

**OPERATION BRASSTACKS : A Politico-  
Strategic Analysis**

Dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University  
in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for the award of the Degree of  
**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**

**GADDAM DHARMENDER**



CENTRE FOR SOUTH, CENTRAL, SOUTH-EAST ASIAN  
AND SOUTH-WEST PACIFIC STUDIES  
SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES  
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY  
NEW DELHI - 110067

**1989**



जवाहरलाल नेहरू विश्वविद्यालय  
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY  
NEW DELHI - 110067

CENTRE FOR SOUTH, CENTRAL AND SOUTH-EAST ASIA  
AND SOUTH-WEST PACIFIC STUDIES  
SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

CERTIFICATE

*Certified that the dissertation entitled "OPERATION .  
BRASSTACKS. : A POLITICO-STRATEGIC ANALYSIS" submitted  
by Mr. GADDAM DHARMENDER in Partial fulfilment for  
the award of the Degree of MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY has  
not been previously submitted for any other degree  
of this or any other University. To the best of our  
knowledge this is a bonafide work.*

*We recommend that this dissertation be placed before  
the examiners for evaluation.*

*I Mukherji*  
I.N. MUKHERJEE  
Chairperson

*S. D. Muni*  
S.D. MUNI  
Supervisor

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Notwithstanding the catchy jargon of strategic studies, the problem facing a student of politics is the ability to reconcile the two and not lose the fine thread whereby either politics is being influenced by strategic studies or the other way round. Perhaps some may contend that the distinction between the two is quite meaningless. Be that as it may. The credit for helping me overcome the initial hurdles and grasp the intricacies of strategic affairs and political relations goes entirely to my supervisor, Prof. S.D. Muni. His rigorous and often exacting demands (but always challenging) are chiefly responsible for the present state of this work. It was indeed a great pleasure working under him and I am much enriched by the experience.

To Prof. Urmilla Phadnis and Kalim Bahadur, my grateful debts for initiating me into the realm of South Asian Studies during my Masters days.

To Professor Ashok Guha of the Division for International Trade and Development (SIS/JNU) whose brilliance always went over my head but whose down to earth wit completely bowled me over.

My parents have been most understanding, an understanding which, curiously, only parents seem to have. My sisters, Masi and Priya, have been extremely loving and

encouraging. I am really grateful to them for the love, shelter and happiness. A most wonderful family.

Rajesh Rajagopalan was ever willing to come forward with his criticisms and helpful comments.

To Moa Longkumer, Jimmy Keishing, Sudha Ramachandran, Muthu Appiah, Vasant Pai and Leo Ramesh. Great buddies all and fellow drifters in this great cosmic ocean of ours. But above all to Tutun Sanyal. An ideal companion and the person most responsible for weaning me away from those wild and irresponsible ways.

This work was made possible by the research grant I secured from the University Grants Commission as a Junior Research Fellow.

The type-work of Mr. K. Muralidharan was as usual excellent, given the short time frame I would always give him. I am personally responsible for all errors, both factual and typographical, which may have still crept their way.

## CONTENTS

	Page No.
Chapter I : Introduction	1
Chapter II : The Indo-Pakistani Strategic Equation	15
Chapter III : The Indo-Pakistani Military Balance	30
Chapter IV : Operation Brasstacks, Saf-e-Shikan and Flying Horse	67
Chapter V : An Appraisal of Brasstacks	98
Chapter VI : Conclusion	115
Appendix I :	120
Appendix II :	121
Appendix III :	122
Appendix IV :	123
Appendix V :	124
Bibliography	126

CHAPTER - IINTRODUCTION

Relations between India and Pakistan have always been unpredictable. Seesawing between the two extremes of outright hostility to uneasy tolerance, an element of uncertainty has come to characterize relations between the two. The events of December 1986 - January 1987 typify this contention. Because how else is one to explain that a routine military exercise can trigger off a full scale mobilization of the armed forces which almost brought the two countries to the brink of war. And only in early January, 1987 (just two weeks before the Mobilization crisis) secretary level talks had resumed with a visit to Islamabad by India's Foreign Secretary. Fortunately neither country picked up the gauntlet and yet another crisis was overcome.

In the four decades since independence, India and Pakistan have been to war in 1947-48, 1965 & 1971. However in early 1987 the two countries were on the brink of a fourth conflict. The reason for this was the inconsequential incident of conducting simultaneous military exercises. This is nothing new, since both countries conduct their exercises towards the winter months of each year. In order to avoid misunderstandings information is exchanged over the duration, size and area of the exercise.

In fact during the beginning of India's exercises, named Operation Brasstacks, Pakistan was apparently informed about the exercise.<sup>1</sup> But whether by accident or by design, the Indian Military exercise was to become a source of considerable concern to Pakistan. Likewise the unscheduled changes which took place in the Pakistani military exercises, Saf-e-Shikan and Flying Horse, raised suspicions in India. A case of preparing for a worst case scenario based just on assumptions and suspicions seems to have been the cause. And the exercises soon passed out of the domain of pure military operations and became instruments of foreign policy posturing and diplomatic brick-batting.

The purpose then, of this study is to make an analysis of the events in the wake of Operation Brasstacks. Pinpointing the cause of such crisis situations is not always possible. Instead the object will be to make a study of Indo-Pakistan relations with Brasstacks as a focal point. A study of civil-military relations will be an important tool, in understanding the events during Brasstack. For this purpose the conceptual framework, outlined in some detail in the section that follows, is hoped to be of some use.

Chapter II deals with the Indian and Pakistani threat perceptions and strategic environment. Based on this their

---

1. India Today (New Delhi), 15 February, 1987. p.26.

security policies will be analysed. Chapter III then deals with the balance of forces on either side arising out of their respective security policies. In this case a noticeable trend, of rising military capability is sought to be established. Incidentally, an assumption also made is the relationship between a more active foreign policy and growing military capabilities. The third section of this chapter deals very briefly with the troop deployment profiles of either country. This information being classified, the details are hazy but every effort has been made to remain as accurate as possible within the given constraints. Chapter IV lays out a detailed analysis of exercises Brasstacks, Saf-e-shikan and Flying Horse. The various manoeuvres are analyzed backed by the tactical advantages/disadvantages that may have accrued from such moves. Crisis management and diplomatic manoeuvres are the contents of another section of this Chapter. The last chapter deals with the conclusions.

#### A Conceptual Framework: The Armed Forces as Political

##### Instruments:

Waging a war has always been an expensive proposition. This may not have necessarily been the case in the past, when, wars were waged with a view to annex territory or else to fill the coffers of the state. The economic exploitation of such conquered lands which then followed often offset the cost of such an action. In the present day context this is,



however, not the case. The possession of sophisticated weaponry and force multipliers has rendered the cost of war astronomical. The availability of such weapons in the international market, and at competitive prices, has meant that they are within the reach of any nation having sufficient resources.

Hence, differences between countries are more often settled through peaceful means, such as diplomacy. Granting the fact that exceptions do exist, this trend towards a negotiated settlement of disputes has been on the rise in the recent past. This is especially the case where the costs of engaging in a conflict are greater than the benefits accruing from such an adventure. Under such conditions, the peace time use of the armed forces assumes considerable significance. After all conditions of peace have yet to bring about the total disbanding of armed forces. And even a cursory glance at history reveals that there are hardly any instances where a nation at peace has entirely done away with its army. So, whether peace or war, the armed forces have come to be recognized as an essential institution of the present day nation-state.

The armed forces of any country by their very existence impinge on the formulation of foreign policy and on interstate relations. The fact that a country has a military force, whatever be the doubts as to its capabilities, will serve to act as a deterrent to other nations. And during

peace time all developments within the armed forces are closely monitored by foreign powers. Hence, the importance of the armed forces stems from the fact that "by their very existence as well as by their general character, deployment and day-to-day activities (they) can be used as an instrument of policy in time of peace".<sup>2</sup> }

The use of armed forces for political objectives has long been the basis of their very existence. Whereas, earlier the actual use of force by the armed forces was expected to achieve a political objective, lately a demonstration of the type of force that can be brought against a potential adversary is deemed to achieve these same political objectives. Such a demonstration of force is commonly referred to as 'force without war' or 'coercive diplomacy'.

According to Blechman, "a political use of the armed forces occurs when physical actions are taken by one or more components of the uniformed military services as part of a deliberate attempt by the national authorities to influence, or to be prepared to influence ..... another nation without engaging in a continuous contest of violence".<sup>3</sup> Here the initiation of war is not the objective, either due to the deterrent capabilities of the other nation or else because the demonstration of force is designed to act as a

2. Barry M. Blechman, 'Force Without War: U.S. Armed Forces as a Political Instrument' (Washington D.C., Brookings Institute, 1978), p. 4.

3. Blechman, see note. 2, p.12.

deterrent. To that extent the objective is more limited and is specifically political.

The distinction between a 'political' and a 'military' use of the armed forces stems from the objective being fulfilled. A military use involves waging war on an adversary or the repulse of an attack by an adversary i.e., an actual engagement of enemy forces is deemed to occur. As opposed to this a political use involves only a demonstration of force, or the adoption of a belligerent attitude towards a potential adversary. Such an attitude is designed to influence and "to cause an actor to do something that he would not otherwise do, or not do something that he would do otherwise."<sup>4</sup>

The concept of coercive diplomacy has its genesis directly in the politico-strategic considerations of the superpowers. To that extent the advent of nuclear weapons has introduced an entirely new dimension to war. The enormous destructive capability of nuclear weapons has introduced concepts such as Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD) wherein both powers face the prospect of total annihilation. Under such circumstances the doctrine of "show of force" has gained currency. The result is that external threats to security do not any more emanate through the traditional methods of war. Instead they are increasingly emerging from the threat of use of force.

---

4. Blechman, see note.2, p.13.

There are several ways in which the armed forces can be used to demonstrate force and thus serve political ends. One among these is the method of despatching a Naval warship to the area of conflict or potential conflict. The United States has been the principle exponent of this method, commonly known as 'gun-boat' diplomacy. The demonstration of force here is either to express solidarity with or else to warn one of the adversaries. In the context of India, the American decision to despatch a task force into the Bay of Bengal during the 1971 Indo-Pakistan War is an example of a limited application of naval force. In this case the show of force (by the United States) was expected to act as a deterrent to one of the adversaries (India) from intensifying the conflict. Further, the American action was designed to express solidarity with Pakistan and signal to newly be-friended China that the United States would stand by its friends in their time of trouble.

Secondly, the movement of troops to or away from specific locations, mobilization or de-mobilization of reserves or a change in the readiness status of troops can all serve to convey certain signals to other countries. Once again, essentially military actions can, with a subtle twist, fulfill limited political objectives.

Lastly, the holding of military exercises and manoeuvres by the armed forces can sometimes have a built-in political objective. While the holding of such exercises is

actually designed to test the combat readiness of the troops and to work out and test new strategic doctrines, they can also be used to discourage potential adversaries by demonstrating the capabilities that can be brought against them. Sometimes such manoeuvres even provide an excellent camouflage to launch a surprise attack on an adversary. Although such a tactic has never been demonstrated again, ~~X~~ the classic example often cited is the manoeuvre carried out by the Egyptians in 1973. A series of exercises were carried out by the Egyptian army, each culminating close to the Israeli border. After thus putting at ease Israeli suspicions, one such manoeuvre was converted into an attack and instead of culminating at the border an invasion into Israel was launched under the cover of a military exercise.<sup>5</sup>

The above framework is thus assumed to throw some light on the events of December 1986 and January 1987 in Indo-Pakistan relations. Being essentially a western strategic doctrine, force without war has, to date, seen very little application in the Indian subcontinent. The traditional rivals of the region have not fought a war since December 1971. But a regional arms race between the two has led to the possession of increasingly sophisticated weapons by both countries (examined in detail in Chapter III). This in turn has led to minor skirmishes (such as the Siachen Glacier incident) between the two and the adoption of a belligerent attitude. Moreover both countries are intent on projecting

---

5. Information obtained in interview with a highly placed serving officer of the Indian Army.

their capabilities and fulfilling their self defined roles.

India has come to be recognized as a serious military power but is yet to be totally comfortable in its role as a regional power. There have been tentative demonstrations of force by India. For instance, during the internal crisis in South Yeman (January, 1986), the indigenously developed frigate, INS Godavari, was despatched to the Gulf of Aden.<sup>6</sup> The Government's official stand was stated to be concern for some 5000 Indian nationals working in Aden.<sup>7</sup> The frigate remained on station for several weeks outside Yemini territorial waters, before returning to its base in Bombay. This was the first time that an Indian naval vessel has been sent outside territorial waters on active deployment during peace time. This instance may very well set a precedent for future Indian demonstrations of power in the Indian Ocean littoral. The decision to supply India with TU-142 Bear reconnaissance aircraft taken during Garbachev's visit in December 1986, has further added to India's 'reach' in the Indian Ocean.<sup>8</sup> With an effective range of 13,000 Km the TU-142 Bears can fly right upto South Africa and back.

In 1987 there were two more instances of Indian demonstrations of force. In June 1987, the Indian Air Force carried out a supply-mission, air dropping essential

---

6. Asian Defence Journal (Malaysia) 11 January 1988, p.15.

7. ibid., p.15.

8. India Today, 15 December 1986.

commodities to the economically blockaded Jaffna region in Sri Lanka.<sup>9</sup> The Indian action, a clear violation of another country's sovereignty, came after repeated requests by India to lift the economic blockade were turned down by Sri Lanka. That the transport planes were escorted by the Mirage-2000s further underlined the grim Indian determination to influence regional affairs. Such a decisive demonstration of power was soon backed by the signing of a peace accord between India and Sri Lanka. And at the time of the signing of the accord, July 29, 1987, two Leander class frigates, from the Southern and Eastern Naval Commands, were stationed off the Galle Green Face of Colombo Port.<sup>10</sup>

Again, in early November 1988, Indian troops were despatched to the Maldives. In a pre-dawn swoop, a group of mercenaries had landed in the capital Male with the objective of deposing the President, Maumoon Abdul Gayoom.<sup>11</sup> Following a personal request by Gayoom, India rushed two companies of para-commandos from Agra to Male.<sup>12</sup> The entire operation (code named Cactus) was carried out in less than a day. The mercenaries were captured and Gayoom was restored as President. Gayoom had also asked the United States and other countries for help, but the request for military aid

---

9. Frontline (Madras), 13-26 June 1987, p.10.

10. Frontline, 8-21 August 1987, p.12.

11. India Today, 30 November 1988, p.44.

12. ibid., p.45.

was only made to India.<sup>13</sup>

Operation Cactus (the Maldivian incident) revealed a high degree of inter service coordination and demonstrated the speed and efficiency with which India could deploy its troops to any part of the South Asian region. India's newly acquired strategic airlift capability was also demonstrated for the first time. That the American strategic naval base of Diego Garcia lies just 750 nautical miles away from Male is another point that should not be overlooked.<sup>14</sup>

Thus, concomittant with its emergence as a military power India has demonstrated some instances of limited military posturing in order to back its political objectives. First and foremost among its political objectives is the desire to maintain South Asia as its sphere of influence. The induction of troops into Sri Lanka (August 1987) and the Maldives Operation (November 1988) are both instances of New Delhi's donning the role of a regional gendarme. More importantly this role seems to have been recognized by both the superpowers. The United States had tacitly backed Indian Operations in Sri Lanka and Maldives while the Soviet Union has usually stood by New Delhi's regional policy.<sup>15</sup> However American acceptance of New Delhi's role in the region seems to be conditional to

---

13. This was reiterated by Gayoom himself at a press conference soon after the Indian action. See The Hindu (Madras), 7 November 1988.

14. The Hindu, 5 November 1988.

15. The Times of India (New Delhi), 5 November 1988.



to leaving out Pakistan from the ambit of India's influence<sup>16</sup> since they consider Pakistan vital to their South-West Asia Policy.<sup>17</sup>

The other factor underlying Indian policy stems from the anomalous nature of the South Asian subcontinent. India is a geographical giant surrounded by six dwarfs. The problem with being a regional power is that the sense of persecution among the smaller neighbours tends to become acutely sensitive. If India were to act as a regional bully and adopt a tough stand towards its neighbours this would not only involve a ganging up by its neighbours but may probably even lead to interference from extra regional powers. On the other hand adopting too soft a line towards the neighbours would make India susceptible to "blackmail" by them. The way out of the dilemma for India then is to follow a middle-line. India has so far done this with a fair amount of success. Thus its military power and demonstrations of capability have succeeded in keeping extra regional powers out while simultaneously affirming to the countries in the region (barring Pakistan) that India help would always be forthcoming.

Thus by projecting its forces beyond its own borders India has undertaken a limited, if tentative, demonstration

---

16. The Hindu, 7 November 1988.

17. See Lawrence Lifshultz, "The Strategic Connection Pakistan and the U.S. Cooperate on building up forces", Far Eastern Economic Review, 18 December 1986.

of power. Such demonstrations have been either with a benign intention (Maldives, November 1988) or outright hostility (airdropping of supplies over Jaffna, June 1987). But in all such cases the political objectives have been achieved due to increased military capability. For instance, the rushing of troops to the Maldives, in an extremely tight timeframe, would not have been possible if it wasn't for the giant IL-76 Soviet transport planes.<sup>18</sup> However increased Indian military capability has been partially off-set by the matching strides made by Pakistan in its military. Apart from triggering-off a local arms race in the region this action-reaction syndrome has also served to strain relations between the two neighbours.

Under such circumstances a dissuasive demonstration of power by India does not seem improbable. And a military exercise would be perfectly suited to carry out such a strategy. Whether Operation Brasstacks had any such purpose will be the objective of this study.

On the other hand such demonstrations of force have been more or less absent in the case of Pakistan. But then unlike India, where the structures of civil and military authority are clearly demarcated, in Pakistan this line is blurred. Successive military regimes have stamped their influence on the political processes in that country. Thus the political use of the armed forces, albeit for purposes

---

18. The Hindu, 5 November, 1988.

of internal rule has been quite clear in Pakistan. So, from the standpoint of Pakistan, the question thrown up is whether the Zia regime intended to use the armed forces to reassert the military dominance over the increasingly articulate civil government of Junejo. The government of Junejo, although formed to confer legitimacy on General Zia's regime, seemed to be slipping out of the latter's control and Prime Minister Junejo was emerging as a potential rival power center.<sup>19</sup> Thus one assumption is that General Zia probably intended to use the Pakistan Army and the opportunity thrown up by the Indian military exercise Brasstacks, to discredit Junejo and reassert his own influence. An incidental (if not the chief) fall out from such an action would be a significant diplomatic coup over New Delhi.

Based on these assumptions, the events of December 1986 and January 1987 will be examined in this study using the foregoing framework as an analytical tool.

---

19. The Zia-Junejo rift is dealt with in detail in a later chapter.

CHAPTER - IITHE INDO-PAKISTAN STRATEGIC EQUATION

Security policies are often dictated by the historical experience of individual nations as also by their geostrategic location. India and Pakistan are no exception to this rule. Relations between the two countries are guided largely by the dynamics of their historical, cultural and ethnic factors. Trying to come to grips with these common denominators has not been easy for either. And, at least in the case of Pakistan, attempts to break free from its subcontinental roots, as can be seen in its efforts to forge closer ties with the Islamic states in the Gulf, have not fully paid off.

Historically, events following partition of the former colonial India and the subsequent question of the Princely states, best exemplified by Kashmir, has determined future relations. Kashmir has been and continues to remain the bone of contention between the two states. Since history had ordained both nations to become uneasy neighbours, their security policies likewise revolved around each other, and each played a prominent role in the others strategic perceptions.

