

ISMS Conference

Paradigm Shifts and Defense Reforms: The Case of India

**Dr. Patrick Bratton
Hawai`i Pacific University**

October 2015

Plan

- I. Introduction: research plan**
- II. Imagining Future War**
- III. Indian Civilian-Military Subcultures**
- IV. Prospects for Reform**

Contrasting Theories About Military Change

Posen and Rynning	Internal balancing: in reaction to threats, civilians will force internal change on reluctant militaries
Kier, Nagl	How do militaries and civilians “imagine” the war to be, given the lens of their political military subculture and how organizational culture can either facilitate or hamper learning and innovation?
Bickle	Bottom up learning “by doing” (informal and formal doctrine)

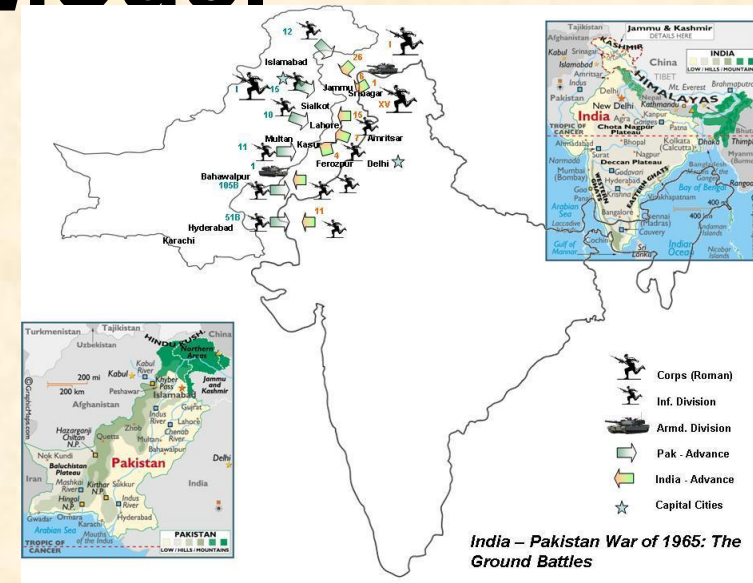
Research Project: Understanding Defense Reform in India

- I. Contrasting Theories of military change**
- II. Andaman and Nicobar Command:**
 - I. contrasted realism and organizational learning theories**
 - II. Organization theory seemed to work better**
- III. Constructivism and Kier**

