
Transforming for an Uncertain Future

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Manpower Intensive Commitments

South Asia is the second most unstable region in the world and is vying closely with West Asia for the number one spot. Traditional security threats are becoming increasingly unpredictable and new challenges are cropping up almost every year. It would, hence, be fair to deduce that the 2015-20 timeframe is likely to be marked by strategic uncertainty. While the probability of conventional conflict is low, new trans-national threats like terrorism have emerged. The Indian Army needs to modernise speedily if it is to prepare for the threats and challenges that it will face in the future. However, qualitative upgradation of weapon systems and equipment demands large capital outlays. As it is becoming increasingly difficult for the defence budget to sustain a force that is over a million strong, several analysts have concluded that modernisation can be undertaken only by quantitative reduction in force levels.

The real dilemma facing the Indian Army is that it is not only deployed in strength along unsettled borders with China and on the Line of Control (LoC) with Pakistan on a permanent basis, but is also engaged extensively in manpower-intensive internal security duties and counter-insurgency operations. Consequently, the army finds it difficult to reduce its manpower, at least in the short-term. Hence, while the requirement for modernisation and qualitative upgradation is well appreciated, it is not being undertaken at the pace that is necessary due to the lack of adequate budgetary support. This article analyses the macro-level changes necessary in the army's force structure to provide it the capabilities necessary for success in the 2015-20 timeframe.

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Upgrading Capabilities for Conventional Deterrence

Fighting on Two Fronts: The issue of the army's ability and operational readiness to fight a "one-front" (against either Pakistan or China) or "two-front" war (against both together) has often been debated. The former Chief of the Army Staff (COAS), late Gen K Sundarji, had visualised a 40-division army for the two-front scenario that envisaged a dissuasive strategy against China and a deterrent one against Pakistan in a non-nuclear environment. With the present force levels, the existing "operational voids" in the war establishments of various field formations and the

nuclear overhang under which the next conventional war will take place, the army is capable of fighting only a one-front war successfully. This capability is being further eroded by the ongoing proxy war in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) and the army's prolonged involvement in fighting insurgency in the northeastern states.

Gen Shankar Roychowdhury, former COAS, has called the army's internal security duties a "half-front" war that will tie down large resources for counter-insurgency as well as rear area security operations during a conventional war. Innovative methods need to be found to enable the army to enhance its combat potential to the maximum possible extent. For example, at present, only about 100 out of over 250 battalions of the Border Security Force (BSF) automatically come under the command of the army for war when the government declares an emergency and the provisions of the *Union War Book* are invoked. Additional BSF battalions and those of the other central government security forces must come under the command of the army for internal security duties and rear area security on mobilisation so that army units employed on these duties can be relieved for operational tasks. The central police organisations (CPOs) will naturally have to be trained for these specialised duties during peace-time. Though the likelihood of a collusive Pak-China axis to wage a simultaneous two-front war against India is low, India's foreign policy mandarins must ensure through astute diplomacy that the armed forces never have to confront a two-front war scenario. The civilian leadership must understand that even if the army is called upon to fight only a one-front war, it cannot neglect the second front completely and has to adopt a strategic defensive posture to be ready for unforeseen eventualities.

It can be nobody's case that the number of combat divisions and independent brigade groups must remain static or even continue to grow. As and when the rapprochement process with China gathers momentum and leads to a satisfactory resolution of the territorial and boundary dispute, it should be possible for the Army Headquarters (HQ) to recommend some reduction in the present force levels committed for the defence of India's northern borders. Such recommendations must take into account the need to retain the divisions of Eastern Command that are dual-tasked for operations on the western border with Pakistan in case the border with China is quiet during a future war. Subsequently, as and when the J&K issue is resolved and it is possible to demilitarise the LoC, a further reduction in force levels should be possible. The aim should be to retain a potent deterrent capability to take the war into the adversary's territory in case of future conflicts, rather than concentrating on positional defence.

