

EAM Dr S Jaishankar's remark at the Second Manohar Parrikar Memorial Lecture

We are all here virtually to remember Manohar Parrikar ji who would have turned 65 years old today. It is natural for us to express our feelings and recall our associations. I myself had the opportunity of working with him as Foreign Secretary. Quite apart from our many official interactions, my recollection is of a warm and informal person, with no airs about him. He could be very caring and it was very easy to build a rapport with him. So, I can well imagine that there are many plugged into this event who would share my sentiments about him.

But on an occasion like this, it would also be right to step back a bit and assess what he meant in terms of policy-making and governance. And how much of that ended up as his legacy. I am grateful to Gen. Shekatkar and the Forum for Integrated National Security for bringing us all together in that endeavour. It is a real honour to deliver the Second Manohar Parrikar Memorial Lecture. And the theme I have selected for my remarks is of the relationship between defence and diplomacy to underline the importance of greater integration in policy making. In many ways, those are the very issues which were at the core of my interaction with Manohar Parrikarji.

Few would disagree with the proposition that when Manohar Parrikar came to Delhi as Minister of Defence, it was like a breath of fresh air, that too from Goa. This was much needed because it is typical in any system to see habits to set in and beliefs to become entrenched. Parrikar ji came in with his 'different' persona, took charge and then brought his enormous energy to bear on all matters of national security. And he did that in his own inimitable style, engaging intensively with his colleagues and with his co-workers, questioning assumptions, offering his own views very transparently, inviting those of others and taking part himself in the argumentation that followed. It certainly was quite different from the ethos prevailing before that. Even though his tenure was less than three years, he established a well-deserved reputation for being practical and for being outcome-oriented. He showed strategic clarity in assessing the world and did what he should on important matters of national interest. Today, it is his outlook that I would like to focus on and emphasize to you the need to be non-dogmatic and self-critical when it comes to policy-making. Even otherwise, these are valuable attributes, but especially so in a world that is rapidly changing.

Now, the global order is continuously evolving and tracking that process is intrinsic to policy-making. What may be different now are the magnitude, complexity and pace of change. Because it has so many more dimensions and variables, the prospect of not fully comprehending all its implications is more real. These are not just matters of policies and their implementation; we have actually seen sharp shifts in the basic stance and behaviour of nations and their interplay with each other. Some of this has unfolded more visibly in the last year; but its contours were evident even before. The salience of China and the re-positioning of the United States are perhaps the two sharpest examples.

But there are many others of great consequence, whether we speak of Brexit and intra-EU politics, the Abraham Accords and the dynamics of the Gulf, the challenges faced by Africa, the ideological debates which we see in Latin America, or the evolution of the Indo-Pacific. Each, in their own way, is a reflection of this larger rebalancing and the emergence of multi-polarity.

[Read Complete Remark](#)

SELF RELIANCE IN MUNITIONS AND ENERGETICS

By Lt Gen N B Singh, PVSM, AVSM, VSM, ADC

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The recent move of the Defence Ministry according approval for indigenous development and production of 125mm Armour Piercing Fin Stabilised Discarding Sabot (APFSDS) ammunition for T-72/T-90 tanks by the industry is indicative of the absence of a coherent long term approach towards Atma Nirbhar Bharat. The present move will once again result in all players missing the fairways for the woods. The track record of indigenous development has not been encouraging, as a concrete strategy is yet to be devised. A strategy for the defence industrial base is necessary as the future is unpredictable and requirements large as is evident from the import embargo list released by the Govt.

The attack of armour is the most complex and dynamic area of ammunition design. Defeating a tank entails penetration of the armoured shield accompanied by violent secondary effects to disable the crew and platform. The Russians were the first to field a tank gun firing APFSDS ammunition. It had a lot of similarities with the German ammunition in World War II, Peenemunde Arrow. The 125mm gun of tank T90 and T72 is a product from the same designers. The current ammunition being used has a penetration of 450mm of toughened steel. What is being asked from the industry is enhanced penetration of 530mm, to be fired from existing barrels. All this to be done without any design documents of Russian gun!

