integrate J&K into its parent nation.**

*“Most people have concluded long ago that Pakistan’s Kashmir policy has been hurting Pakistan and Kashmir more than India.”*

— US political commentator Michael Krepon

**T**he captivatingly scenic and enormously strategic state of Jammu and Kashmir, since its stormy accession to the Union of India on 26 October 1947, has, more often than not, displayed an uneasy coexistence with the liberal, secular and, unquestionably, generous environs of its parent nation. That countless soldiers, innocent citizens, policemen and even some local political leaders have sacrificed their lives to give the restive state a semblance of peace, progress and, importantly, democracy, will be stating the obvious. That the chief perpetrator of all violence, terrorism and public unrest in J&K is neighbouring Pakistan is a universally accepted fact. Thus ravaged by Pak inflicted conflict and a few internecine contradictions within, J&K endures as an illogical and perhaps a fatal obsession for Pakistan.

Notwithstanding Pakistan’s proxy war and myriad machinations, the Indian state has also to ponder seriously that, even after 67 years of accession to the Indian Union, why has Kashmir not emotionally integrated itself fully into the Indian mainstream. Is the Indian state in some form of denial as regards the political aspirations and angst of the people of the Valley – within the framework of Indian integrity – also needs introspection. The Kashmiri ethos of Sufism and Kashmiryat is essentially closer to the multi-plural, inclusive and secular moorings of the Indian state than the divisive, extremist forms of the Islamic faith, on the ascendant, in violence stricken and sectarian Pakistan. Mistakenly, Pakistan considers Kashmir as India’s Achilles heel but that J&K is a flashpoint for conflict between the two nuclear neighbours is also a stark reality.

Like most intractable problems, the J&K conundrum also has both an external and internal dimension to its resolution. Thus there is a conflict of Kashmir (external dimension foisted by Pakistan) and the conflict in Kashmir (the internal dimension) – if the Indian state can rise to the challenges of the latter, the former will gradually lose its relevance!

### Significant Benchmarks

Covering the historical facets and various nuances of the Kashmir conundrum will be rather voluminous to be covered in this article but it is essential that certain benchmarks on J&K, since 1947, are recapitulated as relevant for an overall analysis. Some of these are briefly enunciated below:

- Overall 5,000 Pathan tribesmen/Pak Army personnel masquerading as *Razakars* invaded J&K in October 1947.
- Maharaja Hari Singh, ruler of J&K, signed the Instrument of Accession on 26 October 1947; accepted by the Governor General of India, Lord Mountbatten on 27 October 1947. Indian troops were immediately flown to Srinagar airport to save the Valley and drive out the Pakistani *Razakars*/troops.
- Indian troops stabilised the situation, saving the capital Srinagar and to some extent, pushed back the Pakistani invaders. Reportedly, Sheikh Abdullah prevailed upon Pt Nehru not to commit the Indian Army in the Gilgit-Baltistan region as its population were not Kashmiris. Meanwhile, Pt Nehru, on Mountbatten's advice, chose to go to the UN on 1 January 1948 on Pak aggression in J&K.
- UN adopted two Resolutions on 13 August 1948 and 5 January 1949 providing for a plebiscite to be held by India under UN supervision but after Pak withdraws its troops from J&K and also disbands its *Azad* Kashmir forces in the state. The latter conditions have always been glossed over conveniently by Pakistan in international fora.
- The Regent of J&K, Yuvraj Karan Singh, issued a proclamation on 25 November 1949 that legally declared the state's assimilation to the Constitution of India. *Article 370*, which confers some special rights on the state of J&K, was incorporated in the Indian Constitution in 1950.
- Sheikh Abdullah became the PM of J&K in 1951 after elections to J&K's Constituent Assembly were held. However, on grounds of treason, the Sheikh was arrested in 1953.
- On 15 February 1954, J&K Constituent Assembly with Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad as Chief Minister ratified the state's Accession to India.

After many years in political wilderness, Sheikh Abdullah became the CM of J&K in 1975, signed the landmark Kashmir Accord with then PM Indira Gandhi and stayed on as CM of the state till his death in 1982. In his last years and especially after Pakistan's decisive defeat in the 1971 War with Bangladesh's emergence, Kashmir's tallest political leader ever, Sheikh Abdullah had come to the conclusion that J&K's future was best served with it being a part of India.

The Indira-Sheikh Accord reiterated the accession of the erstwhile princely state to India as final and the Sheikh had dropped the demand for any plebiscite to determine the final status of J&K. The Accord, however, allowed the Government of India to impose President's Rule in the state, if required. As a sop to the Kashmiris, *Article 370* of the Indian Constitution was retained and the Residuary Powers were to remain with the J&K Assembly.

The 2015 elections to the state assembly witnessed a record turnout of over 65 per cent and after protracted negotiations, for the first time in its history, a coalition of two ideologically, diametrically opposite political parties, the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and the BJP joined hands to form a coalition government in J&K. The state government uneasily plods on and has yet to achieve any credible success in governance or in establishing law and order effectively in the state. The PDP is considered by many in India as being 'soft' on separatists. Meanwhile the right wing BJP, which self-proclaims to be ultra-nationalist, appears to be caving in frequently to the PDP on state issues, including pertaining to security.

