CHAPTER VII
DEFENCE DYNAMICS SINCE 1971

India's Defence Perspectives and Policies underwent considerable change in the seventies. These changes were due to transformation in both the strategic environment of India and in its domestic politics. From the strategic point of view the creation of Bangladesh improved Sino-American ties. The international oil crisis in Middle East, Soviet-US naval rivalry in Indian Ocean, provided stimulus for revision in India's defence perspective and planning.

These international and domestic conditions influenced defence political orientation. Firstly, from the point of view of interpretation and likely role of non-alignment with reference to India security: secondly, the civilian and military intentions of developing nuclear energy and thirdly, policies concerning ratio procurement of conventional weapons through domestic production and foreign sources. Further the emerging strategic picture in 70s created some compulsion for defence policy-makers because of events in the sub-continent, Middle East global realignments, confrontations in East Asia and developments in the Indian Ocean region. At the regional level, the most important event was the creation of Bangladesh which resulted in the dominance of India
in the sub-continent. This caused a new wave of interest in India's defence policy leading to some of the following questions:

a. Is there any military threat to India and if so, what is its nature and extent?
b. Does this threat envisage the employment of nuclear weapons, and if yes, to what extent and what are its implications?
c. How can this threat to India be countered and neutralised?
d. What are the desired capabilities to be generated by a new defence policy?
e. What are the necessary steps to be taken for attaining this capability?
f. What are the economic considerations in adopting such a defence policy?

With these questions, defence policy was given a fresh look. Earlier guidelines with reference to the role of the armed forces were re-emphasised. The primary peacetime role of the Indian Army was stated to prepared itself to meet any external threat on the borders. This involved maintaining a perpetual vigil, in all kinds of situation and terrain ranging from deserts to high mountains. The army was also required to assist the civil administration in the maintenance of law and order and essential services whenever required. She was also occasionally required to intervene and extent beyond the borders, when such assistance is requested.

The Navy was entrusted with the task of safeguarding India's vast coast-line, her island territories, off-shore oil assests and an
Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) (2 million square Kms.). It was also assigned the responsibility of protecting India's growing maritime trade and expanding merchant fleet. Like the army, it was also required to assist the civil authorities during civil disturbances like port strikes, natural calamities and accidents, etc.

From a small coastal force consisting of a few frigates, sloops, survey ships and mine-sweepers, the Navy had grown into a three dimensional force in the seventies which included Aircraft carriers, Destroyers/Frigates, submarines and maritime aircraft. The growth has been characterised by increasing indigenisation of activities relating to ship-building, including the development of indigenous design capability for sophisticated weapon systems and creation of maintenance facilities. As a result of these efforts, the majority of the ships presently on order are under construction indigenously.

The Indian Air Force was assigned its role of keeping the Indian air space not to be violated and keep spreading its wings for purposes of airlifting relief supplies from domestic and foreign sources. It was also required to support operations for air maintenance on border ports.

In our immediate neighbourhood, Pakistan continued its efforts in augmenting its forces by acquiring substantial quantities of sophisticated arms and ammunition including missiles, tanks, anti-aircraft guns, artillery gun boats, torpedo boats, submarines, helicopters and different types of aircraft from various countries.
EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE OF INDIA
The arms embargo was also lifted this time which helped in supplies, hardening its militaristic tendencies. Further as a result of new raisings and these acquisitions of military hardware, she replenished her losses of 1971 war and raised pre-1971 level of her strength both qualitatively and quantitatively. Her efforts conlined in acquiring more and more of sophisticated weapon systems.

The situation on the borders with Pakistan remained by and large peaceful except for a few local incidents of firing, civilian intrusions across the line of control and few violations of air space. The system of referring these issues to flag meetings between the authorities on the borders of the two armies and through diplomatic channels was fully utilised to prevent further escalations.

In pursuance of policy of the establishing good neighbourly relations, decision-makers made efforts to end the era of hostility and conflict, in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the Simla Agreement. The efforts however made no major headway because Pakistan continued to drag it's feet and kept the whole process of normalisation in a state of suspense and stagnation and continued with her imaginary threat from India and layed emphasis on an arms build up much beyound the needs of her genuine self-defence.

China continued to help Pakistan in building its capacity for arms production and in fact Pakistan was the biggest recipient of Chinese military aid amongst non-Communist countries. China also
continued its propaganda campaign against India on imagery and flimsy grounds. On the borders, China not only increased its logistics but also intensified patrolling activities in some sectors particularly on the Indo-Tibet border. She continued to lend moral and material support to hostile elements. In the north, there has been no major increase in the overall strength of the Chinese armed forces in Tibet. There has also been no significant border incident during this time. Although there was very weak response to the Indian initiatives and efforts to pursue a policy of peace and friendship. But there were signs of general improvement in the climate of Sino-Indian relations which showed slow degree of improvement inspite of basic differences on the border question. Power rivalry and tension continued in the India Ocean region, particularly with reference to the military base at Diego Garcia. It remained of serious concern not only to India but also to other littoral and hinterland states. It was hoped that major maritime powers would respect the Declaration of the U.N. General Assembly regarding Indian Ocean as a Zone of peace and would co-operate in its implementation. But increased military presence presented threats to lasting peace. India made consistent efforts to oppose the extension of great power rivalry to other parts of the world, particularly to the area around India.

