



RESEARCH PAPER

Indian Military's Buildup and its Impact on Pakistan: An Overview

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ABSTRACT

The Indian military modernization is serious threat to South Asian security in general and particularly Pakistan. The Indian military is continuously bringing shift in her strategic thinking and introducing new doctrines. Which compel India to fill the void in her overall military capabilities because at the moment Pakistan is coming up with adequate answers to the Indian doctrinal transformation. The nuclear factor reduced the likelihood of large scale war and forced the Indian political and military leadership to find gap between the nuclear and conventional capabilities of Pakistan. This is the reason that India is transforming her military doctrines and from total war to limited war. In the changing strategic scenario, the Indian military is aiming at quick and swift operations under the nuclear overhang. To achieve her stated objectives, it needs an agile force which is integrated with modern Network Centric Warfare and Electronic Warfare capabilities. The Indian military is refurbishing her tri services with advance weaponry to enhance the operational readiness of her forces against emerging threats in the region. The Indian Army, Air Force and Navy is phasing out old weapons and replacing it with modern arsenal with the help of Russia, America, EU and Israel. Such a development would create security dilemma in South Asia vis-à-vis Pakistan. Pakistan is trying to overcome this emerging threat with her indigenous capabilities but due to fragile economy it may not achieve arithmetic arms race against India. To deter India from any limited conventional attack Pakistan would definitely rely on her tactical nuclear weapons to offset the Indian conventional superiority. This article would focus on the Indian military's rapid doctrinal transformation and military modernization and how it creates conventional asymmetry in South Asia and force Pakistan to go for conventional or nuclear countermeasures to maintain balance of terror to deter India from any misadventure.

Keywords: Buildup, Indian Army, Pakistan

Introduction

Indian military's strategic thinking since 1947 has been focused against Pakistan. Especially after 1962 war with china, India realized that it is better to have peace with china and focused against Pakistan. Apart from direct hostilities both states are also engaged in proxy war against each other. The continued hostilities created serious problems for both states and plunged the region into unending arms race, instability and turmoil. The Indian

military is spending huge amount of money on the purchase of new weapon and equipment to fill the gaps in its overall military capabilities and operationalize its aggressive doctrines against Pakistan. The concept of total war has been washed-out after the induction of nuclear weapons in South Asia. The Indian military's mobilization in 2001-02 after a terrorist attack on its parliament proved to be ineffective because of the slow mobilization and loss of the element of surprise.

Indian military brought a huge strategic shift and introduce Sunderji doctrine in 1980s to cut Pakistan into two, but General Zia's nuclear signaling prevented any large-scale conventional war against Pakistan. After overt nuclearization, Kargil conflict 1999 and attack on the Indian parliament forced India to mobilize 800,000 troops on the border with Pakistan but because of nuclear deterrence India could not attack Pakistan. Then a thinking emerged in 2004 to carry out limited strikes to teach Pakistan lesson or give a punishing under nuclear umbrella in case of any terrorist attack on the Indian soil, but Pakistan counter measures in the shape of tactical nuclear weapons prevented India to operationalize the cold start doctrine. Later in 2012 India came up with the idea of sub-conventional warfare in their air force doctrine in which they declare that Indian air force can carry out surgical strikes against non-state actors across the LOC just on like the pattern of US which they did in Abbottabad so that was the idea which they started practicing in their military exercises. India reiterated again on the idea of surgical strikes openly in their joint arm forces doctrine of 2017. In this doctrine again, India focused on surgical strikes in case of any alleged terrorist attack inside India or Indian held Kashmir. Later in 2018 India came up with the idea of land warfare doctrine of 2018 in which they again talked about punitive strikes against any terrorist attack inside India.

All these doctrines and strategies by the Indian military suggests that they are looking room for a limited, short and intense conflict with Pakistan, but to operationalize such an ambitious doctrines Indian military would have to revamp its overall war fighting capabilities. In future India would add latest Main Battle Tanks- (MBTs), fifth generation aircraft, gunship helicopters, long range air defense systems, surveillance and reconnaissance aircraft, advanced artillery, weapon locating radars and battle field surveillance radars, night vision capabilities not only in aircraft, helicopters, tanks but also in its infantry soldiers. With all these capabilities the Indian military would be able to operationalize its aggressive doctrines against Pakistan. To overcome its deficiencies Indian government under BJP launched a made in India campaign. In which Indian government would carry out contracts with other countries to manufacture military hardware in India, share technology and expertise. In this way India's own defense industry would face uplift and overcome its paucities in its overall military capabilities.

