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MINIMISING CASUALTIES IN COUNTER INSURGENCY/ COUNTER TERRORISM OPERATIONS



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1. The Indian Army (IA) along with other security agencies has been facing a simmering insurgency in Kashmir and the North Eastern states for over three decades now. Though a large number of terrorists have been eliminated, security personnel have also suffered casualties in unacceptable numbers during this period. The security forces in general and the army in particular have learnt many lessons and there has been a continuous improvement in strategy and tactics while dealing with insurgents/terrorists. However, it goes without saying that the same is true for terrorists and they also try and stay ahead of the security forces through continuous innovation in tactics and by use of technology. This is corroborated by the fact that the army is suffering avoidable casualties.

2. An attempt is being made through this paper to take a de novo look at the causative

factors for combatant casualties of IA in counter-insurgency/counter terrorism operations (CI/CT Ops) and suggest remedial measures to minimise these casualties. The focus is on IA casualties suffered during active operations only.

Study on Pattern of Fatal Injuries in Counter Terrorist Operations

3. A study was conducted in year 2006 by three AMC officers at a zonal hospital responsible for embalming of fatal army casualties in Northern Command. The study took into account operational deaths and injuries over an eight year period from 1999 to 2006 with a view to identify the causes of casualties. Though the study only covered casualties in Kashmir, the findings can, by and large, be extrapolated to other similar conflicts in the North East. The major findings of the study