India's immediate strategic environment in the years following independence consisted primarily of Pakistan. The

Himalayas were considered to be a natural barrier and hence the threat from China was considerably down played, especially so since a fair degree of rapport was established between Indian and Chinese leaders (the Hindi-Chini 'Bhai-bhai' phase) during the early '50s. Jawaharlal Nehru, the architect of independent India's foreign policy, did recognize the threat posed to India by China, and to a lesser extent, by the Soviet Union.<sup>1</sup> The primary concern, however, was Pakistan and its external policy of entering into alliances and other such arrangements with the super powers was considered of importance to India. In fact Nehru remarked that India disapproves "of all military alliances and more especially such alliances as the Baghdad Pact which directly or indirectly effect us".<sup>2</sup> While thus reiterating India's opposition to any alignments, Nehru recognized that "the natural result has been that neither of these big blocs look on us with favour".<sup>3</sup> At the same time rejecting all accusations of being a fence sitter, Nehru valued India's "right of independent judgement (and) ability to make decisions uninfluenced by any other party".<sup>4</sup>

- 
1. For a lucid account of Nehru's defence policies, see Lorne J. Kavic's "India's Quest for Security: Defence Policies 1947-65" (Berkeley University of California Press, 1967), pp.22-28.
  2. Jawaharlal Nehru "India's Foreign Policy: Selected Speeches, September 1946 - April 1961" (Delhi; Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India (1971), p.478.
  3. *ibid.*, p.25.
  4. *ibid.*, p.80.

India's foreign policy in the early years was based largely on Nehru's idealistic world view. The 1962 Sino-Indian border war shook the policy makers from out of their complacency and a radical reassessment of foreign policy was undertaken. After this war India was faced with a two-front threat and the Himalayas were no longer the inseparable barrier they were once considered to be. The set-back received by India during the 1962 war led to a drastic reappraisal of its defence policies; and by extension its foreign policy. More importantly it hammered home the point that military prowess is an important corollary of an active foreign policy. The policy of non-alignment was considerably diluted from India's earlier stand and weapons assistance was freely acquired from the United States, the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom.

The growth in Sino-Pakistan relations in the post-'62 phase further underlined the change in the security environment and starkly hammered home the possibility of either a Chinese threat from the north and east or a Pakistani attack from the West, or a combined Chinese-Pakistani threat. The reality of such a two-front war was further underlined when during the 1965 outbreak of hostilities with Pakistan, China delivered an ultimatum to India. The fall-out in relations with China has also had internal ramifications for India, especially in the north-east region. And during the '60s and early '70s China actively cultivated Indian insurgent elements such as the

Nagas and Mizos.<sup>5</sup>

In the post-1962 years Indian embarked on an arms acquisition spree, determined to achieve self-sufficiency. In this regard Soviet military aid, on vastly concessional terms, has been of great importance and the success of this policy can be seen in the decisive victory India achieved during its 1971 war with Pakistan. The formation of Bangladesh and the cutting down to size of Pakistan saw the emergence of India as the undisputed regional power.

From 1971 onwards India began to increasingly stamp its authority on regional affairs. In 1971 an Indian Army contingent was despatched to Sri Lanka to assist the government put down an insurgency launched by the Janata Vimukti Peramuna (JVP). In 1974 a test explosion of a nuclear device by India (termed as a 'peaceful nuclear explosion') shook the world, as much by surprise as by the technological ability demonstrated by a developing country. To date, India has voluntarily restrained itself from going nuclear, an unparalleled action. This event was soon followed by the incorporation of strategically located Sikkim (till then an Indian protectorate) into the Indian Union.

---

5. K. Subrahmanyam, "India's security: The North and North-East Dimension", Conflict Studies 215, enter for "Security and Conflict Studies" (London, U.K.), p.7.

Since the mid-'70s the increased presence of the superpowers in the Indian Ocean region and other developments at the global level saw an enlargement of India's strategic environment<sup>6</sup> by the late '70s and early '80s. Developments in South-East Asia and South-West Asia had an indirect impact on the Indian subcontinent. Events in South-West Asia, particularly the erosion of American influence in Iran and the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, have inexorably drawn the subcontinent into the vortex of super power strategic concerns. The events in Iran and Afghanistan catapulted Pakistan into the status of a frontline ally of the United States, thereby enabling it to receive unprecedented levels of American military assistance. One direct outcome of such transfers has been the introduction of high technology weapons systems into the subcontinent and consequently an erosion in India's military superiority. An obvious fall-out has been the triggering-off of a renewed regional arms race. The concomitant strain in Indo-Pakistan relations has further contributed to a rise in regional tensions.

Traditionally policy makers in India give more weightage to conventional deterrence. But then India has preferred to keep her nuclear options especially so in the light of recent developments in Pakistan. In late 1986, the

---

6. For an analysis of this enlarged strategic framework, see Raju G.C. Thomas, Indian Security Policy (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1986), pp.30-50.



Washington Post quoted a US intelligence report as stating that Pakistan was only "two screwdriver turns from having a fully assembled bomb".<sup>7</sup> Further, "the reports in 1983 that China had transferred a bomb design to Pakistan, and Pakistan's attempts to obtain Krytrons (Critical elements in the design of the weapons), from the U.S. throughout 1985"<sup>8</sup> all attested to that country's persistence in developing a nuclear device.

Indian strategic policy revolves around the emphasis laid on its being a status quoist power lacking any extra-territorial ambitions. Strategic policy is based on a two-component (conventional) deterrence capability<sup>9</sup> with the stated policy of keeping nuclear weapons options open. But it has however created all the technological facilities essential for producing a bomb<sup>10</sup> and also the necessary delivery systems for such weapons have either been acquired (for instance the MIG-27 jet fighter is capable of air dropping nuclear weapons) are one being tested out (India's

- 
7. Bob Woodward, "Pakistan Reported Near Atomic Arms Production," Washington Post, 4 November, 1986 quoted in Dilip Mukherjee, "U.S. Weaponry for India", Asian Survey Vol.XXVII, No.6 (June 1987) p.612.
  8. C. Raja Mohan, "The U.S.-Pakistan Strategic Consensus and India", Strategic Analysis (New Delhi), Vol.XI, No.12, (March 1987), p.1378.
  9. L.K. Sharma, "General Sundarji on Tasks ahead", Times of India (New Delhi), 1 February 1986.
  10. Anthony J. Cordesman, "U.S. Strategic interests and the India-Pakistan - Military Balance" (1987). (Monograph) p.47.

nascent intermediate range missile tests). The danger posed by a nuclear arms race between India and Pakistan is considerable. A study reveals that "by late 1990 Pakistan could have as many as 15 Hiroshima-size devices, while India might have produced more than 100".<sup>11</sup>

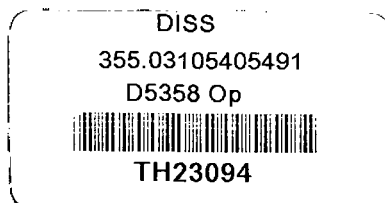
India's two-component deterrence capability involves first, a dissuasive or defensive component where one would extract a fairly high price for any local success that an enemy might achieve and, secondly a counter-offensive capability of hitting out at any aggressor who takes the initiative.<sup>12</sup> The first seems to be clearly directed against China and the second against Pakistan.

Likewise for Pakistan too, the main threat was seen to be emanating from India. Leaders of that country often voiced concern (mostly not without foundation) that India was never reconciled to the creation of Pakistan. The ideological difference between the two countries permanently sealed this rift. The birth of Pakistan was rooted in the belief that the Muslims of the subcontinent need a homeland for themselves, so as to escape domination and persecution by the majority Hindus.

- 
11. This was the conclusion of a Carnegie Endowment Task Group of top experts on nuclear weapons and South Asian security. quoted in Pacific Defence Reporter (Australia). Vol.XVI, No.1. (July 1988). p.27.
12. L.K. Sharma, "General Sundarji on tasks ahead" Times of India, 1 February, 1986.



TH-3094



Geostrategically, Pakistan is placed at one of the most important locations of the world. Situated as it is "at the junction of India, Afghanistan, China, the Soviet Union and Iran (and) its location at the head of the Persian Gulf, the Gulf of Aden and the Arabian Sea",<sup>13</sup> confers on Pakistan great strategic significance: significance which few leaders in either India or Pakistan seem to have fully grasped. Leaders in both countries were, understandably, more concerned with each other.

Entry into the American sponsored security alliance systems of CENTO and SEATO in the '50s can be seen as early Pakistani attempts to garner external support against India. A policy which is still actively pursued. Recognition of the threat posed to the subcontinent by the looming shadow of China was quickly taken advantage of by entering into close relations with that country. After 1963, relations between the two countries blossomed and over the years got firmly cemented. A clear vindication of the Kautilyan contention that one's enemy's enemy is one's friend.

In the wake of the 1971 war, Indo-Pakistani relations were generally cordial. The installation of the popularly elected Bhutto regime facilitated the signing of the

---

13. D.C. Jha, 'The basic foundations and determinants of Pakistan's Foreign Policy', in Surendra Chopra ed. "Perspectives on Pakistan's Foreign Policy" (Amritsar, Gurunanak Dev University 1983), p.11.

bilateral Simla Agreement in 1972, a landmark in relations between the two countries. This was in keeping with India's oft stated preference for dealing with a popular regime in Islamabad and not with a military dictatorship. The agreement bestowed a de facto recognition of the status quo in Kashmir, and though relations were not entirely normalised, tensions were temporarily diffused.

The ideological difference is an important factor in understanding relations between the two countries. The very basis for the emergence of the two countries has been religion - Muslim Pakistan was conceived as the homeland for the Muslims of the subcontinent, while India opted for a secular outlook and is the home for several millions of Muslims. Pakistan continues to retain, much to India's irritation, an active interest in these Muslims. Over the years this interest has waned, probably out of fear of being swamped by Muslim refugees. The presence of these Muslims in India and doubts over whether to adopt a secular or religious garb have given rise to an identity crisis in Pakistan. This was further complicated by the breakaway of East Pakistan (with Indian support) and the creation of the state of Bangladesh. The emergence of Bangladesh once and for all destroyed the fallacy of religion as a basis for the two-nation theory. More than anything else this singular event undermined the entire basis of its foundation.

In the post-1971 phase, the decision to become an Islamic state has seemed to have paid off quite well. On the

one hand such a policy achieved a partial integration of its people and conferred legitimacy on rulers such as General Zia-ul-Haq. We say 'partial integration' since regional, ethnic factors such as Punjabi, Sindhi, or Baluchi sub-nationalities have not been entirely subdued. On another, broader level embracing an Islamic ideology has helped the country to draw sustenance through military and economic assistance from the oil-rich Arab states. The fact is that in this case, Pakistan being an Islamic State has been welcomed into the 'fold' by the other Arab nations. At the same time, not being an Arab state itself, has helped Pakistan to detach itself from the fratricidal differences existing between the Arab nations.

Coming back to the bilateral sphere, the ideological difference between the two countries has added considerably to the antagonistic relationship. Even the dispute over Kashmir can be seen as an expression of this difference. Furthermore we should note that there are no two religions in the world as different from each other as Hinduism and Islam. There are also fears in Pakistan, probably expressed more due to political expediency rather than out of any firm conviction, of being absorbed politically, intellectually and economically by India. And Pakistan has always strived to come out from under the shadow of Indian dominance. Perhaps, present day Pakistani clamours for equality with India can be traced back to similar demands made by the

Muslim League vis-a-vis the Indian National Congress during the pre-partition days.

Over the years Pakistani strategic threat perceptions have broadened and along with India, they now include Afghanistan and the Soviet Union. The last two in fact compounded Pakistan's threat perceptions and it also has to now contend with a two-front war. The ethnic connection existing between the Baluchis and Pathans in Afghanistan and Pakistan and the extremely porous nature of the boundary has further complicated Pakistani security considerations. India's muted criticism of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 was seen in Islamabad as India's indifference to Pakistani security considerations.<sup>14</sup> The point is, Pakistan is faced with a strategic dilemma, as can be seen from the contention that "it is big enough to play the game, but not big enough to win it".<sup>15</sup> This dilemma in its strategic outlook had led Pakistan to adopt the doctrine of "offence-defense",<sup>16</sup> i.e. in time of heightening crisis it has not hesitated to be the first to resort to force and thus gain an initial advantage, the pattern in

- 
14. Howard W. Wriggins, "Pakistan's Foreign Policy after Afghanistan", in Stephen P. Cohen, ed., The Security of South Asia (New Delhi: Vistaar Publications, 1988), p.65.
15. Stephen P. Cohen, "Identity, Survival, Security: Pakistan's Defence Policy" in Surendra Chopra, ed., Perspectives on Pakistan Foreign Policy (Amritsar, Guru Nanak Dev University, 1983).
16. Ibid.,

earlier wars with India. This action is then followed by fervent pleas for international intervention, well before a counter-offensive can be launched against it. But earlier, the only hitch of such a policy option had been that its armed forces were not sufficiently well equipped; or to put it in another way they lacked the 'punch' to wrest the initiative. Since the early '80s at least, this shortcoming has been overcome with the induction of sophisticated frontline military equipment from the United States, thus making the offence-defence doctrine more feasible. In this respect the Soviet action in Afghanistan came as an unexpected boon to policy makers in Pakistan, since it led to greater American Military aid. Consequently, the threat to Pakistan from across its northern borders increased.

In return for military assistance, Pakistan had to acquiesce to American demands to act as a conduit for covert arms supplies to the Afghan Mujahideen (rebel elements fighting the Soviet and pro-Soviet Afghan government). This acquiescence however had had certain repercussions. Firstly, a direct Soviet threat to Pakistan seemed a possibility.<sup>17</sup> This can be seen from the number of bombings carried out in Pakistan and the frequent air space violations by Afghan

---

17. Paradoxically, such a Soviet threat has been used as one of the excuses by Pakistan to justify its demands for the transfer of sophisticated weapons systems from the Americans.

jets.<sup>18</sup> Secondly, the fall-out from the Afghan war began to be felt in both Pakistan and India. The increase in the number of Afghan refugees, the rise in drug smuggling and the easy availability of assault-rifles and assorted weaponry (actually meant for the Afghan Mujahideen) on the streets of Pakistan's important cities led to the rise in domestic social tensions. The ability of secessionist elements in India to easily obtain such weapons from across the border added a new dimension to the Punjab problem.

As was noted earlier, Pakistan's policy, of forging closer ties with the Gulf countries has had a fair amount of success. However like the Afghan issue, this aspect of Pakistan's external policy has also had regional repercussions. Apart from economic ties, Pakistan has cultivated an active military relationship with some of the principle countries of that region. In fact Pakistan is the "largest exporter of military manpower in the third world" with a reported total of 40,000-50,000 Pakistani personnel based in countries of South-West Asia and Africa.<sup>19</sup> Pakistani Air Force personnel man and operate some fighter squadrons of the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council.<sup>20</sup> The importance, to India, of such arrangements arises from the probable transfer of weapons systems to

---

18. Jasjit Singh, "U.S. Arms for Pakistan:AWACS and Its Implications", Strategic Analysis, Vol.XI, No.9 (December 1986), p.1006.

19. *ibid.* p.1015.

20. *ibid.* p.1015.



event of war. Such a possibility cannot be discounted, especially on ideological-religious grounds, if the war were to involve India. For instance, during the 1971 Indo-Pakistan War, Jordan had offered (with American concurrence) to supply F-104 Starfighters to the Pakistani Air Force to back its war efforts.<sup>21</sup>

The fact is, whether India likes it or not, Pakistan has come to occupy a position of great strategic significance in American security policy vis-a-vis South-West Asia and the Gulf States. This becomes apparent especially in the light of developments in Iran and Afghanistan. And irrespective of the outcome in either Iran or Afghanistan, Pakistan has come to play a key role in American security interests in the region.<sup>22</sup> This is further attested to by the designation of Pakistan as a "crucial ally" within the CentCom's South-West Asia framework.<sup>23</sup>

- 
21. Jasjit Singh, "Pakistan Army: The Growing Offensive Capability" Strategic Analysis, Vol.XI, No.11, (February 1988), p.1236.
  22. For instance, in a testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Sub Committee on Asian and Pacific Affairs, Howard Schaffer, the deputy assistant secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian affairs stated that "the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan does not mean the end of threats to South Asia and the Persian Gulf nor the end of the US's need for strategic partners in the region". See The Schaffer Testimony reproduced in Strategic Digest, Volume XIX, No.5 (May 1989), p.533.
  23. See Lawrence Lifschultz, "The Strategic Connection: Pakistan and the U.S.Cooperate on Building up Forces", Far Eastern Economic Review, 18 December 1986, p.25.

Thus, the induction of sophisticated weapons into Pakistan altered the existing regional balance and contributed to heightened bilateral tensions between India and Pakistan. Simultaneous with this development was the realization by India that much of the advantage gained in the 1971 war had been eroded considerably.

### CHAPTER - III

#### I. The India-Pakistan Military Balance

This section examines the military balance and the force levels existing between India and Pakistan. Following the hectic build-up of the armed forces during the '60s, the post- '71 period (until the late '70s) saw a relative lull in the arms race on the subcontinent. In the aftermath of having presided over the dismemberment of Pakistan (in 1971) no immediate threat confronted India. Consequently much of the '70s saw India preoccupied with domestic issues. Likewise, in Pakistan too the rise of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto coincided with the general public's disillusionment with the policies of the armed forces. Moreover the Simla Agreement of 1972 temporarily laid to rest all bilateral disputes and permitted both countries to tackle domestic problems.

A combination of regional and global issues during the late '70s saw the beginning of a new arms race between India and Pakistan. In Pakistan, the military under General Zia-ul-Haq staged a successful coup in July, 1977. That year also marked a watershed in Indian politics and for the first time a non-Congress government (the Janata Party) headed the country at the center. At the global level the thaw in the cold war between the superpowers was steadily coming to an

cold war between the superpowers was steadily coming to an end. The process was precipitated by the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in December, 1979. This event, combined with the earlier collapse of the Shah regime in Iran, was to have important ramifications on the sub continent. Pakistan was suddenly propelled into the forefront of American security concerns and General Zia found himself in prominence. Cleverly manoeuvring the incredible leverage he thus possessed vis-a-vis the Americans, Zia demanded and received economic and military assistance on an unprecedented level. This assistance was used by Zia to modernize the armed forces while at the same time consolidating his own position. Ignoring all Indian protests to the contrary, Pakistan was supplied by the United States with sophisticated frontline weapons and India had no option but to match standards.

A word of caution here. There is no necessary correlation between initial American supplies to Pakistan and Indian purchases. In fact Indian modernization efforts got underway in 1978 itself with the decision to purchase the Jaguar jet-fighters.<sup>1</sup> But quantitative increases were more apparent in the case of Pakistan during the '70s, especially in terms of augmenting existing manpower levels<sup>2</sup> with concomitant equipment acquisitions. These

- 
1. Asian Defence Journal (Malaysia) September 1987. p.4.
  2. This is attested to by the fact that in 1970-71 there were 300,000 troops in undivided Pakistan. However, the number of troops increased to 400,000 by 1979-80, an

acquisitions were mostly in the form of outdated Chinese tanks and aircraft.<sup>3</sup> Qualitative upgrading of these systems i.e. modernization efforts, however coincides with similar Indian plans.<sup>4</sup> American weapons to Pakistan began on a large scale only in the post 1981 period, as part of the first tranche of \$3.2 billion arms and economic assistance.

The troubles facing Bhutto towards the end of his rule made him turn increasingly to the army for help. Coupled with this was the well known penchant Bhutto had for all things Chinese. Hence the mid-'70s witnessed the induction of large amounts of Chinese Military hardware into the Pakistan armed forces.<sup>5</sup> Probably for Bhutto such a policy, while keeping the military top-brass happy, simultaneously served to strengthen relations with China. Moreover it should be noted that in the post-'71 period (and primarily during the Presidency of Jimmy Carter, who took strong exception to Zia's track-record of human rights violations) Pakistan-American Military relations were low-key<sup>6</sup>. Thus Zia

---

important rise if one considers that this number was now meant for the defence of West Pakistan alone. See Jasjit Singh, "Pakistan Army: The Growing Offensive Capability", Strategic Analysis, Vol.XI. No.11 (February 1988) Table 1. p.1227.

3. Ibid. p.1226.
4. Sreedhar, John Kaniyalil and Savita Pande, "Pakistan after Zia" (New Delhi, ABC Publishing House, 1989) p.11.
5. During the '70s just over 40% of all Pakistani arms imports were from <sup>China</sup>. See Thomas Ohlson and Michael Brzoska "Arms transfers to the Third World 1971-85" (Oxford, Oxford University Press for SIPRI, 1987). p.35.
6. *ibid.* Appendix 1, p.232.

is credited with having brought in the much needed modernization of the armed forces.<sup>7</sup> This was achieved by adopting the convenient garb of Islamization, which put him in access to large sums of Gulf money, and by taking advantage of the rapidly changing scenario in South-West<sup>8</sup> Asia.

