CHAPTER 3

CASE STUDIES OF INDIA’s WARS FOUGHT POST-INDEPENDENCE

“No one would deny that all wars and battles are regrettable acts of human folly, causing unjustifiable agony and distress to combatants and non-combatants alike, but these considerations should not preclude their serious study if only to avoid the mistakes of the past which make such tragedies inevitable.”

- David G Chandler

The Indian military history of pre and post-independence era is replete with a rich repository of wars fought between tribes, kingdoms, and nations, highlighting intricacies of various nuances of deterrence and decision-making. Post-independence, India has fought five conventional wars and were on the brink of another one which didn’t take place after mobilization of the armed forces. Four of these wars were against Pakistan in 1947-48, 1965, 1971 and 1999 while it fought one against China in 1962. These wars are a rich repository of valuable lessons for the present decision-makers, and the military leaders alike due to their continued relevance as threats persist from the same adversaries. The study of military history normally focusses on tangible aspects of wars and what goes behind the scenes at the politico-diplomatic level are not normally deliberated in depth. The decision for war is a very complicated decision for any political leader due to the uncertainty of escalation and enormous destruction and casualties. The outcome of the decision impacts the achievement of the nation’s vital national interests, prestige as well as immense politico-diplomatic gains or losses. Deterrence is a peace-time activity intended to avert wars. It’s only when the deterrence fails, nations take decisions to go to war. Each war has a separate casus belli, a different reason to shift from a state of peace to war, a different course of action and a different ending. The wars theoretically should result in enduring peace, but it has not happened in the Indian context. The confrontation between India and Pakistan continues unabated and so is the case with China. As the reasons for nations going to wars cannot be generalized, the aspect of deterrence impacting the decision-making is dynamic and keeps getting more and more complex due to the advent of nuclear weapons. “Wars rarely start because one

side believes that it has a military advantage; they occur when leaders become convinced that force is necessary to achieve important goals.”

Due to the numerous complexities and the significance of decision for war for national security, it is imperative to examine in detail the underlying reasons for the adversaries to initiate war against India. What was the relative military capability of the adversaries? Were there any security alliances with the Super Powers that could have deterred the adversary? What was the decision-making mechanism in existence in India and the personality of political and military leaders to lead the nation in war? To get an answer and understand the dynamics of deterrence and decision-making all the five wars and mobilization of armed forces in 2001-02 have been analyzed to understand the co-relation between deterrence and decision-making.

The case-studies will validate or invalidate the hypothesis that ‘deterrence is an essential part of decision making for war’ and that the ‘vacillation in the use of force/other instruments has impacted the relevance of deterrence in India.’ The case studies will reflect the relative significance and application of various determinants for deterrence and decision-making as discussed in Chapters I and II. The studies will enable the present and future decision-makers to take well-considered, rational and prudent decisions and assist in building the relevant processes and capabilities for deterrence. The decisions of today impact the deterrence for tomorrow. The case studies have been laid out in six sections as follows:

(a) Sections I : India-Pakistan War 1947-48
(b) Section II : India-China War 1962.
(c) Section III : India-Pakistan War 1965
(d) Section IV : India-Pakistan War 1971.
(e) Section V : India-Pakistan Kargil War 1999
(f) Section VI : Operation Parakram 2001-2002

SECTION I
INDIA-PAKISTAN WAR: 1947-48

Background

The first India-Pakistan War 1947-48 was fought over Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) within less than three months of India achieving independence and Pakistan becoming a sovereign nation. J&K was one of the 565 princely states that were offered a choice to join either of the dominions. Pakistan instigated a tribal-led invasion supported by its Army to coerce the ruler to accede to Pakistan, but the ruler signed the ‘Instrument of Accession’ in favor of India. The Indian Army was inducted to push back the raiders. The Pakistan Army initially supported the raiders covertly and later got actively involved in the war against the Indian Army. The UN-sponsored cease-fire brought the war to an end on 31st December 1948. The case study of the 1947-48 India-Pakistan War will examine the deterrence and decision-making for war from the Indian perspective in the light of the factors that influenced the partition process: -

(a) Part I : The Partition and the War
(b) Part II : Analysis of Deterrence and Decision Making for War
(c) Part III : Conclusion

PART I: THE PARTITION AND THE WAR

The 1947-48 India-Pakistan War was an off-shoot of the partition process of the Indian sub-continent reflecting the interplay of divergent ideologies of India and Pakistan and the geo-strategic significance of J&K for the British empire post their withdrawal. The major factors in the conflict are the images that both India and Pakistan envisioned prior to the partition; the Indian National Congress (INC) believed in the continuation of the old India entity, while the Muslim League dreamt of Pakistan carved out of the Muslim majority areas of the North West and East India becoming a strategically vital, Islamic State.\textsuperscript{317} British geo-strategic interests to contain the expanse of communism laid in having greater control over North West of India that now constitutes Pakistan.

\textsuperscript{317} Gupta, Sisir, \textit{Kashmir A Study in India-Pakistan Relations} (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1967) p 440
The Partition

The end of World War II increased US pressure on Britain to expedite granting independence to India. The British Prime Minister Attlee initially against dividing India due to “US view of partition giving a fillip to leftist forces in the subcontinent” later consented “to create a smaller Pakistan to safeguard British strategic interests.”\(^{318}\) The British Government, having failed to resolve the simmering differences between the INC and Muslim League with regard to the form of interim government to be adopted prior to independence, fixed the original target date to hand over power to “responsible Indian hands by a date not later than June 1948.”\(^{319}\) Fearing the rise of inter-communal violence, the date was later advanced to 15 August 1947. Lord Mountbatten was appointed the Governor-General on 22nd March 1947 and tasked to fix responsibility for the division of India squarely on Indian shoulders. With respect to India, he was specifically tasked “to persuade the Congress Party leaders to abandon their demand for the inclusion of North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) in India (thereby clearing the way for strategic areas to be placed in Pakistan’s hand) and ensure India after independence would remain a member of the British Commonwealth as Pakistan was expected to do so anyway.”\(^{320}\) It was also to persuade Jinnah to forego his claim for the whole of Punjab, Bengal, and Assam.\(^{321}\)

The British Parliament had passed ‘The Indian Act of Independence’ on 18th July 1947, postulating the partition of British India into two entities - India and Pakistan and lapsing of paramountcy that had governed the relationships of the British with 565 princely states. The rulers of the princely states were given time till 15th August 1947 to decide which dominion to join. Remaining an independent state was not an option. To oversee the partition, a Boundary Commission referred to as the Radcliffe Commission was formed to demarcate the division of Punjab and Bengal while the Punjab Boundary Force was established to oversee the migration of population. The division of the armed forces and distribution of government assets was worked out.

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\(^{318}\) Sarila, Narendra Singh, *The Shadow of the Great Game the Untold Story of India’s Partition* (New Delhi: HarperCollins Publishers, 2005) p 199. Mr Sarila was ADC to Lord Mountbatten and later joined the Indian Foreign Service, where he worked from 1948 to 1985. He was the deputy permanent representative in the Indian delegation to the UN.


\(^{320}\) Sarila, op cit, p 273

\(^{321}\) Ibid.
separately. The majority of princely states exercised their option barring the rulers of Junagadh, Hyderabad, and Kashmir. Junagadh and Hyderabad comprised of predominant Hindu population but were ruled by Muslim rulers, while Kashmir was predominantly Muslim populated State but ruled by a Hindu ruler.

Maharaja Hari Singh the ruler of J&K aspired to remain an independent State and vacillated to join either India or Pakistan. He proposed a ‘Standstill Agreement’ on 12th August 1947 with both the nations, to facilitate the continued inflow of supplies and goods pending final accession. Pakistan signed the agreement post-haste presuming that by doing so, it might persuade the Maharaja to accede to it. India did not sign the agreement. However, Pakistan, soon took a ‘U’ turn and stopped the supply of essential commodities to Srinagar and suspended the Sialkot- Jammu rail link. India and Pakistan continued to woo Maharaja for accession. On 3rd September 1947, a column of raiders from Pakistan crossed into the state of J&K as a prelude to a larger and broader infiltration plan. Maharaja’s offer of accession to India made in early and late September was rejected by Prime Minister Nehru, who insisted that Sheikh Abdullah, should be released and that a popular government led by Sheikh Abdullah, is immediately installed; only then should Kashmir declare accession to India. Nehru believed that Sheikh, being a popular leader acknowledged by 80 percent of the Muslims of Kashmir with credentials for rejecting Jinnah’s two-nation theory would serve as a bridge between Kashmir and India that would help make Kashmir a symbol of Indian secularism. Meanwhile, Sheikh Abdullah was released from jail on 29th September and his release was taken as a firm indicator of Kashmir’s accession to India. The Maharaja’s request to the government of India to send arms and ammunition to bring the worsening law and order situation was rejected by Lord Mountbatten, who wanted the Maharaja to first decide on accession. As the political negotiations were going on, Pakistan was simultaneously orchestrating an invasion by the tribesmen into J&K.

324 Sarila, op cit, p 345
The Tribal Invasion and War

Pakistan launched an armed invasion codenamed ‘Operation Gulmarg’ on 22
October 1947 by nearly 20,000 tribesmen duly supported by the Army, with the aim to coerce the Maharaja to accede to Pakistan failing which to annex the State of J&K by force. A sizeable strength of Maharaja’s Army deserted and supported the invaders. The balance of the force though heavily outnumbered, fought courageously. The tribesmen captured Muzzafarabad and Domel and entered Baramulla on 26th October 1947 where they indulged in mass-scale rape and plunder. The Maharaja’s request to India for military support was rejected by the Governor General, on the plea “that no military action could be approved against a sovereign State of J&K unless the Maharaja accedes to India.” The Maharaja signed the ‘Instrument of Accession’ on 26th October 1947 and was accepted by the Governor-General on 27th October 1947. The acceptance of the Instrument of Accession completed the legal process of J&K’s accession into India and enabled the Indian Army to intervene. The first infantry battalion (1 SIKH) landed in Srinagar on 27th October 1947 to push back the raiders.

The Indian Army advanced from Srinagar and fought a pitched battle on the outskirts of Baramulla, however, the raiders being superior in numbers, bypassed the military position and rushed towards Srinagar. Meanwhile, additional troops were speedily inducted into Srinagar that surprised Jinnah. The rapidity with which Indians were inducted into Srinagar was outside Jinnah’s calculations. He ordered the Pakistan C-in-C to rush troops to Baramulla, Srinagar, and Mirpur, but the British Supreme Commander told Jinnah that since “Kashmir had acceded to India, sending Pakistani troops would have dire consequences and British officers would be compelled to Stand Down.”

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326 Singh, Jaswant, India at Risk (New Delhi: Rupa Publishers, 2013) p 25


328 Raghavan, op cit 2010, p 109. The Stand Down’ Instructions meant that the British officers who were retained in the armed forces of both countries to safeguard attempts to subvert the troops, would be withdrawn immediately in the event of hostilities to avoid British officers fighting against each other in an inter-dominion war.
The Indian Army after repulsing the raiders on the outskirts of Srinagar launched a counter-offensive and secured the Kashmir Valley by recapturing Baramulla and Uri by November 1947. Due to the onset of winters, further military operations could not be undertaken. The Gilgit Agency directly administered by the British was handed over to the State of J&K in July 1947, however, the Gilgit Security Council Scouts revolted under instigation from Pakistan and formed a provincial government. An infantry battalion of the Indian Army (6 JAK RIF) comprising half of Muslims and Sikhs was rushed towards Gilgit, but its Muslim troops joined hands with the Gilgit Scouts. After the consolidation of Gilgit, the raiders secured Skardu in August 47.

The raiders had also entered the Jammu region and surrounded Poonch and other towns. The Indian Army’s plan to clear these towns from the raiders was not approved by the British C-in-C in the Defence Committee of the Cabinet (DCC) chaired by Mountbatten as it was considered too risky and accordingly instructed the GOC Jammu and Kashmir Division: “not to take unnecessary risks.” The GOC, however, interpreting the C-in-C orders differently to India’s advantage, relieved these towns but were recaptured by the raiders. Poonch could not be relieved but was reinforced by an infantry battalion from the Uri side. The garrison remained under siege. Mirpur, Bhimber, and Rajauri were also captured by the raiders by end December 47.

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330 Gilgit Scouts was a paramilitary force deployed in Gilgit.
331 Sarila, op cit, p 358
Along with the military operations, diplomatic negotiations facilitated by Mountbatten were undertaken to prevent escalation but failed to achieve any result due to the tough stands taken by both sides. India wanted all raiders to withdraw first and after cessation of the fighting, its troops would also be pulled back except for small garrisons at vital strategic points followed by a plebiscite under the United Nations (UN) Security Council auspices. Pakistan, on the other hand, wanted all Indian forces to be withdrawn which was not agreeable to India and the talks remained inconclusive.332

Failure of political negotiations prompted India to contemplate escalating the war to the plains of Punjab and use Air Force against the raiders. At a meeting of the DCC held on 20th December 1947, the Indian Ministers demanded the creation of a cordon sanitaire ten miles deep, stretching from Naushera to Muzaffarabad, which should be intensely bombarded by the AF.333 Mountbatten opposed air action due to civilian casualties and intervened to suggest a reference to the UN as India had a ‘cast iron case.’334 Nehru, adopting a cautious approach proposed to limit the territory to be bombed in order to destroy insurgent concentrations.335 Upset by India’s strong stance, the British put intense pressure on Nehru to refer the matter to the UN. Nehru finally agreed and the Government of India on 1 January 1948, reported the matter to UN Security Council under Article 35 of the Charter.336

The command and control of the Indian Army was restructured in January 1948. On 20th January 1948, Lieutenant General KM Cariappa took over the command of Delhi and East Punjab Command from Lieutenant General Russell and the command was re-designated as Western Command.337 The Army operating in J&K was reorganized into Jammu and Srinagar Divisions. By April 1948, there were seven Indian Army brigades operating in J&K and an additional brigade was being inducted.338

In Kashmir Valley, the Indian Army launched the Spring Offensive in May 1948 along two axes from Uri and Tangdhar towards Muzaffarabad. As the Indian Army

332 Raghavan, op cit 2010, pp 116-119
334 Sarila, op cit, p 371
335 Raghavan, op cit 2010, p 119
336 Under Article 35, any member of the UN may bring any dispute, or any situation of the nature referred to in Article 34 to the attention of the Security Council or of the General Assembly.
337 Singh, Bhupinder, Lieutenant Colonel (Retired), Indo-Pak Conflicts over Kashmir (Patiala: BC Publishers,1983) p 68
338 Prasad and Dharampal, op cit, pp 154-155
retook additional areas, the Pakistan Army became more actively involved to prevent
the war from extending to its own territory. Indian Army’s main offensive along Uri-
Domel could not make much progress due to heavy opposition, as along with the
raiders, the Pakistani regular troops were also employed which were not catered for in
Indian Army’s operational plans.\textsuperscript{339} Tithwal and certain additional areas were
captured after stiff opposition. The planned offensive towards Muzaffarabad was
suspended in June 48 due to the need of additional troops in Ladakh, where, the
Pakistani troops after capturing Zojila Pass, Kargil and Dras were steadily advancing
towards Leh. After repeated failures by Infantry to capture the vital Zojila Pass, the
Indian Army employed tanks to finally recapture it on 15\textsuperscript{th} November 1948. Dras,
Kargil, and Leh were secured by 24\textsuperscript{th} November 1948. Repeated attempts by the
Indian Army to send relief to the besieged garrison of Skardu from Srinagar failed due
to inhospitable terrain, inclement weather conditions and stiff enemy opposition from
Pakistan Army. In Jammu region, the Indian Army recaptured Jhangar and Rajauri by
April 1948, while Poonch was relieved on 20\textsuperscript{th} November 1948. The IAF played a
stellar role in providing logistic support to the besieged Poonch garrison and effective
air-support during the fighting.

Meanwhile, there were protracted debates in the UN Security Council in 1948. A
number of resolutions were passed aimed at restoring peace, but none of the
resolutions condemned Pakistan for its aggression.\textsuperscript{340} After some political maneuvers
and lengthy negotiations, the Security Council passed a Resolution on 13\textsuperscript{th} August
1948 that was accepted by both sides. The Resolution envisaged effecting a cease-fire,
withdrawal of Pakistani troops from J&K and on completion of this, determination of
the will of the people.\textsuperscript{341} The UN-sponsored ceasefire came into effect on 1 January
1949. Pakistan till date has not withdrawn its forces from J&K.

\textbf{PART II: ANALYSIS OF DETERRENCE AND DECISION MAKING}

The war is always preceded by confrontation which is the core of the crisis and results
due to the conflict of interests and collision of challenges and resistances between two
nations. The confrontation is normally managed by deterrence and the decision to
resort to war reflects the failure of deterrence. The 1947-48 India-Pakistan War also
referred to as the first Kashmir War signified the commencement of confrontation

\textsuperscript{339} Dasgupta, op cit, p 148
\textsuperscript{340} Ibid, p 67
\textsuperscript{341} Ibid
between India and Pakistan which manifested from the simmering differences prior to independence. It is, therefore, axiomatic that the various decisions that emboldened Pakistan to launch a tribal invasion within three months of its existence be examined. Though technically, the confrontation between India and Pakistan ought to have commenced when they became independent countries; since Pakistan is the product of that confrontation, political and diplomatic decisions pre and post-independence, had a profound bearing on Pakistan’s decision for war. To understand this in the correct perspective, there is a need to first assess the motives and the likely aim of Pakistan, being the aggressor. Pakistan intended to achieve the political objective of strengthening its two-nation theory based on religion through forced annexation of J&K due to its geostrategic significance.

**Geo-Strategic Significance of J&K**

Robert Kaplan in his book *The Revenge of Geography* reiterates an age-old proposition supplemented by numerous examples that it is mainly geography and not just economics or politics that shape strategic and geopolitical outcomes. Highlighting the significance of geography in shaping geopolitical outcomes, he argued, “Eurasia will eventually be as claustrophobic as Israeli and the Palestinian territories, with geography controlling everything, leaving no room to maneuver, with four shatter zones or areas more prone to conflict that threaten to "implode, explode, or maintain a fragile equilibrium.” The confrontation over Kashmir between India and Pakistan reinforces Kaplan’s argument. The State of J&K is strategically significant for both India and Pakistan. J&K is India’s window to the Central Asian Republics, sharing borders with Pakistan to the West, Afghanistan to the North West and China to the North East. It gives India control over the waterworks of Chenab, Jhelum, and Indus which are the life-line of Pakistan as the majority of its population is dependent on agriculture as the main source of income. The vital North-South road and rail route between Lahore and Rawalpindi lie within thirty miles from the border. J&K provides Pakistan a contiguous geographical link to China that poses a collusive threat to India.

The North West region of undivided India constituting present-day Pakistan was considered geographically more significant by the British Empire for its long-term

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342 Kaplan, op cit, p 145 The shatter zones include the Indian Subcontinent, Arabian Peninsula, the Fertile Crescent and the Persian core.

geo-strategic interests. The British government, after the Allies victory in World War II, perceived the Soviet Union to pose a threat to its strategic interests. The appraisal report titled “The long-term policy to safeguard the strategic interests of the British Empire in India and the Indian Ocean” in May 1945 appreciated India’s strategic value to Britain as a base from where its forces would be suitably deployed within the Indian Ocean area, the Middle and the Far East; the North West region was considered suitable for British air force to threaten Soviet military installations.344

The Karachi naval port and Peshawar air base were ideally suited to target important military installations of the Soviet Union and building a ‘cordon sanitaire’ around it. It was, therefore essential that Britain must retain its military connection with the sub-continent so as to ward off the Soviet Union threat.345

Gilgit-Baltistan region located to the North West of J&K sharing borders with China’s Xinjiang Province, Wakhan corridor of Afghanistan and Chitral district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa acts as a buffer between India, Pakistan, China, and Central Asian Republics. British India, due to its geostrategic significance, therefore, wanted the state of J&K to be a part of the new nation of Pakistan to fulfill its perceived role as a bulwark against the communist expansion.

The ideological underpinnings of Pakistan were added to the geographical interests of Britain. Jinnah had conceived Pakistan to be formed on the basis of the ‘Two-Nation Theory’ as a separate Islamic nation to be carved out of the Muslim-majority areas of the then undivided India. Nehru, Gandhi and many other prominent leaders felt that the Hindus and Muslims can co-exist in united India, while Jinnah felt, “the Hindus and Muslims belong to two different philosophies, social customs, literature, civilizations which are based on conflicting ideas and conceptions.”346

Pakistan saw it natural for a Muslim-majority Kashmir having the same cultural affinity and geographical contiguity to be part of Pakistan. For India, J&K represents the secular character of its ideology that Muslims could live in India without fear of discrimination in a predominantly Hindu State. The nationalism of Pakistan is a religion while that of India is secularism. Pakistan considered itself incomplete without Kashmir while India perceived Kashmir as an essential element of its secular and federal democratic structure.

344 Sarila, op cit, p 22
345 Ibid
The convergence of geostrategic location of J&K and mutually exclusive ideologies of India and Pakistan form the root cause of the confrontation between the two nations. For Pakistan, the geography of J&K dictated, while ideology exploited, and both became the driving forces to annex Kashmir. It was also to serve the long-term geostrategic interests of Britain after its departure from the Indian sub-continent.

**Pre-Independence Political Decisions impacting Deterrence**

Deterrence as highlighted in chapter I is also an aspect of diplomacy and not purely a military concept. The political and diplomatic decisions taken by the Indian leadership even under the British government had a profound impact on the subsequent events. The INC was the ruling party in all the provinces when the second World War broke out in November 1939. In protest against Britain’s declaration of war on Germany on behalf of India, the Congress Party resigned from the government in the provinces. This was perceived as an abdication of responsibility by the majority party during the critical period. It reduced British dependence on the Congress Party to mobilize Indian resources for the war which was exploited by Jinnah by promising mobilization of resources for the British war effort. Jinnah was so delighted at the Congress Government’s resignations that the words ‘Himalayan blunder’ escaped his lips. Jinnah, thereafter, openly started making demands for creation of a separate

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348 Sarila, op cit, p 38
state of Pakistan comprising the Muslims. VP Menon lamented: “Had the Congress not resigned from its position of vantage in the provinces the course of India’s history might have been different.”349 This decision of the Congress Party made the British gravitate more and more towards Jinnah. Britain became less confident of the INC as rulers of an independent India cooperating with Britain on defence and security matters. They perceived that independent India with her “socialist-minded Congress party, size and potential would be difficult to manage’ and therefore it was prudent to partition the sub-continent to serve the twin objectives of creating a ‘weak’ India on one side’ and a ‘pliable but strategically located Pakistan on the other side.”350 India could not earn the gratitude of the British despite contributing immensely towards Britain’s war effort. The Indian Army was one of the largest Allied forces contingent forming part of the British Army; more than 2 million Indian troops fought against the Axis forces.351

The NWFP now known as Khyber Pakhtunwa borders Afghanistan to the West, China to the North East and J&K to its East. The Kyhber Pass provided a link between India and Afghanistan prior to independence. Due to the strategic importance of NWFP, Britain wanted it to be part of Pakistan. When the negotiations for its future were going on in London, its popular leader Ghaffar Khan started propaganda for a Pathan National Province i.e. for a separate independent state of Pakhtoonistan.352 The INC supported the independence option to be included as part of the referendum to decide its future, which was not agreeable to Mountbatten, who decided on a referendum to join either dominion. Nehru agreed for the referendum without consulting the local leader Ghaffar Khan. Ghaffar Khan decided that his Congress party would not take part in the referendum to which Nehru and Patel acquiesced. The result of the referendum declared on 20 July 1947 showed that out of a total 5,72,798 electorates 2,89,244 or 50.49 percent had voted for Pakistan.353 The NWFP was thus lost by a mere .50 percent of the votes.

349 Menon, VP, Transfer of Power in India (London: Longmans Green, 1957) p 52 quoted in Sarila, op cit, p 37. VP Menon was a distinguished civil servant and advisor on Constitutional reforms to three Viceroy – Linlithgow, Wavell and Mountbatten.


352 Sarila, op cit, p 300

353 Ibid, p 302
Had this Muslim majority province remained under Congress Party rule between 1940 and 1946, the plan for partition could not have been put forward as, without the inclusion of the NWFP within its borders, *Pakistan would have remained an enclave within India and would have lost its most important base to the West, that of its strategic value.*\(^{354}\) The writer’s observation that the plan for partition could not have been put forward had Congress not resigned from power in NWFP seems far-fetched, but surely the resignations by the Congress party overlooked its strategic significance. Non-participation in the referendum was another mistake that proved costly. Nehru explained to his colleagues that “if they did not yield on the referendum, Mountbatten, having committed himself to the British Cabinet, would have to resign, and that would be harmful as he could be counted upon to help them during the critical period before British withdrawal.”\(^{355}\) It may be noted that one of the specific tasks assigned to Mountbatten on his nomination as the Governor General was to persuade the Congress Party leaders to abandon their demand for the inclusion of NWFP in India in order to include this strategic area as part of Pakistan. Mountbatten successfully accomplished the task assigned to him. The victory in a referendum in NWFP emboldened Pakistani to vigorously pursue their agenda for the accession of J&K into Pakistan. NWFP forming part of Pakistan provided geographical continuity to J&K and motivated the local Pathan tribesmen to acquire the additional adjacent territory. Two months later, Pakistan, cleverly diverted them to launch a tribal invasion in J&K, that would serve its national interest and also the geo-strategic interests of Britain. *The last bastion from which the defence of India could be organized was evacuated without a fight.*\(^{356}\)

The author interviewed Lieutenant General TS Shergill and Colonel Harjeet Singh\(^{357}\) and asked whether Nehru and Patel’s acceptance of Mountbatten’s proposal to conduct a referendum and then boycott the same was the right decision and whether it emboldened Pakistan to plan the subsequent invasion of J&K by tribesmen. General Shergill felt that the Congress did not participate in the referendum because they knew they would lose not only the vote but face too. In the circumstances, it was

\(^{354}\) Ibid, p 38
\(^{355}\) Ibid, p 301
\(^{356}\) Ibid
\(^{357}\) Interviewed Lieutenant General TS Shergill on 11 August 2018 and Colonel Harjeet Singh on 12 January 2019. General Shergill currently the Chief Advisor to CM Punjab is a prolific historian, analyst and co-authored the book ‘The Monsoon War 1965 Young Officers Reminisce – 1965 India-Pakistan War’ with Captain Amarinder Singh. He was India’s Defence Attache to US and also served as Chairman of Punjab Public Service Commission.
unlikely that Congress participation in the referendum would have made any difference and consequently on any possible deterrence. The narrow margin of victory militates against face-saving pretext. Colonel Harjeet, however, alluded that this decision emboldened Pakistan to plan the invasion as it also served British long-term interests. Nehru’s explanation indicates that acceptance of referendum in NWFP was more to appease Mountbatten than to secure India’s strategic interests. In a confrontation the aim is to influence the opponent, to change or form an intention, to establish a condition and, above all to win the clash of wills.\textsuperscript{358} \textbf{Lord Mountbatten won the clash of wills through astute diplomacy while the Indian leadership displayed lack of political forethought and vision to comprehend the geo-strategic significance of NWFP that was adroitly exploited.} Quitting from the strategic NWFP, agreeing to the referendum and thereafter not participating were serious mistakes by the political leadership. Had Abdul Ghaffar Khan’s party participated in the referendum, India had a good chance of winning it seeing the narrow margin of its loss and blocking inclusion of NWFP in Pakistan’s territory and forsaking claims to J&K.

\textbf{The Partition Process}

Hastening the partition process accentuated the growing hostility between the Muslims and the Hindus. The British government’s announcement to leave by a particular date was not borne out of the realistic assessment of objective factors prevailing at that point of time. It reflected the failure of diplomacy to resolve the differences between the Congress Party and the Muslim League. The British by imposing the time limit expected to compel the hostile parties to come to some sort of agreement on their own, but it didn’t. The imposition of time-limit created law and order problems. This was rightly foreseen by Sir Winston Churchill - the leader of the Opposition Conservative Party, who strongly opposed the withdrawal of British by a particular date. Predicting that it would bring in disorder, he said: “A time limit is imposed – a kind of guillotine- which will certainly prevent the full, fair and reasonable discussion of the great complicated issues that are involved; the 14 months will not be used for the melting of hearts and union of Muslim and Hindu all over India, but in preparation for the civil war; and they will be marked continually by disorders and disturbances.”\textsuperscript{359} He was proved eminently right.

\textsuperscript{358} Smith, op cit, p 184
\textsuperscript{359} Ganguly, op cit 1999, p 30
The government proved incapable of dealing with law and order problem arising out of mass migration of population across the new frontiers. The Punjab Boundary Force composed of about 50,000 officers and men charged with maintaining law and order over an area of 37,500 square miles with a population of about 14.5 million, with millions moving from one state to another was grossly inadequate to manage huge population migration resulting in large scale atrocities by Hindus and Muslims on each other. There was no regulatory mechanism to control the activities of fanatical religious organizations who incited the masses on either side to indulge in communal violence. Undoubtedly the stories of the massacre of Muslims on the Indian side of Punjab inflamed the passions of the Muslim tribesmen who revolted and attacked India. Pakistan exploited its religious homogeneity of Islam against India’s socio-cultural and religious diversity to whip up passions of the common masses against India. Had the British planned an orderly transfer of power to the new dominions of India and Pakistan and diplomacy given adequate time to resolve contentious issues, the resultant turbulence partition process would have been avoided leading to smoother transition. The confrontation stage soon transformed into the crisis stage.

**Post-Independence Political Decisions impacting Deterrence**

The Indian political leadership delayed the acceptance of accession of J&K. As the raiders began to infiltrate into J&K from the beginning of September, the Maharaja by mid-September had decided to accede to India, but the Prime Minister, Nehru, insisted that Abdullah should be immediately released from jail and associated with the governance of the State. Sheikh Abdullah was released from jail on 29 September 47, but the Maharaja was reluctant to lose power and become a figurehead in the country that his family had ruled for over a hundred years and Sheikh Abdullah had built his popular movement not just around a demand for democracy, but more specifically around the expulsion of Dogra dynasty.

The decision to accept the Instrument of Accession even after it was signed by the Maharaja of Kashmir was mired in avoidable politics. Mr. Prem Shankar Jha has given an exhaustive chronology of events between 24 and 27 October 1947 to

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360 Ibid, p 40
361 Ibid
362 Dasgupta, op cit, p 16
highlight the sharp differences between Prime Minister Nehru and the Deputy Prime Minister Patel on the handling of Kashmir – this was related to Prime Minister Nehru’s insistence to not to accept the accession till an explicit commitment from the Maharaja to bring Sheikh Abdullah into the government. Jha pointed out that at one time, the Prime Minister of J&K, Mr. Mahajan even threatened to go to Lahore to see Jinnah and Nehru telling Mahajan that even if Srinagar was taken by the tribesmen, India was strong enough to retake it.\(^{364}\)

Prime Minister Nehru’s insistence on Maharaja to hand over power to Sheikh Abdullah despite rightly appreciating Pakistan’s strategy to infiltrate into Kashmir to initiate some big action before the onset of winters delayed State’s accession and provided valuable time to Pakistan to coerce Maharaja and plan the tribal invasion. A frustrated Patel rightly said: “I regret our leader has followed his lofty ideas into the sky and has no contact left with earth or reality.”\(^{365}\) Had India accepted the accession in September and thereafter engage Sheikh Abdullah in governance and exploit his popularity amongst the masses, rather than delaying the accession itself, Pakistan’s perception about coercing Maharaja to accede could have come to an abrupt end. It would have also settled the power struggle between Sheikh Abdullah and the Maharaja. As a statesman, Nehru should have shown greater political sagacity and sensitivity to Maharaja’s concerns towards resolving the conflict at the nascent stage rather than postponing the decision and worsening the situation.

Prime Minister Nehru, while announcing the amalgamation of J&K into the Republic of India, assured the people of J&K that once peace was established in the Valley and the status quo of territorial integrity was maintained, the people of J&K would have the right to a plebiscite, to join either India or Pakistan.\(^{366}\) Mountbatten, ‘with the Cabinet’s approval’, too wrote a separate letter to Maharaja asking him to “settle the question of State’s accession by reference to the people, as soon as law and order have been restored in Kashmir and her soil cleared of the invaders.”\(^{367}\) This letter was not the legal acceptance of the Instrument of Accession; it was only a supplementary letter

\(^{364}\) Ibid, pp 65-73
\(^{365}\) Sarila, op cit, p 370
\(^{366}\) Singh, Jaswant, op cit, p 39
\(^{367}\) Lakhanpal, PL, Essential Documents and Notes on Kashmir Dispute, (New Delhi, 1951) pp 47-48 quoted in Blinkenberg, Lars, India-Pakistan The History of Unsolved Conflicts, Volume I The Historical Part (Denmark: Odense University Press, 1998) p 78
due to the extraordinary situation in which the accession was sought. Mr Hingorani after examining numerous legal documents stated: “A perusal of the Instrument of Accession confirms that the sovereign ruler of J&K unconditionally acceded to the dominion of India in terms of the Indian Independence Act of 1947 and the Government of India Act of 1935, as amended, and did not require a reference to the people to settle the accession.” Mountbatten’s letter, contrary to legal requirements, established Britain’s pro-Pakistan attitude and its intention to keep the pot boiling. He shrewdly involved the government of India into it, whose acceptance was most unfortunate. A Danish diplomat rightly remarked: “The contents of the letter formulated in accordance with Mountbatten’s advice to the Indian Government, should later form the background of the basic conflict between India and Pakistan.” The Indian leadership failed to display strategic forethought, realpolitik, and vision on matters of national security. Captain Amarinder’s assessment is apt: “In truth, New Delhi was deliberately allowing the pressure upon the ruler to build up to the point at which the Maharaja would be driven to capitulate over Sheikh Abdullah.” He further laments: “but for New Delhi’s intransigence, the accession of Kashmir might have been completed in early September and a sizeable force of the Indian Army in position on the ground long before the situation reached crises proportions.”

Both India and Pakistan tried to coerce the ruler of Kashmir using the Standstill Agreement to pressurize Maharaja to accede to their side. Pakistan later withdrew the offer and applied direct coercion through the tribesmen. India, by not signing the Stand Still Agreement and “inventing a principle’ – no standstill without accession, applied gentle and far subtle pressure.” India’s delayed acceptance of the accession on political considerations, overriding national security interest, instead of imposing any deterrence, emboldened Pakistan to orchestrate a well-planned tribal invasion and exploit the situation to its advantage. The hypothesis that ‘vacillation in the use of force/other instruments has impacted the relevance of deterrence’ stands validated.

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368 Ibid  
369 Hingorani, Aman M, Unravelling the Kashmir Knot (New Delhi: Sage 2016) p 150  
370 Blinkenberg, op cit, p 150. Lars Blinkenberg was the Ambassador of Denmark posted in Delhi from 1964 to 1968.  
371 Singh, Amarinder, op cit, p 14  
372 Ibid, p 15  
373 Jha, op cit, p 128
Military Deterrence

Indian armed forces had marginal military superiority over Pakistan at the time of independence. Under the terms of transfer of power, all movable military infrastructure had been divided on a 70:30 ratio between India and Pakistan. India had nine infantry divisions, an armored division, two parachute brigades, and an independent armored brigade and seven fighter squadrons as against Pakistan’s seven infantry divisions, a parachute brigade, and an independent armored brigade and two fighter squadrons. The number of infantry battalions allotted to the Indian Army and Pakistan Army was 88 (including 12 Gorkha battalions) and 33 respectively. The Pakistan Army was mainly officered by the British officers while this was not the case with the Indian Army who had the majority of its own officers. The Indian Army had deployed an infantry division plus an infantry brigade in East Punjab and an infantry brigade group plus an armored brigade group in Hyderabad. This reduced the availability of the military to conduct operations in J&K.

Pakistan never admitted to its role in the tribal invasion maintaining it to be a spontaneous uprising by the locals which was supported by their co-religionists in the tribal areas. There is a plethora of evidence giving details of Pakistan’s complicity in planning and equipping the raiders for the invasion on Kashmir. The details of Pakistan’s clandestine operations in Kashmir have been published by one of its principal architects, then Colonel and later Major General Akbar Khan in his book ‘Raiders in Kashmir’. The Times (London) reported on 13 January 1948: “Pakistan is unofficially involved in aiding the raiders is certain; there is first-hand evidence that arms, ammunition, and supplies are being made available to the Azad Kashmir forces; a few Pakistani officers are also helping to direct their operations…and however much the Pakistani government may disavow intervention, moral and material support is certainly forthcoming.”

374 Ganguly, op cit, 2002, p 19
376 Army Statistical Organisation, Statistical Review of Personnel Army of India, Volume IV 1st October to 31st December 1948; Archives Section of Army Headquarters, p 114
377 Prasad and Dharampal, op cit, pp 68-71
378 Khan, Akbar, Major-General (Retired), Raiders in Kashmir (Karachi: Army Press,1963)
379 Gupta, op cit, p 116
Though Pakistan’s military capability to wage war immediately on achieving independence was itself very meager, yet while planning the tribal invasion, it was neither deterred by India’s marginal military superiority nor by the fact that its army was officered mainly by the British officers. **Pakistan’s national interest supplemented by the British strategic interest that laid in having J&K as part of Pakistan emboldened it to overcome its military inferiority.** It ingeniously indoctrinated, trained, equipped and employed the Pathan tribesmen of NWFP who adroitly exploited the mountainous terrain to their advantage

**India’s Decision for War**

Amidst the building up of crisis, India adopted the politico-military establishment blueprint as recommended by Lord Ismay, then Chief of Staff for political decision-making pertaining to national security. The Defence Committee of the Cabinet (DCC), constituted on 30th September 1947, with the Prime Minister (who was also the Minister of External Affairs) as Chairman, and the Deputy Prime Minister who was also the Home Minister), the Finance Minister and the Defence Minister as members was India’s highest decision-making body for national security and defence. The heads of the three Services were to be in attendance to give on-the-spot military appreciation or clarifications.

The infiltration of raiders in strength in an organized manner on 22nd October 1947 precipitated the simmering crisis to a conflict situation. The DCC under the chairmanship of Lord Mountbatten – the Governor General of India with the Prime Minister and others in attendance discussed the situation of tribal invasion of Kashmir on 25th October 1947. Mountbatten refused to mobilize the Indian Army to induct to Srinagar, on the logic that no military action could be approved against a sovereign State of J&K unless the Maharaja accedes to India, arguing: “it would be a folly to send troops into a ‘neutral’ state; Pakistan, could do exactly the same thing, thus precipitating an inter-dominion war.”

The rejection of Maharaja’s request for military support by the Governor General was unjustified despite the compelling need to do so. Mountbatten’s argument that Pakistan would also send its troops into Kashmir leading to war was illogical and

380 Venkateswaran, op cit, p 89
381 Dasgupta, op cit, p 45
reflected a partisan approach. India would have sent troops on the ruler’s request for military assistance, which would have been legal in international law, but no such request was made to Pakistan; its sending troops would have been illegal. Mr. Patel saw no reason why India should not respond to a request for assistance from a friendly state which had been subjected to invasion. India’s assistance to a friendly state, in fact, was in the form of counter-intervention in response to a unilateral action taken by Pakistan which is normally justified in international norms. When the boundaries had already been crossed by the armies of a foreign power, even if the crossing has been called for by one of the parties in a civil war, then what is at issue is counter-intervention.  

India would have been morally and legally justified in sending troops to Kashmir in response to the appeal received from the J&K government before the formal signing of accession as a counter-intervention force. This would have halted the raiders far away from Baramulla. Mountbatten himself admitted to this logic, when he explained the same, “it would still be legally correct to send troops at its request to a friendly neighboring country even if it did not accede but the risk of Pakistan also sending troops would be considerable; the accession would fully regularize the position, and reduce the risk of an armed clash with Pakistan Forces to a minimum because then they will be entering a foreign country.”

The national interest of India became hostage to the geostrategic interests of Britain. Presence of Lord Mountbatten as the Governor-General sublimed deterrence value of military decisions by preventing mobilization and application of force at the right time.

Mountbatten had assumed that he would continue as Governor-General of the two dominions. Jinnah’s firm rebuttal in July that the first Governor-General of Pakistan would be Jinnah hurt Mountbatten’s pride. The highest decision-making body in Pakistan was chaired by Jinnah, while in India, it was Mountbatten who presided over all meetings of the DCC, instead of the Prime Minister of the country. The first meeting, which, instead of Nehru was chaired by Mountbatten. It permitted him as Chairman of DCC to play an important role in policymaking. This meeting established a precedent till the end of 1948 during which all important questions

382 Walzer, op cit, p 90
383 Sarila, op cit, p 353 quoting Governor- General’s personal report to the king, 7 November 1947, para 28
relating to Kashmir were decided not in the Cabinet but in meetings of the DCC; this allowed Mountbatten to play a critical role which far exceeded that of a constitutional figurehead.\textsuperscript{385} The innocuous coup-de-main; effected by Lord Mountbatten, of usurping the control of the DCC proved very costly for India as borne by the subsequent decision-making driven by the British politico-strategic interests. The generosity of Indian leaders to permit the Governor-General to preside over the meetings of DCC, while it was refused by Pakistan reflected appeasement to get favorable decisions but it didn’t work.

A state of crisis generally falls in the intermediate zone between peace and war. For the crisis to erupt, one of the nations must initiate some form of conflict behavior in an attempt to resolve the underlying conflict of interest in its favor. \textit{All the contending parties namely the ruler of Kashmir, the Governor-General and the political leadership of India and Pakistan displayed ‘conflict behavior’ against each other in varying forms.} Maharaja’s initial indecisiveness to accede to either dominion, India not signing the Standstill Agreement, its procrastination in accepting accession in early September, Governor General’s refusal to induct the Indian Army till formal accession is signed, India’s PM as well as Governor-General’s pledge for plebiscite and Pakistan’s coercive strategy are manifestations of the conflict behavior against each other. Prime Minister Nehru’s pledge for plebiscite despite having a legally valid Instrument of Accession raised high hopes of the Kashmiri people to have the choice to join either dominion.

\textbf{Decisions During War}

The commencement of military operations by the Indian Army to push back the raiders marked the commencement of the first Kashmir War. \textit{The decisions during the conduct of war were influenced by the geo-strategic interests of Britain that were aligned with the national interest of Pakistan. Neither any political objectives of the war were laid down, nor any priorities fixed. Pushing back the raiders was the only objective to be achieved.} Accordingly, there was no application of any decision-making model or theory. Battles were fought at the tactical and operational level. Some important decisions of the DCC driven more by the strategic considerations of Britain rather than that of India which impacted the

\textsuperscript{385} Dasgupta, op cit, p 43
conduct of operations at the tactical level but having strategic significance are enumerated in the succeeding paragraphs.

The DCC in November 1947 opposed the Indian Army’s offensive plans to clear Poonch and other towns from the raiders. Whitehall believed that “Indian control of the western borderlands of Jammu would pose a grave strategic and economic threat to Pakistan.”\(^\text{386}\) India’s occupation of these areas would threaten the Jhelum Bridge and Mangla headworks. Accordingly, the British C-in-C advised Major-General Kulwant Singh the GOC Jammu and Srinagar Division to ‘not to take unnecessary risks’ who, however, smartly interpreted these orders and relieved some of the towns, but earned the wrath of British C-in-C. Mirpur and Bhimbar being politically and militarily desirable objectives could have been prioritized and captured by diverting additional forces from Punjab and Hyderabad. Poonch is an important town which was surrounded by the raiders. The Indian Prime Minister’s decision to hold on Poonch to at all costs was vehemently opposed by the Governor-General and British C-in-C considering it to be a risky venture to hold and infested with the possibilities of adverse outcome affecting Indian Army’s reputation and the ongoing diplomatic initiatives. Prime Minister Nehru, however, showed firmness and did not withdraw as the evacuation would have seriously dented the government’s prestige. It will be seen that extreme aversion to risk carried the implication that the Poonch area should be abandoned to its fate lest the Army suffer even a minor setback.\(^\text{387}\) Poonch was reinforced by a battalion-sized force from the Uri side in November 47.

Mountbatten opposed Prime Minister Nehru and other minister’s proposed for air-interdiction of invaders bases within Pakistan in December 1947 on the pretext of civilian casualties and limited availability of aircraft. Air Vice Marshal Arjun Subramaniam giving a detailed account of the exploits of Royal Indian Air Force (RIAF) in pushing the raiders in Kashmir Valley highlighted adequate availability of aircraft: “by December 1947, in addition to one squadron already operating in Kashmir Valley, two more squadrons were inducted into J&K.”\(^\text{388}\) The operations in Kashmir Valley due to weather conditions had by and large come to a halt and all the three squadrons were available for air-interdiction of invaders bases. There was thus no constraint of availability of aircraft. As Nehru, considering the collateral damage to

\(^{386}\) Dasgupta, op cit, p 69
\(^{387}\) Ibid, p 67
\(^{388}\) Subramaniam, op cit, pp 128-130
the civilian population, agreed to the territory to scale down the air-operations, and wanted the plans to be accordingly prepared. Finally, when the DCC agreed to examine the establishment of a cordon sanitaire by the Joint Planning Staff, Mountbatten sabotaged the proposal. He confided to the British C-in-C that: “the real reason for his opposition to the cordon sanitaire was that if established would for once and all do away with any hope of any agreement with Pakistan and wanted the plan to be prepared accordingly.”

After detailed examination, the Joint Planning Staff restricted partial proscription zone to include the plains and low hilly areas around Kotli, Mirpur, and Bhimbar.

Meanwhile, the political talks conducted between India and Pakistan to put an end to the hostilities and to withdraw all the raiders remained inconclusive due to Pakistan’s refusal to accept the legality of J&K’s accession. Instead, Pakistan, wanted India to withdraw all troops and set up an impartial administration in Kashmir which was not agreeable to India. This amounted handing over the state to the ‘Azad Kashmir’ forces by removing the fully formed responsible government set up in Kashmir. Mountbatten sought to accommodate Pakistan in a major way by ignoring the Indian position that withdrawal of the raiders should be the first step towards a settlement and wanted Nehru to unilaterally accept plebiscite under UN auspices without any concessions from Pakistan. This was not acceptable to India and Mountbatten’s mediation to break the impasse failed.

