

# **INADEQUACY IN OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS; QUEST FOR A SOLUTION IN BANGLADESH PERSPECTIVE**

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## **Introduction**

“Butter versus Gun” is an age old dilemma which is going on till date, especially in the third world developing countries like Bangladesh (BD). With the effect of globalization, concept of human centric security system is challenging state centric one and vibrant private sector made it more focused discussion today. With the trend of changing nature of threats, different types of conflicts are erupting around the globe and above all, the effectiveness of conventional forces’ response to those are seriously doubts the justification of having large standing Armed Forces. In the fast changing security environment, different countries have adopted different national security strategies. Some have given economic development more priority than defense when some of the regional countries have gone for collective security strategy like ASEAN etc. Robert S. McNamara, Secretary of Defense of US, said before the American society of newspaper editors, “Security is not military hardware, though it may include it. Security is not military force, though it may involve it. Security is not traditional military activity, though it may encompass it. Security is development. Without development, there can be no security”<sup>1</sup>. Today, BD is being confronted with threat of different dimensions, originating from both external and internal sources. Power struggle over Indian Ocean by three big actors like US, INDIA (IN) and CHINA (CH) have posed more security challenges for BD. Recent demarcation of maritime boundary with both the neighbours MYANMAR (MN) and IN have added a new chapter of security response

1. [2parse.com/?page\\_id=3385](http://2parse.com/?page_id=3385) Cached, Robert McNamara’s Speech on “Security in the Contemporary World” By Joe Campbell, accessed on 18 January 2015.

towards Blue BD in the south. Because Indian Ocean is now perceived to be the world's centre of gravity in strategic terms, proving the prophetic words that are often attributed to A.T. Mahan: "Whoever controls the Indian Ocean will dominate Asia ... the destiny of the world would be decided on its waters"<sup>2</sup>. On the other hand, constitution clearly states that "Safeguarding sovereignty and territorial integrity is the supreme and sacred duty of all citizens irrespective of cast and creed"<sup>3</sup>. With all these, today policy makers are facing ever more challenges and difficulties in negotiating dilemmas to develop a proper and appropriate defence strategy for the country.

## **National Perspective**

**Geo Strategic Settings:** BD's geographic location gives a distinct advantage of being the bridge between South and South East Asia with IN and MN on two sides and Bay of Bengal as third neighbour. BD is part of South Asia, which continues to be one of the most volatile regions, with three regional nuclear powers i.e, CH, IN and PAKISTAN. With the changed scenario, BD's geo strategic importance increased due to three factors. First, BD began to be referred to as the third largest Muslim country in the world and second in the South Asian region. Secondly, BD is located within the 'geo-strategic frontier' of IN, South Asia's most powerful country. Finally, BD being in close proximity to CH, Asia's largest power, considered as the strategic rival of both the US and IN. Recent shift of US policy of focus from Europe to Asia and three big actors' race for dominance over Indian Ocean further augments the importance. Thus prevailing geo-strategic environment poses challenge to BD's National Interest and Security. Beside economic development, IN is also modernizing her Armed Forces as part of the aspiration to be a super power. All these have created an environment of arms race in the region certainly not very conducive for BD. MN is opening up gradually for their march towards democracy, yet

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2. [http://idsa.in/strategicanalysis/36\\_3/IndianOceanNavalSymposium\\_PKGosh](http://idsa.in/strategicanalysis/36_3/IndianOceanNavalSymposium_PKGosh), accessed on 18 January 2015.

3. Constitution of the People's Republic of BD.

Rohingya issue is likely to have spillover effect in bilateral relationship. Large scale participation in UN peace keeping operations, huge Diaspora community and growing presence in regional and global bodies have increased BD's standing in world forum. BD is likely to become attractive destination for trade and investment provided it can meet the challenges like power crisis and political stability etc. Water sharing of common rivers will be a point of concern of the region having security impacts.

