



DEFENCE AND DIPLOMACY

IN PURSUIT OF NATIONAL SECURITY

VOL. 11 NO. 4

ISSN 2347 - 3703

JULY-SEPTEMBER 2022

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INTELLIGENCE SET-UP IN INDIA: AN ANALYSIS

SUSHIL TANWAR

“The intelligence elements are spread over different ministries. What will strike any observer is that there is no single authority to which these organisations report and there is no single or unified command which can issue directions to these agencies and bodies.”

—P. Chidambaram, Former Union Home Minister¹

INTRODUCTION

The national security and intelligence apparatus in India has evolved over a period of time in tune with the emerging threats. The present intelligence structure in India comprises numerous agencies that have different hierarchies and specifically defined mandates. Some of the intelligence agencies operate both at the state and national level. In addition, the three defence services, State Police and the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) have their own integral intelligence set-up.

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1. The remarks were made while delivering the “Intelligence Bureau Centenary Endowment Lecture”, on December 23, 2009, at <https://static.indianexpress.com/frontend/iep/docs/Chidambaram-speech.pdf>. Accessed on March 10, 2022.

These different intelligence agencies, over fifteen in number, therefore tend to overlap in their functions, either by design or due to ambiguity in mandates and sometimes as a natural consequence of the nature of intelligence operations.

The intelligence gathering apparatus across the country currently relies on multiple kinds of sources such as Human Intelligence (HUMINT), Open-Source Intelligence (OSINT) and Technical Intelligence (TECHINT) including Electronic Intelligence (ELINT), Imagery Intelligence (IMINT) and Signal Intelligence (SIGINT). The various types of intelligence structures have therefore been created broadly in a manner that each agency is responsible for one particular kind of intelligence.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

India has a rich tradition of use of intelligence for statecraft. The employment of secret agents finds an active mention in the historical texts. In the Rig Veda, it has been mentioned that active use of “spashas” or “spies” was made to maintain peace and order in the society. References to espionage and spies have also been made in Panini’s epic treatise “Ashtadhyayi”.²

“Arthashastra” by Kautilya lays down the basic principles and a detailed hierarchical network for intelligence. The book describes two systems of carrying out espionage activities, that is, sansthah (stationary spies) and sancharah (roaming spies) while also emphasising on possessing a dense network of spies, referred to as ‘guda’ that report directly to the king. It even talks about other intricacies of intelligence network such as counter-espionage and psychological operations.³

Every ancient kingdom in India including large empires such as Guptas, Mauryas, Ahoms and Marathas employed a well-knit network of spies for espionage and state security. Sultans of Delhi posted agents known as “Barids” to gather information from various

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2. Akhand Jyoti, “Art of Spying—A Sacred contribution of Vedic Rishis”, March-April 2008, at http://literature.awgp.org/akhandjyoti/2008/Mar_Apr/v1.3. Accessed on February 4, 2022.
 3. Dr. Mazhar Abbas and Muhammad Abrar Zahoo, “Espionage in ancient India”, *The News*, May 16, 2021, at <https://www.thenews.com.pk/tns/detail/834352-espionage-in-ancient-india>. Accessed on March 20, 2022.

parts of their empire while Cholas employed “Sandhivigrahis” who not only acted as diplomats and liaison officers between the emperor and feudatories, but also kept the king informed about various aspects of state security.⁴ This emphasis on intelligence is also reflected in the commonly quoted axiom “spies are the eyes of king”.

During the British rule, intelligence continued to play a major part in smooth administration and ensuring security of the Empire. Its origin can be first traced back to the “Anti Dacoity and Thuggee” organisation which was established at Jabalpur by General William Sleeman to neutralise the growing menace of thugs and dacoits in British Central India. In 1887, “Central Special Branch” was set up by the Secretary of State for India which was subsequently renamed as Central Criminal Intelligence Department. In 1920, it was rechristened as Central Intelligence Bureau (CIB).⁵

EVOLUTION OF INTELLIGENCE SET-UP

At the time of India’s Independence, the erstwhile CIB established by the British to conduct and coordinate all intelligence activities across the country was the primary intelligence agency. It was thereafter reorganised into the Intelligence Bureau (IB) while Military Intelligence, inherited from the British Indian Army, was bifurcated between India and Pakistan. In addition, each state police also had its own intelligence wing.

