FUTURE MEDIA-MILITARY RELATION IN THE CONTEXT OF BANGLADESH

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INTRODUCTION

"Journalists will say that war is too important to be left to generals. Reporting of war is too important to be left to reporters. Soldiers need to get involved in this."

-Major General Patrick Brady - 1990 (former Public Relations Chief of US Army)

In all over the world, military and the media have a deep relationship though it has been debated for decades. Military needs a good image to uphold the morale of the troops and a rightness of the cause, appreciation of their job to make the supreme sacrifice if required (Bashar, Abul Group Captain-2003).The media military relation is highly altered in a globalized scenario keeping in view the future role of military forces both in peace and in conflict. The relationship between the military and the media is changing, propelled by certain momentous developments, in all the major democracies of the world, including Bangladesh. The revolution in information technology, from the transistor through widespread digitisation, deeply networked communications, as well as, the revolutionary changes in the employment of airpower have profoundly influenced analysts and planners and has completely changed the conduct of war. This scenario of change, which has evolved over a number of years, has shifted the balance towards the media and in the process, thrown up a new series of challenges to the military; especially in terms of media military relationship.In Future, the role of the press in reporting on the military is likely to be enhanced, and the military is increasingly to be fixed in the media focus. In such circumstances the military must take a long hard look at how it interfaces with the media and make the necessary changes (the necessary adjustments by the media not ruled out) to re-establish a relationship in which the military and the media will be able to successfully work alongside each other to the benefit of both. After all, the media have an important role to interpret the military to society and society to the military. Despite clashes, both military and media have worked together in the past. May it be in Vietnam War, Korean War, Gulf war and in the Liberation war of Bangladesh. (Tareq, Alam -2008).

After independence, Bangladesh has experienced intermittent military intervention, which brought in its wake restrictions on the media in accessing military related information. Repeated military interventions and political instability have resulted in an extended gap between the military and the media. After the fall of General Ershad's regime in 1990, the situation has gradually improved. However, after the 1/11, when army was supporting the caretaker government, the role of military was also severely criticized by the media and civil society. Hence, Bangladesh has still some problems in the area of military-media relationship that needs to be addressed.The Bangladeshi media, though now operating in the global arena, and very vibrant business industry as well, have so far not been able to use, to the desired extent, this advantageous situation for authentic, objective and substantive treatment of matters pertaining to defence, while the armed forces have yet to fully grasp the power and potential of the media in projecting their correct image.

Amidst these changing parameters and challenges of the media-military interface, the state of affairs in Bangladesh is not fully satisfactory. After thePilkhanacarnage in February 25, 2009, the role of media was criticized. There are apprehensions on the part both of the media and the military about each other's role and their contribution to governance, protection of democracy, national security and public opinion. Media is now enjoying total freedom in Bangladesh. The independent media has already emerged as the center of the democratic process and ultimately developing the potential to strengthen civil society institutions in Bangladesh. The media, in exercising their new found freedom of expression, have at times negatively impacted the military through their reporting. The military, now subservient to civilian control, needs to find new ways of undertaking their operations keeping in view the public support and national security.

There is difference of opinion about military and the media that media is interested in negative activities of military. This is the reason that military avoids media most of the time. Media feels that military is not transparent and is always try to hide the information from public view, reasoning national security is the vital reason. This resulted in a cold relation (ShaheenIqbal, NDC IRP, 2010). At times due to lack of knowledge or understanding media exaggerate the information about military which at times leads to strain relationship between this two. Though at present the relationship between media and military stand on a positive platform but which needs improvement in future for launching successful military operations.In the 21stcentury, the media in Bangladesh has acquired an entirely newdimension. With the entry of the internet (information

super way), permitting operation of private TV channels, web based newspapers, Bangladesh thus face 'media explosion ininformation age'.We now stand in a democracy where the media need the military to fulfill its role of informing the public. Healthy media- military relationship is a pre-requisite for a nation tothrive in a conflict situation. The basic tenet must hold: an unfettered press is a burden tothe military in the field, anathema at the seat of government and vital to a free, democraticsociety. Both the military and the media need to find out the balancing requirement, confer and agree. Despite the differences, it is a fact that both media and military are participantsin conflict situations. Therefore, media-military relations require a detail study.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW: MEDIA MILITARY INTERFACE