The Prime Minister considering Pakistan’s intentions, failure of political negotiations and improved military position of the Indian Army contemplated launching an offensive in Punjab to strike at the invaders’ concentration areas and lines of communication in Pakistani territory. This would lead to an escalation of war with Pakistan which India now considered necessary. According to Raghavan, “Nehru thought that preparations for an attack on Pakistan would themselves have a coercive effect; troop movement will confirm this fear on Pakistani part; besides, they could throw out this hint to Ambassadors of UK and USA.” Coercion to be effective warranted implementation of the intention. Neither any coercive effect was caused on

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389 Dasgupta, op cit, p 92  
390 Prasad and Dharampal, op cit, p 79  
391 Dasgupta, op cit, p 74  
393 Raghavan, op cit 2010, p 148
Pakistan nor any caution imposed on UK and US; instead, it produced an unintended outcome – irresistible pressure on Nehru to refer the matter to the UN. Faced with the prospect of an all-out war, Mountbatten mounted immense pressure on Nehru to refer the matter to UNO. Nehru reluctantly agreed to refer the matter to the UN. Till now, Nehru had resisted British pressure to involve the UN before the eviction of raiders but finally gave in on 20th December 1947 to exhaust all peaceful means before taking recourse to military action against Pakistan.\textsuperscript{394} The Indian Cabinet while taking the matter to the UN was under the impression that it was a prelude to India marching towards the invaders’ bases if they did not withdraw within a short time.\textsuperscript{395} This assessment turned out to be incorrect. \textbf{Taking the Kashmir issue to the UN was an incorrect political decision, as thereafter, it got entangled in international power politics and cold war dynamics.} Very few nations supported Indian line UN Security Council discussions as the British diplomats convinced the international community of Pakistan’s argument of the Muslim majority and contiguous J&K to be part of Pakistan.

Having got the matter referred to UN, Mountbatten then dissuaded Nehru from launching an offensive into Pakistan. He wrote to Nehru stating, “it was a fatal illusion to believe that war between India and Pakistan could be confined to the sub-continent or be finished off quickly in favor of India” and shrewdly added that “embroilment in war with Pakistan would undermine the whole of Nehru’s independent foreign policy and progressive social aspirations.”\textsuperscript{396} Nehru replied, “under the international law we can in self-defence take any military measures to resist the invasion including sending our Army to attack their base near the Pakistan border.”\textsuperscript{397} Prime Minister Attlee too expressed deep concern on Nehru’s plan of sending forces to Pakistan in self-defence acting within her rights in international law. He wrote to Nehru, “I beg you as a friend that, whatever be the provocation, and whatever the immediate difficulties, you should do nothing which might lead to war, with all its incalculable consequences and it would, in my opinion, place India definitely in the wrong eyes of the world.”\textsuperscript{398} Prime Minister Attlee’s skillful combination of pleading and warning is evident and it worked.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{394} Dasgupta, op cit, pp 99-100
\item \textsuperscript{395} Sarila, op cit, p 372
\item \textsuperscript{396} Ibid
\item \textsuperscript{397} Ibid. Also see \textit{SWJN}, Volume IV pp 391-392
\item \textsuperscript{398} Dasgupta, op cit, p 105
\end{itemize}
Britain wanted to avert an all-out war at all costs as that would have conferred significant advantages to India. A decisive victory over Pakistan was possible by bringing Pakistan Army to battle in the plains of Punjab instead of fighting local level tactical battles within J&K only. An all-out-war would have led to the withdrawal of nearly 500 British officers from the Pakistan Army and the two Generals directing the operations of Indian Army. The removal of British Generals from India would have provided complete freedom of action in planning and conduct of operations to while the withdrawal of British officers from Pakistan would have incapacitated their Army. The Indian Army was mostly led by the Indian officers who would not have caused much impact. There were no ordnance factories in Pakistan to replenish the ammunition. Mountbatten accordingly did not let the COS, instructed by Nehru to plan for the Indian Forces to enter Pakistan Punjab. However, the war in Punjab would not have led to the diversion of the tribesmen from J&K due to their limited employability in the plains. Indian Army still had to keep J&K as the primary theatre of military operations due to the urgent need to evict the raiders from the maximum area of Kashmir. India required Infantry in J&K and would not have been able to muster adequate strength to support an armored led military offensive into Punjab. Indian Army had an armored division, but it required Infantry to mop up and occupy important areas which were not available. A war in Punjab would have incapacitated the Pakistan Army due to the withdrawal of British officers from its Army, thereby, delivering it a huge psychological blow. To avert this disadvantageous situation to Pakistan, Britain exerted immense pressure on India to refrain from enhancing the scope of operations into Pakistan and succeeded.

While the intended offensive into Punjab did not take place, Britain continued to follow its agenda of restraining Indian Army operations. By the summer of 1948, the regular Pakistan Army troops had entered J&K. 7 Infantry Division of Pakistan Army joined the battle surreptitiously in March-April 1948, while 9 Infantry Division joined in June 1948 making a total of five infantry brigades. Besides the regular Pakistan Army, a large number of Azad Kashmir troops, fully equipped and trained by Pakistan were fighting in J&K. The Indian Army advance from Uri towards Domel in

399 The British Generals directing the war were General Sir Rob Lockhart (later Sir Roy Bucher) Commander-in-Chief (C-in-C) of Indian Army and Lieutenant General Sir Russel Dudley, GOC Delhi and East Punjab Command till 20th January 1948.

400 Prasad and Dharampal, op cit, p 377
May 1948 was opposed by the Pakistan Army regulars as the British were well aware that the Azad Kashmir forces would collapse against the Indian offensive. The presence of Pakistan Army regular troops was known to the British C-in-C in India but the plans were not modified to cater for stiff opposition by the regular Pakistan Army. The British Indian C-in-C’s secret conversation with his Pakistani counterpart in March 48 gave ample grounds to suspect that regular Pakistani troops would be sent to into J&K before the spring; even Whitehall believed that Pakistani C-in-C had informed him regular troop movement into J&K. The result was the inability of the Indian Army to advance towards Domel. On assurance from Britain, Pakistan increased her force levels in Kashmir which proved vital.

The British C-in-C did not plan any offensive towards Poonch in April-May 1948, citing non-availability of troops due to the prevailing law and order situation in Hyderabad, despite Prime Minister Nehru emphasizing the priority of operations in J&K over the operations going on in Hyderabad and East Punjab. Later events confirmed that the trouble in Hyderabad was not that serious and the danger to East Punjab remained merely a threat. The Indian Army’s multi-pronged offensive operation in Hyderabad commenced on 12th September 1948 employing two and a half divisions including an armored division and concluded on 17th September when the Nizam of Hyderabad surrendered. The offensive operation having lasted less than a week reveals the limited capability of Nizam’s Army and the irregulars. It was surely possible to divert additional forces into J&K.

British C-in-C instructed General Cariappa to concentrate mainly on stabilizing the existing plans. His plans for the capture of Mirpur and Muzaffarabad were not pursued at Army HQ on the pretext of not weakening defences in East Punjab from a non-existent threat. The internal security requirements were overplayed to tie down Indian forces. Cariappa’s autobiographer rightly stated, “Cariappa appeared to be fighting two enemies- Army HQ headed by Roy Bucher and Pakistan Army headed by Messervy.” To cripple the Pakistan Army’s capacity to pursue war was not spelled out as a military task; a simple pushing back the Pakistan military became the

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401 Dasgupta, op cit, p 151
402 Prasad and Dharampal, op cit, p 65
403 Subramaniam, op cit, pp 174-178
404 Ibid, p 211
405 Khanduri, CB, Brigadier, Field Marshal Cariappa – His Life and Times (New Delhi: Lancer, 1995) pp 165-66
only objective.\(^{406}\) The British C-in-C in India lost no opportunity to impress upon the Indian government the limitations of its Army and the need to adopt a purely defensive posture while the British High Commissioner arranged to feed Nehru from professional sources that the morale of Indian troops in Kashmir had begun to deteriorate.\(^{407}\) India was not fighting against one enemy but two enemies; the British Generals proved more audacious than the combined Pakistan Army and the tribesmen.

**The War Termination**

The War Termination stage is as important as the initiation stage as it shapes the futuristic strategic landscape. Towards the end of October 1948, the likelihood of military stalemate was becoming imminent. The British C-in-C advised Nehru that the objective of clearing Kashmir of the invaders was unattainable and military stalemate was unavoidable except for some limited offensive operations.\(^{408}\) It was then Nehru concluded that, “while gradual success would come to us, no quick or effective decision was likely; we might gain some successes and advance our fronts, but this would be a long drawn out affair, would not put an end to the conflict and there was always the question of foreign powers interfering or aiding Pakistan in other ways.\(^{409}\)

It is imperative to examine the residual combat potential prior to the cease-fire to see the feasibility to launch more attacks and capture additional areas by continuing the war. This has been examined by various analysts in different ways. General K V Krishna Rao, former Chief of the Army Staff was of the opinion that at the time of the ceasefire, the Indian Army was in full command of the situation and could have evicted the enemy from remaining areas of J&K but orders were received that no further operations were to be carried out, as a cease-fire was in the offing.\(^{410}\) On the other hand, Dr. S N Prasad, the author of the official history of ‘Operations in J&K, 1947-48’ opined that it was not possible.\(^{411}\) However, both do agree that to clear the entire state more troops had to be brought into J&K from the rest of India. An entire infantry division was required for the recapture of Bhimbar and Mirpur alone; no such

\(^{406}\) Singh Jaswant, op cit. p 160

\(^{407}\) Dasgupta, op cit, p 181

\(^{408}\) Ibid, p 197

\(^{409}\) SWJN, Second Series, Volume 19 quoting Nehru to Sheikh Abdullah, 25 August, 1952, NMML, pp 322-325

\(^{410}\) Rao, op cit, p 67

\(^{411}\) Prasad and Dharampal, op cit, p 373
force could have possibly been spared from the J&K theatre.\textsuperscript{412} The availability of forces in India and Pakistan in December 1948\textsuperscript{413} is tabulated as follows:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Formations/Units</th>
<th>India Total</th>
<th>J&amp;K</th>
<th>Pakistan Total</th>
<th>J&amp;K</th>
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<tr>
<td>Army</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infantry Division HQs</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>03</td>
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<tr>
<td>Infantry Brigades</td>
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<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Infantry Battalions</td>
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<td>50</td>
<td>63</td>
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<tr>
<td>J&amp;K and East Punjab Militia Irregulars</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Armored Divisions</td>
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<td>Nil</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independent Armored Brigade</td>
<td>01</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armored Regiments</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>06</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artillery Regiments</td>
<td>19</td>
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</table>

India had overall military superiority over Pakistan, but the latter enjoyed numerical superiority of Infantry duly supported by the tribesmen in J&K. Considering India’s superiority in armor, artillery, and AF, it was possible for the Indian Army to induct up to two to three Infantry divisions from IS duties in Hyderabad and deployment in East Punjab due to improvement in the situation. The military operations in Hyderabad had concluded on 17\textsuperscript{th} September when Nizam had surrendered freeing two and a half divisions. With additional force levels, the liberation of complete J&K was not feasible, but definitely important objectives could have been captured by strategic prioritization. However, to liberate additional areas, more than additional infantry, the senior Army leadership was required to be entrusted to the Indian Army officers and not the British Officers who were playing a dubious role to pursue their politico-strategic interests. Indian Generals were highly capable and experienced with national interest uppermost in them as was proved in the last more than twelve months.

It is often mentioned that due to political considerations, the Indian Army did not progress operations beyond Uri towards Domel. Ganguly, a military historian, stated:

\textsuperscript{412} Ibid
\textsuperscript{413} Ibid, pp 373-375
\textsuperscript{§} 7 and 9 Infantry Divisions of Pakistan Army and one Division of ‘Azad Kashmir’ Forces.
\textsuperscript{\textdegree} 7 and 9 Infantry Divisions of Pakistan Army and ‘Azad Kashmir’ Forces.
\textsuperscript{§} Out of these 127 Infantry battalions, besides 50 battalions deployed in J&K, 29 were in East Punjab, 19 in Hyderabad and 29 for Internal Security duties and as reserves. These 127 infantry battalions included Parachute and Gorkha battalions and State Forces units serving with the Indian Army but excluded Garrison battalions and companies.
“The Indian lack of interest in reclaiming the remainder of the original princely State stemmed from pragmatic political considerations.”

Highlighting the political considerations, he stated that Sheikh Abdullah’s writ was confined primarily to the Kashmir Valley and beyond the Valley, in areas like Mirpur, Poonch, Muzaffarabad, Gilgit, and Baltistan, he had little standing. In Mirpur and parts of Poonch, his old rival and pro-Pakistan agitator Yusuf Shah wielded considerable influence over the Muslim population. As it was difficult to win the support of the Muslim population in these areas, the Indian Army was not encouraged to push beyond the territory it had come to control. A number of analysts feel the same. There is no evidence available to support this assumption that Sheikh Abdullah’s political considerations played any role in the conduct of military operations. The author asked Lt Gen Shergill whether political or military considerations precluded operations beyond Uri to which he clarified that it was unlikely that the decision to stop at Uri and the plains area West of Chhamb was entirely political. In 1947, when Uri was recaptured by mid-November, by the Indian Army, the possibility of continuing the operations towards Domel was considered, but the British Army and Air Force C-in-C s were overcautious in their assessment that the brigade had overstretched itself and there was inadequate air-support to prosecute an offensive battle with winter around the corner. The need to divert two battalion-sized force from Uri to relieve the besieged garrison of Poonch took precedence. It was this force that reinforced Poonch and held it for full one year despite heavy odds till it was finally relieved in November 1948. In retrospect, it was the right decision considering the relative significance of holding onto Poonch vis a vis advancing on to Domel. The fall of Poonch would have been a far greater psychological blow to India and a tremendous strategic advantage to Pakistan. Subsequently, in 1948, the Indian Army advanced along Uri- Domel axis was considerably slowed down due to damaged bridges and strengthening of positions by approximately a brigade strength of regular Pakistan Army troops in addition to a large number of tribesmen. The requirement of troops in Ladakh stymied all possibilities of resuming advance towards Domel. The operations towards Mirpur-Poonch area were effectively controlled by the C-in-C due to British strategic interests and not by any political considerations of Abdullah.

414 Ganguly, op cit, 2002, p 19
415 Ibid, quoting interview with K Subrahmanyam, New Delhi, December 1992
416 Subramaniam, op cit, p 130
The diplomatic negotiations in the UN proceeded side by side. India accepted the 13th August Resolution 1948 Resolution as the basis of a cease-fire as it implicitly recognized the legal basis of India’s presence in J&K in contrast to that of Pakistan. India was also assured that there would-be large-scale disarming of ‘Azad Kashmir’ Forces. By 25th December 1948, the United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP)’s mediatory efforts worked out the agreement between India and Pakistan. Cease Fire came into effect one minute before midnight of 1 January 1949.417

India’s decision-making during the conduct of war reflected political naivety. Nehru’s flip-flop decision of threatening to take the war into Pakistan, and instead, taking the issue to the UN under Mountbatten’s pressure internationalized the conflict and made J&K a ‘disputed territory’. This decision continues to bedevil India even now. A leader of the stature of Prime Minister Nehru was expected to resist British pressure in its national interest. This decision emboldened Pakistan to downplay India diplomatically in international forums. The relevance of decision-making to strengthen deterrence stands established.

Role of Foreign Powers

The role of foreign powers is an important determinant in the conduct of war. The US, USSR, and China, besides of course Britain played a significant role.

The US played a very positive role with respect to India both prior to the partition and during the war. The Americans had advised Britain to keep India united, fearing that India’s division would assist the Russians; it was only after March 1947 when the Congress Party itself accepted the division of Punjab and Bengal, that the US found itself unable to do anymore.418 The US showed a greater understanding of India’s legal position on J&K after signing of the Instrument of Accession in favor of India. Throughout 1948, the US insisted that J&K’s accession to India was valid and should not be diluted, unless it lost the pleiscite that India itself had offered and, meanwhile, Pakistani forces that had entered the State, should be withdrawn; it was this US stand that prevented J&K’s accession to India being negated, at Britain’s behest, by the UN Security Council.419 India failed to take advantage of the US’s positive inclination based on the legality of accession. It was Nehru’s distrust of American capitalism,

417 Dasgupta, op cit, p 199
418 Sarila, op cit, p 403
419 Ibid
faith in Britain’s socialism and personal ties with Mountbatten that dissuaded him from developing closer relations with the US that would have been of immense advantage to India in the UN and globally. Pakistan’s acceptance of withdrawal from J&K in UN Security Council Resolution had come largely because the Americans had remained absolutely adamant that the Pakistanis had to pull out.\textsuperscript{420}

The Soviet Union generally did not take much interest in the UN Security Council proceedings as Stalin considered India to be still under British control. It is intriguing that Britain supported the creation of Pakistan to serve its long-term interest of keeping the Soviets away from the Indian sub-continent and India could not muster the support of the Soviet Union, who was the basic cause of Britain’s tilt towards Pakistan. With the US supportive of India, it should have been possible for Indian diplomacy to extract greater diplomatic support from the Soviet Union in the UN Security Council.

China played a supportive role for India in the UN Security Council. In March 1948, the presidency of the Security Council had passed from Canada to China who was more positively inclined towards the Indian case than any other delegation. The draft resolution presented by the Security Council on 18 March 48, under the Chinese presidency went a long way to meet India’s concerns. It dealt with restoration of peace and order, called upon Pakistan to try and secure the withdrawal of the raiders, prevent any further intrusion, called on India to set up a Plebiscite Administration to conduct a fair plebiscite, constitution of an interim government having adequate representation of all major political groups and the appointment of a high Indian official to ensure fulfillment of the state government’s obligations under the plan.\textsuperscript{421}

The proposal according to priority for restoration of peace and order was consistent with India’s sovereignty in J&K. The US supported the draft framework with certain amendments. The Commonwealth representative pressed for a number of amendments to meet Pakistani demands.

Britain extended its dubious role from the battlefield to the UN and moved away from a position based on legality and impartiality to protect their interests after their withdrawal from the sub-continent. In addition to serving its strategic interests, Britain was also trying to win over the Arabs, in order to preserve their interests in the

\textsuperscript{420} Ibid, p 396
\textsuperscript{421} Dasgupta, op cit, pp 126-27
Middle East and Gulf. The loyalty of Lord Mountbatten to Britain remained more pronounced throughout his stay in India and he carried out the mandate given to him by the British Government to the dot. All the respondents strongly agreed that the British pressure was the most important determinant that played a key role in decision-making in war and deciding the outcome of the war. The sub-continent was partitioned and the Kashmir war ended with one-third part of the state remaining under Pakistan control having crucial areas that served British interests. The innocuous coup-de-main; effected by Lord Mountbatten in the beginning in October 1947 of usurping the control of the DCC proved highly damaging to India right from acceptance of Instrument of Accession to the cease-fire and in fact till today. Britain’s dubious role in the UN got the US to their side. The US Embassy note asking India and Pakistan to restrain from ‘irresponsible elements’ and ‘precipitous action by either government’ was directed at Pakistan and India respectively. British diplomacy succeeded in converting the pro-India stance of US to neutrality with both India and Pakistan.

Leadership

The Indian political leadership proved inept in resisting Mountbatten’s vigorous pursuance of British geo-strategic and Pakistan’s national interest. Indian leaders could not calibrate their policies to the power-politics of the emerging cold-war dynamics. Failure to appreciate the geo-strategic significance of NWFP constrained Nehru and Patel to agree to a referendum and thereafter acquiescing to Frontier Gandhi to boycott same enabled Pakistan to get the strategic province into its territory. According to Sarila, “the Indian leaders remained plagued by the age-old weakness of arrogance, inconsistency, often poor political judgement and disinterest in foreign affairs and questions of defence.” Nehru’s decisions reflected the appeasement of Mountbatten. Sarila, the ADC to Mountbatten commented: “Nehru and the Mountbattens [including Lady Edwina Mountbatten] had come closer to each other, but the Indian [read Prime Minister Nehru] was less able to separate affairs of State from personal feelings than the Englishmen [read Mountbatten].” Mountbatten seemed to have successfully applied the Stephen Rosen’s Emotion-based Pattern Recognition model on Nehru which states that people normally adopt a course of

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422 Refer Question 20 of Appendix B on page 359
423 Ibid
424 Sarila, op cit, p 405
425 Ibid, p 356
action which is based on the relevant information stored in the memory over a period of time and tend to relate the same to the new problem. Mountbatten’s technique of mediation was to propose a compromise solution and, when this was rejected by Pakistan, to seek a unilateral concession from the party over which he had real influence-India [read Prime Minister Nehru].

To be fair to Nehru, he displayed commendable resolve and determined leadership to steer the Indian Army during the war despite the Governor-General and British Generals blatantly adopting a pro-Pakistan agenda to pursue their own strategic interests. Prime Minister Nehru showed considerable courage and political foresight in making the bold decision of holding onto Poonch against the advice of experienced British generals; political considerations overrode those of military strategy. Subsequent events proved the decision to hold on to Poonch to be right. It was a lasting tribute to Nehru that Poonch held out and was spared the horrors which befell the inhabitants of Mirpur, Kotli and other pillaged towns.

The Indian Army military leadership deserves wholesome praise for the conduct of operations against severe odds. Both the senior and junior leadership rose to the occasion and surmounted the first challenge after achieving Independence with great aplomb, mature professionalism, maintaining the highest standards of training, valor, and sacrifice and lived up to its reputation of being one of the finest fighting forces of the world. The combined operations stood out as one of the finest examples of the synergized application of combat power benchmarked by the flawless execution of the airbridge. Not only was this apparent between the Airforce and the Army, but also with the civil aviation and the state forces. This was independent India’s first Joint Services mission in the battle and a fine example of synergetic effort. The lifeline to Leh i.e. Zoji La Pass was recaptured by the innovative use of tanks in a high-altitude area, which indeed was a brilliant move. The leadership of Lieutenant General Cariappa, Major Generals Thimmaya, Kulwant and Atma Singh was outstanding and inspiring against all possible odds considering the fact there was no time for detailed preparations.

426 Dasgupta, op cit, p 84
427 Prasad and Dharampal, op cit, p 82
428 Singh, Jaswant, op cit p 82
429 Ibid, p 72
PART III: CONCLUSION

The partition was a politico-strategic act enacted by the British in continuation of its ‘divide’ and ‘rule’ policy carried out in the name of the ideology of ‘India for Hindus and Pakistan for Muslims’ to continue their control over Indian sub-continent. Britain’s pro-Pakistan policy on Kashmir was based on “its desire to keep that part of its old Indian Empire which jutted into Central Asia and lay along Afghanistan, Soviet Russia and China, in the hands of the successor dominion that had promised cooperation in matters of defence.” 430 Pakistan emerged the successor to British policies.

The first India-Pakistan War of 1947-48 was a typical third world and a unique conflict in which the rival armies were led by the British Generals. Lord Mountbatten- the Governor General and the British generals adroitly pursued their geo-strategic interests that were aligned with Pakistan. Acceptance of Britishers as heads of administration with a dominating role in military decision-making disallowed pursuance of national interests by India. The Governor General overshadowed the decision-making process and disabled the Indian political leadership from exercising the National will. From Pakistan’s perspective, the ‘End’ justifies the ‘Means’. It achieved its national interest to a great extent. Pakistan secured one-third of the strategic area of J&K which broke India’s geographical contact with Afghanistan and CARs. It is in full control over Gilgit Baltistan region. Skardu provides it with the base for operations on the Siachen glacier. It secured the strategic depth against India and more importantly, it laid the long-term foundation of deep distrust amongst the people of J&K against the Indian nation that metamorphosed into a proxy war in the late eighties. While it was anticipated that the war in 1948 would settle the matter of territorial dispute over Kashmir, it instead sowed the seeds of prolonged confrontation.

430 Sarila, op cit, p 413
SECTION II
INDIA-CHINA WAR 1962

Background

India and China have had a long history of friendly relations based on ancient cultural and, religious ties and trade and share a long border mostly based on the crest line of the Himalayan range. The border normally referred to as the Northern border or frontier is based on custom, usage, agreements and the traditional watershed principle along high crests in the mountains. Due to historic cultural ties, there was generally an environment of friendship and tranquility without any military confrontation between the two countries. The boundary issue - the main bone of contention and a source of confrontation between India and China is intimately linked to the Tibetan issue. India was accused of supporting the Tibetan uprising in March 1959 which brought the boundary dispute to the forefront. A series of diplomatic negotiations to resolve the boundary dispute proved unsuccessful and finally led to the 1962 War, though there were other reasons too. The case study will examine the evolution of the confrontation and analyze the application of deterrence and decision-making for the war under the following heads: -

(a) Part I : The Confrontation and War
(b) Part II : Analysis of Deterrence and Decision making
(c) Part III : Conclusion

PART I: THE CONFRONTATION AND WAR

China on achieving independence, adopted a well-thought-out plan to restore its power in Tibet while India, aspiring to inherit the British legacy considered Tibet to be a buffer State between the two countries. The differences began to grow between the two countries when China militarily annexed Tibet. The “origins of the conflict lay in two intertwined issues – the boundary dispute and Tibet.” With both the issues being interlinked, a brief overview of the underlying issues of the boundary dispute and the Tibetan issue is imperative to grasp the essential aspects related to the India-China War 1962.

431 Raghavan, op cit 2010, p 227
The Tibetan Issue

The British, during their rule in India, had kept Tibet as a buffer state free of any external influence, particularly Russians and, therefore, had only acknowledged China’s ‘suzerainty’ and not ‘sovereignty’ over Tibet and maintained direct diplomatic relations with Lhasa.\(^\text{432}\) After independence, the Central People’s Government of China militarily annexed Tibet in October 1950 and restored its power in Tibet. To study the problems created by the Chinese aggression in Tibet, India constituted a high-powered committee named the HimmatSinhjhi Committee to make recommendations for the measures to be taken to improve administration, defence, communication in the frontier areas.\(^\text{433}\) For ‘defence and security’ the Committee Report recommended reorganization and re-deployment of the military forces in NEFA to include some increase in Army and a considerable increase in Assam Rifles and other Civil Armed Police including their deployment in larger concentrations at strategic points to carry out regular patrolling. It also recommended the development of certain airfields and other infrastructure, but there wasn’t much progress on the ground. The Agreement on Trade and Intercourse between India and China was signed on 29 April 1954 in which India recognized Tibet as a region of China.\(^\text{434}\)

The Boundary Dispute

The Tibetan issue is closely linked the boundary dispute. The border between India and China stretching from the North-Western tip of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) in the West to the North-Eastern point of North Eastern Frontier and Agency (NEFA and now Arunachal Pradesh) in the East is about 4,250 km including the 482 km of the Bhutan-Tibet section.\(^\text{435}\) The boundary comprises three distinct sectors – the Western, the Central and the Eastern. The Western Sector comprises of Ladakh, the Central Sector the areas of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, and the Eastern Sector the areas of the states of Sikkim, Bengal, Assam, and Arunachal Pradesh. China contended that the Sino-Indian boundary had not been formally de-limited while India

\(^{432}\) Ibid, p 230
\(^{433}\) Mullick, BN, My Years with Nehru: The Chinese Betrayal (New Delhi: Allied Publishers,1971) p 122
\(^{434}\) Raghavan, op cit 2010, p 240
maintained that the boundary was clearly demarcated in the Eastern sector while in the Western and Central sectors it was defined by usage and custom. Prime Minister Nehru stated in the Parliament on 20 November 1950 that, “the frontier from Ladakh to Nepal [Western and Central sector] is defined chiefly by the usage and custom, while in the East from Bhutan to Burma it was clearly defined by the McMahon Line fixed by the Shimla Convention of 1914.” The three representatives of India, China and Tibet had initialed the agreement, however, China did not ratify it, while India had ratified the same. The maps published by Survey of India in 1950 showed the McMahon Line as the boundary indicating a clear position only in the East. China maintained silence to India’s statement in Parliament and on the publication of maps. It later started staking claims to about 13,000 kilometers of Indian territory in different sectors of the boundary. The areas claimed includes the Aksai Chin in Ladakh in the Western Sector, Barahoti in Uttarakhand in the Central Sector and major parts of Arunachal Pradesh in the Eastern Sector.

To lend credence to its claim to Aksai Chin, China began constructing a highway known as the Western Highway to connect Xinjiang with mainland China through Tibet. Aksai Chin provides strategic access to its Western province of Sinkiang. The

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437 Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru (SWJN), Second Series, Volume 15, Part II, The PM’s Answer to a Question in Parliament on 20th November 1950, p 348
438 Rao, op cit, p 75
Indian government decided not to protest these activities because the area was so remote as to make enforcement of Indian jurisdiction extremely difficult.\textsuperscript{439} India had extended its border in the East when, in February 1951, it occupied the Northern part of the Tawang District.\textsuperscript{440} China began questioning the border alignment shortly after the 1954 Trade Agreement. After Zhou En Lai’s visit to India in June 1954, Nehru directed “all old maps dealing with the frontier should be carefully examined and where necessary withdrawn; new maps should be printed showing the North and North-Eastern frontier without reference to any line and stating any un-demarcated territory; this frontier should be considered a firm and definite boundary not open for any discussion.”\textsuperscript{441} The Prime Minister also directed that the system of check-posts should be spread along the entire frontier, especially in such places considered disputed. China, on the other hand, in order to reinforce its claims, carried out intrusions in Barahoti in the Central Sector in July 1954, Lanak La in Ladakh in the Western Sector in August/September 1956 and Walong in the Eastern Sector in 1957.

In January 1959, China for the first time, stated its case explicitly through a note saying that “the border had never been delimited formally; there was no treaty or agreement; and that the Xinjiang/Tibet highway had been built within Chinese territory; on the Eastern sector, the Chinese Government finds it necessary to take a more or less realistic attitude towards the McMahon Line.\textsuperscript{442} It suggested, “the two sides should temporarily maintain the status quo and not go beyond them.”\textsuperscript{443} This note clearly established the boundary dispute between India and China both in the Western and Eastern sector. India was more concerned about China’s claims in the Eastern sector as Zhou had earlier proposed to accept the McMahon Line as the boundary but now made it quite clear that the entire border is disputed. Nehru was amenable to compromise in the Western Sector, but his principal concern was the Eastern sector where the Chinese maps published in 1958 claimed sizeable area of

\textsuperscript{439} Garver op cit, p 89
\textsuperscript{441} SWJN, Second Series, Volume 26, 481-84. Note to Secretary General and Foreign Secretary, 1 July 1954, p 482
\textsuperscript{442} Dave, AK, IPS (Retired), \textit{The Real Story of China’s War on India, 1962} (New Delhi: Centre for Armed Forces Historical Research, United Service Institution of India; Occasional Paper No 1, 2006) p 5
\textsuperscript{443} Ibid
Assam and some parts of UP. In the West, the Aksai Chin region is under Chinese control but claimed by India while in the East, Arunachal Pradesh is under Indian control but claimed by China.

**Tibetan Uprising**

The unrest in Tibet simmering since years exploded in March 1959 but was successfully put down by China. The Dalai Lama – the spiritual leader of the Tibetans escaped and took shelter in India. China was convinced of the Indian government’s involvement along with that of the USA and Britain in fomenting the uprising. It suspected that India had enabled the Dalai Lama’s escape to India to undermine Chinese control in Tibet. Perhaps the Chinese leadership believed so because the Indian Consul-General in Lhasa had ‘met with the Tibetan protestors at the start of the uprising. China, after successfully containing the Tibetan uprising, toughened its stance on the border dispute.

China concurrently pursued diplomacy and military activities to resolve the boundary dispute. Zhou Enlai, in his letter to the Indian Prime Minister of 8 September, 1959 laid claim to all 1,132,000 square kilometers of Indian territory in Ladakh and NEFA and explained that “just because for reasons of amity” Chinese forces have not crossed the line “No way implies that the Chinese government has recognized that line.” China sought a negotiated settlement but apparently on its terms and condition as it had suggested maintenance of status quo in Ladakh, and the NEFA border to be left unguarded. To give substance to its claim to the territory, the Chinese forces had an armed encounter with the border post at Longju in NEFA on 25 September 1959 followed by an ambush of an Indian police patrol near Kongka La in Ladakh on 21 October 1959.

These incidents alarmed India. The Indian Army was instructed to move closer to the border and take over the security of the border in Ladakh and NEFA to prevent the occupation of Indian territory. 4 Infantry Division located at Ambala was shifted to NEFA in November 1959 and tasked to defend the entire McMahon line from the Bhutan Tri-Junction to the Burma border. The newly-raised 17 Mountain Division was deployed in a defensive role in Sikkim. China too moved its forces closer to the

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444 Raghavan, op cit 2010, p 244
445 Dave, op cit, p. 7
With both sides sending troops to the disputed borders, the probability for violent clashes increased manifold. There was immense pressure on Nehru, not only from the opposition but his own party members, to take a stronger stance. In Parliament, Nehru rejected strong action and urged restraint, “a showdown with China would be disastrous for it would entail a great focus on military measures and divert resources from pressing domestic concerns but India would not be cowed down by China, nor would it abandon non-alignment and seek military assistance.”

China’s offer, made on 3 November 1959, for “the creation of a demilitarized zone by means of a 20-kilometer withdrawal by each side from the Line of Actual Control and talks between prime ministers” was rejected by India. It apprehended that China wanted to equate India’s possession of NEFA with Chinese control over Ladakh. Diplomacy continued side by side. The talks between Prime Minister Nehru and Prime Minister Zhou held over several rounds from 20 to 25 April 1960 in New Delhi ended in failure after which, both China and India continued to enhance their troop presence and creating infrastructure in the border areas. From May 1960 onwards, Chinese activity increased manifold in Ladakh including road-building much beyond their claim-line. It virtually annexed 2,000 square miles of area in North Ladakh and 400 square miles further South, setting up several new posts and building roads to link them. India decided to take counter-measures to prevent further occupation of the territory. On 2 November 1961, at a meeting chaired by the Prime Minister and attended by the Defence Minister, the Chief of Army Staff (COAS), the Chief of General Staff (CGS), other civilian and military advisors, it was decided to establish additional posts by the Army close to the border. The directives issued in the form of minutes of the meeting instructed the Indian Army to establish posts to prevent any further Chinese advance avoiding border clashes unless this becomes necessary in self-defence, patrol as far forward as possible towards the International Border and position additional forces close to the forward posts. This was known as ‘The Forward Policy’ intended to deter Chinese incursions. The Army, by February 1962, had established approximately sixty posts in Ladakh and NEFA with strengths

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446 Raghavan, op cit 2010, pp 258-59
447 Dai, Chaowu, ‘From ‘Hindi-Chini Bhai-Bhai’ to ‘International Class Struggle’ against Nehru: China’s India Policy and the Frontier Dispute’, in Gupta and Luthi, Eds, p 76
448 Dave, op cit, p 10
varying from 10-20 personnel from within the existing force levels. Some posts were sited very close to the McMahon line despite the agreement after the 1959 clashes that both countries would withdraw 20 km from their last positions. Some were sited within territory claimed by China.

**Border Clashes**

Frequent clashes started occurring between the troops on the border. In a clash in the Galwan Valley in Ladakh on 6 July 1962, the Chinese surrounded the Indian post, but the Indian troops stood their ground compelling the Chinese to pull back slightly but they continued to encircle the post. The Prime Minister thought China’s action was ‘a show of force’ to test India’s reaction and directed that the posts should remain firm; the Chinese backing off without attacking confirmed their ‘behavior pattern of aggression.’

The COAS and the CGS also inferred that the incident vindicated their assessment about Chinese reactions and that the Forward Policy could be pursued without much risk.

The situation in the Eastern sector deteriorated from the first week of September 1962. A face-off had taken place between the Indian and Chinese troops at Dhola post which the Indian Army had established as part of its Forward Policy in June 1962 at the Tri Junction of India, Bhutan and China border. The post was located on the southern bank of River Namka Chu below the Thagla Ridge in Tawang Sector of NEFA. On 8 September, approximately a company strength of Chinese troops surrounded the post warning the Indian troops to vacate the area as that was Chinese territory. For 12 days, the troops of both sides remained in eyeball-to-eyeball confrontation till 20 September during which time, the Chinese established themselves strongly on the Thagla Ridge.

On 9 September, a meeting was held by the Defence Minister where a decision was taken to evict the Chinese South of the Thagla Ridge. The field commanders on the ground i.e. the corps, division and brigade commanders considered the operation militarily infeasible. The militarily sound views of the field commanders were overruled by the Army Commander, the COAS and the Government.

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451 Sinha, Athale, and Prasad, op cit, pp 175-176
452 Rao, op cit, p 89
453 Ibid, p 91
Commander insisted on the tactical infeasibility of evicting the Chinese, the Army Commander asked for a new Corps Commander. The Defence Minister, to avoid political repercussions, decided to raise 4 Corps HQ under Lieutenant General BM Kaul. The new Corps Commander considering the difficulties involved in the eviction of the Chinese from Thagla Ridge made a bid for additional resources including offensive air support. He, however, decided to launch the operation latest by 10 October, despite the difficulties.\(^{454}\) A patrol base established on the Thagla ridge as part of preparations for the attack was overrun by the Chinese. The situation was reviewed in the Emergency Committee of the Cabinet (ECC) wherein it was decided that a brigade would hold the defensive positions along the Namka Chu.\(^{455}\) As the situation on the Thagla Ridge continued to deteriorate, the Chinese leadership decided to launch an invasion on India on 20 October 1962.

### The War

The Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) launched premeditated and calibrated attacks, termed as a ‘counter-attack in self-defence, in Ladakh and NEFA on 20 October 1962, followed by a subsidiary thrust in the Walong area on 22 October 1962 in the Eastern sector.\(^ {456}\) The Chinese overran the Indian forward defences including the Namku Chu and other posts in the Eastern sector as also in the Western sector. India vacated Tawang on 23 October without any resistance. In the Western sector, the PLA captured most of the posts North of Chushul by 22 October, barring Rezang La. After four days of fighting, as the PLA had achieved their military objectives, the Chinese President, Mao Zedong, proposed a ceasefire to the Indian Prime Minister and a peaceful resolution of the boundary through negotiations, with both sides to disengage and withdraw twenty kilometers from the present positions. Nehru suggested a return to the ‘boundary prior to 8 September 1962. Zhao's reply of 4th November repeated the same offer as in 1959 i.e. to return to the McMahon Line in NEFA and the Chinese claims to Aksai Chin.

After three weeks of a lull, fighting resumed in the Eastern sector on 14 November 1962, with the PLA attack in the Walong area. The attacks launched in Se La and

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\(^{454}\) Ibid, p 92  
\(^{455}\) Raghavan, op cit 2010 , p 301 The writer has based this on number of versions of this meeting; Kaul, BM, The Untold Story (New Delhi: Allied Publishers, 1967) pp 385-386; Mullick, op cit, pp 361-364; Khera, SS, India’s Defence Problem, ( Bombay: Orient Longman, 1968) p 225; Palit, op cit, pp 226-227; Maxwell, op cit, pp 340-341 and Hoffman, Steven A India and the China Crisis (Delhi: Oxford University Press,1990) pp 153-54  
\(^{456}\) USI Study, op cit, p 37
Bomdi La on 17 November 1962 in the Tawang area forced the Indian Army to retreat. Rezang La post located near Chushul in Ladakh fought very bravely but ultimately fell to the repeated PLA attacks on 18 November 1962. Having occupied all the strategic objectives in both the Eastern and Western sectors, the Chinese President Mao declared a unilateral ceasefire on 20 November 1962, signaling the end of the war.

**PART II: ANALYSIS OF DETERRENCE AND DECISION MAKING**

Correlating the paradigm of *Peace- Confrontation-Crisis-Conflict-War* to the 1962 War the various stages that distinctly emerge are as follows:

(a) 1950 - 1954 : Peace - Policy Formulation
(b) 1954 - 1959 : Confrontation - Boundary Dispute
(c) 1959 - 1961 : Crisis - Tibetan Uprising
(d) January-October 1962 : Conflict - Border Clashes
(e) October-November 1962 : War

**Peace: 1950-1954: Policy Formulation**

Peace is the absence of direct or indirect violence but does not imply that there is no conflict of interests between them. The conflict of interests may remain latent for greater strategic goals and erupt at the opportune time. There were undercurrents of simmering differences on the Tibetan and the boundary dispute between the two countries.

The simmering differences on the Tibetan issue owe its origin to India’s pre-independence era. China felt that India believed in maintaining the British legacy of imperialism. In March 1947, the Interim Indian Government had signed off on a British Cabinet decision to covertly supply a limited number of arms and ammunition to the Tibetan government. 457 Though the decision of India’s Congress leaders was taken when it was under British rule, China felt the decision also reflected the thought process of India’s emerging new leaders. The same month India had invited the Tibetan government to participate, along with representatives of other Asian nations, in the Asian Relations Conference in March 1947. This was strongly protested by

China (then still the Republic of China), but India refused to withdraw the invitation extended to the Tibetans. On achieving independence, India expected China to exercise the same suzerainty over Tibet which the Britishers had exercised in the overall framework of Tibet’s autonomy. China, however, by annexing Tibet in October 1950, made its intentions clear of making Tibet as its integral part and establishing its sovereignty over it. The three notes sent by the Defence Minister of India to China protesting its military annexation of Tibet in October 1950 were viewed by China as interference in their internal affairs. Mao Zedong had ordered the Foreign Ministry to ‘adopt a harder approach’ towards Indian ‘interference.’ In response to the third Indian protest note, dated 1 November 1950, which directly raised the question of Tibet’s autonomy within the framework of Chinese suzerainty, China demanded that India choose between accepting it’s unlimited sovereignty over Tibet or confrontation with China; implicit in China’s note was the message that China was willing to employ the military instrument against India over Tibet.

China ‘feared’ India’s possible challenge to its rule over Tibet though war might not have been then in the thought process of Chinese leadership. Kaplan highlighting the significance of geography in India-China confrontation reinforced China’s fears: “The issue of Tibet has inflamed this rivalry, even if it is a core function of it, as an independent or autonomous Tibet that was even vaguely pro-Indian would make Chinese strategists exceedingly nervous.” India too feared that the Chinese threat to its security due to the elimination of the Tibetan buffer between the two countries. To overcome this mutual fear both countries adopted different policies.

China conscious of India’s fears signed a 17-Point Agreement with the Tibetans on 23 May 1951 in which the Chinese protected the privileges and religious freedom of the ruling elite. It was a clever ploy to win over the ruling class; no such agreement was signed with any other minority group in China. In this China made a reference that the Tibetans shall unite with them to ‘drive out the imperialist aggressive forces from Tibet’ and ‘the local government of Tibet shall actively assist the PLA to enter

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459 Mao, Zedong, *Jianguo Yilai Mao Zedong Wengao*, (Beijing: 1987) pp 1:627-28 quoted in Garver, op cit, p 46. This is Volume 1 of Mao Zedong’s documents written from 1893 to 1976 and was published in 1987

460 Garver, op cit, p 46

461 Kaplan, op cit, p 249

462 USI Study op cit, p 6.
and consolidate national defence.”

Who were the imperialist forces? It was obviously hinted at India; Britain had left China long back and the US had no presence over there.

To deal with China and Pakistan in the wake of adversarial relations with both and considering the need for economic development of the country, the PM Nehru adopted a policy of reconciliation and strategic friendship with China. He decided to steadfastly confront Pakistan militarily, and pursue a friendship with China diplomatically. Nehru justified the same: “the country had only two alternatives to deal with China- to build up a military force which would enable her to speak on terms of equality with China, or to seek a modus vivendi for co-existence with China; for political and economic reasons, he doubted that the first was feasible.” Secondly, the Indo-Pak war of 1948, had forced the Indian military to keep its primary focus on Pakistan as its arch-rival. Nehru’s assessed that it was difficult for India to confront two unfriendly and antagonistic powers with military capability. In view of India’s military weakness, it was not in a position to protect and preserve its security, if it had to face two hostile powers on its borders. Of the two powers: Pakistan and China, Nehru felt that Pakistan would remain hostile with no possibility of any change in its attitude, while reconciliation is possible with China. China’s silence on Nehru’s public declaration in the Parliament on 20 November 1950 that the frontier from Bhutan Eastwards had been clearly defined by the McMahon Line was taken as tacit acceptance of India’s claims. Mao’s assertions to India’s ambassador on 28 September 1951, that India had nothing to fear from China and China had no fears on her Southwest frontier conformed to Nehru’s thinking that India need not expect any aggression from China and that the border was not an immediate issue. Certain precautionary administrative and police measures were, nonetheless, adopted in conformity with the recommendations of the Himmat Sinjhiji Committee Report. Anything which could be interpreted by China as concerning defence preparations was purposefully avoided. The USI Study finds, that India’s decision of friendship with China far outweighed any obligations it had inherited from Britain regarding

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463 Ibid
464 Ibid, p 9. Also see Note to the Foreign Secretary 18th June, 1954
467 USI Study, op cit, p 8
468 Kavic, op cit, p 61
Tibet. Stephen Cohen, an American political scientist, and security studies expert termed this policy as impeccable military logic.

India as part of its reconciliation policy granted unilateral concessions to China to allay Chinese fears. India was one of the first non-communist countries to recognize the People’s Republic of China and established diplomatic relations at the ambassadorial level on 1 April 1950. India’s acceptance of the conversion of India’s mission in Lhasa into a Consulate-General on 16 September 1952 that would ‘report to the Indian Ambassador at Peking was a ‘friendly gesture’ from Nehru intending to emphasize that India had no political interest in Tibet. India’s agreement on a change of the status of its mission in Lhasa, had, in effect, implied recognition of Tibet as part of China in September 1952. Practically it implied that Tibet existed only as a province of China. India recognizing Tibet as ‘a region of China’ and not raising the boundary issue during the discussions for the Agreement on Tibet were part of India’s friendly approach. Nehru had instructed the Indian delegation, not to raise the boundary question and in case the Chinese raised it, we should express our surprise and point out that this is a settled issue; he publicly stated, “our people have not gone there to discuss the frontier problem, it is not an issue at all to be discussed.” India considered the 1954 India-China Agreement as an implicit trade-off that resolved the border dispute presuming China had accepted the existing borders. India had hoped that ‘the incorporation of the five principles of the Panchsheel Agreement’ into the text of the 1954 Agreement on Tibet with China would become the basis for a peaceful and enduring Sino-Indian relationship. China, however, comprehended the agreement differently, primarily through its security interests in Tibet, and not to solve the boundary question.