The intelligence organisations have thereafter evolved in a gradual manner, sometimes as an evolutionary process but mostly as an afterthought in response to emerging crisis situations. Over the years, many committees and task forces were formed to improve the structure and functioning of intelligence agencies. However, their findings and recommendations have either been classified as secret or only partially released in the public domain.⁶

In 1951, Himmatsinghji Committee was formed to assess overall management of the borders with China and recommend suitable

4. Bhashyam Kasturi, “Intelligence Services Analysis Organisation and Functions”, Lancer Papers, 1995, pp. 20-22.

5. Ibid.

6. Manoj Shrivastava, *Re-Energising Indian Intelligence* (New Delhi: Centre for Land Warfare Studies and Vij Books India, 2013).

measures. The committee which consisted of five members including its Chairman, Major-General Himmatsinghji, Deputy Minister of Defence, Mr S. N. Haksar, Joint Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Mr K. Zakaria, head of the Historical Division (MEA), Group Captain M. S. Chaturvedi of Indian Air Force and Mr. Waryam Singh, Deputy Director of IB recommended several measures to improve intelligence system. Although the findings of the committee are still classified, many analysts have postulated that the committee recommended that IB should also gather external intelligence apart from its main role as the nodal agency for internal intelligence. Some experts also feel that the committee report may have been the catalyst for initiating measures for the merger of Sikkim into the Union of India and deployment of Assam Rifles along the North Eastern borders.⁷

The defeat in the war against China in 1962 has primarily been attributed to shortcomings in intelligence set-up. The Henderson Brooks committee which was formed immediately after the cessation of hostilities would certainly have looked into the intelligence aspects of the war but its report is secret and has not yet been made public. After the 1962 conflict, the need to create capabilities for ELINT and IMINT from aerial based platforms in airspace was felt. Thus two separate identities, that is, Directorate General of Security (DGS) and Aviation Research Centre (ARC) were raised and placed under the overall control of Director, Intelligence Bureau (DIB).⁸

The next series of intelligence reforms were initiated based on the report of B. S. Raghavan Committee which was formulated to analyse deficiencies in intelligence during the 1965 Indo-Pak war and Mizo insurgency in 1966. Although the report is still classified, many observers believe that this report was instrumental in the decision made by the then PM Indira Gandhi to establish an intelligence agency which would be responsible exclusively for external intelligence. Consequently, the Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW) was raised in September 1968 and placed directly under the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) as part of the Cabinet Secretariat.

7. Lieutenant General Kamal Davar, PVSM, AVSM, VSM (Retd.), "Re-Energising Indian Intelligence: A National Imperative", *USI Journal*, July-September 2018.

8. *Ibid.*

The nascent organisations of DGS and ARC along with their integral resources were also shifted to the R&AW.⁹

Thereafter, K. Shankaran Nair Committee was constituted in the early 1980s to study the human resource and cadre management in the two intelligence agencies, that is, IB and RAW. However, the recommendations of the committee haven't been made public.

The next major restructuring of India's national security establishment was done in 1998 based on the recommendation of a task force headed by Mr K. C. Pant, the outgoing Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission. The special task force also included Mr. Jaswant Singh and Air Commodore Jasjit Singh, the then Director of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA). Following its recommendations, a three-tier structure which included National Security Council (NSC), a Strategic Policy Group (SPG) and a National Security Advisory Board (NSAB) was set up. The creation of tiered structure and formation of various coordination groups was also aimed to ensure macro-management of intelligence in a more cohesive manner.

The Kargil conflict in 1999 led to an in-depth analysis of the nation's security and higher defence management structures, including its intelligence architecture. Kargil Review Committee (KRC) was set up in July 1999 under Mr. K. Subrahmanyam which was tasked to examine the sequence of events leading to the armed intrusions by Pakistan into the icy heights of Kargil Sector, identify lapses and make recommendations for the future. The KRC submitted its report in December 1999 and was tabled in Parliament in February 2000. Apart from its findings, KRC also recommended the setting up of a Group of Ministers (GoM) to look into various aspects of National Security.

