

# NET SECURITY PROVIDER: INDIA'S OUT-OF-AREA CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS



Military Affairs Centre, IDSA

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MILITARY AFFAIRS CENTRE, IDSA

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# PREFACE

The primary task for India in the coming decades is to ensure economic growth that reduces poverty and improves its overall socio-economic conditions. In turn, continued economic growth is dependent upon access to raw materials, energy, markets and free trade. It follows logically, therefore, that our economic and strategic interests are no longer just confined to our territorial borders. As a result, in this century, India's economic growth would be dependent not just upon our economic and financial policies but also on developments around the globe. In addition, globalization has led to the spread of the Indian diaspora in different parts of the world. It has often been the duty of the Indian government to ensure the physical safety of this diaspora in the face of conflicts or natural disasters. As a result, we need capabilities to evacuate our citizens. These two assumptions lie at the heart of this report which examines India's capabilities to conduct Out-of-Area Contingency (OOAC)

operations. In military parlance, this refers to the employment of Armed Forces beyond one's borders. The report does not go into imagining scenarios and, instead, concentrates purely on the issue of capabilities. Eventually, of course, all decisions to employ our Armed Forces will be taken by our political leaders. However, the Armed Forces must be prepared in terms of training, planning and visualising of military operations outside our borders. I welcome this report by the Military Affairs Centre of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA), which examines all these issues. This report is a product of a year of research and a number of roundtables. Its primary target audience is the Indian strategic community and this is aimed at generating a debate. While parts of the report are critical, however, it is hoped that this is taken in the right spirit. While commending the members of the Military Affairs Centre, I welcome correctives and feedback on this report.

**Dr. Arvind Gupta**  
**Director General, IDSA**



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

India's economic growth and prosperity are increasingly being shaped by circumstances outside its borders. Most prominently, trade and access to energy are now critical components of the Indian economy. In addition, the Indian diaspora, which is a source of significant remittances, also needs protection and evacuation. Thus, India's economic and national interests are gradually spreading outwards from its borders. Also, at times, the Indian military has been deployed for security operations – for instance, in anti-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia and in overseas humanitarian and disaster relief operations. In light of its capabilities and possible overseas role, the Indian military has been called a 'net security provider' in the region. This report, therefore, focuses on examining the Indian military's Out-of-Area Contingency (OOAC) operations.

In examining this topic, the report analyses previous deployments of the Indian military outside its borders, including in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKO), evacuation of Indian citizens from conflict zones and in active operations like Sri Lanka from 1987–90 and the Maldives in 1988. It then examines the current capacity and trends for executing such operations. Finally, it makes recommendations not only for the Armed Forces but for other relevant agencies as well, such as the Ministries of Defence and External Affairs, the National Security Council and the Cabinet Secretariat. The research methodology consists of secondary literature as

well as interviews and roundtables with many serving and retired officials.

This report argues that despite claims about the capabilities to conduct OOAC operations, the Armed Forces and other government agencies still need to devote significant amount of resources and attention to this issue. Our study of previous OOAC operations provides many insights, some of which are as follows:

- **Lessons unlearned:** The lack of declassification and access to previous records inhibits analysis of past missions. This is applicable to all such missions including UN operations, evacuation of Indian citizens and other military operations. Partly as a result of this, no Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are in place for operations like evacuation of citizens from conflict or disaster zones.
- **Capitalise on participation in UN missions:** While India has historically been among the strongest supporters and largest contributors to UN peacekeeping missions, however, it has not taken full advantage of its vast experience. For instance, there is a lack of regional specialisation and area studies in the Armed Forces. In addition, the field reports of participating units are not studied and analysed.
- **Clarify and attain capabilities, if required, for overseas disaster relief operations:** The Indian military has played an important role

in overseas disaster relief, most prominently during the tsunami relief operations in 2004. However, there is still some ambiguity on whether it should prepare, plan and equip for such missions or leave it to the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF). As the latter is still significantly dependent upon the Armed Forces for transport and logistical needs, this creates confusion between the two. There is a definite need for greater clarity on this issue.

- **Need for robust contingency planning:** An analysis of the operations of the Indian Peacekeeping Force (IPKF) in Sri Lanka reveals the need to create robust contingency plans and to train commanders and troops to be able to rapidly shift their missions in the event of changing political dynamics.

An analysis of the current military capabilities for conducting OOAC operations reveals the following trends:

- **Deployment and lift capacities:** Currently, it appears that a Brigade-level force can be deployed relatively quickly for OOAC operations. More forces can be built up as the situation demands. In addition, recent acquisitions, including both air and sea lift capabilities, indicate that plans are in place to eventually create a Division-sized Rapid Reaction Force. Such a force is among the recommendations of this report.
- **Training and preparation:** Considerable attention needs to be paid on planning, training and preparation for possible contingencies. This includes the need for better intelligence, inter-agency functioning, investment in area studies and linguistic training. Currently, due to the single service approach, these

crucial functions do not get the attention they deserve.

- **Logistics:** The operating range of the military will be shaped to a significant extent by logistic supplies. Currently there appears to be little consideration of the logistical chain for possible contingencies. This report makes two recommendations—pre-position stocks in appropriate places including in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and explore the possibilities of signing logistical supply agreements with other countries.
- **Strategic communication:** The importance of strategic communication and thereby shaping perceptions assumes importance especially due to the multiplicity of audiences—domestic, host country and international. Currently, it does appear that much thought and resources have gone into this issue. This report, while critically analysing the media engagement policy, suggests an alternate strategic communication model.

While the report makes a number of recommendations in every chapter, however, there are two major organisational changes that are imperative:

- **OOAC Directorate:** This report finds that planning, training and preparing for OOAC operations suffers from a general lack of resources and attention. To counter this, it is suggested that the current offices handling this responsibility in the Integrated Defence Staff be upgraded to a Directorate under a 2-star officer. Such a directorate should be augmented with additional staff, including hiring specialised civilians, for enhanced planning and training for OOAC

operations. This directorate could then work with the Service Headquarters, Command Headquarters and concerned formations to better think through these types of missions.

- **Emergency Division in the Ministry of External Affairs:** One of the factors identified by this report as creating problems, especially during evacuation operations, is inadequate diplomatic staff. Moreover, regional desks in the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) are not

trained to handle crisis situations. To obviate these problems, this report recommends the creation of an Emergency Division in the MEA. Such a division would be in charge of political–military affairs and be staffed by a mix of civilians and military officers. The mandate of this division would be to deal with all crisis situations, including evacuations, disaster relief and all other out-of-area contingencies.



# 1. THE CASE FOR OUT-OF-AREA CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS

The focus of this project is to analyse India's capability to conduct Out-of-Area Contingency (OOAC) operations. It does so without specifying the contingencies or possible scenarios and instead focuses narrowly on the capabilities. This project also analyses different contingencies beyond military power projection, including humanitarian relief, United Nations peacekeeping operations and evacuation of citizens from conflict zones. The underlying premise of the project emerges from a simple proposition—defending one's national interests in an interconnected and globalised world will force the military to look beyond its national boundaries. Unhindered socio-economic progress requires a peaceful and stable environment, particularly in the immediate and extended neighbourhoods. A growing economic power like India has a legitimate interest in securing its trade and energy flows and assist in stabilising, to the extent possible, its periphery. Moreover, technological progress and possible proliferation of weapons of mass destruction have meant that a small body of state-supported, or stateless, terrorists can cause catastrophic harm. To ensure economic growth and energy supplies as well as prevent instability in the neighbourhood and terrorist attacks on the homeland, nations require the capability to look at and, if required, operate beyond their immediate borders.

This, however, does not mean that India should go abroad “in search of monsters to destroy”.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, there are circumstances that demand military interventions beyond national borders, not only for protecting the national interest but also for the larger “benefit of humanity” in terms of promoting regional and international peace and stability. The deployment of the Indian military outside its border has also historically been undertaken for two crucial tasks—disaster relief and evacuation of Indian citizens from conflict zones. In light of these considerations and its relevance, the Military Affairs Centre at the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA) undertook a study of, what in military parlance is called, OOAC operations.

The capability of the Indian military to operate outside its borders has fetched intermittent attention. David Scott presents probably the best analysis of the concept of “extended neighbourhood” and explains how increasing trade and energy linkages provide the foundation for India's interests outside the subcontinent.<sup>2</sup> He also describes India's strategic expansion, both economically and through military cooperation, along the four cardinal directions. He concludes, however, with a warning of a possibility that “India may be over extending itself with regard to its extended neighbourhood concept”.<sup>3</sup> Walter

Ladwig appears to be more optimistic about India's long-term ability to emerge as a great conventional power and argues that "contrary to both conventional wisdom and the beliefs of some Indian officials, since Independence, India's Armed Forces have undertaken a range of power projection missions, and they will likely do so again in the future".<sup>4</sup> In 2009, the United Service Institution of India organised a seminar on OOACs. The seminar proceedings were subsequently published but its main approaches focused primarily on the likely scenarios for such operations.<sup>5</sup> To be sure, there are some papers that suggest organisational changes to conduct OOAC operations. These papers and the state of implementation of its recommendations are acknowledged and discussed subsequently in this report. In an important study that focuses just on power projection, Admiral Blair offers a sobering assessment that while "Indian power projection capabilities are being modernised, but dramatic new capabilities are not expected".<sup>6</sup> More importantly, while comparing the power projection capabilities of India, China, Japan and the United States (US), he predicts that "major power competition in the region will be primarily economic and diplomatic. The military power projection capabilities of major nations will grow but their use will be generally restrained—primarily symbolic, occasionally coercive or punitive, and often cooperative".<sup>7</sup> This project report confirms Blair's assessment while analysing India's capacity to undertake OOAC operations.

Part of the inspiration for this project emanates from numerous public pronouncements made by senior Indian officials,<sup>8</sup> most prominently by Defence Minister A.K. Antony who publicly declared that the Indian Navy has the mandate:

"...to be a net security provider to island nations in the Indian Ocean Region ... [as]

most of the major international shipping lanes are located along our island territories. This bestows on us the ability to be a *potent and stabilising force* in the region".<sup>9</sup>

Does India then possess the capabilities to be a net security provider in the region? What are some of the areas that require additional resources and attention? In attempting to answer these questions, this report covers three aspects. First, it describes India's historical experience with OOAC operations. This concentrates on what lessons have, and have not, been learnt. Second, it analyses, as far as possible, the current capability of the Armed Forces to conduct OOAC operations. Finally, it makes some recommendations for the future. This study then hopes to trigger a debate and create action points for the National Security Council Secretariat, the Ministry of Defence, Service Headquarters and numerous inter-services organisations, including the Integrated Defence Staff.

At the outset, however, this study has been hampered to a considerable degree by a lack of access to official documents—including of previous operations. This lacuna has been highlighted throughout the report and it is recommended that the Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces follow a mature declassification policy. To get around this problem, the Military Affairs Centre organised a number of seminars, both public and closed door, with participants from the strategic community and the Armed Forces Headquarters. Those who agreed to be publicly identified are listed at the end of the report. Of course, faults and mistakes, if any, in this report lie entirely with the members of the Centre.

The rest of this chapter consists of two sections. The first section explains the economic and

developmental rationale that is forcing India to look beyond its borders. The second section analyses the conceptual outline for the different types of OOACs.

## SECURING INDIA'S GLOBALISING ECONOMY

The pattern of global trade and its links to India's economic growth is forcing India to look beyond its borders. Since the early 1990s, the growth of the Indian economy has been quite impressive. Between 1990–91 and 2010–11, India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) registered an average growth of 6.6 per cent, compared to 5.4 per cent in the decade before (see Annexure I).<sup>10</sup> An important feature of the Indian economy since liberalisation is its globalised nature. In 1990–91, India's total external trade (import and export) accounted for a mere 6 per cent of the GDP. By 2010–11, it had increased to 52 per cent. All this notwithstanding, the momentum of India's growing and globalising economy hinges upon a number of domestic and external factors. From the external point of view, for continued economic growth India requires, among others, safety and security of the global commons (particularly the trading routes), unhindered access to energy supplies, stability among major trading regions and the safety of the diaspora – a crucial source of remittances that support the economy.

It is noteworthy to mention that nearly 95 per cent of India's trade by volume and 70 per cent by value is through sea.<sup>11</sup> There are about 1,040 Indian ships (as of December 2010) that carry the country's cargo.<sup>12</sup> Maritime security, therefore, is of critical importance for India's economic growth in general, and trade in particular. Of particular importance is the safety and security of energy supplies. India is heavily dependent on external sources for its energy supplies, particularly crude

oil. In 2009–10, India's import dependency on crude oil was to the extent of 79 per cent,<sup>13</sup> which is expected to increase further in the coming years as the economy grows and domestic supplies are constrained. In 2010–11, India imported 163.6 million metric tonne (MMT) of crude oil from 33 countries, including 10 from conflict-prone West Asia (see Annexures II and III for a regional and country-wise breakdown of India's oil imports in recent years).

Apart from crude oil, India is also significantly dependent on imported liquefied natural gas (LNG) for meeting its natural gas requirements. In 2010–11, India imported 35 million standard cubic metres per day (mscmd), which was 21 per cent of the total gas available in the country in that year.<sup>14</sup> From 2008 to 2010, India has imported a total of 35.56 billion cubic metres (BCM) of LNG from 15 different countries, including faraway places such as Russia, Trinidad and Tobago and Equatorial Guinea, among others.<sup>15</sup>

Since international trade has assumed a key role in India's globalising economy, it is imperative that the country's major trading regions/partners remain free from political instability. This aspect assumes higher importance given that some of the country's largest trading regions, including West Asia and North Africa (WANA) and to a lesser extent North-East Asia, are also prone to domestic and regional political conflicts. While India can do little to shape the internal political dynamics of these countries, however, by working in tandem with regional and extra-regional powers it can encourage policies that favour peace and socio-economic development. In case these efforts fail then India's government will have to examine operations to evacuate its citizens.

One key aspect of India's growing and globalising economy is the contribution of the Indian

diaspora to the country's economic development. According to the latest estimates, about 3 per cent of the country's GDP is accounted for by remittances.<sup>16</sup> Protection of the interests of this vital segment of contributors to India's economy is, therefore, a necessary imperative.

Overall, the crucial task of ensuring economic growth and progress has seemingly been internalised by the Indian military. Hence, for instance in 2007, the Indian Navy articulated its vision as follows:

“... our primary maritime interest is to ensure national security, provide insulation from external interferences, so that the vital tasks of fostering economic growth and undertaking development activities can take place in a secure environment”.<sup>17</sup>

The military then should be prepared, trained and adequately equipped to operate outside our borders for different types of operations. While in some circles such an argument might be misperceived as a case for military adventurism, however, that is not the argument here. Ultimately, any decisions on the use or deployment of forces will be made by India's political leadership. As such, the elected representatives of the Indian people will decide the tasks that are to be undertaken to protect the country's national interests. Perforce, with globalisation, economic growth and the free movement of people, India's interests, like that of other growing economies, will extend beyond its borders. The choice is clear — either the military prepares for OOACs and performs these operations well, or it does not prepare and when called upon to do so, performs them badly.

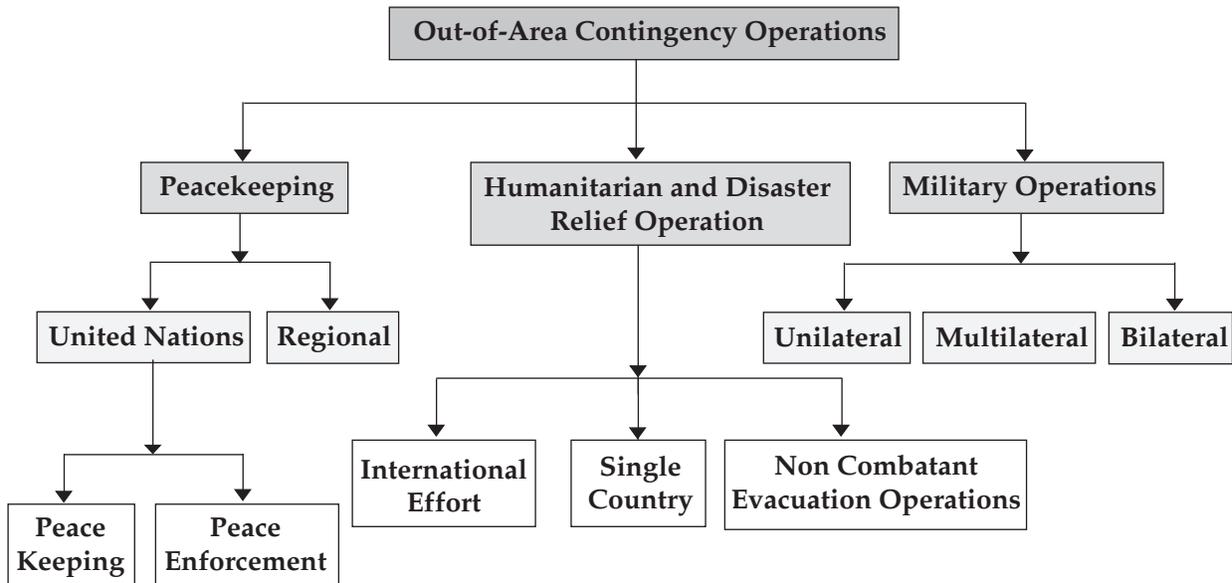
## CONCEPTUAL OUTLINE FOR OOAC OPERATIONS

The concept of OOACs is not new for India. It has responded to contingencies either on a request from another government, or under the UN flag, or for evacuation operations. These contingencies have included both military and humanitarian assistance during disaster relief. In most cases, the overriding factors have been a respect for sovereignty and government-to-government dialogue. Accordingly, the *Maritime Military Strategy* published by the Navy in 2007 defines OOACs as “maritime operations in less-than-war situations, which may include operations to provide assistance and support to friendly governments”.<sup>18</sup> However, this definition is too restrictive and applies mainly to naval operations. After deliberations, the following definition is proposed for OOAC operations:

“Out-of-Area Contingency Operations are those military missions that are conducted beyond India's borders. These include, but are not restricted to, humanitarian assistance and military assistance either sought by friendly nations or offered by India in combating security related issues and in disaster relief. The contingencies would also cover protection of India's national interests and diaspora.”

This study deliberately does not propose scenarios in envisaging OOAC operations. There are earlier studies that have followed that approach.<sup>19</sup> Instead, it classifies OOAC missions by their characteristics. Accordingly, OOAC operations can be imagined under three broad heads—peacekeeping, humanitarian and military operations. These can also be subdivided into various types of contingencies, as described in Chart 1.

Chart 1: Types of Out-of- Area Contingencies



This chart, and the types of missions described in it, is merely for illustration and it is important to note two additional points. First, there may be situations that blur the lines between the types of contingencies. Therefore, planning, equipping and training would require flexibility in thought and action, and a fast response. Second, the types of operations will be dictated by geography and the capability to operate beyond India's borders. It is difficult, therefore, to envisage the Indian military undertaking major missions in South America. Hence, for planning purposes, one can label the missions differently: immediate neighbourhood/extended neighbourhood or vital/essential contingencies (depending on the political risks and costs involved) or even likely/unlikely, depending upon the scenarios. Ultimately, all such operations will be decided by the circumstances and prevailing national sentiments which will guide the decisions of our elected representatives.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> This evocative phrase was used by US Secretary of State John Quincy Adams in a speech on US foreign policy delivered at the US House of Representatives to mark his country's Independence Day on 4 July 1821.
- <sup>2</sup> See David Scott, 'India's "Extended Neighbourhood" Concept: Power Projection for a Rising Power', *India Review*, Vol. 8, No. 2, 2009, pp. 107–43.
- <sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 138–39.
- <sup>4</sup> Walter Ladwig, 'India and Military Power Projection: Will the Land of Gandhi Become a Conventional Great Power?', *Asian Survey*, Vol. 50, No. 6, 2010, p. 1182
- <sup>5</sup> See United Services Institute of India, S-52: *Proceedings of a Seminar on use of Military in Out-of-Area Contingencies: Strategic use of Military Power in the Regional Context* (New Delhi: USI Publications, August 2009).
- <sup>6</sup> See Dennis C. Blair, 'Military Power Projection in Asia', in Ashley Tellis, Mercy Kuo and Andrew Marble (eds), *Strategic Asia 2008–09: Challenges and Choices* (Washington, DC: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2008), p. 413.