Although there were move towards the demilitarization of the Indian Ocean by way of summit meeting between the Heads of Government of U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. The proposal of limiting arms development was favourably taken by them. However, India
strongly projected her view that the region should be completely free of big power rivalry and that foreign military bases should be eliminated.¹¹

The quest for peace in West Asia also continued in 70's. The agreement between Iran and Iraq (both friendly to India) to resolve their differences amicably, did help in preservation of peace and stability in the Gulf region. The reopening of the Suez Canal and Egypt-Israel Disengagement Agreement amounting to withdrawal of Israel from the strategic Mitla and Giddi passes and the Aby-Rudies oil fields paved way for a resolution of the central issue of the legitimate rights of the Palestinians.¹²

The Fifth Summit conference of non-aligned countries which was held in Colombo in August 1976 was another significant event which symbolised the continuing validity of the policy and principles of non-alignment. The Colombo Declaration was notable in the field of promoting collective self-reliance through an expanded Action Programme for Economic Co-operation. The Declaration further reiterated its unflinching support to the struggle of colonialism, racism and apartheid.¹³ During this time India continued to give its unequivocal support to the efforts of general and complete disarmament, including nuclear disarmament and emphasised that she is not only against nuclear weapons themselves. She believed that the arms race has reached an alarming stage and the growing expenditure on the production of destructive weapons must be curtailed. She gave her all out support
to all moves which lead to East-West arms control both in the strategic as well as in conventional terms.\textsuperscript{14}

India showed her concern on political upheaval in Bangladesh when President Sheikh Mujibur was assassinated but treated this development as their internal affair. She showed her anxieties about Bangladesh policies which may result in minority crossing to India in search for shelter and safety.\textsuperscript{15}

The Bangladesh Government had mounted virulent anti-India campaign through their media which focussed on two issues - (a) the problem of the sharing of the Ganga waters and (b) the allegation regarding India’s complicity in insurgency in Bangladesh territory along the Indo-Bangladesh border. In return India made her position clear by saying that the issue of sharing of Ganga waters is essentially of a technical nature and can be resolved bilaterally and efforts would be made for a mutual agreement which came about later. Secondly, India is not interested in encouraging and supporting the activities of lawlessness whereas her interest is in a sovereign, stable, independent and prosperous Bangladesh.\textsuperscript{16}

The Agreement on the sharing of Ganga water vindicated our faith that all problems between states, however, complex, could be resolved in a spirit of mutual co-operation.

In view of large scale building of offensive military capability by the neighbouring countries and existing political uncertainty India’s defence preparedness and planning assumed greater significance in the seventies. The increased threat perception made incumbent on
India to plan for increased offensive and defensive capabilities in terms of reorganisation and equipment in a planned manner.\textsuperscript{17}

It was realised that no development is possible without real defence capability and in the ultimate analysis it depended on the economic and industrial base. An efficient fighting machine requires modern weapons, reorganisation, new doctrines, constant training and adequate technical backup. Thus with these systematic defence planning began only in 1964. Defence requirement were assessed on a five year basis and First Five Year Defence Plan (64-69) came in 1964 which basically forecasted Credible Defence System which could serve broader security defence objectives with Fourth National Five Year Plan. This plan accounted for resources availability, both and domestic and foreign for building credible defence posture with expansion and modernisation programmes. This Plan was followed by succession of plan exercises covering the period 1966-71 and 1969-74. In 1970, the roll-on-Plan concept has adopted by deleting the year which had elapsed and adding one more year and thus the first Roll-on-Plan 1970-75 came up. The events leading to the conflicts of December 1971 made it necessary to reassess threat and assessment was made during 1973-74, along with the developments of the West Asia war (October 1973). This threat perception had to take into account acquisition of military hardware by neighbouring countries, the increase in the international price levels and the hike in oil prices.
The Defence Plan 1974-79 was then suitably modified in 1975 consistent with out basic policy of non-aggression but with credible level of Defence preparedness, for deterrent purposes. The policy makers also recognised the urgency for synchronising defence with development. The ministry of defence emphasized that "the inevitable need to harness all resources of the country to it’s defence and for the defence efforts to derive full sustenance from the country’s economic development." As a result, National Development Council authorized planning commission to review the needs of both development and defence. Consequently the Defence Planning system, underwent many changes between 1964-76 both in methods and approach. Different planning units came into existence Departments of Defence, Defence production, Research and Development set up, and in the Service Headquarters. Thus the three service, different Defence units and Defence public sector undertakings were given an opportunity to participate in the planning process.

Then in 1974, an Apex Group of Ministry of House recommended that a steady long term defence effort would be more cost effective and economical than fluctuating allocations. Thus, in order to integrate defence planning within the overall economic planning defence and economic development plans were made co-terminous.

To summarise, the main thrust of Defence Planning in 70s were in the following areas:
a. To design develop and deployment indigenously all weapon systems with their accessories.
b. To enhance in the pace of indigenous production of defence items including weapon systems, and arms, and ammunition.
c. To draw scheme for maximum utilization of spares connected items which are being imported, to reduce foreign dependence.
d. To dispose accumulated surpluses.21

Further, emphasis was also placed on Defence Management and Institute of Defence Management was strengthened with multi-disciplinary courses to provide exposure of Management techniques to service and civilian officers in various professional fields, including techniques in automatic and electronic data processing, inventory and project management and value Engineering.