Pursuant to the KRC recommendations, a GoM under Shri L. K. Advani was set up in 2000 to consider the recommendations of the Committee and formulate specific proposals. It also included the Defence Minister, External Affairs Minister and Finance Minister. The GoM consisted of four Task Forces, one each on Internal Security,

9. Prakash Nanda, "Beyond Netaji Files", News18, October 17, 2015, at <https://www.news18.com/blogs/india/prakash-nanda/beyond-netaji-files-14452-1153190.html>. Accessed on February 14, 2022.

Intelligence Apparatus, Border Management and Management of Defence.¹⁰

The “Task Force on Intelligence Apparatus” was headed by Mr G. C. Saxena, former chief of R&AW and then Governor of J&K. The task force recommended a comprehensive overhaul of the national intelligence apparatus in view of the need for integrated joint management structures and technological expertise. The task force carried out wide-ranging consultations with all stakeholders in the national security establishment. Although the report is still classified, some of the recommendations included the creation of National Technical Research Organisation (NTRO) and Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA), and, a reevaluation of the role of Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC)/National Security Council (NSC) in order to improve the analysis and assessment of collected intelligence. It also proposed that a clear charter should be formulated for the intelligence agencies and suggested need for improvements in the existing mechanisms for intelligence sharing.

In 2008, in the wake of the Delhi blasts, a task force was set up by the government to review the functioning of the intelligence agencies and prepare a blueprint for revamp of intelligence apparatus. The task force was headed by Dr. S. D. Pradhan who was also the deputy national security adviser and had served as chairman of JIC. Former IB Chief P. C. Haldar and noted scientist, Roddam Narasimha, were the other consultant members of the task force. The report submitted in 2010 suggested a significant enhancement of intelligence acquisition capabilities through measures such as increase in strength of intelligence agencies and establishment of a national counter-intelligence centre.

Soon after, the country was rattled by Pakistan-sponsored terror attacks across several locations in Mumbai. The 26/11 Mumbai attacks led to an overhaul of internal security apparatus and the government announced several measures such as the creation of National Counter-Terrorism Centre (NCTC) and a nationwide

10. Report of the Group of Ministers on National Security, at <https://www.vifindia.org/sites/default/files/GoM%20Report%20on%20National%20Security.pdf>. Accessed on February 24, 2022.

automated information-sharing network, to be known as the National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID).

In June 2011, “Naresh Chandra Task Force” was set up, to review the implementation of approved proposals of the KRC, study national defence management structure and suggest suitable reforms. The 14-member high-powered task force was led by Mr. Naresh Chandra, former Cabinet Secretary and included senior retired officials such as Mr. G. Parthasarathy, former High Commissioner to Pakistan, Air Chief Marshal S. Krishnaswamy (Retd.), Lt Gen V. R. Raghavan (Retd.), Admiral Arun Prakash (Retd.), Mr. K. C. Verma, former Secretary R&AW, Dr. Anil Kakodkar, former Chief of the Department of Atomic Energy and Mr. V. K. Duggal, former Union Home Secretary. The task force made certain key recommendations including the expediting of the creation of new instruments for counter-terrorism, such as the NATGRID and NCTC.¹¹

It is evident that the current intelligence structures in the country have largely been shaped by the findings and reports of these numerous committees. Although most of their proposals and recommendations have not been made public and little clarity exists on their implementation, the current intelligence apparatus in the country has by and large now taken a firm shape. It is therefore essential to study and analyse the present structures from that perspective.

HIGHER INTELLIGENCE MANAGEMENT

The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) is the highest decision-making body on matters of national security in the country. The committee which was earlier known as Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs (CCPA), functions under the Prime Minister, and comprises the Ministers of Defence, External Affairs, Home and Finance. Although this body is not directly related to intelligence management, since matters of national security are closely interlinked

11. Brig Vinod Anand, “Defence Reforms and Naresh Chandra Task Force Review”, September 13, 2012, at <https://www.vifindia.org/article/2012/september/13/defence-reforms-and-naresh-chandra-task-force-review>. Accessed on March 10, 2022.

with intelligence, the directors of two premier intelligence agencies, that is, R&AW and IB assist the CCS.¹²

The decision making for the national security requirements is primarily vested in the National Security Council (NSC). Since the national security hinges on the available intelligence, the national security architecture is also the de facto intelligence management structure in the country. The three-tiered management structure consists of NSC, Strategic Policy Group (SPG) and the National Security Advisory Board (NSAB). Certain advisory bodies such as Technology Coordination Group (TCG) and Intelligence Coordination Group (ICG) are entrusted with the consultation and recommendations for managing and coordinating the functioning of intelligence agencies.