### Article 370

*Article 370* is a law in the Constitution of India which grants special status to J&K within the Union of India. This law ordains that except for foreign affairs, defence, finance and communications, the Indian Parliament will require the approval of the state government for introduction or application of any other laws on aspects other than mentioned *ibid*. During its introduction at the time of the enactment of the Constitution, *Article 370* fell under the Constitution of India's Part XXI called 'Temporary and Transitional Provisions'. On 27 November 1963, Pt Nehru himself confirmed on the floor of Parliament that he had earlier made the statement that "Article 370 of the Constitution would be eroded progressively." But as the years have passed, *Article 370* appears to have become effectively permanent and for the local leaders of the Kashmir Valley an emotive issue.

### AFSPA

The Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) was enacted by the Indian Parliament on 11 September 1958, which confers special powers to the armed forces in 'disturbed areas'. The Act is central to the operations of the security forces who require legal immunity while operating in areas afflicted by insurgency and terrorism. However, some state governments, certain citizens and NGOs have been demanding withdrawal of this Act on the grounds that it is 'draconian' in its implementation and some NGOs have dubbed it, unfairly, as a 'license to kill'.

As regards J&K, the present CM and even the previous one, have advocated repealing AFSPA from J&K. An unbiased look at the current security situation does not recommend the withdrawal of the Act in the present security scenario. However, whenever the security situation normalises, the Army may revisit the necessity of AFSPA in J&K's hinterland and leave it to the state police and the central police/paramilitary forces to handle internal security while the Army concentrates on manning the Line of Control (LoC).



Meanwhile as the Army conducts its counter-terror and counter-insurgency operations in the state, it must do so with a human face, ensuring minimum collateral damage, involve locals with them for local intelligence gathering and logistical support and further energise its people-friendly activities.

### Rehabilitation of KPs

The advent of heightened Pak sponsored militancy in the early 90s witnessed the phenomenon of nearly 3 lakh Kashmiri Pandits (KPs) fleeing their homes from the Kashmir region to outside the state or areas around Jammu. In a matter of months the KPs became refugees in their own homeland. For years, there has been much discussion on the return of the KPs to Kashmir. The present state government has advocated the concept of establishing small townships for them (calling them composite camps) in Srinagar and some other towns in the Valley whilst the separatists have suggested the KPs to return to their original abandoned homes. The KPs themselves, with most of them now living in refugee colonies, in and around Jammu, are themselves not sure about their own security in case they return to the Valley – thus an impasse has resulted.

### Handling Separatist Leaders

Since Kashmir's accession to India, Pakistan has assiduously endeavoured to foment trouble in J&K, especially in the Valley, not only by violent methods but encouraging separatist leaders to regularly drum up anti-India activities in diverse ways. Misusing the liberty of democracy and often India's soft attitudes towards its errant citizens, these separatist leaders, supported ideologically and financially by Pakistan, have employed the pulpits of the mosques and *madrassas* to spread their message of hatred and communal disharmony. Each year, most of them, surprisingly, are allowed by the Indian state to attend functions at the Pakistani High Commission in New Delhi, where they get their annual financial doles and the latest instructions from their Pakistani ISI handlers.

The Government of India and the state government must come down with a heavy hand on these separatists like the fundamentalist Geelani, Yasin Malik, Shabir Shah, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq and any anti-national activities be firmly curtailed. The state governments merely putting them in comfortable 'house arrests' hardly solves the problem – they should be housed, whenever they indulge in anti-national activities, in proper jails even outside the state and dealt under the Indian law.

### Ever Growing China-Pak Axis

For years, the 'higher than the mountains' and 'deeper than the oceans' friendship between China and its supplicant nation, Pakistan, has been on the ascendant. India has to factor in the strategic ramifications of this axis which is primarily targeted against India behind the façade of economic cooperation between Pakistan and China. This collusion will get further cemented by the so-called Economic Corridor from restive Kashgar in China to the Gwadar deep water port on

the Arabian Sea, running through Gilgit-Baltistan-PoK and thence through insurgency hit Balochistan.

In the last few months, Pakistan definitely appears emboldened in its nefarious activities in J&K and a strident anti-India stance after Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit to Pakistan in March this year. According to media reports including in the US media, China has stationed nearly 50,000 troops in GB-PoK region, masquerading as a labour force and engineers, to build infrastructure along the Karakoram Highway whilst also having taken a 50 years lease for this region from Pakistan. The large and strong Chinese presence in the region has obviously ominous concerns for J&K and India.