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469 USI Study, op cit, p 4
470 Cohen, op cit 2002, pp 38-40
474 The Panchsheel Agreement as a Preamble to the 1954 agreement, included the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence from Panch meaning five, and Sheel meaning Virtues in Sanskrit. These were mutual respect for each other’s territorial integrity and sovereignty; mutual non-aggression; mutual non-interference in each other’s internal affairs; equality and co-operation for mutual benefit and peaceful co-existence.
Considering the hostile nature of the relationship with the Western neighbor Pakistan and the need for economic development for a newly independent nation, the policy adopted with respect to China was logical, rational and prudent. India strove to build up deterrence based on strategic friendship with China to be the best guarantee for the country’s defence. Military measures were deliberately not undertaken to avoid any provocations to China. The contentious boundary issue was not even discussed, leave aside resolving the same prior to accepting Chinese sovereignty over Tibet in the India-Tibet Agreement. The was generally a period of Uneasy Friendship.

The Confrontation: July 1954-March 1959
Confrontation is normally managed through political and diplomatic measures alongside the military, with the former taking precedence over the latter to influence the opponent to change its intent and win the clash of wills. China having obtained unilateral concessions from India on the Tibetan issue, now began to assert itself on the boundary dispute expecting a similar conciliatory stance by India.

China first attempt to win the clash of wills was by publishing the maps in 1954 that showed the North-Eastern edge of Jammu and Kashmir (the Aksai Chin region) as Chinese territory and expected India to accept Aksai Chin as its territory in exchange of China’s acceptance of McMahon Line as the border between the two countries in the East. India refused to accept this proposal. Nehru was firm that Aksai Chin was an integral part of Ladakh and the McMahon Line was inviolable in the East. As India did not relent, China followed up by carrying out intrusions in all the sectors between July 1954 and 1957 to convey the message that it could escalate the boundary dispute and resolve it by force, if required. The Chinese intrusions made India realize the need to define the boundary but felt that there was no urgency and continued to reiterate its position through maps and statements. Nehru felt that we should hold our position and the lapse of time and events will confirm it, and by that time, perhaps, when the challenge to it came, we would be in a much stronger position to face it. Implicit in Nehru’s statement is acceptance of India’s military weakness, but took no steps to develop the military capability. The size of the Indian Army remained fairly static from 1953 to 1956 comprising between 325,000 and 350,000 personnel of all

476 Luthi, Lorenz M, ‘India’s Relations with China, 1945-74’in Gupta and Luthi, Eds, p 32
477 Maxwell, op cit, p 92
In mid-1954 the Ministry of External Affairs assumed control of the 300-mile Ladakh-Tibet border and reorganized the system of check posts, which had hitherto been manned somewhat haphazardly by the State police. This was rather strange – the External Affairs Ministry controlling the borders with troops drawn from the Home Ministry. The Indian Army should have been made responsible for the defences on the border and should not have been considered a provocative action as the Army is responsible to protect the country against external threats.

The opening of the Tibet - Sinkiang Highway in 1957 through Aksai Chin established China’s de-facto control over the disputed territory and accentuated the growing hostility between the two countries. In January 1959, China stated its unambiguous stance on the boundary issue, claiming the whole of Aksai Chin and non-acceptance of the McMahon Line as the boundary in the East, but open for negotiations while maintaining status quo. China by claiming the whole of Aksai Chin and not accepting McMahon Line as the boundary in the East, but willing to negotiate in the latter case made the boundary dispute official and asserted its intentions unambiguously. The COAS, General KS Thimayya based on the intelligence appreciation, Intelligence Bureau inputs and studies conducted by the Army Commands, projected to the MoD in July 1957 the requirement of three mountain divisions and 10-15 Assam Rifle battalions, intelligence and communication resources and development of border infrastructure emphasizing that there cannot be a viable defence without offensive or riposte capability.

These projections remained unactioned as the force level projected was considered excessive. In fact, the defence budget for 1959-60 was reduced from the previous year by Rs 35.46 crore and brought down to Rs 242.68 crore. General Thimayya, after retirement and few months before the war, wrote, “I cannot even as a soldier envisage India taking on China in open conflict on its own; it must be left to the politicians and diplomats to ensure our security.” The former Chief, while admitting the lack of

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478 Kavic, op cit, p 85
479 Ibid, p 51
481 Khanduri, CB, Brigadier, Thimayya: An Amazing Life (New Delhi: Knowledge World, 2006) p 216
482 Ibid, p 221
483 Raghavan, op cit 2010, p 269
military capability, expected diplomacy and political negotiations to achieve the desired deterrence.

India’s approach to the boundary dispute was, thus, in stark contrast to its approach to the Tibetan issue. **India by adopting a tough stance on the boundary dispute exhibited its resolve to not to let the Chinese impose their will.** Deterrence implies that a country must be able to resist the political and military demands of a potential attacking nation.

**The Crisis: March 1959- 1961**

The grant of political asylum to the Dalai Lama by India, following the Tibet Uprising in March 1959 and China’s conviction of India’s involvement, particularly that of Prime Minister Nehru, in instigating the Tibetan revolt precipitated the ongoing confrontation into the crisis stage between the two nations. **China perceived India’s support to Tibetan rebels as a conflict behavior and issued veiled threats of use of force against India.** At a meeting on 25 March 1959, Deng Xiaoping insisted that several of Nehru’s speeches about the Tibetan situation, together with the fact that the HQ of the rebellion was located in Kalimpong (in West Bengal), “left no doubt that the Indian government was behind the rebellion and when the time comes, we certainly will settle accounts with them [the Indians].”

A similar concern was echoed at the Politburo meeting on 17 March 1959 speculating that both Britain and the US had provided active support to the rebels using India as a frontline state. Mao said that “India was doing bad things in Tibet and therefore had to be dealt with”; he, however, cautioned that China should not condemn India openly for the time being, instead “India would be given enough rope to hang itself.” This was the first indication of the use of force by China against India. However, a recent study drawing on Chinese sources concludes that there is little evidence to support Beijing’s claim that New Delhi inspired and colluded with the rebels in Tibet. Neither was there any available evidence to suggest that the Indian government cooperated with the US after Dalai Lama fled to India.

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484 USI Study, op cit, pp 23-24
485 Lintner, op cit, p xv
486 Raghavan, op cit 2010, p 250. Also see Chen Jian, ‘The Tibetan Rebellion of 1959 and China’s Changing Relations with India and the Soviet Union’ *Journal of Cold War Studies* 8, No. 3 (Summer 2006) p 54 -101
The centrality of the boundary dispute placed a premium on skillful diplomacy. In conflictual relations among states, diplomacy may regulate that rivalry by identifying areas of cooperation and keep it from intensifying. India and China explored bilateral diplomacy to discuss their respective claims on the boundary dispute and resolve/minimize the areas of conflict to Delhi.

China attributed the failure of Zhou’s talks with Nehru in April 1960 to Indian intransigence. China felt that India was unwilling to put aside the complicated historical legacy to delimit a legitimate boundary. From China’s perspective, Zhou’s ‘package deal’ proposal in April 1960 was an “earnest effort to reach a preliminary agreement that would help settle the boundary question” but Nehru’s unwillingness to negotiate increasingly looked like obstinance and even preparation for military aggression. It is incorrect to attribute the failure of talks to Nehru. On 5 February 1960, the Government of India had dropped the precondition of a Chinese withdrawal from Aksai Chin to accept Zhou’s proposal for a summit. Nehru had reasons to not to accept the package deal, most importantly the lack of trust in Chinese leadership and their motives. India by now had considered China as untrustworthy and apprehended that once they agreed to compromise, they might come out with even more demands in the future. There was a disparity between the maps of 1956 and 1960 produced by China in which additional 2,000 square kilometers in Aksai Chin was claimed by China, thus reinforcing their untrustworthiness, though China claimed that there was no disparity. An equally important reason was the constitutional clause, which made any transfer of territory dependent on approval by a super-majority in the Indian Parliament. The Supreme Court had ruled in March 1960 that no territory could be ceded without an amendment to the Constitution that needed parliamentary support which was inconceivable in times when public opinion was intensely aroused. Under such circumstances, Nehru did not feel any justification in bartering the deal due to the Chinese use of deceit and force to occupy Aksai Chin and India to ratify the

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487 The Package Deal proposed by China to settle the boundary dispute implied that China was willing to recognize India’s claim to the North East Frontier Administration (NEFA) in the eastern sector, comprising 84,000 square kilometers, in exchange for India accepting China’s claim to Aksai Chin in the western sector, encompassing 38,000 square kilometers
488 Hyer, Eric, 'The Strategic and Regional Contexts of the Sino-Indian Border Conflict: China’s Policy of Conciliation with its Neighbours’ in Gupta and Luthi, Eds, p 97
489 Gupta, Das Amit R, 'Foreign Secretary Subimal Dutt and the Prehistory of the Sino-Indian Border’ in Gupta and Luthi, Eds, pp 58- 59
490 Gupta Das Amit R, op cit in Gupta and Luthi, Eds, p 59
same. Also, India had a strong documentary and historical evidence to counter Chinese claims while China had limited evidence. China instead relied heavily on “negative evidence or loopholes in Indian evidence and reasoning to disprove Indian contentions.”491 It is difficult for any self-respecting government to consider a 2,000-mile border open to barter, even if they were assured of a favorable negotiating outcome and no expansionist designs on the border side.492 The PM’s stance on China’s untrustworthiness and expansionist designs was vindicated when during the three rounds of official discussions after the summit, the Chinese produced a map depicting their claim line in Ladakh further to the West of the line shown in their maps of 1956 incorporating an additional 2,500 square miles of Indian claimed territory.493 India’s stance on the negotiations was eminently right. Nehru toned down his demand for Chinese withdrawal from Aksai Chin and did not suggest even a token withdrawal in Ladakh. This presaged an important shift in India’s negotiating stance.494 Perhaps this compromise stand by Nehru was too late.

**China’s Decision for War: Escalation from Conflict to War: January 1962 – November 1962**

Thucydides in the History of the Peloponnesian War has identified ‘fear, interest and honor’ as the three important motives for war. All the three motives were present in some proportion of China’s decision to wage a war against India in 1962. The failure of talks triggered increased military activity by both China and India along the borders. The Forward Policy adopted by India was counter by China’s Policy of ‘Armed Co-Existence to counter-coerce India by establishing posts encircling the new Indian positions. This reflected a change from non-confrontational containment of each other to that of active confrontation that sowed the seeds of escalation. Border clashes thereafter became more frequent with higher intensity.

‘Fear’ and ‘Interest’ often yield to considerations of ‘Honor’ or ‘Threats to Honor’.

The Indian Prime Minister Nehru had emerged as an important leader of the Third

491 Hoffman, op cit, p 90 based on his interview with Mr JS Mehta, Director, China Division and leader of Indian delegation to 1960 official talks.
492 Ibid, pp 113-114
493 Raghavan, op cit 2010, p 266
494 Ibid, p 288. Also see “The afterthoughts of Premier Chou” (an interview with Neville Maxwell), *Sunday Times*, 19 December 1971: Belcher (Deputy High Commissioner in India) to Paul Gore-Booth (British High Commissioner in India) 16 July 1962, Ms. Gore-Booth 85, Gore-Booth Papers, BL.
World after the Bandung Conference in Indonesia in 1955, Nehru had become the leading voice for the newly-independent nations of Asia and Africa. The international scenario had made China wary of India. From the late 1950s onwards, China was concerned about the growing Indo-Soviet relationship as well as America’s growing interest in democratic India as a counter to the Chinese communists in Asia. The PRC leadership apprehended that the US and the Soviet Union were pursuing a policy of ‘containment’ of China in partnership with India. A blow at India might bring what the Chinese saw as Nehru’s covert alliance with the Americans against themselves into the open and expose the ideological error of Moscow’s support for India.

Around the same time, Mao was severely criticized domestically for the failure of the Great Leap Forward Policy that resulted in hundreds of deaths due to starvation. Mao shrewdly converted his personal interest to national honor and interest. China considered its proposal of ‘barter package’ that implied China recognize the status quo of the boundary in the East, and in turn, India accepts Chinese claims on Aksai Chin in the West in the 1960 political negotiations held in Delhi as a conciliatory approach. As China was unwilling to concede anything in the Western sector where it had constructed a highway and was already in effective control of the area, India did not accept the proposal that aggrieved China. China used the Indian posts established as part of its forward policy to assert its military might and bring India to the negotiating table where it could dictate terms. When India did not respond, China reacted like any powerful authoritarian state with a clear understanding of the benefits of using military force to prove a point and teach a weaker adversary a “lesson as Mao put it.” From a political standpoint, this action was designed to “teach India a serious lesson” about Chinese concerns with sovereignty and territorial integrity.

In May 1962 China had taken an in-principle decision to launch an invasion on India. On 14 May 1962, Zhou ordered the senior military commanders to complete preparations by the end of June 1962. China had decided to wage a war but

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495 The Bandung Conference was held in Bandung, Indonesia in April 1955 to promote self-determination, mutual respect for sovereignty, non-aggression, non-interference in internal affairs and equality among the Afro-Asian countries. The Indian PM Nehru was one of the leading contributors of the Conference.

496 Garver, op cit, p 397

497 Subramanian, op cit, p 199

498 Dai Chaowu, in Gupta and Luthi, Eds, p 77 quoting Zhou Enlai Junshi Huodong Jishi, p 564
continued to seek talks with Delhi throughout the summer as a cover-up plan. It said on 21 July 1962 that it had no wish to fight a war with India and routine negotiations would lead to a settlement. 499 On the ground the situation was different. The failure of the July 1962 intensive negotiations between India’s Defence Minister and Chinese Foreign Minister at Geneva to diffuse the deteriorating situation on the border due to delay in communications from the Indian side was perceived by Beijing of India’s insincerity about finding a peaceful solution, despite India showing keenness to commence negotiations without any preconditions except that Nehru wanted China to indicate willingness to withdraw to assuage domestic opposition. Beijing, however, had lost trust in Delhi and hardened its stance unless India unequivocally and publicly withdrew all fictitious and false claims on Chinese territory and should withdraw from Chinese territory. 500 This implied India to roll back its forward policy which was not acceptable. As China became more and more aggressive, India, too hardened its stance. Nehru told Parliament on 13 August that until the status quo prior to Chinese occupation was restored in Ladakh there could be no discussion on the boundary issue. 501

By July 1962, the international environment became more favorable to China. The Geneva Agreement in July 1962, on the removal of all foreign troops from Laos, precluded the possibility of a US-led or backed attack on China via Laos in the event of war with India. China after achieving the desired deterrence vis-à-vis USA was convinced that the war with India would remain limited without any superpower intervention. As India had no such political or diplomatic deterrence or any leverages through the superpowers, the Chinese attitude further hardened. Chinese protest notes, thereafter, became full of anger and threats; accusations were made on India for setting up ‘aggressive strong points’ and ‘deliberately provoking military clashes. 502

Having achieved the desired deterrence, China on 6 October 1962, directed the PLA to launch a “fierce and painful” attack; “If they attack, don’t just repulse them, hit back ruthlessly so that it hurts.” 503 The directive called for a coordinated assault in the Western and Eastern sectors with the main assault in the Eastern sector where India

499 Dave, op cit, p 16
501 Raghavan, op cit 2010, p 291
502 Dave, op cit, p 13
503 Raghavan, op cit 2010, p 299
had a larger number of troops enabling the PLA to inflict severe punishment and
where it would convincingly demonstrate its intention of non-acceptance of
McMahon Line.\textsuperscript{504} China felt that since the real provocation for it lay in the West; but
politically as well as militarily the opportunity for demonstrative and destructive
retaliation lay only in the East, it initiated a strong move into the disputed territory
beneath the McMahon Line.\textsuperscript{505} On 18 October 1962, the Central Military Committee
approved the decision for a ‘self -defence counter-attack war; the PLA’s operational
plan was approved and the date was set for 20 October 1962. \textsuperscript{506} Accordingly, the
PLA launched an invasion on India simultaneously in the Western and Eastern sectors
on 20 October 1962.

Ostensibly, China cited the adoption of the forward policy by India as the reason for
initiating the hostilities. Nothing can be farther away from the truth. India’s ‘Forward
Policy’ provided China with the ideal pretext to launch an invasion which it termed as
‘a counter-attack in self-defence’. China did not consider this forward deployment as
a threat as 34 Indian posts in Ladakh had been interlocked with 47 of China. It was
shown as an escalation by India to justify its invasion. Chairman Mao himself was
unable to accept them as aggressive in intent: the back-up Indian troops were far back,
mostly in Leh and numbered in the whole of Ladakh no more than three battalions in
strength.\textsuperscript{507} Eliminating the Indian posts established as part of its forward policy were
not worthwhile objectives. Some scholars cited the setting up of the Dhola post below
the Thagla ridge as a trigger for China’s attack in NEFA. This again is incorrect. The
post was set up by India on 4 June 1962 as part of its Forward Policy. China did not
include the setting up of this post in any of the numerous protests notes. From the
Chinese point of view, their action at Dhola post was just an application of the ‘armed
coeexistence’ tactic, which they had applied against the Forward Policy in Ladakh.
Even the most ardent supporter of the Chinese cause, Neville Maxwell terms this as
“fabrication and to say the Indians launched an attack was rather grotesque.”\textsuperscript{508}

\textsuperscript{504} Garver, op cit, pp 117-19 and MarFarquhar, Origins 3, 307
\textsuperscript{505} Garver, op cit, p 398
\textsuperscript{506} Ibid, quoting Yang Chengyui Nianpu, (Chronological Records of Yang Chengwu) Beijing,
Jiefangjun Chubanshe, 2014, pp 368-69 and Garver, op cit, pp 121-22
\textsuperscript{507} Dave, op cit, p 14. The assessment is correct. A brigade HQ with two battalions of JAK Militia and
one regular battalion was deployed; Sinha, Athale and Prasad, op cit, pp 67, 84 and 85
\textsuperscript{508} Maxwell, op cit, p 372
Deterrence

China’s decision to wage war reflected lack of general and immediate deterrence by India. Prime Minister Nehru reconciled to the ‘failure’ of his policy of accommodation with China took a number of diplomatic steps to include strengthening South Asian partnerships, reconfirming existing commitments to defend Bhutan, Sikkim, and Nepal, but failed because the PRC signed generous border agreements with Burma and Nepal in early 1960.509

The adoption of the Forward Policy in November 1961 as a form of deterrence was based on Nehru’s calculations on the USSR-China relationship and intelligence assessment. The USSR and China had concluded the 1950 Sino-Soviet Agreement on equal terms indicating collusion of interests, but the USSR did not want to see China growing stronger. The USSR had developed a closer relationship with India as a balancing force against China in Asia implying that the Soviet Union cannot wish to see Chinese action [read military action] drive India right into the Western camp. 510 It was also assessed by Nehru that any military action by China would lead to a world war and a nuclear war.511 This was a wishful assumption by Nehru to believe that the USSR would militarily assist India and that any military action could lead to world war prompting US and USSR intervention on the side of India. Secondly, the Intelligence Bureau had assured the Prime Minister that China would not encroach on territory normally occupied by the Indian troops. Under these assumptions, the forward policy was conceived to deter China but it did not work. The decision to achieve deterrence by the forward policy failed. The hastily and poorly planned deployment of the forward policy did not provide deterrence but provided China a justification to evict the Indian positions negating the Intelligence Bureau assessment.

Mao saw India as flabby, without the will to power, where he expected “the spring thunder” to break out, rupturing its unity.512 Indian Army on 25 June 1959 comprised of nine infantry divisions, an armored division, an independent armored brigade, and

509 Ibid. Also see ‘Burma and Red China to Swap Border Slices’, Chicago Daily Tribune, 1 February 1960, p 17 and ‘Red China reaches Accord with Nepal’, New York Times, 22 March 1960, p 1
510 Raghavan, op cit 2010, p 281
511 USI Study, op cit, p 32
512 Subramanyam with Monteiro, op cit, p 324
The weaponry of the Indian Army was of World War II vintage—.303 rifles with the Infantry and 25-pounder guns, 5.5 inch and 3.7-inch Howitzers with the Artillery. Similar was the state of other Arms and Services as well as that of the IAF having limited transport aircraft. The intelligence set-up was also not geared towards the Chinese side. There were no roads in the likely area of operations in the event of hostilities with China. A series of letters were sent from Army HQ, in 1961-62, to the Defence Minister enumerating deficiencies in equipment and supplies, that could be crippling in the event of war remained unactioned. Military aid from abroad was unacceptable since it would impair India's non-alignment status and there was hardly any indigenous defence production.

Prior to launching the invasion, China had built up its strength on the border up to 7 divisions while the strength in Tibet had risen to 11-12 divisions prior to the war, though Major General PJS Sandhu, Deputy Director USI and editor of the US Study: ‘A View from the Other Side of the Hill’ clarified during an interview that there were approximately five divisions plus that were employed for the offensive— one division plus in the Western Sector and four divisions in the Eastern Sector. The stationing of a division at Rudok in Ladakh by October 1961 has been confirmed by the official history also. It is fair to assume China had up to six divisions available for the offensive—five in the Eastern and a division or division plus in the Western Sector. Additional forces were kept as reserves in Tibet. Against the division in the Western sector, India had deployed one infantry brigade across a frontage of approximately 300 kilometers in Ladakh in the Western Sector, while two divisions were deployed across a frontage of 575 kilometers in the Eastern Sector against China’s five divisions. As per laid down combat ratios, China had maintained the normal 3:1 numerical superiority against India with adequate reserves positioned in close proximity of the border, but the latter’s deployment across the vast frontage was

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513 Army Statistical Organisation, *Statistical Review of Personnel Army of India*, Volume IV 1 October to 31 December 1948; Archives Section of Army Headquarters, *Strength Return of Indian Armed Forces*, Indian, AG’s Branch, 31 December 1948 and 31 December 1960, p 8 The Divisions were 4,5,17,19,20,23,25,26,27 and 1 Armoured Division.
514 Dave, op cit, p 11
515 Interviewed on 12 January, 2019. 4 Infantry Division plus a regiment, was employed in the Western Sector, while 11, 55, 130 Infantry Division and Force 419 (Divisional size force) was employed in the Eastern Sector.
516 Sinha, Athale and Prasad, op cit, p 62
517 Rao, op cit, p 88
constrained by poor infrastructural development having hardly any lateral connectivity and mutual support between posts. China, on the other hand, had adequate connectivity with roads coming right up to the border. Theoretically, the Indian Army seemed capable of defending the Chinese offensive, but the latter was able to achieve a superior concentration of force at the point of application. There was no retaliatory capability with the Indian Army and this did not deter PLA from attacking. It is an irony that India fielded approximately 1.40 million soldiers and 2.43 million soldiers during the First and the Second World Wars respectively, in defence of British Imperial interests the world over but could not field even half a million men under arms to defend the unsettled and disputed frontiers of Independent India.  

India thus lacked both general and immediate military deterrence against China. While India’s development of military deterrence was inhibited by economic constraints, its non-aligned policy precluded leveraging the superpower rivalry to its advantage. China took full advantage of India’s lack of military, diplomatic or any political deterrence. India’s military weakness prompted Mao to humiliate Nehru, reduce his international stature and regain his own honor. The hypothesis that deterrence is an essential part of decision-making for war in the Indian context thus stands validated.

The 1962 India-China War was a ‘War of Choice’ for China. The very fact that China unilaterally declared a ceasefire and returned the captured territories in the East proved that the boundary dispute was not the cause for war and there were no ‘vital security interests’ involved that prompted China to employ the military instrument against India in 1962. The Chinese decision to wage a war upheld Thucydides concept of fear, honor, and interest as the motives for war. Personnel ‘Interest’ and ‘Honor’ of Mao decisively became the national interest of China. Hermocrates said in 424, “I suppose no one will dispute that we went to war in order to serve our own individual interest and we are now, in view of these interests debating how we can make peace.” After the war in 1962, Mao Zedong became the leader of the Third World.

518 USI Study, op cit, p 141  
519 Thucydides, op cit, p 15
India’s Decision Making: A Critical Analysis

As India suffered a humiliating defeat by China, its decision-making for war in the wake of lack of general deterrence warrants a critical analysis. Macro-level decisions impacting the national security and defence preparedness were not taken institutionally but, in an ad-hoc manner. While democracy under the PM Nehru had flourished, collective cabinet decision-making had not and it was left to the PM and a few trusted advisors to decide India’s approach to international issues. \(^{520}\) Nehru’s policy of strategic friendship, though prudent and rational was opposed by Sardar Patel, the Deputy Prime Minister and the Home Minister and Mr GS Bajpai, the Secretary-General of the Ministry of External Affairs, who tried in vain, in 1950, to convince him to pay more attention to Indian military preparations at the Indo-Tibetan border and to cooperate more closely with the West. \(^{521}\) Sardar Patel wrote to Nehru in December 1950, “we have to consider what the new situation now faces us as a result of the disappearance of Tibet, and the expansion of China up to our gates.” \(^{522}\) Mr KM Pannikar, the Indian Ambassador in Nanjing in an essay titled “When China goes Communist” in November 1948 warned of the combination of Machiavelli and Marx which would not permit territories at the periphery like Tibet any independence; “not only the McMahon Line but the boundary from Ladakh to Burma may become a new area of trouble.” \(^{523}\) The opposition to the policy reflects the lack of institutionalized decision-making mechanism. The policy was influenced by the threat perception of China. Nehru did not believe that China had the ability to threaten India, for his assessment was that China’s first priority would be to attend to its huge domestic problems and would thus have little time for foreign ‘adventures.’ \(^{524}\) Soon after Independence in 1947, General Lockhart, the C-in-C of Army, prepared a draft policy paper for the defence strategy for India and went to discuss the same with the PM. The C-in-C recounted to his staff officer that he was thrown out of the PM’s office saying, “Rubbish! Total Rubbish!’ We don’t need a defence plan. Our policy is *ahimsa* (non-violence). We foresee no military threats. Scrap the Army. The police

\(^{520}\) Kundu, op cit, p 125  
\(^{521}\) Gupta, and Luthi, Eds, p 8  
\(^{523}\) Gupta, and Luthi, Eds, p 8  
\(^{524}\) Ibid, p 5
are good enough to meet our security needs.”^525 The lack of threat perception from China led to inadequate budgetary allotments to the armed forces. Nehru officially confirmed in the Parliament on 17 November 1950 and 21 December 1950, that he had directed the Defence Ministry to reduce defence expenditure and the size of the Army. ^526 His government preferred a highly mechanized and relatively small army instead of a large and ill-equipped ‘foot’ force and intended to reduce the size of the Army [about 150,000 men] for economic reasons. ^527 The border with China is mountainous and a mobile mechanized Army is ill-suited to conduct defensive military operations. The economic constraint was not a tenable argument as a mechanized army is much more cost-prohibitive requiring an indigenous industrial base, as opposed to normal infantry. ^528 The dissonance in the policy – formulation is evident. **The macro-level policy decisions related to national security having long-term strategic implications were taken by the PM alone instead of an institutionalized collective body or in a cabinet meeting.** The DCC – the apex decision-making mechanism which was in existence prior to and during the 1947-48 War became dysfunctional. The decision-making process, besides the lack of institutionalized mechanism, was adversely impacted by Civil-Military Relations, Intelligence, Public Opinion, and Leadership.

**Civil-Military Relations.** The civil-military relations were not congenial, and adversely impacted the decision-making related to capability building and important military decisions taken prior to the 1962 War. During the 1950s there was a general apathy towards defence preparedness. The priority for economic development with regular cuts in defence budget due to lack of threat perception from China by the political leadership in contrast to Army’s assessment based on hostile activities led to downward degradation of the armed forces in the country’s security and the decision-making process. The changing of the designation of Service Chiefs from Commander-

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525 Palit, op cit, pp 317-321 quoted in USI Study, op cit, pp 139-140. Major General AA Rudra was the Military Secretary at GHQ, New Delhi. The incident was narrated to him by the C-in-C immediately after his return from the PM’s office.
526 Kavic, op cit, p 84. Also see Constituent Assembly Debates (CAD) Part 2, Volume I, p 24
527 Ibid.
528 The present-day cost for raising an infantry battalion and mechanised infantry battalion is Rs 250 and Rs 505 Crores respectively, while yearly recurring cost is Rs 63 and Rs 60 Crores respectively for infantry and mechanised infantry battalions. The Infantry Combat Vehicles (ICV) required for the mechanised army are still not being developed indigenously and are imported. This is based on authors interaction with the Financial Planning Directorate, Integrated HQ of MoD on 8 October 2018
in-Chief to Chief of Staff of their respective services, making the service headquarters as the ‘attached offices’ and relegating it to the lower part of the hierarchical security structure created the vacuum between the political and military leadership. The concept of ‘civilian supremacy’ was interpreted and gradually converted as ‘bureaucratic control’ over the armed forces. This institutional inequality created dissonance amongst the service headquarters. The appointment of Mr. VK Krishna Menon as the Defence Minister in 1957, exacerbated the growing widening of relations between the civilians and services. His impatience, anger, language, working habits and propensity to play favorites vitiated the working environment between the services and the MoD with the former losing trust and confidence in the latter.\textsuperscript{529} The passive response of the government to Army’s requirement for adequate budget allotment for capability development was a major contributing factor to the controversy of the resignation of General K.S Thimayya, the Chief of the Army Staff on 01 September 1959.\textsuperscript{530} The PM’s statement in the Parliament, “the civil authority is and must remain supreme, it should pay heed to the expert advice it receives” \textsuperscript{531} was illustrative of the poor civil-military relationship. It is attributable to a number of factors.

Menon, the Defence Minister, Mr. BN Mullick, the Director of Intelligence Bureau (IB), Lieutenant General BM Kaul, the Chief of the General Staff (CGS) used their personal relationship with the PM to undermine the established civil-military procedures. Even as late as 1959, there was no change in Nehru’s threat perception of China. Nehru’s belief that Pakistan remained the chief threat led him to dismiss President Ayub Khan’s proposal of a joint Indo-Pak defence of the sub-continent with the question: “joint defence -against whom?”\textsuperscript{532} The political leadership was over-dependent on the Intelligence Bureau, whose Director Mullick, due to his close relationship with Nehru played a dominant role in the policy formulation process. At the crucial 2 November 1961 meeting,\textsuperscript{533} Mullick’s assurance that the Chinese would not encroach on land normally held by the Indian units of ‘even a dozen soldiers’ led

\begin{footnotes}
\item[529] Kundu, op cit, pp 101-103
\item[530] Kavic, op cit, p 154
\item[531] Ibid, p 155
\item[532] Maxwell, op cit, p 206 quoted in Kundu, op cit, p 126
\item[533] This meeting was held to decide India’s response to increased Chinese activities on the border and formulated the Forward Policy.
\end{footnotes}
directly to Nehru’s adoption of the forward policy.” The Army Chief was not quite convinced by Mullick’s assessment that the Chinese would not contest Indian moves with force. The civil authorities, however, felt that that the policy would not invite any retaliation, as China would not go to war for solving the border issue for fear of adverse international opinion and would not strive to remove the Indian posts, but progressively would pull back as Indian forces creep forward. Accordingly, the civil authorities directed the Army to speedily implement the policy without further questioning and delay. The Army leadership implemented the policy with certain reservations. The Intelligence Bureau, thus, dictated/influenced actual military deployments, which were to prove disastrous subsequently. While generating, advocating and implementing his preferred policies, Mullick allowed an element of one-upmanship with the Army to influence his thinking. Commenting on Mullick’s role in the decision-making between 1959 and 1962, Maxwell commented, “He has been charged with structuring information to what Nehru and his colleagues wanted to hear.” The Army was widely criticized for not highlighting the various logistical constraints in implementing the policy which is partially true. The available evidence indicates that the Army Chief appreciated that the new posts could neither be supported tactically nor sustained logistically to which the Prime Minister remarked, that he did not expect a battle with the Chinese and the military leaders had not pressed the point. Such important macro-level politico-military decisions should have been taken in the DCC or a cabinet meeting with greater deliberations instead of a meeting attended by a number of advisors which was dominated by the personality of Director of the Intelligence Bureau. The Forward Policy adopted was not an operationally viable and workable policy as there was no coercive force to counter-attack the enemy. The Army Chief though not fully convinced of the military viability of the policy, but did not oppose the same in a comprehensive and convincing manner.

The adversarial civil-military relationship manifested in numerous decisions that impacted operational preparedness. On 8 June 1962, the Intelligence Bureau conveyed a reliable report to the Prime Minister, Defence Minister, the COAS and concerned

534 Kundu, op cit, p 127. Also see Palit, op cit, p 105
535 Prasad, Sinha and Athale, op cit, p 86
536 Hoffman, op cit, p 246
537 Maxwell, op cit, p 331
538 Kaul, op cit, p 280; Palit, DK, op cit 1991, p 106 and Hoffman, op cit, p 98
Secretaries to Government that China had decided to wage war in September unless the border dispute was resolved earlier.\textsuperscript{539} The Intelligence Bureau following up the report sent several assessments in the succeeding months to all the government agencies including the Directorate of Military Intelligence of the substantial build-up of Chinese troops and supplies. But none of the agencies acted decisively enough to prepare for the threat of an invasion. They at best-apprehended incursions in few un-held places. Had a careful assessment of the intelligence inputs been done, the level of military preparedness would have been that much better. The problem was not that too little information was available but that it was assessed inappropriately.\textsuperscript{540}

The decision to evict the Chinese from Dhola post on Thagla Ridge was taken on 11 September 1962 in a meeting chaired by the Defence Minister and not in the DCC which should have been the norm. It effectively changed the Forward Policy from aggressive self-defence to an outright offence and marked another low in the already adversarial civil-military relationship.\textsuperscript{541} This decision was taken in the absence of PM (who was in London to attend the Commonwealth PM’s conference), Finance Minister (who chair such meetings in the absence of PM was also in London) and the Home Minister.\textsuperscript{542} The COAS despite acquiescing with the Government and overruling the subordinate commanders, had a lingering apprehension about the feasibility of launching the military operation to evict the Chinese from Namka Chu Ridge, but instead of directly raising his observations with the government decision, played safe by asking for a formal order on 22 September. The formal orders were signed by the Joint Secretary confirming the government order. Not only India’s offensive plans failed, but it also could not adopt a viable defensive position. Many officers saw General Thapar’s acceptance of Sarin’s authority as a failure of leadership.\textsuperscript{543} Non-acceptance of the orders as they were signed by a Joint Secretary level officer during the ongoing conflict would have been seen as arrogance and egoism of the Chief. The government should have issued such important directions on its own instead of forcing the Chief to ask for the same. \textbf{The failure of the Army Chief laid in asking for a written order as a cover-up for operation in case of subsequent failure. Mutual trust – so important for any relationship was grossly lacking at the top level.}

\textsuperscript{539} Dave, op cit, p 14  
\textsuperscript{540} Hoffman, op cit, p 239  
\textsuperscript{541} Kundu, op cit, p 131  
\textsuperscript{542} Ibid  
\textsuperscript{543} Ibid, 133
Lieutenant General Sen, the Army Commander, distorted the military information flowing from the ground commanders to the COAS and the Defence Minister resulting in decisions that were not in touch with the reality. Deliberations that preceded the launch of an operation to evict the Chinese from the Thagla ridge were influenced by Sen’s incorrect assessment and subsequent alternatives highlighted. Lieutenant General Kaul, the Corps Commander of the newly raised Corps though realized the futility of holding untenable defensive position on the Thagla Ridge, instead of suggesting withdrawal in a meeting held on 11 October 62 and chaired by the PM, Defence Minister, Director IB, the COAS and the Army Commander, offered three choices - attack despite odds, hold the present position or withdraw to a more defensible location. When the COAS and the Army Commander advised holding the present position, he did not protest and led to approval of the second option of holding onto the untenable defensive position. Lieutenant General Kaul did not show the courage of conviction to advice on the right option. In giving the civil-military leadership three choices where only one existed, Kaul ignored a commander’s first duty to do what is best for his men. The Namku Chu position was quickly overrun by the Chinese when they attacked India on 20 October 1962 and set the stage for the subsequent rout of the Army. The reinstatement of Kaul after his hospitalization for command of a Corps in place of an experienced Lieutenant General Harbaksh Singh, who had assumed temporary command of the Corps during his period was an avoidable political decision.

The DCC was made functional by the Defence Minister towards the end of September 1962. During the war and after the declaration of emergency in October 1962, the DCC was re-designated as the Emergency Committee of the Cabinet (ECC) that took all strategic level decisions for the war and was chaired by the PM regularly, who had then taken over as the Defence Minister following the demotion of Menon. The change in name of the decision-making body during the war reflected ad-hocism and was only symbolic as there was no improvement in its functioning. Tactical level decisions continued to be decided by the ECC with limited formal mutual consultative process. On the ground, as the Army suffered one reverse after another, the lack of defence preparedness was fully exposed. The poor civil-military relations were

544 Ibid, p 135
545 Ibid
thus an important factor in formulating military decisions devoid of ground realities and professional judgement both prior to and during the war. The civilian and the Army leadership were equally responsible for the same. The senior Army leadership displayed a lack of military judgement to distinguish the right from wrong and the moral courage to state the right course, irrespective of consequences or what the political leadership might think. The COAS, the Army Commander and the Corps Commander felt content to follow rather than convince the political leadership for fear of reprisals or marginalization. Norman Dixon commenting on ‘Incompetence’ in World War I in his book ‘On the Psychology of Military Competence’ wrote “There was at even the high levels of command an attitude of mind so pathological and unrealistic that, on occasions, even army commanders dared not express their doubts about the viability of a particular order or venture, preferring to conceal evidence from their superiors rather than be thought wanting in courage or loyalty.” A similar attitude was exhibited by the senior Indian Army leadership in the 62 War. Liddell Hart further elaborated, “One of the lessons of the war is certainly the need of allowing more latitude in the military system for intellectual honesty and moral courage.” The political leadership had failed to create a conducive environment for the free and frank exchange of opinions and consultative decision-making process.

The inability to use the IAF in operations to support the ground forces was a major operational flaw in the planning and conduct of operations. The advice of Intelligence Bureau for non-employment of the Indian Air Force (IAF) proved costly. The IAF was qualitatively superior to the PLA Air Force (PLAAF) in terms of all aircraft (fighters, transport, and helicopters) and could have been employed effectively both in Ladakh and NEFA. India had over 20 combat squadrons and around 500 aircraft comprising the relatively modern Hunter fighter-bomber aircraft and Gnat interceptor aircraft; about 15 squadrons were available for deployment in the Eastern sector and Ladakh sectors. PLAAF, on the other hand, was numerically superior but technically inferior to the IAF. The Indian airfields were located closer to the border as against China. The IAF, though qualitatively superior was not employed

548 Subramaniam, op cit, p 227
based on the exaggerated capabilities and deployment of PLAAF as provided by the Intelligence Bureau, who cautioned the Government that the use of offensive air power may result in the PLAAF attacking Indian cities like Calcutta and the danger of India not being able to occupy ‘the moral high ground’ in case of a protracted conflict. The PLAAF could hit Indian cities provided they operate from within Tibet where the high altitude-imposed restrictions on their weapon carrying capacity. The USI Study based on US and UK assessments of PLAAF and post-conflict intelligence concluded that “the PLAAF did not pose any threat to India as it was neither allotted for the operation nor deployed during the operations.” The limited availability of airfields in the high altitude areas of Tibet would have precluded the employment of Chinese aircraft to target Indian cities, while the IAF operating from airfields close to the Tibetan borders would have caused considerable attrition to the PLA and imposed great caution. The employment of the IAF could have possibly deterred the PLA from launching the second phase of operations in November 1962. This would have, perhaps, changed the outcome of the conflict. The IAF leadership was kept out of the decision-making mechanism.

**Intelligence.** India lacked strategic, operational and tactical level intelligence about China. The political hierarchy in India was not aware of the thought process of the Chinese leadership. The prospect of the Chinese launching very carefully controlled limited operations with limited political objectives appeared to have been overlooked both in the military and political circles. Indian intelligence assessment that any Chinese invasion is unlikely due to its involvement in sorting out numerous domestic problems lulled decision-makers into complacency. The persistent misplaced belief that China’s invasion was unlikely, without risking a wider war completely ignored the prospect that China could launch a limited, calibrated punitive strike. The possibility of Chinese intentions to consider a military option against India to deflect domestic criticism and reduce Nehru’s international stature never occurred to Indian intelligence agencies. India overlooked the implications of the important operational level activities like the infrastructural developments,

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549 Ibid, pp 227-228
550 Most of the 20 odd airfields in Tibet were at altitudes of above 3,500 m, with some even higher up to 4,500 m.
551 USI Study, op cit, p 122
552 Ibid
553 Subrahmanyam, op cit, p 322
554 USI Study, op cit, p 157
particularly highways and major logistics bases, in Tibet. PLA soldiers and intelligence persons, in the garb of Tibetan refugees, were operating inside the Indian territory from the early 1950s. Nicholas Eftimiades, an expert on China’s intelligence operations, reveals that the Chinese began sending agents into the NEFA and other areas two years before the military offensive and gathered facts on India’s order of battle, terrain features, and military strategy through agents.\textsuperscript{555} To be fair to the Intelligence Bureau, it provided a number of timely intelligence inputs but were not taken notice of. The Intelligence Bureau had, in fact, fed timely intelligence inputs of Chinese preparations for the impending hostilities. Since February 1962, the Intelligence Bureau had noticed the induction of two-division equivalent of additional troops raising the strength in Tibet to 11-12 divisions.\textsuperscript{556} These were not taken seriously due to the flawed threat perception. The China Division functioning in the Ministry of External Affairs also did not attach much significance to the Chinese activities related to deployment and logistic build-up. It thought that the IB and the Army should evaluate the matters.\textsuperscript{557} The Chinese portrayed such activities as reactions to the Indian Army’s activities along the border of which the Chinese division was not aware. Lack of coordination is evident.

**Public Opinion.** There was sharp public opinion against China in India after the Tibetan Uprising in March 1959. It took the form of articles in national newspapers criticizing China for high-handedness in crushing the popular sentiment of the Tibetans for independence. The obscure nature of Tibetan autonomy, legitimacy and character of Chinese sovereignty and Tibetan objections to policies exercised by the Chinese government were discussed and debated in great detail.\textsuperscript{558} This impacted decision-making in both countries. To China, it reinforced their perception that India instigated the Tibetan Uprising and strengthened its belief to punish India to undermine its influence over Tibet. Within India, the media questioned the Government policies, particularly the concept of Panchsheel or peaceful co-existence in recognizing Chinese sovereignty over Tibet in 1954. It intensified when Prime Minister Nehru ruled out India’s interference in the internal affairs of another country. The moderate note struck by the Prime Minister to prevent exacerbation of feelings

\textsuperscript{555} Eftimiades, Nicholas, *Chinese Intelligence Operations* (Ilford, Essex: Frank Cass, 1994) pp 90-91
\textsuperscript{556} Dave, op cit, p 11
\textsuperscript{557} Hoffman, op cit, p 244
\textsuperscript{558} USI Study, op cit, p 125
already aroused due to recent developments in Tibet was in sharp contrast with the views of the parliamentarians who angrily objected amidst uproarious scenes against Nehru’s assertion that the internal affairs of China could not be discussed in the Parliament.\textsuperscript{559}  The contrast in India’s official China policy and the larger public opinion impacted India’s foreign policy decision making in relation to China. One of the reasons for Prime Minister Nehru to reject Zhou En Lai’s offer of India’s acceptance of Aksai Chin in exchange for China’s acceptance of the McMahon Line was the prevalent public opinion in India during the bilateral talks in April 1960. The public opinion in India was against any compromise with China. In fact, there were protests against the government for inviting Zhou for talks to Delhi. A large-scale demonstration led by an opposition leader was held outside the Prime minister’s residence.\textsuperscript{560}  Acknowledging public opinion, Nehru stated, “If I give in then I shall no longer be the Prime Minister of India – I will not do it.”\textsuperscript{561}  After the failure of the talks between the Indian Defence Minister and Chinese Foreign Minister in Geneva, India had changed its stance of asking China to withdraw from Aksai Chin. Nehru wanted China to at least indicate a willingness to withdraw to assuage domestic opposition.\textsuperscript{562}  The Prime Minister was acutely conscious of the public opinion that he could not make any conciliatory move openly that would put him under tremendous pressure from domestic constituencies to repudiate it. Public opinion, thus, played a significant role in shaping India’s foreign policy decisions towards China and also that of China towards India.

**Leadership.** The Indian leadership both at the political and military level did not live up to the expected standards. In fact, it failed to uphold the nation’s and Army’s prestige. The non-aligned approach adopted by Nehru gave him a misplaced sense of idealism in international relations. He felt that all issues can be resolved diplomatically not realizing that diplomacy needs to be strengthened with military capability. The false sense of emerging as a peaceful leader led to a very serious deficiency in defence preparedness. The modernization of the Indian Army in terms of weapons and equipment was neglected. No thought seemed to have been given to create any sort of deterrence against China despite the latter’s intransigence. Prime Minister Nehru’s

\textsuperscript{559}  Ibid, p 127

\textsuperscript{560}  Hoffman, op cit, p 87, quoting *Times of India*, 18 April, 1960

\textsuperscript{561}  Maxwell, op cit, p 177 Recounted to the writer of the book by one of those present at the time

\textsuperscript{562}  Raghavan, op cit 2010, p 290
intense dislike for matters military kept the operational preparedness of the Armed Forces out of the strategic discourse of the country. By and large, all the respondents blamed both the political and military leadership for the debacle in 1962.\textsuperscript{563}

Commenting on the military leadership, Dr. Subramanyam commented, “at a critical time the country had a COAS who could not pull his weight, an ineffective Army Commander, a flamboyant but inexperienced Corps Commander and a highly decorated but burnt out divisional commander.”\textsuperscript{564} The COAS, General PN Thapar lacked the moral courage to project the appropriate ground realities to the political leaders and civilian bureaucracy. He implemented the Forward Policy with certain reservations as he was not fully convinced of the professional soundness. The Army Commander, Lieutenant General LP Sen, marginalised the competent Corps Commander Lieutenant General Umrao Singh as he clearly articulated his valid military objections to operations on Thagla Ridge and got him replaced with an inexperienced Lieutenant General BM Kaul, who despite the difficulties involved in the eviction of the Chinese from Thagla Ridge decided to launch the operation. Criticizing General Thapar’s asking for written orders, Major-General Palit, the Director of Military Operations, questioned, “Why did he not resist the pressure on him to mount a reckless offensive at Thagla?”\textsuperscript{565} Brigadier Dalvi, the commander of the brigade responsible to execute the order and later taken PoW, found it unbelievable: “To be right and overruled is not forgiven to persons in responsible positions.”\textsuperscript{566} The Army senior leadership’s failure to resist the political authorities to conduct a tactically unviable militarily operation overruling the sound views of the field commanders right at the beginning of the Chinese invasion proved very costly. The Indian Army, was thereafter, unable to recover from the setback it suffered. The Indian leadership was ad-hoc in 1962, for reasons of insufficient institutionalization of the decision-making process and insufficient commitment to military planning.\textsuperscript{567} The creation of an ad-hoc new Corps HQ during the war to adjust Lieutenant General BM Kaul for his career progression was an irrational political decision. \textbf{The senior Army leadership tended to distort military information. Alternative options to tackle the crisis were formulated incrementally, bereft of the ground situation and realistic assessments.}

\textsuperscript{563} Refer question 20 of Appendix B on page 359
\textsuperscript{564} Subramanyam with Monteiro, op cit, p xxxi
\textsuperscript{565} Palit, op cit,1991, p 199
\textsuperscript{567} Hoffman, op cit, p 251
Role of External Powers. Britain upheld Chinese authority over Tibet as a way of keeping the Russians out. The United States initially supported China’s authority over Tibet to counter Japan and felt that US interests would not be served by recognizing Tibetan independence. United States policy towards the PRC had shifted sharply with the beginning of the Korean War in June 1950 in which China supported North Korea. In October-November 1950, the US approached India for cooperating to support Tibetan resistance against China, but New Delhi was not interested in the American proposal as Nehru realized such a course would lead India into alignment with the US and confrontation with China, and neither consequence was acceptable. The USSR, due to its friendship with both India and China, had declared its neutrality in the Indian-Chinese territorial dispute in September 1959 though, Soviet leaders pressurized Mao to concede to India’s demands on the border which annoyed China. China viewed the growing relationships amongst the US-USSR-India with great skepticism, despite India vigorously pursuing its non-aligned policy.