- <sup>7</sup> Ibid, p. 420.
- <sup>8</sup> A number of Indian officials from time to time have made references to the capacity of the Indian military to operate beyond its borders. For quotes, see articles by David Scott and Walter Ladwig.
- <sup>9</sup> See 'Indian Navy: Net Security Provider to Island Nations in IOR: Antony', Press Information Bureau: Government of India, 12 October 2011, emphasis added. <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx?relid=76590>, accessed on 17 March 2012.
- <sup>10</sup> The growth rate is based on GDP at market and constant (2004–05) prices. The GDP figures are taken from Reserve Bank of India, *Handbook of Statistics of Indian Economy 2010-11* (New Delhi: Reserve Bank of India, 2011).
- <sup>11</sup> Ministry of Shipping, *Maritime Agenda 2010-20* (New Delhi: Government of India, January 2011), p. 306.
- <sup>12</sup> It is, however, to be noted that the share of Indian ships in carriage of the country's overseas trade is miniscule (about 8.4 per cent in 2008–09). See, *Maritime Agenda 2010-20*, p. 304.
- <sup>13</sup> The figure is based on the difference between India's total crude oil consumption and domestic production. See, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Government of India, *Basic Statistics on Indian Petroleum and Natural Gas 2009–10* (New Delhi: Government of India, 2010).
- <sup>14</sup> Rajya Sabha, Parliament of India, Gas Transportation from Turkmenistan, Un-starred Question No-290, Answered on 2 August 2011.
- <sup>15</sup> See British Petroleum, *BP Statistical Review of World Energy* (2009, 2010 and 2011).
- <sup>16</sup> See Ministry of Finance, *Economic Survey 2011-12* (New Delhi: Government of India, 2012), p. 351.
- <sup>17</sup> See Foreword written by Admiral Sureesh Mehta in Indian Navy, *Freedom to Use the Seas: India's Maritime Military Strategy* (New Delhi: Ministry of Defence (Navy), 2007), p. iii.
- <sup>18</sup> See Indian Navy, *Freedom to Use the Seas*, p. 105.
- <sup>19</sup> See the papers in USI, *Proceedings of a seminar on use of Military in Out-of-Area Contingencies*.

**SECTION I:**  
**CONDUCT OF PREVIOUS OUT-OF-AREA**  
**CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS**



## 2. UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS: LEVERAGING INDIA'S FORTE

“Our participation in peacekeeping operations need not solely be governed by considerations of national interests. India needs to perform the role that is in consonance with its growing stature as an emerging power.”

– General J. J. Singh, Former Chief of Army Staff<sup>1</sup>

Although operations conducted under the United Nations (UN) flag do not classically fall under the rubric of Out-of-Area Contingencies (OOACs), however, India's vast experience and contribution makes it necessary to study these missions. The contours of India's relationship with the UN had been set out early by Jawaharlal Nehru, who said, “... we adhere completely and absolutely to the principles and purpose of the United Nations Charter and that we shall try to the best of our ability, to work for the realisation of these principles and purpose”.<sup>2</sup> According to the Ministry of Defence, “Since 1950, India has participated in 45 UN missions out of the total of 69 UN missions, across the globe. Till date, more than 1,65,000 Indian troops have participated in various UN Missions.”<sup>3</sup> Tellingly, India has also the largest number of fatal casualties among nations participating in peacekeeping operations—indicative of its deep commitment and sacrifices.<sup>4</sup> While the Army's role in UN operations is better known, it bears mention that the Air Force has also been an active participant alongside. It sent Canberra bombers in 1960 to the Congo and has had deployments in Somalia (1993), Sierra Leone (2000), DRC (2003) and a Chapter VI mission

in Sudan (2005).<sup>5</sup> The Navy had three warships participate in the Somalia operation.<sup>6</sup> The *Ministry of Defence Annual Report* rightly notes that the Indian military “...has demonstrated unique capacity of sustaining large troop contingents all over the globe, over prolonged periods. Known for their professionalism, compassion, equanimity and forbearance, Indian troops have been popular, effective and always in demand”.<sup>7</sup>

This chapter examines some of the major trends, problems and future prospects of India's participation in peacekeeping operations. It also makes some recommendations on what can be done to make improvements in these missions and under what conditions India should expand its peacekeeping engagement. Indeed, one of the debates in India has long been about the utility of its participation and contribution in UN operations. Some argue that India's involvement in the policy-making bodies should be a prerequisite for continued participation in peacekeeping operations. On most counts, India is a natural claimant for a permanent seat at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). While this chapter does not concentrate on this particular

issue, however, it is identified as an important issue for deliberation both within India and in the international community. Instead, the main focus of this chapter is on analysing India's role in UN missions.

## LEARNING THE LARGER LESSONS

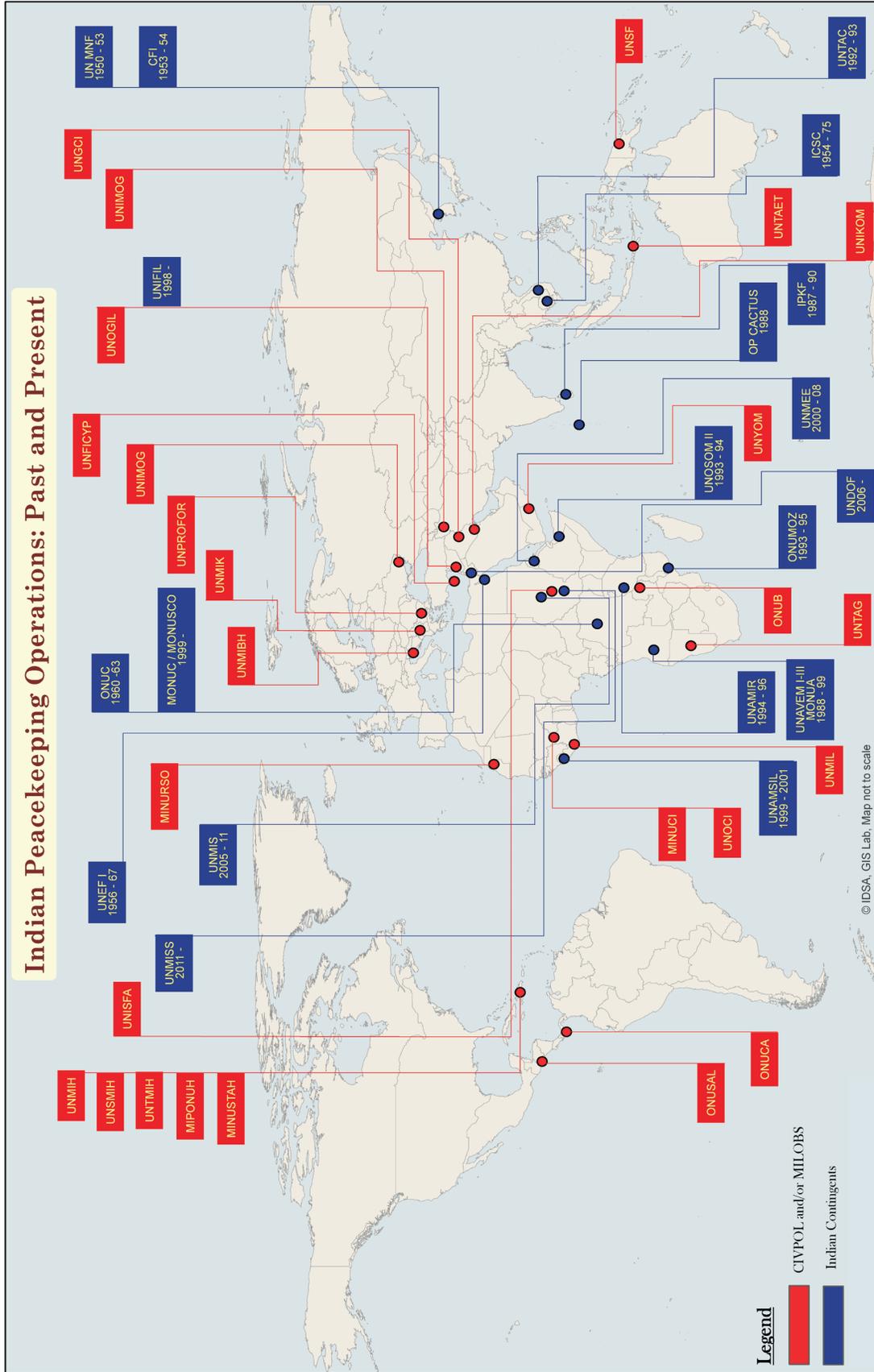
Identifying problems in UN missions would require perusing after-action reports, end-of-mission reports, war diaries, unit log books and observations of senior commanders deputed as force commanders, deputies and staff officers in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO). It is not clear whether these records are available for public study and discussion. More crucially, it is not evident that serving officers access these records to engage in an honest discussion on the strengths and shortcomings of India's participation in peacekeeping operations. Instead, what passes for a discussion in the public domain usually are anecdotal accounts by some of the participants.<sup>8</sup> This is an aspect that requires attention not just to improve India's ability to undertake peacekeeping operations but also for DPKO to examine the issue of institutional memory, study and analysis. This issue and the problems that accrue therein can be deliberated at the annual peacekeeping conference organised by the Centre for UN Peacekeeping (CUNPK) of the United Services Institution, among other forums. In turn, the reports that are made during the peacekeeping missions can be analysed by Army Training Command (ARTRAC) or by researchers at think tanks like Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS), United Service Institution of India, or even the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA).

Despite this research limitation, there are some noticeable trends which create problems in the

Indian military's participation in UN operations. One of the biggest lacunae is that India lacks an overall peace operations policy. The guidelines on the website of the Permanent Mission of India in New York are useful, but these could be in the form of a policy document with government ownership. The result is that different agencies in the government which operate together in the peace operations realm comprise 22 different organisations and they are often not on the same page and have varying sense of commitment and urgency. The onus then is on the Staff Duties Directorate of the Army HQ to integrate the effort at great cost to its overall efficiency. This leads to bureaucratic delays, piecemeal clearances and financial queries and hurdles, particularly from Defence Finance, indicating a lack of synergy. Crucially, the non-military aspects of peace operations, in terms of peacemaking and peace building which are arguably more important than the military dimension of peace operations, do not get the attention they deserve. In sum, there is a lack of inter-agency coordination and ownership as there is no central coordinating mechanism. At most, a Committee of Secretaries meets periodically but its efficacy is suspect.

Another problem is the retention of knowledge and expertise acquired by the Indian military while deployed for peacekeeping operations all over the world. The selection of units and officers deputed for such missions is based on unit performance and merit, respectively. While this ensures that quality personnel take part in these missions, there is no system of retaining the expertise gained. Hence, for instance, officers who are deployed in these missions gain insights into local politics and regional and international developments. However, as there is no equivalent of the US Foreign Area Officer in the Indian military, this expertise is lost to the organisation.

India's UN Peacekeeping Footprint



Source: Based on Satish Nambiar, Chandar Sundaram, RTS Ghinea, ed., *For the Honour of India: A History of Indian Peacekeeping* (New Delhi: USI Centre for Armed Forces Historical Research, 2009).

There needs to be a policy that allows officers, whether mainstream careerists or those choosing to opt out of traditional career paths, to build up this expertise. Thus, there is a need to build an ethos of specialisation which will go a long way in building in key competencies, such as those of area specialists under the Defence Intelligence Agency and linguists.<sup>9</sup>

India's admittedly minor problems in these missions apart, there is a larger issue—the future of India's participation in UNPKO, the changing nature of UNPKO and how all this fits into the overall narrative of OOAC operations. This is discussed in the next section.

## THE CASE FOR ENHANCING COMMITMENT, OR NOT

When India assumed a rotating seat at the UNSC in 2011, it touted its participation in and continued support to UN peacekeeping operations and publicly articulated the need to revitalise this important function of the UN. Accordingly, India has made a number of statements calling for revitalisation of UN peacekeeping operations.<sup>10</sup> In its Annual Report, the Ministry of External Affairs articulated this issue in the following terms:

“During its forthcoming term on the Security Council, India's immediate priorities will include ... the strengthening of UN peacekeeping and peace-building efforts. India is also committed to continue working for bringing about much needed structural reform to the UN Security Council.”<sup>11</sup>

This renewed focus has dove-tailed into the larger debate about the efficacy, utility and future direction of peacekeeping operations.<sup>12</sup> On this issue, there are two points for deliberation by

India—the overall rubric of its participation in UN operations and the actions to be taken if India decides to enhance its participation in these missions. The first is a straightforward question that is increasingly being articulated in India — why should India participate in peacekeeping operations while being excluded from the policy-making bodies?<sup>13</sup> There is currently a vigorous debate on the need for restructuring of the UNSC to reflect contemporary global politics.<sup>14</sup> India has a strong case for claiming a seat as a permanent member. Moreover, there is a need to consider the representation of troop contributing members in management positions. If such a decision is taken, India can increase its contribution to peace operations policy and decision-making at the political, operational and strategic levels in the UN system. In this manner, its presence on the UNSC can be productively used. Commensurate with this, it can also enhance its financial contribution to peacekeeping operations. However, the chances of such a change occurring anytime soon appear to be dim. Indian policy-makers then will have to make a conscious decision on its continued support for peacekeeping operations.

If, however, it is felt that India should continue its role in peacekeeping operations and, in addition, lobby for significant reforms and enhance its commitment to peacekeeping, then there is much work to be done.<sup>15</sup> Currently, there are four options or models on peacekeeping that are in vogue in the UN. First is the coalition approach based on a lead nation backed by a secondary state; second is subcontracting to a regional organisation; third is the 'stand by' force concept; and, fourth, is the as yet politically nonviable suggestion of having a standing UN force.<sup>16</sup> The latest UN report appears to favour the first two approaches when it argues:

“Peacekeeping is not always the right answer. In situations of high political tension, or in contexts where regional or national support is lacking, prevention, mediation, peace building and conflict-sensitive development activities may be more effective. In active conflict, multinational coalitions of forces or regional actors operating under UN Security Council mandates may be more suitable. Successful crisis management rests on choosing the right tools.”<sup>17</sup>

Hence, there is a trend that favours outsourcing peace enforcement missions with or without a Chapter 7 mandate.<sup>18</sup> For instance, the UN has supported the efforts of the African Union to bring peace to Somalia and, in another instance, gave a Chapter 7 mandate for NATO operations in Libya.<sup>19</sup> If this trend continues, then India might have to concentrate on building capacity and flexibility to work with regional alliances and partners. This might require additional resources in terms of posting military officers to these organisations to build working and professional familiarity. India could also choose to engage with the difficult missions, contributing enablers, filling in ‘gaps’ in UN capability and increasing its civilian presence. Fortunately, there seems to be a rethinking in some countries about the utility of peacekeeping missions as China, Japan, South Korea and certain other countries have shown new interest. India, along with other nations in the UN, should take this opportunity to galvanise the debate and increase the utility of peacekeeping.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE: INDIA’S PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

India’s current approach to peacekeeping operations suffers from a lack of synergy. While it is currently touted as one of the cornerstones

of its diplomacy, the links between the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and the Armed Forces in conducting these missions need to be enhanced. This has the potential not just for more interaction at places where such missions are conducted but can also have greater diplomatic pay-offs. Hence, there is a need to cross-post and augment the staff both in New Delhi and in the field. This can involve posting of military officers to the UN Political Division (UNP) at the MEA.<sup>20</sup> The Permanent Mission of India (PMI) in New York would require additional staffing as necessary, in particular of a uniformed element.<sup>21</sup> An ‘all of government’ approach is required since the agencies involved range from ordnance factories and contractors involved in provisioning equipment, vehicles and clothing to the military at the spear-tip. Clearly, troops sent out for such duty need to be looked after, since they are ambassadors of a kind.<sup>22</sup> The capacity of the military staff would require upgrading in terms of operations rooms, real time communication and protocol and procedures. The organisation may take a hard look at the sections in the Staff Duties Directorate (SD 3) and the Military Operations Directorate (MO 8A).

The second edition of the peace operations doctrine, due five years after its first publication in 2007, could incorporate the features outlined here.<sup>23</sup> Additionally, the HQ Integrated Defence Staff (IDS) could bring out a joint peace operations doctrine in conjunction with the MEA. The CUNPK, the current nodal point, must acquire new premises and a bigger staff.<sup>24</sup> India must sign up as one of the states from which the UN draws its permanent bureaucracy by facilitating Indian applicants for internships, associate experts and a young professionals programme.<sup>25</sup> When the Indian National Defence University, INDU, is established, it could take up theoretical

work in peace research along with the CUNPK and peace studies faculties to enhance India's conceptual contribution. This can be furthered by the military adopting a liberal policy of access to its information and reports. At the regional level, cooperation in peace operations of South Asian states can be marshalled by the SAARC Secretariat and through the South Asian University.<sup>26</sup> India can also engage in capacity building of other regional organisations and states by sending training teams and optimally expanding the facilities of the CUNPK.

India's contribution and participation in UN operations has been unparalleled. If the future foretells increased political instability and conflict, then peacekeeping and peace-building offers the best hope. India, in partnership with other nations, can bring much needed resources and commitment to this process. But for this to happen, it would require further debate and changes within the MEA and the Armed Forces. That is their challenge for the future.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> General J.J. Singh in the Foreword, *Indian Army Doctrine for Peacekeeping Operations* (Shimla: HQ ARTRAC, 2007), p. i.
- <sup>2</sup> CUNPK, 'Indian Army and United Nations Peacekeeping Operations', Information Brochure (New Delhi: IHQ of MoD (Army)).
- <sup>3</sup> Ministry of Defence, *Annual Report, 2010-2011* (New Delhi: Government of India, 2011), p. 30
- <sup>4</sup> India has lost 143 soldiers in UN operations, see: [http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/fatalities/documents/StatsByNationalityMission\\_2.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/fatalities/documents/StatsByNationalityMission_2.pdf), accessed on 20 March 2012.
- <sup>5</sup> Manmohan Bahadur, 'Coercive Air Power and Peace Enforcement', *USI Journal*, No 584, April–June 2011; <http://www.usiofindia.org/Article/?pub=Journal&pubno=584&ano=812>, accessed on 5 February 2012.
- <sup>6</sup> Vinay Bhatnagar, 'India's PKOs: A Historic Perspective and the Way Forward', *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 35, No. 6, November 2011, pp. 927–33.
- <sup>7</sup> Ministry of Defence, *Annual Report 2010-11* (New Delhi: Government of India, MOD, 2011), p. 29. For a good account of India's peacekeeping contribution, see Lt. Gen. Satish Nambiar, *For the Honour of India: A History of Indian Peacekeeping* (New Delhi: USI, CAFHR, 2009).
- <sup>8</sup> For instance, the lessons learnt from Operation Khukri, the rescue of Indian peacekeepers in Sierra Leone, have mainly been recounted by its participants, see Col. Khushal Thakur, 'Thus Proved in Sierra Leone Too', *Sainik Samachar*, <http://mod.nic.in/samachar/dec15-20/html/ch10.htm>, accessed on 5 February 2012 and Lt. Gen. V. K. Jetley, "'Op Khukri"—The United Nations Operation Fought in Sierra Leone', *USI Journal*, Vol. 137, No. 567, January–March 2007, pp. 81–94.
- <sup>9</sup> Training of translators with the Army Education Corps at its training centre at Pachmarhi can afford a relook.
- <sup>10</sup> See 'Statement by Ambassador Hardeep Singh Puri, Permanent Representative at the Open Debate on UN Peacekeeping Operations at the United Nations Security Council on 26 August 2011', at <http://www.un.int/india/2011/ind1890.pdf>, accessed on 10 November 2011 and 'Statement by Ambassador M.S. Puri, Deputy Permanent Representative, at the Opening Session of the Annual Debate of Peacekeeping Committee (C-34) on Peacekeeping on 21 February 2012', available at <http://www.un.int/india/2012/ind1992.pdf>, accessed on 24 February 2012.
- <sup>11</sup> Ministry of External Affairs, *Annual Report 2010-11* (New Delhi: Government of India, MEA, 2011), p. 106.
- <sup>12</sup> For a discussion of some of these issues, see UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support, *A New Partnership Agenda: Charting a New Horizon for UN Peacekeeping* (New York: July 2009) <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/documents/newhorizon.pdf>, accessed on 10 December 2011 and Mariano