### Other Important Issues

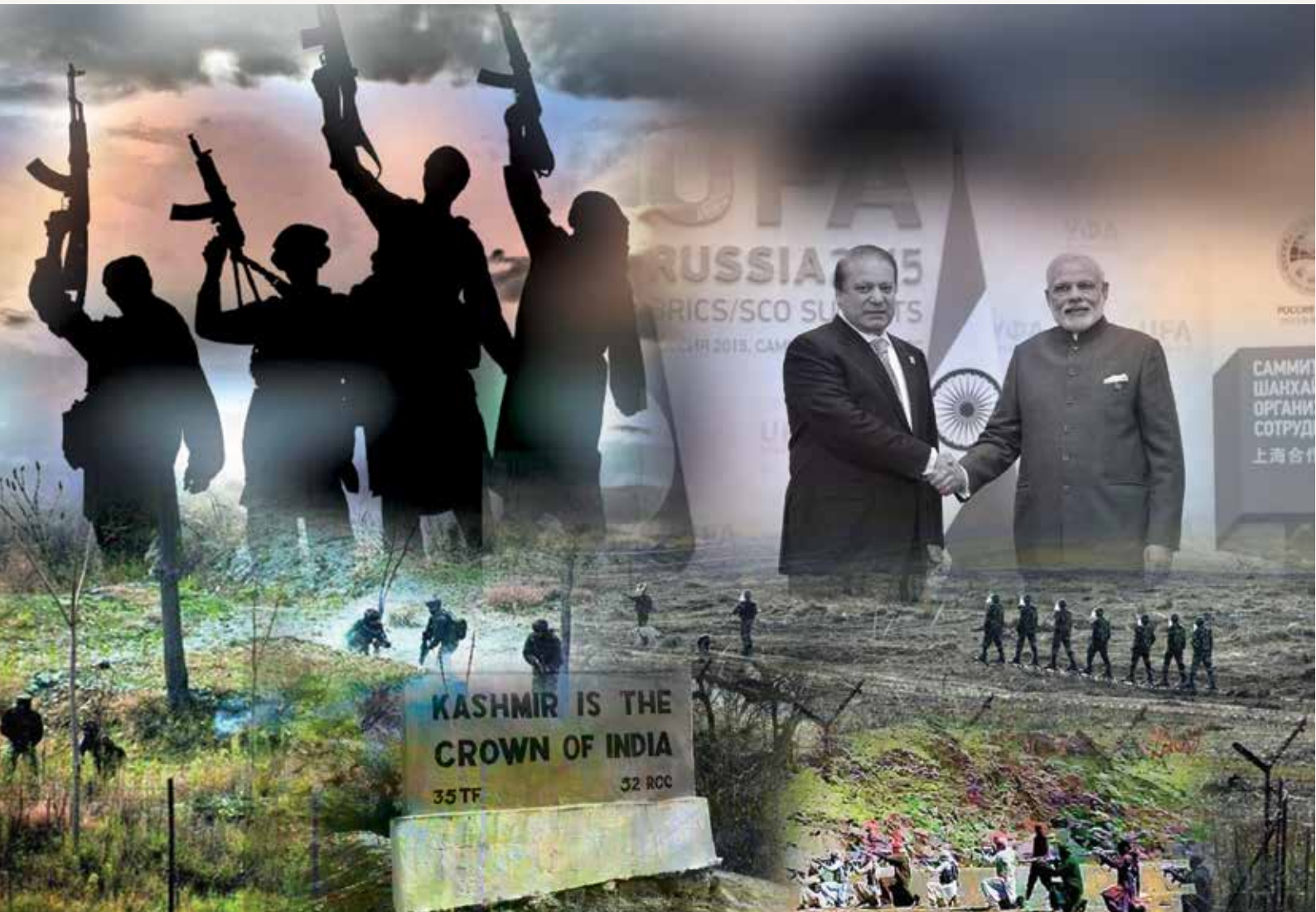
There are some other important issues for consideration by the Indian state as regards J&K. Importantly, with the US drawdown in neighbouring Afghanistan and after its eventual pull-out or a reduced military presence, will a likely Talibanised Kabul, in cohorts with Pakistan and its notorious ISI, spell further trouble for J&K? In addition, what are the concerted measures India needs to take to achieve reconciliation through dialogue and development to bring the restive Valley into the national mainstream? Has the nation done enough to assist J&K get out of last year's havoc caused by the unprecedented floods in the state? Does the Centre need to pump in greater resources in the fields of education, health care and infrastructure generating additional employment for youth in J&K which may also wean them from militancy?

### Reclaiming PoK

We should make it clear to Pakistan that we will not brook any interference by them in J&K. The unfinished agenda of the Partition is how to get Gilgit-Baltistan and PoK back into India. If need be, we must raise the costs to Pakistan for exporting terror to the state by synergising our diplomatic, political, economic and military measures. We can remind them of their various fault lines – which India being a peace loving neighbour has never exploited so far.

- Any seditious/anti-national activities must be dealt with firmly and speedily to send out the right signal to all concerned.
- Perception management be accorded its due significance to give a true picture to the local Kashmiris.
- India must open up channels of communication to the oppressed masses in Gilgit-Baltistan and PoK.
- The Indian Army and the Air Force must further re-energise their reaching out to 'welfare of the locals' programmes.

Jammu and Kashmir is at the core of Indian nationalism and secularism on which the values of a multi-plural and inclusive Indian nationhood is based. Notwithstanding the mistakes and blunders of the past 68 years, successive governments at the Centre and State, may have made in J&K, it is time for us to discard the baggage of history and take all suitable and firm measures, both in the external and internal dimensions, to fully integrate J&K into its parent nation. Thus sagacious and strong leadership is the need of the hour. **D.A**



# INCOHERENT STRATEGIES REACTIVE POLICIES

The most insistent problem in Kashmir is not Pakistan. Nor is it the Kashmiris. The problem is India’s abysmal leadership, the lack of vision, of consistency and of dedication to purpose among a deeply corrupted political elite and a political culture of expediency and of short-term gains, both in Srinagar and in Delhi. Unless this deep and tragic flaw is addressed, the theatre of human suffering will continue to play out in J&K, with the principal actors flailing about aimlessly, like puppets on strings.

