

Doctrinal Reawakening of the Indian Armed Forces

Air Commodore Tariq M. Ashraf, Pakistan Air Force

INDIAN AND PAKISTAN (Indo/Pak) military doctrines have had distinctive defensive undertones since the two countries gained independence from the British in 1947. Notwithstanding the three wars and several near wars the two countries have engaged in as independent nations, there has been no significant shift in respective military and warfighting doctrines until recently. In the last year, events in the region and elsewhere have highlighted what the two countries need in order to modify existing doctrine.

Some regional events that triggered the review of military doctrine include the Indian subcontinent's nuclearization and how it affects the nature of war in the region and the roles of Indo/Pak military services; lessons from the 1999 Kargil crisis and the possibility of waging limited conventional warfare under a nuclear umbrella; and the 2001 to 2002 period of massive military mobilization and posturing referred to as Operation Parakaram.

Global events affecting doctrinal thinking in Indo/Pak militaries include America's Global War on Terrorism, manifested in the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, and U.S. President George W. Bush's doctrine of preemption.

These events have had so pronounced an effect in the last year, the Pakistan Air Force (PAF), the Indian Army, and the Indian Navy (IN) have published new doctrinal documents and manuals or modified editions of existing ones. This spurt of doctrinal changes and revisions comes at a time when India and Pakistan have declared their intent to enter into a composite dialogue.

Referring to the timing of the announcement of the Indian Army's new "Cold Start" doctrine, military columnist Sultan Hali notes, "The timing of this 'disclosure' of India's new war doctrine is of interest. Why have India's top military commanders returned to their drawing board to work on this

new war doctrine—the Cold Start strategy—while a highly hyped peace process is underway?"¹

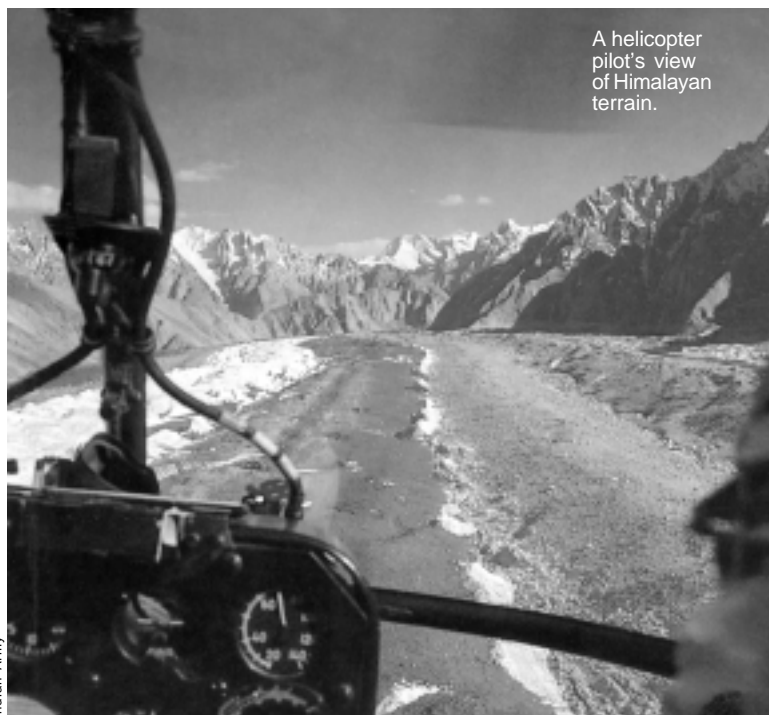
South Asia's Nuclearization

The nuclear genie emerged from the lamp in South Asia in 1998. The availability of a nuclear capability has altered the nature of war in the region and the role of the three military services in their respective realms of warfare.

India and Pakistan nuclearized their air forces first. Attack aircraft capable of being configured with nuclear weapons emerged as the first nuclear-delivery platforms for both countries. This ushered the Indian Air Force (IAF) and the PAF into the lime-light of the strategic military equation and reduced the strategic significance of Indian and Pakistani armies and navies.

Worried that the Air Force might lay claim to a lion's share of the strategic military expansion, the Army and Navy campaigned for strategic roles—the Army by laying claim to the surface-to-surface ballistic missile force, the Navy by harping on the sea-based dimension of the nuclear deterrence triad. Indo/Pak armies garnered strategic roles by gaining control of the nuclear-tipped, surface-to-surface missiles (SSMs), while their navies are still endeavoring to develop a nuclear capability to justify their strategic role.

Nuclearization shifted the objective of war from territorial occupation to destruction operations because annexation of sizeable territory was considered much more likely to violate the other side's nuclear threshold than controlled destruction of an adversary's military and economic potential. This transformation reduced the significance of the larger Indo/Pak armies and enhanced the importance of the air forces because they were more suitably equipped and configured for effective destruction campaigns. Strategic affairs analyst Subhash Kapila



Indian Army

A helicopter pilot's view of Himalayan terrain.

says India's strategic military objectives should "shift from capturing bits of Pakistan territory in small-scale, multiple offensives to be used as bargaining chips after the cease fire and focus on the destruction of the Pakistani Army and its military machine without much collateral damage to Pakistani civilians."² The nuclearization of South Asia has precipitated a serious review of Indo/Pak military doctrines, not only altering the manner in which future military conflicts will be fought but, also, the relative balance of power of the three military services.

