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Editorial

The editorial board takes immense pleasure in presenting the 64th issue of Army Journal covering novel articles of stimulating and thought provoking contemporary, professional, national and international affairs which will portray a brilliant image of an enlightened community. This journal has already been established as a leading think tank in military as well as in national level for its study of a wide spectrum of life. It epitomizes the vivid representation of the activities and the multifarious facets of army as a whole.

Editorial board would like to thank all the prolific authors for providing outstanding research articles on a broad range of exciting topics covering restructuring Bangladesh Army keeping vision 2041 and beyond, probable strategy of Bangladesh in facing emerging challenges in peacekeeping, expectations and challenges of the unit level command, efficacy of self confidence in transforming future leaders, options of Bangladesh Army in facing asymmetric threat in UN peacekeeping, role of resistance of the East Bengal Regiments in Liberation War, preparedness of Bangladesh Army in evolving cyber security threat, global governance challenges and implications for Army, effect of social media on CHT and prospects of Bangladesh in reconstruction of Africa by using its peacekeeping reputation. We are confident that our distinguished readers will gain much from the insights highlighted by our esteemed authors. We would relish and feel immensely rewarded if the valued readers find it worth reading.

We are appreciative of the support rendered to us by all concerned and indeed very grateful to our contributors. We look forward to the continued support of all concerned to bringing out even better journal in future.
RESTRUCTURING BANGLADESH ARMY: VISION 2041 AND BEYOND

Lieutenant Colonel Md Imrul Mahbub, afwc, psc, Arty

A new idea is first condemned as ridiculous and then dismissed as trivial, until finally, it becomes what everybody knows.

-William James, 1879

Abstract
Restructuring is bringing about an important internal change that alters the relationships between different components of an organization. Many countries are downsizing or upsizing their armies in the context of restructuring. None can negate the necessity of maintaining a reasonably strong army and decisions of force modernization taken by Bangladesh Government are a clear manifestation of the necessity. Restructuring is essential for a host of reasons, such as: threat perception, missions and assigned tasks, national policies and military doctrine, and national economy. The restructuring objectives, often quantitative, usually aim at enabling the army to carry out various military missions. A rational framework for force restructuring may include five main steps synchronized in a logical sequence. It’s a functional flow of various activities performed by a number of people from different branches and directorates. In doing so, implementation road map to force restructuring may encounter few formidable challenges like provisioning of budgetary resources, managing multi-modal engagements, synchronization with associated plans etcetera. Bangladesh has received many accolades for its achievements in different sectors. So, time is ripe that Bangladesh Army may also undertake force restructuring process in triumphing ‘Vision 2041’. Force restructuring is a complex and highly intertwined process. A Military Plans Directorate at Army Headquarters’ level, if established, may formulate force restructuring plans and orchestrate all relevant actors and stakeholders in fulfilling the plans. It is, therefore, imperative to revisit our force structure to bring desired qualitative changes in Bangladesh Army and remain ready at the service of the nation.

Introduction
What is ‘Restructuring”? Many opine that it’s bringing about a far-reaching or important internal change that alters the relationships between different components or elements of an organization, association or system. Historically speaking, what was so difficult about continually retaining the same standing army that the Romans could but their successors in the middle ages couldn’t? Military historian Peter Heather gives a straight and simple answer that standing armies need periodical restructuring (Heather 2008). Many countries like United States of America and United Kingdom are downsizing their armies by about 20% where as India and China are upsizing their armies (Marley 1998) in the context of restructuring. Understandably, every

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1 An early Imperial Legion of about 5,000 men required about 7,500 kilos of grain and about 450 kilos of fodder per day or 225 and 13.5 tonnes of grain, respectively, per month which deems a huge ask even today.
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country has their own reasons and interests but our take away from the phenomenon is that, ‘restructuring’ is not about upsizing or downsizing but the right sizing of an army.

Bangladesh is persuasive to peace and corner stone of its ‘Defence Policy’ is ‘Friendship to all, malice to none’. Its strategic defensive posture\(^2\) by theme negates a large standing army with aggressive projection of military might. However, as a sovereign country, none can negate the necessity of maintaining a reasonably strong army capable of defending its sovereignty and territorial integrity. The Government of Honourable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina envisioned transforming Bangladesh into a middle-income country by 2021 and a developed country by 2041 (Dhaka Tribune, April 26\(^{th}\), 2017). Recent decisions of force modernization taken by Bangladesh Government (Budget Speech 2015-16) are also a clear manifestation of the aforementioned vision.

Bangladesh has earned many tributes for her accomplishments at various sectors in the recent past. We may now contemplate the structure of a formidable army suiting to the requirements of the nation and divert our resources in its fulfilment. While embarking on the journey to envision the restructuring, we may draw inspirations from the ideals of the Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who envisaged a competent Bangladesh Army capable of defending our beloved motherland (Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's speech to 1\(^{st}\) batch of Bangladesh Military Academy). It’s a very vast and complex subject with dimensions of mammoth proportion. Owing to that fact, this paper will limit its scope only within the core areas of fore restructuring namely restructuring desirability, genesis and a logical functional flow.

**Operational Definitions**

**Restructuring.** Merriam-Webster dictionary defines restructuring as ‘A permanent change in the makeup, system, form or pattern of an organization usually to run it more effectively’ (Merriam-Webster 2018). To restructure an organization or system means to change the way it is organized, usually in order to make it work more efficiently (Collins Dictionary 2018).\(^3\)

**Vision 2041.** Honourable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina wants to turn Bangladesh into a developed nation by 2041 and as such has asked for preparing a vision document in this regard. The 20-year vision document is expected to be ready by 2021 and may include number of goals, inter alia, no poverty, zero hunger, gender equality, clean water and sanitation, affordable and clean energy, decent work and economic growth, reduced inequalities, climate action, digital Bangladesh, etcetera (Dhaka Tribune, April 26\(^{th}\), 2017).

\(^2\)Presentation on ‘Draft Defence Policy’ given to Armed Forces War Course members at National Defence College on 13\(^{th}\) April 2016.

\(^3\) A quick internet search provides no less than ten definitions for restructuring. The first definition on the list is, not surprisingly, from the business field. There are definitions beside military usage from financial and corporate world, business and health sciences etcetera.
Why Restructuring is Desirable from Time to Time?

Bangladesh Army was born of war, and that, it had to overcome a number of challenges during its journey towards reaching the present state. The first decade was our fledgling stage and restructuring began from the second decade. Authentic restructuring has begun since 2009-10 and army is now focusing on enhancement of capabilities to perform its assigned roles and tasks. Restructuring is essential for a host of reasons, such as:

**Threat Perception.** Present day threats may emanate from both traditional and non-traditional sources. Although perception about any conventional war is declining all over the world but non-traditional security threats are emerging as core security challenges of this century (Khan 2017). They may not pose direct threat to territorial integrity or sovereignty of a country but questions a state’s authority and hinders good governance. Like all other armies of the world, Bangladesh Army is also duty bound to decisively deal with any threat likely to cause notable damage to our people, society and peaceful way of life. Owing to the fact, organized conventional threat study at strategic and military strategic level is a recurring phenomenon which subsequently, shapes up any force restructuring. Besides, in-house nontraditional security threat studies are also steered by relevant stakeholders on regular basis which is significant for complimentary structuring of any combat force.

**Missions and Assigned Tasks.** Bangladesh Army’s primary mission is to defend the country from any external aggression. It can also certainly pride itself with an excellent record of success in tackling disasters i.e., both natural and man-made, role towards global peace etcetera. However, both primary and secondary tasks related to internal security and in aid to civil power or nation building are multi-faceted and have changing natures. As such, force structuring becomes a necessity to match with the desired capabilities in performing the given missions and assigned tasks.

**National Policies and Military Doctrine.** Our constitution delineates the vital interests derived out of the purposes of the nation⁴ (The Constitution of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh). Foreign Policy of Bangladesh also evidently expresses the idea of ‘peaceful coexistence’. Emanating from that, our defence policy is non-threatening and non-interfering with no extra territorial ambition. These national policies bear the guiding principles in formulating our military doctrines to safeguard the interests of the nation. Moreover, it is envisaged that general mass is likely to actively participate in national defence as it was manifested in our great Liberation War of 1971. The ‘Youth Bulge’⁵ phenomenon (United Nations Development Program, Human Development Report 2018) in next decades also support the assumption of active people’s participation. Therefore, periodical force restructuring is necessary to accommodate and adjust to these facts.

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⁴ ‘The Constitution of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh’ suggests that promoting democracy, physical security of territory, safety of people, economic wellbeing, and protection of our critical infrastructure are among few of our vital interests.

⁵ ‘Youth Bulge’, a demographic profile coined by the social scientists in recent days, indicates on the escalating youth populations of a nation.
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**National Economy.** Bangladesh is developing rapidly and measured as an ‘emerging state’ by our intelligentsia due to its growing economy (Kabir 2005). Bangladesh has already become a middle-income country and started its journey towards an upper middle-income country by 2030 and a developed country by 2041. In consonance, Bangladesh may now consider supporting its military growth simultaneous to economic growth to meet the expectations of people. The national budget of Bangladesh for Financial Year (FY) 2018-19 is Taka 4,64,573 Crore and government has allocated Taka 29,084 Crore for the Ministry of Defence, Armed Forces Division and other services (The Independent, June 7th, 2018). The 2018-19 defence budget also amounts to 6.3% of total annual government expenditure and about 1.3% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) which was only near 1% in last decade (The Daily New Nation, June 7th, 2018). This additional allotment will enable the armed forces to make less revenue expenditure and more capital expenditure in fulfilling the requirements of additional infrastructures and all other associated facilities with a balanced and harmonized growth. A sectoral resource distribution of Bangladesh National Budget for FY 2018-19 is shown in Figure 1:

![Bangladesh National Budget for FY 2018-19 (Sector Wise)](image)

**Figure 1: Bangladesh National Budget for FY 2018-19 (Sector Wise)**

**Source:** Adapted from the Daily New Nation Website (June 7th, 2018)
**Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) Analysis of the Force Restructuring Environment**

SWOT analysis of our force restructuring environment as shown in headlines form (Figure 3) are almost self-explanatory. Nevertheless, a broader description to understand the prevailing SWOT may be valuable.

**Strengths** being, among others, popular support that our army has earned through their long drawn commitments to the nation, appreciable compassion of strategic leadership, receipt of budget at right proportion and enthusiasm of our senior military leaders.

One of the major **Weaknesses** is the absence of a body of military planners along with a steering committee to monitor the restructuring process/progress. There are at times conflicts in setting of priorities since priorities are set basing on knowledge and experience that may change over time. This may, in turn, bring ad-hocism in capacity building as well. Force restructuring plans may also change due to personal oriented system, resulting in discontinuation of plans and policies.

Important **Opportunities** are, inter alia, participation in economic emancipation, creation of indigenous defence industries whereas, not to forget that Bangladesh is dependent on foreign countries for its war materials and only a limited war may be supported by stockpiling but not a protracted war (Hussain 2008). It may be significant to focus in civil/military ‘dual use’ sectors which will attract attention of investors. Later, these investments may be leveraged to support military requirements. For instance, huge investment in space-based technologies and systems will give capabilities that, if harnessed correctly, will provide capabilities to Bangladesh Army.

Lastly, **Threats** wherein dichotomy between maintaining national security and ensuring healthy socio-economic growth is existent. Some argue that, defence spending has a negative impact on economic growth and productivity (Kabir and Waheduzzaman 2016) and being non-productive sector, takes away resource from education, health and agriculture sectors (Kabir 2005). Still, many of these discussions may be subsided by sharing general and common information with academics. Pooling and Sharing of resources with other national stakeholders may also be a very promising method. However, Bangladesh Government’s recent decisions about forces’ modernization (Budget Speech 2015-16) suggest balancing these conflicting requirements which is encouraging to the right kind of force structuring. A thematic SWOT analysis of present force restructuring environment is shown in Figure 2:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helpful</th>
<th>Harmful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strengths</strong></td>
<td><strong>Weaknesses</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Government benevolence.</td>
<td>2. Void in monitoring the restructuring process/progress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Expanding budget.</td>
<td>3. Ad-hocism.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Leadership. 4. Conflict of priority setting. 5. Change/discontinuation of plans and policies.

**Opportunities**
1. Contribution to growing economy.
2. Development of defence industries.
3. Engagement in research and development.

**Threats**
1. Gun versus butter dichotomy.
2. Reaction/responses from national and international actors.

**Figure 2: SWOT Analysis of the Force Restructuring Environment**

**Source:** Developed by Author

**Genesis of Force Restructuring**

Beginning of any force restructuring is imbued with the tasks and challenges as to how to shape an army so that it attains abilities to defend the country. The restructuring objectives, often quantitative, usually aim at enabling the army to carry out various military missions. To decide the essential military capabilities, it is necessary to establish a process that will lead to the establishment (illustrated schematically in Figure 3) of a ‘Requirements Directory’.

**Figure 3: Schematic Processes to Establish Requirement Directory**

**Source:** Developed by Author
Force structuring involves a process, which helps determining personnel strength, equipment or resources needed to train and operate the forces for accomplishing given missions. Undeniably, it is expected to draw notable inferences from the strategic and operational environment as well military doctrines and requirement of capability development originating there from.

**Strategic Environment.** The dynamics of strategic environment is hard to comprehend unless one is a strategic level practitioner. A methodical study on strategic issues may only give a general understanding of certain topics but not insights. Nevertheless, few researchers opine that, generally small states like Bangladesh chooses cooperation strategy as its security policy options (Ahamed 2004). Adoption of such strategy corresponds to joining an alliance to maximize influence over adversaries to avert a war. Bangladesh follows policy of peaceful co-existence with the neighbours, and strategic thinkers suggest that we must get closer to our neighbours and derive maximum advantage out of them. However, conventional threats apart, Bangladesh is also vulnerable to many non-traditional security threats due to its geo-strategic location, socio-economic conditions and so forth. The ‘Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Citizens’ are creating social disturbances in the south-eastern part of Bangladesh as well as adding strain on our national economy. Most of these security challenges may take their toll almost at same ferocity. Thus, Bangladesh Government envisions capable armed forces developed well to address, enhance or ensure the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bangladesh.

**Operational Environment.** A host of issues may bubble up in minds while discussing about operational level. Force restructuring is likely to generate many discourses only on sheer size and weight of the forces that can operate and manoeuvre in today’s target-rich environment. Evidently, restructuring of Bangladesh Army will be greatly influenced by ‘Defence Policy’ and operational postures at the wake of it, doctrines derived there from, cost-benefit analysis, and perception of potential threats’ coercive power that may precipitate conflict. Taking account of our operational environment encompassing contemporary security challenges, (i.e., fluid, short-lived, lethal), threat perceptions, terrain and weather, technological advancements, etcetera, Bangladesh Army may resort to strike a balanced mix of deterrence and compellence. Another part of force restructuring will equally hinge on the necessity of sustenance without forgetting the ideal tooth to tail ratio. The role and degree of involvement in aid to the civil administration, i.e., maintenance of law and order situation, disaster management, diverse nation building activities, etcetera and conceivable organizational interface with local administration for integrating civil resources in war efforts shall also remain in the thought process. These discussions may provide a scope for reality check in force restructuring.

**Military Doctrines.** Draft ‘Joint Warfare Doctrine’ (JWD) suggests that the application of military power should be first through deterrence (Draft JWD 2006). It will necessitate a credible deterrent or, at the least, a moderate deterrent force to demonstrate our intent and resolve. Bangladesh Army may not look for conventional superiority rather; it may resort to a mix of conventional and unconventional war fighting strategy to compensate the asymmetry. Doctrinal

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6Presentation on ‘Global, Regional and National Security Environment’ given to Armed Forces War Course members at National Defence College on 20th April 2016.
assumptions of our unique home-grown\(^7\) doctrine of blending (Draft Doctrine of Blending Unconventional Warfare with Conventional Warfare 2004) are also valid as manifested in the liberation war of 1971. It is also synonymous to ‘total resistance by nation-in-arms’ or ‘total defence’ (Talukder 1989) ideology as advocated by many. We may also recall that land forces can no longer function in compartments with single service orientation but demands military integration known as ‘jointery’ (Edmonds 2002). Our force restructuring should therefore, cater for five dimensional conflicts (aerospace, land, sea, electromagnetic and cyber), information dominance and integration with other components of national power.

**Military Capability Development.** Idea of capability development and future direction of any army is particularly related to securing the nation’s interests and responding to predicated threats (Spisak 2013). However, no denying that choosing the right military capabilities to develop is an argumentative method and uptight with uncertainties. The framework for examining military capability is indeed a quagmire since it requires a detailed analysis of the balance of power, the circumstances under which the engagement occurs, and the relevant constraints and objectives that condition the overall interaction between the two forces (Paret 1989). The issue is always a matter of judgement and there is no proven theory of military capability development. As such, measuring existing military capabilities and assessing future needs for Bangladesh Army will remain an issue of debate and discussion. However, Collin’s\(^8\) ‘Nine Principles of Preparedness’ may be a good start point. Jasper (2010) advised that 21st century warfare demands ‘Capability-based Approach’ and, accordingly, a decision point emerges whether we should have threat-based or a threat independent/ Capability-based approach.

**A Rational Framework of Force Restructuring**

A rational framework for force restructuring may include five main steps synchronized in a logical sequence. It’s a functional flow of various activities performed by a number of people from different branches and directorates. These five distinct steps of the process (illustrated schematically in Figure 4) are as follows:

**Step 1:** Military Operations Directorate will articulate core missions to be accomplished by Bangladesh Army. They may also identify specific military tasks essential for mission accomplishment. Then, Military Plans Directorate will identify what military capabilities army must have, to meet the operational requirements. They should also identify deficiencies that may need priority attention.

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\(^7\)Presentation on ‘Introduction to Strategic Decision Making Process’ given to Armed Forces War Course members at National Defence College on 21st April 2016.

\(^8\) John M. Collins in 1994 described nine benchmarks, or principles of preparedness to constitute a favourable assessment of a force, which could inform the development of specific measures against missions and tasks. The nine principles are purview, regional peculiarity, quantitative sufficiency, qualitative superiority, complementarity, infrastructure, compatibility, foresight and financial sufficiency.
**Step 2:** All arms and services directorates will explore technical and operational potentials, and ideally with no constraint of budget. They may then scale down to a smaller number of options which are technically feasible and operationally relevant.

**Step 3:** Top-level decision makers choose options to pursue seeing their costs, implications and applicability. The difficult decisions about resources allocation will be made in this step.

**Step 4:** Asset acquisition offices, inter alia, Ordnance, and Weapon, Equipment and Statistics Directorates will act on the choices made by the decision makers. They will complete the development or procurement of chosen systems.

**Step 5:** A steering committee will monitor the process and evaluate the total progression to ensure that chosen new systems are operationally functional. They should also provide periodical feedbacks to the decision makers so as to enable them of succeeding with correct decisions.

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**Figure 4: Rational Framework of Force Restructuring**

**Source:** Developed by Author

**Roadmap to Force Restructuring for Bangladesh Army**

Capability development is not a standalone subject and may not exist for one’s own sake. All branches and directorates, field formations, and institutions and organizations may actively participate in developing capability with equal levels of ambition.
Establishment of Military Plans Directorate. It is likely to be a key player in force restructuring, as it may be in charge of planning new missions and operations, reviewing existing ones, build close group effort with Military Operations Directorate and other stakeholders. They, in partnerships with stakeholders, will develop military capabilities required for existing as well as future missions and operations. They should also assess and put together the financing strategy.

Information Gap Analysis. Military Plans Directorate may conduct an information gap analysis and find voids in the data repository about existing military capabilities and future needs. This is likely to generate clear and authentic data that will support enhanced decision making. They should devise some mechanism for data generation and data mining from related organizations and stakeholders.

Mapping of Branches and Directorates. Military Plans Directorate may group different branches and directorates and identify the groups’ responsibilities in achieving conceived force restructuring plan. They may also map out lead, co-lead and associate members against each group of the force restructuring. This may reduce duplication of efforts, enhance synergy and help formulate coordinated action plans.

Formulation of Action Plan. Military Plans Directorate in concert with already grouped branches and directorates will prepare an action plan for implementation of force restructuring in alignment with the priorities set by senior leadership. Respective groups (and sub-groups, if needed) will undertake actionable projects/ programs/ activities and work towards translating the plans into realities.

Formulation of ‘Steering Committee’. A ‘Steering Committee’ may be formed who will be at the core of moving the force restructuring plan in concert with other implementation partners. They may also design the monitoring and evaluation framework for restructuring implementation. This framework may have a system to facilitate data collection, analysis, progress tracking and reporting to senior leadership.

Challenges Ahead and Ways to Overcome

We all may agree that if Bangladesh Army needs to meet the challenges our nation may face ahead, it must prepare itself to remain ready not only for today, but also for tomorrow. In doing so, implementation of road map to force restructuring may encounter few formidable challenges.

Provisioning of Budgetary Resources. Implementation of the force restructuring plan may entail mobilization of vast resources, especially budgetary resources. Regular or traditional sources of funding may not always be sufficient to implement the plan. Innovative ways of financing from private sectors, defence industry development partners, et cetera may have to be explored beside governmental resources. It seems that greater coordination, good management system and functional modalities may elevate effort economization and thereby budget maximization. The difficulties cannot be denied, but, on a more positive note, let us also recognize that financial difficulties could also lead to a leap forward for collaborative efforts.
Managing Multi-modal Engagement. Implementation of any force restructuring plan requires a multi-modal engagement by all relevant stakeholders. It may include not only branches and directorates of Army Headquarters but also private sectors, national and international producers and vendors of defence equipment, and research and development project partners, etcetera. As such, a continuous brainstorming is essential in working out how to enhance participation of all the stakeholders in its efforts to implement the force restructuring plan.

Synchronization with Associated Plans. Understandably, there will be number of other plans in place and in the process of realization. There may be challenges in collection, analysis, and dissemination of associated plans to military planners and actors involved in force restructuring. As for example, any force restructuring plan should also contextualize the real state plan appropriately. Therefore, the ‘Real Estate Master Plan’ for Bangladesh Army, though may remain in the domain of a separate group of planners but, will have to go side by side with force planners. Thus, we may need to build clear route of corroboration and collaboration at planning, execution and evaluation levels between all planners for sharing the best of knowledge.

Recommendations
Bangladesh Army is one of the best institutions of our country with proven track record. It needs to prepare itself for combating conventional threats as well as performing its peacetime roles. The difficulty in doing the tasks does not lie in what to do but with what structure will do. The ever changing nature of tasks demand a continual reorganization and reequipping. In light of above discussion, following are recommended:

a. A Military Plans Directorate may be created under General Staff Branch at Army Headquarters by 2018 to centrally plan, operate and control all force restructuring matters (executive recommendation).

b. A Steering Committee may be formed including members of senior ranks from each arms and services to monitor progress, evaluate outcome, provide feedback to the senior leadership and recommend necessary corrections (policy option).

Conclusion
Bangladesh has now started its journey towards an upper middle-income country by 2030 and a developed country by 2041. Government of Bangladesh has also expressed strong commitment to fulfil the agenda demanding concerted and collective efforts at all levels and Bangladesh Army is also not left out of government benevolence. Bangladesh has by now received many accolades for its achievements in different sectors and far more confident to set the example of a leading development goal achiever. So, time is ripe that Bangladesh Army may also undertake force restructuring process in the milieu of national development as the country moves ahead in triumphing the ‘Vision 2041’.

The characteristics of future battle fields are likely to be precarious. It may not be contiguous or orderly with operations of all-weather and all-kinds running round the clock. Forces will be vulnerable to easy identification and immediate destruction with high-tempo operations. Military
doctrines and fighting concepts or strategies are necessary but nevertheless, we need right kind of force structure best suited for the desired purpose. A capable army makes a credible deterrent force for any potential aggressor and also provides required services to the nation in the line of peacetime roles.

Force restructuring is a complex and highly intertwined process for armies all over the world and Bangladesh Army will be no exception. It may require a lead directorate to act as focal point for the purpose. A Military Plans Directorate at Army Headquarters’ level, if established, may formulate force restructuring plans and orchestrate all relevant actors and stakeholders in fulfilling the plans. There may be challenges in several areas including resource mobilization but that may be addressed with proper corroboration and collaboration between participants. We must not forget that our nation puts so much of trust on Bangladesh Army that they consider us as their last hope. It is, therefore, imperative to revisit our force structure, reshape, if necessary, to bring desired qualitative changes in Bangladesh Army and remain ready at the service of the nation.

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Presentations


Lieutenant Colonel Md Imrul Mabud, afwc, psc was commissioned on 16 June 1995 in the Corps of Artillery. He commanded an artillery regiment and a locating battery. He was a Brigade Major in an Infantry Brigade and a Grade 1 Staff Officer in Army Headquarters. He also served in United Nations Mission in Liberia and as a Military Observer in Democratic Republic of Congo. He is a graduate of Defence Services Command and Staff College and National Defence College, Mirpur. He is also a graduate of the Institute of Business Administration, University of Dhaka. Currently, he is serving at Military Operations Directorate in Army Headquarters.
EMERGING CHALLENGES OF UNITED NATIONS PEACE SUPPORT OPERATIONS: STRATEGY OF BANGLADESH

Brigadier General Md Aftab Hossain, BSP, afwc, psc

“Bangladesh has become a brand name in peace support operations for our utmost dedication and professionalism”
— Sheikh Hasina, Honourable Prime Minister, People’s Republic of Bangladesh

Abstract
Since 1988, for last 30 years, Bangladesh is contributing troops and police in UN peacekeeping operations and has participated in 54 different missions in 40 countries. Bangladesh has earned a very positive image for its performance in implementing peace process in different troublesome countries of the world. However, deployed peacekeepers face multidimensional challenges while carrying out their tasks and encounter asymmetric threats like terrorist attacks, IED explosion etc. Bangladeshi peacekeepers often face problems in communicating with locals in Francophone and Arabic speaking mission areas. Therefore, Bangladeshi peacekeepers need to be trained and equipped with modernized equipment, UAV, mine protected vehicle etc. Bangladesh also encounters challenges in enhancing her participation in UNPSOs as UN is making space for new T/PCCs. Besides, regional organization like AU influences UN for the interest of its member states. Bangladesh also does not have proportionate senior representation at UN Secretariat and field missions. Bangladesh is yet to open embassy with African countries hosted/ hosting UN missions which is necessary for getting scope in peace support efforts as well as improving bilateral relations. At strategic level, steps should be taken capitalising positive images of peacekeeping to gain diplomatic and economic ties with other countries for mutual benefits. At the operational level, Services HQs should take appropriate steps to train the peacekeepers physically and psychologically to undertake any assigned task in right spirit to uphold the image of Bangladesh. The excellent performance of Bangladeshi peacekeepers is praiseworthy and it has enabled the country to earn huge foreign remittance. Every effort should be made by all concerned so that the hard-earned reputation is upheld. Focus should be for more qualitative contribution for world peace and security which is the constitutional commitment of Bangladesh. It is recommended that the contingents should be equipped with mine protected vehicle, UAV and other modern equipment to meet the challenges of UNPSOs. Participation of female peacekeepers in all capacities should be encouraged to support UN policies. Learning French and Arabic language should also get top priority for all potential peacekeepers before deployment. MOFA should establish embassy in all closed, old/maturred missions (in Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Sudan, DR Congo, South Sudan etc.). Positive image in peacekeeping should be utilised for bilateral relation and economic ties for the betterment of the country.
Introduction

Bangladesh is participating in United Nations Peace Support Operations (UNPSOs) for last 30 years. After participation to 54 missions in 40 countries, Bangladesh has proved to be one of the leading troops/police contributing countries (T/PCCs). At the moment about 27 Bangladeshi contingents and 7,739 peacekeepers are deployed around the world which is approximately 9% of the total globally deployed UN peacekeepers.\(^1\) The contribution of Bangladesh for UNPSOs has been highly appreciated and created a very positive image around the world. It has enabled Bangladesh to build up bilateral relationships with other countries and organizations in addition to the earning of huge reimbursement. Therefore, it is important to keep the tempo to uphold the reputation and already earned image. However, participation in UNPSOs is becoming challenging in manifolds day by day. Various UN documents identify three key challenges for blue helmets are the protection of civilians (POC), critical peacebuilding tasks and the important issue of robust peacekeeping.\(^2\) Gender mainstreaming is another issue which is vigorously pursued by UN at Headquarters (HQ) and field level. Alongside the challenges, troops contribution has become more competitive due to the upcoming interested Member States (MS) to contribute troops for UNPSOs and involvement of regional organizations to promote the interest of their MS. These multidimensional challenges in the implementation of the mission's mandate necessitate T/PCCs to be prepared accordingly. At this backdrop, it has become imperative for Bangladesh as one of the top ranking contributors to enhance the preparedness of Armed Forces to the fullest to overcome the challenges.

An attempt has been made in this paper to discuss the challenges of UNPSOs that Bangladesh is likely to face and suggest a strategy for Bangladesh towards UNPSOs. The paper has also examined the state of the present preparedness of Bangladesh to meet those challenges and suggested ways on how Bangladesh should respond to the challenges ahead. Finally, this paper has concluded with a few recommendations. The paper has been written based on experience of the author in the field of peace support operations as Planning Officer of DKKO, UNHQ and Colonel Staff of Overseas Operations Directorate, Army Headquarters (OO Dte, AHQ). However, it was validated by numerous interviews with Force/Sector/Contingent Commanders, Contingent members of different UN missions and high officials of UN Secretariat.

CHALLENGES OF UNITED NATIONS PEACE SUPPORT OPERATIONS

General

Peacekeeping environment has changed in many-folds and now most of the UN missions are multidimensional and integrated missions. The changing trends of UNPSOs from traditional to multidimensional have invited a number of challenges. Though this paper intends to identify all the challenges of UNPSOs, in general, the focus will be to spot challenges faced by Bangladesh as a leading T/PCC. In addition, other multidimensional, operational and logistics challenges of different aspects have been discussed in details subsequently.

Understanding the Whole Gamut of Peace Support Environment

Changing Trends of Peacekeeping Operations from Traditional to Multidimensional. In the last six decades, UNPSOs had different tasks to meet the requirement of changing security and political scenario. In initial days of the 1950’s, the UNPSOs consisted of military observers and lightly armed troops for monitoring and reporting of ceasefires but the present days’ missions are very complex, multidimensional and largely peace enforcement operations under Chapter VII of the Charter. Current traditional and multidimensional missions are shown in Figure 1. Seven large missions out of 14 peacekeeping missions are multidimensional.

Current UN Missions – 22
Peacekeeping Missions – 14
Special Missions – 07
UN Support Office in Somalia – 01

![Legend:](image)

Figure 1: Current Traditional and Multidimensional Missions

Source: Prepared by the author with data from Fact Sheet of UNPSOs, dated 31 August 2018.

Focus on Peacebuilding Task. Deployed peacekeepers are now increasingly asked to undertake a wide variety of complex tasks such as to build sustainable capacity, human rights monitoring, security sector reform, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of former combatants. In all current mission peacebuilding efforts are predominant.

Lack of Proper Understanding Regarding Peacebuilding. Many peacekeepers still consider peacekeeping and peacebuilding to be similar but they are different in nature. Peacebuilding involves a range of measures for strengthening national capacity building and to lay the foundations for sustainable peace and development. 98.36% of the Bangladeshi peacekeepers are participating in such missions that demand clear concept and understanding of peacebuilding effort. Peacekeepers should be able to identify critical tasks of peacebuilding which is not in the domain of military and police only, though they are the early peace builders.

Training on Peacebuilding Related Issues: Peacebuilding is a new and sensitive concept that demands for training before deployment. Bangladesh Institute of Peace Support Operation Training

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4 Lacroix, Mr. Jean-Pierre, Under-Secretary-General (USG), DPKO, New York, interviewed by the author on 6 July 2017.
(BIPSOT) is the premier institution in Bangladesh which is providing dedicated education and training to the peacekeepers for developing their skills. After training, they could be readily employed in UN peacebuilding activities around the world. Recently, Bangladesh has established Peacebuilding Centre that can also provide training on peacebuilding.