During the war, the Western world supported India. USA, UK, Australia and many other countries readily responded to India’s call for assistance; however, the USSR shifted to the Chinese side. On 20 October 1962, a few hours after the Chinese attack, Khrushchev wrote a letter to Nehru expressing concern at reports that India intended to take up arms to settle her boundary dispute with China, and warning that this was “a very dangerous path.” The reaction of the non-aligned governments whose cause Prime Minister Nehru had been championing was reserved and wary. There was no expression of sympathy or support from any of the Arab countries. Similarly, African countries were non-committal. Ethiopia and Cyprus were the only countries among those who had attended the 1961 Belgrade Conference of non-aligned governments to come out openly on India’s side from the outset; others just urged restraint and patience on both sides. When Parliament re-assembled Nehru expressed his resentment at those of India’s friends abroad, “well-intentioned countries, who were trying to bring about a ceasefire, advising us to be good and peaceful as if we were inclined to war.”

568 Garver, op cit, p 48
569 Nayar, Kuldip, Between the Lines (Bombay: Allied Publishers,1969) p 152
570 Lok Sabha Debate, 8 November 1962. Prime Minister on Sino-Indian Relations (PMSIR) I: ii, p 150
Validation of Hypothesis

The hypothesis that ‘deterrence is an essential part of ‘decision-making for war’ in the Indian context and vacillation in the use of force/other instruments has impacted the relevance of deterrence in India has been comprehensively validated. There was neither any viable military capability in terms of numerical strength, effective strategy or inspiring politico-military leadership nor any alliance or partnership with the superpowers that could have deterred China from waging a war of choice. Imprudent politico-military decisions based on erroneous assumptions and inaccurate intelligence inputs impacted deterrence. Non-employment of Air Force validates the hypothesis that vacillation in the use of force/other instruments impacted the relevance of deterrence. Also, it was not only the ‘vacillation in the use of force/other instruments that impacted the relevance of deterrence but the politico-militarily unsound policy decisions taken prior to the hostilities impacted deterrence for the 1962 War.

PART III: CONCLUSION

The 1962 India-China War was symbolic of the failure of the foreign and defence policies of India and the related mechanisms involved in national security. In order to remain away from the cold-war dynamics, India adopted non-alignment as the central theme of its foreign policy and focussed on economic development domestically. China, on the other hand, believing in the concept of power flowing from the barrel of a gun military annexed Tibet in 1950 as part of its policy to assimilate and consolidate the periphery. Thus, the two neighbors began their post-independence journey with divergent ideologies and political systems. India rightly appreciating the strength of hostile China and its own limitations to confront two adversarial neighbors simultaneously, adopted a prudent policy of strategic friendship with China. It strove to win China’s trust and achieve by granting unilateral concessions and shunning the dynamics of cold-war dynamics.

Though war is a continuation of policy, the Indian policy does not advocate war. But one cannot legislate the same policy for a hostile neighbor aspiring to be a regional power. Security and development are two interlinked pillars of a nation’s growth, India in its quest for domestic economic development overlooked the security aspect and the good old Roman saying, “if you want peace, prepare for war.” India did not
conceptualize any war-avoidance strategy by building a viable military deterrent capability. Its non-aligned foreign policy precluded development of alliances and partnerships. Unlike Roosevelt, Churchill, and Mao, Nehru’s approach to the role of force and the military in statecraft demonstrated ambivalence and reluctance with a touch of ‘forced realism’ when pushed against the wall.\textsuperscript{571} It must always be remembered that the national power comprises both military and economic capabilities. The optimum mix and use of these capabilities can be different, but both military and economic strength are vital for security.

\textsuperscript{571} Subrahmanyam with Monterio, op cit, p 322
SECTION III

INDIA-PAKISTAN WAR 1965

Background

The partition of the country and the 1947-48 India-Pakistan war made Kashmir the centrality of relations between the newly born nations. The 1947-48 Kashmir War continued to energize the feelings of hostility and distrust between the two states. Since then a state of perpetual confrontation has existed between the two states. Consequent to the first Kashmir War, India and Pakistan chartered different courses to consolidate their gains on Kashmir and strengthen their respective ideologies to mitigate likely threats. India focused on Kashmir’s political integration with the rest of the country and followed the policy of non-alignment in conducting its foreign relations. Pakistan, taking advantage of the Cold War dynamics, committed itself in building military capability and international alliances to strengthen its case against India. Diplomatic efforts to resolve the Kashmir issue yielded little. The 1962 India-China War brought Pakistan and China much closer to each other, with India being their common adversary. Pakistan intending to exploit domestic fault lines within Kashmir launched an armed tribal invasion in the first week of August 1965 followed by a conventional offensive on 1 September 1965 that escalated into an all-out war between India and Pakistan. The case study on the 1965 India-Pakistan War will examine the application of the concept of deterrence and decision making for war and has been structured as follows:

(a) Part I : The Confrontation and the War
(b) Part II : Analysis of Deterrence and Decision Making
(c) Part III : Conclusion

PART I: THE CONFRONTATION AND THE WAR

Divergent Paths

India followed the path of a politico-legal integration process to strengthen its hold on Kashmir, while Pakistan began building up its military capability and international alliances to pursue its claim to the state. India’s political integration process began

572 Ganguly, op cit, 1999, p 6
with the grant of special status to J&K through Article 370 of the Constitution, in January 1950, followed by the conduct of elections to the state constituent assembly in April 1951. Sheikh Abdullah won the State assembly elections but thereafter began to distance himself from Delhi, resenting the integration process. He was arrested in August 1953 on the suspicion of conferring with Pakistan. Most historians believe that Abdullah was removed because he was reluctant to lead Kashmir into the Indian Union.\footnote{Brines Russell, \textit{The Indo-Pakistani Conflict} (London: Pall Mall Press, 1968) p 99. Also see Brown Norman W, \textit{The United States and India and Pakistan} (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953) p 195} This is correct, as the process of integrating Kashmir practically began with the next incumbent Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed who was more cooperative and quickly brought the state legally into India. The Constituent Assembly ratified the State’s accession to India on 6 February 1954, followed by the adoption of State Constitution on 19 November 1956, under which Kashmir became an integral part of India. The accession of the state was formalized by India on 26 January 1957 making the Accession Act ‘irrevocable’. India’s integration process continued with Supreme Court assuming jurisdiction over J&K in January 1960, alignment of the Union, Concurrent and State List subjects with the other states in October 1963 and extension of crucial provisions of the Constitution to the State. On 4 December 1964, the Home Minister of India stated in the Lok Sabha: “New legal steps would make empty and redundant the special status granted to Kashmir under the 1950 Constitution as India extended two previously inapplicable articles of the Constitution 356 and 357 to J&K.”\footnote{Ibid, p 4. Article 356 empowered the Indian President to dismiss the State Government and impose President’s rule while Article 357 replaced the term ‘Chief of State’(\textit{Sadr-e-Riyasat}) and Prime Minister with ‘Governor’ and ‘Chief Minister’ respectively, like the other States of the Union of India. Article 356 gave Delhi the legal means to directly intervene in state affairs through invoking of President’s rule enabling it to exercise more direct authority without international criticism}

Pakistan began strengthening its armed forces through military alliances. It concluded a military agreement with the US in February 1954, joined the South East Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO) in September 1954 and the Baghdad Pact, later renamed as Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) in September 1955. Pakistan, ostensibly projecting to become the bulwark against the spread of communism in Asia, was, in reality, wanting to garner American and international support to challenge India’s integration process on Kashmir by building up its military capability. Prime Minister Nehru bitterly opposed Pakistan’s military pact with the
USA and stated in the Lok Sabha on 29 March, 1956, that “either the Pakistanis are apprehensive of India, or they want to develop strength and, as the phrase goes, speak from strength and have joined the Baghdad Pact and SEATO essentially because of their hostility to India.” Thereafter, Nehru categorically rejected the use of plebiscite to settle the Kashmir dispute and, instead, offered a ‘no war pact’ to the Pakistani Prime Minister, Mr. Bogra, who rejected the offer and reiterated the resolution of Kashmir as a prelude to such a pact. Nehru’s proposal in, April 1956, of partitioning the state of J&K along the existing Cease Fire Line generated intense anti-India feelings. Seeing no tangible progress in bilateral negotiations from 1953 to 1956, Pakistan invoked multilateral diplomacy raking up the Kashmir issue in the United Nations (UN) Security Council in January 1957, expecting the US and other Western countries support. Its proposal in the UN of placing a temporary UN peace-keeping force in Kashmir was vetoed by the Soviets. Subsequent UN efforts did not yield anything positive, but Pakistan continued to pursue its agenda to integrate Kashmir by any means. 

In October 1958, martial law was imposed in Pakistan. Nehru was wary of negotiating with a military dictator and sensed the danger of proclivity of military dictators to employ the military instrument to resolve the dispute. The alleged theft of a holy relic in Srinagar, in December 1963, inflamed passions of the Kashmiri people against the Indian government leading to large scale protests in Kashmir. As part of the integration process, Sheikh Abdullah was released on 8 April 1964, after eleven years of almost continuous imprisonment and was allowed to visit Pakistan. During his visit to Pakistan, he publicly invoked the right of self-determination for the people of Kashmir.

The aftermath of the 1962 India-China War provided greater propulsion to the forces of hostility increasing the proclivity towards war. Following the military debacle against China, India began the process of rearmament and modernization of its armed forces. Pakistan and China finalized a Sino-Pakistan Border Agreement, in March 1963, under which Pakistan conceded some 2,000 square miles of Hunza, lying in disputed Kashmir towards Gilgit to China while Pakistan, in turn, got 750 square

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575 Ganguly, op cit 1999, p 57. Also see Nehru, Jawaharlal, India’s Foreign Policy, (New Delhi: Publications Division, Government of India, 1961) p 94
576 Ganguly, op cit, 2002, p 25
577 Gupta, op cit., p 304
miles of grazing land and salt mines. The area of Hunza and the airfield at Gilgit pre-empted any Russian possibility of acquiring the airfield that could target the supply base of China.

The amendment of India’s Constitution, pertaining to the status of J&K caused considerable alarm in Pakistan. President Field Marshal Ayub Khan, vented his ire publicly linking the issue with India’s rearmament programme, saying that “the arming of India has emboldened her to announce plans to integrate the state of J&K; her aggressive action will continue to pose a serious threat to our security.”

Presidential elections were held in Pakistan, in January 1965, in which the opposition candidate Miss Fatima Jinnah - the elder sister of the founder of Pakistan, Mohammad Ali Jinnah lost narrowly to Field Marshal Ayub Khan though large-scale rigging in favor of the latter caused widespread unrest.

**Kutch Skirmishes and Pakistan’s Decision for Tribal Invasion**

Pakistan launched an unprovoked armed skirmish in the Rann of Kutch in Gujarat in April 1965. Pakistan had coveted the Rann despite clear evidence being available in pre-Independence records in favor of India and that the Maharaja of Kutch had laid claims to it based on irrefutable historical evidence. The Pakistani Army outperformed the Indian Army who withdrew under severe pressure. It emboldened Pakistan to carry out the planned tribal invasion in Kashmir. Pakistani President Field Marshal Ayub Khan approved the plan on 15 May at Murree to launch guerrilla operations in Kashmir to be codenamed *Gibraltar*. The military aim of the operation was three-fold: “disrupt Indian control of the State; assist and direct an armed revolt by the people of Kashmir; create conditions for an advance by the Azad Kashmir forces into Kashmir and eventual liberation of Indian held Kashmir.”

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581 Operation Gibraltar was the codename given to the strategy of Pakistan to infiltrate the guerrillas in Jammu and Kashmir and start a rebellion against Indian rule. Launched in August 1965, the guerrillas, disguised as locals, entered Jammu and Kashmir from Pakistan with the intention of fomenting an insurgency among Kashmiri Muslims.

582 Singh, Amarinder and Shergill, op cit, p 36
Pakistan launched Operation *Gibraltar* on 5 August 1965 along the entire Cease-Fire Line. One infiltration group was tasked to reach Srinagar on 8 August\(^{583}\) to incite the people for an uprising against the Indian government, overthrow the government and take over political control of the State, which would call upon Pakistan to support the liberation of Kashmir. The plan failed to incite the populace and there was no local uprising. By 14 August, Pakistani regular troops had captured few key Indian positions along the Cease Fire Line. The Indian Army stabilized the situation arising due to continued infiltration by the third week of August. It, thereafter, launched an offensive across the Cease Fire Line and captured the strategic Hajipir Pass and other dominating objectives by 28 August.

**The War**

The failure of Operation Gibraltar and the Indian Army’s successful offensive across the Cease Fire Line put Pakistan under pressure. Field Marshal Ayub instigated by his Foreign Minister Bhutto decided on the military option. He, on 29 August 1965 “directed the Army, to take such actions that will unfreeze the Kashmir problem, weaken India’s resolve and bring her to the conference table without provoking a general war.”\(^ {584}\) Pakistan Army launched an offensive codenamed Operation *Grand Slam* in the Akhnur Sector on 1 September 1965, caught the Indians by surprise and achieved quick success, threatening Akhnur and Jammu - the vital communication centres. India employed its air force to contain the offensive. The Indian Army then decided to launch a two-pronged counter-offensive in Punjab, supported by a diversionary offensive in the Rajasthan Sector.

The Indian Army launched its offensives, on 6 and 8 September 1965, to threaten Lahore and Sialkot by 11 and 1 Corps respectively. 11 Corps’ limited offensive made steady progress, capturing two important villages of Burki and Dograi on the Eastern bank of the Ichhogil Canal posing a threat to Lahore. The Pakistani Army launched a counter-offensive with its 1 Armoured Division in the Khem Karan Sector on 8 September as a *quid-pro-quo* to the Indian Army’s offensive in the Lahore Sector. 11 Corps with its 4 Mountain Division succeeded in thwarting the Pakistani offensive, inflicting severe degradation to Pakistani armor particularly the Patton tanks in the

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\(^{583}\) 8\(^{th}\) August coincided with the first anniversary of the arrest and dismissal of Sheikh Abdullah Pradhan, RD, *1965 War The Inside Story Defence Minister YB Chavan’s Diary of India-Pakistan War* (New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, 2007) p xviii
battle of Assal Uttar. The Indian Army lost 32 tanks while the Pakistani Army lost 97 tanks with 72 of them being Patton tanks, though Pakistan admitted that the total losses were about 62 tanks. 1 Corps’ main offensive too made reasonable progress, capturing the villages of Phillora and Pargwal; however, Chawinda – an important village to threaten Sialkot could not be captured. The sector witnessed some of the fiercest tank battles. 1 Corps captured about 490 square kilometers of area and destroyed/damaged 144 Pakistani tanks with another 11 captured intact; Indian losses were 29 tanks destroyed and 41 damaged.

The Indian and Pakistani air forces operated at low-key counter-air operations and in support of ground forces. The Indian Air Force lost 75 aircraft while the Pakistani Air Force lost 19 aircraft. The Indian Navy conducted relentless anti-submarine

586 Singh, Bhupinder, Dr Lieutenant Colonel (Retired), 1965 War: Role of Tanks in India-Pakistan War (Patiala: BC Publishers, 1982) quoted in Singh, Amarinder and Shergill, op cit, p 243
589 Singh, Amarinder and Shergill, op cit, pp 461-464. The IAF never released an official list of casualties. The data is based on the painstaking research of the writers of the book and has been compiled after referring to various sources, including talking to retired officers and going through unclassified documents. In respect of PAF, these are the official figures.
operations and prevented the Pakistani submarine, PNS Ghazi, from making an impact on the war.

China, on 17 September, accused India of maintaining fifty-six military installations on the Tibetan side of the border in Sikkim which should be dismantled within three days and threatened of grave consequences, if it failed to do so. To reinforce the threat, China carried out some posturing, moving troops, deploying aircraft and made intrusions all along the border, even indulging in firing at some places. The US warned China of retaliation in the event of any Chinese attack against India.

**Cease-Fire.** The UN Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution, on 20 September 1965. It called “upon India and Pakistan to a ceasefire on 22 September at 0700 hours GMT (1200 hours IST) and subsequent withdrawal of all armed personnel back to the positions held by them before 5 August 1965.”[^590] The Security Council also decided that as soon as a ceasefire is implemented, it would consider measures for a political settlement of the problem underlying the conflict. India accepted the ceasefire and the demand for withdrawal the next day but made it clear that she did not accept proposals to reconsider a political settlement.[^591] Pakistan also accepted the ceasefire and the guns fell silent with effect from 0330 hours, 23 September 1965.

**Peace Agreement.** The Indian Prime Minister Shastri and the Pakistani President Field Marshal Ayub Khan met in Tashkent in the first week of January 1966 with the Soviet Prime Minister Kosygin playing a mediatory role to work out a peace agreement. After prolonged discussions spanning over four days, the Tashkent Declaration was signed between the Indian Prime Minister and the Pakistani President on 10 January 1966. The two leaders agreed that “all armed personnel shall withdraw to the positions they held before 5 August 1965 not later than 25 February 1966, both sides shall observe ceasefire terms on the Cease Fire Line and prisoners of war would be repatriated promptly.”[^592] Unfortunately, a few hours after signing the agreement, Prime Minister Shastri died of a heart attack.

[^591]: Brines, op cit, p 374
[^592]: Ibid, p 404
PART II: ANALYSIS OF DETERRENCE AND DECISION-MAKING

The 1965 India-Pakistan War underscored the ineffectiveness of deterrence leading to decision making for war to achieve political objectives. Correlating the paradigm of War and Peace to the 1965 India-Pakistan War, following stages emerge:

(a) Confrontation : 1949 – 1964 - Building up Deterrence
(b) Crisis : April -May 1965 - Decision for Tribal Invasion
(c) Conflict : August 1965 – Escalation to War
(d) War : September 1965

The Confrontation: Building up Deterrence

The basic issue of J&K between India and Pakistan, remaining unresolved after the 1947-48 War, led to the confrontation between the two states. With both the countries committed to their respective ideologies, they adopted different means to strengthen themselves and mitigate the threats of others. This state of confrontation is normally contained and managed by deterrence with a shadow of the threat of war in the background. **India’s political integration process of J&K into the national mainstream and Pakistan’s military capability development programme were intended to achieve deterrence against each other by applying threats and challenges.**

India applied the strategy of deterrence for the first time in March-April 1950 during the communal riots in Bengal. In 1950. “When Pakistan Prime Minister Liaquat Ali shook his fist, Nehru’s response was to move Indian armor to Punjab and warn that any war-like move in Kashmir would be treated by India as a general war.” The deployment of the Indian Army on the Western border unnerved Pakistan. It alerted its armed forces and reinforced East Pakistan with aircraft and naval ships. Pakistan, well aware of its military weakness, vigorously pursued diplomacy. The Pakistani Prime Minister and his Commander-in-Chief (C-in-C) visited New Delhi and signed the Nehru-Liaquat Pact providing for equality of citizenship and security to minorities in East Pakistan. The deployment was called off after one month. Nehru considered that India’s coercive strategy convinced Pakistan to reach an agreement.  

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593 Subrahmanyam, op cit, p 75
594 Raghavan, op cit 2010, p 187
In 1951, India’s grant of special status to J&K in the Constitution and announcement of the conduct of assembly elections was challenged by Pakistan with the threat of war to prevent the conduct of the elections. India responded to the challenge by deploying an armored division, an infantry division and an independent brigade close to the border in Punjab in July 1951. The Pakistani Army too carried out deployment. The stand-off continued amidst unsuccessful diplomatic negotiations to diffuse the tension till the assassination of Pakistani Prime Minister Liaquat Ali in October 1951. Both sides thereafter softened their stand and withdrew in early 1952. The elections were conducted smoothly and the constituent assembly was formed on 31 October 1951. The deterrent strategy adopted was the strategy of denial and punishment as discussed in Chapter 1. The mobilization of forces would signal India’s determination to deny offensive action by Pakistan; the presence of the armored division would convey India’s readiness to inflict punishment.

India’s decision to deploy the Army on the border signaled its political resolve to achieve political integration of J&K by the use of force, if required and strengthened its deterrence. India applied the strategy of ‘Deterrence by Denial and Punishment’ to prevent Pakistan from any war-type moves in Kashmir in 1950 to disrupt the elections in 1951. The strategy succeeded. International pressure as a determinant of deterrence too contributed to a great extent, but this was definitely triggered by the deployment. Raghavan opines that the failure of Graham’s mission and convening of the J&K constituent assembly could have intensified the domestic pressure on Pakistan to take military action in J&K and deterrence would not have then worked had Pakistan PM not been assassinated: “that is why Liaquat’s assassination makes this a tantalizing counterfactual question in the history of India-Pakistan relations.” Conjecturing that the situation was diffused by the assassination of Liaquat Ali questions the effectiveness of deterrence. It is unlikely that Pakistan would have resorted to the military force on account of domestic

595 Ibid
596 Ibid, p 197
597 Dr Frank Graham was appointed by the UN Security Council as the UN representative for India and Pakistan in 1951 to try and effect demilitarization, prior to implementing plebiscite as per the UN resolution. It was known as the Graham Mission. It could not arrive at consensus on the troops to be maintained in J&K by both sides. The Pakistan press had censured the Graham’s report calling it as shirking of responsibility while Britain and America were desirous to extend the Graham mission, that had also irked Pakistan
598 Raghavan, op cit 2010, p 217
pressure as India then had military superiority over Pakistan. India had nine infantry divisions, an armored division, an independent armored brigade and seven squadrons of the air force as against Pakistan’s seven infantry divisions, an independent armored brigade and three squadrons of the air force.\(^{599}\)

India continued to strengthen its deterrence through its policy decision of fully integrating the state of Kashmir politically. By formalizing the accession of J&K on 26 January 1957 and making the Accession Act ‘irrevocable’, India removed all legal hurdles to make Kashmir an integral part of the Union of India. It provided teeth to Prime Minister Nehru’s categorical statement made in 1952: “if Pakistan, by mistake invades Kashmir, we will not only meet them in Kashmir, but it will be a full-scale war between India and Pakistan.”\(^{600}\) Various analysts and authors have admired the steps taken to integrate the state of J&K. Brines, the author of authoritative book on 1965 War The Indo-Pakistani Conflict wrote: “This was necessary, as politically the possibility of attack by Pakistan could best be minimized by making the territory of Indian Kashmir unmistakably India, so that an assault would be clear aggression and would justify response in battle areas more suited to the Indian Army.”\(^{601}\) Professor Ganguly, author of Conflict Unending India-Pakistan Tensions Since 1947 wrote: “To forestall a possible Pakistani attack on Kashmir, key Indian planners had evolved a fairly sophisticated strategy, an amalgam of defence and deterrence through punishment and retaliation.”\(^{602}\) This was communicated through a series of statements by high-level Indian civilian officials. \textbf{By almost completing the political integration process, India had created a viable political deterrence.} This afforded India the option of responding to any Pakistani aggression in Kashmir by executing military operations at the time and place of own choosing, outside J&K, without any international criticism or interference. Militarily, it implied the application of ‘Offensive-Defensive’ strategy – adopt a defensive posture in J&K and launches an offensive in Punjab to threaten its sensitivities in order to deter Pakistan from any misadventure. \textbf{Pakistan’s strong objections to the integration process underscored the impact of the deterrence it had created.}

\(^{599}\) See Foot Note 612 for detailed relative military capabilities of India and Pakistan on page 198
\(^{600}\) Paul, op cit, p 109 for Nehru’s statement.
\(^{601}\) Brines, op cit, p 98
\(^{602}\) Ganguly, op cit 2002, p 38
Diplomacy is a vital instrument to resolve the underlying difference during the confrontation stage. Bilateral and multilateral diplomacy pursued in the sixties had not yielded the desired results. In the wake of 1962 War, India had received arms assistance from USA and UK without any demand for a change in its non-aligned policy but with a rider to reach an agreement with Pakistan on the Kashmir issue on terms favorable to Pakistan. President Kennedy of the US had urged the Indian government to make proposals signaling a willingness to give Pakistan a substantial position in the Vale.\textsuperscript{603} Six meetings took place between India and Pakistan from 26 December 1962 to 16 May 1963 but were inconclusive. Pakistan insisted on a plebiscite which India rejected, and instead, proposed partitioning the State along the existing Cease Fire Line, a no-war pact and military disengagement. Pakistan then demanded besides the Kashmir Valley, the whole of Jammu region barring the Kathua region, to be merged into its territory.\textsuperscript{604} India did not submit to US demands for major unilateral concessions. It rightfully rejected the Pakistani demands as their proposal implied that out of a total area of over 84,000 square miles, India was left with less than 3,000 square miles.\textsuperscript{605} Pakistan made a No-War pact contingent on the resolution of the Kashmir problem as a pre-condition and the six rounds of negotiations ended in failure. The failure of the talks virtually closed the option of bilateral diplomacy to resolve the dispute.

Pakistan created deterrence against any likely Indian offensive in J&K by signing a border agreement with China. With the signing of the agreement, China had completely changed the strategic situation in Kashmir and, if it intended any future military adventurism in India, it had a permanent bridgehead in Hunza.\textsuperscript{606} The control of large territory deep within Kashmir enhanced the threat perception to India from China manifolds. It also nullified any UN mediation that was based upon the maximum withdrawal of Indian and Pakistani forces. With the Chinese entrenched in the state, any troop reduction was almost an impossibility. Bhutto stated in Pakistan’s National Assembly on 7 July 1963, that “if India were to turn her guns against Pakistan, it would not be alone in that conflict …… an attack on Pakistan involves the territorial integrity and security of the largest state in Asia and this new element is a

\textsuperscript{603} Schofield, op cit, p 99
\textsuperscript{604} Gupta, op cit, pp 290-291 and 352-354. For an account of the various proposals see K Rangaswami “Joint Talks: Did Pakistan Pre-Plan Failure?”
\textsuperscript{605} Schofield op cit, p 101
\textsuperscript{606} Singh, Amarinder and Shergill, op cit p 3
very important factor.” Besides deterring India from any military action against Pakistan, the statement was to seek China’s active military support in its war against India. In February 1964, Chinese Premier Chou En Lai, during a visit to Pakistan, publicly assured his country’s full support to Pakistan favoring resolution of the Kashmir dispute in accordance with the wishes of the people. Pakistan President Ayub Khan, during his state visit to China in March 1965, tried to elicit Chinese support against India. China supported plebiscite but did not pledge any military support but Pakistan, perhaps, assumed China’s assurances for military support. Chinese support to Pakistan and criticism of India in the Kutch skirmishes strengthened Pakistan’s conviction of support from its closest ally. Pakistan’s alliance relationship with China was a relatively important determinant in its decision for war.

Military Deterrence

As Pakistan was exploring the military option, it’s in order to examine India’s military deterrence. Dr K Subramanyam, a strategic affairs expert alluded to the erosion of India’s military capability since 1950 and the concomitant lack of military deterrence that emboldened Pakistan to take a decision to employ military force to resolve the Kashmir issue. The threat that was credible and stopped Pakistan in 1950 was slowly eroded and became incredible in 1965. There are other analysts who feel India had substantial military capability to deter Pakistan. Professor Ganguly pondered, “Why was the Pakistani politico-military leadership not deterred from attacking Kashmir? They were well aware that India had substantial military capabilities and had, repeatedly, expressed a willingness to use them as deemed necessary.” A similar observation has been raised by TV Paul, “Why did the Pakistani leaders decide to commit to a military solution to the Kashmir dispute in September 1965 when they knew India had a nearly 3:1 numerical advantage in the Kashmir theatre and a 5:1 superiority in overall military and industrial capacity?” This warrants in-depth examination.

Deterrence is a function of political resolve and military capability. India displayed its political resolve and intention to counter any Pakistani attack on Kashmir by efficiently carrying out its politico-legal integration process, but did not build up the

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607 Brines, op cit, p 211
608 Subrahmanyam, op cit, p 76
609 Ganguly, op cit 2002) p 40
610 Paul, op cit, p 107
overwhelming desired military capability to translate the political threat into the reality of launching a military offensive in the plains of Punjab. Intentions are fickle and subject to sudden change while capabilities, by contrast, are relatively stable; they are the combined hardware, personnel, and doctrine that make up military forces; they have a substance to them which is countable and relatively calm. The progressive build-up of relative military capabilities of India and Pakistan since partition to the outbreak of war in September 1965 in terms of combat formations, squadrons and ships with respect to Army, Air Force and Navy respectively of respective armed forces has been by worked out by examining various sources and interacting with known military historians and researchers. The details are tabulated below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formations/Units</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>Pakistan</th>
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<td>1947</td>
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<td>Army</td>
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<td>Infantry divisions</td>
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<td>Mountain divisions</td>
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<td>Parachute brigades</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ships (All types)</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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The data for 1965 has been compiled from Prasad and Thapliyal op cit 2011 pp 9 - 13; Singh, Amarinder and Shergill, op cit, pp 8–12; Subramaniam, op cit, pp 271-72 and The Military Balance 1964-65 *The Institute for Strategic Studies, London*. Mr Prasad and Thapliyal’s book provides a detailed account of the war as maintained in the Indian government’s military history records.
The table highlights that, since independence, Pakistan raised two armored divisions adding eleven armored regiments to build up its strength to seventeen regiments by 1965 out of which nine regiments were equipped with modern US Patton tanks (396). This was possible due to the direct military pact signed by Pakistan with the US under the Mutual Defence Assistance Agreement followed by it joining the SEATO and CENTO. It paid special attention to build up its war-waging potential in the plains. Between 1954 and 1965 Pakistan received 400 Patton and 200 Chaffee tanks, a squadron of supersonic F-104A fighters, four squadrons of older F-86F fighters and two squadrons of B-57B Canberra bombers, besides additional basic arms.613

India during this period raised eleven mountain divisions and only four armored regiments. Its lone armored division had only one armored and one infantry brigade instead of traditional three armored brigades; it had no medium self-propelled artillery or advanced antiaircraft guns that could enhance the striking power. Out of its sixteen armored regiments, only four were equipped with Centurion (180) tanks which were comparable to the Pakistani Patton tanks while the other tanks were far inferior. There was the superiority of numbers in artillery but all its regiments were equipped with World War II vintage guns while Pakistani Army’s artillery regiments were equipped with the latest heavier caliber American guns. Indian infantry was superior in numbers to Pakistan in 1965 but four out of the nine infantry divisions were on reduced strength and with two divisions permanently deployed in J&K, only seven divisions were deployed against the entire Pakistan border mostly in the defensive role having almost the same strength as that of the Pakistani Army. “The modernization of India’s warfare capability in the plains was neglected; the only armored division of India was left with the same organization and equipment of World War II.” 614

On the relative strength of the Indian and Pakistani air forces, India had 36 fighter/bomber squadrons with about 700 aircraft to Pakistan’s 14 squadrons having 260 combat aircraft. The Indian Air Force had only 270 combat-worthy aircraft against Pakistan’s 170 aircraft.615 The Indian Air Force had marginal quantitative superiority while Pakistan enjoyed qualitative superiority due to better technological upgrades.

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614 Singh, Amarinder and Shergill, op cit, p 479
Pakistan’s eight squadrons of F-86 Sabre jets were armed with Sidewinder missiles while India’s thirteen squadrons of Hunters, Mysteries, and Canberras were all subsonic without any missile armament. The Indian Navy enjoyed qualitative and quantitative superiority over the Pakistani Navy, having an aircraft carrier INS Vikrant, a combined strength of 47 ships/cruisers/destroyers/ frigates/minesweepers, 24 Sea Hawk strike-interceptors but no submarine. The Pakistani Navy had 28 ships/cruisers/destroyers/ frigates/minesweepers and 19 utility helicopters plus a submarine PNS Ghazi. Quantitatively, India added mountain divisions meant for warfare against the Chinese, but there was qualitative erosion due to lack of modernization. **Pakistan’s military capability was thus superior and credible to India in 1965 due to qualitative and quantitative accretion of armored regiments and the induction of technically superior tanks, artillery, anti-tank weapons, and aircraft.**

India began the rearmament and modernization programme of its armed forces in 1963 only after the 1962 military defeat. The defence allocation was raised from 2.1% in 1961-62 to 3.7%, 3.5% and 3.7% of the GNP in the years 1963, 64 and 1965 respectively.\(^{616}\) This rearmament programme was focused more against the Chinese threat and less towards Pakistan. The eleven mountain divisions raised were meant for deployment against the Chinese border. Consequent to modernization programme, India’s armed force, would have reached closer to their authorized levels by the end of the 1960s.\(^{617}\) On completion of its modernization programme by 1968-69, India was expected to have a substantial military superiority over Pakistan. Bhutto argued, on 12 May 65, “since India’s military strength is growing, and is at present in no position to risk a ground war, it was time to strike.”\(^{618}\)

India, in 1965, lacked the overwhelming conventional armored and infantry superiority required to launch an offensive into Pakistan to win a decisive victory that could deter Pakistan from launching a conventional against India. But, Pakistan, too did not enjoy overwhelming superiority over India. Taking out the eleven mountain divisions deployed against the Chinese border, there was almost parity between the two armies. ‘**Power-parity prevents war, it preserves peace since no state expects a**

\(^{616}\) Prasad and Thapliyal, op cit 2011, p 8

\(^{617}\) Singh, Jasjit, Air Commodore, *Defence Forces of India*, (New Delhi: Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis, 1989) p 48

\(^{618}\) Singh, Kriti, Revisiting India-Pakistan War, *Defence and Security Alert*, August 2015, Volume 6, Issue 11, p 64
victory and the potential initiator realizing limited chances of its military victory will prudently avoid a war. Preponderance deters war. Since India did not have the preponderant military capability, and Pakistan had qualitative superiority, the former could not deter war. The armored formations and the air power project the offensive capability of its armed forces in the plains in which Pakistan enjoyed qualitative superiority being equipped with the latest Patton tanks and Sabre jets respectively. Secondly, India’s military modernization programme already underway would widen the gap in India’s favor once all acquisitions and expansion plans fructified. Pakistan, therefore, considered, 1964-65 as a ‘strategic window of opportunity’ to attack before India’s military weakness and vulnerability in 1965 transforms into its strength in the next three to four years. The mere threat of a strongly militarized India had served as an incitement, not a deterrent.

Crisis

Pakistan as a prelude to finalizing its plan for initiating hostilities selected the Rann of Kutch - a remote border area to assess India’s political will, military preparedness, its own armament and equipment in battle conditions, particularly the Patton tanks it had acquired from Western powers and the ensuing world reaction to Pakistani military action. The Kutch crisis created as a result of Pakistan’s unprovoked border skirmishes in April 65 were viewed differently by both the countries. Pakistan perceived India’s lackadaisical military performance during the Kutch skirmishes as lack of confidence after the Chinese debacle while India considered Kutch having little tactical and no strategic significance.

As the negotiations for the Kutch Agreement were being mediated by the British Prime Minister who asked for a cease-fire, India launched ‘Operation Ablaze’ and captured two dominating features in Kargil. The launch of ‘Operation Ablaze’ convinced Pakistan that India’s concentration in Punjab was ominous; the war was imminent and made it finally relent to agree for a ceasefire in Kutch on 1 May.

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619 Paul, op cit, p 5. Also see Claude, Inis L, Power and International Relations (New York: Random House, 1964) p 56
620 Jasjit, op cit 1989, p 48
621 Operation Ablaze was the concentration of 11 Corps on the Punjab border by India’s Western Army Command to assess the military preparedness of the IA and wargame the likely contingencies. Operation Ablaze was also meant to pressurise Pakistan and the mediator to restore the status quo in Kutch.
622 Features captured were Point 13,620 and Black Rock that overlooked the Indian positions and the road Srinagar Leh.
During the negotiations, Pakistan was reluctant to withdraw forces to positions prior to 1 January 1965, as demanded by India, while India was not accepting the matter to be referred to international arbitration, as desired by Pakistan, for fear of setting a similar precedent for Kashmir. During the negotiations, when no breakthrough was emerging, Prime Minister Shastri communicated to the British and Americans that India was fast running out of patience and if diplomatic means did not succeed, India retained the option to use military means to resolve the issue. On 30 June 1965, the ceasefire agreement was signed under which the status quo as on 1 January 1965 in Kutch was restored and the border was to delineated by a three-member international tribunal. India’s military deployment as part of Operation Ablaze, succeeded in coercing Pakistan to accept the ceasefire and restore the status-quo in Kutch, though the agreement was a ‘Give and Take’ as India had also agreed for international arbitration. The agreement was severely criticized in India by the opposition, even some members from the Congress Party and the media, as India in the past had not agreed for any international arbitration.

The Government of India had contemplated expanding the Kutch skirmish beyond the region. But the Chief of the Army Staff (COAS), General JN Chaudhari successfully staved off attempts to broaden the scope of the conflict, on the grounds that it did not make strategic sense. Mr. SD Pradhan during an interview with the author reinforced the same, elaborating that in a meeting chaired by the Prime Minister and attended by the Defence Minister, COAS and CAS, the Defence Minister had proposed involving the Navy to exert pressure on Pakistan; broadening the conflict in areas favorable to India was also discussed in which the COAS displayed a defensive mindset perhaps borne out of lack of confidence in his Army after the debacle at the hands of China in 1962; he did not favor either of the proposals. India’s military failed to respond effectively at the tactical and strategic level in Kutch emboldened Pakistan to give concrete shape to the planned tribal invasion. Pakistani President Field Marshal Ayub Khan approved the plan on 15 May at Murree to launch guerrilla

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623 Prasad and Thapliyal, op cit 2011, p 35
625 Ibid.
626 Ganguly, op cit 1999, p 72
627 Mr SD Pradhan is the former Deputy National Security Advisor and Chairman Joint Intelligence Committee. He has got a deep insight into the national security issues and military history of post-independent India.
628 Interview carried out on 21 July, 2018
operations in Kashmir to be codenamed *Gibraltar*. Ayub was convinced that India would succumb to military pressure from Pakistan and international diplomatic pressure from the West. Captain Amarinder Singh however, felt that “drawing such wide-ranging conclusions on the basis of a few days fighting was always going to be risky.” Though subsequent events proved Captain Amarinder right, it overlooks the psychological dimension of deterrence that could have been imposed on the Pakistani decision-makers had Indian Army mobilized its Army to threaten Pakistani sensitivities.

Deterrence is the perception of denial of success and lies more in the cognitive domain than the physical. The effect desired is a psychological one which is achieved by means of a threat. The COAS, while overruling the need to broaden the military conflict with Pakistan, apparently did not consider this psychological aspect of deterrence that would have been imposed on Pakistani decision-makers. The reason, was, also lack of Indian Army’s operational preparedness. The Western Army Commander’s statement alludes to the same. The main impetus to the offensive plans of India was given by the Kutch episode. Indian Army was thus, not operationally ready to undertake any offensive into Pakistan during the Kutch skirmishes which the Chief covered up by quoting inappropriate strategic sense. India’s acceptance of the international tribunal to resolve the Kutch boundary dispute strengthened Pakistani perceptions of India’s politico-military vulnerability after the humiliating defeat by China in 1962. Indian Army soldiers were seen as weak and low in morale. Field Marshal Ayub Khan reflected the same to his Army Chief in his top-secret order prior to launching of the offensive in Akhnur sector, “As a general rule, Hindu morale would not stand for a couple of hard blows delivered at the right time and the right place; such opportunities should, therefore, be sought and exploited.” Pakistan’s growing politico-diplomatic engagement with China and non-withdrawal of US Military Aid Programme to Pakistan for violating the terms of the agreement to employ American tanks in Kutch further emboldened Pakistan. It also erroneously

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629 Operation Gibraltar was the codename given to the strategy of Pakistan to infiltrate the guerrillas in Jammu and Kashmir and start a rebellion against Indian rule. Launched in August 1965, the guerrillas, disguised as locals, entered Jammu and Kashmir from Pakistan with the intention of fomenting an insurgency among Kashmiri Muslims.

630 Gokhale, op cit 2015 p 61

631 Singh, Amarinder and Shergill, op cit, p 30


633 Pradhan, op cit, p xviii
assumed the existence of widespread popular support for Pakistan amongst the people of the Kashmir Valley.

Conflict: India’s Tactical Containment but No Strategic Deterrence

Pakistan’s launch of tribal invasion in J&K on 5th August marked the commencement of the conflict stage. The conflict involves the application of force at the tactical, operational or strategic level to attain the desired objectives. The aim of Pakistan’s tribal invasion was to incite the people of Kashmir for a revolt and create conditions for intervention by the Azad Kashmir forces for the eventual liberation of J&K. Though the application of force was planned at the tactical level, it was intended to attain a long-term objective of improving its position relative to India in the overall confrontation.

The large-scale infiltration had caused alarm and concern within the J&K administration. On 8 August 1965, a panicky civil administration requested that the Army should declare martial law and take over the administration of the State.634 The central government, after consulting the Army, declined as it amounted playing into Pakistan’s hands and given credence to the Pakistani theme of an internal uprising by the people of Kashmir. Declaring martial law would have demoralized the people, who out of fear could have cooperated with the raiders. Moreover, it would tie down the already overstretched Indian troops. On 12 August, the Prime Minister Shastri evolved the broad contours of his policy to deal with Pakistan’s infiltration campaign: “India would not approach the UN; Pakistan would be sternly warned against infringing on India’s sovereignty and plans would be prepared for various contingencies.”635 The Indian Army was instructed to take effective action to seal the passes that were used by the infiltrators.636 India’s capture of vital strategic objectives like the strategic Hajipir Pass inside the POK and shifting the battle across the Cease Fire Line coupled with effective containment of infiltration threat in the hinterland signaled India’s intent and capability.

India, however, did not carry out any deployment close to the border in Punjab after 5 August and after the escalation of the conflict along the Cease Fire Line. This was despite the fact that its armored division was temporarily pre-located in Jullundur after its deployment in Operation Ablaze till July 1965.

634 Singh, Amarinder and Shergill, op cit, p 40
635 Raghavan, S, The War That We Forget, Outlook, Volume LV, No 20, 25 May, 2015, p 28
636 Pradhan, RD, op cit, p 7
Strong states discourage others from attacking them by being able to repel such an attack through ‘Deterrence by Denial’. The military posturing of the armored division along the Punjab border for an offensive as a deterrent strategy post the infiltration campaign could have possibly deterred Pakistan from launching the offensive in Akhnur and thereby averting the war. Broadening the conflict beyond the Kutch region and military deployment signaling the adoption of Strategy of Denial and Punishment would have been proof enough of India’s military resolve and imposed a psychological constraint on Pakistan. It would have also been seen as effective implementation of its evolved military strategy of responding to any Pakistani aggression at the time and place of its choosing in synchronization with the political resolve achieved by Kashmir’s integration. Indian unwillingness to respond with alacrity and military strength coupled with their readiness to seek third-party intervention led the Pakistani leadership to make a flawed inference that the Indians lacked the will for war and have not recovered from the psychological setback of the 1962 Sino-Indian border war. Mr. SD Pradhan during an interview with the author clarified that the priority of the government in August was to stabilize the situation in J&K in the wake of Pakistan’s Operation Gibraltar where additional troops were inducted. Moreover, India had no intelligence of any impending Pakistani offensive in Akhnur Sector. The top political and military leadership was somehow conditioned that Pakistan would not escalate the conflict. India did not seriously consider the concept of war-avoidance strategy and the psychological dimension of deterrence. Pakistan, therefore, assumed that India would not escalate the conflict in Kashmir to an all-out war. Pakistan also did not consider India’s physical deterrence in terms of military capability credible. “Pakistan perceived lack of credibility of this threat based on India’s past response to limited wars [Kutch border skirmish in April 1965] not to escalate beyond the immediate theatre of operations and India’s strength of its geographical depth, population and military potential was not sufficient to deter a short and limited attack by Pakistan.” Pakistan was, thus, not deterred by India in 1965; it was also the distinct possibility of India building up the military deterrence in next three to four years that would shift the balance of power in India’s favor. This incentivized Pakistan towards the decision

637 Snyder op cit 1961, p 32
638 Ganguly, op cit 2002, p 41
639 Paul, op cit, p 109
for war in 1965 in this ‘strategic window of opportunity. **Both the psychological and physical dimension of deterrence thus played an essential part in Pakistan’s decision-making for war. The hypothesis that deterrence is an essential aspect of decision-making for war is fully validated.**

**War: Analysis of India’s Decision-Making**

Failure of India’s deterrence led to the decision making for war. Deterrence deals with the prevention of war and decision-making for war lend itself to decisive employment of military force with the political objectives being the same. India followed a well-defined institutionalized process for politico-military strategic decision-making. The Defence Committee of the Cabinet (DCC), re-designated as the Emergency Committee of the Cabinet (ECC) post the 1962 War was fully functional taking all important decisions. Prime Minister, Shastri spent a fair amount of time to deliberate on the macro aspects of the impending war. Consequent to launch of Pakistan’s offensive in Akhnur Sector on 1 September 1965, the ECC under the chairmanship of Prime Minister deliberated extensively on all the aspects of the war and ordered the Army to cross the International Border.  

