

# Human Resource Development Strategy for Sub-conventional Warfare

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*Army personnel trained and equipped for conventional warfare find themselves at a disadvantage when deployed for sub-conventional operations. The advancement in technology, changing warfare concepts, induction of sophisticated weapons and support equipments and need to handle far too many variables demand deliberate efforts in ensuring recruitment of desired human resource and their training in the army to suit the requirements of conventional as well as sub-conventional warfare. This is essential since possibility of conventional war can not be totally ruled out and at the same time relevance of sub-conventional operations in today's scenario can no longer be ignored. This paper is an attempt to evolve a suitable human resource development strategy for capacity building in Army for coping stress in sub-conventional warfare.*

## General

Total wars of conventional nature are tending to become a history. The development of society and concentration of existing and future world powers on economic growth vis-à-vis military growth consolidates the practicability, applicability and relevance of limited and sub-conventional warfare concept. While rivalry among nations will continue to exist, the balance shall be possible through deterrence mechanisms at their disposal. The nations in this civilised world are more likely to focus on economic growth while keeping their deterrence capability intact for effective and meaningful negotiations on the issues of dispute among them. Gone are the days when military supremacy of one nation over the other could mean overall supremacy. Today, economic strength coupled with credible deterrence in terms of technology, possession of weapons of mass destruction, national policies and military power, adequate to guard its borders against external aggression and proficient enough to undertake sub-conventional operations, whenever thrust upon by rival nations in the form of proxy war, insurgency, terrorism, border skirmishes etc, form the basis for balance of power in any region.

As per Indian Army Doctrine on Sub-Conventional Operations, total war as an instrument of state policy has become less relevant than ever before and resultantly, the probability of full scale conventional war between nations is gradually receding

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as an option for settling disputes. However, this has given further impetus to sub-conventional operations as the predominant form of warfare.<sup>1</sup>

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Most future conflicts, in the form of sub-conventional operations, are likely to remain a major responsibility for the Army. Hence it will be in the fitness of things to prepare army for this type of warfare in a more pragmatic and systematic manner. Army personnel trained and equipped for conventional warfare find themselves at a disadvantage when deployed for sub-conventional operations. The advancement in technology, changing warfare concepts, induction of sophisticated weapons and support equipments and need to handle far too many variables demand deliberate efforts in ensuring recruitment of desired human resource and their training in the army to

suit the requirements of conventional as well as sub-conventional warfare. This is essential since possibility of conventional war can not be totally ruled out and at the same time relevance of sub-conventional operations in today's scenario can no longer be ignored.

This paper is an attempt to evolve a suitable human resource development strategy for capacity building in Army for coping stress in sub-conventional warfare. This paper will bring out the necessity of human resource development to suit sub-conventional operation requirements, salient aspects of stress in sub-conventional operations and the existing drawbacks and challenges faced by the organisation during such operations. Thereafter, steps required to meet the challenges of future warfare shall be discussed. Finally, this paper will recommend human resource development strategy for the Indian Army.

### **Necessity for Human Resource Development**

It is essential to have an army which is capable of responding to conventional as well as sub-conventional warfare requirements with bare minimum turbulence while switching roles from one form of warfare to another. This necessity can be fulfilled only if deliberate actions are taken from recruiting to basic, advance and refresher training of officers and men at training centres/ training academies and formation level schools apart from refresher training in respective units. The training centres and training academies will have to shift focus from conventional warfare specific training to conventional cum sub-conventional warfare training. It implies that training of officers and men in conventional as well as sub-conventional warfare tactics demands a balanced focus. Human resource of army needs to be taught and exercised in sub-conventional warfare techniques at par with conventional warfare. This shall ensure fully prepared army to respond effectively to conventional as well as sub-conventional operations requirements at all times. Keeping the

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reality of future wars and conflicts between nations in mind, the human resource of army has to be prepared right from day one. A holistic look has to be given to recruit, prepare/ train, utilise and sustain an army, which should be capable of undertaking conventional as well as sub-conventional operations, whenever thrust upon and plays its role to achieve national objectives.

From the army perspective, sub-conventional warfare differs with respect to application of fire power. Many more restraints are imposed on the sub-conventional battlefield because of political ramifications that could result from its indiscriminate use. This type of warfare demands restraint and judiciousness to prevail to ensure that only the minimum amount of force required is applied. The rules of engagement will differ significantly in conventional and sub-conventional operations since the latter is not a declared war between two warring countries but may either be supported from outside or outsiders may be involved in waging it. Sub-Conventional war also encompasses an internal unrest within a nation, and hence a certain degree of restraint must be imposed. Indiscriminate violence on the part of military against indigenous population will do little towards winning their hearts and minds. The army personnel have to be trained on this issue right from first day in a deliberate manner since heavy fire power and large-unit maneuvers in sub-conventional operations are irrelevant, not cost effective and most of the times counterproductive.