In late 70's (77-78) 'Moderniation' came in the Army in a big way with various programs of replacement of old and out-dated weapons systems. The Army was now equipped with substantial quantity of modern arm and armaments. There was a steady improvement in the teeth to tail ratio. Indegenously developed Vijayanta tank produced by the Heavy Vehicles Factory (HVF), was inducted into service which proved good both from the point of view of mechanical reliability and offensive potential. The introduction of indigenously developed 1555 mm 1FG field gun gradually replaced 25 pounder guns. Air Defence capability was improved by replacing L-60 gun. Certain modernisation projects of Radars, Surveillance and night vision system were also under taken.
In addition attention was paid to improve bridging capability, mine warfare, assault equipment and system of water supply.

In the field of mechanised warfare, few infantry units were equipped with Armored Personnel carries (APCs) to provide better mobility with new training aids to maintain the optimum efficiency. A basic emphasis on individual and collective training continued. The individual training aimed at the professional competence whereas collective training laid emphasis on coordinated team work. Thus training system was strengthened to keep pace with technological advances and as a result training facilities got sophisticated at various institutions.\textsuperscript{42}

In 70s Naval Forces came to lime light because of a) the developments in the Indian Ocean region b) the emergence of the concept of the exclusive economic zone c) the widening of maritime and exploitation program. The Navy, therefore, was strengthened in keeping with the needs of maritime defence, to include defence of oil installations, platforms and other structures. The maritime defence to include defence of oil installations, platforms and other structures. The maritime duties and responsibilities of the Navy increased considerably in the seventies and therefore establishment of “Coast Guard organisation” for enforcing the laws of the country in the field of customs immigrations, fishing pollution at sea proposed. The strength of Navy continued to increase both in terms of manpower and equipment. Emphasis was placed on Indigenous construction,
improvement of naval dockyard, use of meteorology and vibration monitoring. Certain reforms were also made in the service conditions of Naval personnel.\textsuperscript{23}

Apart from the 4th Lender Class Frigate, INS DUNAGIRI constructed by Mazagon Dock Ltd., and first indigenously built 'Seaward defence boat' was inducted in 1977. Later the 5th frigate INS TARAGIRI and the 6th frigate VIINDHYAGIRI were also launched. In addition helicopters also have operative from these ships to give them greater anti-submarine and surveillance capabilities. Several other ships including survey ships, Landing Craft, Ocean going Tugs, Barges etc. made operative Naval Dockyard Expansion at Bombay was completed at the first phase of naval project at Visakhapatnam was under taken. The dry dock, in this project was to be used and refits made. Base repair organisation at Port Blair was commissioned in March, 1978 to facilitate the repair facilities to Indian and foreign Naval ships.

The post of Flag Officer Commanding, Southern Naval Area, was redesignated as Flag officer commanding in chief, Southern Naval Command: Similarly, the post of Navel Officer - in - charge, Goa, was also upgraded to flag officer commanding, Goa Area. The time scale promotion for sailors was introduced another important development in 1970s was the merger of supply and Secretariat Branch with the Executive branch.\textsuperscript{24}

The Air force also continued to rise in strength and stature. Government undertook planned program of modernisation by
equipping it with suitable weapon systems of diverse origins. In
1970s Flight - safety measures computerisation, introduction of air
defence ground environment system (ADGES) and promotion policy
was concentrated upon. Although updating and modernization is
an essential aspect of maintaining credible Air Force but in terms
of economic balance between in terms of economic balance
between needs and costs, it became little difficult. However, it
was recognized that challenges of electronic warfare could be
handled only through better air defence systems, faster and more
secure communications and advanced and effective weapons.\textsuperscript{25}
Therefore radar and communication Project Office (RCPO) was
established in 1971 as a system Engineering Group. This group
in association with the Air Defence Ground Environmental System
(ADVES) network held in utilization of latest technology. In
addition to the design and engineering of installation of these
systems the RCPO addressed itself to developmental requirements.
Further RCPO cooperated in number of research projects with the
academic institutions of the country with advanced technology. The
RCPO also sponsored candidates for post graduate and short term
courses at various centers in the country to meet the future
requirements of the airforce.\textsuperscript{26}

The global rivalry between the big powers continued
escalating during 80s. This rivalry has also projected itself in the
Indian Ocean region. The non-aligned proposal to make the
Indian Ocean a zone of peace has made little progress. The
expansion of bases and facilities in the Indian Ocean and its littoral
areas and the proposal for the deployment of a Rapid Deployment Force, threaten the security and stability of the area.

The massive arming of Pakistan "as a frontline state", of USA caused concern. Transfer of sophisticated weapons resulted in a significant qualitative and quantitative enhancement in Pakistan's over all military capability. The current induction of arms into Pakistan is being justified on filmsy grounds.

The developments of arming of Pakistan "as a frontline state", as part of the so-called "strategic consensus", cause concern. Transfer of sophisticated weapons resulted in significant qualitative and quantitative enhancement in Pakistan's over all military capability.²⁷

The developments in West Asia, the Gulf and Afghanistan raised Pakistan's importance in the strategic perception of the united states. The US-Pak deal for the supply of $3.2 billion worth of arms and economic aid to pakistan bears testimony to this.

