Chapter-VI
Politico Military Strategy of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh
Government in Exile

Introduction
National strategy does not only concern military but the whole gamut of national interest. Prerequisites for evolution of national strategy would be national homogeneity, internal stability, military capability and last but not the least will and strength as a nation to safeguard its values and interests. Therefore, there is a requirement of development and utilization of the political, economic, psychological and military power of a nation to safeguard national interest. In this chapter politico-military strategy of all the stakeholders will be discussed along with brief history of progressive evolution of grand strategy. Like many modern wars, Bangladesh liberation war also happened after exhausting all political and diplomatic means. Broad campaign strategy will be discussed here and a separate chapter has been dedicated to deal with military operation. But during the Bangladesh Liberation War, political and diplomatic dimension of the campaign is of more abiding interest.¹

At the time of Bangladesh Liberation War, no institution in Indian Army taught or studied strategy in depth, though tactics was taught and practiced with adequate detail. Historically military officers of the undivided India were taught to handle platoon and company level tactics and not higher level strategy. As British Generals occupied those senior positions, Generals of both India and Pakistan at the time of 1971 war, were mostly of pre independence vintage and carried historical baggage.

There are varying views whether or not India has a strategic culture. There are arguments for and against it. However before we proceed to examine different views, it would be necessary to understand definition of strategic culture. Alastair Ian Johnston defined, “Strategic culture is an integrated set of symbols (i.e argumentation, structures, languages, analogies, metaphors etc.) that acts to establish pervasive and long-lasting grand strategic preferences by formulating concepts of the role and efficacy of force in
interstate political affairs, and by clothing these conceptions with such an area of factuality that strategic preferences seen uniquely realistic and efficacious.”

George. K Tanham stated that, "Indians have not been great strategy thinkers or developers of strategy, although they have been profound thinkers in many other fields (their) view of life as unpredictable did not lead Indians to see the need for strategy and even if they had, they would have been unlikely to proceed because if the future is unknown and …. Why plan?" Tanham also argued that lack of a monolithic political identity in India has caused lack of strategic thought and forward planning. Tanham’s arguments were debated in the Indian strategic circles and many did not agree to his findings. Gautam Das, a strategy theorist, challenged Tanham’s observation by stating that Tanham falsely assumed that India is a monolithic political entity. Geographical India was made up of many kingdoms at different times and she had more than one political empires. India should not be judged by analyzing the period of British Raj only. Namrata Goswami, another person with expertise of matters strategy, argues:

> What I understand by strategic culture is an ideational milieu by which the members of the national strategic community form their strategic preferences with regard to the use and efficacy of military power in response to the threat environment. Each country has its own way to interpret, analyze and react to external opportunities and threats. As a member of the Indian strategic community, let me assure you that we do have a strategic culture where we closely assess the external environment and debate on the efficacy of the use of military power in addressing external threats. That India tends to give priority to dialogue over the use of military power in foreign policy does not mean that it does not have a strategic culture; it just means that the strategic preferences are different from the normal understanding of how Great Powers behave.

Some argue that Indians have learnt strategy through the mythological literature like Ramayana, Mahabharata, and religious scripts like Vedas, Upanishads and Puranas. It is a fact that after Kautilya’s ‘Artha Shastra’ for two thousand years, there was no other Indian literature on strategy and statecraft worth mentioning. But can literature on strategy be the only barometer for measuring strategic efficacy of a nation? When the Bangladesh campaign took place, India’s Nehruvian foreign policy of Non Alignment
was rather used as ‘foreign policy autonomy’ to seek a powerful international partner that would serve best interest of her national security.

Political leaders, diplomats, senior civilian officials and military officers, economists, intelligence community and last but not the least academicians are all part of the national strategy mechanism and have to work in cohesion. Most importantly therefore is the vision of the strategic leadership that make history, that builds nation and that make armed forces victor. In a democratic country like India with such diversity strong central government in New Delhi headed by a person with vision, grit and determination can only shape the strategic direction for the country. In March 1971 general election, Indira Gandhi came to the parliament with two third majority. Mrs. Gandhi proved to be a strong Prime Minister who used her power to formulate and implement her foreign policy objectives specially in relation to the East Pakistan crisis and shaped the destiny of not only India but of South Asia.

**India’s Politico Strategy during the East Pakistan Crisis**

Indian public was stunned with the news of ghastly massacre during ‘Operation Searchlight’ by the Pakistani Army that commenced in East Pakistan from 25 March 1971. It evoked sharp reactions from many quarters. Opposition parties started putting pressures on the government for early action and early recognition of Bangladesh. Indira Gandhi handled the event deftly and with full sincerity of purpose. However, *ab initio*, her response was absolutely measured. On 27 March she met opposition leaders and told them that her government would not support the secessionist movements in East Pakistan at that stage as that would invariably draw international repercussions. Indian government initially believed that though the conflict over formation of a civilian government in Pakistan was intense, but the political groups of Pakistan under the supervision of President Yahya Khan would negotiate a settlement. Indian Government did not anticipate Mujib’s arrest and final break of the ongoing negotiations….Initial response of government of India after the brutal military action was though highly vocal but cautious. Neither it wanted to antagonize the Pakistan government nor did it want to rouse passion within the country to avoid demand by various political groups in India for an immediate action. And of course, at this stage it did not give any kind of impression
that India will provide material assistance to the freedom fighters (Mukti Fouz) 7 About India’s initial response, Mr. J. N. Dixit, an Indian Foreign Services Officer who was involved in management of refugee affairs, writes:

Although it (India) extended general support, to the cause of East East Pakistanis, India was cautious not to take macro-level diplomatic or political steps in support of the liberation struggle. While providing facilities for the establishment of an interim government and giving general support to the resistance movement, India had not given formal recognition to what came to be known as the Mujibnagar Government.8

Bangladesh Government in Exile which was set up on 17 April1971 at the mango grove of Baidyanathatala (later named Mujibnagar), was soon shifted to Calcutta along with its office bearers, with the assistance of Government of India.

