INTRODUCTION
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Events unfolding in the realm of international relations since the end of the cold war have transformed the very concept of security, and thereby posed new challenges to the studies on foreign policy, diplomacy and defence. The world, as it emerged then, appeared to be quite different from the one we knew for a long time since the cold war era. A major feature of this transformation has been a high density of issues in international relations. Within this complexity, understanding threats to defence and national security could be a difficult task insofar as the traditional conceptualisation of security still remains linear. The instruments of statecraft are generally understood linearly based on the characterisation of factors and forces at play. These narratives still remain useful; yet it is hardly possible to depict the full gravity of the post-cold war conditions and, even more, the post-9/11 security milieu. Given the complexities of the regional and international situations, an adequate depiction of threats to national security requires an analytical tool with explanatory power which can deal with a wide array of actors and issues. Keeping this critical domain in perspective, this study tries to analyse India's defence policy in the post-cold war period, focussing on its strategy and options within a framework of complex regional and international settings.

Defence and national security are interrelated concepts. National security is generally seen as the ability of a nation to safeguard its legitimate interests as well as its core values against all internal and external threats. A nation has security when it maintains a coherent defence policy which can sustain such values and interests. The concept of security, by and large, stems from a fear or perceived fear that threats may develop from beyond the borders, for meeting which adequate preparations have to be made. A major requirement of a sovereign state is strength in the form of defence apparatus. The size and shape of this apparatus is related to the location and level of threat perception sustained by the ruling elites. Similarly, the degree of defence burden that a nation endures is largely influenced by its perception of threat to national security.
Scholars and defence specialists say that capability to meet the challenges of changing geopolitical situation, as well as the pressures emerging from national, regional and global settings is an indispensable requirement of ensuring security. This capability consists of building the basic defence apparatus which shall ensure the ability to defend the country’s land, sea and air frontier, as well as of engaging the present and potential adversaries. And this apparatus should necessarily be reinforced by diplomacy and foreign policy that is constantly informed by the interest of the nation. Thus, to put it in a wider perspective, the security of a country depends on a number of factors ranging from geopolitical position, perceptions of the ruling elites, capability of armed forces, economic and industrial infrastructure, balanced political system, and effective foreign policy strategies. It is in this background that a question is raised why some nations are increasingly absorbed in militarisation and arms build up. Many developing (and even underdeveloped) nations spend huge amounts to increase the capability of their defence forces. The example of India and Pakistan is illustrative of this. However, in the case of the advanced industrialised nations, arms industry appears to have become one of the most profitable areas of investment.

This study is an attempt to analyse the basic parameters of India's defence policy in the post-cold war period. It assumes significance in the context of far-reaching changes in the global scenarios since 1991 and the security challenges India faced with the changing matrix of international relations, regional security dynamics, and nation building issues.

Profile and Relevance of the Study

Historically, India’s defence policy exhibited change and continuity under pressure of national and regional situations. During the first decade of independence, India paid less attention to defence infrastructure and strategic responses despite the issues emerging from partition, including the Kashmir dispute with Pakistan, and the perceptions of threat from China in the background of the Tibetan question, following its takeover by the People’s Liberation Army (PLA). But the India-China war of 1962 brought about a paradigm shift in India’s military statecraft and defence spending. It was from that time onwards that India underlined the
importance of strong armed forces and an appropriate foreign policy to take care of national interests. The government started paying appropriate attention to the requirements of the armed forces, and plans for modernisation and expansion of the three services were initiated.

Meanwhile, the emergence of China as a major power in the region and its growing strategic tie-up with Pakistan generated a heightened threat perception in India. The strategic relationship between Pakistan and China had thus a significant bearing on India’s security perceptions and policies. The emerging Sino-US-Pak ties had created security challenges to India, compelling it to forge closer ties with Moscow, and thereby started strengthening its own defence capability. Moreover, the United States arms aid and support to Pakistan continued to be a major source of threat to India.

The politico-strategic situation in the subcontinent in 1971, in the wake of the Bangladesh crisis, prompted India to diversity its defence options and strategies. On the one hand, India reinforced its ties with Moscow and, on the other hand, it tried to strengthen indigenous armament industry. In the post-Shimla period, India continued to strengthen defence production and procurement. India also considered it essential to link it up with industrial development. As a result, the defence expenditure began to increase since 1971. Throughout the late seventies, the Indian defence establishment sustained its policy of indigenous production of weapons with a view to reducing dependence on import of arms. However, besides indigenous arms build up, India also strengthened its capability through arms imports.

The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in December 1979 and the subsequent efforts by the US and China to counter it by strengthening military ties with Pakistan again posed challenges to India’s security and defence. The Afghan crisis boosted Sino-Pak military co-operation and Pakistan became a frontline state both to the US and China. It also paved the way for China-US rapprochement. Meanwhile, conflicts and tensions between India and Pakistan continued throughout the 1980s. The dispute over Siachen Glacier, Pakistan’s nuclear programme and its support to militancy in Punjab and Kashmir were the major security concerns for India during this period. The involvement of China in Pakistan’s nuclear
programme was another major concern to India. The late 1980s and the beginning of 1990s saw much greater Sino-Pakistan strategic tie-ups in the nuclear and military fields. Moreover, China developed sophisticated missiles and weapons which India viewed with serious concern because the latter was reported to have agreed for missile transfer to Pakistan then.