Traditional Model

1. Pakistan Centric:

1. Rely on conventional Superiority
2. Use strike corps to threaten Lahore



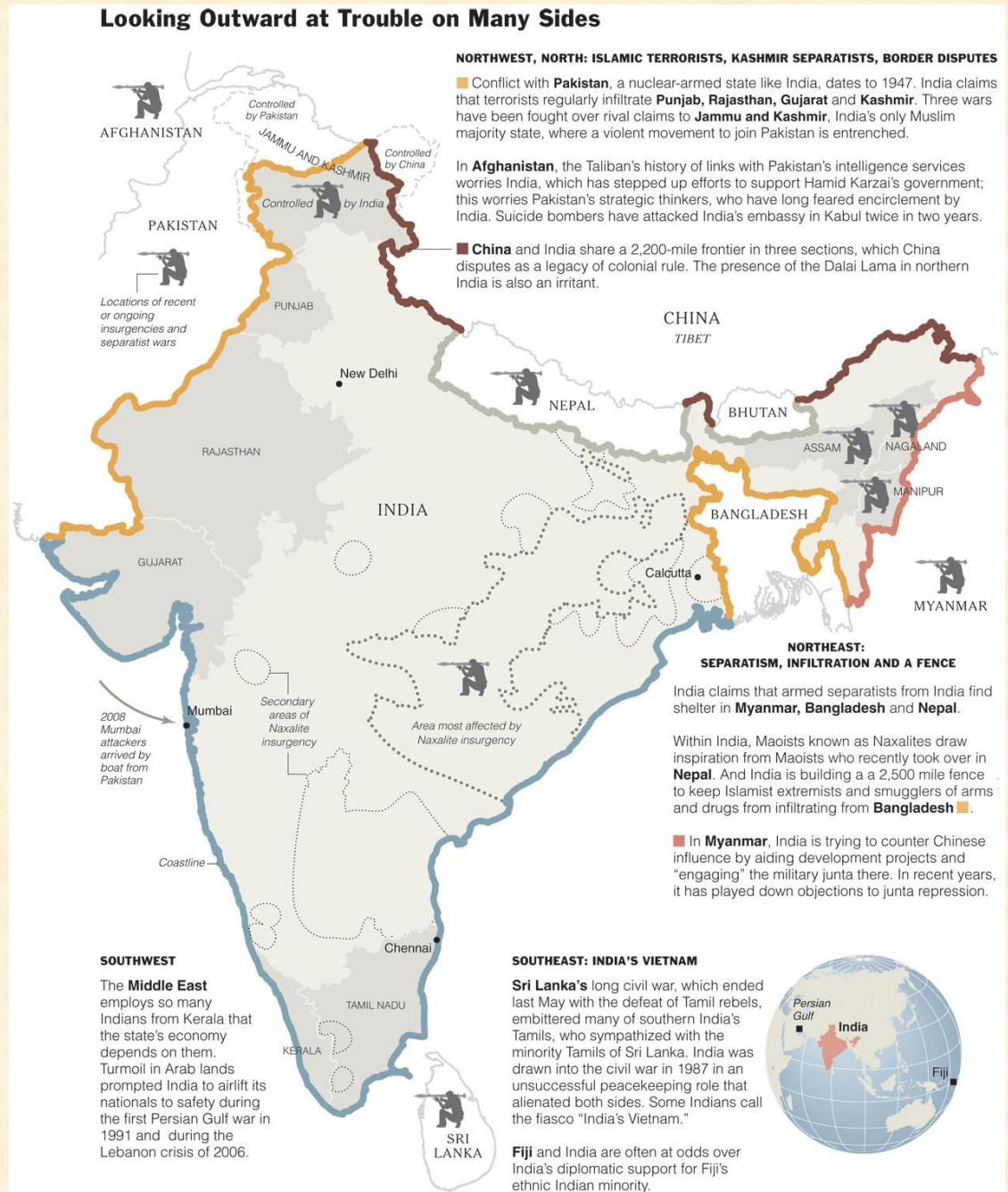
2. Spoilers: 1980s-Present

1. Over nuclearization
2. Use of violent non-state proxies



Indian Internal Conflicts

- A. Border regions
 - 1) Kashmir
 - 2) Northeast
- B. Naxals
- C. Regional/transnational terrorism:
 - A. India top targets for terrorism outside Iraq and Afghanistan 2000s
 - B. Rise in sophisticated transnational groups like LeT



Drivers for Change and Innovation in Indian Defense

- 1) Modernization for mechanized high-tempo conventional operations**
- 2) Internal security, low-intensity conflict and border constabulary duties, soft security issues**
- 3) Technology and cyber warfare vulnerabilities and capabilities**
- 4) Need for power projection or “out of area” capabilities? And what level?**
 - a. “Soft power projection”:** evacuations, humanitarian assistance and disaster response, peacekeeping
 - b. “Hard power projection”:** project power against opposing force/hostile resistance, military intervention/peace enforcement?
- 5) Need for “military diplomacy” and international cooperation: development of shared norms for what militaries do and how they are organized**

Cold Start?

A. Problem:

- A. Pakistani militants attack via asymmetric proxies
- B. Need to find “strategic space” to use conventional superiority in limited war
- C. Indian army is large, and much is tied down with border or COIN work
- D. Takes 30 days to mobilize, too slow to credibly threaten

B. Cold Start “Doctrine”

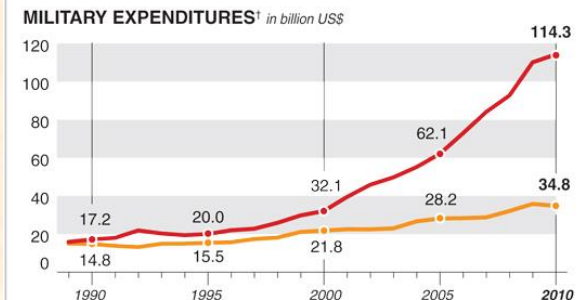
- A. Be able to mobilize strike corps quickly
- B. Be able to provide military option to policymakers
- C. Advance quickly with shallow thrusts into Pakistani territory
- D. Destroy militant training centers, occupy land for diplomatic bargaining, threaten Lahore or communications with Lahore



Sino-Indian Rivalry: “Chindia” or Chasing the Dragon?