World War I and World War II

Media restrictions and media censorship were imposed during World War I and II though Army granted some privileges to journalists in world war-1 but not many. They were allowed to go to France, but not usually to the front lines. And this was criticized. Perhaps because of the criticism by the press of the restrictions during World War I, the restrictions upon the press were less severe during World War II. The first restrictions were placed in effect a year before Pearl Harbour was attacked. The military authority requested that newspapers not to publish any information about troop movements or ship construction. Prior to the American entry into World War II, the Army and Navy established censorship plans in case of war. On December 7, 1941, the FBI assumed temporary control of news censorship and telecommunications traffic into or out of the United States (Media-Online). In general, censorship during World War II was well-organized and fairly consistent.

Vietnam War. It was the first war that received independent TV coverage, and one of the myth that emerged at the time that US had lost the war because of media,known as the "first war fought on television"(Wolfsfeld, 2011,p.28). Vietnam War appeared to be a source of scourge in the media military relation in American history. A 1995 study of the military media relationship conducted by Frank Aukofer and Vice Admiral William P. Lawrence showed sharp differences between the two institutions. The source of disagreement appeared to be the "Post – Vietnam Blame Media Syndrome". In the Aukofer-Lawrence study, more than 64 percent of military officers agreed with the statement, "News media

coverage of the events in Vietnam harmed the war effort." The military was forced to withdraw due to a collapse of public support at home, a collapse fuelled by hostile coverage by the media, and particularly by TV.

Liberation War of Bangladesh. Media coverage of our great War of Liberation was a far reaching and a very positive effect on its outcome. At the beginning of Bangladesh War of Independence, media was not much organized or developed. There were few daily newspapers from Dhaka and Chittagong and "The Joi Bangla" from Naogaon and weekly newspaper 'Mujibnagar Sangbadpatra' (English). "The Joi Bangla" could continue its publication during the war. Besides, the weekly newspaper "Mujibnagar Sangbadpatra"(English) used to publish the horror acts of the Pakistanis for the international world. However "Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra" was the great source of inspiration for our freedom fighters as well for our common people. The broadcasting of "CharamPatra by M R Akhter Mukul and other famous nationalistic songs inspired the freedom fighters throughout the war and helped in reducing the suffering of the people and inspired the freedom fighters. It became the only source of information to learn the development of the struggle of the freedom fighters. The announcement of independence was also performed through this media.

Gulf War

Gulf War was the first test case for the global media network to cover a deadly war live with the help of satellite TV network. The media this time was with limited censorship. Having learned the experiences from Vietnam and Falkland campaign, the US military were ever prepared to handle the media in a planned and systematic way. More than 1600 reporters covered the war, which was of a great dimension after the World War II. Allied public relation departments found it extremely difficult to control and channel the CNN and BBC media teams. Regular press briefing were arranged at Dhahran and at Pentagon with details of the days events. It would be naive to believe that United States Generals were viewing CNN to acquire inputs of the combat area(Nair-1991). A major role of media was also to achieve the deception plan of coalition forces. After destroying all intelligence and surveillance system of Iraq, the demonstration and rehearsal of a large amphibious assault was carried out in the Persian gulf which was covered amply by news media specially CNN.

Kargill Conflict

Kargil became one of the worst nightmares for India. It not only caught them napping, but also exposed their extreme vulnerabilities and resulted in very high casualties. Having realised that, credit must be given to the Indians for their resilience and for their highly successful media and diplomatic campaign.