The purpose then of analysing the military balance of the two countries is to throw light on their foreign policy orientations. An increasingly hardheaded method of dealing with foreign policy issues, at least within the region, is noticeable in the behaviour of both India and Pakistan. Pakistan had invoked Soviet wrath by actively providing a base for anti-Soviet rebel groups fighting in Afghanistan. It had also become an important link in the American Central Command security chain. Like the decision to enter into SEATO and CENTO during the '50s, the Pakistani decision to be a part of the CentCom framework seems to be with the intention of garnering support against India and internationalizing its bilateral grievances with India. For its part, India too has displayed a belligerent attitude in its external relations vis-a-vis its traditional rivals - Pakistan and China. The Siachen Glacier incident with Pakistan is a case in point. Located in the Karakorums, the Siachen Glacier lies in one of the most inhospitable

---

7. Sreedhar et al "Pakistan after Zia" Op.cit. p.11.

8. *ibid.* p.11.

terrains of the world. Overlooking the Karokorum Pass and the northern Ladakh areas, this area has come to assume great strategic significance. It was however not considered important enough to be clearly demarcated by either the Karachi Agreement on the Ceasefire line in 1949 or by the Simla Agreement of 1972 which worked out the Line of Actual Control.<sup>9</sup> Frequent violations by Pakistan since 1974 were abruptly put an end to by Indian forces which decisively occupied the Glacier in June, 1984.<sup>10</sup> This action stemmed out of Indian fears that Pakistan was seeking to legitimize non-existent claims in a vital geo-strategic point by encouraging foreign mountaineering expeditions.<sup>11</sup> Close on the heels of this incident with Pakistan came the decision to confer statehood on the Arunachal Pradesh region. This being disputed territory the Chinese lodged a protest which was dismissed by India as an intrusion in its internal affairs.<sup>12</sup>

Thus the military posturing and flexing of muscle seems to fall into a pattern. Certain external political objectives are either gained by outright military action (Siachen Glacier incident) or by displaying a sufficient

---

9. Manoj Joshi, "The Siachen Glacier Incident" Strategic Digest, Vol. No. (June 1985), p.666.

10. Ibid., p.665.

11. Ibid., p.667.

12. Far Eastern Economic Review (Hong Kong) 1 January 1987, p.22. It should be noted here that earlier in June 1986 China had intruded into the Sumdorong Chu Valley of Arunachal Pradesh.

deterrent capability. Events in the wake of Operation Brasstacks seem to have their genesis in the arms build-up India and Pakistan have embarked on since the late '70s. Hence a study of the military balance, apart from analysing the strengths and weaknesses of the respective armed forces, will put in a clearer perspective the events of January, 1987.

The composition of any nation's armed force is determined by, among others, historical, geographical and economic factors. Historically, the British-colonial legacy inherited by the two countries has determined the formulation of their respective strategic doctrines. The first Indo-Pakistan war had determined future military strategy in the sense that "wars were expected to be primarily based on land, engaged and directed by the army".<sup>13</sup> This meant that the army has come to assume a dominant role with the air and naval wings providing a support role.

Geographical factors have determined the composition of the armed forces especially so with regard to the army and the navy. The land border between India and Pakistan (except for certain sectors in Kashmir) is ideally suited for tank warfare. Hence tanks, armoured fighting vehicles and artillery comprise a major portion of the army in both countries. Moreover both armies are primarily based on

---

13. Raju G.C. Thomas, Indian Security Policy (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1986), p.138.



the infantry soldier as can be seen from the large number of infantry divisions on either side. The extensive coastline which India needs to safeguard has made it imperative for it to raise a strong naval force. On the other hand naval strategy from Pakistan's perspective has occupied a low priority, although indications of the past few years point to the development of a strong sea-denial capability.<sup>14</sup>

Technology has come to play an important role in the composition of the armed forces. Since cost is an important factor in assessing the induction of advanced weapon systems, economic factors have come to play a role in determining the composition of the armed forces. Since requirements of the air and naval wings are more heavily technology oriented and capital intensive, they tend to be more expensive. So, given the poor economic base of the two countries their armed forces are skewed in favour of the army. It costs more to equip, say, the air force with one jet fighter than to equip one infantry battalion. Moreover, both countries lack the requisite technical know-how (India to a much lesser extent) and hence dependence on foreign suppliers is increased.

---

14. Between 1976-78 Pakistan acquired 6 Gearing Class destroyers from the U.S., several fast attack craft from China and a large number of anti-ship missiles. Moreover, within CentCom, the United States probably visualizes a more active Pakistani marine strategy. See Thomas Ohlson and Michael Brzoska, "Arms Transfers to the Third World 1971-85", op.cit. Appendix 1. pp.230-32.

Given the fact that operational and tactical doctrines revolve around the army, the emphasis here is given to this wing of the armed forces. Moreover it should also be noted that the military exercise under study, Operation Brasstacks, was to a great extent solely an army exercise. In the sense that it was devised and carried out by the army with little support from the other two wings.

## II. INDIA

The Indian Defence Plan 1985-90 is directed towards the modernization of the country's armed forces so as to enable them to counter any threat to the security of the country.<sup>15</sup> The emphasis is laid on the "modernization and replacement of equipment to secure greater fire power, mobility and more modern means of communication."<sup>16</sup> This feeling has pervaded all the three wings of the armed forces and is best exemplified in this statement of General Sundarji, the then Chief of Army Staff:

"We have modernized thus far ..... the time has come to take a total look at technology, threats, tactics, organization and force structure to get a future force-mix right."<sup>17</sup>

- 
15. Annual Report 1988-89, Ministry of Defence (Government of India), p.5.
  16. SIPRI Yearbook, 1987, World Armaments and Disarmament (New York, Oxford University Press, 1987), p.139.
  17. L.K. Sharma, "General Sundarji on tasks ahead", Times of India, 2 February, 1986.

Significantly, this aim has been the main purpose of Operation Brasstacks. Defence expenditure for 1986-87 was stated to be Rs.10,194 crores<sup>18</sup> and the revised estimates put this figure at Rs.12,940.54 crores.<sup>19</sup> Justifying such enormous expenditures, the Defence Ministry's 1986-87 Annual report contends that international tensions were high with consequent repercussions on India's security environment.<sup>20</sup>

The total armed forces strength in India is 1,262,000 of which the army alone accounts for 1,100,000 men.<sup>21</sup> (See Appendix 1).

This makes India's armed forces the fourth largest in the world.<sup>22</sup> The army is organized into 5 Regional Commands. It comprises two Armoured Divisions, one Mechanized Division, twenty Infantry Divisions, nine Mountain Divisions, nineteen Independent Brigades (7 Armoured, 10 Infantry, 1 Mountain and 1 Paracommando), ten Artillery and five Air-defense Brigades.<sup>23</sup>

- 
18. Annual Report, 1986-87. Ministry of Defence, Government of India. See Chart I, 'Defence Expenditure for Services'.
  19. Defence Services Estimates, Government of India, 1987-88.
  20. Annual Report 1986-87, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, p.2.
  21. "The Military Balance, 1987-88 (London, International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1987).
  22. World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers 1987 (United States, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency), p.3.
  23. The Military Balance, 1987-88 (London, IISS, 1987).

The Mountain Divisions are mostly deployed for high altitude operations. The Mountain Divisions in Arunachal Pradesh permanently face eighteen 'Main force' and eleven 'local force' Chinese Divisions, and two face the Pakistani army in the north-west<sup>24</sup>. There are about 46 Tank regiments of which the "operational Main Battle Tank (MBT) inventory includes 200 recently acquired T-72s (with some 550 more in the pipeline), 800 aging T-54/55s and some 1,300 domestically produced Vijayantas (a Vickers design)."<sup>25</sup> (See Appendix II). The T-54/55 series is still the most widely used tank even amongst the Warsaw Pact countries and is reasonably well armed, protected and mobile. The Vijayantha has not been found entirely satisfactory by the army and hence modernization attempts in the early '80s have once again turned to imports. The T-72 has been selected to fill the gap and experts have declared it to possess considerable tank fighting capabilities, reflecting the lessons of the Middle-East Wars. The armoured formations thus consist of a mix of T-54/55/72 and Vijayanta tanks. The latter are apparently being upgraded with emphasis on mobility, protection and first round-hit capability so as to enhance and make the compatible with contemporary MBT.<sup>26</sup> Plans for

- 
24. C.W.S. Brodsky, "India and Pakistan", in Richard Gabriel ed. Fighting Armies: Non-aligned, Third World and other ground Armies - A Combat Assessment". (Westport, Greenwood Press, 1983), p.13.
25. Rodney W Jones and S.A. Hildreth, "Modern Weapons and Third World Powers" (Westview Press, 1984), p.33.
26. Annual Report 1986-87, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, p.9.

modernization include new Muzzle Reference systems, Laser range finders, gyro-land navigation systems, improved armour, a new powerful engine and Tank Fire Control System.<sup>27</sup>

Importance has also been given to Mechanized Infantry formations and enhanced air-defence capabilities. New strategic doctrines with emphasis on mobility and fire-power have been evolved. The Re-organized Army Plains Infantry Division (RAPID) is one such concept.<sup>28</sup> In fact the RAPID doctrine was one of the foundations around which Operation Brasstacks was conceived. In keeping with this strategy a new Mechanized Infantry regiment has been raised. Since, this involves the use of armoured personnel carriers (APC) and Mechanized Infantry Combat Vehicles (MICV), the Indian Army has seen the induction of these systems on a substantial scale.<sup>29</sup> There are some 600 BMP-1 (MICVs), 350 OT-62/64 (APCs) and 360 BTR-60 (APCs).<sup>30</sup> (See also Appendix 2). The BMP-1 is the most advanced in the Indian armour. It is armed with a smooth-bore, short recoil 73 mm gun and further supplemented by an externally launched anti-tank guided missile, the AT-3 Sagger.<sup>31</sup> India has reportedly

---

27. Ibid., p.9.

28. Information obtained in interview with highly placed serving officer of the Indian army.

29. Thomas Ohlson and Michael Brzoska, "Arms transfers to the Third World 1971-85" (SIPRI, Oxford University Press, 1987), p.183.

30. The Military Balance 1987-88 (IISS, London, 1987), p.157.

31. Jane's Defence Weekly, 20 December 1986, (Vol.6 No.24) p.1447.

placed an order for the advanced BMP-2 ICV in addition to more BMP-1s.<sup>32</sup> The BMP-2, when inducted, will add considerably to India's air defence capabilities in addition to the usual functions of an ICV, since it can use its 30 mm 2 A42 cannon to engage helicopters.<sup>33</sup>

Due to the limited use of airpower in past Indo-Pak conflicts air defence systems have so far played a limited role. The use of such systems in the Middle-East wars<sup>34</sup> and their effectiveness against superior aircraft has made India to introduce these systems on a substantial scale. Present day battle scenarios are based on the highly developed technology of weapon systems where reaction time is considered crucial. An effective air defence system is based on an efficient communication system, a fighter/interceptor force and surface-to-air missile (SAM) systems. For the army, SAMs have become very important tactical air defence systems against low flying enemy aircraft. Capable of flying at tree-top level, these aircraft are dangerously close by, once they are visually sighted. Under such conditions SAMs assume crucial importance. In addition to the older Soviet made SA-2 and SA-3s India has some 1050 SA-6 Gainful, 400 SA-7 Grail

---

32. The Military Balance 1987-88, op.cit. p.157.

33. Jane's Defence Weekly, January 24, 1987 (vol.7 no.3), p.113.

34. William J. Koenig "Weapons of World War 3", (London, Bison Books, 1981), p.38.

portable SAMs, 250 SA-8 Gecko and some 300 SA-9 Gaskin landmobile SAM systems.<sup>35</sup> The SAMs are used as division-level air defense systems. The SA-6 Gainful and SA-8 Gecko have limited on-board acquisition radars and hence these systems have been augmented by deploying the Soviet LONG TRACK radars.<sup>36</sup> In addition there are some 2,665 air defense guns, chief among these being the Shilka ZSU-23-4 self-propelled anti-aircraft gun.<sup>37</sup>

Military tactics are also largely defined by terrain. The Indo-Pak Border is characterized by two types of terrain - the plains in the Punjab-Rajasthan-Sindh areas and the hilly mountainous stretches in the Kashmir sector. In the plains region, long range weapons of high accuracy favour the defender and tanks favour the attacker while in the mountains these are replaced by shorter-range weapons manned by foot soldiers.<sup>38</sup> Indian artillery (see Appendix 2) consists of some 2,165 field guns and 1,710 howitzers.<sup>39</sup> These comprise, among others, the indigenously developed 105 mm field gun (FG), the 100 mm M1944 FG, the 105 mm Model 56p

- 
35. Thomas Ohlson and Michael Brozoska, 'Arms Transfers to the Third World 1971-85', op.cit. p.184.
36. Anthony H. Cordesman, "U.S. Strategic Interests and the India-Pakistan Military Balance" (Monograph, 1987), p.18.
37. The Military Balance, 1987-88, p.157.
38. Lt.Gen. Eric A. Vas, "The Changing Rythem of War:The Evolution of Mechanized Military Tactics", Indian Defence Review, January 1989 (New Delhi, Lancer International), p.83.
39. The Military Balance 1987-88, p.157.

howitzer and the 203 mm MH5 howitzer.<sup>40</sup> In order to upgrade this capability the government placed an order for some 400 Bofors FH-77B 155 mm howitzer.<sup>41</sup> For the high altitude regions of Kashmir (and also along the Sino-Indian Border) the army has the 76 mm Mountain Gun.<sup>42</sup> Anti-tank capabilities revolve around the Sexton 25 Pounder self-propelled gun (SPG), the Abbot 105 mm SPG and, the modified Vijayanta tank which has a 130mm SPG on its turret.<sup>43</sup>

The Indian Air Force's (IAF) strategic doctrine is derived from experience during the second world war and proceeds on the basis of establishing air superiority. Support for the army and navy was considered to be secondary to the air force's own battles.<sup>44</sup> However, air defense operations, deep penetration strike and interdiction capabilities, close air-support for the army and shore based tactical support for the navy, providing tactical and strategic transport for the army and carrying out reconnaissance missions are defined as the new role of the IAF.<sup>45</sup> Air operations, which were considerably limited during India's earlier wars, are expected to play a more

---

40. Ibid., p.157.

41. Ibid., p.157.

42. Ibid., p.157.

43. Jane's Weapons Systems 1987-88 (London, Jane's Publishing Co. Ltd.)

44. Raju G.C. Thomas, "Indian Security Policy" op.cit. p.148.

45. Asian Defence Journal, September 1987, p.10.



dominant role in any future wars. However, the fact remains that the IAF's role will be subordinated to the strategic plans of the army and to an extent it will have to base some of its operations on the army's plans.

The budgetary allocation for the IAF is about 21.56% of the total defence outlay, or Rs.2,198 crores for 1986-87.<sup>46</sup> The IAF deploys some 700 combat aircraft, 11 air transport squadrons and at least 60 armed helicopters.<sup>47</sup> It is divided into 5 Air Commands - New Delhi (Headquarters Western Air Command), Jodhpur (HQ South-Western Air Command), Allahabad (HQ Central Air Command), Shillong (HQ Eastern Air Command) and Trivandrum (HQ Southern Air Command).<sup>48</sup>

The combat aircraft (see Appendix 3) are organized into three bomber squadrons (consisting mainly of aging Canberras and the newer Jaguars), eleven squadrons of fighters/ground attack (the pride of place being taken by the Mirage-2000s and MIG-29 Fulcrums), eight air defense squadrons and three reconnaissance squadrons.<sup>49</sup>

In pursuant to the decision taken by the Ministry of Defense,<sup>50</sup> the first batch of MIG-29 fulcrums arrived from

46. Annual Report, 1986-87 . Ministry of Defence, Government of India Chart 1. 'Defense Expenditure for Services'.
47. The Military Balance 1987-88, p.157.
48. Asian Defense Journal, September 1987. p.4.
49. The Military Balance 1987-88, p.157.
50. Annual Report, 1986-87. Ministry of Defence, Government of India, p.17.

the Soviet Union in December, 1986<sup>51</sup>. Scheduled to arrive in April-May 1987, their delivery was speeded up by the Soviet Union following Gorbachev's visit to New Delhi in November, 1986.<sup>52</sup>

Qualitatively, the IAF is considered to be one of the best equipped forces in the Third World.<sup>53</sup> Apart from the numerical advantage it enjoys over Pakistan, the IAF also has a definite edge in terms of capabilities over its counterpart.<sup>54</sup> While conceding that the F-16 Fighting Falcon is an exceptionally versatile advanced fighter jet, some analysts claim that its superiority can be overcome in actual battle by swamping it with numbers, i.e. a single F-16 should be engaged by several fighters with the object of at least one of them being able to make a hit. Such a strategy involves the ability to absorb high levels of losses in terms of men and machines. And Indian public opinion being extremely sensitive to all issues relating to Pakistan, one wonders whether the political authorities will be willing to make such sacrifices. Especially, since it may

- 
51. Jane's Defense Weekly, December 20, 1986. (Vol.6, No.24), p.1433.
52. The reason given for advancing, by four to five months, the delivery schedules was ostensibly to enable India counteract the Pakistan Air Force's F-16. See India Today, 15 December 1986, p.102.
53. Anthony H. Cordesman, "U.S. Strategic Interests and the India-Pakistan Military Balance." (Monograph, 1987), p.22.
54. Ibid., p.22.

effect morale, particularly in the armed forces.

The transport squadrons are composed mainly of AN-32s and AN-12s. These have been further augmented with the induction of an initial batch of eight IL-76 air transport planes with 20 more on order.<sup>55</sup> It is alleged that some IL-76s may be airborne early warning (AEW) Platforms.<sup>56</sup> The IAF has a good record as to its air-lift capabilities and has successfully undertaken high altitude operations under severe conditions (Ladakh and Siachen areas). In this regard the induction of the Mi-26 Halo<sup>57</sup>, reportedly the largest helicopter in the world has made a significant difference to Indian logistical capabilities in hostile regions. The Mi-26, with a unique eight blade rotor, is an all weather, heavy lift helicopter with a payload and cargo similar to the Lockheed C-130 Hercules.<sup>58</sup> The Indian outpost on the Siachen Glacier, located at 7000 meters, has been kept functional largely due to the strategic air-lift provided by these helicopters.<sup>59</sup>

- 
55. The Military Balance, 1987-88. p.158.
56. SIPRI Yearbook, 1987. World Armaments and Disarmament, (New York, Oxford University Press, 1987), p.247.
57. 2 Mi-26 Halo's were inducted in 1986. These two were reportedly for evaluation, and a further eight are in the pipeline. See SIPRI Yearbook 1987. p.247.
58. John W.R. Taylor ed. 'Jane's All the World's Aircraft. 1987-88, (London, Jane's Publishing Co., 1987), p.269.
59. Defense And Foreign Affairs Review (USA), April 1989 (vol.XVII, No.4), p.29.

The importance of helicopters in providing close air support and battlefield tactical defense has seen their induction into the IAF on an increasingly large-scale. They have become the vehicles for providing close air support to ground troops and in air-to-ground and anti-tank operations. They are capable of engaging enemy targets throughout the battlefield from very low altitudes, and have the added advantage of operating in conditions which restrict the use of enemy aircraft.<sup>60</sup> Moreover, modern military strategy would proceed on the basis of destroying enemy airfields as a primary objective under battle conditions. The ability of helicopters to operate from temporarily constructed helipads, or even in areas with no such provisions, has given rise to their being used increasingly for combat purposes. In particular, the lessons of the Vietnam war, where ground attack fixed wing aircraft were unable to operate successfully due to terrain and other difficulties and, in which helicopters performed remarkably well, can be seen to be the reason behind the rise in the tactical importance of helicopters.