The 1999 Kargil Conflict

Occurring barely a year after the South Asian subcontinent's nuclearization, the 1999 Kargil conflict was the moment when India and Pakistan came the closest to an all-out conventional war that could have developed into a nuclear exchange.³

No military operation of significance can or should be undertaken without adequate precommencement coordination with all agencies likely to be involved in operations.⁴ This is particularly true for Pakistan where a lack of coordination between political leaders and military elites caused a certain degree of discord, especially after U.S. President Bill Clinton coerced or cajoled Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif into declaring a unilateral withdrawal of forces from the area against the desires of Sharif's military and without really taking the military into confidence.

During any military operation, one should expect

the maximum, not the minimum, possible reaction from the enemy and build a suitable response into the plan itself to permit operational flexibility. In an environment where adversaries have access to nuclear weapons, one should avoid the active involvement of air forces, especially in offensive roles. This is a step of immense escalatory dimension, which could well escalate the conflict to a higher level. Neither India nor Pakistan significantly employed their air forces during the conflict, primarily because of apprehensions about the conflict escalating into an all-out war.

Although the element of surprise can lead to extremely favorable initial results, especially in an environment as asymmetric as Kargil, the advantages accrued because of surprise are lost immediately after

the outbreak of hostilities and could precipitate an overreaction on the part of the adversary. In regions as remote and inaccessible as Kargil, logistic sustenance through an efficient stocking and resupply system is critical because of the inherent difficulties of transportation.

Even in a confrontation between two nuclear-capable militaries, some space is available for adversaries to indulge in limited conflict short of all-out war. When embroiled in a limited conflict, antagonists must exercise great military restraint to preclude escalation. The exercise of such restraint by both India and Pakistan was fairly obvious throughout the conflict.⁵

When contemplating a limited conflict under a nuclear umbrella, the military planner must remember that even a tactical offensive that promises strategic dividends could cause the adversary to overreact.⁶ The lack of a real-time, year-round surveillance capability to monitor enemy activities near the border could lead to being surprised, especially in South Asia where Pakistan and India share a long, contiguous border.

The possibility of achieving surprise requires a high state of military alertness and readiness and the ready availability of adequate airlift potential to rapidly bring forces to bear on the enemy in the theater of operations. This requirement could dictate forward positioning of important combat elements even during peacetime. The military planner must

consider their locations' proximity to expected theaters of military operations and communications links with the area of interest.

Because of the inaccessibility and remoteness of the icy wastelands of Siachen and the snow-covered Himalayan, Karakoram, and Hindukush mountain ranges, lines of communications extending into these areas become targets that assume strategic significance. Even the destruction or denial of one minor bridge might isolate forward forces from any resupply or reinforcement.

Combat in high-altitude environments has radically different requirements than do operations at lower elevations. The Kargil conflict revealed several deficiencies in equipment inventories and operational philosophies. Doctrine must address these problems to undertake effective military operations in the region's hostile environment.⁷

International involvement, especially by the United States can be instrumental in preventing a potential conflict from escalating into an all-out war or nuclear exchange. The clout the United States enjoys under the prevailing global environment places an enormous responsibility on America's shoulders. For India and Pakistan, the specter of inevitable U.S. intervention to avert a nuclear exchange also has doctrinal implications.⁸

The 2001-2002 Brinkmanship Episode

Soon after the Kargil conflict, the massive mobilization of Indo/Pak militaries and a stance of exaggerated forward posturing once again brought South Asia to the verge of war. Harping on the theme of Pakistan's involvement in cross-border terrorism, the right-wing Indian People's Party (BJP)-dominated government decided to deploy India's military against Pakistan in an obvious attempt to coerce and browbeat Pakistan into refraining from supporting the Kashmiri freedom fighters operating inside Indian-Held Kashmir (IHK).

In response to the Indian military's mobilization and forward deployment along the international border, Pakistan's military came to its highest state of readiness and deployed according to war plans. This confrontation of over a million military personnel brought India and Pakistan to the brink of war. Only after 10 tense months of standoff did both countries withdraw and resume a peacetime footing.

Some salient lessons that emerged from this period of brinkmanship caused both countries to

reformulate their military doctrines. As during the Kargil conflict, each country realized it faced the dangers of a devastating nuclear exchange and exercised a high degree of restraint. India took the requirement for restraint so seriously it



Indian resupply operations during the Kargil conflict.

Indian Army

removed one Army and two Air Force commanders who had overstepped restrictions.⁹

Pakistan's geography came to its rescue. Its forces were located fairly close to planned wartime-deployment sites and quickly deployed and occupied these sites. The Indian Army took almost 30 days to mobilize and deploy to wartime locations.¹⁰

Most Indian analysts contend the delay inherent in Indian mobilization and deployment gave Pakistan the maneuvering space to seek international mediation. Pakistan's ability to mobilize and deploy forces also quickly placed Indian military leaders "on the back foot." The Indian military needed to reduce its mobilization and employment time to preclude Pakistan from seeking extra-regional intervention. Only then could the Indian military achieve "near decisive results" early in a conflict and preclude foreign intervention or mediation.

