CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS
Conclusions:

National security may be postulated as being a nation's ability to effectively safeguard its internal values and legitimate interests against all external threats. That implies secure borders, shores and the nation's skies. As a result of evolution and scientific achievements of the mainkind, history of warfare has moved far ahead of other spheres. The net result is an absolute offence-capability of inflicting massive destruction of life and material. Despite all the human achievements, no defence is presently feasible nor does it appear to be in sight other than the only alternative of relying on the element of deterrence. That spells the use of force which is considered essential not only to guarantee security against any external invasion but also to ensure internal peace and stability. The armed forces, more appropriately symbolise the use of force giving impetus to the theory of deterrence which aims at compelling the adversary to do something or to refrain him from attempting any hostile steps by threatening a penalty for non-compliance. The nations have been relying on the use of force since their very origin. The armed forces in this context are a tool to implement the national policy. This fact of history has been found repeating itself through the ages.
The politico-military phenomenon too has undergone a drastic change due to the socio-economic developments over the period. The introduction of scientific and technological aspect to the power building process changed not only the pattern of fighting but also the organisation part, rather progressively. The beginning of Naval and Air Warfare are the corollaries of the same stream of science and technology. The socio-political structure of the nations was affected equally. India and its armed forces were no exception to the phenomenon. We came a long way neck to neck with others through the ages.

Having critically analysed the contribution of India's Armed Forces in general, prior to the partition of the country and afterwards consistently over the period, the investigation as undertaken to highlight the role of Armed Forces in India's Defence in 1971 arrives at the findings that, given the reasonable equipment and proper leadership the Indian forces throughout displayed a high sense of sacrifice, devotion and loyalty to the motherland against heavy odds. Morality and valour remained the corner stone of the Indian military throughout.

The Armed Forces of India in the real sense of the word emerged after the independence. Earlier, the forces belonged to different kings and emperors where in a proper
and historically researched military thought was not
developed. Last in the series, the forces belonged to the
British crown. The colonial power evaded an earnest
Indianisation of the local Armed Forces despite Indian
protests and exploited the element of loyalty and courage
to a full extent in the furtherance of the British objects-
ives, especially during the World Wars.

Immediately after the partition, the Indian Armed
Forces set new records while tackling the first Pakistani
attempt to annex Kashmir by clandestine and violent means.
The national forces displayed a high sense of dedication
and caution during the inescapable national integration of
the problematic former princely states with the Indian
Union. Having produced the desired results in maintaining
internal security at home, the Indian soldiery earned an
international acclaim on UN peace-keeping missions abroad.

The first Indian Prime Minister Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru
extended a spontaneous welcome to the Communist regime in
China because he had hoped that the two most populous nations
of the world, which also happened to be Asians, would
cooperate to bring about stability on the Asian scene. On
the other hand, relations with the USSR during the Stalin
period were cool. Chou-En Lai was feted in New Delhi in
1955 and he accepted the five principles of Co-existence-
Panch Sheel. At that point of time China branded Pakistan as a US stooge because of the defence agreement of 1954 and its membership of SEATO and CANTO.

By 1958, the first inkling of the Chinese incursions across the Tibetan-Himalayan border reached the Indian Government and when a police party was sent to the inhospitable terrain for investigation, they were ambushed by the Chinese patrols. That led to the strengthening of the Himalayan border security of India. Perforce, the nation had to adopt the so called 'Forward Policy'. Consequently in order to avoid the Chinese annoyance, a slow and steady pace of build-up in NEFA followed. Ultimately it resulted in the Chinese reaction in an extremely unexpected strength. The Indian Army, with a high profile ever since, did its level best under the circumstances but the result proved unfortunate for the country. While the newly liberated nation was busy in national development and putting the post-World War International Relations in the right key, a trusted Asian friend hit it 'below the belt'. The Indian forces fought with all the might at the time.

From 1962 onwards, the nation turned rather serious towards national defence and a wholehearted effort went into reorganising and reequipping the Indian Armed Forces who looked into themselves rather realistically, since they str
to learn a lot from the tragic experience.

Nehru's health faltered, presumably from the shock he had received due to an action as that, by a country, friendship for which had been the rationale behind his foreign policy for fifteen years. He never fully recovered from the jolt and ultimately left the nation for his heavenl abode in May, 1964, leaving behind his 'ideals' that are to date, guiding, not only own nation but the World as a whole, for the peace of which the great leader laid down his life.