Offensive Operations: Many political as well as military thinkers are still not ready to concede that it is no longer necessary to defend every inch of territory against external aggression. It has been repeatedly emphasised by numerous military leaders and thinkers that offence is the best form of defence. Commenting on the army's proclivity for attrition oriented defensive battles, Lt Gen V. K. Kapoor has written:¹ "The Indian Army is organised, equipped and trained for second and third generation, industrial age, and low technology conflicts. Its traditional methods favour deliberate set-piece military operations, against fixed defences, which are attrition oriented and tactically biased. The army excels in defensive operations and has considerable staying power and exceptional resilience. Over the past five decades or so, it has gathered remarkable experience in counter-insurgency operations. However, the higher leadership, by and large, remains mired in conservative attrition oriented methodologies. This fact, together with lack of adequate funds and long delays due to complicated and lengthy procurement procedures and a general lack of interest on the part of the political leadership, have led to a manpower-oriented growth of the army."

Though there is apparently no written directive from the government that the loss of territory is unacceptable, all formation commanders proceed to make their defensive plans based on the assumption that this is indeed so. In response to a question regarding the excessive emphasis on obstacle systems as a first line of defence in the plains, Lt Gen S Pattabhiraman, then vice chief of the Army Staff (VCOAS), had stated:² "Any talk of mobile defence needs to be evaluated in our context based on ground realities such as the location of politically and economically important communication centres close to our western borders which cannot be

ignored. Within these constraints, mobile warfare is very much part of our war-fighting doctrine to be applied where conditions permit as part of overall strategy.”

Modern military technology (real-time surveillance combined with accurate ground-based and aerially delivered firepower including precision guided munitions – PGMs) makes it possible to deny territory by observation and fire rather than by physical presence, except against the most serious aggression. In case the ‘pivot’ or defending corps commanders adopt such a course of action, it will enable them to retain almost two-thirds of the combat potential of their infantry and mechanised forces intact as reserves in well dispersed hides for exploiting opportunities to launch offensive action into enemy territory. For this purpose, the offensive punch of pivot (holding) corps will have to be suitably beefed up, particularly in terms of mechanised assault elements. Perhaps some of these additional resources could come from, or be shared with, strike corps formations.

Strike Corps: Need to Review Structures

Pakistan’s so-called ‘low nuclear threshold’, as perceived by most Indian analysts, and the need to mass firepower rather than forces when planning to fight in a nuclear environment, prompt the need for a fresh look at the Indian concept of maintaining massive strike corps for deep thrusts into Pakistani territory. As is well known, India has three strike corps (1, 2 and 21 Corps) – one each for the Western, South-Western and Southern Commands responsible for operations on the border with Pakistan in the plains sector.

Pakistan’s Low Nuclear Threshold: It was widely reported during Operation Parakaram that Gen Padmanabhan had planned to simultaneously launch all three strike corps so as to achieve surprise and a quick decision.³ With modern intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities, the adversary can easily discern the concentration areas of the strike corps and is unlikely to have any illusions about the approximate areas where Indian strike corps are likely to strike. When a strike corps does succeed in making a deep penetration – and one or the other is bound to succeed – the stage at which Pakistan’s nuclear threshold will be crossed is a matter of analysis. If the Indian strike corps are going to be employed only to achieve small, operational or even tactical-level gains, why have three of them at all? In the coming decades, Indian military genius will lie in finding a suitable via media for launching sharp offensive punches without allowing a conflict to roll over the nuclear threshold while maintaining adequate countervailing forces.

Slow Mobilisation for Operation Parakaram: The massive size of the present strike corps makes it difficult for them to concentrate, side-step, deploy and

manoeuvre, and virtually, rules out surprise and deception. As reported by several analysts, during Operation Parakaram, the strike corps took too long to move to their concentration areas. If a fleeting opportunity is to be exploited, the strike formations must be capable of launching an offensive operation from a “cold start”. Another lesson was the hesitation of the political leadership to allow the army to launch deep offensives with the strike corps. According to the strategic community grapevine in New Delhi, the civilian leaders had serious reservations about the offensive plans presented to them by the COAS because of the impact the army’s success may have had on Pakistan’s nuclear decision-making.