The arms race between the superpowers continued in 80s both in nuclear and conventional spheres. There was little reason to assume that the strategic Defence Initiative (SDI) would be abandoned or because no major program of weapons research has ever remained confined to the drawing board without going to the testing.²⁸

Soviet - American dialogue did not address itself to their rivalries in the Third World in 80s because most of other crises
in their relations have from developing countries only like Korean, Vietnam and Cuban Missile crises, therefore in 90s also these countries would remain the cockpit of world tensions because of the inherent economic political and ethno sociological weaknesses of these countries.

On the initiative of the littoral powers of Indian ocean a resolution was passed by the United Nations in 1971 calling for declaring it as a zone of peace, free from great power tensions. But in the intervening years, the Indian Ocean had become a cauldron of tensions. A heightened military presence of extra-regional powers in the Indian ocean and a quantum increase in their capability to intervene created threat to India's security. Further, Pakistan gained in American perceptions and formed part of their strategic consensus to counter the Soviet presence in Afghanistan and to compensate for the loss of Iran.

There had been an improvement in bilateral relationship, had expanded in areas of trade technical and cultural exchanges. Six rounds of talks had taken place on the border issue which reflect a positive movement. But China had improved its tactical positions in Tibet and had announced its modernisation program. In Pakistan, civilian government was installed. It was hope that mutual trust between the two countries would emerge in economic social and cultural fields but it resulted Defence Secretaries meeting on Siachen issue region. It's clear that Pakistan has more closer to acquiring nuclear weapons
capability. The second negative development which caused concern was flow of arms into Pakistan from the United States on the grounds that these are required by Pakistan in view of the Soviet presence in Afghanistan. Most of the land based weapon systems cannot be used in Pakistan's northern or western theatres and are obviously meant for use against India. The strengthening of Pakistan's Navy by supplies of sophisticated weaponry can have no relation to the situation in Afghanistan. This required taking appropriate counter measures. 23

The Indian Army

Modernisation of the Army is an on going process. Efforts continued progressively to modernise its weapon systems and equipment, to enable the force to keep abreast of the latest technology and to effectively meet any threat besides the introduction of the new weapon systems, the available system were upgraded to meet the futuristic battle field requirements. The structural organisation of the army continued with emphasis on training on new weapon systems, based on simulation techniques to emphasis on force multipliers. A system approach was adopted for the life cycle management of the equipment with a view to improving, the mobility of the infantry it was proposed to replace the existing fleet by a new series of vehicles. A high level study team was set up to make recommendations on the appropriate types of vehicles and the feasibility of their production in the country. 24
The most notable service rendered by the Indian Army outside the country during this time was its peace keeping operations in the North-Eastern Province of Sri Lanka. It was gratifying that the IPKF personnel gave an excellent account of themselves. The Army continued to assist the Antarctica Expedition with effective communication support. Our troops continued to remain deployed in positions on the Saltoro Ridge, west of the Siachen glacier, in sub-zero temperatures. The helicopter fleet performed well in making arrangements and in evacuation of the sick and the wounded from these areas.

During 1970s and early 1980s the Army received a decreasing proportion of the overall defence budget. From receiving 74 percent in 1970-71, by 1980-81 the figure had dropped to 66 percent (excluding pensions). This trend was also reflected in capital allocation which declined from 51 percent to 36 percent during the same period. With man-power levels standing at 1.1 million, a very large proportion of the Army’s allocations are absorbed by pay, pensions and stores and this has been the case since 1963-64 which places inevitable downward pressure upon other budget heads controlled by the Army. The army did receive a significant share of the modernization package. However, in contrast to the other two services, much of the planned procurement was drawn mainly from soviet or indigenous resources.

The agreement signed with the USSR in May 1980 gave the Army a significant increases in firepower. The long standing
desire to replace completely the aging Centurions and supersede obsolete and troublesome Vijayanta MBT (main battle tank) was at last granted through the procurement of 800 T-72 tanks, 200 to be supplied directly, the rest built under license. The Vijayanata was not in fact withdrawn and by the mid-1980s, 1250 units were still in service. Instead the army examined various proposals for retrofitting the Vijayanata including the installation of a new and more powerful engine, laser ranging and night visual systems. Moreover by 1986 only 350 T-72s had been received. In addition it was also to receive more BMP-1 armored personnel carriers, the BMP-2, air portable version the SAM 8 missile, a mobile surface to air system, the SAM 5 long-range surface to air missile and long range, dual capable, surface to surface missiles. Several of these acquisitions related to the decision in mid-1981 to modernize the air defence regiments under Army command.\textsuperscript{32}

In mid-1985 the Government placed an order with the Dutch Government for 250 Hollandaise Signal catcher radar weapon systems for its air defence regiments and intended for use in tandem with the contraves superfledermaus weapon control systems. One year later 120 simfire MK II extended Range Improved Tactical and Gunnery Simulators were ordered from the UK for the Army’s main battle tank fleet.

In March 1985, the contract for a maximum of 1500 artillery pieces costing $3.5 billion (kits and eventually indigenous production) was awarded to Sweden which came as a great surprise to many.
To add to the massive deal with Befores in late 1986 India considered the purchase of a self-propelled 155mm howitzer from the UK with the intention of utilizing the Vijayanata chassis.

