

## China Storming Arunachal Bastion in Vain

**By Srikanth Kondapalli**

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While the nation's attention is drawn acutely to the western sector of the border between India and China in the wake of the bloody fisticuffs on the night of June 15, 2020, and the aftermath, developments in the Indian eastern flank are no less alarming. Indeed, China's revival of irredentist claims, strategic border domination efforts, the creation of pinpricks or even waging psychological warfare against India. These are, of course, stoutly countered by India by matching, if not overpowering, build-up of capabilities, plans, strategic alignments, and diplomatic manoeuvres.

When China occupied Tibet in 1951, its main focus was on the Aksai Chin region for transporting and sustaining its troops. China's attention hardly elicited Arunachal Pradesh's (at that time, North East Frontier Agency) region. Indeed, in 1960, China's Premier Zhou Enlai even suggested a "swap deal" of accepting south of the 1914 McMahon Line (the current day Arunachal Pradesh) as a part of India provided the latter recognised Aksai Chin as a part of China. The offer was repeated by Deng Xiaoping in 1980 but was not accepted by India due to China's tentative and dubious claims, even for Aksai Chin.

The territorial dispute across 1,126 kilometres of border between India and China in the eastern sector is actually in six areas, including Longju, Asaphila, Migyitun, Namka Chu, Samdorong Chu, and Chantze. Frequent transgressions by China's troops are reported in these areas, specifically in Kameng, Fish Tails, and other areas. Recently, border transgressions by China were reported at Hundred Hill at Kaho, Andrella Valley at Dibang, Maja in Upper Subansiri and other areas.

However, since the mid-1980s, China has begun eyeing Arunachal Pradesh for its strategic location, boundless natural resources, and historical and religious affiliations of Tibet to this region and to balance or contain India. Samdorong Chu incident in 1986 was the first pointer in this direction when about 200 Chinese soldiers crossed the Kameng sector at an increasing rate of transgressions that year. Earlier, in 1975, the Tulung la incident resulted in four Assam Rifles soldiers being ambushed.

India doubled down by organising the spectacular Operation Checkerboard with air-land battle scenarios. The Chinese were rattled with the resulting kill ratio – that is estimated at ten Chinese casualties for every one Indian soldier dead in the simulations, according to Chinese military sources. As a result, Deng Xiaoping began diverting attention to "Asian century" debates. At the 8th border talks to resolve the territorial dispute in November 1987, a flustered China also proposed creating a demilitarised zone in the eastern sector. Again, at the 4th Joint Working Group (JWG) meeting in February 1992, China proposed that the local military personnel should meet at Bumla to sort out border frictions. Later, in August 1995, at the 8th JWG meeting,

China also agreed to withdraw troops from four forward military posts in the Wangdong area. At the next 9th JWG meeting in October 1996, China also agreed to open an annual military meeting point at Dichu in the eastern sector at the level of a major general.

Thus, even though China realised it could not force India into the eastern sector, it, however, raised unsettling irredentist claims in the region by equating Arunachal Pradesh to “southern Tibet” (zangnan). Since the mid-1980s, China began arguing that since the 5th Dalai Lama hailed from the Tawang monastery, it should belong to communist China now! Even though China’s foreign minister, Li Zhaoxing wrote a book lampooning the 5th Dalai Lama, China began assuming “ownership” over him and the monastery. Today, with President Xi Jinping proclaiming the “China Dream” of eyeing “lost territories” historically, full normalisation of relations with India has become problematic for decades to come.

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## **Military’s Customs, Traditions And Historical Trappings**

**By Lt Gen (Dr) N B Singh, PVSM, AVSM, VSM, ADC**

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The move by the military to review its age-old colonial era customs and traditions has drawn varied reactions from different quarters. Like Agniveer scheme, it has been assumed that any change or transformation is uncalled for and the current military leadership could end up eroding and diluting ethics, values, customs and traditions of the Army. What has gone unnoticed is that the aim is to rid the organization of legacy activities and practices that have outlived their utility and relevance. It has been left to the military to review and take a call. The logical way is to allow the military to objectively review these practices and decide on the way forward with the firm belief that the present leadership has the wisdom and intellectual abilities to decide what is best for the organization. Dr Abdul Kalam had once remarked that customs and traditions are like lamp posts, one can use the lamp to enlighten one self and move forward or one can hang oneself with the post. The history of regiments is firmly embedded in the regimental culture and preserved in the Archives in the form of weapons, uniforms, medals, trophies, images displaying sacrifices & acts of gallantry of previous generations, soldiering activities and other trappings of martial endeavour.

