



PRINCIPLES EMPLOYMENT OF AN INDIAN ARMED FORCES IN INTERNAL SECURITY

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Abstract:

A major obstacle in the way of an Indian strategy to stem militant violence is summed up in the familiar saying 'One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter'. Insurgency, terrorism and proxy war are the main components of low intensity conflict operation. Border skirmishes on a street could also fall with in this category. In future, the major international and regional powers could pursue their ambitions through sub conventional operations.it figures at the lower end of the spectrum of conflict and is characterised by asymmetry of force levels between regular forces and irregular opposition, where in the force applied and the violence generated depends on the code of conduct and the capabilities of the weaker side, as also the laws of the land which impose restrictions on the actions of security forces.

Key word: Employment of an Indian Armed Force, National Security, joint appreciation with the civil authorities.

As of date, the Military has been heavily committed in dealing with internal security. This has undoubtedly been at the expense of its war readiness and it is only inevitable that the Military will have to seriously review its involvement in internal security matters. The primary role to combat insurgencies and manage political violence should therefore be that of the Internal Security Forces and not the Military.¹ The Military must be employed only in exceptional circumstances and withdrawn at the earliest opportunity.

1. RULES OF ENGAGEMENT: Before committing the Military, certain basic issues need to be formulated by carrying out a joint appreciation with the civil authorities, at the appropriate level.

These include:-

- Command and control structure, so that unity of effort is achieved.
- Promulgation of appropriate special laws so that the actions of the troops are in conformity with the law and full protection is afforded to the troops.

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¹ Maj Gen Afsir Khan – Transnational terrorism: Danger in the south (1995)

- Formation of appropriate committees at all levels to effect synergy.

However, despite all efforts, every answer may not be forthcoming clearly. These highlight the delicate and complicated nature of CI/CT operations. Military commanders must consequently learn to live with reality and plan operations accordingly.

2. GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF DEPLOYING ARMED FORCES: The general principles which must be kept in mind are given in succeeding pages.²

- **Minimum Adequate Force:** Collateral damage has spun off advantages for militants to exploit sentiments of the people and should be avoided at all costs. While ensuring that minimum required force is applied, safety of own troops should not be lost sight of.
- **Transparency in Operations:** With international, national and vernacular media having access to remotest of areas, the need to ensure transparency in operations against insurgents cannot be over emphasized. Media must be co-opted right from the beginning of the operations and a correct balance be maintained in ensuring security of impending operations and fulfilling the quest for information of the media. The compulsions and terms of reference under which the troops are operating must be clearly appreciated by the media. Local police and civil administration officials must be co-opted in all operations undertaken by troops.
- **Intelligence:** Reliable, timely and appropriate intelligence is vital to the success of CI operations. The maximum use of intelligence calls for coordinated employment of all intelligence agencies. All CI operations should be based on hard actionable intelligence. Jungle bashing has adverse after affects both on the local populace as well as security forces and must be avoided.
- **Addressing the Cause:** Commanders and troops must always keep in mind the fact that insurgents are our own citizens who have been led astray, and weaned away from the mainstream of society. As such, they should not be regarded as enemies. During the CI/CT campaign, sincere endeavour should be made to win them over, and a fair chance given to them to join the mainstream of society, with attractive rehabilitation packages.
- **Secure Environment:** Security forces must so plan their operations that a secure environment is ushered in and the fear of the gun removed. It is only when the population feels secure against insurgent threats that they will extend help to the security forces and provide timely information. A psychologically secure population also starts regaining faith and confidence in the State and its democratic values.

2.Capt. Sonal Ashish VRC (1994) – Terrorism and insurgency in India: A study of the human element New Delhi: Lancer Publisher Private Limited.