**Multidimensional Challenges**

**Growing Partnership with Regional Organizations.** Nowadays UN is promoting peace effort of regional organizations such as African Union (AU) and European Union (EU) etc. under UN Chapter VIII. In some cases, the regional organizations impose conditions in terms of selecting T/PCCs and senior leadership for those missions. This provision refrains from selecting T/PCCs judicially based on quality of troops and equipment to deploy in UN missions. Due to persuasion of AU, African contribution has increased significantly as shown in the Table 1. Moreover, among 26 major T/PCCs (with more than 1,000 troops) 17 T/PCCs are African and only 7 T/PCCs are from Asia.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>African T/PCCs</th>
<th>Asian T/PCCs</th>
<th>European T/PCCs</th>
<th>South American</th>
<th>North American</th>
<th>Australian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remarks</td>
<td>Increasing</td>
<td>Decreasing</td>
<td>Decreasing</td>
<td>Decreasing</td>
<td>Decreasing</td>
<td>Decreasing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Number of T/PCCs with more than 1,000 Peacekeepers

Therefore, MS of AU have increased their troops/police contribution to UNPSOs as shown in figure 2.

![Figure 2: Contribution of African T/PCCs has Crossed Asian T/PCCs Contribution in 2013](http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/resources/statistics/archive.shtml)

Source: Prepared by the author with data from UN Peacekeeping Website.

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6 UN Mission in the Republic of Sudan (UNMIS), African Union-UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), UN Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS) and UN Interim Security Force in Abyei (UNISFA).

Growing Mistrust between UN and Host Countries. UN intervenes in the conflict of different countries for the establishment of peace and security with the mandate passed by the UN Security Council. However, it has been observed that in the process of establishing peace, sometime new country gets independence being separated from the host country. Side-by-side new UN missions also take birth. Separation of South Sudan from Sudan is such an example. Therefore, the leadership and population of such country grow mistrust on UN and deployed peacekeepers.

Ultimate Result:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>UN Mission in Sudan</th>
<th>UN Mission in South Sudan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>1 x Mission in 1 x Country</td>
<td>Sudan (New Mission)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>2 x Missions in 1 x Country</td>
<td>Sudan (New Mission)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>3 x Missions in 2 x Countries</td>
<td>Sudan and South Sudan (New Mission)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3: Example of Element that Contributes to Mistrust/ Non-cooperation of Host Nations

Source: Conceptualised and analysed by the author.

The leadership of the host country gets scared by observing this type of phenomenon and does not welcome UN in peacebuilding activities. Many host countries impose restrictions on the movement of the UN peacekeepers by curfew at night and also impose restrictions on conducting operations in few restricted areas. Some countries also refuse visa request of UN personnel and delay in custom clearance for contingent own equipment (COE). All these are violation of the principle of impartiality and consent of parties. A woman in Darfur commented “It makes it look like the government is in charge of UNAMID”.

Host Countries Preference. Sometimes the host nations give preference for specific countries as T/PCCs. For example, both Sudan and South Sudan allowed only Ethiopia to contribute troops in Abyei an area between Sudan and South Sudan whose status is yet to be settled. Other than few staff

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8 UN Mission in the Republic of Sudan (UNMIS), African Union-UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), UN Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS) and UN Interim Security Force in Abyei (UNISFA).


officers only Ethiopian troops (approximately 4200) are deployed in UNISFA (Abyei) which led Ethiopia to secure 1st position in T/PCCs ranking overtaking Bangladesh and other leading T/PCCs.

**Operational Challenges**

**Challenges of Protection of Civilians (POC).** POC is one of the major challenges in the present context when the civilians have increasingly become the victims of armed conflict. In response, the UNSC has mandated missions for POC from physical violence. At present 95% of total globally deployed peacekeepers work for POC. Implementation of this challenging mandate is often considered as the yardstick to measure success of the peacekeepers.

**Inadequate Peacekeepers to Ensure POC.** Peacekeepers often deploy amidst the unrealistic expectation that they will be able to protect all civilians at all times which is an impossible task. It is not possible to ‘protect everyone from everything’ with usual population versus the peacekeepers ratio deployed in the mission. Once the peacekeepers fail to protect the civilians, they lose confidence on peacekeepers and start non-cooperation. The state in Table 2 shows ratio between civilian need to be protected by a single peacekeeper.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UN Mission and Country</th>
<th>Area (in square km) (*times larger than Bangladesh)</th>
<th>Population (in million) (#times less than Bangladesh)</th>
<th>Peacekeepers Deployed</th>
<th>Ratio: Civilian/ Per Peacekeepers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MONUSCO, (D R Congo)</td>
<td>23,45,409 *16.8</td>
<td>81.60 #2.06</td>
<td>18,692</td>
<td>4366/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MINUSMA (Mali)</td>
<td>12,40,192 *8.4</td>
<td>14.50 #9</td>
<td>11,880</td>
<td>1221/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNMISS (South Sudan)</td>
<td>6,19,745 *4.1</td>
<td>12.34 #13.32</td>
<td>12,923</td>
<td>955/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MINUSCA, Central African Republic (CAR)</td>
<td>6,22,984 *4.22</td>
<td>4.70 #35.46</td>
<td>12,104</td>
<td>388/1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Inadequate Peacekeepers to Ensure POC

**Source:** Information is collected from different websites and evaluated by the author.

The ratio indicates that the number of peacekeepers in relation to population is inadequate to protect the civilians against any attack by the armed group. It should be a concern whether such

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10 Chapter VII: Action with respect to threats to the peace, breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression.

11 Statement by former USG, DPKO to the Special Committee on PKO, at New York, on 24 February 2014.

12 Hertz Lieutenant Colonel Badderuddin, Capacity Development Officer, Policy and Doctrine Team, DPKO, New York, USA, interview by the writer on 21 December 2013.

13 Paul, Deconinck Major General Jean, Force Commander, MINUSMA, Mali, interviewed by the author on 01 October 2017.
less number of peacekeepers can protect a civilian. The most dangerous part of POC is the failure to protect civilians rightfully receive widespread publicity.

**Complex Command and Control (C2) Arrangement of UN.** In UN mission, the contingents and individuals are placed under operational control of the Force Commander (FC) but not under the full command. As the FC, Sector Commanders and Contingents are not from the same nation, in a crisis situation the force do not react the way they would do in their national environment. This C2 arrangement of UN is resulting in unexpected performance by the deployed peacekeepers. Research shows that due to the complexity of operations and the limitations imposed by the national governments, a centralized command and a form of decentralized mission type style is generally used in the frame of UN operations at all levels: strategic, operational and tactical.

**Language Barrier.** For successful UNPSOs skill on local languages plays an important role in effective communication. Recently one of the French and Arabic speaking T/PCCs got advantage over Bangladesh while selecting a Rapidly Deployable Battalion for MONUSCO. Though skill of Bangladeshi officers in English is good, the levels of communication of both officers and troops lack in French and Arabic. Due to lack of skill in French/Arabic language, Bangladeshi candidates sometimes do not get shortlisted/selected for posts in UN secretariat and field missions. Table 3 shows the language of the large UN missions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mission and Country</th>
<th>Language (including Mostly spoken local language)</th>
<th>Number of Deployed Bangladeshi peacekeepers</th>
<th>Position of Bangladesh among T/PCCs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MINUSMA (Mali)</td>
<td>French (Bambara)</td>
<td>1,696</td>
<td>2nd /57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MINUSCA (CAR)</td>
<td>French (Sango)</td>
<td>1017</td>
<td>6th /55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MONUSCO (DR Congo)</td>
<td>French (Swahili)</td>
<td>1,893</td>
<td>3rd /56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MINUSTAH (Haiti)</td>
<td>French (Haitian Creole)</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>6th /36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNMISS (South Sudan)</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>1,629</td>
<td>5th /67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNAMID (Darfur, Sudan)</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>7th /46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MINURSO (Western Sahara)</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1st /39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIFIL (Lebanon)</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>14th /42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3: Local Language of Different Missions**

**Source:** Data is collected from UN document, website and evaluated by the author.

Besides, approximately 6456 serving/retired Armed Forces personnel and civilians are participating in ‘Operation Kuwait Punorgothon’ (OKP) as part of bilateral agreement between two governments that also demands skill in Arabic language.

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14 Lieutenant Daniel Blocq is an assistant professor in international law at Netherlands Defence Academy.


21
Lack of Representation at Higher Level Post. Being one of the leading T/PCCs for long, Bangladesh could not get appropriate share of the higher posts at UN Secretariat. Though there are few posts at P-4 level, there is no post at P-5 (Section Chief)/ Director or above level staff. As the DPKO and DFS in the UN Secretariat direct and monitor field missions, appropriate representation from military as well as civilian may be pursued.

Gender Mainstreaming. One of the focused areas of UN is mainstreaming gender and accordingly it targeted 15% female of the total UNMO/SO to be deployed by 2018. At present, about 10% of 11,099 police and about 3% of the 83,000 military personnel of deployed peacekeepers are women.16 The female participation of the uniformed components of UNPSOs needs to be also increased.

Inherent Disadvantages of UN Mission under Chapter VII. UN missions conducted under Chapter VII allow UN peacekeepers to apply force if any of the parties in the conflict does not obey the peace treaty. Once peacekeepers apply force, that party consider UN is suppressing them and assisting their opponents. Therefore, the party gradually become hostile to peacekeepers and try to create hindrance and make the environment insecure for peacekeepers to implement mission mandate.

Operational Environment. Peacekeepers are now facing serious security challenges of asymmetric and complex threat. Besides, many host nations do not cooperate with UN force and impose restriction on movement and other operations. For instance, alongside UN forces, there are troops from AU, France and recently created G5 Sahel Force operating in Mali. Many of the locals do not support involvement of so many forces operating in Mali. Similarly in CAR, other forces are operating side by side UN force. Sometimes Bangladesh contingents need to conduct joint operations with these forces including Government force of the host countries. Therefore, it is difficult for Bangladeshi peacekeepers to operate maintaining the image of impartiality to the locals.

Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) Threat. Persistent IED threat and increasing threat of terrorist activities highly restrict freedom of movement/manoeuvre/operations of UN Forces in Mali. The main threats in Mali are IED in different forms including suicidal attack. The security threat in Mali is increasingly transitional and criminalized in nature.17 Therefore, it is often a threatening concern for all peacekeepers while conducting operations for the implementation of mission mandate.

Poor Intelligence Network. Intelligence plays a vital role in assessing situation and to develop Concept of Operations. Absence of intelligence outfit in UN contingents is an impediment for intelligence management and it affects conduct of operations. In many mission especially in Mali the contingents do not have specific Area of Responsibilities with geographic boundaries which hamper in establishing intelligence network.18

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16 UN Background Note- October 2018.
17 DPKO, 2018, ‘Current and Emerging Uniformed Capability requirements for UN Peacekeeping’.
18 Briefing by Colonel Mashirur Rahman, Contingent Commander BANBAT-5, Mali on 10 October 2018.
Logistic Challenges

Difficulties of Logistic Support. Most of the contingents are deployed in land lock countries of African continent far away from Bangladesh. To maintain several contingents with thousands of troops far away from home is a huge logistic challenge. Additionally, due to the physical environment, weather and poor infrastructure, the contingents require huge spares. As the make and type of the equipment are different, spares are not available in local market of host countries. The shipment of spare parts and other equipment in most of the cases do not reach in time due to the difficulties of custom clearance of many countries enroute including host country. Therefore, sometimes, major equipment (Combat vehicles, Generators etc.) remains non-operational due to lack of spares leading to the sufferings of contingent and loss of country’s reimbursement.19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Distance (in km)</th>
<th>Means of Transportation Involved</th>
<th>Tentative Time</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mali</td>
<td>9,651</td>
<td>Sea and Land</td>
<td>90 days</td>
<td>1. All are land locked countries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D R Congo</td>
<td>8,027</td>
<td>Sea and Land</td>
<td>75 days</td>
<td>2. Air transportation is very costly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAR</td>
<td>7,615</td>
<td>Sea and Land</td>
<td>90 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Sudan</td>
<td>6,415</td>
<td>Sea and Land</td>
<td>80 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Time Consuming Transportation Procedure

Source: Data is collected from OO Dte, AHQ by the author.

STRATEGY FOR BANGLADESH TO RESPOND THE CHALLENGES

General

As discussed earlier UNPSOs are facing multiple challenges and a concerted effort is needed to overcome those challenges. With the vast experience and enormous capability developed in last 30 years, Bangladesh should be able to overcome the challenges and can bring fortune for Bangladesh in enhancing the contribution to UNPSOs. It will in turn pave the way for Bangladesh to have positive bilateral relation with other countries.

Strategy for Bangladesh on UNPSOs

Concept of Participation in UNPSOs. From the past experience it has been observed that Bangladeshi peacekeepers are efficient in winning the hearts and minds of the locals through different humanitarian activities for socio economic development. Bangladeshi contingents construct and renovate roads, schools, religious institutions, organise free treatment camps, organise games and sports competitions among the locals. All these activities take the Bangladeshi peacekeepers closer to the people at root level. Side-by-side, in the process of performance

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19 Rahman, Lieutenant Colonel Md Hamdur, psc, General Staff Officer 1, OO Dte, AHQ, interviewed by the Author, on 17 December 2017.
mandated tasks, Bangladeshi peacekeepers should gain confidence of the political leaders and hierarchy of the host nations. Therefore, Bangladesh should work in three pronged approach shown in Table 5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bangladesh in Peacekeeping</th>
<th>Three Pronged Activities</th>
<th>Result</th>
<th>Consolidation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Performing mandated tasks with unquestionable loyalty</td>
<td>Gain confidence of UN</td>
<td>Conducive and favourable situation for UNPSOs including peacebuilding activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Support Political Process’ as extension of state authorities</td>
<td>Gain confidence of Political Leaders/ Officials of host countries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Civil Military Cooperation (CIMIC)/Pacification Activities/Humanitarian activities</td>
<td>Winning the hearts and minds of locals specially youths.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Proposed Three Pronged Approach of Bangladesh in UNPSOs

Source: Conceptualised by the author.

Ultimate Aim: Government to Government Bilateral Relation. Bangladesh should have long term strategic vision to continue with bilateral relation even after the closure of the UN missions. Therefore, all the activities should be directed with an ultimate aim to have bilateral relation with host countries. As the personnel of Armed Forces have already gained confidence and trust of the host countries, therefore, military to military cooperation should start with immediate effect. Later on cooperation should transfer to all possible fields like agriculture, trade and commerce, participation of NGOs etc. The strategy should be as shown in the figure.

![Figure 4: Strategy of Bangladesh for Participation in Peacebuilding](source)

Source: Conceptualized by the author.

Preparation at Strategic Level

Enhancing Diplomatic Capacity. High level diplomatic engagement and support is needed for successful UNPSOs as well as to ensure that Bangladesh is getting appropriate slice to

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20 Focused Group discussion with deployed Bangladeshi officers of Force Headquarters of different missions.
21 Uddin Lieutenant General Mohammad Nazim, Former Chief of General Staff, Bangladesh Army interviewed by the author on 30 June 2018.
22 Islam, Brigadier General Quazi Shamsul, Director, OO Dte, AHQ interviewed by the author on 30 June 2018.
participate in future peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities. Diplomatic relations should be enhanced with AU, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), EU, Arab League, NATO, CANZ (Canada, Australia and New Zealand at UN). Former military leadership, SO/UNMO and other civilian staffs of Bangladesh may assist in this regard with their expertise in the field of peacekeeping. Permanent Mission of Bangladesh at New York (PMBNY) also should pursue diplomacy at UN secretariat and permanent missions of other countries at New York.

**Opening up Embassy/ Mission by Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA).** There is positive image in current and closed mission areas where people have good impression about Bangladeshi peacekeepers but there is no Bangladeshi outfit to capitalise that. There is no Embassy of Bangladesh also in the countries which is hosting major UN missions now.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Major Mission</th>
<th>Total Participation of Bangladesh (so far)</th>
<th>Host Country</th>
<th>Embassy of Bangladesh</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNAMSIL</td>
<td>11,911</td>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>There is no Bangladeshi Embassy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNOCI</td>
<td>28,902</td>
<td>Ivory Coast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNMIL</td>
<td>23,330</td>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MONUSCO</td>
<td>22186</td>
<td>DR Congo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MINUSCA</td>
<td>3096</td>
<td>CAR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MINUSMA</td>
<td>5085</td>
<td>Mali</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: Peacekeeping Contribution and State of Embassy of Bangladesh in Africa Region

*Source:* Data is collected from Armed Forces Division by the author.

MOFA should open embassy/ missions in all countries of closed and matured missions as shown in Table 6 with a view to establishing bilateral relation with host countries in different fields of cooperation.

**Establishing Think Tank Cell.** By now, Bangladesh has good number of resource personalities and experts on peacekeeping issues. For their optimal utilisation, Bangladesh should establish a dedicated Think-Tank Cell comprising retired and serving military officers, Director General of UN Cell from MOFA and other experts on the field. The Cell should carry out study on strategic matters on UNPSOs and recommend formulation of policies for Bangladesh. The body may be housed at Peacebuilding Training Centre /BIPSOT, AFD or at MOFA.

**Study Report of High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO).** The panel had comprehensive assessment of current peacekeeping operations to find out the emerging needs and evolving challenges likely to be faced by different actors of peace process. It has also highlighted the necessity to train the peacekeepers by the member state and “Triangular consultation” among Security Council, T/PCCs and UN Secretariat. Bangladesh should study the report to set own courses of actions to act as a leading T/PCCs.23

23 HIPPO Report; page 61 and 62.

Preparation at Operational Level

Responding to UN Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System (UNPCRS). As per the HIPPO report UN has created a Van Guard Brigade which will allow UN to quickly insert a military capability into a new mission area or to reinforce any existing mission.\(^\text{24}\) Bangladesh should register and always try to keep few units in Rapid Deployment Level (RDL) of PCRS which is a prerequisite of selection for any new deployment subsequently. The contingents are to be ready for deployment with COE and self-sustainment within 30-90 days on receiving invitation from UNHQ.

Taking Responsibilities for POC. 95 % of the deployed troops involved in POC.\(^\text{25}\) Being one of the sensitive tasks, it is imperative to enhance preparedness of Bangladesh Armed Forces to the fullest to meet the challenges of POC.\(^\text{26}\)

Training Needs for Peacekeepers and Peace builders. Peacekeeping training enables UN military, police and civilian staff to effectively implement increasingly multifaceted mandates.\(^\text{27}\) Peacekeeping training prepares them with the knowledge, skills and attitudes that enable them to implement the mission mandate. Practical oriented training should be imparted on robust peacekeeping. BIPSOT can provide such training with the support of other training institutions.\(^\text{28}\) To train the personnel on environment, socio-economic condition and local culture, assistance may be sought from the just rotated staff contingent. The impact can be described by the flow chart of Figure 13.

![Flow Chart: Impact of Training on Overall Performance of Contingents](image)

**Figure 5: Impact of Training on Overall Performance of Contingents**

*Source:* Conceptualized by the author based on experience of working in AHQ, OO Dte and Planning Officer of DPKO, UNHQ.

Enhancing Language Proficiency. Knowledge on local language is a prerequisite for successful operations and should get top priority. Selected troops should undergo training in French/Arabic languages. To fulfill the requirement, Language Lab may be established at

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\(^{24}\) UN DPKO and Department DFS Policy on RDL of PCRS August 2017.

\(^{25}\) Calculated from data available at UN archive.

\(^{26}\) UN Secretary-General Guterres, Antonio’s Speech in 2nd Chief of Defense Conference on Peacekeeping at UNHQ New York, USA on 06 to 08 July 2017.

\(^{27}\) Bhuiyan, Brigadier General Md Anisuzzaman, ndc, psc (retired) (former Commandant BIPSOT), interviewed by the author on 3 July 2017.

\(^{28}\) Rahman, Major General Md Maksudur, psc, former Commandant, BIPSOT, interviewed by the writer, 7 July 2017.
formation level for their continuous practice as it takes time to build up the proficiency and skill on languages.\textsuperscript{29}

**Mainstreaming Gender.** Gender mainstreaming is pursued vigorously by UN at HQs and fields level.\textsuperscript{30} Bangladesh has already established credibility by providing all-female Formed Police contingent to Haiti (MINUSTAH) and DR Congo (MONUSCO). Bangladesh Armed Forces also started sending female officers as Staff/Observer to meet the 15% target of UN. The tempo should be continued and while nominating candidate for posts at UN Secretariat and field missions, female officer candidates should get priority.\textsuperscript{31}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Officer</th>
<th>Contingent Member</th>
<th>SO/UNMO</th>
<th>Total Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>641</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>539</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table-7: Increasing Bangladeshi Female Officers Deployment in UN Missions**
Source: Data is collected from OO Dte by the author.

Besides, Bangladesh Army has planned to deploy ‘Female Engagement Team’ of about 20-25 personnel (female soldiers led by female officer) to different missions from 2019 which will be a milestone in the history of Bangladesh.

‘Zero Tolerance Policy’ on Sexual Abuse and Exploitation (SEA). Bangladeshi peacekeepers have very positive image around the world which should be maintained and pursued. Commanders at all level should take all motivational approach so that Bangladeshi peacekeepers do not involve with SEA cases. In case of any incident, punitive measures should be taken as soon as possible.

**Enhancing Logistic Support.** At present, most of the Bangladeshi contingents are deployed in Mali, CAR, South Sudan, Sudan and DR Congo. To ease up the logistic supply steps may be taken to establish two Advance Logistic Base; one in Mali and other one in Sudan to support missions in CAR, South Sudan, Sudan and DR Congo as shown in Figure 6. The suppliers should be allowed to deliver directly to those bases or in the missions instead of bringing those equipment/spares in Bangladesh and again sending them to missions following a long and hazardous procedure.

\textsuperscript{29} Focused Group discussion with the officers of pre deployment contingent.
\textsuperscript{31} Foster, Major General Andrain, Deputy Military Adviser, UN Secretariat, interviewed by the author on 06 July 2017.
Conclusions

Bangladesh is contributing in UNPSOs and participated in 54 different missions in 40 countries. Bangladesh has glorious success and earned very positive image for implementing peace process in different troublesome parts of the world. Deployed peacekeepers face multidimensional challenges in mission areas. POC being a very sensitive and peacebuilding being an ambiguous task to build capacities of the war-torn host countries demand extra attention. While carrying multidimensional tasks peacekeepers encounter asymmetric threats like terrorist attacks and IED explosion. Again, while communicating with locals in Francophone and Arabic speaking mission areas Bangladeshi peacekeepers face problems very often. Besides, the deployed contingent sometimes suffers from maintenance and logistics problems of supply and remains ill equipped. Bangladesh needs to be equipped with modernized equipment including UAV with thermal imagery, mine protected vehicle etc.

Bangladesh encounters challenges in enhancing her participation in UNPSOs. UN is broadening its base and making space for new T/PCCs that is reducing the scopes for Bangladesh to contribute more. Besides, regional organization like AU influences UN for the interest of its
member states. Bangladesh also does not have proportionate senior representation at UN Secretariat and field missions. Government is yet to open embassy with African countries hosted/ hosting UN missions which is necessary for getting scope in peace support efforts as well as improving bilateral relations.

At strategic level, steps should be taken capitalising positive images of peacekeeping to gain diplomatic and economic ties with other countries for mutual benefits. At the operational level, Services HQs should take appropriate steps to train the peacekeepers physically and psychologically. There should be professional mind set to take any assigned task in right spirit to uphold the image of Bangladesh.

Bangladesh has achieved laurels in many fields for which Armed Forces’ role in UN peacekeeping is noteworthy. The excellent performance of Bangladeshi peacekeepers has not only earned the name and fame of the country but also enabled to earn huge foreign remittance. Every effort should be made by all concerned so that the hard-earned reputation is upheld. Focus should be for more qualitative contribution for world peace and security which is the constitutional commitment of Bangladesh.

**Recommendations**

In light of the discussion/study and the findings brought thereafter, few recommendations are enumerated in subsequent paragraphs.

**Modernization of Peacekeepers.** The contingents and individuals should be equipped with mine protected vehicle, equipment, UAV and other modern equipment to meet the challenges of UNPSOs.

**Training of Peacekeepers.** Peacekeepers should be trained to meet the evolving challenges of UNPSOs.

**Establishing Think-tank Cell.** Think-Tank Cell may be established to study effective Peace Operations Strategy for Bangladesh. They should recommend and formulate appropriate policies related to peace support operations including coordination and training aspects.

**Participation of Female Peacekeepers.** Participation of female peacekeepers in all capacities should be encouraged to support UN’s standing and they should be prepared accordingly.

**Learning French and Arabic Languages.** Learning French and Arabic language should get top priority for potential peacekeepers.

**Enhancing Diplomatic Mission by MOFA.** MOFA should establish embassy in all closed, old/matured missions (in Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Sudan, DR Congo, South Sudan, Sudan etc.). Positive image of Armed Forces in peacekeeping should be utilised for bilateral relation and economic ties.
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33. Fizunnessa, Mrs Sadia, Director General, UN Wing, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), interviewed on 30 December 2017.
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35. Different website as mentioned in the Footnotes on different dates.

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EXPECTATIONS VIS-À-VIS CHALLENGES OF UNIT LEVEL COMMAND-A STRATEGY TO TACKLING THEM

Lieutenant Colonel Md Humayun Kabir, SUP, SPP, psc, Inf

“The commander must work in a medium which his eyes cannot see; which his best deductive powers cannot always fathom; and with which, because of constant changes, he can rarely become familiar.”

— Carl von Clausewitz

Abstract

Commanding Officers (CO) form the back-bone of any army. They act as the life blood for functioning and delivering capability. Like many other professional armies of the world, commanding a unit in Bangladesh Army has increasingly become the most challenging of all jobs that a CO undertakes in his service career. Technological advancement, change in societal construct, and influence of globalization have added multipronged challenges compared with earlier time and the challenges are in the rise. As such, to fulfil the typical military requirements and multi-faceted or diversified tasks, COs have to find their way out applying their service experience, leadership traits and management skills prudently. The expectations of superior authority and under commands put an added caveat to the challenges. The complexity of expectations and challenges made the CO’s job even tougher. Though very precise and prescribed lessons on command and leadership are imparted to officers in their military career, these lessons are not sufficient to come out as a successful commander. More so, how to discharge the most challenging and demanding CO’s tasks is not particularly taught to any officer except that he gradually learns the art through on the job training. To be a successful commanding officer, one must continuously study and understand the challenges posed in present day context, visualize the expectations of one’s superiors and under commands and fulfil every mandated mission or tasks. This paper will provide an insight of the expectation vis-à-vis challenges including mitigation measures focusing on practical issues likely to be encountered by an officer while performing typical CO’s job in present-day working environment keeping primary focus on peacetime complexities.

Introduction

1. Among all the command and leadership assignments during military career, the command of a unit remains the finest as also the most exhilarating experience for an officer. In present day context of Bangladesh Army, commanding a unit arguably has become increasingly the most challenging, yet most rewarding, of all jobs that an officer undertakes in his service career. Commanding Officers (CO) form the back-bone of the army and they remain as the lifeblood of the army, the bedrock of stability, and the trailblazers of military professionalism. They are the

1Sengar, Maj Gen Anil (2016), Battalion Command: Dare to Lead, Pentagon Press, New Delhi, India (p xv)
2 Los Santos, Lt Gen Jaime S De (2002), Command Leadership, Kalayaan Press MktgEnt, Philippine (p vi)

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essential cogs who command units, determine morale, manage resources, and shoulder the responsibility and the blame when events refuse to follow the plan.

2. Command could simply be defined as the authority to exercise the right given to the commander by virtue of his rank and assignment, to issue orders, and to take all actions necessary to accomplish any given mission. Command and leadership are inherently dependent where command is determined by the human element under his command while leadership is an attribute that is perhaps more ingrained than acquired. Also it is more valuable than the mere wearing of ranks, while it is undeniable that rank facilitates leadership. Given the fact that units varies in construct, it would be safe to assume that, due to varied chemistry of human nature, those who command men-intensive units as against material-intensive units, would face a stiffer challenge. These men are part of the current complex society who are being highly influenced by the societal impact, technological advancement, and they pose increased challenges that a CO needs to face as time elapse. Whether commanding a men-intensive or material-intensive unit, mitigating those challenges, whatever comes up, are the corner-stone of success in today’s context. Mastery in applying a fine mix of the vested authority, leadership skills and management pave the way to accomplish the desired end state at any given point or time.

3. The expectations of superior authority and under commands put an added caveat to the unfathomable challenges for what a CO needs to apply multipronged strategy to fulfil the mandated task or mission. They are intertwined (Figure 1), and a CO must acquire mastery not only on the theoretical aspect but on the application method as well to be a successful leader and commander. That is why a certain length of service and a colourful experienced track record is necessary for an officer to become a CO. This experience, as seen by many military strategists, makes a CO a naturalistic decision maker. Though very precise and prescribed lessons on command and leadership are imparted to officers in their military career, how to discharge or apply the most challenging and demanding CO’s tasks is not particularly prescribed. Considering the shortfall of application part, this paper will go beyond the book and focus on practical issues likely to be encountered by an officer while performing typical CO’s job in present-day working environment keeping primary focus on peacetime complexities.

Figure 1- Relationship between expectation, challenges and strategy

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1US Military Publication (2018), Military Command and Leadership: US Army, Middletown, DE, USA (p 8)
2Graves, Major C Thomas, US Army (1999), Choosing the Best: Battalion Command and The Role of Experience, School of Advanced Military Studies United States Army Command and General Staff College Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, USA
4. An attempt will be made in this paper to underscore the expectations of seniors and under commands from a CO while he commands a unit. Subsequently, the typical challenges faced by a CO in present days, while fulfilling those expectations, will be discussed. Finally, appropriate strategy will be accentuated to find ways and means to tackling those challenges for the greater good of the organization.

**Expectation from a CO**

5. At the very outset, a CO needs to understand that ‘Command is not a privilege but a responsibility’\(^5\). He needs to understand that ‘No level below the CO has independent authority and no level above him has the direct authority’\(^6\). In this backdrop, one must understand that Cos form part of a chain and this chain must be strong. While one performs the job of a CO, he is being watched by two tiers of audience; by his superior and by his under commands\(^7\). They have certain expectation which a CO must fulfil at any given point or time. The expectations can be rolled down from leadership indicators following the model below:

- **Guiding Attributes**
  - Traits
  - Principles
  - Experience

- **Application Authority**
  - Command
  - Leadership
  - Management

- **Command Indicators**
  - Morale
  - Discipline
  - Esprit-de-corps

6. While commanding a unit, the guiding attributes that is learnt institutionally or gathered through service experiences are to be applied methodically keeping in mind the indicators for the ultimate goal of creating an effective unit. A CO must understand that a balanced approach in applying the command, leadership and management skills with a meticulous planning and coordination is the key for the attainment of maximum potential.\(^8\) The proper application of leadership principles and techniques of command and management skills will provide the necessary force and that will ultimately influence the unit to apply maximum effort in striving towards attaining its expected goal.

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\(^6\)Sengar, Maj Gen Anil (2016), Battalion Command: Dare to Lead, Pentagon Press, New Delhi, India (p 1)

\(^7\)Angela R. Febbraro, GC Gardner (2008), Leadership And Command, Chapter 3 NATO Multinational Military Operations and Intellectual Factors Publications (RTO-TR-HFM-120) (P 3.4-3.5)

Expectation Vis-A-Vis Challenges of Command—A Strategy to Tackling Them...