The way Indian media responded to the crisis, mobilized its resources and organized television programmes, newspaper reports, discussions, features, the famous "rogue army" posters and a wide array of coverage convinced the world media that Pakistan was on the wrong footing and the Indians were the aggrieved party. The Chanakyan principles of trickery and lies were fully exploited to dupe their own countrymen.

India also made a very intelligent use of the Internet and dedicated an exclusive website www.vijayinkargil.com to spread their propaganda. Trained PR officers manned chat sites on the web. On the other hand, the media was suppressed with iron hand within Pakistan. The Jung group and NajamShethi are two symbols of the growing belligerence of Pakistan media. Pakistan stands isolated in cyberspace with chat-rooms, message boards, chain letters and website expressing stock at the torture of Indian troops.

Principles of War Affecting Military-Media Relationship

For conducting any military operations, military leaders need to adhere some principles of war codified in the doctrine of that particular country.British Armed Forces, all leaders are trained in the 10 Principles of War. These short principles - many of them only a single word - are inherited from centuries of studying conflict and competition. While they are designed for warfare, they are a great set of guidelines for life in general and business in particular. The first principle is usually singled out as pre-eminent, with the second also considered to be special:

1. Selection and Maintenance of the Aim
2. Maintenance of Morale
3. Offensive Action
4. Security
5. Surprise

6. Concentration of Force

7. Economy of Effort

8. Flexibility

9. Cooperation

10. Sustainability/Logistics

These principles were codified by JFC Fuller, a Major General and military historian, after the First World War, but they incorporate the ideas of the greatest military thinkers in history including Sun Tsu, von Clausewitz and Napoleon. These set of principles are also accepted in the doctrine of Bangladesh Armed Forces and are taught to the all military leaders.Now it can be seen what are the principles of war affect the media military relationship:

"Security" becomes the most vital principle of war insofar as the military-media relationship is concerned.Commanders must prevent their own forces from being surprised and take calculated risks rather than gambling their forces. Hence, security is vital. It ranges from counter-intelligence to protect battle plans, and communications security to surveillance plans and flank security elements. This is the reason the military would shield its battle plans from the media before determining a time that it seems fit for dissemination. The media on the other hand, thinks the timing of dissemination is at their calling and this is where the tensions arise. Security is often interpreted as secrecy.

Media Landscape and Their Interactions with the Military

From the history of warfare military had observations about the role of media or press or vice versa. One of them is ignorance of operational requirement. First real "confrontation" was observed between the military and the media was in the Crimean War. William Howard Russell of the London Times exposed incompetence within the British high command. He reported on British misadventures, poor execution of the campaign and neglect towards casualties. It reformed British Medical Services; Florence Nightingale entered into the war and raised RED CROSS (Brown, Capt-92). In Bangladesh, Media probably are not giving appropriate attention about the role of peace keepers operating in the different parts of the globe. Military people think that media are less objective and less patriotic. Media often publish or broadcast misleading, unbalanced, fabricated, motivated and untrue news items. One of the most significant allegation against media by the military people is certain section of media are allergic to military and

not fair and balanced. Media have lacks of knowledge of defence needs. Role of media during the BDR carnage of 25 February 2009 was seriously criticized for initial two days. However military also to be blamed partially because they did not give required information/ true picture of the story to the media.

Challenges of Media–Military Relations

The spectrum of media has expanded so much due the advent of technology that a cell phone with camera can transmit a massage with live video throughout the world within a moment. The execution of death sentence of former Iraqi President Saddam Hossain could be viewed by the entire world instantly through the new media technology. Now the range of media includes all those platforms that empower a broad range of actors (individuals through nation states) to create and disseminate near real time or real time information with the ability to affect a broad worldwide audience, like internet websites, blogs and you- Tube etc. The present scenario has brought a bigger challenge before the military organizations in terms of handling new media technologies in the backdrop of its exponential reach, impact and the way the user content generated on these platforms can be distorted, manipulated andcirculated to millions in an instant which can be used by the enemy to its advantages. The usage of new media technology like in Israel-Hezbollah war of 2006 to in recent times Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant media campaign provides us an examples on how the current information environment has impacted the way the warfare is conducted today.In order to get information dominance in any given environment, undermining the importance and strength of new media can prove detrimental to the defence forces.