Some years back in 2014 the Govt had entered a contract with Tecmash, a Russian company for supply of some 60,000 rounds of APFSDS ammunition, nicknamed Mango with a penetration of over 500 mm. It was accompanied with technology transfer to Ordnance Factory Board (OFB), Kolkata. The Army has been complaining of the unacceptable quality of ammunition being supplied. It is therefore looking at alternate sources of ammunition procurement. However, this approach appears to be ill conceived and unlikely to come to fruition as envisaged. In the short to medium term, continued access to bespoke ammunition, preferably under technology transfer is essential to maintaining operational readiness of the Army.

Any indigenous efforts at enhancing penetration should be under the aegis of Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO), the only agency having a sound knowledge base on ammunition design and testing.



APFSDS AMMUNITION



SABOT AND PENETRATOR SEPARATING BEYOND GUN BARREL

Development of APFSDS ammunition is a complex process. For higher penetration, the sabot mass has to be reduced and penetrator length maximised. Higher stresses could lead to failure of sabot and the penetrator breaking up immediately beyond the gun barrel. A thorough understanding of gun design and improved materials is the key. During the process of technology transfer, only production drawings of the gun and ammunition have been provided. **A tank gun and ammunition is designed as a system keeping in mind the targets to be defeated.** In the absence of design details, the ability of private sector to develop not only complex ammunition but with enhanced capabilities is questionable. They may end up picking up developed ammunition from East Europe, Israel, and Russia offering these for evaluation. All this will be at the taxpayer`s cost. New rounds employing new sabot and improved penetrator with superior capabilities are available. Why then is the Army rolling out this experiment to plug the operational capability gap? How can high end ammunition manufacture be handed over to private parties without any foundational knowledge?

During my interaction with Russian designers on barrel burst cases of tank guns, they were of the opinion that the process of technology absorption in ordnance factories left much to be desired. It was observed that, in most cases ordnance factories ended up procuring raw materials from all corners of erstwhile Soviet Union in pursuit of cost based procurement. If propellants and explosives are procured from various sources because these cost less, there was no way one could guarantee that ammunition being manufactured would meet stipulated safety and consistency standards.

In my opinion, **the root cause of faulty ammunition manufacture in India has been -- incomplete absorption of technology of manufacture, lack of self sufficiency in basic input materials, purchase of these from cheapest sources and a cultural inability to adhere to the stringent processes outlined in technology documents.** Taking shortcuts is our forte. In frugal engineering parlance, it is called Jugaad.

The real concern is that private entities will put in half baked efforts at huge costs and delays in this programme due to absence of know how, know why and know what is to be done. The end product could, either be ineffective or unaffordable, exacerbating the current capability gap. Instead, the right approach would be to identify the strengths of DRDO/OFB, build up competencies, and invest in improved components and raw materials with a thorough understanding of gun design. If required, go back to Russia- the power house of smooth bore guns and APFSDS ammunition and relearn the process. It would be at a cost but self reliance in munitions and energetics is indispensable for India. The industry needs to get into this segment through the painstaking route of supply of quality input materials and manufacture of simpler munitions. Operating ammunition plants under Government Owned Contactor Operated model is a pragmatic option, to build foundational knowledge in the private sector.

A special force of experts needs to be assembled under the Defence Ministry with a long term strategic plan to make the country self reliant in munitions and energetics. Having acquired foundational competencies, the private sector can be thrown the challenge of optimizing the indigenous 120 mm gun of Arjun and its ammunition and eventually going for development of a 130/140 mm tank gun and its ammunition for next generation tanks targeting a much higher penetration. This is one approach to building industrial capabilities in this niche segment and providing India the much aspired technology security. As they say, action without strategy could end in a nightmare and the essence of strategy is in choosing what not to do.

IRAN EXECUTION AND ITS POST MORTEM

By Lt Gen VA Bhat

Author served as the Director-General of Quality Assurance (DGQA) at the Department of Defence Production (Ministry of Defence)

The Execution of a top Iranian Nuclear Scientist recently made headlines around the world. Iran was quick to accuse Israel and Western countries of this assassination. Denial of Israel was equally quick. The tilt of the Trump Administration towards Israel is well known. Mr. Trump annulled the Treaty signed with Iran with P5 + one to limit its Nuclear enrichment ambition/programme. Iran has now admitted that this is an operation carried out by Artificial Intelligence with a machine gun operated remotely. It reveals the gaps in the security system of Israel.