From India's perspective, the most important lesson that emerged from this standoff was that political and military instruments of national power must work together in a synchronized manner. Deciding to adopt a pronounced forward and aggressive military posture to coerce Pakistan was basically a political decision, and the Indian military, excluded from the decision loop, could not immediately adopt the posture its political masters desired. General Sundarajan Padmanabhan, former Chief of the Indian Army, said it was not possible to go on the offensive against Pakistan immediately after the



A Soviet-made Charley I class submarine used by the Indian Navy to gain operational experience and insight into nuclear warship construction and propulsion.

newfound relevance to the United States and the West.

In line with the Indian government's hegemonic designs toward Pakistan and the entire region, India hailed Bush's national security strategy of preemption. Some hardliners espoused the idea that India could also adopt a policy of preemption to ensure Pakistan refrained from supporting the freedom fighters in IHK. The Indians even made a brazen attempt to group Pakistan as one of the target countries in the Global War on Terrorism.

political decision had been made because "[w]ar is a serious business, and you don't go just like that. When December 13 happened, my strike formations were at peace locations. At that point, I did not have the capability to mobilise large forces to go across."¹¹

The U.S. invasion of Afghanistan and the presence of U.S. and coalition military forces in or near Pakistan territory posed an immense problem for India. With the exception of an elusive U.S. naval fleet, supposedly approaching the Bay of Bengal during the dying days of the 1971 India-Pakistan War, South Asian countries have never had to contend with the actual presence of Extra-Regional Forces (ERF) on their soil or doorstep. The presence of U.S. troops in the area severely constrained the freedom available to India and Pakistan, discouraged them from going to war, and encouraged the United States to be more active in attempting to resolve imminent military confrontations in South Asia.¹²

The effect of geopolitics on regional conflicts also emerged as a significant lesson, although not for the first time. Pakistan's decision to side with the United States in the Global War on Terrorism by permitting U.S. forces' unrestricted use of airspace and providing prepared launching pads for military operations, transformed Pakistan into a crucial frontline state for the United States. The United States needed Pakistan much more than it needed India and viewed the possibility of an Indo-Pak military conflict with great disapproval. Try as India did, by harping on the theme of Pakistan's involvement in cross-border terrorism in IHK, it could not dent Pakistan's

location influences its relevance for the major powers. Although India offered the United States the use of airfields and logistics facilities, Pakistan was a much more suitable option by virtue of its proximity to the theater of operations.

Recent events in South Asia have been of such significance and magnitude as to cause Indo/Pak militaries to wake from their doctrinal slumber and reexamine how they prepare for fighting any future war that might occur in this highly volatile region of the world. The following recent events demonstrate this doctrinal reawakening:

- In Pakistan, until recently, the only doctrinal document available to the public was one the PAF published in 1987. In January 2004, the PAF published a revised version of its Basic Air Power Doctrine.

- The Indian Army announced its new doctrine, euphemistically titled "Cold Start," in early 2004. The contents of this document remain classified, but statements of some senior Indian Army leaders provide indications of its content.

- The IN also has a new Maritime Doctrine. While some portion of it remains classified, much is available to the public.

- India has revealed the initial draft of its nuclear doctrine, but Pakistan still has not.

One important aspect of this new doctrinal openness is the military's desire to enhance public awareness of its roles, functions, and importance. The services feel increased public awareness would ultimately translate into greater public participation in security affairs and would influence government decisions regarding national security. Apparently the

services want to help shape national opinion and influence government decisions regarding them and the allocation of resources.

India's Cold Start Doctrine

Lessons learned from the 1999 Kargil crisis and the 2001-2002 brinkmanship period led the Indian Army to alter its doctrine, announcing the new doctrine on 28 April 2004. The doctrine must still be fine-tuned and discussed at the various tiers of the Indian Army.

During the Kargil crisis, the Indian Army was caught unprepared. Although it ultimately managed to deploy in adequate numbers, the time lost was of great concern. The gap in time permitted the Pakistan military to adopt a forward-deployed posture and precluded any attempt to achieve a military edge.

