



LAND WARFARE DOCTRINE - 2018

To be read in conjunction with
'Joint Doctrine of the Indian Armed Forces - 2017'

Notes

“Valour, glory, firmness, skill, generosity, steadiness in battle & ability to rule – these constitute the duty of a soldier”.

- The Bhagwad Gita

LAND WARFARE DOCTRINE – 2018

Introduction

The Indian Army today is engaged in the management of complex and active land borders coupled with ongoing Counter Insurgency (CI)/ Counter Terrorism (CT) operations leading to a 'No War No Peace' Scenario. The primary role of the Indian Army is to preserve National interests and safeguard sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity of India against external threats and internal subversion by deterrence or by waging war. The primary approach of our Nation is to resolve disputes in an amicable manner, with National Objectives being achieved through a mix of Politico-Diplomatic initiatives. However, the Indian Army will continue to undertake a 360 degree overview of the security environment and shall be prepared to prosecute military operations in a multi-front scenario in all dimensions, to achieve Politico-Military objectives. We will fight as we are, at the time and place of our choosing, utilising all resources, after prioritising the options based on our capabilities and emerge victorious, while continuing to upgrade our capabilities.

This Doctrine provides broad tenets for the prosecution of operations by the Indian Army across the entire spectrum of conflict. The focus will be on force modernisation, resource optimisation and innovative conceptual processes leading to winning strategies for future wars. Our geostrategic environment, external and internal threats, possible responses and a way ahead to develop capabilities for the future are the major determinants shaping the Land Warfare Doctrine. This doctrine will lay the foundation for formulation of strategies for the Northern and Western Fronts and Operational Directives.

Geo Strategic Environment

- **Environmental Realities.**
 - The current geopolitical upheaval of shifting power centres, realignment of alliances, shrinking economies and resources, rising ecological threats, dissolving of the physical and virtual boundaries and surging fundamentalism/ radicalisation makes the global security situation complex and uncertain.

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“Unless India stands up to the world, no one will respect us; In this world, fear has no place; Only strength respects strength”.

- Dr A P J Abdul Kalam

- The security environment in the region remains dynamic. South Asia is one of the least economically integrated entities in the world, resulting in security and economic imbalances in the region. Unresolved border disputes, both territorial and maritime, illegal cross border migration, trans-national crimes and increasing radicalisation are some of the major issues plaguing the region.
- **Future Security Challenges.**
 - The greatest danger to our Nation continues to be external aggression with collusive threat from adversaries as well as internal instability due to state/ non-state sponsored proxy war, thus imposing multi front challenges in various dimensions, ranging from warfare in the non-contact domain, to an all out full spectrum war.
 - Future conflicts will be characterised by operating in a zone of ambiguity where nations are neither at peace nor at war - a 'Grey Zone' which makes our task more complex. Wars will be Hybrid in nature, a blend of conventional and unconventional, with the focus increasingly shifting to multi domain Warfare varying from non-contact to contact warfare.
 - Enhancing capabilities to meet the emerging contours of conflict in a multi front environment mandate the Indian Army to be prepared for techno-centric combat by imbibing technology, utilising human resources efficiently, ensuring optimal utilisation of the defined budget for force modernisation and further enhancing joint and integrated operations.
 - While any future national response would be a combination of diplomacy, military and economy, the Indian Army must be prepared for a swift and robust military response to safeguard our National aims and objectives.

Spectrum of Conflict and Force Application

In addition to unresolved border disputes on our Northern and Western Fronts, our Nation is being subjected to state sponsored proxy

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"As soon as the fear approaches near, attack and destroy it".

- Chanakya

war and acts of terrorism from across the border. There is thus a need to prepare for the multi-faceted security challenges that lie ahead.

- **Current Dynamics/ No War No Peace.**

- A concerted effort is being made by our adversaries to shrink the space for conventional wars, through prosecution of unconventional operations at the lower end of the spectrum and threats of early and irrational use of nuclear weapons at the other. While conventional war will remain central in the construct of the spectrum of operations, the Indian Army will continue to prosecute effective Counter Insurgency/ Counter Terrorism operations to ensure deterrence through punitive responses, against state sponsored proxy war.