Management of Domestic Politics

The refugee influx not only resulted in economic drain to India but also raised several tricky domestic political problems that complicated decision making. The refugees were concentrated in some of the most trouble ridden sections of India namely; West Bengal, Assam, and tribal inhabited Tripura, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland. West Bengal too was under severe Naxalite problem since 1969. Congress supported coalition which won in March 1971 election in West Bengal lasted only few months till 28 June, when ‘President’s rule’ was imposed on the state. Indian Army Units and Central force were engaged in controlling Naxal problem. Even in 1971, many Naxalites were operating in border areas of East Bengal with some success. Refugees were also disturbing the existing social fabric in places such as Tripura they outnumbered the locals. Though they were barred from taking up jobs, but about three millions entered the labour market of West Bengal. And cheap labour disturbed the existing wage pattern causing great resentment. It also created high inflation. CPM and CM: established contact with pro-China wing of Pakistan Communist party including National Awami party (Bhasani). CPM wanted immediate recognition to Bangladesh Government in Exile and opposed military intervention by India in fear of escalation to an all out Indo-Pakistan War. Some of the Communist Party members contacted New Delhi remain firm in its policy
regarding East Pakistan’s problem. Indira Gandhi refused any solution to Pakistani crisis that did not ensure return of the refugees to East Pakistan.\textsuperscript{9}

While supporting the freedom movements in Bangladesh, India had to factor the dangerous fall out it could have on the North Eastern states and in Tamil Nadu which often demanded separation because of distinct ethno linguistic and cultural identity. It rather was a great dilemma for the central leadership. It also had to take note of the idea of Greater Bengal which of and on got surfaced.

Mrs. Indira Gandhi and her administration while handling domestic pressure on the East Pakistan crisis, showed remarkable amount of patience and maturity to arrive at well charted courses of action. “The decision making elite in the Government of India could not totally ignore public views on the East Pakistani situations, but it handled all suggestions and criticisms calmly, rarely rejecting anything out of hand, but also rarely, if ever, revising policies to suit critics. From 25 March to the end May, New Delhi discouraged projections of a major Indian role in the resolution of the crisis in East Pakistan”.\textsuperscript{10} This approach has been criticized by Sisson & Rose because they felt that “it did not make good political or strategic sense.”\textsuperscript{11}

**Evolution of Policy Strategy**

But behind the closed doors, in early April it was debated whether an immediate military action by India would be a good strategy or not. It is said that Indira Gandhi wanted that way: so did some of her cabinet ministers, Mr. D. P. Dhar and preeminent civilian strategist Mr. K. Subramaniyam\textsuperscript{12}. Though K. Subramanyam was not part of the government functionaries but his opinion carried weight. But Mr. Swaran Singh, the External Affairs Minister and General Manekshaw, the Joint Chief of Staff, advised otherwise. Mr. P.N.Haksar was also against an immediate action. Swaran Singh felt that by an immediate launch of army operation, India would be seen as illegitimate aggressor and be condemned by the international community and Manekshaw, the pragmatic and assertive soldier; in clear cut terms demanded more time for preparation, training and equipping the armed forces. In addition, Manekshaw was also worried about the interference of monsoon in the proposed military operation; their argument prevailed upon the final decision. Defence Minister Mr. Jagjivan Ram too supported the views of
Army Chief. Mrs. Gandhi’s advisers also felt that in addition to ensuring India’s international credibility, U.S. and China factors have to be taken into account while evolving a holistic and pragmatic policy. After due deliberation an “evolutionary policy stance was adopted aiming at freedom to exercise military option if interim measures taken by India did not succeed in resolving the crisis in East Pakistan.” Salient aspects of the policy approach are stated below:

(a) East Pakistan crisis can only be resolved if Pakistan respects the election mandate of the general elections thus assuring the legitimate political aspirations of the Bengalees.

(b) To start the process, Mujibur Rahman must be released immediately and be allowed to move to Dacca to begin the political process. Pakistan Government should thereafter make further negotiations with him.

(c) Pakistan should ensure safe return and settling of all the East Pakistani refugees now based in India.

(d) Pakistan should immediately stop military operation in East Pakistan and troops should return to the barracks.

(e) The international community should pressurize through bilateral diplomatic and UN channel and impress upon Pakistan to resolve the crisis in East Pakistan by peaceful means.

(f) The United Nations and its relevant ancillary establishments should initiate immediate and adequate refugee relief programme ensuring early return and settlement of the million of refugees located in India.

**Politico Strategy: First Tranche**

By end April, Indira Gandhi and her advisors after considering all options, concluded that first and most important strategic move must entail ‘preparation of the domestic public opinion in India for the probable extension of formal and active support to the liberation struggle of East Pakistan.’ Simultaneously it was considered strategically imperative to sensitize the world to make them aware of India’s compulsions, concerns and rationale for its reactions as they evolved. Therefore the necessity to undertake a comprehensive and well planned diplomatic initiative.
Ensuring Structural Arrangements for Dealing with East Pakistan Crisis

Formulating a strategy itself is not enough; its implementation is as important if not more. To this effect, the basic organizational and political arrangements were in place by end May. Following actions were taken:

(a) A Special Unit was set up in the Ministry of External Affairs to deal with the East Pakistan Crisis. Mr. J.N. Dixit was made Director of this division.

(b) Establishment of a Secretariat of External Affairs Ministry (Liaison Office) at 18 Camac Street in Calcutta to coordinate with the Bangladesh Government in Exile. Mr. A. K. Ray assisted by Ms. Arundhuti Ghosh were entrusted with the tasks of liaising with the Bangladesh Government in Exile, Central Government and Government of West Bengal and to facilitate for the Mukti Bahini.

(c) Mr. S.K. Singh was made responsible for coordinating the publicity campaign for the Government of India’s East Pakistan policies.

(d) R.D. Sathe, of MEA Economic Division was made responsible for coordinating economic assistance to Bangladesh Government in Exile.

(e) A committee of secretaries comprising of the Secretaries, Defence, Home, Finance and Foreign Affairs was set up to take executive decisions dealing with preparations for war. Director General BSF, Civil Defence and Heads of other Para Military Forces were co-opted as and when required. The apex of direction and supervision remained with Manekshaw (Joint Chief of Staff) and D.P. Dhar. (Chairman of the Planning Committee of Ministry of External affairs).

(f) Mrs. Gandhi involved senior politicians and ministers like Mr. Swaran Singh, K. C. Pant, Y. B. Chavan and Jagjivan Ram etc. in fine tuning India’s policy and in briefing foreign governments to mobilize both domestic as well as international support.