- Aguirre and Joana Abrisketa, 'Pressing issues for UN Peacekeeping Operations', Norwegian Peacebuilding Centre, October 2009.
- <sup>13</sup> See Nitin Pai and Sushant Singh, 'Bring the Troops Back', *Indian Express*, 10 July 2008.
- <sup>14</sup> Ramesh Thakur, *The United Nations, Peace and Security: From Collective Security to the Responsibility to Protect* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, p. 315) writes: 'The UN Charter was written in another age for another world.'
- <sup>15</sup> The need for reforms in peacekeeping operations has been articulated by the UN recently. See the following documents published by UNDPKO, *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines* (New York: 2008) and *New Partnership Agenda: Charting a New Horizon for UN Peacekeeping* (New York: 2009). Organisationally, the setting up of the Peacebuilding Commission (2005) and the Department of Field Support (2007) have enabled professionalisation of peacekeeping. Currently, the DPKO is formulating a capability package for infantry units deployed in the field.
- <sup>16</sup> For institutional alternatives, see Paul Diehl, *International Peacekeeping* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), pp. 107–42.
- <sup>17</sup> See UNDPKO, *A New Partnership Agenda: Charting a New Horizon for UN Peacekeeping*, p. 9, <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/documents/newhorizon.pdf>, accessed on 10 December 2011.
- <sup>18</sup> Peace enforcement 'involves the application of a range of coercive measures, including the use of military force'. It requires the explicit authorisation of the Security Council. It is used to restore international peace and security in situations where the Security Council has decided to act in the face of a threat to the peace, breach of the peace or act of aggression. The Council may utilise, where appropriate, regional organisations and agencies for enforcement action under its authority and in accordance with the UN Charter. See UN website, Peace and Security, <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/operations/peace.shtml>, accessed on 10 December 2011.
- <sup>19</sup> For more on Somalia, see Ted Dagne, 'Current conditions and prospects for a lasting peace', *CRS Report*, August 2011 (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2011).
- <sup>20</sup> Precedence exists for a military officer posting in the MEA in the form of a Director-level officer at the D & ISA (Disarmament & International Security Affairs) Division.
- <sup>21</sup> The first military officer has recently been posted-in in May 2011, indicating positive portents for the future.
- <sup>22</sup> For instance, the Mahindra jeeps with a peacekeeping mission in Africa date to 2004. Procedures for retiring equipment can be looked at to improve the quality available with the peacekeepers. India's budding private defence industry sector can showcase their wares in such environments. Provisioning peacekeeping equipment and accoutrements for the contingents is the responsibility of the ordnance factories. This is also an opportunity for them from the export point of view.
- <sup>23</sup> The promulgation letter by the Army Commander, Army Training Command (ARTRAC) mandates a review after five years.
- <sup>24</sup> For details of its contribution, see its website, <http://www.usiofindia.org/CUNPK/>
- <sup>25</sup> Currently, India is not a participant state in the latter; as a result bright young Indians cannot be represented in the junior hierarchy of the UN since the programme features a direct recruitment exam for participating states' nationals.
- <sup>26</sup> The South Asian University's Department of International Relations, that is to come up in phase 1 by 2014, could focus on this, among other aspects. The need for enhancing regional linkages on peacekeeping has been pointed out by Mr. Manoj Mathew, Political Officer with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).



### 3. NON-COMBATANT EVACUATION OPERATIONS

Non-Combatant Evacuation Operations (NEO) are missions to evacuate Indian citizens, and sometimes of other friendly countries, from unstable, potentially dangerous and conflict-afflicted areas. The danger could emanate from a conflict situation, political instability or natural disasters. In the past, NEO operations in India have been undertaken under the ambit of Out-of-Area Contingency (OOAC) operations. Given the current and ever increasing global spread of the Indian diaspora, a situation requiring evacuation could arise again at short notice (for the number and country-wise spread of current Indian diaspora, see Appendix V). The Indian Armed Forces, due to their fast response time, are at the disposal of the Government to be called upon as and when required to execute this task. India has executed such operations on several occasions in the past. Three notable instances are those involving the evacuation of Indian citizens from Kuwait in 1990, from Lebanon in 2006 and from Libya in 2011. An examination of the circumstances that led to the need for these evacuations and the execution of the evacuation operations merits study in order to plan for future execution of such operations in various parts of the world.

#### KUWAIT, 1990

Iraq, under Saddam Hussein, invaded Kuwait in 1990 thus setting the stage for a confrontation with the United States (US). Over time, it became increasingly clear that a war over Kuwait aimed at pushing Iraq out of that country and, thereafter, suitably punishing Iraq was inevitable. India had fairly good relations with both Iraq and Kuwait. Relations with Saudi Arabia, Jordan and other countries in the region were also good. The US-led forces were also not hostile to Indian interests. The action against Iraq on Kuwaiti soil commenced with a naval blockade of the Iraqi and Kuwaiti sea approaches. There was adequate warning that a conflict was imminent due to the build-up of Iraqi troops on the Iraq-Kuwait border and the subsequent allied troops build-up. However, neither the embassies in Baghdad and Kuwait nor the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) had anticipated that Iraq would invade Kuwait. This resulted in a delayed reaction and the ensuing sea blockade made a viable sea-based evacuation of the Indian diaspora difficult. Therefore, the only option was evacuation by air. Approximately 176,000 people were evacuated by air from 13 August to 11 October 1990, even though a small number of people returned by ships and other means.<sup>1</sup> As a result of this operation, Air India is

in the Guinness Book of World Records for having successfully evacuated 111,711 Indian citizens from Iraq, Kuwait and Jordan by operating 488 refugee flights over a period of 59 days.<sup>2</sup> Air India's effort was supplemented with sorties of the Indian Air Force's (IAF) IL-76 heavy lift aircraft (details of the IAF effort are not available in open sources). This is the second largest airlift after the Berlin airlift post World War II.

## THE PROCESS

Although the Government was concerned about the welfare and safety of Indian citizens present in what was inexorably becoming a conflict zone, the media, public and political pressure accelerated the process. The process of evacuation started with the then Foreign Minister, Mr. I.K. Gujral, along with senior officials of the MEA visiting Baghdad and Kuwait. The salient points of the process highlighting the positive efforts and lacunae are detailed below:<sup>3</sup>

- The team arrived in Kuwait on 14 August 1990, twelve days after the invasion of Kuwait. Iraq agreed to facilitate repatriation mainly due to its good relations with India.
  - Communication equipment was flown in with a member of the team. This equipment was useful even after the Indian mission closed down (oral history does not specify which mission) till contact was lost.
  - On the team's return, a Cabinet sub-committee consisting of representatives from the Ministries of External Affairs, Civil Aviation, Finance and Defence was formed to oversee the evacuation. According to Ambassador Fabian, 'Normally, a Cabinet Sub-committee is serviced by the Cabinet Secretariat. T.N.R. Rao, Additional Secretary in the Cabinet Secretariat, was very cooperative and I, as
- Joint Secretary in the Gulf Division of the MEA, started preparing the agenda and the minutes, of course, with Minister Gujral's approval. I.P. Khosla (Additional Secretary) supervised. The Cabinet Secretariat was fully kept in the picture. We did not have to go through the normal time-consuming channels and it did help.'
- The sub-committee was managed by an Additional Secretary (as per the oral account of Ambassador Fabian, it appears that the Additional Secretary was I.P. Khosla) keeping the Cabinet Secretariat and Foreign Minister informed.
  - Clearances were obtained in quick time after the mechanisms of the Cabinet sub-committee were established. Time was saved by resorting to telephonic clearances that were subsequently followed up by confirmatory written communications. There was a good rapport between the Ministries of External Affairs and Civil Aviation.
  - The issue of grounding of flights by Air India due to stranded crew and long hours beyond the permitted duty hours, as per existing regulations, was obviated by a timely news story of the stellar work undertaken by Air India. The long hours were due to the delay in flights resulting from the late arrival of evacuees from distant places. Ambassador Fabian in his oral account recalls: 'The crew was unwilling to fly as the time taken for the wait and the flying time to Bombay would take them beyond the stipulated hours of their duty. This was obviated by a timely article in The Hindu that applauded the excellent work being done by Air India and resulted in the crews deciding to go the extra mile to keep up the good name.'

- The lack of Arabic-speaking people, especially in Jordan, was felt. Language-qualified personnel could have assisted the movement of evacuees to the camps and departure airfields. The assistance of English-speaking college students was arranged to overcome this hurdle.
- In Jordan, camps were established in school buildings in different parts of the country. This added to the time delays in reaching the airport.
- Officers from MEA and other ministries were deputed to the Gulf to establish liaison with the diaspora and local authorities.
- Payment of customs duty on arrival was an issue as the evacuees were mostly carrying gold and not enough cash. The proposal of people leaving gold in airport lockers till the duty amounts were arranged was not agreed upon by the Ministry of Finance.
- Although there was a notional form of an evacuation plan there has been no follow-up to institute Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). According to Ambassador Fabian, 'There was no proper follow-up to institute SOPs. That is our weakness. In fact, though it was our assessment that there was no need for evacuation from countries other than Iraq and Kuwait, we nevertheless had done a sort of planning on evacuating our people from the rest of the region. Our various missions in the region had decided where our people would collect in case of an emergency, how they would be contacted in case evacuation was needed, etc. We had reasonably comprehensive plans on logistics, ground transportation to the airport, seaport, etc., albeit in a notional sense.'

## LEBANON, 2006

On 12 July 2006, the Hezbollah's military wing carried out a cross-border attack from Lebanon killing eight Israeli soldiers, wounding six and capturing two. The Hezbollah also fired rockets into Israel from Lebanon to cause harassment that resulted in civilian casualties. In response, Israel launched air and artillery strikes on identified Hezbollah targets and imposed an air and sea blockade of Lebanon. Under these circumstances, India decided to evacuate its citizens. Although there can never be adequate warning for such incidents, the fragility of the security environment and the Kuwait experience dictate that an evacuation plan should have been prepared. In the event, four ships of the Western Fleet operating in the area were diverted and 1,766 Indian nationals were evacuated from Beirut to Larnaca in Cyprus between 20 July and 1 August 2006. In addition, 514 citizens of Nepal, Sri Lanka, USA and Bangladesh were also evacuated.<sup>4</sup> The evacuees were subsequently flown out from Cyprus by Air India. There was a very limited evacuation by road, with two buses carrying about 50 people, into Syria.

## THE PROCESS

The process of the evacuation from Lebanon has been hailed by some as a model that could form the basis of an SOP. However, it must also be noted that the presence of Indian ships in the region was fortuitous. The salient points of the process are as follows.<sup>5</sup>

- The Indian mission was ordered to commence evacuation on 17 July 2010 to Cyprus as it was a friendly nation. The mission's strength was suitably augmented from other missions and MEA on a temporary basis.

- Other nations had already prepared for evacuation and had booked various places to be used as camps. This is a clear indication of their preparedness and foresight in addressing such situations, which resulted in non-availability of suitable places for Indian camps.
- Cyprus being an EU nation, has strict visa requirements that were obviated by the issuance of transit slips. This methodology was brought about by proactive diplomatic interaction.
- The non-availability of camps and the problem with visas necessitated that aircraft be sent urgently to avoid immigration issues.
- It is clearly evident that a formal structure to deal with such situations did not exist and crisis management had to be undertaken by people on the ground.
- The presence of four Indian naval ships in the area was a matter of luck that aided in shortening the time taken for the evacuation.
- The Indian government probably requested Israel to limit attacks during the process of evacuation by ships so as to avoid any chance of the ships and people being erroneously targeted. This was evident from the timings and duration of the attacks carried out by Israel during the evacuation.

## LIBYA, 2011

As the conflict in Libya escalated, the Indian government, on 24 February 2011, decided to evacuate its citizens from Libya.<sup>6</sup> There were estimated to be about 18,000 Indians in Libya at the time, working mainly for multinational companies. It is evident that the lessons (from Kuwait and Lebanon) with respect to a formal

plan for evacuation and warnings to people on the ground about the developing situation and process for evacuation were not learnt and formalised cohesively.<sup>7</sup>

## THE PROCESS

- The decision to evacuate was taken late. This affected the ability to inform the diaspora of the intentions and plan, mainly due to there being no procedure in place to do so. The efforts were further compounded as the conflict had intensified.
- The Government obtained clearances from all the involved parties for Indian aircraft to fly into a few Libyan cities and to pre-decided airports in neighbouring countries while clearance was obtained for a chartered civil passenger ferry and Indian Navy ships to dock at a few Libyan ports for the evacuation of Indians.
- The Indian Foreign Minister spoke with his Libyan counterpart to obtain permission for flights to Tripoli and a few other cities and docking rights for Indian ships at Benghazi. The sea lift was planned up to the Egyptian port city of Alexandria from where Air India established an air bridge to India.<sup>8</sup>
- One Indian Naval ship, along with two chartered ferries, MV Scotia Prince and the La Superba, both based in Sicily, evacuated people from Tripoli and Benghazi, respectively while another naval vessel gave escort cover. The two Indian naval ships sailed from Mumbai on 26 February 2011 and arrived off Tripoli on 10 March 2011. Scotia Prince and La Superba evacuated from Benghazi.
- Air India deployed two aircraft, while the IAF placed Il-76 heavy lift aircraft on standby to

assist Air India, if required. One IL-76 aircraft flew about 186 passengers in one sortie from Egypt to India.

- By 9 March, 14,000 Indians had been evacuated from Libya and the last 1,000 people were evacuated by 10 March 2011.
- The speed of the evacuation was slow as compared to, say, that of China or the US.<sup>9</sup>
- There were reports that some nations had flown in helicopters to evacuate people from areas in the interior of Libya from where movement to the evacuation points was hazardous due to the ongoing conflict.

## ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The recent evacuation from Libya is a case in point where the response was considered late and inadequate. Earlier, a similar situation – a delayed response – was seen in the 1990 evacuation from Kuwait. The speedy evacuation from Lebanon was possible due to the fortuitous circumstance of Indian Naval ships being present in that area. In sum, an analysis of previous operations reveals that India needs to pay more attention and resources to this issue.

Although the operations ended successfully, it is clearly apparent that two issues had aided the evacuation process. First, the good relations that India had with the nations from where the evacuation had to be conducted, as well as with the neighbouring nations. Second, the proactive working environment established, after setting up of committees or crisis management groups, between the offices and agencies involved in the evacuation. The existing environment aided the evacuations which could well have failed if there had been a viable military threat to Indian ships and aircraft or if a complex military situation had developed.

Some of the conclusions and recommendations that emerge from the discussion in this chapter are as follows:

- Lack of an evacuation policy and joint plan of action (with time lines) that would establish a committee or a crisis management group well in time to address and oversee a smoother conduct of NEO. This policy and plan would also lay down guidelines for various offices and agencies that would be involved with evacuation. This would obviate the requirement of setting up of ad-hoc committees or crisis management groups and save time in decision making.
- Inadequate staff in Indian missions. The number needs to be increased so that there is adequate staff strength available to tackle emerging situations and oversee smooth evacuation.
- Inadequate number of language experts on the ground. Placing people proficient in the local language would enable smoother interaction with local government agencies on the ground.
- An alternate methodology for issuance of visas for nations to which evacuees are to be shifted. A plan for working out a suitable methodology in terms of an understanding could be worked out with various nations.
- Lack of assessment of developing situations and delayed, or in some cases no warnings, to the Indian diaspora. In times of impending conflict, an assessment must be made and a decision taken to forewarn the missions that an evacuation is either imminent or being considered. This would enable the missions to take action according to the laid down evacuation plan.

- Indian missions must formulate a method of tracking numbers and location of the Indian diaspora and establish reliable methods of communicating with them in their areas of responsibility.

It is, therefore, recommended that an OOAC policy should be issued with a follow-up plan indicating responsibilities and a time-line for activation. The MEA may look at setting up an Emergency Division to cater for such situations (this aspect is examined in detail later in this report). The policy and follow-up plan would require addressing all issues connected with NEO in order to enable maximum synergy and streamline inter-office/ministerial functioning. Further, a contingency team should be nominated in advance, which would be activated and manned depending on the area and category of contingency. The members of the team, due to the nature of their official responsibilities, would be dealing with issues connected with evacuation on a daily basis. These members, in their official capacity, could keep a database that would have to be updated on the basis of the actions required of them in times of evacuation. This contingency team would interact with the emergency division of the MEA to enhance their understanding of the situation on the ground. The composition could vary, depending on the type of contingency and force levels/assets to be utilised. Additional members could be brought in on an “as and when required basis”. The generic composition of the team could be as follows:

- Chair: A Secretary-level officer from the MEA/ MoD who has appropriate financial authority.
- Members could be from the following ministries/offices for interfacing and obtaining the requisite approvals in short time frames:

- External Affairs Ministry: From the relevant division for area interface.
- Defence Ministry
- Finance Ministry
- Health Ministry
- Home Ministry
- Civil Aviation Ministry
- Surface Transport Ministry
- Indian Overseas Affairs
- HQ IDS, Three Services and Coast Guard
- DG Shipping

The recommendations regarding the setting up of the contingency team would have to examine issues of staffing, training and location. The budgetary aspect would have to be considered only for the emergency division, given that in other cases the existing structure is likely to be adequate. The main emphasis of the recommended structures would be on assessment of the developing situation and taking timely approval and actions. This would go a long way in ensuring cogent action and enhance the standing of India in international affairs.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> See K.P. Fabian, ‘Iraqi annexation of Kuwait - August 1990: Evacuation of over 110, 000 Indian Nationals’, *Indian Foreign Affairs Journal*, Vol. 7, No. 1, January–March 2012. This oral history account is a recount of the events by Ambassador Fabian who was Head of the Gulf Division during the period.
- <sup>2</sup> See ‘Air India Develops Evacuation Plan for Mideast War’, available at [http://www.airliners.net/aviation-forums/general\\_aviation/read.main/1024235/](http://www.airliners.net/aviation-forums/general_aviation/read.main/1024235/), accessed on 20 February 2012.

- <sup>3</sup> This section relies on K.P. Fabian's account, 'Iraqi annexation of Kuwait - August 1990', *Indian Foreign Affairs Journal*, Vol. 7, No. 1, January–March 2012.
- <sup>4</sup> See Indian Navy website: [http://indiannavy.nic.in/Op\\_sukoon\\_lebanon.pdf](http://indiannavy.nic.in/Op_sukoon_lebanon.pdf), accessed on 5 January 2012.
- <sup>5</sup> These points are based on the discussions at a round table conference held at IDSA on NEO on 30 January 2012. The project team is grateful to the participants for their views.
- <sup>6</sup> See 'Press Release on Evacuation of Indian Nationals in Libya', available at <http://www.ndtv.com/article/india/press-release-on-evacuation-of-indian-nationals-in-libya-87537>, accessed on 20 February 2012.
- <sup>7</sup> These points are based on the discussions at a round table conference held at IDSA on NEO on 30 January 2012.
- <sup>8</sup> Sandeep Dixit, 'Krishna Seeks Libya's Help to Evacuate Indians', *The Hindu*, 2 March 2011, <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/article1501669.ece>, accessed on 20 February 2012.
- <sup>9</sup> For a critical analysis of the evacuation operation in Libya, see Rohan Joshi, 'Bringing Our Citizens Home', *Pragati*, April 2011, <http://pragati.nationalinterest.in/2011/04/bringing-our-citizens-home/>, accessed on 20 February 2012.



## 4. OVERSEAS HUMANITARIAN AND DISASTER RELIEF OPERATIONS

“Disasters do not recognise geographical boundaries. Major disasters may often simultaneously affect several countries. It will be the national endeavour to develop close cooperation and coordination at the international level in all spheres of Disaster Management.”

*National Policy on Disaster Management, 2009, p.14*

Disasters are going to increase in frequency and intensity. One reason is that economic infrastructure is being concentrated in urban centres as population grows. The second is the rise in extreme weather events related to climate change. The Indian military gained international attention for its deft handling and swift response during the 2004 tsunami. This capacity for disaster relief will need to be enhanced, especially since the military is usually the first to be deployed to handle the aftermath of major disasters. Good preparation for handling domestic disasters will also be good for out-of-area missions.<sup>1</sup>

This chapter begins with a brief discussion of the logic and concept of preparing for disaster relief operations and connecting it with out-of-area contingencies (OOACs). It will then briefly discuss experiences like the tsunami relief operations of 2004 and other such deployments in the recent past. Finally, it discusses policy considerations for these types of operations and makes some recommendations.