**National Interest:** National interests can be defined as nation's perceived needs and aspirations in relation to the internal and international environment. Government has to concern itself for its security, the integrity of its political life and the well being of its people. In tangible terms, a nation needs security and development when in spiritual terms; a nation needs respect and recognition from international community. Securing the interest could enhance the political, economic, security, environmental, and/or moral well being of a populace and the state. According to degree of intensity, interests can be prioritized in four categories<sup>4</sup>:

- **Core/Vital Interests:** Vital interest represents the single most important interests for any actor and cannot be compromised. This is the very essence of the actor's existence; the protection of its citizens and their institutions assuring its security, freedom and independence, and enshrinement of its values. A nation is willing to sacrifice blood and treasure, in short to do whatever it takes to defend its vital interests. In BD perspective, vital interest may be – “Maintaining sovereignty and safe guarding territorial integrity.”
- **Significant Interests:** A significant interest is so important to an actor's well being that its leadership can only compromise up to a certain point. Although it may not affect national survival, yet can cause serious harm. Measures, including the use of conventional military forces can be opted to counter or deter the threat of action. For BD, significant interest may be – “Ensuring sustainable economic development and maintain human and energy security.”

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4. Joint Operational Staff Work – B précis of National Defence College.

- **Important Interests:** These interests would be important but not crucial to an actor's well being. Important interests could cause considerable concern and harm and would likely be resolved with compromise and negotiation rather than confrontation. Some of such interests may include:
  - Resolving contentious issues with other states through negotiation.
  - Promoting internal security and stability.
- **Peripheral/Other Interests:** Peripheral interests neither involve a threat to the actor's security or the well-being of its populace, nor seriously impact the stability of the international system. Some of such kind of interests may include:
  - Developing a comprehensive National Security Strategy and Defence Policy for preserving National Interests.
  - Maintaining peaceful friendly relationship with neighbours and other related actors.
  - Developing and maintaining professional Armed Forces having deterrence capability and imbedded with values, ethos, patriotism and devotion.

**Elements of National Power:** National power is the aggregate strength or capacity of a state to achieve its national interests. Within the international arena, it may also be viewed as the ability of one state to influence another. Today, even strategic actors other than states also have elements of power to influence actions and affect others interest. Though there is no 'the set', yet some of the elements of power may include:

- **Geographic:** A state's geography is the foundation on which the remainder of that state's power is built. Geographic power is normally considered to be a force multiplier of other elements of power. The land mass of BD itself may not generate much power but if can be utilized as regional connectivity hub then can yield some benefit.

- **Economic:** Economic power is widely used in international relations to create long-term stable relationships. Trade also creates interdependence that can be both a blessing and a curse. The present standing of BD as a developing nation, this element does not offer much power. However, if coupled with geographic advantage, then it can make others dependent on her in the field of RMG, deep sea port etc., thus only may create some degree of influence.
- **Political:** Political power is the most used element of national power in international relations. Its application generally involves the lowest risk and highest chance of success. As the application of any element of power to reach a national objective ultimately depends on political decisions, the importance of politics to the military strategist cannot be over emphasized. The political system in simplest terms is the manner in which the state makes decisions and organizes its resources. However, BD is yet to emerge as politically stable strong state to influence the global actors in favour of her interest.
- **Military:** The military element through which the state may focus its national power most quickly but it also carries the greatest risk of escalation of violence and the possibility of a clear defeat in the attempt to achieve a specific national objective. Military power can only be applied within the political process imposed limits on the use of force to achieve a strategic objective. BD is trying hard to maintain a moderate Armed Forces purely for defensive purpose, thus she may not become that influential for resolving contentious issues by this element only.
- **National Will:** The national will element of power is the sum of the state's human resources. It is the element in which relatively intangible factors exert a considerable influence. There are generally no accepted standards of measurement that may be used to assess national will. Knowledge, logic, and experience must temper judgement in this area. Historically BD displayed strength in this field and in future also will

be able to rely much on it. Coupled with it, if the youth bulge can be integrated and utilized properly, it can become a viable strength for BD.