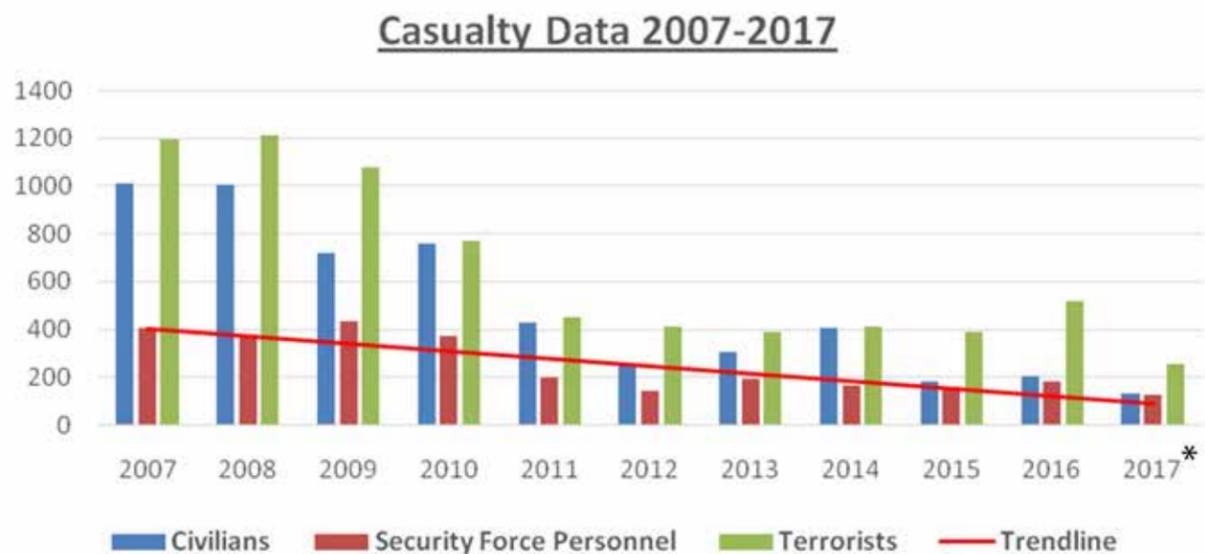


are given below:-

- (a) Terrorist initiated injuries/deaths were 62.5% while rest were environmental/natural factors.
- (b) Casualties at line of control (LC) were 4.8% out of total casualties from year 1999 to 2003. After the ceasefire came into force in year 2003 there were no more casualties on LC. However the data for LC casualties can be extrapolated to 7-8% for the complete eight year period.
- (c) Terrorist initiated injuries accounted for 8.16 deaths per thousand troops involved, enemy action across LC causes 0.63 deaths per thousand (extrapolated to 1 per thousand).
- (d) Of the total fatalities, 89.5% were killed in action, while 10.5% died of their wounds after reaching the hospital.
- (e) Fatality to total injured ratio was 23%.
- (f) The rank structure of the fatalities was officers 8.6%, JCOs 7.3%, and Other Ranks 84.1%. 51% of soldiers martyred were below 25 years of age.
- (g) Out of the terrorist initiated fatalities, 78.2% died of gunshot wounds and 21.5% by splinters and IEDs. The ratio was reversed on LC and in Kargil war.
- (h) Fatalities peaked during June to November and declined in winters.

Casualty Data

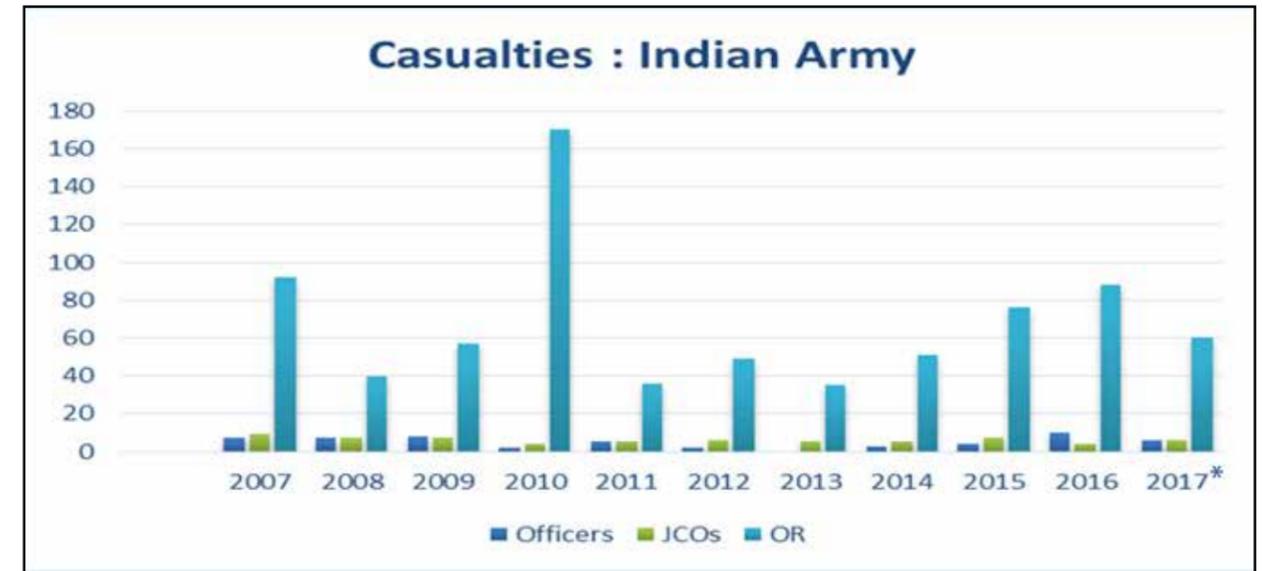
4. The casualty figures over the past 10 years pertaining to civilians, terrorists and security forces (including Indian Army, Para Military Forces and Police), are illustrated in the figure below. It can be seen from the trend line that the number of casualties of security forces is reducing over time.