At a meeting on 3 September called by the Prime Minister with the Defence Minister, the COAS and the CAS (the Chief of Naval Staff (CNS) was left out) the country’s war objectives were laid down as follows: -  

(a) To defend against Pakistan’s attempts to grab Kashmir by force and so make it abundantly clear that Pakistan would never be allowed to wrest Kashmir from India.  

(b) To destroy the offensive power of Pakistan’s Armed Forces.  

(c) Occupy only minimum Pakistan territory necessary to achieve these purposes which would be vacated after a satisfactory conclusion of the war.  

The Prime Minister directed Air Marshal Arjan Singh to ensure that there was no bombing of civilian areas in Pakistan. These directions constituted what is called the ‘Higher Direction of War.’

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640 Singh, Amarinder and Shergill, op cit, p 479, Pradhan RD, op cit p 22, and Prasad and Thapliyal, op cit 2011, p 94  
641 Ibid  
642 Prasad and Thapliyal, op cit, p 94  
643 Pradhan, op cit, p 27
India’s decision to take the battle into Pakistan upheld Thucydides concept of ‘Honor’ and ‘Interest’ as the motives for India’s bold decision. As the Kutch skirmishes emboldened Pakistan to initiate the infiltration campaign in Kashmir, it also made India determined to give a befitting reply to any Pakistani misadventure. The government made an accurate assessment of Pakistan’s intentions and regarded maneuvers in Kutch as only a smokescreen for her pre-planned intrusions in Kashmir. Pakistan’s increasing belligerence had strengthened the nation’s and the Indian Army’s resolve to avoid further insult after the humiliation from China in 1962. The intense domestic pressure not only from the opposition but also from within the Congress party and the public added to Prime Minister’s resolve. An impatient nation demanded that the Government and the Army stop silly sallies, act and wipe out the humiliation heaped upon the country and avenge themselves against a perfidious neighbor. The statement echoed the national sentiment. Prime Minister Shastri’s speech in the Parliament on 28th April, 1965, categorically warning Pakistan, “If Pakistan continues to discard reason and persists in its aggressive activities, our army will defend the country, and it will decide its own strategy and the employment of its manpower and equipment in the manner which it deems best” was translated into reality. It reflected the nation’s determination to defend its honor and uphold its national interest. While doing so, India followed the Bounded Rationality Theory which offers heterogeneous goods having positive or negative constraints. The negative constraint already in existence was Pakistan’s offensive in Akhnur sector which was to be contained at all costs. Destroying Pakistan’s war-waging potential by occupying its territory was a positive alternative, which was capable of achieving the goal of containing Pakistani offensive already in progress. As Pakistan’s offensive in Akhnur sector had made substantial territorial gains threatening Akhnur as well as Jammu, India had the option of reinforcing this sector with additional forces and fight a purely defensive battle or go on the offensive to take the war into Pakistani territory. India adopted the latter option. Employing the armor to contain the Pakistan offensive in Akhnur sector would have limited the war to Kashmir and enabled the superior Pakistani armor to open another

644 Ibid, p 120
645 Mankekar, DR, Twenty-two Fateful Days (Dehradun: Natraj Publishers, 2011) p 14
646 Lok Sabha Debates, Third Series, Volume XLII, 1965, PM Shastri’s speech in the Lok Sabha on 28 April, 1965, p 11585
647 The theory has been explained in Chapter II on page 74
front in Punjab. It employed armor offensively, as it should be, to destroy/degrade the enemy’s war-waging potential by threatening its strategic sensitivities instead of engaging in defensive battles to protect own vulnerabilities. Admiring the Indian decision as an illustration of a significant aspect of Indian psychology, Brines wrote, “Although clearly unwilling to launch an aggressive war, the Indians once attacked, were ferociously determined to inflict the maximum punishment on Pakistan; they were not deterred by moral or political considerations from any actions they deemed justifiable for this purpose.”

The decision of the government of India to take the war into Pakistani territory was a bold politico-military decision consistent in line with its policy decision enunciated and declared in the 1950s that Pakistan’s aggression against Kashmir would be treated as an invasion of India and responded at a time and place of its own choosing. It set aside the Pakistani assumption based on India’s past war behavior in 1947-48 when after threatening to escalate the war into the plains of Punjab did not do so and non-escalation of conflict during the Kutch skirmishes. It also dispelled the Pakistani perception that India did not have the stomach for an all-out war and it would not cross the International Border. While doing so, India was not deterred by the technical and qualitative inferiority of its equipment.

The ‘Higher Direction of War’, however, did not reflect the government’s intentions to achieve a decisive victory over Pakistan that could later act as a credible deterrence for any future misadventure. Non-involvement of the Indian Navy as a vital instrument of national military power in the overall war effort, restrictions imposed on the employment of the AF and Army reflected a somewhat passive approach.

The CNS was not called for the meeting in line with government’s policy to keep the conflict with Pakistan as narrow-based as possible. The Indian Navy, though larger in size, and having greater strike power than the Pakistan Navy was assigned a defensive role. After the operations started, the defence ministry had issued written instructions that the Indian Navy would not operate beyond 200 miles from Bombay nor North of the parallel of Porbandar. India did not wish to extend the war to the seas as the Navy was still to be equipped with naval equipment negotiated with the Soviet Union. It

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648 Brines, op cit, p 331
was feared especially on the Eastern board which was generally unprotected, that Pakistan Navy may carry out wide-scale attacks; as India was ill-equipped to face such an eventuality and therefore did not wish to provoke Pakistan. The reason given out for preventing the Indian Navy from operating was that Indonesia had started staking claims to the Andaman & Nicobar Islands and had dispatched a few naval ships to Karachi to bolster the Pakistan Navy in 1965. The defence of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands from a possible attack from Indonesia was considered more crucial and important than naval operations against Pakistan by the government. However, the fleet which was there on the Eastern coast to deter the Indonesian Navy was later recalled to Bombay and the ships and the aircraft carrier went into dry dock to refit. Captain Amarinder rightly questions: “One wonders if the perceived threat was in the East, why then wasn’t the fleet retained in the Eastern waters and ships not kept in operational readiness.” It is apparent that the issue of employment of the Navy was not discussed in the ECC. The Indian Navy was issued written instructions imposing restrictions on their operational areas after the operations had started. The instructions were issued after the CNS had two meetings with the Defence Minister. The actual reason was to keep the conflict as narrow-based as possible.

The Indian Air Force was inducted into the war when the Army sought the support of AF around 11 am on 1st September due to the criticality of the situation in Akhnur sector. The involvement of AF would have broadened the conflict and constituted the escalation ladder; therefore, the approval was to be taken from the ECC. Due to time criticality, the Defence Minister immediately approved the employment of AF and later took approval of the ECC and the Prime Minister.

Air Vice Marshal Subramaniam rightly questions, “Should this joint appreciation not have been done in the preceding weeks by the Western Army and Air Command and prior clearance been obtained from Delhi to launch air strikes, should Pakistan attempt to expand the conflict?” Obviously, no contingency planning was done to cater to the employment of AF in critical situations. This led to a lack of coordination between the three services in evolving an integrated operational plan impacting the conduct of operations at the ground level and causing casualties to own troops. The three-

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649 Pradhan, op cit, p 117
650 Singh, Amarinder and Shergill, op cit, p 468
651 Pradhan, op cit, pp 116-117
652 Ibid, p 4
653 Subramaniam, op cit, p 284
pronged offensive into Lahore Sector was not supported by a simultaneous air offensive against the Pakistani air bases. Had such missions been planned for the Lahore offensive on 6th September, it would have paid handsome dividends and precluded Pakistani Air Force seizing the initiative to strike on Indian Air Force bases of Adampur, Halwara, Pathankot (Punjab) and Jamnagar (Gujarat). The Indian Air Force riposte was launched next day morning. Professor Ganguly observed, “in many ways, this was the classic example of the ‘organizational missions’ of particular forces undermining the larger cause of developing a coherent national security strategy.”654 A bit harsh observation, though definitely this was an avoidable lacuna in the planning process. Though the Chiefs of Staff Committee, headed by the Army Chief, met regularly during the war, apparently no joint planning was carried out and plans were hastily drawn up by each service.

The Government was very apprehensive on the likelihood of the Pakistani Air Force targeting Indian cities and causing civilian casualties. Air Marshal Bharat Kumar, during an interview, clarified that no formal directive was issued however there were three restrictions imposed on Indian Air Force. 655 These were, firstly, it would be employed in support of the Army, should not initiate attacks on Pakistani airfields unless the Pakistani Air Force attacked the Indian Air Force bases and retaliate only to degrade their operational capabilities. This inhibited the Indian Air Force from carrying out pre-emptive air strikes on Pakistani airfields and other installations. Secondly, East Pakistan was not to be targeted, which was understandable. Thirdly, Peshawar was not to be attacked without the express permission of the Government, but no reason was ascribed for the same. It is thus clear that India was not aiming for a full-scale war but a limited war with short-term political objectives.

The restriction imposed in the higher direction of the war on 3 September on Army to occupy minimum territory was militarily unsound and seems to have been borne out of the self-imposed a strategic restriction of keeping the war as narrow-based as possible. Captain Amarinder rightly laments “To occupy minimum territory was a strange caveat to be applied to the launching of operations into Pakistan and it is surprising, the COAS and CAS agreed to this curb.”656 At the ground level, it

654 Ganguly, op cit 1999, p 73
655 Interviewed on 09 December 2018
656 Singh, Amarinder and Shergill, op cit, p 288
involved orchestrating the offensive in such a manner so as to achieve the degradation of Pakistan’s armed forces by occupying minimum territory. It was not a practical proposition as the enemy is drawn into the battle space by threatening certain sensitive objectives which are geographically located away from the border envisaging deep penetration and concomitantly occupy larger territory. **Perhaps it was a symbolic political overtone to exhibit our restraint and satisfy global opinion.**

According to PVR Rao, then Defence Secretary, the aim was to “keep the operations as lowkey as possible, Kashmir had to be defended and it was the determined policy of the Prime Minister and the Indian government not to allow operations to escalate.” Keeping the war as narrow-based as possible was not a sound and rational politico-military decision. Not only all the components of the nation’s Armed Forces should be employed in a full-fledged war, but all elements of the nation’s comprehensive national power must be brought upon to bear on the enemy. It should have been considered that only a decisive victory in war over Pakistan would have made it realize the benefits of enduring peace and have made India’s deterrence more credible for the future. *India did not follow Clausewitz’s theory on war “If our opponent is to be made to comply with our will, we must place him in a situation which is even more oppressive to him than the sacrifice which we demand.”* One wonders whether this is the fallout of India’s pacifist strategic culture. “India, from a sub-continental and national perspective has almost always been on the strategic defensive.”

The war was primarily fought in the Western sector. By 1965, Bengali nationalism was already developing and there was growing disenchantment with West Pakistani rule. Showing sensitivity to these concerns, India rightfully exercised restraint and did not carry out any operations in East Pakistan, except for retaliatory raids in response to Pakistani air attacks on Barrackpore and Agartala. The Pakistani - political-military leadership had long since decided that the defence of the East lay in the West. This proved costly for Pakistan.

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659 Tanham, op cit, p 135  
660 Ganguly, op cit 1999, p 75  
661 Ganguly, op cit 2002, p 45
Some Indian newspapers gave the impression that Lahore would be occupied leading to doubt whether the capture of Lahore and Sialkot were the objectives of Indian offensive. They were not. The Defence Minister Chavan and other officials emphasized that “conquest of Pakistan’s queen city was never an objective.”

The military objective of the offensive in Punjab was “to capture Pakistani territory up to the line of Icchogil Canal posing an automatic threat to the political sensitive town of Lahore, while in Sialkot sector it was the securing of territory with a view to advance towards the Marala-Ravi Link Canal.” Inherent in this laid down objective was to destroy/ degrade the war -waging potential of the Pakistani Army which was militarily logical, pragmatic and achievable. The capture of the territory is an essential means to an end; the end being the destruction/degradation of war-waging potential. At the political level, the capture of the territory is a measure of a nation’s success and exercise of leverages in diplomatic negotiations. Threatening Sialkot, being a sensitive objective, drew the enemy armor into the selected battle space for destruction/degradation.

India’s decision-making process, for the 1965 War signaled political resolve and firmness though it did not reflect its desire for a decisive victory. The remarkable performance of its Army and AF in 22 days made up for the lack of deterrence it could not create against Pakistan since Independence.

Civil-Military Relations. The civil-military relationship functioned very efficiently prior to and during the war. There was excellent coordination amongst the various functionaries of the government with the political hierarchy giving total freedom of action to the armed forces to execute the operations within the broad perimeters of the higher directions of war. The then defence secretary, Mr. PVR Rao, recalled that “After giving the broad directive on 13 August, the Prime Minister did not concern himself with the details of the operations and the Defence Minister too, never interfered in operational matters.” The ECC did not discuss any military issues. However, some analysts feel that there was less effective control of the civilian hierarchy and others feel that the greater control inhibited effective conduct of the military operations. Raghavan felt that the total freedom of action in the planning and

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662 Brines, op cit, p 329
663 Harbaksh, op cit, p 18, 19 and 176
664 Singh, Kriti, op cit, pp 29 -30
conduct of operations given to the armed forces led to faulty planning at the armed
forces level as the civil hierarchy did not exercise effective command and control over
the Army; “the ghost of 1962 continues to bedevil India’s strategic handling.”
Attributing military failures in planning to lack of civilian control is unjustified. The
close civilian interface is justified if the civil officials are intimately enmeshed with
the military planning during peace-time which was and is not the case in India even
now. The government consciousness of its widespread criticism in 1962 of political
interference in planning and conduct of military operations rightly chose not to
interfere in planning and conduct of military operations.

**Intelligence.** Intelligence is an important determinant in decision-making. The
decision-making on the Indian side was impacted by poor intelligence at the strategic
and operational level. Lack of clear assessment of Pakistan’s intention to launch a
large scale infiltration campaign for which the recruitment, training, and organization
started as early as May 65 was a serious intelligence failure. Neither the
Intelligence Bureau responsible for external intelligence nor the military responsible
for operational intelligence detected the build-up of Pakistan’s divisional size force
for the offensive in Akhnur sector leading to a delayed build-up of Indian Army
troops and suffering reverses. Similarly, the raising and equipping of the new 6
Armoured Division with Patton tanks, the raising of a new 11 Infantry Division in
Lahore sector, the concentration of Pakistani Army’s 1 Armoured Division in
Changa-Manga forest opposite the Khemkaran sector were not known. Perhaps, in
hindsight, some of the intelligence failures proved a blessing in disguise. Had the
location of Pakistan’s 1 Armoured Division been known to have been positioned
opposite the Khemkaran sector, the Indian Army possibly would not have launched a
three-pronged offensive in Lahore Sector and adopted a cautious defensive approach
due to the threat of Pakistani offensive.

**Residual Combat Potential.** The residual combat potential available with the
warring nations towards the closing stages of war is an important determinant of
decision-making for a ceasefire. The acceptance of the ceasefire was a political
decision but was based, besides other factors, on the advice rendered by the COAS.
There is a certain amount of dichotomy regarding the availability of tanks and

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665 Ibid
666 Rao, op cit, p 149
ammunition with India and Pakistan at the time of ceasefire. When the Indian Prime Minister enquired from COAS, whether India could win a spectacular victory if the war was prolonged by few days, the General was reported to have replied that most of India’s first-line ammunition had been used up and there had been considerable tank losses.\footnote{Prasad and Thapliyal, op cit 2011, p 314} However, the war account records revealed a different picture later. By 22 September only 14 percent of India’s frontline ammunition had been fired and the number of tanks held by India was twice the number Pakistan had.\footnote{Ibid, p 315 quoting Subrahmanyam, K, \textit{Times of India}, 7 September 2000} Mr. Kalyanaraman, a research scholar with the Institute of Defence Studies and Analysis has raised four observations with this narrative.\footnote{Kalyanaraman S, “The Context of the Cease-Fire Decision in 1965 India-Pakistan War’ IDSA Special Feature, 21 September 2015} The observations basically pertain to the residual combat potential in terms of availability of tanks as well as ammunition with India and Pakistan and to the discussion between the COAS and the Prime Minister prior to taking the decision for a cease-fire.

Commenting on the availability of tanks at the end of war, Kalyanaraman felt that that the number of tanks held with Indian Army and Pakistani Army on 22 September should be 592 and 569 tanks\footnote{The number of tanks has been calculated based on the availability of 720 tanks with the IA and 765 with PA as given in Note 613 on page 198. Subtracting the attrition suffered by IA being 128 and PA 196 tanks, the total tanks with the IA comes out to be 592 and PA 569. For tank casualties refer Note 674 on page 215} and not twice the number of tanks with the Indian Army vis-a-vis the Pakistani Army at the end of war, as has been claimed. Lieutenant General TS Shergill stated, during an interview, that the Indian Army had maintained its laid down the percentage of 50\% war wastage reserves (WWR) due to which destroyed tanks were replaced while the Pakistani Army had not maintained its WWR in their enthusiasm to raise more Patton regiments.\footnote{Interview carried out on 6 August 2018} They had thus strategically over-stretched themselves and could not replace the destroyed or damaged tanks. Due to non-replenishment of destroyed tanks; two of its regiments (10 and 11 Cavalry) ceased to exist on the battlefield after 16 September and another three regiments were down by one or two squadrons. Lieutenant General Mahmud Ahmed of Pakistani Army has confirmed General Shergill’s assertions. He states, “all the mechanically fit M48 tanks of 11 Cavalry (13 in all) were formed into one squadron while the rest of the crew concentrated and trained at Pasrur pending the arrival of fresh equipment.”\footnote{Ahmed, op cit, p 421-451}
There is a difference in the number of tank casualties quoted by respective sides.\textsuperscript{673} Taking a average figure of 200 tanks destroyed/ damaged of both sides and considering 100% repair of temporarily out of action tanks by both sides and 100% replacement of destroyed tanks by the Indian Army due to its full stock of WWR and nil in case of Pakistani Army, the number of tanks available with the Indian Army, at the end of the war would have been 880 tanks \((1080 - 200 = 880)\) while with Pakistani Army it would have been 565 tanks \((765 - 200 = 565)\). This amounts to less than double the number of tanks but still a substantial difference of 315 tanks in India’s favor.

As far as ammunition is concerned Mr. Kalyanaraman contends that it rests on the unverified assumption that the Pakistani Army’s ammunition and spare parts would not have lasted for more than a few days after 22 September. He has opined that, as the war lasted for three weeks and the Indian Army had utilized only 14 percent ammunition, there is no reason that the Pakistani Army would have consumed far greater quantities of ammunition. Lieutenant General Shergill clarified that the Pakistani Army had employed tanks in the Kutch skirmishes while no Indian tanks were employed there. One composite armored regiment comprising a squadron each of 12 Cavalry (Chafee’s) and 24 Cavalry (Patton’s) took part in the Pakistani offensive in Kutch.\textsuperscript{674} Secondly, the Pakistani Army launched an armored-led offensive in the Akhnur sector on 1 September where it had employed two armored regiments - 11 Cavalry and 13 Lancers. The Indian Army had employed only one squadron of 20 Lancers in the Akhnur Sector.\textsuperscript{675} Therefore, Pakistan’s ammunition consumption was definitely higher than that of the Indian Army. Taking into account that the US policy for providing six weeks of ammunition as war wastage reserves (WWR) to countries receiving American military aid, Pakistan’s ammunition stock was definitely lower than that of India.

\textsuperscript{673} The MoD approved history by Prasad gives the tank casualties caused by 1 Corps as 144 tanks plus 11 tanks captured intact. Indian losses were 29 tanks destroyed and 41 damaged. In Khemkaran sector Colonel Bhupinder has given the number of tanks lost by the India as 32 tanks while Pakistan lost 97 tanks. Total Pakistan losses were 252 and that of India as 102 tanks. Brines quoting military circles in Washington concluded, on the basis of post war information, that Pakistan lost 200 tanks, with another 150 put out of action but recoverable \((32\% \text{ of her 1100 tanks})\ [765 \text{ tanks and Not 1100 as PA did not maintain war wastage reserves}]\). India by this assessment lost between 175 and 190 with another 200 temporarily out of commission \((27\% \text{ of her 1450 tank force})\ [1080 tanks including war wastage reserves]\); some foreign assessments place Indian losses at the lower figure of 100 to 125. \textit{It is fair to assume that both India and Pakistan lost 200 tanks each}

\textsuperscript{674} Pradhan RD, op cit, p 28

\textsuperscript{675} Singh, Bhupinder, op cit 1982, p 40-42
The other two observations pertain to the consultations of the Prime Minister with the COAS for acceptance of the UN-sponsored ceasefire. Kalyanraman opines that the narrative fails to comprehend the context of the conversation between Prime Minister Shastri and Chaudhuri about extending the war for some more days. General Chaudhari, the COAS opposed acceptance of ceasefire when it was initially considered on 13 September. For the final acceptance, the COAS himself had agreed to accept a ceasefire as India’s strategic aims had been achieved. This has been confirmed by Mr. RD Pradhan, the secretary to the Defence Minister during the war. DK Palit noted that in the light of his (COAS) previous assertion about attaining a decisive victory within a few days, he felt compelled to offer the excuse that the army had used up most of its frontline ammunition and suffered considerable tank losses. This was an “off-the-cuff answer that Chaudhuri delivered as was his habit, without, verifying it first with his staff.”

Kalyanraman’s assessment that the Indian Army was simply not in a position at that point in time to attain a spectacular victory in a matter of a few days or a week is only partially correct. The Indian Army, by virtue of having sufficient quantity of ammunition as well as greater number of tanks and considering the leadership and morale of the troops, was definitely in a better state to cause additional attrition on Pakistani Army and capture few more areas, though decisive victory would not have been possible.

**Cease-Fire.** The decision to end the war is as important as the decision to initiate the war. As the war was heading for a stalemate and world pressure was growing for a truce, the situation was reassessed. The COAS assessed on 20 September, that the twin purpose of degrading the war-making potential of Pakistan as well as thwarting the Pakistan design to resolve the Kashmir issue by military strength had been achieved. The Army was on top of the situation and ready to unreservedly support the ceasefire now. The CAS Air Chief Marshal Arjan Singh stated in September 2015: “I advised the Prime Minister Shastri not to agree for a ceasefire, but I think he was under pressure from the UN and some countries.”

The international community, particularly the US, asserted immense pressure through the UN. The Defence Minister Mr. YB Chavan alludes to the same, “the leading powers of the UNO, including the

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676 Palit, op cit 1991, p 427
677 Pradhan, op cit, pp 77-78
USSR are not with us on the Kashmir issue, we are tragically alone; this is the achievement of our foreign policy.” The Security Council wanted the acceptance of ceasefire before the expiry of Chinese ultimatum on 22 September 1965 so as to negate any pretext to intervene in the conflict. The acceptance of a ceasefire precluded China’s interference along the Northern borders. **Acceptance of ceasefire at this time was a wise decision as prolonging the war would have isolated India internationally, it deflected the Chinese threat, though militarily some more gains were possible. While accepting the cease-fire, The Prime Minister adroitly calibrated the military requirements on the ground and did not entirely succumb to the international pressure.** Professor Ganguly’s observation that the Indian decision to accept the ceasefire was made on political, not militarily grounds is incorrect. The Armed Forces were kept in the loop for the decision about the ceasefire.

The ceasefire came into effect on 23 September early morning. The public supported the ceasefire but strongly opposed the withdrawal of forces. The ceasefire resolution did not satisfy India as Pakistan was not declared an aggressor while Pakistan too felt unsatisfied as it could not include the provision of plebiscite in Kashmir. The inclusion of political considerations, at the behest of China, was a face-saving clause for Pakistan. The clause for the inclusion of consideration of future steps for settlement of the political problem was inserted because the UN diplomats recognized that a “ceasefire depended upon Pakistan’s acceptance of the inflexible Indian position and that a face-saving provision was necessary to permit Rawalpindi to do so.”

**Peace Agreement.** The Tashkent Agreement did not produce the desired peace dividend as expected after the war. Like the ceasefire, it did not satisfy India and Pakistan with both sides compromising on their stated stands. India making the greater concessions militarily agreed to return the captured territories. Prime Minister Shastri felt satisfied that the conference did not compromise India’s position on Kashmir and President Ayub Khan felt satisfied that he got back from India the lost areas of Tithwal, Hajipir, and Kargil, and that Kashmir was discussed. Though

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679 Pradhan, op cit, p 83
680 Ganguly, op cit 1999, p 75
681 Brines, op cit, p 379
682 Prasad and Thapliyal, op cit 2011, p 299
Kashmir was discussed, Pakistan did not get any guarantee for its future political consideration. In India, the public criticism on the agreement pertained to the return of its hard-won key features, particularly the Hajipir Pass.

India surrendered the military advantages it had gained in the war against Pakistan. It came under intense Soviet pressure to sign the Agreement, as at one stage it was appearing that the summit would fail. Mr. K Shankar Bajpai, the secretary of the Indian delegation to Tashkent wrote on its completion of 50 years of the 1965 war, “Originally urging the Tashkent meet not for a final settlement but to start a process, Moscow pressed for an agreement there and then, with messages sent through our ambassador warning of a return to the UN Security Council, and without the benefit of a Soviet veto.”683 During the interview with the author, Mr. Bajpai admitted that the Russians exerted immense pressure on India to accept the withdrawal of forces from captured territories in POK.684 He clarified that India was initially determined not to return the captured J&K areas unless Pakistan agreed to renounce force and accept cease-fire line as an international border, but Russia’s skillful diplomacy turned from pro-India to even-handed, as it saw the possibility of weaning Pakistan from China. Russia warned India not to expect any Soviet veto in the UN Security Council resolutions. Mr. Bajpai was of the view that India should not have accepted these terms and defied subsequent Security Council resolutions as it had been done in numerous cases across the world. He laments that none of the senior ministers and officials including the Chief Designate Lieutenant General Kumaramangalam objected.

**External Influence.** External influence on developing countries is an important and unavoidable determinant in decision making for terminating the war, as well as post-war negotiations. After the Kutch skirmish, US mulled over the withdrawal of MAP which was the lifeblood of Pakistan’s national security, but it was not done due to a fear of Pakistan falling into new alliances with Russia or China.685 It further emboldened Pakistan for its military venture. Both the superpowers avoided direct involvement during the war. The US mainly exercised its influence through the UN even though it privately warned China against intervening in the India-Pakistan war as

684 Interviewed on 26 March 2018
685 Gokhale, op cit 2015, p 26
preventing China from entering the war was an important factor in United States policy. The United States worked with the Soviet Union to pass successive UN Security Council resolutions that contained explicit language about the undesirability of third-party military intervention. The United States, along with the United Kingdom, suspended all economic and military assistance to India and Pakistan in order to compel them to end the war.

China, in a bid to wean away Pakistan from the US, built anti-communist bloc in Asia and due to its hostile relationship with India, supported Pakistan prior to and after the war in discussions at the UN. The Pakistan President Field Marshal Ayub Khan and Foreign Minister Bhutto had concluded that China would militarily assist Pakistan in the event of a war with India. China avoided direct involvement but intervened in a symbolic manner by raking up a protest against the Indian security forces for having constructed some military structures in Sikkim and issued an ultimatum to demolish these structures within 72 hours. The Chinese ultimatum evoked strong warnings from both the superpowers. India was deterred from de-inducting any formations from the East for operations against Pakistan, though it discounted any large-scale Chinese attack. China ensured inclusion of political considerations in the ceasefire agreement that was considered as a face-saving clause for Pakistan. Bhutto confirmed later that the Chinese pressure was responsible for including the clause pledging future consideration of a political solution for the Kashmir problem. At that time, China had neither the intention nor the capability to militarily support Pakistan as it was already providing assistance to Vietnam against the USA; under the circumstances, it was difficult for the Chinese to open a new front against India.

The Soviet Union played a leading role in the post-war negotiations and brokered the Tashkent Declaration. Russia maintained a neutral position much to the benefit of Pakistan. Premier Alexie Kosygin repeatedly urged Shastri and Ayub Khan to cease hostilities and even offered to mediate between them. Highlighting Soviet interest in the complex diplomacy played out in India-Pakistan War, Professor Griffith writes, “Moscow wanted to maintain its newly-won rapprochement with Pakistan; its minimal objective was the containment of both Peking and Washington and maximum

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687 Gokhale, op cit 2015, p 178
aim to improve relations between India and Pakistan so together they might devote their energies to containing China rather than fighting each other.’ 688 By brokering the Tashkent Agreement, the Soviets achieved their minimal aims with respect to India, Pakistan, and China.

The Indian offensive across the International Border was severely condemned in many parts of the world despite Pakistan initiating the conflict. This was extremely unfortunate and reflected the failure of India’s diplomatic efforts to shape a favorable environment. There was credible evidence of Pakistan training, equipping, supporting and providing the military leadership to the infiltrators, irrespective of its denial. The UN Secretary General’s appeal based on the ground report prepared by United Nations Military Observer Group for India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) Commander General Nimmo clearly indicts Pakistan, India failed to convince the international community of Pakistan’s game-plan. Pakistan succeeded in shaping the geopolitical environment by an intensive anti-Indian propaganda campaign and projecting itself as a victim of India’s rearmament programme. The principal reason for India’s condemnation was probably that India carried out her operations with relative openness while Pakistan employed subterfuge with considerable success. 689

Leadership. The Indian Prime Minister, Mr. Lal Bahadur Shastri provided resolute and determined leadership to the country and belied doubts about his ability. All the respondents overwhelmingly graded Shastri’s political leadership as ‘Very Good’. 690 He showed the strength of conviction and defied the image of a soft-spoken frail man. The US Ambassador to India, Kenneth Galbraith noted: “there is more iron in his soul than appears on the surface; he makes up his mind firmly and his decision sticks; he is the kind of man who is trusted.” 691 He was instrumental in giving clear and unambiguous directions to the Army to cross the International Border and take the war to Pakistan. Shastri’s decision to cross International Border in Punjab and go for an all-out war has been appropriately described as the tallest decision by the shortest man. It took Pakistan by surprise as they were least prepared for an all-out war. The expansion of the war to the rest of the western front was not only useful for forestalling any potentially adverse situation in J&K; it was also to convey the

689 Brines, op cit, p 333
690 Refer Question 20 of Appendix B on page 359
691 Singh, Amarinder and Shergill, op cit, p 1 and Brines op cit, p 219
political message of deterrence for the future to Pakistan that ‘aggression would not
do’ and demonstrated Kashmir being an integral part of India. Mr. YB Chavan was an
equally effective Defence Minister who enjoyed the trust of the Prime Minister. The
Prime Minister, Defence Minister, the COAS and the CAS worked as a closely-knit

team.

The senior military leadership is a mixed bag of superb successes and avoidable
failures. The leadership of General Chaudhari the COAS left much to be desired. Both
prior to and during the war he displayed lack of resolute leadership. His suggestion
not to expand the Kutch conflict was militarily sound but led to emboldening Pakistan
to initiate the infiltration campaign in J&K. He overlooked the deterrent effect of
aggressive response to Pakistan initiated skirmishes in Kutch. During the war, on 9/10
September when the Pakistan armored thrust in the Khemkaran Sector was underway
and threatened the Beas bridge along the Delhi-Amritsar highway, the COAS
contemplated withdrawal of the Indian Army to the Beas river instead of fighting a
defensive battle close to the International Border. General Harbaksh insisted on a
written order and declined to implement the order as he was confident of thwarting
the Pakistani armored thrust. 692 The situation eased off the next day after the historic
battle of Assal Uttar. The Indian Army’s gallant and heroic defence, the next day,
vindicated the Army Commander’s professional conviction. Had this been carried
out, it would have been a disastrous outcome for the nation and the Indian Army.

Doubts have been raised whether such an order was issued by the COAS or it is a
mere conjecture. RD Pradhan who was the secretary to Defence Minister, based on
Chavan’s diary and analysis of various correspondences, particularly between General
Chaudhari and the Defence Minister on the writing of a book by Lieutenant General
BM Kaul ‘The Untold Story’ ‘has confirmed that a suggestion to retreat to the Beas
was made. 693 Also, General Chaudhari’s advice to the Prime Minister for the
ceasefire based on the shortage of ammunition was professionally unsound.

The operations of 1 Corps suffered from professional differences between the COAS
and the Western Army Commander in its strategic conception. The Western Army
Commander favored launching 1 Corps from the direction of Dera Baba Nanak but
the COAS decided to launch the offensive from the Samba-Kathua side. This

692 Singh, Amarinder and Shergill, op cit, p 230
693 Pradhan, op cit, p 64
difference was not reconciled and adversely impacted the conduct of operations of 1 Corps. The Army Commander’s dissension led to his taking a backseat to oversee the operations and the COAS directly involving himself in tactical level operations. Both are guilty. The COAS should not have involved himself of interfering at the tactical level, the Divisional and the Corps Commanders are the competent authorities to direct tactical battles. The Army Commander’s dissension should have ended once the plans were finalized and should have left no stone unturned to support the plan that was approved by the COAS. “The animosity between the two senior-most Commanders of the Indian Army festered to the detriment of operations of 1 Corps; many strategic opportunities created by 1 Corps were thrown away by lack of flexibility by Western Command HQs.”

The lack of flexibility is being referred to is the inability of the Western Army Commander to shift additional armor from the Khemkaran Sector where fighting had almost ceased by 12 September to reinforce 1 Armoured Division in the Sialkot sector. It is the lack of flexibility to shift the strategic weight to the Sialkot sector displayed after blunting the Pakistani invasion in Khemkaran that paid dearly in the operations of 1 Corps. Perhaps the human factor of the bitterness of the Army Commander with the COAS on a number of professional matters weighed heavily on the latter’s mind to devote lesser attention towards the operations of 1 Corps. Harbaksh’s resoluteness, grit, and professional wisdom, faith and trust in his command and moral courage to stand up to the Chief at Khemkaran when the latter contemplated withdrawal to Beas saved the day for the Indian Army and the nation. Lieutenant General Harbaksh Singh was the rock that stood unwavering even on occasions when commanders above or below him had momentary lapses of reason. The Army Commander lifted a defeatist 4 Mountain Division to carve out a brilliant victory in the battle of Assal Uttar. The surprise counter-offensive of Pakistan’s 1 Armoured Division capturing the village of Khemkaran and threatening to make a deeper thrust towards Amritsar or the Beas bridge had induced panic amongst the rank and file of 4 Mountain Division prompting the GOC 11 Corps recommending replacement of 4 Mountain Division and disbandment of four infantry battalions. The Army Commander immediately flew to HQ 4 Mountain Division, introduced a sense of calmness and confidence in the formation and lifted a defeated leadership setting them on the path to a brilliant

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Singh, Amarinder and Shergill, op cit, p 480
victory later. Lieutenant General Mahmud Ahmed, wrote, “Lieutenant General Harbaksh’s timely visit to HQ 4 Mountain Division on 8 September 1965 may be regarded as the turning point in the 1965 War.”

This decision of the Army Commander was a force multiplier in the operations of 11 Corps. The CAS, Air Chief Marshal Arjan Singh too displayed resolute leadership. The Defence Minister commented about him. “Air Marshal Arjan Singh is a jewel of a person; quietly efficient and firm; unexcitable but a very able leader.”

When the ceasefire came into force on 23 September 1965 at 0330 hours, the Indian Army was in possession of 1,920 square kilometers of Pakistani territory and the Pakistani Army held 540 square kilometers of Indian territory. Pakistan lost the war and India was the clear winner, though it fell short of a decisive victory.

Validation of Hypothesis

Pakistan’s decision to wage a war against India was influenced by India’s lack of military deterrence in 1965 and buildup of substantial deterrence in the next four to five years. India’s lack of military deterrence was reinforced by its Army’s poor performance in Kutch skirmishes in April 1965 coupled with its decision to not to expand the Kutch conflict in response to Pakistan aggression. India’s acceptance of international arbitration for dispute of Kutch dispute reinforced Pakistan’s perception of lack of military deterrence by India. The hypothesis that deterrence is an essential part of decision-making in the Indian context thus stands validated. The second part of the hypothesis that vacillation in the use of force/other instruments has impacted the relevance of deterrence also stands validated.

PART III: CONCLUSION

Avoidance of war, according to Kautilya, was the ultimate test of the efficiency of a King and his Army; this is deterrence these days. War was not considered a proactive tool of statecraft by the Indian political leadership and concomitantly the concept of war avoidance by deterrence did not seem to have been examined seriously, despite appreciating Pakistan to be a permanent threat to India’s security.

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695 Ahmed, op cit, p 267
696 Pradhan, op cit, p 83
698 Subramaniam, op cit, p 444
The initiation of hostilities by Pakistan underscored the failure of India’s military deterrence and the distinct possibility of building a viable deterrence in the next three to four years was an important determinant for Pakistan to initiate hostilities. Kutch reinforced the Pakistani perception of India’s lack of psychological and physical dimension of deterrence. The 1965 War was a ‘War of Necessity’ for India to defend the vital national interest of territorial integrity threatened by Pakistani aggression while it was a ‘War of Choice’ for Pakistan. India’s decision-making process matured into a sound, prudent and institutionalized mechanism, while the political cum Armed Forces leadership grew from a defeatist mindset induced after the Chinese debacle humiliation. “Pakistan’s acceptance of restoring status quo ante, with only face-saving provisions in the UN resolution for some future consideration was, perhaps the strongest indication that, for all practical purposes, Pakistan had lost the conflict.”

For India, the victory dispelled the ghosts of the 1962 and laid the foundation for a decisive victory over Pakistan six years later, in the 1971 War. The war, however, did not result in peace; the confrontation continues unabated. Aristotle – the Greek philosopher said about 2,300 years ago, “it is not enough to win a war; it is more important to organize peace’; and peace relies heavily on the political will to do so.”

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699 Brines, op cit, p 375
700 Singh, Kriti, op cit, p 64
SECTION IV

INDIA - PAKISTAN WAR 1971

Background

Pakistan, on getting independence on 14 August 1947, consisted of two geographically distinct wings - West and East Pakistan with the political power concentrated in West Pakistan. East Pakistan always felt discriminated in terms of economic development and representation in government and military jobs. The failure of West Pakistan to address the aspirations of the people of East Pakistan caused great disenchantment to the latter despite Islam being the common bond. The main political party of East Pakistan – the Awami League demanded regional autonomy in June 1966. The general elections held in Pakistan in 1970 led to the absolute majority to the Awami League in the national assembly of Pakistan. However, the Central Pakistan Government denied the legislated right to Awami League to form a government. This caused a great amount of disenchantment to the people of East Pakistan and their demand for autonomy gradually became more pronounced. In March 1971 as the people of East Pakistan rose in revolt, the Pakistan Army launched a military crackdown to suppress the autonomy demand. This triggered a large-scale exodus of refugees to India causing grave economic and security crisis. India’s diplomatic efforts to resolve the crisis did not yield the desired results. The East Pakistan resistance movement grew in strength with its military wing launching a guerrilla campaign against the West Pakistan Army. Pakistan believed the involvement of India in supporting the guerrilla campaign. The frequent border skirmishes between the Indian Army and Pakistan Army became more intense leading to launch of air strikes by Pakistan on Indian AF bases at the beginning of December 1971. India responded aggressively employing all the three services both in West and East Pakistan, leading to an all-out war. The case-study on India-Pakistan 1971 War will analyze India’s decision-making for war and the deterrence. It has been structured as follows:

(a) Part I : The Crisis and Evolution of Decision
(b) Part II : Analysis of Deterrence and Decision-Making
(c) Part III : Conclusion
PART I: THE CRISIS AND EVOLUTION OF DECISION

The Crisis

The vast economic disparity between East and West Pakistan exacerbated the ethnic, socio-political and psychological differences. To address these and other inequities, the Awami League leader Sheikh Mujib demanded regional autonomy and a separate currency for East Pakistan in his Six-Point Programme in March 1966. This was outrightly rejected and also led to a two-year jail term for Mujib in April 1966. President Yahya Khan initiated a number of measures for political reconciliation with East Pakistan. The elections to the National Assembly were held in December 1970. The Awami League emerged as the largest political party, winning 167 out of 169 seats giving Sheikh Mujib the legal and moral right to form the government in Pakistan. Bhutto’s party could win only 88 out of 144 seats. The military regime in West Pakistan did not want to yield political power to East Pakistan. The election results placed the military regime and Bhutto as leader of the largest political party in West Pakistan in a quandary on how to accept East Pakistan the prospects of power-sharing with Sheikh Mujib. Bhutto’s intransigence of non-participation in the national assembly and inflexibility of Mujib provided Yahya with an opportunity to subvert the elections. The denial of rightful legislative power to Sheikh Mujib accentuated the confrontation between East and West Pakistan. Throughout March 1971, Yahya kept up the pretense of negotiations with Mujib but was using the time to build up its Army in East Pakistan. The number of troops in East Pakistan had gone up from 14,000 to 60,000. As political negotiations could not make a breakthrough, Mujib started a non-violent, non-co-operation movement which turned violent. The Pakistan Government saw it as a virtual secession and charged the leaders of Awami League with conspiracy to bring about the division of Pakistan. To quell the movement, President Yahya Khan ordered the Pakistan Army to ‘sort out the Bengalis’ and ‘fully

701 Six Point programme were the demands projected by Sheikh Mujibur Rehman for autonomy of East Pakistan. These included parliamentary democracy and a federal constitution, restrict federal government powers to defence and foreign affairs, two separate currencies for East and West Pakistan, devolve fiscal policy to the federating units, maintain separate foreign exchange earnings for each wing and raising a separate militia for the defence of East Pakistan.
703 Ganguly, op cit 1999 pp 95-96
704 Chopra, Pran, India’s Second Liberation (Delhi: Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd, 1973) p 70
705 Prasad and Thapliyal, op cit 2014, p 14
restore the authority of the Central Government. The Pakistan Army launched a ruthless military crackdown on the night of 25th March 1971 to suppress the Bengalis and arrested Sheikh Mujib on 27th March. The military crackdown brutally killed a large number of defenceless civilians, raped women and plundered property. This led to large scale exodus of refugees into India. The magnitude and extent of the repression in East Pakistan was later acknowledged with details given in Pakistan’s Hamoodur Rahman Commission Report. By the end of March 1971, as the Pakistan Army had established control of entire East Pakistan, the influx of refugees into India grew manifold, posing a severe economic and socio-political threat to the national security. The military genocide also pushed the autonomy demand of East Pakistan to secession.

The Evolution of Decision

On 31st March, the Parliament of India unanimously passed a resolution expressing deep anguish and grave concern at the massive attack unleashed by the Army of West Pakistan against the people of East Pakistan. The resolution stated, “This House cannot remain indifferent to the macabre tragedy being enacted so close to our border and called upon all people and governments of the world to prevail upon the government of Pakistan to put an end immediately to the systematic decimation of people; it assured the struggle and sacrifices of 75 million people of East Pakistan will receive the whole-hearted sympathy and support of people of India.” As the influx of refugees into India continued unabated, the Government of India (GoI) examined various options to resolve the crisis precipitated by the military crackdown of West Pakistan Army.

The formal and the highest consultative institution for decision-making on security in March 1971 was the Political Affairs Committee (PAC), comprising of the Prime

706 Rao op cit, p 157
707 Hamoodur Rahman Commission of Inquiry was commissioned by the Government of Pakistan on 26 December 1971 to look into the allegations related to (a) excessive use of force and fire power in Dacca during the night of 25/26 March 1971 when military operations were launched; (b) senseless and wanton arson and killings in the countryside during the course of the ‘sweeping operations’ following the military action; (c) killing of intellectuals and professionals like doctors, engineers etc and burying them in mass graves not only during early phases of military action but also during the critical days of the December 1971 war; and (d) killing of Bengali officers and men of the Units of the East Bengal Regiment, East Pakistan Rifles and the East Pakistan Police Force in the process of disarming them or on pretence of quelling their rebellion. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hamoodur_Rahman_Commission (Accessed on 13 September 2018)
Minister, the Foreign Minister, the Defence Minister and the Finance Minister. Various other ministers, service chiefs and secretaries attended when considered necessary. General SHFJ Manekshaw, the Chief of Army Staff (COAS), by virtue of seniority was the Chairman of Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC). As the likelihood of war appeared imminent, the three services were intimately involved in the deliberations at the highest level as well as in joint planning. Besides this institutionalized body, there was another small crucial group comprising of a small and homogeneous team that deliberated on all important macro-level issues, particularly on foreign policy and defence matters. Mrs. Gandhi, the PM and the final authority, relied extensively on her secretariat, headed by PN Haksar* until July 1971 and later PN Dhar. India’s decisions for the resolution of the crisis was evolved over a period of time in a graduated manner in synchronization with the emerging situation as per the following timelines -

(a) Crisis:
   i. 25th March to May 1971 - Policy Formulation
   ii. June to August 1971 - Diplomacy and Coercive Strategy

(b) Conflict: September to November 71 - Escalation and Decision for War

(c) The War: December 1971 - Surrender and Cease-Fire

Crisis: 25th March to May 1971 - Policy Formulation

India examined various options namely the military intervention, granting political recognition of Bangladesh government-in-exile, seeking diplomatic support of international community and provision of moral and military support to Mukti Bahini. There was immense political and public pressure on the government for military intervention and recognition of Bangladesh government-in-exile in April 1971. A number of analysts, with Dr Subramanyam the most forceful one, felt that May was the appropriate time for intervention by India due to the limited Pakistani military deployment in East Pakistan who was engaged in carrying out the military crackdown and controlling the consequent uprising. Raghavan opined that a swift Indian military operation could have occupied a large territory of East Pakistan, presenting a fait accompli to Pakistan and afforded very little time to the UN Security Council to

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* PN Haksar was PM Gandhi’s Principal Secretary from 1971 to 1973. He was a close confidant in the key core group of the PM. Mr DP Dhar was the former ambassador to the U.S.S.R.; in 1971 he was the head of Policy Planning in the Ministry of Affairs.