Under **the accord**, Iran agreed to limit its sensitive nuclear activities and allow international inspectors in return for the lifting of crippling economic sanctions. Saudi Arabia, a Sunni majority nation, is a sworn enemy of Shia dominated Iran. The Saudis are fully aware that Iran is the only other nation who will support the Arab world. The Saudis are keen to limit the influence of Shia Iran in the other Arab Nations in its vicinity. The Nuclear deal was inked by the P5+1 with the US President taking a lead in the negotiations and then concluding it. It was signed just 96hrs before Mr Obama handed over to Mr Trump. Suffice to say the treaty was already dead before it was brought to the table as Mr Trump in his campaign had announced that he will abrogate this Treaty. President-designate Biden was the Vice President under President Obama when negotiations on the Deal started.

It is pertinent to see how this act influences the countries of the subcontinent. Iran has religious economic and strategic ties with this region. All three countries of the Sub-continent India Pakistan and Bangladesh are bound to be affected by this turbulence. Saudi Arabia, Israel and the Republicans are keen to continue keeping Iran in the same state as it finds itself after the Trump Administration annulled the Nuclear Treaty, and placed severe sanctions to cripple its economy. Massive retaliation by the Iranians will severely handicap the incoming US President Biden. Not doing so will bring into focus the sharp internal differences between the doves and the hawks of Iran Policy makers. The doves are willing to negotiate with the US and want Iran to regain its own legitimate place in the world order. The hawks are itching to retaliate. These frequent attacks on high profile Iranians by its enemies lead us to speculate the penetration of its society by those who oppose the existing Regime in Iran. India will not like to be sucked in the politics of the Middle East.

There has been a big shift in the thinking of the Arab States toward Israel in recent times. Bahrain and UAE have already normalised relations with Israel. There have been unconfirmed reports of Israel PM visiting Saudi Arabia recently. Though Israel is yet to comment Saudis have promptly denied this vehemently. The erstwhile ambassador of Saudi Arabia to London has criticised any proposed recognition of Israel by his country.

There are think tanks in Pakistan who are willing to establish ties with Israel and counter India growing relations with Israel. Islamist Hardliners on whom the Imran Khan government heavily depends upon are preventing this relation. The intense hatred of the Jews and the Hindus by these hardliners forces Islamabad to hold its hand. Imran Khan is under pressure from its Gulf Friends to reach out to Jerusalem and recognise it for accompanying spin off of better relations with the US and limit the exponential rise in Indo US relations. Bangladesh is also looking at a window to go ahead and engage with Jerusalem. Relations of Pakistan with Turkey and Iran are also blocks which need to be given serious thoughts by the present of Pakistan Government. Similar Islamist hardliners in Bangladesh are holding it back. If Pakistan takes the plunge and recognises Jerusalem in spite of the anticipated backlash to follow, Dacca will also be forced to follow suit.

If, and when, both Islamabad and Dacca do accept the reality of Tel Aviv it will be a big political and ideological bonus for Israel. Both these countries are the World's biggest Islamic nations. India may see its special position come under threat with this new order. Israel may lose its interest in India as it presently sees India as a counter-balance to Muslim nations all around in the region. With normal relations progressively finding legitimacy with more Muslim countries, the Muslim block may block India's political, trade and military ties with India.

Turkey is a nation which is partially located in Europe and a larger area in Asia. The defeat of Turkey in the First World War signaled the end of the Ottoman Empire. Kemal Atatürk was instrumental for the defeat of the Allied Forces who had occupied Turkey at the end of WW1. He brought about Radical changes and ushered parliamentary democracy and secularism in the country. Turkey joined NATO and is still a part of the alliance. Turkey has now undergone a big change in the last two decades. Turkish President Erdogan has been responsible for bringing in Islamist values to the fore front but denies he has abandoned secularism. His act of changing the Sophia Church to a Mosque has been condemned by many specially the Western World. Besides CAA, abolition of Articles 370 and 35, and the division of Kashmir into three parts. It has made efforts to raise the Kashmir issue in various International Forums. It is said Turkey is sponsoring terrorism to help Pakistan in creating trouble in Kashmir.