Handling the Refugee Issue

One of the biggest challenges of Indira government was the handling the refugee issue as it had both internal as well as international ramifications. Seeing the pathetic conditions of the refugees during her two day mid-May tour to Assam, Tripura and West Bengal;
Indira Gandhi was alarmed as well as shocked with the magnitude and intensity of the refugee crisis. On 24 May, she debated in the parliament:

Conditions must be created to stop any further influx of refugees and to ensure their early return under credible guarantees for their safety and well being. ........unless this happens, there can be no lasting stability or peace on the subcontinent. We have pleaded with other power to recognize this. If the world does not take heed, we shall be constrained to take all measures as may be necessary to ensure our own security and the preservation and development of the structure of our social and economic life.16

Actually, refugee issue and the allied problems drew attention of the world media both by default as well as by design of Indian Government whose media management team widely projected the inhuman conditions of the refugees and the enormous problems India was facing feeding and sheltering millions of them. India wanted early return of the refugees through a political solution. Though many governments may not have openly supported India because they thought that will entail supporting disintegration of Pakistan, but unofficial position of the majority of the world population was sympathetic to the brutalized East Bengalis and problem ridden India. However that did help only in raising some money and material help for the refugees but no official pressure was put on Yahya to seek permanent resolution of the imbroglio.

Assistance in the Creation of a Resistance Movement in East Pakistan
Till May, India did not want to enhance her role in resolving the East Pakistan crisis lest it is seen by the international community as meddling into another country’s affair. Instead of a direct intervention at the early stage of the crisis, “New Delhi considered it essential to assist in the creation of a resistance movement in East Pakistan as the political and military basis for direct Indian intervention. If military action were unavoidable, India preferred that its moves be interpreted as supportive of a Muslim led East Pakistani liberation movement rather than just another Indian-Pakistani (i.e., Hindu-Muslim) conflict.”17 On 20 July 1971, Mr.Swaran Singh, appraised the parliament that India was helping the Mukti Bahini, in consonance of the earlier resolution of the parliament, adopted unanimously pledging sympathy and support and we are pursuing
that resolution in the best possible manner. “We are doing everything possible to lend support to the freedom fighters.”

**Indo-Soviet Friendship Treaty: A Diplomatic Coup by India**

Though both India as well as Pakistan did not accept Breznev’s proposal for Collective Security for Asia, mooted in 1967; but India kept the issue alive by asking for alternatives and alteration to the proposed plan etc. Seeing that no political solution to resolve the Bangladesh issue is forthcoming and tilt in US policy in favour of Pakistan more visible, and above all Sino-US rapprochement that began in July with Kissinger’s secret visit to Peking on 9 July 1971 arranged by Pakistan; Indira Gandhi sent her confidant Mr. Haksar to work on an agreement with Soviet Russia. And on 7th August, signing of the Indo-Soviet Treaty was a strategic masterstroke by Indira Gandhi. It was indeed a diplomatic coup by India. About the Treaty, in his book, *Foreign Policy of India*, N. Jayapalan writes:

> The immediate objective of the Treaty was to serve as a deterrent against Pakistani threat to India’s security. It was also designed to check the possible Sino-Pak collusion against India. It was an important measure for neutralizing the growing Washington-Pindi-Beijing entente which had within it certain big dangers for the security needs of India. It also assured Soviet support for India at the United Nations. It was concluded at a time when East Pakistan was in turmoil and it indirectly helped India to make a decisive contribution towards the creation of Bangladesh. In the Bangladesh War of December 1971, India received full support and it prevented a possible Chinese and American intervention from the side of Pakistan. It also led to Soviet support for India at the United Nations and checked the adoption of U.S.-China approved anti India moves in the Security Council.

With the passage of time, it was becoming more and more clear that it could be a well nigh possibility for Government of India to exercise the military option in support of the liberation struggle of Bangladesh. Signing of Indo-Soviet Friendship Treaty, the most significant strategic step that India took in preparation for the possibility of her likely participation in the Bangladesh freedom struggle. Dixit spells out importance of the treaty in following words:
…the most important political and strategic clauses were those which stipulated that both countries guarantee each other’s security that if there is any perceived threat by either party in the agreement they will enter into immediate consultations to fashion remedial counter measures; that they will not enter into any arrangements or agreement with other countries which will be detrimental to each other’s security interests; and they will cooperate with each other to strengthen security.²⁰

**Keeping the Gun Powder Dry While Pursuing Diplomacy**

Armed Forces leadership took stock of the situations in April 1971, to assess war worthiness. It was felt necessary to prepare the armed forces for any eventualities while the effort to pursue Yayha for a political solution was on. It was found that army’s reserve holdings of arms, ammunition, equipments, spares etc. were low. Holdings of the critical items were much lower and in they were in short supply. First action that Manekshaw initiated was making up deficiencies of the reserve items expeditiously. Government machineries, Ordnance Factories, Tank manufacturing units etc. were geared up to accelerate production for making up shortfall in reserve holdings. Thereafter Manekshaw gave his attention towards ensuring units and formations war worthiness by making up their deficient manpower, arms, ammunition, and equipments. It became a herculean task because of the heterogeneous varieties of equipments Indian Army was holding. Sukhwant Singh gives a vivid picture about the conditions prevailing in the army units and formations at that time:

Making up their (Units & Formations) deficiencies in manpower, equipment and ammunition became difficult as a major reorganization and re equipping of the Indian Army was then in progress, especially in Armoured Corps and in Artillery. Some units were under rising, others were converting to newly introduced equipments, and yet others were getting familiar with specialized equipments. ………..rationalization (of equipment to achieve homogeneity) was over by August. Rationalization of stockpiling of General Staff reserves of equipment and spares needed more time…….Placing ammunition stocks presented certain difficulties, especially of imported varieties because the required quantities were not
available…….items of short supply were proportionately distributed in such a manner that the immediate requirements of a short and intense war would be met….The redistribution was completed surreptitiously by the middle of October under cover monsoon and winter stocking, , and it served well.²¹

To make up for the lack of road and rail network in the Eastern theatre , The Border Road Task Force and the central and State road construction agencies were put on the job to construct communication net work so that stocking and dumping of stores and troops building up and movements go on smoothly.

Restraint and surprise was embedded in the strategic planning and preparations of the armed forces. Various measures were adopted to keep the movements of the units to forward areas secret. Particularly in Western theatre, troops were moved late. Manekshaw waited till the beginning of October and there after commenced movements to forward areas which was completed by middle of November. Sukhwant Singh makes an interesting observation which had great strategic relevance for Pakistan. He comments, “The tactical imbalance ( of Indian army) which existed because of the improper locations of troops was redressed by the third week of October. Yahya waited too long.”²² Which means that Indian army is well prepared to tackle Pakistan offensive hereafter and Yahya lost the strategic advantage of a preemptive attack: best time for Pakistan would have been to launch offensive operation in October.

Manekshaw also activated Joint Intelligence Committee under the Chairmanship of Vice Chief of Army Staff, consisting of representatives of the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), IB and Directors of Intelligence of Army, Navy, and Air Force. In addition, inter services Joint Planning Committee was also formed to achieve better cohesion amongst the three services.