An Analysis of the Indian Military Capabilities

India desires to become a major power in the world because of its growing economy, huge population/man power and military muscle (McKercher, 2012). The Indian military is graded as the largest force in south Asia and 3rd largest in the world. The strength of the Indian military is close to 1,346,000 (IISS, 2015). In which the army is the biggest organ with 1,150,900 men, the Indian Air force- (IAF) and its Navy are second and third in line at 127,200 and 58,350 respectively. India aims to become a global power to maintain strategic stability with arch rivals China and Pakistan. From 2008 to 2017, India has spent about 100

billion dollars on buying new weapons and system. Moreover, it has raised its defense budget to 52 billion dollars in 2018 which is about 7% raise from the previous fiscal year. The Indian military modernization and its strategy has been focused on Pakistan since 1947 because of the border proximity and many unresolved issues (Tellis, 2012).

This is the motive behind massive funding for transformation in its overall war fighting capabilities. Over the period Indian military not only increased its defense budget but also increased its defense spending, as per estimates Indian military's weapons related imports from 2004 to 2015 intensified by 111% which accounted for about 15% of the global arms purchases in which main suppliers were Russia (75%), USA (12%) and Israel (7%). But between 2009 to 2013 and 2014 to 2018 it decreased by 24% just because of the delay in deliveries of arms produced under license from foreign suppliers which accounted for about 9.5% of the global arms purchases in which Russia accounted 58% during 2014 to 2018 but USA and Israel increased their arms export to 15% and 11% respectively (Pieter d. Wezeman, Siemon T. Wezeman, 2014). The Indian military is in close defense collaboration with major powers America, Russia, France and Israel to revamp its overall military might.

The Refurbishment of the Indian Army

The Indian government has launched ambitious programs to refurbish its army and bring them at par with modern forces of the world. To incorporate modern technology in its infantry divisions the Indian government is working on two projects. First, The Battlefield Management System and second, arming the Infantry with better offensive and defensive gear. These projects would help Indian army to overcome its operational weaknesses (Programmes at a glance, 2014). Moreover, the backbone of the Indian army is T-90-Tank. India is in contract with Russia for the supply of T-90 Main Battle Tanks-(MBTs). Currently Indian army operate 18 regiments of the T-90 Tanks, (Programmes at a glance, 2014) and it is expected that by 2020 thirty-five regiments of the T-90 MBTs would be operational and mainly deployed against Pakistan (T-72BU / T-90, 2017). The T-90 would add offensive strike in the Indian army and play a vital role in any conflict in future with Pakistan.

The Indian army has inducted modern artillery guns to revamp its firepower against Pakistan at LoC and international border. The US made M777A2 LW155 ultralight howitzer artillery was added under a deal worth \$737 million (Chabba, 2016). Under the contract the US firm in collaboration with Mahindra Defense Systems would manufacture 120 howitzers and remaining artillery guns would be transferred by America in three years (Chabba, 2016). This gun has range of 30km (Chabba, 2016). Which may increase the outreach and firepower of the Indian Artillery against Pakistan. India is also manufacturing indigenous artillery guns.

The Dhanush 155mm/ 45 Calibre Artillery System has been developed by the Indian defense industries (Singh, 2016). The Indian army would induct about 114- guns initially, it would provide them with the ability to take out targets at 38km range (Singh, 2016). The Dhanush Artillery is a long-range weapon and it would help India to carry out strikes deep inside Pakistan and across Line of Control. The Indian military is working on the advance towed artillery gun system- (ATAGS) with 155 mm / 52 Cal features (Singh, 2016). This project was started in 2013 to be operational by 2019 (Singh, 2016). These guns would

provide Indian army with capacity to carry out strikes at long distance with precision strike and greater firepower.