Nature filled the vacuum rather appropriately with the induction of a less internationally known figure ——— Bahadur Shastri, whose mantle was yet to be measured through a test by Pakistan, China and the United States of America, in that order or conversely with combination and permutation

Due to increasing foreign interests in this strategic part of Asia, Pakistan received military hardware beyond its legitimate defense needs. Sino-Pakistan axis born out of a common hostility towards India developed extensively. All this put together excited Pakistan to feel strongly about having fulfilled her urge of achieving military parity with India. Hence, another 'bout' with India to annex Kashmir, this time, adopting Mao-inspired Guerilla action under the cover of Kutch design.
All that resulted in the outbreak of 1965 Indo-Pakistan Conflict which apart from washing off the 'stigma' of 1962 also served as a proof to India's adversaries that the Armed Forces of this peace loving nation, nursed by Mahatama Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru would never be found wanting in looking after the country's frontiers. Outcome was the Tashkent Agreement, that again displayed the Indian magnanimity for the sake of peace. Thus, concluded the 'innings' of yet another great leader of the masses, Lal Bahadur Shastri, who departed the World soon after signing the Declaration leaving behind a message that the Indians fought with all their strength and would continue to fight for peace with an equal might.

Pakistan which was created in 1947 on the basis of 'Two Nation Theory', ultimately, failed to evolve a synthesis between its two Islamic Wings which drifted apart even during the life time of its founder Mohammad Ali Jinnah. Except for the common religion, they were never at the same wavelength in most spheres of life. Pakistan was soon drowned in the military dictatorships dominated by the Western Wing. As usual, the Military Junta lacked in the art of Civil Administration/ statesmanship and continuously failed over the period to maintain unification in Pakistan.
The constant exploitation led to a complete alienation of the Bengali Wing. False electoral promises of restoration of democracy were clearly understood by the Easterners who turned out eligible through the ballot power for future political leadership of Pakistan under Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The Eastern masses gave Mujib an overwhelming majority in the National Assembly in December 1970, which fact served as a highly potent repellent to the ruling Military Junta and comparatively more to Bhutto who openly declined to occupy 'Opposition Benches'. Hence, the aftermath that followed to subdue the strongest ever heard of 'nationalism wave' in the erstwhile East Pakistan. Consequently, the Pakistani suppression took the form of the historic military crackdown on March 25, 1971. Creating a history of genocides, the worst ever heard of military repression forced out of land a constant bee line of Bengali refugees in millions across the international border into India. Unbelievably, that continued unabated till the end of liberation.

The tragic situation created right on the Indian door-steps dramatically developed into a kind of strategic decision-making-crisis over night. The Indian leadership was faced with a highly pressing emotional demand at home on humanitarian grounds for an Indian intervention employing the services of Armed Forces forthwith. That proposition seemed extremely dangerous in view of the likelyhood of a
global dimension to the so called internal affair of Pakistan. The straight implementation of the wishes of the people's representatives in the Parliament as also a volatile public opinion throughout India, could have also led to inviting a threat to our own very sovereignty instead.

An earnest Indian effort to cultivate a desirable world opinion went in vain since most key nations evaded the moral responsibility rather cautiously. Even a leading power like USSR closely reading the situation took its time to commit only to stay away from the tense situation, just on the verge of a global provocation.

Economic burden of refugees and emotions at home dictated an immediate Indian Campaign to liberate a huge mass of suffering humanity being subjected to indifferent killings relentlessly let alone various other tyrannical means. Without deeply analysing the likely international implications of the emotionally surcharged proposal for a hasty Indian military intervention, some experts strongly felt at the time that if only India was keen enough and more than willing exploiting poor viability of Pakistani force level positioned in the Eastern Wing till March, 1971, Bangladesh liberation problem could have easily ended in April, 1971.
In order to give a different shape to the internal uncontrollable disorder as also to divert the local public attention, Pakistan engineered a plot to convert the issue into a military problem with India on the plea of Indian involvement in their internal affairs, the naked facts, being contrary notwithstanding. It was Pakistan only who initiated the 1971 Indo-Pak Conflict by over stepping well into the Indian territory under the pretext of fighting the Mukti Bahini escapees.