7. The model expressed is further dissected taking important elements of every step for general understanding which will facilitate one to be an effective commander in present day context while he commands a unit in BD Army. These are discussed below:

a. **Loyalty and Integrity.** For BD Army, loyalty has no second option. Sometimes, unquestionable loyalty is demanded from a CO. The same is demanded from under commands by CO himself. A CO must understand by heart that his integrity, honesty is continually tested and he needs to uphold his flag high as it directly affects him. While he possesses and practices loyalty and integrity, his sincerity, dedication to service will automatically pour in. This will instil a sense of absolute loyalty to the lowest ranking under commands. This will create an environment where everyone will naturally be motivated and inspired to work for the greater interest of the organization.

b. **Leading from Front/Role Modelling.** Both tiers (superior and follower) would demand a CO to be ‘role model’, ‘lead from front' or ‘setting personal example’ type commander. Please note, the higher one goes up the ladder, the more the tail hangs out for all to see. It suggests that each action of a leader is observed and evaluated by his superior and his men. A CO should grab every opportunity to lead from the front and be a role model for his under commands.

c. **Professional Competence.** Historical evidences suggest that soldiers do believe that a commander’s competence saves their lives. A superior in the same note can have strong reliance on a competent CO. While one is appointed as CO for his proven professional competence, his superior and men would like to see him implementing his competence on ground and take the unit in a new height. It demands a CO to be a blend of good leader, commander and manager in broader sense. CO must understand essentials of man management and administrative function in peace as well as in war. He must be innovative and thoughtful to bring about qualitative changes while he commands in operation, impart training and make administrative plan.

d. **Justice and Impartiality.** Justness of a CO is directly proportionate to the trust of his superior and men. He must be impartial in all count by being transparent to his men. Logical reasoning and reasonable explanation will ease up developing ethical command climate. While a CO develops an ethical command climate by practicing strong values thyself, his

13 US Army Command and General Staff College Press US Army Combined Arms Center Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, From One Leader to Another, Volume II, Command Sergeant Major Joe B. Parson General Editor
14 University of San Diego 2018, Command Climate and Ethical Behaviour: Perspectives from the Commandant's of the Marine Corps, Brian Kerl
outfit is bound to contribute within his command tenure effectively. Judgment of a CO is
developed while he reads his men closely, understand them and then treat them with humane
touch. Though not trained institutionally, a CO must be a good psychologist. This will also
assist him to be a good motivator and mentor of men in time of need.

e. Physical and Mental Robustness. Physical and mental robustness are pre-requisite for a
CO to expect the same from his men. CO has to go through many hard training activities,
exercises, and lead the troops in various operations. This robustness will aid to uplift his
‘Role Model’ image.

f. Physical and Moral Courage. For reasons obvious, display of physical courage is directly
linked with physical fitness. Moral courage has connection with mental courage\textsuperscript{16}. Accepting
consequences will remain a challenge that a CO must count while displaying moral courage.
As CO, one must make a balance while displaying moral courage with loyalty. Personal
courage, tactical sense and administrative ability had to be matched by an unflawing
optimism.\textsuperscript{17}

g. High Ethical and Moral Values. To command a Battalion one must have high ethical
and moral values. Without this, it is more likely that he will face dilemma in him to command
the unit effectively. As CO, one must put ‘Organization before Self’ in every account\textsuperscript{18}. If
strong ethical and moral values are nurtured in unit by CO and his outfit, the unit is likely to
reach a new height in his command tenure.

h. Decisiveness in Decision Making. Decisiveness is one of the basic ingredients of CO. It is
not necessarily a God-gifted quality. It can be developed through constant training and
professional competence. The knowledge of the relevant aspect accelerates the decision-
making process\textsuperscript{19}. More often than not, a CO’s decision making depends on his personality
and experience. A CO is expected to apply his wisdom when his decision is sought and he
should be risk-taker not risk averter.

j. Vision and Foresightedness. A CO should think ahead. He must have forethought and
imagination. He should think and decide future challenges of the unit and take adequate
measures to deal with them\textsuperscript{20}. He should formulate his command idea based on the strength
and weaknesses of the unit. He should be able to manage any unforeseen in the unit.

\textsuperscript{16}Robert A. Garland Jr. Lt Col, USAF (31 October 2008), Physical and Moral Courage: An Essential Personal
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\textsuperscript{17}Brennan, Dr Patrick H (2006), Good Men for a Hard Job: Infantry Battalion Commanders in the Canadian
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\textsuperscript{19}J Lake, Christopher and Highhouse, Scott (2013), Assessing Decision Making Competence in Manager, Judgment &
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\textsuperscript{20}Jones, Colonel Steven M (2003), Improving Accountability For Effective Command Climate: A Strategic Imperative,
USAWC Strategy Research Project
k. Adaptability and Flexibility. As CO, one must learn to adapt with all evolving situation. He should be flexible enough to cope with all changing situation. If a command climate prevails where CO is adaptive and flexible, his men will feel free to approach him with any matters at any point of time\textsuperscript{21}. This will facilitate his command tenure to function smoothly. R rigidity kills initiative and creates a barrier in under commands mind.

1. Communication Skill. COs require mastery of intergenerational communication, not only in terms of translating higher intent into action but also with respect to serving as a voice for a generation of young leaders who arguably already possess many of the adaptive and creative leadership traits the profession desires to cultivate\textsuperscript{22}. A CO must be a good communicator where he should have that capability to present matters to superior and to his under command in the best convincing way possible\textsuperscript{23}. This is an art and he must thoroughly read his superior. On the other hand he should have similar capability to convince his under commands which is relatively easier. This will ease up the process of ‘shared knowledge’\textsuperscript{24} up and down the channel to effectively command the unit.

Challenges of CO

8. CO faces multi-dimensional challenges while commanding a unit. Though the challenges do not follow any set pattern or criteria and at times, unique in nature, some common challenges do prevail. Some of these challenges includes change in uptake and attitude of under commands, diversified tasks, changed socio-economic structure, excessive and unplanned commitment of the CO, distance between leader and led, shortage of officers etcetera and the list is quite long\textsuperscript{25}. These challenges while identified should not be posed to burden the superior leadership but to remain equipped to deal with them effectively while a CO commands his unit. Few of these challenges which are common in nature will be discussed here.

a. Upholding Esprit-de-Corps/Motivation. In all military outfits, round the world, esprit-de-corps and motivation are the driving force that keep the bonding strong during peace and war. It also generates pride in uniform. A CO faces constant challenge with the new generation intake of officers and men to keep the motivation in desired level. CO should apply all his wisdom to install Esprit-de-Corps or fellow feeling, regimental feelings, comradeships at the optimum level to keep the unit battle ready at all times.

\textsuperscript{23}Katarina Katja Mihelić, Msc, Slovenia Bogdan Lipičnik, Phd, Slovenia Metka Tekavčič, Phd, (2010), Ethical Leadership, International Journal of Management & Information Systems – Fourth Quarter 2010 Volume 14, Number 5
\textsuperscript{25}Kabir, Mohammad Shariar (2004), Challenges to the Battalion Command, IRP submitted in Defence Services Command and Staff College, Mirpur
b. **Self-Accountability/Commitment from Officers and Men.** Seeking self-responsibility is one of the key indicators for officers and men for becoming a professional military man. The culture of taking initiative with required zeal and enthusiasm amongst junior officers and men keeps a unit vibrant. It has been observed that a CO has to put in lot of efforts to make his outfit tuned to ‘seek responsibility’ tendency. Furthermore, CO needs to put an extra effort to make his officers and men going details of any problem/issue to bring out the best output in any given job.

c. **Training Plan.** Preparing and pursuing an effective and sustainable training plan is one of the most important tasks and a challenge for any CO. Training being the best welfare for men, CO has to keep the most important concern or focus to train his unit. No amount of resource will be sufficient to impart effective training as the room for improvement is the biggest room on earth. Hence, with resource constraint, shortage of qualified instructor, CO should take every endeavour to impart training needed for his men.

d. **Societal Impact.** Army personnel are not separated from the society; hence, prevailing socio conditions will have definite influence. Today’s officers and men are smart, intelligent, tactful and inquisitive than early. They have more hopes and aspirations. The chances of getting derailed from the set standard of military norms due to societal impact cannot be ignored. A CO should understand this dynamics and keep motivating his officers and men to refrain his outfit from negative impact of societal impact. Remaining within and nurturing military value and ethos, constant motivations are the best way to avoid societal impact.

e. **Administrative Challenges.** Perhaps no military around the world is fully sound administratively. Scarcity of manpower and resources will remain a persistent challenge in the foreseeable future. A CO should cope with this challenge and perform all assignments though it will sometime seem overstretched. As the military engagements leaps beyond pure military, like Operation NOBO JATRA or Operation ALOR SHONDEHANE, so does the multifarious challenges including discipline issues of various natures will rise. CO should master the art of tackling those prudently to keep the unit function effectively under all odds. Though the typical administrative issues like accommodation, living condition and schooling will remain a challenge, undoubtedly, the condition is getting better day by day due to the deep concern of military hierarchy.

f. **Pride in Profession.** Army is a profession of pride and honour. Real motivation lies in the premise that one individual serves the nation and remains ready to lay down life without any hesitation in the way of duty. This motivation comes from patriotism and pride in uniform. The promise of status, respect and a decent life style are motivating factors for

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26 Raihan, Asif Rana, psc, Lieutenant Colonel, CO, 17 Bangladesh Infantry Regiment, Jashore Cantonment. (personal communication, 2018, October 8).
27 Kabir, Mohammad Shariar (2004), *Challenges to the Battalion Command*, IRP submitted in Defence Services Command and Staff College, Mirpur.
28 Rahman, Md Atikur, psc. Lieutenant Colonel, CO, 11 East Bengal Regiment, Kholahati Cantonment. (personal communication, 2018, November 2)
talented young men to join military despite having physical hardship. Corporate world, at times, put a strain in that motivation. CO needs to work with prudent wisdom to continuously install the pride in profession.

g. **Distance between Leaders and the Led.** Unit cohesion and moral is, ‘largely, a function of the degree to which the combat troops perceive that their officers are willing to fight and die with them’\(^{29}\). But, current “Head Down” officers keep themselves engaged with hi-tech gadgets thus creates a natural distance with their men. Soldiers are also grasping the similar habit. This is not conducive to creating a healthy climate or environment that facilitates command of a CO. COs should ensure that set regimental cultures of respective units are being practiced religiously to increase the inter-personal relation between officers and men.

h. **Social Media.** This is a new phenomenon and form of counterproductive work behaviour emerging in the last decade. Cyber loafing can be defined as surfing the web in any form of non-job-related task performed by the under command. Nowadays, it is observed that officers and men remain connected with the internet round the clock. They also keep surfing the social media often and on. If the same surfing is done during office time, it is bound to reduce the work efficiency of an individual. It is also directly and indirectly responsible for moral and ethical degradation for cases like extra marital affair, illicit relationship, drug abuse and the list is quite long. Besides implementing the social media policy strictly, CO has to find way out studying the trend of his unit and reduce the negative impact of social media in his unit.

**Strategy to Tackling the Challenges**

9. Challenges will be there but these are to be dealt with positive attitude. Tackling these challenges is also a command responsibility. How these challenges can be mitigated is discussed subsequently.

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a. **Constant/ continuous Motivation.** If a CO is a role model who is morally upright, physically and mentally robust, professionally competent, his under commands are bound to listen to his every word he speaks. For CO ‘motivation’ should be utilized as the most effective weapon/tool against all challenges and, it should be done continuously for both officers and men. They should be told to live within their means without unnecessarily comparing with outside people since it is not going to give any dividend. They should be guided to take pride in profession as it offers the most secured and honest living. They should be motivated softly to increase their ethical and moral values. They should be guided to grow comradeship while they live together, work together, enjoy together and fight together. While accepting societal impact on military, measures to be adopted through innovative means so that the gap between leader and led is reduced. If a coherent approach is applied and officers and men work in similar platform, many challenges will naturally be overcome and they will remain motivated and disciplined.

b. **Accountability.** To command effectively, a CO must ensure that he delegates authority, accepts mistakes and make his officers and men accountable for their responsibilities. Every tier of officers and men should be given with responsibilities in commensuration with their rank/ appointment. Certain degree of flexibility should also be given. Accepting marginal error and avoiding over supervision, if they are made accountable for the given tasks, the overall performance of the unit is likely to rise high. CO should try to create an environment where all ranks including officers will be encouraged to seek and take responsibility. CO should be flexible, adaptive and encourage the same for others.

c. **Prudent Career Plan.** A prudent career plan encompassing training, leave and administration before the start of training year will yield a positive outcome for any unit. This plan should address when an individual will go on privilege leave/ Eid Leave or even Casual Leave, who should be trained in various army, division, brigade and unit level cadres, who should be appointed in various appointments round the year while catering for alternative or minor adjustment at later stage. This will set the pace of the unit to function smoothly. This will ease up many administrative issues like resource constraints and manpower issue. Prudent training plan keeps a unit operationally fit by selecting appropriate personnel for a selective course or cadre and maintain specialist state as prescribed by authority. Prudent leave plan normally solves most of the family issues and discipline cases like AWOL or OSL.

d. **Humane Touch.** A CO must always remember that he primarily deals with men not machine. Man management has always been a critical issue since inception. In present day context, where societal value is degrading, technological advancement is on the rise, men are more critical to handle; as CO, one needs to apply technique that will assist him to keep his

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men under his effective grip. Perhaps, ‘human touch’ in every military activity is the key here in present day scenario. A CO needs to be more humane than before. Toxic or autocratic leadership will not yield good outcome. A CO needs to study and read every officer and soldier very closely while dealing with them for any issue.

Conclusion

10. An Army is only as worthy as its COs. They are expected to work harder if compared to any other tenure of their military career. They will remain the center of attraction, being closely watched and intensively analyzed. It is expected by all that they will be a role model in decision making where professional competence and fair judgment ingrained with high ethical and moral value will remain as the linchpin. Discipline will obviously remain a key focus where they should never lose focus. Even among commanding officers who were widely disliked for their obsessive discipline but truly imbued with courageous leadership earned their men’s grudging respect.

They also need to acquire the mastery of seeing through the lens. In present day context, good commanders need to anticipate developments in the situation rather than being forced to react to changes: they endeavoured to “stay ahead of the action”.

11. With the stream of time, command has become now most challenging and demanding. Morally, they cannot afford to put a step wrong. They are constantly under the scanner from their superiors and their subordinates. The organization owes it to the COs who shoulder the responsibility of keeping the Army battle-fit. COs must make every endeavour exercising their initiative to take the unit in a newer height. Building a strong bonding with all the members of his unit, a CO has the sacred responsibility of contributing in the progressive development of the Army continuously.

QUESTIONNAIRE TO GUIDE COMMAND CLIMATE

- Is the unit and men my number one priority? Is my family willing to be second rung?
- Do I plan the unit beyond my tenure?
- Do I take an ethical stance irrespective of the consequences?
- Am I forthright expressing my opinion in the interest of the unit or do I favour a diplomatic approach to a soldierly one?
- Do I serve the individual or the chair?
- Do I take responsibility for my decisions and actions?
- Am I approachable to the men with personal issues?
- Do I cite ‘heavy paperwork’ as the reason for my inability to be with the men in the field?

33 Rahman, Md Atikur, psc. Lieutenant Colonel, CO, 11 East Bengal Regiment, Kholahati Cantonment. (personal communication, 2018, November 2)
34 Brennan, Dr Patrick H (2006), Good Men for a Hard Job: Infantry Battalion Commanders in the Canadian Expeditionary Force, Canadian Army Journal Vol. 9.1 (p22)
35 Jim McLennan, Alina Holgate, Mary M. Omodei and Alexander J. Wearing (2003), Good, Poor, and Disastrous Small-Unit Command: Lessons from the Fireground, The 39th Lamp, Brussels, Belgium (p4)
36 Collected from web and modified by the author.
✓ Do I postpone taking unpleasant, tough decisions?
✓ Do I keep a larger perspective or do I micro-manage?
✓ Do I accept error of judgment from my subordinates?

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EFFICACY OF SELF-CONFIDENCE: A CATALYTIC AGENT TRANSFORMING THE ASPIRATION OF FUTURE LEADERS OF BANGLADESH ARMY

Colonel Md Ziaul Hoque, afwc, psc

“If you have no confidence in self, you are twice defeated in the race of life. With confidence, you have won even before you started.”

-Marcus Tullius Cicero

Abstract

Self-confidence is a quality that persists in all outstanding leaders. There is one delicate attribute that contributes most profoundly in living a passionate, successful and content life that is termed as self-confidence. A self-confident leader is poised to be creative, open to new experiences and cognitive thinker and accommodates other potentials. In addition, he possesses the capacity to see beyond (visionary) and catch a glimpse of possibilities; scanning the horizon of the leader’s world and exploring the depth of leader’s experience. A junior leader must campaign against the worry habit. A subtle and successful attack on fright is to snip off the little worries, one by one, before going to the main trunk of one’s fear. A junior leader should prepare for a journey that entails stock of his present location, thinking about the destination, having the right mindset for a prospective career in Bangladesh Army. Then slowly he should move toward desired goal. A proper mentoring coupled with the personal effort may bring out the undiscovered qualities of a junior officer and establish him to be a kingpin not only for the unit but also for the entire Bangladesh Army.

Introduction

Self-confidence is simply credence in one’s own abilities or faith in one’s own capability to do anything precisely. It is particularly significant in almost every aspect of lives. And those having confidence are more successful in their professional life as they pursue more ambitious goals, take decisive action, and share their ideas and desires easily. Self-confident people also maintain more contented and healthier relationships, have more personal achievements and feel better about them in general. Jack Welch believed: “Confidence gives you courage and extends your reach. It enables you to take greater risks and achieve far more than you ever thought possible”. Leadership largely depends on self-confidence; it is said as act of obedience, confidence, respect and cooperation in order to accomplish the mission. Self-confidence is a phenomenon which comprises courage, decisiveness, endurance and initiative.

1 http://www.1000advices.com/guru/business_success_3s_welch.html [accessed on 05 August 2018]
2 Leadership is the art of influencing and directing man in such a way as to obtain their willing obedience, confidence, respect and loyal cooperation in order to accomplish the mission.
3 Courage is the choice and willingness to confront agony, pain, danger, uncertainty, or intimidation. Physical courage is bravery in the face of physical pain, hardship, death or threat of death, while moral courage is the ability to act rightly in the face of popular opposition, shame, scandal, discouragement, or personal loss.
A self-confident military leader is most likely to win maximum battle because of his thoughtful planning, judicious utilization of available resources, compassion, astute leadership and admirable ethos. Troops would be comfortable with a commander who gives clear orders, holds his head high, answers questions assuredly and readily admits when he does not know something. During our Liberation War, Mukti Bahini and peace-loving Bengalis from all walks of life demonstrated their determination and resilience to defend their motherland. Freedom fighters were organized and equipped with limited training by active and former military leaders since 26 March 1971 to shape the battlefield in length and breadth for final offensive by allied forces in December 1971. Though they had enormous limitations compared to well-organized and well-trained Pakistani Forces, they came out as victorious due to their resilience, determination and courage. The leaders at all tiers instilled confidence in them to fight for the righteousness of the cause. Freedom fighters gained self-confidence from military leadership through motivation and training. Thus, self-confident leaders inspire others and are generally more proactive. A self-confident leader acts as an environmental change-agent. He is more of a thermostat than a thermometer. Both are instrumental for measuring heat. The thermometer is passive because it only records the temperature of the environment whereas a thermostat is active because it determines what the environment will be and effect a change in order to make it suitable. A self-confident leader is also poised to be creative, open to new experiences and cognitive thinker. In addition, he possesses the capacity to see beyond (visionary) and catch a glimpse of possibilities; scanning the horizon of the leader’s world and exploring the depth of leader’s experience.

Bangladesh Army expects its officers to grow into the role of professionals, competent to lead in extreme conditions and to meet the unforeseen and fulfil their mission. An aspect that distinguishes military leadership from leadership in the civil context is the ability to withstand extreme situations where his life and that of his subordinates are at danger. Self-confident leader is determined to make decisions in adverse conditions taking all possible risk of his life. It means doing the unpleasant, withstand unpleasant circumstances, overcoming feelings of powerlessness and avoiding emotional exhaustion. Military leadership requires robustness in order to think clearly and effectively and to master one’s own emotions in the face of difficult situations. Self-confident leader is like the balance in a spectrum of military life. He can undertake calculative risks and try hard to achieve objective. However, an over-confident leader will probably take too much risk, stretching beyond his capabilities and crash badly which is not desired at all.

A junior officer in the unit is often found lacking in confidence in his initial days. It is an absolutely normal phenomenon for a newly commissioned officer since he is stepping inside a new environment to which he is completely unaware. However, there is hardly any problem in entering the unit with poor confidence, but it significantly important for a young officer to boost his level of confidence within the shortest possible time in order to function as a military leader. Fortunately, self-confidence can be learnt and built by relentless hard work and dedication. The devotion of a junior officer coupled with balanced supervision by senior officers of the unit may turn a wobbly young officer into a balanced, accomplished and confident military leader. In this paper an attempt

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has been made to discuss the challenges confronted by junior leaders with poor self-confidence and suggest a few measures for inculcating positive attitude towards self-confidence. Thereafter, it has been highlighted briefly how self-confidence affects performance of an individual with special emphasis on a few factors that affect self-confidence. At last this paper covers the plausible measures to be undertaken by the junior leaders to strengthen their own confidence level.

**Control of Fear and Strengthening Self-Confidence**

Fear is the most potent of all beliefs, with one exception, and that is faith. Faith can always overcome fear. Junior officers should learn to go through faith until he becomes an expert in faith. Then possibly fear cannot live in someone’s mind. A junior leader must campaign against the worrying habit. A subtle and successful attack on fright is to snip off the little worries, one by one, before going to the main trunk of one’s fear. It is obvious that very successful junior leaders are those who triumph even apprehension of failure and rejection. They approach their task with a belief that they will ultimately succeed in their endeavor, that all obstacle are simply very insignificant in nature. They dedicate their commitments totally to achieve desired goal and pursue until they succeed. Every officer who is selected for commission in Bangladesh Army has seeds of self-confidence; the selection system ensures that training and motivation which will gradually reduce the degree of fear and instill self-confidence. Realistic training for an officer’s role in war and courage in his professional competence develops self-confidence. Events like battle inoculation and skill in the employment of weapon and equipment, Situational Training Exercise (STX), Mission Oriented Training (MOT), individual obstacle crossing, frequent interaction with seniors are a few opportunities for a military officer in peacetime to train him in conducting battle where self-confidence plays a significant role. Very often, during peacetime, an officer wavers or desists from an action which is obviously in the interest of his sub-unit or from offering unpalatable advice on a problem, or expressing a candid opinion, when he starts thinking ‘will it adversely affect my career’. These doubts cross the mind to those whose self-confidence is not profound and strong; he remains ambitious beyond his potential. An officer can consolidate and build up his courage and self-confidence when he has developed requisite selflessness.

In any situation that an officer encounters, he should ask the question- what is the ‘worst that can happen?’ Once he has identified the worst, he should think how to prevent it from happening and undertake suitable action. He should also think out the options he would have if the worst does happen. If, after such an exercise, the worst does actually take place, it can never imbalance or discourage the officer concerned; he remains prepared for it. In the implementation of any plan, program or project, countless difficulties arise. Failures occur on the part of people who have to execute the plan. At times, these failures happen due to natural causes; in other times due to insufficient resources; and these exist as a result of frailties of human nature. A good leader must have the confidence (call it determination, perseverance, tenacity or whatever) to persist in spite of set-backs and difficulties that may emerge.

**Self-esteem Versus Self-confidence**

The terms self-esteem and self-confidence are often used interchangeably when referring how someone feels about himself. Although the concepts are very similar, they are two different

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7Staple Dr. Walter Doyle “How to Win in Life” USB Publishers’ New Delhi, 1995, p-196.
concepts. It is important to perceive their roles when someone looks to improve by himself. Self-esteem develops from skills and situations that have shaped his visions. On the other hand, Self-confidence is how he feels regarding his abilities which may differ from situation to situation. Someone may possess healthy self-esteem, but low confidence on some precise situations.

Figure 1.1: Differences between Self-confidence and Self-esteem

When someone develops a fondness for himself, his self-esteem improves which makes him more confident. When he is confident in domains of his life, he begins to increase his overall sense of esteem which may improve both concurrently.

Figure 1.2: Correlations between Self-esteem and Self-confidence

Source: Developed by behavioural scientist Viktor Sander

Self-confidence a Dynamic Process

Self-confidence is not instantaneous but comes from taking small steps (i.e. having a set of goals). Great achievers in life are those who always set goals for themselves and work hard to grasp

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Efficacy of Self-Confidence: A Catalytic Agent Transforming The Aspiration of Future Leaders of Bangladesh Army

According to Shad Helmsetter “It is the goal that shapes the plan, it is the plan that sets the action, it is the action that achieves the result, and it is the result that brings the success”. Self-confidence is a judgment based on weighing capabilities, abilities, motivation and all the resources that one can muster versus the requirements of the task at hand. Like any other finding, it can be accurate or inaccurate. It is influenced by how someone makes judgments meticulously, how accurate is the data that are considered for judgments, and how it is processed. Self-confidence is based on perceptions, both on capabilities and the task or challenge, not on the underlying skills or the task requirements. For the requirements of the task, anything that affects perceptions can result in having more or less self-confidence.

In self-confidence cycle, people venture a small risk and make a step toward some momentous goal. Success in that perspective makes him more confident in his abilities. As a result, he sets higher goals and gains more self-confidence successfully, leading to next higher level of aspiration. People may have considerable control on overall picture of self-confidence. Level of confidence results from specific experiences and it develops through a cognitive sense-making process.

Note: The Cycle can be entered at any point

People with self-confidence are made, not born. The bottom line is that self-confidence is one of the self-management factors that people can influence. It takes a rational momentum to build great self-confidence and a fundamental building block as self-confidence hinges on the “Five principles as stated by John Maxwell in his book titled “Winning with people”. These are:

- **The Lens Principle:** Who we are determines how we see others.
- **The Mirror Principle:** The first person we must examine is ourselves.
- **The Pain Principle:** Be reminded that people often hurt by people. In other words, life is so comfortable to live if we do not step on each other’s rights.
- **The Hammer Principle:** Never use a hammer to swat a fly off someone’s head.

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10Helmstetter Shad “You can excel in times of change” Pocket publisher December, 1992
The Elevator Principle: We can lift people up or take people down in our relationships. We have to learn to respect other people’s views because they too can be rightful.

Challenges to Develop Self-confidence

A newly commissioned officer steps into a new environment once he joins the unit after completion of training from Bangladesh Military Academy (BMA). For the first time, he stands in front of a bulk of soldiers. The soldiers are oriented with the unit cultures and tradition which were hardly a part of their academic training. At this stage, it is usual for the officer to feel considerable discomfort due to exposure to an entirely unique situation. These discomforts are usually generated by number of common challenges faced by officers in the initial days. However, as he gradually gains experience, he becomes more involved in unit affairs and thereby gets confidence regarding routine activities. A new set of challenges may appear for junior officers after their initial tenure in the unit. The challenges which junior officers face in the unit affecting their self-confidence are enunciated in following paragraphs.

Fear of Unknown

Famous American writer H.P. Lovecraft says, “The oldest and strongest emotion of mankind is fear, and the oldest and strongest kind of fear is fear of the unknown”. Once a newly commissioned officer joins unit, he remains completely unaware about the regulations, best practices, cultures, traditions and activities of the unit. The officers become the centre of curiosity among all members of the unit. As a result, at times it becomes quite stressful for the officers because of persistent fear of unknown. It becomes more challenging for a newcomer when the unit suffers from the shortage of officers especially junior level officers who could be regular mentor for the newcomer. Due to paucity of officer, newly commissioned officers stay devoid of initial supervision of immediate seniors. This is the most common phenomenon in almost all major units of Bangladesh Army. A newly commissioned officer needs distinctive care from the beginning by unit officers for a solid foundation in Bangladesh Army. He must undergo all routine activities which will motivate him towards the goal. A motivated person with higher self-confidence will work harder in tackling a task and exert more effort even in the face of critical problems and difficulties. Self-confidence helps a person to assess a situation as less threatening and fearful. In the process, it helps him to believe that he will be capable to withstand the threats. Threat and fear are relational concepts. It occurs in relation to some situation. As a result, whether he views a situation as a threat or an opportunity, depends on how he observes the situation and his ability to grapple with the situation. Self-confident leader, with his abilities, will appreciate fewer situations as threat.

Exposure to Leadership and Divergent Commitments

An officer experiences the unique feeling of leadership in the unit for the first time in his military career. No matter how best theoretical knowledge one has acquired during academic

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1https://www.google.com/#q=h.+p.+lovecraft+quotes&stick=H4sIAAAAAAAAAONgFuLQz9U3MM4ySFGCs7TEs5O9AtS8wtyUoFUUXF-nlVhaX5JkgLeyXLwAAAA (Accessed on 24 May, 2018)
training, the maiden exposure to leadership becomes a great challenge for the officer. Though the leadership arena is smaller, a newly commissioned officer suffers from various leadership dilemmas due to unique environment. A junior officer often has to deal with tremendous challenges in leading his men caused by various reasons. The reasons may vary from lack of experience, diversity of the under-commands, age difference between leader and the led, lack of knowledge on specific issues, insufficient guidance from senior officers and so on. Thus a junior leader is likely to face difficulties in decision making which may affect his image as a trustworthy leader. An officer is always subjected to high standard of rigorous training, lifestyle, manners and etiquettes during the academic training. On the contrary, the picture in the unit may seem to be highly contrasting than that of the academy. It is obvious that a newly commissioned officer will remain baffled with the level or standard of acceptance in his initial days. The functions of junior officers become arduous owing to shortage of men and material. It requires wisdom, judgment, methodical calculation and a proper appreciation of the situation to overcome the prevailing scarcity of manpower. But, in the initial days, junior officers are yet to acquire such skills because of their inexperience. Moreover, the increasing commitment of the unit further adds to their anxieties.

**Command Climate**

Healthy command climate is the essence of proper grooming up of junior officers. Reluctance in vesting independent responsibilities bars the natural prosperity of junior officers. ‘Zero Error Syndrome’ may severely degrade the potentials of junior officers. Furthermore, lack of congenial atmosphere in the unit may even derail young officers from dedication towards service. Lack of basic professional knowledge will make a junior officer unsteady while serving in any appointment, especially as staff officer in the unit. Lack of knowledge regarding rules, regulations and policies may lead him to serious complicacy. Consequently, he remains confounded in taking important decision.

**Visualization**

Someone cannot change the fact that he had some failures and setbacks in his early career. But he can change the way by perceiving them and perception on things is very crucial. He must apprehend where and how he went wrong, thereafter come up with ways to make things better in future and ways to prevent repeating the same. A leader should focus on future and remember that “anything and everything is possible”. He should visualize all his dreams candidly where he would like to reach and how colourful he wants his military career. He should understand that everything in life goes through a process. It will take much effort to get into the pinnacle of military career and achieve dormant dreams. Thus a junior military leader being optimistic must set "realistic" course of actions and follow that continuously.

**Capacity of Evaluation and Analysis**

There is a saying “Readers are leaders”. An officer immediately after his commission should possess a few military history books besides his must-read Army Training Pamphlet (ATP). This

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14 Command climate is the working environment within the influence of a particular leader or chain of command. The command climate is based on the subordinates' understanding of how they are expected to perform, how they are treated, and how they must conform to the leader's style.
culture immensely depends on his immediate senior officers who will always motivate youngsters to achieve immediate objective. Commanding officer needs to inspire juniors for periodical book review in a formal and informal way while discussing routine affairs in unit field mess. When someone reads, he can write eloquently and lucidly in order to articulate his thoughts, ideas and opinions in a rational way. Books on illustrious people, military history, leadership, strategy and tactics will steer junior leaders to attain a thought-provoking mind, self-discipline and will power for self-confidence. One should repeat to him that "I am the best" "I am competent" "I am confident" "I will" "I can" "I am" and very soon he will achieve it.15

A Journey for Pursuing Self-confidence

A junior leader should prepare for a journey that entails stock of his present location thinking about the destination, having the right mindset for a prospective career in Bangladesh Army. Then he should slowly move towards desired goal. By doing the right thing and starting with small and easy wins, he can put himself on the path of success and the self-confidence develops along with it. In setting out for the journey, the followings are necessary:

![Figure 1.4: Self-Confidence Development Cycle](image)

**Figure 1.4: Self-Confidence Development Cycle**

**Source:** Develop by author

**Thought Pattern for Self-confidence**

A junior leader needs to think positive and something out of the box, therefore, making him different from others. Ingenious way of doing things that sometimes ‘agree to disagree’ and giving opinion in a positive tone when chances are given by seniors but argument should be based on logics only on professional aspects, not by hurting the emotion of seniors. He should formulate a plan to do something different for tomorrow. If possible, he can do something slightly different from what he did yesterday, every day from the point of view of doing a little bit better, again it

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will create ‘inspirational leadership style’ that is so motivational. The person who is always looking for doing something new will be progressive minded. Confident leaders should do following:

- They have to exercise their analytical thinking abilities more effectively in finding solutions.
- They have to set higher goals and pursue them for better performance.
- They have to make different plan of any tactical solution though likely to face more challenges.

Self-confidence is always related to performance. But it also operates on set goals and the effectiveness of the leaders’ analytic strategies. Being more analytic about the approach to the task, leaders are more likely to get an approach with a higher probability of success. Thus, it has the following direct and indirect effects on self-confidence and performance as shown below:\(^\text{16}\)

![Diagram](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/238295487_Self-confidence_and_Leader_Performance)

### Figure 1.4: Direct and Indirect Relationships between Self-confidence and Performance

Source: Self-confidence and Leadership Performance

**Generating Pride**

A junior officer having less dedication towards his profession will hardly devote himself to unit affairs. As a result, he will always stand perturbed and confused in his assignments. The set goals should be clearly focused, appropriate, attainable, measurable and time-bound. The goals should be too challenging at this stage, the habit of achieving them should be gradual and slowly successes will keep piling up. In addition, the set goals should be associated with the ‘SWOT analysis’\(^\text{17}\). In other words, it should exploit one’s strength, minimize one’s weakness, realize one’s opportunities and control the potential threats. The moment a sense of satisfaction is generated in the heart of a young officer, he will completely devote himself towards service. The zeal will act as a catalyst in building his self-confidence.