In 1987 the Army came under criticism for its prevarication over which rifle to choose as a replacement for the indigenous Ishapore. In mid-1993 the Ministry of Defence finalized tenders for 100,000 AK 47 assault rifles and 50 million rounds of ammunition. However, this is supposed to be an intermediate step pending the indigenous development of 5.56 mm assault rifles.

Between 1979 and 1983 the overall strength of the army increased above armament procurement. The total number of independent armoured Brigades was raised to seven from five and a mechanised division was created.

The army sought expansion through the creation of an Army Aviation corps (AAC). Such an organization was created in mid-19876 with the intention of providing the Army with at least 200 helicopters, including gunships. Eventually, however, it turned out to be a hollow victory when allocations for the the AAC dwindled to virtually nothing during the late 1980s. In the 1988-89 defence budget the army aviation wing received only Rs.0.2 million ($154,000).

The Indian Navy

The Indian Navy had grown from a small coastal Navy to a well balanced, ocean going force, because of India's growing...
maritime interests. In 70s and 80s extra regional Navies established a seizable presence in the Indian ocean with improved military facilities which created concern for India. These concerns included the safety of coast line and hundreds of island territories, overseas trade, off-shore oil resources, deep sea fishing, ports, harbors and the EEZ of two million sq.kms. This development of Navy therefore aimed at securing vital economic trade and security interests.

The IAF in 80s as one of the advanced Air Forces in the world with its inventory of modern combat and transport aircraft, helicopter fleet and sophisticated communication systems, comprised all the essential elements of a balanced and versatile force.

The transport fleet consisting of heavy lift, medium lift aircraft and helicopters has acquainted itself very creditably during the operations in Sri Lanka and Maldives. In addition to its main task of guarding the skies over India, the IAF has been actively involved in the maintenance by air of far-flung outposts and has undertaken flood relief operations and casually evacuation. INS Dunagiri landed over by Mazagon Dock Ltd to the Navy, the first indigenously built 'Seaward defence boat' which is an improvement on the earlier boats of the description, was also handed over to the Navy during the year 1977. The 5th Frigate INS Taragiri, which is now being fitted out is expected to be ready towards the end of 1978. The 5th and 6th Frigates are being equipped with more modern and sophisticated sensors and weapons. In
addition helicopters would operate from these ships, thereby giving them a much greater anti submarine and surveillance capability. The imported content of the 5th and 6th ships is only about 27 percent as against 70 percent in the case of the first frigate.

The growth of the Indian Navy in the past was mainly carried out through import of equipment both from the Soviet Union and from Western sources. However, consistent with the policy of self-reliance the Navy has recently taken a conscious decision to add to its force level mainly through indigenous construction.

The on-going indigenous effort in warship construction would enable the Indian Navy to meet most of its future requirements. The ships under construction are being fitted with state of the art weapons, sensors and population which, too, are predominantly indigenous. The first indigenously designed and constructed missile corvette.

INS Khukri was commissioned in the Indian Navy on August 23m 1989. The Naval Design Organisation has developed several ship designs, the most complex of them being the new frigates of the Godavari class.13

During the 1980s the long standing commitment to an ambitious naval presence in the region finally came to fruition. A Government report in 1978 signaled the onset of a 20 year naval development program a designed to give the country an indubitable
blue water naval capability. In keeping with Indra Gandhi's view of the preferred defence policy for India, the naval modernization program was unequivocally based upon power projection. The proposed role for the Navy went beyond sea lines of communication (SLOCs) and the ability to come to the aid of small developing countries within the region. The primary naval missions during this period were four-fold.

a. Protection of India's water frontiers and sea approaches to the country;

b. Protection of India's natural resources in the water continuous to the Arabian sea and Bay of Bengal;

c. Protection of the country's marine traffic; and

d. Utilization of the navy to promote Indian political and national goals throughout the Indian ocean and the Middle East.

Another striking aspect of the naval modernization program was the determination to move away from the USSR as a sole source of supply. During the 1970s the state of the economy and the willingness of the USSR to supply naval equipment gave the Indian government no choice but to accept the offers. In the 1980s, India found itself able to afford a more independent naval build-up which could permit the Navy to develop independent missions without external constraint.

Air Force

In the Combat Fleet Category, the re-equipment of a squadron with MiG-29 aircraft has been completed. Steps hav
been taken to acquire additional MiG-29 aircraft. Indigenous manufacture of MiG-27 aircraft at HAL their induction program involving replacement of old transport aircraft by IL-76 heavy transport aircraft, AN32, medium transport aircraft and the indigenously manufactured Dornier light transport aircraft is continuing. Measures to augment the helicopter fleet through procurement of additional Mi-26 heavy lift helicopters and induction of two units of Mi-17 helicopters are also progressing.34

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CONCLUSION
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Generally there are three inter-related aspects in all kinds of decisions: the decision itself, the decision makers and the decision making process. All these three require a combination of information, advice and deliberation. The decision and the decision-making group are identifiable politically or constitutionally but it is difficult to identify the process itself because of the involvement of other variables. Besides, even if one could identify all the actors, institution and variables, it would still be difficult to assess their exact role and contribution in the whole process i.e. the task of quantifying different inputs in a policy decision is even more complex.