NSC was formed in 1990 by the then Prime Minister V. P. Singh, to “take a holistic view of national security issues in the light of the external, economic, political and military situations and their linkages with our domestic concerns and objectives.” It was chaired by the PM, and was composed of the Foreign Minister, Defence Minister, Finance Minister and the Home Minister. It also included the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission as member.

National Security Advisor (NSA) is the Chief Advisor to the Prime Minister of India on national and international security policy. The post was created in November 1998 and Mr. Brajesh Mishra was appointed as the first National Security Advisor of India. He is generally a close confidante of the PM and often acts as his special Interlocutor on strategically sensitive issues.

SPG is chaired by the Cabinet Secretary and consists of serving senior bureaucrats and officials. Its main task is to make policy recommendations to the NSC and suggest follow-up action on issues concerning national security. It has 18 members including the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), Chiefs of the three services, two intelligence chiefs (IB and RAW), Secretaries of Defence, Home, Finance, Revenue, and Space, the Governor of Reserve Bank of India; and

12. Ldr A. R. Saluja, SC, “Indian Intelligence Organisation—Need for a Comprehensive Knowledge Management Strategy & Policy”, at [https://www.satp.org/satporgtp/publication/idr/vol_16\(2\)/saluja.htm](https://www.satp.org/satporgtp/publication/idr/vol_16(2)/saluja.htm). Accessed on May 1, 2022.

Vice Chairperson of the NITI Aayog. The chiefs of the Atomic Energy Commission and Space establishments are also part of the group.

NSAB is an advisory body that undertakes long-term analysis and provides perspectives on issues of national security. It also prepares an annual strategic review identifying critical areas and events of national importance and recommending action plans, in addition to undertaking such other tasks as allotted to it by the government. The number of its members varies from 10 to 30. These nominated persons generally are experts in their respective fields such as military, academics, journalists and former government servants.

National Intelligence Board (NIB) was constituted in 2002 for national level policy formulation on information warfare as well as for the creation of adequate structures for implementation of the policies. It is chaired by the NSA and provided sectorial support by the NSCS. Its members include the Cabinet Secretary, Service Chiefs, the Secretaries who comprise the Core Group ministries, Secretaries from the Ministries of Information Technology, Telecom and Information & Broadcasting, Chairman of Atomic Energy Commission, Scientific Advisor to Raksha Mantri, Director IB, Secretary (R&AW), Chairman NTRO and DG DIA. The Deputy to National Security Advisor (NSA) is the Member Secretary.

National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) headed by the NSA, was set up to provide the secretarial support to the NSC. It has since then undergone many transformations and has now emerged as the premier agency which is shaping the national security policy. Earlier, the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) which was established in the 1970s as part of the Cabinet Secretariat was entrusted with the tasks of aggregation and analysis of intelligence inputs. Thereafter, in 1998, based on the recommendations of the K. C. Pant Task Force, it was reorganised into the NSCS in order to improve the interface between the NSC, SPG and NSAB.

In 2006, the JIC was again revived to coordinate the tasking and functioning of intelligence agencies but in 2018 it was once again subsumed into the NSCS. It now acts as the nodal agency to analyse strategic intelligence from various agencies based on consultations with different stakeholders. NSCS, like the erstwhile JIC, also prepares intelligence reviews, papers and estimates for the

concerned ministries and departments. It has three deputy NSAs with each heading a separate vertical dealing with issues of internal security, external affairs and science and technology.¹³ A senior military officer, usually a veteran, heads the military wing and acts as an advisor on military affairs. In addition to these four verticals, a separate appointment of National Maritime Security Coordinator (NMSC) has been created to function as the nodal point of reference for all maritime issues and enable the coordination between the country's maritime agencies.¹⁴

TCG is an advisory body which was created to coordinate and regulate the plans for acquisition of major strategic facilities and technical equipment for use by the intelligence agencies. It also generally oversees the TECHINT capabilities of the intelligence agencies and examines issues relating to allocation of funds for this purpose.