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Historically, the fundamental problem confronting the conventional soldier employed on the sub-conventional battlefield is that he finds himself applying the conventional principles of war, which do not apply in sub-conventional conflicts. Every organisation and social profession inculcates its members with a coherent set of constructs and categories through which they are expected to interpret their professional world,<sup>2</sup> and army is no different in this respect. Thus, to ensure desired performance of an army in sub-conventional operations at par with performance in conventional operations, it is essential to develop its members simultaneously. However, it is to be noted that maintaining a balance in training for conventional as well as sub-conventional wars is not an easy proposition and has to be considered with due caution since it might confuse trainees at training centres/ schools of instruction.

## Stress in Sub-conventional Operations

Ambiguity of aim, lack of visible success, high casualty rates and prolonged exposure to dangerous situations are the main causes of stress among troops operating in counter insurgency environment and operational factors such as fatigue, unpredictability of threat, extended separation from families, absence of recreational avenues and problems related to leave add fuel to fire.

Recently, the Defence Minister informed the parliament that there were 520 cases of suicide and fratricides in the Army since 2006, of which 495 were suicides alone. The Parliamentary Committee had noted that there were 635 cases of suicides and 67 fratricides in the armed forces between 2003 and 2007. The Minister also noted that 70 per cent of the suicides took place in peace stations and rest in field areas, a fact that surprised the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence. Remaining 30 per cent suicide cases occurring in field/counter-insurgency areas is substantial toll and needs to be minimized. This is a cause of serious concern and the Army is taking necessary measures to prevent such incidents in all its sincerity.<sup>3</sup>

Plethora of literature on combat stress substantiates that troops trained in conventional warfare experience significant stress while operating in low intensity /counter insurgency operations environment. Conventional training makes a soldier think in clear cut terms and this tendency often leads to problems in such environment where concept of enemy can not be applied to one's own people. In such operational environment, a soldier ends up fighting an elusive enemy, in the absence of reliable intelligence and cooperation of local population. Many researchers tend to believe

that ambiguity of aim, lack of visible success, high casualty rates and prolonged exposure to dangerous situations are the main causes of stress among troops operating in counter insurgency environment and operational factors such as fatigue, unpredictability of threat, extended separation from families, absence of recreational avenues and problems related to leave add fuel to fire. However, most of the stress related cases can be managed much before they can drive a soldier to indulge in suicide/ fratricide. It is essential to understand the underlying cause of rising cases of suicides/ fratricides among trained and disciplined soldiers that tend to drive a soldier to a point of no return. Is it due to stressful working environment and extended tenures in insurgency areas as brought out in numerous media reports, or is there something else to it?

With sharp decline in incidents of terrorist related violence and attack on soldiers in Jammu & Kashmir (J & K), prolonged exposure to dangerous situations can not be termed to be the root cause of suicides/ fratricides in the Army. If such

tendencies were related to exposure to dangerous situations, it should have shown a downward trend, which has actually not been experienced on ground. On the contrary, a large number of troops prefer field postings on voluntary basis in order to retain family accommodation in peace stations so as to ensure requisite schooling for their children since they feel that timely leave and better allowances are available in operational areas. This clearly establishes that correlation between cases of suicides/ fratricides and prolonged exposure to dangerous situations in counter insurgency areas lacks substance.

**If stress level is greater than optimum stress level, it may lead to accumulation of fatigue- leading to psychobiological diseases as a result of hyper-stress.**

As per Yerkes-Dodson Stress Model, certain degree of stress level (optimum stress level) is necessary to make us live an active and productive life. However, the stress level lower than optimum stress level in any individual leads to decay of psychological system called hypo-stress – implying lack of interest in activities. If stress level is greater than optimum stress level, it may lead to accumulation of fatigue-leading to psychobiological diseases as a result of hyper-stress. The Army has been taking short and long term measures to maintain optimum stress levels among its troops.