The helicopter gun-ship, Mi-25 Hind-D has been inducted into the IAF. Twelve of these gunships have been added to the existing Mi-8/-17s.<sup>61</sup> There are eleven squadrons of

---

60. John W.R. Taylor (ed), "Jane's All the World's Aircraft, 1987-88 op.cit. p.267.

61. The Military Balance, 1987-88. p.158.

liaison helicopters, all of which are army assigned.<sup>62</sup> The Defense Ministry Report 1986-87, has also taken the important decision of forming an Army Aviation Corps in order to strengthen the combat arm of the Army.<sup>63</sup>

Air defences under the purview of the IAF, have also received attention in the Current Modernization Plans (1985-90). Air defense forces are closely integrated and operate in a planned and coordinated manner. Developments in Electronic Counter Measures are considered important. The IAF now has a relatively sophisticated Air Defence Ground Environment System (ADGES) which provides instant warning and evaluation of air threats as they develop.<sup>64</sup>

In the wars of independent India, the Navy has seen little battle until the 1971 war. This can be partly explained by the fact that no naval threat exists to India as far as the regional powers are concerned. The Indian Navy is the largest regional force in the Indian Ocean region (excluding the presence of extra regional powers) and the eight in the world.<sup>65</sup> It is, in the words of the authoritative Jane's Fighting Ships, "the most powerful indigenous naval force from Mainan to Port Said, and is

---

62. Ibid., p.158.

63. Annual Report 1986-87, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, p.9.

64. Asian Defence Journal, September 1987, p.12.

65. Pacific Defence Reporter (Australia), April 1988 (vol.XVI, No.10) p.26.

(still) growing".<sup>66</sup>

The Indian Navy's share of the defense budget was Rs.1,184 crores for 1986-87 (or 11.62%).<sup>67</sup> The Navy is composed of some 50 combat ships organized into the Western, Southern and Eastern Naval Commands. Plans for expansion are well underway and in October 1986 the foundation for India's largest Naval base was laid at Karwar.<sup>68</sup> The role of the Navy in India's strategic perceptions, however, remains vaguely defined. Peninsular India occupies a strategic position, overlooking as it does the important Sea Lines of Communication (SLOC) between South-East and South-West Asia, which brings "over 50 per cent of the Ocean waters in the east, west and south well within 900 miles of the nation's coastline".<sup>69</sup> The lengthy 3,750 mile coastline along with the 200 mile Exclusive Economic Zone and the increased flow in overseas trade has given rise to the need to control more than just coastal waters.<sup>70</sup> The logic is that during a conflict, India's external trade routes should not be

- 
66. Quoted in Pacific Defense Reporter, 1987 Annual Reference Edition, December 1986-January 1987 (vol.XIII, nos. 6/7). p.56.
67. Annual Report, 1986-87. Ministry of Defense, Government of India, see Chart I, Defense Expenditure for Services.
68. Asian Defense Journal, January 1987, p.102.
69. Ashley J. Tellis, "India's Naval Expansion: Reflections History and Strategy", Comparative Strategy, vol.6 no.2 (1987), p.186.
70. Raju G.C. Thomas, "Indian Security Policy". op.cit. p.154.

adversely effected. The point is, apart from the superpower presence in the Indian Ocean region (against whom the Indian Navy anyway does not stand much of a chance) no immediate threat seems to exist.<sup>71</sup> The Indian strategy, then, seems to be the establishment of a strong sea-denial capability vis-a-vis extra regional powers (since sea-control capabilities against regional powers is well-established) and gradually evolve towards sea control capabilities.<sup>72</sup> Several of the recent purchases and orders for future acquisitions point to the development of a blue water capability, which is essential for sea control. The acquisition of a Charlie-class nuclear submarine from the Soviets<sup>73</sup>, three more Kashin class destroyers,<sup>74</sup> Kamov Ka-27 Helix anti-submarine warfare helicopters,<sup>75</sup> and Tu-142 Bear Maritime reconnaissance aircraft<sup>76</sup> all point towards the future establishment of a considerable sea control strategem. In

- 
71. Stating that "the Navy has never been able to delineate precisely either the source or the nature of its perceived threat", one analyst forcefully demolishes several "threats" and establishes that "there are no identifiable sea-borne threats (to India) justifying the creation of formidable naval forces." See Ashley J. Tellis "India's Naval Expansion: Reflections on History and Strategy" op.cit. Particularly pages 193-196.
72. Pushpinder Singh, "The Indian Navy: Modernization and Strategy in the '80s", Asian Defense Journal, July 1987, p.5.
73. Foreign Affairs Record, External Publicity Division, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, February, 1988 (Vol.xxxiv, No.2). p.34.
74. SIPRI Yearbook 1987, op.cit. p.247.
75. Ibid., p.247.
76. India Today, 15 December 1986. p.103.

this context the addition of a second aircraft carrier, the INS Viraat, is also a significant development.<sup>77</sup>

The core of the navy consists of an aging aircraft carrier, the INS Vikraant. A second aircraft carrier, the HMS Hermes (rechristened INS Viraat) was bought in 1986 but had not been commissioned by the time of Operation Brasstacks. There are also reports that India is planning to purchase (or develop indigenously) a third aircraft carrier.<sup>78</sup> The INS Vikrant carries a mixed force of Sea Harrier V/STOL and Alize aircraft along with Sea King ASW helicopters.<sup>79</sup> The Indian Carrier Battle Group (CBG) has however come in for severe criticism arising mainly out of the vaguely defined objectives and missions of these carriers. Apart from the lack of clearly defined objectives, the other shortcoming is with regard to the operational capabilities of the Sea Harrier V/STOL aircraft. The most crippling defect of the aircraft is its limited 250 nm range under a full mission load of 5,300 lbs.<sup>80</sup> This has led to a "circular operational logic: the carrier exists solely to

---

77. SIPRI Yearbook, 1987. op.cit. p.246.

78. Ashley. J. Tellis, "India's Naval Expansion: Reflections on History and Strategy". op.cit. p.185.

79. The Military Balance, 1987-88. p.157.

80. Ashley J. Tellis, "Aircraft Carriers and the Indian Navy: Assessing the Present, Discerning the Future". The Journal of Strategic Studies (London), 10:2, 1987, p.146.



host the aircraft and the aircraft exist solely to defend the carriers."<sup>81</sup>

The Indian Navy has 4 Kashin class destroyers (see Appendix 4) with 4 Styx surface-to-surface missiles (SSM) and embarking one Kamov Ka-25 ASW helicopters.<sup>82</sup> These destroyers are considered to be the most powerfully equipped surface ships among the Asian navies since they boast of computer-directed fast-firing guns, anti-submarine torpedoes and medium range anti-submarine rocket launchers.<sup>83</sup> In addition there are some 21 frigates, 4 corvettes and several patrol craft, mine sweepers and amphibious landing craft. The existing eight Foxtrot submarines have been augmented with the induction of one kilo class submarine in late 1986.<sup>84</sup> Five more kilo class submarines are on order.<sup>85</sup>

The Naval air force is composed of a squadron of Sea Harrier V/STOL fighter jets. ASW capabilities are met by 5

- 
81. Ibid., p.153. While thus subjecting the Indian carrier battle groups to singularly scathing criticism, Tellis does recognize the paradoxical nature of the Navy's objectives, which is "that of maintaining sea-control vis-a-vis Pakistan while simultaneously attaining a sea-denial capability vis-a-vis the external powers in the region". A tough proposition by any standards. See also p.160.
82. The Military Balance. 1987-88. p.157.
83. See Pushpinder Singh, "The Indian navy" op.cit. p.16.
84. Ibid., p.16.
85. The Military Balance 1987-88, p.157.

helicopter squadrons consisting of Kamov Ka-25 Harmones, Westland Sikorsky Sea-Kings and SA-316-B Aloutte IIIs.<sup>86</sup> There are two squadrons of Maritime reconnaissance aircraft composed of 3 IL-38 Mays and 3 Tu-142 M Bears.<sup>87</sup> The TU-142 Bears are by far the most important arm of India's Maritime reconnaissance wing. With an unrefuelled range of 13,000 KM. the Bears have increased manifold India's ability to patrol almost any corner of the Indian Ocean.

### III. Pakistan

Pakistan has always been dependent on external sources for its major arms requirements. American weapons transfers in particular have been crucial to its emergence as a military power. In the absence of such transfers it would never have become a serious military power.<sup>88</sup> Moreover, all such weapons transfers have always had a direct and immediate impact on the regional military balance existing between it and India. In the wake of the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Pakistan has increasingly demanded and received substantial American military aid. It is the fourth largest recipient of US military largesse, after Israel, Egypt and Turkey. The \$3.2 billion 6-year military

---

86. Ibid., p.157.

87. Ibid., p.157.

88. Stephen P. Cohen, "U.S. Weapons and South Asia:A Policy Analysis", Pacific Affairs, Spring 1976, (vol.49. no.1)

aid and economic package, from 1981, saw a further increase of \$4.02 billion (announced in March 1960) for the period 1987-93. The United States has stressed that it would continue to play an important role in Pakistan's defence modernization programme.<sup>89</sup> The arguments given by experts is that US arms sales to Pakistan are to be viewed "in the context of overall American strategy in the region, rather than as a response to a specific threat to Pakistani military security".<sup>90</sup>

This may well be the case since Pakistan has become an integral part of the American Central Command security system, which is considered to be on par, operationally, with NATO and the Pacific Command.<sup>91</sup> Within CentCom's framework Pakistan is designated a "crucial" ally role.<sup>92</sup> Thus the enormous expansion of the Pakistan armed forces since 1979 has been funded by the United States. Apart from the induction of new weapon systems, funding and construction of new air-bases and other such facilities in Baluchistan has also been underway. This is in keeping with American requirements for 'host-nation' facilities.<sup>93</sup>

---

89. SIPRI Year Book, 1987, p.139.

90. *Ibid.*, p.192.

91. See Lawrence Lifschultz, "The Strategic Connection: Pakistan and the U.S. Cooperate on Building up Forces", Far eastern Economic Review, 18 December 1986, p.25.

92. *ibid.* 26.

93. *ibid.* 26.

The induction of advanced weapon system into Pakistan has, understandably, introduced an element of disquiet among Indian defence planners. This is especially so if one were to consider the fact that the margin of superiority enjoyed by India has never been substantial. Moreover the Indo-Pak wars of 1965 and 1971 reflect the contention that Pakistan has always used these weapons against India, although they were acquired for a different purpose altogether, viz. under a Memorandum of Understanding with the Americans, signed in the 1950s, weapons were acquired in order to defend itself against 'communist' aggression. Lately, Pakistan has once again been receiving American weapons in order to defend itself against Soviet aggression.

The total armed forces of Pakistan number 480,600 of which the army accounts for 450,000.<sup>94</sup> (See Appendix 1). As noted earlier, both India's and Pakistan's military strategy revolves around the army. Its mainline forces are organized into 19 Divisions (2 Armoured and 17 Infantry).<sup>95</sup> 6 Corps are stationed permanently facing east towards India. Much of the border along the Punjab-Sindh-Rajasthan sectors being ideal tank terrain, the bulk of its armoured brigades are also postioned here. This is also the case with the Indian armoured corps. Pakistan has some 1600 tanks of which the

---

94. The Military Balance, 1987-88, p.168.

95. Ibid., p.168.

bulk is composed of some 1100 T-59 MBTs, acquired from the Chinese.<sup>96</sup> The M-48 A5 MBT, still largely used by NATO forces in the European theatre, number about 450.<sup>97</sup>

Air defence capabilities have been considerably updated with the induction of the highly versatile and successful shoulder fired Stinger missiles.<sup>98</sup> Anti-tank guns (towed) are comprised of a 6 pounder and a 17 pounder. Field guns are of Chinese origin and are of the Type 59 100mm and 130mm and a Type 56 85mm.<sup>99</sup> (See Appendix 2). Field howitzers are of the 75 mm M11P, the 105mm M101 and the Model 56P.<sup>100</sup> Lately, the 155mm M114 field howitzer has also been induced.<sup>101</sup> This has sent India scampering to update its own artillery capabilities and the balance will probably be restored once the FH-77B Bofors howitzer is inducted.

The Pakistan Air Force (PAF) has some 381 combat aircraft.<sup>102</sup> (See Appendix 3). Like the IAF its doctrine is also based on establishing air superiority and providing additional ground-attack capabilities. Once again the PAF's strategy is determined by the actions of the army and they

- 
96. Ibid., p.168.  
 97. Ibid., p.168.  
 98. Ohlson and Brzoska, op.cit. p.232.  
 99. Ibid., p.230.  
 100. The Military Balance, 1987-88, p.168.  
 101. Ibid., p.168.  
 102. Ibid., p.168.

are expected to act in coordination with it. Its most proud possession is the two squadron strong F-16 multi-role combat fighter.<sup>103</sup> In addition there are some eleven squadrons of ground attack and interceptor fighters made up of Mirage IIIs and Q-5 Fantan-As and Shenyang J-6.<sup>104</sup> The introduction of the F-16 has made the PAF take a quantum jump in terms of reach, interception and ground-attack capabilities. The most important aspect of these jets is their ability to double as nuclear weapon delivery systems. In view of the largely covert nuclear development programme of Pakistan the introduction of such aircraft poses a danger to other countries in the region.

As noted in the second chapter, Pakistani strategy probably hinges around the launch of an effective first strike (assuming that it is a conventional one), and a maximization of gains (territorial or psychological). By the time the enemy is able to react and counter-attack international intervention is assumed to bring a cessation to all hostilities. This was the strategy in its earlier wars with India and resulted in failure partly because such an attack requires the availability of sophisticated equipment, and at that time Pakistan lacked such an arsenal. In terms of both air power and armoured capabilities India enjoys considerable superiority. But with the induction of

---

103. Ibid., p.168.

104. Ibid., P.168.

of highly sophisticated weapons into the Pakistan armed forces the strategy of a punitive first strike can well be pulled-off with a high degree of success.

Force multipliers, such as electronic surveillance systems, high-resolution night vision equipment and radar jamming devices are capable of tilting the balance. Both India and Pakistan are yet to equip themselves with such devices on a scale which would prove decisive. This can probably be explained by economic factors such as cost. However, India in its modernization attempts is paying attention to "force multipliers such as mobility, night vision devices, command, control communication and intelligence and electronic warfare capability".<sup>105</sup> Pakistan too has made determined efforts to acquire airborne early warning systems (AEW) from the United States. It justified its demand as stemming from frequent airspace violations by Afghan jets.<sup>106</sup> The main problem facing Pakistan pertains to adequate ground-based detection and surveillance systems. Pakistan does have a reasonably modern ground-based air control and warning system, called the Crystal System, which has air-to-ground communications capability, digital handling capability, microwave links and land lines, and a series of command centers.<sup>107</sup> The drawbacks of this system

---

105. L.K. Sharma, "General Sundarji on Tasks Ahead", Times of India, 2 February 1986.

106. SIPRI Yearbook, 1987, p.206.

107. Anthony H. Cordesman, *op.cit.* p.29.

relate to limited vectoring of fighters on to targets flying across the Indian border and it has limited altitude capability.<sup>108</sup> The arguments so far put forward, justifying the demand for AEW platforms, however relate to the Afghan-Pakistan border, and the frequent violation of Pakistani air space by Afghan jets.

The AEW is an airborne surveillance and tracking radar platform which eliminates radar "clutter" and other drawbacks of ground based tracking systems. An AEW of the Boeing E-3A Sentry type is capable of tracking as many 600 low-flying aircraft at a time, over a radius of 470 km.<sup>109</sup> This represents a tremendous increase in detection capabilities. Such an AEW platform can direct friendly fighter/interceptors onto approaching enemy aircraft well before the latter are in visual range. Such a system acts as a force multiplier of a devastating magnitude and introduces great asymmetry in capabilities.<sup>110</sup> The Pakistan-Afghan border, is however, characterized by rugged mountains, thus giving rise to radar "shadows" (obstacles which obstruct radar tracking) and high "cluster" levels<sup>111</sup>. Since no detection platform can be absolutely leakproof, enemy jet

---

108. Ibid., p. 29.

109. Jasjit Singh, "U.S. Arms for Pakistan: AWACS and its implications", Strategic Analysis, December 1986 (vol.XI. No.9), p.1005.

110. Ibid., p.1005.

111. Anthony H. Cordesman, op.cit. p.30.



fighters can penetrate an AEW's sweep by resorting to terrain masking and exploiting the mountains to their advantage. And unless an AEW has sufficient radar reflection or "clutter" rejection to track air movements its effectiveness can be neutralized.<sup>112</sup>

Thus the use of AEW platforms by Pakistan on its Afghan borders can be ruled out since they will be rendered ineffective. This leaves only the Indo-Pak Border which is characterized by low levels of radar clutter. Optimizing their use on this section of the border would enable Pakistani to have a complete picture of the air defenses of India, its strengths and weaknesses.<sup>113</sup> The Americans have to-date delayed taking a decision in this regard owing perhaps to Indian sensitivity on this issue. If at all AEWs are inducted into the region they would have quite far-reaching implications.

Pakistan's naval capabilities are quite limited but, within the region, they are second only to that of India's. Its single naval base is at Karachi, within striking reach of Indian Air Force bombers as also Indian naval craft. In the 1971 war, India had carried out early preemptive strikes on Karachi and successfully neutralized any Pakistani naval initiatives.

---

112. Ibid., p.30.

113. Jasjit Singh, op.cit. p.1018.

The Pakistani navy possesses some six destroyers of the Gearing class and one of the Country class. (See Appendix 4). An order for two Amazon class destroyers was placed in 1985.<sup>114</sup> The destroyers are armed with American RGM-84A Harpoon Missiles (Ship-to-Ship) and British Seacat ShSHMs.<sup>115</sup> There are eleven submarines of the Augusta (2), the Daphne (4), and SX-404 Midget (5) classes.<sup>116</sup> It also possesses several Fast Attack Craft (FAC) which are capable of being an effective menace to the Indian Navy. These are all of chinese origin and belong to the Huangfen, Huchwan and Shanghai II class.<sup>117</sup> Their firepower is considerable (most of the patrol craft used by the Iranians with such deadly effect in the Straights of Hormuz during the recent Iran-Iraq war are of Chinese origin) and they are equipped with Hai Ying-2 ShSHMs.<sup>118</sup>

Naval air capabilities are limited with the presence of just one squadron with three combat aircraft armed with anti-ship Exocet missiles. ASW capabilities and search and rescue operations are carried <sup>out</sup> by six Westland Sea Kings (also armed with Exocets) and four SA-316B Alouette III helicopters.<sup>119</sup>

---

114. Thomas Ohlson and Michael Brzoska, "Arms Transfers to the Third World 1971-85" op.cit. p.232.

115. The Military Defence 1987-88, p.168.

116. Ibid., p.168.

117. Ibid., p.168.

118. Ibid., p.168.

119. Ibid., p.168.

#### IV. TROOP DEPLOYMENTS ALONG THE INDO-PAKISTAN BORDER

The Indo-Pakistani Border is approximately 2,300 km. long. Out of a total of 19 Pakistani divisions, 13 are permanently deployed along this line with India (of the other 4 divisions deployed on its Afghanistan border, two are earmarked against India).<sup>120</sup> Likewise, out of a total of 34 Indian divisions, approximately 20 are deployed on the border with Pakistan at any given time.<sup>121</sup> The border can be divided into two segments. The first is the border line along the disputed Kashmir region. The border here is not clearly demarcated and since the 1972 Simla Agreement the Line of Actual Control (LAC) has come to be accepted as the de facto boundary. But, domestic political compulsions will prevent either country from admitting so. The agreement (signed July 2, 1972 between Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Indira Gandhi) states that "the line of control resulting from the ceasefire 9 - December 17, 1971, shall be respected by both sides without prejudice to the recognized position of either side."<sup>122</sup> This segment is 1216 km long. The second segment, about 1040 Km long runs from Akhnoor in the North to the Rann of Kutch in the South. This is the

---

120. K. Subrahmanyam, "India's Security: The North and North-East Dimension", Conflict Studies 215, (London, Institute for the Study of Conflict).p.19.