### LOGIC AND CONCEPT

Domestically, the military is a second respondent except in the case of Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) incidents, wherein it is designated as the first respondent.<sup>2</sup> Yet, there are certain unique assets that only the Armed Forces possess. For instance, the Indian Navy, combined with the Coast Guard by the very nature of their duties, engage frequently with foreign countries. In combination with other services, they are ideally positioned in terms of capabilities and training to execute disaster relief operations overseas.<sup>3</sup> They are also suitably equipped to quickly deploy teams from the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF). Thus, whatever may be the semantics of first or second respondent, the military must now also gear up for increasing non-traditional security tasks. In the open domain there is proliferation of literature on disaster relief. It has been correctly argued that disaster relief diplomacy will provide India another opportunity to address bilateral and regional political issues.<sup>4</sup> However, first of all, the assistance has to be in conformity with the UN mandated Guidelines on the Use of Foreign

Military and Civil Defence Assets in Disaster Relief or the “Oslo Guidelines”, which have the following principles:<sup>5</sup>

- (a) At the request of, or with the consent of, the receiving state
- (b) At no cost to the receiving state
- (c) In support of local emergency management
- (d) Additionality/complimentarity
- (e) Needs-based, neutral and impartial
- (f) Unarmed and in national uniform

Three propositions, or assumptions, explain why the military must be prepared for future disaster situations as an OOAC:

- **Intensity and frequency of disasters will increase:** The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) projections of climate change and UN projections of population and economic growth all show greater risks of natural and manmade disasters. The findings of IPCC show that the frequency of heavy precipitation will increase and intensity of cyclones would be more. The situation is critical as urbanisation is leading to concentration of populations. With problems of hygiene, poor living conditions, weak buildings, etc., urban areas suffer from disaster risk (Disaster risk = Hazard x Exposure x Vulnerability). Due to industrialisation and urbanisation, the chances of massive manmade disasters of chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and environmental (CBRNE) variety will increase.<sup>6</sup>
- **Weak, fragile and developing countries will be most vulnerable to disasters and will require assistance:** While disasters do not discriminate, however, developed countries usually have the resources to deal with the aftermath and the technology to warn their

citizens. Developing countries, on the other hand, are often in need of assistance from the international community. In addition, studies have shown that natural disasters have significantly increased the risk of violent conflict both in the short and medium terms, especially in low-and middle-income countries.<sup>7</sup> Accordingly, more attention should be given to mitigating the social cost and political risks posed by these cataclysmic events and prevent regional instability.

- **India’s economic rise and resources will place it in a position to undertake humanitarian and disaster relief (HADR) operations:** International politics mirrors human interactions and so “with great power comes great responsibility”. As India grows economically and if it wishes to play a bigger role in international politics, it may have to assume certain responsibilities. One of them may involve providing HADR to other countries. As a result, the role of NDRF and the military in disaster relief as part of out-of-area deployments may increase.<sup>8</sup> The NDRF is a national asset that cuts across civil-military boundaries and, if needed, may be the first to be airlifted or shipped for an out-of-area mission in military transport. However, it is still dependent upon the military for transportation and some logistical support. Indeed, disaster relief is an increasingly common topic and function envisaged in other militaries.

## PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE

The Indian Armed Forces have undertaken various OOAC operations in providing relief materials to many disaster-affected countries from time to time. These are described in Table 1 (on page 39), followed by an analysis of one of the most significant efforts in recent times—the 2004 tsunami relief operations.

Table 1: India's contribution to recent overseas disasters

Year	Incident	Relief material offered by India
September 2005	Katrina (hurricane) disaster in US	25 tonnes of relief materials including 3000 blankets, 150 tarpaulins, bed sheets, etc., flown in by IAF planes.
February 2006	Extensive mudslides in Leyte (East Philippines)	30 tonnes of relief materials including medicines flown in by IAF.
May 2006	Indonesia earthquake	86 tonnes of relief materials including medicines despatched by IAF planes and a naval ship.
August 2006	Katrina (hurricane) disaster in US	3200 blankets and 225 tents.
November 2007	Cyclone (Sidr) in Bangladesh	Relief materials and supplies (unknown quantity) flown in by IAF.
May 2008	Cyclone (Nargis) in Myanmar	Relief materials and supplies (unknown quantity) supplied by two naval ships.
March 2011	Tsunami/Nuclear Disasters in Japan	Blankets, 13,000 bottles of mineral water and 10-tons of high-calorie biscuits.

## Tsunami, 2004

The disaster relief operations undertaken by the Indian military during the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami was universally praised and acclaimed. India's role in quickly mobilising its defence and civil assets for Sri Lanka, the Maldives and other neighbours in Asia catapulted the country to a leading seat in major global disaster relief initiatives.<sup>9</sup> A total of 35 aircraft, 42 helicopters, 40 ships and nearly 20,000 Armed Forces personnel were deployed for relief operations in Sri Lanka, the Maldives and Indonesia. A total of 1,187 tons of relief material was delivered in 860 sorties and 1,750 persons were airlifted to safe places. One army field hospital, two hospital ships and eight medical camps were set up. A total of 14,800 patients were provided treatment. Other activities undertaken were harbour survey, clearance of debris, evacuation of 1,200 persons, repair of roads, water pumps and generators, and

restoration of power, water and communication services. Nine relief camps were also set up.

This experience led to important measures within the Armed Forces and in other organs of the government. For instance, a policy guidance document was issued regarding "Armed Forces assistance for national disasters" by the Defence Crisis Management Group (DCMG). HQ IDS (Integrated Defence Staff) was tasked to coordinate efforts of the DCMG by interacting with the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Ministry of Defence (MoD), Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and other relevant ministries and departments.<sup>10</sup> One practical lesson was that the Andaman and Nicobar Command had set up a field HQ at the site to control and coordinate the relief efforts of all components of the Armed Forces with other agencies on site. For similar missions in the future, such a field formation could function directly under HQ IDS.

However, certain shortcomings were observed during this mission. First, there was no ship-to-shore capability, which hampered relief efforts. This experience played a role in shaping the Navy's attitude and its eventual decision to acquire INS Jalashwa from the United States (US). For the future, hovercrafts should also be considered for such missions. Second, there was no effort to record and publicly disseminate the efforts made by the Indian military. As a result, the Indian military lost an opportunity for media projection and earning greater diplomatic goodwill. More crucially, there are very few public documents that can be studied for future missions. Third, there was a lack of engineering capability to clear roads and related work within the Navy. There were also some problems, perhaps inevitable, of interagency coordination and ownership in these efforts. According to Admiral Raman Puri, the Chief of Integrated Staff (CISC), during the 2004 tsunami:

“... while the Defence Crisis Management Group (DCMG) is the right agency to take complete command and control of service effort, there remains a tendency for the services to maintain their identity to highlight their efforts and the bureaucracy only too happy to then coordinate. DCMG should also be the nodal agency for inter ministerial and intra agency coordination.”<sup>11</sup>

It is not yet known whether these issues have been clarified with Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) dictating the staffing, powers and authority of the DCMG. If in place, then such SOPs should be disseminated for wider knowledge of the military community and other stakeholders involved in such missions.

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

There is a need for a more focused analysis on the mandate, mission, equipping and training within the military to undertake HADR missions — whether within or outside the country. One of the most important decisions needs to be taken at the very top — should the Indian military prepare, in terms of training, planning and equipping, for disaster relief operations. Currently, there is some confusion on this matter. The NDRF was ostensibly raised to free the military of this responsibility but as it lacks resources the military, in practice, is still called upon to be the first responder. One approach can be to create closer integration between the military and NDRF and, indeed, some officers are currently being cross posted. In the absence of this being a designated task, the military is often unprepared, in terms of equipment and training, to undertake disaster relief operations. Hence, for instance, a study of the Sikkim earthquake had recommended that Army formations be authorised hand-held equipment like rotary saws, inflatable lighting towers, rubberised jacks, cutters, expanders and drillers, as are available with NDRF teams.<sup>12</sup>

If the military is expected to be deployed for overseas disaster relief then there are some additional issues that require deliberation. Unlike domestic disasters, most overseas deployment will be contingent on sea and air lift capabilities. There might also be a need to pre-position stores, especially those with longer shelf life. This can be worked out among the three services, and logistical and planning exercises conducted. A separate budget could be allocated to the Armed Forces for these types of missions. To better perform these missions, the Indian military could cooperate with other militaries to learn best practices.<sup>13</sup> Initiatives such as the biennial

Milan series of exercises by the Indian and other navies of the Indian Ocean littoral and the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium will help in establishing faster humanitarian assistance and disaster relief mechanisms.<sup>14</sup> Such initiatives need more frequent and wider interaction, and not just on maritime issues. For a beginning, disaster-related interaction on complex scenarios could include countries in the region and in the extended neighbourhood.

Implementing these measures will require enhanced coordination between MoD, the Armed Forces, MHA and MEA. As has been recommended earlier in this report, there is a need to raise an Emergency Division in the MEA. If such a division is raised, it could play a role in coordinating this aspect and also taking ownership of overseas humanitarian assistance operations. It could also plan for joint simulation exercises and disseminate this knowledge to the services and scholars. Past performance must be recorded for wider open access study. The Indian National Defence University (INDU) will need to be an active partner in the theoretical aspects, including being an interface with the National Institute for Disaster Management (NIDM). In addition, as suggested in a recent study, there is a need to create a document for International Disaster Management which must perforce include SOPs.<sup>15</sup>

Disasters do not respect political boundaries and their spillover can devastate a region and retard economic, regional and social development. As India develops the capabilities to assist in humanitarian aid, it must also professionalise its approach. While some might dismiss this as an ideal, it is also an important aspect of public diplomacy and perception management. India has done so in the past, it just needs to institutionalise it.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> The importance of this topic can be gauged by the newfound attention paid to it by militaries all over the world. See special issue on this subject in *Journal of Defence Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 1, January 2012. Also see Arjun Katoch, 'Experience in Responding to the Great East Japan Earthquake and Lessons for India', *Journal of the United Service Institution of India*, Vol. CXXI, No. 586, October–December 2011, pp. 555–65.
- <sup>2</sup> There are quick reaction teams and quick reaction medical teams which are dual tasked for roles in war and peace.
- <sup>3</sup> These views have been covered in Brigadier O.S. Dagur, *Disaster Management: An Appraisal of Institutional Mechanism in India* (New Delhi: Centre for Land Warfare Studies/ Knowledge World, 2011).
- <sup>4</sup> D. Suba Chandran, N. Manoharan, Vibhanshu Shekhar, Jabin T. Jacob, Raghav Sharma and Sandeep Bhardwaj, 'India's Disaster Relief Diplomacy', *Indian Foreign Affairs Journal*, Vol. 4, No. 2, April–June 2009, pp. 63–80.
- <sup>5</sup> See 'Guidelines on The Use of Foreign Military and Civil Defence Assets in Disaster Relief', <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/47da87822.html>, accessed on 14 August 2012.
- <sup>6</sup> Disasters having a WMD (weapons of mass destruction) dimension are now referred to as CBRNE disasters. See seminar report, *Consequences and Management in the Aftermath of a Nuclear Strike* (New Delhi: Centre for Land Warfare Studies, May 2009), available at [http://www.claws.in/index.php?action=master&task=317&u\\_id=36](http://www.claws.in/index.php?action=master&task=317&u_id=36), accessed on 10 December 2011.
- <sup>7</sup> See Marjolein Righarts, 'Natural Disasters and the Risk of Violent Civil Conflict', *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 52, No. 1, March 2008, pp. 159–85.
- <sup>8</sup> The NDRF comprises core personnel on deputation from the Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) and Border Security Force (BSF). These units are being trained and equipped to deal with all types of disasters. Units based in Chandigarh and covering the states of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and

Uttarakhand have been given specialised training to deal with landslides, avalanches and earthquakes. The unit at Guwahati has specialised training for water rescue and earthquakes. The Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), Mumbai, Defence Research and Development Establishment (DRDE), Gwalior, and the College of Military Engineering (CME), Pune, have been assisting in training NDRF personnel to deal with nuclear, biological, chemical (NBC) emergencies. Similarly, the IAF is training them in heli-slithering. See Brigadier O.S. Dagur, *Disaster Management: An Appraisal of Institutional Mechanism in India*. According to M. Shashidar Reddy, Vice Chairman, NDMA, all 10 units of NDRF are trained in emergency response to radiological and nuclear emergencies. Comments at a talk delivered at IDSA on 20 January 2012 on 'Nuclear Disaster Management in India'. <http://idsa.in/event/NuclearDisasterManagementinIndiaCapabilitiesandConstraints>

- <sup>9</sup> Ministry of Defence, *Annual Report, 2004–2005* (New Delhi: Government of India, 2005), pp. 4–5.
- <sup>10</sup> Vice Admiral Raman Puri, 'Tsunami Relief Operations by India Armed Force', *USI Journal*, Vol. CXXXV, No. 560, April–June 2005, pp.200–14. The author was

Chief of Integrated Staff to Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee, when the tsunami struck in 2004.

- <sup>11</sup> E-mail correspondence with Vice Admiral Raman Puri of 30 December 2011. The DCMG was functioning under the CISC and this created some tensions between them and Service Headquarters.
- <sup>12</sup> Nina Khanna, Jayender Verma and B.K. Khanna, 'Sikkim Earthquake: Perils of Poor Preparedness', *Journal of Defence Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 1, January 2012, pp. 77–90.
- <sup>13</sup> The Turkish military, for instance, has especially invested in undertaking earthquake relief operations. See General S. Padmanabhan (Retd), *A General Speaks* (New Delhi, Manas Publications, 2005), p.31.
- <sup>14</sup> For more about the Milan exercise, see S. Anandan, 'Today's Oceans are Maritime Highways linking Nations, Says Navy Chief', *The Hindu*, 5 February 2012.
- <sup>15</sup> See Colonel Amardeep Bhardwaj, 'International Military Cooperation in Disaster Management: A Win–Win Situation for All', *The War College Journal*, Summer 2011, pp. 41–46.

## 5. MAJOR LESSONS FROM OPERATION PAWAN (SRI LANKA, 1987–90) AND OPERATION CACTUS (MALDIVES, 1988)

This chapter examines Indian military operation in Sri Lanka from 1987 to 1990 and the operation to prevent a coup in the Maldives in 1988. The intention here is not to describe or study these operations per se, but to understand if they hold any lessons for future military operations.<sup>1</sup>

One of the major military operations conducted by the Indian military outside its borders in recent times was the deployment of the Indian Peacekeeping Force (IPKF) in Sri Lanka. Initially, it was expected to play a non-lethal peacekeeping function but, due to a variety of reasons, it turned into an intense counterinsurgency campaign against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). In addition, the Indian military deployed quickly and even used force to prevent a coup from occurring in the Maldives in 1988. While there are many strategic, operational and tactical lessons that can be learnt from these episodes, however, like with the other chapters, there is a dearth of primary sources. As a result, the study mainly relies on secondary literature and biographical accounts. However, many of these accounts are contradictory, which makes it urgent that the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and the Armed Forces together evolve a mature declassification policy. To get around this problem, some primary interviews were conducted and a seminar held on

this subject at the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA). Out of this effort, six major lessons emerged for future deliberation and which have applicability for imagining Out-of-Area contingencies (OOACs).

First, to the extent possible, get a clear mandate. An important lesson to be learnt from the Indian intervention in Sri Lanka is the imperative of defining the mission unambiguously. It is essential to understand that India will have only limited resources and political will to expend beyond its shores, given that neither national survival nor loss of national territory is likely to be at stake in contingencies involving external intervention. Given this limitation, arriving at clearly defined and limited goals is essential for success. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge that political developments and uncertainties mean that it is not always possible to be given an unambiguously clear mandate at all times. The government of the day will be susceptible to public opinion, especially in a democracy, and this opinion may change according to battle casualties and political developments. It is important, therefore, for military commanders both at the apex level and in the field to have the intellectual and operational flexibility to change their missions according to political directions. While this is easier said

than done, however, it is an aspect which senior commanders must acknowledge and train for.

Second, there is a need for focusing on robust military contingency planning. Even though contingency plans were made at Army Headquarters (HQ) in the mid-1980s, these were insufficiently invested in or robust. A more important lacuna was the failure to envisage the possibility of Indian forces having to eventually confront the LTTE. Because such a scenario was not envisaged, only a much smaller force than was originally envisaged was actually inducted into Sri Lanka. Only one division, the 54 Infantry Division, was inducted and the others that had been earmarked were left behind. Thus, when the decision was made in early October 1987 to use force against the LTTE, instead of a minimum required force of seven to eight brigades, the IPKF had only two in the Jaffna sector. Further, the initial composition of the IPKF was not suitable for this sudden change from a peacekeeping to a peace enforcement role. Since mobilisation had not been ordered, most fighting units were deployed with strengths that stood at 50 to 55 per cent. More galling was the fact that the close-quarter battle weaponry and equipment employed by Indian troops were inferior to that being used by the LTTE. Thus, the second lesson to be learnt from the IPKF experience is the imperative of ensuring that all possible contingencies are not only visualised but also catered for. At the same time, there is also a case for discussing these scenarios with other relevant agencies and departments of the government. This would help in fine-tuning the scenarios with inputs from multiple sources and debating how they will play out in the short, medium and long terms, thus generating more refined policy options. Unlike in previous decades, the institutional mechanisms to engage in such discussions have now been established, chief

among them being the National Security Council and its Secretariat. There is, thus, greater scope for a more comprehensive contingency planning process. At the same time, to prevent group-think, it is necessary to institutionalise criticism by nominating at least one official or a group of officials to serve as the devil's advocate(s), thus ensuring that the cons of every scenario, plan and policy being debated are taken into account during the decision-making process.

Third, there is a need for greater clarity in designating command and control. There was a great deal of confusion in official minds during the initial weeks and months about who exactly exercised supreme command over the IPKF. One of the debates was whether it would operate under Indian or Sri Lankan authority and commanders. While this was sorted out within a few months, however, it indicated a lack of clarity on this issue. More damaging was the ad-hoc manner in which the command and control structure of the IPKF came to be established. While, initially, GOC 1 Corps was expected to be the Army component commander, however, later an in-between solution was agreed upon. The command function was fulfilled by the Advance Headquarters of the Southern Command, which had been set up in Madras (now Chennai) during the contingency planning process itself, and which was then placed under a Deputy Overall Force Commander (OFC).<sup>2</sup> In practice, this arrangement led to a considerable degree of dissonance in the command structure. While the interim headquarters of the IPKF was a part of HQ Southern Command, its Directing Headquarters was the Army HQ in New Delhi and HQ IPKF had to deal with Army HQ on most matters relating to operations and intelligence. But at the same time, Southern Command was responsible for the IPKF's logistics needs, dealing with issues

relating to discipline and welfare as well as writing confidential reports. In other words, while the GOC-in-C of Southern Command was the OFC of the IPKF, responsibility for policy, planning and execution vested with the Deputy OFC, who took his directions directly from Army HQ. The resulting dissonance, further compounded by the inevitable personality clashes, played out thus: HQ OFC wanted HQ IPKF to move to Sri Lanka, especially when things heated up in theatre. But HQ IPKF simply could not move in and out of the theatre due to its own reasons. First, Army HQ had ruled out the idea of locating the IPKF HQ in Jaffna or Trincomalee, even though detailed plans had been drawn up to deploy it north of Trincomalee.<sup>3</sup> Second, inadequate staff strength meant that HQ IPKF could not be split even temporarily between Madras and Sri Lanka. In addition, there were other issues relating to communication, coordination with the Air Force and Navy, etc. The end result was that Southern Command HQ thought that HQ IPKF did not have any time for it, while HQ IPKF thought that Southern Command HQ was indulging in undue interference.<sup>4</sup> A semblance of order and unity of command finally came into being only after the formal establishment of a full-fledged IPKF headquarters on 1 April 1988.<sup>5</sup>

Fourth, there is an urgent need to enhance inter-services integration, especially for these kinds of operations. According to initial plans and the Chiefs of Staff Committee directive of June 1987 that appointed an OFC, the FOC (Fleet Officer Commanding), Eastern Fleet, and the Chief of Staff of Southern Air Command were designated as the component commanders of the Navy and Air Force. Inexplicably, soon after the IPKF's initial induction, the Navy and Air Force began to withdraw the resources they had allotted. At HQ IPKF, for instance, the numbers of staff allotted

by the Navy and Air Force as well as the ranks of personnel posted were decreased. As a result, HQ IPKF was forced to get in touch with the Southern Air Command if it needed an aircraft and the Eastern Naval Command if a naval craft was required.<sup>6</sup> Notwithstanding the relative success of the eventual arrangement, it is imperative that command and control are clearly established at the outset before undertaking a future out-of-area operation. One issue to ponder over in this regard is the exact role of Army HQ in the day-to-day conduct of overseas operations that are being actually handled by the headquarters of the field formation designated for the purpose.<sup>7</sup> Ideally, the role of Army HQ must be limited to issues relating to political direction of the campaign as well as course corrections that may be felt necessary. The actual conduct of the operations will thus vest with the operational commander. In this regard, it would be worthwhile to establish tri-service commands to undertake OOACs in order to enable seamless integration between the air, land and naval efforts.