New media is one of the main forces in accelerating the trend of globalizations in the human society. Due to the thrust of new media, the global trend creates new social networks and activities, redefines political, cultural, geographical and other boundaries of human society, expands and stretchesso cialrelations, intensifies and acceleratessocial exchanges, and involves both the micro structures of person hood and macro structures of community. Givenits indispensable nature, nchallenging presence, infinitereach, deepimpact, it becomes paramount for the defence organization to understand it from the core and optimize its potentials for achieving the military objective.

Present Media- Military Relationship in Bangladesh

Present Relationship: An Overview. Presentlythe relationship between and media is on requirement basis. There is no continuous link between military and the media. The armed forces have an organization called ISPR (Inter Services Public Relation Directorate) under Ministry of Defence which is responsible for keeping contact with media agencies and performs all media related affairs of the armed forces. There is a perceptional differences that media feels military is not transparent and military feels media is interested about the negative aspects of military (Iqbal-2010). More over due to a long military rules are also responsible for distrust between this two organizations. This has resulted cold relationship. It is also important that due to very poor knowledge about the military affairs by the journalists, media at times projects either exaggerated or untrue information about military. This type of projection by the media leads to deterioration of relationship between media and military. At present both media and military maintains a fairly workable relations which needs improvement especially in the field of understanding each other.

Absence of a Comprehensive Media Policy. At present there is no clear cut media policy for the armed forces. Media is managed by the armed forces personal on required basis. A serious media phobia works among the armed forces personal even within the senior officers. There are lot of restrictions imposed by the respective services Headquarters concerning media handling. Some of them are:

a. Only ISPR is authorized to give any information related to armed forces to the media for publications.

b. Other than ISPR no member of the armed forces can contact with any media or can give any interview for private or official purpose without prior permission of appropriate authority.

A media policy is prepared by the AFD in 2010 which is still in draft form needs government approval. Draft media policy covers all aspects of media handling by the military personal at the appropriate level. Once this gets into motion the relationship of media military may get into a new heights.

Limitations of ISPR. ISPR is a very old and backdated organization having only 33 personals. (The organogram is at Annex A). The organization is headed by director at the rank of Lieutenant Colonel from the AEC Corps or an equivalent

officer from the Information Cadre of Civil Service. The officer of AEC or from civil service has very shallow knowledge about the operational aspects of military affairs. But the present regulations of ISPR does not permit any main stream military officer to be appointed as director. More so ISPR is also very poorly staffed. It does not have any branches outside Dhaka. It has to perform all its functions sitting at Dhaka. The most important thing is that ISPR functions under MOD but all military activities most importantly operational activities is planned, controlled and coordinated by the Armed Force Division (AFD). Therefore there is always a coordination gap between ISPR activities. For smooth functioning of ISPR, it has to be reorganized, adequately equipped, staffed with competent officer put under AFD.

Survey Result: Regarding Existing Relationship and Effects

A survey was conducted (questionnaire was at Annexure B) about the existing relationship. Total 50 respondent (all are senior military officials and civil bureaucrats) answered the questions. All the respondents were very spontaneous, gave positive answers and with the same opinion that a good media military relation can reduce the military intervention in future and can enhance the effect of military operations by taking the public opinion in their favour. Respondents also opined that present media military relationship is good and media need to come out from the partisan politics and yellow journalism. Military needs to take the media onboard about their activities and to train selected journalist as defence correspondents to cover the military activities, respondents opined.