During a trip to operational areas in J & K, the author interacted with 60 officers, 145 Junior Commissioned Officers and 880 Other Ranks of all arms and services. It came out clearly that suicides/ fratricides in operational areas mainly take place due to domestic problems of affected individuals for which they find no solution. These personal /domestic problems include marital discord, hiding facts about his trade/ position in organisation while getting married, property disputes, heavy debts, inability to bear children education expenses, previous psychiatric disorder, and inability to meet aspirations of educated spouse at home etc. 98 per cent troops felt that suicides/ fratricides are triggered by stress purely linked to domestic / personal problems and have no linkage, whatsoever, with operational environment. As per statistics of suicides/attempted suicides in operational areas in a corps zone in 2008, out of 18 cases, 13 were due to domestic problems, 02 due to failed love affair, 02 due to previous psychiatric disorder history and only 01 case related to operational stress. It has to be noted here that 13 cases of suicide due to domestic problems were in fact a result of operational environment that prevented desired level of addressing of domestic/ personal front by the affected individual. With the

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breakdown of joint family system, soldiers are anxious about their families left behind at home. The growing cost of sustenance and education are difficult to meet. Due to easy communication with family members as a result of affordable mobiles in everyone's reach, even most mundane changes get passed on to a soldier. A soldier, far away from home, is unable to solve his personal matters. This leads to hyper-stress among soldiers due to personal/ domestic reasons. The Army can grant 90 days leave to an individual in a year. Any requirement beyond his yearly entitlement is taken care of by granting advance of annual leave in exceptional cases, which gets accounted for against his next year's entitlement. Most cases of suicides have occurred soon after troops returned to duty from leave. This clearly indicates that soldiers resorting to extreme steps are severely troubled by domestic issues which they are unable to resolve.<sup>4</sup>

When a soldier is perturbed over his family problem beyond his optimum stress level or returns from leave with helplessness in getting his rightful due after exhausting all possible options and reaches a point of no return, he gets psychologically affected. Such estranged individual either attempts to end his life or turns the weapon towards his colleagues or superiors, on minor provocation at the spur of moment over any issue. The study of past incidents reveals that the maximum number of suicide/ fratricide cases occur within a few days of soldier returning from leave. In most such cases, the individuals had availed their quota of leave as per their requirements.

The Army has initiated number of measures to prevent occurrence of such incidents at all levels and needs of soldiers are being taken care of realistically. Through project- MILAP, interaction with troops has increased substantially and counselling facilities are being ensured up to post level. Officers, Religious Teachers and Junior Commissioned Officers are being trained in counselling techniques on regular basis, buddy system has been made realistic, leave is being granted liberally, help-lines have been created and manned round the clock to help distressed soldiers promptly and infrastructure pertaining to living conditions has been improved considerably.

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There is a need to sensitize the civil administration more deliberately to address the problems of soldiers and their family members with passion. A large number of soldiers get bogged down by property disputes with close relatives. Limitation of leave period prevents soldiers from adequately presenting their respective cases, otherwise essentially required to seek justice. The increasing lawlessness in rural areas affects their families and further compounds their worries. The recommendations of commanding officers to the

district administration about the problems being faced by the soldiers under their

command fail to evoke desired response, unlike in the past. In order to limit stress among troops in operational and other areas to optimum levels, this anomaly needs immediate addressing through an institutional directive by the government to district administration to resolve the problems of soldiers on priority.

Notwithstanding the fact that most suicide cases in Army are as a result of helplessness on the part of soldiers in solving their domestic problems, it is a hard fact that helplessness is mainly due to nature of their prolonged deployment in counter-insurgency areas and low intensity conflict operations which induces tremendous stress by preventing adequate addressing of personal issues.

### **Challenges in Sub-conventional Operations**

The officers, junior commissioned officers and non commissioned officers of our army come across difficult challenges for testing their leadership acumen. The volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity of sub-conventional warfare environment impacts on the decision making, and, therefore, underscores the importance of suitable frames of reference and training to enable them to operate effectively in an arena, which is largely grey. These challenges are at operational as well as tactical levels. Some of the major challenges encountered by the commanders at operational level in sub-conventional operations include:-

- Ensuring the correct orientation of their command for sub-conventional operations.
- Training of heterogeneous components of combat resources.
- Intelligence generation.
- Coping with subversion in various institutions during the initial stages of operations.
- Eliciting accountability of various security agencies in the conflict zone and ensuring effective coordination and synergy in the initial stages of operations.
- Preservation of combat power and maintenance of morale.

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- Coping with cases of stress related to operational as well as domestic issues.
- Coping with the time differential in creating counter measures for overcoming the technological capabilities of the terrorists/ insurgents.
- Dealing with seditious media reports by subverted sections of local media.