\(^{17}\text{SWOT Analysis is a useful technique for understanding Strengths and Weaknesses of the organization, and for identifying both the Opportunities open and the Threats that organization face.}\)
Independent Responsibilities and Regular Correction

US General George S. Patton said “Don’t tell people how to do things, tell them what to do and let them surprise you with their results”\(^{18}\). So, superior officers in the unit should never hesitate to delegate independent responsibilities to the junior officers. A superior officer must clearly spell out his intent and provide him a general guideline. A periodical supervision or reporting followed by minimum possible interferences may enable a junior officer to work with self-sufficiency and wholeheartedly. Over-much supervision should be avoided in order to bring out the latent potentials of a junior commander. Each feat will add substantial experience and significantly mature a young officer.

Accept Criticism

It is to be ensured that one stays on top of that positive thinking, enjoying and celebrating success and maintaining the mental image of his success are potent ways of managing one’s mind. For example, having photographs of one’s graduation, prizes and awards displayed conspicuously can be a motivating factor. On the other hand, one must be prepared to handle one’s failure. One has to accept mistakes occurring with any new concept and challenge. One has to get into the habit of treating mistakes as learning experiences and distinguish them in a constructive way. A superior officer by dint of his experiences is obliged to provide continuous correction to his juniors. Superiors must instill characteristics of a basic soldiering into a young officer. Seniors must also monitor the growth of his leadership qualities. The correction must be interpreted in a motivating tone rather deliberate fault finding. Nevertheless, a senior should at times be harsh towards junior officer if repeated cautions are not adhered to. The more a junior officer is corrected, more he will become a balanced and seasoned/polished officer and transmitting same to his juniors.

Find and Cherish the Genuine Achievement

Each person is gifted and possesses inherent potentials which must be identified and harnessed. A junior officer should find what he has achieved genuinely and list the 10 best in an “Achievement Log”. Perhaps an individual was topper in an important examination or test, got a commendation letter from his commander and achieved a champion trophy in some competitions that meant a lot to his unit or played a key role in an important teamwork. He has to list these 10 achievements boldly, display it where he can look and see it often. Thereafter, he has to spend a few minutes every day to admire his success. With this method he would be spurred to strive harder. Having identified where he belongs, he should think about the things that are really important to him and what he wants to achieve in life. Looking at the “Achievement Log” and reflecting on his recent life, he should think about what others would consider to be his strength and weakness. From these, an officer should think about the available opportunities and threats he is likely to deal with in future which would be the part of SWOT analysis”.

Managing Mind

As George Bernard Shaw puts it, “Those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything”. Managing one’s mind is important in building self-confidence. This can be achieved by having a positive attitude to life. One has to purge one’s minds of negative thoughts so that one

may look calm and relaxed. One should learn to pick up defeating the negative self-talks which can ruin mental image of what one feels and experiences as one achieves major goals.

**Committing to Success**

The ultimate path of preparing for the journey is to craft a clear and unequivocal promise to himself that he is entirely committed to journey and he will do all in his authority to achieve it. As he is doing it, certain doubts may be evident. He has to write them down and challenge them steadfastly and assuredly. If feasible, additional goals should be set to manage those appropriately.

**Accelerating Towards Destination**

Now it is the time to start stretching out oneself. One has to make the goals a bit bigger and the challenges a bit tougher. A leader should increase the size of his commitment and extend the skills he has proven into new but clearly related arena. This should be reinforced with continuous demonstration of diplomacy, transparency, humanism and above all brotherly attitude in all his dealings. One has to eschew all vices that can make people doubt about one’s confidence and ability. He has to aim at excellence (near perfection) in all dealings. Above all, he should be original in his thoughts and deeds. There is no faster route to the building of self-confidence.

**Conclusion**

Lack of self-confidence of junior officers initially in the unit is a normal phenomenon. But, it is of immense importance for a young officer to quickly gain the confidence in order to establish himself as a trusted leader and important contributor in the unit. In fact, he is the best judge to focus on different micro aspects to enhance his confidence and should take all possible measures to achieve his goal at the earliest. An experienced senior in the unit should render his guidance and motivation to amplify the individual effort of the junior officer. However, it is the Commanding Officer who should largely contribute in generating a healthy and fear-free environment so that the dormant potentials of the young officer flourishes in no time. Second-in-Command and the senior Company Commanders must understand the characteristics of junior officers and figure out a balanced yet firm approach towards him. Every accomplishment should be followed by a set of correction and proper recognition to his hard work. A proper mentoring coupled with the personal effort may bring out the undiscovered qualities of a junior officer and establish him to be a kingpin not only for the unit but also for the entire Bangladesh Army.

It is imperative to build self-confidence as one progresses in life. The process needed for self-confidence building has been discussed and certain factors which may enhance self-confidence have also been mentioned. While addressing officers, Gen. Collin Powell (US Army) acknowledged that “The day subordinates stop bringing you their problems is the day you have stopped leading them. They have either lost confidence that you can help them or concluded that you do not care. Either case is a failure of leadership”. To be blessed with success in all endeavours, everybody must aspire to build and maintain self-confidence.
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Colonel Md Ziaul Hoque, afwc, psc was commissioned with 25th BMA Long Course on 20 December 1991 in the East Bengal Regiment. He attended number of courses and seminars at home and abroad. He is a Graduate from the National Defence College and also from Defence Service Command and Staff College, Mirpur, Dhaka. He also completed Master of Business Administration from Southeast University, Bangladesh. He has workable grip on French language. He served in various Commands, Staff and Instructional appointments in his long illustrious career. Besides various regimental appointments, he commanded 18 Bangladesh Infantry Regiment at Jessore. He served as General Staff Officer Grade-2 in Military Training Directorate and General Staff Officer Grade-1 at Overseas Operation Directorate and Infantry Directorate, Army Headquarters. He served as Instructor Class A at Tactics Wing, School of Infantry and Tactics. He served under the blue helmet in three West African countries; Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), Ivory Coast (UNOCI) and Liberia (UNMIL). Presently, he is serving as Chief Instructor of Tactics Wing at SI&T.
TRADITIONAL TO ASYMMETRIC THREAT DYNAMICS IN MALI: OPTIONS FOR BANGLADESH ARMY IN ROBUST PEACE KEEPING OPERATIONS

Lieutenant Colonel Md Delwar Hossain Talukder, BSP, psc, Engrs

‘Peace is not merely the absence of visible conflict’

-Barack Obama

Abstract

United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) was deployed in Mali by Security Council resolution 2100 of 25 April 2013. Bangladesh deployed peacekeepers in Mali on April 2014. Presently 1277 peacekeepers of Bangladesh Army are deployed in Mali consisting contingent members, staff and military observers. The peace process in Mali is difficult, complex and marked by many obstacles. The level of threat has risen significantly in the form of placing Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) in channel routes to the Special Vehicle Borne IED (SVBIED) explosion inside MINUSMA secured camps/installations and also by Indirect Fire (IDF), Mortar/Rocket Attack. In this context, Bangladesh Army cannot sacrifice more and more. In last four years Bangladesh Army has lost eleven peacekeepers. Material losses are also huge. All the Bangladeshi peacekeepers need to use appropriate gadgets and gears to cope up in this robust peace keeping mission. This study shows that proper Logistics Reconnaissance and Survey (LRS), robust training, adequate knowledge on Rules of Engagement (ROE), special Counter IED (CIED) training will immensely improve the standard of our peacekeepers. This paper also shows that training to cope up rough weather, adverse situation and arid terrain in Mali needs due attention before troops are on operational ground. Bangladesh Army can use Drones, Mine Resistant Ambush Protected Vehicle (MRAP), Electronic Countermeasure (ECM) Jammers to ensure robust peacekeeping. Workable language training on French Language for all peacekeepers can also be arranged before deployment in MINUSMA which will definitely increase the operational effectiveness of our peace keepers.

Introduction

Mali, a landlocked country of western Africa, is mostly in the Saharan and Sahelian regions. The country is largely flat and arid. Although Mali is one of the largest countries in Africa, it has a relatively small population, which is largely centered along the Niger River. Agriculture is the dominant economic sector in the country, with cotton production, fishing, cattle and camel herding are among the major activities. In recent years, Mali has been confronted by a profound crisis with serious political, security, socio-economic, humanitarian and human rights consequences. The crisis stems from long-standing structural conditions such as weak state institutions, ineffective governance, fragile social cohesion, deep-seated feelings among communities in the north of being neglected, marginalized and unfairly treated by the Central Government.

2 http://www.our-africa.org/mali/history-politics.
In mid-January 2012, a Tuareg movement known as the Mouvement National pour la Libération de l’Azawad (MNLA), along with Islamic armed groups including Ansar Dine, Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), in addition to deserters from the Malian Armed Forces, initiated a series of attacks against government forces in the north of the country. On 22 March 2012, a mutiny by disaffected soldiers defeated by the armed groups in the north resulted in a military coup d’état. Immediately after the coup, on 27 March 2012, the Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) responded quickly and formed the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA).

Further consultations led to the deployment of **United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA)** in mid-January 2013 – a multidisciplinary United Nations presence to support the deployment and operations of AFISMA. It was established by Security Council resolution 2100 of 25 April 2013 to support political processes in Mali and carry out a number of security-related tasks. However, since its launch on 1st July 2013, peacekeepers have been victims of various types of attacks, including ambush, suicide attacks, shelling, Indirect Fire (IDF) and Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs). Along with 51 other Troops Contributing Countries (TCC), Bangladesh Army is providing 4 contingents, located in 3 different regions, in order to achieve the greater benefit.

**MINUSMA- A BRIEF ROAD MAP**

MINUSMA was established by Security Council resolution 2100 of 25 April 2013. It was launched to support political processes, to support the interim authorities and implementation of the transitional roadmap. MINUSMA is the only mission out of 16 active UN peacekeeping operations that authorizes troops to deter and counter “asymmetric threats” that could harm its work or civilians. Presently MINUSMA comprises of 11279 military personnel including 1440 police (comprising of Formed Police Units and individual police officers). In past four years, 118 peacekeepers have been killed — making the MINUSMA the world body’s deadliest ongoing peace keeping operation.

Source: MINUSMA Fact Sheets November 2017

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3 https://minusma.unmissions.org/en/history date 21 January 2018

4 http://www.washingtonpost.com/sf/world date 17/02/17.
Bangladesh deployed peacekeepers in Mali on April 2014 following official request by the United Nations. As of MINUSMA strength report for the month of September 2017, total 1533 Bangladeshi peacekeepers are working in Mali. Bangladeshi peacekeepers include members of Bangladesh Army, Navy, Air Force and Police. Bangladesh Army is providing 4 contingents, located in 3 different regions. Presently 1277 peacekeepers of Bangladesh Army are deployed in Mali which include contingent members, military staff and observers. Bangladesh is positioned 2\textsuperscript{nd} top troops contributing countries in MINUSMA. Bangladesh Infantry Battalion (BANBAT) is operating in Gao under Sector East, Engineers Contingent (BANEGR) is operating under Sector North in Kidal and Agulhoq area. Bangladesh Transport Contingent (BANTPT) is operating in Bamako while Signal Contingent (BANSIG) is located in all the sectors including Force Headquarters.

THREAT CRESCENDOS – CUSTOMARY TO ASYMMETRIC

The peace process in Mali is difficult, complex and marked by many obstacles. The threat dimensions for last few years especially in the centre and in the north of Mali have shifted to asymmetric environment. The level of threat has risen significantly in the form of placing IED in channel routes to the Special Vehicle Borne IED (SVBIED) explosion inside MINUSMA secured camps/installations. Incidents of attacking MINUSMA or Forces Armées Maliennes (FAMa) camps increased sharply in the recent years.

SVBIED/IED Attack

There have been numerous SVIED/mine attacks on MINUSMA and partner forces in the recent years. BANBAT faced IED attack once on 29 October 2016 as part of logistic convoy escort from GAO to KIDAL. On 24 September 2017 BANBAT was carrying out logistics convoy operation from Gao-Anefis-Kidal route. The convoy was hit by an IED on the way. The APC was totally destroyed. 3 BANBAT peacekeepers were

*BANBAT/4 APC destroyed by IED on 28 February 2018*

\[\text{Source: MINUSMA Monthly Report September 2017}\]

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5 Ready Reckoner on BD Army in UN Peace Sp op and BMC to Kuwait, AHQ GS Br date 04 September 2017.

killed in action on spot and 4 were wounded. The most demoralizing upset of BANBAT happened on 28 February 2018 while the contingent was carrying out an operational patrolling in central Mopti region. One of the APC of the convoy was hit by an IED enroute. Instantly, four peacekeepers embraced death and four were wounded. Later on 20th March 2018 Private Rashed, who was wounded earlier, expired in Senegal while undergoing treatment.

**Indirect Fire (IDF), Mortar/Rocket Attack**

There are couples of instances when Gao, Timboktu, Kidal and other super camps of Mali and periphery were attacked by IDF. Bangladesh forces are operating in all those camps. Mortars, recently been used during the complex attack in Kidal super camp on 22 March 2018, are fully accurate and Terrorist Armed Groups (TAG’s) got their desired effect. Five coremecs of Cambodian Engineers were fully burnt. Nine French troops were also seriously wounded. BANENGR, located in Kidal, were luckily saved. Gao Super Camp being just beside the airport and offering a much more concentrated and lucrative target, the possibility of mortar attack on it cannot be overruled.

**Ambush and Complex Attack**

A classical ambush is difficult in the desert terrain but there are places which pose ideal opportunity for complex attack involving IED/VBIED followed by ambush using automatic weapons. All the Main Supply Routes (MSR) and the surrounding areas of Gao present some ideal places for such attacks.

On 30 October 2016, in the evening, local militias attacked the forces deployed in Kidal sector with mortar rocket causing severe damages to all forces deployed in Kidal. The complex attack on Kidal super camp using IDF followed by direct attack on 08 June 2017 incurred death of four Guinean peacekeepers. The devastating SVBIED attack on Gao airport on 29 November 2016 once again proved the capabilities of TAG’s attack. On 14 April 2018 at around noon, Timboktu camp experienced such a complex attack. The attack continued nearly six hours leaving huge loss of UN peacekeepers. BANSIG and other Bangladeshi serving peacekeepers survived the attacks without significant losses.

**Unexploded Ordnance (UXOs) Threat**

Abandoned mortars, artillery shells, rockets, grenades, bullets and aircraft bombs appear to be concentrated in the towns of Northern Mali where BANENGR and BANSIG contingents are operating. Although the bulk of UXO is from recent fighting, there are also anti-tank mines along
the Mali-Algeria, Mali-Burkina Faso and Mali-Niger borders predating the current conflict. Persistent threat of UXO and terrorism in the Sahel region in recent time has raised serious security concerns for the region along with a fear of expansion in future. In Mali, terrorist attacks which until recently were confined to the North, are now being recorded in the centre and south – raising concerns of the emergence of new terror hotbeds. Recent surge in threat scenario is characterized by use of more powerful explosive in IEDs, complex yet well timed and executed attack against superior force followed by sharp engagement and rapid disengagement.

**Other Asymmetric Threat**

The threat dimension has recently shifted to asymmetric environment in Mali with no apparent possibility of regression in the near future. BANBAT, BANENGR AND BANTPT units remain exposed to interceptions by the perpetrators. In Mali, terrorist attacks, which until recently were confined to the North, are now being recorded in the centre and south – raising concerns of the emergence of new terror hotbeds. BANTPT Contingent is operating in this region. Security situation limits MINUSMA operation, but TAGs retain freedom of movement/action to conduct complex attack on MINUSMA installations and forces. In recent years BANBAT and BANTPT were targeted number of times.

**COMBATING THE THREAT - OPTIONS AHEAD**

The MINUSMA forces will probably be forced to spend even more resources to secure their own forces and assets. In that scenario, high self-esteem of contingents with proactive robust approach as well as neutralism in the peace implementation process may stabilize the situation of Mali in the long run. As per the fast facts sheet published by MINUSMA in March 2018, from 1st July 2013 to March 2018, 143962 military patrols were operationalized to deter threats and protect civilians. 341 tons of obsolete and non-usable weapons and ammunitions confiscated and destroyed by FAMa with support from MINUSMA. 982 members of the Malian security forces trained in counter IED measures including 68 women. In this context, Bangladeshi peacekeepers cannot sacrifice more and more. In last four years Bangladesh has lost eleven peacekeepers. Material losses are also huge. All the Bangladeshi peacekeepers need to use appropriate gadgets and gears to cope up in this robust peace keeping mission.

**Proper Logistics Reconnaissance and Survey (LRS):** Department of Peace Keeping Operations (DPKO) policy directive on ‘Contributing Country Reconnaissance Visits’ dated 5 October 2005 has clearly highlighted the essence of LRS in any mission. The purpose of a TCC reconnaissance is to determine how the ground directly affects the contingent’s capability in undertaking the tasks. The ground refers to the actual environment and circumstances in which the contingent will operate. Mission in MINUSMA has this purpose more relevant. BANTPT is located in Bamako. Weather condition in Bamako is moderate, not arid. On the other hand, BANENGR and BANSIG are operating in northern Mali. Weather is very dry and rough throughout the year.

**Robust Training:** Proper training aims to prepare selected contingent and other members to perform in an effective, professional and integrated manner in UN Peace Keeping Operation (PKO). Three main phases of peacekeeping training as in the UN PKO: Pre-Deployment
Training (PDT), induction training and ongoing training in mission area. All these training should be properly done in Bangladesh Institute of Peace Support Operation Training (BIPSOT), other training institutions and unit level, keeping mission mandate and robust peace keeping in MINUSMA. Force Commander (FC) has clearly emphasizes 7 key training areas i.e. - immediate action drill (ambush and counter ambush), camp alarm schemes, weapon training, range work, ROE and mandate, first aid, and conduct and discipline7. Training should also be continued upon deployment in mission area keeping the FC’s intent.

**Adequate knowledge on Rules on Engagement (ROE):** The ROE is operational tools which represent an accommodation between the political purpose of the UN deployment, the legal constraints of the force and the military mission. All the members should be very pertinent regarding use of force, use of weapon systems, and authority for level of force and specific ROE for UN forces under Chapter VII.

**Special Counter IED (CIED) Training:** A report published by ‘Counter-IED’ on 24 February 2018 indicated that European Union leaders have doubled their funding for tackling IED attacks in Sahel region in particular to Mali8. Hence Bangladesh Army should also emphasize the importance of CIED training. Different training institutions i.e., Engineers Centre and School, Ordnance Centre and School and other institutions should bring out training curriculum considering latest techniques followed by the various terrorist groups in Mali. United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) has a vast and updated training experience in Mali. Hence Bangladesh Army can plan the training in coordination with UNMAS.

**Preparation to cope up with Rough Weather, Adverse Situation and Arid Terrain:** Security situation in Mali remains unpredictable and complex, most of the time, due to the ongoing various attacks which are being carried out by TAGs. In comparison to the last few years, the 2017/18 mission year suffered the most number of attacks9. The overall situation becomes more challenging coupled with rough weather round the year. Average temperature in Saharan terrain, where most of the Bangladeshi peacekeepers are working, is more than 40° Centigrade which reaches up to 55° Centigrade. Weather remains extremely dry throughout the year where humidity remains less than 10%10. So it is clear that while undergoing various training in Bangladesh, it is not possible to acquaint with such adverse situation. However, adequate protective measures, sufficient gears, necessary medicines can be planned to cope up with such adverse condition once the troops will be in operational area.

**Use of Drones:** The operational area in Mali is comparatively vast than the forces deployed by Bangladesh Army. Hence Bangladesh Army can use drones for surveillance, aerial photography, recording valuable footage and various search and rescue operations. Crowd monitoring can also be done by drones where security situation becomes complex. To gain firsthand information after any IDF attack, when coming outside of bunkered position is not

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8 https://counteriedreport.com/tag/mali date 21 January 2018
Possible, drones can be sent to the possible places of initiation and impact. While carrying out any long range patrolling, operational and real time movements, to search possible hotspots where IED can be planted, specialized drones can be sent ahead of the troops for attainment of early evidences.

**Use of Mine Protected Vehicle (MPV) and other Specialized Vehicle:** Different contingents, serving in MINUSMA, are using modern MPVs for various operations. Presently Nepal is using Kraz MPV TC, Chad Army is using RG-31 NYALA and Netherland peacekeepers (FALCON) are using BUSHMASTER APC. Off late Bangladesh Army has sent Mine Resistant Ambush Protected Vehicle (MRAP) to various army contingents in Mali. It is expected that, in future, operational efficiency will be increased and as well casualty rate will be reduced. There are instances where TAGs carried out direct fire to MINUSMA forces. To eliminate these threats, bullet proof vehicles, aerial vehicles etc. can be added to contingents’ inventory.

**Explicit CIED Equipment:** The level of IED threat has increased continuously since 2013. The threat includes not only the dynamic use of anti-tank mines, SVBIED, VBIED, but also Remotely Controlled IED (RC-IED). Now-a-days, these RC-IEDs have become a greater challenge/threat for all Bangladeshi peacekeepers. On 12th April 2016, an RC-IED was detonated in Aguelhoc camp under Kidal sector where BANENGR is deployed. One Chadian peacekeeper was injured. The devastating attack against BANBAT on 28 February 2018 was believed to be a RC-IED where 3rd Armoured Personnel Carrier (APC) of the convoy was hit. From previous incidents it is seen that the armed groups are targeting the command vehicles with RC-IEDs. To diminish the above mentioned risk, Electronic Countermeasure (ECM) Jammers can be used in convoys which will ensure safe movement through unknown hostile territory.
**Bunkered Accommodation for All:** To reduce mass casualties from IDF/rocket attacks, bunkered accommodation can be one of the workable solutions. At present only BANENGR has these type of accommodations. Respected Chief of Army Staff, Bangladesh Army, during his visit on October 2018 in MIMUSMA, has also emphasized this type of accommodations. Bunkered accommodation is made of containers surrounded by stacked earth in Hesko or sand bags. To ease of construction few engineer equipment i.e., excavator, loader etc. can be added to each contingent.

**Language Training:** Official Language of MINUSMA is English. However, French is widely spoken here. In many cases it is seen that French is being preferred where instructions issued from force and sectors. Out of 51 countries, presently serving in MINUSMA, 34% countries are French spoken\(^{11}\). Without basic knowledge on French, it becomes very difficult working with the peacekeepers of these countries. Hence, workable language training for all peacekeepers can be arranged before deployment.

**Conclusions**

As like other West African countries, most of the areas of Mali are in the Saharan desert. All most all the areas are largely level and scorched. Recently, serious political, security, socio-economic, humanitarian and human rights crisis have been emerged in Mali and as a result instability has occurred. On 22 March 2013, a mutiny by disaffected soldiers from the units defeated by the armed groups in the north resulted in a military coup d’état. Immediately after the coup, the government of Mali and member states of the ECOWAS countries responded quickly and formed the AFISMA. To support the deployment and operations of AFISMA, MINUSMA was deployed by the special regulation of UN.

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\(^{11}\) MINUSMA, Force Strength Report of the Month of September 2017.
MINUSMA was established to support political processes and to carry out a number of security-related tasks in Mali by the Security Council. MINUSMA is the only mission in the whole UN peacekeeping operations that permits troops to daunt and defy ‘asymmetric threats’. The threats include terrorist groups, their activities that can harm its work or civilians. At this moment there are 51 countries which are directly and indirectly involved with MINUSMA. In the past four years, 118 peacekeepers have been killed making the MINUSMA, the world body’s deadliest ongoing peace operation. On April 2014 Bangladesh deployed peacekeepers in Mali. Presently, 1277 peacekeepers from Bangladesh Army are working in Mali which includes contingent members, staffs and military observers.

Peace process and stability in Mali is not an easy going task rather thorny, complex and marked by many impediments. The threat dimensions for last few years especially in the centre and north of Mali have shifted to asymmetric environment. Threat dimensions have risen significantly in the form of placing IED in probable places used by various security forces. Explosion by SVBIED inside MINUSMA secured camps/installations are also increasing. On 28 February 2018, the most disheartening upset of BANBAT happened. The contingent was carrying out an operational patrolling in central Mopti region. One of the APC of the convoy was hit by an IED enroot. On that attack four Bangladeshi peacekeepers embraced death and four wounded. Instances of various forms of IDF attacks are also present in Gao, Timboktu, Kidal and other Super Camps and periphery. Bangladesh Army is operating in all those camps.

In last four years Bangladesh has lost eleven peacekeepers. To ensure more security and robust posture, the forces working in Mali will probably be forced to spend even more resources. Peacekeepers of Bangladesh contingents need to adopt rapid robust posture for reducing material and personnel losses. We expect that mission oriented training in different training institutes at home and abroad, apposite LRS will bring out prudent success. All members should be very pertinent regarding the use of force, use of weapon systems. Knowledge and implementation of ROE for UN forces under robust and integrated peacekeeping missions, like in Mali, must be addressed. Bangladesh Army should emphasize the importance of CIED trainings. Training packages and curriculum, taught in various training establishment, should incorporate updated TTPs followed by various terrorist groups.

Countries, operating under blue helmets in Mali, are using mine and IED protected vehicles for long to protect their invaluable peacekeepers. Bangladesh Army has also sent few mine and explosives resistant vehicles to Mali. Over last few months, operational efficiency, safety and robust peace keeping stances have been increased by using these MRAPs. To eliminate direct fire attacks by terrorist armed groups, bullet proof vehicles can also be added to contingents’ inventory. It is seen that the conflicting groups are targeting the command vehicles with RC-IEDs. To diminish the above mentioned risk, Jammers for countering signals from IEDs used against convoys can be used which will ensure safe movement and added security. French Language is widely used in MINUSMA. Hence, before deployments to the mission area, French Language training can be arranged for all members. Few deadliest attacks have also occurred in Mali by indirect rockets or mortars. BANENGR contingent, now operating in Kidal, Mali, has
Traditional to Asymmetric Threat Dynamics in Mali: Options for Bangladesh…

prepared bunkered accommodation since that area is prone to these types of attacks. Bangladesh Army can gradually prepare these types of bunkered accommodation for other contingents.

**Recommendations**

The peace process in Mali is difficult, complex and marked by many obstacles. The threat dimensions for last few years especially in the centre and in the north of Mali, where most of the Bangladesh Army peace keepers are working, have shifted from traditional threat to asymmetric environment. In this context, peacekeepers of Bangladesh Army cannot sacrifice more and more. All the Bangladeshi peacekeepers need to use appropriate equipment to get along in this robust peace keeping mission. In view of the aforementioned, the following recommendations are suggested for Bangladesh Army:

- In addition to present MRAP, more MPV/MRAP can be procured. Using MPV/MRAP in various operations will definitely increase morale of the troops and give a robust posture to the UN environment.
- Apt and robust training by all peacekeepers to be ensured. Emphasize should be given during pre-deployment and after deployment in mission area.
- To reduce casualties from IDF/Mortar fires, bunkered accommodation should be constructed gradually by all the contingents.

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Lieutenant Colonel Md Delwar Hossain Talukder, BSP, psc, Engineers was commissioned on 8th June 1999 with 40th BMA Long Course in the Corps of Engineers. He served in different Division Engineer, Riverine Engineer and Engineer Construction Battalion. He also served as an Officiating Instructor Class ‘B’ in Army School of Education and Administration (ASEA) and Instructor Class ‘B’ in Engineers Centre and School of Military Engineering (ECSME). He had his tour of duty in United Nations Mission in Liberia in 2009-’10 and in Mali in 2017-’18. He has completed BSc in Civil Engineering from Military Institute of Science and Technology (MIST). He is also a graduate from Defence Services Command & Staff College (DSCSC), Mirpur. The officer has a number of publications in various journals in his credentials including prestigious MIRPUR Papers (DSCSC Journal), The GALAXY (MIST Technical Journal) etc. At present he is Commanding 11 Riverine Engineer (RE) Battalion.
AN EVALUATION OF INITIAL RESISTANCE OF THE EAST BENGAL REGIMENTS: BEGINNING OF AN ARMED STRUGGLE FOR THE LIBERATION OF BANGLADESH

Lieutenant Colonel Mohammad Monjur Morshed, psc, AEC

Abstract

Liberation War of Bangladesh was the consequence of the long strained socio-political movement which reached its final stage in March 1971. After the initial resistance, entire revolutionary leadership and population were wholeheartedly waiting to get the personnel of East Bengal Regiments (EBR) in their movement. The conscious personnel of EBRs had also been moved by the nationalist sentiment that swept the Eastern wing of Pakistan. At the vertex of political aspiration, EBRs joined the liberation upsurge with their weaponries and military enthusiasm. The initial resistance created aspiration among the people. But the difficulties impeded the desired success due to the complete disintegration of regiments, shortage of arms and ammunition, lack of intelligence, logistic backup, absence of unified central leadership and shortage of manpower and moreover, well-coordinated tactical operations. After the initial setbacks in regular set piece battle, the EBR personnel took shelter in the neighbouring country to regroup with a view to continuing the resistance against occupation forces. The EBRs with mass people fought against the Pakistani Army following guerrilla technique and prepared the ground for the Allied forces which led to the emergence of independent Bangladesh.

Introduction

The EBR emerged as a credible fighting force in the race for movement of socio-cultural and political emancipation of the Bengalis of the then East Pakistan as it stretched out culmination in March 1971. Five EBRs located in East Pakistan revolted against Pakistan Army chain of command and organized resistance movements in different places like 1 EBR at Jessore, 2 EBR at Joydevpur-Dhaka-Mymensingh, 3 EBR at Sayedpur, 4 EBR at Comilla-Brahmanbaria and 8 EBR along with the East Bengal Regemental Centre (EBRC) at Chittagong. Mass movement permeated with EBRs fighting spirit and strength converged into an armed struggle creating a formidable force for Liberation War. The revolt of EBRs did not occur suddenly, the personnel of EBR were well aware of the liberation movement along with their own right in Pakistan Army. They physically joined the movement after massive crack down on 25 March 1971 (Operation Searchlight of Pakistan Army) on unarmed civil population of East Pakistan. Unarmed people tried to resist Pakistan Army with local weapons as a means of blockade, small scale attacks and non-cooperation. “At this stage, a number of daring and nationalist – minded Bengali officers managed to slip out of the

Pakistan dominated cantonments, along with their men, and raise the flag of revolt". An armed
flavour with a hope of endeavouring an organized military resistance came into light as East Bengal
Regiments revolted against Pakistan Army in various places. They started an armed struggle
giving hope to the people to fight for liberation and with all out people’s participation. According
to Rounaq Jahan, "The savage brutalities of Pakistan Army and the genocidal nature of their killing
aroused a keen sense of unity among the Bengalis, broke down primordial sentiments and stiffened
their resistance. It was looked upon not only as a struggle for liberation but in fact as a struggle for
the survival of a people." The EBR shaped the core of the resistance movement. At this stage if
Bengali members of Pakistan Army did not organize the initial resistance, the history of the
emergence of Bangladesh could have been different.

**East Bengal Regiments and Liberation War**

There were eight battalions (1 EBR to 8 EBR) out of which five battalions including the EBRC
were located in East Pakistan during military crackdown on 25 March '71 with approximate 5000
personnel and other battalions (9EBR to 12 EBR) were raised during war. EBR personnel
organized resistance against Pakistan Army through a regiment or individual initiative taking a
leading role throughout the liberation war.