Though BD as state does not follow any specific set of elements, however discussed ones are generally used for academic purposes. There are various other models available:

<b>Table 1: Some of the Models of Elements of National Power</b>				
DIMEFIL (US Model)	PMESII (UK Model)	STEEPLEM	DEMPT	Constituents of a Nation
Diplomatic	Political	Social	Diplomatic	Rule of law
Informational	Military	Technological	Economic	Education
Military	Economic	Economic	Military	Commercial
Economic	Social	Environmental	Population	Humanitarian
Financial	Infrastructure	Political	Technological	Health
Intelligence	Information	Legal		Information
Law Enforcement		Ethical		Military
		Military		Economic
				Diplomacy
				Administration
				Governance

**National Resources:** National power of a state, which has three crucial substances: force, influence and authority, is heavily dependent on the national resources. This in turn largely shapes up the national interests, i.e. in international relations, how a state intends to behave and interact with other states or exerts influence. Old school of thinkers considered resources as all natural and static. But contemporary school of thought opines that resources are not confined to nature. More so, modern social academia considers resources can be made or created by human efforts and its nature is dynamic. Thus a new type – Technological Resources is

being widely discussed. Although there is some divergence in perception, yet national resources can broadly be categorized into four groups<sup>5</sup>:

- **Natural Resources:** Natural resources are materials and components (something that can be used) available within the environment like air, water, copper, wood, wind energy, hydro-electric energy, iron, coal, petroleum etc.
- **Human Resources:** This is about people. It is the resource that resides in the knowledge, skills, and motivation of people. Some believes that more the population, more the human resources. However, one needs to bear in mind that it is more about the quality, not the quantity.
- **Economic Resources:** Economic resources are the assets (things of value) which an economy (or business) may have available to supply and produce goods and services to meet the ever-changing needs and wants. Industrial base and infrastructure are considered to be major contributors to the economic resources.
- **Socio-psychological Resources:** These include national stability, leadership and political will. Without national stability, it will be hard to create the loyalty of the citizen to the government and build up relationship with other nations.

BD will have to capitalize more on human resources for her development and enhancement of national security. Side by side, endeavour for capitalizing natural and economic resources should remain on. Political leadership is needed to strive further for strengthening the socio-psychological resources.

**Realities of Constitution, Foreign and Defence Policy:** Article 25 of the constitution of BD states- “The state shall base its international relations on the principle of respect for national sovereignty and equality, non interference in the internal affairs of other countries<sup>6</sup>”. Though there

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5. Joint Operational Staff Work – B précis of National Defence College.

6. Constitution of the People's Republic of BD.

is no written foreign policy being circulated yet the theme “friendship to all, malice to none” is said to be the core essence of our all diplomatic engagements. Main focus is on solving the differences of opinion with others peacefully through negotiation and may even by adopting bilaterally accepted legal suits as seen in case of maritime delineation with MN and IN. As for defence policy which is not yet published but surely can be said mainly focuses on defending the sovereignty within own territorial boundary. BD Armed Forces’ participation in UN peace missions is also purely a response in humanitarian ground duly supported by constitution and does not reflect any kind of aggressive posture. Thus, it can be deduced that BD will be committed to resolve the contentious issues mainly by other means giving less preference to military option. Military option may be considered only if the core / vital interest is threatened and even then forces are likely to be employed in defensive posture within own territorial boundary.