- 1) Differences:
- a) 2014:
 - a) China: GDP 10.4 trillion, 7.4% growth rate, 129 B defense
 - b) India: GDP 2.05 trillion, 5.6% growth rate, 45.2 B defense
 - b) China higher on indicators (infant mortality, life expectancy, etc.)
 - c) China started reforms earlier (1979 vs. 1991)
 - d) China has grown faster in past (8-9% vs. 5-7%)
 - e) Global R&D spending PRC 14%, India 4%

CHINA & INDIA'S MILITARY		CHINA	INDIA
ACTIVE MILITARY		2,285,000	1,325,000
ARMY		1,600,000	1,129,900
Battle-ready tanks		7,050	4,117+
Artillery		12,462+	10,758+
Helicopters		509	222
NAVY		255,000	58,350
Submarines		71	16
Destroyers		13	10
Frigates		65	12
Amphibious		239	17
Combat aircraft		311	26
Marines		10,000*	1,200*
AIR FORCE		330,000	127,200
Combat aircraft		1,687	665
Helicopters		80+	326
STRATEGIC FORCES			
Operational warheads		180	60-80
Land-based launchers		238	100-125
Sub-based launchers		36	-
Aircraft		282	267
RESERVE		510,000	1,155,000



*Estimates

¹Figures for China are SIPRI estimates, including expenditures not included in official defence budget

Sources: The Military Balance 2011, SIPRI

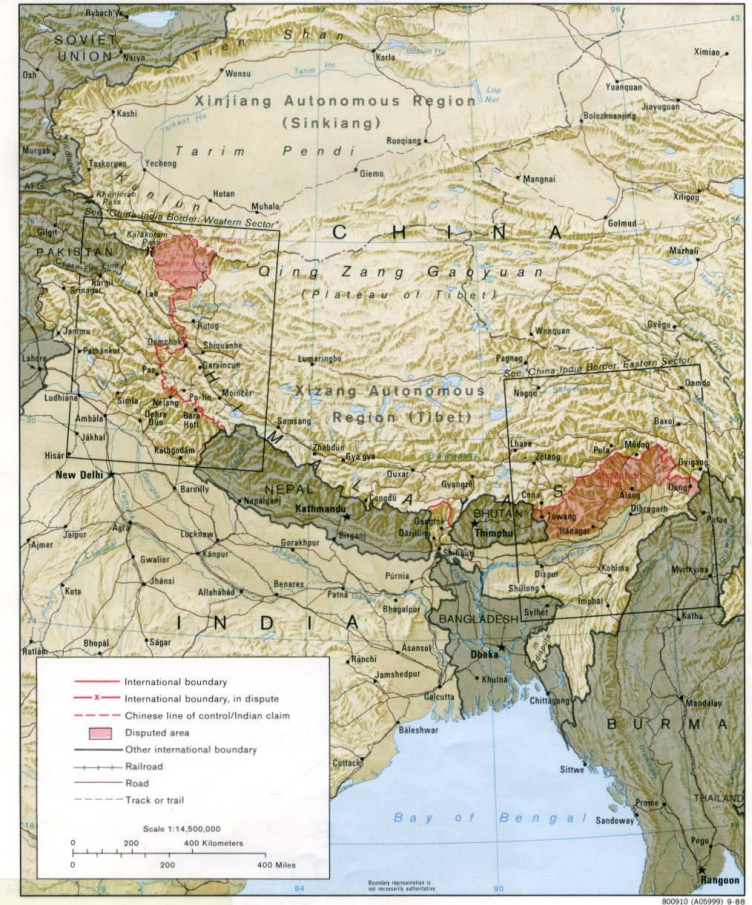
REUTERS

* Data from IISS *Military Balance*, *The Economist*, and Guruswamy and Singh, *Chasing the Dragon*