Military customs, traditions and courtesies are fundamental aspects of soldiering and are integrated to develop esprit de corps. Regimental history is invoked by military leaders in all spheres of regimental activity, formal or informal to inspire a sense of shared organizational heritage and motivate men to excel. To remain a formidable fighting force any military has to develop the fighting spirit in soldiers to be ever ready to disrupt and destroy the enemy. A custom is a way of doing an activity, which has evolved over generations of regimental history and become second nature. Courtesies are a form of polite behaviour and shows respect for others e.g., one required act of military courtesy is the salute. The salute is a symbol of respect and a sign of camaraderie among service personnel. The special way of salute in the Indian Navy has come from Royal Navy as a custom. Even the US Navy traces the origins of its salute to the Royal Navy. The Army has over the years added Jai Hind alongside its salute. Over a period of time most practices have got enriched with indigenous inputs and it will be wrong to assume that the military continues to majorly operate with colonial era customs and practices.

Courtesy cultural engineering done at the academies and regimental centres, young combatants will continue to perform combat duties by adopting shared values, beliefs and norms as prevalent in their regiments. They will continue to accomplish missions for sake of their team members to their left or right and for the honour of the regiment. It is only as leaders climb the highly competitive space in senior ranks that they begin to manage their inner lives such that emotional and behavioural chain reactions occur. The apprehensions being expressed by many are unfounded and it would be prudent to leave this rejig to the current leadership in uniform who have the wisdom and intellectual fire power to decide what is good for the military. The future of our military is in the hands of able leaders who are expected to uphold those customs and traditions that make the Indian military a reputed fighting force.

However, with the planned integration and establishment of theatre commands, it is the internal workings of the organization that need a revisit. There are a large number of archaic processes, solidified mindsets and historical trappings that continue to retard training, pace of capability development and adversely impact team work and group cohesion. There is need to moderate the extremely competitive organizational climate where most members for ever compete with each other. The tenure-oriented templates at the work place may not be the ideal way of working in the changing security landscape. Increasing use of ethnocentric practices and social capital for individual benefits and maintaining status quo is demotivating.

The archaic mindset and myth that some group(s) have more operational relevance than others has been very effectively demolished by the war in East Europe. It has once again demonstrated the importance of all round integrated capabilities resting on solid foundations of engineering and logistics. The manpower centric warfare the Army has been incubating to address counter insurgency may not be enough to address emerging security challenges at LAC. Designating any service as a support element is against the basic tenets of team work. Airpower, manned or unmanned is sure to be a high impact element of future combat any where, more so at the LAC. The historical segmentation in the Army; arms, supporting arms and services has been jettisoned by the British Army from where it was picked up and continues to justify inequity here. It has only created divides and deep siloes. The way combat support elements had to pursue their case in courts for equitable distribution of vacancies in higher ranks is unparalleled.

Future wars in our context are likely to be prolonged, against an adversary having enormous technological dominance and staying power on the battle field. The operational tempos of future conflicts can be calibrated by a stronger power to exploit extant vulnerabilities. The military needs to aim at achieving technological parity at least, if not technological dominance over the prime adversary. Reforms in internal workings ought to aim at acquiring agile capabilities to address new forms of warfare.

An important element that needs consideration is the culture of long-term strategic planning and its implementation, as against the tenure syndrome prevalent today. The attempt to portray that every thing is up and running during one's tenure, has to be replaced with a hard-nosed assessment of actual operational capabilities, identification of capability gaps and initiation of measures to mitigate risks in the short and long term. This is the surest way to achieve capability centric staying power.

Some issues of personnel management need addressal. The system of dispensation of military justice, the conduct of summary court martial in particular needs a reset, an area where the courts have also given their observations. The system of administrative review could look at becoming more responsive and prompter. There is a growing feeling amongst the rank and file that only a judicial review can consider their grievances objectively and dispense justice. The Armed Forces Tribunal established to address the grievances of military personnel need to be provided resources to dispose of cases promptly.

Resolution of pay anomalies of serving personnel as well as pensions of Veterans are areas that need authentic actions aimed at resolution. The liberal provisions of disability and invalid pension should not be altered despite fiscal pressures as pension remains the only source of sustenance of most military men who have been invalidated out of service before completion of pensionable service. Organizations like Department for Ex- Servicemen Welfare, ex- Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme, Directorate General Resettlement etc could revisit their processes and align these with those adopted in developed economies, evolving an enabling alchemy that brings some satisfaction to retiring soldiers, veterans and now the Agniveers.