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Perhaps the answer lies in commencing a major offensive across the International Boundary (IB) with a large number of complementary “shallow thrusts” over a wide front and retaining the option to upgrade these “limited offensives” to deep strikes coordinated by a full-fledged Strike Corps HQ, based on the enemy’s reactions and the overall situation at the national level. Within 72 to 96 hours of the issue of the order for full-scale mobilisation, five to six or more strike division battle groups must cross the IB directly from the line of march. These should be launching their break-in operations and crossing the “start line” even as the forward divisions of the holding or pivot corps are completing their deployment on the forward obstacles. The initial thrusts should be followed up by additional ones after evaluating the success achieved and analysing the enemy’s reactions. Only such simultaneity of operations will unhinge the enemy, break his cohesion and paralyse him into making mistakes from which he will not be able to recover.

Options for Restructuring: Despite the lessons of Operation Parakaram and the public discussion of battle groups and cold start, most serving army officers find the option of maintaining the status quo of retaining the three strike corps in their present form very attractive. The reasons are understandable but should not be acceptable. One possible option is to split the three strike corps into several division or division-plus size battle groups of the size and capabilities of Russia’s famed OMGs (operational manoeuvre groups). While one each could be allotted

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to the holding (pivot) corps for providing an offensive punch to them, the others will need to be so structured that they are capable of independent action, as directed by the Command HQ. These should be designated as theatre and Army HQ reserves. Each one will need to be specifically structured to achieve given objectives in the terrain in which it is expected to be launched and yet be flexible enough for two or more of them to fight dispersed under a Strike Corps HQ to bring to bear the combined weight of their combat power on a single objective deep inside Pakistan. Hence, at

least two of the three HQ of the present strike corps must be retained and should be capable of taking under command strike battle groups at short notice to achieve given objectives. The third Strike Corps HQ could be utilised to raise a mountain strike corps by regrouping reserve formations.

Mountain Strike Corps: A strong case can be made out for a mountain Strike Corps HQ for Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), with a strike division each pre-positioned north and south of the Pir Panjal range and capable of moving to either launch pad quickly. Such a corps, organised, equipped and trained for an operational role across the LoC with Pakistan and the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China would enhance the quality of India's conventional deterrence in the northwestern Himalayas. A dissuasive strategy need not be purely defensive. In any future border war with China, the Indian Army must resort to offensive-defence. If the fight has to be taken across the LAC on to the Tibetan plateau, the army must develop an offensive capability equivalent to the combat potential of a mountain strike corps. Even across the LoC with Pakistan, the capture of a major objective like the Haji Pir Pass will not be possible without a simultaneous offensive from the direction of Uri from the north and Poonch from the south.

In case push comes to shove and the conflict spills over from the mountains to the plains, the full combat power of the Indian Army and the Indian Air Force (IAF) must be employed in a synergistic manner to bring to battle and completely destroy the offensive combat potential of the Pakistan Army so that it is cut to size once and for all. The art of generalship will lie in achieving this aim quickly without crossing Pakistan's nuclear threshold, before the international community and the UN Security Council blow the whistle for a cease-fire. If this is not done, the next war will be as futile as the last few that India has fought.