Fifth, it is critical to have a robust intelligence planning and coordination process. Given the security challenges posed by Pakistan, in particular, as well as by China, it is but natural that Military Intelligence has devoted a disproportionate amount of focus to these two countries. At the same time, because of the Indian Army's engagement in domestic counter-insurgency tasks and the cross-border linkages that insurgent groups maintain, Bangladesh and Myanmar also tended to receive attention. India's other neighbours, in this case Sri Lanka, received little attention from Military Intelligence until May 1987 by when, as noted earlier, the contingency planning process was beginning to take shape. Playing catch-up to meet the suddenly emerged requirement meant that subsequent efforts to

establish an intelligence set-up focused on Sri Lanka occurred in an ad-hoc and uncoordinated fashion. As part of contingency planning, a small intelligence team was moved to Madras in May/June 1987 and tasked with collecting intelligence about Sri Lanka. For its part, HQ Southern Command utilised its own (Counter-Intelligence) Liaison Unit based in Madras to serve as an interface with state and central intelligence agencies based in Madras. After the induction of 54 Division, a few Tamil-speaking intelligence officers and NCOs were attached to HQ OFC at Madras and, subsequently, despatched to Sri Lanka but without any resources. While they were not under the command of 54 Division, at the same time they were only nominally under the command of HQ OFC because they were tasked to submit their reports directly to the Director General, Military Intelligence (DGMI). Later in September 1987, the 57 Mountain Division moved its own Intelligence and Field Security Company to Sri Lanka. Because this unit came under the command of HQ OFC, HQ 54 Division, which had lead responsibility in the area, excluded it from all deliberations and operational planning, did not seek its assessments, nor task it to cater for intelligence requirements. Only after the structure of the Advance HQ of the OFC became formalised was “an intelligence unit specifically structured for the IPKF operations as the Ad-Hoc Liaison Unit was raised”.<sup>8</sup>

Four consequences flowed from the ad-hoc manner in which the intelligence effort was organised. First, the absence of established intelligence assets in Sri Lanka meant that Indian forces deployed there were deprived of useful information before undertaking military operations against the LTTE. Second, most military intelligence officers had little background knowledge about Sri Lanka when they were

inducted there. Third, the DGMI, which had only a small dedicated intelligence resource available to it in the form of the unit that was moved to Madras during the contingency planning process, could not provide useful assessments or inputs for operations. The story was similar with the Southern Command as well. And, fourth, unlike during the 1971 (India-Pakistan) war, Command Headquarters failed to provide short-term training to officers and NCOs on handling prisoners, gathering intelligence from them, and so on.<sup>9</sup>

A below-par military intelligence set-up was only part of the problem. Intelligence sharing was minimal between the intelligence wings of the three Services partly because of lack of communication in this regard but also because of the lack of joint command and control. Further, civil intelligence agencies either refused to share information or failed to provide the kind of information required by the IPKF. Failing to understand the importance of political intelligence for military operations, the Intelligence Bureau refused to share information with the IPKF in this regard. For its part, the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) could neither provide specific military-related information nor make an assessment of the LTTE's military capabilities. And to top it all, political considerations drove the Tamil Nadu government to deny all access to information about the LTTE and its activities in the state available with its intelligence.<sup>10</sup>

Reforms during the last two decades have addressed some of these issues. For instance, a Defence Intelligence Agency has been established to coordinate the intelligence efforts of the three Services. The next natural step is to devise a mechanism to bring about coordination between the efforts of military and civil intelligence services. From the perspective of this study, what is more important is the tasking of civil

and military intelligence agencies to build up expertise (including language proficiency) as well as generate intelligence on a regular basis about countries of interest in the extended neighbourhood where Indian forces might be called upon to intervene.

This lesson is reinforced by the experience during Operation Cactus—the Indian military mission to rescue the Maldivian government headed by President Gayoom from a coup d'état. Even basic information about the Maldives was not readily available for the planners of this mission. 44 Squadron, which was tasked to transport paratroopers to the Maldives, did not have the latest Jeppesen charts and had to plan its flights using older data.<sup>11</sup> Even starker was the absence in the Army as well as Air Headquarters of a map of the Maldives or a photograph of the runway at Hulule where the Indian forces were to be inserted. It was only because of the fortunate posting at Army Headquarters of a Colonel who had holidayed in the Maldives that a tourist map of the country, including that of the Hulule airfield, became available for planning purposes.<sup>12</sup> An additional source of information about the Maldives and its capital Male in particular came from the Indian High Commissioner to that country who fortunately happened to be visiting India at that time. It was he who provided inputs about the airport, buildings, roads, etc. in Male and made available a tourist book containing a photograph of President Gayoom, all of which proved immensely useful for both the Indian Air Force pilots and the para commandos tasked with securing the island and its leadership.<sup>13</sup>

If even this basic information had not been fortunately available for Indian military planners, it is doubtful whether the rescue mission could have been mounted in the timeframe in which it was done. Any delay in sending Indian troops

to Male would have provided the plotters of the coup d'état an opportunity to confront the world with a *fait accompli*. As Abdullah Luthufi, the coup attempt's mastermind put it: “[In] [a] country like [the] Maldives, anybody can be president. If only luck had been with us. If only you Indians had come a little later.”<sup>14</sup> It is therefore imperative that civil and military intelligence resources are dedicated for the purpose of generating a constant stream of information about countries in the immediate and extended neighbourhoods.

Finally, there is an urgent need to focus on civil affairs, including engaging with the local, domestic and international media. The Sri Lanka experience also teaches the importance of the Indian military being prepared to carry out administrative and civic tasks while engaging in out-of-area operations. Because the contingency of militarily taking on the LTTE and the consequences thereof were not visualised in advance, the IPKF was suddenly forced to confront the task of administering Jaffna when the LTTE, which until then had exercised control over the peninsula, melted away into the forests. The organisational structure that was created for this task was as follows: At the apex level in New Delhi, a Support Group was formed in the Cabinet Secretariat comprising of representatives of all ministries and agencies involved. Its task was to assist the Core Group which was engaged in framing and guiding India's Sri Lanka policy. To interface with the Support Group, Army HQ set up a cell in the Directorate General of Military Operations. At the cutting edge stood the office of Town Commandant Jaffna (TCJ), headed by a brigadier who was assisted by a few IAS officers and a small dedicated staff. HQ IPKF established its own Civil Affairs Cell, and Civil Affairs Cells were replicated at all the division and brigade headquarters as well. In addition, to facilitate coordination of all civil affairs activities

in Sri Lanka, a Civil Affairs Cell was raised at Southern Command's Advance Headquarters in Madras. Its tasks included interfacing with Army Headquarters' Military Operations-Sri Lanka division, Indian High Commission in Colombo, Indian Red Cross, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, media, the Tamil Nadu government, Indian Customs, etc.<sup>15</sup>

To its credit, the TCJ successfully carried out several tasks over the next two-plus years, including the restoration of civil administration, ensuring food supplies, medical facilities and other vital requirements, re-opening of educational institutions, re-establishing administrative linkages between Jaffna and Colombo, facilitating the return of refugees, establishing the election machinery and assisting in the successful conduct of three different elections, and raising the Citizen Volunteer Force to police the Tamil inhabited areas. One additional task that it could have effectively performed is gathering information and intelligence from the scores of people who necessarily had to approach the TCJ on a day-to-day basis. But this task was never conceived of, probably because civil affairs was a function that was new to the Army and the full implications of engaging in it was not appreciated until later by commanders as well as troops.<sup>16</sup> It is therefore necessary to accept civil affairs as a branch of general staff and create staff in the various commands. At the same time, plans must be prepared and kept in stand-by for possible contingencies. This would require the prior collation of data on civic amenities, installations, government structure, and so on, with respect to the potential theatres where the Indian military might be forced to engage in.

One important aspect that was neglected, however, was engaging with the media. In this case there were three audiences—domestic

Indian public opinion, opinion of the Sri Lankan population – itself divided into Sinhala and Tamil populations, and the opinions of the international community. As discussed later in this task force report, media engagement and strategic communication did not get the attention it deserved. As a result, India lost the perception battle while this was skillfully used by the LTTE.

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

There are many policy recommendations that flow in preparing for OOACs from this analysis of Operations Pawan and Cactus. First, there is a need for more primary data and study to clear the conflicting accounts that have emerged. Intellectual honesty and study would then prove to be very helpful in planning for the future—an area that the Armed Forces have to acknowledge and address. Second, while it is desirable, to the extent possible, to have a clear mandate, however, political developments and shifting public opinion may force a rapid course correction or change in mission. The military must acknowledge this and prepare its commanders to have the requisite intellectual and operational flexibility. At the same time, the military concerns must be communicated unambiguously to the political leadership so that they appreciate the limits of power. This requires a high degree of trust and honest communication between the civilians and the military, which has often been problematic in India.<sup>17</sup> Third, there is a need for a robust military contingency planning process as well as discussions at various levels within the system to fine-tune plans and provide an adequate force to meet possible eventualities. Also, it is important to have a concept of red-teaming so that such planners do not fall prey to group-think. Fourth, it is important to designate clear lines of command and control. This should

ideally be established at the outset, along with the designation of the appropriate field formation at the headquarters while at the same time keeping in mind the imperative of establishing tri-service joint commands to undertake OOACs. Another alternative that could be considered in this regard is the formation of a Corps-sized Tri-Service Rapid Reaction Force. Fifth, it is necessary to focus on intelligence planning and coordination, which needs to become more robust, with the prior build-up of adequate expertise and capabilities. Hence, the military must devote resources to build a cadre of area specialists and linguists. Similarly, it must also encourage this expertise to emerge in the civil domain. Finally, the importance of engaging in civil affairs tasks must be factored into the planning process, with the requisite data collated and plans formulated. Another important element is media engagement and planning, an aspect covered later in this report.

The deployment of the Indian military in Sri Lanka is still considered a controversial issue. It is almost as if the Indian military and the government have both turned away from it. This could be a costly mistake as, like all operations, it has many lessons that must be imbibed.<sup>18</sup> Before preparing for future OOAC missions, therefore, the Indian military must re-examine its past.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> For a more detailed analysis of the IPKF operation, see S. Kalyanaraman, 'Major Lessons from Operation Pawan for Future Regional Stability Operations', *Journal of Defence Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 3, July 2012.
- <sup>2</sup> See Depinder Singh, *The IPKF in Sri Lanka* (Noida: Trishul Publications, 1992), p. 34.
- <sup>3</sup> N.K. Bahri, 'Logistics in Support of IPKF', in *Indian Experience in Force Projection* (New Delhi: CENJOWS, 2008), p. 109.
- <sup>4</sup> S.C. Sardeshpande, *Assignment Jaffna* (New Delhi: Lancer Publishers, 1993), pp. 142–43.
- <sup>5</sup> See A.S. Kalkat, 'Opening Remarks: Session III: Operations of IPKF and Accord Enforcement', in *Indian Experience in Force Projection*, p. 53.
- <sup>6</sup> See Depinder Singh, *IPKF in Sri Lanka*, pp. 35, 59.
- <sup>7</sup> N.K. Bahri, 'Logistics in Support of IPKF', in *Indian Experience in Force Projection*, p. 106.
- <sup>8</sup> R. Hariharan, 'Intelligence Operations', in *Indian Experience in Force Projection*, pp. 121–23; the quote is on p. 123.
- <sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 125–27.
- <sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 128–30.
- <sup>11</sup> A.G. Bewoor and S.C. Joshi, 'Maldives Operation', in *Indian Experience in Force Projection*, p. 162.
- <sup>12</sup> Air Marshal Ashok K. Goel, 'The Facts: 3 November 1988 (Op Cactus from the Force Commander of the Operation)', 16 April 2012, available at <http://airmarshalashokgoel.blogspot.in/2012/04/facts-3-nov-1988-op-cactus-from-force.html>, accessed on 4 May 2012.
- <sup>13</sup> A.G. Bewoor, 'Op Cactus: Reminiscences', available at <http://www.bharat-rakshak.com/IAF/History/1988Cactus/Cactus01.html>, accessed on 17 April 2012.
- <sup>14</sup> As told to Shekhar Gupta, see Shekhar Gupta, 'Inside a comic-book coup', *Indian Express*, 19 March 2005, available at <http://www.indianexpress.com/oldStory/66779/>, accessed on 7 May 2012.
- <sup>15</sup> N.K. Kapur, 'Civil Affairs', in *Indian Experience in Force Projection*, pp. 136–37.
- <sup>16</sup> R.I.S. Kahlon, 'Civil Affairs and Media Management', in *Indian Experience in Force Projection*, pp. 141–52.
- <sup>17</sup> See Anit Mukherjee, 'The Absent Dialogue', *Seminar*, No. 599, 2009.
- <sup>18</sup> Details of the lessons learnt from Operation Pawan have been compiled at Army Headquarters, as also a history of the operation. But, inexplicably, both remain under wraps.



**SECTION II:**  
**CURRENT ISSUES IN PLANNING FOR OUT-OF-AREA  
CONTINGENCIES**



## 6. EXISTING CAPACITY AND FUTURE PLANNING FOR OUT-OF-AREA CONTINGENCIES

From 1947 till at least the mid-1980s, India's defence policies had been focused primarily upon defence of the country's borders. The equipment purchases of the three services too were in conformity with this philosophy. From the mid-1980s, there was a gradual shift and India slowly began to perceive itself as a regional power and a security provider. This change also influenced equipment procurement by the three services. The Indian Navy moved towards gaining a blue water capability. Accordingly, it inducted more potent vessels that packed greater punch as well as the ability to operate further from coasts, commissioned the aircraft carrier *INS Viraat* to replace the aged *INS Vikrant*, inducted more modern submarines and gave a further boost to indigenous shipbuilding. The Indian Air Force (IAF) moved to induct longer range-capable aircraft such as the Jaguar and MiG-29 followed by the Mirage-2000 and Sukhoi-30MKI. A decade after the 1991 economic crisis, there was also a turnaround of the Indian economy that enabled an increase in the military budget. Moreover, the enlarging of India's interests required the capability to defend these interests when required. It is as a result of all these factors that Out-of-Area Contingency (OOAC) entered the military lexicon.

OOAC operations are relevant in all professional militaries with the capability to operate outside

borders. But it is important to remember that, in most cases, OOACs are just that — contingencies. As they are not usually envisaged as a primary function, they also usually suffer from a lack of attention.<sup>1</sup> India has been paying attention to this function in recent times — whether for humanitarian or non-combatant evacuation operations. In a report on its first year of existence, Headquarters, Integrated Defence Staff (HQ IDS) mentioned that its tasks included the finalisation of the “aims and contingencies for OOAC” based on the Raksha Mantri's operational directive. In addition, it also issued a “tri-service joint response plan” for disaster management.<sup>2</sup>

The above statements of HQ IDS are over a decade old and since then very little has been made available in the public domain on current plans and training for OOAC operations. This should not be surprising as such missions can have political and diplomatic sensitivities. Despite this limitation, members of this task force undertook a study of current capabilities and future imperatives to conduct OOACs. This was done by accessing publicly available material, interviews with retired officials and a seminar at the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA).<sup>3</sup> A number of recent public pronouncements indicate that this is a growing area of interest for the Indian Armed Forces. For

instance, in 2009, the *Times of India* reported that:

“A three-day infantry commanders’ conference in Mhow which concluded on Thursday, with Army Chief Deepak Kapoor and all the top commanders and battalion heads in attendance, took stock of the force’s war-waging materials and deliberated on how it can be prepared for an ‘out of area’ role.”<sup>4</sup>

This chapter examines four aspects pertaining to OOACs—capabilities, planning, training and execution. In the course of discussing these issues, the report makes prescriptive analysis and recommendations. We readily acknowledge that these prescriptions are open to debate and challenge. The members of the task force would readily welcome that but, based on their interviews and experience, these are the measures they thought best. The chapter ends with some policy recommendations.

## CAPABILITY

Successful execution of OOAC operations would be shaped primarily by the following:

- Ideally, a clear political, diplomatic and military goal. If this is not possible due to a rapidly evolving political situation then there should be a blunt and honest dialogue between all the stakeholders—politicians, diplomats and military officers.
- Capability for rapid projection of combat power.
- Detailed, updated and timely intelligence of the objective area.
- Opposed entry capability.
- Clear command and control structure with a precise demarcation of duties and responsibilities.
- Joint planning for operations.
- Prior training, exercises and robust contingency plans to prepare for such missions.
- Ability to shape public opinion—domestic, international and also in the area of operations.

The ability to conduct OOACs will be dependent primarily upon the lift capabilities and reach of the

Table 2: Present Lift Capability of the Navy

Ship	Number	Capacity
Landing Platform Dock (LPD)	1	Up to 6 medium support helicopters. Either 9 Landing Craft Mechanised (LCM) or 4 LCM and 2 Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC); 4 Landing Craft Vehicle Personnel (LCVP); 930 troops.
Landing Ship Tank Large (LST(L))	5	2 Magar – 15 Main Battle Tanks (MBT) or 8 Armoured Personnel Carriers (APC) or 10 trucks; 500 troops. 3 Magar modified – 11 MBT or 8 APC or 10 trucks; 500 troops.
Landing Ship Tank Medium LST(M)	5	5 MBT or 5 APC; 160 troops.
Landing Craft Utility (LCU) <sup>7</sup>	6	2 APC, 120 troops.

Table 3: Present Lift Capability – Air Force (Transport Aircraft)<sup>8</sup>

Aircraft	Number	Capacity (per aircraft)
IL 76	17	Maximum payload of IL-76MD (IAF variant) is 47,000 kg. Max speed is 750-780 kmph. Range with maximum payload is 3,800 km. Range with 20,000 kg payload is 7,300 km. It can carry 140 troops or 125 paratroopers as alternatives to cargo.
AN 32	100	Max payload 7,500kg (of which fuel can be 5,500kg max) so the aircraft in practice carries about 4,000kg cargo load on routine missions. It can carry 39 paratroopers.
DO 228	25	Max payload is approximately 2713 kg. With 19 passengers range is 1167km.
C-130J	6	Maximum payload 18955 kg. Capable of carrying 92 fully equipped troops.
HS 748	40	Max payload approximately 5350 kg with a range of 852 km. Capable of carrying 48 paratroopers.

Air Force and the Navy.<sup>5</sup> The current lift capabilities of the Navy and Air Force, according to publicly available sources, are given in Tables 2 and 3.<sup>6</sup>

Among the IL series, six of the planes are refuelling tanker aircraft. In addition, the Indian Navy has acquired ships that can provide fuel and logistical support. These capabilities enhance the operating range of both aircraft and ships. With such platforms, the force level that can be deployed at any given time would be around an integrated Brigade group with its supporting assets.<sup>9</sup> The reach of current air and sealift capabilities means that, realistically speaking, India can conduct OOAC operations only within the Indian Ocean region (IOR).