The creation of strike corps in accordance with Sundarji doctrine denuded the remaining Indian Army of any meaningful offensive punch, especially for "holding" or defensive corps normally stationed much closer to the border.¹³ Time would have been saved if defensive elements had been suitably configured for undertaking limited-scale offensive operations. The strike corps could have supplemented these small-scale offensives as and when they occurred. Kapila says, "Since the most significant aim of the new war doctrine is to strike offensively without giving away battle indicators of mobilization, it is imperative that all strike formations headquarters, armoured divisions, and armoured brigades are relocated from their existing locations in Central India and in depth in Punjab to forward locations."¹⁴

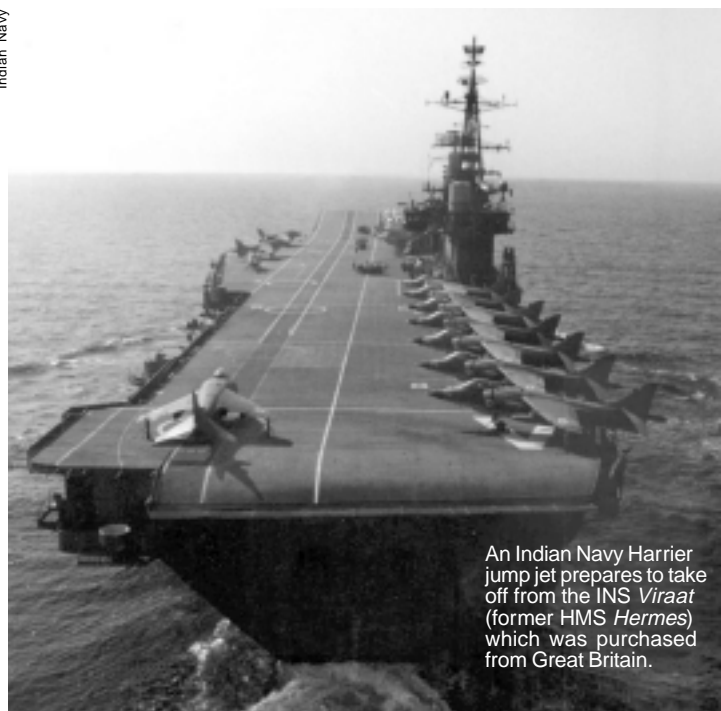
Indian Army leaders were convinced the 1999 Kargil crisis had proven it was still possible to wage a limited war even after the nuclearization of South Asia, provided the adversary's nuclear threshold was not violated. This concept was quite enticing for India's and Pakistan's armies because they feared their relevance and importance in national defense affairs was diminishing after the nuclearization of the subcontinent.

Indo/Pak land forces thought that to ensure the place of importance they enjoyed, they needed to justify the possibility of a limited conventional war. Failure to do so would have strengthened the position of those who asserted that, as during the Cold War, the availability of nuclear weapons on both sides had

reduced the chances of their use in a limited conventional war.

Indian Army leaders thought it necessary to modify Army doctrine. India needed to position some offensive elements of its army near the border. Defensive elements normally located near the border can be brought into offensive action on short notice but are not effective because of their limited offensive capability. In fact, the prime offensive elements of the Army, the three strike corps, did not enter the previous three Indo/Pak wars because their location in depth precluded timely committal to combat. Adopting this course of action would minimize the time required to bring the Indian Army's offensive elements to bear on Pakistan; reduce deployment and mobilization time; deny time available to Pakistan to move forces forward; and preclude it from seeking international intervention. Pakistan's *Daily Times* said, "The idea is that the international community should not get the opportunity to intervene. Hence, the need for swift action starting from a cold start instead of slow mobilisation."¹⁵

Locating offensive elements close to their launching pads for attacks against Pakistan would reduce reaction time and early warning normally available to Pakistan. Placing offensive elements where they could immediately launch an offensive would permit the Indian Army to achieve surprise. Previous massive mobilizations and deployments gave the



An Indian Navy Harrier jump jet prepares to take off from the INS *Viraat* (former HMS *Hermes*) which was purchased from Great Britain.



US Air Force

Indian ground crews at Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska, service nuclear-capable Jaguar fighters during a July 2004 training exercise with U.S. forces.

plan away and forewarned the Pakistan Army. As the prime focus of Pakistan's intelligence-gathering apparatus, the strike corps could not alter their disposition significantly without the Pakistan Army knowing. Although the Indian Army had some offensive elements in the designated defensive corps, they were inadequate for launching any meaningful offensive.

Attaching limited offensive elements with the defensive or holding corps dissipated the Indian Army's precious offensive capability and prevented judicious use of available offensive assets. With offensive elements able to move into action on short notice and with the element of surprise partially in its favor, the Indian Army could decisively degrade Pakistan's military potential without crossing its nuclear threshold and giving the international community the time or opportunity to intercede. Essentially, the Indian Army would be able to conduct a limited war without provoking the threat of a Pakistani nuclear response.

Salient features. Cold Start Doctrine visualizes the creation and subsequent employment of eight integrated battle groups (IBGs), which according to Kapila, could mean eight integrated armored division-size or mechanized infantry division-size forces with varying compositions of armor, artillery, infantry, and combat air support—all integrated.¹⁶ In addition to possessing integral army units, the IBGs

would have dedicated army aviation support in the form of utility and attack helicopters and comprehensive air support by pre-designated IAF squadrons.

The IBGs facilitate judicious use of Indian Army offensive assets because assets deployed with defensive formations could also be pulled out and incorporated into IBGs. Kapila writes, "The Indian Army's combat potential would be fully harnessed. The distinction between strike corps and defensive corps in a ground holding role will be gradually diminished."¹⁷

Unlike the strike corps located in depth, the IBGs would be situated well in front and fairly close to the border where they could be brought into action without giving Pakistan early warning or preparatory time. As envisioned by Cold Start Doctrine, the Indian Army's exaggerated forward offensive posture would require political leaders to quickly decide at the outset the type of military action to take. The immediacy of such action would not leave any time for leaders to rethink or modify their decision.