The Transformation Process in the Indian Air Force

The Indian Air Force is the fourth largest in the world with 170,000 personnel. It operates from 60 airbases in India (Indian Air Force, 2017). The current IAF squadrons' strength is close to 33 but to operationalize its aggressive doctrines it must have more than 42 squadrons to control air space and maintain hegemony in the region (400 more fighter jets, 2016). India would take another 15 years to get 42 squadrons (Chopra, 2017). The IAF has plans to add over 400 aircraft in future to replace aging fleet (Chopra, 2017) The future IAF would be composed of upgraded Russian SU-30 MKI and advanced fifth generation French Rafale aircraft. The induction of these aircraft would help India to overcome deficiencies in its air force, improve coordination with ground forces and add lethal fire power against Pakistan. The SU-30 MKI is an air superiority aircraft, the IAF currently operates more than 200 of such aircraft and 53 more will be added in next few years (Chopra, 2017).

The SU-30 MKI is equipped with advance features, greater firepower and it can carry BraMos cruise missile. This aircraft has a range of about 3,000 km but could be enhanced to 8000 km with refueling. The IAF is also in negotiations with their Russian counterparts to upgrade Sukhoi-30 aircraft with fifth generation attributes (Su-30MKI, 2020). The induction and upgradation of Russian aircraft would augment IAF's ability to strike deep inside Pakistan and improve its outreach. The Indian government is also in deal with the French counterparts for the purchase of 36 Rafale aircraft worth \$8.7 billion. India would get these aircraft in next six years. The Rafale aircraft is also considered to be the air superiority aircraft. It can carry nuclear or non-nuclear warheads at a range of about 1,850km (Dassault Rafale, 2017). The purchase and upgradation of aircraft would uplift IAF and fill its operational gaps. The IAF would emerge as a perfect force in the region challenging the conventional balance vis-à-vis Pakistan and putting the regional security at risk.

The Indian Naval Modernization: Hegemony at Seas

The Indian government has also poured billions of dollars to revamp its maritime warfighting capabilities. Recently the incumbent government in India has allotted \$8 billion to refurbish its Navy (Pauline Eadie, 2016). Currently the Indian navy possess about 171 naval vessels, 250 aircraft and 16 submarines to guard its maritime interests. The Indian navy has planned to get 3- aircraft carriers by 2022 (Naval Technology, 2020). India has also acquired nuclear submarine from Russia and in coming years it has planned to get five more such submarines. It would boost India's maritime outreach and firepower against Pakistan (Pant, 2012). India is also in deal with the French government for the supply of highly sophisticated conventional Scorpene submarines worth \$3.5 billion (India investigating , 2016).

The Indian navy in addition has acquired long range surveillance and reconnaissance aircraft P8-I, from the US under a deal of \$2.1 billion (Indian Navy to get, 2018). This aircraft is equipped with modern features which includes Harpoon Block-II missiles, MK-54 lightweight torpedoes, rockets and depth charges (Indian Navy to get, 2018). The P-8-I has

the capability to spot inbound threats at long distance and provide ample time for countermeasures. The P8-I can cruise at a speed of about 907 km per hour to carry out operations at 1,200 nautical miles (Indian Navy to get, 2018). These acquisitions would expand Indian navy's maritime surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities and would challenge Pakistan's maritime interests in the Indian Ocean as well.

The Advancement in Transportation and Logistics in the Indian Military

The transportation and logistics play vital role in country's war fighting capabilities. To operationalize its aggressive military doctrines India must acquire quick, swift and long-range transportation and logistics capabilities. This is the reason that India carried out deals with the US to acquire modern transport aircraft to replace aging Russian logistics aircraft. India purchased advanced C-130J Hercules transport aircraft from American defense companies (Stephen P. Cohen, Sunil Dasgupta, 2009). India acquired five such aircraft and six more will be inducted soon (India To Get, 2016). The C-130 Hercules is a very sophisticated aircraft equipped with advance features and has ability to operate in harsh weather conditions (C-130J Super Hercules, 2017).