Insanity, it has been remarked, is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. By this measure, India’s ‘policy’ on Kashmir and on the Pakistan-backed movement of Islamist subversion and terrorism there, has been nothing

short of lunacy. For decades, the national leadership has failed to evolve anything resembling a coherent strategy of response, ceding the initiative entirely to the adversary, reacting fitfully to each new provocation and celebrating accidental gains as great strategic victories.



### Mere Rhetoric

Each party in opposition talks about strategy and strength and national interest; every party in power negotiates on its knees with Pakistan and with its separatist and terrorist proxies in Jammu and Kashmir. This process has gone through its most recent cycle, as the sorry posturing of the Modi regime was brought to an ignominious end at Ufa, where it is now known that it was an importunate India that sought the restoration of talks with Pakistan, after New Delhi's high dudgeon in August 2014 over the Pakistan High Commissioner's hosting of Kashmiri separatists in Delhi. In the intervening months, Pakistan has made little secret of its contempt for the various 'preconditions' India has periodically set for the resumption of 'dialogue': the Pakistan High Commission hosted Kashmiri separatists on *Eid-ul-Zuha* in March 2015 and had invited them again for *Eid-ul-Fitr* celebrations in July, though some prominent separatist formations refused to attend because of Pakistan's failure to mention Kashmir in the Ufa talks; no effective action has been taken against the perpetrators of the 26/11 Mumbai attacks and, in fact, the principal accused, Zakiur Rehman Lakhvi, has now been released, even as Pakistan insists that voice samples cannot be used as evidence against him; the 'infrastructure of terrorism' remains intact in Pakistan and there are almost daily violations of the 2003 Ceasefire Agreement along the Line of Control (LoC) and International Border (IB) in J&K.

### Targeted Attack

Crucially, just a day before Modi met Sharif at Ufa, a Border Security Force (BSF) trooper was killed by a Pakistani sniper in the Nowgam Sector of Kupwara District, along the LoC. Earlier, on July 5, Pakistani Rangers had killed another BSF *jawan* in the Nowgam Sector. According to partial data compiled by the South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP), Pakistani Forces violated the Ceasefire Agreement (CFA) on at least 50 occasions during the first six months of 2015 (data till June 30), resulting in three fatalities among Security Force (SF) personnel. There were 74 CFA violations by Pakistan during the last six months of 2014, resulting in three deaths among SF personnel. SATP's partial data also recorded at least 17 infiltration attempts during the first six months of 2015 (till June 30), resulting in 11 fatalities – eight terrorists and three SF personnel, adding to 19 such attempts during the last six months of 2014, which resulted in 13 fatalities – 12 terrorists and one trooper. Jammu and Kashmir Director General of Police, in June 2015, warned of a significant concentration of terrorists along the LoC and in February 2015, Haribhai Parathibhai Chaudhary, Union Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs told Parliament about "several terrorist training camps in Pak-occupied Jammu and Kashmir ... which are used for training and subsequently for infiltrating trained militants /terrorists into J&K State."

### Inexplicable U-turn

And yet, utterly inexplicably, the Modi Government, which boasted that it had a 'strategy' for Pakistan and against terrorism, is proving no better than its predecessor United Progressive Alliance Government, whose policy pendulum on Pakistan was exhausted by two fruitless options: Talks and no talks. The logic of this 'policy' is deeply entrenched in the Indian state and its agencies and was recently articulated by AS Dulat, former Chief, Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) and Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's principal interlocutor in Kashmir, who writes, in his *Kashmir: The Vajpayee Years*, "... what is India's problem in Kashmir? It is Pakistan. So either you bomb and finish off Pakistan – a strategy that even the Americans could not successfully pull-off in Afghanistan or Iraq and which we certainly can't do – or you talk to Pakistan."

And so, the entire and vast spectrum of possible strategies against Pakistan is condensed into this reductionist and false dyad, with no supporting argument and no examination of any available alternatives.

### Other Options

There have, over the decades, been many variations of this argument of necessity. Thus, it is argued, you can't change your neighbours and its consequent 'corollary', that a strong and stable Pakistan is in India's best interests. But we did change our neighbours in 1971, with the creation of Bangladesh. China changed our neighbours for us by occupying Tibet in 1950 and certainly altered the neighbourhood with the occupation of Aksai Chin in 1962. Pakistan changed the neighbourhood within months of Partition, by occupying large parts of J&K; has engineered further changes by transferring some of these territories to China and continues to seek to complete what it regards as its 'unfinished agenda' of taking over the whole of J&K. Indeed, the South Asian neighbourhood was utterly transformed in 1947, when lunatic British cartographers arbitrarily dissected the subcontinent. The entire record of human history is, in fact, a narrative of 'changing neighbours'. Crucially, it is unlikely that any country in history, other than modern India, could ever have argued that a 'strong and stable' enemy was in its interest – and the fact that Pakistan's orientation is one of unyielding enmity to India cannot have escaped the notice of even the most Panglossian (overly optimistic) idealists. And yet, the arguments endure, with little challenge and frequent reiteration, among the 'intelligentsia' in this country.