Manekshaw also knew well that ‘man behind the gun is more important than the gun’. To boost morale of the soldiers who are expected to fight till last and there after make supreme sacrifice if needed; he convinced the government to introduce better compensation measures for the martyr’s family members and for those who may be disabled due to war injuries. Taking cue from Napoleon, he also introduced several medals like, Silver Jubilee of Independence Medal Wound Medal etc. as part of his
efforts to motivate and psychologically build the soldiers morale high so that he gives his best.

**Diplomatic Offensive: Strategy to Garner International Support**

Since beginning of the East Pakistan crisis, “Mrs. Indira Gandhi believed and made it amply clear through various statements that there must be a political, rather than military, solution to Pakistan’s problem in its eastern province and that the great powers had a special responsibility to help see such a solution through.”

With this belief, to sensitize the international community and to garner their support for India’s policies related to East Pakistan crisis, emissaries were sent to brief the foreign governments. Sardar Swaran Singh undertook a tour of important capitals of North America and Europe between May to September, 1971. K.C.Pant visited a number of Asian and Central American countries. Mr. Mohammed Yunus, a friend of Indira Gandhi was dispatched to Islamic countries to convince them and argue for India.

Till major part of 1971, India kept hoping that good sense will prevail in Pakistan government after understanding the ground realities and foreign nations in general and USA in particular will put adequate pressure on Pakistan to resolve the dispute by granting autonomy to East Pakistan which Mujibur Rahaman repeatedly voiced through his six points formula. Indira Gandhi also hoped that millions of refugees will go back to their home if such a political arrangement fructify. But it did not happen that way.

General Sukhwant Singh avers, “The more international pressure became ineffective the, more India was pushed closer to thinking of war,…more it alienated international option. Yahya Khan fully exploited this in many capitals.” On 19 July 1971, Yahya Khan declared in an interview with a correspondent of *The Financial Times*, London, that, “if India made any attempt to seize any part of East Pakistan” this would be treated as an attack on Pakistan, “I shall declare war, let the world note. Nor will Pakistan be alone.”

India’s External Affairs Minister, Mr. Swaran Singh promptly replied to the ‘threat of war’ by Yahya. He said:

> Pakistan had been all along trying to mislead world opinion by asserting that Pakistan’s problem was with India and not with the people of Bangladesh. The Pakistani military regime’s reckless brutality had landed it in a morass. Pakistan
must realize that only a settlement with the representatives of Bangladesh would
solve the problem. But so long it did not realise these activities of the Mukti
Bahini would increase. And if Pakistan made this an excuse to launch an attack
on India, “we will defend ourselves” 26

On 15 August , on the Independence Day of India, emboldened by the Indo-Soviet
Friendship, Prime Minister Indira Gnadhi announced from the rampart of Red Fort, Delhi that, “We do not want war. We do not rattle sabres But India is prepared for any
emergency”. 27

Along with diplomacy, military on both sides were carrying out preparations to meet war
like contingency. Thus having kept the military option open, Mrs. Gandhi set on a final
attempt to impress the international community to pressurize and pursue Yahya Khan to
embark on a political solution to the East Pakistani crisis and create a favourable
situation to facilitate return of refugees. She first began her journey with Soviet Russia.
In Moscow she said, “We cannot but be perturbed when a fire breaks out in a neighbour’s
house. What happened in East Bengal can no longer be regarded as Pakistan’s domestic
affair. More than nine million Bengalis have come into our country. We cannot be
expected to absorb them. We have problems enough of our own and we certainly do not
need to add to our vast population.” 28

On 23 October, Indira Gandhi embarked on a three-week tour to several Western Nations, namely, US, France, Britain, West Germany, Belgium and Australia. She did her best to explain the situation in South Asia, requested for their help to share economic burden towards managing the refugees and asking them to pursue Pakistan Government for an expeditious political settlement of the East Pakistan problem. She also assured the world that India would not assume the role of an aggressor. She also expressed her willingness to meet Yahya and discuss. But she reiterated that any settlement in East Pakistan has to be negotiated with Mujib and the elected leaders of the Awami league. Yahya was absolutely rigid in his stand of refusing to deal with Mujib and other Awami leaders whom Yahya termed traitors.

**Military Strategy: India**

Because of the past experience of wars with China and Pakistan, Indian Armed Forces
did not assess any threat from East Pakistan nor did it cater for a contingency plan for a
major operation in East Pakistan. Siliguri corridor was always considered a strategically vulnerable area and as such its protection was planned for. As per the existing threat assessment, northern and western borders of India were thought strategically vulnerable because of the earlier threat perception. With the new worsening situation in East Pakistan, Indian military had to relook at their national security strategy de novo. It was assessed, if an operation had to be undertaken in East Pakistan, it has to be ensured that any threats in Western and Northern borders which Pakistan always considered as their primary objectives during any Indo-Pakistan war, had to be properly taken care of. India did not have sufficient forces to take care of simultaneous threats of Pakistan and China if enjoined by them. As Pakistan by August had moved sufficient troops in East Pakistan, they were capable of giving a good defensive battle.

As for an offensive operation in East Pakistan, bulk of the troops had to be mustered from the formations deployed in Northern borders against China. This thinning out was a risky proposition because China could have taken advantage of it. Therefore, timings of the operations was planned during winter months when passes are closed because of snow. Accordingly, any time between December-January was considered suitable. It was thought of that a calculated risk of thinning out from the northern border could be taken because of the timing as well as the deterrence, Indo-Soviet Treaty of Friendship had on China. Having considered all the factors, ‘a strategy of offensive defence in the West and, defence in the North and a swift offensive in the East was finalized broadly.’