**Location and Raising Date of EBRs during Liberation War**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regiments</th>
<th>Date of Raising</th>
<th>Date and Place of of Revolt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 EBR</td>
<td>15 February 1948 at Kurmitola, Dhaka Cantonment</td>
<td>Revolted at Jessore Cantonment, Jessore on 30 March 1971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 EBR</td>
<td>07 February 1949 at Kurmitola, Dhaka Cantonment</td>
<td>Revolted at Joydebpur, Gazipur on 28 March 1971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 EBR</td>
<td>04 February 1962 at Moinamoti Cantonment, Comilla</td>
<td>Revolted at Sayedpur Cantonment 28 March 1971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 EBR</td>
<td>10 February 1963 at Moinamoti Cantonment, Comilla</td>
<td>Revolted at Comilla cantonment, Comilla on 27 March 1971.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 EBR</td>
<td>21 October 1965 at Dhaka</td>
<td>Located in West Pakistan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 EBR</td>
<td>15 December 1965 at Comilla Cantonment</td>
<td>Located in West Pakistan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 EBR</td>
<td>06 March 1969 at Chittagong Cantonment</td>
<td>Located in West Pakistan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 EBR</td>
<td>10 October 1971 in Montoli, India</td>
<td>Raised under the Mukti Bahini, the Bangladesh liberation army, in 1971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 EBR</td>
<td>As training battalion on 10 October 1970 at Dhaka and as fighting regiment on 10 October 1971 at Rajnagar of Tripura, India</td>
<td>Raised under the Mukti Bahini, the Bangladesh liberation army, in 1971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 EBR</td>
<td>01 September 1971 at Fakirchora, India</td>
<td>Raised under the Mukti Bahini, the Bangladesh liberation army, in 1971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 EBR</td>
<td>15 December 1971 at Veipara of Jessore</td>
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<tr>
<td>EBRC</td>
<td>15 February 1948 at Kurmitola, Dhaka</td>
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8. Lt Gen Kamal Motinuddin (Retd), op. cit., p. 225.
POLITICAL MOVEMENT TRANSFORMED INTO ARMED RESISTANCE

Political upsurge was transformed into armed struggle as EBRs joined the resistance movement. Before beginning of armed resistance, political movement for independence reached its vertex in March ’71 after election of 1970 when West Pakistani rulers denied legitimate demands of Bengalis. The address of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on 07 March inspired the people for independence and non-cooperation movement which paralyzed the life of East Pakistan. Massive crackdown by Pakistan Army on 25 March created ground for EBRs to emerge in the scenario revolting from Army and organize an armed resistance. 1 East Bengal Regiment (Senior Tiger) became the centre of inspiration for Bengali soldiers since its formation at Kurmitula, Dhaka on 15 Feb 1948 with the aim of integrating Bengali vigour in Pakistan Army under commanding officer Lt Col V J E Paterson.11 This regiment fought gallantly in 1965 Indo-Pakistan war and earned a good reputation in Pakistan army receiving highest number of gallantry awards as a single fighting unit.12 On 25 March 1971 the regiment was located in Jessore Cantonment with splited fighting strength in various places.13 Maj Abu Osman Chowdhury (the local EPR Wing Commander) repeatedly sent message to Commanding Officer Lt Col Rezaul Jalil to join EPR who revolted but his appeals were ignored.14 Bengali troops revolted as Brigade commander of 107 Brig Durrani ordered to disarm the troops, which made the commanding officer tangled.15 Capt Hafiz and Lt Anwar organized the troops (Lt Col Jalil, commanding officer refused to join) and escaped from the cantonment.16 As Lt Anwar, with group of men at the tail end of the battalion started to escape, and he was killed, first martyr of the Senior Tigers, and was decorated posthumously with the second highest gallantry award Bir Uttam.17 The Guardian newspaper from London wrote about killing of 1 EBR, “Most vicious of perhaps was the attempted annihilation of the East Bengal regiment. Few of the 1 Battalion escaped through a curtain of bullets fired by those who the previous days were their mates in the mess.”18 After the revolt, the regiment carried out series of successful battles against Pakistan army and eventually redeployed at Teldala of Tura Hill in Meghalaya on 19 May. Capt Salahuddin Momtaz became martyr in Battle of Kamalpur in the later stage of war.19

The 2 East Bengal Regiment (Minor Tigers), was raised at Kurmitola Dhaka on 07 February 1949 and was located at Joydevpur under 57 Brigade.20 The regiment revolted after Operation Searchlight and reorganized whole battalion in Mymensingh where other forces and civilian

12. Interview of Maj Gen A K M Safullah (Retd) who served in 1st EBR as 2IC, 25 June 2012.
15. Lt Gen Kamal Motinuddin (Retd), op. cit., p. 251.
16. Lieutenant General A S M Nasim (Retired), Bir Bikram, Bangladesh Fights for Independence, (Columbia Prokashani, Dhaka, 2002), p. 34.
19. Lt Col S I M Nurunnobi khan, BB, Roumari Ranangan, (Sahitto Prokash, Dhaka), pp. 36-42.
volunteers augmented their fighting strength. Subsequently, combined revolutionary forces decided to attack Dhaka under Maj Safiullah, who was guided by the following considerations;

21 to keep Pakistani troops engaged in Dhaka so that they were not in a position to spare troops and send reinforcements to Chittagong, Kushtia or any other places. Numerically as well as armament wise Pakistan's strength in Dhaka was much superior to the resistance forces, as such attacking cantonment from an unexpected direction was planned. These considerations forced to move troops as fast as possible and led to adopt the eastern approach for the main attack.22 Maj Khaled Mosharraf received message about this deadly and unwise plan which might led to serious consequence as Pakistani two brigades were located at Dhaka supported by tanks.23 Maj Safiullah met Maj Khaled Mosarraf in Brahmanbaria with whole regiment renouncing the plan.

The 3 East Bengal Regiment,24 popularly called as Minor Tiger, was raised at Moinamoti, Comilla on 04 February 1962 and was located at Sayedpur on 25 March with its commanding officer Lt Col Fazal Karim (West Pakistani).25 According to plan, as for the other Bengal Regiments, 3rd East Bengal also underwent a split up and sent to bordering areas.26 A small amount of rear party left behind in Sayedpur Cantonment. Among those Bengali Capt Anwar, Lt Siraj and Sub Maj Haris were included.27 On 28 March '71 the unit decided to take up arms against Pakistan Army. The regiment carried out many operations against Pakistan army till further redeployment in India.

The 4th East Bengal Regiment was raised at Moinamoti, Comilla on 10 February 1963 and the Commanding Officer was Lt Col Malik Kijir Hayat (West Pakistani) with his 2nd in Command Bengali officer Maj Khaled Mosarraf.28 Companies were split and deployed at Brahmanbaria, Shamser Nagar and Comilla as a part of ill design weakening fighting strength. As the news of the heinous crackdown of Pakistan Army reached, Maj Shafaat Jamil along with two more young Lieutenants revolted on 27 March 1971 at Brahmanbaria.29 Maj Khaled Mosharof took over the command of the battalion and set about a defence on wide front.30 The 4 EBR and 2 EBR jointly developed a formidable defence at Brahmanbaria, Akhaura keeping headquarters at Teliapara tea

22. Interview with Maj Gen Helal Morshed Khan, BB by BDS 71, who served in 2 EBR during revolt at Joydevpur,
25. Maj Gen Md Anwar Hossain, BP (retd) by BDS 71 who was serving in 3 EBR during revolt in Sayedpur, 12
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garden and the area of responsibility extended up to Sylhet. At the end of April '71, Pakistan Army launched a major ground and air offensive on the EBR held areas and some unsuccessful battles like Battle of Bhairab-Ashugonj-Lalpur, Battle of Madhabpur and Battle of Mantala took place. Finally, the EBR troops were forced to withdraw towards border by 15 May.

The 8 East Bengal Regiment was raised on 30 September 1970 at Chittagong Solosahar and Lt Col A R Zanjua (Panjabi) became the first Commanding Officer. Bengali members of the regiments revolted on 26 March. After the revolt, the regiment was taken on the outskirt of the city Kalurghat and developed a river line defence. The regiment had only few light arms and ammunition like 303 rifles, 2 inch mortar. On the other hand, Pakistan Army had heavy weapon like tank and artillery. The news of revolt was communicated to the civil administration and political leaders in Chittagong. Capt Khalekujjaman was appointed for the security of Kalurghat radio station whereas Capt Rafiq with his EPR troops developed resistance at Chittagong city. On 26 March 1971 Maj Ziaur Rahaman, Second in Command, announced independence on behalf of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahaman from Kalurghat Radio Station. The radio station was destroyed after bombardment by Pakistani air force and shifted to city on 03 April '71 and later towards Chittagong Hill Tracts. Resistance at Chittagong City continued for two weeks along with EPR, police and mass people. Pakistani forces reinforced arms and ammunition through air lift using Chittagong airfield and launched counter operations making resistance fighter to retreat. Pakistan army reinforcement was halted at Kumira inflicting huge casualties. At Kalurghat, 8 East Bengal Regiment along with one company of the then East Pakistan Rifles fought till the last against Pak massive attack supported by navy. Subsequently, they redeployed in India fighting successive battles at Karnaphuli-Cox's Bazar highway and Burighat. East Bengal Regimental Centre was attacked on 25 March killing thousands of recruits and survivors joined resistance movement.

34. Maj Rafiqual Islam, BU (Retd), op. cit., pp. 119-122.
35. Lt Col Mahfujur Rahman, op. cit., p. 52.
42. Maj Rafiql Islam, BU (Retd), op. cit., p. 159.
44. Bangladesh Liberation War Documents, op.cit, p.50.
NATURE OF THE RESISTANCE

Though movements for socio-economic and political emancipation were well developed, armed resistances were yet to thrive. When the Pakistan army began its crackdown on the night of 25 March ’71, the first objective was to disarm the Bengali units of the armed forces.45 But this proved to be more difficult than expected and resulted in their revolt and armed resistance. Bengali units in the armed forces had been moved by the nationalist sentiment that swept the eastern wing of Pakistan. These regular forces in the army and police formed the initial core of resistance, but had no training or experience in guerrilla warfare. They did not know how to mobilise the overwhelming support of the Bengali population and offset the greater number of trained West Pakistani soldiers and their superior firepower. In the 2nd or 3rd week after the Pakistani crackdown, Bengali troops tried to engage them in different parts of the country by conventional tactics. These 'set-piece' battles proved to be costly affairs resulting the retreat of all organised Bengali resistance by the end of April 1971. The remnants of the Bengali units crossed the border into India with their all ranks.46

Socio-Political Discriminations and EBRs

Discriminations inside the Pakistan Army towards Bengali members sparked sentiments towards separate identity of nationalism. Disciplined and restricted garrison life could not keep the Bengali troops away from the socio-political and economic evolution of East Pakistan. They were vigilant about the political developments in East Pakistan. Overriding intense socio-cultural movements developed consciousness about their proud distinct identity, as Bengali, both inside army and outside. The Pakistan army continued the British pattern of recruiting mainly the 'martial races' of the Punjab and Northwest Frontier Province. Bengalis made up less than 10 percent of an army estimated in 1971 at 350,000 although they constituted 56 per cent of the national population.47 “The orders, directing to abruptly detach the Bengali officers from their units and key positions on frail pretexts, acted as a catalyst to the increasing antagonism which had already existed between the Bengalis and the West Pakistanis”.48 As a result a sense of relative deprivation developed among Bengali members of all ranks and they pursued a chance to regenerate in appropriate moment.49 Over stretched socio-cultural, political and economic sufferings of the people of East Wing of Pakistan and strained relations of EBR personnel with the West Wing colleagues in the army consequently received an outburst through armed resistance coupled with mass people’s participation. Initial resistance of EBR personnel throughout the East Pakistan gave armed flavour to the well matured political movement for the independence of Bangladesh. When frustration prevailed for political solutions, at that moment, they envisioned a dream for liberation. They spontaneously contributed and collaborated with the EBR personnel.

49. Interview of Maj Hafiz Uddin Ahmed, BB (Retd), op. cit.
Covert Relation with Political Leaders

EBR personnel maintained contact with political leaders and their relatives as situation permitted. As the political movements progressed towards the final destination, EBR personnel got updated about dimensions of movements through their relatives, newspapers and friends. Some of the EBR members maintained covert relations with political leaders. During turmoil periods of March ’71 they secretly met and discussed about the course of actions. At the night on 25 March ’71, the West Pakistani Armed Battalions engaged in indiscriminate mass killing with the objective of neutralizing the political power. In order to achieve this objective, the Army had to capture the political leadership, neutralize the student leaders and cultural organizations (which mobilized the renaissance of Bengali nationalism) and disarm the Bengali armed men.50 At that stage EBR personnel revolted and they met the political activists and leaders. Both of them worked together for the common cause of liberating country from occupation forces.51 Those unique cooperation and coordination gave hope to the people to join imminent people’s war.

Sufferings of Mass People

The resistance brought more sufferings for the mass people as the operations of Pakistan Army were carried out inside civil areas. The resistance was a triumph without an immediate achievement for the EBR as well as for the people. Neither people nor EBR fighters could sustain for longer duration in the battle field against well organized and prepared Pak regiments. Rather they could have organized strategy and tactics of guerrilla warfare.52 They could not resist atrocities of 24 years and existing mayhems derived from crackdown. On the other hand, Pakistan army as a part of overpowering insurrectionary activities extended military operations in the civil areas to find opponents. People suffered more, long drawn socio-political sufferings turned into military atrocities. Human rights situation was degraded throughout East Pakistan as internally displaced people increased and millions of people took refuge in neighbouring country.

Legal Ground for Pak Subsequent Operations

Pakistan authority so long sensed the movement for autonomy as a part of conspiracy. Now they found a legal ground against EBR terming them as mutineers to justify their previous and continuing actions. Since EBR personnel revolted, it was used as pretext to suppress them including people’s movement. The Government of Pakistan also termed the mutiny as rebellious activities and received some degree of international response linking to Indian support so long they had been propagating.

Lessons for Future Operations

The resistance movement displayed sacrifice, bravery and unparalleled courage that was the great example of inspiration.53 The resistance gave a lesson to the EBRs for fighting future battles of liberation along with mass people as they received overwhelming cooperation. Those regiments

52. Capt S K Garg (retd), op. cit., p. 65.
came back after reorganization with conventional and guerrilla tactics by June 1971 where their fighting experience during initial resistance provided lessons to be followed.

**Preparation of Pakistan Authority about Probable Revolt of EBRs**

Western Wing leaders knew about apparent consequences of political development in East Pakistan and Pakistan Army chalked out a comprehensive plan of fighting forthcoming probable military activities of EBRs. Subsequent incidents prove that as a plan of reducing fighting strength, EBRs were split and deployed in isolated locations so that they could not communicate to other troops as necessary.

**Difference of Opinion and Actions**

EBR personnel maintained highest degree of military discipline. Their activities proved it. Even at the very crucial time they were loyal to Army norms. In some cases few personnel remained reluctant even after revolt as a whole. After revolt some EBR personnel felt mental stress considering their activities as violation of military system. All the EBRs personnel were yet to join the resistance movement, and some of them joined later stage.

**Set Piece Engagements**

EBRs could not extricate from cantonment with full regimental strength. Engaging in running battles against Pakistani organized fighting regiments supported by air, artillery and some places with navy, with shortage of arms & ammunition with remnants of the regiment created unfavourable state. The EBR personnel had offered resistance in set piece engagements with whatever they had. In these engagements, they suffered large number of casualties.

**Support of Civil Population**

Entire revolutionary leadership and population were keenly waiting to get EBRs in their movement as they had been struggling for autonomy, democracy, socio-political-economic rights against autocratic rulers of the West. Agartala Conspiracy case is the burning instance of joint collaboration of armed forces personnel. Political movements reached its culmination after victory in general election of 1970 but plot to foil the result frustrated them. As the EBR personnel revolted, population of East Pakistan got hope for an armed struggle for liberation war. People gave them shelter, logistic supply, fought with them with the spirit of liberation.

**THE RESISTANCE MOVEMENT: REDEPLOYMENT**

Although the armed resistance by the EBR elements of the Pakistani army started well, the operations did not achieve immediate result. Resistance movement in certain stage came to a standstill and by the end of April 1971, most of the revolting Bengali troops had been flushed out into India. Though they were spirited with the hope of liberating country and received overwhelming mass support, the rebels gained little success against Pakistan Army firepower,

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54. Lieutenant Colonel Shaafayet Jamil, Retd, Bangladesh Liberation War Documents, op.cit, p.132.
tactics and numerical superiority. The difficulties impeded the desired success like, complete disintegration of regiments, shortage of arms and ammunition, lack of intelligence, logistics back up, absence of unified central leadership and shortage of manpower coupled with well-coordinated tactical operations. Many of them had a rough flight for freedom. Heavy casualties, the privation of a hazardous trek, the sight of brutal atrocities and ruthless genocide by the West Pakistani troops had demoralised many of them. For all practical purposes the resistance that started on 26 March had virtually died down and something was needed to be done to bring it back to life again. They were simply inexperienced of staging a concerted action.

Spontaneous Resistance

The resistance movement would have been properly planned much earlier for desired result. There had been a little attempt made to coordinate or organize a military cadre around which a resistance movement could be formed as the political movement reached its vertex before 25 March ‘71.57 There was total lack of coordination and communication in the operations. Spontaneous mutineers took up arms in various places after 25 March ‘71 at their own initiative and arrangements. 8 EBR at Chittagong and 2 EBR at Joydevpura revolted on 26 March whereas 1 EBR at Jessore and 3 EBR at Sayedpur joined the resistance after 27 March. Before joining resistance movement EBR personnel did not make any plan among themselves for any probable resistance movement.

Pakistan Army’s Quick Counter Offensive

Before consolidating strength, the intensity of Pakistan Army’s quick offensive operations, demoralised the resistance movement troops. During March ‘71, more troops were brought secretly to East Pakistan to meet upcoming insurrection as anticipated to augment one division plus military strength. Probable options were also worked out as political situation went beyond their control. As a consequence, Pak Army located in East Pakistan launched counter offensive without much delay before resistance movement got strength with Indian support.

Engaged in Pitched Battle

EBRs, if numerically counted, made a favourable balance of muscle against the Pakistan Army but practically the strength was too little to cut any ice to start with. The rebels with their inferior manpower and weaponry instead of going for guerrilla warfare, chose to fight pitched battles.58 The immediate impact was suffering heavy casualties in terms of manpower and weapons. Though revolutionary people established contact with Indian authority for arms and ammunition supply, they did not receive adequate response.59 India looked unprepared and seemed unlikely to intervene in East Pakistan till that time with its own military forces.60 West Pakistani policy makers knew the probable consequence of political crisis and military actions and they decided to shift EBRs to West Pakistan or split their fighting forces. With a view to reducing the hitting power of a battalion and

58. Lt Gen Kamal Motinuddin (Retd), op. cit., p. 251
to decimate their strength, they were split into companies and these companies were often beyond battalion communication network. This had provided another advantage for the West Pakistani army. They aimed at keeping the Tigers out of picture of the build-up that was going on behind, in the cantonment and at the same time, dealing with them piecemeal, in isolated actions.  

**Operations Conducted by Comparatively Junior Officers**

Operations were conducted by comparatively junior officers who had less experience of conducting systematic operations for long term results. It should be mentioned, however, that some courageous mid-level officers took the grave risk of revolting without any specific directives. But there were instances where most of the Bengali troops were wiped out by the Pakistanis due to lack of timely initiative on the part of the experienced leadership. So, organizing a formidable and effective military operations with depleted strength against well-coordinated Pakistani military formations were not possible.

**Necessity of Adequate JCOs and NCOs**

Shortage of adequate fighting forces especially in JCO and NCO ranks made the resistance movement suffer in front battle. They could not stand effectively against Pakistani organized military units.

**Definite Aim and Objectives**

Though there was a definite political aim for autonomy, democracy and freedom, military consequences were not considered. Socio-political movements organized by political leaders drew a line of success through political means, but no definite aim or objectives were thought out regarding the imminent military engagement. EBRs fought without definite aim to reach desired destination.

**Central Command**

The war of resistance by Bengali troops and civilians started spontaneously and was fought by separate units and groups without any central command. The first attempt to coordinate war was made on 04 April ’71 in Teliapara (Sylhet), where a number of senior Bengali military commanders arranged an important meeting. Before that, there was no central military leadership for the resistance movement. Localized mid-level officers organized the resistance with their own ability. No effort was made to establish a countrywide and regional system of command and control by nominating leaders and defining areas of responsibility. This often resulted in unplanned confrontations and casualties on the part of Bengali troops. Battalions, located in East Pakistan, were out of contact from each other and were not in a position to work out a joint military plan following the political developments prevailing at that time.

Coordination between Guerrilla and EBRs

Some guerrilla operations were planned by political leaders before 25 March and limited scale training was given. Though EBRs emerged as military force for the same cause, no link had been established between the military elements and clandestine militant organisations raised by various political parties during the period of political uncertainty. As a result the revolt lacked a strong base and organised infrastructure to sustain a pro-longed insurgency.

All Political Activists did not Participate in the Resistance

The way political movements developed before 25 March ’71, the same way political activists could not participate in resistance with EBR personnel. They gave moral support, shelter and non-military support to them. Some of them participated side by side with EBRs with full spirit and devotions but full-fledged military operations could not absorb them as they lacked training.

Insufficient Firepower

Well organized Pakistan army could have been defeated by a small number of spirited liberation forces but they lacked minimum fire power. They did not have any supply of ammunition in response to Pakistani power fire. In bordering areas, the fighters communicated with Indian Border Security Forces for replenishment, but ammunition calibre did not match with their weapons.

Pak Army’s Firepower

Pakistan army was ready to face the resistance of EBR though they were surprised and overwhelmed for some days by the determined fighters. They used land, air and naval resources against a small number of enthusiastic EBR fighters with inadequate arms and ammunition.65

Deliberate Operation Plan

Excited people with the spirit of freedom welcomed EBR fighters and extended helping hand with whatever they possess. In response to the massive Pak firepower, EBR fighters engaged themselves without deliberate operational plan and adequate strength.66 Definite consequence was throwing them to an unequal desperate battle leading to the disengagement in a long run.

Regimental Integration

When EBRs revolted and left cantonments, they lost their regimental integration as some Pakistani personnel were included in the strength who did not follow them. Instead of reorganizing the regiment as per the fighting organogram, they involved with a running battle. Moreover, heterogeneous fighting element of Air Force, Navy, EPR, police and civil volunteers who fought with them, could not compliment the basic regimental fighting spirit.67

65. Lt Gen Mir Sawakat Ali, BU (retd), op. cit., p. 91.
67. Maj Rafiqul Islam, BU, op. cit., p. 53
**Operational Tactics of Pak army**

Pakistan army used better tactics in the battle field than that of freedom fighters. Sometimes they deceived EBR fighters in the battle as happened in Kalurghat where defenders were completely surprised.  

**Political and Diplomatic Guidance**

Resistance movement required diplomatic backup so as to define their status as freedom fighters under the control of a formal government. Exile government was yet to be formed and received international recognition. To meet up diplomatic vacuum, military commanders meet on 04 April '71 at Taliagarh. By that time fighting forces carried out tactical redeployment in India. To decide on the course of any military action against an established government was not an easy matter especially for a uniformed soldier.

> In the initial days of liberation war we in uniform were looking for a senior and able commander to give us the desired leadership. We were fighting isolated and disjointed battles all over the country, lacking in coordination and higher direction which were factors of utmost importance in any war. A senior officer was required who could, with foresight and military genius, lead us to a successful war. Then there was a need for political support, without which the war of liberation could as well be termed as an insurgency or at best a revolution. We had to master political backup for another very important reason. We needed armed assistance from abroad which could only be possible through political negotiation.

In April 17, 1971, a government of Bangladesh in exile was formed and undertook campaigns to gain support from the international community. The government also arranged, with the help of India, to train 100,000 young men as freedom fighters who began to take part in guerrilla attacks within Bangladesh.

**Necessity of Battle Intelligence**

EBR fighters lacked proper battle intelligence throughout the resistance movement. Shortage of communication equipment created non receipt of Pakistani military movements. As a result, they had poor communication among themselves, even many of the EBR officers were in dark about the incidents of 25 March and activities of other Bengal regiments. During the initial days of liberation war, vital information of the Pakistan Army was not available to them. What little they had, was of no military consequence. News that massive movement of Pakistan Army troops and munitions of war was in progress since the commencement of non-cooperation movement could help them little. It was merely a vague information and not military intelligence,

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68. Lt Gen Mir Sawakat Ali, BU (retd), op. cit., p 90.
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without which no tactical appreciation was possible, not to speak of a tactical battle. This was one-reason why initially liberation war did not take a co-ordinated shape.

**Conclusion**

In response to the crackdown, the independence of Bangladesh was declared triggering off a resistance that was organized almost spontaneously by the EBRs. After the initial setbacks of engaging the Pakistani troops in regular set piece battles, the EBR personnel decided to seek sanctuary in India to start regrouping with a view to continuing the resistance against occupation forces. Consequently, this experience made the freedom fighters stronger and wiser while taking on enemy in the later stages of the war. The EBRs finally fought the Pakistani Army preparing the ground for Allied forces to intervene on 03 December 1971 which took only twelve days to force the Pakistan Army to surrender leading to the emergence of independent Bangladesh.

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73. Maj Gen K M Safiullah, op. cit.
76. Major General Md Sarwar, BSP, SGP, ndc, hdmc, pse, PhD, 1971, Resistance, Resilience and Redemption, (Mowla Brothers, Dhaka, 2018), p. 120.
EVOLVING CYBER SECURITY THREAT AND PREPAREDNESS OF BANGLADESH ARMY

Lieutenant Colonel Mohammad Nurul Salam, psc, Sigs

Abstract

Cyber Security is one of the most talked about issues in present day’s context. Cloud services, social media, and mobile devices and bring your own device (BYOD) policies have moved the virtual world closer to reality. Cyber domain is expanding exponentially across the globe. It is emerging as a great concern in all corners of the society. It is changing so rapidly that it is literally impossible for any stakeholder to remain updated without appropriate engagement. Hence, thorough knowledge and understanding about recent cyber-attacks is necessary. Cyber is the latest catchword that has really taken the media like a storm. At national level including military, cyber-attacks can exploit the vulnerabilities of critical infrastructures which have a significant impact in routine running of the state. Therefore, we must have a complete understanding on Cyber-attack trends, identify own strength and weakness and try to attain the required competencies to fight back enormous threats of cyber-attacks. Bangladesh Army has its defined cyber space to store and share valuable information and data. Updating own technical outfit and catalogue with the latest cyber-threats, maintaining proper cyber hygiene and build associated protection mechanism is a challenging task indeed. In doing so, investment in people, acquire latest technologies and ensure appropriate hands on training is the necessity of time.

Introduction

The availability of technology and easy access to the Internet has brought great convenience to everyday life. Cloud services, social media, and mobile devices and BYOD policies have moved the virtual world into closer arena. But, there are also numerous kinds of cyber threats lurking in cyberspace, waiting to exploit a system or network vulnerabilities to compromise the security. Cyber threat is becoming a greater concern in all tiers of today’s society. The threat scenery will continue to evolve, with new and innovative attack methods on a favourable target environment. On a national level, cyber-attacks can exploit the vulnerabilities of critical infrastructures such as the energy, transportation, communications and many other sectors. Collapse of such sectors can seriously weaken the process of attaining military mission. Beside, military itself poses a great threat from diverse cyber domain. Therefore, there is vested interest for the military to develop comprehensive cyber security measures in order to mitigate varied kind of cyber-attacks. Furthermore, future attacks will be more diverse, using automated tools, rapidly changed in order to compromise hundreds of thousands of computer based systems around the globe.

BYOD (bring your own device) is the increasing trend toward employee-owned devices within a business. Smartphones are the most common example but employees also take their own tablets, laptops and USB drives into the workplace.
Evolving Cyber Security Threat and Preparedness of Bangladesh Army

Advent of Internet of Things (IOT) in our daily lives and rapid growth in the field of Artificial Intelligence (AI) have increased the possibilities of cyber threats in manifold. We all live in a world which is networked together in all aspects of our daily lives. Bangladesh also poses a soft and easy target of cyber threats. According to a cyber-threat map developed by real-time Kaspersky Lab, Bangladesh is reportedly the 20th most cyber-attacked country. Bangladesh Army has its defined cyber space to store and share valuable information and data. Updating own technical outfit and catalogue with the latest cyber-threats, maintaining proper cyber hygiene and building associated protection mechanism are challenging tasks indeed.

This paper highlights recent perspective and trends of cyber-attacks worldwide and on Armed Forces of Bangladesh over last few decades. It describes current cyber threat trends, an overview of Bangladesh Army IT Network, and focuses on strength and vulnerabilities of the networks in a nutshell. Having discussed the issues, finally a broad guideline has been articulated, following which Bangladesh Army can mitigate the threats to a great extent.

**Recent Perspective of Cyber Attacks**

**General**

Cyber-attacks are continuously evolving into smarter, persistent and challenging incidents. There is a long history to hacking, started almost 114 years ago. It has been a tremendous challenge for cyber-security professionals, technology vendors and law enforcement agencies to keep pace with these advancements. Many high-profile cyber-attacks highlighted that prevention and detection solutions are not enough. Evidence shows skilled, motivated, well-funded and state-sponsored hackers are capable to access any networks. In last few decades there had been destructive cyber-attacks in different parts of the world. Armed forces of Bangladesh also part of such threat. Hence, it is imperative and necessary to develop a complete understanding about the motivations, attack vectors and weaknesses exploited by past cyber-attacks. Lessons must be learned from past incidents to improve upon all aspects necessary for defending against future cyber-attacks. A few of the major cyber-attacks in last decade are discussed subsequently.

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2Real time update of all cyber-attacks around the globe from different parts of the world. It is established using wide cyber sensors from different regions.
Ransomware or WannaCry

It is believed to be one of the largest cyber-attacks in the history. WannaCry was a ransomware cyber-attack that spread rapidly in May 2017. Like all ransomware, it took over infected computers and encrypted the contents of hard drives, then demanded a payment in Bitcoin$^4$ in order to decrypt them. In June of 2017, a more virulent version of the malware started spreading in a new name “NetPetya”. NetPetya is widely believed to be a cyber attack from Russia against Ukraine, opening up a possible era of states using weaponized malware. The attack was estimated to have damage more than .2 million computers across 150 countries, with financial loss of few hundred billions of dollars. Security experts believed from the evaluation of the worm that the attack originated from North Korea or agencies working for the country.

$^4$Bitcoin (₿) is a crypto currency, a form of electronic cash. It is a decentralized digital currency without a central bank or single administrator that can be sent from user to user on the peer-to-peer bitcoin network without the need for intermediaries.$^7$
Cyber Attack in Iran in 2010

Stuxnet is a malicious computer worm, which was first uncovered in 2010. It was developed in 2005, which targeted supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) systems. It is believed to be responsible for causing substantial damage to program. The worm was a jointly built American/Israeli cyber weapon. Stuxnet specifically targets programmable logic controllers (PLCs), which allow the automation of electromechanical processes such as those used to control machinery on factory level machineries, or centrifuges for separating nuclear material. Following a series of zero-day flaws, Stuxnet compromised Iranian PLCs, collected information on its industrial systems and caused the fast-spinning centrifuges to tear themselves apart. Stuxnet ruined almost one fifth of Iran's nuclear centrifuges numbering around 1,000. The worm infected entire IT system of the project damaged about 200,000 computers and 1,000 machines.

Titan Rain

In the beginning of 2003, several US government agencies, including the Department of State, Energy and Homeland Security, NASA, as well as defence contractors were targeted by a series of coordinated cyber-attacks. The attack was code named as ‘Titan Rain’. It breached hundreds of classified documents from US state departments. In August 2005, SANS Institute revealed that the attacks originated in Chinese province of Guangdong. In May 2006, hackers targeted US State Department’s headquarters and offices dealing with Asia, breaching the unclassified network. Sensitive information including passwords was believed to have been stolen. In August 2006, US government officially stated that 10 to 20 terabytes of data has been downloaded by China. This is believed to be one of the most aggressive state sponsored cyber-attacks ever made in the history.

Figure 3: Cyber Attack attempt by China on USA in 2003-2007 (Around 700)

Target of Titan Rain on US in 2006

5 A zero-day (also known as 0-day) vulnerability is a computer-software vulnerability that is unknown to those who would be interested in mitigating the vulnerability (including the vendor of the target software). Until the vulnerability is mitigated, hackers can exploit it to adversely affect computer programs, data, additional computers or a network. An exploit directed at a zero-day is called a zero-day exploit, or zero-day attack.
6 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stuxnet
Cyber Attack in Estonia

A series of cyber-attacks took place on 27 April 2007 where websites of Estonian organizations, including Estonian parliament, banks, ministries, newspapers and broadcasters were completely collapsed. The reason was country's disagreement with Russia about the relocation of the Bronze Soldier of Tallinn\(^8\), an elaborate Soviet-era grave marker, as well as war graves in the city of Tallinn. Most of the attacks were targeted to denial of services like power plants, banks etc. and spam distribution to different networks. According to military planners and cyber security experts, it may have been the second-largest instance of state-sponsored cyber warfare, following Titan Rain. Following this event, NATO created Cooperative Cyber Defense Centre of Excellence in Tallinn, Estonia.

Cyber Attack in Bangladesh Bank

Bangladesh Bank cyber heist took place in February 2016, in which Federal Reserve Bank of New York issued instructions to withdraw US$ 1 billion via swift code. It was a complete fraudulent act where five transactions issued by security hackers, worth $101 million. At the request of Bangladesh Bank, the Federal Reserve blocked the remaining thirty transactions, amounting to $850 million. Dridex malware was injected to carry out the attack. Such an audacious heist was made successful by capitalizing the weaknesses in the network security system, along with involvement of some of its employees. Some or all of the stolen funds may eventually found its way to North Korea. It was alleged that North Korea had a distinct role in the attacks. Indeed it would be the first known incident of a state actor using cyber attacks to steal funds.