121. Ibid., p.19.

122. Clause 4 (ii), see Satish Kumar ed., "Documents on India's Foreign Policy 1972" (New Delhi, MacMillan 1975), p.147.

international border and it is properly demarcated and chalked out.

In both countries the border is guarded by para military forces such as the Border Security Force (BSF) in India and the Pakistan Rangers in Pakistan. Apparently these forces are considered to be less provocative than the regular troops, especially so, since along several sections of the Border, troops are poised eye-ball to eye-ball. In the case of India the BSF functions under the Ministry of Home Affairs along the international border during peace time. Along the LAC it is under the direct control of the Army. So, one way to gauge tensions is to note when the BSF is brought under direct army control. This was done during Brasstacks thereby indicating that the government is concerned with developments on the border.<sup>123</sup>

The Indo-Pak border at some points along the international border is characterized by small buldges (into India) or enclaves or pockets (into Pakistan). These are small areas of land, usually across some river or canal, with strategic significance. For instance two such points are the Shakargarh bulge (Pakistan) which is withing striking range of Pathankot, and the Dera Baba Nanak enclave (India) which is within reach of Gujranwala. In the event of war such strategic enclaves or bulges assume

---

123. Times of India, 19 January 1987.

importance since they facilitate the launching of quick thrusts into each others territory. For instance, in the 1965 and 1971 campaigns India had launched such a strike across Dera Baba Nanak enclave (out of Gurdaspur) and towards Gujranwala with the objective of overrunning Pasrur, the wheat granary of Pakistan.<sup>124</sup>

In January 1987, Pakistan had positioned its Northern strike force of 6th Armoured and 17th Infantry Divisions near the Shakargarh bulge and its southern strike force of 1st Armoured and 37th Infantry Divisions near Sulemanki.<sup>125</sup> This signalled an offensive formation with a definite tactical advantage. The disadvantage was India's, since its cantonment areas are located some 150 to 200 kms away from the border. Many of the Indian divisions earmarked for the western sector are quartered in Central and South-Central India and mobilization time is approximately 10-14 days.<sup>126</sup> On the other hand Pakistani mobilization time is around 72 hours since their cantonments are quite close to the border.<sup>127</sup>

Pakistani troops are divided into two types of military formations: holding (defensive) troops and strike (offensive) troops.<sup>128</sup> There are two strike formations. Army

---

124. The Hindu (New Delhi), 13 May 1987.

125. Frontline, 7-20 February 1987.

126. K. Subramanyam, *op.cit.* p.19.

127. *Ibid.*, p.19.

128. The Hindu, 13 May 1987.

Reserve North consisting of I Corps with 6th Armoured and 17th Infantry Divisions, and Army Reserve South consisting of II Corps with I Armoured and 37th Infantry Divisions. The holdings troops are as follows: in the Sialkot sector (Pakistan I Corps) there is the 8th and 15th Infantry Divisions and two independent brigades, the 54th Infantry and 8th Armoured,<sup>129</sup> the Lahore sector (Pakistan IV Corps) with 10th, 11th and 37th Infantry divisions, an independent infantry division, infantry brigade and armoured brigade,<sup>130</sup> the Bahawalpur-Multan sector (Pakistan XI Corps) with the 35th and 14th infantry divisions and the 105th Infantry and 10th infantry Armoured independent brigades.<sup>131</sup>

On the Indian side, the deployments are as follows:<sup>132</sup> Srinagar sector (XV Corps) consists of 3 and 28 Divisions at Leh and Kargil, 19 Division at Baramullah and 25 Division covering Poonch, Meandhar and Rajouri Sectors, Siachen is under 102(I) Brigade. Nagrota sector (XVI Corps) consists of 10 Division at Akhnoor, 39 Division at Yol and 26 Division at Jammu. Jullundur sector (XI Corps) has 7 Division of Ferozepur and 15 Division at Amritsar. Bhatinda sector (X Corps) comprises 16 Division at Gobindpur, 24 at Bikaner and

---

129. Ibid.

130. Ravi Rikhye, "The War that never was: The Story of India's Strategic failures" (New Delhi, Chanakya Publications, 1988) p.112.

131. The Hindu, 13 May 1987.

132. Ravi Rikhye, op.cit. pp.95-122.

and 18 at Kota. Jodhpur sector (XII corps) consists of 11 Division and 12 Division.

The balance then, is thirty-four divisions to India and twenty to Pakistan. In the event of a limited war, between one to two weeks, rough parity in force level exists. Past instances of Indo-Pak wars do reveal that conflicts have generally been of a limited nature. In fact Pakistani strategy apparently revolves around and plans for a limited war, in which case the existing parity makes a difference without actually reflecting the advantage which India otherwise enjoys. Only in the case of a war of attrition would India be able to bring its overall superiority into effect.

## CHAPTER - IV

### OPERATION BRASSTACKS, SAF-E-SHIKAN AND FLYING HORSE

Towards the winter months of each year, India and Pakistan conduct military exercises. In addition to its annual exercises, India also conducts Corps-level exercises every three years. Sometimes these Corps-level exercises involve more than one corps and therefore tend to be on a larger scale than is usually the case.<sup>1</sup> Staging such military exercises is normally a routine affair and almost all armed forces of the world conduct them. The purpose being to test out new strategies and to keep troops in battle ready condition!

In addition to its tri-annual multi-corps level exercises, India also conducts several exercises on a smaller scale. Such exercises maybe at the division, brigade or even platoon level. Sometimes a division may conduct several such independent exercises in a year. And the annual exercises are staged by one or more divisions within a corps. The point is, such military exercises are normally regarded as routine affairs. The increasing modernization of the armed forces has meant that newer and better quality weapon systems are continuously being inducted. And since modernization is an ongoing process,

---

1. Information obtained in interview with a serving officer of the Indian Army.



military exercises are continuously being held so that the armed forces are familiar with the weapons they use and the tactics being employed. This is all the more important, as developments in weapons technology are taking place at a bewildering pace thus making the rate of obsolescence very high.

India has been conducting its triannual exercises for well over two decades now. The first such exercise was conducted sometime in 1966 and ever since then they have been a regular feature. The stepped up pace of modernization policies during the past one decade in the armed forces has seen a steady increase in the size, scale and duration of these exercises. Thus Operation Digvijay (1983)<sup>2</sup> was larger than its predecessor and by extension Operation Brasstacks larger than Digvijay. But it needs to be acknowledged that Brasstacks was unusually large in scale and duration.

[ In October 1986, India launched its most ambitious military exercise to date, code named Operation Brasstacks.<sup>3</sup> This multi-corps level exercise (actually one and half corps with assorted independent Brigades) involved close to

---

2. Significantly, General Sundarji, as the <sup>then</sup> Chief of Western Command, was in charge of Operation Digvijay. See India Today, 15 May 1988. p.81.

3. India Today, 15 February 1987. p.26.

200,000 men with a reported cost of between Rs.200 to Rs.400 crores.<sup>4</sup> The entire Western Air Command was activated and limited amphibious exercises were also scheduled to take place in the Saurashtra region.<sup>5</sup> So in effect it was more or less an inter-services exercise, but with a dominant army role.

Designed to test out India's newly raised Mechanized and RAPID (Reorganized Army Plains Infantry Divisions) regiments, Brasstacks was located south of the Indira Gandhi Canal in the Jaisalmer-Bikaner region of Rajasthan<sup>6</sup>. The location of the exercise was just over 60 Kms from the Pakistan border. The brain child of the then Chief of Army Staff, General K. Sunderji, it was designed to test out new logistical and tactical doctrines revolving around better mobility and fire power.

Mechanized Infantry forces are considered to be crucial in modern war tactics. Armoured Personnel Carriers (APCs) and Mechanized Infantry Combat Vehicles (MICVs) are the main launching pads for such tactics. They are employed in conditions where the movement of tanks is impeded or where infantry soliders are under attack from light mortar and small-arms fire. They are essentially an offensive-oriented strategy, since "an offensive places greater demands on

---

4. The Telegraph (Calcutta), 8 February 1987.

5. India Today, 15 February 1987. p.26.

6. Ibid., p.27.

mechanized infantry support for enhancing the mobility of tank spearheads, especially when the tempo is stalled by obstacles or terrain".<sup>7</sup>

In addition to the Mechanized Infantry regiments Brasstacks was concerned with conducting the test trials of the RAPID (Reorganized Army Plains Infantry Divisions) Divisions. The RAPID and Mechanized Infantry divisions are a corollary of each other and in fact RAPID emerged out of the recent emphasis given to Mechanized forces in the tactical and strategic doctrines of the Army. The RAPID also emerged out of the shortcomings of plains infantry. These shortcomings maybe identified as lack of mobility, flexibility and fire power, and in their "present configuration they were considered incapable of functioning in support of Mechanized forces in fast-moving fluid operations".<sup>8</sup> An infantry division is organized into three infantry brigades, an artillery brigade and other brigades providing logistical back-up. The RAPID however is composed of two infantry brigades, one mechanized Brigade, two Armoured regiments (either T-72 or T-54/55 tanks) and a Mechanized Infantry Battalion (BMP-1 and BMP-2 armoured personnel carriers). Thus, even though a RAPID has less overall infantry combat power in comparison to a standard

- 
7. Lt. Gen. Eric A. Vas, "The Changing Rythm of War: The evolution of Mechanized Infantry". Indian Defence Review, January 1989, p.88.
  8. Lt. Gen. Mathew Thomas, "The RAPID: An Appraisal of India's new-look Infantry Division for Warfare in the Plains". Indian Defence Review, January 1989, p.92.

infantry division it has enhanced target acquisition and surveillance capability, greater anti-tank potential and enhanced mobility<sup>9</sup>.

The strategic orientations of both the RAPID and Mechanized regiments seems to throw light on India's new military doctrine. The emphasis from a counter-offensive strategy seems to be shifting and giving way to certain offensive tactics. Though still limited in nature and by no means a generally applicable rule, such a strategy seems to fit in with the government's regional policy. In the previous chapter we had taken a general run-down of India's military might. Several of the newly acquired weapon systems (for instance the MIG-27 and 29s, the Kresta Class Cruisers, etc.) enhanced the offensive capability of the armed forces. That India intends to play a more active role and exercise its position as the regional power is obvious. But New Delhi seems to be backing its intentions by building the requisite capability. The essence and purpose of exercise Brasstacks can be better understood when studied against such a background.

Elaborate in detail, Operation Brasstacks was divided into four phases spread over nearly five months.<sup>10</sup> The first two phases were "played out" in the operation rooms of the

---

9. Ibid., p.95.

10. The Telegraph, 8 February 1987.

cantonment area of Delhi, and were restricted to paper.<sup>11</sup> Game theories and the use of computer aided models was the dominant theme. These two phases dealt largely with working out the logistics of men and materials that would be needed, along with optimum deployment profiles.<sup>12</sup> In fact the deployment of troops did not get underway till early November. Phase three, which began sometime in December, was a "limited offensive" following imaginary set backs in the wake of an "enemy" attack.<sup>13</sup> The final phase, or rather the "shooting phase" was scheduled to begin in February. This was the most important part of Brasstacks and envisaged an all out "counter offensive". The phase four plan involved an imaginary thrust into Pakistan with the objective of capturing the Sindh city of Hyderabad<sup>14</sup>. The troops were to advance in a broad-arrow head formation so that the vanguard could be protected from being outflanked. But since there were insufficient troops to carry out such a massive "offensive", the plans envisaged a diversionary amphibious "attack" on the Pakistan Coast near Karachi. But in reality such an "attack" was to be played out in the Saurashtra region.<sup>15</sup>

---

11. Ibid., 8 February 1987.

12. Ibid., 8 February 1987.

13. Ibid., 8 February 1987.

14. The Hindustan Times (New Delhi), 3 February 1987.

15. India Today, 15 February 1987.

[

In keeping with convention, the Indian Director General of Military Operations (DGMO) had apparently informed his Pakistani counterpart, in early November, about the nature, duration, size and location of Operation Brasstacks.<sup>16</sup> Pakistan, probably alarmed at the size of the troops being massed on its borders, brought up the matter during the SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) Summit in Bangalore in November, 1986. In fact the summit opened amidst reports that Indian troops were massing on Pakistan's borders.<sup>17</sup> Pakistan Prime Minister Mohammed Khan Junejo first raised the issue in his meeting with India's External Affairs Minister N.D. Tiwari.<sup>18</sup> The SAARC Summit, having failed to define clearly what constitutes terrorist activities<sup>19</sup>, came up with the Bangalore Declaration. The Declaration was significant for its reiteration to promote peace, stability and amity in the region through strict

- 
16. Ibid., 15 February 1987. p.26. However this contention is disputed by Lt. Gen Jagjit Singh Arora (Retd.), Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha). Lt. Gen. Arora states that, while being briefed on the border issue as part of the opposition, the Minister of State for Defense, Shri Arun Singh, had said that there was no need to inform Pakistan since exercise Brasstacks was well over 60 Kms from the border with Pakistan. Once Pakistan began to voice its concerns, India did inform them. (interview with Lt.Gen. Arora, New Delhi, 15 May 1989).
17. Far Eastern Economic Review, 27 November 1986. p.30.
18. Frontline, 7-21 February 1987. p.7.
19. India Today, 15 December 1986. p.127.

adherence to the principles laid down in the United Nations Charter.<sup>20</sup>

During the Summit bi-lateral talks (SAARC excludes discussion of bilateral issues in its forum) were being held between Junejo and Rajiv Gandhi. Junejo's speech at the inaugural session came up with the suggestion that a formal convention should be drawn up making it obligatory for member states to inform each other of any significant troop movements<sup>21</sup>. He went on to add that observers should be allowed to watch all major exercises. These remarks were an obvious reference to Indian troop movements. Apparently in their private meetings Prime Minister Gandhi took exception to Junejo's comments, but however linked the troop movements to the Indian Army's exercises.<sup>22</sup>

In fact, Pakistan seemed convinced by the Indian explanations since General Zia himself ruled out any immediate threat of an attack on the eastern border (by India).<sup>23</sup>

---

20. Foreign Affairs Record, External Publicity Division, Ministry of External Affairs (Government of India), 16 November, 1986 (vol.xxxii, no.11). p.338.

21. Far Eastern Economic Review, 27 November 1987, p.30.

22. Ibid., p.30.

23. General Zia made this statement while address<sup>e</sup>ing the National Assembly Members from Baluchistan and North-West Frontier Provinces on December 7, 1986. See Frontline, 7-20 February 1987, p.9.

Meanwhile, Pakistan too was conducting its own military manoeuvres, Saf-e-Shikan and Flying Horse. These exercises had begun in October and were scheduled to end by November and Mid-December respectively. The exercises were centered around the two strike corps of the Pakistani Army. Saf-e-Shikan was headed by the 1st Armoured and 37th Infantry Divisions of Army Reserve South. It was located in the Bahawalpur-Marot sector.<sup>24</sup> The 6th Armoured and 17th Infantry Divisions of Army Reserve North were involved in the exercise Flying Horse which was scheduled to take place further North in the Jhelum-Chenab corridor.<sup>25</sup> The Pakistani Air Force was also conducting its own exercises, code named Highmark.<sup>26</sup>

Despite being assured that the massing of troops was in relation to routine military exercises, Pakistan continued to express concern over the "unprecedented" concentration of Indian troops on its borders.<sup>27</sup> According to one Indian newspaper, reports in the Pakistani press greatly exaggerated the India military exercise and the threat posed by it to Pakistani security.<sup>28</sup> In fact Flying Horse was

---

24. Frontline, 7-20 February 1987. p.9.

25. Ibid., p9.

26. India Today, 15 February 1987.

27. The Muslim, quoted in Public Opinion Trends (POT) Analysis and News Service (New Delhi). Pakistan 1987, Part 1, p.295.

28. The Hindustan Times, 3 February 1987.



# Pak Troops Remain in Combat Position even after the End of Their Exercises



SOURCE: India Today, 15 February 1987

apparently accompanied by a carefully orchestrated campaign in Pakistan about the security threat posed by India.<sup>29</sup>

On 17th November 1986, the Pakistani DGMO sought and received assurances from his Indian counterpart about Brasstacks.<sup>30</sup> He was informed by the Indian DGMO that they were routine Multi-corps level exercises and were in keeping with India's triannual exercises, which invariably tend to be on a much large scale.<sup>31</sup> On the face of it no covert purpose as such was evident in the nature of exercise Brasstacks. It was, for all practical purposes, just a military exercise but on a scale not attempted before.

Towards the end of December 1986, Indian intelligence picked up some disquieting signals.<sup>32</sup> (See Map 1). The two Pakistani Military exercises, Saf-e-Shikan and Flying Horse were not proceeding as scheduled. The troops belonging to the 1st Armoured and 37th Infantry Divisions, which headed Saf-e-Shikan, continued to remain in position near Rahimyar Khan even after the conclusion of their manoeuvres. Initially, Indian intelligence concluded that they were probably monitoring Brasstacks. Adoption of such defensive postures while monitoring the military exercises of another country are normal practise. But Flying Horse, scheduled to

---

29. The Telegraph, 8 February 1987.

30. India Today, 28 February 1987.

31. Ibid., 15 February 1987.

32. India Today, 15 February 1987.

be held in the Jhelum-Chenab corridor, shifted venue to the Ravi-Chenab corridor so that by the end of their exercises Pakistan's Northern strike corps were dangerously close to the Indian Border near the Shakargarh bulge.<sup>33</sup> The change in location was not informed to the Indian DGMO. But information was conveyed that Pakistan had decided to extend the exercises because of India's Brasstacks.<sup>34</sup> Although it is not uncommon to extend the duration of an exercise, the excuse given in this instance did seem extraordinary. Meanwhile, the PAF's exercise Highmark came to an end, but satellite bases were kept operational with detachments flying regular sorties. Still more surprising was that Pakistani forces in the forward areas were issued extra ammunition, all new postings and transfers suspended and service leaves were cancelled.<sup>35</sup> And Para-military forces such as the Mujahids and the Janbaaz were activated. Indian intelligence sources had apparently gathered all this information by the 15th of January 1987.<sup>36</sup>

But, between December 1986 and January 1987, India too acted in a manner which could have only increased existing suspicions on the other side. The most important Indian

---

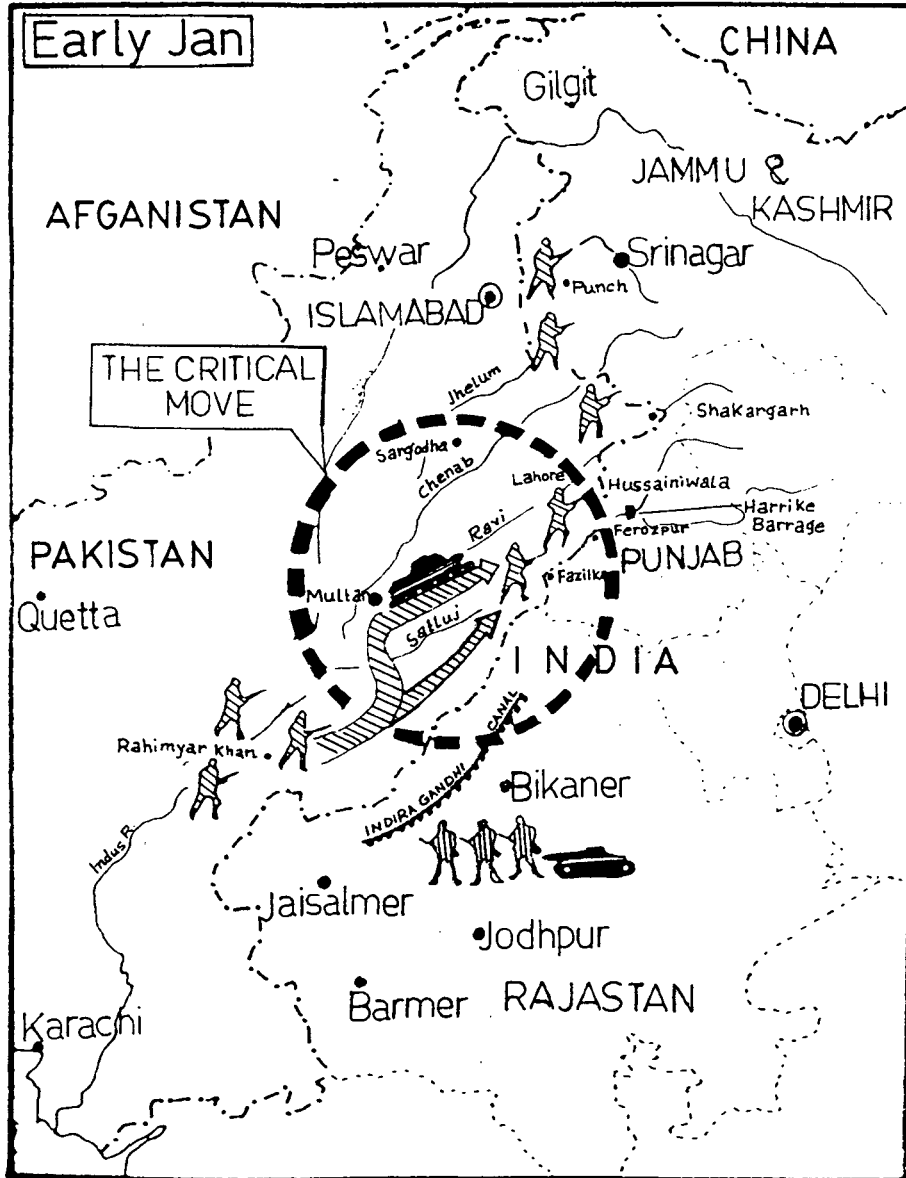
33. Times of India (New Delhi), 19 January 1987.