Though, importance of Dacca as the gravitas centre was understood by the higher echelons of the army, but factoring, Pakistan’s defensive capability, numerous river obstacles, and likely international and United Nations intervention for a ceasefire Dacca was not earmarked as stated final objective in the beginning as detailed planning could be carried out for the capture of territory up to the major river line. Many have criticized non inclusion of Dacca in the initial operational directives issued by Army Head Quarters. General Krishna Rao, who was one of the Divisional Commanders during this operation, writes about the strategy in Eastern Theatre:

As Pakistan had sufficient troops to offer adequate resistance, to any advancing troops, any premature adventure on Dacca could prove to be unsound. It was felt that full advantage should be taken of the geographical configuration, which in
turn indicated that land operations should be launched from all three sides, while Naval operations should be launched in the South. A Naval blockade would ensure isolation of East Pakistan. As there were only two squadrons of Air Force in East Pakistan, by knocking these out of the war as early as possible after the start of the war, a condition of war supremacy could be created, where by ground forces would be able to operate freely without enemy air interference. As far as the land forces were concerned, it was considered that an advance to the major rivers from the different Sectors and securing the available ferries, would facilitate launching of operations into the Dacca Bowl and its ultimate capture.³⁰

General Sam Manekshaw, Chief of Indian Army and also the Chief of Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee had a difficult task in his hand to take care of Western front, as well as Eastern front against Pakistan and North and North Eastern front against any Chinese threat. His basic strategy was a blitzkrieg offensive operation in the East and defend and hold West and carry out limited offensive operation where possible. He took calculated risk by thinning out troops deployed against Chinese to build up forces in Eastern theatre. Unlike India, Pakistan had an advantage of ability to quickly mobilize army formations for war because their cantonments were located closer to the border. India’s politico-military strategic thinkers were not very sure about responsible behavior on the part of Yahya who could plunge into war without much provocation. His series of public sabre rattling statements in various national and international forums were matter of concern for India. To obviate any such design, in September, Manekshaw after obtaining political clearance commenced mobilization of the army formations from interior locations of India to areas in proximity of the international borders opposing Pakistan in both East and West Wing. Air Chief and Naval Chief too readjusted their resources and carried out positioning their units accordingly as per joint planning. To ensure better inter services coordination, Eastern Air Headquarter based in Shillong and Eastern Navy based at Vizag, positioned their advance Head Quarters in Calcutta.

Military Historian D.K Palit opined that the core of the Eastern Command plan in the Bangladesh campaign was:

“….contain the enemy strong points at the border while powerful mobile thrusts, by a series of by-passing moves, cut the enemy’s line of communication and raced ahead for the Dacca “bowl”. There would be three major thrusts, one each
from each of the three army corps, and a lesser thrust from the Meghalaya areas. Each would strive to by-pass major resistance and make for the strategic target, while leaving behind detachments to contain and eventually liquidate centers of resistance. With the cooperation and support of the air and naval arms, he would isolate Dacca.”

In the Eastern front, Lt Gen J S Aurora planned a multipronged offensive and from as many directions as possible to destroy the enemy forces and captures maximum territory. Multi directional attack can be defined as an attack launched by balanced groups with inbuilt reserves, simultaneously along more than one axis, each adequately apart contributing to the accomplishment of the final mission which otherwise would have required a large number of attacks in phases. The concept of multidirectional attacks offers a greater degree of moral ascendancy over the defender, offensive action, initiative and chance of success besides economising on troops and time. A major advantage of such strategic plan is, ‘earmarking of separate troops for diversionary attacks or feint attacks will not be required’.

Surprise which is a key factor towards success of operation is bound to be achieved through multidirectional attack. For a defender it was difficult to ascertain total intension of the attacker as simultaneous attacks from different directions will lead to confusion, isolation and also will undermine defenders morale. Defenders attention remains divided so does his resources to react while facing multidirectional/ multi prong attacks.’

It was possible for the Indian forces to carryout isolation and envelopment of the Pakistani forces by multi prong attacks by different Corps and within the Corps by multi directional attacks by the Divisions. This strategy gave flexibility and thereby ensured exploitation by those formations who gained success. Surprisingly, though discussed during the planning stage, possibly anticipating a political settlement, but capture of Dhaka as the ultimate objective was not formally planned in Delhi or Kolkata. Events took a different turn so did the decision regarding the final objective.
Government of India’s Policy Directives for Military Option

As the situation in the east kept deteriorating and Pakistan mobilized its forces in the west, in October 1971, India laid down the following limited objectives for its possible military operations.\(^\text{32}\)

1. To assist the Mukti Bahini in liberating a part of Bangladesh, where the refugees could be sent to live under their own Bangladesh government.
2. To prevent Pakistan from capturing any Indian territory of consequence in Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Rajasthan or Gujrat. This was to be achieved by offensive defence and not merely passive line-holding.
3. To defend the integrity of India from a Chinese attack in the north.

The Indian Navy (IN)

Indian navy’s strategy was to keep sea lines of communication open for India and deny the same to Pakistan. In the East, navy was tasked to isolate Bay of Bengal and make all the ports of East Pakistan inoperative so that Pakistan cannot use them. In the West, destroy Karachi port and its ancillary installations.

The strategy of Indian Air Force and Indian Navy was part of the overall military strategy of India and each service because of close coordination since the planning stage, compliments each other to achieve overall aim of the national strategy.

The Indian Air Force (IAF)

Based on the directive issued by the Cabinet to the Chiefs Staff Committee, the war aims for IAF operations were laid down as follows: \(^\text{33}\)

(a) To defend the home base against enemy air attacks.
(b) To support the Army in the field, and to do it, gain and maintain a favourable air situation over the tactical area, and mount reconnaissance, interdiction and other operations having a direct bearing on the outcome of the land battle.
(c) To conduct counter air operations, i.e. reduce the effectiveness of the PAF by destroying its aircraft and bases.
(d) To provide air transport support to own forces.
(e) To provide maritime support to the Navy.
Strategic Mission emphasis throughout the war was on interdiction. In the West, the IAF’s primary tasks were disruption of Pakistan’s communications, destruction of fuel and ammunition dumps, and disruption and prevention of ground force concentrations to thwart major offensive against India. On the Eastern front, while the Indian Army launched a blitzkrieg operation, the IAF’s strategic objective was to make Pakistan Air Force non operative by knocking off the aircrafts and by carrying out selective bombing on the runways to make them unserviceable, there by achieve total air superiority. In addition, provide direct support to the ground forces during the Indian Army’s blitzkrieg offensive operation.\(^{34}\)

**Pakistan’s Political Strategy**

Pakistan’s anti India obsession was prominently visible all through the crisis, post the national general election held in December 1970, to abortive political negotiations between Mujib with Bhutto and Yahya. Pakistan for every problem in East Pakistan blamed India, be it victory of Awami League in the election or increased regional aspirations expressed through Mujib’s Six Points election manifesto, or the subsequent exhibition of spirit of Bengaliness. Pakistan failed in resolving the domestic political problem by a political solution. “The primary objective of Pakistan’s foreign policy making from May through the December war to constrain India from acting in a way that threatened the integrity of Pakistan or that would force a political settlement on any terms other than those stipulated by military regime”\(^{35}\).

Pakistan made an aggressive effort towards obtaining support of the international community toward restraining India by calling their attention.