Defence Policy making in India is much too complex because she resembles neither the third world nor the developed world. India’s religio-cultural traditions, her mode and level of economic development and her system of governance and the degree of diversity and contradictions in her social structure are quite problematic.

All these distinctive elements have considerable bearing on the decision making process, in general, including that of defence and security. In addition, there are a host of other institutional
and human factors which are really specific to India. The
'Bureaucratic' factor is the first amongst them. Because of India
inheriting a colonial legacy the Indian system is still remains a
system of coping with administrative structure for defence policy
formulation. Whatever is existing today is certainly lacking in the
characteristics of a sophisticated, coherent and rational system.¹

During the last fifty years of democratic functioning, a wide
array of articulate political institutions have come up which formally
or informally participate and contribute in 'defence policy' debates.
These provide inputs to planners but are limited in their scope and
levels. Further, being hierarchical society, in all dimensions, large
participation in matters of 'security perception' is just emerging
and today India can boast of some "groups of persons" and "thin
tanks" belonging to the media and elite, which have become
reasonably articulate in matters of defence policy.²

However, since independence India has to go a long way in her quest for national security. Three phases seem quite
distinctive in her efforts. In the first phase, the prime objective
was to increase India's military power for meeting threats from
Pakistan and China, after her 1947 and 1962 experiences. The
policy, therefore, was 'Minimal' and 'Reactive'. In the second
phase, after 1971 i.e. after loosing the fall of 1962 gained
confidence in 1965 and consolidating its image in the Bangladesh
crisis, the objective was of becoming a "power" in the sub-
continent. The policy, therefore, was "Sufficient and Reactive".
the third phase i.e. after operation PAWAN and operation CACTUS the objective was to acquire the status of a South Asian power with all its ramification. The policy, therefore, during this time was Minimum Deterrence and Practice.3

India’s three principal strategic objectives areas: i) consolidating her position in South Asia ii) achieving military paramountcy in the Indian Ocean Region and iii) acquiring sufficient power to press for status elevation in various international fora.

During the 1980s India doubled its military expenditures and became one of the principal arms purchaser in the third world. The weapon systems purchased from various outside sources included; T-72 tanks, Bofores FH-77B 155-MM towed artillery for army, MIG-29 and Mirage 2,000 for Air Force and a 29,000 tons of aircraft carrier named Hermes and Soviet Charlie-I class nuclear submarine for Navy. During the same time India also instituted some indigenous weapon development programs (Agni intermediate-range and prithvi short-range ballistic missiles). It was further stated by the then Director of the Defence Research and Development laboratory at Hyderabad Dr. A.P.J. Abdul kalam who declared in 1989 (After Agni’s initial launch) that India possesses the capability of producing ICBM, if required.4

During 80s India also demonstrated some kind of strategic assertiveness and propensity to use force in 1986-87. Indian army conducted major exercises called "Operation Brass Tacks" near Pakistan border and "Checker Board" near Chinese Border. Agair
in 1987-88, India made some kind of military interventions in Sri Lanka and Maldives, of course at the request of the host governments. It was in 1989 that India implemented some kind of partial economic blockade of Nepal.

Pakistan along with China forms the apex of India's threat hierarchy. In addition to three wars with Pakistan, 1987, and 1990 also saw conflicts between the two appearing imminent in 1987 crisis resulted from mutual apprehensions, misjudgments of each other of their troop movements during exercises along border it is a fact that "Brass Tacks" was one of the largest army exercises in which one third of the total troops participated". On the other side Pakistan prolonged its winter collective exercise with forward deployment of armored and infantry divisions near Punjab Border. It was by mutual understanding arrived at the Foreign Secretary level which brought the de-escalation of tension and restationing of troops in peace time cantonments. It was heightened activity of militants in Kashmir and Punjab by Pakistan trained militants precipitated the 1990 crisis". It was during 1991 that significant firing exchanges took place along the line of actual control in Kashmir. The significant point is that artillery, rocket and mortars were used in such firings and Siachen Glacier was also not excluded, it was at the height of 17,000 ft. that India first deployed its troops on the glacier in April 1984 during "Operation Meghoot" it was in 1987 that Pakistan made an attempt to dislodge Indian troops from their dominating positions along the height of Saltoro Rang".

People's Republic of China is India's second security concern. The 1962 experience and Beijing's ultimatum during 1965 have had a lasting psychological effect on India's policy makers. In response India detonated nuclear device in 1974, mountain divisions for high-altitude operations and stationed several Air Force squadrons along the border with China. China on its part upgraded logistics infrastructure in Tibet by building roads, an oil pipeline and a railway. These improvements gave Beijing the capability of maintaining 20 divisions facing India in Comparing the weapons inventory of both countries one would conclude that India doesn't suffer with disadvantage.

The Management of security relations by India with other South Asian actors was motivated by the objective of discovering intervention of extraregional powers in the area including Indian Ocean Region. During 1980s India did show some measures to achieve these goals, in June 1987 India stepped in Sri Lanka. The major objective of sending IPKF was to disarm the LTTE, an militant organisation. At the height of its operation IPKF consisted of about 70,000 troops incorporating four divisions which consisted of 15 brigades. The peace keeping mission in fact failed to realise its principal objective of disarming of LTTE, it was because of Indian intelligence failure and LTTE's innovative use of mines lying. At last IPKF withdraw in March 1990, with causality of about 3000 troops (1000 killed and 2000 injured).