Intervention Capabilities

Since independence, India has had to exercise its military option several times to achieve its foreign policy and national security objectives. The army was ordered to forcibly integrate Goa, Hyderabad and Junagadh into the Indian Union as part of the nation-building process. The Indian armed forces created the new nation of Bangladesh after the Pakistan Army conducted genocide in East Pakistan. India intervened in the Maldives and Sri Lanka at the behest of the governments of these countries and was ready to do so in Mauritius when the threat passed. Now analysts are discussing the emergence

of a resurgent India that will be a dominant power in Southern Asia. Some, like Bharat Verma, editor, *Indian Defence Review*, choose to go further:⁴ "... our political aim should be the dominance of Asia by 2020 as an economic power backed by a world class military." Though it will be a gradual and long drawn process, it is quite likely that a cooperative international security framework will eventually emerge from the ashes of Gulf War II. Stemming from the need for contingency planning, particularly in support of its forces deployed for United Nations (UN) peacekeeping duties and for limited power projection, India will need to raise and maintain in a permanent state of quick-reaction readiness, small expeditionary forces to participate in international coalitions sanctioned by the UN Security Council.

The aim of such operations will be to further India's national security and foreign policy objectives, to support international non-proliferation efforts, and to join the international community to act decisively against banned insurgent outfits like the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in Sri Lanka or even rogue regimes. International non-proliferation initiatives, such as the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) and the Container Security Initiative (CSI) particularly cannot succeed in the Southern Asian and Indian Ocean regions without Indian participation as a member or as a partner providing outside support. As an aspiring regional power, India will also need to consider its responsibilities towards undertaking humanitarian military interventions when these are morally justified. Other requirements that are difficult to visualise accurately today but would further India's foreign policy objectives or enhance national security interests in the future, will also justify the acquisition of expeditionary intervention capabilities. Several contingencies requiring Indian participation can be visualised.

Efforts should commence to raise a division-size rapid reaction force, of which the first air assault brigade group should be a part, by the end of the 12th Plan period, 2012-17.

The Indian security forces can break out from the present impasse in Kashmir only if the deployment of SF units is substantially enhanced and they are effectively utilised for trans-LoC operations.

The late Gen K. Sundarji, former COAS, had often spoken of converting an existing infantry division to an air assault division by about the year 2000. Though the idea was certainly not ahead of its time, the shoestring budgets of the 1990s did not allow the army to proceed to practically implement the concept. Now the time has come to translate his vision into reality. Lt Gen Vinay Shankar (Retd) has written, "Some years ago, the army had drawn up an approach paper projecting the requirement of two air-mobile divisions... This is now a definite requirement and the proposal ought to be followed up."⁵ Other analysts are also of the view that India needs to put in place a fairly expansive expeditionary capability.⁶ Besides being necessary for out-of-area contingencies, air assault capability is a significant force multiplier in conventional conflict. Despite what the peaceniks may say, substantial air assault capability is not only essential for furthering

India's national interests, it is now inescapable.

Air Assault Brigade: The present requirement is of at least one air assault brigade group with integral helilift capability for offensive employment on India's periphery. This capability must be in place by the end of the 11th Plan period, 2007-12. This brigade should be capable of short-notice deployment in India's extended neighbourhood by air and sea. Comprising three specially trained air assault battalions, integral firepower component and combat service support and logistics support units, the brigade group should be based on the MI-17 equivalent transport helicopters. It should have the guaranteed firepower and support of two to three flights of attack and reconnaissance helicopters. The air assault brigade group should be armed, equipped and trained to secure threatened islands, seize an airhead and capture a value objective in depth such as a bridge that is critical to furthering operations in depth. It should also be equipped and trained to operate as part of international coalition forces for speedy military interventions. To make it effective, it will have to be provided air and sealift capability and a high volume of close air support till its deployment area comes within reach of the artillery component of ground forces. Since the raising of such a potent brigade group will be a highly expensive proposition, its components will need to be very carefully structured to get value for money. It must be emphasised that a brigade group of this nature will

provide immense strategic reach and flexibility to military planners and the Cabinet Committee on Security in the prevailing era of strategic uncertainty.