The Pakistan Military Junta Cashed in on the situation making yet another attempt to annex Kashmir in the hey day apart from diluting the Indian deployment along the Eastern Front by extending war to the Western Front. Since Pakistani efforts to internationalise the Indian interference for seeking aid of UN troops to police the Eastern border failed despite the UN Secretary General's proposal to the security Council in July 1971, there seemed no other way out for Yahya Khan. Declaring war in the West would strain the Indian Military resources which were already well spread over and almost contained by the Chinese and counter-insurgency commitments, as appreciated by Pakistan. Also, another advantage to Pakistan would have been the enhanced flexibility during post-war bargaining through Pakistani military gains in some areas in the west as expected by Yahya Khan.
On the other hand, India exercised an earnest restraint avoiding an armed clash with Pakistan for quite a length of time despite contrary pressures and Pakistani provocations. Ultimately, Pakistan resorted to undeclared war with India on night of December 3/4, 1971 at dusk, ironically, adopting Israeli style pre-emptive air raids followed by swift ground attacks in the Western Front. That served as a welcome signal for India to push through her Armed Forces who soon crossed the international border in the east at a dozen points. The operations in the Eastern Theatre progressed at a rapid rate, the inherent tactical and administrative hazards of a riverine terrain notwithstanding. By December 13/14, 1971 the situation took a typical turn and all of a sudden, an altogether new dimension emerged with the entry of US 7th Fleet consisting of nuclear powered 'ENTERPRISE' and other vessels in the Bay of Bengal. It was reported to be heading for Chittagong. That appeared far more alarming than the Chinese occasional threats all along.

Simultaneously, the Indian operations on the Western Front progressed almost equally well too. Somehow, by dint of sheer dedication and operational proficiency, the Indian Armed Forces hastily concluded the operations on the Eastern Front by December 16, 1971 prior to the US military intervention securing the historic surrender of as
many as 93,000 Personnel of Pakistani Forces fighting in the erstwhile East Pakistan. India then boldly declared a unilateral cease-fire to be effective from 8 A.M., on December, 17, 1971 since the liberation campaign of Bangladesh was duly completed achieving the Indian main aim.

India's 14-day war with Pakistan in 1971 has a historic significance not only because it culminated in establishing independent Bangladesh with an extremely marked contribution of Indian Armed Forces but also because it has enabled the emergence of a power equation in this part of the World. The balance of power created by India in 1971 proved more enduring and productive than the one that prevailed here in the past and the post-war period, bears testimony to this fact of history.

The Bangladesh issue in 1971 had engaged and strained the policies of major forces of the World to be reconciled with at the time. The geostrategic importance of the region is self-explanatory. The Indian sub-continent as the most populated region and because of its Central position on the Indian Ocean littoral, has had the most profound influence on the history of the region as a whole. Only a power, based on its territory, has controlled the Ocean for any length of time. The reverse is equally true.
too and as such, the one without the other is not in continuity with the facts of geopolitics of the region. There has been a struggle for hegemony ever since the fifties among the USA, the USSR and China for carving out a favourable balance of power in the Indian sub-continent, South Asia and South-East Asia. This led to deep American involvement in South Asian affairs in general, and the Indian sub-continent in particular, more than the Middle East and South East Asia like Vietnam, to the accentuation of the sino-soviet rivalry and the resultant distribution of power alliances in regional powers like India and Japan. That further contributed toward the pursuit of divisive power politics in which the interests of the global powers in particular, and those of the regional powers in general, become increasingly identical, at least in matters involving regional affairs. Unlike the military alliances of the mid-fifties, the friendship alliances of the late sixties had a distinctive characteristic.

Earlier, the super powers which had led to the two power blocs influenced regional politics and global thinking of the alliance partners; during the subsequent period, it was the regional parties like the great Indian factor which were seen influencing policies of the super powers in the concerned regional matters. From the Indian factor the
Russians were indirectly benefited to the extent of straining the Americans to revise their outlook and policy especially the policy in the Indian sub-continent.

It goes without saying that the decisive Indian victory in 1971 raised India's stature in the global environment to the level of a world power and part of credit rightly goes to the Armed Forces. Soviet gratitude towards India due to an enhanced credibility especially in Asia needs no mention.

