

# Emergency - an analysis

BRIG GEN (RETD) JAHANGIR KABIR, *ndc, psc*

HERE is one fundamental difference between the present caretaker government and the Ershad regime. Ershad knew he did not have the people's support. He looked for political roots, organizing heterogeneous elements willing to collaborate, even patronised a pliant opposition after fortifying power. As a popular move he downsized the districts to subdivisions, created upazillas and had elections. That some people still remember him, and he is a countable political force, is due to his people friendly activities in spite of the convictions and allegations.

How will the nation remember the caretaker government? Lately some have fine-tuned a political phrase, 'army backed government' to earn respectability. It has however two dangerous connotations: that the army is not normally loyal and obedient to the constitutional and elected governments and do not 'back' them; more dangerous is the implied meaning that army can make and break any government any time they wish to. The Armed Forces are a national institution and must not offer free ride or bailout to anybody from a political jinx. They are professionally obliged to carry out all legal orders of the government.

No doubt, the land forces are the dominant of the three services. The army is more visible because they operate on land. The high seas and the open sky are the operational zones of the two sister services. Moreover, the ships and aircrafts are exorbitantly expensive for a poor country like Bangladesh that restrains the development of the sister forces to the desired level. Land, air or sea - the forces are an organic whole of the national defense



establishment. They share everything - from victory in a combat to sorrow in a disaster. We should avoid the divisive coinage of army only out of avoidable ignorance that may help the enemies of the state.

The people did not mandate the caretaker government beyond ninety days because of the danger of abusing the agenda of an impartial election. Ninety days is enough for an election under available impartial administration unless one wants to import impartial people from abroad. The caretaker is not a government;

it is purely a temporary arrangement with minimum functional ability of day-to-day administration. The army did a commendable job, but the country did not need to be under emergency to prepare the voter list and national ID cards.

It is something when you leave the house to a caretaker with mandate of none. Bangladesh called them caretakers and advisers strictly to confine them to their job of conducting an impartial election within ninety days. The nation needs to know how they have prolonged their stay for such an unprecedented duration! If it

were an elected government prolonging their life of five years in the same proportion, somebody could rule Bangladesh for more than forty years. Many generations meanwhile would have perished. Hardly any dictator or emperor ever ruled for that long in the annals of history. When prices of the essentials were increasing beyond the purchasing power of the people only the anti-people establishment could say they have nothing to do with the market forces.

The political and anti corruption drive to justify the two years existence initially

looked attractive in spite of the legal vacuum. What happened next? Between minus two to endless plusses, parties forming grand alliances, we had continuous magic shows staged and counter staged at the cost of suffering of the people. In the Spanish bullfight, bulls invariably suffer and die. In the fight against corruption and political reforms, the wild bulls and the matadors are hall and hearty to the peril of the people. The prices of essentials had doubled beyond the capacity of the poor. The only dilapidated plastic sheet under which a family slept on the fringe of rail tracks and roadways were destroyed because it was on a square yards of land that did not belong to the homeless destitute. We call Bangladesh a republic anchoring the ownership of the landmass to the citizens. Alas, the citizens have no right to live and die under a torn plastic sheet hanged over the entire family with no other place to go.

I am not a communist; nevertheless, one cannot afford to be inhuman. Leave alone Karl Marx, we should learn lessons from Bill Gates, the living legend of market economy and a philanthropist. If I could, I would have requested Bill Gates to salvage Bangladesh with his organizational brilliance. In spite of success or failure in personal life, a government has the responsibility to feed the poor, shelter them, and treat them when they are sick. Even an animal needs a burrow as shelter in nature or a barn if surrendered to the human needs. The caretaker government could not do very much for the alleviation of the poor and helpless. They demolished the shanties causing suffering to the most vulnerable. There is a meeting point between Karl Marx and Bill Gates, which the caretakers ignored.

They promised corruption free society

and political reforms to justify their rule for two long years; used all institutions of the state under emergency. No human right, no politics, and no vote for two long years - the prices of the essentials made the life of the people miserable. What did the people get in return? The emergency rule is the reason for all the mishap. They had caged both the elected prime ministers for many months on corruption charges, arrested many political bigwigs and business tycoons. Now they are providing the ex-prime ministers with the highest security and protocol as if they are already prime ministers. If only it was a laughable episode, the political melodrama enacted during last two years could break the most prosaic character into thunderous laughter.