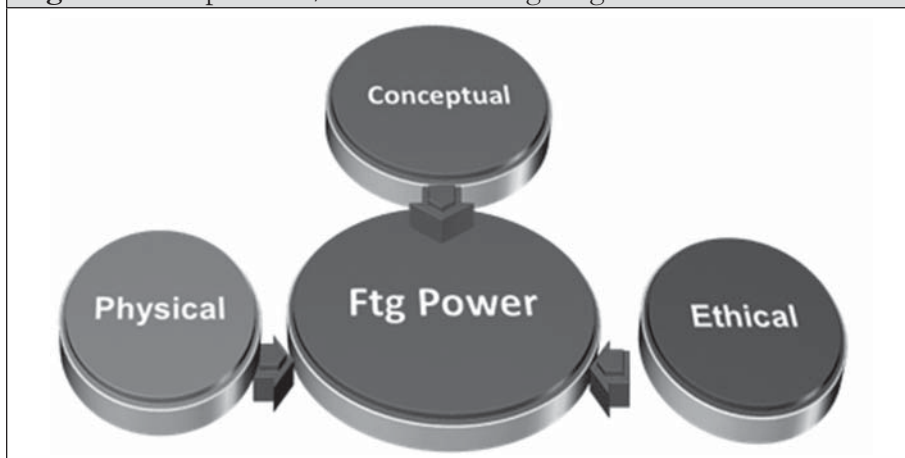
**Requirement to Maintain Blue BD:** Recent delimitation of maritime boundary with our both immediate neighbours has created Blue BD in the south almost equal to size of the Green BD of the north. This has open up some new challenges in both economic development and security dimension. Even though from security and dominance point of view, immediate capacity building of Bangladesh Navy and Coast Guard demands priority yet it will not be confined to that only. This demands far wider attention at national level to extract full potential being offered by this Blue BD. A generation of sea farers to be created to build the image as sea faring nation, at least at regional level. As no prime national institute exists with the desired capacity, as such BD Navy with the support of the government will have to take the lead role. Next generation should be made aware of this potential field and talented people to be attracted for higher study, research and job market. Both national and forces’ development plans should have priority focus on it, which to be persuaded vigorously.



## Fighting Power and BD Armed Forces

**Fighting Power:** Fighting power of any Armed Forces consists of Physical, Conceptual (Training and doctrine) and Moral (Ethics, Values and Ethos) component as shown in figure 1. Physical component generally refers to the size of the Armed forces including its equipment and facilities available. Conceptual component refers to the standard of training, concepts and doctrines for utilizing the forces most effectively in any crisis situation. Moral component though refers to the mental state of the force yet it directly relates to ethical standard of the forces individual members and organization as well.<sup>7</sup> These three components' multiplicity produces the fighting power of a force that counts. Thus, it will be difficult to have full potential without a balanced development of all these components. Off these three components, lower ethical and moral standard will have much negative impact even if the other two remains relatively better. Because even in the era of drones and Nano-technology etc., still the men behind, matter most. Thus human dimension, along with, ethical standard will continue to influence future conflicts, which can't be negated by any degree of technological advancement.

**Figure 1:** Components / Elements of Fighting Power<sup>8</sup>



7. AHQ project study paper of 66 Infantry Division of 2014.

8. Joint Operational Staff Work – B précis of National Defence College.

**Ethical Dimension:** This dimension revolves around some theoretical understanding alongside its practical applications. Related terminologies are:

- **Values:** Values can be defined as those things that are important to or valued by someone. Values are the embodiment of what an organization stands for and should be the basis for the behaviour of its members. Values provide the basis for judgments about what is important for the individual member or organization to succeed in its core business.
- **Ethics:** Ethics may be defined as the set of moral values and principles that distinguish what is right from what is wrong. Ethics, therefore, aims to study both moral and immoral behaviour in order to make well-founded judgments and to arrive at adequate recommendations<sup>9</sup>.
- **Ethos:** This is the characteristic spirit of a culture, era, or community as manifested in its attitude and aspiration<sup>10</sup>. The fundamental character or spirit of a culture; the underlying sentiment that informs the beliefs, custom, or practice of a group or society is called as its ethos<sup>11</sup>.
- **Organizational Ethics:** Organizational ethics is the ethics of an organization and it is how an organization responds to an internal or external stimulus. Organizational ethics is interdependent with the organizational culture.
- **Comparison:** Comparisons between the Core Values of some of the Armies are shown in the table below, which are mostly individual centric (concerns members only, not the organization as a whole):

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9. A Comparative Analysis of Conventional Ethical Code, and Islamic Ethical Code in Accounting Profession, Md. Kamal Hossain.

10. [www.oxforddictionaries.com](http://www.oxforddictionaries.com) accessed on 07 December 2014.

11. [www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com) accessed on 07 December 2014.