In November 1988 India helped Maldives in the military operation called OPERATION CACTUS reacting to President
Gayoom's request Air Force air-lifted troops and secured the air field at Hulule and thereby restored government's rule within hours. This success was primarily due to Sri Lankan mercenaries failure to block the airport's runway. Finally Indian contigent of 164 military personnel left Maldives in November 1989 with the sense of satisfaction. At the departure ceremony President Gayoom declared "His country felt quite secure with India's military power as it has always shown that it supported democracy, freedom, and stability in the region".6

In 1989 Indo-Nepalese friction came to fora 1) Because of Kathmandu's acquisition of arms from China which include anti aircraft guns 2) Introduction of work permits to all Indian residents of Nepal 3) Imposition of additional duties on Indian products. India subsequently closed all but two border posts and banned more exports to Nepal, ultimately trade and transit treaty was renewed. The relation between two countries became normal.

During 70s and 80s, it was only USSR with whom India had primary defence linkages particularly after 1971 Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Co-operation. This treaty was further renewed in 1991 for another 20 years and thus Indo-Soviet Security relation were substantial because the treaty stipulated that neither side should act inimical to their defence needs and called for joint consultations in the event of military threat of either party. As a matter of fact military sales was the core element of this strategic relationship which USSR was suppose to account for
roughly more than 50% India’s defence needs. Further this purchase agreement was facilitated by low unit cost, concessional interest rate and payments in rupees the utility of soviet arms was further enhanced by Moscow’s willingness to permit license production in India of specified military items also some access to advance weapons technology.  

By the late 1980s economic dislocation of USSR forced India to enhance low interest-rates, payment of financial commitment of hard currency, thus weaponry requirement from Soviet Union lost its attractiveness. Moreover it became difficult for India to acquire critical spare parts for Soviet arms and equipment. Thus Air Force and Navy faced considerable difficulties in operational readiness because of their dependence on import of high-tech weapons. Of the drawbacks of the above kind the USSR voted in favour of Pakistan in UNO on November 11, 1991, for establishing nuclear free zone in South Asia, disappointed Indian policy makers to some extent. Inspite of all this difficulties the then Defence Minister Shared Pawar declared in early 1992 that Indo-Russian military ties along with other CIS members will remain unaffected and Indian Armed forces would continue to use weapons based on Soviet technology. 8 In addition to this India made all out effort to identify other East European sources as alternative arms suppliers. 9

There was significant improvement in Indo-US strategic relations because of following reasons 1) Disintegration of soviet
as a main arms supplier 2) US support of Indian action in Sri Lanka and Maldives. 3) US help in reducing tension between India and Pakistan by instituting CBMs and 4) Suspension of US arms aid to Islamabad.

In this improved strategic equation India did mention unfavourably about the US Naval presence in the Indian Ocean and favourably about the establishment of zone of peace in the waters and thereby giving a indication that India is in favour of withdrawal of all extra-regional naval units in this area. On the otherhand India favorably responded to US initiative, of defence co-operation. It was Lt General Clanda Kick-Leightier who proposed certain measures for said military co-operation which included, reciprocal visits by army chiefs of staff and senior commanders establishing a joint army and navy executive steering council, frequent bilateral strategic seminars, exchanges of personnel and co-operation in military training.

But can India really become a military power with a role to play in the international system and does she possess the capacity? The answer is convincingly in the affirmative.

Pakistan is the only region which would regard India's rise with alarm. This is a factor that has to be taken into account by India and the ultimate solution to her problem could be found only in a policy of "give and take".

India's developing economy has also been viewed as an obstacle because of resource scarcity. They argue that India cannot
afford to spend on a military build-up in preference to development. But as a matter of fact "Is India spending too much on defence? This is the counter argument.

Given the size of her land and sea frontiers and the security environment in which India is operating her military expenditure has been relatively modest. As percentage of her GNP, it is low. Besides, the conventional view that much of the defence expenditure has been incurred at the expense of development does not hold water. For, if India cannot sustain or increase her rate of growth by over 5 per cent with 2.2 per cent of the GNP going into savings significantly to the development process of the nation as a whole.

Furthermore, one cannot dismiss an argument that the defence program does 'make some positive contribution to civilian economics. Military training has provided trained personal with experience. Military infrastructural facilities like airports and roads, often perform civil functions. In other words it means that military spending does not necessarily hamper economic growth in civilian sectors. It is because of all these there is a reckoning that, of National Security has widened in India's policy making but with some difficulties enroute.

Such difficulties are that National Security may no longer be synonymous with national defence. But the fact remains that 'national defence' remains the core of National Security. Another trend is to link domestic happenings with external happenings. Th
may be justified to some extent but the danger of such a trend is that it becomes difficult for the Indian psychograph to look into the internal dimensions of the problem.

Until the late 1980s, India was considered an emerging regional superpower in military terms. Between 1985 and 1989 the defence budget rose steeply from 2.9% of GDP to 4.2% Change since then is mostly attributable to the external policy implications of domestic developments. Given the preoccupation with internal troubles, the defence forces have had neither the time nor the moneys to pursue regional power projection.