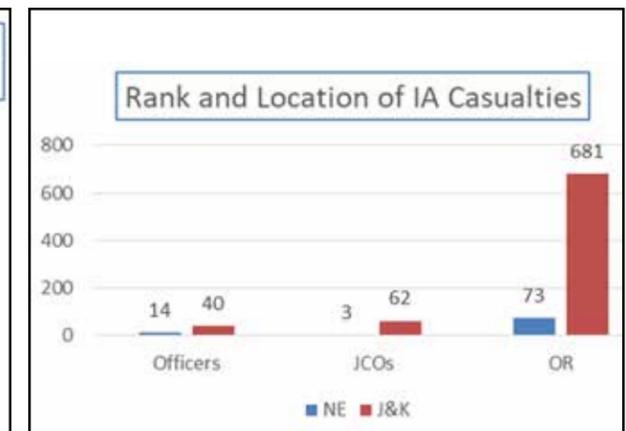
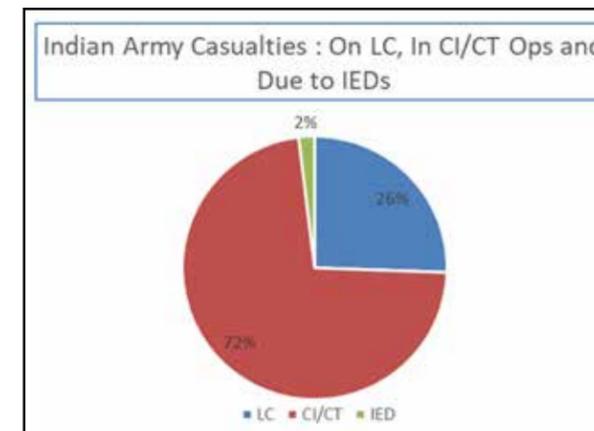
* Till Sep 2017



5. The data for the army casualties alone is illustrated below:-



* Till Sep 2017



Inferences from Casualty Data and Study on Pattern of Fatal Injuries in Counter Terrorist Operations.

- 6. Some inferences drawn from the above casualty data and the study are as under:-
 - (a) Most of the fatalities were due to gunshot wounds selectively aimed at head, face, neck and thorax. Therefore, a lightweight flexible and effective bulletproof protection for this area will save lives.
 - (b) Proportion of Officers and JCOs fatalities is more in CI/CT Ops than that in Kargil war or on LC. In CT Ops, troops move in small groups, each group led by an Officer and/or JCO. Hence, selective aiming at the leaders by terrorists may be responsible for this high ratio.



(c) IED/blast injuries revealed a similar trend and were the major contributors to the casualties along with multiple gunshots. During cordon and search, troops enter into confined spaces in small groups. Restricted mobility in this situation makes them vulnerable to preferential targeting and multiple gunshots. Explosions in confined spaces lead to multiple injuries and up to 49% mortality compared with open spaces.

(d) Young officers suffer the maximum pro rata casualties followed by OR and JCOs. This may be due to inexperience of Young Officers in CI/CT Ops, as they are freshly commissioned from training academies. We may also need to look at developing more initiative and leadership traits in our JCOs.

(e) Treatment within the golden hour can reduce fatal casualties to a large extent. Casualty evacuation by fastest means and availability of adequate nursing assistants in situ may reduce the 10.5% fatalities which occur after injured soldiers reach the hospital.

(f) Spurt in casualties occurs in the year when unrest in a particular area increases, as was seen in 2010 and 2016 in Kashmir. Other causes of sudden increase in casualty can be mass casualties during raids on army camps or ambushes by militants. Sudden increase in Indian Army casualties in 2015 can be attributed to the Manipur ambush by insurgents on an army column and in 2016 by terrorist attacks at Uri and Nagrota.

(g) Year wise casualty figures of all Security Forces and Indian Army figures follow a similar trend. Both figures are generally declining over the past decade barring spurts in casualties as mentioned above. However it is a cause for concern that the ratio of fatalities of terrorists vs soldiers has also

decreased over the years. The present ratio of nearly two soldiers being martyred for every five terrorists killed is a cause for introspection.

Lessons in CI Ops from Other Nations

7. Though India has been facing CI threat since a long time and we have evolved our anti terror strategies and tactics, it would be worthwhile to know what principles and techniques are followed by other countries who face a similar problem. Russia and Israel are the two countries whose methodology in containing insurgency may be studied as Russia has achieved reasonable success against Chechen insurgents while Israel has managed and achieved considerable success after the two Intafadahs. Some of the policies/strategies followed by these two nations are briefly covered below.

8. Russia

(a) After the Beslan attack, new anti terrorism laws and reforms were introduced. Restrictions on media were imposed while covering anti terror operations. Justification/legitimation of terror acts by anyone was declared as a criminal offence.