<b>Table 2: Comparisons between Core Values of Different Armies<sup>12</sup></b>				
US (7)	UK (6)	Canada (4)	Philippine (6)	BD (10)
Loyalty	Selfless Commitment	Duty	Love of Country	Honour and Pride
Duty	Courage	Loyalty	Valor	Honesty and Integrity
Respect	Discipline	Integrity	Honour	Loyalty
Selfless Service	Integrity	Courage	Loyalty	Patriotism
Honour	Loyalty		Duty	Trust and Faith
Integrity	Respect for Others		Solidarity	Respect
Personal Courage				Justness
				Service before self
				Courage
				Comradeship

**Uniqueness of Military Service and Society:** Since time immemorial, military is a diverse entity within the greater society having distinct recruitment, training and organizational culture<sup>13</sup>. Soldiers have the responsibility and legal right to use lethal force and may be required to lay down their lives and risk those of their comrades. Thus prescribed set of values for Army has to be different than that of the greater society. However in maintaining so, military needs to guard against the danger of being isolated totally. Introductory remarks of Values and Standards of the British Army Doctrine say “It is operational effectiveness that requires the Army to have values and standards that are different”.<sup>14</sup> Presently, a trend exists to compare the military service with the corporate society in respect

12. AHQ project study paper of 66 Infantry Division of 2014.

13. AHQ project study paper of 66 Infantry Division of 2014.

14. Values and Standards of the British Army, published in 2008.

of facilities and job environment. But these two fields are characteristically different, as the corporate world looks for the profit maximization where generally ethics is over shadowed by that objective. On the other hand, military service demands its members to stand against all odds for the cause of the Nation and make supreme sacrifices once needed. Thus this can be stated clearly that military service is unique and demands to maintain relatively higher ethical standard.

**Modernization of Armed Forces:** Forces development at BD is going on based on Forces Goal-2030. Here beside the expansion of the outfit of three services, importance is given on the enhancement of capabilities from functional point of view. Human Resource Development is also given focus. But it is a reality that arms race has no end and thus BD faces tremendous challenges for modernizing her standing conventional Forces. Thus BD needs to carefully evaluate the ways and means to make the Forces most effective with deterrence capability, contributing to national security. SINGAPORE emphasized on a total defence owing to the lack of territorial depth to embrace economic, social, psychological defence and the bedrock of military defence<sup>15</sup>. Along with other lines founder President LEE KUAN YEW focused on developing and building the Army from scratch right after the separation<sup>16</sup>. Today Singapore Armed Forces stands as a credible deterrent modern force of the world, which can serve as reference for BD in present perspective.

**People's Integration:** The concept of blending Unconventional Warfare (UCW) with conventional one is viewed as a viable option to offset or counter the perceived superiority and integrating of general people in the overall defence effort of the country. BD is having its glorious history of mass participation in the War of Liberation. Situation and the circumstances are likely to be different in any future conflict. At that time, whole nation was ready for a struggle for the independence but in future

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15. Simon S. C. Tay "A Mandarin and the Making of Public Policy" published by National University press of Singapore, 2007.

16. Marshal Cavendish Edition, "From Third World to First- Memories of LEE KUAN YEW" by Singapore press Holdings, 2009.

it will be defending the motherland. Besides ‘Levee En Masse’ of French revolution and CH people’s movement by great leader Mao Tsetung also support the concept. The draft doctrine titled<sup>17</sup> ‘Blending Unconventional Warfare with Conventional Warfare’ has outlined different aspects of UCW giving emphasis on force generation. The success will greatly depend on the understanding the concept and acceptance of it at the local level, where stake holders will be the mass population, local administration, public representatives etc. The creation of sense of belongingness and the mindset of the masses of being part of the overall defence effort will be vital here. The conflicts around the globe like Iraq, Afganistan, Syria, Ukraine etc. clearly display that it is very difficult to completely defeat and subjugate any nation even for the world’s military might. This happens mainly because the leadership could convince people of those countries that present state is temporary one and will be reversed in future. Thus for BD in an environment of defending own territory, people’s integration with military through blending concept is likely to give more dividend rather than merely focusing on Force generation.