Mr. Erdogan has been flexing his muscles to challenge Saudi Arabia as a leader of the Gulf Nations. In 2019, Pakistan and Turkey made joined efforts to isolate Saudis in concert with Malaysia to hold a conference of Muslim countries. Saudi Arabia and other Gulf Nations threatened Pakistan to return loans granted to it to tide over the economic crisis it is faced with. An IMF loan means Pakistan has to introduce many reforms which are opposed by most hard liners as it is against the tenets of Islam. Other threats have been implied. Return of Pakistani labour employed in the Gulf Nations as there is Economic recession has potential to create havoc with the economy of Pakistan.

India has been watching these changes closely. Mr Netanyahu is also facing problems with his coalition partners who have said they will withdraw support. He is thus inclined to fend relations with powerful Muslim countries of the region. India needs to watch the events as they unfold in the Middle East in the next 2-3 months as Mr. Donald cedes, finally even though grudgingly, space to Mr Biden. India also needs to be concerned as Joe Biden may not be as keen to favour India over Pakistan as Trump was. It is well known that Biden has had good relations with Pakistan during his tenure in the Senate as well as in the White House as VP. He has been conferred with the second highest civil award HILAL E PAKISTAN IN 2008.

India now needs to watch the events as they unfold after 20 January 2021 as the new Administration takes charge and takes its first steps. The President had called our general area as AF-PAK and named a special Envoy take this task on separately. Mr Biden has no other option to take quick steps to the Middle East. India must grab any opportunity with two hands and successfully limit the over reach of the US on Pakistan. It must use its good relations with Iran and gain the confidence of Mr. Biden to suit its interests in Asia.

Metamorphosis of political relationships in the Middle East in view of the Abraham Accords

By Dr. Arnab Chakrabarty

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Ever since the first **Yom Ha'atzmaut** was celebrated and the streets of Tel Aviv erupted in joyous rousing in 1948, the neighbouring Arab nations did not accept the creation of the Jewish state with a similar sense of enthusiasm. To them, the creation of Israel was nothing short of a sinister design to strategically carve out an enemy state right within their vicinity. Indeed the **first Arab-Israeli war** of 1947-1949 exhibited the disdain that the Arab nations had for the newly created state of Israel, vowing to decimate it at any given opportunity. Conflicts would perpetuate between the Arab nations and Israel and **further wars** such as the Suez war of 1956, the Six-Day war of 1967 and the Yom Kippur war 1973 clearly showed the paucity of peace.

Of course as time passed Israel emerged stronger and realisation dawned upon the Arab nations that the state of Israel was an established fact. A dwindling Palestinian resistance and the futility of the intifada also enabled Israel to dig its roots deeper. Even though multiple resolutions were passed at the United Nations condemning Israel for promoting racism, occupying Palestinian territories and carrying out clandestine military operations; none could shake the determination of the **Jewish nation to exist**. The recent peace process exhibit a curious tendency on the part of the Arab states to reconsider their long standing wish to decimate Israel and instead focus on partnership and amicability especially in the backdrop of a rising Turkey and discord in the Arab camp. Such a metamorphosis could primarily occur in view of the changing nature of political events in the region, where pragmatism edges out ideological hostility with ease.

In 1979 egged on by the then American President Jimmy Carter, Anwar Sadat the then President of Egypt and the former Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin came to terms by the **Camp David Accords**. While both the sides made considerable efforts to come to an amicable understanding, for the Israelis this was just the beginning to amend a broken relationship with Egypt even if that required giving up captured territories and oil fields in the Sinai Peninsula. Fuelled by this success Israel and Jordan also entered into a **peace treaty in 1994**. The 1990s was a period of speculation for Israel as it had to consider its relationship with the Arab nations which were not willing to offer concessions and a resurging Palestinian resistance that was difficult to deal with. The treaty signed between Israel and Jordan in the Wadi Arava in the presence of former American President Bill Clinton signed in the backdrop of the secret peace talks between the PLO and Israel provided Jordan with an excellent opportunity to receive the same deal as Egypt did without antagonising the Palestinians.