The rulers must apologize to those who suffered in jail during last two years without trial. If people have to vote for old politicians with all kinds of allegations, they must have an answer why they could not do so two years back. Who has stolen their right to vote? It has created a cerebral political disorder that may cloud our future off and on. I am less worried about the event of the last two years than the bad inference created for the days to come.

Dr. Fakruddin Ahmed is a high achiever in his life. Two years of absolute rule of the country without the mandate of the people is more than one can hope for even if one is overtly ambitious. He must find a way out now to regularize the events of last two years to stop the hemorrhage: a gaping wound to the constitution that he opened he cannot leave without healing.

The author is a freelancer.

## Perilous security system of the world From disarmament to arms control!

SHAMIMA NASREEN

MANY countries around the world today possess or have the means to acquire weapons of mass destruction. They may be nuclear, chemical, biological or other types of weapons, which can be delivered through diversified ways. It is mainly the more powerful and wealthy nations that have such weapons although some poorer nations are also obtaining them. In recent years, there have been several movements and treaties to facilitate control of the flow and deployment of arms, be they land-mines, small arms, or weapons of mass destruction such as nuclear weapons though most of these are considered as controversial. Disarmament is now an issue that cannot be found even in a fairy tale now.

### Enactment of arms control

Arms control treaties and agreements are often seen as a way to avoid costly arms races which would prove counter-productive to national aims and future peace. Some are used as ways to stop the spread of certain military technologies (such as nuclear weaponry or missile technology) in return for assurances to potential developers that they will not be victims of those technologies. Additionally, some arms control agreements are entered to limit the damage done by warfare, especially to civilians and the environment, which is seen as bad for all participants regardless of who wins a war.

While arms control treaties are seen by many peace proponents as a key tool against war, by the participants they are often seen as simply ways to limit the high costs of the development and building of weapons, and even reduce the costs associated with war itself. Arms control can even be a way of maintaining the viability of military action by limiting those weapons that would make war so costly and destructive as to make it no longer a viable tool for national policy.

### Enforcement of arms control

Enforcement of arms control agreements has proven difficult over time. Most agreements rely on the continued desire of the participants to abide by the terms to remain effective. Usually, when a nation no longer desires to abide by the terms, they usually will seek to either covertly circumvent the terms or to simply end their participation in the treaty. This was seen in Washington Naval Treaty (and the subsequent London Naval Treaty), where most participants sought to work around the limitations, some more legitimately than others. The United States developed better technology to get better performance from their ships while still working within the weight limits, the United Kingdom exploited a loop-hole in the terms, the Italians misrepresented the weight of their vessels, and when up against the limits, Japan simply left the treaty. The nations that violated the terms of the treaty did not suffer great consequences for their actions. Within little more than a decade, the treaty was abandoned. The Geneva Protocol has lasted longer and been more successful at being respected, but still nations violated it at will when they felt the need. Enforcement has been haphazard with measures more a matter of

politics than adherence to the terms. This meant sanctions and other measures tended to be advocated against violators primarily by their natural political enemies, while violations had been ignored or given only token measures by their political allies.

More recent arms control treaties have included more stringent terms on enforcement of violations as well as verification. This has been a major obstacle to effective enforcement, as violators often attempt to covertly circumvent the terms of the agreements. Verification is the process of determining whether or not a nation is complying with the terms of an agreement, and involves a combination of release of such information by participants as well as some way to allow participants to examine each other to verify that information. This often involves as much negotiation as the limits themselves, and in some cases questions of verification have led to the breakdown of treaty negotiations (for example, verification was cited as a major concern by opponents of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, ultimately not ratified by the United States).

The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) was designed to prevent testing of nuclear weapons and hence reduce the chance of an arms race. On October 13, 1999, the US Senate decided not to ratify the CTBT. This drew condemnation from the then US President Bill Clinton and his White House Administration as well as from various environmental groups, NGOs and other governments. Finally Bush administration set aside from the treaty and were pressing ahead, beyond international scrutiny and in defiance of the NPT, with the development of new generation nuclear weapons.

The Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions (SORT), better known as the Moscow Treaty represents an important element of the new strategic relationship between the United States and Russia with both parties agreeing to limit their nuclear arsenal to 17002200 operationally deployed warheads each. It was signed in Moscow on May 24, 2002. SORT came into force on June 1, 2003 after the Bush-Putin ratification in St. Petersburg, and expires in December 31, 2012.

During the Cold War, it became clear to most people on both sides of the Iron Curtain that a continued arms race in an environment of brinkmanship would only lead to financial difficulties and would not solve the nuclear dilemma; hence, arms control. Consequently, advances in arms control have become customary norms for leaders in both Washington and Moscow; the Moscow Treaty is apparently George W. Bush's contribution to the process.

### Nuclear weapons and arms control treaties under pressure

All four major nuclear weapons treaties are under pressure. Some UN member nations are skeptical of the commitment from the United States on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. The Anti Ballistics Missile Treaty is under threat from the United States National

The following table shows the leading arms suppliers compared and the value of all arms deliveries to the world (in millions of US dollars)

Country	USA	UK	France	Russia	Germany	Italy	Canada	Japan
Ranking	1	2	3	4	5	10	No ranking or value for arms deliveries is provided by the Congressional Research Service Report for Canada and Japan	
Arms deliveries worldwide between 1996 and 2003 in millions of US dollars	151,867	43,000	30,200	26,200	10,800	2,700		

Source: The G8: global arms exporter: Failing to prevent irresponsible arms transfers, report by Amnesty International, Iansa and Oxfam International, Control Arms Briefing Paper, June 2005.

Missile Defense Program. The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty was rejected by the US Senate and Russia initially stalled on the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, START II because of the American missile defense program. Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) for several years has been supported by the EU. UN's main aim is to strengthen the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, the cornerstone of the international effort to curb the spread of WMD. It is specifically aimed at nuclear armed states such as India, Pakistan and Israel, which are not party to the NPT. The US would back the FMCT in principle, but it would not support the inclusion of binding monitoring, verifying and inspecting provisions.

### Militarization and weaponization of outer space

The US is planning to develop weapons to ensure military dominance in space. This goes counter to the United Nations Outer Space Treaty that provides the legal framework for the use of space for peaceful purposes. A risk of an arms race increases when combined with the missile defense plans. The US is also risking abrogation of the Anti Ballistic Missile Treaty by continuing with its Star Wars program, a national missile defense system. However, critics point out that the program is very expensive (largely paid for by the public), that the technologies are risky, that the threat rationale isn't very strong and that this will affect international relations, and could lead to an arms race.

Nations may remain in a treaty while seeking to break the limits of that treaty as opposed to simply withdrawing from it. This is for two major reasons.

- To openly defy an agreement. Even if one withdraws from it, it is often seen in a bad light politically and can carry diplomatic repercussions.
- Additionally, if one remains in an agreement, competitors who are also participatory may be held to the limitations of the terms, while withdrawal releases your opponents to make the same developments you are making, limiting the advantage of that development. Several nuclear arms control treaties have been established so far but from the following fields it is clear that the treaties are not properly maintained even by the major nuclear weapons states.

### Process of arms control: stagnant or active?

We know that the very same US Government that went to war in Iraq

because Saddam Hussein did not fully comply with UN weapons inspections unilaterally rejects similar control over its own WMD arsenal.

Contrary to their responsibilities and legal obligations the G8 countries are still supplying weapons and munitions to irresponsible end users. The table shows the leading arms suppliers compared and the value of all arms deliveries to the world.

As the more powerful countries show less commitment to reducing their own arms substantially and continue to pursue their own 'national interests', they affect many others around the world. This has led to an increase in resentment against them. One option for nations that feel threatened has been to improve their defensive capabilities and increase arms purchases and spending. Neighboring countries will often feel the pressure to keep up, 'just in case'.