**Maintaining Operational Efficiency and Ethics:** Any Force being superior in physical and conceptual component will fail to generate its full fighting power if it lacks in ethical component. Same happened in the Battle of AJNADAYAN (now falls in Israel and Palestine) between Muslims and Romans in July 634.<sup>18</sup> Roman commander KAYKALAN sent spies and the findings revealed that Muslims inferiority in physical and conceptual component was compensated by the superiority in ethical side. In over two hundred battles and engagement with the Persians and Byzantines by Muslims, display the similar phenomenon. Newly formed Muslim states conquer over two super power of the time (Persian and Byzantine Empires) certainly had the elements of statesmanship, strategic leadership and above all, fighting power potential of the Muslim forces imbedded with very high ethical standard. This clearly displays the vital importance of ethical component of fighting power over other two components. This

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17. The Draft Doctrine on “Blending UCW with Conventional warfare” March 2004, published by AHQ.

18. Al Bidaya Wan Nihaya, Volume 1 to 10, translated and published by Islamic Foundation of BD.

also can be deduced that supremacy in other two components may put any forces in some advantageous position apparently but certainly lacking in ethical component will inevitably result into disastrous consequences. Thus here may be a food for thought for the Armed Forces of the developing nations like BD from this trend. Undoubtedly decay in ethical standard will inevitably lower the individual professionalism and overall operational efficiency of any force. Army Regulation (Instruction) 7 delineates, maintaining operational efficiency for war is a command responsibility. If the operational efficiency cannot be maintained, Army and in turn BD Armed Forces will fall short of constitutional obligations too.

## **What is The Option for BD?**

Geo strategic setting and present realities justify that BD needs to have credible Armed Forces to maintain and secure her various interests. The question is how big and with what capability the forces are to be organized? Commonly, two types of planning are done for Force structuring. These are threat base and capability based planning. For country like BD, surrounded by big actors, matching with them is likely to remain as a never ending race. Taking the fact that BD Armed Forces mostly will be engaged to defend the motherland, developing required degree of capability to deter any aggressor and able to react suitably in case of any violation seems to be more appropriate. Thus BD mostly needs to adopt a capability based planning rather than joining the arms race following the threat based planning model. Here decision makers will be left with the better option to make a balance between economic realities and developing Armed Forces as credible deterrent tool, which will be reckoned by all. In the physical component, deterrence capability to be achieved by increasing the long range indirect delivery means for all three services, which will deter any evil venture, rather than merely increasing the outfits.

For enhancing the efficiency of the Armed Forces beside physical and conceptual component, due focus will have to be given on the ethical dimension. Because for defending motherland, human factor will play

a predominant role. Thus, Ethical dimension of fighting power to be formalized and persuade vigorously by policy makers, commanders and the institution, as a whole.

Main deterrence capability and very survival of Armed Forces facing any odds will mostly depend on the people's integration in overall defence effort of the country. Thus doctrines like blending conventional warfare with unconventional warfare or defence policy should focus more on people's integration with Armed Forces in the overall war effort. If the popular support remains with the Armed Forces that will also augment the moral component and deter any aggressor thus complementing the effort of defending our beloved motherland.

Overall Defence Strategy of BD needs to focus taking general people onboard; always making them part of it. Armed Forces to focus on upliftment of the ethical dimension of her members. This to be capitalized as the main strength of the fighting power. Modernization to be focused on attaining credible deterrence means, to be reckoned by aggressor before any engagement. Only Armed Forces, which is morally upright having popular support can very professionally utilize their capabilities to effectively defend the motherland. But if devoid of ethics and popular support, same will fail to defend the motherland, it does not matter how big the Force is or how modern and developed it is.

## **Conclusion**

While formulating the defence strategy, main inference to be drawn from the War of Liberation. Besides historical examples of small states defending their motherland against big powers to be consulted mostly instead of the references of the big powers expeditions. Righteousness of the cause and justness of the engagement to be taken into consideration by the policy makers in the decision making process. Policy makers also need to take into consideration the domestic dimension in terms of the aspiration of the people & the state and capitalized on the actual strength