Similar attempts at brokering a peace deal were also tried between **Israel and Syria** in the aftermath of the Madrid Conference and between **Israel and Lebanon**.

While the Iran-Iraq war, the Iraqi invasion and subsequent liberation of Kuwait in 1991 and the invasion of Iraq in 2003 exposed the fissures within Arab nations, a belligerent Turkey and an ominous Iran also envisions discord within the Arab states. The heydays of Palestinian struggle and *intifada* are no longer **words of choice among the Arab states**. Indeed, the Arab Spring, the Syrian civil war and the rise and fall of the ISIS were some noteworthy events that highlight the differences in perceptions among the Arab nations regarding regional issues. Israel in this regard even though it has been the *bête noire* for all, managed to remain unscathed. While Palestine is still a cause of concern or rather a forge of unity for the Arab states, political pragmatism and changing tunes of the international area calls for newer approaches in the Middle East.

The recent peace deal between Israel, Bahrain and the UAE under the auspices of former American President Donald Trump heralded a new dawn in bilateral relations in the Middle East. While both the Arab signatory states have a common opposition to Iran, they offered only token reference to Palestine. Emirati Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah Bin Zayed Al Nahyan and Bahraini Foreign Minister Abdullatif Al- Zayani mentioned the agreement as a historical accord in the face of changing relations in the Middle East. Dubbed as the **Abraham Accords**, the new peace deal is expected to cause a **domino effect** in the Middle East which will usher in a new era of peace and harmony in the region. While Israel and the United States were triumphant in their expression of a supposed era of harmony along with the other Arab signatory states, utter disdain was expressed by **Palestinian leaders** who believed that they were stabbed in the back. While Israeli Foreign Minister Gabi Ashkenazi clarified that the peace deal has not been brought to life at the expense of the Palestinians, the mood in the other camp is visibly dark. The deal has however been perceived as an underhand deal that broke the decades old theme of Arab states not giving up on Palestine. While the United States and Israel expressed their wish for more states to normalise relations with Israel in return for **concessions**, it would take a herculean effort for that to materialise as certainly normalisation of relations with Israel would inevitably **isolate the Palestinians** therefore causing a major embarrassment for the Arab nations and also failing their ally. The normalisation of relations between Israel and Morocco too display a gradual warming up between former rivals with concessions being eked out on each side.