The challenges faced by the commanders at various tactical levels include:-

- Intelligence generation at grass roots level.
- Adhering to parameters laid down for engagements.
- Ensuring adherence to prescribed tactical norms during sub-conventional operations.
- Managing operational as well as domestic stress and preventing attrition in own rank and file.

### **Meeting Operational Challenges**

**Training our officer cadre, and specially junior officers, for displaying effective leadership in sub-conventional operations is of paramount importance.**

In order to meet above challenges, it is imperative that military leaders at all levels possess necessary conceptual, tactical and technical skills and understand the ways and means for the effective application of combat resources at their disposal.

Training our officer cadre, and specially junior officers, for displaying effective leadership in sub-conventional operations is of paramount importance. Our military training academies/ institutes/ schools/ colleges responsible for training officer cadre have to gear up to face the reality of future warfare (sub-conventional warfare) and must endeavor to ensure 'what a leader must

be', 'what he must know' and 'what he must do' in this new warfare environment. Since principles of conventional warfare do not apply to sub-conventional warfare, training of the officer cadre needs to be reviewed and executed in all schools of instruction right from initial academy viz National Defence Academy/ Indian Military Academy/ Officers Training Academy to subsequent progressive military training schools/ colleges to produce and sustain a professional role model. The final product should be capable of working with a spirit of selflessness, remaining calm and composed under adverse situations, fit to take pragmatic decisions, motivating his command to deliver with precision by leading by example, switching

roles from conventional operations to sub-conventional operations with minimum turbulence, outsmarting terrorists through guile, guts and professional competence and maintaining high levels of combat worthiness of his command for conventional as well as sub-conventional operations by striking a right balance during peace time training.

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While interacting with officers, junior commissioned officers, non commissioned officers and soldiers in various units deployed in counter insurgency environment as also training centres of various combat and support arms, certain issues came out clearly. Most of the young officers were of the view that they are unable to perform up to their full potential and their initiative gets curbed. Majority of these officers went to the extent of saying that training imparted to them in military academies /

centres was to fight a conventional war whereas they fight insurgency and deploy for low intensity conflict operations. Not only young officers but also a large chunk of middle level officers felt that it might be worth preparing the army for future instead of practicing history. A significant number of senior officers felt that quality of younger generation is below the mark and wanted that our selection system be modified suitably taking into account the academic strength, psychological aspects and mental as well as physical capacities of candidates.<sup>5</sup>

It came out clearly that our soldiers are very low at uptake and it becomes difficult for them to grasp and understand necessary instructions in limited available time for execution of tasks/ missions and advocated that instead of short-listing candidates for selecting recruits based on physical tests, short-listing should be done based on a written paper comprising of basic language skill, general awareness, intelligence and psychological tests.<sup>6</sup> It was felt and is actually true that physical tests be conducted only for short-listed candidates based on written paper since there is no dearth of candidates who wish to join services as soldiers and physical attributes can be easily improved upon during the recruit training at respective regimental centres. In the existing scheme of things, academically and mentally superior candidates get eliminated right in the start of selection process since short-listing of candidates for written test is based on performance in physical test(s).<sup>7</sup> It may be argued that conducting written paper for large numbers may be non-feasible. But navy and air force are already practicing this model.

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This model is also being practiced in US and British armies. Well, it is very much feasible, if there is a will.

Personnel below officer rank (PBOR) felt that training centres are unable to do real justice to fulfill training needs of recruits. A lot of useful time gets wasted in projecting showmanship. The training schedules get disturbed frequently, the instructors get detailed on avoidable non instructional tasks in order to impress the visitors and, all this they felt, happens at the cost of training. The PBOR strongly felt that the training infrastructure and quality of instructors at training centres needed boosting up. They also expressed that syllabus being covered continues to be theoretical in nature and far from reality of counter insurgency operations and felt that training is still focused on conventional operations. Necessity of practical approach was asserted by majority of officers and men whom I happened to interact with. Some of the PBOR offered sarcastic smiles when inquired about the quality of instructors in training centers. If I put it bluntly, they felt that training centres are posted with mostly disgruntled officers who are either overlooked or on last-leg posting or low medical categories or posted on compassionate grounds to sort out their personal problems and hence unable to contribute to the training needs effectively. This fact should be a matter of concern for planners in various line directorates as also directorate of military training and must be addressed appropriately. On interaction with training battalion commanders posted at six regimental centres of different arms as also officers responsible for PBOR training at line directorates, it was revealed that PBOR training is the responsibility of