A compelling need is to integrate professional military ethics and character development into leadership development programs and unit training, as it seems to have got diluted over the years. One distinctive practice of yester years where senior officers wore similar uniform without any regimental accoutrements, could be re- introduced so as to bring in unity of purpose and spirit of camaraderie in higher ranks. The future of any military depends on the fighting spirit of well-trained soldiers and readiness of its platforms, driven by a strategy architected by the best brains possessing range and depth. Alongside integrated organizations, a convergence of thoughts of the human capital will be vital for the military to give a befitting response to any capability surprise launched by the adversaries.

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## **Chip Production – Scare, Shortage & Now Recession!**

**By Sanjay Sahay**

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The roller coaster of semiconductor doesn't seem to be ending soon. The supply chain disruption is the plot, but they are any number of sub plots getting tied to it. From every sector of the economy getting hit to national security, the narrative seems to endlessly peeling off layer after layer. Then the scare, just in case there was another pandemic or any geopolitical situation, what would be the fate of the semi-conductor starved or the semi-fed nations. Nation states are trying their level best, at least the ones who can, from the US to Europe to India. There is the scare of shortage. The near monopoly of TSMC has always remained an area of serious concern.

TSMC not only produces nearly 90% of chips made using advanced technologies, but also has most of its production on the home island. The island has been the target of an increasingly belligerent China. A big fab facility was in the interest of US or might be they were not able to imagine a life without it. Without a fab to support the US economy, they were feeling jittery. TSMC in Phoenix is the best that could happen to the US. The \$12bn fab under construction seems to have allayed US fears of life without the chip. Arizona capital's history of semiconductor manufacturing helped it land a deal with the world's largest chipmaker. Actually, the scenario that had got created was easily the biggest economic security crisis since the recession.

Demand surged as homebound workers upgraded their electronics. Public transport averse commuters ordered for new cars. Pentagon and Co. needed the chips for their hi-tech gadgetry. Thus, TSMC's decision in May 2020 for building the Phoenix plant was possibly the most watched foreign investment in US for decades. Arizona scored on low costs, a talented workforce and a reliable supply chain. While some glimmer of light showed by way to improved chip supply chain and few nations went ahead on their way of creating fabs, the chip industry has once again taken the world by surprise. \*And this time it is recession.

It seems the chip industry is plagued in some way or the other. Now the chipmakers see a "breath-taking" drop in demand as the recession looms. From a super demand and shortage no end in sight, it seems, if the indicators are anything to go by, the demand seems to have gone in for a tailspin, might be in a just a quarter. Samsung has reported totally unflattering numbers. The world's largest memory chipmaker reported a 32% dive in operating income. The PC processor chipmaker AMD said it will miss its earlier forecast by about \$1 billion. After years of record capital spending, "the chipmakers are warning on a weekly basis that the demands are sputtering." Within hours of each other Samsung and Advanced Micro Devices Inc. reported disappointing results. Some companies have started making efforts to stall plummeting prices. The fall in AMD shares spurred losses in chip and PC makers from TSMC to Lenovo Group Ltd. on Friday.

THE CHIP SEEMS TO BE GETTING INTO A TAILSPIN.

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## **INS Vikrant: Relevance Of Aircraft Carriers Today**

**By Lt Gen V A Bhat**

Gen Bhat served as the Director-General of Quality Assurance (DGQA) at the Department of Defence Production (Ministry of Defence) affairs.

September 2, 2022 was a red-letter day for the Nation and in particular the Indian Navy as the second Aircraft carrier (AC) INS Vikrant was commissioned by the PM. Developed by the Indian Navy's design bureau and constructed by the Cochin Shipyard Ltd (CSL), it is largest and most complex Ship. When fully operational INS Vikrant will carry on board 30 aircrafts. (A/C). It will have on board MIG 29K FIGHTERS, KAMOV31 HELICOPTERS, MH-60R HELICOPTERS ADVANCE LIGHT HELICOPTERS (MADE IN INDIA), NAVAL VERSION OF THE LIGHT VERSION A/C. Propelled by 4 Gas Turbine Engines, with maximum speed of 28 Knots and cruising speed of 18 Knots, it will carry a crew of 1600 including 200 officers including Ladies. It has a 16 Bed hospital and a very modern well-equipped kitchen to serve a diverse menu to the crew. It uses an Aircraft operation mode known as Short Take Off but Assisted Recovery (STOVAR). For this mode of aircraft take-off and landing INS Vikrant is equipped with a Sky-Jump for launch and three Arresters for Recovery on Board.

The Government of India (GOI) sanctioned this project in 2003. It has been built at a cost of Rs 20000 Cr. The sea trials are starting in November and the AC will be fully operational by mid-2023. Vikrant in Sanskrit means Courageous and its motto is "Jayme Sam Yudhi Sprudhah" which means " We conquer those who fight us in war". With Vikrant joining the Indian Navy the push for the third AC is getting stronger to keep in check the growing Chinese Navy which is getting stronger bigger and set to launch its own third AC.