- Ensuring territorial integrity along the Line of Control (LC), Actual Ground Position Line (AGPL) and Line of Actual Control (LAC) is the prime responsibility of the Indian Army. Any adversarial attempt to alter the status quo along our borders will be dealt with in a firm and resolute manner.

- **Line of Actual Control.** In case of any deliberate 'transgressions' along the Line of Actual Control, actions will be taken to resolve the issue to our advantage with minimum escalation, in consonance with existing Agreements and Protocols. However, there is a need to be prepared for any escalation.

- **Line of Control.** Along the Line of Control, operational capacities will be further strengthened to maintain moral and operational ascendancy and also enhance our punitive response options to greater depth, effect, sophistication and precision.

- **Internal Security.** When requisitioned to deal with internal threats and challenges, the Indian Army will prosecute operations in a firm manner using the principle of minimum force, focussing on winning hearts and minds, providing security to the local populace and uphold the principles of Human Rights.

- **Island Territories.** In addition to our land borders, we shall continue to enhance our capacities to defend our Island

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“The essence of military profession is preparedness”.

- Field Marshal K M Cariappa, OBE

Territories and exploit their location to our advantage in consonance with our National objectives.

- **Conflict Scenario.**

- **Enhancing Deterrence.** While war prevention through deterrence remains a core objective at the national level, preparing for war and its prosecution will remain the Army's prime function. Joint operations will be imperative to achieve operational success. Integrated planning and conduct of networked theatre battles will therefore be part of the Indian Army's strategy for prosecuting war. A strong well-structured and demonstrated strategic capability will be essential to deter war. We shall continue to enhance deterrence by development of niche capabilities, strategic posturing and upgradation of infrastructure.

- **Force Application.** Synergised application of land, maritime and air components will be imperative to achieve operational success. All threats will be met with a calibrated response by seamless integration and joint application of resources in our arsenal across all domains of conflict.

- **Asymmetry.** Asymmetry with any adversary will be offset by better training standards, development of strategies, skilful use of terrain and application of the principles of operational art and manoeuvre warfare. Technological asymmetry with an adversary will be countered by mission oriented training, motivated troops and effective leadership.

- **Conventional War.** When forced to prosecute a conventional war, it shall be to meet our National politico-military objectives and be executed to ensure comprehensive military gains. All combat operations will be as Integrated Battle Groups (IBGs), under command of a combined arms operational headquarters. Appropriate simultaneous responses to hybrid and non-contact warfare will be ensured in all dimensions, at all stages, and in all sectors of conflict.

- **Border Management.** During conventional war, the Indian Army will synergise employment of all Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) as per operational plans. Their integration, training and operational procedures to assist in their assimilation into the war fighting effort, so as

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“For the Indian Army to remain relevant, it has to remain versatile and be prepared to fight across the full spectrum of conflict”.

- Gen K Sundarji, PVSM

to ensure smooth and seamless transition during conventional war is essential.

- **Northern Borders.**

- All measures will be undertaken to enhance deterrence along the Northern borders. Operations along our Northern borders will be force centric, through effective multi-tiered deployment, rapid mobilisation, positioning/ application of reserves, augmentation of forces and force multipliers.

- All forces deployed along the Northern borders shall be self contained in all aspects and be capable of fighting isolated. Reserve formations must be agile to ensure rapid mobilisation and timely application, augmented by forces from other fronts/ sectors. Strike formations shall be suitably mobilised, postured and acclimatised for rapid application.

- **Western Borders.**

- Capabilities will be enhanced to enable deterrence along our Western borders. Operations along the Western borders will be force and/ or space centric with one being corollary to the other. Our response along the Western Front will be sharp and swift with the aim of destroying the centre of gravity of the adversary and securing spatial gains.

- All forces shall be applied as Integrated Battle Groups, with equipment profile matched with envisaged role and exploitation potential, to provide greater flexibility in force application.

- **Collusive Threat.** In event of a collusive threat, the primary front will be dealt with all the resources in our arsenal and a strong strategic defensive balance will be maintained along the secondary front. The Indian Army shall be prepared to address collusive threats in all

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“Solutions are found through restraint & mutual dialogue”.

- Narendra Modi

dimensions. Military forces will be identified, rehearsed and equipped for such contingencies. In a given contingency, should the Sub Conventional threat escalate, the Indian Army will also remain prepared for punitive response against all threats in this domain with all security agencies.