34. India Today, 15 February 1987.

35. India, Lok Sabha Debates Series 8, vol.xxv, no.151. Minister of State for External Affairs, Eduardo Faleiro in reply to a oral question on the border situation, 13 March 1987.

36. India Today, 15 February 1987.

# Pakistan Southern Reserves Move Opposite Abohar and Fazilka after Crossing Sutlej



SOURCE : India Today, 15 February 1987

action in this region concerned the deployment of 6 Mountain Division from out of Bareilly (its peace station) to the sensitive Jammu sector.<sup>37</sup> And contrary to assurances given by India, the size of Brasstacks was not curtailed,<sup>38</sup> and further, information as to the nature and duration of Brasstacks was supposed to have been deliberately kept vague.<sup>39</sup>

↳ What ultimately brought matters to a head was the extremely provocative move (from the Indian Viewpoint) undertaken by Pakistan's Army Reserve South sometime in early January, 1987. The 1st Armoured and 37th Infantry Divisions left Rahimyar Khan, crossed the Lodhran bridge across the Sutlej, near Bahawalpur and headed in the direction of Multan, their peace time station.<sup>40</sup> (See Map 2). But instead of proceeding to Multan, they bypassed it and took up position near the Sulemanki Headworks, just 16 kms from India's border near Fazilka.<sup>41</sup> This manoeuvre put the Sutlej river behind them and opened up the Punjab plains to a quick thrust. There were also reports that some elements of Pakistan's XI Corps from Peshawar and XII Corps from

---

37. India Today, 28 February 1987.

38. The Muslim, quoted in Public Opinion Trends, Pakistan 1987 Part I, p.296.

39. India Today, 28 February 1987.

40. Ibid., February 1987. See also The Hindustan Times, 24 January 1987.

41. Ibid., 15 February 1987.

Quetta had been grouped with the two strike formations.<sup>42</sup>

Such an offensive manoeuvre put Pakistan in a tactically advantageous position. Its Northern strike Corps were poised in the strategic Shakargarh Bulge, within striking range of India's vital Jammu-Pathankot-Gurdaspur area. Its Southern Strike Corps were barely 15 Km. away from Fazilka-Abohar. The two strike formations were thus offensively poised near the strategic border state of Punjab. What heightened Indian concerns was that Indian Punjab was in a state of flux since separatist elements were waging a grim battle against the state's para-military forces. The Pakistani moves thus synchronized with the Sikh extremists' plan to whip up pro-"Khalistan" (the separate state they were demanding) sentiments at a Sarbhat Khalsa (Convention of the Sikh community) to be convened on January 26, India's Republic Day.<sup>43</sup> The impression thus gained by New Delhi was that Pakistan intended to fish in India's troubled waters. And an Indian Defence official stated that with all Indian troops and aircraft not involved with Brasstacks still at their peace time locations, a definite tactical advantage rested with the two Pakistani strike formations.<sup>44</sup>

---

42. Times of India, 19 January 1987.

43. Frontline, 7-20 February 1987. p.6.

44. The Telegraph, 8 February, 1987.

But, surprisingly, till January 15, when the three service chiefs briefed the Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs (CCPA) and advised manning of forward defences, no Indian reaction took place.<sup>45</sup> This, despite the fact that Indian intelligence had been following all Pakistani moves carefully. It was only after the movement of Army Reserve South was confirmed that Indian reactions got triggered-off. The Indian move followed a carefully orchestrated campaign in the newspapers of Pakistani massing of troops in the Punjab sector. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi briefed opposition leaders on the developments on the border.<sup>46</sup> And finally on January 23, following an urgent meeting of the cabinet committee on Political Affairs, a "red-alert" (the highest state of alert, short of actual war) was sounded and the army was directed to man its forward defences.

#### Domestic Reactions:

In fact till January 19, the day newspapers carried screaming headlines about the massing of troops on the border, the people in both countries were not aware of the developments taking place on the border. Moreover details regarding Operation Brasstacks were vague and except for the fact that it was on a large scale not much was known about it. Moreover till then Indo-Pak relations had appeared to be improving.

---

45. India Today, 15 February 1987.

46. Patriot (New Delhi), 18 January 1987.

Hence the incidents in the third week of January, 1987 could not have come at a more inopportune time. That they did, reveals the hair-trigger nature of Indo-Pakistan relations. Only in November 1986 at the SAARC Summit in Bangalore leaders of the two countries had met and declared their intention to improve relations. In early January the Indian Home Secretary C.G. Somaiah had visited Pakistan to confer with his Pakistani counterpart S.K. Mahmood, Pakistan's Interior Secretary<sup>47</sup>. Soon after, the resumption of foreign-Secretary level talks, after more than a year, took place. Further Pakistan had offered to issue a joint declaration with India, denouncing the Sikh secessionist demand for Khalistan.<sup>48</sup>

The days from January 19, 1987, when Indian news reports first announced the concentration of Pakistani troops on the Border, to January 27, when it was announced that Secretary level talks would be held to deescalate the tensions, were filled with confusion (and misleading statements). Operation Brasstacks, till then a very low profile event was suddenly catapulted onto center stage. At a press conference on January 21, Prime Minister Gandhi expressed "tremendous concern" over the massing of troops along the border and said that the government was trying to ascertain from Islamabad and "others" as to why these troops had not been

---

47. Pakistan Times (Islamabad), 4 January 1987.

48. Times of India, 16 January 1987.



pulled back at the conclusion of their exercises.<sup>49</sup>

Defending the size and scale of Brasstacks the Prime Minister clarified that no threat was posed to Pakistan by the exercise.<sup>50</sup> But basically the Indian contention was that even after being informed of the timing, location and level of troops to be deployed, Pakistan chose to adopt an offensive tactical position. In the guise of strengthening its defences, in view of Brasstacks, "it had adopted a force disposition which could have only been taken to mean a prelude to a probable incursion into the sensitive Jammu and Punjab sectors."<sup>51</sup>

Following an urgent meeting of the CCPA, the Indian Army was directed to man its forward positions and the Air Force was put on maximum alert.<sup>52</sup> The BSF along the international border was put under Army control with the Navy being directed to keep its "eyes and ears open"<sup>53</sup> Troops were also airlifted and rushed to Punjab. Replying to an oral question in the Lok Sabha, Minister of State for External Affairs, Eduardo Faleiro, stated that India had exercised maximum restraint. He stated that the threat

---

49. Times of India, 19 January 1987.

50. This assurance was given by Gandhi during the SAARC Summit. See Frontline, 7-21 February 1987, p.7.

51. Annual Report 1986-87, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, p.2.

52. Times of India, 21 January 1987.

53. The Hindustan Times, 24 January 1987.

posed by the Pakistani moves "could no longer be ignored and left us with no other alternative but (to) institute essential defensive measures involving preventive deployment of the army".<sup>54</sup>

Simultaneous with the decision to place the armed forces on maximum alert, India also initiated diplomatic moves. On January 23, Pakistani ambassador in India, Humayun Khan, was summoned to the Foreign Office and told in no certain terms that if Pakistan did not move its troops to their pre-October positions then India would be forced to move its troops to the border.<sup>55</sup> The Minister for External Affairs N.D. Tiwari, conferred with the Soviet Ambassador Nikolai Rykov while Minister of State for Defence Arun Singh informed the American ambassador John Gunter-Dean of the Pakistani troop movements.<sup>56</sup>

In Pakistan, the reactions were mostly based on allegations made in India. One of the first official statements came from the Chief Armed Forces Spokesman, Brigadier Siddiq Salik and was totally misleading. Rejecting the Press Trust of India report that Pakistani troops were offensively located along the Indian border he said, "This is all false".<sup>57</sup> The spokesman went on to

---

54. India, Lok Sabha Debates Series 8, vol.XXV, no.151, 13 March 1987, p.7.

55. India Today, 15 February 1987.

56. The Hindustan Times, 24 January 1987.

57. The Dawn, 20 January 1987.

reiterate charges, first made in November, that India was massing troops along the border. On 22nd January, a Foreign Office spokesman in Islamabad (without denying Indian charges) said that India's professed concern at Pakistan troop build-up along the border were unwarranted and were a diversionary ploy to draw attention away from India's multi-corps exercises in Rajasthan. The Pakistani forces were, according to him, conducting their normal winter exercises and hence there were no grounds for Indian concerns. Thus, Pakistan continued to deny Indian charges and instead drew attention to Operation Brasstacks and the presence of some 200,000 Indian troops across the Sind Border.<sup>58</sup> Even as late as January 25, the Pakistan Foreign Office continued to deny that its troops had positioned themselves opposite the Abohar-Fazilka sectors. Instead attention was sought to be focused on India's exercises.<sup>59</sup> One newspaper even went so far as to state that an exercise the size of Brasstacks could not have been a mere exercise and speculated that it probably had deeper ramifications which remain unexplained.<sup>60</sup>

The Pakistani Prime Minister Mohammed Khan Junejo issued a statement from Peshawar that his country was committed to peace in the region and believed in the

---

58. The Dawn, 22 January 1987.

59. The Muslim, 25 January 1987.

60. The Dawn, 25 January 1987.

principles of peaceful coexistence.<sup>61</sup> Later, on his return to Islamabad, he convened a meeting of the Defense Committee of the Cabinet where a decision was taken to enter into immediate negotiations with India in order to deescalate tensions. Meanwhile, the Pakistani Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Zain Noorani, summoned the Indian ambassador S.K. Singh making a proposal to enter into immediate talks.<sup>62</sup> Going a step further, the Pakistani ambassador at the United Nations, was directed to meet representatives of other countries and explain the Pakistani position. The most surprising aspect of the entire episode was the absence of General Zia-ul-Haq from the country. From Kuwait, where he was attending the Islamic Summit, Zia raised the issue by stating that "regrettably, an unprecedented concentration of Indian troops very close to our borders and several other military measures adopted recently by India have suddenly injected elements of tension and grave misunderstanding in bilateral relations".<sup>63</sup> The Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, apparently at the behest of General Zia, had a telephonic conversation with Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. Through Mubarak the Prime Minister conveyed his assurance to Zia that India did not want an

---

61. The Muslim, 25 January 1987.

62. Ibid.

63. Frontline, 7-20 February 1987, p.10.

escalation and would like Pakistan not to attempt any adventure.<sup>64</sup>

### The New Deployment Profile

The fact is that the movement of the two Pakistani strike formations, one located near the Shakargarh Bulge and the other near the Sulemanki Headworks, brought about only a temporary disadvantage in India's tactical position. These troops were already in their "launch pads", i.e., strategic points from where to launch a strike. Whereas India had yet to put its forces on a red-alert.<sup>65</sup> On January 23, the Indian Army was directed to occupy its forward defences, a manoeuvre which was more or less completed by January 27th, by which time India had gained the upper hand in the crucial sectors of Jammu and Punjab.<sup>66</sup>

As noted earlier, Pakistan had shifted its Northern strike corps of 6 Armoured and 17th Infantry Divisions near the Shakargarh Bulge and its Southern strike Corps of 1st Armoured and 37th Infantry Divisions near the Sulemanki headworks. The 16 Infantry Division (Kharlan) and 14th Infantry Division (Okara) were further added to these two, respectively.<sup>67</sup> As such, a formidable array of 19 Divisions

---

64. Ibid., p.10.

65. The Times of India, 19 January, 1987.

66. The Hindu, 27 January 1987.

67. The Hindu, 13 May, 1987.

had apparently taken up position on the Pakistan side from the Kashmir sector in the north to the Sindh sector in the south-west (ironically this left less than two division on Pakistan's Afghan borders to face the "Russian threat", under the guise of which the Pakistani rulers had secured vast quantities of arms.)<sup>68</sup>

To neutralize the position of the Pakistani Northern strike corps, India brought in the 29 Division into the crucial Jammu-Pathankot area.<sup>69</sup> This was in addition to 6 Mountain Division which was brought in during December and the other existing formations at Jammu, Yol, Akhnoor and Naoshera. Pakistan's Southern strike corps were likewise countered by the reinforcement of the Ferozpur sector with 23 Division from Ranchi and 57 Division from the North-East. 54 Division from Secunderabad was on its way. Additionally, the Pakistan General Staff must have taken note of the eight Divisions which were part of Operation Brasstacks and which could have fanned out in different directions. These formations were capable of, in the event of war, cutting all rail and road communications between Sind and Punjab.<sup>70</sup> However, exercise Brasstacks was altered only marginally with one division being entrusted with guarding the Rajasthan border.

---

68. Frontline, 7-20 February 1987.

69. Ravi Rikhye, The War that never was: The Story of India's Strategic failures" (New Delhi, Chanakya Publications, 1988). p.149.

70. The Hindu, 27 January 1987.

Thus tactically, the Pakistan position was rendered strategically suicidal. Both its strike formations, in the event of carrying out an offensive, were in danger of having their rear cut-off by an Indian counter-offensive.<sup>71</sup>

Crisis Management:

The Pakistani strike corps were positioned long before India even took the decision to place its armed forces on a red-alert. So, as such the choice open to India was to enter into negotiations with Pakistan from a militarily weak position, or else to forward deploy its forces and then negotiate from a position of strength. In the event it chose the latter.<sup>72</sup> On January 23 came the news that India had placed its forces on a "red alert". Simultaneously it took the initiative to defuse tensions by offering to hold official level talks.<sup>73</sup> What mattered was that both countries kept their diplomatic channels and expressed a willingness to sit and thrash out the issues. In the final analysis this is what prevented things from getting out of hand. And over the years, especially since the Simla Talks of 1972, diplomatic channels between the two countries have come to acquire a resilience of their own.

---

71. The Hindu, 27 May 1987.

72. Frontline, 7-20 May 1987. p.10.

73. Annual Report, 1986-87, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, p.2.

[ Indo-Pak relations are often viewed by decision-makers in both countries as a zero-sum game. The result is that neither is willing to make any concessions. Or worse, even appear to make concessions, since this will be taken as a gain by the opposing side. The entire process of deescalation was marked by this characteristic and, neither India nor Pakistan wished to appear as backing down. Hence statements expressing a desire to sit and talk things over were invariably mixed with rhetorics well laced with patriotic fervour.

The day after the Indian decision to place its troops on the "red alert", Pakistan indicated its willingness to open talks at any level.<sup>74</sup> On the 24th of January the two Prime Ministers, Junejo and Gandhi, had a telephonic conversation. Observers at the time attributed this conversation as being decisive in deescalating the tension.<sup>75</sup> The next day, Indian Ambassador S.K. Singh had an extraordinary meeting with Junejo in Parliament House (Islamabad). Two days later (i.e. 27 January), by which time the Indian troops had been forward deployed, it was announced that Pakistan's foreign secretary Abdus Sattar was to lead a five Member delegation to New Delhi for talks on the border crisis.<sup>76</sup>

---

74. The Dawn, quoted in Public Opinion Trends, Pakistan, Part I, 1987, p.298.

75. The Hindu, 28 January, 1987.

76. The Hindu, 27 January, 1987.



International reactions to the events on the Indo-Pak border were generally subdued. Despite having sounded out the Soviet and American ambassadors in New Delhi, their lack of response must have come as a disappointment to India. Throughout the crisis, Tass and Izvestia, the Soviet Union's official barometers maintained a neutral stand.<sup>77</sup> The surprise, from India's point of view, was the Chinese reaction. Official Chinese media gave equal space to both countries point of view without appearing to take a stand. Moreover, the Chinese Ambassador in New Delhi, Li Lianqing, met the Indian Minister of State for External Affairs, presumably to make known that his country would like to see the crisis resolved peacefully.<sup>78</sup> A significant departure from past Chinese practises in their relations with India.

[ The deescalation talks opened in New Delhi on 31 January. The Indian side was led by acting Foreign Secretary Alfred Gonsalves and Pakistan by Abdus Sattar. The talks immediately ran into difficulties with both sides disagreeing on the scope of the talks. The Pakistani attempt was to negotiate procedures for preventing any future misunderstandings rising out of military manoeuvres and the Indian insistence was on keeping the current talks confined strictly to a deescalation of the current military confrontation.<sup>79</sup> The Pakistani strategy thus seems to have

---

77. India Today, 15 February 1987.

78. The Hindu, 29 January 1987.

79. Far Eastern Economic Review, 12 February, p.17.

been to ensure a check on any future military manoeuvres by India by, among others, limiting their size. Because throughout the crisis, Pakistan had been expressing concern at the size of Brasstacks. The Indian objective was to firstly focus attention on Pakistani troop movements north of Fazilka and secondly to ensure withdrawal of the two armies back to their peace stations.<sup>80</sup> The Pakistani attempts to include Brasstacks in the talks and wrangle an assurance that its size be cut down were also rejected by India.<sup>81</sup>

From the talks it became clearly evident that both countries had prepared for a worst-case scenario. Pakistan defended its actions by saying that contrary to assurances the size of Brasstacks was not curtailed. The danger posed to its civil population led to the issuing of 1st line and a reserve 15-day ammunition. Further, it stated that the inclusion of an amphibious exercise was not made known to it.<sup>82</sup> But by far, the most convincing reason given was the movement of 6 Mountain Division into the Jammu sector. Apparently this move coupled with the already existing Pakistani apprehensions over Brasstacks led to their actions.

The talks, initially scheduled for two days, eventually lasted for five days. At the talks, Sattar made it clear

---

80. The Hindu, 1 February 1987.

81. The Hindu, 5 February 1987.

82. India Today, 28 February 1987.

that there was no way Pakistan would withdraw its forces unless India scaled down the size of Brasstacks. The Pakistani insistence on scaling down Brasstacks seems to indicate that they were probably proceeding on the assumption that it was not purely a military exercise. An apparent trade-off between Sind (Brasstacks was located in Rajasthan across the Sind Border) and Punjab (Pakistani strike corps were poised for an offensive close to India's Punjab Borders) appeared to be the Pakistani line of thinking.<sup>83</sup>

The talks appeared to be going around in a vicious cycle. If India went ahead with Brasstacks on the scale Pakistan objected to, then it would continue to retain its forces on the border. In the event of which India would be obliged to match forces. And, so back to square one.

Fortunately, on day five, a limited agreement was arrived at.<sup>84</sup> Neither side was prepared to make any major concession that might create an impression of a climb-down. A sector by sector study of the ground positions was made in an attempt to identify the nature and extent of deployments in the various sectors. Following this a mutually acceptable package of procedures for a withdrawal, within

---

83. The Hindu, 3 February 1987.

84. A text of the February 4 Agreement between India and Pakistan was tabled in the Lok Sabha, in response to a written question. See India, Lok Sabha Debates Series 8, vol. XXIV, No.4) 27 February 1987, p.142. See also appendix V.