Implications. A change as radical as Cold Start Doctrine necessitates a response from Pakistan. The focus of India's doctrinal transformation remains the Pakistan military in general and the Pakistan Army in particular.

With strategic positioning of eight IBGs, the Indian Army would retain the option of launching a sizeable offensive in eight sectors, which would thin

and dissipate the Pakistan Army's and Air Force's defensive potential. Launching eight simultaneous offensives requires creating and maintaining sizeable strategic reserve elements that could easily move into sectors where needed. These strategic assets, crucial to the success of the Army's offensives, would also appear prominently on the list of targets for the PAF and Pakistan's SSM inventory.

Spreading the Indian Army's offensive potential across as many as eight sectors would help India capitalize on the IAF's tremendous numerical superiority. While the numerically inferior PAF would be hard pressed to meet the Pakistan Army's support requirements in all sectors, the IAF could do the same with a much greater degree of freedom because of its significantly larger fleet. Considering airpower's crucial role in determining the outcome of modern land battles, the availability of adequate air support would definitely prove a major advantage for the Indian Army. Indian analyst Firdaus Ahmed writes, "The idea is to paralyse Pakistani leadership with this decision dilemma while making quick territorial gains to be bartered post conflict on the negotiation table in return for Pakistan's promise of good behaviour with regard to Kashmir."¹⁸

Confronted with an adversary that is more than twice its size, the Pakistan Army must first identify the eight possible sectors in which the Indian Army could mount simultaneous offensives. This is vital from the perspective of force disposition because distributing Pakistan assets over eight sectors would eat into its offensive potential. Defensive elements would require some integral offensive potential, which might come from existing assets. Consequently, the Pakistan Army's offensive potential might be somewhat marginalized.

The availability of integral Army aviation and Air Force combat support assets would permit the Indian military to function as a more responsive, integrated, tri-service military machine by addressing the problems of interservice coordination and communication. The ready availability of helicopter and fixed-wing assets to offensive elements would pose an additional burden for the already overstretched PAF while increasing the need for adequate air defense weapons for the Pakistan Army's main elements.

Because the Indian Army's offensive IBGs' forward location reduces the early warning currently available to the Pakistan Army, a requirement exists for around-the-clock, all-weather surveillance and reconnaissance of all eight IBGs to preclude the Pakistan military being taken by surprise. The military

would need aerial reconnaissance by PAF reconnaissance assets and unmanned aerial vehicles. Also, human intelligence assets would have to supplement these assets.

Because of the limited reaction time available, the Pakistan Army and PAF would have to remain at a higher state of readiness and preparation or be stationed closer to the border. As with the peacetime location of the Indian Army's three strike corps, knowledge of the eight Indian Army IBGs' locations could reveal the expected sectors of operation in which the Indian Army could be contemplating future offensive action.

Analysis. Implementing Cold Start Doctrine requires a high degree of coordination between India's political and military leaders. The speed with which military action is likely to unfold would not allow political leaders to waver once they make a decision.

The Indian Army's effort to regain the supremacy it enjoyed within the Indian military structure before the 1998 nuclear tests must be kept in mind. By creating eight IBGs involving IAF and IN elements, the Indian Army could well be trying to demonstrate the subservience of the other two armed services. That Indian Army generals will command all eight IBGs and attached IAF and IN units is virtually certain. Whether the other two services will accept this arrangement, especially when all three are competing for a bigger share of the Indian nuclear military capability, remains to be seen. To dispel any doubt about the Indian Army's intentions, the IAF and IN chiefs of staff attended the Army Commanders' Conference and remained present while the Cold Start Doctrine was being announced. One Indian journalist said, "In a sense, the new doctrine could be a new push for integrated command by one of the forces."¹⁹

While it is possible for the Indian Army to achieve territorial gains or destroy the Pakistan military through massive surprise attacks, the ever-present factor of Pakistan's nuclear threshold must figure high in the Indian Army's offensive calculus. Not violating Pakistan's perceived nuclear threshold emerges as one of the major constraints in any decisive application of Cold Start Doctrine.

Given the Indian Army's ability to spring a major surprise, the Pakistan Army must not completely rule out preemption by attempting to destroy the Indian Army's IBGs before India can bring them to bear on Pakistan defenses. Cold Start Doctrine moves from the erstwhile defensive mindset the Indian Army has maintained since independence,

Indian landing craft *INS Nilgiri*, a veteran of operations in Somalia and Sir Lanka.



Indian Navy

shifting to the offensive and requiring significant adjustments in leadership and training philosophy, which is easier said than done. Going on the offensive at the outset is inherently risky and, as retired Brigadier Shaukat Qadir writes, “Neither Indian nor many Pakistani commanders are comfortable taking risks. There is far too much at stake! It is for this reason most of all that I consider it unlikely that such a concept (Cold Start) might actually be tried. If it ever is, I would like to witness it.”²⁰

Cold Start Doctrine permits the efficient use of technological and numerical advantages the Indian military enjoys over the Pakistan military and aims to fully exploit these advantages. The doctrine specifically talks of the immense firepower, including IAF combat assets, the Indian Army’s long-range artillery assets, and its short-range ballistic missiles, that can be deployed against Pakistan.