China-Pakistan Relationship

- A. Background:**
- 1) 1950s-60s
 - 2) Use Pakistan to hold India down
 - 3) Chinese aid to Pakistani nuclear and missile program
 - 4) Indian nuclear weapon development tied to China, not Pakistan?
- B. India:**
- 1) Goal to “De-hyphenate”
 - 2) Move beyond dealing with Pakistan to larger world
 - 3) Concern with China-Pakistan alliance
- C. Pakistan:**
- 1) Obsessed with Indian security threat
 - a. Drives Pakistan policy towards China
 - b. Drives Pakistan policy towards Afghanistan: strategic depth
 - c. Use of US military aid against India
 - d. Stability-Instability Paradox
 - 2) Danger of Pakistan as weak state

China-India Border



Cold Start to Two Front Doctrine?

- 1) China as the great unknown?
- 2) 2010 end to Cold Start Doctrine
- 3) Two Front Doctrine
- 4) Challenges:
 - 1) Mountain Strike Corps?
 - 2) Infrastructure catch-up
 - 3) Modernization of airfields
 - 4) Army too busy with COIN?



INDIA'S STEPS TO COUNTER THREAT FROM CHINA

- **Developing long-range ballistic missile Agni-V**
- Raising a new strike corps for China border
- **Deployment of BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles**
- Proposed air mobile artillery guns for new mountain strike corps
- **Sukhoi squadron inducted in Northeast**
- A network of advanced landing grounds being made operational in places from Ladakh to Arunachal Pradesh
- Development of military infrastructure



14 STRATEGIC RAILWAY LINES

EASTERN Murkongseld-Pasighat-Rupai, Misamari-Tawang, North Lakimpur-Along-Silapathar

WESTERN Patti-Ferozpur

SOUTHERN Jodhpur-Shergarh-Phalsund, Jodhpur-Jaisalmer

CENTRAL Rishikesh-Karanprayag-Chamoli, Dehradun-Uttarkashi, Tanakpur-Jauljibi, Tanakpur-Bageshwar

NORTHERN Jammu-Akhnoor-Poonch, Pathankot-Leh, Srinagar-Kargil-Leh

SOUTH-WESTERN Anupgarh-Chhattisgarh-Motigarh-BKN.