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\(^8\) The monument consists of a stonewall structure made of dolomite and a two-meter (6.5 ft) bronze statue of a soldier in a World War II-era Red Army military uniform. It was originally located in a small park (during the Soviet years called the Liberators' Square) in central Tallinn, above a small burial site of Soviet soldiers' remains reburied in April 1945.
Cyber Attacks on Armed Forces of Bangladesh

Armed Forces of Bangladesh has also suffered with numerous cyber-attacks attempts in last couple of years. The attacks were carried out isolated, mostly by non-state sponsored groups. Web page hacking of Air forces Recruitment system, hacking of Bangladesh Army Online learning system and intrusion in the webpage of National Defence College (NDC) are few of the examples. Few of the recent cyber-attacks incidents snap shots are appended below:


Figure 5: Cyber-attack on Air Force and NDC web site

Source: http://thehackerposts.blogspot.com/ and:
https://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/2017/09/09

Future Trends Global Cyber Threat

General

The modern cyber war is against governments, military, businesses and individuals without any precise convention. Many of them are simple and effective but others are targeted and complex in nature. Cyber threats are highly dynamic in nature. It needs persistence, regular follow up and mastering of resources to mitigate. The threat dimension progresses at such a rate that professionals remain on a run to deal with tomorrow’s cyber threats. It should be remembered that only very less portion of internet is visible to us (Only 4 %). Rest are occupied by Deep Web and Dark web\(^9\) where most of the cybercrimes take place. In 2017-18, around 978 million people in 20 countries were affected by various kind of cybercrime.

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\(^9\)The “deep web” is the web that exists in places that can not be accessed by search engines. ... The “dark web” is any Web-like network that uses proprietary protocols or requires special software to access.
Top Predictions in Cyber Threat in Near Future

Basing on present trends and changing nature of cyber-attacks following future threats are identified by experts:

a. **Meltdown & Spectre Exploits.** This is a hardware level exploitation. It appeared in early 2018, and its wide spread indicates that it is going to be the favoured tool for the hackers. It is predicted that the emergence of password-stealers and info stealers will take the advantage of Meltdown and Spectre vulnerabilities.

b. **PDF & Microsoft Office Threats.** Cybercriminals are likely to leverage users’ trust in PDFs and Microsoft Office applications as a new attack vector. Because of complicated techniques, many legacy firewalls and anti-virus solutions are unable to identify effectively and mitigate PDFs or Microsoft Office file types that contain malicious content.

c. **More Info Stealers.** Information stealing from devices from a remote location through various technical means (i.e. phishing) is an emerging trend in last few years. In some cases, highly targeted attacks had political motivation and targeted to a defence personnel of a particular field. As user-related data is extremely valuable to attackers, it is assumed that most of the attacks focused on gaining these valuable contents.

d. **New Ransomware Tricks.** With the trends of Ransomware attacks in 2017, new tricks are expected from ransomware authors. The mechanism used by ransomware to render a victim’s device useless has been shifted. Earlier threats simply covered the entire screen with a custom message. In 2017, it completely encrypted the device. We expect to see even newer techniques in 2018 and onwards.
Evolving Cyber Security Threat and Preparedness of Bangladesh Army

e. **Surge in Encrypted** Attacks. 2017 was the beginning of encrypted cyber-attacks. In future, we may witness more sophisticated malware that rely on encrypted traffic to covertly infiltrate organizations.

f. **IoT based Attacks.** Advanced IoT malware is likely to leverage automated active attacks which would spread easier and faster (e.g., actively exploiting the vulnerabilities and spreading like a worm). Home-based IoT attacks will lead headlines as they started to threaten average citizens’ privacy and personal profiles.

g. **State Sponsored Activities.** In last few years, it has been observed that States are getting involved with stealing, cybercrime and much other ethical confrontation in collaboration with vested groups against a particular country basing on political, military, business and even against individual contradiction. This trend is likely to increase in future days.

An Overview of Bangladesh Army IT Network

**General**

Bangladesh Army is maintaining two separate networks in connecting its end users. Bangladesh Army Net (BAnet) and Internet based network (Office Net) are the two functional networks. Strict air-gap[10] between Internet and BAnet is ensured at all times.

**Bangladesh Army Network (BAnet)**

It is the Wide Area Network (WAN) of Bangladesh Army which helps to store, transfer and exchange routine military information and any other information of military interest. Army Data Centre of Bangladesh Army provides the platform for hosting the applications to the potential users. Various application services are designed to be available throughout the WAN by strong Regional Data Centres (RDC) and small Network Operation Centres (NOC), geographically dispersed in the important communication nodes. The network is designed to withstand or recover from any kind of cyber-attacks.

**Internet**

Bangladesh Army also has the provision of extending internet service to the Army installations within cantonments. Mostly the offices are connected using Wi-Fi based connectivity. Necessary measures like firewall, content filtering etc. are ensured to all end user devices to meet appropriate security requirements before connecting them to the network.

**Strength of Bangladesh Army IT Structure**

There are certain technical domains where Bangladesh Army attained its strength over the period of time. A few of those are appended bellow:

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[10] An air gap, air wall or air gapping is a network security measure employed on one or more computers to ensure that a secure computer network is physically isolated from unsecured networks, such as the public Internet or an unsecured local area network. The name arises from the technique of creating a network that is physically separated (with a conceptual air gap) from all other networks.
a. Establishment of Army Data Centre. Bangladesh Army established its Tier III Data Centre in 2014. This is the first international certified Data Centre in Bangladesh. All the web based software which is used in Bangladesh Army is being hosted and all databases are backed up in a secured environment.

b. Closed Data Network. BAnet is a closed network protected by strong firewall and Active Directory Policy. The network is completely isolated from internet connectivity. The network guarded with latest version of End Point Security software. Usage of any kind of Flash drive or removable device is strictly forbidden which ensures security of the network.

c. Secured Use of Public IP. Public IP or real IP provides an open gateway to the internet domain. Bangladesh Army restricts the use of public IP with proper security management procedure. At present very limited amount of public IPs are in use.

d. Use of Remote Access Protocol. Bangladesh Army networks do not have any provision of remote log in from a distant location. Usually, software vendors or admin users sometimes look for remote log in facilities for ease of connectivity from a distant location, which is vulnerable for the whole network from the security point of view.

e. Application hosting in Army Data Centre. Most of the running software and applications are hosted from Army Data Center which is protected by strong firewall, power back up, data backup etc. There is no breach of security violation and hacking incident from the hosted application from Army Data Center.

Vulnerability and Weakness of Bangladesh Army in IT Domain.

Vulnerability and weakness incurred due to lack of knowledge, shortage of resource and sometimes due to budget constraints. Despite of significant growth in IT sector in last couple of years, there are a few specific areas where due attention may be given:

a. Improper Issue of Smart Phone, Electronic Gadget and Social media. Availability of smart phones and other electronic gadgets, easy access to internet connectivity and careless use of social media is a massive threat in our society. Members of Bangladesh Army are also part of this threat in the present day’s context. Sharing of classified information, compromising military value and ethics and many other wrong practices pose great cyber threat. Our users are somewhat lethargic to follow the laid down security instructions, guidelines, Service Operating Procedures (SOPs) and ignorant about privacy or configuration settings of various applications.

b. Versatile Use of wireless based Access Point (AP). Our workplace locations are infested with enormous number of Wi-Fi based internet connectivity. Widespread use of wireless networks invites huge cyber threat in the turn. Network routing once compromised, it would be difficult to recover.

\[1\] Data Centre which Guaranteeing 99.982% availability.
c. **Security of Soft Map Data.** Soft version of military maps and data is in use in various military armaments like MLRSS guns, tanks etc. Our Global Information System (GIS) section is also handling huge volume of classified map data. Protection and security of this soft version of map data is very vulnerable.

d. **Dependency on Hardware.** Like many other users of IT domain, Bangladesh Army is also dependent on various national and international vendors. Deployed hardware may have some back door vulnerabilities to potential adversaries.

e. **Dependency on Software Vendors.** Bangladesh Army depends on civilian vendors for application software development. Sometimes software is developed based on free version and following a prototype which is already in use. Such provisions leave a scope for opening back door for outsiders and malware injection.

f. **Dependency for Civilian Owned Transmission Network.** Bangladesh Army is operating one of the largest IT networks around the whole country. Connectivity among the distant location is dependent on Bangladesh Telephone Company Ltd (BTCL) and various Nationwide Telecommunication Transmission Networks (NTTNs). This is open data tunnel and is always susceptible to any kind of infiltration.

**Ways to Mitigate**

*General*

Cyber threat can never be eliminated completely due to its dynamic nature and rate of expansion. However, considering specific threat and vulnerability vis-à-vis preparedness in the perspective of Bangladesh Army, following aspects may be drawn with proper attention:

*Limiting the Use of Wireless Based Internet Connectivity*

For extending internet services, we should encourage to have cable based connectivity at end user level in military work places. In today’s context, though it is pretty difficult to satisfy the user without a wireless based solution as all the devices are wireless based.

*Provision of Encryption at End User Level Equipment*

Since, we depend on civil vendors for network and hardware; we need to have some kind of protective measure to guard our information. Therefore, at the user end we should strictly maintain own encryption policy like IPsec, VPN tunnelling etc. This will reduce the threat of back door connectivity to a great extent.

*Avoidance of Free Version Software*

Bangladesh Army should not compromise the quality of service to economize our budgets for better sustainability of our software. Software platforms, resource personals, selection of appropriate language and database and proper report generation must be given highest emphasize. No open sourced code and prototype model of software should be allowed for the use of Bangladesh Army.
Develop Own Transmission Network

Bangladesh Army had tremendous growth in the IT network in last few years. Presently, almost all the cantonment locations are connected. Probably, time has come to think how Bangladesh Army should start develop its own transmission network. This will save a lot budget every year and ensure enhanced security.

Preparation of IT Based Core personals

IT sector needs practical hands on expertise which needs to be perused continuously. According to the existing policy of Bangladesh Army, any individual can be retained to a particular position for a certain period of time; therefore, a strong necessity was felt to build a core group of IT personals for enhanced service support.

Strict Adherence to the Policy and Training.

With the passage of time, respective authorities brought out specific guidelines and instructions about the usage of various software, social media and on other related matters. It is commonly observed that the policies are not followed by our men who appears as a bottleneck to maintain the secured cyber hygiene. In order to ensure safe use of IT, strict enforcement of regulation and awareness campaign is necessary. Beside a slandered training module may be provisioned as part of regular training events in Bangladesh Military Academy, Officers’ courses and all other training institutes of Bangladesh Army.

Conclusion

Cyber security in military includes protecting military networks along with associated applications against cyber threats. Cyberspace is a network of networks that includes countless computers across the globe, therefore, no state or organisation can unilaterally maintain absolute effective cyber security. Close co-operation and timely sharing of cyber events around the world, updating threat signatures of malicious code, and information sharing with other stakeholders can help to improve collective cyber security standards. Therefore, a precise knowledge on historical and contemporary study of global cyber threats is necessary to relate the issue. It is to be remembered that the nature of cyber threat is dynamic, not having any kind of palpable boundary. Basing on the recent trends and experiences, threat prediction in cyber domain in near future can be speculated broadly, yet subjected to be changed any time. Bangladesh Army networks possess certain areas of strength and vulnerabilities. While the weakness and vulnerabilities cannot be eliminated outright, there is definite ways, following which we may try to attain the capability to fight diverse nature of cyber threats. Keeping own system updated with latest end point security measures, maintaining proper cyber hygiene, judicious use of social media and finally user awareness play paramount role to mitigate different forms of cyber threats. Therefore, it is always expected that, Bangladesh Army shall continue to explore all possible ways to defend its own cyber space. In doing so, investment in people, acquiring latest technologies and ensuring appropriate hands on training are the necessity of time.
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GLOBAL GOVERNANCE CHALLENGES: EFFECTS ON BANGLADESH AND IMPLICATIONS FOR BANGLADESH ARMY

Lieutenant Colonel S M Ashraful Islam, psc, ASC

“No State, however powerful, can protect itself on its own”
—Kofi Annan (2005)

Abstract

The world in twenty-first century has accomplished momentous human developments. At the same time, global scenarios were shattered and shadowed by the rise and threat of militant extremism, religious fanaticism, absence of rule of law and much social discrimination. Organized crime and transnational terrorism have threatened many nationalities into peril. The Earth’s climate is changing at a rate that has exceeded most scientific forecasts. Bangladesh has already experienced and highly susceptible to all those challenges in this era of globalization. A variety of actors and expertise is required to prescribe and implement appropriate action to evict this global governance challenges. Bangladesh is located at the regional crossroad and is likely to be affected nationally, regionally and internationally with global governance issues. The effect of global governance challenges onto Bangladesh perceived to have national, regional and international consequences. Bangladesh Army as one of the state actors for sustaining global peace is contributing greatly at home and in abroad. Bangladesh Army being the vanguard element of the government may be called for handling various threats and challenges of global governance which demands state of the art training and preparedness to deliver appropriate services at the time of real need. In addressing the expected threats and challenges, Bangladesh Army may have one or more geographical, societal, organizational and regulatory limitations. Therefore, national capacity building will be required emphasizing Bangladesh Army which will include appropriate tactics and strategies, cutting edge technologies and equipment, collaborative training including effective civil-military coordination.

General

The world in twenty-first century has accomplished momentous human developments. With the advent of modern science and technology, the extreme global poverty is slashed by halving within less than two decades. Among other incomparable human achievements are the exploration of outer space, intensification of the internet, steady advance of freedom, better security, and justice. At the same time, global scenarios were shattered and shadowed by the rise and threat of militant extremism, religious fanaticism, the absence of rule of law and much social discrimination. Continuous violence and intrastate conflicts endure in many poorly governed spaces of the world where a violation of human rights, discrimination among people, sex and gender-based atrocities against women, children, and minorities are a common phenomenon. Organized crime and transnational terrorism have threatened many nationalities into peril. Many

states and regions are already in a fragile condition where the international community has little or no peace to keep. Belligerents and militants have adopted asymmetric tactics where the enemy has “no appearance or area of operation”. Fragile states and poor governance are creating refugees and internally displacing people, who are constantly facing death, deportation and terrible mayhems. “The Earth’s climate is changing at a rate that has exceeded most scientific forecasts. Some families and communities have already started to suffer from disasters and the consequences of climate change “forced to leave their homes in search of a new beginning” as quoted by UNHCR. Bangladesh has already experienced and highly susceptible to the same challenges in this era of globalization.

In this world of hyper-connectivity with fostered trade links and ideological differences, many challenges are created by neo-liberal globalization towards global governance. These challenges are concerned with issues that are not possible for a single state to address in resolving it. Myriad collective or individual entities that emanate from various societal and professional alignments often interact with each other in a number of ways, form networks and engage to address local and global issues that threaten the communities. From climate change to humanitarian crises, military conflicts within and between states, asymmetric threats, and transnational militancy, cross-border terrorism and the rise of right wing nationalism couple with economic volatility seriously threaten human security across the globe. The powerful and the powerless, both are prone to this kind of global challenges and facing the threats of extinction.

A variety of actors and expertise is required to prescribe and implement appropriate action to evict this global governance challenges. Bangladesh Army as one of the state actors for sustaining global peace, contributing greatly at home and abroad in many aspects, included but not limited to peacekeeping operations for mitigating global governance challenges. This analytical study identifies the global governance challenges and its effects that seriously frame threats to Bangladesh with a view to implicating actions for Bangladesh Army.

Understanding Global Governances

Traditionally, governance denotes Formal Political Institutions that aim to coordinate and control interdependent social relations and that also possess the capacity to enforce decisions. But in recent years, however, scholars have used “Governance” to denote the regulation of interdependent relations in the absence of overarching political authority, such as in the international system. The concept of Global Governance was first pronounced in 1992 by James Rosenau and Ernst-Otto Czempiel’s collection titled “Governance without Government”. In 1995 the Commission on Global Governance further highlighted the concept of global governance by emphasizing “Our Global Neighbourhood”. Here, the concept of global

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Global Governance Challenges: Effects on Bangladesh and implications for Bangladesh Army

Global governance denotes the community movement for the global issues like upholding peace and security, protecting the natural environment and expanding economic activity for the advancement of the global community. Security, be it for a human being or for Mother Nature, is central to the governance challenges and thus the issue has expanded beyond the state boundary. For example, if the security of human being is severely violated and requires an international response on the humanitarian ground, Security Council of UN may authorize appropriate actions within any sovereign state to stabilize the region. And the UN is acting on the basis of global governance where global communities and states are placing their consent for the appropriate action to maintain world peace.

Actors in the GlobalGovernances

Global governance is governing, without sovereign authority, relationships that transcend national frontiers. According to the theories of International Relations, Realist School of Thought views the global governance as state-centric. The state makes a decision as a sovereign entity and maintains relations with other sovereign states to have an effective world order. International organizations were merely the “Intergovernmental Organizations” to them and mere instruments of government, therefore, are unimportant in their right. Realism posited that states act as units and that their military security interests trump on all of their other goals. But this state-centric world politics were changing after the demise of Soviet Union and international organizations were actively engaging among themselves to fill up the vacant spaces for shaping up the world order. Therefore, the liberalists’ view of the international relations strongly argues that international order and consequently state to state relations is dependent and influenced by institutions. The interdependence theory that emerged in the 1970s from liberalist theory turned eventually to develop into regime theory in the 1980s which ultimately developed into global governance theory in 1990s.

Having all those thoughts and views, it can be said that the concept of global governance is diverse in content, nature and is polycentric with multiple actors. These multiple actors with polycentric control can be broadly divided into state and non-state actors. The state machinery including armed forces, corporations, constitutional and non-constitutional bodies etc. all form the part of the state actors. On the other hand, non-state actors encompass national, sub-regional, regional, multinational and international entities. As a matter of facts, examples can also be drawn of the participation by many non-state actors, including the inter-state regime to generate global awareness.

Global Governance Challenges

If we take the stock of global governance challenges, we see a string of issues which are interrelated and interconnected yet having self-determining characteristics. Various actors in the global governance system conjoin around the concepts, ideas, norms of human rights and security in multiple ways. In doing that the realists’ state-centric “principles of sovereignty continued to challenge the practical application of those ideas internationally”\(^\text{10}\). Global Governance Challenges today range from violent conflicts and fragile state, climate change and resultant displacement, arms proliferation and transnational militancy, the rise of the right wings nationalists and inter-state rivalry, cross-border economic shocks and cyberspace security, organized crime and human security. All those challenges are likely to have long-lasting and far-reaching consequences, marked by extreme violence and chaotic condition in the face of remarkable human development.

![Figure 1: Global Risks: Likelihood And Impacts](image)

**Source:** World Economic Forum Global Risks Perception Survey 2017–2018

**Preventing and Responding to Violent Conflicts between States.** According to the WEF Global Risks 2015, “interstate conflict” is considered as the top catastrophe threat of concern in a

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global governance challenges: effects on bangladesh and implications for bangladesh army

new ranking order of business risks for the next decade\textsuperscript{11}. the americans in the name of “war on terror” involved themselves in an asymmetric warfare with numbers of nation who were involved in it. the rise of china as an economic giant, the emergence of the brics\textsuperscript{12} nation and russia under present leadership started offsetting american supremacy, especially in the mena\textsuperscript{13} region. global south displayed more influence on global issues in confronting global north’s desire in world affairs. conflicts between russia and ukraine, china and india, china and the south china sea neighbours, north korea and the american alliance, india and pakistan, bangladesh and myanmar over rohingya issues, saudi arabia, and iran over syria, yemen and qatar are the newer hotspots along with the old issues between palestine and israel.

figure 2: global displacements by conflict and violence in 2016

source: internal displacement monitoring centre (idmc)\textsuperscript{14} with world bank data

mitigating and adapting to climate changes. climate change and resultant disasters are the growing concern for the displacement of the human being. according to a report of idmc, one person in every second has been displaced by a disaster since 2009. in bangladesh, approximately 0.85 million people were displaced due to natural disaster from january to june 2017\textsuperscript{15}. amidst this horrific scenario, the paris agreement\textsuperscript{16} in december 2015 raised hope to many distressed people. in the agreement, 195 countries committed to limiting the increase in the global temperature to “well below” 2\textdegree c and pursuing efforts to limit it to 1.5\textdegree c.

\textsuperscript{11} andrew coburn, “interstate conflict is the new top concern for global risks 2015”, centre for risk studies, university of cambridge, january 2015. (http://www.blogs.jbs.cam.ac.uk/risk-studies-viewpoint/)
\textsuperscript{12} brics- brazil, russia, india, china and south africa
\textsuperscript{13} middle east and north africa
\textsuperscript{14} idmc is a geneva based independent organization, provides credible and timely data on all situations of internal displacement worldwide.
\textsuperscript{15} source: idmc, (http://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/bangladesh/)
\textsuperscript{16} reached at the 21\textsuperscript{st} session of the conference of the parties (cop) to the un framework convention on climate change (unfccc)
The agreement raised hope amid the absence of national commitment and enforcement mechanism, but the future of it was put into peril by the unilateral withdrawal of USA from UNFCCC\textsuperscript{17} meeting in Morocco in 2016. As a matter of fact, offshore countries like Bangladesh will be the worst sufferer of this climate change by giving out huge internal displacement.

**Advancing Development.** At the 70\textsuperscript{th} session of the UN General Assembly, world leaders adopted Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to advance the development. With 17 goals and 169 targets including health, education, energy, infrastructure, gender and environmental issues, SDGs were targeted for both developed and developing countries. With the estimated cost of $4.5 trillion per year to implement the SDGs, least developed countries were reached in a framework for domestic resource mobilization due to the reluctance of donors in support of the goals.

\textsuperscript{17} UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
Emerging powers, therefore, are moving forward with their initiatives like Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the New Development Bank (NDB), led by China and the BRICS nations respectively. The new “Belt and Road” initiative of China sparked wide debate and raised suspicion among the neighbours and western powers over growing Chinese influence in the region.

**Promoting Global Health.** The sudden outbreak of Ebola in Sub Saharan and West African countries severely affected global health issues since 2015. According to the Council on Councils of Center for Foreign Relations (CFR), 80% of the world population lives in the polio-free region, and HIV infections rate declined to 38% since 2001. Even having this remarkable global achievement, the projected expenditure for Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD) will be US$ 47 Trillion.

![Set of 9 voluntary global NCD targets for 2025](https://www.cfr.org/interactives/reportcard2015#!/ranking/2015)

**Figure 5: Global NCD target by 2025**

**Source:** World Health Organization (WHO)

Many new diseases are identified and new outbreaks like “Zika Virus” are often taking place around the globe. Though Bangladesh is declared polio-free country by WHO, it is under threat due to the influx of Rohingya refugees coming from Myanmar. The possibilities of spreading HIV infections and cholera outbreak cannot be ruled out while millions of refugees fleeing to

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19 The World Health Organization is a specialized agency of the United Nations that is concerned with international public health.
Bangladesh. New outbreaks with worst security conditions are greatly threatening the poorly governed spaces of the world.

**Managing Cyberspace Governance and the Internet.** Cyberspace and internet governance remain a very soft and subtle affair for many global stakeholders. The debate is looming around to have greater control over greater liberty in the global cyberspace. The concept of an open and free Internet was increasingly contested in 2015 as many countries sought to tighten control over the Internet. In many occasions, high-profile cyber-attacks and cases of cyber espionage underscored the need for better cyberspace management. Global leadership at times agreed not to conduct or enable cyber espionage to provide a competitive advantage to security and commercial sectors. Having promised to that, however, establishing rules for cyber espionage and its effectiveness will depend on the commitment and its implementation.

State security can be very vulnerable in the face of cyber-attack, the recent 20/6/2017 hacking of account in Bangladesh Bank substantiates the threat very much.

**Combating Transnational Terrorism.** Transnational terrorism which is also called international terrorism has become a major issue in the 21st century. Transnational terrorism is characterized by heterogeneous groups operating with loosely held hierarchy, having

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decentralized control with autonomously organized domestic and foreign fighters involving several states by using cutting-edge technology\textsuperscript{21}. Their formation and activities have been proliferated highly by factors like globalization, religious extremism, and advanced communication tools. The world has witnessed the rise of Boko Haram in Nigeria, Al-Shabab in Somalia, Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) along with the “Lone Wolf”\textsuperscript{22} terrorist groups in many parts of the globe. The hybrid type newly waged asymmetric warfare adopted by militants, especially in the Islamic Maghreb zones like Mali and neighbouring countries is a great concern for the global leaders. Bangladesh, being a peace-loving homogenous country, is experiencing the same threat as other countries elsewhere in the world.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{terrorist_incidents_worldwide.png}
\caption{Terrorist Incidents Worldwide}
\label{fig:terrorist_incidents_worldwide}
\end{figure}

\textbf{Source: Wikipedia}

\textbf{Preventing and Responding to Internal Violent Conflict.} In the post-cold war era, perhaps internal conflicts and violence were the biggest challenges encountered by international communities. Many political scientists explained internal conflicts and civil war with “Greed and Grievance” theory\textsuperscript{23} in saying that control over resources and relative deprivation fueled the conflicts. We observe that African Centric conflicts are mostly driven by the greed of the elite

\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{21} Serdar Yildiz (2015), Transnational Terrorism, : https://www.researchgate.net/publication/283542794
whereas the MENA region has boiled up due to grievances. However, elements of the degradation of the social contract are present in both the region. Former UN Secretary-General Mr. Kofi Annan, for instance, noted that since 1970 no less than 30 wars have been fought in Africa, most of them were intrastate in nature (Aboagye 2009; 2007). Today, if we look at the MENA region only, we see the horrific nature of internal conflicts where millions of lives are already in jeopardy. In South Sudan more than 2.4 million people have been displaced and tens of thousands have been killed as quoted by African Union report in October 2017.

Figure 8: Number of Displacements by Conflict and Violence as of 2016

Source: IDMC, with World Bank Data

New countries and regions like Rakhine State of Myanmar and Kurdish Region are also broiling up due to internal conflicts and ethnic problems.

**Preventing Nuclear Proliferation.** Nuclear proliferation is a major concern for the peace-loving people due to the rise of ultranationalist right-wing politics, transnational militancy, organized crime, asymmetric warfare and state fragility of many nuclear-powered nations. The only good news was the deal reached between the P5+1 and Iran in July 2015 to limit Iran’s nuclear program in exchange for sanctions relief. However, North Korea continued to threaten the international non-proliferation regime and global peace through its pursuit of nuclear weapons and delivery vehicles. The Indian subcontinent kept millions of people under constant nuclear threat with the Pakistani adoption of “First Strike” strategy against India. Bangladesh has also started its journey as a 31st nuclear-powered nation in the world with the inauguration of Ruppur Atomic Energy Power Plant. Safety and security to avoid an accident is also a major concern for Bangladesh.


25 The United States, United Kingdom, France, Russia, and China, plus Germany.
Effects of Global Governance Challenges on Bangladesh

Bangladesh is located at the regional crossroad and is likely to be affected nationally, regionally and internationally with global governance issues. The country has just stepped into the middle-income country group, having a very strong middle-class society with a vibrant media having widespread coverage. A highly interconnected society with extensive mobile telephone network is facilitating people to people connections greatly. The country is sustaining over 6.19% GDP growth rate continuously for the last decade\textsuperscript{26}. A wonder of microfinance and related success story, Bangladesh is scripting a remarkable story of economic transformation and resilience\textsuperscript{27}. Global governance regime at times is supplementing to resolve many development issues of Bangladesh and sometimes clashing with it. The effect of global governance challenges onto Bangladesh perceived to have following national, regional and international consequences:

\begin{itemize}
  \item Being located in a disaster-prone area, the country has redefined its relationship with disaster- from eco-vulnerable status to win global recognition and respect as a disaster manager\textsuperscript{28}. Due to the lack of cohesion in global climate change preparedness, Bangladesh is going to face multi-dimensional disasters including cyclones, floods, and droughts. Rise in the sea level due to global warming and carbon emission will put many coastal areas under water, creating climate IDPs\textsuperscript{29}. Therefore, an existential issue like food security, shelter and medication is a great concern for Bangladesh.
\end{itemize}

\textbf{Figure 9: Displacement Figures in Bangladesh (2009-2016)}

\textit{Source: IDMC}

\textsuperscript{26} General Economics Division, 2015, 7th Five year Plan, Planning Commission, Government of Bangladesh.
\textsuperscript{27} Power and Participation Research Centre. Bangladesh 2016- Politics, Governance and Middle Income Aspirations: Realities and Challenges - An Empirical Study. Published by UNDP.
\textsuperscript{28} Ibid. p 7.
\textsuperscript{29} Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)
b. One of the major foreign remittance earning sources of Bangladesh is the diaspora living or working abroad, especially in the MENA region. Approximately 12% of the country’s GDP is contributed by foreign remittances sent by its workforce. If the interstate conflicts are going to continue for prolong time around the globe, foreign remittances are going to be dropped thus affecting its economic growth.

c. New outbreaks of diseases will highly affect the country due to poor monitoring and quarantine mechanism. The country is declared free of polio and other contagious diseases but often suffered due to new outbreaks like Zika virus and Ebola. Country’s medical safety is at risk due to the influx of Rohingya refugees from Myanmar. Experts fear that cholera and AIDS are likely to spread if not preventive steps are taken.

d. Cybercrime and transnational terrorism is a great concern for the security provider of the country. When the country’s banking system is emerging as a network-centric system, hacking the central bank account was a serious safety issue for the banking sector of the country. Scam of many network-centric banking activities put serious pressure on this emerging sector. Strict compliance for the nonproliferation and security of the atomic installations will put extra pressure on the cyberspace security system.

e. Transnational and regional militant groups are also active in the country as security forces are encountering them every now and then. The recent attack on “Holy Artisan” restaurant at Gulshan area, Dhaka also signifies their presence. Violent communal riots and blindfolded religious activities around the globe are also responsible for heating up internal harmony and social discord.

Implications for Bangladesh Army

Historically, Bangladesh Army has long glorious history to safeguard the distressed and oppressed people at home and abroad. It has hoisted the flag of peace in many lands of disarray during the last 30 years engagement with peacekeeping operation under United Nations. Bangladeshi peacekeepers are regarded as the “Role Model” to many troops contributing countries (TCCs). Bangladesh Army has marked its footprint almost in all spheres of human society, be it in war or peace, including but not limited to nation-building, humanitarian assistance, disaster management, and law and order preservation activities. It has also experienced working with sub-regional and regional armies along with the global partners in different types of engagements. The professionalism, dedication to service, respect for the human rights and international humanitarian laws have established the credibility of this army both nationally and internationally. Yet, global governance challenges give off new types of global threat and challenges, phenomenon and catastrophes which demand state of the art training for and preparedness of the army to deliver appropriate services at the time of real need. The global governance challenges have the following implications for Bangladesh Army:

**Global Governance Challenges: Effects on Bangladesh and implications for Bangladesh Army**

**Expected Threats and Challenges.** Bangladesh is exposed to various global governance challenges like natural calamities, transnational militancy, cyberspace crime, epidemic diseases, economic constraint and violent conflicts. Bangladesh Army being the vanguard element of the government may be called for handling various threats and challenges some of which are:

a. **Natural Calamities and Disasters.** Global warming and its resultant effect responsible for glacier melting in the Himalayas are causing floods and displacing thousands of inhabitants. Cyclones and tornadoes are becoming a regular phenomenon, responsible to create climate refugees in the coastal belts. Approximately, 3.3 million people have been affected by Tropical Cyclone Mora in 2016. Thousands of people are uprooted from their pastoral lands due to excessive river erosion and landslides. Salinity intrusion into the river basin and offshore areas are causing critical shortages of pure drinking water and water for the household use.

b. **Man made Disasters.** Building collapse and industrial fire are taking a huge toll on human lives in the economic zones. These man-made disasters seriously affect the economic growth, particularly affecting readymade garment industries. The safety of the labors and the image of the country are directly involved where international communities are highly critical concern of it.

![Figure 10: Disaster Displacement Figures in Bangladesh (2008-2016)](source: IDMC Report)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>New Displacements</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>2009</td>
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<td>2015</td>
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<td>2016</td>
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-1,500,000
-1,000,000
-500,000
0

**c. Extremism and Fanaticism.** Bangladesh is also experiencing the rise of the religious extremism and fanaticism due to long war and insurgency in West Asia, Middle East, and South East Asia. The spillover effects and fall outs of those inter and intra-state conflicts are seriously undermining the security of Bangladesh.