Future Media Environment

Future media environment likely to be more complex. Just as time and experiences have shaped the military-media relationship of the past, so too will technological advances shape the military-media relationship of the future. Future military commanders will face a media in a technologically stronger position and even more competitively driven to report on military events than was the case in Desert Storm and other recent military operations. The media currently feels it does not have the capabilities needed to cover military operations.

Technological Advancement

During Desert Storm, the capability of cellular phones and portable satellite transmission equipment advanced to an astounding degree. CNN displayed this capability with their reporters' vivid descriptions of attacks on Baghdad. Despite the F-117's targeting of the international telephone exchange during the initial attack, the CNN crew was able to get its portable satellite connections working in a matter of minutes to broadcast to the world. This was the first time in war that the media broadcast live television from the enemy's capital while under attack. This stunning real-time narrative provided a world audience with bombing and cruise missile reports.

Future technology with respect to the media will be even more impressive. Specifically, the media is acquiring equipment that employs breakthroughs in miniaturization of electronic devices such as portable satellite-based phone and video systems. Motorola's Iridium system, for example, will enable world-wide communications for anyone with a cellular phone. The Iridium system will be a network of 66 low earth orbiting satellites and will provide voice, data, fax, and paging anywhere on earth.

Competitive Pressures

Now a days all the print and electronic media sell the news as product to the public and they also make profit through their rate of advertisement. The media which can provide real time authentic information can survive in the media competition. Otherwise, the viewers with a remote control at their hand switch to other channels. Both in peace and in conflicts media personals need to develop real professionalism and earn the credibility of the viewers to survive with their commodity.

Significantly, the media will be more diverse and fragmented in the future. Other nations and companies are starting 24-hour live news coverage to compete with CNN. News competition will make broadcasters more aggressive in reporting news and will make it more difficult to keep operationally sensitive news from leaking. Minutes in the television business can make the difference between winning or losing the public's viewership. Some media organizations may feel they have a responsibility to hold a story for security reasons, but do not want to be scooped by other news services. Thus, the temptation will be great to broadcast if they believe the story is going to come out anyway.

Analysis

The revolutions in the field of information technology have caused the media to have a much greater impact on operations. Thus it is imperative to take a closer look at the intricate relationship between the military and the media, and to understand the role of media in war.

The Military and The Media : Who Needs Whom?

This is the most important question while analyzing the relationship: who needs whom? Does the media need the military or military need the media? The answer is, however, may not be that simple. Throughout history both institutions have been at odds with each other. Our war of Liberation shown a beautiful cooperation and media's role as force multiplier but In the Vietnam war it was opposite. The military is enduringly popular, but is at its best in battle and conflicts like a conditioned athlete. However, it too, has its share of incompetence. So when the military makes mistakes, they can be monumental. Besides territory, a large number of lives can be lost. The military are disciplined, hierarchical and live within a homogenous, closed culture that can be —and often is — hostile to outsiders. (Hali-online, 2000).

The news media, are often unpopular with the military for which they function independently, without rules, regulations, or even a Code of Conduct except for some that are self-imposed. The media's Newspapers, Radio, TV and Cable have a variety of interests of their own and set goals to be achieved. May have a separate political ideology. Yet at their best, the media provide the nation with a vital service keeping the people informed, aware and it is one of the pillars of the state.

When the two institutions meet during a conflict, clashes are desirable. The media wants to tell the story, and the military wants to win the war and keep casualties to a minimum. The media wants freedom, no censorship, total access and the capability to get their stories out to their audiences quickly. The military on the other hand, wants control. The greatest fear of a military commander in a pre-invasion scenario is that something might leak out that would tip off the enemy. Commanders want to keep his operational plan secret and also try to confuse the enemy and to achieve surprise. These are fundamental differences that will never change. At times the military and the media also have worked together in harmony but usually bitterness tarnishes their relationship.