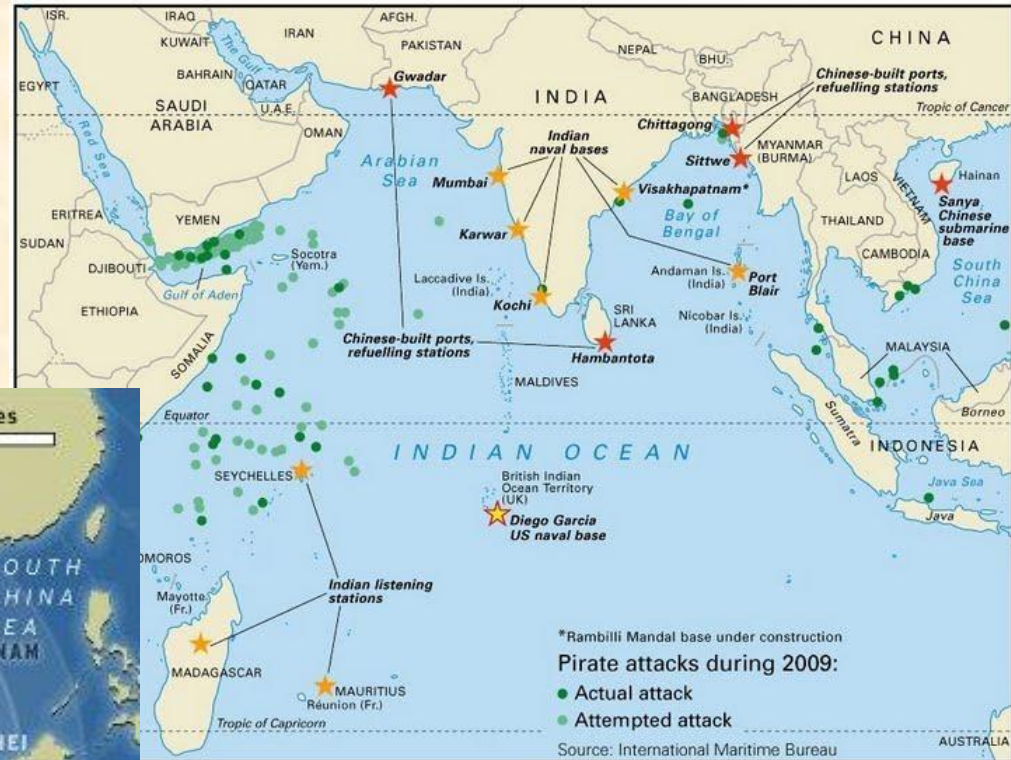
Security Concerns in Indian Ocean

Net Security Provider?

Soft Power Projection?

Hard Power Projection?

GREAT POWER COMPETITION IN THE INDIAN OCEAN



Contrasting Theories About Military Change

Posen and Rynning	Internal balancing: in reaction to threats, civilians will force internal change on reluctant militaries
Kier, Nagl	How do militaries and civilians “imagine” the war to be, given the lens of their political military subculture and how organizational culture can either facilitate or hamper learning and innovation?
Bickle	Bottom up learning “by doing” (informal and formal doctrine)

Keir Imagining War

Civilians

Primary concern is domestic political power of military:
Elected leaders: praetorian issue, votes

Bureaucracy: power and access

Public: pride in military, but concerned with other issues

Military

What the military believes is possible (in terms of doctrine, strategy etc.) given political and economic constraints:

Army: largest service, divided: do new missions/roles detract from Army's dominant role?

Air Force: wants autonomy and technology

Navy: Cinderella service, more interested in change

Constraints on Military Change in Indian Context

- 1) **Strategic Culture of Restraint:** reluctance to use hard power, projection power
- 2) **Autonomy and Moral Authority:** preference for soft power/moral leadership, reluctance to create formal alliances, complicates mil-to-mil cooperation
- 3) **Continentalist World View: focus on territorial threats and “maritime blindness”**
- 4) **Lack of Articulated and Open Strategic Thinking:**
 - a. No formal articulation of strategy
 - b. Archives closed, difficult to learn from experience and develop SOPs
- 5) **Lack of integration and capacity for dialogue between civilian and military leaders**

Kargil 1999

1. Questions:

1. Why total surprise? Intelligence failure
2. Could India fight a tightly controlled limited war under nuclear conditions?
3. Need to reform old organizations?

2. Reform:

1. Kargil Review Committee and Report 1999-2000
2. Group of Ministers Task Forces and Report 2001



Major Defense Reforms Proposed 2001

Chief of Defence Staff (CDS)	Single point military advice to government
MoD-Service Integration	Integrate services with MoD, and expand “billets” for service members inside MoD
Service Jointness	Increase joint training, doctrine development, procurement, and given incentives/requirements for joint service for promotion
Joint Commands	<p><u>Theatre Commands</u>: predeployment of assets to specific geographic commands, all service forces are under the operational command of a joint commander</p> <p><u>Functional Commands</u>: pooling assets of a similar function to be controlled by joint commander</p>

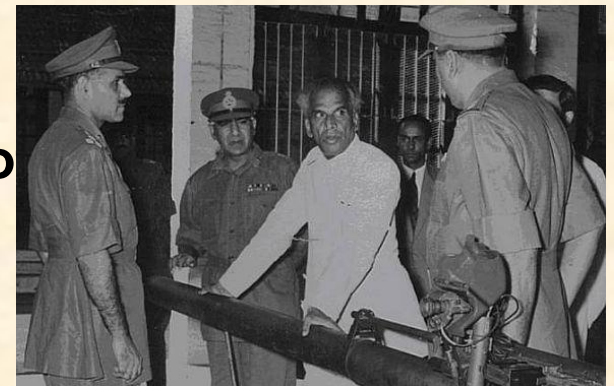
Military and Civilian Subcultures

Reform Minded	Traditional
Navy	Air Force
Army Futurists	Army Traditionalists
Defence Intellectuals	Bureaucracy?
Politicians	Politicians?