Adopting an offensive doctrine could also be an effort to reiterate and reestablish the Indian Army’s strategic military potential, like the IAF and the IN (with its submarine-launched, nuclear-tipped missiles under development). Significantly, just 2 months after announcing the Cold Start Doctrine, the Indian Army established a nuclear-capable missile unit expected to be armed with Agni-1 and/or Agni-3 SSMs.²¹ Once this doctrine has been finalized and implemented, Pakistan must conduct a detailed analysis of its contents and implications, preferably at the joint staff headquarters level, so it can develop a suitable doctrinal and strategic response.

India’s Maritime Doctrine

On 23 June 2004, 2 months after the Indian Army announced its Cold Start Doctrine, the IN unveiled its Maritime Doctrine, which was a significant de-

velopment because it was the first naval doctrine the IN ever formulated. The doctrine envisions a significantly greater role for the IN, delving into the realm of extra-regional or “blue water” operations and contending that, as an established leg of the nuclear triad envisioned in Indian nuclear doctrine, the IN must be able to carry and employ nuclear weapons to provide India with a credible second-strike capability.

Several circumstances led to the creation of Indian naval doctrine. Because the growing debate in India over each military service’s role

in South Asia’s nuclearized milieu, the Indian Army and the IAF had already gained a foothold, whereas the IN had not. Maritime reach and force projection are essential attributes of any global power. India’s quest to transform itself from a subregional power to one possessing regional or higher status requires a strong navy. For the IN to maintain its relevance, it needed a significant strategic military role and function.

Because India’s increasingly educated middle class significantly influences the country’s political leaders and because the services consider themselves to have been overlooked, they created new military doctrine and offered it for public debate. And, because of India’s vastly improving economy and rapidly increasing budgetary allocations for defense, the services felt they should receive a greater share of defense financial resources. Having a viable doctrine would afford a suitable starting point. Doctrine addresses development plans and justifies them.

The emergence of geoeconomics as the main determinant of interstate relations requires the availability of adequate naval power to secure sea lines of communication against interference or interdiction by hostile navies. For India, which is predicted to encounter enormous energy shortfalls in the coming years, this is especially relevant; India cannot afford to have its maritime link with the Persian Gulf obstructed or tampered with.

The IN’s involvement in joint naval patrols with the United States (and other navies) after 11 September 2001 highlighted the increased role the IN has in regulating the oceans around India. Creating the Far Eastern Naval Command at Port Blair in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands allows India to

monitor the strategic Straits of Malacca.

The IN has also emphasized the increased threat it faces from the navies of Pakistan and China as a justification for force-structure enhancements and additions. U.S. and coalition naval presence in the Indian Ocean also serves to highlight the enormous clout and influence the IN would enjoy if it possessed the requisite capabilities.

Indian Maritime Doctrine justifies a strategic nuclear role for the IN. In this context, the new doctrine asserts the Navy would be the most potent force to launch an attack with nuclear weapons, and a launch pad in the high seas is preferable because it would minimize collateral damage as compared to land-based, nuclear-delivery systems.²²

Even at sea, doctrine places nuclear-delivery potential from submarines rather than from surface vessels. One Indian journalist qualifies this: "The Indian government is in covert talks with the Russians to lease two Akula-class nuclear submarines (that have both longer undersea duration and ability to fire nuclear weapons) and has, for nearly two decades, been engaged in making its own nuclear submarine coded Advanced Technical Vehicle."²³

Capable of remaining submerged, nuclear-capable submarines would be the most difficult of the nuclear-delivery platforms to detect and engage, which enhances their relevance as a credible second-strike capability. Freedom of maneuver and positioning would significantly expand the spectrum of targets Indian military forces could engage.

In line with the Navy's vision as a regional power of significance, the new doctrine moves away from the inward-looking focus of earlier naval doctrine and specifies developing capabilities to deal with "conflict with an extra-regional power" and, even more ambitious, "protecting persons of Indian origin and Indian interests abroad."²⁴ Doctrine states the Navy's primary mission is to provide conventional and strategic nuclear deterrence against regional states and talks of being able to raise the cost of intervention by extra-regional powers, deterring them from acting against India's security interests.



Elements of the Indian Navy during recent fleet maneuvers.

The new doctrine also calls for exercising control over designated areas of the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal to safeguard mercantile, marine, and seaborne trade and secure India's coastline, island territories, and offshore assets. According to the doctrine, the IN's main strategy would remain "sea control" along with an increased resort to "sea denial" for the hostile navies it encounters.²⁵

In line with its enhanced presence and blue-water aspirations, the Navy envisions increasing cooperation with other navies to combat emerging international concerns like terrorism, transporting weapons of mass destruction, sea piracy, and drug trafficking.²⁶ Doctrine also calls for developing an adequate amphibious capability to mount sizeable amphibious assaults against Pakistan, if necessary.