During the wartime when there is a life and death struggle for the military, personally as well as institutionally oath bound to make supreme sacrifice. Their dedication, commitment and patriotism comes to their rescue instinctively and through their long training. Media lacks such training and has nothing personal at stake. The military needs projection of its popular activities on media for its image building and growing favourable public opinion. On the other hand, media need information on military affairs for preparing factual and credible news stories and also cooperation and security during war and conflict scenario. So a close working relation is also necessary for knowing each other's capabilities, limitations and constraint (Rob- 2015). It is for the civil media to come forward with the remedy. And for the military to provide its own media to fill the gap and, more importantly to serve the nation keeping the national interest above everything.

Media as A Force Multiplier

Without the public support, no battles or campaign can be won. War of Liberation is the greatest example of defeating a stronger army by the weak and poorly trained freedom fighters. One of the major cause of Pakistani defeat was that lack of public support. The CharamPatra by MR Ahther Mukul from Swadhin Bangla Betar Kenro use to revitalize the freedom fighters and in spite of lots of odds keep the morale high thus worked as force multiplier. Military leaders are aware that news media coverage of their operations can be a force multiplier. Many military leaders have come to the conclusion that media coverage not only develops public awareness and the support of military units, it has the side benefit of enhancing their morale by informing their families and friends of the activities of the troops. If used prudently, media is indeed a Force Multiplier as it builds public opinion.

Information Security and the Military Culture

The U.S. National Information Systems Security Glossary defines "Information Systems Security" as the protection of information systems against unauthorized access to or modification of information, whether in storage, processing or transit, and against the denial of service to authorized users or the provision of service to unauthorized users, including those measures necessary to detect, document, and counter such threats.(Online, Definition).Traditionally, information security implies the military practice of reviewing a reporter's newscopy prior to his

filing to ensure that no information of value to the enemy was released. This system was effectively used during the Second World War but now technological innovations have called into question the whole concept.

The "Vietnam Syndrome" leads most Americans to believe that they lost the war due to the total freedom given to the media in their coverage of the war. Their pessimistic reports tipped the public opinion against the conflict. The tales of atrocities of US troops on My Lai and Iwo Jima and, Jane Fonda's radio speeches from North Vietnam and media reports of US casualties stirred public opinion in USA against the War in Vietnam.

In Desert Storm the Pentagon decided to use information security to avoid a Vietnam-like situation. The imperative for secrecy was great, because if Iraqi commanders had had even an inkling of the US attack plan, they could have repositioned their forces, jeopardizing the success of the operation and inflicting significantly higher casualties on Allied Forces.

Important Media Lessons from the Gulf War and Kargil

It is always said that nobody learns from the history and those who do not learn from the history are relegated to become a part of history. It view of above discussions following lessons may be drawn from the Kargil and Gulf crisis so that in future, employment of media in military operations is done prudently:

a. Public opinion must be supportive as whole nations go to war not just the armed forces. Public opinion can be built by the media.

b. Operational secrecy in modern limited wars now requires the active involvement of the media.

c. The propaganda effect may be market oriented and in outcome of an advertising campaign. The media involved in the Gulf War had ties to the US arms industry

d. There is a need for reporters to be educated about the military and the military about the media.

e. Media coverage plays as a force multiplier. People get their perception of the military as a dedicated and professional organization from media reports, therefore, mutual trust and confidence must be developed among this two organization.

Common Goal of the Media and the Military

The political masters and the military commanders must be able to identify capability of the media shall be utilized to shape up the national will in support of overall war efforts. It shall not be left to the media's own understanding and interpretation only, which at times may become detrimental to national objectives. All must be able to understand the strength of the media for forming and shaping up the public opinion in favour of national core issue. Media can perform this job by educating the nation and keeping them informed by timely delivery of the correct information. It is needless to mention that, all these activities shall be undertaken jointly by media and military planners together. As a citizen, we have the solemn responsibility to be united and have an integrated efforts for achieving the national objectives.