**Pakistan’s Assessment of the Situation:**\(^{36}\)

a. India could extend limited support and training to the Bengali guerrillas, but would not intervene militarily.

b. Pakistan army and auxiliary force have capability to tackle the Mukti Bahini and they will not be a major threat to overpower the state machinery or make Eastern Wing free by guerrilla warfare.
c. Mukti Bahini will not be able to pull it off if India could be pursued by the international community to withdraw support.

Sisson & Rose avers, “Throughout, Pakistan’s strategy toward India was to constrain and to defend; and throughout the autumn months Pakistani leaders looked outward to the international community for salvation rather than inward for political solution.”

To exert pressure on India, Pakistan tried hard to win the sympathy of the Islamic countries, the Western bloc and China. At the same time they pressed hard for UN intervention on the subcontinent to turn politico-military conditions in their favour and thus perpetuate the status quo. They expected USA, China and the Arab countries to help and join them in their war. They received very little direct support which belied their expectation. Despite coaxing by USA, China didn’t move its force against India in Chumbi Valley (Sikkim). US deployed its air craft carrier 7th Fleet on 10th December 1971 but could not alter the course of war.

**Pakistan’s Military Strategy**

Since inception of Pakistan, bulk of Pakistan’s armed forces were stationed in West Pakistan, with a Division–sized force in East Pakistan. Pakistan Army’s vision was “Defence of the East Pakistan lies in West Pakistan.” It was originally based on an analyses of Field Marshall Auchinlek about the defence potential of Indian sub continent during the British Raj. Taking cue out of it, Field Marshall Ayub Khan made this as Pakistan’s national defence strategy which continued till 1971. General Niazi writes:

> this strategic vision means that, battle of the East will be fought in the West”.

Translated into coherent terms, this means that the decision in a war with India would be obtained on the Western Front by launching a vigorous offensive to capture a sizable chunk of strategically important Indian Territory. East Pakistan garrison, on the other hand, would fight a defensive cum limited offensive battle, by keeping the maximum number of Indian troops engaged and tied down for a given period, until the decision on the Western Front is achieved.

Based on this strategic concept, Pakistan in 1971 planned to fight the decisive battle in J&K and Punjab. They also perceived that their allies like USA, China etc. may join them in their war and also like past this time too, United Nation will pressurize India to agree for cease fire before any major damage is done.
About the Pakistan’s overall strategic concept: of war against India, Niazi asserts:

This concept was adopted after protracted trials based on copious studies, and remained the basis of our military strategy till the end of the 1971 war. Within the context of this concept, the plans for fighting a war with India in East Pakistan were not to be in isolation, but an integral part of the overall strategy. The battle plans of both the theatres were concomitant and interdependent….The theatre plans were accordingly evolved to support each other.39

**Pakistan Air Force (PAF) Strategy**

Pakistan’s Air Force Strategy and concept of operation has been analyzed by Jasjit Singh taking cue from the Pakistan Air Force’s official historians. Following are the highlights:40

(a) Begin war with preemptive strikes on Indian air base and radar facilities.
(b) Give maximum support to General Tikka Khan’s strike force (Army Reserves, ! Corps and 2 Corps) , with five divisions at his disposal proposed offensive into India by a pincer attack in tandem to capture maximum Indian territory in the area south of Sutlej River to ease off pressure in the East Pakistan.
(c) Achieve a condition of air superiority in the projected area of offensive operation.
(d) Continue proving protective cover to strike force.
(e) Undertake interdiction tasks destroying Indian supply line, air bases, and ground forces.
(f) PAF to maintain offensive pressure on the IAF until army’s offensive was launched.
(g) Provide needed air support to Pakistan Army’s holding action along the entire 3,700 kilometer border from Kashmir to Kutch.
(h) Provide limited air support to Pakistan Navy (PN).

**Overall Strategy of Pakistan Navy (PN)**

Pakistan had a small navy with vintage ships and equipments. In nutshell, its overall strategy was to keep its ports secure and operative. Also secure sea line of communications to ensure uninterrupted commercial shipping.
Pakistan’s War Strategy in East

Based on the broad military strategy, mission given to Lt. General Niazi, GOC Eastern Command of former East Pakistan were:

a) Evict guerrillas
b) No territory to fall into enemy hands which they can declare as Bangladesh
c) Defend East Pakistan against external aggression

Aligning with the mission, four lines of defence in East Pakistan revolving around various important communication centers/towns were developed into fortress concept of defence by Lt Gen Niazi. Tactical level of the design of battles and its execution have been covered in Chapter-VII.

Comments on Pakistan’s Strategy in East Pakistan

Pakistan government assessed that India as and when it gets involved, will capture adequate territory sufficient to accommodate the refuges and Bangladesh Government in Exile. They thought that India’s socio-economic problem created because of the influx of refugees will thus be addressed. Any war having longer duration and higher intensity will be halted by China through physical intervention by joining the war in support of Pakistan, and by the diplomatic intervention of the United States, and the United Nations leading to cease fire. Scenario of war leading to capture of Dacca and the complete East Pakistan was never perceived by the Pakistani strategic planners. General KV Krishna Rao writes,” Task given to Niazi was “prevent internal subversion and defend East Pakistan against external aggression”

Niazi’s strategic thinking was naturally influenced by the assessment made at the higher Government level whereby only limited aims were attributed to India. Therefore, the effective defence of the Dacca Bowl, the political and military heartland of East Pakistan, never formed the basis for evolution of the strategy for defence of East Pakistan

Strategy of Government of Bangladesh in Exile

Historian Muhit wrote that, “proclamation of independence provided the basis for organization and direction of efforts” . Central direction on the liberation war commenced from 17 April 1971, the date Bangladesh Provisional Government came into
being. In absence of Mujib, under the leadership of Mr. Syed Nazrul Islam, Acting President and Mr. Tajuddin Ahmed, Prime Minister of the Provisional Bangladesh Government functioning from Calcutta. Bangladesh Government sought help of Indian Government for all types of support including arming, equipping, training the Mukti Bahini and also to lend her voice in the international forum for to put pressure on the Pakistan Government for an expeditious solution of the crisis. Early May, Manekshaw issued instruction to Eastern Command giving a policy direction about Mukti Bahinis training, equipping and support by BSF and Army to enhance its capability. All through, Bangladesh Government in Exile was coordinating with HQ Eastern Command to improve operational efficiency of the liberation force.

