

General

The Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS) organised a Fellow's Seminar on "Pakistan Army: Modernisation, Arms Procurement and Capacity Building" on 21 February 2011 at the CLAWS premises. The Seminar was chaired by Lt Gen GK Duggal, PVSM, AVSM, VrC (Retd). The discussants were Maj Gen GD Bakshi, SM, VSM (Retd), Ms Shalini Chawla, Senior Fellow, CAPS, and Gp Capt Manish Girdhar, VM, Senior Fellow, CLAWS. Dr Shah Alam, Research Fellow, CLAWS, presented his paper on the subject.

Opening Remarks: Brig Gurmeet Kanwal (Retd), Director CLAWS

The Pakistan Army has developed and modernised despite several challenges. It influences the country's security and foreign policy. The army helps in ensuring internal security of the country. Pakistan has been facing challenges like Islamic radicalism, terrorism, insurgency, sectarian and ethnic conflict. The fissiparous tendencies have generated a sense of insecurity in Pakistan as a result of which the role of the army and its influence in Pakistan's polity has increased. Today, the Pakistan Army possesses a nuclear arsenal that has enhanced its firepower capacity.

Lt Gen GK Duggal, PVSM, AVSM, VrC (Retd)

Pakistan has developed its nuclear weapons capability. Pakistan's intention as to its usage and its outlook in the neighbourhood is not clear and appears vague. Pakistan is not economically strong but has successfully maintained a large and strong army. This, from an army, which was faced with a force deficiency in 1947 and was filled with British officers. Pakistan has always had a sense of insecurity since 1947. Over and above, for Pakistan, Kashmir has continued to remain on top of its agenda. Thus, they have received a large chunk of the country's defence budget and maintained well-trained officers. Since Pakistan is economically weak, it cannot sustain a modernisation programme of its own and has received economic assistance from various countries. In 1965, China provided arms to Pakistan. The US supplied arms to Pakistan in the 1980s. Pakistan's strategy was to maintain association with the US and to obtain arms from it.

Present-day Pakistan has been facing Islamic radicalism which is a serious challenge to its security. However, the Pakistan Army is a professional army and will not allow radical element to take over the country.

Dr Shah Alam:

The Pakistan Army has conventional and unconventional weapons, and missiles. It possesses armoured, artillery, infantry, air defence and army aviation assets. Equipped with modern weapon systems, it is organised under nine Corps HQs. A country's

military capability depends upon the linkage between available weapons and its strategic options. The availability of weapons provides options to a country in exercising its power. Moreover, the availability of weapons increases manoeuvring capacity of a country.

The modernisation process in the Pakistan Army was first instituted under the stewardship of General Ayub Khan and was continued by the successive regimes. General Ayub Khan as the army chief, army chief-cum-defence minister, and later as President contributed in expansion of the Pakistan Army.

It was during this period, in the 1950s, that Pakistan established and nurtured its relations with the US. It signed defence pacts with the US and also became a member of the US/West-sponsored security organisations, the SEATO and the Baghdad Pact/CENTO. The events facilitated in procuring arms from the US. Pakistan-US defence pacts and Pakistan's accession to these organisations changed the direction of Pakistan and that of army. The US arms helped in expansion of the Pakistan Army. Pakistan also received arms from the USSR in 1969 and 1970.

In the 1970s and 1980s, modern arms and equipment were inducted in bulk in the army, and as a result its combating capacity increased. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto restructured the military and allocated huge resources for modernisation of the army, and the army turned into one of the prize institutions of Pakistan. . Later, Gen Zia-ul-Haq too paid attention to modernisation and inducted modern arms. Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif also allocated resources for modernisation of the army despite several hurdles. Gen Pervez Musharraf as the army chief-cum-president naturally tried to improve the army. Pakistan-US relation improved during the Musharraf period and its impact was seen on arms transfers.