(b) Actions to improve coordination within security agencies were taken and all units involved in counter terrorism were brought under one under one HQ for operation purposes.

(c) If a relative did not report on his terrorist family member before the terror act was committed, the relative was presumed to be an accomplice and dealt as such by the security forces. However this was not sanctioned by law.

(d) Arrest, torture and disappearance of relatives of terrorist was especially seen in Chechenya. The belief was that a terrorist's relative had high chances of becoming a terrorist hence it was considered as a pre-emptive move to stop future terror attacks.

(e) Relatives were used as 'hooks' to lure militants and to pass poisoned food to terrorists.

(f) Disproportionate use of force was resorted to while dealing with insurgents. Burning/demolishing of houses of terrorists was seen in a large number of cases.

9. **Israel.** Israel conducts its counter terrorism operations and manages terrorism on its soil based on certain principles which have evolved over time. These principals are given below:-

(a) The number of effective terrorists is limited. By eliminating the most skilled and dangerous terrorists through arrests (the preferred method) or by targeted killings (if absolutely necessary), a state can greatly disrupt the operations of a terrorist organization.

(b) If the pace of arrests and killings is rapid enough, then the terrorist organization can lose the critical mass of skills and capabilities that it requires to function.

(c) It is far better that a local government's forces are used to fight terrorism than to call on outside forces, no matter how skilled. The locally based government can use its manpower, its legal system, its knowledge of the terrain, and most importantly its intelligence and police assets to fight terrorists far more effectively than any foreign government coming in from outside. In addition, foreigners are likely to alienate the local population.

(d) While terrorists can be highly skilled, they are far from perfect and they often make mistakes. Terrorism is a grave threat, but all too often the terrorists are analysed as if they were superhuman and their actions are misunderstood due to this overestimation of their abilities.



(e) While many governments are weak, they will almost always prove stronger than the terrorists in the event of an open confrontation. Therefore, the argument that some governments want to crack down on terrorists but cannot is an argument that should not be accepted.

(f) Arrests, targeted killings and defensive measures are means of managing a conflict, not means of solving it. A lasting settlement to the conflict requires a political settlement, but such a settlement is only possible once security services can reduce the problem of terrorism to manageable levels.

Causative Factors of Indian Army Fatalities in CI/CT Ops

10. In any conflict there will be operational casualties. In CI/CT Ops the aim is to minimise own casualties while neutralising maximising terrorists. While any combatant death is unfortunate, a ratio of 7:1 for terrorist vs combatant fatalities is considered acceptable. However the present ratio of less than 3:1 is a cause for concern. Almost everyone who has served in active CI ops can relate to incidents where lives could have been saved without compromising the operation and it is imperative that we assess what has gone wrong in a fair and truthful manner. Some possible causes of casualties suffered by IA are given as under:-

(a) **Award/Appraisal System** The existing award system is, by and large, still connected to the number of kills and weapon seizures. The race to get recognition has sometimes led to operations being mounted in haste and even bordering on recklessness in some cases. There have been incidents where unnecessary individual heroic and hasty actions have led to casualties which were avoidable. The problem is magnified when it comes to unit citations, which appears to be a goal of almost every unit which is inducted into CI ops. The tendencies of looking for glory in own two year tenure



is a bane which may have led to unwarranted casualties.

(b) **Training.** The large percentage of young officer and soldier casualties in CI/CT Ops implies that our initial training at Pre Commission Training Academies (PCTAs) and Regimental Centres is not giving desired emphasis to CI aspects. Quality of Pre Induction Training may also be a factor as it is a 'just in time' capsule which is most critical especially for personnel being inducted in CI Ops for the first time. Unfortunately, if the shortfall in training is made up through 'on the job' training it will result in more casualties.