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32 [https://reliefweb.int/disaster/tc-2017-000058-bgd](https://reliefweb.int/disaster/tc-2017-000058-bgd)

33 ADRC, Op Cit.
d. **The Radicalization of Community.** Communalism and radicalization of the various faith-based organizations is another big challenge facing Bangladesh. In a wave of 2015-16, few incidents of faith-based assassination took place which was seriously dealt with by the law enforcing agencies.

e. **Transnational Terrorist Operatives.** Suicidal attacks in the name of Al-Qaeda and Islamic State (IS) are often taking place and extremists are seriously undermining security organization with a stockpile of IEDs\(^{34}\) and explosives. Transnational and international terrorist groups are claiming many attacks by their own operatives. The figure below is showing the trends of militancy in Bangladesh since 1970 which indicates a sharp rise from 2012.

![Figure 11: Trends of Militancy in Bangladesh (1970-2016)](image)

**Source:** University of Maryland’s Global Terrorism Database (GTD)\(^{35}\)

f. **Human and Drug Trafficking.** Cross-border movement, human and drug trafficking including smuggling of arms and gold are another big challenge for the security sector which undermining the country’s economic development. The inaccessible and porous border with lack of supervision, coupled with corruption are severely affecting the state monitoring mechanism.

g. **Refugees and IDPs.** Poor humanitarian conditions and violation of human rights in the bordering state of the neighboring countries created refugee crises and affecting Bangladesh.

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\(^{34}\) An improvised explosive device (IED) is a bomb constructed and deployed in ways other than in conventional military action.

\(^{35}\) GTD is an open source database managed by University of Maryland, USA.
Recent atrocities against Rohingya by Myanmar Security Forces in Rakhine state is considered as “Text Book” cases of ethnic cleansing as described by UNOHCHR\textsuperscript{36}.

**h. The Outbreak of Epidemic and Endemic.** According to UNICEF and WHO, Bangladesh is under imminent threat of Cholera, measles and Polio outbreak due to the inflow of Rohingya refugees. The Daily Star reported on 17 September 2017 that refugees were identified with HIV positive which is a great concern for the local population.\textsuperscript{37}

**j. Cybercrime.** The banking sector and other network-based businesses are coming under continuous cyber-attack from local and international hackers. Organized gangs from home and abroad are relentlessly devising methods to breach the cybersecurity. Bangladesh lost a huge amount of money as hackers breach the network security of Bangladesh Bank. A terrorist also using cyberspace to communicate and to recruit followers which is a serious vulnerability for the country.

**Likely Roles of Bangladesh Army.** Born through the glorious liberation war, today Bangladesh Army is a well-trained, well-equipped and well-organized force. Over the last forty years, it has performed its primary role of defending the country externally as well as safeguarded her from internal destabilization. Bangladeshi men and women in uniform are serving side by side to meet up the challenge for the 21\textsuperscript{st} century\textsuperscript{37}. Primarily Bangladesh Army is designed as a deterrent land force to defend the sovereignty and territorial integrity. Its classical roles include fighting the traditional and non-traditional threats and challenges; assisting the civil administration in disaster and internal security management; nation-building, peacekeeping, and coalition operations with friendly countries\textsuperscript{38}. Considering the global governance challenges and associated threats, Bangladesh Army may be called for one or more of the following tasks:

**a. Humanitarian Operation for Refugees and IDPs.** Considering the global challenges and threats Bangladesh Army may be called for various national and international humanitarian undertakings. However, Bangladesh Army is already tackling catastrophic refugee crises created by Myanmar security forces in Rakhine state. Estimated 1.2 million forcibly uprooted Rohingya minorities are taking shelter in Teknaf area of Bangladesh. Immediately Bangladesh Army was called for coordinating lifesaving undertakings for the distress people with the assistance of national and international humanitarian agencies.

**b. Disaster Relief Operation.** At times nation faces natural and man-made disasters including flood, cyclone, landslide, building collapse and industrial fires etc. Army is often called for to assist the civil administration to handle these existential crises like the case of “Rana Plaza”. According to the Oslo Guidelines,\textsuperscript{39} the involvement of domestic military

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\textsuperscript{36} United Nation Office of the High Commission for Human Rights (UN OHCHR)  
\textsuperscript{38} https://www.army.mil.bd/About-Bangladesh-Army  
\textsuperscript{39} Oslo Guidelines. Guidelines on the Use of Foreign Military and Civil Defence Assets (MCDA) in Disaster Relief.
forces is often the first resort due to lack of capacity elsewhere and the use of foreign military assets must be a last resort. It is well articulated in Bangladesh Army.

c. **Fighting Against Non-Traditional and Asymmetric Threats.** Bangladesh Army is assisting to various law enforcement agencies to eliminate non-traditional and asymmetric threats that the nation is experiencing currently which is included but not limited to drug, arms and human trafficking. Army have already skillfully fought and solved insurgency problems in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT). The army is not only fighting non-traditional threats inland but also fighting against asymmetric threats in distant lands under the UN umbrella.

d. **The Campaign against Epidemic and Endemics.** Bangladesh Army is not only called for to keep hands on security, rather army also assisted the home administration in fighting against Avian Flu at home and against Ebola in UN mission. Military hospitals are also designed to handle emergency outbreaks of epidemic and endemic to help the health administrations. The army medical teams are promptly visible in home and abroad immediately after the disasters, be it a natural or man-made catastrophe.

e. **Safeguarding Key Point Installations and Cyberspace.** Bangladesh Army is safeguarding many key point installations and also providing the backbone for cyberspace security. Country’s most of the heavy power plants are guarded by the army. Military intelligence and experts are also providing real-time information and technical know-how to safeguarding the cyberspace. The evil nexus of the extremists are broken every now and then and brought them to justice by monitoring their internet-based network. Bangladesh army surely has to be organized and create a platform to safeguard the cyberspace like many other modern armies.

f. **Safety Net for Atomic Power Plant and Satellite Communication.** Bangladesh has entered into the elite group of countries by inaugurating Ruppur Atomic Power Plant and launching Bangabandhu Satellite in the outer orbit. The army is already working on safeguarding the atomic power plant; however, steps may be taken to create an organization for ensuring the safeguard of satellite ground stations. Besides, the opportunity may be tapped by using the satellite to maximize the military benefits for which a platform of expert military professionals will be required.

g. **Nation Building Activities.** It is worth mentionable that Bangladesh Army is an active stakeholder in the quest for national progress and development. The impression of the army is distinctly visible in all major nation-building activities like Padma Bridge, Cox’s Bazar Marine Drive and Dhaka Elevated Expressways etc. These undertakings are eventually turning huge youth populations into a highly skilled human resource⁴⁰.

h. **Enhancement of Education and Research.** Bangladesh Army is contributing actively in education and economic advancement of the country by undertaking various educational and

⁴⁰ Source: www.army.mil.bd.
entrepreneurial initiatives. Military educational institutions for higher studies are distinctly visible in the country. Young prospective students are getting world-class education in those institutions which are run by army administrations. In these institutions, significant research and development works are going on which are contributing greatly both militarily and economically.

**Limiting Factors for Bangladesh Army.** Though army is the last resort to be used, it’s often called only when the situation has reached a dangerous level. Armies all over the world have certain limitations and will find it difficult to bring the situation under control in a short time which is expected by the public and also by the government. In addressing the expected threats and challenges, Bangladesh Army may have one or more of the following limitations:

a. **Addressing Societal Factors of Terrorism.** Terrorism and extremism can be controlled by army and security forces, however, the evidence says, it can only be eliminated with popular support. Elimination of terrorism requires removal of the “root cause” of terrorism which requires social, economic, political and psychological attention. Civilian administration can effectively address these societal factors where the army can play the supportive role.

b. **Geographical Constraints.** Many of the extremist's groups operate in the remote bordering areas where a military operation is a very complex issue. Cross-border activities of the terrorist make it very difficult for the military to have effective control over their movement.

c. **Regulatory Limitations.** Political, diplomatic and international rules and regulations at times limit the military operation in support of the civilian authority. Receptive incapacity of the civilian authority and bureaucratic complexity at times severely affect the efficiency of the army. Bangladesh Army as an organization is not designed for these purposes yet can quickly readjust its structure for the emergency call.

d. **Collateral Damages.** Fighting against the terrorist and their suicidal squad can be fierce and bloody. It involves loss or damage to the forces and civilians as well. It may create widespread condemnation from the international humanitarian actors if the military actions are not legitimate, which is always a challenge for the army to prove. Severe loss of civilian as well as military life will diminish the goodwill of the armed forces in home and in abroad.

e. **Disrespects for UN Peacekeepers.** So long Bangladesh Army was participating in UN peacekeeping operations where the parties to the conflicts respected the UN forces. But in recent time, UN forces are not respected, threats to the conflict are asymmetric, peacekeepers are deliberately targeted and facing deadly engagements. The military in that multinational environment also faces different barriers like language, culture, operating different equipment and adopting different tactics.

f. **Organizational Constraints.** With the present force structure, Bangladesh Army responds to the national call in support of the civilian authority. The absence of appropriate interfaces and clear coordination mechanism create chaotic posture for the military
stakeholders. Many national mega development projects are under implementation including nuclear power plant where the army is actively involved. Cyberspace security and network-based crime which is another security threat has increased and extensively used by the domestic, side by side transnational criminals. Thus, the army is facing organizational constraint and lacking the operating know-how to quickly adapt to the needs.

Way Forward

National Capacity Building Emphasizing Bangladesh Army. Bangladesh Army remains steadfast to the national goals and objectives during war and peace. In conventional warfare, the role of the army is well-defined41. Presently, Bangladesh is not facing any eminent conventional threats from external aggressors. But terrorism and militancy are assuming dangerous proportions in the country. The very nature of the operation and tactics being adopted by a terrorist are getting metamorphosed. As a result, state security has to be addressed within a national framework. Structural changes in the organization and force planning are a requirement to fit into the new roles. Organizational setup including national command and monitoring centre will be required to meet the governance challenges emanating from global issues.

Need for Cutting-Edge Technology and State of the Art Equipment. Bangladesh Army is already called for fighting against terrorism in a number of occasions. The Holy Artisan case at Gulshan area, Dhaka is the prime example of the army’s involvement in fighting the jihadists. It is expected that not only inside Bangladesh but our army is likely to be called upon by the international community to fight against terrorist under UN umbrella. Bangladesh Army is already fighting against terrorist armed groups in Mali under UN peacekeeping operation. It is evident that any operation against international terrorist armed groups such as Al-Qaeda, ISIL and Boko Haram will be fierce and protracted in nature. Therefore, real-time battlefield surveillance and intelligence system including protective vehicles and equipment will be required. A well-coordinated logistic system will be required to support these impending complex operations.

Need for Appropriate Tactics and Strategies. The operation against non-traditional and asymmetric threat forces involves different kinds of strategies, tactics, weaponry, training, and logistics. A well-motivated and well-coordinated force having a long-term strategy, supported by appropriate tactics can only fight these battles. Considering the perceived threat at home and in deployed areas overseas, it is the call of the time to formulate appropriate tactics and strategies. The experienced gained through the fighting insurgency operation in CHT will be contributing greatly in this regard.

Training Requirement Including Civil-Military Coordination (CIMIC). Bangladesh Army remains at the forefront and undertakes pivotal tasks for coordinating with all humanitarian activists and agencies to provide them food, shelter, treatment, and recovery. Training with all stakeholders is essential to understand the CIMIC mechanism. Though army is well experienced, however, it is a requirement to bring others in the same platform for the effective future campaign. Joint and collaborative training is essential to bridge the gaps and establish rapport.

Bangladesh Institute of Peace Support Operations Training (BIPSOT) can play a vital role in this regard if policy and regulatory supports are provided.

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Lieutenant Colonel S M Ashraful Islam, psc was commissioned on 16 Jun 1995 in Army Service Corps of Bangladesh Army. He served in various command, staff and instructional appointments. He attended various courses in home and abroad. He had peacekeeping assignments with UN Mission in Cote d’Ivoire as Senior Staff Officer Logistics and in Liberia as Military Observer. He is a graduate of Defence Services Command and Staff College, Mirpur and obtained Master of Defence Studies degree from National University. He held a Diploma in Logistic Management from US Army Logistic Management College, Ft Lee, Virginia. He obtained MBA from MIST under Dhaka University and also a Subject Matter Expert on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration. He is a content developer for UN Peacekeeping Training and a former faculty of BIPSOT. He is an MPhil researcher of Bangladesh University of Professionals. Presently he is commanding a Supply and Transport Battalion in Chittagong Cantonment.
PROPAGANDA IN SOCIAL MEDIA: A MENACE IN CHT

Colonel Gulam Mahiuddin Ahmed, SGP, afwc, psc

“If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles.”
— Sun Tzu, The Art of War

Abstract
Over a period of time, the security dynamics of CHT has changed to a great extent. These changes have resulted in a complex situation, where the greatest worry is the existence of faceless enemies with non-military lethality. Social media is one of the fields of the new security dynamics which is growing day by day with its intensity as well as effectiveness. With the weaponization of social media, it has become the ‘weapon of choice’ in CHT as well. Analysing the details and in-depth study of the major events of the Bilatchhari Incident, it has been found that BD Army has participated in the social media dimension partially. It was also evident that BD Army had been targeted deliberately in this incident in the arena of social media. However, the fact is, the propaganda and hate campaign is far from having been explored in its totality resulting ‘the weapon of choice’ being used by the faceless enemies of BD Army in CHT. The weaponization of social media has offered manifold threats to BD Army. With an ever-increasing trend, this new foe has been manipulating all available means to target BD Army at various dimensions of the conflicts in CHT. Thus, it has become imperative for BD Army to prepare itself for facing the menace of this faceless reality to existing security dynamics in CHT.

Introduction
Insurgency started in violent form across Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) in mid-seventies. Consequently, the Government of Bangladesh undertook an integrated approach of conducting military operations against the armed insurgents and socio-economic development as well as political reconciliation in a quest for peace and stability in the region. The political initiatives of the Government to bring the erstwhile PCJSS to the negotiation table and successful military operations of Security Forces (SF) against the Shanti Bahini have compelled the insurgents to come to the negotiating table. Since the signing of the historic CHT Agreement, the SF has been assisting the government and other agencies to implement the Agreement by maintaining law and order situation in CHT.

Over a period of time, the security dynamics of CHT has changed to a great extent. These changes have put the SF into a complex situation, where they have gradually been dragged into fighting a new foe, in a field mostly away from the traditional military arena. Social media is one such field, which is growing day by day in the virtual space with intensity as well as effectiveness. This new menace which is faceless has expanded the arena of conflict of CHT into the virtual world. Wherein, psychological warfare conducted over the last few years, has been the driving force behind the ‘soft warfare’ well underway against the SF. The weapons used in this warfare are manifold including dissemination of disinformation over media to eliminate public support in the country for appropriate action against the perpetrators as well as limiting freedom.
of action of the SF in CHT. With an ever-increasing trend, this new facet of the threat has been exploiting all available platforms targeting SF on various levels, which at times contribute to raising questions regarding the involvement of SF in the process of implementation of CHT Agreement.

This paper briefly highlights situations where social media have been utilized for military purposes in contemporary conflicts. Then the different dimensions of conflicts in CHT where SF are involved will be discussed. Subsequently, a recent incident will be analysed as a case study in order to find out the degree of involvement of the SF in the aforesaid dimensions of conflict. Finally, the current trend of utilization of social media by the faceless enemies against the SF will be highlighted followed by a brief discussion on the way out of this security dynamics in CHT.

The ‘Weaponization’ of Social Media

Being part of ever developing technology, social media have affected the environment of contemporary conflicts significantly. The changed conflict environment has also delivered more power to or effect of social media in contemporary conflicts. These developments have brought in new realities for different actors in a conflict affecting their way of fighting. At the same time, these actors have weaponized social media through systematic and strategic use for military purposes. Therefore, “it has increasingly become the ‘weapon of choice’ both for state and non-state actors” (Renolds, 2016, p. 13).

Basing on several resources, Thomas Elkjer Nissen has identified six activities, shown in figure 1 below, where social media can be utilized for supporting military operations, such as Intelligence Collection, Targeting, Psychological Warfare, Cyber Operations, Defence and Command & Control (C2).

![Figure 1: Activities and Effect Frameworks of Social Media](nissen-2015-p-61)

Source: Nissen, 2015, p. 61.
**Targeting.** Social media can be used for identifying the target in the physical domain based on a geo-tagged picture, update, ongoing conversation etc. Besides, a target can be nominated in social media profiles, sites, accounts, etc. for placing information (image/words/other contents) and influence conversation. It is also used for directly addressing a large audience in the social media group to change their perception, attitude, and behaviour. Social media may be attacked by hacking or defacing them. For example, NATO used air power in Libya targeting regime positions, which were identified through Google maps and cell phones (Nissen, 2015, p. 82).

**Intelligence Collection.** For intelligence collection, there are several ways to analyse social media, such as trend analysis, network analysis, content analysis, geo-analysis, behavioural analysis, sentiment analysis etc. All these can contribute to target analysis, support psychological warfare or selection of target both online and offline. Social media can make it possible to get detailed information about actors, networks and even provide real-time information. Even, it allows collection and analysis of intelligence without ‘boots on the ground’ or any physical presence in the area of interest. With a consistent study of social media, it is possible to identify ‘early warning signals’ of a future crisis. For example, the presence of Russian soldiers in Ukraine could be proved through social media profiles used by Russian soldiers. (Volchek & Bigg, 2015).

**Cyber Operations.** It includes an attack on websites, hacking a password protected chat site, email, or cell phones etc. for exposing content; intrusion in news agencies and altering news stories, altering image or content in Facebook; intrusion into database in order to extract information etc. “All such activities are aimed at preventing other actors from using social media platforms to communicate, coordinate actions, access information, or distribute messages, at least temporarily.” (Renolds, 2016, p. 14). For example – the hacker could hack Twitter account of US CENTCOM and send a threatening message to US soldiers, e.g. ‘American soldiers, we are coming, watch your back’ (Bucktin, 2015).

**Psychological Warfare (PsyWar).** It is the most fertile area for weaponizing social media. It refers to all activities reaching the target audience aiming to influence their belief system, perception, motivation, emotions, values, attitude, behaviour, and reasoning. "PsyWar conducted in and through social network media can be very effective, particularly when used in combination with more traditional means of communication and media” (Nissen, 2015, p. 67). The overt method of influencing includes the creation of official pages, website, channel etc. On the other hand, the covert method includes fake identities, social bots and trolling etc. In the certain cognitive domain, use of PsyWar can achieve certain military effects such as – inform, shape, manipulate, influence, deceive, coerce, deter, mobilize, mislead, promote, convince etc. (Nissen, 2015, pp. 69-70). A good number of examples of PsyWar can be sited from the recent conflict in Ukraine.

**Defence.** It refers to protection of own social media platforms, accounts, profiles, sites etc. at the technical or system level. The use of encryption, anti-tracking or IP-concealing software etc. are some of the defensive activities. In cognitive domain, the defensive activities can achieve
certain military effects such as detect, prevent, secure and protect. Therefore, terrorist organizations mostly use encrypted chat platforms for communications.

**Command & Control.** Social media network can be used for C2 purposes, which include internal communication, information sharing, synchronization of actions and facilities for agile decision making, coordination etc. The C2 activities of social media have three distinct effects in the military such as facilitate, coordinate and synchronize. Thus, it is quite useful for non-state actors like insurgents. Besides, it can be used with great effectiveness for the dissemination of information to mobilize and coordinate non-state actors with a common interest to engage them with a specific target.

**The Dimension of Conflicts in CHT**

With the changing nature of warfare, David Patrikarakos has observed a new form of conflict where engagements are taking place in multiple dimensions, such as physical dimension, information or narrative dimension and discursive dimension. Observing the current security environment, events taking places both within and out of CHT, vibrant social media platform, and role of SF in CHT, it appears that CHT issues may be categorized in line with the aforesaid dimensions of conflict. Wherein SF are involved in all three dimensions, which may be re-named as the physical dimension, social media dimension, and discursive dimension, as shown below in figure 2.

![Figure 2: The Dimensions of Conflicts in CHT](image)

*Source:* Modified by the Author from NATO Information Operations AJP3.10.
Propaganda in Social Media: A Menace in CHT

The Physical Dimension (Battleground in Real World)

This is the tangible dimension in the real world, the visible battleground where soldiers fight with a tank, artillery and other means. “It is the dimension where physical platforms and the communications networks that connect them reside” (US Department of Defence, 2014, pp. 1-2).

In CHT, SF is organized, equipped and trained to fight in this dimension. They have effective organizations, well-established infrastructures, trained forces equipped with required weapons and more or less almost everything necessary to assist in the implementation of the CHT Agreement on the ground. On the other hand, the regional political parties (RPP) are maintaining armed miscreants with effective organizational structures equipped with modern weapons and necessary logistics. They are engaged in different kinds of activities including armed clashes with SF as well as armed miscreants of other parties. Besides tactical operations, SF have been conducting harmony and development activities regularly to deal with them. In doing so, they demonstrated proven competency in physical dimension by keeping the armed groups in CHT at bay.

However, the physical dimension has another facet which is vibrant and growing day by day. It includes unarmed civilians, newspaper, laptop, smart phones, books, computers etc. But considering its apparent non-military attributes, it could not draw the adequate attention of SF. Moreover, it is not confined to military or nation based systems and process only. It is also connected across national and geographic boundaries over the network in the information sphere.

The Social Media Dimension (Battle of Narratives)

This may be termed as the battleground of ideas, mostly fought in social media. It is designed to collect raw data which may be fabricated, from the physical dimension, then inject it into the information sphere. This dimension not only includes messages and post published in the social media but also action, reaction and counter actions which are ‘reflection of words and symbols’ of various actors (DeRosa, n.d.). Wherein, a narrative is crafted deliberately, this can be deployed in a rapid-fire series of mutually-reinforcing stories, just making it viral. Usually, it is hard for people to disregard such kind of narrative. Moreover, it has the capability to reach a global audience in seconds at a minimal cost. (Herrmann, 2017).

In the case of CHT, social media is being used extensively, mostly by Tribal people specifically against Bengali and SF. Any happenings in CHT are published in the social media almost instantly, allowing access from other parts of the country as well as the world. Ironically, instead of true happenings, the facts are fabricated to draw sympathy in favour of them and malign the SF as well as government machinery.

On the contrary, sometimes it appeared that SF is less vibrant in social media, ceding the space to their threat and not delivering ammunition to its supporters to use. Thus their messages are not getting across the line and reaching to its intended audience. Sometimes, it has been seen that instead of preventive measures, SF is taking reactive measures. Therefore, it has counterbalanced the power of weaponry with the power of information forcing SF who won the fight at the physical dimension, to lose it in the social media dimension.
**The Discursive Dimension (The Cognitive Dimension)**

This dimension affects all others, especially the general mass who are not the participants in any of the previous dimensions. Once the raw data are put into the world of social media, the general mass come to know about any incident. “The watching world then processes the data to make up its mind about a conflict. From this, it then decides where its sympathies lie, which translate to either support or opposition at both the popular level and, more important, the political level.” (Patrikarakos, 2017). In doing so, a mind not only views that information through its trusted filters but also tend to believe it. Due to the psychological condition of ‘Primacy Effect’ or ‘Conceptual Conservatism’, the human mind tends to ‘believe the first thing that they hear and doesn't correct that belief when they are told otherwise’. Even, it is due to the same psychology that human mind maintains a belief, ‘despite new information that firmly contradicts it’.

Basing on the tactical operation of the SF in CHT, a narrative is shaped by the miscreants with some misinformation around some fact and figures. Then it is posted in the social media with the aim of creating some emotional impact on the viewers to gain sympathy in favour of the depicted victims. Where, usually the SF are portrayed as villains, if necessary with completely false information or hiding the entire truth or even reversing the fact. Obviously, ordinary people who have no clue at all, about the facts, tend to believe it. It is, as Kevin Kwang said, because, "There are a lot of people who believe everything posted on the internet is true." (Kwang, 2017).

Thus, SF is being maligned regularly, even when they are successfully maintaining law and order situation under control. On the contrary, the cohorts of the armed miscreants are viewed as the victims of military brutality in CHT. With the effective utilization of such non-lethal arsenals repeatedly along with some other means, the adversaries have been successfully winning against SF over almost all the issues of CHT both at home and abroad at Discursive Dimension.

**Contemporary Significant Incidents**

Propaganda and hate campaign against SF in CHT has got huge momentum with the proliferation of social media. There are numerous occasions where SF have been targetted deliberately through social media by hiding the fact, mixing falsehood with truth, revealing the partial truth or even narrating completely fake stories. A few such incidents where social media has been exploited recently are highlighted subsequently.

**The Disappearance of Kalpana Chakma.** There had been sufficient evidence that no one from SF was involved in the incident of the disappearance of Kalpana Chakma. The government formed a probe committee in September 1996 which concluded: “Kalpana Chakma was kidnapped either on her own wish or by force, but it was not possible to identify the kidnappers due to a lack of proper witnesses.” (Yusuf, 2015). Yet, the issue is being exploited regularly in social media, portraying her as a symbol of injustice caused to the Tribal people by SF in CHT.

**The Arson Attack at Langadu.** Utilizing the pictures of the incidents of fire at Gaibandha, Barishal and Tongi, SF in CHT have been defamed in the arson attack at Langadu in June 2, 2017.
Propaganda in Social Media: A Menace in CHT

The Communal Tension at Ramgarh. Following a threat of armed miscreants for illegal toll, the Bengali villagers urged help of local SF in Ramgarh in June 30, 2017. Subsequently, they could successfully drive the miscreants away. However, they (SF) were accused in the social media by the vested quarters, of instigating another Langadu incident.

The Construction of Kiyang at Guimara. SF, as well as local administration, asked the local village head to stop the construction work of a Kiyang at Guimara as it was being constructed on government land in June 2018. Yet, SF has been maligned in social media, exploiting religious sensitivity.

Case Study: Incident of Bilaichhari, Rangamati

The incident of Bilaichhari, Rangamati may be cited as an appropriate example of exploiting social media against the SF as well. Besides, it can be examined to identify the degree of involvement of SF in all three dimensions of conflict.

A series of killing, abduction, attacks on civilian and other forms of atrocities by the armed miscreants of a regional political party (RPP) throughout the month of December 2017 and January 2018 terrorized the ordinary people of Jurachhari and Bilaichhari Upazila of Rangamati. They were also under constant anxiety and fear of death. Consequently, the SF intensified their intelligence as well as operational activities. Immediately after one such special operation which was launched basing on specific information about the presence of armed miscreants at Orachhari village, a Facebook post was uploaded alleging rape of two sisters by few SF members.

The post was shared by others instantly. Consequently, a series of protest and propaganda started in the social media as well as different places. Following a detail investigation on the ground, a press release of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) declared on 05 April 2018, after seventy-four days that there was no evidence of rape (Gulrukh & Ahmed, 2018). The medical examination of the girls conducted in January 24, 2018, by a medical board also could not find any sign or symptom of rape.

However, by that time, the intended damage against the SF was successfully caused by the vested quarters. Because the press release published long after the incident, could hardly make any impact on the general mass. Actually, it failed to reach most of the people who knew about the allegation. Thus, the people, who participated in different types of protests, could never come to know how they had been emotionally blackmailed and exploited basing on a fake allegation.

Some Significant Events of The Incident of Bilaichhari

Since the beginning of the incident, a series of events unfolded one after another and sometimes in parallel with each other in different dimensions of conflicts. Only a few significant activities are highlighted subsequently in the diagram.
Patrolling at Orachhari
Patrol reached the village at night and left before the dawn of 22 January 2018.

Admission of the Girls to Hospital
The girls were admitted to the Rangamati General Hospital by some unknown people with an allegation of rape, more than 30 hours later than the patrol visited them.

Press Conference at Rangamati
A press conference was held at Rangamati Press Club to ‘dispel confusion’ over this issue, in presence of the parents. Among other claims, it was stated that following the departure of the patrol, some unknown youth have abducted the girls and the RPP is alleging rape politicising a non-political matter.

Press Conference at Dhaka.
CPB Nari Cell, Samajtantrik Mahila Forum, and Hill Women’s Federation held a press conference at Dhaka. Another Press Conference was held by Nagorik Samaj at National Press Club. Obviously, the security forces were blamed in both the conferences.

Custody Battle in the Court
In an attempt to take the girls in their custody, once the parents filed a writ petition with the High Court, it was known that the similar attempt had been made by the vested quarter too. However, the custody of the girls was given to the father and the state was asked to ensure the protection of the family, after a full court hearing with the Chief Justice as Chair.

The Release of the Girls from Hospital
Once authorities of hospital and police tried to hand over the girls to their parents, Mrs. Yan Yan along with half a dozen activists obstructed the process physically. It ended up in hand to hand scuffle with a female member of the police. Finally, the girls could be handed over in the evening.
The aforesaid events may be categorized into different dimensions of conflict in CHT as shown in figure 4 below. Wherein, it is vivid that SF had partial involvement in the Social Dimension and in one part of Physical Dimension only, i.e. patrolling at Orachhari. But they had no involvement in Disruptive Dimension where most of the people could be oblivious to CHT affairs.

Thus, it is likely that their perception of this incident is most likely to be biased towards Tribal efforts. Similarly, SF is winning in all the issues where it is involved, i.e. part of Physical Dimension, but not achieving the same in all other dimensions, especially in Social Media Dimension which most of the time works as the gateway between Physical Dimension and Discursive Dimension. Ultimately, the perception of general mass moves in favour of Tribal propaganda efforts which is usually against the interest of the SF.
Exploiting Social Media in CHT

Dhaka has been pronounced as the second most active city in the world for Facebook users in April 2017\(^1\). There are over 30 million active social media user in Bangladesh and most of them are youth\(^2\). According to research published in the Daily Prothom Alo, 95 per cent youths of age 15 to 30 years considers Facebook as their favourite social media\(^3\). Of which, a large portion considers social media to be the most effective source to get any news. Thus it is easily understandable that a big portion of the population of Bangladesh depends on social media mostly on Facebook, as shown in figure 5 below, for keeping them updated on the latest happenings in the country.

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\(^1\) The Daily Star, Dhaka, April 15, 2017.
\(^2\) Digiology, Demographics of Facebook Population in Bangladesh, April 8, 2018.
\(^3\) The Daily Prothom Alo, July 20, 2017.
The use of social media in CHT is no less than other parts of the country. The instant posting of any incident in social media, of course in a fabricated way to gain sympathy in their favour and generate hatred against the SF is a common phenomenon in CHT. Besides, many a time it is observed that the Tribal people bring out a procession with a handful of people keeping a banner in front, take some snap with a smartphone, upload it in social media and then leave the place. All the movement of SF is also shared almost instantly over social media. Social media especially Facebook is a common means to call for assembly at a given point, spreading rumours as well as call for preventing SF from performing their duties. There have been numerous occasions which indicated that with its easy availability, speed and common reach, the massive use of social media in CHT has added an additional layer of complexity to traditional battle spaces in CHT for the SF.

According to the members of SF deployed in CHT, the Tribal people have already weaponized the social media in CHT. The six activities, where social media can be utilized against SF, are being utilized by the Tribal people with varying frequency in CHT as shown in figure 6 below. Therefore, it will not be surprising if it is found that this trend of weaponization of social media in CHT is affecting the activities of SF.

**Figure 5: Social Media Stats in Bangladesh (July 2018)**

*Source: Statcounter Global Stats.*

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**INTERNET USERS ON SOCIAL NETWORKING WEBSITE**

- Facebook: 88%
- YouTube: 8%
- Pinterest: 1.38%
- Google+: 0.27%
- VKontakte: 0.26%
- Other: 4%
In order to determine the level of the feasibility of utilizing social media in support of the activities of the SF in CHT, a study was conducted. It is found that the Psychological Warfare is the best arena in this regard, which is closely followed by Intelligence Collection, as shown in figure 7 below. Interestingly, the Tribal people are already exploiting the same against SF since long.
Given the findings and assessment above, the fact of the case study may be taken into consideration to find out the reality in the field of social media. There have been a number of posts uploaded on Facebook both for and against the SF following the incident of Bilaichhari. A comparative study of only a handful of Facebook pages speaks it all, as shown in Table 1 and Table 2 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serial</th>
<th>Facebook Page</th>
<th>Content Generated</th>
<th>Reaction</th>
<th>Share</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>CHT-Jummaland</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9515</td>
<td>1793</td>
<td>480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Hill Bloggers and Online Activists’ Forum of CHT</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>10685</td>
<td>2811</td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Fight For Right in CHT</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>5243</td>
<td>963</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>জেগে ওঠো জুম্মাজাতি, গর্জে ওঠো জুম্মাজাতি</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>জুম্মা সংবাদ বুলেটিন (Cht)</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>697</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>223</strong></td>
<td><strong>26234</strong></td>
<td><strong>5632</strong></td>
<td><strong>908</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Propaganda by the Tribal (Mostly Against SF)
Table 2: The Other Side (Response; Mostly Stating the Fact)

Source: Study of the Facebook post by own sources of author.