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respective line directorates but training centres are controlled by Area / Sub Area Headquarters. Since Area/ Sub Area Headquarters are in no way responsible for PBOR training, non-availability of instructional staff due to detailment of officers and PBOR instructors by these Headquarters for administrative tasks impinges avoidable extra burden on already under-posted officers and PBOR instructors at regimental training centres due to hard scale holding of officers in a particular arm/ service and PBOR in various trades. This is at the cost of training. On interaction with unit commanding

officers of various arms/ services, it was confirmed that training of recruits at regimental training centres is not up to the mark and professionally more than 30 percent soldiers reporting to units immediately after the recruit training from training centres are found wanting. This puts undue burden on unit commanding officers. Such ill-trained soldiers posted with units deployed for low intensity conflict operations are bound to suffer from psychological discomfort due low confidence level in their professional ability. Such soldiers in difficult situations will only add to confusion and make the tasks of leaders more problematic. I inquired from a group of 30 NCOs of infantry, artillery, engineers, signals, EME and ASC whether they were satisfied with training standards of soldiers reporting to units

after recruit training. Majority of them were of the view that most of the soldiers posted from training centres immediately after recruit training lack knowledge

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of their profession and mentioned that the best welfare that could be done to a soldier is to make him confident in his professional task and prepare him for conventional as well as unconventional operations through a well structured, balanced and ruthless training program.

Above facts clearly call for review of recruitment methodology based on initial short-listing through psychological and mental uptake test designs followed by physical tests. It is also clearly established that training methodology at training centres and all other schools of military instructions needs a review to suit the requirements of sub-conventional operations while retaining the ability to undertake conventional operations.

There is also an urgent requirement to revise the syllabus, equipping the regimental training centres with desired infrastructure and ensuring posting of capable and dedicated instructors at training centres/training academies apart from ensuring attitudinal shift towards conduct of a well structured and balanced training for meeting the training needs of officer as well as soldier cadre of army for conventional as also sub-conventional operations.

### **Developing Human Resource for Future Warfare**

During its journey for over fifty years, Indian Army has left footprints of both success and failure. These years have yielded wide and varied experience in our approach and methodology to combat sub-conventional threats. While refinement of strategic and operational concepts and tactics to operate in such environments have been carried out, holistic view on developing a modern minded human resource for Army to undertake tasks in such an environment while retaining capability of switching roles for conventional operations needs immediate focus.

#### **Recruitment**

Future wars will be termed as knowledge age wars. Such wars lay emphasis on attracting knowledgeable personnel and training them.<sup>8</sup> Thus Indian Army has to induct personnel with higher and better educational standards with technical bent of mind. With increase in general level of educational standards, a large number of well

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qualified candidates can now join the forces. Further, the aim should be to make the soldier multi-skilled in order to meet the objectives of downsizing, achieving flexibility in employment as also improving their career prospects.<sup>9</sup> However, it may be noted that pay packages of soldiers need to be suitably upgraded commensurate with the enhanced level of educational standards at par with corporate world.

**Restraint has to be exercised and patience is essential since counter-insurgency efforts may consume years rather than months.**

The man power must understand that insurgency is not primarily a military problem and hence has to be addressed to resolve the legitimate grievances of the aggrieved people. Security forces are deployed on an area basis and junior leaders have to be allowed a considerable initiative and tactical flexibility. Restraint has to be exercised and patience is essential since counter-insurgency efforts may consume years rather than months. The soldiers have to afford protection to the population and government's instruments of political control and

influence. The soldiers should also be able to perform non-coercive, quasi-military and military activities to mobilize public support.

The process of developing human resource for meeting challenges of sub-conventional warfare including limited wars has to begin right from recruitment stage by selecting right person for right job. The selected candidate/ recruit has to be intelligent enough to understand basic concepts, capable enough to handle modern weapons and equipments/ gadgets, educated enough to understand nuances of modern conflicts, quick at uptake, psychologically robust to perform under stress and strain, capable enough to act and react logically in foggy situations with out looking at someone for guidance and must be mentally robust and physically tough to withstand future warfare challenges. While physical attributes may be improved through rigorous physical training, it may not be feasible to alter or modify mental robustness of a person significantly. Mentally or psychologically weak candidates are likely to suffer stress related disorders more frequently. Hence there is a requirement to shortlist candidates based on written test conducted before the physical test. Psychological test is also necessary in respect of candidates who get short-listed based on written test followed by physical tests. While selection of officers is being done as per requirements, recruitment of soldiers needs a review. In November, 2008, Dr W. Selvamurthy, then Chief Controller Research and Development, Ministry of Defence had mentioned that the army will soon introduce an entry-level personality test for aspiring personnel to eliminate candidates with negative traits is a measure aimed at cutting down the number of suicides and fratricides.<sup>10</sup> However, this is yet to be implemented.