Rapid Reaction Division (RRD): Simultaneously, efforts should commence to raise a division-size rapid reaction force, of which the first air assault brigade group should be a part, by the end of the 12th Plan period, 2012-17. The second brigade group of the Rapid Reaction Division (RRD) should have amphibious capability with the necessary transportation assets being acquired and held by the Indian Navy, including landing and logistics ships. The brigade group in Southern Command that is designated as an amphibious brigade at present, but without adequate amphibious capabilities, could be suitably upgraded. The amphibious brigade should be self-contained for 30 days of sustained intervention operations. The third brigade of the RRD should be lightly equipped for offensive and defensive employment in the plains and mountains as well as jungle and desert terrain. All the brigade groups and their ancillary support elements should be capable of transportation by land, sea and air.

With the exception of the amphibious brigade, the division should be logistically self-contained for an initial deployment period of 15 to 20 days with limited daily replenishment. The infrastructure for such a division, especially strategic airlift, attack helicopters, helilift and landing ship capability, will entail heavy capital expenditure to establish and fairly large recurring costs to maintain. However, it is an inescapable requirement and funds will need to be found for such a force by innovative management of the defence budget and additional budgetary support. The second RRD should be raised over the 13th and 14th Defence Plans by about 2027 when India's responsibilities would have grown considerably. Unless planning for the creation of such capabilities begins now, the formations will not be available when these are required to be employed.

The only airborne force projection capability that India has at present is that of the independent parachute brigade. Since the organisational structure of this brigade is more suitable for conventional operations, this brigade should be retained as an Army HQ reserve for strategic employment behind enemy lines to further the operations of ground forces that are expected to link up with it in an early timeframe. However, when necessary, the brigade could be allotted to the RRD for short durations to carry out specific tasks.

Enhanced Special Forces (SF) Capabilities

The recent US-led campaign in Iraq vividly highlighted the wide range of employment possibilities that the special forces (SF) provide to a theatre

commander. The Indian Army's SF battalions have several notable achievements to their credit during both conventional operations and sub-conventional conflicts. However, their numbers, capabilities, organisational and ancillary support structures, the quality of their leadership and the training standards of their personnel need to be substantially enhanced for their optimal exploitation in support of current and future national security objectives.

India's counter-proxy war campaign in Jammu and Kashmir has reached the stage of strategic stalemate. The Indian security forces can break out from the present impasse in Kashmir only if the deployment of SF units is substantially enhanced and they are effectively utilised for trans-LoC operations. They must be employed on a regular basis to raid known Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) terrorist training camps and launch pads for infiltration. They should be utilised to launch clandestine attacks to destroy logistics installations and infrastructure in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK) such as ammunition and FOL (fuel, oil and lubricants) dumps, bridges, radio-relay communications towers and Battalion and Brigade Headquarters. Besides continuous artillery shelling that has the attendant disadvantage of causing collateral damage to civilian life and property, covert trans-LoC employment of SF provides the only viable option to hurt the Pakistan Army personnel and ultimately break their will to fight a senseless limited war. Such hit-and-run attacks in the rear areas in POK will substantially degrade the Pakistan Army's potential to sustain a long drawn out campaign to infiltrate trained terrorists into Kashmir. The objective should be to raise Pakistan's cost of waging a proxy war against India.

Gulf War II is a good pointer to the type of role that should be assigned to the SF in conventional operations. While strategic reconnaissance will remain a primary responsibility, the SF must be employed more aggressively to cause disruption behind enemy lines, to seize an airhead or a bridgehead across an obstacle in depth through heli-landings and to establish a forward operating base for attack helicopters during break-out operations with armoured divisions. They are the force that is best equipped to destroy the enemy's nuclear warhead storage sites for battlefield nuclear weapons, missile bases, rocket launcher hides, medium guns, tank transporter vehicles in harbours and waiting areas, communications nodes, logistics installations and headquarters, among other such high value targets. In the mountains, the employment of SF units has to be more nuanced. During the 1999 Kargil conflict, some of them were employed as super-infantry to launch attacks that were foredoomed to failure and were later criticised for not succeeding. Such temptations to hasten the speed and tempo of operations must be curbed.