- **Non-Contact and Hybrid Warfare.** Non-Contact and Hybrid domains of conflict are now being integrated into the conventional and sub conventional realms and could be non-declaratory and non-attributable in its execution, a characteristic of Grey Zone Warfare that needs to be catered for.

- The Indian Army will enhance capabilities to address the challenges of non-contact domains of conflict viz cyber, space and information as a component of our National strategy for non-contact warfare to cause unaffordable losses to potential adversaries.

- Due to increased threat of hybrid warfare, the Indian Army will prosecute operations with designated forces, equipped and mandated to effect attacks/ retaliation in the Information Warfare (IW) domain. Adequate capabilities will be developed to dominate the hybrid warfare environment, both along our Northern and Western borders and in dealing with internal security, in coordination with earmarked services and agencies.

- **Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW).** The Indian Army will continue to meet its other secondary obligations like Aid to Civil Authorities, Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR), Internal Security Duties, Nation Building, UN Peace Keeping Operations and Out of Area Contingency (OOAC) tasks, including assistance to Friendly Foreign Countries (FFCs) and assistance in 'Non Combatant Evacuation Procedures'.

- **Enhancing Domestic Defence Capability.** The Indian Army will integrate with defence research, public sector units and civil industries to develop systems, ideas and concepts, in fielding of latest weapons and equipment to provide impetus to domestic defence production.

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“The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong”.

- Mahatma Gandhi

- **Military Diplomacy.** The Indian Army will continue its endeavours in Military Diplomacy in the form of Military to Military cooperation and by utilising the services of its Defence Attachés to ensure close coordination with other nations. Simultaneously, the Indian Army would work towards balancing relations with other nations and form strategic partnerships to achieve our National objectives.

Capability Development

Development of capacities will be a pragmatic mix of both capability and threat based approach to enable a greater span of responses to plausible scenarios for force developers to work on. We shall continue to create capacities that deliver national security outcomes through optimal utilisation of all resources and not those that lie idle. A balance will be maintained in development of Capacities and Capabilities, which must go hand in hand.

- **Development of Capacities.**
 - Capacity development will aim to enhance ‘Sector Specific Threat Based’ capacities and move towards a more broad spectrum ‘Capability Based’ force. Simultaneously, capacities to ensure rapid infusion of technology to upgrade Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR), firepower, mobility and precision weapon capabilities and create tailor made organisations with equipment/ capacities specific to sectors must be enhanced. Capacities will be developed to address multiple challenges of close proximity situations and enhance ability to fight when isolated.
 - This will be achieved by synergising modernisation, optimising, technology assimilation, developing our human resources and optimum budget utilisation. Delegation, Autonomy and Upgrading Operational Efficiencies shall be the prime areas of focus.
- **Capabilities to be Developed.** Development of capabilities will be based on a tiered, prioritised, sector specific and threat based

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“You can distil deterrence down to two factors : Capability and Will”.

- Chris Gibson

evaluation to cater for :-

- Hybrid Threats/ Responses Short of War/ Localised Conflicts/ Multi Domain Capacities/ Out of Area Contingencies.
- Full Spectrum Deterrence and Operations.
- Prioritisation of acquisition shall be based upon 'Op Critical', 'Op Essential' and 'Op Advantageous' requirements. The type and quantities of critical operational equipment/ assets will be acquired in a balanced manner based on guaranteed funding.
- **Focus Areas for Capability Development.**
 - **Optimisation.** The Indian Army will continue to optimise its resources and forces based on the present and future challenges.
 - **Force Structure.** The Indian Army will be structured to be an agile, mobile and technology driven force, operating in synergy with the other Services, in pursuance of our National Interests.
 - **Human Resource Development (HRD).** Human Resource Development will aim at preparing a soldier for the future battlefield milieu. The soldier will be a scholar warrior with levels of competencies commensurate to his task. Digitisation and connectivity initiatives will be upgraded as also simulator/ distance learning/ e-learning programmes to enable optimisation of manpower. A fillip shall be given to Professional Military Education (PME) to nurture future commanders capable of executing knowledge based operations.
 - **Second Echelon Capability.** Indian Army units in their secondary role, as well as the Rashtriya Rifles (RR) and Assam Rifles (AR) battalions, deployed to conduct Counter Insurgency/ Counter Terrorism operations in the hinterland, will also be prepared, trained and suitably empowered, to be effectively employed for conventional

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“Technology, through automation and artificial intelligence, is definitely one of the most disruptive sources”.