709 Sisson and Rose, op cit, p 138
impose cease-fire or other measures and India’s intervention would have been justified for humanitarian assistance.\textsuperscript{710} Such an intervention if successfully undertaken would have mitigated the brutalities inflicted upon the Bengalis, the loss of life and violation of human dignity.\textsuperscript{711} However, there were more disadvantages of military intervention in East Pakistan in April 1971. Politically, the world would not have supported India and despite doing so much for the refugees, it might not have earned the good-will of the world community. The situation had similarities to the one in Kashmir of which the Prime Minister was very wary of correlation. She stated, “India had consistently maintained in respect of Kashmir that we cannot allow its secession and that whatever happens there is a matter of domestic concern and that we shall not tolerate any outside interference.”\textsuperscript{712} Further quoting the example of Nigeria where the secessionist movement in Biafra\textsuperscript{713} was not supported, she cited international law, “where a state of civil war does prevail, international law and morality accord legitimacy to a successful rebellion.”\textsuperscript{714} But there was scope and justification albeit with a caveat. “Morality, at least, is not a bar to unilateral action so long as there is no immediate alternative available.”\textsuperscript{715} Morality does permit unilateral action provided other alternatives are explored, this was not the case for India’s intervention in East Pakistan in April-May 71. India’s military intervention without exploring other alternatives would not have been justified internationally leading to its diplomatic isolation. Military reasons too militated against intervention in April-May 71. At a meeting held at 10.30 pm on 26th March in the Army Headquarters, attended by the Prime Minister, the Defence Minister and the COAS, the Prime Minister after hearing the COAS’s account of the events in East Pakistan, expressed the desire that India should assist the people of East Pakistan immediately as they were going through a traumatic period. The Chief replied that he was conscious of the necessity for this political requirement, but militarily he was not ready, as most of the formations and units were dispersed, for performing election duties and time was required to prepare for the task in hand.\textsuperscript{716} The military intervention was considered again. At a cabinet meeting held on 25th April, many

\textsuperscript{710} Raghavan, op cit, 2013, p 272  
\textsuperscript{711} Ibid  
\textsuperscript{712} Ibid, p 60  
\textsuperscript{713} Biafra was a secessionist State in West Africa that existed from 30 May 1967 to January 1970. Biafra’s attempts to secede from Nigeria resulted in the Nigerian Civil War.  
\textsuperscript{714} Raghavan, op cit, 2013, p 60  
\textsuperscript{715} Walzer op cit, p 106  
\textsuperscript{716} Singh, Depinder, Lieutenant General, PVSM, VSM (Retired), Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw, MC, Soldiering with Dignity (Dehradun: Natraj Publishers,2002) pp 128-129.
ministers demanded immediate intervention; the Chief was the lone voice advocating patience for the reasons enumerated above.  In personal discussions with Mrs. Gandhi, General SHFJ Manekshaw advanced three reasons for his present hesitancy. The reasons were first, Tibetan passes were about to open with the melting of the snows and Chinese intervention could not be ruled out, this would lead to temporary loss of territory to the Chinese. Secondly, the terrain of East Pakistan was a network of rivers and the rainy season commences in June, the need to remain clear of monsoons was imperative. A military campaign, if started before the monsoon must be quickly concluded and that would require a greater superiority in numbers over the enemy than was available if action were taken immediately. Additional forces had been deployed in East India due to elections and only up to a division plus were available. Since Pakistan was believed to have over four divisions; India could build up forces within a few weeks but by then the monsoon would not be sufficiently far away and India could be in difficulty if the rains broke a little earlier than normal. The military action was favored by the Finance and Defence Minister as well as the public in general, particularly of West Bengal while the Foreign Minister opposed the same. The Indian Railways was not then well prepared to ferry the men and material. The author interviewed Lieutenant General Depinder Singh – then MA to the COAS to seek clarifications on the discussions that ensued in the meeting. He clarified that the COAS favored conducting a swift Indian campaign at a time when China would be unable to militarily intervene. The opening of passes along the Northern borders facilitated the possibility of Chinese interference and the impending monsoon precluded the conduct of swift military operations. Lieutenant General Depinder highlighted in his book *Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw, MC, Soldiering with Dignity* that the Chief during the personal meeting had asked the Prime Minister: “whether he should claim insanity and resign as he was the only one opposing military intervention”, the Prime Minister rejected the offer, telling him “he was absolutely right.”  

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717 Singh, Depinder, op cit, p 129  
718 Chopra, op cit, pp 78-79  
720 Interview carried out on 21” September 2018. Lieutenant General (then Colonel) Depinder Singh was the Military Assistant to General Manekshaw during the 1971 War  
721 Singh, Depinder, op cit, p 129
productive and Bangladesh could have been refused recognition by the majority of the
countries. It was a political consideration of external recognition and domestic
political visibility of Bangladesh when it became independent.\footnote{Chopra, op cit, p 79}
The military option was, thus, ruled out in April-May 71 on both military and politico-
diplomatic considerations though it was portrayed as military consideration being the
dominant reason.

The commonly held belief that the Prime Minister had favored military intervention in
April-May 1971 in East Pakistan, while the COAS dissuaded her from doing so seems
implausible as both the Prime Minister and the COAS held similar views on the
subject. Lieutenant General Depinder Singh recounted during the interview that it
came as a big surprise when, after some Cabinet meeting, there were rumors that the
Army had developed cold feet and had refused Cabinet orders to militarily intervene.
He clarified that this was a falsehood being spread by some vested interests. Srinath
Raghavan explained that Mrs. Gandhi in order to assuage the feelings of critics had
summoned Manekshaw to the cabinet meeting held on 25\textsuperscript{th} April, to convey military’s
viewpoint directly to the political leaders, who were critical of government’s cautious
policy and demanded immediate intervention.\footnote{Dhar, PN, \textit{Indira Gandhi, Emergency’ and Indian Democracy} (New Delhi: Oxford university Press, 2000) p 157 quoted in Raghavan, op cit, p 70. Raghavan carried out personal interview with PN Dhar in Delhi on 24 November 2009. Srinath Raghavan is a senior fellow at the Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi and India Institute at King’s College, London. He works on contemporary and historical aspects of India’s foreign and security policies.} The rumor was possibly spread by some Ministers who wanted to draw political mileage out of the crisis in East Pakistan. Srinath Raghavan considers “this [i.e. the rumor about differences between the COAS and PM] is perhaps the most tenacious of all myths about the 1971 crisis.”\footnote{Raghavan, op cit 2013, p 67 Also see Pupul Jayakar, \textit{Indira Gandhi: A Biography, Revised Edition} (New Delhi: Penguin, 1995) p 223 and Singh, Depinder, op cit, p 129} Indira Gandhi’s strategic outlook was shaped by an assessment prepared earlier in the year on the threat posed by Pakistan. The assessment had concluded:
“Pakistan’s military preparedness is such that she has the capability of launching a
military attack against India on the Western front.”\footnote{PN, Haksar Papers (III Instalment) NMML, Subject File 220, ‘Threat of a Military Attack or Infiltration Campaign by Pakistan’, Secretary R&AW to Cabinet Secretary, 14 January 1971, p 18} The Prime Minister was aware of these weaknesses which were not rectified when the crisis in East Pakistan erupted. The advice from the Army chief was in synch with that of the Prime Minister’s views.\footnote{Raghavan, op cit 2013, p 67} It appears that the COAS’s explanation of military constraints to some
cabinet members including the Finance and Defence Minister who had favored the 
military intervention in April 71 had been misinterpreted as differences between the 
Prime Minister and the COAS or rumored as Army developing cold feet. In fact, 
Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi instead of herself ruling out the military option chose the 
Army Chief to explain the reasons as the professional view would find greater 
acceptability.

**India did not grant recognition to the Bangladesh government in exile established on 17th April 71.** It would have been a viable option had it been followed 
by direct or indirect military intervention. As the military intervention was ruled out, 
recognition would have been a premature action and drawn an adverse international 
reaction. It was appreciated that Pakistan would turn this recognition of East Pakistan 
into an Indo-Pak conflict, resulting in a war where Pakistan could seek UN 
intervention, which in turn, would have harmed the cause of East Pakistan. However 
close contacts were maintained with the Provisional Government of Bangladesh 
(PGB) and extended diplomatic and humanitarian support. The Prime Minister, the 
Foreign Minister and other officials began using the word “Bangladesh or East Bengal 
for East Pakistan, in government circles, which in fact amounted to de facto 
recognition.” India’s grant of refuge to political leaders and its cadres as well as 
military/para-military personnel of East Pakistan forces was in line with the Indian 
policy in a similar development in a neighboring state. India had granted political 
asylum to Dalai Lama and his followers in 1959 in the wake of Tibetan Uprising.

**The government decided to explore diplomatic means to seek the support of the world community.** It publicized the atrocities being committed by the Pakistan 
Army in East Pakistan. Mrs. Gandhi requested all the governments in mid-May to 
persuade Pakistan to cease military atrocities in East Pakistan that would enable the 
return of refugees from India. The world community proved unwilling to apply 
adequate pressure on Pakistan which emboldened it to not to carry out any course 
correction in East Pakistan. The result was the continuation of a massive influx of 
refugees into India. **As the atrocities continued unabated, the autonomy demand gave way to complete independence and this became the unstated target of India’s diplomatic campaign.** But none of the foreign powers including the USA

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727 Ibid, p 35  
728 Sisson, and Rose, op cit, p 142  
729 Chopra, op cit, p 80
and USSR was willing to apply much pressure on Pakistan that would compel it to yield on independence. The Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi was constrained to say: “the growing agony of the people of East Pakistan does not seem to have moved many governments; our restraint has been appreciated only in words while the basic issues involved and the real threat to peace and stability in Asia are being ignored.”

The military intervention having ruled out and the diplomatic option not providing the desired outcome, India decided to pursue the third option, i.e. provide support to the liberation movement launched by the Bangladesh government-in-exile. On 7th May, the Prime Minister explained the broad parameters of policy to support the liberation movement in a closed-door meeting with leaders of the opposition. The Prime Minister envisaged a guerrilla campaign “to constantly and continuously harass the West Pakistan Army as an armed intervention at this stage would evoke hostile reactions all over the world and all the sympathy and support for Bangladesh will be drowned in Indo-Pak conflict.” A committee was formed to assess the requirements of the liberation movement. India encouraged the Bengalis decision to carve out “a liberated area near the border so as to have some capability to influence the turn of events later.” To implement the Prime Minister’s strategy of a guerrilla campaign, the Indian Army was entrusted with the primary responsibility for the arming and training of Mukti Bahini and providing material aid in terms of arms, ammunition, communication equipment, broadcasting facilities, logistics, and advisory support. The Army Chief issued an Operational Instruction to HQ Eastern Command on 1st May 71 whose aim was “to assist the government of Bangladesh in rallying the people in support of the liberation movement and to raise, equip and train East Bengal cadres for guerrilla operations.” The guerrilla operations besides harassing the Pakistani forces would preclude launching any offensive across the borders into India. It was also to use the Bengali fighters to support India if Pakistan initiates any hostilities against India. The plan was to organize and equip a guerrilla force of 20,000 men, which could subsequently be enlarged to 1, 00,000. This would enable India to upscale the scope of guerrilla activities in a gradual manner and plans were accordingly formulated.

730 Prasad and Thapliyal, op cit 2014, p 73
731 PN, Haksar Papers, Subject File 227, Haksar’s Note to Indira Gandhi on meeting with opposition leaders on 07 May 1971
732 Raghavan, op cit 2013, p 62-63
733 Ibid, pp 72-73
734 Ibid
India carried out a review of the political situation in end May 71. The refugee influx into India continued unabated causing a grave security risk and economic burden on India. By end May, over three and a half million refugees had crossed over to India.\textsuperscript{735} North-East region of India where the refugee camps were established was vulnerable for exploitation of the refugees by the ethnic insurgent groups who used East Pakistan as their safe bases. There was also concern about the prospect of Maoists of West Bengal and extremist elements within the refugee camps joining hands to exploit the situation. The ratio of Muslims to Hindus of the refugees initially was 80 to 20, but by the end of April this had reversed: nearly 80 percent were Hindus, and only about 20 percent were Muslims.\textsuperscript{736} India concluded, “apparently, Pakistan is trying to solve its internal problems by cutting down the size of its population in East Bengal and changing its communal composition through an organized and selective programme of eviction.”\textsuperscript{737} The composition of the refugees was worrisome due to apprehensions of Hindus not returning even after restoration of peace. New Delhi was not confident that an Awami League government would welcome back the Hindu refugees, who, on staying in India, would become an unacceptable burden on the economy and create social problems.\textsuperscript{738} The refugee influx formed a sort of "indirect aggression" against India and was assuming the dimension of a dispute between Pakistan and India.

The economic burden for managing the refugees was rising every month. The budget presented in May 1971 had provided 600 million rupees for the relief of refugees but it was getting submerged by the scale of the deluge.\textsuperscript{739} The return of refugees accordingly became an important consideration in India's demand for the political resolution of the civil war in East Pakistan. Dr. K Subrahmanyam, a strategic affairs expert associated with the IDSA, advocated a series of bold politico-military steps to be taken to help the freedom struggle in Bangladesh end quickly and victoriously, instead of relying too much on the international community to force Pakistan for a political settlement.\textsuperscript{740} He was alluding to military intervention to support the ingenious freedom struggle. After deliberating on various policy options, the Prime Minister took a series of decisions in end May that set the framework for Indian policy thereafter.\textsuperscript{741} These were: -
(a) **The return of all refugees, including the Bengali Hindus was the first and most fundamental objective; any “peaceful solution” that did not provide for this—either directly or indirectly—would not be acceptable to New Delhi.**

(b) The transfer of power to the moderate Awami League leadership in East Pakistan in any form of government that create conducive conditions for the return of the refugees.

(c) Provide calibrated indirect military support to the Mukti Bahini, but, if that proved unsuccessful, direct military intervention at an appropriate time.

(d) Enhance the efforts to mobilize the international community and organization in support of Indian objectives in East Pakistan, alternatively neutralize their capacity to counter Indian policy.

The Prime Minister elaborated the contours of this policy in a speech delivered in Parliament on 24th May 1971. It stated, “what was claimed to be an internal problem of Pakistan has also become an internal problem for India; Pakistan cannot be allowed to seek a solution of its political or other problems at the expense of India and on Indian soil.” As India could not provide relief to the refugees for an indefinite period, it was necessary to stop further inflow and ensure their early return with suitable guarantees for their safety. World powers, by virtue of their strength, had a special responsibility to exercise their influence over Pakistan to restore peace. She emphasized, “*If the world does not take heed, we shall be constrained to take all measures as may be necessary to ensure our own security.*” The speech was aimed at multiple audiences: to convince the domestic opinion that the government was determined to tackle the problem, to convey to Pakistan that India would not accept refugees as a fait accompli, to convince the great powers that Pakistan’s actions were fraught with dangerous possibilities and if required take any measures as deemed appropriate for its security. Implicit in this is the possible use of force.

The refugee deluge by end May had created a humungous humanitarian crisis for India. **The “return of refugees, therefore, became the political objective and the cornerstone of its diplomatic campaign.”** Considering the lack of any forward movement till now by the world community towards a workable political solution, India began to examine all possible options including the option of application of military force to resolve the problem.

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742 Lok Sabha Debate, PM’s Statement in Lok Sabha, 24 May, 1971, p 187
743 Ibid, p 188
July to August 1971: Diplomacy and Coercive Strategy

India launched an extensive diplomatic campaign to mobilize international opinion to underline the need to pressurize Pakistan to evolve a viable political solution in East Pakistan that would be acceptable to the Awami League and create conditions conducive for the return of refugees from India. Foreign Minister and several other cabinet ministers visited capitals in Europe, North Africa, East, and West Asia. From July onwards, the Indian Prime Minister and Foreign Minister visited various countries. All the countries visited showed sympathy and agreement with India, but this did not translate into persuading Pakistan to alter its policy of suppressing the populace of East Pakistan. Influential countries like the USA, China and some Islamic countries who could have exerted pressure upon Pakistan to stop atrocities in East Pakistan did not do so. They considered it to be an internal matter which emboldened Pakistan. The role of USA, USSR, China all of whom are also permanent members of the UN Security Council influencing decisions in the world body was significant.

The US attitude towards India was unfriendly. The US felt that given time it would be able to bring the Pakistan President round, but did not specify any time limit. Nixon favored autonomy to East Pakistan but warned India of Chinese intervention to support Pakistan if India launched military operations in East Pakistan. Kissinger warned the Indian Ambassador on 17 July, “if war broke out between India and Pakistan and if China became involved on Pakistan’s side, we would be unable to help you against China.”

China adopted a cautious stance since the commencement of the crisis in March 71. China urged Yahya in a letter on 11 April to reach a political settlement with East Pakistan as per the wishes of people. “China would firmly support the Pakistan Government in their just struggle for safeguarding national independence and state sovereignty, should India dare to launch aggression against Pakistan.” Quoting several authoritative sources, Sisson highlighted that Zhou had included in his 11 April letter to Yahya that “the question of East Pakistan should be settled according to wishes of the people of East Pakistan; this sentence was neither published by the Chinese News

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744 The PM visited USA, USSR, UK, France, Germany and Canada
745 Raghavan, op cit 2013, p 107
746 Pakistan Times, 13 April, 1971. Zhou Enlai letter as circulated by the Pakistani Government quoted in Sisson and Rose, op cit, p 203
The Indian government had copies of this correspondence and accordingly did not perceive China as a major threat to deter it from achieving its objective in East Pakistan. Despite its disapproval of military crackdown in East Pakistan, China continued to supply Pakistan with military hardware to equip two new divisions. China was also concerned about the developing strategic co-operation between Russia and India and did not want to push India further closer to its adversary - the Soviet Union. Foreseeing the inevitability of East Pakistan breaking away from Pakistan, China calibrated its policy to ensure its influence among the Bengalis as a counterweight to India and Russian influence. It also felt the need to keep normal relations with India. It is noteworthy to state here that China did not give any commitment to Pakistan to ensure its territorial integrity.

The USSR had adopted a more balanced and nonpartisan position between India and Pakistan after the Tashkent Agreement in 1966 and advised both countries to avoid escalating the situation. This USSR’s ambivalence to keep Pakistan in his sphere of influence to negate Chinese dominant influence through its aid program was a matter of concern to India. In view of the deteriorating regional and international situation, India gave a fresh look to the treaty of friendship and cooperation with USSR that was under consideration for two years. India and USSR signed a Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation in New Delhi on 9th August 1971. The treaty was mutually beneficial to both India and USSR. India’s two main concerns namely continued Russian support for Pakistan and its support against China in the event of war were addressed. Article IX of the treaty stated, “In the event of either party being subjected to an attack or a threat, the parties shall immediately enter into mutual consultations to remove that threat and take appropriate effective measures.” With this, India achieved additional safeguards against any Chinese intervention. The treaty also stipulated both sides “to abstain from providing

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747 Ibid quoting Interviews, Bangladesh, 1982; Pakistan1979, Anwar Hossain, the Bengali foreign language expert at Peking Radio from 1966 to 1972, claimed that he had translated Zhou’s letter into Bengali for Peking Radio and that it had included the last sentence that was omitted from the Pakistani version of the text “A Bengali Grandstand View” Far Eastern Economic Review, 11 October 1974
748 General Yahya Khan’s interview in Newsweek (New York) 8 November, 1971 quoted in Prasad and Thapliyal, op cit 2014, p 75
749 Sisson, and Rose, op cit, p 196
750 GoI, MEA Bangladesh Documents, Volume I, p 703-710 quoted in Prasad and Thapliyal, op cit 2014, p 42
751 Raghavan, op cit 2013, p 108
assistance to any third party that engages in armed conflict with the other party.”

This was to safeguard India against the supply of any Soviet military support to Pakistan.

The Indian Foreign Minister had urged the UN Secretary General to use its good offices to evolve a political solution that could pave the way for the return of refugees. The UN proposed to establish the United Nations High Commission of Refugees (UNHCR)’s presence in the refugee camps and establish reception centres in East Pakistan to receive the returning refugees. India rejected the proposal. India strongly rejected the UN Secretary General’s suggestion for a mutual withdrawal of Indian and Pakistani military and deploying UN observers on each side of the border. India’s rejection of deploying UN observers made the world believe in Pakistan’s accusations of India instigating the rebellion in East Pakistan. The possibility of any international pressure upon Pakistan receded further.

The factors that had emerged by mid-July, would determine the broad contours of the policy to be adopted henceforth. These factors were: -

(a) Diplomacy was unlikely to succeed to persuade the international community to put pressure on Pakistan. Most of the countries regarded the refugee problem in India as well as the situation in East Pakistan as separate issues and did not share India’s view of crisis requiring a political resolution. The United States who could exert maximum leverage was the most energetic supporter of Pakistan.

(b) Bolstered by the response of the international community, Pakistan government published a White Paper on 5th August, blaming the Awami League for the crisis and ordered Sheikh Mujib to be tried for treason in camera; it also disqualified 79 of the 160 Awami League members of the National Assembly, charging 30 of them with sedition.

(c) Confident of getting support for these political steps, General Yahya Khan began the war -phobia in August 1971. He said, “War with India is very near and in case of war, Pakistan would not be alone.” Pakistan attempted to build deterrence of international support against India.

752 PN Haksar Papers, II Instalment (NMML) Subject File 49. Note to PM and FM by TN Kaul, 3 August 1971,
753 Sisson and Rose, op cit, p 190
754 Raghavan, op cit 2013, p 208. Also see New York Times 8, 19 and 20 August and 20 September,1971
755 Rao, op cit, p 158
Pakistan continued to build up its forces in East Pakistan. These forces initially meant for controlling the uprising in East Pakistan, were also tasked for deployment on the border and conducting operations against India.

Pakistan in late August published a district-wise tally of refugees that put the total figure at just over 2 million closely resembling the number of Muslims among the Bengali refugees. The huge difference in the number of refugees calculated by India reinforced India’s apprehension that the Pakistan government would not allow the Hindus to return to their homes.

The economic burden of management of the continued influx of refugees was an important determinant of the new policy. Up to the end of July 1971, 7.23 million refugees had taken shelter in India and by 15 December, this figure was expected to reach almost 10 million; the projected cost was assessed at 5,250 million while the external aid amounted only to 1,125 million rupees. The cost of the war in 1965 was of the order of Rs 50 crores. In 1971, considering various factors, the total cost of the war was expected to be Rs 5,000 million whereas the appreciated number of refugees in October would cost Rs 5,250 million rupees. War was a one-time cost which was lesser than the recurring cost of maintaining refugees. In July 1971, an economic assessment underlined that India was not vulnerable on account of foreign exchange reserves until March 1972 even, if international trade was adversely affected due to war.

There was simmering discontentment in the Bangladesh liberation movement, whose leaders in exile felt that the tight control of the Indian Government was not conducive for promoting long-term friendly relations. They were also upset over India not recognizing the PGB and not intervening militarily. They were convinced that Pakistan was not in a position to counter India in the war due to the geographical constraint and local conditions of maintaining the West Pakistan forces in East Pakistan.

The announcement of Mujib’s trial and other tough measures adopted by Pakistan convinced India of the unlikelihood of the emergence of any political solution. The cautious approach adopted by India was not yielding the

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756 Raghavan, op cit 2013, p 209. Also see Agha Shahi to U Thant, 2 September 1971, S-0863-0001-02, UNSG U Thant Fonds, UN Archives, New York
757 Raghavan, op cit 2013, pp 206-209
758 Annual Report of the Ministry of Defence for 1965-66
759 Subrahmanyam, op cit, p 106
760 *PN Haksar Papers*, III Instalment, NMML, Subject File 260. Note on ‘Economy under Conditions of Crisis’ 21 July 1971, prepared by Mr PN Dhar, economist and secretary to the PM.
desired dividends. Dr. K Subrahmanyam argued for more-active stance. His main argument was that military action by India in Bangladesh even if escalated to full-scale war with Pakistan would still be more cost-effective not only in terms of economics but also in establishing the credibility of the Indian government. He emphasized, “the political leadership has to weigh the likely consequences of different courses of action and adopt a solution which minimizes the adverse impact on the country's interests.”

As the shift towards a more-proactive stance was emerging which might lead to military intervention, it is prudent to examine the relative military capability of India vis-à-vis Pakistan, being an important determinant for decision-making. The relative strength of India and Pakistan including the deployment/positioning on Western and Eastern fronts has been tabulated. The details are as follows:

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761 Raghavan, op cit 2013, p 209
762 Subrahmanyam, op cit, p 97
8 Prasad and Thapliyal, op cit 2014, p 271 These personnel were from Para military personnel of East Pakistan Civil Armed Forces (EPCAF) Scouts, Mujahids and Razakaars. Also see Khan, Fazal Muqeem, Major General, *Pakistan’s Crisis in Leadership* (Islamabad: National Book Foundation, 1973) pp 276-291
The Indian Army, had a distinct quantitative advantage over Pakistan Army in the Eastern Theatre, though Pakistan presumed it to be otherwise as it felt that the Chinese threat would tie down India’s divisions deployed on the border. It was near parity in the Western theatre though India enjoyed a nominal advantage in terms of infantry divisions, while Pakistan had marginal superiority in armored. The Mukti Bahini offered distinct advantages to the Indian Army over the irregulars trained by the Pakistan Army. The IAF enjoyed a qualitative and quantitative advantage over PAF. The IN was considerably stronger having an aircraft carrier, but Pakistan Navy (PN) was better off in submarine capability. India’s indigenous military industrial complex provided the requisite support while Pakistan depended on support from the Western Powers, the Middle East, and China. India thus had adequate capability to fight against Pakistan on both the Eastern and Western fronts.

**Considering all these factors, India decided to adopt a coercive strategy by upscaling the qualitative and quantitative support to the Mukti Bahini in order to compel Pakistan to seek a negotiated settlement for the East Pakistan crisis.**

The original target of training 20,000 guerrillas by the end of September is substantially increased to over 1,00,000 by end of November. The arms and material support to the Mukti Bahini was provided with greater urgency, even procuring some requisite equipment from abroad. The Indian Army, thereafter, assumed a more active role providing increased fire support to the Mukti Bahini. It also embedded some of its own troops, especially the commando units, to fight alongside it.

As a negotiated settlement between Mujib and Yahya appeared unlikely with both sides hardening their attitudes by now, India’s proclivity towards the military solution increased. The appropriate timing for a military intervention in East Pakistan was a crucial decision. Considering the military requirements of closure of passes on the Sino-Indian border, suitability of terrain in East Pakistan after the monsoons, reorientation of Mukti Bahini for both guerrilla and conventional warfare and adequate time for preparations, late November - early December period was considered conducive for conducting military operations to achieve India’s objectives in a quicker time frame. The Indian government wanted to give the

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764 Prasad and Thapliyal, op cit 2014, p 203-04
765 Raghavan, op cit 2013, p 212
766 Ibid, p 213
international community and the UN sufficient time to attempt to mediate a viable political solution in East Pakistan or, in the process, expose beyond all doubt their inability to do so. Mrs. Gandhi’s multilateral diplomacy with European countries, USSR and the US were intended to achieve the same purpose. This time, however, coincided with the timing of the session of UN General Assembly. It was presumed by India that the USSR veto power would, forestall, or at least delay any action by the UN Security Council against India. These factors enjoined upon the Indian Army to accomplish its tasks in a quicker time frame.

**Conflict: September to November 71: Escalation and Decision for War**

India, while keeping the diplomatic and political options open, stepped up its assistance to Mukti Bahini and military pressure on Pakistan Army in East Pakistan towards the last week of August 1971 in order to convince the Pakistani Government of futility of military operations and instead seek a negotiated settlement with Awami League leadership. India’s upgraded support to the Mukti Bahini coupled with the enhanced tempo of military operations along the border in July-August made Pakistan apprehensive of India’s military intervention in East Pakistan. However, it was not clear about India’s possible military objectives in East Pakistan – whether to capture limited territory close to the border to install a Bangladesh puppet government and recognize the same internationally or a well-planned military offensive in East Pakistan to defeat the Pakistan Army and secure its surrender. Pakistan appreciated that “India would adopt the first option and feared that the aim of such an attack would be to carve out a liberated zone inside East Pakistan to establish Bangladesh government.”

Pakistan ordered a full mobilization of its forces in the Western Sector considering its offensive capability in West Pakistan to be the best defensive policy for East Pakistan. This was to deter India from initiating any hostilities in East Pakistan where they were relatively weak. A war psychosis was created by Yahya Khan from October onwards within Pakistan. He stated in an interview that “if the Indians imagine they will be able to take one morsel of my territory without provoking war, they are making a serious mistake; Let me warn you and warn the world that it would

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767 Sisson and Rose, op cit, p 209  
768 Raghavan, op cit 2013, p 222  
769 Rao, op cit, p 207
mean war, out and out war.” On 1st November, Yahya Khan was reported to have said in an interview that “China would intervene in the event of an Indian attack on Pakistan.” Yahya had made a similar statement in August 1971 also. India did not mobilize its forces in the West except moving limited troops for defensive purposes closer to the border in October, to avoid any adverse international reaction, maintain secrecy and avoid any provocation to Pakistan. The possibility of Pakistan launching a pre-emptive attack in the West appeared higher in the overall strategical framework.

Any compromise with Mujib appeared unlikely and so was his release as that would tantamount to political suicide by Pakistan. The Pakistan army continued the atrocities on the civilians and augmenting their military strength. Under the given circumstances, the Indian government was convinced of the unlikelihood of the emergence of any political solution that would serve its minimum requirements.

With the rapidly deteriorating situation, India worked out the broad military strategy of adopting an ‘Offensive-Defensive in the West, Defensive along the Northern borders and a Swift Offensive in the East.’ The strategy on the Eastern Front was to capture large areas bordering the Brahmaputra and Meghna river lines; while doing so the thrust lines were tasked to isolate and bypass the Pakistani forces so that the objective could be achieved quickly.

The force allocation was accordingly carried out – thirteen infantry divisions and one armored division for the Western front, while ten divisions including for deployment on the Northern borders for East Pakistan. Army’s Eastern Command was given the task of degrading/destroying the Pakistani forces and occupy the maximum territory of East Pakistan; subsequently, it was ordered to liberate the whole of East Pakistan.

India, in order to avert war, renewed its diplomatic campaign. Mrs. Gandhi undertook a tour to USSR from 27 to 29 September and to Belgium, Austria, UK, USA, France and West Germany from 25 October to 12 November 1971. India needed maximum

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771 Asian Recorder, 17-23 December, 1971 quoted in Raghavan, op cit 2013, p 222
772 Rao, op cit p 170
774 For the Eastern theatre, three Corps HQs and six mountain divisions were earmarked for the offensive; two Corps HQs and four divisions were reconfigured from within the theatre, (four divisions deployed for counter-insurgency/ kept as reserves) while a Corps HQ and two divisions were shifted from the Western theatre. Four divisions continued to remained deployed along the Northern borders against China in the Eastern theatre.
775 Rao, op cit 170
support of USSR both for the supply of arms and for diplomatic support on the international stage. The Soviet Union maintained that the refugee and political settlement of the crisis should be delinked. The USSR’s full support was crucial for India, which despite the friendship treaty, was not forthcoming. Mrs. Gandhi, however, succeeded in inducing a positive shift and also got the support of Britain and France, being permanent members of the UN Security Council. Mrs. Gandhi, was, however, unable to convince the US President Mr. Nixon in November who reiterated both sides to withdraw their troops from the border, conduct bilateral talks and position UN observers along their borders. It also conveyed non-availability of its support, if China intervened.

As part of the escalatory ladder, the Indian Army from the second week of October began to carry out offensive operations within East Pakistan. The aim of these operations was to improve Indian Army’s defensive posture to deny/ secure a suitable launch pad for subsequent large-scale operations and also to ascertain likely Pakistan Army reaction at the tactical and strategic level. As the Pakistan Army moved to the border areas, the Mukti Bahini extended their hold over the interior of the country. There was a sharp rise in the scale and intensity of military operations including the use of tanks and AF. Indian troops after 21st November positioned themselves within East Pakistan, though India denied the presence of its troops.

In response to India’s intensification of military activities in East Pakistan, The Pakistan Army considered attacking the Western front on 22nd November. Yahya restrained its Army from escalating the situation hoping that the UN Security Council would intervene in its favor in the crisis. At the same, Yahya intensified its efforts to install a civilian government in Dacca to lend some legitimacy to his regime for the international community. By this time, however, Yahya’s hopes for any intervention by the world powers in its favor had also dwindled. The USSR and Britain effectively restrained the US to prematurely summon the UN Security Council.

On return from the visit to the US, the Prime Minister ordered to further intensify the military operations in East Pakistan. In the last week of November, Prime Minister accorded approval for the launch of a full-scale offensive in East Pakistan on 4th

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776 Raghavan, op cit 2013, p 224
777 Raghavan, op cit 2013, p 232 and Sisson & Rose, op cit, p 213
778 Ibid. Also see Khan, Gul Hassan Memoirs of Lt Gen Gul Hassan Khan (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1993) p 322
December 1971.\textsuperscript{779} The Pakistani President had decided on 30th November to launch an invasion on the Western front on 3rd December 1971.\textsuperscript{780}

The War: December 1971

Pakistan launched pre-emptive air strikes on 3\textsuperscript{rd} December 1971 at 5.45 pm on a number of Indian airfields in the Western Sector. It was intended to ease off the Indian military pressure in East Pakistan and international intervention to impose a cease-fire. The Pakistani air strikes at major Indian air bases on 3\textsuperscript{rd} December was a welcome surprise to India.\textsuperscript{781} With the air-strikes, India’s planned invasion would not be seen as an aggression by India. It would enable complying with the provisions of the India-Soviet Friendship Treaty.

The launch of pre-emptive air strikes by Pakistan on 3\textsuperscript{rd} December marked the commencement of the 1971 India-Pakistan War. Sison and Rose, however, observed that in more realistic terms, the war began on 21\textsuperscript{st} November, when Indian military units occupied East Pakistan territory.\textsuperscript{782} The writer’s observation is incorrect. Prior to 3\textsuperscript{rd} December, Indian Army and Pakistan Army were routinely engaged in tactical level conflict in which Indian Army’s operations were restricted to providing support to the Mukti Bahini though it involved crossing the International Border and occupying the territory for improving its defensive posture. This was also to act as suitable launch pads for the likely offensive. There was no use of AF except once when it was purely in response to Pakistani air attacks. After 21\textsuperscript{st} November it was only a change of tactics. India had decided to launch the invasion but did not want to be seen as an aggressor to comply with the Indo-Soviet Treaty.

The COAS, after briefing the Prime Minister sought approval for launching the invasion in East Pakistan. The Prime Minister after meeting with the rest of her cabinet decided to declare hostilities on Pakistan and to recognize Bangladesh. In the wee hours of 4 December 1971, the war for Bangladesh formally began.\textsuperscript{783}


\textsuperscript{781} Sisson, and Rose, op cit, p 214

\textsuperscript{782} Ibid

\textsuperscript{783} Ibid. Also see Dixit, op cit, p 89-90 and Lal, PC, \textit{My Years with IAF} (New Delhi: Lancer International, 1986) p 193
India responded immediately with the AF launching air strikes the same night. The Indian Army launched tactical level offensive operations commencing 4th December in J&K, Punjab, and Rajasthan capturing and losing some objectives while the major offensive was launched in the Shakargarh Sector on 5th December where intense tank battles ensued. The Indian Army made tactical gains in Ladakh, Kashmir Valley, Punjab, and Rajasthan while Pakistan Army also made tactical gains in Jammu region and Punjab.

The Indian Army launched the main multi-pronged offensive in East Pakistan – the primary theatre of operations, to destroy the Pakistan forces and occupy a major portion of its territory. The Indian Army captured major communication centres one after the other with the AF achieving total air superiority in the first few days of the war. The IN established a naval blockade to prevent any Pakistani build up in the region including third-party intervention by the sea in East Pakistan. With the Indian Army closing in on Dacca, an airdrop of a para battalion was carried out on 11th December followed by a successful air strike on the Governor’s house on 14th December which caused a huge psychological impact. Seeing the rapidly deteriorating

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situation of Pakistan Army, psychological pressure was built upon the Pakistani Commander Lieutenant General AAK Niazi to surrender by issuing leaflets, handwritten messages in Urdu and radio broadcasts. Messages were sent to the Military Advisor to the Pakistani Governor in Dacca on 11th and 13th December 1971. The Pakistani Government kept on encouraging General Niazi to continue fighting, assuring them of direct military intervention by China and the USA. Nothing happened from the Chinese side. On 13th December information was received that a Task Force of the US Seventh Fleet had entered the Bay of Bengal. India carried out intensive bombings on naval assets in East Pakistan to render them unusable for the Seventh Fleet. While the Indian Army was building up intense pressure on Pakistan Army to surrender, the Pakistan Government was desperately looking for UN-sponsored cease-fire as a face-saving mechanism instead of surrender.

A total of 24 resolutions were moved in the U.N. Security Council. The most significant was the one submitted by Poland to the Security Council. The resolution called for an immediate cease-fire, troop withdrawals by both sides, renunciation of claims to any occupied territories and the transfer of power in East Pakistan to the representatives elected in December 1970. A cease-fire and immediate mutual withdrawal before the capture of Dacca, as laid down in the Polish resolution, would have been extremely disadvantageous to India. The surrender of the Pakistani Forces in East Pakistan which India was attempting to seek before the resolution would not have been possible. A cease-fire followed by withdrawal of its forces would have made India's task difficult to assist the Awami League in establishing a stable regime in Bangladesh. Fortunately for India, Bhutto, the head of the Pakistani delegation to the UN while speaking in the Security Council proceedings on 15th December, criticized the UN for its failure to act promptly, tore up a copy of the Polish resolution, and stormed out of the session, halting all consideration of the subject. The cease-fire resolution failed. Seeing the failure of UN-sponsored cease-fire and intense pressure of the Indian Army, the Pakistan Army decided to surrender on 16th December.

785 Rao, op cit 2013, p 195
787 Rao, op cit, p 195
788 Sisson and Rose, op cit, p 219
789 Ibid
790 Raghavan, op cit 2013, p 261
The Instrument of Surrender was signed by Lieutenant General AAK Niazi, the Commander of Pakistani forces in East Pakistan and Lieutenant General JS Aurora, the GOC-in-C of Eastern Command in the presence of a large crowd of Bangladeshis and foreign media men on 16th December at 4.55 pm in Dacca.971 92,208 Pakistanis including soldiers, sailors and airmen, paramilitary personnel and policemen, and the civilians were taken as prisoners of war (PoWs).972 With the signing of the surrender, the hostilities came to an end in East Pakistan. The Indian Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi informed the Lok Sabha about the surrender of the West Pakistani Forces in Bangladesh and the same evening, announced a unilateral cease-fire on the Western Front. Pakistan accepted the same next day. On 17th December 1971, the 14-day India-Pakistan War came to an end. Indian troops captured 5,620 square miles of Pakistani territory as against the loss of 120 square miles on the Western front.973

PART II: ANALYSIS OF DETERRENCE AND DECISION MAKING

The 1971 India-Pakistan War was the first war in India’s post-independence era where India, unlike the previous wars, pro-actively displayed the political resolve and the military capability to adroitly synchronize the essential determinants of deterrence and decision-making for war to safeguard vital long-term national security interests. The 1971 War was precipitated by the crisis caused due to the influx of refugees. A crisis is described as a “situational change in the external or internal environment of the nation-state that creates in the minds of the incumbent decision makers … a perceived threat from the external environment to basic values to which a decision is deemed necessary.”974 A crisis contains three necessary conditions “threat to core values, finite time for response to the threat and the perception that the nation-state is highly likely to become involved in military hostilities.”975 The refugee crisis posed ‘indirect aggression’ exerting a destabilizing influence and posing threat to India’s core values, which if not resolved through peaceful means warranted application of military force as a last resort. The need to resolve the conflict through the use of military power with

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971 Prasad and Thapliyal, op cit 2014, p 414
972 Ibid, p 415
973 Ibid, p 202
975 Hoffman, op cit, pp 259-260
the singular purpose to “liberate Bangladesh” became the desired unstated end state. War is undertaken as a last resort after exploring all possible options, but the peculiar circumstances created immense enthusiasm amongst certain political leaders as an opportunity to militarily intervene in April-May 1971. Without exercising diplomacy and political negotiations India waging a war would have been subjected to intense UN and other international pressure as it would have been accused of meddling in the domestic matters of Pakistan. India’s subsequent criticism of Pakistan interfering in Kashmir would have been then negated. This unstated but well understood, intention served as a deterrence for Pakistan to escalate initially and for China to intervene militarily. India was ceased with the geographical problem [Chinese threat along the Northern borders] and weather constraints [monsoons] of launching the operations between March to November. The achievement of purpose needed a swift campaign, no intervention from China and capitulation of Pakistan Army in East Pakistan before international pressure brought the war to a close. These considerations could not have been met in April-May. The political necessity of exploring all effective alternatives particularly diplomacy, engagement with the world community, military requirements of training, equipping, strategic positioning of forces and calibrating the indigenous freedom movement of Bangladesh in the background of unwavering pursuit of ultimate desired end state of war conjointly dictated conducting military operations at a later time. Hence, buying time before executing the decision to go in for was a necessity borne out of compulsions of international diplomacy, and military preparedness. However, to assuage domestic and political constituency, it was portrayed as a lack of military preparedness to fit into the overall context of a cautious policy approach adopted by the PM. The Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi’s belief that India had to “tread our path as a state, with[a] a great deal of circumspection and not allow our feelings to get the better of us” reflects the cautious approach, which was valid and prudent.

India, thereafter, orchestrated the evolution of the decision for war in a progressive manner over a period of time in synchronization with the intensification of crisis with a careful and deft exploration of all alternatives to fulfill the tenets of Just War theory. It started with the formulation of the problem statement at the end of May: “the return of refugees was identified as the desired end

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796 Raghavan, op cit 2013, p 60
Having identified the return of the refuges as the single homogeneous good to be achieved, India examined a set of well-defined alternatives that affords the maximum utility as per the tenets of the ‘Utility Maximization Theory’ also known as the ‘Rational Model for Decision Making. It examined the options of seeking diplomatic support of the international community, granting political recognition to Bangladesh government-in-exile and provision of moral cum military support to Mukti Bahini.

India sought the support of the international community to pressurize Pakistan for a political settlement that would satisfy the then East Pakistan demand of a popularly elected Awami League government and Indian demand of return of all the refugees. Diplomacy was calibrated in a manner that it does not evoke any serious enthusiasm for restraining Pakistan from ending the crisis. It worked. From this point on, a vicious circle took over: the more international pressure proved ineffective, the closer Indian thinking moved to the only alternative – war; the more India thought of war the more she alienated official thinking in other countries.797 The inference was clear – the response of the international community suited India’s objectives and made it easy for India to decide the best possible option on its own.

Granting recognition to the PBG and rendering greater support to the Mukti Bahini were interlinked. The decision to provide military support to Bangladesh’s liberation movement was to respect the popular sentiment, exploit their inherent strength to tire out the adversary and make Mukti Bahini an essential part of the escalatory ladder. India considered it essential to assist in the creation of a resistance movement in East Pakistan as the political and military basis for Indian intervention. India preferred that its military action, if unavoidable, should be interpreted as supportive of a Muslim-led East Pakistani liberation movement rather than just another Indian Pakistani conflict. Dr Subrahmanyam termed this, “a shift from a diplomacy of persuasion to the diplomacy of the threat of force to avoid a compulsive drift into a war later on.”798 By mid-April, the Mukti Bahini was not fully trained, oriented and capable of executing sustained operations against the better trained and equipped as most of the areas under its control were taken back by the Pakistan Army by end May. The military support was accordingly calibrated and the PBG was not recognized in

797 Chopra, op cit, p 81
798 Subrahmanyam, op cit, p 72 and 75
April 1971. India’s international diplomacy in April-May revealed the limitations of the world community to resolve the crisis. **Considering the limitations of the international community to resolve the crisis as well as that of the indigenous resistance movement, India shifted to a more active policy.** The Prime Minister’s statement on 24th May in the Parliament, “if the world does not take heed, we shall be constrained to take all measures as may be necessary to ensure our own security’ was the first discreet official threat to use force.”

As the need to apply military instrument was becoming a probability, India put in sustained effort to engage the world community to highlight the atrocities being committed in East Pakistan to diplomacy to convince the world of the righteousness of its cause and garner their support. It engaged the US, USSR, Britain, France, Germany, Canada, the Islamic world and the UNO to pressurize Pakistan to work out a political settlement. It concurrently focussed on deterrence too.

China began to believe in the inevitability of Bangladesh’s secession considering Pakistan’s sustained suppression of the populace of Bangladesh. The dawning of this reality, combined with its long-term strategic interests of maintaining cordial relations with India, China turned into a cautious ally and refrained from colluding with Pakistan. India having advance intelligence about Chinese stance asking Pakistan to respect the wishes of people of East Pakistan and its intentions to not to support Pakistan militarily enabled it to factor the same in its politico-strategic response. A number of analysts and political observers erroneously believed that the Indo-Soviet Treaty had set the stage for an armed intervention by India as it had achieved the requisite deterrence against China. Raghavan’s observation is apt: “China’s stance had crystallized long before the treaty was concluded.” 799 Sisson and Rose had also confirmed the same: “By July 1971 the Indian government had obtained copies of the letters exchanged between Beijing and Rawalpindi in April in which Chinese government had explicitly stated Chinese military forces would not intervene in another Indo- Pakistani war.” 800 India also had copies of the hidden part that urged Pakistan to reach a political accord with East Pakistan as per the wishes of people.

799 Raghavan, op cit 2013, p 201
800 Sisson, and Rose, op cit, p 199 The source of this information includes one former official of the Pakistan Foreign Service who provided copies of the Sino-Pakistani correspondence to the Indian intelligence services at the home of a well-known Indian journalist in New Delhi
India signed the Indo-Soviet Friendship Treaty to create the desired deterrence against Pakistan besides an additional safeguard against China. Russia’s continued supply of arms aid to Pakistan was addressed through this treaty. The treaty’s stipulation on both sides to not to provide assistance to any third party that engages in armed conflict with the other party would prevent Soviet military support to Pakistan in the event of war, thereby degrading Pakistan military capability. With respect to China, the Treaty envisaged assistance only if the country is subjected to aggression by another country not if it launches an aggression against another country. India intended to achieve this by suitably calibrating the military strategy in a manner that Pakistan was compelled to initiate the first step.

India, however, could not elicit support from the USA which mattered the most. USA’s non-cooperative approach was dictated by its own national interest. Nixon’s objective was to “buy time and deter India from embarking on the war at least until his own trip to Beijing had been completed; Nixon and Kissinger believed that if they allowed India to humiliate Pakistan, their reputation in the eyes of China would suffer irreparable damage.”801 India, also could not draw international support from the UNO due to its refusal to allow UN observers apprehending that their deployment would label the ongoing crisis as an Indo-Pakistan dispute. This would then digress attention from the real issue of military oppression of populace and the return of refugees. India’s rejection of deploying UN observers made the world believe in Pakistan’s accusations of India instigating the rebellion in East Pakistan. This hardened the stance of the international community against India while it receded on Pakistan. India looked at the macro picture of according primacy to the political solution of the crisis that in itself would create conducive conditions for the return of refugees, while the UN wanted to address only the issue of facilitating the management of the crisis. The UN wanted to address the consequence while India wanted the cause to be addressed by a political solution.