Another very important strategy adopted by Bangladesh Government in Exile was to rouse conscience of the world by writing to world leaders and deputing appropriate emissaries across the globe. Mr. Bhasani wrote to Mao Tse Tung and other world leaders; text is given in Appendix 7. Justice Abu Syed Chowdhury who with the tacit support of British Government opened an office in London for creating public opinion, was the main voice of Bangladesh in U.K., Europe, America, Latin America, Canada etc. Text of his address in Europe is given in Appendix 8. He also led a sixteen member delegation to the United Nations in an effort to plead on behalf of Bangladesh. Justice Chowdhury periodically issued rebuttals to Pakistan’s propaganda to uncover the truth.44

Bangladesh Government in Exile as part of its strategy, also made a good psychological impact through the Radio Station named Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra, and media briefings with two folds aim, one: to motivate the freedom fighters and Bengalis across the globe to rise to their cause by raising funds, two: shaping opinion of international communities in favour of Bangladesh.

Bangladesh government as part of its strategy all through tried its best along with India to ensure safety of Mujibur Rahaman. It may be recalled Yahya announced commencement of in-camera trial of Mujibur Rahaman. Anticipating grave threat to his life, The Acting president of Bangladesh, Mr. Syed Nazrul Islam, warned President Yahya Khan that any attempt on the life of the Sheikh Mujibur Rahman will destroy Pakistan.45
Sometime in mid-October, Mr. JN Dixit and Mr. S.K.Singh, both from Indian External Affairs Ministry were sent to Calcutta to exchange views with the Bangladesh Government in Exile. Officials of Bangladesh Prime Minister’s office told them that, “while a guerilla warfare could continue for many years, the various groups of the freedom fighters will not be able to overcome the Pakistani military without direct Indian military support. Col. M.A.G. Osmani, who was titular head of all the freedom fighters, gave a clear assessment that if there was no direct military support from India, the youthful groups fighting the West Pakistan army would be reduced to carrying on a hopeless struggle which may ultimately fade away.”

Dixit writes that following specific suggestions were made by the Mujibnagar Government in Exile to the Government of India in October which can be termed as part of their strategy that involves India:

(a) Bangladesh Government should be given formal recognition and Bangladesh existence as an independent country should be legally acknowledged.

(b) A Joint Command should be formed between the Indian Armed Forces and the Mukti Bahini of Bangladesh to draw up immediate plans for full-scale military operations against Pakistan armed forces in Bangladesh.

(c) India should indicate to the United Nations that given the dialotory attitude of majority of the members of the organization, India and Bangladesh would not countenance any intervention by the United Nations which may aim at a compromise scaling the demand for complete independence of Bangladesh.

The Government in Exile opted for the best course option, “to carry on the struggle in the hope that people of Bangladesh would keep the spark of freedom aglow and the world at large would become increasingly aware of their struggle. Guerilla warfare was an essential ingredient of the struggle.” It also established and used Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra to motivate the freedom fighters and the Bengalis all over the world so that liberation struggle could sustain. It sent emissaries and wrote to many foreign nations for support and influence Yahaya for an expeditious political solution along with release of Mujibur Rahaman and other Awami League leaders. Bangladesh Government sent a delegation to the United Nations to be heard though formal permission was not granted. They resorted to various means to raise funds for sustaining their civil war. Mukti Bahini
acted like their sword arm who fought independently by resorting to guerilla tactics and also in the final stage as part of the Indian regular force.(Mitro Bahini).

**Mukti Bahini/Resistance Group:** In addition to the re organized regular armed forces under Col Osmani , various other categories of freedom fighters and resistance group(generic term Mukti Bahini) became the sword – arm of the Bangladesh struggle . Basic strategy was spelt out in the ‘Teliarapara Document’ approved by the Bangladesh Government in Exile. Because of various diluted versions and distortion of history of Mukti Bahini, the senior commanders in May 2008, have jointly prepared a historical paper named “Bangladesh Liberation War -1971: The Strategy and Organization of the Fighting Forces” About the broad strategy ,it states the following:

(a) A large number of guerrillas would be sent inside Bangladesh to strike at the enemy everywhere through raids and ambushes.

(b) Industries would not be allowed to run. This would be achieved by blowing up electrical poles and power sub-stations-thereby disrupting power supplies.

(c) Pakistanis would not be allowed to export any raw materials or finished products. This would be achieved by disrupting the port facilities and destroying warehouses where such materials are stored.

(d) Vehicles, railways, and river crafts which were for movement of enemy troops and military supplies would be systematically attacked and destroyed.

(e) Tactical planning would be drawn in such a manner that the enemy was forced to split in to smaller groups. After isolating the enemy, the guerillas would strike deadly blows to the enemy groups.

Mukti Bahini, aligning with its performance and capability and the type of support it received from BSF and Indian Army, changed its operational strategy which is evident during pre-monsoon, monsoon and post monsoon phases of operations undertaken by them.
Conclusion

How does one examine appropriateness of politico-military strategy formulated and executed during the Bangladesh Liberation War 1971? Military strategy is derived from the political strategy which leads to evolution of national policy. “In achieving policy goals, strategy must pass four simple tests: it must be politically acceptable; it must be feasible; it must be suitable to the circumstances; and it must be sustainable not only in terms of resources, but also in the common will of the members of an organisation or the people of a nation to see it through”.\(^{51}\) Retrospectively, it can be said that Pakistan’s political strategy of different treatment to one wing with 55% of its population by disrespecting the ‘ballot’ and subduing the resultant protests by ‘bullets’ created enemy within. Common will of the country was divided and measures adopted were unsuitable to the circumstances. Feasibility study and risk analysis should have given Pakistan answer that military strategy adopted by them against a bigger Indian Armed Forces supported by Mukti Bahini was not sound. But they had an impractical assumptions and a false belief which added to their failure. That China, and United States will enjoin them physically to fight the war against India was an impractical assumption. Despite Bhutto’s return from China empty handed, President Yahya Khan had claimed that the “Chinese Ambassador in Islamabad had assured him that within 72 hours (from December 12 ) the Chinese Army will move towards the border.”\(^{52}\) Pakistan had deeply embedded false belief that, Muslims had never been defeated by the Hindus so they can not be beaten ever. “Their ….military planning was bolstered by a firm conviction, held even through the end of the December war, that it was impossible for Pakistan to lose a war to India. Such an outcome was inconceivable; in the worst case some miracle would intervene to save Pakistan.”\(^{53}\)

When the war started, Nurul Islam was named to become Prime Minister and Bhutto was made Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister. A move by Yahya to keep himself in power, to keep Mujib and other senior Awami league leaders based in India out of power despite popular choice, and to keep Bhutto under check. But Bhutto had altogether different aim which was proved as the events unfolded and more historical truths discovered. India’s the then Foreign Secretary, Mr. T.N. Kaul writes that,” The military leadership of Pakistan fell into Bhutto’s trap”.\(^{54}\) Yahya planned to install the civilian
government prior to the meeting of the National Assembly. Yahya was too late in his
effort to install a civilian government, also had a false hope that even at that stage when
the war has commenced a political solution of his choice can work to keep the both wings
together. All were more interested in power than survival of Pakistan as conceptualized
by Jinnah. Yahya wore two hats: Commander of the Armed Forces and Head of the
State. And he was no Napoleon or Fredrick the Great who could handle both with ease
and efficiency.