To face these security challenges, India adopted several measures. First, it sought to develop military capability, including missile and nuclear capabilities. Secondly, India tried diplomatic measures to face the threat. During the second half of the 1980s, and in the beginning of the 1990s, India tried to develop cordial relations with China, US and Pakistan. India’s relations with Russia were also retained even after the disintegration of the Soviet state.

Modernisation of arms and equipment was a major aspect of Indian defence programme in the 1980s and it continued in a much more vigorous manner in the 1990s. Given the military modernisation programmes underway in China and Pakistan, India has also been compelled to expand its Research and Development (R&D) base and thereby launched a new set of programmes, partly through import of equipments and partly through indigenous design and expansion of defence production capabilities.

During the post-cold war period, India emerged as one of the top manufacturers of sophisticated weapons and a major importer of arms in the world. Attempts were also made to modernise the Indian military hardware and the substantial increase in defence outlay gave a new strength to Indian armed forces. Thus, competitive arms build up in the region, higher force levels and sophistication of weapon systems, introduction of innovations in newer fields and the periodic replacement of obsolescent weapons systems etc. made the defence of India an expensive one. It led to a substantial increase in the defence budget year after year. Since the mid-1980, the defence budget appeared to have heightened by more than 20 per cent a year. The defence outlay had gone up from Rs. 1,100 crores in 1970-71 to Rs. 4,651 crores in 1981-82 and Rs. 13,000 crores in 1988-89. This had increased to more than Rs. 25,000 crores by 1993-94. In another ten years’ time (2004-05), the amount
reached Rs.77,000 crores. The year 2014-15 saw the defence allocation of India further reaching Rs.2.29 trillion.

Meanwhile India has also emerged as one of the top importers of arms in the world. It accounted for 14 per cent of the global arms imports during 2009-14, according to the data on arms transfers brought out by international agencies. Earlier, during 2005-2009, India had accounted for 7 per cent of global arms imports. In 2015, as various studies revealed, India has become the world’s top arms importer replacing Saudi Arabia in the list. Comparing the performance of India during the five-year periods, 2005-2009 and 2010-2014, it was shown that Indian arms imports had shot up to 140 per cent. All this shows that India has assumed a position of great importance among the top players in arms deals. This also calls for an analysis of the rationale of high spending in defence.

**Literature Profile**

The literature on India’s defence and national security is vast and varied. While Kavic (1967), Khera (1968), Subrahmanyam (1972, 1982 and 1990), Thomas (1978) and Victor (1990) provide a historical and strategic analysis of the policy of India, Jayaramu (1987), Kodikara (1984), Nanda (1994), Lakshmi (1988) and Raghavan (1996) deal with specific issues and challenges India faced regionally and in relation to major and minor actors. Works by Abraham (1999), Kapur (2001), Menon (2004), Nanda (2001), Karnad(2002), Perkovich (2000), Ramana and Reddi (2003), Bidwai and Vanaik (2001), Sharma (1983), Smith (1994) and Kargil Review Committee Report (2000) provide a comprehensive and critical analysis of the nuclear scenario which India and other South Asian countries have been grappling with. There are, however, not many studies dealing with India’s defence policy in the post-cold war period looking into the inter-locking concerns of security, defence and foreign policy. The present study is a modest attempt to fill this gap.

**Research Questions**

The following questions are addressed in this context of high-profile defence dynamics of India.
1. What are the basic parameters of India’s defence policy in the cold war and post-cold war period?

2. Is there any continuity and change in India’s security perceptions and defence strategies during the cold war and post-cold war period?

3. What are the perceptible levels of threat emanating from the internal and external sources in the post-cold war period?

4. How do the measures that India has taken to strengthen its defence capability impact on its policy regime?

5. Has India’s high-profile defence dynamics generated any strategic challenges in the region?

The study seeks to find out appropriate answers to the above questions on the basis of the primary data which helped formulate hypotheses for further investigation.

**Hypotheses**

The study has proceeded with the following assumptions which have been subjected to verification.

1. India’s defence policy has apparently come under the pressures of interlocking concerns of security overlapping across national, regional and international settings.

2. The post-cold war scenario does not seem to have changed the basic parameters of India’s defence policy. It has rather perpetuated the security-strategic concerns of India emerging from the cold war security complex.

3. While conventional arms build up continued to feature India’s defence apparatus in the post-cold war period, its nuclear-missile development programmes marked a shift in policy regime.

4. India’s defence policy, over years, began to reckon the emerging challenges of internal security, coastal security, and regional security caused by both exogenous and endogenous factors.
Scheme of Chapters and Methodology

The study has been divided into five chapters. The introduction provides the conceptual problems and the scope of study on national security and defence. The first chapter analyses India’s national security focussing on perceptions, levels of threat, defence parameters and other variables. The second chapter deals with India’s defence policy in historical perspective focussing on the Nehru phase and the post-1962 scenario. The third chapter examines India’s security environment and defence options in the post-cold war period (1991-98). The fourth chapter analyses India’s defence policy in the post-Pokhran-II phase. The fifth and final chapter summarises the findings and conclusion.

The study is set in historical–analytical method. Source materials for the study include documents and reports of governments, non governmental agencies, international research institutions etc. Secondary sources are also used in the analysis of defence options and strategy of India.