The military industrial complexes of the wealthier (and more powerful) nations will highlight how so many other countries have increased sophisticated weapons (often sold by the wealthier and more powerful nations) and how that means that they should consider urgently increasing their own military spending and proliferation. An increase in arms leads to an arms race and increase in insecurity.

By seeking a global halt to the production of highly enriched uranium and plutonium for weapons, its wider aim is to reduce the chance of such materials being obtained by irresponsible regimes of non-state terror groups. Iranians and North Koreans are under intense US pressure to co-operate with inspectors from the UN's International Atomic Energy Agency but not so strict with India, which is controversial. To Bush, it seems, international verification procedures were a one-way street. The US places the safeguarding of an uncompromised American sovereignty ahead of global arms control. The US knows very well, any new treaty is all but unenforceable without effective monitoring and verification. "Inspections are essential" say arms control experts, if such treaties are to work. The US and the other nuclear weapon states appear content to place the safeguarding of an uncompromised, untrammelled American sovereignty ahead of effective global arms control. That is why the whole process of arms control becomes biased and stagnant. Reluctance in arms control is mainly because without nuclear, chemical, biological and other weapons the stronger cannot otherwise exploit the weaker.

The author is an analyst on International Relations.

### The future combat system

The US President-elect Barack Obama has promised not only the scrutiny of the national defense strategy but also of some of the leading defense acquisition programmes of the previous regime - programmes that promised to shape the future direction as well the deployment capabilities of the US military over the next two to three decades.

Barack Obama promised to 'go through the federal (defense) budget, line by line, eliminating programs that no longer work'. Constrained by a depleting economy, Obama promised to reduce the US defense budget - the largest in the world - by "tens of billions of dollars". Among the programmes which are most likely to be affected are: National Missile Defense, space-based weapons, reduction in number of nuclear weapons and most importantly, the Future Combat System (FCS) which is currently the umbrella for every current modernization program of the US Army.

Barack Obama contends that proven weapon systems are good enough for the US Army's present requirements and as such, it would be unwise to look at the battle spectrum two to three decades from now. The President-elect, however, has promised to provide his troops "with the first-rate equipment, armor, training and incentives they deserve". As the presidency unfolds we are likely to witness in the coming months an interesting debate between the Department of Defense and the State Department over army's requirement for high-tech weapon systems.

The pre-election statement of Barack Obama to slow down the development of the FCS is unnerving for the US Army which is already overstretched in Iraq and Afghanistan in terms of its fighting capabilities. The scale of war casualties in these two countries - exceptionally high for a military considered to be the best in the world in terms of technology - has put additional onus on the army to continue to look for technologies which will minimize physical risks to its soldiers in the battlefield while maximizing its fighting capabilities.

The FCS, conceived almost a decade ago, is a US\$160 billion plus project that seeks to address the army's requirements to fight medium to high intensity protracted conflicts with a considerably low burden of logistics. The FCS, touted often as a system of systems' presently visualizes 14 manned and unmanned systems tied together by an extensive communications and information network.

The FCS intends to replace current systems such as the M-1 Abrams tanks and the M-2 Bradley infantry fighting vehicles by combat sensors and robots in the battlefield arena, integrated on a common grid with systems existing presently, in development, and those that will be developed in the future. The FCS is believed to have reached a level where at least some of the prototypes are on the verge of being fielded to units.

Ever since its conception in October 1999 by the then Joint Chiefs of Staff, the FCS has remained controversial for its high price tag. In 2007, restructuring due to financial constraints downsized the 18+1+1 FCS to the present 14 systems, resulting in the delay of its implementation by at least five years. The first FCS equipped Brigade Combat Team is not likely to roll out before 2015 and thereafter one FCS BCT rolling out every year, as per the existing time-frame, it will not be before 2030 that the FCS is deployed in the entire spectrum of future battlefield.

The reduction in the military budget as intended by the new President will not only further delay the implementation of the FCS but also result in further scaling down its range. The Army, on its part, wants the system to proceed at an accelerated rate with the first FCS-equipped brigade combat team (BCT) to be deployed by 2012 or 2013 instead of 2015 as currently planned. In fact, what makes the FCS a high-risk venture is because of the advanced technologies involved as well as the challenge of fusing all of the FCS subsystems together. There is also the question of FCS compatibility with a joint operations structure.