Following Sheikh Mujibur Rahman’s declaration of independence in March 1971, “The
Government of India decided on a two track approach to resolve East Bengal crisis.
Firstly, to support the liberation struggle to exert pressure on Pakistan Government to
respect the electoral verdict of 1971. Secondly, mobilize international public opinion
through bilateral contacts and the United Nations. While India successfully followed the
first track, the second track was beset with several hurdles, particularly because of United
States support to Pakistan ‘.regime’.” 55

Since beginning of the East Pakistan crisis, “Mrs. Indira Gandhi believed and made it
amply clear through various statements that there must be a political, rather than
military, solution to Pakistan’s problem in its eastern province and that the great powers
had a special responsibility to help see such a solution through.” 56

With the advantage of hindsight of more than four decades, one can possibly deduce that
India’s evolution of politico –military strategy and her response during the Bangladesh
crisis were well planned. Fervent appeal to the international communities to see the
reason and seek resolution of the crisis through political means was the main theme till
mid November. Diplomacy and preparation for a possible war went on in tandem.
Basically a strategy of ‘one leg on the ground’, if one fails, other can stand in good stead.
A nation should not be found wanting in handling a situation like that of 1971 for want of
strategy encompassing all aspects of national security interest. Series of sequential steps
were taken and this effort was to prove vital later to justify military action by India.
Pakistan and a few others felt that India orchestrated dismemberment of Pakistan which
has been refuted by ample historical proofs. Dixit writes:
Political and psychological factors characterizing the East Pakistan crisis made India’s involvement in the liberation struggle inescapable. The point to be understood that India’s support to the liberation struggle of Bangladesh was not a pre–planned conspirational strategic move but a politico–strategic response to the continuous threats which Pakistan had been posing against the unity and territorial integrity of India right since the partition of the country in 1947.  

As Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, General Manekshaw as well as other two service chiefs, understood the importance of role and involvement of politicians and bureaucrats in finalizing defence policy and evolving a broad national strategy. Service Chiefs worked in close coordination with them. Manekshaw’s proximity to Mrs. Indira Gandhi, and mutual respect for Mr. D. P. Dhar and understanding between them helped in formulation of national policy guide lines. Never before there was such synergy amongst, politicians, bureaucrats and the defence forces. “India’s proclaimed policy has all along been never to be the first to strike, but only to retaliate in the event of an attack by an adversary.” While mentioning about Indian Military strategy in context to Western theatre, General Krishna Rao avers, “Indian Military strategy was tailored to meet the requirements of the Governments policy. Formations all along the Front were to remain on the defensive initially, if Pakistan started the war, commands could retaliate by going on the offensive, on orders from Army Headquarters and secure the limited objectives set to them. There was no question of any efforts at dismembering West Pakistan, as mischievously propagated in certain quarters.”

India showed her restraint and belief in democratic norms which are visible through her graded response and measured public utterances by its leaders, where as Pakistani leaders and media were full of war rhetorics and battle cry ‘crush India’. Throughout the period of crisis, “Pakistan was desperately seeking UN intervention and proposed international supervision of troop withdrawal and stationing UN observers” which India resisted all along. On 24 November in Islamabad, Yahya stated that within the next ten days, he would be fighting in the front. “Yahya thus wanted to settle a political problem through military solution in spite of Pakistan’s apparent weakness in the east.” Yahya failed to listen to the sage advice of Clausewitz who said, “War cannot be divorced from political life. Whenever this occurs in our thinking about war, the many links that connect the two elements are destroyed and we are left with something pointless and devoid of sense.”
Politico-military strategy is to be finalized by the leaders keeping long term aim in view. The country must benefit from the courses of strategic options it has charted, weighed and opted.

“The strategists deals with the future- a future that is volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous. The purpose of strategy is to influence that future to serve one’s national interest better.” Military is nation’s last means of carrying out national objective. Only a visionary leader can use this asset aptly. Force without wisdom falls of its own weight—so said Horace. Best politico-military strategy would always be: ‘use military force only in the national interest, with full understanding of the end goal and that too when victory is assured. National interest, well considered end goal, and victory: all three are abiding parameters. Because, unlike a game, ‘in war-there is no runners-up’.
End Notes: Chapter-VI


5. Namrata Goswami, *India’s Strategic Culture is Plain to See*, Online Asia Times( www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/SOU-01-050413.html), viewed on 1/3/2016


8. Dixit. J.N.p.49


10. Ibid.p.151.

11. Ibid.

12. National Herald, 5 April 1971. Subramanyam advocated in his article that India must launch military operation right now because the situation created by East Pakistan crisis offered India with “an opportunity the like of which will never come again.”


15. Ibid, p.59


22. Ibid, p.49.


27. Singh, Sukhwant, p.108.


34. See website, indianairforce.nic.in/show_page.php?pg_id=71, viewed on 21 January 2016.

35. Sisson & Rose, p.222.

36. Ibid., p.162.

37. Ibid., p.222


41. Niazi, p.80.

42. Krishna Rao, V.K., General, p.166.


46. Dixit J.N., pp.85-86.

47. Ibid., p.85.


50. *Bangladesh Liberation War -1971: The Strategy and Organization of the Fighting Forces*, A primary document produced by the Sector Commanders and


52. Manekar, D.R., Pakistan Cut To Size, Indian Book Company, New Delhi,1972,p.150.Here the author has cited a top secret message from Anderson Papers. He also quotes, Anderson where it discloses that Soviet Ambassador in New Delhi ,Nicolai Pegov had assured Mrs. Indira Gandhi on December, 13 that Soviets would open a diversionary action against Chinese and would not allow the Seventh fleet to intervene. Apparently the Soviet Military attaché in Kathmandu reported to have called upon his Chinese counter part advising if the latter seriously intervened in the India –Pakistan


57. Dixit J.N. Liberation and Beyond: Indo Bangladesh Relations,p.46.

58. Singh, Sukhwant p.54.

59. Krishna Rao, VK, p. 207.

60. Ibid.,p.286.

61. Singh, Lachhman, p.22.