- **Unity of Effort:** Unity of effort and cooperation are vital for the success of CI/CT operations, and ought to be coordinated at the highest political level. Cooperation between the armed forces, civil administration, police, para-military forces and the intelligence services must be ensured. Constant reviews of the situation should be carried out to modify own strategies according to the dynamics of the changing situation. This would require a very pragmatic and flexible approach.
- **Role of Mass Media:** Mass media has a very vital role to play in CI/CT operations. Through effective use of media, the public should be convinced of the steps being taken by the Government to redress their grievances and meet their aspirations. It should aim at diluting the motivation of the insurgents and reinforcing the credibility and authority of the Government. Vernacular media will also play a lead role in this regard, as it has wider acceptance amongst the population at large. It is a potent 'Force Multiplier' and if handled correctly, they can play a crucial role in swaying the so called 'fence sitters', who actually comprise of more than 80% of the local population. The media also needs to be made responsible and national interests should always be safe guarded.
- **Psychological Impact:** Insurgency and CI operations leave a major psychological impact on the people, the insurgents and the security forces. Constant threat to life, property, and disruption of day to day life has an adverse effect on the population. Amidst all these realistic and unfavourable circumstances, maturity demands that the Military should avoid any temptation or inclination in directing its wrath on the local population, but understand their compulsions and limitations. Any extreme action will be a retrograde step towards combating insurgent and will contribute to the success of the insurgent's game plan. Commanders at all levels must take into account the peoples' compulsions and their ordeal while carrying out operations and the treatment of the population must be sympathetic and humane. Psychological operations play a major role and should be planned and executed at the national level. For this, the government must have a clear cut aim and infrastructure. Psychological operations, besides targeting the civil population and the insurgents, should also cater for educating those involved in countering insurgency, specially the armed forces. Soldiers should be convinced of the righteousness of government policy, the nation's support and politico-moral justification of government actions against the insurgents. Psychological operations should therefore aim at:-
 - Winning the support and confidence of the population.
 - Lowering the morale and effectiveness of the insurgents and their supporters.
 - Instilling high morale and confidence in those involved in fighting insurgency, as well as reversing the ill effects of hostile propaganda.

- **Disengagement:** In a democratic system, the decision to disengage the Military is a political decision and it will depend on a large number of factors. However, disengagement must be at the earliest possible time frame. Prolonged employment of Military on CI operations may turn out to be counterproductive. If needs be, the Military could be employed again after a suitable gap.

3. RESULT INDICATORS

It is important to evaluate the impact and result of various measures taken by the government, as well as the security forces.³ Result indicators will be discernible only over a period of time and could include the following:-

- **Free Flow of Information Willingly:** This stage is indicative of the change in attitude of the population. When that happens, then it is a matter of neutralising insurgents by undertaking operations based on specific intelligence, which will be forthcoming.
- **Functioning of Law Enforcement Agencies:** Effective functioning of law enforcement agencies right down to 'thana' level and the judiciary are definite positive indicators. This occurs when security forces have been successful in isolating the insurgents from the population centres, and a climate of reasonable safety and security has been created within the citizens.
- **Progress in Socio-Economic Projects:** An obvious upward trend and progress in completion of socio-economic projects is another positive indicator. Closely integrated with this should be a rise in the human development indices within the insurgency affected area.
- **Unemployment Rate:** Large scale unemployment, particularly amongst the youth, is one of the catalysts for promoting insurgents. When unemployment rates decline, it is a positive sign and is indicative of the fact that one of the basic causes of insurgents has been addressed.
- **Normalcy:** A fair degree of normalcy in peoples' day to day social and economic routine is an important indicator of positive achievements in combating insurgents.

The response of the Armed Forces must fit into the total response system of the government. To that extent, it needs to be developed at two levels:-

- First, between the Armed Forces and the civil administration at the central, state, and local levels.
- Second between the Military, its formations, Special Forces and specialist units, elite commando units like the NSG, CPOs, and Local police forces.

³ Brig Dr S P Sinha VSM (2007) – Lost Opportunities: 50 Years on Insurgency in the north east and india's response. New Delhi: Lancer Publication and distributors.

Conclusion

We need to tackle the problem of militancy “with an iron fist and a velvet glove”. In this insurgency, people are the “centre of gravity”. Our operation must be conducted in a people friendly manner, in order to win the hearts and minds of the people. If the people are with us, the information about the militancy activities will start flowing and we will be able to wean away the people from the influence of the militant. We need to base our cordon and search operations on specific information, so that people are not inconvenienced unnecessarily. We also need to keep the collateral damage to the civil properties to the minimum and use minimum force for all tactical operations. Human rights of the citizens must be respected and human dignity maintained.