The most serious shortfall in the new doctrine is the disconnect between the assets the Navy currently possesses and the capabilities the new doctrine envisages. According to one source, "There is a considerable gap between the vision of the doctrine and its assets on the ground. With only one new aircraft carrier on the horizon and a shortfall of new ships due to production delays, India's defence planners must consider nurturing an indigenous private defence production industry in general and naval shipyards in particular."²⁷ In the past, the slogan that the Indian Ocean belongs to India gave rise to suspicions among other regional states regarding Indian designs for hegemony. The new doctrine's emphasis on blue-water, extra-regional naval operations further accentuates these perceptions.²⁸

While the Navy's assertions concerning its strategic nuclear role are plausible, its statement that an increasingly powerful Pakistan Navy (PN) poses a

major regional threat is ridiculous. The IN falls among the top 10 navies of the world. The combat potential of the PN is negligible in comparison.²⁹

Because Indian Maritime Doctrine focuses more on power projection in accordance with India's vision of itself as an emerging regional and global power of consequence, political and diplomatic connotations of the new doctrine seem better defined than purely military aspects. The IN expects to be more an instrument of political coercion and force projection than another instrument of war.

India's Maritime Doctrine is little more than an attempt to assert that, notwithstanding the lack of importance accorded to it previously, the Navy remains an essential instrument of Indian military

power and should be treated as such. Concerned over having been left out of strategic nuclear operations by the IAF and the Army, the Navy wants to claim its rightful place in that sphere of operations by highlighting that only submarine-launched nuclear warhead-equipped missiles can provide a true second-strike capability and, hence, effective deterrence.

The new Indian Maritime Doctrine definitely merits an indepth analysis to help chart the PN's future development plans and determine operational doctrine for any future military conflict against India. Pakistan's doctrinal thinkers should analyze India's new military doctrines at greater length to put the necessary measures in place before the next military conflict threatens to engulf South Asia. **MR**

NOTES

1. Group Captain S.M. Hali, "India's war doctrine: 'Cold Start—Implications for its neighbours? The implications of India's new war doctrine for Pakistan and China," on-line at <www.pakdef.info/forum/showthread.php?t=5314>, accessed 28 October 2004.

2. Subhash Kapila, "India's new Cold Start Doctrine strategically reviewed," South Asian Analysis Group (SAAG) Paper 991, 4 May 2004, on-line at <www.saag.org/papers10/paper991.html>, accessed 1 November 2004. This paper should be read along with SAAG Paper 1013, on-line at <www.saag.org/papers11/paper1013.html>, accessed 1 November 2004.

3. For an analysis of the 1999 Kargil conflict, several other sources, as well as mine, rely on the following documents: Ashley J. Tellis, C. Christine Fair, and Jamison Jo Medby, "Limited Conflict under the Nuclear Umbrella: Indian and Pakistani Lessons from the Kargil Crisis," RAND, MR 1450-USCA, on-line at <www.rand.org>, accessed 2 November 2004; Marcus P. Acosta, "High altitude warfare: The Kargil conflict and the future" (Master's thesis, June 2003, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA); Brigadier Shaukat Qadir, "Analysis of the Kargil Crisis 1999," *R.U.S.I. Journal* (April 2002); "War in the High Mountains: The Kargil Operations, 1999," on-line at <www.bharatshak.com/LAND-FORCES/Army/History/1999war/index.html>, accessed 2 November 2004; "Kargil Conflict: A Pakistani Perspective," *Daily Dawn*, 27 May 1999; Lisa Hwang, "Unraveling Pakistan's Actions in Kargil," Center for Strategic and International Studies Prospectus, 1, 1 (Fall 1999); "1999 Kargil Conflict," on-line at <www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/kargil-99.htm>, accessed 2 November 2004.

4. The enormous international interest in the 1999 Kargil conflict is evident from the fact the Center for Contemporary Conflicts of the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California, undertook a detailed analysis titled "Kargil Project," which included two major conferences, one in Monterey from 29 May to 1 June 2002, and the other in New Delhi from 26 to 27 September 2002. Proceedings of the September 2002 conference are on-line at <www.ccc.nps.navy.mil/events/recent/sept02Kargil_rpt.asp>, accessed 1 November 2004 and for the May 2002 conference at <www.ccc.nps.navy.mil/events/recent/may02Kargil_rpt.asp>, accessed 1 November 2004.

5. According to "Kargil Conflict 1999," "Apart from keeping the plan top secret, the Pakistan Army also undertook certain steps to maintain an element of surprise and maximise deception." Some analysts argue secrecy was overplayed. Some key individuals and organizations that needed to be kept in the loop were excluded.

6. For a detailed overview of the possibility of waging a limited war in South Asia under the nuclear umbrella, refer to the Center for Contemporary Conflicts of the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, conference on "Asymmetric Conflict in South Asia: The Cause and Consequences of the 1999 Limited War in Kargil," 29 May to 1 June 2002, on-line at <www.ccc.nps.navy.mil/events/recent/may02Kargil_rpt.asp>, accessed 1 November 2004.