In addition, India is acquiring new capabilities for enhancing both its airlift and sealift capabilities. The proposed induction of such platforms is shown in Table 4.<sup>10</sup>

Additional lift capability as per requirements could be drawn from the merchant marine as ‘ships taken up from trade (STUFT)’ and by chartering

civil aircraft. The induction of these platforms will significantly enhance the lift capability of the Indian Armed Forces. This indicates that plans may be in place to develop capabilities for a Division-size force—perhaps something like a Rapid Reaction Division. Such forces could be augmented with the soon-to-be acquired M-777 howitzers which, according to some, may have been acquired specifically for use in OOACs.<sup>14</sup> A recent analysis of the Army’s doctrinal thinking backed up this new-found emphasis on OOAC operations:

“... a major thrust of the ongoing review pertains to enhancing strategic reach and developing OOAC capabilities stretching from the Persian Gulf to the Malacca Straits. This thrust is closely linked to the requirement to attain operational synergy with the Navy and the Air Force.... an eventual withdrawal of western military forces from the region does require India to have a credible military option to bring to the table in a discussion of any new regional security structures.”<sup>15</sup>

Table 4: Proposed Induction of Naval amphibious ships and Air Force transport aircraft

Platform	Number	Remarks
Landing Craft Utility (LCU) Ships	8	Will be built by GRSE, Kolkata. <sup>11</sup>
LPD (Landing Platform Dock) Ships	Not Known	Request For Information (RFI) was issued in early 2011. But apparently these were sent only to Indian shipyards. <sup>12</sup>
C-17 Aircraft	10+6. First 10 on order with Boeing, USA. Order for next batch of 06 awaiting clearance <sup>13</sup>	Maximum payload is 77,520kg; Maximum fully kitted troops carriage for air assault is approx 102 paratroops;(102 seats can be fixed on board) or 90 passengers or 10 casualty passenger pallets in addition to 54 sidewall seats in medical evacuation role. It can carry one Main Battle Tank (MBT) in addition to a few small light vehicles or up to three AH-64 Apache helicopters or three wheeled or tracked vehicles.
Medium Transport Aircraft (MTA)	Not Known	A proposed collaborative project between Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) and Illushin Bureau of Russia. Not even in prototype stage so inadequate information available.
C-130J	Increase in numbers expected beyond the current six.	Similar capability per aircraft as given at Table 3 above.

## PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

As mentioned earlier, due to the political complexity of a situation, it might not always be feasible to obtain a clear-cut political mandate. The military must, therefore, build in flexibility to adapt to possible changes, even during the course of execution of the initial mandate. Such changes and re-orientations are complex and may not always be possible within reasonable time frames. Therefore, changes in directive and mandate must also be made by the political leadership with full consideration of the time required by the military to adapt to the change. In this scenario, contingency planning is critically important and must be robust and exhaustive. It is also crucial

to “Red Team” these plans. Finally, the lessons learnt from the Sri Lanka and Maldives operations must be internalised and disseminated.

A necessary consideration while planning for such operations is the creation of an apex higher defence structure that conducts this mission. At the apex level, this high-level structure would have to oversee the planning and execution of operations and should ideally consist of the following members:

- Prime Minister (PM)
- External Affairs Minister (EAM)
- Defence Minister (RM)

- Cabinet Secretary
- Three Service Chiefs
- Defence Secretary
- Foreign Secretary
- Chief of Integrated Defence Staff (CISC) till such time a CDS is nominated
- Other members nominated as per requirement, situation and expertise

For a closer day-to-day handling of the mission, a separate committee or secretariat should be formed. An assessment of the situation would dictate whether the operations envisaged would be 'Air-Sea', 'Air-Land' or, as in Sri Lanka, all three services combined. The first step, therefore, is 'joint planning for unified operations'. The services must, therefore, eschew the current single-service approach as these create silos and unnecessary duplication. In order to streamline the inter-agency/ministerial working, a contingency team be nominated that would be activated and manned depending on the area, type of operation and force levels/assets to be utilised. The composition could vary and additional members could be brought in on an "as and when required basis". Such a committee would, therefore, consist not just of service officers (from the operations, intelligence and logistics directorate), but also director-level officers from the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Ministry of Defence (MoD), Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and different intelligence agencies. In addition, officials from the Ministries of Health, Surface Transport, Civil Aviation and Finance maybe co-opted – depending on the mission. Leaving the coordination for such complex operations to the last minute may create problems and, hence, a policy for conduct of OOAC operations must be evolved that would enable all agencies to work

together. This must be practiced and war-gamed in exercises. The generic composition of the team could be as follows:

- Chair: Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee/ CDS when appointed
- Members could be from the following ministries/offices for interfacing and obtaining the requisite approvals in short time frames:
  - External Affairs Ministry – From the relevant division for area interface
  - Defence Ministry
  - Finance Ministry
  - Health Ministry
  - Home Ministry
  - Civil Aviation Ministry
  - Surface Transport Ministry
  - HQ IDS, three Services and Coast Guard
  - DG Shipping
  - Intelligence agencies

As far as the military is concerned, it is understood that currently the three services have been directed to look at various regional contingency options as "lead services". This is indicative of a single service approach and risks creating silos while exacerbating information asymmetries. Instead, it is recommended that HQ IDS should be designated and may offer a better option to plan and take ownership of all OOAC operations. It not only has a tri-services complement but can also act as the nodal military agency to interact with civil agencies. Operating under the Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee, HQ IDS would have the appropriate mandate to work out a viable plan of action free from service-specific prejudices. However, our study finds that current planning and

training for OOAC missions suffers from a lack of resources and attention. To deal with this problem, we recommend that the current offices in the IDS be upgraded to a Directorate under a 2 Star. In addition, such a Directorate should have the flexibility to hire civilians with specialised skills—in languages, area studies, media handling—which they can utilise accordingly. These civilians should have the requisite clearances to interact directly with the formations and prepare them for their expected missions.

A final planning consideration must be a comprehensive discussion on the issue of logistics. Many have commented on the problems of logistics in supporting the Indian Peacekeeping Force (IPKF) operations in Sri Lanka and in preparing for an operation beyond one's borders. Logistics is a critically important area. On this issue, there are a number of options available to India. The first would be to consider pre-positioning stores, especially of the non-perishable kind, to well-connected staging areas that can be used when the need arises. On this count, the government should examine the viability of developing strategic assets and pre-positioning stores in the Andaman and Nicobar islands. While some in the military have argued for creating the capabilities to host large forces and platforms for a number of years, however, bureaucratic inertia and turf wars have stymied such initiatives. Moreover, environmental concerns seemingly have won over strategic interests. This need not be so and steps can be taken to prevent this from being a zero sum game. But for that to happen, there should be a renewed interest in examining the development of military facilities and bases in those islands.

Another option is to sign logistical support agreements with countries in the region. The Indian Navy already has some logistical support

agreements in place, but there might be a need to further strengthen such agreements to cater for all types of contingencies. As a corollary to this, the option of mutual logistical support should also be explored with countries that possess these capabilities. Therefore, bilateral agreements based on mutual interests with friendly nations should be examined and effected for utilization of their assets and infrastructure, as and when required. Hence, for instance, India could approach the USA for logistical support on a reciprocal basis from island locations like Diego Garcia, or from Bahrain.

Both these initiatives—pre-positioning stores and logistical support agreements—will also prove to be useful for humanitarian and disaster relief operations and for non-combatant evacuation operations.

## TRAINING

The training of forces that are earmarked to take part in such operations must continue on an ongoing basis during peace time, both in their individual services and at a combined level involving either two or all the three services depending on the type of OOAC planned. Post the establishment of a regular OOAC force, annual joint exercises training can be planned and executed under the overall responsibility of the Overall Force Commander (OFC). Although joint training is carried out at the two-service and tri-service levels (amphibious exercises), these exercises focus primarily on the defence of India. The OOAC templates and plans evolved would have to be exercised by the earmarked forces in areas closely resembling the main objective areas. This is not considered a major issue given the diverse nature of India's geography. Further, OOAC operations pose a different challenge wherein the forces would be operating in an

alien environment juxtaposed with issues such as diplomatic, media, international and national law, culture, ideology and religion, to name a few. Sensitisation of the force to these aspects would be critical to ensure a successful operation. The embedding or attachment of experts in these fields from civil agencies to advise the OFC and commanders in the field would be an essential requirement. This would require a reorientation of training at all levels, especially the forces operating in the field. The military and civil experts would need to understand the operating nuances of each other. An important element of this would be investing in the creation of resources like area studies experts and linguists. As the military's own in-house programme to do this has been plagued by problems (primarily in career planning), there is a need to study the viability of outsourcing this to the civilian domain.

## EXECUTION

At the planning stage itself, there is a need to formulate a structure for execution of OOAC operations. This could comprise two parts – preparatory and execution. The preparatory stage would commence from the shifting of assets and end when the force is ready to move and the OFC is satisfied. The planning and execution of the preparatory stage would be done under the purview of the contingency team. The execution stage would commence from the movement stage and last till the time of return of the force. Till the embarkation stage, HQ IDS should be in command so as to ensure effective interface with all agencies. Depending on the geographical setting of the area of operations, suitable service commands could be directed to nominate assets to undertake operations and assets placed under a nominated OFC. An "Air-Land" scenario would necessitate an Army OFC while an "Air-Sea"

scenario would require two OFCs, as is the case for amphibious operations – Naval and Army. The Naval OFC would be in command from movement to arrival at the area of operations and up to the time that the Army OFC is in a position to take over command. At all times, the OFC would be reporting to the Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee, through CISC. This would ensure a single point of contact that would enable interface with the three services and the apex high-level structure. An important consideration to keep in mind during the execution phase would be engagement with the media and shaping of the narrative.

## SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Many recommendations follow from the above analysis. While this section does not enumerate all the recommendations made in this chapter, however, it reiterates certain major points. Accordingly, the following need to be done:

- Formulation of an OOAC policy.
- Formulation of OOAC operation plans for various areas under the ownership of HQ IDS.
- Setting up of an apex-level structure for overseeing planning and execution.
- Creation of a Directorate for OOAC operations in HQ IDS under a 2 Star officer.
- Nomination of a contingency team for planning, creation and execution of red teams to challenge planning assumptions.
- Joint planning for operations, including civil agencies.
- Augmentation of lift capabilities and earmarking of assets.

- Establishing a Rapid Action Force, of minimum Division size, capable of independent detached operations.
- Embedding/attachment of diplomatic, legal and media advisors.
- Having an established and exercised logistics chain. Need to examine pre-positioning of stores and signing of logistical support agreements.
- Training and exercises based on operational plans. Such exercises should include all personnel from agencies, including civil, likely to operate with the OOAC force.

In sum, the conduct of OOAC operations requires renewed attention and emphasis. It would be better for the Indian military to be prepared when tasked to conduct such missions and do them well, than not be prepared and do them badly.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> In some countries which lack an immediate threat, like the US or UK, OOAC and power projection becomes the primary task of the military and gets adequate attention.
- <sup>2</sup> See <http://ids.nic.in/reportfirst.htm>, accessed on 5 May 2012.
- <sup>3</sup> For instance, see CLAWS Seminar Report, *Joint Amphibious Warfare*, January 2009, [http://www.claws.in/CLAWS-HQ\\_SC\\_Seminar\\_19-20\\_Jan\\_2009.pdf](http://www.claws.in/CLAWS-HQ_SC_Seminar_19-20_Jan_2009.pdf), accessed on 5 May 2012, and Rahul Bhonsle, 'India: An "Out of Area Contingency" in Libya', CLAWS Article 1764, [http://www.claws.in/index.php?action=master&task=765&u\\_id=79](http://www.claws.in/index.php?action=master&task=765&u_id=79), accessed on 30 May 2012.
- <sup>4</sup> See 'Indian Army mulls ambitious war plan', *Times of India*, 18 September 2009.
- <sup>5</sup> See Air Marshal B.K. Pandey, 'Indian Air Force Airlift Capability', *Indian Defence Review*, Vol. 26, No. 3, July–September 2011, <http://www.indiandefencereview.com/defence-industry/Indian-Air-Force-Airlift-Capability.html>, accessed on 16 February 2012.
- <sup>6</sup> The data in both these tables have been taken from IISS, 'Chapter Six: Asia', *The Military Balance, 2011*, Vol. 111, No. 1, pp. 239–41.
- <sup>7</sup> LCU's have limited range and are therefore considered effective only within half the IOR.
- <sup>8</sup> The data in this table relies on the following sources: *Jane's World Air Forces*, Issue 32, August 2010, and *Jane's All the World's Aircraft 1999–2000, 2001–02 and 2011–12*.
- <sup>9</sup> This estimate is for a one-time force. After unloading, these planes and ships can turn around to lift more combat forces if required.
- <sup>10</sup> The data for this table relies on *Jane's All the World's Aircraft 2011–12*.
- <sup>11</sup> See 'Navy inks Rs. 2,200 crore deal for 8 amphibious vessels', *Times of India*, 1 October 2011.
- <sup>12</sup> See Indian Navy website at <http://www.irfc-nausena.nic.in/modules.php?name=Content&pa=showpage&pid=350>, accessed on March 18, 2012.
- <sup>13</sup> Gulshan Luthra 'IAF will induct its C 17 Globemasters from 2013', *India Strategic*, October 2011, [http://www.indiastrategic.in/topstories1211\\_IAF\\_will\\_induct\\_C17.htm](http://www.indiastrategic.in/topstories1211_IAF_will_induct_C17.htm), accessed on 20 February 2012.
- <sup>14</sup> See Rajat Pandit, '27 Years After Bofors, Nod for Howitzer Deal', *Times of India*, 12 May 2012.
- <sup>15</sup> Vinod Anand, 'New Army Doctrine: Reviewed and Restructured', *SP's Land Forces*, Vol. 7, No. 1, February–March 2010, p.16.

## 7. ROLE OF MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS IN OUT-OF-AREA CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS

The primary responsibility of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) is to handle the diplomatic policies and foreign relations of the Government of India. By virtue of the task assigned to MEA, its involvement in Out-of-Area Contingency (OOAC) operations is inevitable. This chapter analyses the current and expected roles of MEA for these types of operations. While doing so, it makes recommendations and anticipates the types of missions that it might be called upon to play.

### CURRENT ROLES OF MEA

Through its missions in various countries, MEA maintains a constant watch on the emerging international scenario. These missions also inform the headquarters in MEA about any emerging situation or potential contingency and whether it impinges on India's national interests or not. The Ministry then, usually through the office of the Foreign Secretary, brings this to the notice of the political leadership. Hence, any decisions on OOAC operations, whether for humanitarian relief, non-combatant evacuation or contemplated military operations, will have to be based, among other factors, on inputs from MEA. Once a decision to undertake an OOAC operation is taken by the political leadership, depending upon the number of agencies involved, the coordination

work is delegated to the Cabinet Secretary or MEA. In case there is involvement of only the Ministry of Defence (MoD) in addition to MEA, the responsibility of coordination usually rests with MEA.<sup>1</sup> However, in case more agencies and/or ministries are involved, the Cabinet Secretary takes over the coordination work. This was evident during the numerous non-combatant evacuation operations. For instance, during the evacuation of the Indian diaspora from Kuwait in 1990, a Cabinet Sub-committee consisting of representatives of MEA, MoD, the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MCA) and Ministry of Finance (MoF) under the chairmanship of the then Foreign Minister I.K. Gujral, was formed to coordinate the operation. Normally a Cabinet Sub-committee is serviced by the Cabinet Secretariat but in this case the Additional Foreign Secretary (Political) supervised the work of the Sub-committee. The Cabinet Secretariat was, however, kept in the loop.<sup>2</sup>

It is important to note, however, that MEA's job is more of macro-coordination and to assist in the requisition of additional materials. Hence, for instance, it may work with the Ministry of Surface Transport and MCA to provision resources. As for the operations itself, MEA has little role to play as they are specialised in nature. This is especially

true in the case of military operations or disaster relief operations. In the case of military operations, in addition to establishing communication with MoD, MEA also establishes communication with the operations directorate of the service involved, for example, with the Directorate General of Military Operations (DGMO) in case of the Army. This responsibility of coordination with the Indian missions abroad and with the Defence Forces rests with the Joint Secretary (JS) of the concerned division in MEA. Should the need arise for any policy decision during the course of the operation, it is discussed by the Foreign Secretary with the political leadership and the outcome is informed to the concerned JS.

In the case of small operations like the evacuation of a couple of hundred Indian citizens from a country where a civil war breaks out, the complete initiative including planning, coordination and execution is left to the Indian mission in that country. MEA steps in where the operations are beyond the capability of the local missions. And, as the main agency involved in the operation, MEA may brief the media jointly on a daily basis, depending upon its criticality, as was done during the Kargil conflict. As a matter of routine, however, media briefings are delegated to the External Publicity Division.

In situations where military assistance is required for securing the lines of communications and providing security to Indian citizens before and during evacuation and if there happens to be military presence of a friendly country (e.g. in Iraq), MEA also approaches friendly countries (in this case, the US) for assistance through diplomatic channels.

## A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF MEA IN OOAC OPERATIONS

An analysis of the functioning of MEA in previous missions and its capability to handle future contingencies reveals some crucial deficiencies.<sup>3</sup> First, there is little evidence that MEA has documented and disseminated past lessons, or has created Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for future contingencies. Instead, what is apparent, especially in the case of non-combatant evacuation operations (NEOs, discussed in chapter 3), is that individual situations are handled separately on a case-to-case basis and that lessons learnt from these operations have not been documented. Whether a database of lessons learnt in previous operations exists as a ready reckoner for posterity is not known as the archives are closed to researchers.<sup>4</sup> There is also no evidence that SOPs have been created as a result of these operations.<sup>5</sup>

Second, MEA's approach to handling crisis situations, especially of the more serious nature, leaves much to be desired. The coordination work for handling a crisis is left to the JS in charge of the region, who is invariably already overloaded with routine tasks and has a limited staff. This may leave the person with little time for coordination work. Moreover, as this person may have little previous experience or training in handling such situations, the response can be erratic and inconsistent. Without SOPs, most officials almost feel their way through crises. While this might work for relatively minor incidents, for OOAC operations such an approach will lead to sub-optimum outcomes. To be sure, in most cases, the Coordination Division of MEA also gets involved to assist the concerned Division in handling contingencies. However, it is an additional task for both the Divisions and neither of them is organised or trained for

such tasks, nor do they have the resources to do so. Their primary responsibility is not crisis management or contingency planning but, instead, the ‘coordination’ of different ministries and agencies. For these reasons, these Divisions have to temporarily abandon most of their in-hand work to address any developing contingency as it assumes top priority. Also, post crisis, preparation of after-action reports, compendiums and SOPs is not always insisted upon and so may be overlooked as both Divisions have to pay attention to their already neglected routine work. In other words, a specialist job is being done in a generalist manner, which may lead to the overlooking of important details. Hence, handling the diplomatic aspects of complex crises and contingencies requires finely tuned and trained organisations. Due to these reasons, one of the recommendations of this report is the creation of an Emergency Division (ED) within MEA. This proposal is examined in detail in the next section.

Finally, MEA will have to find the means and measures to increase its staff strength and expertise on political-military affairs. There has been much recent commentary on the woeful inadequacy of the number of Indian diplomats and how this hampers India’s ability to conduct foreign policy.<sup>6</sup> Responding to this criticism, the government has claimed that it has increased the number of entry-level trainees. However, this measure is inadequate and does not address the immediate problems. These trainees will progress to mid-level ranks more than a decade from now, whereas the demand for additional staff might also increase. Instead, MEA must seriously consider proposals like lateral entry—from both civilian, professionally qualified experts and maybe even from other government services. Military officers are ideally suited to be permanently seconded and absorbed into MEA. While this might be

resisted on turf considerations, however, in the larger interest of conducting effective diplomacy as well as increasing the political-military expertise within MEA, such measures should be studied and quickly implemented.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Like in other countries, the Indian diplomatic community will have to create additional capacities to handle emerging challenges and complexities. For instance, in the United States, the State Department has a separate office headed by a Deputy Assistant Secretary and staffed by a healthy mix of civilian and military personnel responsible for planning, policy and analysis of international security operations under the Bureau of Political Military Affairs.<sup>7</sup> One of the main recommendations made consistently throughout this report is the necessity of creating an ED within MEA. Such a division would be responsible for all contingencies, including NEOs, humanitarian and disaster relief operations and all forms of OOAC operations. Such a division, moreover, could assist regional JSs in other unforeseen situations—like providing support to the Indian diaspora and other such contingencies. This division can preserve the database of all previous operations, list the lessons learnt for future use and prepare SOPs for envisaged contingencies. These SOPs should be periodically reviewed as and when there is any change in the capability of any agency or establishment. The SOPs should clearly lay down various time lines, which shall ensure better coordination. Should a contingency arise in a particular area, the role of the Division under whose jurisdiction that area falls should be advisory in nature while that of the ED should be that of the Executive.