Civil-Military Relations

A. Civilian control:

- 1) System set in late 1940s
- 2) Separation of MoD and Services
- 3) Lack of constructive dialogue
- 4) Autonomous military
- 5) No “jointness” in military
- 6) Paradox:
 - a. Military complain about lack of influence
 - b. Military like (and chose) autonomy

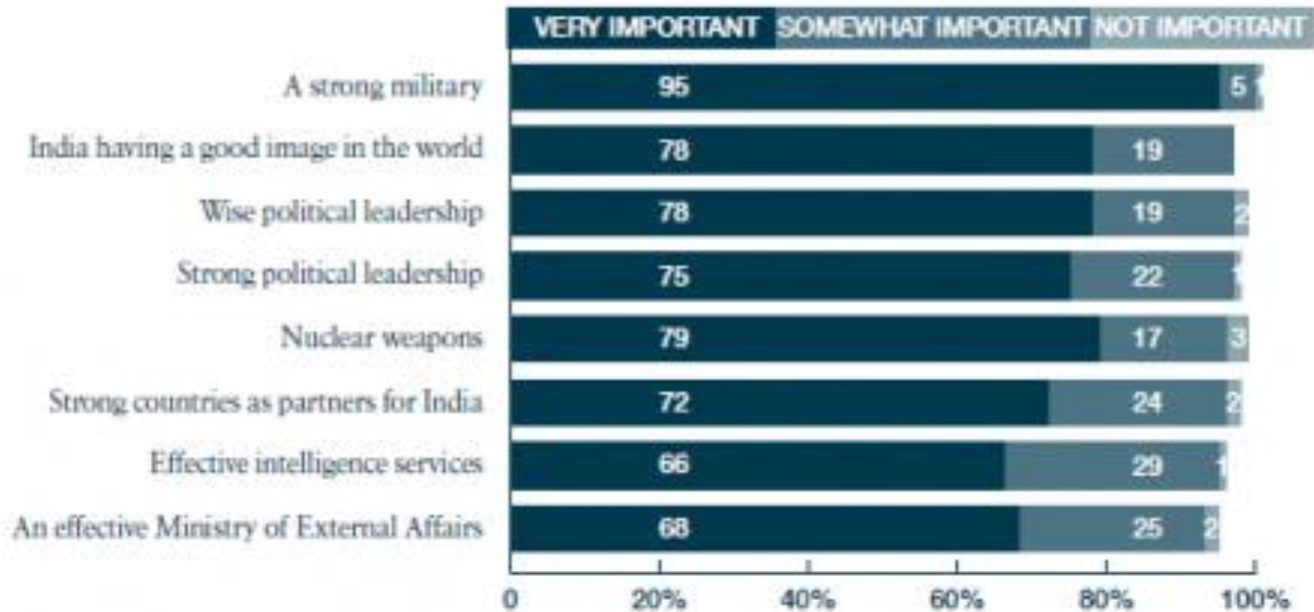


Public Opinion

Indian public feels that for India, the important tools to achieve its goals include the military and nuclear weapons

Figure 8: The instruments of Indian foreign policy

Now about what India needs to achieve its foreign policy goals. Please say whether you personally think each of the following is important or not important for India to achieve its foreign policy goals.



Note: all poll data from Lowy *India Poll 2013*

Public Opinion

However, the major security and political issues that concern them are “governance” and soft security issues:

Figure 7: India's foreign policy goals

Thinking about what Indian foreign policy should be trying to achieve, I am going to read a list of goals, and ask you to tell me how important each one is for India. Please say whether you think each issue is very important, fairly important, not very important, or not at all important.