The induction of the INS Vikrant has opened an old debate if the ACs are relevant today? The Late CDS Gen Rawat was not in favour of having a Third AC for the Navy. There is a view that we must look at islands in our vicinity and explore possibilities of making them fully operational optional ACs which denies ingress to our enemies to enter our legitimate waters and can give adequate protection to vast coastline having with most recent state of the art equipment.

Critics who question the acquisition of a third AC say that the cost of manufacture of a such a ship costs crores of investment. The cost will be much more by the time the third is produced. ACs are very valuable targets in War. They are sitting ducks with their large mass and their sheer size. Today's modern equipment like long range aircrafts with lethal armament on board, underwater attacks by Submarines Ballistic Missiles and so on. Loss of AC is a big loss of face and hits the moral of the troops in battle which can have an adverse effect on the battle front. These critics thought merit consideration.

As per UN conventions the territorial limit of the sea waters is 12 Nautical miles. Further 200 nautical miles from its Territorial waters is Exclusive Economic Zone of that particular State.

In the second world war (WW) the pre-emptive air strike on Pearl Harbour causing huge damage on the US Navy was carried by Japanese by using its own AC. Subsequently later also the Western Nations had ACs to augment their Naval Power and Project their Global Power. In contrast Germany their main Foe in WW II did not have any ACs but defended their interest by building Submarines popularly known as U boats and destroying Ships of the Allied Powers. The destruction caused by the U boats are well known. The erstwhile Soviet Union after WW II followed the principle of denial of the Integral waters by building Submarines over ACs. This philosophy of the Soviet Leaders after WW II may have been dictated by not having the same economic strength as its rival USA. US and other Western Powers demonstrated the use of ACs in Kuwait War in 1991 by constant bombarding the Iraqi forces with the aircrafts which were aboard their ACs. Navy has Frigates, Destroyers, Missile Boats, Submarines, which can be used in Offensive or Defensive operations. In addition, Navies have Hospital Ships, Tankers to replenish the Ships at sea with Fuel, Rations, ammunition and so on. The 1965 war with Pakistan is not something the Indian Navy would like to talk about. INS Vikrant was in dry docks and did not sail. Pakistan had already acquired submarines by then and the Indian Navy was wary of these Submarines. Pakistan Navy came close to Dwarka and bombarded the city with impunity. Indian Navy did not join in battle. However, the Vikrant was used in the 1971 war in the Eastern Theatre very effectively and played an important role in the Liberation of Bangladesh.

The principal whether India should have a third AC will be dictated by the Area we would like to dominate in our Neighbourhood. China is our main adversary and today China is becoming a very strong Naval Power. It is trying to dominate the South China Sea and trying to influence the African Continent. If our aim is to dominate the area in the Arabian Sea a little beyond Gwadar Port, then the present ACs are sufficient to perform that role. Our Main Adversary China has two ACs and now building one more. It is likely to be commissioned by end of 2023 or early 2024. China's aim to dominate the entire sea area ahead of the South China Sea. Taiwan and some islands are disputed areas as far as China is concerned.

There are an estimated 46 aircraft/helicopter carriers in service worldwide. The United States has 11 aircraft carriers and 9 "hello" carriers (it is a Naval war ship which carries Helicopters), nearly as many as all other countries combined, followed by Japan and France, each with four. Eleven other nations have at least one carrier, and several more are under construction.

- United States - 20 (11 aircraft carriers, 9 hello carriers)
- France - 4 (1 aircraft carrier, 3 hello carriers)
- Japan - 4 hello carriers (two of which are being converted to light aircraft carriers)
- China - 3 (2 aircraft carriers, 1 hello carrier)
- Italy - 2 aircraft carriers (one specialized for submarine hunting)
- United Kingdom - 2 aircraft carriers
- Australia - 2 hello carriers
- Egypt - 2 hello carriers
- South Korea - 2 hello carriers
- India - 1 aircraft carrier
- Russia - 1 aircraft carrier
- Spain - 1 aircraft carrier/hello carrier (can be either)
- Brazil - 1 hello carriers

- Thailand - 1 hello carrier
- The biggest AC of USA, USS FORD has a displacement of 100000Tonnes and capable of carrying 75/80 aircrafts on its deck.
- Although aircraft carriers are best known for launching fixed-wing (or variable-wing) fighter planes, the list above demonstrates that roughly half of what we call aircraft carriers today are technically helicopter carriers. Slightly smaller than "traditional" aircraft carriers (but still enormous), hello carriers are often referred to by sub-type labels such as amphibious assault ship, landing platform helicopter (LPH), landing helicopter assault (LHA), or landing helicopter dock (LHD) to differentiate them from their larger brethren.