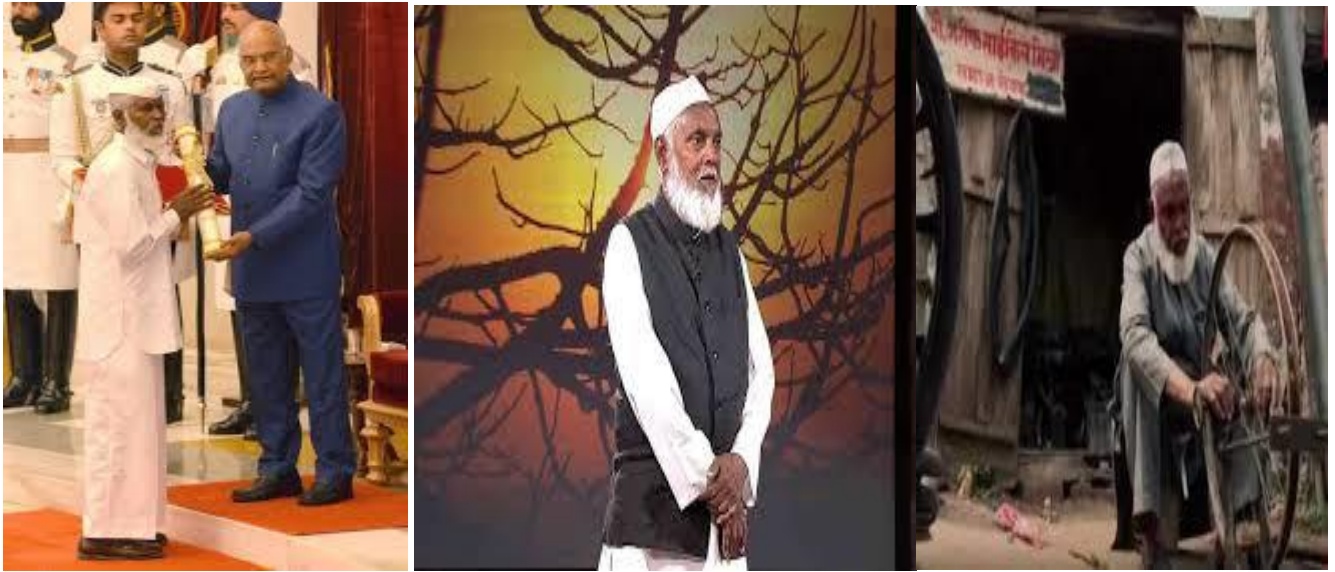
The peace accord is however beneficial to the signatory states in terms of normalising relations and could be seen as a form of **détente** reminiscent of the brief periods of cessation of hostilities during the Cold War. For the UAE and Bahrain economic opportunities could enhance in an open partnership with Israel in addition to keeping a restive Iran in check. Both Bahrain and the UAE seek to **improve their economic opportunities** and are also **wary of Iran**, whose growing regional clout could spell disaster for these two Arab states. For Israel, normalising relations with the UAE and Bahrain could gradually aid in ending its **regional isolation** as well as create more chances for normalisation of relations with other Arab states, needless to mention this would also enable Israel to be recognised as a legitimate state in the region. On a lesser but significant note, the deal will also cause more pronounced fissures within the Arab states with Saudi Arabia treading cautiously while others such as Iran and Qatar vehemently opposed to the normalisation of ties with Israel. Needless to mention, Turkey that has been trying its level best to claim the leadership of the Islamic world would also be jittered.

While Palestine has always been the **cornerstone** of the foreign policy of the Arab states regarding Israel, the changing nature of the international and **regional dynamics** once again proved to be far worthy than ideological dimensions. That should however not entail a dismissive note regarding the Palestine question, but a mere suspension. While Palestine will remain an important question, regional trade and commerce, the use of airspaces and airbases, the **looming threat from Iran and Turkey**, a consolidation of radical Islamic forces and the need to resist from being hostages to the ideals of Palestine vis-à-vis 'national interests' will play a far more significant role in shaping future peace accords in the region.

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Nation is Indebted to:

Ayodhya's last rites Samaritan, Mohammad Sharif alias 'Shareef Chacha', Padma Shree



Ways of human sensitivity are beyond understanding of ordinary human beings. However, amongst very ordinary human beings, there are stars who shine brilliantly. At times there are some incidents which change the complete personality of such people. They become apostles of humanity with a mission in life.

Mohammad Sharif alias “Sharif Chacha”, 80-year-old, is such a rare person. He is an ordinary cycle mechanic in Rekabganj area of Ayodhya. A sad incident happened in his life where his 25 year old son's dismembered body, partly devoured by animals was found on a railway track between then Faizabad and Sultanpur railway station in 1992. This tragedy and the way his son's body was found changed his thinking.

“I resolved then that no individual would undergo the humiliation my son (then 25) had undergone in death”, “Kya Hindu Kya Musalman, Sabse pahle Insaan” said Sharif Chacha.

From then on, he ensures respectful cremation or burial of any dead person as per his/her religion. In earlier days he himself used to enquire from Police, Mortuary about any unclaimed body and carry that on a cart for last rites. Those days people labelled him as “Pagal Aadmi ” mad man. He used to spend his own money for this. Now he is seen with respect and many people are supporting him in his noble work. Ayodhya administration contacts him for dignified last rites of unclaimed bodies.

As per Sharif Chacha, he has cremated more than 3000 Hindus and buried 1500 Muslims so far.

For such a devoted social service, he was conferred with Padma Shree on Republic day 2020

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