Sisson rightly observed, “an inherent contradiction existed, between the efforts of India to ‘internationalize’ the emerging crisis insisting that this was solely a Pakistani affair whose suppressive policies in East Pakistan constituted ‘indirect aggression’ against India by pushing millions of refugees into its territory.”802 India consistently refused to accept the classification of the dispute as an Indo-Pakistan dispute as wanted by the international community.

801 Raghavan, op cit 2013, p 227
802 Sisson, and Rose, op cit, p 188
Barring bringing a change in US and UN attitude, Indian diplomacy succeeded in convincing the world community of the righteousness of its cause. The Indo-Soviet Treaty would lead to cessation of Russian arms supply to Pakistan during the war. Considering unlikelihood of China’s military intervention along the Northern border in the event of Indo-Pakistani war, non-supply of Russian arms aid to Pakistan and unwillingness and inability of the international community to influence Pakistan for a political settlement in East Pakistan, India from the last week of August 1971 shifted to a coercive strategy to convince Pakistan that “a negotiated settlement with Mujib would be better than persisting with its present course.”

India, thereafter, assiduously escalated the military operations along the India-East Pakistan border and combined it with enhanced support to the Mukti Bahini to undermine Pakistan control in the hinterland. The strategy worked and Pakistan Army, underestimating India’s capability and intentions to be restricted to capturing limited territory close to the border to install a Bangladesh puppet government in East Pakistan, moved out in strength from the depth to the border areas and build up strong defences around major towns away from Dacca. The denuding of the hinterland by the Pakistan Army enabled the Mukti Bahini to dominate the geographical space and exert greater pressure in the hinterland. India’s strategy of combining upgraded conflict in the border areas by conventional means with sub-conventional means through Mukti Bahini in the hinterland were to cause a psychological dislocation among the political and military leaders of Pakistan and enabled it to achieve strategic deception that were to provide a free run to the Indian Army at a later stage of war.

Coerced by India in the East, Pakistan ordered mobilization in the West, but India did not carry out counter-mobilization, except for moving very essential military elements along the border for defensive purposes. Pakistan’s mobilization in the West was intended to put international pressure on India to deter it from the war in the East. Pakistan was convinced that due to the international pressurize, particularly of USA, India would not cross the International Border in East Pakistan and restrict itself to military operations close to the border. While the military activities picked up momentum, there was no forward movement on the political and diplomatic front.

Raghavan, op cit 2013, p 210 Delhi, 24 quoting personal interview with PN Dhar, 24 November, 2009. Also see Dhar PN, Indira Gandhi, the Emergency and Indian Democracy (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000) p 175 and Dixit, JN, Liberation and Beyond: Indo-Bangladesh Relations (New Delhi: Konark Press, 1999) pp 64-65
Creation of war psychosis by Pakistan President Yahya Khan from October onwards ruled out the possibility of any political settlement with Mujib. Military intervention was imminent, but India remained amenable to any political settlement, that should lead to the establishment of a conducive environment for the return of refugees.

India’s coercive strategy further provoked Pakistan Army to use air and tanks in the planned escalated conflicts in close proximity of the border. The Indian Army also responded by use of air and tanks leading to further escalation of conflict in East Pakistan in mid-November. Progressively graduating into the next escalatory ladder, Indian troops began to remain deployed inside the captured territory in East Pakistan instead of returning as hitherto fore. Yahya hoped of UN Security Council intervention in the crisis and remote possibility of putting a civilian government in place in Dacca that could avert war.

India had overall military superiority over Pakistan with a favorable ratio of 1.4:1 for the offensive, instead of the norms laid down ratio of 3:1 which was adequate for both the fronts. India’s decision for war in late-November to early December was guided by employing geography as an important determinant of deterrence against any Chinese interference. Still not taking the Chinese threat lightly despite deterrence and credible intelligence of non-interference, the Indian Army did not downscale its existing deployment of four divisions along the border. India built up adequate military force against Pakistan in the East and seen in conjunction with the raising of 1,00,000 Mukti Bahini Force, this was significant. With Indian Armed Forces poised to operate against East as well as West Pakistan, the value of deterrence multiplied manifold and prevented Pakistan from adopting a pro-active aggressive stance from April to November despite India’s adventurism in numerous ways. At no point of time, India was seen losing control of the initiative or the ability to make Pakistan act in the desired way. The lack of support from the international community, particularly from the USA who mattered the most to work out a political settlement by West Pakistan, strengthened India’s conviction of the inevitability of military instrument to resolve the dispute. The plan for the military invasion of East Pakistan was finalized after the failure of Mrs. Gandhi’s meeting with Nixon in the first week of November. Some high American officials were convinced that the “Indian Government had decided to dismember Pakistan by force before Mrs. Gandhi came to

804 Chopra, op cit, p 80
Washington and that the discussions there had been an exercise in futility.”

There is merit in their conviction. Prior to application of military instrument as the last resort, India was fully convinced of the inability and futility of international mediation to resolve the ongoing crisis by diplomacy, but it sought to convey to the US their inability to work out any concrete proposals to defuse the crisis. **There is a finite time to resolve the crisis through peaceful means, as one of the essential conditions of crisis** as highlighted earlier in the text. Pakistan did not generate any peaceful alternatives with East Pakistan that could ensure the return of refugees and hand over power to the duly elected leaders of Awami League. Creation of war-phobia reflected its hardened attitude and expectations from the international community to pressurize India to avert war. The continued influx of refugees not only increased the economic cost of their management but significantly increased the threat to India’s multi-cultural and diverse society. With the passage of time, the economic and security threats to India enhanced while the chances of international diplomacy to amicably work out a peaceful settlement receded. This was a threat to the political and cultural identity which is a vital national interest essential for the survival of a nation. India’s necessity for the war was to protect its vital national interest in political and cultural identity after exploring all peaceful alternatives. Commenting that India’s decision was based on expectations, that did not materialize, Sisson observed, “The escalating threat of war narrowed expectations of peacefully arranged outcomes, indeed, the field of expectation became so narrow that it excluded the contemplation of alternatives.”

Richard Smoke had generalized this type of process “As escalation proceeds… a double gap is likely to open up between the two sides. Each finds it cognitively more dissonant to make a significant new offer, and cognitively more difficult to hear any hints of a new offer from the other, which the other is also finding cognitively more difficult to make. As the escalation sequence goes on, this double gap will widen. As time passes and events became more threatening, each side may, so to speak, gradually retreat into its own universe.”

Shifting to the battlefield, India’s escalated military activities in East, finally compelled Pakistan to launch air strikes in the West followed by India’s retaliation signaled the commencement of the 1971 War. India’s strategy to deliberately

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805 Sisson and Rose, op cit, pp 195-96
806 Ibid, p 280
generate indecisiveness in Pakistani leadership about India’s politico-military objectives succeeded. The Pakistani decision to launch air strikes was a pleasant surprise for India. Mr. DP Dhar, when informed of the Pakistani air strikes tersely, remarked: “The fool has done exactly what one had expected.” It resolved India’s puzzle of selecting the right time. India did not become the aggressor and ensured Russian assistance during the war. **India’s military strategy replaced the political strategy only by stages and unfolded as planned. Before the end of May 71, the Prime Minister and her closest advisers had mentally accepted the possibility of war; by the middle of July, they saw it as probable; what was only a contingency military plan about the end of July became a subordinate alternative by the end of August, a senior alternative by the end of September and by the end of November it was the only way.**

India’s broad military strategy of adopting an offensive-defensive in the West, defensive along the Northern borders and a swift offensive in the East was prudent and logical. The centre of gravity for military operations for India was East Pakistan, where India optimally exploited the combination of conventional and sub-conventional means as well as synergized joint operations of Army, AF, and Navy to execute its planned swift offensive. The military strategy envisaged launching a multi-prong land offensive with superior concentration to dissipate Pakistani forces, occupy the major portion of territory up to the river lines and converge on to Dacca. The Indian Navy effectively blocked the sea. The strategy was criticized for not keeping Dacca as a military objective. The capture of Dacca as an alternative strategy was considered but ruled out due to the risk of imposing an early cease-fire that would have ended the war without capturing a major portion of territory and also Dacca. The Northern approach, though the second shortest approach but without any river, obstacle en-route was allotted the least amount of forces hoping that by the time cease-fire was declared, India’s progress of military operations would render Pakistani positions and that of Dacca untenable. The liberation of the whole of East Pakistan was specified later, the capture of Dacca was not specified; it was felt that if conditions were favorable, plans would be modified. The strategy worked brilliantly.

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808 Raghavan, op cit 2013, p 234, quoting Dixit, op cit, p 89
809 Chopra, op cit, p 80
As the Indian Army rapidly closed on to Dacca, intense activities were going on beyond the battlefields of East and West Pakistan. The negotiations in the UN Security Council for cease-fire and arrival of US Seventh Fleet in the Bay of Bengal to pressurize India were also progressing at a very hectic pace. Time was of the essence. The arrival of US Seventh Fleet in the Bay of Bengal instead of deterring India incentivized it to secure the surrender of Pakistan Army at the earliest. As the capture of Dacca was not planned initially, the emerging favorable military situation provided an opportunity that was fully exploited. India’s application of psychological pressure on the Pakistan Army to surrender intensified with the encirclement of Dacca by the Indian Army. As the Polish resolution failed in the UN due to Bhutto’s dramatics on 15th December, it was only a matter of time for Pakistan Army for the inevitable – the surrender. The Indian Army secured the surrender of Pakistan Army - an objective that became a possibility with the speed of military operations of the Indian Army and collapse of Pakistan Army resistance as the war progressed. The surrender of the Pakistan Army was by far the largest single surrender of regular troops and served to highlight the magnitude of the swift Indian victory. Lasting just 13 days, it is considered to be one of the shortest wars in history that led to the division of Pakistan and creation of a new nation, Bangladesh.

There was a view that after the liberation of Bangladesh, India intended to continue the war to dismember West Pakistan and that it was the presence of US Task Force in the Bay of Bengal and diplomatic pressure exerted by the US through the Soviet Union which made Indians desist.810 This is not true though the US presumed that since East Pakistan was to be lost, their interest was to preserve the integrity of West Pakistan. Anatoly Dobrynin, a former Soviet diplomat stated in his memoirs that the Soviet Union had diplomatically intervened and obtained assurance from India that it would not carry out a major attack on West Pakistan and this was communicated to the US.811 The US President Kissinger also wrote, “By using diplomatic signals and behind the scenes pressures we [implying USSR] had been able to save West Pakistan from the imminent threat of Indian aggression and domination.”812

810 Robert Jackson, *South Asian Crisis, India-Pakistan-Bangladesh* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1975) p 140 quoted in Prasad and Thapliyal, op cit, p 416. In an interview in Time, published on 26 December 1971, Nixon hinted at it while saying that there was no difference between the Soviet Union and the US at the end of Bangladesh crisis and the Soviets restraint helped to bring about “the ceasefire that stopped what could have been the conquest of West Pakistan as well”.

811 Subrahmanyam with Monteiro, op cit, p 328

India had not considered dismemberment of West Pakistan while planning military operations, though there was pressure from certain political leaders and strategic experts. After the Pakistan Army had surrendered in the East, the Indian decision makers deliberated on the merits and demerits of continuing the military operations in West Pakistan. The political advantages of an immediate and unilateral cease-fire, partly conceived in terms of prestige, were weighed against the military advantages of inflicting further attrition on the enemy and capturing some crucial territorial point.\(^\text{813}\)

The Prime Minister resisted the pressure of her colleagues to prosecute further operations on the Western Front. In the Political Affairs Committee meeting held on 4\(^{\text{th}}\) December, the Defence Minister Jagjivan Ram, with support from YB Chavan, argued for a major offensive against West Pakistan, suggesting "liberation of the Pakistan-held sections of Kashmir as the minimum goal," but the Prime Minister held on to her earlier decision to fight essentially a defensive war on the Western front.\(^\text{814}\) General KV Krishna Rao also clarified that the Indian intention was never to prosecute major offensive operations in the West or dismember Pakistan.\(^\text{815}\) The Prime Minister after consulting the Political Affairs Committee, service chiefs, members of the opposition and the Foreign Minister (on the telephone as he was in New York) preferred the political advantage. Dr. K Subramanyam had repeatedly argued for an offensive in Sind instead of Punjab as it would give us tremendous bargaining leverage in shaping things in Pakistan after the war.\(^\text{816}\) There is immense logic in Dr. Subramanyam’s suggestion as fighting in Punjab would be a slogging match due to the obstacle-ridden terrain as it was proved subsequently, while Sind was a soft underbelly of Pakistan where Indian Army with limited force levels had advanced up to 45 kilometers along the Barmer- Nayachor Axis.\(^\text{817}\)

Adoption of a full-fledged offensive operation by the Indian Army in Sind would have achieved deterrence against any Pakistani misadventure in the future. The military advantages did not lay in inflicting additional attrition on the enemy and

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\(^{813}\) Chopra, op cit, p 212

\(^{814}\) Sisson and Rose, op cit, p 215 quoting Interviews by the writer with the Prime Minister’s office, Cabinet, Secretaries, Governmental and Military officials 1978 and 1981

\(^{815}\) Rao, op cit, p 244

\(^{816}\) Subramanyam with Monteiro, op cit, p 328

\(^{817}\) One infantry brigade supported by a squadron of tanks advanced 45 kilometres inside Pakistan opposite the Barmer Sector. The author’s battalion 10 SIKH earned the battle honour PARBAT ALI for capturing a massive feature that was overlooking Naya Chor on 13\(^{\text{th}}\) December 1971
capturing some crucial territory but it was the deterrence value that it would have created on Pakistan for any futuristic misadventure in J&K. **This political advantage would have been of far greater significance than earning the goodwill of the international community.** Militarily, India was in a position to capture territory in Sind by shifting the forces from East to West Pakistan. India, as in 1965, vacillated in the application of optimum force against an adversary, thereby failing to apply the Clausewitzian theory of suppressing the will of the enemy – “*If our opponent is to be made to comply with our will, we must place him in a situation which is even more oppressive to him than the sacrifice which we demand.*”

The theory of dismemberment of West Pakistan by India and its subsequent backing down due to US Seventh Fleet was apparently a falsehood spread by the USA based on some CIA inputs. Nixon and Kissinger overplayed the intelligence input to suited them to rationalize their desire to demonstrate resolve to China and the Soviet Union.\(^{818}\) Dr. Subramanyam confirmed the same. The story of an Indian plan to launch an offensive in West Pakistan was invented to justify the sending of Enterprise mission; this kind of disinformation is standard practice in intelligence operations.\(^{819}\) No cabinet meeting had taken place in India in which such intentions were conveyed. There is no such intention or instructions issued in the directive to the Chiefs of Staff by the government.\(^{820}\) Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi confirmed in writing on a note in February 1972, “that not even a discussion had taken place at any Cabinet Meeting on this issue.”\(^{821}\)

The orchestration of a diplomatic campaign to explore all possible options was done very diligently but it did not succeed not because the cause was not right, but due to the specific interests of powerful countries. The US who could have exercised influence on Pakistan for a political settlement did not want Pakistan to lose face before the visit of US President to China which Pakistan had facilitated. India sought legitimacy for a war considered inevitable and succeeded in projecting the war for humanitarian intervention and not a Hindu- Muslim conflict. Media helped India to a great extent to shape the international opinion in her favor. Mr. Anthony

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818 Rao, op cit, p 244  
819 Subramanyam wih Monteiro, op cit, p 330  
820 Ibid, op cit, pp 329-330, quoting discussion with the Defence Minister and the Director of Military Operations.  
821 Raghavan, op cit 2013, p 262
Mascrenhas’ story showcased the systematic character of the murderous campaign waged by the Pakistani military in East Pakistan. Similar stories on the atrocities committed by the Pakistan Army in East Pakistan and published by numerous international journalists made the world community to view India’s cause for war favorably.

The Peace Agreement

The decision-making for the establishment of lasting peace on the conclusion of war is as important as the decision to wage a war. A very brief glimpse into the thought process for the Peace Agreement between India and Pakistan is in order.

The summit meeting was held from 28th June to 3rd July 1972 at Shimla. There were differences between the two sides on the basic issues to be addressed. A perusal of the ‘Agenda Items proposed by India on 28th April 1972 for the Summit Talks between the Prime-Minister of India and the President of Pakistan’ reveals that India pressed for renunciation of conflict and confrontation and adoption of a policy of enduring peace, friendship, and cooperation while for Pakistan, the main issue was the repatriation of the Prisoners of War (PoWs) and the withdrawal of forces. India did not spell out the resolution of the Kashmir issue explicitly but made an implicit mention only for the same. A meeting was held between the Foreign Ministers of USSR and India on 27th June 1972, in which India stated that the conversion of cease-fire line with minor modifications into an International Border would be proposed if a settlement is in sight, but this cannot be the starting point on which Pakistan can again raise objections. India seemed to have decided prior to the summit not to impose a solution on J&K by invoking the leverages it had held then. The Shimla Agreement signed between the Indian Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi and her Pakistani counterpart, ZA Bhutto, on the night of 2nd/3rd July 1972 underscored the principle of bilateralism between the two countries. The agreement provided for the return of

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3. Mr Anthony Macrenhas was a Pakistani journalist of Goan Christain descent who was working for the Morning News in Karachi and was one of the eight journalists taken on an officially sponsored trip to EP in the first week of April 71. Due to prevailing censorship he did not publish the story in the newspaper he was serving and instead published in another newspaper in London having wide circulation. His 5000 Word story published in the Sunday Times on 13 June 1971 under the heading ‘Genocide’ received world-wide attention.

822 Raghavan, op cit, p 132
823 PN Haksar Papers (III Instalment) Subject File 92(a) to 92(d). Photocopy of the ‘Agenda Items proposed by India on 28th April 1972 for the Summit Talks between the Prime-Minister of India and the President of Pakistan’ is enclosed at Annexure on page 360
824 Ibid
PoWs, conversion of Cease-Fire Line into the Line of Control and vacation of the territory captured in the West across the Inter Border.\textsuperscript{825} Pakistan recognized Bangladesh only in February 1974 and there were reports that Bhutto visited various Arab countries to dissuade them from recognizing Bangladesh. In a speech to the Pakistan Institute of International Affairs in Karachi on 31 July 1972, Bhutto stated that the “Agreement was not a ‘No-War Pact’ and asserted that it was entirely different from the phrase ‘refrain from the use of or threat of force’ used in the Shimla Agreement.”\textsuperscript{826} Pakistan succeeded in getting the Kashmir issue delinked from the Shimla Agreement. There were no commitments from Pakistan about the resolution of J&K and there was no precondition of recognition of Bangladesh by Pakistan.

**India sought to strengthen the hands of Bhutto, hoping that his leadership would result in a process of democratization, that would end military dictatorship in Pakistan and assist in establishing enduring peace.** Mrs. Gandhi showed considerable interest in ensuring that Bhutto did not return to Pakistan an embittered man because that would make the task of Indian diplomacy that much more difficult.\textsuperscript{827} The Prime Minister felt that Bhutto would restore democracy in Pakistan that would be easier for Indian diplomacy to handle than the military dictatorship. Raghavan felt “Had India rammed through a final settlement on Kashmir, it is quite likely that the Pakistan Army would have deposed Bhutto even earlier than it did; the Shimla accord gave Bhutto an opportunity to introduce a new constitution in 1973 that remains a beacon of hope for Pakistani democrats.”\textsuperscript{828} Firstly, India’s adoption of an accommodating approach against a weaker neighbor was well-intentioned and reflected India’s desire for enduring peace but it overlooked the belligerent and untrustworthy personality of its leader and the strategic culture of Pakistan. How could India trust Bhutto who for grabbing the political power worked towards the ignominious surrender of its own Army instead of an honorable cease-fire in the UN Security Council in December 1971?\textsuperscript{829} Secondly, whether there is a democracy or not, the Pakistan Army call the shots and take all important security-related decisions,

\textsuperscript{825} Rao, op cit, pp 240-241
\textsuperscript{826} Prasad and Thapliyal, op cit 2014, p 437
\textsuperscript{827} Chopra, op cit, p 254
\textsuperscript{828} Ibid
\textsuperscript{829} Bhutto by not ensuring the non-adoption of the Polish resolution apparently calculated that an ignominious defeat with the surrender of its troops would inflict a severe blow to the Pakistan Army that would marginalise it in Pakistan’s polity and ensuring his own political ascendance
particularly those pertaining to India and specifically J&K as perceived to be in their national interests. Mrs. Gandhi was expected to accord primacy to the national interests of India and not that of the untrusted adversary. Thirdly and most importantly, India failed to achieve the requisite deterrence against Pakistan. On the diplomatic table, India could not impose an unambiguous solution to the Kashmir problem from a position of strength that could have acted as credible deterrence against Pakistani misadventure in the future. **India lost on the table what it gained on the battlefield. It allowed Pakistan to keep the pot boiling till it reworked its strategies to wrest Kashmir from India through a proxy war in 1990.** The scars of that soft approach are daily felt in the ongoing proxy war in J&K. The hypothesis that the vacillation in the use of force/other instruments has impacted the relevance of deterrence in India stands fully validated as Pakistan after recovering from the humiliation of 1971 launched the proxy war in 1990 in J&K. Perhaps Mrs. Gandhi was convinced by Haksar’s observation that “not only the rise of Nazism but also the seeds of the Second World War would not have been sown, had the Versailles Treaty not imposed humiliating conditions on Germany after its defeat in the First World War.”

In a moment of triumphant magnanimity, Indira Gandhi lost a golden opportunity to remove the Kashmir thorn from India’s flesh. Dr. Subrahmanyam has proved eminently right.

**The Decision-Making Process**

The decision-making process of India for the 1971 War symbolized by a small informal core group comprising of experienced and trusted civil servants functioned extremely well within the overall framework of the institutionalized decision-making mechanism i.e. the PAC. The core group effectively coordinated the inputs and tasking of different agencies involved in decision making for the Prime Minister. There were regular appraisals of the political as well as the military situation and the likely responses of external powers. The final decision-making authority was vested in the Prime Minister’s office, but she always took care to keep the Parliament informed of the key decisions. Over a period of time, it emerged as an institutionalized body, with the PAC getting relegated to a mere formal structure.

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830 Raghavan, op cit 2013, p 268
831 Subramaniam, op.cit, p 427
without authority and power. As discussions or deliberations rarely took place in the PAC and formal decisions not referred to or its approval, this at times led to different perceptions causing some dissonance in decision-making. India’s military activities in East Pakistan during October and November were normally carried out without any deliberations in the Cabinet. The hostilities on the Western front were the only serious subject debated in the PAC meeting on 4th December.\(^{832}\)

As the Prime Minister enjoyed a huge parliamentary majority, the domestic political pressures did not cause much anxiety. Moreover, in India, the Prime Minister as per unwritten norms enjoy greater autonomy in foreign policy decisions. *This small group of the Prime Minister operating in a highly homogeneous and informal manner within a formalized structure was the key element in decision making on East Pakistan in 1971.* The valuable and unbiased advice rendered by the key group justified the faith reposed in them.

The political leaders, the bureaucracy, particularly the key core group of the Prime Minister and the military hierarchy were completely in sync with each other. The decision-making process within the Armed forces too functioned very smoothly with utmost cooperation. This was the first war in which all the three services worked in absolute synergy and synchronization with great panache. The armed forces were provided with the fullest support and freedom to plan their operations. The armed forces never lost sight of the political aspects of their operations and accordingly calibrated their strategy to hasten up the final closing in around Dacca to ensure surrender instead of the cease-fire.

India and Pakistan did not negotiate or communicate directly. Each side communicated through public statements and sometimes through the offices of other countries. This militated against any compromise political solution – “statements of resolve by one side were perceived by the other as a commitment to resist any resolution of the crisis.”\(^{833}\) India’s concern of return of refugees was seen as interference in Pakistan’s internal affairs. Pakistan’s moves towards a political settlement towards the end of November were perceived by India to buy time to work out a solution that would continue to pose a threat to India’s interests.

\(^{832}\) Sisson, and Rose, op cit, p 215

\(^{833}\) Ibid, p 279
Leadership

Indian political leadership under Mrs. Gandhi as Prime Minister, Defence Minister Jagjivan Ram and Foreign Minister Swaran Singh acted firmly and boldly. The Prime Minister, Mrs. Gandhi was instrumental in keeping the national interests supreme and synchronized the entire political, diplomatic and military machinery with great aplomb, profound maturity, and shrewd judgment. All the respondents overwhelmingly graded Mrs. Gandhi’s political leadership as ‘Very Good’. She displayed the courage to withstand the political maneuverings of US President Nixon. Mrs. Gandhi told the US Secretary of State, Mr. Kissinger that there was some chance of a reasonable settlement if Mujib were released and discussions held with him, but as the US gave no assurance, Mrs. Gandhi bluntly warned him that in that case, India would have no alternative but to step in with assistance to the Mukti Bahini.\(^{834}\)

The Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi, conveyed to the US Ambassador in Delhi, that India’s patience was running out and to safeguard her national interests and security, it would take any action that it found necessary. To a clarification by the US Ambassador on the position of UN observers, Mrs. Gandhi replied with brutal frankness, “My position is harder than it was three weeks ago and it will get harder day by day; my patience is at an end and I cannot hold the situation any longer.”\(^{835}\)

She proved a deft politician, a skilled diplomat, a seasoned leader and demonstrated the courage to implement the ‘military option’. She brilliantly transformed the crisis thrust on the nation into a strategic action of liberating Bangladesh in a great victory. Unlike previous wars, there was greater clarity in Government directive to the armed forces. Dexterity of competent leadership was able to build up the strategy which generated a conducive environment for a military response.

Field Marshal SHFJ Manekshaw, popularly known as Sam, provided resolute and decisive military leadership prior to, during and after the war. He very clearly and unambiguously elaborated the constraints and limitations of military intervention in East Pakistan in April-May 1971. The moral courage exhibited by the Indian COAS while airing his opinion on the timing for war and taking the onus for the delay on military considerations alone is an example of outstanding leadership. As COSC, he very efficiently coordinated the operations in three different theatres of

\(^{834}\) Chopra, op cit, p 85

\(^{835}\) Bangladesh Documents II, p 260 quoted in Prasad and Thapliyal 2014, op cit, p 76
the Army, two air commands of the Air Force and two on sea-boards of Indian Navy, ensuring that the three services worked like a well-oiled machinery with the fullest cooperation and synergy at all levels ranging from planning to execution at the ground level. As COAS, he strategized the military planning astutely to meet the requirements of the government’s policy and assiduously applied the psychological pressure on Pakistan Army towards the closing stages of the war when Dacca was surrounded from all sides. The Chief of Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal PC Lal and the Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral SM Nanda worked in unison to strategize and execute the plans. The IAF established air superiority in the Eastern Theatre in just two days of the war and rendered maximum assistance to the Army in ground operations in both the theatres. The IN deployed its assets to cater both the Western and Eastern theatres, effectively isolated East Pakistan from West Pakistan and kept the Indian sea routes open. The Pakistani submarine Ghazi deployed in the vicinity of Vishakhapatnam to intercept the Indian aircraft carrier INS Vikrant. was destroyed on 4th/5th December inflicting a severe blow to the PN. Lt General J S Aurora - the Eastern Army Commander responsible for operations against East Pakistan was a knowledgeable officer having considerable experience. He organized the raising of Mukti Bahini and its subsequent employment to support the Indian Army. His strategy to launch a multi-prong offensive into East Pakistan was meticulously planned and brilliantly executed.

Application of Just War Theory and Validation of Hypothesis

India applied all the tenets of just war theory in letter and spirit for the liberation of Bangladesh in the 1971 India-Pakistan War. India undertook to mobilize international opinion to pressurize Pakistan to stop its policy of repression but the international community including the US and China were unwilling to apply any pressure on Pakistan. When the UN too failed to take any action, India met the last resort criteria and was the competent authority under the circumstances to wage the war. India’s intervention was meant to restore peace and not for any territorial conquest. The war signified its right intention. Just War theorists are much more disposed to accept India’s military action as a case for humanitarian intervention.\(^{836}\) Arguing that rarely do countries put their soldiers at risk for others, Walzer states, “Indian involvement was a better case of humanitarian intervention not because of the

\(^{836}\) Coates, op cit, p 161
singularity and purity of the government’s motives but because its various motives converged on a single course of action that was also the course of action called by the Bengalis.”\textsuperscript{837} India considered going to war more economical than absorbing the refugee burden. The Indian Army moved out of East Pakistan quickly defeating the Pakistani Army and did not impose any political controls on the new state of Bangladesh. India’s subjugation of the Pakistan Army followed Clausewitz’s dictum, “for the war to achieve its laid down political objectives, the military power of the enemy must be destroyed to such an extent that it is not able to prosecute the war; the country must be conquered and the will of the enemy must be subdued.”\textsuperscript{838} India’s capture of the essential territory and encirclement of Dacca were means to subjugate the Pakistan Army who was compelled to surrender.

\textbf{India’s decision for war upheld Thucydides’ motives for war of ‘Fear, Interest and Honor’ or threats to Honor.} The crisis caused by the unprecedented and continuous refugee exodus from end March onwards caused the politico-socio-economic threat to the internal security of India. It was feared that the ideology on which Pakistan took birth and the manner in which it seeks to resolve the differences with India, will continue to be a threat to peace adversely affecting national security. It was appreciated that Pakistan in its existing geographical location form comprising of East and West Pakistan will threaten India’s strategic interests and long-term peace. In the current context, continuous influx of the refugees with the majority of them being Hindus who might not return after the restoration of normalcy would upset the existing demographic composition of the North-Eastern States with attendant problems. This ‘Fear’ demanded India’s response that seeks independence of Bangladesh. Though unstated, such an interest could only have been served through decisive military intervention. The convergence of the ‘Interest’ and ‘Fear’ would automatically lead to immense enhancement of India’s ‘Honor’ and ‘Prestige’ as well as of its leader, the PM Mrs. Indira Gandhi.

\textbf{India by calibrating the escalation from September onwards to peak by end November and intervention in December, achieved military superiority against Pakistan through deft use of terrain, timing and force generation.} The Indo-Soviet Friendship Treaty achieved deterrence against continuous supply of military

\textsuperscript{837} Walzer, op cit, p 105
\textsuperscript{838} Clausewitz, op cit, p 12
equipment to Pakistan and provided an additional safeguard against China. With deterrence in place, India liberated Bangladesh. *Deterrence is an essential part of ‘Decision Making for war’ in the Indian context thus stands validated and further reinforces the co-relation between deterrence and decision-making for war.*

**PART III: CONCLUSION**

The 1971 War was a ‘Just War’ for India. It was a ‘War of Necessity’ for India for a just cause and in the national interest. With the UN and the big powers unwilling to stop the continual genocide, and with India having to face the brunt of a consequent refugee problem that in turn was causing a destabilizing effect, it was left with no other option than taking recourse to military means as a last resort. Training the Mukti Bahini guerrillas in the beginning, gradually escalating and ultimately taking the battle into the then East Pakistan in conjunction with fighting a two-front war against Pakistan in the West reflect India’s political resolve and military capability. Not succumbing to the coercive US reflected India’s firm resolve to achieve its vital national interest. It was ably supported by a swift military campaign. The political leadership combined ‘real politic’ with genuine empathy for the victims of the genocide.

The Indo-Pakistan War of 1971 came to an end after the liberation of Bangladesh. India emerged a regional power in South Asia after the 1971 War by demonstrating firm resolve to act in the national interest. In fact, India transformed a humungous crisis of refugees into a significant strategic victory. Sisson rightly observed that “there was strong and consistent control in democratic India during the Bangladesh crisis, but relatively weak and inconsistent control in authoritarian Pakistan; democratic India was the hard state; authoritarian Pakistan the soft.”839 The statement that signifies the growth of India’s strategic decision-making and a great departure from the label of a ‘soft state’ incapable of taking hard decisions.

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839 Sisson, and Rose, op cit, p 277
SECTION V
THE INDIA-PAKISTAN KARGIL WAR 1999

Background

In May 1998, India and Pakistan tested their nuclear weapons. After the nuclear tests of 1998, the political leadership of both countries had started a composite dialogue process. The dialogue prompted the Indian Prime Minister AB Vajpayee to travel to Lahore from Amritsar in a bus, on 20 Feb 1999, at the invitation of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif as part of normalizing bilateral relations. The Lahore Declaration committed both countries to resolve outstanding issues including J&K through a composite and integrated dialogue. The Lahore Declaration and other peace overtures did not suit Pakistan’s Army. Peace with India without securing merger of Kashmir with Pakistan implied acceptance of their inability to complete the unfinished agenda of partition. The internal security situation in Kashmir was showing signs of improvement despite the induction of battle-hardened foreign terrorists whose activities had, in fact, weaned them away from the populace. Pakistan focused on hyping the proxy war using the nuclear card orchestrated a major intrusion into the unoccupied heights of Kargil to achieve strategic advantages. India was surprised when it detected the intrusions and launched the military operation to evict the intrusions in May 1999.

The case study will examine the failure of deterrence capability attained by India leading to Pakistan’s intrusions and analyze India’s decision-making for the Kargil War in the backdrop of nuclear threat by Pakistan. The case study has been structured as follows:

(a) Part I : Pakistan’s Motives for Kargil and Indian Response
(b) Part II : Analysis of India’s Decision and Deterrence
(c) Part III : Conclusion

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PART I

PAKISTAN’S MOTIVES FOR KARGIL AND INDIAN RESPONSE

The Kargil Review Committee (KRC) constituted by the Government of India to review the events leading up to the Pakistani aggression concluded that Pakistan launched its Kargil campaign based on certain politico-strategic motives and assumptions. Pakistan intended to internationalize Kashmir as a nuclear flashpoint that would warrant third-party intervention; change the alignment of LoC by occupying un-held areas in Kargil and achieve a better bargaining position to trade-off certain dominating locations held by Indian Army in Siachen glacier. The Pakistani assumptions were:

(a) Its nuclear capability would prevent India from exploiting its superior conventional military forces to launch any major offensive plans, particularly across the IB.

(b) It believed that the international community would mediate early to impose a cease-fire that would enable Pakistan to keep territory occupied across the LoC – this would confer better bargaining leverages.

(c) China would be favorably poised towards Pakistan due to its anti-India stance post nuclear explosions.

(d) An unstable political government in India would not be able to respond firmly and unlikely to escalate beyond Kargil.

(e) The Indian Army due to its intense commitment in counter-insurgency operations in J&K would not be capable of responding in a robust manner.

(f) There is the limited deployment of Indian Army East of Zojila, that would prevent an effective reaction against the intrusions before the Zojila road opens for traffic by end May/early June.

(g) The Indian Army would not be in a position to achieve a concentration of high-altitude trained and acclimatized troops for attacks on Kargil heights.

(h) The rapid restoration of normalcy in J&K needed to be checkmated to sustain the cause.

The contingency planning for the Kargil intrusions was worked out in 1987 when General Zia-ul-Haque was the President. But the plan was vetoed by the then Foreign

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841 KRC Report, op cit, pp 89-91
842 Ibid
Minister Sahibzada Yakub Khan due to its military untenability and being internationally indefensible.\footnote{KRC Report, op cit, p 77. Also see Gauhar Altaf, Nation, 5 September, 1999} Pakistan assumed that India due to the difficulties of terrain would not be able to evict the intrusions enabling it to bargain for India’s dominating positions on the Siachen Glacier. This plan was subsequently shelved by successive governments too. The shelved intrusion plan for Kargil sector was, however, revived with renewed vigor by the Pakistan Army Chief, General Pervez Musharraf who had taken over as the Chief in October 1998.\footnote{Baxter, Craig, ‘Pakistan on the Brink: Politics, Economics, and Society (New York: Lexington Books, 2004) p 131} General Pervez Musharraf while addressing troops had stated, “Don’t be carried away by the rhetoric of the Indians whose armed forces are totally exhausted and whose morale is at its lowest.”\footnote{KRC Report, op cit, p 92} The Pakistani Army Chief assumed Indian Army to be militarily weak having low morale due to continuous deployment in the proxy war in J&K.\footnote{Indian Army has been engaged in combating the Pakistan-sponsored proxy war since 1990. Besides the divisions employed in J&K, some reserve divisions from the peace stations used to be inducted into the State to augment the existing strength.} Pakistan decided to intrude across the Indian side of LoC to occupy the un-held/ winter vacated posts of the Indian Army with effect from the latter half of April 1999. The military/proxy war-related motives were to disrupt supplies by interdicting the Srinagar–Leh road; make Indian defensive locations untenable in Turtok and Siachen by occupying un-held areas; provide greater momentum to the ongoing proxy war in J&K by drawing away troops from the Valley to Kargil; attempt to activate militancy in Kargil and Turtok sectors and play to the fundamentalist lobby and Pakistani people by bold action in Kashmir.\footnote{KRC Report, op cit, p 90. Motives at (b), (d) and (e) have been assessed by Army HQ based on Pakistani plans and actions during the Kargil War} Based on various agency reports, an estimated 1,500-2,400 troops, both regular and irregulars were deployed; the Indian High Commission in Islamabad estimated that around 1,700 Northern Light Infantry troops were deployed in Kargil.\footnote{Ibid, p 96} It is fair to assume that a substantial strength of the intruders was from the regular Pakistan Army. The intruders built up the posts to well-prepared defensive positions and adequately stocked them with supplies, ammunition, and other military stores to withstand repeated assaults from the Indian Army.

The intrusions came to the notice of the Indian Army for the first time in Kargil on 3\textsuperscript{rd} May 1999 in Batalik sub-sector followed by Dras, and other sub-sectors by 14\textsuperscript{th} May
1999. Subsequent patrols confirmed the enemy presence in the un-held areas across the LoC. The detection of intrusions triggered immense public and political pressure for decisive action against Pakistan. The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) decided on 18th May 1999 to “clear the intrusions, exercise restraint and avoid an escalation.” Employment of offensive air support and helicopters was ruled out. To plan the eviction of intrusions, the identity of the intruders was a grey area for the Indian Army. They were dressed like militants but their activities conformed to military personnel. General Malik, the COAS admitted, “a factor that contributed the most to our surprise and to the fog of war was our inability to identify the intruders for a considerable length of time, who were they? were they militants or Pakistan Army regulars.” The ground and intelligence reports indicated that the intruders were jihadi militants, but since they never defend territories from weapon emplacements, there was a doubt. The issue remained unclarified in the CCS meetings. The extent of intrusion along the entire frontage of 160 km Kargil sector, the holding of tactically dominating positions 8-10 km deep inside the Indian territory and the intensity of machine-gun, mortar and artillery fire indicated that the Pakistan Army was involved in this intrusion. It used the jihadi militants' façade to carry out the Kargil intrusion with regular Army troops. This assessment subsequently proved to be right.

The three service Chiefs deliberated on a joint military strategy to optimally employ the services in an integrated manner. The IAF had certain reservations and had not agreed to the employment of air power due to the inability of attack helicopters to fly at those altitudes, besides its use would escalate the conflict. In the CCS meeting held on 24th May 1999, the Indian Army’s strategy of locating, containing, isolating and evicting intrusions without loss of any further posts and the employment of air power as well as the deployment of the Navy was approved. However, it was emphasized that the intrusion should be cleared at the earliest and our forces should not cross the LoC or the International Border; the latter was reiterated as a term of reference.

849 Ibid, pp 98-99
850 Malik, op cit 2006 p 116. General VP Malik was the COAS and Chairman COSC during the Kargil War
851 Ibid, p 110
852 Ibid, p 115-117 and 127
853 Malik, op cit 2006 p 121
854 Ibid, 124-126
As per the Union War Book, the Government of India should by now have declared a 'warning period' or a 'precautionary state' for a general mobilization to take place; but since India and Pakistan were not engaged in a regular war, the government could not 'declare' any such state. With a declared 'policy of restraint', the CCS was not willing to escalate hostilities. The Union War Book did not cater for any limited military operations or low-intensity operations that were short of a regular war. Accordingly, no formal mobilization or declaration of war was carried out. To ensure expeditious eviction of the intruders, formations and units deployed within the Kashmir Valley in the counter-terrorist grid were inducted to Kargil. The reserve formations located outside J&K were inducted close to their likely employment areas in J&K, while the rest of the Army was deployed in their operational areas. The IN and IAF too deployed their assets. The IN shifted some assets from the Eastern to the Western Fleet while AF launched sorties in the Kargil sector. Indian Army termed the operation Vijay launched to evict the intruders, while AF termed its operation Safed Sagar and the IN called it operation Talwar. The strikes by the IAF on own side of the LoC on 26th May, \(^{856}\) mobilization of Army formations along the Pakistani border as

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\(^{856}\) The IAF launched approximately 40 strike missions from Srinagar and Avantipur air bases by MIG-21MIG-23 and MIG-27 strike aircrafts along with MI-17 helicopters fitted with rocket pads.
well as the deployment of naval assets in the Arabian Sea possibly surprised the Pakistani leadership and deterred them from escalation. The Indian Army’s initial progress to evict the intruders from the dominating mountain peaks due to inhospitable terrain and the rarefied atmosphere was slow and arduous with heavy casualties. But gradually, the resolve of attacking infantrymen and damage inflicted by IAF and artillery began to take its toll on the Pakistani intruders. The Indian Army’s first major success came on 13th June 99 with the recapture of Tololing – an important feature followed by the recapture of other dominating features. The strategically located Tiger Hill was recaptured on 4th July 1999 – the same day the Pakistani Prime Minister was scheduled to meet the US President in Washington. India’s capture of almost all the important dominating features and the diplomatic pressure from the USA finally led to Pakistan’s capitulation. By 26th July 1999, all Pakistani intruders were evicted from the Kargil sector and Operation Vijay was formally called off on 31 July 1999.

The Kargil War resulted in a resounding victory for the Indian Armed Forces. Air Commodore Jasjit Singh857 stated on India’s victory, “If India can beat a professional military force equipped with modern firepower, at a time and place of Pakistan’s choosing, with the initiative also in their hands, with strategic and tactical surprise almost complete, then India can beat Pakistan anytime, anywhere.”858 While Pakistan exploited the determinant of geography and terrain to stealthily occupy the un-held rugged mountain peaks, the Indian Army overcame these constraints to evict the intrusions.

PART II

ANALYSIS OF DETERRENCE AND DECISION -MAKING

The Indian Armed forces operation to evict the Pakistani intrusions from the Kargil heights has been termed by some analysts as a Conflict due to the localized nature of operations restricted to the intruded areas in Kargil without crossing the LoC while

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Air Commodore, Jasjit Singh, AVSM, VrC, VM was a military strategist who was the longest serving director of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA) from 1987 to 2001. He was the founder-director of the Centre for Air Power Studies. He was awarded VrC during the 1971 India-Pakistan War and Padma Bhushan in 2006. He was a much-revered analyst in the military circles.

Singh, op cit, p 130
others have termed it as War. Though the area was localized, mobilization was not ordered and war was not declared by the government but the employment of air-power, all weapons of the Army, intended purpose of intrusions to achieve a strategic purpose and active involvement of the international community to defuse the crisis in the backdrop of nuclear threat would justify classifying it as a War and not a Conflict. The KRC Report concludes: “the Kargil intrusion was essentially a limited Pakistani military exercise designed to internationalize the Kashmir issue which was tending to recede from the radar screen of the international community; it was, therefore, mainly a move for political and diplomatic gains.”

Territorial gains were planned by altering the LoC for a better bargaining position and secure possibly better quid-pro-quo leverage against the positions held by Indian Army in Siachen. The intended gains were more politico-diplomatic than military reinforces it to term as a War. The term ‘Kargil War’ reflects the localized nature of operations.

**Deterrence**

The Kargil War has underscored the significance of both deterrence and decision-making for war. The lack of India’s military deterrence and Pakistan’s nuclear deterrence were two main important determinants in latter’s decision for launching the Kargil intrusions. Out of the eight assumptions analyzed by the KRC as the reasons for initiating the Kargil intrusions by Pakistan, two pertain to lacking military deterrence by India or perceived as such by Pakistan. It’s true that the Indian Army since the mid-eighties was heavily committed in counter-insurgency operations in Punjab and Sri Lanka and thereafter in J&K since the early nineties. Between 1990 and 1998 India had raised two counter-insurgency force HQs, seven Sector HQs, and twenty-four Rashtriya Rifles (RR) battalions by milking troops from the existing units and formations. However, they were inadequate as the arc of terrorism continued to expand geographically coupled with the increased intensity of violence. A mountain division, three reserve brigades and troops up to a divisional level strength from formations located in peacetime were regularly inducted in the rotation to J&K to strengthen the counter-insurgency grid. Three to four armored/mechanized regiments/battalions also used to be employed in J&K.

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859 KRC Report, op cit, p 236
860 Based on author’s knowledge and confirmed by interaction with DGRR HQ and RR formations between March and May 2017.
Their primary equipment used to get mothballed. The four divisions deployed on the LoC in J&K were heavily engaged in the counter-infiltration role, due to which there was no conventional training conducted by them. This constant deployment along with a certain attitudinal change that the era of conventional wars is over led to the erosion of conventional capability and deterrence which Pakistan factored in its assumptions to carry out intrusions. Pakistani analysts over the years have perceived the Indian Army’s degradation as an effective fighting force due to its continuous employment in counter-insurgency in Kashmir. Lieutenant General Javed Nasir wrote in early 1999: "The Indian Army is incapable of undertaking any conventional operations at present, what to talk of enlarging conventional conflict." There was only one independent infantry brigade comprising four infantry battalions that were deployed East of Zojila Pass in Kargil sector, however, one brigade and additional two to three infantry battalions were available in Ladakh region. The overtly demonstrated nuclear capability had emboldened Pakistan to disrupt the sanctity of LoC by capturing un-held areas in Kargil. Pakistan’s decision to undertake intrusions in Kargil were also designed to validate its perceived nuclear deterrent capability to forestall major conventional counter Indian military response by its superior forces particularly across the International Border in the plains.