ICG was established in 2001 for overseeing the allocation of resources to intelligence agencies, approving annual tasking for intelligence collection and reviewing the quality of inputs provided by the intelligence agencies. In order to facilitate tasking of various intelligence agencies, the ICG functions directly under the NSA. The ICG is also mandated to provide systemic intelligence guidance at the apex level and examine the production of national estimates, assessments and forecasts.¹⁵

EXISTING INTELLIGENCE STRUCTURE—AGENCIES AND MECHANISMS

As covered earlier, there are a number of intelligence agencies in India with IB and R&AW being the premium intelligence agencies for internal and external intelligence respectively. The Ministries of

13. Nitin A. Gokhale, "How Revamped NSCS is Helping Shape Coherent National Security Policy", November 1, 2018, at <https://bharatshakti.in/how-revamped-nscs-is-helping-shape-coherent-national-security-policy/>. Accessed on January 15, 2022.

14. Abhijit Singh, "India's Maritime Security Coordinator has his Mission Cut Out", ORF, February 21, 2022, at <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/indias-maritime-security-coordinator-has-his-mission-cut-out/>. Accessed on February 24, 2022.

15. Group of Ministers' report on "Reforming the National Security System", May 23, 2001, at <https://archive.pib.gov.in/archive/releases98/lyr2001/rmay2001/23052001/r2305200110.html>. Accessed on February 14, 2022.

Home, Finance and Defence have their separate intelligence agencies functioning under them for meeting the specific requirements of respective organisations.

AGENCIES UNDER CABINET SECRETARIAT

The Cabinet Secretariat of the Government of India controls three prominent intelligence agencies. These three central agencies are R&AW, ARC and NTRO. It is generally believed that these three agencies are de facto directly under the PMO and NSA.

R&AW is the external intelligence agency of the nation which is responsible for providing strategic and operational intelligence by monitoring the political, economic, scientific and military developments in the target countries. The agency gathers inputs on various aspects related to national security through covert and overt operations. It was established on September 21, 1968 with R. N. Kao as its first head and K. Sankan Nair as his deputy. Its chief is designated as Secretary (Research) in the Cabinet Secretariat. R&AW reports to the Prime Minister's Office and is placed under the Cabinet Secretary on an administrative basis.

Although it has physical presence, under diplomatic cover, in virtually every major embassy and high commission of India, R&AW also relies greatly on its significant technical intelligence capabilities. In official correspondence and communication, R&AW is generally referred to as Cabinet Secretariat (Cab Sec).¹⁶ The formal charter of R&AW as recommended by the GoM is as under:

- Collection, analysis and dissemination of all types of external intelligence in political, economic, military and technological domain.
- Conduct special operations abroad.
- Act as nodal agencies for counter-intelligence operations outside India.
- Liaison with foreign intelligence and security agencies.

The intake for officer cadre for R&AW is through a specialised allied service, the Research and Analysis Service but most of the

16. Major General V. K. Singh, *India's External Intelligence—Secrets of Research and Analysis Wing* (New Delhi: Manas Publications, 2007).

officers serve on deputation from other services such as the Indian Police Service (IPS).¹⁷ The structure and functioning of R&AW has been kept confidential for obvious reasons. However, the information available in open domain suggests that the agency is organised into three separate segments, that is, special operations, research desk for analysis and covert operations.¹⁸ The agency is composed of separate divisions which monitor specific regions across the globe. These regions are, Pakistan, China, South Asia, Middle East, Europe, North America, Africa and other specific target countries. It also has a separate division named Electronic & Technical Services (ETS) which is responsible for acquiring information using Electronic Intelligence (ELINT) measures.¹⁹ It also has a special division under a joint secretary for security and counter-intelligence. The appointment of Chief Military Intelligence Advisor (CMIA) has also been created to analyse inputs of military nature and liaise between R&AW and the three services.