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There are high as well as low response areas within the geographical spread of the country from where the manpower for Army gets recruited through open recruitment rallies. Recruitment rallies are planned well in advance, keeping in view the geographical and topographical considerations. At least one such rally is held in each month, combining districts, areas and regions, depending upon

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the response anticipated, thereby giving every aspirant, irrespective of his place of residence, minimum one opportunity in a year to get himself enrolled in the Army.<sup>11</sup> Though there may be low response from certain areas but intake quality has been found superior. Basic understanding and IQ levels of recruits hailing from low response states like Kerala have been found to be superior. It may be appropriate to select recruits for technical trades

from such areas. Since modern warfare heavily relies on technology, human resource of Army has to be accordingly mustered and maintained. In order to meet this requirement, objective type question paper with Optical Mark Recognition (OMR) system of evaluation could be considered and minimum cut off must be laid down to be eligible for subsequent selection process.

The proposed system of selection of soldiers for Army, if put into practice, is bound to evoke resistance initially. But in a long run, it shall be able to attract a better manpower.

### **Training**

The training philosophy of Indian Army is designed to meet its present and future threats. The sophisticated combat environment of the future battlefield would be replete with the latest technological advancements. Advanced systems, modern techniques and improved training methodologies would facilitate the deployment of battlefield support systems and force multipliers. This necessitates evolution and reorientation of operational concepts, tactics and techniques, in preparing the Indian Army to meet the future challenges.<sup>12</sup> This in turn, demands changes in force structure, organization and training philosophy to ensure optimal use of advanced technology for the efficient application of combat power.<sup>13</sup>

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The changes envisaged for meeting the future warfare challenges are:

- A well trained, highly disciplined and motivated force for conventional as well as sub-conventional operations, to deter war and when deterrence fails, to conduct swift conventional operations, to obtain decisive victory.

- Graduate transformation to the directive style of leadership.
- Enhanced capability of jointmanship.
- A force trained to fight conventional as well as sub-conventional operations against the backdrop of nuclear threat and insurgencies/ asymmetric warfare threats.
- A quality force which emphasises national values and ethos.

The envisaged training objectives for the future army are:

- Progressively implement the Systems Approach to Training, so as to make training more focused, object-oriented, cost-effective and responsive to the environment.
- Enhance professional military education of all ranks.

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After ensuring recruitment of right person for right job, the training phases have to be carefully planned and executed, duly taking into account the psychological, mental, physical and professional abilities required in modern warfare. A trained soldier when reports to a unit from the regimental training centre lacks experience. Such soldiers have to be groomed in the units for the warfare readiness through realistic on the job training. The induction of these soldiers into war zone needs to be done in a graduated manner. Mere posting of a soldier from training centre to a unit deployed in

low intensity conflict operations to make up for the existing deficiencies may not serve the intended purpose.

### **Upgrading the Training Infrastructure and Training Syllabus**

An important step which is desired to be taken by regimental training centres of all arms and services is to revise their respective training syllabi to meet the challenges of modern warfare. A common syllabus needs to be worked out by the Directorate General of Military Training (DGMT) at the service headquarters in consultation with respective line directorates, Army Training Command and Defence Institute for Psychological Research (DIPR) and promulgated for implementation. While this is done, training infrastructure of regimental training centres has to be upgraded suitably to fulfill the training requirements of trainees for modern warfare. There is

also an immediate need to simplify the procedure for modernization of laboratories in the training centres/ training academies. There is a need to have more number of zonal counter-insurgency training schools on the lines of CIJWS Wirangte. The

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existing number of schools is grossly inadequate. In case, the Army has to cater for CI training needs of Para-military forces like CRPF also, as is being talked of in the media Post-Dantewada incident, more number of CI Training schools is an essential necessity. The requirement of psychologists for monitoring behaviour of trainees in the training centres and applying necessary corrections, wherever necessary need to be met.