(c) **Complacency.** Insurgents/ terrorists employ surprise as the essential principal of war while conducting their operations hence there is a need to maintain alertness during the lull period. Security forces have been targeted in innovative ways and most of the casualties invariably occur in the first couple of minutes of an encounter. Non compliance of drills or conduct of operations without protective equipment like Bullet Proof Jackets/Patkas/Helmets has led to casualties in the past. Tired and fatigued troops may tend to remove or denude protective equipment. Use of mobile phones on duty is another prime example of dangerous complacency as it illuminates the soldiers face and leads to loss of concentration.

(d) **Leadership.** There have been incidents wherein the decisions taken at the highest level have had an adverse effect on morale in the entire sector. Punitive action has been taken in some cases under political pressure with a view to satisfy particular constituencies. At lower levels there have been incidents when inadequate planning and preparation, has resulted in loss of life. Most fratricide incidents can be attributed to poor leadership and management.

(e) **HR Management.** Lack of manpower is a constant problem, both in the CI grid and on LC. This has a direct effect on human aspects like fatigue, stress and availability of troops for operations. System of selecting fresh troops and right man for right job is a management skill which must be known to all junior level commanders as this reduces stress. Besides reducing operational casualties this will also result in fewer non-operational incidents and fratricide during operations.

(g) **Equipment/Resources.** The large number of fatalities due to bullet hits on the head/abdomen in the study mentioned at Para 6 above indicates poor quality/fitment of protective gear of our soldiers. Moreover there have been a number of attacks on our camps which shows how low tech our perimeter fences are and how easily they can be breached. It also reveals poor availability and quality Night Vision Devices (NVDs) which are a key resource as most such attacks take place at night. The INSAS is a dated weapon and not very reliable. Also there are no weapons available which are specifically meant for CI Ops.

(h) **Rules of Engagement.** Prima facie it appears that we follow very stringent rules of engagement with a great deal of focus on avoiding collateral damage. Excessive adherence to the proportionality principal not only emboldens the enemy but also results in prolonging of operations and more casualties.

(j) **Legal Protection.** The recent requirement of filing FIRs for every incident regardless of the applicability of AFSPA will further restrict operations as no individual wants to be involved in legal cases either during service or after retirement. Any such restrictions give more space for terrorists to operate and reduce pressure on them.

(k) **Intelligence.** Lack of timely intelligence inputs is the major cause of combatant casualties. It affects newly inducted units more as their humint network is not established. Moreover, in a large number of cases we see unhealthy rivalry wherein the handing over unit does not divulge details of all intelligence sources to the new unit. This coupled with low availability of surveillance resources like satellite imagery, UAV data, etc can be devastating for a newly inducted unit. Funds meant for gathering intelligence are sometimes diverted for non intelligence purposes which affects quality and quantity of humint. Inadequacy in number of intelligence officers available to a formation also creates voids in actionable intelligence.

(l) **Medical Issues.** The study at Para 3 shows that nearly 10.5% of injured personnel expire at the hospital. In all probability most of these are the casualties who could not be evacuated within the 'golden hour'. More than 60% of Nursing Assistants (NAs) are on leave cum training at any given time. Paucity of NAs at company level is a major disadvantage despite the availability of Battle Field Nursing Assistants (BFNAs) as there is a significant difference in their training standards.

(m) **Time Frame for Completion of Operations.** Attempting to finish off operations in a given time frame invariably leads to higher casualties. This is especially true for operations in built up areas when the terrorist is trapped/ cordoned and yet there are attempts to enter the building/compound either due to orders from higher echelons, quest for glory/awards, mind set to avoid collateral damage or threat/pressure from terror sympathisers/stone pelters.

(n) **Coordination.** Lack of coordination with neighbouring units/formations/other security agencies, espe-



cially during the intelligence gathering and operational phases, may result in inadequate operational planning and problems during actual conduct of operations. Fratricide has been known to occur due to coordination lapses.