### Jingoism Galore

There have, of course, been some other streams of popular 'strategic' argument. There are the



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'military minds' that advise precision bombings, 'limited war' and even, occasionally, the threat of tactical nukes. Tit for tat responses and, as Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar expressed it, 'neutralising terrorists with terrorists only', are some lesser variations on this theme. Elaborating on one such position before he became the National Security Adviser (NSA), Ajit Doval warned Pakistan, "You can do one Mumbai, you may lose Balochistan". None of these options are backed by any realistic assessment of capacity, capability or consequence and reflect, essentially, 'masculine' postures, intended to stave off legitimate criticisms of the infirmity of the State and its leadership.

There are also the 'good people' who dream of creating a 'strong, stable and democratic Pakistan', even as they ignore the deeply flawed democracy and ailing state we have in our own country; even as they refuse to face up to the reality that they lack the most rudimentary instrumentalities – beyond their ineffectual good intentions – to secure the objectives they articulate and even as they studiously ignore the entrenched dynamic of radicalism and Islamist extremism that permeates all aspects of state, society and politics in Pakistan.

In over sixty five years of confrontation with Pakistan, among the most protracted of contemporary conflicts in the world, these rudimentary, rash, unthinking notions are the best we have been able to evolve. And this is just in the realm of purported 'doctrine'; in reality, we remain trapped in perpetual and defensive reaction, with the rare exception of 1971, when India seized the opportunity and initiative to dismember Pakistan.

### **Great Expectations**

When Ajit Doval was appointed NSA, it was assumed that the Modi government would adopt a protracted conflict perspective in dealing with Pakistan. Doval had, shortly before his appointment, publicly articulated the notion of the 'defensive offence mode', arguing that India should "work on the vulnerabilities of Pakistan", which, he argued further, were "many, many times higher than that of India ... Once they find that India has shifted gears from the defensive mode to one of defensive offence, they will find that it (sponsoring terrorism) is unaffordable for them." Among the broad components of this strategy, Doval had spoken of economic instrumentalities, Pakistan's politics and bringing about Pakistan's isolation internationally.

It is not clear whether India has, in fact, existing capacities to impose unbearable costs on Pakistan, but it is abundantly clear that the country needs to create such capacities, given Pakistan's persistent support to terrorism and proxy war and its relentless hostility to the very idea and existence of India. A coherent strategy of protracted conflict would include, among others, instrumentalities of competitive attrition to undermine Pakistan's limited enduring economic and administrative

strengths; the creation of covert capacities to inflict direct harm (not necessarily through violent retaliation) on sponsoring State and non-State actors in Pakistan; a vast augmentation of our intelligence capacities on Pakistani soil – capacities that appear to have been systematically eroded or dismantled over the past decades; capacities to contest Pakistan's strategic overreach in the wider Asian region and capacities to counter Pakistan's immensely successful international efforts to continue to receive support and aid from a range of countries through patterns of blackmail, including nuclear blackmail, as well as subordination, as in the case of its current relationship to China and past relationship to USA.

Crucially, at the core of India's reorientation, must be the recognition that Pakistan's existence is itself in question – hence its claims on Kashmir do not need to be taken as a permanent 'given' in the geostrategic equation.

### **No Protracted Conflict Paradigm**

It is abundantly clear that the Modi regime does not have any coherent conception of any such 'protracted conflict' paradigm of response. The 'Doval doctrine', as some commentators have chosen to describe the NSA's prior and rudimentary articulations of this strategy, appears to have failed to win traction with the country's present political masters, who continue to look for quick and flashy public spectacles and show no stomach for a sustained strategic approach that could actually compel Pakistan to abandon its criminal support to terrorist proxies.

But 'India's problem in Kashmir' is not just Pakistan. A long history of political mismanagement, adventurism, neglect, corruption and sheer incompetence prepared this troubled province for the campaigns of destabilisation, radicalisation and terrorism that Pakistan eventually executed here. For decades before separatist terrorism swept across J&K, a process of Islamist radicalisation had been visible, backed by Pakistan's mischief and by petrodollars flowing in unchecked and unaccounted from West Asia. The Indian establishment continued to sing paeans to 'Kashmiriyat' and the unique patterns of Sufi Islam – liberal, tolerant and all embracing – that were thought to be integral to the values of the people of this region; but it did nothing to protect this stream from the vigorous and well-funded onslaught to which it was being subjected across the Valley and beyond. Indeed, the State confers virtual immunity from law, with rare exception, on anyone operating under the cover of religion – a pattern that is unfortunately not restricted to J&K, but afflicts State action across the country. It was this radicalised, Salafist, Islam that eventually came to form the core of the separatist mobilisation and eventual terrorism in J&K, despite the pretensions of some separatist formations.