The exact number of SF units required for future operations can be assessed only after a holistic appraisal of India's national security objectives and the military strategy necessary to achieve those objectives. Though the National Security Advisory Board (NSAB) had carried out a Strategic Defence Review, its recommendations have not been made public. The SF battalions that India has at present (1 SF, 2 SF, 9 SF, 10 SF and 21 SF) are inadequate for future responsibilities and more SF battalions need to be raised. Bharat Karnad has consistently recommended a 10,000 strong SF component, "rising to perhaps division strength in due course."⁷ Only the most ill informed would quibble with this number. However, calls for the raising of a Special Forces Command on the US pattern are still premature as the Indian armed forces

are light years away from graduating to the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) system with integrated Theatre Commands. At the same time, the ad hoc raising of SF units by various security forces by obtaining government sanction on a case-by-case basis must cease forthwith as such accretions lack synergy and are a national waste.

It needs to be appreciated by India's policy planners that in many situations when war has not yet commenced and it is not possible to employ ground forces overtly, special forces can be launched covertly to achieve important military objectives with inherent deniability. In Kandahar-type situations, they provide the only viable military option. However, they can act with assurance only if they have been well organised and well trained for the multifarious tasks that they may be called upon to perform.

Not much has been done so far because of the meagre resources that are allotted on the capital account for modernisation, the large sums out of these that remain unspent year after year due to bureaucratic red tape and the inability of the government to appoint a Chief of Defence Staff.

Hi-tech Network-centric Force

Technological Deficiencies: The Kargil conflict in 1999 highlighted the Indian Army's technological deficiencies like no amount of shouting from the rooftops could have done. Though the conflict was limited to a small high-altitude area between Zoji La and Chorbat La Passes in Kargil district, with only one brigade affected by the initial intrusions and two divisions employed to evict the aggressors,

Implementation of the upgradation to a networked force will need to be skilfully orchestrated and monitored by a zealous technology-savvy general who will have to be resolute, even ruthless, in implementation, as well as capable of understanding the problems and limitations of men in the field and adept in recommending mid-course corrections.

it exposed the army's almost primitive intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities, low command, control, communication, intelligence, information (C4I2) and electronic warfare capacity and large-scale equipment and ammunition shortages. Some of these are listed at the Ministry of Defence (MoD) website:⁸ "Certain voids such as in surveillance capability, weapon locating radars, integral helicopter lift capability, communications and firepower for fighting in mountainous terrain, high altitude unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), communication interception equipment, satellite imagery capability of world standards, besides development of skills in encryption and decryption, were identified during the Kargil conflict. Action is well underway to fill these voids."

Despite the claim that action is underway, not much has been done so far because of the meagre resources that are allotted on the capital account for

modernisation, the large sums out of these that remain unspent year after year due to bureaucratic red tape and the inability of the government to appoint a CDS who is empowered to decide on inter-Service priorities for the acquisition of weapons and equipment so that the modernisation of all of them proceeds in a holistic and planned manner.

Evaluating modernisation and restructuring options is always an ongoing exercise at Army HQ. In response to a question on macro-level restructuring options for offensive operations, Lt Gen S Pattabhiraman, then VCOAS, stated:⁹ "It would suffice to say that various options for restructuring of field forces for offensive operations are considered from time-to-time depending upon the prevailing and future threat scenarios, capabilities of our perceived adversaries and operational doctrine. The focus of restructuring in future is going to be on highly mobile field formations equipped with good surveillance, firepower and communications capable of operating under a nuclear backdrop. The compulsions brought on by the

ongoing RMA and transformations the world over are being factored into the Long Term Perspective Plan currently under formulation.”

Implementation of the upgradation to a networked force will need to be skilfully orchestrated and monitored by a zealous technology-savvy general who will have to be resolute, even ruthless, in implementation as well as capable of understanding the problems and limitations of men in the field and adept in recommending mid-course corrections. There will be many slippages, time overruns and other challenges along the way; however, given funding and political support, the Indian Army can soon be on its way to becoming a modern, future-ready force by 2015-20.