Preparing the Army personnel for near perfect performance in sub-conventional warfare environment, necessitates ruthless execution of training schedules encompassing all desired issues spelt out in the Doctrine for Sub-conventional Operations i.e. counter-infiltration operations including border sealing through physical presence of troops, use of artificial obstacles and integrated employment of surveillance devices, elicit support of locals residing in border areas/ areas of operations and seamless interface with counter-terrorist operations in the hinterland. Training for such operations has to focus on patrolling techniques, ambushes, raids, cordon and search, search and destroy, establishment of vehicle and personnel check posts, road opening, convoy protection and security of various static installations including operating bases. Our regimental training centres must pay due attention during training of men. Similarly officers training academies have to adequately dovetail these aspects in training of cadets/ officers.

Indian Army is ethos-based and it draws its strength from its ethos, traditions and culture that have shaped its thinking over centuries. During the training of our men, need of continued re-iteration and consideration of essence of these manifests among all ranks in the form of self-denial, moderation, tolerance, respect for women and elderly members of society and ability to live in peace and harmony in a multi-ethnic and multi-religious environment need no special emphasis.

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The training and administrative machinery has to focus on conserving combat power. Friendly losses occur because of terrorist actions, fratricide, stress-related attrition and battle accidents.<sup>15</sup> Training has to address these issues seriously to obviate such losses. The training has to inculcate a habit of exploiting technology including force multipliers like EW equipments, UAVs etc,

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### **Need for Training for Coping Stress**

The loss of human resource due to operational stress aggravated by soldier's helplessness in resolving his domestic conflicts can neither be ignored nor accepted. There is definitely a serious need to review recruitment policy apart from dovetailing stress management techniques and their practice in the training of a soldier right from the day he joins army. It is worth mentioning here that a rightly selected/ recruited officer as also soldier, rightly trained for conventional as well as sub-conventional operations at training centres/

training academies and rightly refreshed through training in units in peace stations, rightly inducted into counter insurgency environment after requisite pre-induction and motivational training at formation training schools and finally, rightly exposed / turned over from a difficult and stressful environment is bound to deliver most optimally.

### **Need for Training on Legal Aspects**

The soldiers have to be fully aware of legal aspects pertaining to sub-conventional operations so that insurgents/ terrorists are unable to take advantages of prevailing circumstances through exploitation of law. This aspect needs to be built into the training syllabi along with loopholes likely to be exploited by the militants both to evade prosecution as also filing of false cases against security forces personnel. On the job training for honing of basic skills should be a continuous affair in the units.

If the regimental training centres and training academies as also units in peace stations are made to deliver for which they are meant, it will not take long to remain always geared up as a fully prepared Army of all arms and services, ready to face challenges necessitated by sub-conventional warfare.

**The soldiers have to be fully aware of legal aspects pertaining to sub-conventional operations so that insurgents/ terrorists are unable to take advantages of prevailing circumstances through exploitation of law.**

## Way Ahead - Recommendations

For the Human Resource of our Army to be able to face the challenges of Sub-conventional Warfare – “the warfare of future”, the following actions are to be taken at appropriate levels:

**Psychological tests** have to be designed by the DIPR with a view to select only initiative –takers, mentally robust, dedicated, motivated, physically trainable and persons with logical reasoning abilities.

- The recruitment methodology for officers and soldiers needs to be reviewed. Psychological tests have to be designed by the DIPR with a view to select only initiative –takers, mentally robust, dedicated, motivated, physically trainable and persons with logical reasoning abilities.
- The standard of written paper needs to be enhanced to ensure desired intake for coping with technology.
- Psychological and intelligence tests should become part of selection procedure for PBOR also.

- Written-cum-Aptitude Test should precede Physical Tests for selecting PBOR.
- Academies (NDA/IMA/OTA) and Regimental Training Centres must be geared up for training cadets and trainees respectively in terms of training infrastructure, training methodologies, training syllabi, trainers/instructors and procedures with a deliberate focus on training cadets and recruits for sub-conventional and limited wars.

**Training can dilute the effects of most of the stressors, if properly targeted. Hence training should be able to prepare soldiers and officers to cope with stressors.**

- Training can dilute the effects of most of the stressors, if properly targeted. Hence training should be able to prepare soldiers and officers to cope with stressors by:-
  - Helping trainees (officers and soldiers) in adapting to the stressor stimuli and reducing their physiological response to the stressor.
  - Teaching strategies that allow trainees to react more effectively to stressors and maintain performance under stress.
  - Building task-mastery and proficiency that can prevent performance degradations.