## Blind-eyed

After more than two and a half decades of terrorism, the State continues to look the other way, as the project of Islamist radicalisation continues unchecked in J&K. Hundreds of Salafist *madrassas* and mosques have come up over just the past decade – overwhelmingly funded by questionable sources abroad and through illegal (*hawala*) channels – but no questions are asked, no accounts are sought. Indeed, the growth of some radical ideological streams of Salafist Islamism are actively encouraged, because these do not currently support the separatist agenda, despite the fact that there is nothing to distinguish their basic ideology from that of separatist Islamism.

In the meanwhile, the Indian State and establishment continues to demonstrate great faith in the power of corruption. The shenanigans of competing secret agencies – widely known and openly discussed in J&K – have now been ably exposed by one of their prominent practitioners, AS Dulat. The fundamental premise of State policy in India has long been that, if you can buy up the elites, the people won't matter. This has yielded a strategy of mass corruption by State agencies and has created a perverse economy that has directly contributed to the persistence of separatism, extremism and terrorism. Crucially, many (if not most) of the beneficiaries of the munificence of Indian State agencies have not been particularly shy of receiving concurrent revenues from Pakistani agencies as well.

## Soft Separatism

At the same time, most 'mainstream' political formations with a popular base in the Valley continue to articulate ideologies of soft separatism and Delhi sees this as a 'counter' to the 'hard' (violent) separatism of Pakistan-backed groups. This is another pattern of opportunism that has kept the Valley on a low boil for decades. The soft separatism of mainstream parties creates the orientation and the spaces within which extremism and hard separatism thrive. In all this, there are no advocates of liberal democracy; no one pursues, propagates or declares a clear commitment to the constitutional path.

Despite the enveloping incoherence of India's policy in J&K, the insurgency in the State has virtually collapsed, from a peak of 4,507 fatalities in 2001, to 193 fatalities in 2014, according to data compiled by the South Asia Terrorism Portal. While the Security Forces have fought relentlessly to secure this end, this is the consequence, overwhelmingly, of extraneous circumstances, including international pressures on Pakistan, the progressive denial of credible deniability, a rising tide of the terrorist blowback within Pakistan and a shift of Islamabad's priorities to the more urgent terrorist campaigns directed towards Afghanistan. Crucially, Kashmiris are now deeply disappointed with Pakistan and the ISI and this has contributed enormously to the progressive



marginalisation of violent and terrorist formations and to increasing flows of intelligence to security and intelligence agencies in India.

## Historic Opportunity

There is, evidently, a historic opportunity here, but a pervasive absence of vision, plan and purpose continues to afflict policy. The State, activists, journalists, strategic 'experts' – no one has an institutional memory. Everything begins anew on each cycle. The wheel is reinvented, *ad nauseam*, the same entrenched platitudes are trotted out by successive regimes and the cost in human lives and anguish mounts interminably.

The most insistent problem in Kashmir is not Pakistan. This perspective, it appears, has failed to win traction with the country's present political masters, who continue to look for quick and flashy public spectacles and show no stomach for a sustained strategic approach that could actually compel Pakistan to abandon its criminal support to terrorist proxies. Resuming talks with Pakistan will only help Islamabad secure greater legitimacy in the international arena, even as its open support to externally directed terrorist groups operating in India and Afghanistan continues unabated. Nor is it the Kashmiris. The problem is India's abysmal leadership, the lack of vision, of consistency and of dedication to purpose among a deeply corrupted political elite and a political culture of expediency and of short-term gains, both in Srinagar and in Delhi. Unless this deep and tragic flaw is addressed, the theatre of human suffering will continue to play out in J&K, with the principal actors flailing about aimlessly, like puppets on strings. **DSA**

**Kashmiris  
are now deeply  
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Pakistan and  
the ISI**

# JAMMU AND KASHMIR



**General Ayub Khan visiting Chamb Sector during 1965 Indo Pak War**

**The security forces will continue to manage the levels of violence but the administration must deliver and grass root organisations like the *Panchayat* must be fully empowered. What must also be focused at the national level are the collusive China-Pakistan efforts to destabilise India at the sub-conventional level. In this context, there is urgent need to establish credible deterrence against the China-Pakistan proxy wars by going fully proactive. This is a dirty war and idealism should not be a stand-alone factor .... We must get surreptitious handle on the fault lines of our adversaries, rather than them controlling ours.**

**T**he Corps Commander of Srinagar based 15 Corps recently said that some 200 Pakistani infiltrators are waiting for an opportunity to crossover the Line of Control. Terrorist training camps in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir are running full swing. Pakistan continues to indulge in anti-India rhetoric with Pakistani NSA Sartaj Aziz officially stating, “Pakistan should not target militants who do not threaten the country’s security” (read LeT and associated scum are free to attack India), while Army Chief Raheel Sharif continues harping upon the ‘unfinished agenda of Kashmir’. The latest encounter in Tangdhar signals Pakistani resolve to continue her proxy war against India. All this has been routine for past several years. But what appears changed is the soft approach of the J&K state government towards separatists reaching a new high by the gesture of openly thanking Pakistan for his victory as Chief Minister Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, was grim forewarning this may follow. A recent post addressed to the Prime Minister on Facebook read, “Modi Ji, beware frequent unfurling of Pakistani flags in the Valley, army being ambushed in northeast and pro-Khalistan slogans re-emerging in the Golden Temple”.