The FCS, promising to alter the future battlefield in the most fundamental ways, remains one of the most closely watched military technology transformation drives in the world today. In so far as the relevance of an FCS in the Indian context is concerned, India neither has the resources to emulate it in its entirety, nor is there any chance of Indian troops fighting protracted conflicts overseas in any foreseeable future.

The internal security situation of India, however, demands development of robotic ground and air vehicles to carry out surveillance, reconnaissance and precision attack missions. The long stretch of India's border -

inhospitable and impassable at several places - requires constant vigil, particularly in view of the frequent terrorist attacks taking place across India. Deployment of semi-automated to automated systems along the border, including the coastline to keep surveillance and reconnaissance would go a long way in bolstering security. The excessive deployment of army personnel in internal security and the ever increasing asymmetric threats, use of booby traps and mines by insurgents and difficulty in gathering human intelligence, mandate requirement for speeding up research in technologies which can save precious lives.

Source: IPCS, New Delhi

### Failed test delays Russian ICBM introduction

A test launch of Russia's new Bulava submarine-based intercontinental ballistic missile has failed, which will further delay this effort to revamp Moscow's aging nuclear deterrent.

A source in the military industrial complex said that Bulava, launched from the Dmitry Donskoi submarine earlier that day, deviated from its course during the flight. It was ordered to self-destruct and did so without causing casualties or damage, the official said.

Navy spokesman Igor Dygalo said December 23 that the launch was carried out in the White Sea but he would not speak about its results, saying only that they are being studied. The launch was the Bulava's tenth, and the fifth that failed. The missile had a successful test in November.

If it had been successful, the Russian navy had planned to introduce the missile into service in 2009.

Capable of carrying up to 10 individually targeted warheads up to 8,000 kilometers, Bulava is expected to compensate for the decommissioning of the rapidly aging Soviet-era nuclear arsenal in order to maintain the strategic parity with the United States.

Bulava tests will be continued in 2009, with three or four launches to be carried out, an unidentified military official told Interfax December 23.

Earlier this year, the head of the Federal Space Agency, Anatoly Perminov, said that it will take between 12 and 14 launches to complete the tests of the new naval missile.

Bulava was designed to be placed aboard the new nuclear submarines Yuri Dolgoruky, Alexander Nevsky and Vladimir Monomakh, each of which can carry up to twelve missiles.

Yuri Dolgoruky was floated out this fall and is being tested in the sea. Two other submarines are being constructed at the Sevmas plant in Severodvinsk on the White Sea in the Russian north.

Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, during his 2000-08 presidency, repeatedly stressed that development of the nation's nuclear forces, including the Bulava, is the major defense against foreign states that aspire to take Russia's natural riches under their control.

### Iran sends warship to fight Somali pirates

An Iranian warship has entered the Gulf of Aden to protect Iranian vessels against pirates off the coast of Somalia, state radio said on Dec. 20. "After traveling more than 4,000 maritime miles... an Iranian warship entered the Gulf of Aden to protect Iranian ships against pirates," the radio said, without further details. Iran said last month it was negotiating with pirates who seized a ship it had chartered but that it was ready to use force to free the vessel.

The Hong-Kong-registered cargo ship Delight, with a 25-strong crew and 36,000 tons of wheat, was attacked in November in the Gulf of Aden as it headed for the Iranian port of Bandar Abbas. In October, the authorities in Tehran paid a ransom to secure the release of an Iranian merchant ship hijacked off the Somali coast two months earlier.

Pirates have carried out more than 100 attacks in the key shipping lanes of the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean since the start of this year. Last month, they hijacked the Saudi super-tanker Sirius Star, carrying two million barrels of crude oil, and demanded a \$25 million ransom for the boat and its crew. It is one of about 17 ships, including an arms-laden Ukrainian cargo vessel, currently in pirate hands.

Numerous countries, including the US, Belgium, France, Greece, Liberia and South Korea have all indicated a willingness to send or have already sent warships to the region and China has said it would also do so.

Source: www.dofansnews.com