SOURCE : The Telegraph, 8 February 1987

the framework of a wide agreement on deescalation, were worked out.<sup>85</sup> (See Map 3)

The withdrawal of forces, to be monitored by the DGMOs of India and Pakistan, was to proceed on a sector by sector basis starting from Shakargarh. One significant point was a no-attack assurance and an undertaking that both sides would avoid provocative actions along the border.<sup>86</sup> (See also Map 3 and Appendix 5). Pakistan's northern strike corps of 6 Armoured Division and 17th Infantry Division were to withdraw from Shakargarh in exchange for India's 6 Mountain Division from Jammu.<sup>87</sup> This withdrawal was to be completed within 15 days. All mine-laying was to be terminated and existing ones were to be lifted or de-activated. Both the Pakistan Air Force and the Indian Air Force were to remain in contact so that misunderstanding of aircraft movement would not take place. Moreover all satellite bases were to be deactivated and the rival navies were to revert to a lower status of operational readiness. But the most important aspect of the agreement was the exclusion of Operation Brasstacks from its purview. But for this, India had to concede and allow the Pakistanis to maintain their southern strike corps of 1 Armoured and 37 Infantry Division, just 15 km from India's border near Fazilka.

---

85. The Hindu, 4 February, 1987.

86. Text of Agreement signed between Abdus Sattar, Foreign Secretary of Pakistan and Alfred Gonsalves, Secretary in the Indian Ministry of External Affairs on 4 February 1987, in New Delhi.

87. Ibid.

The February 4 agreement also provided for a second round of talks. An Indian delegation was to visit Pakistan in early March and discuss the pull out of troops from the other sectors. But a glaring omission from the agreement was the failure to identify who moved whose troops first.

By April, a major part of the 2nd phase of troops pull out from Punjab, Rajasthan and the Rann of Kutch regions was over. This was in pursuance of the agreement reached during the 2nd Round of the Secretary-level talks held in Islamabad.<sup>88</sup> Between 40 to 50,000 troops were involved in the sectors of Chor to Mandi Sadiqganj in Pakistan Punjab and from Barmer to Hindumalkot in Rajasthan.

---

88. The Times of India, 8 April 1987.

CHAPTER - VAN APPRAISAL OF BRASSTACKS

The crisis which erupted in the wake of Operation Brasstacks is symptomatic of the hair-trigger nature of Indo-Pakistan relations. That the crisis took place in a month which was earlier marked by the resumption of Secretary-level talks only strengthens this conclusion. And reflects on the mutual suspicion and distrust the two nations hold each other in. If at all it was the intention of either country to score a diplomatic coup, this resort to, what was at that time termed "exercise manoeuvring", signalled a dangerous exercise in brinkmanship.

To get a clearer understanding of the events surrounding Brasstacks, let us proceed by examining three factors. An analysis of these three factors will not only put the events of January 1987 in a clearer perspective, but may also <sup>throw</sup> some light on the motives for the actions of the respective sides. The three factors can be broadly clubbed under (a) domestic compulsions, (b) external compulsions, and (c) an outright military objective.

Firstly, the domestic compulsions. An examination of the state of political conditions in both the countries will throw some light in understanding the events surrounding Brasstacks. In the past, regimes in both countries had not

hesitated in spilling vitriolic against each other, if only to divert people's attention away from pressing domestic problems. As we shall discuss below, both the Rajiv and Zia governments had much to gain by creating such a situation.

In Pakistan, General Zia found his authority being steadily eroded by his hand-picked Prime Minister Mohammed Khan Junejo. Junejo was emerging as an independent power center and had belied all predictions that he would be just a front-man for Zia. In 1985, General Zia had initiated a democratization process after making certain amendments to the 1973 constitution and tailoring it to fit his needs. The holding of elections and the subsequent restoration of the Federal Legislature and Provincial Assemblies indicated a process of civilianization of the government apparatus.<sup>1</sup> Zia, who as President also continued to remain the Chief of Army Staff, was the real power behind the throne. But then the formation of a civilian government created a diffused political environment and a certain flexibility in alignments.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, Junejo's government was associated with a gradual liberalization of the political atmosphere in Pakistan. These actions of Junejo reflected that while "he maybe trapped in the system, his administration (was) not a

- 
1. Rasul B. Rais, "Transition to Democracy", Asian Survey, February 1988. (vol.xxviii. no.8). p.126.
  2. Omar Noman, "Pakistan and General Zia: era and legacy", Third World Quarterly, January 1989 (vol.xi, no.1), p.39.



show piece of the military."<sup>3</sup> And "soon after consolidating their position in the National Assembly and Senate, Junejo and a majority of his colleagues in the Pakistan Muslim League (PML) began to act differently"<sup>4</sup>. This was probably not foreseen by Zia. In fact, Junejo's growing assertion of his constitutional role must have alarmed the military establishment. Zia, who had once toyed with the idea of reviewing the classical distinction between the civil and military domains<sup>5</sup>, probably felt that by once again asserting his influence and importance, Junejo's popularity could be checked. What better way to do it then by engineering a war-scare with traditional enemy India, and restore the indispensable aura of the army. Operation Brasstacks presented a convenient excuse and a suitable opportunity. It was a large exercise and involved the massing of considerable Indian troops on the border. By highlighting the danger posed by such a concentration of Indian troops, the army could succeed in sidelining Junejo, who symbolized the civilian regime, and restore its own infallibility in the eyes of the people. Moreover the en.

- 
3. Rasul B. Rais, "Transition to Democracy", op.cit. p.130.
  4. Rasul B. Rais, "Pakistan in 1988". Asian Survey, February 1989 (vol.xxix, no.2), p.199.
  5. Zia had made this proposal during the early years of his reign in an attempt to secure his position. He felt that the political role of the military could be concretized through politico-legal arrangements. See Hasan Askari-Rizvi, "The Military and Politics in Pakistan" (New Delhi, Konarak Publishers, 1988), p.242.

masse resignation of Junejo's Cabinet in December, 1986 probably gave confirmation to Zia's suspicions.<sup>6</sup>

On the face of it, such an assertion seems plausible since only in early December Zia himself had expressed the view that the concentration of Indian troops was for the purpose of carrying out training manoeuvres and hence posed no threat to Pakistan's security.<sup>7</sup> And at the SAARC Summit in Bangalore, November 1986, Indian assurances on Brasstacks were accepted by the Pakistani delegation led by Junejo.<sup>8</sup>

It is therefore quite likely that the army top brass may have manoeuvred the two strike corps into their offensive positions. Note also should be made that even though Junejo held the Defense Ministry portfolio, General Zia, as Chief of Army Staff, would be calling all the shots as far as the Army was concerned. The failure by the armed forces to wrest the Siachen Glacier back from India was widely attributed to, in Pakistan, as a failure on the part of the army.<sup>8</sup> This failure would seem doubly inexcusable since General Zia had brought about the modernization of the

---

6. The Junejo cabinet resigned en masse, on December 20, owing moral responsibility to the ethnic riots which had broken out in Karachi. See IDSAs News Review on South Asia/Indian Ocean. February, 1987. (vol.20 no.2) p.166. This resignation, though just a cosmetic exercise, signalled the growing clout Junejo was seen to be asserting.

7. See Frontline, 7-20 February 1989. p.9.

8. Defense and Foreign Affairs Review, April 1989 (vol.xvii, no.4). p.29.

armed forces in a big way. Since, the Siachen issue can be considered as one of the few failures of Zia's external policy, Brasstacks may have presented him with a good opportunity to brow beat India.<sup>9</sup> It was probably in this context that he did the first "probing, in terms of response, to... Operation Brasstacks".<sup>10</sup> To use a cliché, it would have been a case of knocking out two rivals with one stone, if Zia's gambit succeeded. If Junejo failed to control the conflagration the army (read Zia) could step in and case him out. At the same time a diplomatic coup over India would be an added bonus. But probably what Zia did not foresee was the swift Indian reaction in mobilizing its troops and forward deploying them. And Junejo also successfully managed to tide over the crisis by taking the lead in diffusing a volatile situation.

In India too, the government of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was coming *under* increasing pressure. Liberalization policies of the government were yet to fructify and the country was in the grip of a severe drought. Successive failures in elections to various state legislatures had rendered Gandhi's position within the ruling Congress (I) party susceptible to the stresses and strains of the numerous interest groups. Differences within the cabinet

- 
9. For an excellent analysis of General Zia, see Shahid Javed Burki, "Pakistan under Zia 1977-88", Asian Survey October 1988 (vol.xxviii, No.10). pp.1082-1100.
  10. Sreedhar et al, "Pakistan after Zia" (New Delhi, ABC Publishing House, 1989), p.12.

were hazy but nevertheless discernible. This related particularly to the divergence in approach, of bringing to book errant tax payers and other economic violators, between Rajiv Gandhi and his Finance Minister V.P. Singh. The secessionist movement in Punjab continued to defy a solution.

Therefore both in India and Pakistan, the domestic atmosphere was in a state of flux.

Second, the external compulsions. Going by the analysis of K. Subrahmanyam this objective seems clearer in the case of Pakistan. Arguing that a war with India while definitely not the intention of Pakistan, a "war-scare" would nevertheless serve its purposes well, especially vis-a-vis its patron state, the United States.<sup>11</sup> The U.S. Congress was to start hearings on the second tranche of arms transfers to Pakistan, including AWACS, in March of that year.<sup>12</sup> Thus by creating a "war scenario" and concretizing the threat from India to its security and integrity, Pakistan may have hoped to speed up Congress ratification.

Similarly, for India, Operation Brasstacks would serve certain foreign policy objectives. First and foremost amongst these would be a demonstration of the Indian war

---

11. K. Subrahmanyam, "Pak Troops on India's Border: A way out of a dilemma", Times of India, 24 January 1987.

12. Ibid.

machinery. The extraordinarily large contingent of troops, involving close to eight divisions, is a formidable concentration of troops and machines. By flexing its muscle India may have intended to signal to Pakistan that, notwithstanding American arms transfers, the Indian armed forces were still a formidable adversary. This, then, gives rise to a classic case of power demonstration for dissuasive purposes and the use of the armed forces for purely political ends. The immediate short run purpose of such an action would be to deter any Pakistani adventurist designs. Longer term objectives would be a restoration of the absolute military balance of power in India's favour and an assertion of its claim as the dominant power of the region. Indeed subsequent Indian actions, for instance the despatching of the frigate INS Godavari to South Yemen, deploying troops in Sri Lanka and Maldives,<sup>13</sup> reflect this desire of India. While thus asserting its stamp within the region, India simultaneously may have wished that one of the superpowers (i.e. United States) would acknowledge Indian fears, of excessively arming Pakistan with sophisticated weaponry.

Third, the military objectives. Outright military objectives are somewhat hazy in Pakistan's case. In the previous chapter we had examined the troop deployment profile on the Indo-Pakistani border. A rough parity exists

---

13. These have all been dealt with in the first chapter.

between the two countries and only in the case of a war of attrition can India hope to bring into play its superiority. Anyway, the losses on both sides would be severe and Pakistan would most definitely be defeated.<sup>14</sup> A clearer examination of the manoeuvres carried out by the two Pakistani strike corps may throw light on the motives behind these moves. It was clear that the 1st Armoured and 37th Infantry Divisions of the Southern Strike Corps were monitoring Brasstacks from near Rahimyar Khan.<sup>15</sup> Adoption of such defensive postures while monitoring the military exercises of another country are normal practise.<sup>16</sup> The surprise however was the change in the location of the exercises of its northern strike corps consisting of the 6th Armoured and 17th Infantry Divisions. Their area of exercise was rescheduled from the Jhelum-Chenab corridor to the Chenab-Ravi corridor.<sup>17</sup> At the conclusion of its exercise the Northern Strike Corps was positioned close to the Shakargarh bulge salient, within strike of Gurdaspur. Simultaneously, the Southern Strike Corps left Rahimyar Khan and moved towards a point some 15 kms from across India's

---

14. See Anthony H. Cordesman, "U.S. Strategic interests and the India-Pakistan Military Balance". (Monograph, 1987). p.49.

15. India Today, 15 February 1987.

16. Information obtained in interview with a serving officer of the Indian Army.

17. Times of India, 19 January 1987.

Abohar-Fazilka.<sup>18</sup> While both the strike formations were offensively positioned, a cursory examination will reveal that their position was tactically weak susceptible as it was to a Indian counter-offensive. Located at either end of the Indian state of Punjab, the Pakistani formations looked poised for a thrust into the Punjab.

In retrospect such a tactical position gives rise to the important question of the existence of any broader Pakistani strategic objectives. Given the fact that Punjab was besieged by secessionist elements, one is immediately struck by the possibility of Pakistan wishing to do a "Bangladesh" on India. Such a contention rests on two arguments. Firstly, from a tactical point of view the two strike formations faced the prospect of having their rear cut-off and being totally encircled in an Indian counter-offensive (this has been examined in the previous chapter). So a Pakistani offensive into Punjab would have to be a swift thrust based on encountering a friendly and sympathetic population which would view them as liberators instead of as attackers. This would also make an Indian defense limited and severely restricted. Secondly, a "Sarbat Kalsa" (Convention of the Sikh community) had been convened by the Sikh secessionist elements for January 26th.<sup>19</sup> The intention of the secessionist elements was to

---

18. India Today, 15 February 1987.

19. Frontline, 7-20 February, 1987.

declare the state of "Khalistan" on that day.<sup>20</sup> The coincidence in the Pakistani moves and the declaration of the Sikh extremists makes such a contention plausible.

If such a strategic objective was non-existent, then the Pakistani moves may have been a counter mainly against certain Indian objectives. Let us examine Brasstacks a little more closely. Since the beginning, the government was claiming that Brasstacks was merely a military exercise.<sup>21</sup> But an exercise involving something like 8 divisions and at a cost in excess of Rs.200 crores may well be something more than "an exercise". If Brasstacks was to remain an exercise, then the deployment of 6 Mountain Division from Bareilly into the Jammu sector,<sup>22</sup> raises more questions than it answers. Moreover the initial secrecy surrounding the exercise does seem strange, but can probably be dismissed as a sign of the secrecy which usually surrounds all matters pertaining to the armed forces. Contrary to all published reports, India supposedly did not inform Pakistan about the exercise.<sup>23</sup>

---

20. Ibid.

21. This was explicitly stated by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. See the Times of India, 21 January, 1987.

22. India Today, 28 February 1987.

23. This was so because the location of Brasstacks was well away from the border, and information is exchanged only when the troops are stationed much closer to the border. Information obtained from Lt. Gen. Jagjit Singh Arora (Retd.), Member of Parliament.



But then Gen. K. Sundarji (Retd.), then Chief of Army Staff, alleged that Pakistan started talking about Brasstacks in October (1986) itself, before even a single soldier had moved for Brasstacks.<sup>24</sup>

Further, what remains unexplained is the plan for another exercise, named operation Trident. According to one analyst, Operation Trident called for "an attack on February 8, 1947 at 04.30 hours, with Skardu as the first objective and Gilgit as the second."<sup>25</sup> If this is true then Pakistani allegations and suspicions of Brasstacks stand confirmed. Moreover, the respected Indian fortnightly, India Today, quoting from a confidential report prepared for Army Headquarters, states that Brasstacks set out to prove that "from the evolution of political and military aims preceding a conflict, to the conduct of a command-level exercise with troops involving mechanized offensive operations by a strike corps deep into enemy territory in conjunction with the air-force...that clearly indicated to a belligerent and recalcitrant neighbour, the power and strength of India's armed forces".<sup>26</sup> Such a plan is attributed to General K. Sundarji by the magazine, which

---

24. Interview with Gen. K. Sundarji, India Today, 15 May 1988, p.82.

25. Ravi Rikhye, "The War that never was: The story of India's Strategic failures" (New Delhi, Chanakya Publications, 1988). pp.11 and also pp.192-195.

26. India Today, 15 May 1988, p.84.

further quotes sources in the Ministry of Defense as saying that the objective was to provoke Pakistan into some action which would then give India an excuse to launch an attack.<sup>27</sup> Thus while Brasstacks was to be the provocation, Trident was to be the Indian offensive.<sup>28</sup>

Thus of the three assumptions we started with, domestic compulsions, external objectives and outright military objective, the third seems to offer certain explanations.

It is quite unlikely that the leaders of the two countries would create a scenario of looming war clouds with each other just to divert peoples' attention away from pressing domestic needs. Moreover internal problems are a staple of all developing countries given the fact that these countries are in a constant state of flux. Even as regards internal power squabbles, it is quite unlikely that either Rajiv or Zia would engineer such a situation just to reassert their authority. The benefits would be clearly outweighed by the costs. In fact for General Zia, reasserting his own importance was just a matter of dismissing the Junejo Government. On the external compulsions front, it is likely that Pakistan would benefit from projecting a real threat from India. Combined with the one already emanating from Afghanistan, Pakistan can then portray the image of a beseiged ally of the Americans,

---

27. Ibid., p.84.

28. Ibid., p.84.

seriously in need of weapons assistance. But the permutations and combinations involved would be too many and the expectation that they would all eventually work out right can be too far fetched. India's desire to be recognized as the preeminent power of the region and, hence Brasstacks was designed as purely a demonstration of force also do not hold water. The United States does recognize India as the regional power and has sometimes taken India's security concerns into consideration before sanctioning weapons systems to Pakistan.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, the cost (economic) of Brasstacks would be too much when weighed against the political objectives that would be secured, in real terms, against Pakistan. It is also quite likely that the political goals thus achieved would remain vague and defy any attempts to concretize them.

This then leaves us with the military motives. That Pakistan would want to do a "Bangladesh" on India, as earlier assumed by us does not stand the test of reason. Firstly, the circumstances surrounding the Bangladesh issue in 1971 and the Punjab question in 1987 are widely divergent. Secondly, Pakistan clearly lacks the military capability to enforce such a decision on India. And lastly, in the second week of January, Pakistan had "offered to join India in expressing disapproval of the demand for "Khalistan", "<sup>30</sup>

29. See the Schaffer Testimony, reprinted in Strategic Digest, May 1989 (vol.xix, no.5), p.530.

30. Times of India, 16 January, 1987.

Pakistani actions in January were all based on suspicions arising out of exercise Brasstacks. Operation Brasstacks was located in the Bikaner-Jaisalmer sector of Rajasthan. An offensive from here would launch the Indian troops into the Sind province. The Sind province at the time was constantly being rocked by ethnic conflicts, especially in the principle cities of Sind and Karachi. There were also certain groups in Sind advocating a secessionist movement.<sup>31</sup> Likewise for India, the Punjab state was besieged by secessionist elements. Assuming that Operation Brasstacks was the precursor to an Indian offensive into Sind, Pakistan counter-checked by positioning its troops from across the Punjab border. It anyway could not hope to withstand an Indian onslaught from across Rajasthan.<sup>32</sup> Thus the laying of mines, issue of reserve ammunition and other actions on the part of Pakistan seem perfectly justified. And so also the positioning of the Northern and Southern Strike corps.