The C-130 can carry more than 20 thousand kg of logistics at speed of 410mph at 22,000 feet with a maximum range of about 1,956 miles (Kasper, 2015). The acquisition of these logistics aircraft would enhance the Indian military's transportation and logistics capabilities and help India to operationalize its doctrines against Pakistan. Another important induction in this regard was the C-17 Globemaster-III, both states carried out a deal for the transfer of this highly sophisticated transport aircraft (Pant, Handbook of Indian Defence Policy: Themes, Structures and Doctrines, 2016), The deal worth \$4.1 billion for ten C-17 Globemaster aircraft (India plans to acquire, 2015). This transport and logistics aircraft can carry eighty tons of logistics along with 150 fully packed soldiers (Chaturvedi, 2013). The induction of this aircraft would beef up Indian military's logistical and transportation capabilities and help India to overcome the gaps in their overall capabilities of war fighting.

The Indian government has also given a nod for the 15- Chinook heavy lift helicopters worth \$833 million for its armed forces. These are highly advanced transport and logistics helicopters and could be used for many purposes. It could be utilized for rescue operations, Special Forces missions, quick transportation of weapon, equipment and men during conflict (Singh, Shishir Gupta and Rahul, 2015). All these attributes are essential for intense limited conflicts which India desires under her military doctrines. It would provide the Indian military capacity and outreach to carry out military operations inside enemy territory with regular supplies of weapon, men and equipment.

The Indian military is striving to operationalize its CSD and LWD against Pakistan, to bring into practice these doctrines India would require highly sophisticated Apache Attack Helicopter to carry out the operations of Special Forces or surgical strikes. The Apache would provide them with cover and lethal fire power to its advancing ground forces. India is in deal with the US for the supply of 22 apache helicopters worth of \$2.5 billion (India, US sign, 2020). This helicopter would provide them with essential firepower and maneuverability to operationalize CSD and LWD against Pakistan.

The Electronic and Network Centric Warfare capabilities

The Indian military inducted Long Range Reconnaissance and Observation System- (LORROS) from Israel in 2003 to keep vigilance on border with Pakistan and check infiltration on LoC. The LORROS can track its targets in day and night which enables the Indian army to keep 24/7 check on the border. The system is equipped with modern technology, which enables to detect targets at about 13km to 16km range (Singh R. , 2004). The LORROS would help India to overcome its operational weaknesses in recon and observation field. Another major step of Indian Military is the acquisition of network centric warfare capabilities was taken in 2005 during Vajra Shakti exercise in which they practiced Force Multiplication Command Post- (FMCP). The purpose was to merge the flow of information from aircraft, drones, surveillance aircraft and radars to help the field commander to take swift action. After 2005 the Indian military practiced the NCW capabilities in almost every military exercise to incorporate modern weapon system in its forces and overcome its operational weaknesses in overall war-fighting machinery. The process is ongoing to acquire network centric and electronic warfare capabilities. To achieve these capabilities Indian DRDO has introduced Battlefield Surveillance Radars- (BFSR) to detect enemy movement at a short range. The BFSR has the capability to spot, track, and categorize objects like sneaking men, a group, combat vehicles, and helicopters (Battle Field Surveillance Radar, 2017). These electronic warfare capabilities are prerequisite for the operationalization of its aggressive doctrines like CSD and LWD, surgical strikes or proactive military operations and punitive strikes.

Another major development towards NCW and EW capabilities is the acquisition of Weapon Locating Radar- (WLR), which is crucial to identify the range, position and then destroy the enemy artillery, mortar and short-range missile sites. India successfully deployed four such radars close to the LoC to detect Pakistan's artillery position. Due to which India claims that Pakistan reduced artillery fire. This WLR has range of about 50km to mechanically spot precise location of the adversary's mortar, shells, and short-range rocket sites (Army gets weapon, 2018). The Indian military deployed these systems close to its border with Pakistan, which helped them to detect and target Pakistan's artillery positions.