## **Militancy In Jammu And Kashmir**

Militancy in J&K always had full support from Pakistan. Buoyed by the birth of PoK (78,114 sq km of state of J&K legally acceded to India) as a result of Pandit Nehru declaring unilateral ceasefire in 1948 while Indian Army was in hot pursuit of fleeing Pakistani forces. Had Nehru not halted our Army, Pakistan would have no border with China. With the illegal occupation of PoK, Pakistan has always been obsessed with the idea that grabbing J&K would be a cakewalk. It is this misconception because of which President Ayub Khan prompted by Foreign Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto launched the Gibraltar Force and Operation ‘Grand Slam’ in 1965, both failing miserably. It is this same itch that was behind Musharraf’s Kargil intrusions. Pakistan has been extending every possible support to keep terrorism alive in J&K. This includes infiltration operations, training J&K youth in terrorism, supply of arms, armament, ammunition and warlike stores, fiscal support, moral support, psychological operations and sustained propaganda. Ironically, cross-border nexus of some J&K political parties too is obvious. The PDP is supported by the PoK-based Hizbul Mujahideen. On the recent incidents of unfurling of Pakistani flags in the Kashmir Valley, NC politician Mustafa Kamal Khan not only justified the action but stated the said flag should be respected.

In 2013, the NIA had declared Hizbul Mujahideen chief Syed Salahuddin, his deputy Gulam Nabi Khan and eight other militants proclaimed offenders and charged them with channelling huge sums of money



# LOOKING AHEAD



into J&K for subversive activities. One wonders if Mufti Mohammad Sayeed was actually thanking Salahuddin post his assuming the chair of CM of J&K while alluding to Pakistan. Also in 2013, media quoting NIA had said that Kashmiri terrorist groups had received US\$ 100 million for terror operations in past two years, over the past 10 years some ₹ 600 crore were diverted to J&K terrorism from within India, ₹ 98 crore were diverted in one single year from the J&K Affectees Fund and that the J&K Affectees Relief Trust (JKART) had been facilitating Pakistani infiltration into J&K. Intelligence reports also revealed that goods sent through trucks to PoK were intentionally overpriced 2-3 times in the vouchers and additional money received was being diverted for terrorist operations. It is unthinkable that the state government doesn't get major slice of the pie. Hence the soft attitude of J&K state government towards Hurriyat hardliners who are Sunni Muslims (same as the PDP and NC hierarchy), also affected by purge of Ahmadiyyas in Pakistan from the time Zia-ul-Haq declared them non-Muslims and ongoing massacres of Shias in Pakistan. That is perhaps why the state government has been starving the Jammu and Ladakh regions of funds even though Kargil District of Ladakh is 99 per cent Muslim, but Shia.

The influence of the separatists in J&K is restricted to only five districts. There has never been any talk of separatism in the Jammu and Ladakh regions that together constitute 1,13,197 sq km of the state of Jammu and Kashmir; 26,293 sq km of Jammu region and 86,904 sq km of Ladakh. Yet, it is our free media, controlled by media houses abroad, which hype separatism for obvious reasons. With all the Pakistani interference in India's internal affairs, it is without doubt that the ISI too would have invested heavily in our media not only to hype separatism but also hit at the morale of security forces. Interestingly, during the two day round table for all MPs and MLAs/MLCs of J&K organised by the Delhi Policy Group two years back, questions were raised by Muslim J&K politicians as to why no action was being taken to retrieve the territories of PoK and CoK (China-occupied Kashmir). The bottom line is that the separatists have influence in just about 15 per cent area of the state of J&K and this minuscule minority, headed by Geelani and his protégés like the Mirwaiz need to be simply blocked out of any media cover.

**The J&K Affectees Relief Trust (JKART) had been facilitating Pakistani infiltration into J&K**

A scholar recently posted on Facebook: "It is also an open secret that militants in Kashmir are paid now by Chinese and not Pakistan. The Chinese have established huge control over Kashmiri separatist leaders." This certainly requires investigation. If it were not for Chinese nuclear and other support, Pakistan would not dare to continue her proxy war. The cumulative effect of pan-India China-Pakistan proxy nexus adds up to indirectly boosting terrorism in J&K. This China-Pakistan terror nexus is fanning the fires of terrorism across the length and breadth of India. The Maoist insurgency is being supported by them and so is the northeast insurgency. So we see rise of militancy even in Arunachal Pradesh. The apprehension of four Chinese nationals with fake Indian documents on a mission to meet Naga insurgents four years back was warning of Chinese intelligence involvement and obviously contributed to abrogation of the 13 year old peace treaty by the NSCN this year.

## China's Proxy War

In March 2015, nine militant groups of northeast including the NSCN-Khaplang and the ULFA faction led by Pareth Baruah, have come together to form a new unified front with active indulgence of Chinese intelligence during a meeting held recently in Myanmar in March 2015; the new organisation called 'United National Liberation Front of WSEA (West South East Asia)'. Chinese intelligence operatives are active in the Sagaing region and weapons are often shipped to the northeastern groups through the China-Myanmar border. Khaplang, Chairman NSCN will be the nominal head of the new grouping, a key role will be played by Pareth Baruah, the chief of the ULFA, who has been sheltered on Chinese soil for the past several months. Besides the NSCN-Khaplang and ULFA, other groups that participated in the meeting held at Taga in Sagaing (Myanmar) in April 2015 were the Kangleipak Communist Party, Kanglei Yawol Kunna Lup, People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak, People's Liberation Army, United National Liberation Front and National Democratic Front of Bodoland (Songbijit faction). China has created her deadliest proxy in the United Wa State Army (USWA), perhaps more lethal than the LTTE, headquartered in Shan state of Myanmar even arming it with missile fitted helicopters, in addition to assault rifles, machine guns, shoulder fired air defence missiles and armoured vehicles.