What we are then left with is a combination of all the three assumptions: domestic, external and military objectives instead of any one being solely responsible for the crisis. As noted early on in this study, pinpointing the genesis of such crisis-situations is a difficult, if not futile, task. One thing which cannot be ruled out is the

---

31. Omar Noman, "Pakistan after Zia: era and legacy" Third World Quarterly, January 1989, (vol.xi, no.1), p.37.

32. See Ravi Rikhaye, "The war that never was" op.cit. p.165.

purely military objective of Brasstacks. It was an elaborately planned exercise and did involve the testing out of India's new strategic doctrines such as, logistics supply capability in the movement of large armoured formations at high speeds and the integration of ground-air battles and air-assault divisions. The question whether such an elaborate exercise was necessary or not pales into insignificance when one considers the quantum leap made in strategic military planning by Gen. Sundarji. Indeed, allegations that an English World War II tank commander would be familiar with present-day military Indian doctrines seemed true till Sundarji changed it all.<sup>33</sup> In fact a serving corps commander of the Indian Army stated that the Brasstacks concept of war is for the year 2000.<sup>33</sup> In the event what Brasstacks revealed was some of the major shortcomings of the Army, such as movement, fire power and endurance.<sup>34</sup>

However what seemed to have happened is that somewhere along the way the military objectives began to give way to certain political objectives. To understand this we have to remember that the purse strings of the armed forces in India are controlled by the civilian authorities. A cost of Rs.200 crores or more is a difficult proposition to justify. General Sundarji with Minister of State for Defense Arun

---

33. Quoted in India Today, 15 May 1988, p.85.

34. Information obtained from a serving officer of the Indian Army.

Singh may have succeeded in convincing Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi of the political benefits which may accrue. And early Pakistani apprehensions, as expressed during the Bangalore SAARC session, may have been singularly instrumental in convincing the political authorities of such benefits. Namely, to demonstrate to Pakistan the military capabilities that can be brought against it and hence deter it from any adventurist postures. The confidential report quoted by India Today<sup>35</sup> substantiates this argument. So, what we have here is the subtle intertwining of military objectives and giving way to broad political goals. Hence the movement of 6 Mountain Division to Jammu sector in December 1986. And, also the deliberate policy of keeping information as to the nature of Brasstacks vague and unclear.<sup>36</sup>

What invariably tends to happen is the folly of forecasting your adversary's reactions. In fact early Pakistani apprehensions may have convinced New Delhi into blindly blundering to the conclusion that Pakistan would continue to remain defensive. And hence the surprise, possibly panic too, when Pakistan countered by positioning troops across the Punjab. Brasstacks was located opposite Sind province of Punjab. Now Sind is a province of which

---

35. India Today, 15 May 1988. p.84.

36. This is substantiated by the fact that the only channel of communication, the hotline between Indian and Pakistani DGMOs, went cold for a period of 45 days. See India Today 28 February 1987.

every Punjabi leader (and Zia-ul-Haq is one) in Pakistan tends to be apprehensive about. They can never be sure which way the tide will turn, especially so in the light of the recent ethnic riots in that state. Hence, the location of Brasstacks here, apart from logistical convenience (broad, desolate, and sparsely populated sandy stretches) may have been a deliberate fuel to Pakistani apprehensions about the actual purpose of such an exercise. Likewise, the secessionist problem in the sensitive border state of Punjab was turning out to be a nightmare for New Delhi. One may be so bold as to venture the suggestion that in the event of a conflict, New Delhi would be pretty unsure of the direction in which Punjab would swing. Hence if India rankled Pakistan by massing troops near the Sind border, Pakistan reacted by positioning its two strike formations near Punjab. Check, counter-check.

CHAPTER - VICONCLUSION

Analysing military decisions is akin to treading on thin ice. Because of the shroud of secrecy which surrounds all such events, one is forced to rely on formulating conjectures based ~~on~~ mostly <sup>on</sup> secondary sources. This study has been no exception. Hence the ~~resort~~ resort to a lengthy analysis of security policies and the Indo-Pak military balance. In the final analysis however, these two chapters have justified their inclusion by helping us to understand better the events of January 1987.

There has been a change in the security policies of both the countries. Their threat perceptions have broadened and, at least in India's case, events in the neighbouring regions viz. South-west Asia and South-East Asia are seen to be having an indirect influence on its own security environment. In Pakistan's case, developments in Afghanistan have had an impact on its security environment and, like India, it has to now contend with a two-front threat i.e. one from its Western borders, namely Afghanistan and the other from its eastern borders, namely India. Such changes in their security environments has in turn given rise to a subtle, but nevertheless discernible, shift in their strategic policies. In the case of both countries the



shift seems to have been towards a more aggressive foreign policy. This in turn is derived from confidence based on bed-rock of increased military capabilities.

In our examination of the Indo-Pak military balance we had seen the level of military capabilities of both the countries. Within the region they are <sup>the</sup> two most well armed states. Modernization of the armed forces is an ongoing process and hence it is futile to pinpoint exactly when such attempts began. In Pakistan's case, the decade following the break-away of Bangladesh saw massive quantitative increases in the armed forces. Such increases were facilitated mainly by acquisitions of low-quality technologically-poor equipments from China. These were supplemented by a low-level of purchases from European suppliers, primarily France. From the late '70s onwards technologically advanced weapons were inducted. This was made possible because of generous American supplies. Here, we see a linkage between the state of the security environment and induction of weapon systems. American suppliers to Pakistan were forthcoming especially due to a deterioration of the strategic security environment in South-west Asia, as a result of the Islamic Revolution in Iran and the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan.

Like wise, India's arms acquisitions witnessed a quantum leap from the late '70s onwards. This can be attributed to the extended strategic framework and as a

delayed reaction to demands for modernization from within the armed forces. While weapons acquisitions by Pakistan do have a bearing on Indian purchases they are by no means the single most determining factor. In fact such a casual relationship between Pakistani acquisitions and similar Indian purchases (or vice versa) has not been established definitely.

The contention that increased military capabilities has resulted in a more aggressive foreign policy especially within the neighbourhood is borne out by recent developments in the South Asian sphere. In Pakistan's case, its role in the Afghan crisis whereby it acted as a arms conduit to Afghan rebel groups and provided them a base from where to launch operations is one instance. In the absence of sophisticated weapons system it is doubtful whether Pakistan would have been willing to undertake such a perilous task. Likewise Indian actions in Sri Lanka, Siachen and Maldives stem out of increased military capabilities.

The intermeshing of political objectives with military ones finds reflected especially so during times of war. But the analytical framework outlined in the first chapter reveals the increasing number of instances where the line between the two during peace time is becoming more and more blurred. To that extent exercise Brasstacks is a good example of the peace time use of the armed forces for

political objectives. And further proves the contention that external threats to the security of a nation are no more emanating from the traditional methods of war but from demonstrations of power.

But by far the most revealing aspect of our study has been the change in Indo-Pak relations. One can safely assume that if such an incident had taken place during the '50s or the '60s, war would have been a definite outcome. That the channels of communication remained open throughout the crisis surrounding Brasstacks is a revelation in itself. And that the process of deescalation was initiated immediately further attests to the desire for peace between both countries. Perhaps one is witnessing a dilution of past animosities.

So, the inferences which can be drawn from our study are that Operation Brasstacks began as a military exercise. But somewhere along the way political goals got intermeshed with the military goals and the exercise assumed the dimension of a demonstration of force. Our assumption of political use of armed forces thus stands confirmed. Next, the diplomatic coup which New Delhi wished to score vis-a-vis Islamabad did not exactly take place. Instead India was seen as backing down in the face of a counter-offensive by Pakistan. To a great extent this reflects a lack of political will on the part of New Delhi. And in the event throws into question India's political (not military) capacity to carry on a war of attrition vis-a-vis Pakistan,

since only then can it hope to enforce a decisive victory over that country. Lastly, the speed with which the decision to diffuse the situation reflects a dilution of past animosities between the two countries and a maturing in attitude towards each other..

— x —

APPENDIX ITHE BALANCE <sup>of</sup> INDIAN AND PAKISTAN MILITARY MANPOWER

<u>CATEGORY</u>	<u>INDIA</u>	<u>PAKISTAN</u>
<u>Total Armed Forces</u>	1,262,000	480,600
Army	1,100,000	450,000
Air Force	115,000	17,600
Navy	47,000	13,000
<u>Total Reserve Forces</u>	240,000	513,000
Army	200,000	513,000
Air Force	-NA-	8,000
Navy	-NA-	5,000
Territorial Army	40,000	-NA-
<u>Para-military Forces</u>	223,000 <sup>1</sup>	165,000
National Security Force/Guards	80,000	75,000
Border Security Force/Frontier	90,000	65,000
Assam Rifles/Pakistan Rangers	37,000	15,000
Indo-Tibetan Border Police	14,000	0
Northern Light Infantry	0	7,000
Coastguard	2,000	2,000

Source: The Military Balance, 1987-88 (IISS, London, 1987).

Notes:

1. Excluding other groups such as Railway Protection Force, Central Industrial Security Force etc.

APPENDIX - IIESTIMATE OF SELECTED INDIAN AND PAKISTAN LAND-FORCE EQUIPMENT

EQUIPMENT	INDIA		PAKISTAN	
	Type	Nos.	Type	Nos.
TANKS		2,750		1,600
	T-55/-54	800	M-47/-48	450
	T-72	350	T-54/-55	50
	Vijayanta	1,500	Type 59	1,100
AFVs		1,310		845
	BMP-1 (MICV)	600	M-113	800
	OT-62/-64 (APC)	350	UR-416	45
	BTR-60 (APC)	360		
ARTILLERY	76mm: Yug M-48	200	85 mm: Type-56	180
	88mm: 25 Pdr.	800	88 mm: 25 Pdr.	1,000
	100mm: M-1944	185	100 mm. Type -59 ç	
	105mm	340	130 mm Type-59-1/M-46ç	
	130 mm M-46(100 SP)	500	140 mm Guns ç	
	140 mm 5.5 in	140	155 mm M-59ç	
	75 mm 75/74 MG	850	105 mm how	200
	105 mm (How.)	860	122 mm Type 54-1	100
			155 mm M-114	60
			M-198 (towed)	95
			155 mm M-109-A2	178
			203 mm M-110-A2	40

Source: The Military Balance, 1987-88 (IISS, London 1987) and SIPRI Yearbook, 1987



APPENDIX -IIIESTIMATE OF INDIAN AND PAKISTAN AIR-FORCE EQUIPMENT

EQUIPMENT	INDIA		PAKISTAN	
	Type	Nos.	Type	Nos.
TOTAL COMBAT AIRCRAFTS		733		381
TOTAL HELICOPTERS		60		0
BOMBERS	Canberras (35)			
	Jaguars (18)	53		
Fighter/	2 sq. Mirage-2000-H (40)		1 sq. Mirage III EP (16)	
Ground	3 sq. Jaguars (61)		4 sq. Mirage 5PA-3 (60)	
Attack	5 sq. MIG-21 Fishbed(60)		3 sq. Q-5 (41)	
	2 sq. MIG-29 Fulcrum(44)			107
	4 sq. Ajeet Gnats (72)			
	5 sq. MIG-23 Flogger-H(93)			
	2 sq. MIG-27 Flogger D/J(24)			
	-----396			
Interceptor	2 sq. MIG-23 MF (45)		9 sq. J-6 (170)	
/air-	Flogger B			
defense	6 sq. MIG-21/FL/ (120)		2 sq. F-16 ( 39)	209
	PFMA/bis ----- 165			
Reconnais-	1 sq. Canberra (8)		1 sq. Mirage III RP (13)	13
sance	1 sq. MIG-25R/-25U(7)			
	1 sq. MS-748 (4)	19		

Source: The Military Balance, 1987-88 (IISS, London 1987)

APPENDIX IVINDIAN AND PAKISTAN NAVAL BALANCES

<u>EQUIPMENT</u>	<u>INDIA</u>		<u>PAKISTAN</u>	
	<u>Type</u>	<u>Nos.</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Nos.</u>
MANPOWER		47,000		13,000
Submarines	Foxtrot Class	8	Agosta	2
	Kilo Class	1	Dephne	4
	Type-1500	2	SX-404 Midget	2
Carriers	INS Vikrant			
	INS Vikrant			
Destroyers	Soviet Kashin Class	4	County Class	1
			Gearing Class	6
Frigates	Godavari Class	2		
	Leander class	6		
	Whitby	2		
	Petya-II	8		
	Leopard	3		
Corvettes	Nanuchka	3		
	Veera	1		

Source: The Military Balance, 1987-88 (IISS, London 1987)



APPENDIX - V

The following are the minutes of Consultations between Mr. Abdus Sattar, Foreign Secretary of Pakistan and Mr. A.S. Gonsalves, Secretary in the Indian Ministry of External Affairs held from January 31 to February 4, 1987 in New Delhi:

Immediate measures to defuse present tension, to prevent escalation and to deescalate the situation along the India-Pakistan border:

- ( i) Both sides agree not to attack each other;
- ( ii) Both sides agree to exercise the maximum restraint and to avoid all provocative actions along the border;
- (iii) In regard to concrete de-escalation measures both sides agreed to adopt a sector by sector approach for the pull out of troops deployed on the border by both sides.

In pursurance of these parameters both sides agreed, as a first step, to the pull out of troops in the Ravi and Chenab corridor. In this corridor:

- (a) All offensive and defensive forces of both sides will pull out to peace time locations within 15 days of the date of initialling of these minutes. Additional formations inducted in the Rabi-Chenab corridor by both sides. i.e., Army Reserve North comprising 6 Armoured Division and 17 Infantry Division on the Pakistan side, and 6 Mountain Division on the Indian side will also return to peace time locations within 15 days of the date of initialising of these minutes. Pakistan would retain one independent armoured brigade and an independent infantry brigade of the holding Corps reserve.
- (b) The pull out of troops will be undertaken in a graduated manner and will be monitored through regular contact to be maintained by the DsGMO of both sides.
- (c) The modalities for the sector-wise pull out in other sectors would be discussed subsequently; in the intervening period both sides agree not to make any offensive movements to the international border in these sectors;
- ( iv) All mines already laid will be lifted; no mines will be laid;
- ( v) DsGMO of both countries shall maintain regular contact;

- ( vi) The ACAS (Ops) of both countries shall maintain contact to clear apprehensions about aircraft movements;
- (vii) Regular contacts shall be maintained through diplomatic channels.
- (viii) All satellite airfields shall be deactivated immediately;
- (ix) Navies of both sides will be brought to a lower state of operational readiness;
- ( x) For a discussion of further concrete measures for de-escalation along the border an Indian delegation has been invited to visit Islamabad during February 1987. Mutually convenient dates for the visit will be settled through diplomatic channels.

Source: Foreign Affairs Record (External Publicity Division, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India), vol.XXXIII, No.2, 1987. p.59.

BIBLIOGRAPHYBOOKS

- Askari-Rizvi, Hasan, "The Military and Politics in Pakistan" (New Delhi, Konarak Publishers, 1988).
- Baxter, Craig., "Zia's Pakistan: Politics and Stability in a frontline State". (Boulder, Westview Press, 1985.)
- Blechman, Barry M., and Kaplan, Stephen S., Force Without War: U.S. Armed Forces as a Political Instrument". (Washington D.C. Brrokings Institute, 1978.)
- Brodsky, C.W.S., India and Pakistan" in Richard A. Gabriel (ed.) "Fighting Armies: Non-aligned, Third World and other Ground Armies. A Combat Assessment". (Westport, Greenwood Press, 1983).
- Burke, S.M., "Main Springs of Indian and Pakistani Foreign Policies". (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1974).
- Cable, Janes., Gunboat diplomacy: Political application of Limited Naval Force". (New York, Praeger, 1971).
- Chopra, Surender (ed.), "Perspective's on Pakistan's Foreign Policy", (Amritsar, Guru Nanak Dev University Press, 1983).
- Cohen, Stephen P., "The Pakistan Army", (New Delhi, Himalaya 1984).
- \_\_\_\_\_ (ed.) "The Security of South Asia: American and Asian Perspectives". (New Delhi: Vistaar Publications, 1988).
- Cordesman, Anthony, H., "U.S. Strategic interests and the India-Pakistan Military Balance". (Monograph, 1987)
- Craig, Gorden A., "The Political leader as Strategist" in Peter Paret (ed.) "Makers of Modern Strategy: From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age", (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1986).
- Ganguli, Sumit., "The Origins of War in South Asia: Indo-Pakistani Conflicts since 1947". (Lahore, Vanguard Books, 1988).
- Jones, Rodney W., and Hildreth, Steven., "Modern Weapons and Third World Powers". (Boulder, Westview Press, 1984).
- Kavic Lorne J., India's Quest for Security: Defense Policies 1947-65" (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1967).

- Koenig, William J., "Weapons of World War-3", (London, Bison Books Ltd., 1981).
- Kumar, Satish (ed.), "Documents on India's Foreign Policy, 1972", (New Delhi, MacMillan Press, 1975).
- Nehru Jawaharlal, "India's Foreign Policy: Selected Speeches, September 1946-April 1961". Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, 1971.
- Ohlson, Thomas and Brozoska, Michael., "Arms Transfers to the Third World 1971-85", (SIPRI, Oxford University Press, 1987).
- Rikhye, Ravi., "The War that never Was: The Story of India's Strategic Failures", (New Delhi, Chanakya Publishers, 1988).
- Thomas, Raju G.C., Defence of India: A budgetary perspective of Strategy and Politics". (Delhi, MacMillan Press, 1978).
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Indian Security Policy", Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1986.

### ARTICLES

- Badhwar, Inderjit, and Bobb, Dilip, "Indo-Pak Border-Game of Brinkmanship". India Today, 15 February, 1987.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "General K. Sundarji - Disputed Legacy". India Today, 15 May 1988.
- Burki, Sahid Javed., "Pakistan under Zia, 1977-88" Asian Survey, October 1988 (vol.xxviii, no.10).
- Cohen, Stephen, P., "U.S. Weapons and South Asia: A Policy Analysis". Pacific Affairs, Spring 1976 (Vol.49, No.1)
- Lifschultz, Lawrence, "The Strategic Connection: Pakistan and U.S. Cooperate on Building up Forces". Far Eastern Economic Review, 18 December 1986.
- Makeig, Douglas, "War, no war and the Indo-Pakistani Negotiating Process". Pacific Affairs, Summer 1987. (Vol.60, No.2)
- Mukherjee, Dilip, "U.S. Weaponry for India" Asian Survey June, 1987 (Vol.XXVIII, No.6).

- Noman, Omar, "Pakistan and General Zia: era and legacy" Third World Quarterly, January 1989. (vol.xi, no.1)
- Noorani, Zain, "Foreign Policy of Pakistan", Pakistan Horizon. vol. XL, 2nd Quarter 1987.
- Rajamohan, C., "The U.S.-Pakistan Strategic Connection and India", Strategic Analysis, March 1987 (vol.xi, no.12)
- Rais, Rasul B., "Transition to Democracy". Asian Survey, February 1988, (volxxviii, no.2)
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Pakistan in 1988" Asian Survey, February 1989, (vol.xxix, no.2)
- Sharma, L.K. "General Sundarji on tasks ahead", Times of India 2 February 1986.
- Sinha, S.K. Lt. Gen., "Civil Power and the Army" Indian Defense Review, January 1987.
- Singh, Jasjit, "U.S.Arms for Pakistan: AWACS and its implications". Strategic Analysis, December 1986 (Vol.xi.no.11)
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Pakistan Army: The Growing Offensive Capability". Strategic Analysis, February 1988, (vol.xi, no.11)
- Singh, Pushpinder, "The Indian Navy: Modernization and Strategy in the '80s" Asian Defence Journal, July 1987.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "The Indian Air Force: Modern and Professional", Asian Defence Journal, September 1987.
- K. Subrahmanyam, "India's Security: The North and North-east Dimension", Conflict Studies 215
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Pakistan troops on Indian Border: A way out of a Dilemma". Times of India, 24 January 1987.
- Tellis, Ashley J. "Aircraft Carriers and the Indian Navy: Assessing the present, discerning the Future". The Journal of Strategic Studies, Vol.10, no.2, 1987.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "India's Navy Expansion: Reflections on History and Strategy". Comparative Strategy vol.6, no.2.

Thomas, Mathew Lt. Gen., "The RAPID: An appraisal of India's new look Infantry Division for Warfare in the Plains". Indian Defense Review, January, 1989.

Vas, Eric A. Lt. Gen., "The Changing Rythm of War: The Evolution of Mechanized Military tactics", Indian Defence Review, January 1989.

**Newspapers**

The Hindu (Madras)

The Hindustan Times (New Delhi)

Indian Express (New Delhi)

Times of India (New Delhi)

Dawn (Karachi)

**MAGAZINES**

India Today (New Delhi)

Frontline (Madras)

**Journals**

Asian Survey (Berkeley, University of California)

Strategic Analysis (New Delhi)

Strategic Digest (New Delhi)

Journal of Strategic Studies (London)

Asian Defense Journal (Malaysia)

Pacific Defense Reporter (Australia)

Indian Defense Review (New Delhi)

**NEWS SERVICES**

Public Opinion and Trends (New Delhi)

**YEAR BOOKS**

SIPRI Year Book 1987.

The Military Balance 1987-88.