Previously the Indian military was dependent on other countries for Airborne Early Warning and Control System- (AeW&CS) but in 2017, India introduced locally built AeW&CS. This surveillance aircraft has the capacity to detect aerial threats (Kumar, 2017). Such capabilities would put Pakistan's security at risk. The essential part of information gathering about enemy movement and location are the surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities. In this regard the Indian military is equipped with Israeli made UAVs to keep constant check on Pakistan's deployment and alleged infiltrators from Pakistan side of Kashmir (Miglani, 2015).

The Indian military in this regard acquired ten highly advanced Israeli made Heron-TP UAVs under a deal of about \$400 million. The Heron TP is a long-range UAV with endurance time up to 45 hours (Miglani, 2015). These UAVs would enhance Indian military's recon and targeting capabilities deep inside Pakistan. The Indian military has also acquired radar destroyer harpy missiles from Israel. These missiles target radars of the enemy and cripple enemy's detection capabilities (Eric Heginbotham, George J. Gilboy, 2012). It has a

potent range of about 500km and could be launched from multiple launch pads. Such inductions in the Indian military are serious threat for the security of Pakistan. The Indian military have also acquired the Harop Missile from Israel which is also considered as a lethal weapon against enemy command and control centers, missile sites and strategic assets. The Harop missile has range of about 1,000km, and can carry weapon of 15kg, which makes it a lethal weapon against enemy. The Indian military have also made huge strides in the field of spy satellite. In collaboration with Israel, the Indian military launched Risaat-II Spy satellite to keep constant check on Pakistan's military installations, strategic sites, deployment and movement of troops close to the border.

Conclusion

India is modernizing its military at a rapid pace which is going to create threats for the strategic stability of the region. The conventional deterrence would become more fragile between Pakistan and India because of the huge asymmetry. Ultimately to counter Indian aggressive doctrines and massive military modernization, Pakistan would rely on its nuclear arsenal. Pakistan must maintain credible conventional deterrence without jumping in the quagmire of arms race in the region. Pakistan must develop and enhance its indigenous defense industry and bring qualitative as well as quantitative improvement in its MBTs, aircraft, light and heavy weaponry, air defense system to overcome conventional gaps vis-à-vis India. Pakistan must carry out regular exercises and make its forces ready to counter any misadventure by India under CSD and LWD, proactive military operations/surgical strikes and punitive strikes. Moreover, Pakistan must also boost its strategic partnership with China to improve its long-range air defense capabilities, missile accuracy and range, its night vision capabilities in the army and regular exercises to benefit from the Chinese expertise in the modern warfare. The aim of the Indian Military modernization is to fill the gaps and to operationalize aggressive military doctrines against Pakistan but such thinking is aggressive and would create security dilemma in the region putting deterrence stability at risk. India must show restraint and try to improve its ties with Pakistan for long term peace and stability.

This is the overview of Indian strategic thinking which tells us and relate it to the recent attack or aggression by the Indian military. After Pulwama attack the Indian military created a war hysteria and their media also supported the BJP government and created hype in the public and the public ultimately demanded action. Since Modi is going to contest election in 2019 so it would have been necessary for Modi to do something tough against Pakistan and show that he is a tough leader and he can be the suitable choice for the Indian voters and let the Indian know that he is the person and that the Indian defense is in safe hands. So, with that aim they carried out failed surgical strikes against Pakistan in which their migs entered Pakistan and dropped their pay loads in the jungles and then went back after Pakistan's adequate response. It was the breach of sovereignty of Pakistan and Pakistan civil and military leadership already reiterated that if India's carries out any aggressive moves on the LOC, Pakistan is going to retaliate and give India surprise. Pakistan air force in response dropped six bombs inside Indian Territory and later shot down two Indian aircrafts which enforced Pakistan's strategic dominance in the region vis-a-vis India. This shows that the Pakistan conventional capabilities are almost equal to the Indian military capabilities and Pakistan can give more than equal response to the Indian military cannot

breach Pakistan's airspace and they also tried to check Pakistan's defense at maritime domain in which Pakistan also detected their submarine. This is how we can conclude that because of the Pakistan's conventional capabilities, Indian military has been deterred from any aggressive moves and it is difficult for them to escalate the situation now. If they try to breach Pakistan's territory again, Pakistan will give them strong response and teach them a lesson which they can never forget.

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