Suggested Remedial Measures to Reduce Combatant Casualties in CI/CT Ops

11. Actions taken during conduct of conventional operations, by and large, fall within the ambit of the EVR (Environment, Values and Resources) congruence, but the same may not hold true for CI/CT Ops. There may be times when a call has to be taken whether our values take precedence over risk of additional casualties. This is best left to commanders on ground but there is a need to give specific and unambiguous guidelines to them, along with red lines never to be crossed. There are many obvious measures to reduce own casualties, most of which flow from the causes of casualties mentioned above. In addition there can be numerous other aspects which can be tweaked at various levels in HQs/units. Some of these measures are summarised below:-

(a) **HR Issues.**

(i) **Honours and Awards.**

The complete quantification system of awards needs a de-novo look. The system of unit citations encourages most units to aim for the same during their CI tenure. Selecting a unit for a UN tenure largely based on awards during their CI tenure also needs a re-look. We need to move away from the 'numbers game' and rather there needs to be a system where awards are given to units having the best terrorist to own casualty ratio. There need to be clear cut directions from apex leadership that reckless action will not be rewarded, whether it is at individual level or at sub unit/team level. It is time to get more transparent in our award system and put an



end to 'lanyard' loyalties while giving awards. The tendency of 'looking at my two year tenure' needs to be curbed ruthlessly, if we are to save lives in the long run.

(ii) **CI Focused Training.**

The large percentage of casualties of officers and men below 25 years implies that the initial training at PCTAs and Regimental Centres needs to lay more emphasis on CI training without denuding conventional warfare training. This must be followed by adequate exposure on CI leadership training in subsequent courses for our leaders/commanders at Army War College, Junior Leaders Academy, NCOs Academy and other training institutes as this will ensure the requisite continuity in training. This needs to be done even at the cost of increasing overall time spent for training as it will save lives, especially of our young officers and men. Training standards achieved need to be verified after completion of pre-induction training and the same be quantified so as to motivate units to excel during this critical period. Greater emphasis needs to be given on survival training of officers and men below 25 years of age as they suffer the maximum casualties. Combatants must understand that minimising own casualties greatly reduces the morale of enemy in CI Ops. The Training Pamphlets and other drills/SOPs/tactics concerning CI/CT Ops may need a review to factor in the latest ground realities and counter tactical / technical innovations by the enemy.

(iii) **Leadership and Management in CI Ops.** Notwithstanding the debate on whether leadership in CI Ops is different from conventional leadership, a renewed focus on leadership issues specifically pertinent to CI Ops should be a part of the curriculum of Young Officers, Junior Command, Senior Command, Higher Command and NDC courses. In addition 'on the job' mentoring and grooming is a continuous process, which should be a part of the formal responsibilities of 'old hands'. Senior star rank officers also need to be exposed to short 'Just in Time' training capsules before tenating critical appointments in formations involved in active CI Ops. Higher level leadership must be firm, unambiguous and seen to be free from any political angle. Management, especially man management in CI areas and specific management skills/tools required for CI Ops like selecting right man for right job/operation, should be incorporated into syllabi at our training institutes. Ability to motivate the men and maintain a high morale are essential skills for commanders at company and below levels. Higher level commanders and staff must know and look for indicators which portray low spirit in the men and take timely corrective action. Also, increase in financial remuneration, for serving in active CI areas will be a motivator for such postings, especially for the men. Though the issue has been addressed to some extent in the 7th Pay Commission, greater remuneration for higher risk will increase satisfaction levels.

(iv) **Adherence to SOPs.**

Strict discipline in wearing of protective equipment like bullet proof jackets and patkas is imperative and non-negotiable. Other tactical drills which are either laid down as per SOPs or which have been learnt 'on the job' must be followed. Teams moving for operations must be adequately rested, properly equipped and commence operations with adequate time cushion so as to avoid any short cuts in following laid down procedures. Any complacency which may lead to casualties/fratricide must be penalised ruthlessly. Procedures laid down to prevent identification of commanders during operations have the potential to bring down the high number of officer fatalities, and these should be followed religiously.

(b) **Equipment/Resources.**

(i) **Individual Gear.** Lighter and well fitting equipment is essential to reduce fatigue. Hence we need lighter bullet proof jackets, helmets and personal weapon, without compromising on functionality. It is time that a state of the art helmet is inducted as there appear to be a large number of head injuries on the exposed central part of the head in a patka. Also the bullet proof jacket must provide protection from the neck till the abdomen and must be well fitting. A loose jacket will invariably expose the chest if the soldier bends forward. More comfortable clothing which is lighter absorbs sweat better and reduces chaffing/rashes will enable the soldier to focus on his primary job. Weapons specifically meant for fight-



ing insurgents in built up areas like the Corner Shot Rifle, which can look and fire around 90 degree corners without exposing the firer, must be scaled.