The armed forces is responsible for safeguarding the state sovereignty, where all the citizens will enjoy the freedom. But they need to understand that armed forces need to be trained and equipped with modern armoury. In a developing country like Bangladesh allocation and expenditure of defence budget is always talked about. The media can play an important role by emphasizing the need of appropriate defence budget and also can educate the general massabout the issue.

The righteousness of the cause in extremely important to win in the battlefield. In war of Liberation, main reason of Pakistani defeat was that they did not have right cause to fight. At the strategic level, issues of national interest and national security are not always understood by the general mass. The mass media can take this responsibility to create the awareness concerning the issue among the people. War in totally is a very expensive affair, which need huge economic and material support both from home and abroad. In the event of low intensity conflict, or army's deployment in aid of civil power, armed forces may have to use media to attain the public opinion in favour of military operations. But in case of general war, it would involve all segment of society. This situation would demand more coordinated demand by the media and military to sensitize the people to support the campaign by all possible means.

Influence of Media in Future Military Operations

In present day world everybody is concerned about the influence of media. Media are now determining factors about the popularity of any party or government. Another important factor is the speed and the global reach of

the new international media. The capacity for independent assessment and reporting has been reinforced by an increasing independence in communications and dissemination of information through the global media. Globalization has conferred on the media formidable power to influence national and international public opinion. Large news corporations like CNN or BBC have global impact and today can be found in the offices of nearly every senior government and military official throughout the world.Today the media can bring the graphic realities of conflict almost instantaneously into the public's living room bringing the conduct of conflict to the scrutiny of everybody, not just the military leaders and politicians.

The global reach of the media could allow coverage by other nations not bound by considerations of operational security. Such coverage, including input from the Internet, would be beyond sanction, and fully able to feed footage into a global system allowing rapid relay to both combatants and their home nations. While belligerents could place restraints on media in the field, censorship would be almost impossible to maintain in the face of expectations in the home nation.Not only the journalists, every soldiers will have a smartphone in the future battlefield connected with internet, you Tube, sky pie and twitter and can communicate the entire globe within a second. This new media technology can seriously influence the future conduct of war.

Challenges of Future Media-Military Relations in Bangladesh

The future media will have access to new technologies that will allow them to easily broadcast from the battlefield. New, highly mobile satellite uplinks and high resolution satellite images will make operational security very difficult for the operational commander. Also new networks such as the internet and you tube will distribute information from a wide range of sources very quickly. New world-wide satellite communication links from a variety of companies will allow unprecedented communication from virtually any spot on earth.

The present competitive environment of the media will get tougher for news organizations. Not only world-wide news organizations, such as CNN, BBC or Al-Jazeera are increasing at a dramatic pace, our local electronic and print media are also growing fast. They can overwhelm the military commander with numbers. All the media are always in competition and will remain in pressure to report the story first which will likely to make it difficult for the media to cooperate with the military.

The future military commander will need to plan for a large influx of media representatives. Open coverage likely to be normal procedure for combat coverage. Additionally, the commander will have to anticipate that the media will provide sensitive information which may be at the hand of enemy and may have an impact and possibly on the conduct and outcome of the war. The military commander could also face adversaries with advanced techniques for manipulating the media. Therefore military commanders should be trained andcompetent to handle media.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the above study following recommendations are made:

a. Government should formulate a comprehensive media policy for the AF incorporating all aspects of media handling and appropriate training aspects for both military and media personals.

b. Government should focus on capacity building for both media and the military to face the challenges of advanced media technology which can manipulate the battlefield environment in this era of globalization.

c. Appropriate authority of Armed Forces may include the Media Effects as one of the principles of war.

d. ISPR should be re-organized and restructured,should be headed by a senior officer and it should be placed under AFD instead of MOD.

e. Media should play more pro-active role in creating awareness among the people so that they understand the capabilities and limitations of the armed forces. Media people should understand the operational requirements, sensitiveness and national interest behind each mission.

f. Military and media should have more interaction in the form of seminar, symposium and visits to various installations at various levels to develop better mutual trust and understanding.