The proposed ED should be adequately staffed and also have officials from complementary

agencies that are likely to participate in OOAC operations on cross attachment with them on a reciprocal basis. In case a real sub-organisation is not immediately feasible, a virtual organisation with a skeleton staff can be created which can, as required, be gradually augmented. So far as staff from the services is concerned, long-term deputation or lateral entry of service officers can be worked out in consultation with the respective Service Headquarter. This would ensure seamless, efficient and effective inter-ministerial and inter-agency coordination.

In addition, there are some more recommendations that follow from this chapter. Diplomatic missions need to augment their capacities and identify likely tools needed for OOAC operations and other contingencies. Missions that have prior experience, for instance of diaspora evacuation, need to create after-action reports. For a start, they can maintain a real time database of Indian citizens in their areas of jurisdiction. The missions can also make arrangements for alerting and contacting Indian citizens in such contingencies using micro-blogging and social networking sites.<sup>8</sup> MEA also needs to seriously consider measures to immediately enhance its staff strength – whether by lateral entry of civilian experts or from other central services.

For obvious reasons, MEA will have to play a critical role in any OOAC operations. While the focus has primarily been on augmenting the military's capabilities in such missions, MEA has not got the attention it deserves. As India's interests spread beyond its borders, its diplomats too will have to reassess their capacities to deal with complexities and future challenges. In addition, they will have to enhance their interactions with the military and other stakeholders. Only then can we be truly prepared for all manner of contingencies.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Interview with a senior retired diplomat, New Delhi, December 2011. The interviewee wished to remain anonymous.
- <sup>2</sup> K.P. Fabian, 'Oral History', *Indian Foreign Affairs Journal*, Vol. 7. No. 1, January–March 2012, p. 101.
- <sup>3</sup> This analysis has emerged after discussions with senior retired as well as serving Foreign Service officers in the months of December 2011 and January 2012 at Delhi.
- <sup>4</sup> Daniel Markey, 'Developing India's Foreign Policy "Software"', *Asia Policy*, No. 8, July 2009, p. 78.
- <sup>5</sup> K.P. Fabian, 'Oral History', p. 105.
- <sup>6</sup> For a good analysis, see Daniel Markey, 'Developing India's Foreign Policy "Software"'.<sup>6</sup>
- <sup>7</sup> See description of this bureau at: <http://www.state.gov/t/pm/index.htm>, accessed on 18 February 2012,
- <sup>8</sup> For instance, the Chinese government used such online tools to evacuate its citizens from Libya; see Jianggan Lee, 'Micro-blogging helps Chinese Govt evacuate Citizens from Libya', available at <http://www.futuregov.asia/articles/2011/mar/01/microblogging-helps-chinese-govt-evacuate-citizens/>, accessed on 18 February 2012.

## 8. STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND PERCEPTION MANAGEMENT FOR OUT-OF-AREA CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS

The management of information has always been critical to statecraft but it seems to have gained more salience in contemporary times due to the information revolution. State monopoly over information has been replaced by an expanding network of communication mediums which have democratised the access to real-time information for the common man. This has made governments susceptible to pressures from non-state actors, interest groups and most importantly the electorate. Perceptions shape opinions which, in turn, can make or break political fortunes.

For the military, this has meant operating in more unpredictable environments, where change is constant and mandates from political leadership fluctuate. The omnipresent 24x7 media and advances in consumer-fed social media technology has increased pressures on the Forces to watch their every move and weigh every word, thus, curtailing perhaps old-school operational freedom. It is in this context that Western forces battling the “war of ideas” have reworked their narratives framing their national objectives to “strategically communicate” with their domestic constituencies as well as the international audience.

“Strategic Communication” as a concept has come of age and is defined by the United

States (US) Department of Defense as “focused governmental processes and efforts to understand and engage key audiences to create, strengthen or preserve conditions favourable to advance national interests and objectives through the use of coordinated information, themes, plans, programs, and actions synchronized with other elements of national power”.<sup>1</sup> The US with its “National Strategy For Strategic Communication and Public Diplomacy (2007)” and UK with its draft Joint Doctrine Note on “Strategic Communication: The Defence Contribution” are thinking ahead to invest manpower and resources to address this issue.<sup>2</sup> The idea is to identify the core political objective, craft a strong policy narrative and align all diplomacy and communication programmes to target specific audiences using the most appropriate and effective media available. This is only possible, they argue, if “consideration of communication and its effects (is) integrated into operational planning, decision-making, and execution cycles, [and] not considered as an afterthought”.<sup>3</sup>

While many would argue that despite the best efforts of the Americans the results of the Iraq and Afghanistan experiences were not complimentary, we need to take a leaf out of their book. There is a necessity to craft our own approach in

India within the framework of our national policy interests and capabilities. According to Lt. Gen. Satish Nambiar, strategic communication and within it “the handling of the media is an element that needs attention, a dedicated policy and an apparatus that supports intelligent application”.<sup>4</sup>

This chapter analyses the role and necessity of strategic communications in future OOAC operations carried out by the Indian Armed Forces. The core argument is that there should be adequate planning in place to communicate the intent of the operation to different audiences and, moreover, it should be flexible to continuously improvise according to emerging situations. It begins with a brief analysis of the media coverage of two of India’s crises – the 1987-90 IPKF operations in Sri Lanka and the 1999 Kargil war. The former was clearly an OOAC operation and deserves to be examined. The latter has been included specifically as it sheds light on the management of the media in relatively contemporary times. The next section describes the current structure of interaction for handling the media within the Ministry of Defence and the Service Headquarters and examines some of the problems within. The paper finally attempts to suggest an organisational model for strategic communications for future operations.

## LESSONS FROM IPKF AND KARGIL OPERATIONS

Operation Pawan clearly brought to the fore the absence and, ironically, the importance of a well thought out media campaign. During the entire duration of the operations in Sri Lanka, there is little evidence that the military or the Ministry of Defence (MoD) had an effective communication strategy either for its own troops, domestic and

international audience, Sri Lankans or even enemy combatants. Lt. Gen. (Retd) R.I.S. Kahlon, who was the Town Commandant Jaffna (TCJ), says that there was absolutely no organisational support to look into the psychological aspects of the operations.<sup>5</sup> He says, “While we failed to inform people of all the good work done by the IPKF in response to their needs, the LTTE successfully ran us down by highlighting the ‘odd high handedness’ and suppressing the good work. Till the very end of Operation Pawan this remained the singularly neglected area.”<sup>6</sup>

Despite the change in the mandate of the mission, HQ TCJ was never assigned any responsibility to “strategically communicate” its political objectives to the locals, nor were there any ideas on perception management from the Core group headed by the Foreign Minister, Chief of Army Staff (COAS), Vice Chief of Army Staff (VCOAS), or the support group comprising of the Additional Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat and representatives of all ministries and agencies involved in Sri Lanka. The mission was impeded greatly also because there was a lack of understanding of the importance of perception management within the military. “There was lack of understanding among all ranks of the peculiar nature of their operation, the environment and the politico-military nature of the task... they tended to view every situation from a military angle. The fault lay with the hierarchy for having launched these troops without any psychological training and psychological preparation.”<sup>7</sup> This cost the IPKF mission dearly, says Gen. Kahlon, as high-handed dealings did more harm to the Indian military’s image and created more friction. Even damage control had to be resorted to at the local level. The TCJ had to take it upon itself and print posters of the good work done by the IPKF to battle LTTE propaganda. The only assistance in

the chain of command came from HQ 54 Infantry Division where a special cell was headed by CO 54 Infantry Division Signal Regiment. As this officer was a Tamilian, he was able to produce posters and newspaper write ups which were then widely circulated.

The above is just a gist of the most glaring problems faced by IPKF during its mission in Sri Lanka, but it indicates at least three major problems in strategic communication efforts during this operation. First, it is important to have clear political directives to help shape narratives around the operation. Equally important is the necessity to change the narrative should the mandate change. Second, it is important to communicate clearly to the troops about the mandate which should, in turn, influence their conduct and SOPs. Finally, there is a need to support the strategic communication plan by incorporating linguists, media personnel and analysts to shape the narrative and influence perceptions. According to Lt Gen Kahlon, "... psychological warfare is a combat force multiplier and must be managed by experts and accorded priority".<sup>8</sup> Hence, strategic communication has to be integrated at the operation planning stage, and include media and perception management, psychological operations and the entire information campaign.

Seemingly, engagement with the media during the Kargil operations in 1999 had improved greatly as compared to the IPKF operations. Government officials, both civilian and military, engaged the media effectively and favourably shaped domestic and international public opinion. India's first 'televised war' galvanised the nation and helped unite it in an unparalleled manner. Strategic communication was given priority during the operations and this showed when the daily briefings were organised and taken over by senior military and civil spokesmen.

This included representation from the military operations room and other agencies. Army Headquarters (HQ) set up an Information and Psychological Warfare Cell under the leadership of a Major General-level officer with direct access to the Army Chief. This enabled Army HQ to both monitor and disseminate information in a better calibrated manner than would have been the case otherwise.<sup>9</sup>

However, it was not all smooth sailing since a fair amount of reportage during the campaign revealed a lack of public information and awareness about the command structure of the Armed Forces, and how responsibilities are delegated within the national intelligence framework.<sup>10</sup> While arrangements were made for official briefings at Delhi, there were inadequate arrangements at the Corps, Division and Brigade levels. Conspicuous in their absence were arrangements to brief officers and men at the ground level on daily developments and the limited interface with civil authorities. All of this translated into a cacophony of noises and inaccurate reportage. In addition, the Kargil Review Committee identified the following problems in media management during the operations:

- With some exceptions, media personnel lacked training in military affairs and war reporting and the Armed Services lacked training and preparedness to facilitate the task of the media and counter disinformation.
- Defence Public Relations, which is routinely handled by MoD through regular Information Service cadres, is not equipped to handle media relations during a war or even a proxy war.
- The Army needs improved public relations capability even otherwise when deployed on counter-insurgency duties. Public relations

are presently managed by the Ministry of Defence and at the formation level by military officers who have no media background.

- War and proxy war do not leave the civil population untouched. This calls for the creation of a civil-military interface at various levels to deal with a whole range of problems on an emergency basis. Such liaison was lacking during the Kargil action and points to a deficiency that must be made good.
- Accounts also appeared in Pakistan of how India was thrice deterred by its nuclear capability. India's reticence to set the record straight about the earlier conflicts and incorrect reportage allegedly influenced the Pakistani mindset and led to the erroneous miscalculation over Kargil. Such negative propaganda needs to be nipped in the bud to ensure no escalation of tensions.

These two cases of operations in Sri Lanka and in Kargil, while perhaps on different ends of the spectrum, offer valuable lessons for future OOAC missions and shape a strategic communication – or Stratcom – model for India.

## CURRENT STRUCTURE OF INTERACTION BETWEEN MILITARY AND MEDIA<sup>11</sup>

While some systems for media engagement and communication planning are in place in India, however, their functioning leaves much to be desired. All ministries or departments under the Government of India have high-ranking Joint Secretary-level officers in charge of Public Relations or Media Affairs. The Ministry of Defence is no different. Defence Public Relations (DPR) is headed by an ADG Media and Communication, under him/her are three senior Public Relation Officers (PROs) representing the three services,

and 24 staff-level PROs spread across the country selected from all the three forces and also the Indian Information System/Service. This Department also includes the services of the editor of Sainik Samachar and the Films Division.

Apart from this, each service has its own set of media liaison officers. The Army hosts the office of the ADG Public Information (ADGPI) which deals closely with the media interactions of COAS on a day-to-day basis as well as plans for information and psychological warfare for the organisation as a whole. The ADGPI is an adjunct office to the DG Military Intelligence (DGMI) and comes under the Directorate of Military Intelligence, and not DPR. The ADGPI does not have financial sanctions and remains an advisory post without empowerment, despite its proximity to the corridors of power. Ironically, since the ADGPI does not come under DPR, the interface with PROs outside its service is often strained and incongruent in agenda. Under the reforms constituted by former COAS General V.K. Singh, perception management has been given the attention required. Each Command, especially the Northern and Eastern Commands manning borders with hostile neighbours, has an Information Warfare (IW) branch. Each Command branch is headed by an MGGs (Major General-level officer), with appointments of Brigadier General Staff (BGS) (IW) and Colonel (IW) down the order.

The Navy and Air Force, being smaller services as compared to the Army, apparently have more efficient systems with their PROs having a considerably higher degree of empowerment. This mindset is also a straining factor, since the size of the force should not be a determinant in the degree of empowerment of its officers.

In practice, usually, briefings held by Defence PROs are verbatim reproductions of written

communiqués which outline bare information and leave room for wild speculation by the media on matters “classified”. The entire process, more often than not, is rendered counter-productive. According to a former Deputy Chief of Army Staff, “The DPR has no credibility with the media; a revolutionary change in the system is required.”<sup>12</sup>

### PROBLEMS IN THE CURRENT STRUCTURE FOR MEDIA INTERACTION AND ENGAGEMENT

Despite an overarching structure being in place, systemic and bureaucratic inconsistencies hinder effective strategic communications. Culturally, we have inherited a closed bureaucratic system from the British where information, whether classified or otherwise, came at a premium. Currently, information sharing with media is looked down upon as interfering or deemed unnecessary except when required for “publicity” or if it fits “agendas” and “score-settling”.<sup>13</sup> The approach is ad-hoc, generally under pressure, and antagonistic in case the media does not toe the “official line”.<sup>14</sup> While the explosion in the Indian media space is forcing a grudging change in the establishment, the reforms are at best cosmetic.

What is required is a top-down cultural shift in mindset where the top brass encourage and empower their subordinates to engage the public information space and create awareness to align opinion with policy objectives and improve the perception of transparency and good governance. There is also a dire need in the change of attitude and approach to the office of public relations. Until recently, officers posted in DPR were often superseded and generally were retirement postings. While this does not imply that superseded officers may not be incapable, they would certainly—unless motivated by the

organisation—lack the zeal to deal with an aggressive media.<sup>15</sup>

Military officers need to be incentivised to volunteer to train themselves as communication specialists. Language training for field operations, and media capsules covering handling of print, television and social media need to be inculcated in junior-level courses (YO training) and then revised subsequently during Staff College, Higher Command and NDC training. Some thought could also go into creating a specialised military cadre of communication specialists, depending on the resources available and types of missions planned.

However, there is no point investing in communication specialists if MoD does not empower them, which often is the case since DPR often works at loggerheads vis-à-vis military spokespersons.<sup>16</sup> For instance, in the case of the Army, there is a clear disconnect between DPR and ADGPI, so much so that the former at times refuses to release press statements issued by ADGPI as mandated by protocol.<sup>17</sup> Many believe that DPR only defends the offices of the Raksha Mantri (Defence Minister) and Defence Secretary and will not support the Armed Forces in times of controversy.<sup>18</sup> In contrast, media spokespersons for the services are accused of furthering the agenda of their Chief. In short, the turf war that plays out between MoD and Service HQ sends mixed messages to the media. This makes the job of strategic communication all the more difficult.

### RECOMMENDED STRATCOM MODEL

According to a former Home Secretary, a strategic communication model loosely exists within the aegis of the Government of India which comes into prominence during crisis situations. This model includes SOPs for contingencies, but the

Fig 1: A Model for Strategic Communication for OOAC Operations



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problem lies solely with implementation. “No one reads the handbook and this, more often than not, leads to chaos and duplication of work, which in turn sends out mixed or contradicting messages.”<sup>19</sup> More importantly, he adds, “There is a clear lack of leadership which ensures that once a policy is decided the mandate does not change, and all means necessary which include clear and targeted communication of political objectives are not held hostage by pressures of fractured domestic politics.”<sup>20</sup> In the absence of a clear line confusion persists, which is exploited by the media.

Figure 1 gives a suggested strategic communication structure, especially for OOAC operations.<sup>21</sup>

This suggested structure would not entail creation of another layered bureaucracy but would instead

pool in available resources to ensure efficiency. Obviously, for OOAC operations the apex body would be the Cabinet Committee on Security which would take all decisions on policy and mandate, and would frame the core narrative for the operation. The core group would change depending on the nature of the operation, but in most cases would comprise of an MEA-MoD composition along with military commanders and a media consultant, who would help the group “frame the message” and manage press briefings.

Further down, the chain of command media cells would be created at the Integrated Defence Staff, Intervening Joint Service Headquarters, to form links with individual Defence PROs from each of the services, right up to media cells at the formation level. As suggested in the chapter on military operations, if a Force Commander for

OOAC operations is appointed under the IDS, then media engagement and the recommendations made in this chapter could fall under his mandate. Each of these media cells would coordinate intelligence, disseminate communiqués, monitor social media and engage with local media to convey our national interest. The already existing IW branches of the Indian Army could be put to good use. They would also ensure that troops on the ground are psychologically prepared for the operation and remain routinely briefed on developments and changing mandates of the operation.

Finally, an assessment cell also needs to be institutionalised at every level to debrief, analyse the operation, record the lessons learnt and imbibe them into plans for future operations. For this model to succeed, it is imperative that strategic communication is included in the policy and strategy planning stages – and not as an afterthought.

## ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

While many recommendations have been made throughout this chapter, this section focuses attention on a specific few:

- A clear political message, crafted in cohesion with all key departments involved in the operation, is integral to the strategy planning exercise and not as an ad-hoc process.
- Develop a body of SOP narratives or media statements for specific exercises or situations that can be passed down the command chain.
- During OOAC, as per the suggested Stratcom model, the force commander at the IDS level should have a mandate for “strategic communication”. Restrictions and hierarchy

in situations that require quick reactions will be counter-productive

- Invest in training of officers to engage media effectively, including social media. This could be started at the YO-level courses and continue up to HC and NDC.
- Pool more resources into linguist training and even a specialist cadre of officers to focus on perception management. Postings of Defence PROs have to be competitive and incentivised.
- Continue to target defence correspondents with regular briefings, courses and area tours to inform reportage and build transparency. Embedded journalism in some operations could be beneficial.
- Re-haul websites of MoD and the services, ensuring accuracy of information as well as positive projection.
- Finally, the government and the services need to institutionalise a cultural shift in mindset, engage in the information battle field and not avoid it. Training, awareness and a flexible approach are the pre-requisites.

## CONCLUSION

Recent developments suggest that the military is becoming increasingly aware of the importance of engaging with media and shaping perceptions and narratives.<sup>22</sup> However, despite seminars and conferences, more needs to be done by MoD and the military to continue this process. In case of OOAC operations, this becomes an even more critical aspect as domestic support will largely condition the political mandate. There is, thus, a vital need to concentrate on this aspect, otherwise military victories can be perceived as strategic failures.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> See US Department of Defense, *2006 Quadrennial Defense Review Strategic Communication Execution Roadmap*, 25 September 2006, p. 3.
- <sup>2</sup> The US document is available at the Council on Foreign Relations website at <http://www.cfr.org/public-diplomacy/us-national-strategy-public-diplomacy-strategic-communication/p13601>, accessed on 5 April 2012; the UK document is available at: <http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/MicroSite/DCDC/OurPublications/JDNP/jdn112StrategicCommunicationTheDefenceContribution.htm>, accessed on 5 April 2012.
- <sup>3</sup> See Lindsay J. Borg, 'Executive Summary', *Communicating with Intent: Department of Defence and Strategic Communication*, Incidental Paper (Cambridge, MA: Centre For Information Policy Research, Harvard University, 2008). [http://pirp.harvard.edu/pubs\\_pdf/borg/borg-i08-1.pdf](http://pirp.harvard.edu/pubs_pdf/borg/borg-i08-1.pdf), accessed 8 April 2012.
- <sup>4</sup> Interview, 18 June 2012, New Delhi.
- <sup>5</sup> See R.I.S. Kahlon, 'Civil Affairs and Media Management' in *Indian Experience in Force Projection* (New Delhi: GENJOWS, 2008). The following account relies on this source.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid, p.146.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid, p. 142.
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 153.
- <sup>9</sup> See Kargil Review Committee, *From Surprise to Reckoning: The Kargil Review Committee Report* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2000), p. 248.
- <sup>10</sup> The following account of media-military relations during the Kargil war relies on *The Kargil Review Committee Report*.
- <sup>11</sup> Information in this section is based on an interview with Nitin Gokhale, Strategic Affairs Editor, NDTV 24x7, on 16 April 2012.
- <sup>12</sup> Interview with Lt. Gen. Satish Nambiar, 18 June 2012, New Delhi.
- <sup>13</sup> Conversations with various defence correspondents and retired senior military officers who wished to remain anonymous.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>15</sup> In a recent change of policy, the office of ADGPI is now considered a competitive posting and is no longer viewed as harmful for one's career.
- <sup>16</sup> Interview with Nitin Gokhale, Strategic Affairs Editor, NDTV, on 16 April 2012.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>18</sup> Background conversations with various defence correspondents and retired military officers.
- <sup>19</sup> Interview with Mr. G.K. Pillai, Former Home Secretary, New Delhi, 2 April 2012.
- <sup>20</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>21</sup> Model developed on the basis of conversations with experts and senior government and military personnel.
- <sup>22</sup> For instance, see transcripts of a CLAWS Seminar on 'Perception Management for the Indian Military' on 21 February 2012 in New Delhi, [http://www.claws.in/index.php?action=master&task=1092&u\\_id=36](http://www.claws.in/index.php?action=master&task=1092&u_id=36), accessed on 20 March 2012.