The 1972 Simla Accord with Pakistan and the improving relationship with China made the 1980s India's second decade since Independence without a full-scale external war (the other being the 1950s). Yet pressure on the armed forces continued. The declared war was transformed into protracted Low Intensity long term conflict, both inside and outside. Hence, India decided to go for more weapons. During this time, Arms Control and Disagrmament Agency (ACDA) of USA listed India among the foremost weapon buyers in the world. In the same period, the aggressive military exercises 'Brasstacks' and Exercise 'chequerboard' (1986-87) along the borders with Pakistan and China was conducted, which was later followed by operation PAWAN (Rajiv Gandhi-Jaye Wardene accord) to solve the ethnic racial problems. Indian paratroopers also helped the government of the tiny Indian Ocean archipelago state of Maldives from a coup by an exiled businessman backed by Sri Lankan mercenaries in 1989.
India made plans for raising an air-borne assault division, rapid mechanisation of the army with the formation of Reinforced Army and Mountain Division (RAPIDS and RAMIDS), and for acquisition of precision-guided munitions. But for want of resources and of growing perception that the medium and short-term security threats will be internal, so India's weapons and resources programs did not materialise.

The trends in India's defence expenditure between 1984 and 1995 indicate some economic constraints. After rising consistently for five years (from 9.9% of total government expenditure in 1984-85 to 10.3% in 1988-89), the budget was slashed in the following four years. Since the wage bill has continued to increase, the only areas where expenses can be cut are modernisation and acquisitions. This led to debates on how much India needs to spend for its credible defence in the long run. A widely discussed study by Air Commodore Jasjit Singh, (Retd) who heads the Institute of Defence Studies and Analysis (IDSA), has concluded that India needs to allocate a minimum of 3% of its GDP to ensure credible conventional defence if geo-political threats generally remain unchanged in the next decade. The study also concludes that even to regain the levels of training and preparedness, the forces will need to spend an additional billion dollars. A recent study conducted by the Army headquarters put the shortfall at Rs. 120 bn (about 4 bn) in terms of equipment and ammunition.

The world's view of India needs to be revised. As demonstrated in Punjab and now in Kashmir, India will fight as hard
and ruthlessly as ever to put down separatism. Internally, Kashmir will be its most serious long-term threat. Remnants of North-Eastern tribal insurgencies still exist but compared to Kashmir, these are relatively minor problems. Similarly, a consistent and long-term approach will have to be evolved to counter politically the threat of fundamentalism. The threats to India’s stability may emanate from changing internal political equations.

Since Independence, India’s foreign, defence and domestic policies generally followed a consistent pattern. For its smaller neighbors, India’s growing confidence and stability would be a welcome development. As a major buyer of their goods and services, India could lead the sub-continent towards its own rewards in terms of trade, tourism and security. Meanwhile, international peace-keeping may be another route to the world stage. Since the 1950s, particularly after 70s, India has been a significant contributor to U.N. peace-keeping efforts and has recently made large contributions in Cambodia and Somalia. In the post-Cold War World where per capita income and trade surplus rather than the size of nuclear arsenals, have become the denominators of national stature, India is reshaping its future. Politically and economically, there seems no fundamental contradiction between the direction of its economic thrust, political system and security doctrine. To summarize following positive and negative trends must be taken care of: In 80s, India and Pakistan clashed time and again on the highest battle field of the world i.e. Siachen Glacier. India also deployed about 50,000 personal in Sri Lanka. But military
operations did not involve complete mobilization. They also did not create the crisis environment of earlier conflicts in domestic politics, although there was some criticism here and there of governmental polices. The perception of India as the ‘regional Big Brother’ after the economic blockade of Nepal in 1989, also did not mean that she was threatening its smaller neighbors.

It may be argued India is not responding to changing strategic environment, but she is helping in creating a change through its consolidation and compelling other states to respond. This is a situation which is opposite to the situation of the 1950s and of early 1960s and from the mid-1970s to the mid-19780s.

Earlier India was responding to the developments created by SEATO and CENTO defence pacts. Later she began to respond to the arms build up in the Middle East movement of extra regional naval forces into the Indian ocean region. This reactive military response generated political debate on the military policies required to deal with the militarisation of the regions. Theoretically to a certain extent, what may be perceived as an unnecessary arms build up by one state may be due to time lapse between initial the threat perceptions and subsequent military response. Later counter-responses of affected states may produce arms races. The net result thus would be military imbalances between two or more states when viewed on a long term basis. What is unique in the present arms build up in the sub-continent during 1984 to 1989, is that India appears to be leading in military preparations rather than reacting to one.
One justification for this military preparation in the 1990s would be the need to reflect its stature and importance in world affairs. Instead of being equated with Pakistan only to be assessed against China's military power and intention.

The desire for power and prestige may not be sufficient to explain Indian defence policy in the 1990s because underlying this preparation is the fear on collusion of Islamic states, under the leadership of Pakistan, to undermine the territorial integrity and stability of India. Moreover, with the end of the Cold War, there could be a possibility of collusion among the former cold war adversaries to enforce a new order which may run contrary to India's strategic interests.

Notes and References

2. Ibid.
3. Ibid
5. Ibid
6. Ibid
7. Ibid
8. Ibid
11. Ibid., p.52-3