CONCLUSION

The military and the media have a long history of cooperation and also conflict in wartime and in peace. The conflict in the relationship derives from the fact that the military and the press often have objectives that run counter to one another. The military wants to achieve surprise and maintain security to deny the enemy any useful information. The military would also prefer to restrict the transmission of images of war on television or newspapers. The media, on the other hand, want to provide firsthand information to the people and retain them as viewers, listeners, or readers and remain in the competitive media world.

Military should learn to tell their story of success, courage and glory to the media. Media should have access to the combat units, defence installation and cantonment areas. Timely response to the media is one of the means to improve relations with them. Interviewing by the concerned officers on a particular issue may be allowed. Briefing on defence budget would be mostly welcomed by the media personnel. Regular interaction through seminar, symposium on defence matter such as combating terrorism, UN peace keeping mission, disaster management, role of media and military in national development and ensuring national security may be arranged. Dissemination of defence information can build confidence among the citizens about the capability of AF in safeguarding national sovereignty and independence.Activities of AF may be published in the form of feature/article in newspapers will help to build up positive image.

Regular interaction with the media people will certainly create a congenial and faithful relationship with the media. Trust on media people will also produce a rewarding output. Media want timely information from their sources because they work within a deadline time frame. So timely information on defence matter which is publishable should be provided within shortest possible time. All the media have certain political ideology. So equal treatment to all press should be confirmed. Media culture should be respected. Human rights is much debated issue on present day situation.Therefore, training of military personnel on human rights aspects is required. Selected journalists and mediapeople should also be trained on defence matters who can performed as defence/war correspondent in times of needboth in peace or in war.

ISPR is only the agency who acts as bridge and plays an important role in strengthening relationship between military and media. It is assigned to deal with the media on behalf of Armed Forces. Both military and media can avail

cooperation from ISPR to meet their needs and narrow down the difference. Mutual respect and understanding each other is very important. But present organogram, role and its chain of command is not at all suitable to perform the desired responsibilities.

Military can recognize and endorse the importance of media engagement in their operational doctrine. Taking the lessons from the War of Liberations it is important that for a country like Bangladesh, where all powers of the Republic belongs to the people (Article 7(1) of the Constitution).Public opinion is very crucial for any mobilization of the armed forces, and media can provide the Force multiplier effects to the military. The future military commander needs to be more competent to handle the gamut of media –military environment. Military commander needs to understand the dynamics of information technology especially cyber security issues in conducting military operations.

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Brigadier General Abu Naser Md Elias, SGP, afwc, psc is a Course Member of NDC-2015. He was born on 31 August 1967. The officer was commissioned in the Regiment of Artillery on 26 June 1987. Besides serving in all the regimental appointments, he also served as Deputy Director in Special Security Force. In command appointments, he commanded three Artillery Regiments including two medium regiments of artillery. As a staff he served as DAA&QMG of an Artillery Brigade and General Staff Officer Grade-1 in the Armed Forces Division. As a Colonel he was appointed as Station Commander of Comilla Cantonment. Before joining National Defence Course-2015 he was serving as Commander of an Artillery Brigade. He attended number of courses at home and abroad. He is a graduate of Defence Services Command and Staff College and attended Armed Forces War Course from National Defence College. He obtained Masters in Defence Studies from National University, Masters in War Studies also from National University of Bangladesh and Masters in Business Administration from a reputed private university. The officer participated in two UN assignments in the capacity of Contingent member and Military Observer. He visited many countries across the globe. Brigadier General Elias is a proud father of a daughter and a son, both of them are students. His wife, Mrs Shahwari Farzana Luna is a 'housewife' and she is committed to educating her two children in the best possible ways. Brigadier General Elias's hobby is playing golf, gardening, watching TV and reading books.