- Alain Dehaze

operations. As part of optimisation, creation of a robust second echelon capability through TA-isation and a pool of reservists will aim to add depth and flexibility to our force optimisation. These forces shall be integrated seamlessly as a vital component of Rear Area Security Plans.

- **Human – Machine Teaming.** At the core of our future military planning will be the effective integration of soldiers, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Robotics into war-fighting systems that exploit existing capabilities for success in battle. Increase in operational effectiveness due to technological development in all fields will be offset by corresponding optimisation.
- **Review of Scaling.** A holistic review of present scaling of holding and reserves of ammunition, equipment and other stocks will be carried out as per envisaged operational role and likely employment of each soldier/ sub-unit/ unit/ formation at various stages of battle tailored to specific threats. A 'one size fits all' approach will be avoided.
- **Multi Front Capability.** The Indian Army will build capacities to cater for a multi front threat, as the defence needs of the future. Employment of inter-theatre reserves with inter-operable equipment/ assets will ensure timely augmentation of forces on the primary front, while guaranteeing effective deterrence on the other. This will be an important component of the Theatre/ Front Strategy for enhancing strategic mobility of agile reserves capable of quick mobilisation in the form of Integrated Battle Groups.
- **ISR and Precision Strike.** Timely and assured ISR inputs, in concert with intelligence of other Services/ agencies will be developed to offset any terrain and force asymmetries. Enhancing the Information Warfare and ISR capabilities will be critical for precise and decisive employment of long range vectors, strategic and other non-contact assets to cause maximum degradation to the adversary.

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"In the future, we will probably see cyber operations that change or manipulate electronic information to compromise its integrity instead of simply deleting the access to it".

- James R. Clapper

- **Theaterisation of Critical Assets.** Efforts will continue towards Theaterisation (Inter and Intra Service) of all critical assets (ISR, Long Range Vectors, Aviation, Air Defence and Logistics) for optimum application in future conflicts. A concerted effort will be made to enhance the combat potential of the ground forces by procuring Attack Helicopters, dependent on terrain, so as to counter the adversary.
- **Information Warfare (IW).** Indian Army will develop capabilities to prosecute Information Warfare Operations over the entire spectrum of conflict as well as in 'No War No Peace' scenario, with the aim to achieve full spectrum information dominance over the adversary.
 - **Cyber Warfare (CW).** Cyberspace will be the new dimension of warfare and will be a key battle winning factor in future conflicts. While developing Cyber Warfare capabilities, all elements/ forces must retain the capability to fight through a disruptive Cyber Warfare domain/ environment. The Indian Army will upgrade existing Cyber Warfare capabilities with the objective to develop cyber deterrence and defence capabilities, while simultaneously devising means of eliminating such threats.
 - **Electronic Warfare (EW).** We shall continue to develop a span of Electronic Warfare eco-systems to upgrade operational focus, equipping and skilling. Our Electronic Warfare capabilities shall evolve into full spectrum, electro-optical dominance to include capabilities in Communication Intelligence (COMINT), Electronic Intelligence (ELINT), interception, jamming, spoofing and deception. To contain proxy war, endeavours will continue to degrade the communication capabilities of terrorists/ insurgents and enhance our technical prowess to combat the impact of radicalisation/ alienation.
 - **Psychological Warfare (Psy W).** Psychological Warfare will be used to promote own objectives and the Indian Army shall graduate to a state where mass media becomes an organic part of future operations. Social Media, which has emerged as a powerful tool for Public Information and Perception Management, will also be used meaningfully and responsibly to yield desired dividends.

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“In cyberspace, weapon system gets created in 24 hour cycles. You have no earthly idea whether or not you have a defensive capability against them”.