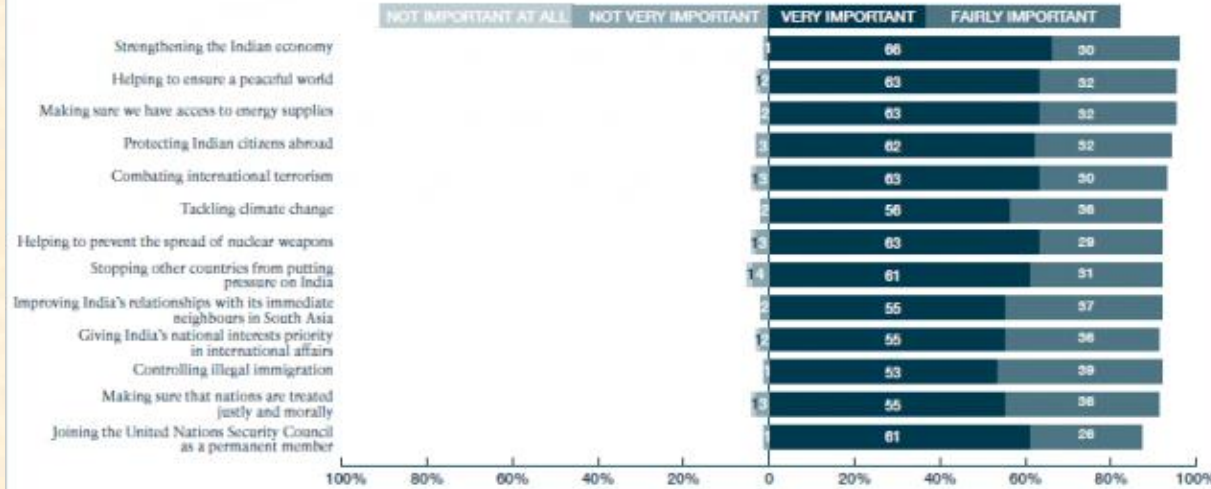


Figure 13: Possible threats to India's security

Now about possible threats to India's security over the next ten years, please say whether you regard each of the following as a threat to India or not a threat to India. Is that a big or a small threat?



KRC and GoM Results

A. Compromise

B. No CDS, COSC and IDS, not effective

C. Two “experimental commands”

1) Functional: Strategic Forces Command

a. Nuclear

b. Conceptual/training command

2) Theatre: Andaman and Nicobar

a. Policing role

b. Conceptual training laboratory

Lost Opportunities 2001-14?

A. Assessment:

- 1) GoM wanted assessment after 5 years
- 2) Narendra Chandra Task Force 2011-13

B. Future?

- 1) Doubtful more theatre commands near future
- 2) No CDS
 - a. 2012 civ-mil crisis with Army Chief VK Singh
 - b. Watered down CoCS?
- 3) Functional commands: space, special forces, cyber

C. Those who call for reform and paradigm shift in Indian security are not dominant:

- 1) Focus on governance and internal security
- 2) The need for power projection and “the China threat” are contested and not universally agreed upon (reluctance to muscle flex)
- 3) No paradigm shift to make radical reform necessary

Change under Modi?

1. **Indian Ocean Region Focus:**
 1. **India as leader of South Asia:**
 1. **SAARC leaders (+Tibet) invited inauguration**
 2. **Modi/India as leader of South Asia**
 3. **Border settlement with Bangladesh**
 2. **Maritime Focus: “removing the maritime cataract”**
 1. **Maritime security and navy**
 2. **Modi’s “Maritime Vision”**
 3. **Mountain strike corps scaled back for maritime?**
 3. **Reaching out to Diaspora:**
 1. **Visits to Mauritius, Fiji**
 2. **US, Australia, Canada etc.**
2. **Improve defense cooperation: make in India, skill India**
 1. **US:**
 1. **Joint Strategic Vision for the Asia Pacific and Indian Ocean Regions**
 2. **Defense Trade and Technology Initiative: aircraft carriers, UAVs, etc.**
 2. **Russia, France, Israel, Japan**
3. **Defence reform:**
 1. **Procurement and development, “Make in India”?**
 2. **COCS and functional commands (Special Ops, Space, Cyber)?**
 3. **One Rank, one pension issue has derailed government’s relationship with military**



Conclusions?

Defense Reforms and Modernization remain slow

“RMA has passed India by”

**Focus on replacing obsolescent equipment,
rather than qualitative updates to combat
capabilities**

No consensus on need for change:

Civilians ambivalent:

Concerns over domestic power

Defense not electoral issue

Military divided

Meet current demands

Meeting future challenges

Watch maritime and defence cooperation issues