- Improving the accuracy of individual expectation.
- Training should also be able to improve the performance of a group under stress by:-
  - Fostering more effective group communication and coordination.
  - Alerting individuals (trainees) to how other members in their group might react to stressful situations.
- Military Colleges and Schools of Instruction of all arms and services must shake up and review their training methodologies and equip themselves for meeting the challenges of future warfare realistically.

**Outsourcing of non-military jobs must be ensured on ground for preserving/sustaining self esteem of soldiers.**

- Psychologists should become regular part of Army Organisations at all levels in order to take timely care of stress-related issues in a realistic manner. Putting too much reliance on religious teachers for managing stress may not be appropriate since they have their own limitations and can not substitute a qualified psychologist.
- Outsourcing of non-military jobs must be ensured on ground for preserving/ sustaining self esteem of soldiers.
- Initiative and creative thinking by young officers and junior leaders should be encouraged and tolerance for mistakes while executing tasks should be accepted by senior hierarchy.
- Regimental Training Centres should be posted with quality trainers and distracting events at training centres, which are major stumbling blocks in training routine, must be curbed ruthlessly. The tendency to post officers, JCOs and NCO instructors, with very little or no inclination / aptitude for instructional assignments, to training centres/ schools of instruction/ military colleges must be curbed. This will ensure quality training to trainees and in the longer run desired product fit to sustain future warfare challenges will be available with the units.
- Best training may be feasible under a Divisional Commander. Training Schools with dedicated training and administrative staff and requisite training infrastructure and focused training methodology and vision will be able to achieve desired training goals in respect of officers and men in a Division. However, this will only be feasible, if these divisional

training schools focus only on training and refrain from miscellaneous time-wasters. Here the troops of all arms and services should be imparted holistic refresher training in a meaningful manner duly taking care of sub-conventional warfare techniques/ tactics apart from conventional warfare requirements. Every soldier must be able to go through a well structured refreshing training cycle in such training schools away from units even in peace areas.

**Every soldier must be able to go through a well structured refreshing training cycle in such training schools away from units even in peace areas.**

- Other avoidable miscellaneous events/ activities like visit of dignitaries and senior officers to training centres/ military colleges/ schools of instructions should not be at the cost of training. Corps specific reunions, events pertaining to corps domestic matters and non-professional formation events take a big toll on precious training time and training resources. Such events, if necessary, must be either totally outsourced or based on additional resources for which redundancies must be inbuilt in the organizational structure of regimental training centres with out causing any disturbance in training schedules. For this to be achieved, one may like to visit institutions like IDSA, where number of events and frequent visits of dignitaries are handled with ease, simplicity, quality and transparency on daily basis in a realistic manner without either affecting any schedule or causing confusion.
- Constant review and updation of training syllabi, training methodology, selection and posting of trainers must be carried out periodically and appropriate corrections applied without delays, whenever necessary. Regimental Training Centres should not be allowed to become dumping ground for officers and men at the cost of training of human resource for future wars.
- More short-service officers' academies on the lines of OTA must be created without any delay to make for existing deficiencies of officers in the Army. Even deficiencies should be made up through NCC entry scheme.
- Lateral placement of officers and men at all levels to para-military forces should be put into practice without further delays. This will not only obviate early retirement worries of service officers and PBOR, but also provide a highly professional human resource to BSF,

**Lateral placement of officers and men at all levels to para-military forces should be put into practice with out further delays.**

**Professional training vis-à-vis welfare must be weighed in appropriate proportions and efforts must be directed towards achieving professionalism for future wars.**

CRPF, POLICE and other para-military organisations. However, it has to be ensured that they get absorbed with out any financial / status disadvantage in any manner. Short-service officers should be laterally placed with BSF, CRPF, POLICE and other para-military organisations as an obligation. This action will encourage more and more candidates to join Army as a short-service officer.

- Professional training vis-à-vis welfare must be weighed in appropriate proportions and efforts must be directed towards achieving professionalism for future wars.

## Conclusion

This paper brings out the human resource development strategy pertaining to future warfare – “sub-conventional warfare”, with a view to build up capacities. It is for various agencies involved in capacity building process to take appropriate steps in a time bound manner. It may not be true to say that nothing is being done in this direction. However, a lot more is desired to be done.

Human Resource being the main and ultimate component, which shall finally conduct operations in limited wars and sub-conventional warfare scenarios, has to be selected, trained, equipped, refreshed and deployed for meeting the challenges effectively. This requires change in mindset and sincere addressing by the concerned agencies at appropriate levels.

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### Notes:

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