## 9.

## CONCLUSIONS

India's growth trajectory indicates certain unmistakable trends. First, the economy will see a greater dependence on energy sources beyond its shores. Second, the availability of a large, educated and technically qualified workforce will see an increasing Indian diaspora. Third, India will be expected to increase its contribution to regional and global efforts aimed at Non-Combatant Evacuation (NEO), humanitarian and disaster relief (HADR) operations and peacekeeping. As the concept of diplomacy and soft power is being influenced by endeavours like disaster relief, this study foresees more demands being placed upon India on account of its location and growing capabilities. Finally, as India's interests extend beyond its borders, it will have to enhance its capability to safeguard them.

India's experience in handling these contingencies in the past has been highlighted in earlier chapters and is based on case studies, personal interaction with key players and documentary evidence. The resultant assessment highlights the strengths, weaknesses and challenges which will need to be addressed if the country has to meet likely OOAC requirements and enhanced domestic and international expectations. One of the main problems in doing this report was the absence

of primary documents. The Indian military and strategic community must have the opportunity to re-examine the past and learn from it. This report therefore urges the Ministry of Defence to embrace a mature declassification policy.

Before focusing on specific aspects, it is important to reinforce that India's OOAC role and responsibility is in keeping with internationally accepted norms and a benign pursuit of its economic and social interests. In the past, India has been a firm supporter of UN mandated operations. This is likely to continue as the guiding principle of India's efforts in support of peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations. At the same time, India will have to re-examine this principle if it continues to be excluded from the Security Council. It does not stand to logic that the deployment of Indian troops would be at the whims and fancy, and veto power, of the five permanent members of the Security Council. Indeed such an arrangement does not comport with India's self-image as a growing power. This contradiction between adhering to UN norms while not being appropriately represented at the Security Council is an issue that will have to be worked through.

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

A number of policy recommendations have been made throughout this report. While this chapter does not enumerate all of them, it emphasizes three main recommendations and reiterates four main categories of findings.

The first major recommendation is the creation of an Out-of-Area Contingency (OOAC) Directorate in HQ IDS with dedicated staff and assets. Creating and attaching importance to this office will focus more attention on planning, training, equipping and preparations for OOACs. As a result, currently neglected but critically important issues like language studies, development of area specialists, plans for strategic communications, logistics, and so on would, in all likelihood, get the attention they need. Such an office could also undertake scenario planning, war-gaming and run training exercises for both civilian and military agencies expected to take part in an OOAC operation.

The second major recommendation is to create an Emergency Division (ED) in the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) that would be primarily tasked for handling crises and also for OOAC operations. Currently, the existing workload within the MEA, with respective desks and the Coordination Division, is not suitable for handling crisis situations. A need is, therefore, felt for an ED with officials from complementary services. Such an office will also help in NEO operations by, among other measures, examining previous missions, initiating Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and conducting training and scenario exercises. By the nature of its duties, the office will have to work closely with the Ministry of Defence (MoD), Service Headquarters and the proposed OOAC Command or joint directorate. In addition, this office could collect data pertaining

to the Indian diaspora specifically for evacuation purposes. Previous evacuation operations were hindered by the absence of this type of data and a means of communicating with the diaspora. It is recommended therefore that details and location of Indian nationals be maintained in missions, under overall directions of ED, to facilitate their location and evacuation in case of an emergency. The use of modern media and social networking tools like Facebook, Twitter and micro-blogging sites can further assist in mobilising people.

Finally, there is a need to create an organisation for inter-agency coordination when OOAC operations involve more than the Ministries of Defence and External Affairs. Among the major findings of the study was the inadequacy of a suitable organisational structure for OOAC when it is being conducted. At the apex level, the study suggests a high-level committee to oversee planning and execution. Given the past experience, it should include key functionaries led by the Prime Minister with the option of delegation, depending upon the nature of task. The coordinating agency should either be the Cabinet Secretary's office or the National Security Council Secretariat. This issue will require some deliberation to see which office would have the best capacity and clout to manage inter-agency coordination. Ideally this office should start functioning, with skeletal staff, in peacetime so that it can conduct planning and training exercises.

Apart from these major organisational changes, there are some other recommendations that follow from this report. For conceptual clarity, they can be grouped under four broad categories.

The first category pertains to preparation and planning for OOAC operations. There is the need to internalise the fact that successful OOAC operations would require, to the extent possible,

a clear political directive and resultant military mandate. However, as this is not always possible, the military therefore must emphasise on robust contingency planning, red-teaming and war-gaming exercises. Operation Pawan in Sri Lanka is the best example of the dangers of shifting and confused political directives. At the same time, it is acknowledged that often the complexity of the situation and changing domestic political opinion may lead to instances wherein politicians may not be able to give absolutely clear directives. It is therefore necessary for the military to stress on intellectual flexibility in their commanders to shift operations, if required. One manner of doing this is to have clearer standing procedures for contingency planning. This study suggests, based on interaction with serving and retired officials, that this important function is inadequately addressed at present. The absence of the same in the past has led to ad-hoc planning and execution. Accordingly, this study recommends the formulation of an OOAC Doctrine to assist in structured and cogent planning for such operations. This could be supplemented by specific doctrines like peacekeeping and joint peacekeeping doctrines. In addition, our analysis of NEO operations has revealed that the absence of a formal evacuation policy has not only impinged upon the decision-making ability of policy-makers but also created other problems while executing these missions. It is therefore recommended that a formal evacuation policy document be created for improving upon the decision-making and functional processes.

The second category of recommendations is to enhance intelligence and situational awareness functions. This aspect is critically important, especially when conducting OOAC operations, and therefore needs renewed emphasis from the intelligence agencies, missions in various

countries, respective desks of MEA, MoD and the Armed Forces. Accordingly, all these agencies must not only build up regional expertise in their own services but also invest resources in area studies and language specialisation. The importance of these often-neglected functions was evident during the operations in Sri Lanka and in various evacuation missions. Hence, the Indian diplomatic and security community must engage with the academic communities and perhaps create regional centres of excellence devoted to area studies.

Another category of recommendations is the continuous training of the different agencies that are expected to take part in OOAC missions. The inadequacy of specific and mission-based joint training came up as a major weakness in our analysis of previous OOAC missions. The study suggests the need to conduct a staggered and progressive training schedule in the military as well as in the different and relevant civilian agencies. This needs to be formalised as an annual exercise and could also include multinational training exercises, given the character of international HADR operations. Joint exercises for peacekeeping would also have to be formalised to ensure better inter-operability. A necessary imperative for planning and training is learning from the past of which, in the absence of declassification and record keeping, there is little evidence. Therefore, it is also recommended that all previous OOAC operations be documented and analysed for deriving suitable lessons.

The final category of recommendations focuses on the military aspects of OOAC operations. The military execution of operations is presently undertaken based on a lead service which, in turn, is influenced by geographical alignments. Instead of this system, as recommended earlier, there is a need to create either an OOAC Command

or a Joint Directorate, both under Integrated Defence Staff. Simultaneously, there is a need to enhance capacity and manpower with foreign military attaché missions to enable them to take appropriate action in case of contingencies. The number of military officers posted to diplomatic missions could also be increased for “sensitive” countries. Moreover, the Armed Forces should gradually adopt the US Foreign Area Officer concept so that it can build up regional expertise.

The capability for operating further from India’s borders to undertake OOAC operations is presently limited by logistical and sustenance issues. Accordingly, it is recommended that pre-positioning of stores be planned both on the Western and Eastern sea boards. It is also recommended that certain specialised and surveillance equipment be installed at the Andaman and Nicobar islands to enhance the reach of operations. In addition, India should explore the diplomatic and strategic feasibility of signing logistical supply arrangements with other countries. This will increase the operating range of the Indian military.

Experience in the past indicates provisioning for OOAC from within budgets of the services and ministries. This has led to delays, and ad-hoc planning and execution. It is therefore recommended that separate budgetary allocation be planned for OOAC to ensure smoother provisioning and distribution of stores. It will also make the process more efficient through structured planning.

There is, it seems, no structured system of addressing the vital aspect of strategic communication. It is therefore recommended that MoD and Service Headquarters pay extra attention to this issue and also explore hiring civilian experts to create a well-considered plan

for strategic communication. Additionally, existing online resources at a multi-agency level are presently conspicuous by their absence. Service websites leave a lot to be desired. It is important to create a vibrant and responsive presence online, to constantly update the environment regarding ongoing actions, as part of OOAC.

In terms of force levels, the present capability is estimated at a Brigade-sized force. Based on the increasing lift capability of the Air Force and the Navy, however, it appears that there are plans to augment this to a Division-sized Rapid Reaction Force (RRF). This study recommends such a measure. This force could also be designated as a reserve for conventional operations to limit redundancy and exploit enhanced capacities. It is also recommended that future requirements in terms of force levels and equipment associated with OOAC operations should be included in joint perspective plans.

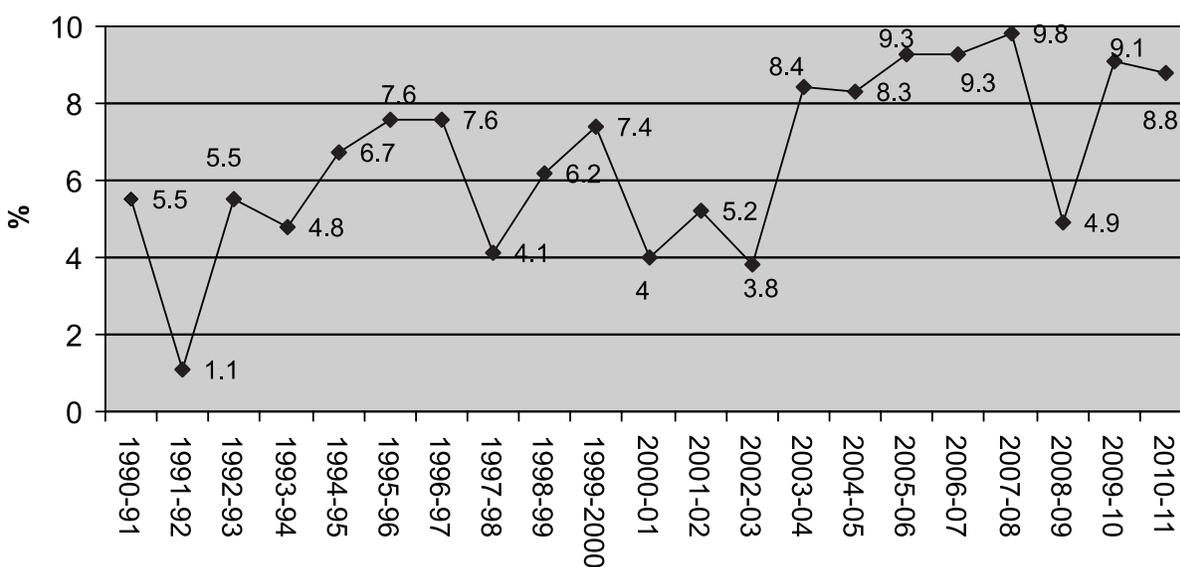
In sum, the twin forces of globalisation and the rising geo-political importance of the Asia-Pacific region is forcing India, like never before, to increasingly look beyond its shores. This is not only for ensuring its energy security but also to sustain its economic growth. In order to protect its national interests and provide security to the global and regional commons, the Indian military will have to be prepared to operate farther from its shores. The primary purpose of this report was to highlight the importance of planning and preparing for such missions when called upon to do so. It appears that more focused attention is required on a whole host of issues. This report then humbly aims to start a debate among the Indian strategic community on the preparation, planning and possible conduct of OOAC operations. We are hopeful that others will take us up on our claims and enrich this debate.

# APPENDICES



## Annexure I

## ANNUAL GROWTH OF GDP (%) 1990/91-2010/11



Notes:

1. The figure is based on GDP at market and constant (2004-05) prices
2. Data for 2008-09 are Provisional, and for 2009-10 and 2010-11 are Quick Estimates and Revised Estimates.

Source: Reserve Bank of India, *Handbook of Statistics of Indian Economy 2010-11*

## INDIA'S REGION-WISE CRUDE OIL IMPORTS 2008-09 TO 2010-11

Region	Import (MMT/%)	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11 (P)
West Asia	Crude Import (MMT) Share in total Import (%)	94.958 71.5	103.889 65.2	105.542 64.5
Africa	Crude Import (MMT) Share in total Import (%)	21.236 16.0	32.914 20.7	35.313 21.6
Other Asia	Crude Import (MMT) Share in total Import (%)	4.896 3.7	3.945 2.5	3.273 2.0
S. America	Crude Import (MMT) Share in total Import (%)	7.637 5.8	12.095 7.6	14.687 9.0
Eurasia	Crude Import (MMT) Share in total Import (%)	1.807 1.4	3.99 2.5	1.464 0.9
N. America	Crude Import (MMT) Share in total Import (%)	2.152 1.6	1.969 1.2	1.47 0.9
Europe	Crude Import (MMT) Share in total Import (%)	0 0	0.094 0.1	0.167 0.1
Australia	Crude Import (MMT) Share in total Import (%)	0.088 0.1	0.364 0.2	1.678 1.0
Total	Crude Import (MMT) Share in total Import (%)	132.774 100	159.26 100	163.594 100

Source: Extrapolated from Rajya Sabha, Parliament of India, *Import of Crude Oil*, Starred Question No-296, Answered on August 23, 2011

Note: P – Provisional; MMT – Million Metric Tonne

*Annexure III*

## INDIA'S COUNTRY WISE CRUDE IMPORTS 2008-09 TO 2010-11

(Million Metric Tonne)

			2008-09	2009-10	2010-11 (P)
West Asia	1	Iran	21.814	21.197	18.499
	2	Iraq	14.391	14.96	17.158
	3	Kuwait	14.764	11.797	11.491
	4	Neutral Zone	0.227	3.050	2.283
	5	Oman	0.277	5.392	5.428
	6	Qatar	2.940	5.419	5.606
	7	Saudi Arabia	25.950	27.188	27.361
	8	Syria	0.082	0.232	0.000
	9	UAE	13.851	11.602	14.706
	10	Yemen	0.662	2.919	3.01
	11	Turkey	0	0.133	0
Africa	12	Algeria	0.263	1.828	2.649
	13	Angola	5.314	8.993	9.648
	14	Cameroon	0.113	0.275	0.308
	15	Chad	0	0.293	0
	16	Congo	0.247	1.455	0.873
	17	Egypt	2.258	3.050	1.842
	18	Equatorial Guinea	0.281	1.246	1.501
	19	Kenya	0	0	0
	20	Gabon	0.418	0.136	0.394
	21	Ivory Coast	0.138	0	0
	22	Libya	0.89	0.947	1.094

	23	Nigeria	10.542	13.197	15.813
	24	West Africa	0	0.243	0
	25	Cote d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast)	0	0.145	0
	26	Sudan	0.772	1.106	1.191
Asia	27	Brunei	0.846	0.905	0.927
	28	China	0	0.141	0
	29	Malaysia	3.91	2.644	2.212
	30	Singapore	0.14	0	0
	31	South Korea	0	0.255	0.134
	32	Thailand	0	0	0.000
South America	33	Brazil	0	2.564	2.769
	34	Colombia	0	0.847	1.235
	35	Ecuador	0	1.309	0.398
	36	Panama	0.072	0.071	0
	37	Venezuela	7.565	7.304	10.285
Eurasia	38	Azerbaijan	1.58	2.264	0.759
	39	Kazakhstan	0	0.133	0
	40	Russia	0.227	1.593	0.705
North America	41	Canada	0	0.080	0
	42	Mexico	2.152	1.889	1.47
Europe	44	UK	0	0.094	0
	45	Norway	0	0	0.167
Australia	46	Australia	0.088	0.364	1.678
Total			132.775	159.259	163.594

Source: Rajya Sabha, Parliament of India, *Import of Crude Oil*, Starred Question No-296, Answered on August 23, 2011.

## Annexure IV

**INDIA'S IMPORT OF LNG, BY SOURCE**

(Billion Cubic Meters)

<b>Country</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
Oman	0.35	0.35	...
Qatar	7.98	8.25	10.53
UAE	0.13	0.17	...
Algeria	0.65	0.16	...
Egypt	0.26	0.33	0.09
Yemen	...	...	0.37
Australia	0.16	1.12	...
Belgium	0.09	...	...
Equatorial Guinea	0.44	0.25	0.17
Malaysia		0.25	...
Indonesia	...	0.08	...
Nigeria	0.41	0.32	0.33
Norway	0.08	...	...
Trinidad & Tobago	0.24	0.68	0.66
Russia	...	0.67	...
Total Import	10.79	12.62	12.15

Source: Extrapolated from British Petroleum, *BP Statistical Review of World Energy* (relevant years)

## TOP 20 ESTIMATED NUMBERS OF OVERSEAS INDIANS

(As per descending order)

No.	Country	NRI	PIO	Overseas Indians Living Abroad
1	USA	9,27,283	13,17,956	22,45,239
2	Malaysia	1,50,000	19,00,000	20,50,000
3	Saudi Arabia	17,89,000	NA	17,89,000
4	UAE	17,00,000	2,911	17,02,911
5	Sri Lanka	500	16,00,000	16,00,500
6	UK	N.A	N.A.	15,00,000.
7	South Africa	18,000	12,00,000	12,18,000
8	Canada	2,00,000	8,00,000	10,00,000
9	Mauritius	15,000	8,67,220	8,82,220
10	Nepal	1,12,500	4,87,500	6,00,000
11	Singapore	2,70,000	3,20,000	5,90,000
12	Kuwait	5,79,058	332	5,79,390
13	Oman	5,56,000	1,713	5,57,713
14	Trinidad & Tobago	1,500	5,50,000	5,51,500
15	Qatar	5,00,000	N.A	5,00,000
16	Australia	2,13,710	2,34,720	4,48,430
17	Myanmar	3,160	3,53,400	3,56,560
18	Bahrain	3,50,000	NA	3,50,000
19	Guyana	200	3,20,000	3,20,200
20	Fiji	800	3,12,998	3,13,798

Source: <http://moia.gov.in/writereaddata/pdf/NRISPIOS-Data.pdf>

### ACRONYMS

1. NRI- Non-Resident Indians: An Indian citizen residing abroad and holding an Indian passport.
2. PIO-People of Indian Origin: Person of Indian ancestry presently a citizen of another country. In other words, a foreign passport holder
3. OILA-Overseas Indians Living Abroad: NRI + PIO

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India's economic growth and prosperity are increasingly being shaped by circumstances outside its borders. Most prominently, trade and access to energy are now critical components of the Indian economy. In addition, the Indian diaspora, which is a source of significant remittances, also needs protection and evacuation. Thus, India's economic and national interests are gradually spreading outwards from its borders. Also, at times, the Indian military has been deployed for security operations – for instance, in anti-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia and in overseas humanitarian and disaster relief operations. In light of its capabilities and possible overseas role, the Indian military has been called a 'net security provider' in the region. This report, therefore, focuses on examining the Indian military's Out-of-Area Contingency (OOAC) operations.

In examining this topic, the report analyses previous deployments of the Indian military outside its borders, including in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKO), evacuation of Indian citizens from conflict zones and in active operations like Sri Lanka from 1987–90 and the Maldives in 1988. It then examines the current capacity and trends for executing such operations. Finally, it makes recommendations not only for the Armed Forces but for other relevant agencies as well, such as the Ministries of Defence and External Affairs, the National Security Council and the Cabinet Secretariat.

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