(ii) **Securing Military Bases.**

The Campose Committee, which was set up in 2016 was mandated to review the security of our defence installations. The committee has recommended changes in HR and extensive use of technology to protect our bases to avoid Pathankot and Uri like attacks. We need smart and reactive fences around our military bases to reduce soldier fatigue by decreasing the number of guards required to man our perimeter boundaries. These fences are easier and faster to erect, have in built cameras and alarm systems for fool proof detection of any breach. Hence intrusion detection is in real time and all weather along with an instantaneous warning. The deterrence value of such fences is likely to reduce attacks on our bases. This coupled with high quality NVDs with all weather capabilities will deter breaching of perimeter.

(iii) **Force Multipliers.** Availability of sniffer/guard dogs in adequate numbers will definitely act as a force multiplier for our forces. Availability of more intelligence officers/operatives will enable operations based on reliable information. Real time information from all surveillance sources including satellite imagery, UAVs and other sources is an essential facilitator in CI/CT Ops.

(c) **Tactical/Operational Issues.**

(i) **Rules of Engagement**



and Timelines for Operations.

It is time that we start laying a greater premium on the life of a soldier than a building. It needs to come as a policy at the highest level that if a terrorist is trapped in a building then either the 'waiting game' must be played or the building must be brought down. Collateral damage (less loss of civilian lives) is acceptable - is the message to be clearly understood by the entire hierarchy. Forced entry must be a last resort and only resorted to when inescapable.

(ii) Surveillance during Operations.

For real time surveillance especially to look inside buildings, around corners of walls or immediate dead ground, small quadcopters, capable of carrying a camera, and controlled from a safe distance may be tried out as this is a potential force multiplier. This may be an effective short term solution as quadcopter technology has developed by leaps and bounds recently and quadcopters with camera are easily available, off the shelf, at very cheap rates (Rs 20,000/- to Rs 30,000/-) and hence can be procured from Army Commanders or other funds without going into tedious procurement procedures. Moreover they are very easy to fly by remote control and this can be learnt by any soldier in a few hours. Being battery operated they are also very silent. Models currently available in the market start with sizes of 6X6X1 inch which makes it a very difficult moving target even from a close distance. Cameras which can 'see' through walls and remote controlled robots which

can go inside built up areas, are more expensive options which can be considered as mid-term solutions.

(iii) Encourage Surrender.

When a terrorist is trapped he is likely to fight with greater motivation, if he believes that there are only two options, escape or death. Knowing that he has a choice to surrender with a chance of subsequent rehabilitation and absorption in the main stream will give him a third option and this will definitely result in lesser casualties and early winding up of some operations. The recent surrender of a few terrorists appears to be a step in the right direction.

(iv) Offensive Action. A coordinated and relentless offensive to deny space to terrorists, as advocated by Israel and Russia, will result in preventing them from reaching the critical mass required to cause large scale damage. This has to be done in conjunction with pressure on their sympathisers and relatives so as to restrict their operating space and use of resources. Targeted assassinations as and when required needs to become an unstated policy.

(v) Intelligence. Commanders must ensure that the handing over unit hands over the complete informers list and other critical intelligence inputs to the new unit so as to ensure seamless operational efficiency. The attitude of one-upmanship needs to be curbed with a firm hand as loyalty to the organisation takes precedence over loyalty to unit/sub unit. Adequate funds for obtaining humint must

be provided as enhanced financial remuneration is likely to improve the quality of intelligence inputs given by informers. It should also be ensured that these funds are used for the purpose they are meant for and not diverted for non intelligence purposes. Also the endeavour should be to harness the loyalties of the local population, in a sub-unit's Area of Operation, through appropriate 'carrot and stick' measures.