In summary, an aircraft carrier is a military tool of tremendous operational capabilities, which can provide the military and political leadership of a relevant maritime country with credible options and solutions for crisis management. While expensive to buy and operate, it may be ultimately less expensive and far more flexible (both militarily and politically) than deploying and sustaining land-based air assets to an available friendly host nation, and therefore well worth the investment. Experts in the Aircraft Carrier Domain are of the view that to exploit the potential of the platform the displacement should be in the range of 100000 tonnes and carry the most lethal and the most advanced new Aircrafts to be effective Only USA and China today have ACs in these displacement capabilities. The third AC Vishal now being planned has a displacement of 66000 tonnes.

In nutshell, as the design, construction of any modern-day AC is very challenging task with huge investment, whether to have one more or not will require very in-depth strategical analysis vis a vis our nation's strategic policy/doctrine by the subject experts and acceptance of the same by Govt of the day.

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## **Nation is Indebted to:** **Thakur Roshan Singh (1892 – 1927)**



**“You don’t get angry for me; my death is not worth regret but it will be worth happiness”**

Thakur Roshan Singh (22 January 1892 — 19 December 1927) was an Indian revolutionary, born in the village of Nabada in Shahjahanpur district, Uttar Pradesh in a kshatriya Rajput family.

It is about the year 1921-22. Mahatma Gandhi had started the non-cooperation movement in rebellion against the British rule in India. The youth of the whole of India were ready to do anything and to make that movement a success. Thousands and lakhs of Indian boys i.e., youth,

who confronted the British rule, had been trapped or were being trapped in Indian jails due to that movement. In the same wild crowd of those hot-tempered brave hearts of India, there was this courageous boy Thakur Roshan Singh.

When Thakur Jangi Singh, and mother Kaushalya, of Nabada village of Shahjahanpur district, came to know about the son's rebellion against the British., they turned to his back and blessed him, "Each drop of your dagger should be done in destroying the whites who had entered India by deceit with black intentions." When Thakur Roshan Singh, an infallible shooter, experienced and clever, got a free hand from his parents to destroy the British, after that he never again cared about himself or his loved ones till the last breath of his life.

In the year 1924, Thakur Roshan Singh joined the Hindustan Republican Association. From the same Republican Association, whose leaders there were young revolutionary Pandit Ram Prasad Bismil of Shahjahanpur, Ashfaq Ulla Khan, Rajendra Nath Lahiri, who were equally crazy about India's independence.

In the Kakori conspiracy of August 1925 (though he had not taken part in this), he was arrested and tried in January 1926 by the then British Government, for a murder carried out during the Bamrauli dacoity in December 1924. He was sentenced to death, along with Ram Prasad Bismil, Ashfaq Ulla Khan and Rajendra Lahiri. He was executed at Malaka/Naini Jail in the Allahabad district. It is well documented that after his death, his family had to face social and economic hardship, including problems finding a matrimonial match for his daughters.

While Inquilabi Ram Prasad Bismil, Ashfaq Ulla Khan and Thakur Roshan Singh were hanged on the same date. That date was 19 December 1927. On turning the pages of history filled with the stories of these brave sons, it is read that, on 6 December 1927, before being hanged in Allahabad jail, Thakur Roshan Singh wrote a letter to his friend. This text was completely memorised by every child of India at that time.

"The execution will take place within this week itself. Pray to God to give you the vengeance of love. You don't get angry for me at all. My death will be for two reasons for happiness. To be born in the world is definitely to die. Do not defame yourself by doing evil in the world. And remember God while dying. These two things should happen. Both these things are with me by the grace of God. That's why my death is in no way worth regretting. I have been separated from children for two years. In the meantime, there was a lot of opportunity to worship God. This left my fascination and there was no lust left. I have full faith that after ending the painful journey of the world, I am now going to live a life of ease. It is written in our scriptures that the person who gives life in the war of religion has the same speed as the sages who do penance while staying in the forest."

On 19 Dec 2018, in Prayagraj City, India Post released a "Special Horse Carried Cover" (where a Postal Bag filled with Special Cover is handed over to Horse rider for delivery) in the honour of Thakur Roshan Singh.

At the feet of Mother Bharti, Thakur Roshan Singh sacrificed every happiness of his life. Due to this supreme sacrifice, though about a century has passed, "India that is Bharat" still remembers Thakur Roshan Singh, with unwavering respect.

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