India’s Decision- Making

India examined the following politico-military options to resolve the Kargil crisis:-

(a) Take recourse to diplomacy and international mediation to resolve the Kargil crisis.
(b) Limited War restricted to the eviction of intrusions in Kargil sector.
(c) All-out war along the LoC and Inter Border

**Diplomatic Option.** War is normally resorted to after exploring all possible options. The first obvious choice is bilateral diplomacy. India did not adopt this approach due to bleak chances of bilateral diplomacy succeeding in working out an amicable

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861 Nasir, Javed, Lieutenant General “Calling the Indian Army Chief’s Bluff” Defence Journal, February March 1999 quoted in Singh, Jasjit, Ed, p 131 The General was the former head of the ISI and the chief intelligence adviser to the Pakistan Prime Minister

resolution considering the atmosphere of deep mutual distrust between the two nations. This was further exacerbated by these intrusions barely a few months after the signing of the Lahore Peace Declaration. A long period of diplomatic parleys would have afforded adequate time to the Pakistani intruders to consolidate their positions on the Kargil heights. Pakistan would have indulged in excessive nuclear rhetoric intended to get the international community ’s intervention to pressurize India to accept the new LoC alignment drawn by the intrusions. Prolonged diplomatic negotiations would have compromised the vital national interest of territorial integrity which stood breached by Pakistani intrusions. **To secure the vital national security interest of territorial integrity physical eviction of intruders was the right option, even though the operations due to the rugged and inhospitable nature of the terrain favored the defender.** Pakistan was banking on international intervention and it was imperative to negate the same. Prolonged negotiations would have also given a fillip to the militancy in J&K necessitating increased force requirements. This option would not have been supported by the public who was emotionally charged upon Pakistan’s betrayal of trust built up a few months back in Lahore. Moreover, India would have conducted diplomacy from a position of weakness.

**Limited War Option.** The vital national interest of re-establishing the sanctity of territorial integrity was possible with physical eviction through the military option. The question was whether to launch only a limited war aimed at the eviction of intrusions along the LoC in the Kargil sector or an all-out war extending to other parts of J&K and the International Border. **The Government exercising restraint decided on the limited war option encompassing all instruments of statecraft. The CCS in the meeting held on 24th May 1999 wanted the intrusions to be cleared at the earliest with a term of reference to not to cross the LoC/ international border.**

The Army strategy was to “contain-evict-deny.” It was to hold and confine the intrusions within the affected areas followed by physically assaulting the features occupied by the intruders and defend these positions by holding them in strength. The air power was to be used “offensively but restricted to own side of the LoC.” The Navy was tasked to deploy its assets in the sea. The political leadership wanted to

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863 Malik, op cit 2006, pp 125-126
864 Singh, Jasjit, Ed 1999, p 152
865 Malik, op cit 2006, p 124
avoid escalation at all costs. The CAS, Air Chief Marshal Tipnis, clarified: “the government wants to ensure there is no escalation; the implications of restricted use of air power were made clear to it.”866 The governments directive to exercise ‘restraint’ was to satisfy the international community and position India as a “responsible nation forced to war but willing to sacrifice strategic military advantages and short-term gains for the greater cause of peace.”867 This calibrated military response reflecting strategic restraint would enhance the prestige and status of the nation and help remove the economic and technological sanctions imposed by a number of countries after the nuclear tests in 1998. The military strategy adopted to contain, evict and deny was prudent, logical and achievable. However, the self-imposed caveat of not crossing the LoC was not justified. It rightfully caused tremendous consternation amongst the rank and file of the Army. The National Security Advisory Board, which included well known defence and strategic affairs expert like Dr K Subrahmanyam, JN Dixit (a former foreign secretary) and three former service chiefs, had recommended to the CCS, through Brajesh Mishra – the National Security Advisor (NSA) , that “the Indian military should be allowed to cross the border/LoC.868 General Shankar Roy Chowdhary, the former COAS, stated, “It was an impractical proposition for the Army to flush out intruders without crossing the LoC.”869 It involved frontal attacks along the expected approaches devoid of natural cover causing a larger number of casualties instead of having an option to launch an attack from the rear direction that could also isolate the attacking objective tactically. The author interviewed the then COAS, General VP Malik and questioned the background to the decision.870 General Malik clarified that the decision to not to cross the LoC was taken in the CCS Meeting on 18th May 1999 by the political leadership without consulting the Army. The instruction was reiterated in the CCS Meeting held on 24th May when the directive to clear the intrusions was issued. He admitted that this was not militarily advantageous but was issued to garner international support. That’s why it was made public also. The Chief was not comfortable with the decision and he suggested to the NSA later that the stipulation of not crossing the LoC should not be made public as contingency

866 Baweja, Harinder, ‘Slow, but Steady’ India Today, July 26, 1999 Volume 24, No 30 P
867 Pandey, DP, op cit, p 25
868 Malik,op cit 2006, p 147
869 India May Have to Cross LoC: Experts The Hindustan Times, June 21, 1999
870 Interview carried out on 20th November, 2018.
may arise that the Army would have to cross the LoC/International Border in case the military operation failed to throw the intruders out from Kargil. The NSA understood the logic and later made an amendment stating through the media that “not crossing the border and the LoC holds good today, but we do not know what may happen tomorrow.” The Chief clarified that the government was exercising utmost caution and restraint to satisfy the international community. The Air Chief’s request to permit his fighter pilots to cross the LoC due to difficulties being faced in their flying circuit within our territory to engage important targets on own side of the LoC was rejected by the CCS on this ground.

The decision of not crossing the LoC was not merely a political decision but also a politico-military decision that affected the planning and conduct of operations at the tactical level and as such it warranted deliberation with the Armed Forces before framing and making it public. Though the short-term politico- diplomatic advantages of not crossing the LoC were significant but had long-term strategic deterrence ramifications. This decision of the CCS tantamounted to accepting LoC as the International border and abdicating its claim to the PoK. It almost served to cast the LoC in stone and virtually conferred upon it the status of an international border. An interesting paradox wherein India wanted to remove the illegal intrusions but not ready to enter into own areas across the LoC that were also under illegal occupation of Pakistan since 1948. It strengthened Pakistani perceptions of India avoiding to escalate the war. India did not fully exploit the advantage of terrain to hasten the eviction of intrusions and adversely impacted deterrence for any future misadventure.

All-out war. The limited war option offered distinct advantages and was rightfully adopted. The advantageous and disadvantageous of an all-out war option would become clearer after discussing other related aspects.

As both India and Pakistan had possessed nuclear weapons threat of nuclear war was a possibility. Nuclear capability and diplomacy as important determinants of decision-making merit deliberation. Intelligence, international response, leadership, and decision-making process were other determinants that impacted the outcome of the war.

Nuclear Perspective

The possession of nuclear weapons with a country enables it to pressurize adversary because no one can guarantee that a crisis will remain under control, and this danger prevents the challenged state from escalating the crisis.\textsuperscript{872} There was a strong conviction in Pakistan that its nuclear tests conducted in May 1998 would restrict India’s military response in Kargil as well as prevent a full-scale conventional war. Pakistan’s intention was to use its nuclear capability as a safeguard to occupy territory in a limited conventional offensive. Pakistan began raising the specter of a nuclear exchange in the early stages of the war. On 27\textsuperscript{th} May, the Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said that “the people of Pakistan were confident for the first time in their history that in the eventuality of an armed attack, they will be able to meet in equal terms.”\textsuperscript{873} Implied in Pakistani PM’s statement is its nuclear capability that they considered viable and strong enough to deter India. Similar threats were conveyed by its top officials and its Foreign Secretary. Pakistan officially issued a warning that it will take necessary steps to defend itself and retaliate. The Indian COAS, however, did not consider the threat to be credible. He said: “there was not much merit in these threats, there are no specific reports about Pakistan Army’s nuclear arsenal readiness, it is doomsday forecasting and nuclear rhetoric.”\textsuperscript{874} There were no intelligence inputs except one or two reports of preparing gun deployment areas and missile launch sites at the field firing ranges. Pakistan had no command and control mechanism in place for employing nuclear weapons. During the interview, General Malik highlighted that the Western media coverage about the nuclear threat was exaggerated and speculative to suit the non-proliferation lobby. Commodore Jasjit Singh reinforced COAS’s assessment on the state of Pakistan’s nuclear capability highlighting that “at the time of Kargil, Pakistan’s nuclear capability comprised of a limited but unknown quantity of nuclear warheads; its delivery capability was restricted primarily to a few aircraft and short/medium range missiles which were also non-operational.\textsuperscript{875} The arsenal by former President Musharraf’s own admission was not operational.\textsuperscript{876} One can infer

\textsuperscript{873} Ibid, p 273
\textsuperscript{874} Malik, op cit 2006, pp 259-260 and 276
that at the time of the Kargil War, Pakistan possessed a limited quantity of undeployed nuclear weapons with restricted delivery capability. It's nuclear threat thus lacked credibility. It is apparent that these threats were directed more at the international community, in order to coerce the USA and other Western countries to mediate early in the ongoing military operations on Kargil heights. It was also intended to deter India’s application of conventional superiority in the plains where it was militarily weak and operationally not ready. Lieutenant General Prakash Menon concluded: “it was with a non-existent capability around which Pakistan wove its paradigm of a nuclear umbrella, to prevent escalation as well as leverage the nuclear flashpoint card internationally.”

India rightfully downplayed the Pakistani nuclear threat and condemned the statements emanating from Pakistan as irresponsible. The US was initially carried away by Pakistan’s nuclear rhetoric. The US Undersecretary for South Asia alluded to the scope for miscalculation.

The international community understood the underlying factors for Pakistan’s nuclear rhetoric only when the Pakistan Army’s role in the intrusions was highlighted with concrete evidence. It then began pressurizing Pakistan to withdraw. Thereafter Pakistan’s rhetoric of nuclear threats declined sharply. India’s continued success in recapturing the intruded heights also reflected hollowness of Pakistan’s nuclear rhetoric. Since India recaptured its territory remaining on own side of the LoC, the efforts to create any escalation dynamics that could threaten nuclear war did not fructify. Despite its best efforts, Pakistan was unable to link its illegal Kargil intrusions with a nuclear flashpoint, though some foreign observers believe it was a near thing.

Not only Pakistan’s assumption of using the rhetoric of nuclear threat to involve the international community to force an early cease-fire in Kargil leaving occupied areas under its control failed, but it was also subjected to intense international pressure to withdraw.

**India’s restrained response led to the conceptualization of limited war in the backdrop of the nuclear threat.** The concept of limited war is pivoted on the notion

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877 Menon, op cit, 2018 p 100
that “there exists conventional space below the nuclear threshold, which can be utilized to apply military force in pursuance of political objectives, which were perceived as attainable within the ambit of limitations.”

Diplomacy as an Instrument of Statecraft

India had decided to employ all instruments of statecraft to discredit the Pakistani claims of Jihadi militants occupying the Kargil heights and project the farce of its nuclear capability. Bilateral and multilateral diplomacy played a significant role during the war, with the former at a low scale while the latter was pursued much more vigorously. Media was allowed to visit the site of war and get first-hand information about the war situation. India’s rationale of strategic restraint was highlighted to the international community in a comprehensive and convincing manner.

While India downplayed bilateral diplomacy, Pakistan pursued it vigorously with its Foreign Minister offering to visit India as early as on 28th May. The Indian Prime Minister in his address to the nation on 7th June 1999, asserted: “I do want to make it plain: if the stratagem now is that the intrusion should be used to alter the LoC through talks, the proposed talks will end before they have begun and added that the Armed Forces shall accomplish this task.” In the bilateral talks held between the Foreign Ministers of India and Pakistan in New Delhi on 12th June, India categorically rejected Pakistan’s three-point formula - a ceasefire; a joint working group to review the LoC and its demarcation on the ground; a reciprocal visit by the Indian Foreign Minister the following week. It was amply made clear that India under no circumstances would negotiate until and unless the Pakistani intrusion was completely vacated either militarily or diplomatically. India rejected the four points projected through Track 2 diplomacy and reiterated the same demands. The contrast in India and Pakistan’s approach was distinct. While Pakistan repeatedly attempted to downplay Kargil linking it with the larger Kashmir issue; India, on the other hand, was totally focused on withdrawal of intruders from Kargil heights. India’s relentless military operations and continued successes supplemented Indian diplomacy substantially.

880 Menon P, op cit 2018, p xiv
881 Malik,op cit 2006, p 145
882 According to some commentators Pakistan had put forward a four-point formula in the last week of June namely appropriate steps be taken by both sides to mutually respect the LoC; immediate resumption of the composite dialogue initiated under the Lahore process; Islamabad to use its influence on the Mujahideen requesting them to disengage and finding an expeditious solution to the Kashmir dispute within a specified time frame. Malik, op cit, p 152
As Pakistan was threatening more Kargils, India too gave a veiled threat to Pakistan through the USA. On 16th June, the National Security Advisor (NSA) informed his US counterpart that India would not be able to exercise strategic 'restraint' for long and the Army might be permitted to cross the International Border any day.\textsuperscript{883} With bilateral diplomacy not being pursued vigorously, international diplomacy stepped in. The US conveyed to Pakistan to withdraw its troops and refused to link the Kargil question with the broader Indo-Pakistani dispute over Kashmir.\textsuperscript{884} As the Indian military operations gathered momentum, Pakistan became more frustrated to seek an honorable exit to end the conflict. The Pakistan Prime Minister Sharif reached Washington on 4th July 1999 and met US President Clinton. The US President reiterated the condition that Pakistan had to withdraw and the US would not intervene in Kashmir dispute, while Nawaz Sharif repeatedly pleaded for direct US intervention in the J & K dispute.\textsuperscript{885} As Pakistan had agreed to withdraw its forces to their side of the LoC, the Indian Army agreed to accept a phased withdrawal of the Pakistan forces on its own terms and conditions. Pakistan Army began to withdraw with effect from 11th July and completed by 17th July 1999 except from three posts which were cleared by the Indian Army by 25th July. On 26th July the Indian Army declared that its territory had been cleared of Pakistani intrusions and the assigned mission had been accomplished by the Armed Forces.\textsuperscript{886}

**International Response**

The international response to Kargil 1999 reflected a change in its perspective of India – a responsible and restrained regional power. India understood the international community’s concern to avert a conventional war that could have escalated to a nuclear war. Pakistan’s irrational approach did not draw support even from its close allies. The United States took a position that was unequivocally in favor of India. The US Congress adopted a resolution recommending the suspension of loans from international financial institutions to Pakistan until it withdrew its troops from across

\textsuperscript{883} Malik, op cit 2006, p 147  
\textsuperscript{884} Ibid, p 119. Also see Mohan, Raja C, ‘Pakistan Must Pull out Troops’ The Hindu, June 28, 1999  
\textsuperscript{885} Ibid, p 258. Also see Reidel, Bruce, ‘American Diplomacy and the Kargil Summit at Blair House’, Policy Paper Series 2002, Center for Advanced Study of India University of Pennsylvania  
\textsuperscript{886} Ibid, p 267
the LoC. Besides the US, the G-8 countries\textsuperscript{887} and the European Union also adopted a similar stance i.e. immediate withdrawal of intruders. China, Pakistan’s trusted ally maintained a neutral stand.\textsuperscript{888} China preferred to go along with the world opinion that viewed India as a victim of Pakistan’s aggression. Russia was even more supportive of India. Majority of the other countries showed even-handedness asking for restraint and avoid escalation, while Saudi Arabia and Iran sought UN intervention to resolve the conflict. One of the key elements that altered the perceptions of the international community in India's favor was that it responded to the Kargil crisis with a restrained military response. The Indian crisis management principles were premised on firmness on the battlefront, a political will to bear its costs and sophistication in handling the diplomatic fall-out.\textsuperscript{889} It was a superb success of the Indian diplomacy considering that only a year back India was subjected to severe international condemnation and economic sanctions following the nuclear tests. The successful eviction and withdrawal of the intruders from the Kargil heights was the outcome of a superb combination of India’s military resolve and skillful diplomacy.

**Intelligence**

The Kargil crisis resulted due to the failure of Intelligence, both at the strategic and tactical levels. India was caught unawares by the stealth and secrecy employed by Pakistani intruders. that had taken place on the Kargil heights. Pakistan adopted a number of deception measures to depict the Army regulars as jihadi militants and India had no credible intelligence inputs about the identity of intruders. It was a systematic failure that adversely impacted the planning. The multiple agencies were working more vertically and less laterally. The focus on sub-conventional operations had taken its toll on the operational intelligence wherein conventional preparedness was relegated which is the Army’s primary responsibility. There was a general bias amongst the various security and intelligence agencies to assess all intelligence inputs to be related to the ongoing proxy war perpetrated by Pakistan since the early

\textsuperscript{887} G-8 Countries include US, UK, Canada, France, Germany, Japan, Italy and Russia
\textsuperscript{888} Chandran, Suba, ‘Limited War with Pakistan’, *India Research Press*, 2005, p 193
\textsuperscript{889} Rajain, Arpit, ‘India’s Political and Diplomatic Responses to the Kargil Crisis’ quoting ‘Security Council Hands off on Kargil’ *The Statesman*, May 30, 1999 quoted in Krishna, Ashok, Major General, AVSM (Retired) and Chari, PR, Eds, *Kargil The Tables Turned* (New Delhi: Manohar, 2002) p 188
The failure was not only in intelligence acquisition but in assessments too, that impacted the decision-making process in the initial stages; lack of identification of intruders is a case in point. There was, however, a silver lining in strategic intelligence when India intercepted a transcript between Pakistan’s Commander-in-Chief and their Chief of General Staff. It revealed that the whole operation in Kargil was not a jihadi operation but military aggression, planned and executed by the Pakistan Army.

Decision-Making Process

India’s apex decision-making mechanism - the CCS functioned quite well throughout the Kargil crisis. It met daily till the second week of July 1999 wherein all politico-military-diplomatic aspects were considered/deliberated. However, important decision of not crossing the LoC/ international border to clear the Pakistani intrusions was taken without any consultation with the service chiefs. Track 2 diplomacy continued alongside the conduct of military operations, but the COSC was not kept in the loop. An integrated ‘war management' system was adopted in which the political, economic, diplomatic, media and military aspects were cogently synchronized. The decision to exercise the ‘Strategy of Restraint’ with a concentration of military effort in the area of interest only in Kargil supplemented by skillful diplomacy in downplaying the Pakistani nuclear factor throughout the war was a sound and prudent decision. It did not permit Pakistan to escalate the war beyond Kargil and internationalize the issue. The decision-making mechanism worked quite effectively during the Kargil war, but it needs to function equally well during the peace-time period too, where the aspect of imposing deterrence on such misadventures be deliberated and implemented through long-term perspective planning. Structural changes required to overcome the shortcomings need to be implemented in the apex-decision-making mechanism.

Leadership

The Indian political leadership showed great maturity in handling the Kargil crisis and very deliberately adopted the Strategy of Restraint considering Pakistani motives and

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891 Malik, op cit 2006, p 100
assumptions in undertaking the Kargil intrusions. The Indian leadership very assiduously converted the challenge of eviction of intrusions into an opportunity to depict Pakistan’s mujahideen a farce and nuclear bluff by judicious utilization of all instruments of statecraft. Prime Minister Vajpayee displayed firmness and resoluteness, handled the crisis with maturity and held the moral high ground when he declared that India will not cross the LoC. He was not carried away by the popular mood for an all-out war. The respondents graded Vajpayee’s political leadership as ‘Good’. Displaying astute political dexterity, Vajpayee brilliantly turned a crisis situation into an opportunity to showcase the country as a responsible nation interested in global and regional peace. However, its decision not to cross the LoC showed his greater propensity to satisfy the international community at the cost of military operations that would impose caution and deterrence on the adversary. General VP Malik - the COAS brilliantly coordinated the planning and execution of all aspects of military operations to successfully evict Pakistani’s intrusion from the Kargil sector. A frontline commander, he closely monitored the progress of military operations without interfering in his subordinate Commander’s functioning. He had great faith in his subordinate commander’s and has adequately empowered them. During the entire course of action, he maintained an excellent rapport with the Prime Minister, Defence Minister and Air Chief as well as Naval Chief.

**Limited or All-Out War and Deterrence Perspective**

India’s well-thought application of limited war concept restricted to the eviction of Pakistani intrusions from Kargil with a public declaratory policy of not crossing the LoC was combined with the threat of escalating the war across the international border in the plains. The deployment of Army’s reserve formations in close proximity to the LoC/international border, employing air power offensively and shifting all naval assets to the Arabian Sea was carefully calibrated to create a strategic asymmetry along the entire Indo-Pak front. It was intended to achieve escalation dominance, should there be a need for war and depict India’s deterrence capability. The Indian Prime Minister’s informing the Pakistani Prime Minister on 24th May that, “all possible steps’ would be employed to expel the Kargil intrusions indicated a well-

892 Refer Question 20 of Appendix B on page 359
articulated deterrent capability. There is no doubt that India reaped tremendous politico-diplomatic advantages internationally by its limited war concept, but it reinforced Pakistani perception of a soft nation unwilling to take strong military action. A vast majority of the respondents strongly agreed that India’s strategic restraint in Kargil reinforced the Pakistan perception of India being a soft nation and emboldened it to continue sponsor terrorism in India. However, it failed to achieve deterrence against any Pakistani misadventure in terms of high-profile terrorist strikes in India like the terrorist strike on the Parliament in December 2001 and the Mumbai terror attack in November 2008. All-Out war in 1999 could have deterred high-value terrorist attacks originating from Pakistan, but it’s highly questionable whether it would have led to a change in Pakistan’s intentions of employing terrorism as an instrument of State Policy against India. It is also imperative to examine whether India had the military capability to launch an all-out war against Pakistan in 1999. The relative military capability of India and Pakistan in 1999 has been tabulated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formations/Units</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>Pakistan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infantry divisions</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain divisions</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rashtriya Rifles Force (Divisions)</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Brigades</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parachute Brigade</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armored Divisions</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Brigades</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air Force</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No of Squadrons</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No of Ships (All types)</td>
<td>55+2*</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Refer Question 14 of Appendix B on page 357

India enjoyed marginal numerical superiority over Pakistan after taking out the mountain divisions deployed against the Chinese border and side-stepping some formations from the East to the West. India had fallen prey to Pakistan’s proxy war due to which the focus of military preparedness for conventional operations remained distracted. Preparedness for sub-conventional operations consumed the maximum attention and the operational preparedness of the Indian Army suffered. No modernization worth the name had taken place for the last few years. Certain indicators of decline in military preparedness were evidence that could have reinforced the judgment of the adversary of weaknesses of the armed forces. The annual defence allocation, due to a serious shortage of foreign exchange and very tight fiscal situation, has been reducing from 3.59 percent of the GDP in 1987-88 to 2.31 percent in 1996-97.\textsuperscript{896} The Army was holding less than 70-80 percent of authorized weapons, ammunition and equipment in units and war reserves in Army depots.\textsuperscript{897} The annual budget available for capital purchases (modernization) was extremely low. Also, due to the raising of Rashtriya Rifles units and other normal training cum maintenance requirements, the war wastage reserves kept on depleting. India lacked the military capability to achieve a decisive victory over Pakistan. India was deterred from Pakistan’s nuclear threat. General VP Malik, the then Chairman COSC and the COAS stated, “The nuclear factor too must have been weighing on the mind of the Prime Minister and his CCS colleagues, though this aspect was never mentioned or discussed in the meetings.”\textsuperscript{898} In reality, the Prime Minister was known to have seriously appreciated a Pakistani nuclear strike had India escalated the war.\textsuperscript{899} Pakistan believed that its nuclear weapons had constrained Indian response options and thus can continue to support aggression and a proxy war, while India felt that a limited war against Pakistan can be fought and won despite the possession of nuclear weapons.\textsuperscript{900} Pakistan proved India’s lack of deterrence by the high-value terrorist attacks.

\textsuperscript{896} Malik, op cit 2006, p 283
\textsuperscript{897} Ibid
\textsuperscript{898} Ibid, p 126
\textsuperscript{900} Menon P, op cit 2018, pp 106-107
It is evident that India in 1999 was deterred from Pakistan’s nuclear threat that was not even viable. The Chief’s statement and further reinforced by General Menon’s assertion in 2018 calling it a non-existent threat affirms the same. India lacked a viable military capability in 1999 that could have emboldened the Indian political leadership to consider an all-out war option for the futuristic deterrence perspective. Indian Navy’s posturing had caused considerable concern in Pakistan. Pakistan was startled by Indian Navy’s deterrent deployment that bottled up its naval fleet in Karachi.\(^9\) Aware of its vulnerability the Pakistan Navy avoided any engagement with Indian Navy as it would have exposed its fuel dumps and sea-lanes to the Gulf.

**Validation of Hypothesis**

Pakistan’s decision for carrying out intrusions in Kargil was emboldened by India’s lack of deterrence that stemmed from perceived military weakness due to prolonged deployment in counter-insurgency operations. Pakistan also assumed that its nuclear capability would deter India from escalating the war in Kargil to a full-scale conventional war across other sectors of the LoC. **Lack of deterrence of India’s military capability and Pakistan’s nuclear deterrence thus played a prominent role in the latter’s decision for undertaking intrusions.** The hypothesis that deterrence is an essential part of decision making for war stands justified for Pakistan's decision.

Not planning to launch a conventional military offensive, applying limited war concept with an early public declaration to not to cross the LoC, not permitting the Air Force to do so to strike on targets located within Indian territory and not combining Navy’s posturing with strategic communication reflected vacillation in India’s decision-making to comprehensively employ the full combat potential against Pakistan’s intrusions in Kargil. **It adversely impacted the deterrence that was testified by a series of high-profile terrorist strikes in India.** The second part of the hypothesis that the vacillation in the use of force/other instruments has impacted the relevance of deterrence in India stands validated.

\(^9\) KRC, op cit, p 22
PART III: CONCLUSION

Kargil War was a ‘War of Necessity’ for India to achieve the vital national security interest in restoring its territorial integrity. By the application of limited war concept in the wake of the nuclear threat, India convincingly achieved its military objective of removal of intrusions and politico-diplomatic objectives of enhancing India's image as a responsible nation willing to work for enduring global peace. The strategy of restraint is the instrument of a powerful nation. Unlike popular misconceptions, restraint is not a sign of weakness but a reflection of courage by the more dominant to restrict one’s might and power.902 However, Kargil failed to achieve any deterrence against Pakistan. India perhaps overlooked the long-term deterrence perspective in its military response. The Kargil crisis “made clear that the nuclear status of India and Pakistan did not remove the danger of war, but certainly increased the stakes if war occurred.”903

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902 Pandey, op cit, p 29
SECTION VI

OPERATION PARAKRAM 2001-2002

Background

The US had launched the global war on terror (GWOT) in Afghanistan to target Al Qaeda bases consequent to the terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre in New York on 13 September 2001. The USA, by having a large military presence in Afghanistan, became a de-facto South Asian neighbor with far-reaching implications for the region. Pakistan, considered to be the epicenter of terrorism became a frontline ally of the US in its GWOT but continued to support the proxy war in J&K and sponsor terrorism in India. The terrorist strike on the Indian Parliament on 13th December 2001 enraged the entire nation. The call for stronger military action against Pakistan – considered to have abetted the strike on Parliament intensified with each passing day. The government of India ordered the mobilization of its armed forces along the Western border termed as Operation Parakram for possible military action against Pakistan. War appeared imminent, but India did not go to war. The case study will examine the decision-making for launching Operation Parakram and the deterrence perspective in the backdrop of Pakistan’s nuclear threat. It has been structured as follows:

(a) Part I : The Terrorist Strike and Indian Response
(b) Part II : Analysis of Decision-Making and Deterrence
(c) Part III : Conclusion

PART I: THE TERRORIST STRIKE AND INDIAN RESPONSE

On 13th December 2001, at 11.40 am five armed terrorists started firing on the Parliament with most of the legislators trapped inside the Parliament. In the ensuing gun battle, all the terrorists were killed. Few hours after the terrorist attack, the Prime Minister, Vajpayee declared “the attack was not on the Parliament, but on the entire nation, the do-or-die battle is in the final stages.”904 India examined both the non-military and military options against Pakistan. On 14th December 2001, India issued a demarche to the Pakistani High Commissioner demanding the cessation of terrorist activities of major militant groups like the Lashkar-e-Toiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed.

904 Sood and Sawhney, op cit, p 61
detain their leaders and freeze their financial assets. Pakistan rejected India’s demands citing inadequate evidence against the terrorist groups. India downgraded diplomatic relations, recalled its High Commissioner, reduced the staff strength, cut-down the railroad movement and denied its air space to Pakistan commercial flights. The Indian Prime Minister wrote to the heads of governments of US, Britain, Germany, and France highlighting “that continued Pakistani sponsored acts of terrorism might compel India to adopt the last resort.”

The CCS under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister and attended by the three service chiefs reviewed the security situation on 17th December 2001. During the CCS meeting held on 18th December the Prime Minister after being briefed by the Secretary Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW) and Intelligence Bureau asked the Service Chiefs who in unison told him that enough is enough and we need to react pro-actively for which full-scale mobilization was required keeping open all options of full-scale war; the Prime Minister gave the go-ahead for the military mobilization and told the three service chiefs “to prepare for a war with Pakistan.” It was the largest deployment of forces on the border after the 1971 Indo-Pak War.

The Western governments led by the US exerted immense pressure on India to exercise restraint and on Pakistan to put a check on terrorist activities emanating from its territory. The US President Bush stated on 19th December 2001 that any escalation “could create severe difficulties for the US and its allies waging a war against terrorism in Afghanistan.” Any India-Pakistan hostilities would have adversely impacted the ongoing GWOT as Pakistan’s support to the US in their campaign, considered crucial, would cease. The U.S. ambassador to India, Robert Blackwill, urged the Indian government to exercise restraint until President Musharraf’s address on TV on 12th January 2002. He announced that the US government is committed to assisting Pakistan in eliminating the influence of terrorists and radical Islam which would create a moderate, secular and liberal society. President Musharraf in his address on 12th January, announced the banning of some terrorist organizations and

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905 Ibid
906 Menon, op cit, 2018, p 110. Also see India Today, 3 June, 2002, p 28
907 The mobilisation involved movement of nearly 800,000 troops, along with their complete weapon and ammunition to their respective battle positions along the border and preparing for war. The three-strike corps were postured in their likely deployment areas close to the Pakistan border.
908 Sood and Sawhney, op cit, p 62 and based on discussion with some senior officers
909 The Hindu, 22 December 2001
Islamic extremist groups, while their leaders were arrested and funds were frozen. The speech temporarily diffused the crisis, but India ruled out any demobilization until it was satisfied that Pakistan had stopped abetting cross-border terrorism. The Indian Army remained deployed on the international border. India in the interim expanded the demands on Pakistan to include handing over 20 criminals/terrorists residing in Pakistan, ceasing support to terrorists in terms of training, supplying arms, providing funds, aiding their trans-border infiltration into India and an unqualified repudiation of terrorism in all its manifestations.\textsuperscript{910} The Pakistan President Musharraf under international pressure promised action against the terrorists in a televised address to the nation on 12 January 2002. His announcement had a limited impact on the situation in J&K. Superficial and temporary measures were undertaken to curb verifiable aspects of Pakistan’s involvement. Few terrorist organizations like Lashkar-e-Toiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed were banned and some terrorist camps relocated to lend credence to Pakistani claims of placing restrictions on terrorists. As the situation was gradually showing signs of improvement, the terrorists struck again. On 14th May 2002, terrorists attacked the living accommodation of families of Army personnel near Jammu. Tensions again built up and India threatened war. Threats and counter-threats including nuclear signaling continued.

Owing to the US mediation, the tension finally eased out in November 2002 and the Army was ordered to withdraw from the border to their peacetime locations. The CCS announced that “troops were being strategically relocated.”\textsuperscript{911} The Indian Defence Minister in replying to questions in the Parliament on 20th November 2002, said that the intended objectives of the 10-month long forward mobilization exerted tremendous pressure on Pakistan to ban a few terrorist organizations, close down some terrorist camps in PoK and arrest a few leaders. General Musharraf decried support to terrorism. The mobilization focused world attention on Pakistan as an epicenter of terrorism. The proxy war situation in J&K started showing signs of improvement. The mobilization enabled the Army to refine its operational plans. On the whole above-mentioned objectives as per the Defence Minister were “achieved with great distinction.”\textsuperscript{912} On the other hand, Pakistan boasted that it successfully deterred India from waging a war and its nuclear deterrence had been validated. The

\textsuperscript{910} Kalyanaraman, op cit Oct-Dec 2002, p 483
\textsuperscript{911} The term strategic relocation was used to describe the end of mobilisation. It indicated that the government believed a war was still to be fought, but not immediately. Sood and Sawhney, op cit, p 9
\textsuperscript{912} Sood and Sawhney, op cit, p 59
Pakistan President Musharraf, outlined this as the biggest foreign policy achievement of his government to uphold the honor and dignity of Pakistan by highlighting the Kashmir cause to the international community. General Pervez stated, “We defeated the enemy without a war.” As the situation on the border eased off, Pakistan reneged on its promises and things were back to normal.

PART II: ANALYSIS OF DETERRENCE AND DECISION-MAKING

The well-planned terrorist strike on the Indian Parliament in Delhi and family quarters in Jammu by Pakistan-based terrorist groups reflects the lack of India’s military deterrence. India ordered military mobilization indicating its intentions to wage a war against Pakistan to punish him for its continued support to cross-border terrorism, but not waging war validated and strengthened Pakistan’s nuclear deterrence, while it lowered the military threat from India. The non-military options like the recalling/halving of diplomatic staff, severing of transport links and economic sanctions had a symbolic value only. International diplomatic pressure which could have caused some hurt to Pakistan was not exerted considering it to be a frontline ally of the US in the GWOT. India’s decision for not exercising the military option, considered a justifiable response to safeguard its vital national interest of internal security warrants an in-depth examination. The decision to order the military mobilization and later demobilized without achieving any viable tangible objectives had four interlinked dimensions – the military, nuclear, coercive diplomacy, and international pressure.

Military Dimension

The political objectives of the military mobilization were not defined when the Prime Minister ordered the service chiefs to prepare for war. When asked by the COAS what the government expected from the war, the Prime Minister was understood to have said “woh baad mein bataayenge (that will be told later).” The day Prime Minister ordered mobilization, the Home-Minister after the debate in Parliament on 18th December 2001 counseled restraint. India’s vacillation for applying military force is evident. Mobilization was ordered but political objectives were not spelled out.

The available literature highlighted that the various military options were discussed in

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913 The Hindu, December 13, 2002
914 Sood and Sawhney, op cit, p 62
915 The Hindu, December 19, 2001
the CCS meeting on 18th December 2001 which ranged from strikes on terrorist camps located in PoK to full-scale conventional operations. The Army suggested full-scale conventional operations of up to three weeks duration to capture territory in PoK. According to some reports, when the initial mobilization was complete the service chiefs, “opted for a limited offensive against terrorist training camps in PoK.” It is clarified that these statements are speculative. No military option, as per the norm, was discussed during the CCS meeting held on 18th December and was left to the service chiefs to work out the various options after which the Indian Army carried out its own contingency planning. The 14th May terrorists attack on the family quarters of Indian Army personnel near Jammu again triggered public opinion for military action. The Army opted for a full-scale offensive operation across the international border as well as the LoC. According to reports, the plan was to become operational sometime between 23 May and 10 June. The government did not accord approval for any military action across the LoC or border, hoping that the mobilization of this scale would prompt the US to force Pakistan to cease cross border terrorism.

Regarding the relative military capability, India had a qualitative and quantitative superiority in air and naval power, but only marginal superiority in land forces. The relative military balance between India and Pakistan in 2001-2002 was the same as in 1999 that has already been discussed in Section V. An operational level military victory in January 2002 was possible against Pakistan in terms of capture of territory and degradation of its military hardware. More than the physical attrition, the political advantages from the decision to wage war would have been significant in terms of the deterrence perspective. It would have signified India’s political resolve and military capability; though it might not have been a decisive victory; this would have acted as a strong deterrence against such high-profile terrorist attacks. But India did not go to war.

917 Sridharan, op cit, p 226
918 Based on author’s discussion with senior officers.
919 Sridharan, op cit, p 227
920 A decisive military victory implies capture of large Pakistani territory and/or substantial destruction/ degradation of Pakistan’s war waging capability
There was a lack of firm intent on the part of the government of India to apply the instrument of military force to compel Pakistan to alter its State policy of cross-border terrorism. The intent and urgency evident at the time of ordering mobilization gradually lost its momentum. By the first week of Jan 2002, the political will to wage war had shifted to employing this threat as an integrated part of national strategy. Indian political leadership failed to act decisively after attempting to assuage the domestic constituency through mobilization, but without evolving the political objectives.

**Nuclear Dimension**

India, test-fired Agni-I missile on 25 January 2002 in an attempt to intimidate Pakistan, who in turn, signaled its nuclear threat towards the end of March 2002 that also marked the reversal of Musharraf’s pledges made on 12 January. In a speech on its National Day on 23 March 2002, Musharraf “warned India of an unforgettable lesson if it dared to challenge Pakistan.” Musharraf conveyed his second signal on 5th April 2002 during an interview with a German weekly newsmagazine Der Spiegel, in which he said, “Using nuclear weapons would only be a last resort for us; only if there is a threat of Pakistan being wiped off the map.” On 26th May, after the terrorist strike at Kaluchak, the Indian Prime Minister stated, that the world leaders while condemning the 13th December terrorist attack asked us to exercise restraint, but “India would not follow the same advice now and the world should understand there is a limit to India’s patience.” Pakistan too responded with a similar statement. On 27th May, the Pakistani President in a televised address stated, “We do not want war, but if it is thrust on us, we would respond with full might and give a befitting reply.” To reinforce the threat, Pakistan test-fired three surface-to-surface ballistic missile systems between 25 and 28 May 2002. India did not react to these signals. The timing of these nuclear signals is significant. The signals started emanating from Islamabad when the conventional military threat after having receded in January again started building up in the wake of terror strike on family quarters in Jammu.

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921 Menon, op cit,2018, pp 113-114
924 Menon P , op cit 2018, p 120
From the above, it is evident that India was deterred from going to war due to Pakistan’s nuclear threat. The deterrence value of nuclear weapons played a significant role in the creation and management of the crisis.\text{\textsuperscript{925}} India’s strategic restraint in Kargil was perceived by Pakistan as the deterrent effect of its nuclear weapons. India adopted a Limited War Option in the 1999 Kargil War due to the politico-diplomatic advantages it conferred. But it did not lead to any deterrence value to India against Pakistan as is exemplified by the continued terrorist strikes. Pakistan used the nuclear card as a shield for high profile terrorist strike deep within India, fully confident that India would not take recourse to conventional attack. The international community would prevent escalation to an all-out conventional war due to its nuclear threat. Pakistan’s appreciation was proved right. Pakistan by adopting a combination of adequate conventional military strength and nuclear signaling deterred India from launching a conventional attack against it. Pakistan’s nuclear deterrence was the single most important factor for India not going for an all-out war in 2002. \textit{“Miscalculation causes wars” and “nuclear weapons make military miscalculations difficult and politically pertinent prediction easy.”}\textsuperscript{926}

Coercive Diplomacy

The military mobilization was an integral and important tool of coercive diplomacy to pressurize Pakistan diplomatically through world leaders and militarily to compel it to put an end to its state-policy of cross-border terrorism against India. The Indian strategy failed to accomplish most of its objectives.\textsuperscript{927} It produced a minimal impact enough to highlight to the world community the menace of terrorism emanating from Pakistan that threatens regional peace and stability. The underlying aim of coercive diplomacy is to persuade/pressurize the adversary to cease doing something that it had already been doing it for some-time; it does not depend upon the application of overwhelming or quick use of force to physically prevent the enemy from doing what he should not be doing.\textsuperscript{928} The military coercion is employed to force the adversary to take some positive action through a credible threat of strong punitive action. In case of non-compliance, force is applied in a limited, calibrated and demonstrative manner

\textsuperscript{925} Ibid, 126
\textsuperscript{928} Kalyanaraman, op cit Oct-Dec 2002, p 480
incrementally. Coercive diplomacy has “a signaling, bargaining, negotiating character that is built into the conceptualization and conduct of military operations.”

India’s coercive diplomacy failed to persuade Pakistan to accede to Indian demands for a number of reasons. Firstly, diplomacy was not applied correctly. Lieutenant General Vijay Uberoi during an interview with the author highlighted the flaws in India’s application of coercive diplomacy. He questioned as to why was the military deployment carried out first; diplomacy should have run its course before considering military deployment. Diplomacy is the first step, while the application of the military instrument is the last resort. It amounted to taking recourse to the last step first. Incrementally increasing the demands on Pakistan was against the tenets of coercive diplomacy. Though it was termed as diplomacy, there was no bilateral diplomacy conducted during the ten-month deployment. The diplomatic channels including Track II were functional during Kargil but were not-operative during 2001-2002. The US was the main channel of communication between India and Pakistan. Secondly, India’s approach to coercive diplomacy was based on an erroneous assumption that due to the ongoing GWOT, Pakistan would be subjected to intense international pressure to accede to Indian demands. India did not consider Pakistan’s utility to the US in its GWOT that constrained the international community, to exert minimal pressurize on Pakistan restricted to diffusing the present crisis. Thirdly, India’s use of coercive diplomacy was severely restricted due to Pakistan’s nuclear capability and its adequate conventional military capability to contain India’s military offensives. Coercion needs to be calibrated deliberately through a judicious combination of military force and diplomacy. India continued to press for the demands that it had placed on Pakistan in December 2001 but did not set any deadline for Pakistan’s compliance. India lacked the compellent capabilities to coerce Pakistan to accede to its demands. Fourthly, India communicated incoherently. In the first few months of confrontation, India signaled a credible conventional threat and avoided any nuclear signaling while Pakistan countered India’s conventional threats with nuclear signaling directly and also through the USA. The total mobilization, including the concentration of Strike Corps along the Western border, shifting of naval assets to the Arabian Sea, deploying the missiles in their

930 Interview carried out on 06 November 2018. Lieutenant General Vijay Uberoi had retired few months before Operation Parakram as the Vice Chief of the Army Staff (VCOAS)
respective locations, and forming of a unified command and control mechanism by placing BSF and Coast Guard under the operational control of Army and Navy respectively signified portent conventional military threats which could have been supplemented by coherent nuclear signaling.

**International Pressure**

Immense international pressure exerted on India to exercise restraint for going to war was influenced by two factors – the nuclear threat and the GWOT. The nuclear signaling by Pakistan had induced fear amongst the international community of their employment that would have impacted regional peace and stability. The war would have adversely impacted the ongoing GWOT. The host of visitors to New Delhi in January and May/June 2002, advocating restraint signifies the deterrence value of nuclear weapons and the interest of the coalition partners involved in fighting the terrorists in Afghanistan. The US played a very important and determinant role in diffusing the crisis. *It prevailed on India to not to adopt US policy in Afghanistan as Pakistan cannot be equated to the Taliban.* India should show restraint and solve the differences by dialogue. As Pakistan had shown some intent to act against the terrorists, it was difficult for India to garner international support for its decision to wage a war. Some Indian analysts believed that having got Pakistan to make promises, the deployment had achieved its aim and also that in geopolitical terms, the war was not an option, as it was inconceivable that an Indian government would contemplate war without the minimum international empathy.\(^{931}\) As the war threatened US interests in Afghanistan, it was difficult for India to wage war without coordinating with it. Shifting of Pakistani forces from the Afghanistan border would have seriously undermined the ongoing military operations against terrorists. The Indian Navy’s operations would have also been substantially impacted by the presence of US naval and other assets in the Arabian Sea for its logistic supplies to its forces in Afghanistan.

**Leadership**

The political leadership failed to act decisively in handling the crisis. All the respondents overwhelmingly rated the political leadership as ‘Below Average’. This is a fact which cannot be disputed. The PM Vajpayee displayed a lack of strong

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\(^{931}\) Raghavan, VR. ‘Military Persuasion or Provocation’, *The Hindu*, February 12, 2002 quoted in Menon, op cit, p 111
political will to take bold decisions. There was a lack of political resolve and firm intent due to US pressure and Pakistan’s nuclear threat. The decision to order mobilization was perhaps an emotive one but when the realities dawned on him, he vacillated to employ the military instrument. The respondents attributed the reasons for non-achievement of India’s political demands to lack of strong political leadership, Pakistan’s nuclear threat, flawed application of coercive diplomacy and international pressure in that order. 932

Analysis of Decision Making

The Indian decision-making process fared poorly to manage the crisis created by the terrorist strike on the Parliament in December 2001. The magnitude of the crisis inhibited Indian decision-makers to simultaneously handle the military dimension, the nuclear threat, the coercive diplomacy, and the international pressure. The ordering of mobilization without spelling out the political objectives was an emotional decision as the terrorist strike had enraged the entire nation. Emotions, stress, and hormones such as testosterone are important players in human decision-making. 933 A cost-benefit analysis in terms of gains expected from a war vis a vis the expected costs was not carried out. War is the last resort to achieve political objectives after exploring diplomacy, economic sanctions, international pressure and the threat to use force. India attempted to adopt it as the first resort to assuage the domestic pressure demanding military action. The government sent incoherent signals of the belligerence of resorting to war and strategic restraint to maintain peace. Indian leaders tried to handle two requirements simultaneously - to pressurize Pakistan and reassure the US. The over-arching role of the US was unavoidable. This emboldened Pakistan to defy Indian demands. The most complicating factor for the government was “its pursuit of a dual-track policy of both intimidating Pakistan through Operation Parakram and attempting to use the US to coerce the Pakistanis.” 934 Neither worked.

Validation of Hypothesis

The hypothesis that deterrence is an essential part of ‘Decision Making for war’ in the Indian context stands validated. India was deterred by Pakistan’s nuclear threat. “In all probability, nuclear weapons as the elephant in the room seems the

932 Refer Question 19 of Appendix B on page 359
933 Rosen, op cit , p 1
934 Pattrick, op cit, p 603
overarching factor that prevented war. ”935 India’s vacillation in the use of force against Pakistan emboldened Pakistan of continued support to cross-border terrorism. The Mumbai-terror strike in 2008 was the manifestation of this vacillation. The terror strike on the country’s highest institution of democracy was reflective of lack of any deterrence caused by India’s strategic restraint and application of limited war option in Kargil two years back. The hypothesis that the vacillation in the use of force/other instruments has impacted the relevance of deterrence in India stands fully validated.

PART III: CONCLUSION

India, unlike, the 1971 War was unable to identify a single homogeneous good in terms of political objective(s) to be achieved while ordering military mobilization. Rupert Smith, inferring from a series of military engagements between the Western Allies and Russians during the cold war confrontation, rightly remarked: “This is basically due to a deep and abiding confusion between deploying a force and employing force.”936 India’s case was worst – it carried out military deployment without evolving any political objectives that were to be achieved with its employment. Operation Parakram also signified the tremendous deterrence value of nuclear weapons. It deterred India from waging a war against Pakistan and emboldened it to continue to pursue its state policy of cross-border terrorism.

935 Menon, op cit 2018, p 126
936 Smith, op cit, p 6