As shown in the table above, the number of posts narrating fact is comparatively far lower than the number of posts with false and fabricated claims about the incident of the case study. Naturally, the common mass is likely to believe what they hear first, which is more likely to be the Tribal version of the story, not the actual truth.

Similarly, it has been observed periodically that the vested quarters have been utilizing social media to a great extent, turning it completely as a faceless enemy against SF in CHT. In doing so, they have dedicated a substantial amount of their efforts in this arena. On the other hand, a similar effort is not observed in favour of SF.

Moreover, the CHT issues are getting complex due to the growing capability of the faceless enemy in the arena of social media utilizing the characteristics of the information environment. The reason is obvious; it is easier to fight against a known enemy than that of a faceless enemy. The peace expected after the CHT Agreement is likely to be affected by this development, making the task of SF more and more complex in future. In fact, it is already affecting the peace in CHT and will continue to do so. Therefore, being an important stakeholder of peace in CHT, there is no alternative for the SF to prepare accordingly to deal with the menace of this faceless enemy.

What is Needed to be Done?

Social media, ‘the weapon of choice’ is being used by the faceless enemies against the SF in CHT prudently. Moreover, with an ever-increasing trend, the weaponization of social media has offered manifold threats to SF. Therefore, it has become imperative for the SF to consider a host of options to prepare it for facing the menace of this faceless reality to current security dynamics in CHT.

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There are certain characteristics of information environment such as accessibility, speed, anonymity, high volume of information exchange daily and no geographic or content-related border (Renolds, 2016).
The common people of Bangladesh living outside CHT are mostly uninformed about the true happenings in CHT. This uninformed group of people are targeted by Tribal propagandists through social media. Therefore, a central body may be established at the military strategic level, which will oversee the entire social media dimension of the conflict. Some sort of ‘Meme Control Centre’\(^5\) may also be associated with this body which will be keeping people informed, pumping information in the social media. Besides, some research foundations may be established as well as sufficiently funded, to create institutional memory. In doing so, it may be manned by professionals for handling legal and media issues as well.

Apparently, it may appear that only a portion of the SF who are deployed in CHT, is being affected. But, in reality, the entire forces are being adversely affected. Therefore, all SF, especially the Army which comprises the biggest slice of SF in CHT, should perform the lead role in fighting the battle of narratives. It is also imperative to establish a database at the military strategic level as well as the operational level in order to provide the required information to other elements of SF.

SF at both operational and tactical level should possess a variety of tools for dealing with its foe at the social media dimension. In doing so, adequate civilian staff, legal consultant and IT expert may be incorporated with the efforts at different tiers.

It is important to develop an understanding of both structured and unstructured anti-Army incitement in CHT as well as the effect of psychological warfare. The members of SF should be trained to avoid the trap of social media in CHT, with a special focus on sexual abuse and exploitation, human rights violation, dispersing mob led by women and religious sensitivity etc.

**Recommendations**

An organized, pre-planned and systematic hate campaign and propaganda activities have added a new dimension to the present security environment in the CHT. In doing so, a non-lethal menace against SF has been developing from the faceless enemy in the arena of social media. Therefore, to cope up with the current situation, the following recommendations may be considered:

a. A well-structured central body may be established at the appropriate level, which will oversee the entire propaganda battlefield of CHT.

b. Some research foundations may be established as well as sufficiently funded, to publish the fact and to counter false narratives regularly. In doing so, it may be manned by professionals for handling legal and media issues.

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\(^5\) A meme is any idea that spreads over internet, which may or may not be true. In internet language, it “often refers to an amusing picture that goes viral on social media”. The ‘Meme Control Centre’, proposed by Dr. Robert Finkelstein for US Military, comprised of ‘Meme Processing Centre’ and ‘Counter Meme Processing Centre’ will pump the internet full of ‘memes’ keeping interest of the country in mind to reach the general mass of the country. (Research Brief, 2018).
Conclusion

Over a period of time, the security dynamics of CHT has changed to a great extent. These changes have resulted in a complex situation, where the greatest worry is the menace of a faceless enemy. Thus, SF has gradually been dragged into fighting a new foe, in a field mostly away from the traditional military arena, while performing its assigned responsibilities in CHT.

Social media is one of the fields of the new security dynamics which is growing day by day with its intensity as well as effectiveness. With the weaponization of social media, it can be utilized in six activities for supporting military operations, i.e. intelligence collection, targeting, psychological operations, cyber operations, defence, and C2. Therefore, it has become the ‘weapon of choice’ in CHT as well.

With the changing nature of conflicts as well as the latest realities in CHT, SF are affected in multiple dimensions, such as physical dimension, information or narrative dimension and discursive or cognitive dimension. In order to identify the degree of involvement of SF, analysing the details and in-depth study of the incident of Bilaichhari of January 2018, it has been found that SF was fully involved in one of the major events of physical dimension only. However, it also participated in the social media dimension partially. Whereas, it had no scope to participate in the discursive dimension. It was evident that SF had been targeted deliberately in this incident in the arena of social media. However, the fact is, the propaganda and hate campaign is far from having been explored in its totality by SF resulting ‘the weapon of choice’ being used by the faceless enemies against the SF in CHT.

The weaponization of social media has offered manifold threats to SF. With an ever-increasing trend, this new foe has been exploiting all available means to target SF at various dimensions of the conflicts in CHT. Thus, it has become imperative for SF to prepare itself for facing the menace of this faceless reality in existing security dynamics in CHT.

(Total Word: 4929 words)

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**Propaganda in Social Media: A Menace in CHT**


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PROSPECTS OF BANGLADESH IN THE PROCESS OF RECONSTRUCTION FOLLOWING SUCCESSFUL UN PEACEKEEPING MISSION IN AFRICA

Major Md Jubayer Anwar, psc, Inf

Abstract

In the contemporary reality, politico-socio-economic conditions of the most war-torn countries, especially in Africa are gradually improving as UN peacekeepers have played a pivotal role in maintaining peace and security. Bangladeshi peacekeepers are no exception at all. The name and fame of Bangladeshi peacekeepers have pervaded because of their professionalism, dedication, integrity and overall discipline. They have also been able to earn their confidence, credibility and trust of the people in those African countries. The involvement of different economic power houses have been increasing in a competitive way in Africa especially in the field of trade and investment. Keeping this in view, Bangladesh may strengthen its economic diplomacy in Africa in both government and non-government level through capitalizing its peacekeepers’ goodwill. Bangladesh may explore the existing opportunities of the concerned African countries in the field of trade, investment, manpower export, agriculture and other various suitable sectors for gaining win-win situation. Such type of initiative will also increase people’s to people’s contact in the present age of globalization. It will also help to change our prevailing medieval mindset about the Africans.

Introduction

United Nations Peacekeepers have played an important role in establishing and maintaining peace and security in many war-torn communities around the world since 1948. Its first mission deployment was to the Middle East to observe and maintain the ceasefire (UN Truce Supervision Organization-UNTSO) during the 1948 Arab-Israel War[1]. To highlight the UN Peacekeepers’ role, former UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjold once said that “Peacekeeping is not a job for soldiers, but only soldiers can do it.” Bangladesh began its extra-ordinary journey with UN peacekeeping in 1988 when the country sent 15 observers from Bangladesh Army to the United Nations Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group (UNIMOG). In 1989, Bangladesh sent its first military contingent to the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) in Namibia to monitor the peace process and elections[2]. Since then, Bangladesh Army has been involved in up to thirty different UNPKOs (United Nation Peacekeeping Operation) covering as many as twenty five countries[3]. Bangladesh has emerged as one of the key contributors to UN Peacekeeping and

international security more broadly. Bangladesh Armed Forces and its Police force have rapidly earned a strong reputation for bravery, competency, dependability, leadership and professionalism over the last three decades. From the beginning, the peacekeepers are applauded for being very good at conduct and discipline. Their contribution has become an important component of Bangladesh’s foreign policy and the country has attained a good standing in global community. The most interesting fact is that Bangladeshi peacekeepers maintain very cordial relations with the people of the host nations and respect their culture and traditions. The peacekeepers have helped to restore peace in many war-torn parts of the globe and have ushered in an era of hope in countries which only known as home of despair and war. In this way, the Bangladeshi uniformed personnel have earned the gratitude of millions of those war-torn countries. For instance, due to the contribution of Bangladeshi troops, the people of Sierra Leone recognized Bengali as the second state language of the country[^4].

This paper will examine the prevailing political, social and economic conditions of war-torn African states following gradual reconstruction process. It will also study and analyze the potential fields of exploration from the perspective of Bangladesh to keep pace with other foreign competitors in Africa. And finally it will project the areas/sectors likely to be involved in the process of reconstruction of African countries using the goodwill of Bangladeshi peacekeepers.

**Role of Bangladesh Armed Forces in Successful Peacekeeping Mission**

Bangladesh is one of the largest contributors to UN Peacekeeping operations. This South Asian nation first deployed uniformed personnel in 1988 to monitor the armistice between Iran and Iraq. Over the past three decades, the contributions of these brave men and women in those countries in which they served have been immense. As of October 2018, 5518 Bangladeshi troops were deployed in 7 (Seven) countries. Bangladeshi peacekeepers work in various roles under the blue flag to support the governments and people of the countries in which they served. According to BBC Bangla news in June 2018, at least 145 Bangladeshi peacekeepers have made the ultimate sacrifice for peace while serving in some of the most difficult places in the world, including in the Central African Republic, The Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Cyprus, Darfur and Mali. In the last three decades, as many as 150,647 Bangladeshi peacekeepers, from Armed Forces and Police have worked in 54 UN Missions in 40 countries. In 2006, the BBC described the Bangladeshi UN Force as “the cream of UN Peacekeeping”. Bangladesh’s participation in the UN peacekeeping missions has become an important component of foreign policy through military diplomacy and the country has attained a good standing.

According to the government of Bangladesh, between 2001 and 2010, the country received $1.28 billion from the UN as compensation for its peacekeeping operations. Between 2012 and 2013, another $72 million was earned through salaries, equipment and other types of compensation.

**Exemplary Performance in West Africa.** Bangladeshi peacekeepers have played an important role to establish peace and stability in many war-affected African countries like Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Mali, Somalia, Rwanda, Western Sahara, Central African Republic, Sudan, Mozambique etc. Bangladeshi Peacekeepers also help them to improve their socio-economic condition and political scenario. Peacekeeping mission is a way for Bangladesh to exercise soft power. It’s a way of winning hearts and minds of the common people of those countries concerned. The excellent performance of Bangladeshi peacekeepers in African countries as well as all over the world in ensuring peace has increased the credibility and image of Bangladesh in international arena. Bangladesh can boost economic activities using the peacekeeping goodwill with those countries. It is not so long ago that the countries were unstable. But after launching successful UN peacekeeping mission like UNMIL in Liberia, UNOSOM in Somalia and UNOCI in Ivory Coast [5], they adopted peace and political stability. Socio-economic condition and political stability are required for smooth bilateral trade relation.

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Contribution in Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone is one of the countries where Bangladeshi peacekeepers played a remarkable role to ensure stability. Bilateral relations between Bangladesh and Sierra Leone have been largely influenced by proper contribution of Bangladeshi forces as part of United Nations peace keeping mission in Sierra Leone. Bangladeshi peace keepers played an important role in fighting the rebels during the Sierra Leone civil war [6]. The peace keepers have also made vital contributions in rebuilding the nation after the civil war and building several important infrastructures [7]. Describing the Bangladeshi peacekeepers' contribution, former Sierra Leone president Ahmed Kabbah said “People of Sierra Leone not only welcome Bangladeshi troops, but they are reluctant to let them leave as well”. In social development, Bangladeshi NGOs including BRAC are operating in Sierra Leone and are working in the areas of microfinance, agricultural development [8]. Sierra Leone has sought Bangladeshi investments especially in garments, textile and agricultural sectors. There have been major investment in Sierra Leone by Bangladeshi companies in the agricultural sector, the most notable being Bangladesh-based Bengal Agro Limited which has invested $50 million and set up a rubber processing plant in Sierra Leone which is the first of its kind in West Africa [9].

Leading Role in Ivory Coast. Ivory Coast is one of the mentionable countries where Bangladesh can explore economical link. Bangladeshi peace keepers have been serving in Ivory Coast since 2004 as part of the United Nations operation in Cote d’Ivoire. [10]. Bangladeshi Peace keepers provided security services and medical aid. In 2006 and 2013, the peace keepers were awarded the UN medal [11]. In 2010, Major General Abdul Hafiz from Bangladesh Army was appointed as the force commander of the UN mission in Ivory Coast [12]. Ivory Coast as a member of West African countries might provide opportunities for Bangladeshi business to lease unused cultivable lands as part of food security programs. Ivory Coast’s business community have also expressed an interest in implementing Bangladeshi agricultural technologies [13]. Bangladeshi investors have expressed an interest in establishing fruit processing plants in Ivory Coast. Bangladeshi medicines and ready made garments have been identified as products with significant demand in Ivory Coast [14].

Achievements in Liberia. Bangladeshi peacekeepers working under the UN mission in Liberia have won the hearts of Liberian people by their role in bringing back and maintaining peace in the civil war- torn country. “We are grateful to Bangladeshi peacekeepers for their vital contribution to the return of peace in the war-ravaged country. We have no means to repay their

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Prospects of Bangladesh In the Process of Reconstruction Following Successful UN Peacekeeping Mission in Africa

contribution”, said several Liberians, conveying the sentiment of general people. Bangladeshi peacekeepers played a vital role regarding surrender of the rebels and armed factions in Liberia. They also organized electoral process in Liberia. Bangladeshi Battalion (BANBAT) was not only fixed in some kind of routine work but also provided technical education, health care and computer training there. They also maintained relentless efforts in various nation-building activities including their shattered infrastructural sector. Bangladeshi peacekeepers contributed massively role in Liberia’s agricultural sector.

**Scenario of Peacekeeping Mission in Liberia.** The Liberian civil war was one of the Africa’s bloodiest civil wars. First one was in between 1989-1996 and claimed the lives of more than 2,00,000 Liberians and further displaced a million others into refugee camps in neighbouring countries. The second Liberian civil war began in 1999 and ended in October 2003. At that time, ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) intervened to stop the rebel siege on Monrovia. By the end of the final civil war, more than 2,50,000 people had been killed and nearly 1 million displaced. In September 2003, the UN Security Council welcomed the Secretary General’s report and its recommendations and unanimously adopted resolution 1509 establishing UNMIL with about 15000 United Nations Military Personnel. As scheduled, UNMIL took over peacekeeping duties from ECOWAS force in October, 2003. Bangladeshi forces took part in UNMIL. Bangladesh Engineering Company in sector-3, Bangladeshi 3 x Infantry Battalions, Engineering Company and Hospital maintenance team in sector B where they were responsible for covering Lofa, Bong, Nimba, Grand Gedeh, River Gee, Maryland and Grand KRV counties. The Sector Headquarters was in Gbarnga, Bong County. Military units within this sector were two Bangladeshi Infantry battalions, Bangladesh Signal Company, Bangladesh Logistics Company and Bangladesh Military Police unit. UNMO teams 6-11 and three level-2 hospitals were also run by Bangladeshi forces in co-operation with other countries.

**Present Political Condition in Liberia.** The 54th National Legislature has been formally seated. A seventy-three member of the House of Representatives was formed during October 10, 2017 election. The UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) ended its mandate after nearly 15 years of stay in Liberia. The mission supported the transition from war to peace. In March 22, 2018, an official ceremony was held in Monrovia which concluded UNMIL’s stay in Liberia. President George M. Weah and the United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed, participated.

**Recent economic overview of Liberia.** Liberia’s economy is showing signs of modest recovery in 2017, amid significant fiscal and external imbalances. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth in 2017 is estimated at 2.5% which is positive compared to a deceleration of 1.6% in 2016 and zero percent growth in 2015. GDP growth is projected to recover to an annual average growth rate of 3.8% over the period 2018-2020. The recovery is expected to be driven largely by

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16https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/first_liberian_civil_war
the agriculture, manufacturing and service sectors as the economy begins to reap the benefits of improved access to road transport network and cheaper sources of electricity.

**Role of Bangladeshi Peacekeepers in Mozambique.** Bangladeshi peacekeepers played a vital role to organize electoral process in Mozambique. They also contributed to disarm fighters of Mozambique and helped repatriating most of the refugees, internally displaced people uprooted by the civil war. Peacekeepers are also successful in Congo, Sudan, Mali and other countries.

**Existing Role of Global Partners in the Process of Reconstruction and the Potentials of African States**

Many international businesses are booming in West Coast of Africa where many new business and investment opportunities are providing excellent return on investments as well as profitable trading opportunities. There are also several export opportunities that West Africa offers to kick-off international businesses. As a result, the West African region is being taken seriously by many business communities. Moreover, there is an oil boom happening on the West coast of Africa. There is also a commodity boom that is developing where primary goods are being exported out of the continent, mostly into India and China. On the building materials side, the infrastructural development happening in these African countries holds potential for the export of products such as steel, cement and metal pipes. In exporting food products, there are huge opportunities. There is also a demand for some of the clothing and garments, such as shoes and readymade garments items. Another opportunity would be to export software applications to these countries. As per West African regional imports, they are dominated by about ten products. Fuels still hold a leading position in this list. They represent 24% of total imports. They are followed by motor vehicles, tractors, cycles and other vehicles (2nd place) machineries, mechanical appliances and boilers (3rd), machinery and electrical appliance (4th), cereals (5th), plastics (6th), iron and steel (7th), iron, cast iron, steel (8th), pharmaceuticals (9th) and fish and seafood (10th).

**Relevant Countries and Organizations.** There are 15 countries in the ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) and it works to promote co-operation in the region on a range of economic and political issues including conflict resolution. West Africa is the EU’s largest trading partner in Sub-Saharan Africa. In the case of West Africa, former colonial powers, and more broadly the European Union (EU), have had an impact on the contours, structure, content and dynamics of West African integration. But they are not the only ones. For instance, other countries and the African Union (AU) have also an influence. United States has also played a vital role through many organizations like USAID, Water Aid and many others. China and India have showed increasing interest in emerging African economies in the 21st century.

**Specific Role of China and India.** China and India found new interests in trade and investment with Africa. These two emerging economic ‘giants’ of Asia are at the centre of the explosion of Afro-Asian trade and investment, a striking hallmark of the new trend in South-South commercial relations. Both India and China have centuries-long histories of international commerce dating back to at least the days of the Silk Road, where merchants pried goods traversing continents, reaching the most challenging and relatively untouched markets of the day.
In contemporary times, Chinese trade and investment with Africa actually dated back several decades, with most of the early investments made in infrastructure sectors, such as railways.

Today’s scale and pace of China and India’s trade and investment flow with Africa. Since 2000, there has been a massive increase in trade and investment flows between Africa and Asia. Significant Chinese and Indian investments on the African continent have been made in apparel, food processing, retail ventures, fisheries and seafood farming, commercial real estate, transport, construction, tourism, power plants and tele-communications, etc. African imports from China and India are more broadly than African exports to these countries. Out of all imports from China, 87 percent comprises of machinery and equipment, textile and apparel. Manufactured products imported from China and India are mainly textile and apparel products, electric machinery equipment, consumer products and batteries. For both China and India, fabrics and Yarn are the major exports to Africa, West African countries such as Benin, Gambia, Ghana, Nigeria, Togo and many other countries. They are major buyers of Chinese and Indian cotton fabrics.

Achieving Economic Interest through Military Diplomacy

‘The foreign policy of Bangladesh is derived from a close enquiry and examination of her vital national interests and stands largely on two pillars; security and development. So, our foreign policy must take Bangladesh Army’s global role into cognizance. These are not two separate entities. There is a necessity to formulate a comprehensive policy on military diplomacy’ [18]. So, Bangladesh Army can play an important role by helping the government in fulfilling its diplomatic interests. ‘Bangladesh Army is deployed in some countries where there is no Bangladesh embassy. Connection with business community of those countries and, finding new market for trading garments, pharmaceuticals, and jute products can be done through military’ [19].

A comprehensive policy on military diplomacy can be formulated and integrated by Armed Forces Division in coordination with Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Commerce, Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industries, FBCCI and other concerned organizations. Such type of integrated and coherent approach can play a significant role in our economy.

Global Security Perspective

The concept of security is drastically changing in the present day world. The bi-polar politics of cold war period is no more relevant in contemporary time. In the present world, global security scenario may be considered from multi-dimensional point of view. Non-traditional threats (i.e. economy, natural and manmade disaster, climate change, Food security, health etc.) also pose threats to many countries of the world. The third world countries, developing countries and even developed countries are also the victim of such type of threats. Keeping these in view, it is also felt that the African countries are also facing more or less similar challenges. At present, the UN

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18 Col A F M Atiqur Rahman, afwc, psc, G – Bangladesh Army: A complementary organ of the government in pursuance of National interest (Bangladesh Army Journal 60th Issue December 2016, Page 45)
19 Col A F M Atiqur Rahman, afwc, psc, G – Bangladesh Army: A complementary organ of the government in pursuance of National interest Bangladesh Army Journal 60th Issue December 2016, Page 44
is gradually considered as supranational authority in ensuring peace and security in the war-torn countries of the world. It is to be noted that the intensity, trend and nature of threats differ from one country to another and is rapidly shifting to multifarious complicated dimensions. Besides, it is also observed that threats are deeply rooted ranging from inter-state to intra-state level. So UN has to tackle such complicated reality as threat to security that emerges in war torn countries of Africa.

**Security Scenario of Africa**

Africa contains 54 countries. Most of these countries experienced European colonialism. These countries were involved in armed conflicts for a long period. Unstable situations, corruption, violence, ethnic clashes, dictatorial regime, lack of good governance, violation of human rights are the common phenomena in Africa. At present, these countries are trying to develop their politico-socio-economic condition through various ways. In the present century, African countries are gradually inching towards democratic norms and values. The economic climate of Africa has attracted many front line states of the world. It is also to be noted that Bangladesh is a country of huge potentials. This country is interested to expand its economic activities with the help of FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) and through increased manpower export. At present, GDP growth of Bangladesh is 7.65% (Bangladesh Economic Review-2018), which is higher than any other times. Besides, Bangladesh has gradually elevated its position from LDC to developing country. Also mentionable, its present political stability, conducive economic environment and overall investment have drawn attention at home and abroad. So the prevailing situation of Africa may open up a new horizon for Bangladesh.

**Probable Opportunities for Bangladesh**

Bangladeshi peacekeepers over the years have proved their worth by demonstrating extraordinary professionalism, courage, dedication and above all strong resolves to achieve and maintain international peace. Bangladesh must appreciate that it has immense influence which is yet to be capitalized on. Bangladeshi peacekeepers put great role in many countries in the world to rebuild peace and stability but the partnership of peace is yet to be extended to partnership for development, which is a dire necessity for a sustainable peace in a country that has just recovered from a civil war. Bangladesh has a vast hard-working population consisting of farmers, garments and real estate workers and thousands of experienced peacekeepers. Bangladesh has many prominent NGOs. So there are vast opportunities to work with war-torn countries in economic sectors which will be beneficial for Bangladesh as well.
Prospects of Bangladesh In the Process of Reconstruction Following Successful UN Peacekeeping Mission in Africa

Bangladesh Export by Major Products during 2011-2012

- Woven garments: 39.54%
- Others: 9.01%
- Footwear: 1.38%
- Engineering Products: 1.55%
- Knitwear: 39.06%
- Food: 2.46%
- Jute & Jute goods: 3.98%
- Agriculture Products: 1.66%
- Leather: 1.36%

Figure 2: Major Export Products of Bangladesh during 2011-12

Source: Export Promotion Bureau

It was assumed earlier that Bangladesh could play a constructive and far-reaching role after the peacekeeping in Africa or other countries in post-war situation where she could contribute in different areas. It includes farming, strengthening the democratic institutions, managing participatory democratic elections, policy formulation and administrative reforms, women empowerment, safety of human rights, enhancement of agricultural production, confirmation of good security, achieving capacity to fight with climate change, reducing social stratification, widening the private sector, political and social rehabilitation of the people under conflict in ensuring security and justice. Through these constructive engagements, Bangladesh could brighten its relations with international organizations and could closer its relations with concerned countries in terms of political, diplomatic and economic aspects. Bangladesh exports to more than 190 countries on the globe. Region-wise shares are at table-1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ser</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Share Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>European Region</td>
<td>52.43 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>American Region</td>
<td>26.48 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Asian Region</td>
<td>10.62 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Middle-east Region</td>
<td>1.94 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>African Region</td>
<td>0.94 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>East European Region</td>
<td>2.87 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Oceania Region</td>
<td>1.57 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Other Region</td>
<td>3.15 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Regional Export Market Share of Bangladesh
Opening Up of a New Horizon in Manpower Sector. Foreign remittances sent by the Bangladeshi expatriates have immense contribution to the economic development of Bangladesh in many significant ways such as lowering unemployment, poverty alleviation and swelling up foreign exchange reserve. According to Bangladesh Economic Review-2017, Bangladesh earned remittances of US$ 12,769.50 million. In Fy 2016-2017 it was 14.48 percent less than remittance inflows of US$ 14931.14 million in Fy 2015-16 (Bangladesh Economic Review-2017).

![Figure - 3: Manpower Export and Remittance Inflow](image)

Source: Bangladesh Economic Review 2017

A sizeable number of Bangladeshi professionals, skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled labour force are employed in different countries including the Middle East. The Middle-east is one of the principal destinations of manpower export from Bangladesh. Recent political turmoil in this region is posing risk for manpower export from the country. In this context, the government has been exploring new destinations of manpower export in other regions of the world. Exploring new destinations is crucial to promote manpower export. Liberia and many other Western African countries need skilled manpower. Industrial experts, skilled manpower in agricultural and other sectors would be useful for them. Bangladeshi physicians may also play a very effective role in providing medicare facilities and treat various communicable and non-communicable diseases in Liberia. Bangladesh can easily export manpower in those countries using Bangladeshi peacekeepers’ goodwill.

Export Opportunity for Pharmaceuticals Sector. Bangladesh has achieved commendable success in the pharmaceutical sector. From Bangladesh, different brands of medicine and raw materials are exported to 127 countries of the world including the UK and the USA. Currently 267 pharmaceutical manufacturing units are producing 26,910 brands of medicine of worth tk. 2247.05 crore annually (Bangladesh Economic Review-2017). Many African nations like Liberia depend on other countries for pharmaceutical products. So Bangladeshi Pharmaceuticals Companies would be able to explore this opportunity. According to www.reportliver.com/news (January 2017), the pharmaceutical’s market in Africa is expected to reach a business opportunity of $45 billion in 2020, propelled by a convergence of changing economic profiles, rapid
urbanization, increased healthcare standards and investment and increasing incidence of chronic lifestyle diseases.

**Figure 4: Yearly Trade of Pharmaceutical Companies (2006-’11)**


**Prospect for Agricultural Support and Investment Sector.** Bangladesh has more scope for nation-building activities in terms of agriculture and domestic farming in West African Countries. Agriculture can be diverted into industrialization process in course of time. Contract farming, cooperatives, joint venture agro-based projects, fruit processing industries, land lease for farming are best opportunities to be created for development. According to Bangladesh economic review-2017, Bangladesh earned 172 million US dollar by exporting agro-based goods in Fy 2016-2017.

**Opportunities for ICT.** For building digital Bangladesh with a view to implementing vision 2021, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) division is working ceaselessly. Government works aiming at exporting 5 billion dollar in ICT sector by 2021 in the guidance of 7th five year plan. African civil war-torn nations would not be able to develop without ICT facilities. So ICT sharing with those countries would be an exploring sector for Bangladesh.

**Chemical Sector.** Bangladesh has turned into a textile chemical exporter in recent year, helping the country to save and earn millions of foreign currency. In Fy 2016-17, Bangladesh has earned 93 million US dollar in this sector. To build up industrial sector, chemical products are vastly needed. According to West African countries import report in 2015, they imported chemical products worth 11 billion dollars. So it would be a big market for Bangladeshi chemical products.

**Plastic Sector.** The plastic industry has been growing at about 20 percent a year on the back of spiralling demand from domestic and export markets. Plastic exports rose up to 31 percent year-on-year to $117 million last fiscal year. According to Export Promotion Bureau, Bangladesh currently manufactures 142 plastic items and the number is increasing day by day. The country
mainly exports intermediate products like film plastic, household items and garment accessories to the US, Canada, Europe, China, India and Nepal. Bangladesh has only 0.6 percent share of the $546 billion global plastic market. Bangladesh Plastic Goods Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BPGMA) has set a target to occupy 3 percent of the global market by 2030 and the government is providing 10 percent cash incentive to the exporters. So, West African countries would be a big market for Bangladeshi plastic industry because those countries imports chart hold plastic goods at 6th place.

**Fish and Sea Food.** Bangladesh has 4.7 million hectares of inland water areas and 1,66,000 square kilometers marine areas for the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). At the same time, the unique climate of available sunlight and temperature throughout the year, as well as water fertility in Bangladesh, offer advantageous conditions to fish growth and production. According to the report of Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Bangladesh has ranked third in the world in terms of inland fish production in 2018. Bangladesh has also earned tk 4500 crore by exporting around 69000 metric tons of fish and fish products in Fy of 2018. As per West African regional imports, fish and sea food still hold 10th place.

**Opportunities for the Export - Import of Other Products.** There are remarkable demand of cycles, machineries and electrical appliances, leather items and many other products in West African countries. Bangladesh Export Promotion Bureau is searching new destination to export Bangladeshi products. Major country-wise export and major products-wise exports of Bangladesh have been shown at figure-5 and 6:

![Figure 5: Region wise Export Earning of Bangladesh](source: Export Promotion Bureau Statistics. www.epb-bd.org retrieved on 16 May 13.)
Prospects of Bangladesh In the Process of Reconstruction Following Successful UN Peacekeeping Mission in Africa

Figure 6: Major Destinations of Bangladeshi Exports during 2011-'12

Source: Export Promotion Bureau

Recommendations

1. Concerned Ministries of Bangladesh may undertake comprehensive and coordinated initiatives in exploring the existing opportunities of concerned African countries.
2. Bangladeshi diplomatic missions in African countries may be instructed by our government to identify the potential lucrative sectors/areas of interest.
3. FBCCI, BGMEA and also other concerned private sectors may be engaged to carry out a feasibility study about the possible risks/problems and its possible remedies to enhance economic ties with African countries.
4. Bangladesh Bank may also take up an initiative to adjust with the African banking procedures which will be compatible with us.
5. Bangladeshi media may play an effective campaign to attract Bangladeshi entrepreneurs for paying proper attention to Africa.

Conclusion

Bangladesh Armed Forces uphold the honour of Bangladesh through UN peacekeeping mission in international arena. Without any exaggeration, Bangladeshi peacekeepers are truly expert and specialized in their peacekeeping duty. Effective peacekeeping depends on local, regional and international partnerships. There are many opportunities to build up socio-economic connectivity and bilateral relations with war-torn countries through peacekeeping mission. To promote sustainable peace and development, economic relevance would be an effective method for peacekeepers. Many civil war-torn countries’ industries, agriculture after all, total economic
system have been destroyed. So there are many opportunities for Bangladesh to involve with those countries in nation-building activities in terms of agricultural, farming and industrialization process. And it would be beneficial sector for Bangladesh. Though many other influential countries have vast role in war-torn countries, using peacekeepers’ contribution, Bangladesh can play an important catalytic role in development of those countries.

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Prospects of Bangladesh In the Process of Reconstruction Following Successful UN Peacekeeping Mission in Africa


**Major Md Jubayer Anwar, psc** was commissioned from Bangladesh Military Academy with 46th BMA Long Course in the Corps of Infantry on 26 June, 2002. He is a graduate from Defence Services Command and Staff College, Mirpur. He served in 3 and 30 Bangladesh Infantry Regiments, 25 East Bengal Regiment and held all the regimental appointments within his capacity. He also served as Instructor Class ‘B’ and General Staff Officer Grade-2 of General Staff Branch in Army School of Physical Training and Sports. He participated in United Nations Mission in Liberia as a Company Second in Command and served as Quick Reaction Force Commander in various operations. Besides all mandatory courses, he attended United Nations Military Observer Course in BIPSOT.