(d) Organisational Issues.

(i) Legal. The recent ruling by the Honourable Supreme Court mandating registering of FIRs for every death despite the cover of AFSPA is definitely a cause for concern as no soldier wants to be embroiled in a legal case at later stage. To keep troops motivated and give them unhindered operational space, there is a need to get over this legal quagmire with all options being explored by the Adjutant General's Branch.

(ii) Casualty Handling. Rapid casualty evacuation drills, including use of helicopters, have the potential of reducing the time and percentage of combatants dying after reaching the hospital. Though BFNAs are available with each sub unit but their capability of handling serious casualties is suspect. Hence there is a need to increase the duration of training of BFNAs while simultaneously enhancing the authorisation of NAs.

(iii) Coordination with Other Security Agencies. Coordination of Army with Para Military Forces (PMF) and Police is es-



sential both for intelligence and conduct of operations. Every operation must have one commander who has complete control over all elements involved in the operation as this will plug any operational/intelligence gaps and eliminate chances of fratricide. Since there are a number of joint operations conducted it is imperative that some cross training of police/PMF with IA is considered to achieve greater homogeneity during operations. This will also pave the way for handing over of complete operations to the paramilitary/police once the situation no longer necessitates an army presence.

(iv) Feedback. Units learn numerous lessons while operating in CI environment. This is especially true for de-inducting units. Fatalities occurring in a similar manner due to right lessons not learnt from own or other units is not acceptable. These lessons need to be formally documented and promulgated to all stakeholders including units undergoing pre-induction training. A proper feedback mechanism needs to be instituted where an honest appraisal be given and centrally circulated to all CI force HQs for taking corrective action.

(v) Social Media/Cyber Campaign. A dedicated social media cell to monitor and counter false propaganda/fake news in real time is essential in today's prevailing environment. This cell can also be tasked for winning over the local population by informing them of the misdeeds of terrorists, by showcasing exploitation of women by terrorists, extortions and brutali-



ty on social media. This cell can be instituted at Corps or above levels and inputs for the same may be taken from lower formations.

(vi) **Out of the Box Solutions**. Sometimes one may need to resort to solutions which may not agree with our values as an organisation. However, since lives of our soldiers are likely to be saved by such actions, some of the following methods may be adopted. Spraying sewage water /water mixed with itching powder on hostile crowds, use of moldorants (smelly water cannons), sleep gases, electro shock guns, directed energy weapons, pulsed energy projectiles, heat rays, blinding lasers, chilli shells, dye grenades, etc, can be considered for use in imaginative ways on a case to case basis. Some of these are high cost equipment and hence may not be available in the short term, but certain low cost options out of the above may be considered. Rottweiler dogs (though banned by many countries) can be used to guard perimeter fences (in addition to smart fences) and also for flushing out terrorists in built up areas, when trained for such ops. Use of flame throwers may be a deterrent for Islamic insurgents due to religious beliefs and may encourage more and early sur-

renders, thereby saving lives. With social media dominating most aspects of people's lives nowadays, generation of fake news based on half truths to discredit the other side is likely to give disproportionate dividends. Ideas regarding imaginative use of technology for surveillance and for conduct of operations have already been enunciated in preceding Paras.

Conclusion

12. It appears that CI Ops will be the new normal for IA for a long time to come. We have already been operating in highly active CI environment since last three decades and some learnt valuable lessons over this period. Due to this experience, India is considered as a nation which is an expert at handling CI/CT situations. However there is definitely a scope for improvement in our strategy and tactics across the complete spectrum of CI/CT Ops. A lowering of combatant casualty figures will be a considerable morale booster for us while the morale of the enemy will be adversely affected. There needs to be an honest introspection as to why we are taking so many casualties despite evolving drills and procedures over a period of time. There are many issues which the government must address to eliminate insurgency but those have been kept outside the scope of this paper. An attempt has been made to look at practical in-house solutions focussing on elimination of IA casualties, with a view to stop brushing our mistakes made under the carpet – we owe it to the next generation of our brave soldiers.

Disclaimer: Views expressed are of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of CENJOWS

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