Pakistan's relation with the US was not too warm in the 1990s, though, and they received fewer arms from the US. It was not like the 1980s, when the US/West supplied arms in bulk to Pakistan in the aftermath of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in 1979. The infusion of modern weapons during this era helped in raising new units and divisions. The US resumed arms supply to Pakistan in the post-September 2001 period.

Pakistan had another steady arms supplier since the 1960s. The country received arms in bulk from China in the 1970s and 1980s and that helped in expanding its defence industrial base. In the absence of defence production capability, China's arms transfers to Pakistan became a significant issue in their bilateral ties. China did not only transfer arms to Pakistan but also assisted in establishing its defence production industry. China's assistance to Pakistan is considered vital for developing Pakistan's poor defence industrial resources and technology. Russia supplied arms to Pakistan in 1995, 2001 and 2003.

With the US, the West, China, Russia, Belarus and Ukraine weapons, the Pakistan Army is being expanded, developed and modernised. With its 550,000 strength, modern and sophisticated arms, missiles, and nuclear delivery capable missiles, the Pakistan Army appears to have emerged a strong force in the region. The Pakistan Army is dominant among the three arms and as a result will continue to define the parameters of the country's security and foreign policy in the long-term. Pakistan has smaller forces and limited capability but will remain a significant player in the region.

Maj Gen GD Bakshi, SM, VSM (Retd)

The Kargil war in 1999 reflects that India lost its conventional superiority over Pakistan. India possesses a large army and weapons. However, conventional deterrence did not work during the Kargil war. China's arms transfers to Pakistan have strengthened its army. Gen Mirza Aslam Beg contributed in development of the Pakistan military doctrine. China tested nuclear devices for Pakistan in 1987. The US provided military and non-military aid to Pakistan that helped in expanding the army. With the passage of time doctrinal development took place both in India and Pakistan. Islam was infused in military during the Zia period.

Ms Shalini Chawla, Senior Fellow, CAPS

The Pakistan Army was influenced by the US and Britain. American and Chinese arms transfers to Pakistan contributed in modernising the Pakistan Army. In the 1980s, the US transferred arms in bulk to Pakistan that increased its firepower capacity. Pakistan has spent resources in establishing and expanding defence production industries. Pakistan has also developed its nuclear capability and its nuclear programme is funded by some Gulf countries. The country's nuclear programme is a cause of concern for India. The tragic incident in the US in September 2001 changed the US arms transfer policy towards Pakistan. Weapons were procured from various sources by Pakistan and those were used against India.

Gp Capt Manish Girdhar, VM, Senior Fellow, CLAWS

Pakistan made alliances with the world powers to obtain arms. China provided arms to Pakistan in the 1960s. The Pakistan Army holds exercises that show its potential, preparedness, and operational strategy. The *Zarb-e-Momin* exercise reflects the military capability of Pakistan. The Pakistan Army holds regular exercises with China, Turkey and Saudi Arabia. The Pakistan Air Force and Pakistan Navy are being modernised.

Discussion

The Pakistan Army is a professional outfit and taps new technology, doctrine and strategy. It continues to ensure professionalism. It is a motivated army. However, there

is rampant corruption in the army. The Pakistan Army and Frontier Forces are involved in operations against militants/insurgents in the FATA. The Zia period witnessed a mushrooming of madrassas (religious schools) in Pakistan, and had wide ramifications for society. The pervasive impact of religion is witnessed in Pakistani society today. Army officers would also have been affected, though the Pakistan Army does not promote radicalism. The Pakistan Army has continued with its military modernisation programme, and the Army is being expanded, despite the country's economic problems

Closing Remarks: Maj Gen Dhruv Katoch (Retd), Additional Director CLAWS

Pakistan is economically weak and has no industrial base. But it has been able to modernise the army. India is economically strong and is capable of spending resources on its military modernisation programme and has been steadily working on it. India and Pakistan have evolved a military doctrine and an effective command and control system. Pakistan's conventional deterrence worked against India in 1999.

(Report prepared by Dr Shah Alam, Research Fellow, CLAWS)