Looking Ahead

It has become somewhat of a 21st century cliché to advocate that modern armed forces should be capability-based and not threat-based as threats are becoming increasingly hard to predict. Some threats remain predictable and forces must be structured accordingly. However, clearly, the army must move inexorably towards becoming “light, lethal and wired” and capable of sustained military operations in the battlefield milieu that is likely to obtain on tomorrow’s battlefields. The ideas proffered here are only initial thoughts and a great deal of analysis will be necessary to think through various issues before substantive recommendations can be made to the government. While these might appear to provide at least some answers, they also have a downside and an element of risk integral to them.

Restructuring and modernising the Indian Army will require political courage, military astuteness, a non-parochial approach and a singularity of purpose. Only a future-ready army can march into the future with confidence, well prepared to tackle the new challenges looming over the horizon. The Government of India must appoint a bipartisan National Military Commission under the Constitution to go into the whole gamut of restructuring and modernisation. The commission should comprise eminent political leaders across the entire political spectrum, retired soldiers, civilian administrators, diplomats and scholars who are capable of dispassionate reasoning and are familiar with the current military discourse. It should recommend a national security strategy and a military strategy. The commission should be given no more than six months to complete its work so that the restructuring exercise can begin early and be completed by 2020-25.

The nation must get a modern force that can fight and win India’s future battles with the least number of casualties through surgical strikes. It should be a force capable of carrying the battle into enemy territory. It is the time the Panipat

bogey is laid to rest. The aim should be to ensure peace through conventional deterrence for economic development to proceed uninterrupted so that India can achieve all round prosperity and join the ranks of the world's developed nations. Ideally, the Indian Army should be so structured that its deterrent capability prevents wars from breaking out at all. Maj Gen J. F. C. "Boney" Fuller had said a hundred years ago, "The object of war is peace, not victory." It may seem a hollow prescription in today's world but, given the necessary support, motivation and political will, the Indian Army can prove that there is truth in Boney Fuller's musings.

Finally, the Indian Army of the future must be light, lethal and wired; ready to fight and win India's future wars jointly with the navy and the air force over the full spectrum of conflict, from sub-conventional conflict and operations other than war to all out war, conventional and nuclear; to ensure regional stability and internal security for a peaceful environment for national prosperity.

Notes

1. Lt Gen V. K. Kapoor, "Indian Army's Dilemma: The Changing Face of Land Warfare and its Impact on Force Structuring", *SP's Land Forces*, Vol. 10, No. 10, 2005.
2. Interview with the author.
3. Among others, see Pravin Sawhney, "Phony War", *Pioneer*, December 19, 2002.
4. Bharat Verma, "Contours of a Grand Strategy", *Indian Defence Review*, October-December 2003, p. 7.
5. Lt Gen Vinay Shankar (Retd), "The Army-2020", *Indian Defence Review*, October-December 2003, p. 76.
6. "At the very least, a genuine expeditionary force would have to comprise two division equivalent forces, increasing over time to 5-6 division equivalent for distant employment..." Bharat Karnad, "Firming up the Critical Capability Triad: Strategic Muscle, Sub-conventional Punch and IT-enabled Network-centricity and Electro-magnetic Warfare Clout," in Vijay Oberoi, ed., *Army 2020: Shape, Size, Structure and General Doctrine for Emerging Challenges* (New Delhi: KW Publishers Pvt Ltd, 2005), p. 247.
7. More recently, Bharat Karnad has written that the SF strength should be two divisions eventually. "To Pack a Good Wallop", *The Week*, December 28, 2003, Pp. 33. He also recommends the establishment of a Special Forces Command at Army HQ "to control them (SF) and plan and direct them in the field." Karnad, op. cit.
8. "National Security Environment: An Overview", Ministry of Defence website, www.mod.nic.in.
9. Interview with the author.