The Bangladesh episode in the context of 'Enterprise' the US 7th Fleet affair proved the hollowness and miserable failure of US administration's ability for crisis management. The lack of sufficient coordination between different agencies of US foreign policy formulation—— the President, his adviser, the State Department, the Pentagon, the Senate Committees, etc., and above all, the concentration of policy formulation process in the hands of US President in addition to Nixon's anti-India attitude proved utter failure. On the other hand, an exemplary crisis management in India with the dynamic and firm leadership of Mrs. Indira Gandhi and the extremely remarkable contribution of the country's Armed Forces created a 'landmark' in the World History. That not only humbled the leading world power but also offered to them many things to learn to the extent
of revising their policy towards the Asian affairs rather with a pinch of salt.

Thus, the Armed Forces of India generated a lot of patriotic enthusiasm in the country with the kind of functional coordination among various organs of the organisation throughout 1971 Indo-Pak Conflict in which officers and men of all the three services achieved a decisive military success on land, at sea and in the air displaying a very high sense of discipline, dedication and sacrifice while performing their tasks both individual as well as in support of each other.

The operational role of Armed Forces of India in 1971 Indo-Pakistan Conflict has been adjudged especially, by foreign observers to the level that of the 'German Blitzkrieg' during the Second World War. The Indian Forces took only 12 days to smash through on their way to Darca, an achievement reminiscent of the German Blitzkrieg across France in 1940. The Indian forces too displayed the same strategy — speed, ferocity and flexibility. In contrast, the Indians adopted a remarkable humane approach and took full care of human lives and property by ensuring no unnecessary killing and destruction. All humanitarian aspects were taken care of while looking after and conducting the Prisoners of war and refugees just like own citizens to
the utter surprise of those who were given shelter in this peace-loving land where human life receives a due regard.

As if that was not enough, the Indians displayed a very high sense of fraternity while seeing off the kind of forced guests in the course of repatriation at places like 'Wagah Border Check-Post' for an instance, the Pakistanis hugged the hosts literally shedding tears leaving behind a token of gratitude in return for their commemorative stay before stepping across to the respective homeland. By coincidence, the researcher, was associated with repatriation activities at the site rather right from the Prisoners of War Camp where as many as nearly 500 JCOs (Junior Commissioned Officers) and VIPs like Lt General A.A.K. Niazi were accommodated.

Last but not the least, the Indian largesse went far to the extent of showing magnanimity even on the Conference Table, as usual, ever since 1948-49, 1962-63, 1965-66 and yet again in 1971-72, regardless of the haggling and bargaining by the aggressor, for the sake of nothing but 'peace' alone. This fact of history though never acknowledged openly by the respective beneficiary is well known the world over and India is very much regarded as the Champion of Peace.
In the backdrop of the relevant and factual knowledge contained in the preceding Chapters coupled with the earnestness of purpose behind the present investigation from the very start, multiple facets of inspiration, generated by the thought provoking contribution of the Armed Forces in India's defence in 1971, have emerged. But for the strength inherited from many untold sacrifices of renowned Champions of Peace like Mahatama Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Lal Bahadur Shastri, then alive Mrs. Indira Gandhi and many more, it wouldn't have been possible for the country's Forces to carry out the herculean assignment as commendably as that.

To that end, the investigation in its finalised form, lends full credibility to the topic of research undertaken as also the emerging enlarged scope for further research in this direction to explore yet many more angles of achieving the vital national objectives — national integration through patriotic spirit and enthusiasm in order to achieve cohesive unity in diversity within India in particular to begin with, leading on further to subcontinental, continental and, ultimately the 'World Peace' in general, for the well being and progress of the humankind.
Suggestions:

In the light of the apparent patriotic spirit and enthusiasm generated among the Indian public by the commendable contribution of Armed Forces in India’s Defence in 1971, with a view to tap the vast latent un-exploited potential as also to canalize the abstract aspect of public curiosity about Indian Defence and further channelize usefully incorporating the same in desirable directions, such as, to contribute towards national integration and security consciousness, it would be in fitness of things to enlarge the scope of giving vide publicity rather vigorously to disseminate defence related researched information of public value down to the masses. That will go a long way in serving as effective deterrent against increased foreign effort to subvert the ignorant/immature sections of Indian society, especially, the youth lot. Consequently, the burning problem of fast growing terrorism in particular and ill-discipline in the society in the larger perspective may be well checked to a considerable extent.

However, there is a need to still go deeper for highlighting such like abstract aspects and conceptual ideas
of military value, generated as a result of the contribution of Armed Forces in the national defence through an enlarged scope of further research into pre-cum-post 1971 period. The existing and the current work in the direction, is only a 'drop' in the ocean.