## External Factors

The China-Pakistan nexus is perhaps the most dangerous in the world, both being nuclear powers and both proactively indulging in sub-conventional war. China has been giving tacit support to Pakistan's anti-India jihad.

## The Manipur Milieu

The deadly terrorist attack on an army convoy in Manipur in June 2015 was a consequence of the formation of the United National Liberation Front of WSEA assisted perhaps by the ISI-backed Peoples



United Liberation Front (PULF) aims to establish an Islamic country in India's northeast and whose leaders are based in Chandel District of Manipur where the army convoy was recently ambushed. According to recent reports, some 3,000 radio controlled explosive devices have been supplied to ULFA through China-ISI channels. The China-Pakistan unholy nexus needs to be watched on other fronts as well. One example is Maldives with over 1,000 uninhabited islands, which has been methodically radicalised through the LeT, which is a proxy both for China and Pakistan. Then South India may be sitting on a tinderbox as well with Al Qaeda having sponsored the Kerala based PFI (Popular Front of India) currently lying dormant.

### **Inexplicable US Role**

Despite all the casualties suffered by US and NATO in Afghanistan because of Pakistani proxies, the US continues to support the Pakistani military ostensibly due to its continued presence in Afghanistan and has supplied over 14 combat aircraft, 59 military trainer jets and 374 armoured personnel carriers to Pakistan as part of Excessive Defence Articles (EDA) besides approving a billion dollars worth of sale of military hardware, identifying Pakistan, ironically for counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency operations. In 2009, the Centre of the Harvard Kennedy School had pointed to clear evidence of misuse of USAID to Pakistan citing proof: US provided US\$ 1.5 million to reimburse Pakistan for damage to navy vehicles which had never been used in combat; US\$ 15 million for Pakistani Army bunkers that were never built; US\$ 30 million for Pakistani road building but no evidence of construction; US\$ 55 million for helicopter maintenance of national fleet that was not performed; Pakistan military received US\$ 80 million per month for military operations during ceasefire periods when troops were in barracks; Musharraf once complained army helicopters needed more spare parts and support, despite US having provided US\$ 8 million worth of *Cobra* parts over previous six months; 'great majority' of the Coalition Support

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Funds given by the US to reimburse Pakistan for counter-terrorism operations was found diverted; US officials visiting FATA found Pakistani Frontier Corps units poorly equipped, soldiers wearing sandals in snow, wearing World War I era pith helmets and carrying barely functional *Kalashnikov* rifles with 'just 10 rounds of ammunition each'. So it is quite evident that bulk of USAID is used to support Pakistan's state policy of terrorism against India and Afghanistan, not for CI and CT.

### **British Activity**

Recently, Britain (perhaps on US behest) has also engineered an MoU between the Afghan intelligence and the ISI that virtually gives power to ISI to exercise its writ in Afghanistan. The Taliban are making gains through their summer offensive even as the ISI is present in Beijing during parleys between the Chinese and Afghani Taliban. The ISIS too is slowly but firmly establishing itself in the Af-Pak region on both sides of the Durand Line supported by the Pakistan Taliban. These dynamics including those discussed in preceding paragraphs plus the Chinese strategic lodgement in Gilgit-Baltistan and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor will have deleterious effect on the levels of terrorism in J&K. The current rallies in Srinagar and Tral with waiving of Pakistani flags may well be pointers to collusive China-Pakistani effort to raise the level of terrorism in J&K.

### **Foreign-inspired Violence**

It is unlikely that Pakistan will curb its proxy war against India. Conversely, it is likely to step it up with Chinese backing, especially when the only way for the military and ISI to keep Pakistan under their thumb is confrontation with India and Afghanistan. A new terror group, Tehrik-e-Taliban (TeT) parading openly in Sopore with ISIS type black flags, carrying assault rifles and making demands on the public akin to Taliban doesn't augur well. Hopefully given time, the PDP-BJP alliance will be able to stabilise the region. Safe return of Kashmiri Pandits would do well for J&K, as would development of infrastructure and investments that can usher jobs for the unemployed youth. The security forces will continue to manage the levels of violence but the administration must deliver and grass root organisations like the *Panchayat* must be fully empowered. What must also be focused at the national level on the collusive China-Pakistan efforts to destabilise India at the sub-conventional level. In this context, there is urgent need to establish credible deterrence against the China-Pakistan proxy wars by going fully proactive. This is a dirty war and idealism should not be a stand-alone factor, because the cost of always following an inward looking policy is much higher. Our foreign policy must have a balanced mix of realism and idealism. We must get surreptitious handle on the fault lines of our adversaries, rather than them controlling ours. **DSA**



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