7. Acosta.

8. For a firsthand account of deliberations between U.S. President Bill Clinton and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on the Kargil issue on 4 July 2000, refer to the Center for Advanced Study of India (CASI) Policy Paper presented at the University of Pennsylvania by Bruce Reidel, titled "American Diplomacy and the 1999 Kargil Summit at Blair House" (May 2002), on-line at <www.sas.upenn.edu/casi/reports/ReidelPaper051302.htm>, accessed 2 November 2004.

9. Rajesh M. Basrur, "India: Doctrine, Posture and Stability," paper for the International Conference on Strategic Stability in South Asia, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California, 29 June to 2 July 2004; "Lt-Gen Vij Moved Forces 'Too Close' to Border," *Times of India*, 21 January 2002; Sandeep Dikshit, "Air Marshal Bhatia Shifted," *Hindu*, 25 April 2002.

10. In a recent interview Gen Sundarardjan Padmanabhan, Retired, Indian Army Chief during the 2001-2002 standoff, said, "Significant military gains could have been achieved in January 2002 had politicians made the decision to go to war." This statement clearly indicates that had the Pakistan Army not been able to mobilize quickly and had the

Indian Army not taken so long to deploy to the front, the latter could well have struck Pakistan a decisive blow. See Praveen Swami, "Gen Padmanabhan mulls over lessons of Operation Parakram," on-line at <www.hinduonnet.com/thehindu/thscript/print.pl?file=2004020604461200.htm&date=2004/02/06/&prid=th&>, accessed 1 November 2004.

11. Ibid.

12. Pakistan's decision to completely support the Global War on Terrorism against the Taliban in Afghanistan was one of monumental significance. Pakistan not only permitted U.S. military aircraft to traverse Pakistan airspace but to use some airfields near the Pakistan-Afghanistan border.

13. The Indian Army's three dedicated strike corps include I Corps, Mathura; II Corps, Ambala; and XXI Corps, Bhopal.

14. Kapila, "Indian Army's new Cold Start war doctrine strategically reviewed, Part II (Additional Imperatives)," on-line at <www.saag.org/papers11/paper1013.html>, accessed 1 November 2004.

15. "Indian Army commanders discuss Cold Start," *Daily Times Monitor*, 16 April 2004, on-line at <www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=story_16-4-2004_pg1_3>, accessed 3 November 2004.

16. Kapila, on-line at <www.saag.org/papers10/paper991.html>, accessed 1 November 2004.

17. Ibid.

18. Firdaus Ahmed, "The calculus of Cold Start," *India Together*, May 2004, on-line at <www.indiatogether.org/2004/may/fah-coldstart.htm>, accessed 3 November 2004.

19. Pinaki Bhattacharya, "Army chief floats 'new war doctrine,'" on-line at <www.hardnewsmedia.com/may2004/army.php>, accessed 1 November 2004.

20. Brigadier Shaukat Qadir, title unknown, *Daily Times*, 8 May 2004, on-line at <www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=story_8-5-2004_pg3_3>, source not accessible, 3 November 2004.

21. "Indian Army May Create Nuclear Unit," *Daily Times*, 1 July 2004, on-line at <www.nti.org/d_newswire/issues/2004_7_1.htm/#04C4318F>, accessed 3 November 2004.

22. Iftekhar Gilani, "Bharat Navy announces 'nuclear doctrine,'" on-line at <www.pakdef.info/forum/showthread.php?p=48250>, accessed 3 November 2004.

23. Sujan Dutta, "Navy takes plunge for nuclear muscle," on-line at <www.telegraphindia.com/1040624/asp/nation/story_3409050.asp>, accessed 3 November 2004.

24. Saikat Dutta, "Navy charts new course with first doctrine," *The Indian Express*, 26 April 2004.

25. New naval doctrine stresses on developing nuclear triad, PTI press report, OutlookIndia.com, on-line at <www.outlookindia.com/pri_news.asp?id=230383>, accessed 3 November 2004.

26. Ibid.

27. "The Navy gets a new songbook," *The Acorn*, 27 April 2004, on-line at <www.paifamily.com/opinion/archives/000636.html>, accessed 1 November 2004.

28. C. Raja Mohan, "India's new naval doctrine," *The Hindu*, on-line at <www.hindu.com/2004/04/29/stories/2004042904801100.htm>, accessed 3 November 2004.

29. According to "The Military Balance 2003-2004," the Indian Navy (IN) has 19 submarines against 10 held by the Pakistan Navy (PN) and 29 principal surface combatant vessels against only 8 by the PN, which gives the IN a significant 2:1 edge in submarines and an over 3.5:1 advantage in major surface combatant vessels. It is also relevant to mention that the IN's manpower strength of 55,000 is well over twice the PN's personnel strength of 25,000. Also, the IN possesses an aircraft carrier with a potent combat aircraft inventory and another one is on order from Russia. Pakistan's Navy does not possess an aircraft carrier or operate combat aircraft of its own and depends on the Pakistan Air Force for naval air support operations.

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