- Thomas Tills

- **Techno-Centric Environment.** The Indian Army will continue to modernise to fight in a techno-centric combat environment which is likely to emerge in futuristic conflict scenarios due to revolution in key technologies like Artificial Intelligence, Quantum Computing, Nano Technology, High-Energy Lasers, Directed Energy Weapons, Hypersonic Weapons etc so as to cater for high technology threat of Swarm Attacks including Drones, Laser and Pulsed Microwave Weapon Systems and Injection of False Information.
- **Space Warfare.** Continuous surveillance of our borders by developing and employment of satellites, to provide accurate inputs for planning of operations, mitigation of threats and integration of space based assets with ground based weapon platforms will be a priority area for development. Development of micro satellites, lighter and greater capacity transponders, manoeuvrable and intelligent outer space satellites, with short life spans which can be launched 'on demand' basis, will be the essential future requirements for the Army.
- **Special Forces Capability.** Special Forces shall be equipped, structured and trained to ensure their application in multiple employment opportunities for exponential gains, to achieve our military objectives. Their equipment profiling, standards of training and employment strategies must form a vital component of our overall deterrence capability, both in unconventional/ conventional domains.
- **Force Projection Capability.** India's role as a regional security provider mandates a force projection capability to further our national security objectives. A Rapid Reaction Force comprising Integrated Battle Groups with strategic lift and amphibious capability will be an imperative for force projection operations.
- **Operational Readiness.** A high standard of operational readiness in terms of mission capable equipment, trained personnel, logistics sustenance and availability of spares and reserves will be ensured to enable the Indian Army to prosecute operations at short notice and on multiple fronts.

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“You will not find it difficult to prove that battles, campaigns, and even wars have been won or lost primarily because of logistics”.

- Dwight D Eisenhower

- **Operational Logistics.**
 - **Strategic Sustenance Capacity.** All modes/ assets of transportation including strategic road/ rail communications, airfields and mounting bases will be employed for enhancing capabilities for inter and intra theatre switching of forces and equipment.
 - **Logistics Planning.** Logistic plans will be tailor-made based on the operations envisaged in specific theatres. Consolidation of stocks at various depots in the hinterland will be carried out as well as the number of logistics echelons reviewed. In the Tactical Battle Area (TBA), stocks will be suitably dispersed as per operational requirement. Logistic movement will be lateral as well as linear to ensure flexibility and adequacy.
 - **Unified Logistics Structures.** The Indian Army will continue to work towards formulation of modernised Unified Logistics Structures under a single logistician as Commander. These structures shall be networked and automated for 'Just in Time' supply. This shall be in concert with our overall upgradation of operational logistics infrastructure especially for independent/ isolated sectors.
- **Nuclear Environment.** The Indian Army will continue to enhance our capability to fight in a Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) environment. Field formations/ units will be equipped to prosecute operations through a Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear contaminated zone, to maintain tempo of operations.
- **Training.** Training will be realistic, integrated, operational oriented and in sync with the Front/ Theatre threat assessment with the focus on imbibing technologies being introduced. The focus of training will be as per Formation's role with emphasis on 'Offensive Defence', Inter Theatre mobilisation, rapid application of Strike/ Reserve Formations, innovative employment of Special Forces and Forward Logistics Management in a techno-centric environment.

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“Quartered in snow, silent to remain,

When the bugle calls, they shall rise and march again”.

- Anonymous
(Siachen Base Camp)

- **Deterrence.** The Indian Army shall be the primary instrument of the overall deterrence capability of the Nation. Enhanced operational preparedness of Defensive/ Strike Formations, positioning of Sectoral/ Theatre Reserves, upgrading capability of Special Forces/ Cyber Domain and demonstrated capability by conduct of military exercises shall be pursued.

Conclusion

The Indian Army will continue to develop strategies and capabilities for contingencies throughout the expanding spectrum of conflict aiming to dissuade, deter, delay and defend by proactive and responsive engagements at the place and time of own choosing, when there is an imminent threat to National Security. In doing so, the strategy will be application of all the elements of the military arsenal in conjunction with other instruments of Comprehensive National Power.

The focus of the Indian Army will be to develop cross domain capabilities, facilitate enhanced jointness and integration amongst the three Services and optimise forces and resources to be prepared for effective and robust military responses in a future battle field milieu. The Indian Army shall continue to be a potent force with deterrent capability to enhance the politico-diplomatic options of the nation.



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