ARC provides dedicated support to R&AW in terms of aerial reconnaissance, imagery analysis, communications and electronics intelligence. The acquired information is also disseminated to the end users including the armed forces. ARC was raised in September 1963 at Charbatia Air Base, with Mr. R. N. Kao as the Director and Group Captain Lal Singh Grewal as Operations Manager. In 1965, ARC was brought under the DGS in Cab Sec.

ARC operates a fleet of specially equipped spy aircraft including Russian IL-76s, AN-32s, MI-17 and Alouette II and III helicopters, General Dynamics Gulfstream IIIs and Global 5000 jets. Although the functioning and bases of ARC haven't been made public due to obvious reasons, it has often been speculated there are five major bases with Charbatia near Cuttack being the largest. The other operating

17. Jayshree Bajoria, "RAW: India's External Intelligence Agency", Council for Foreign Relations, November 7, 2008, at <https://www.cfr.org/background/raw-indias-external-intelligence-agency>. Accessed on February 4, 2022.

18. Asoka Raina, "Inside RAW" (Noida: Vikas Publications, 1981).

19. Shantanu K. Bansal, "Strengthening India's External Intelligence Infrastructure: An Assessment", SSPC Research Paper, August 2016, at <https://www.sspconline.org/research-paper/strengthening-indias-external-intelligence-infrastructure-assessment>. Accessed on March 20, 2022.

bases are at Sarsawa (near Saharanpur in Uttar Pradesh), Dum Duma near Tinsukia (Assam) and Palam in Delhi.²⁰

While ARC provides integral support to R&AW, NTRO is the technical intelligence agency and the fulcrum of cyber-intelligence gathering in the country. NTRO reports to the NSA and the Prime Minister's Office (PMO). It was set up in 2004 based on the recommendations of KRC as the task force recommended the creation of a dedicated technical intelligence agency to be modelled after the UK's Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) or the US National Security Agency (NSA). The National Technical Facilities Organization (NTFO) which was created "to plan, design set up and operate, all major new strategic technical facilities" has now been designated as NTRO.

It develops technology in "aviation and remote sensing, data gathering and processing, cyber security, cryptology systems, strategic hardware and software development and strategic monitoring". The envisaged charter of the NTRO is as under:²¹

- Plan, design, set up and operate any major new TECHINT facilities as approved by the TCG. (As per the definition by Task Force, TECHINT comprised COMINT, ELINT, IMINT and CYBERINT.)
- Examine and process plans for the acquisition of all new facilities/equipment by the intelligence agencies costing more than 3 crore (later 20 crore) for consideration by TCG.
- Plan and establish secure digital networks connecting the intelligence agencies.
- Develop capabilities for defensive and offensive cyber operations.
- Guide development of advanced techniques for Cyber, Crypto analysis and Cryptography.
- Create and maintain a common database of requisite information as approved by the TCG so that intelligence can be rapidly disseminated.
- Explore and establish facilities required for monitoring missile launches by any country of interest.

20. "Aviation Research Centre", at https://military-history.fandom.com/wiki/Aviation_Research_Centre. Accessed on January 13, 2022.

21. R. S. Bedi, VrC, "NTRO: India's Technical Intelligence Agency", *Indian Defence Review*, vol. 23.1, January-March 2008, at <http://www.indiandefencereview.com/spotlights/ntro-indias-technical-intelligence-agency/>. Accessed on March 10, 2022.

- Carry out any such other projects or programmes as TCG may direct.

AGENCIES UNDER MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS

Since the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) is responsible for critical aspects of national security such as internal security, border management, disaster relief, etc., it needs to stay forewarned about the existing and future threats. There are a number of intelligence agencies working under the MHA for this purpose.

IB is the central intelligence agency for domestic intelligence and issues related to internal security, insurgency and terrorism including counter-intelligence. It was raised in 1887 and functions directly under the MHA. Although IB is a central agency, it also has its sub-units known as Subsidiary IBs in every state. IB operates largely through coordination with the local police and State Intelligence branches. IB is considered as the nodal counter-terror agency and works closely with the state police and the central paramilitary forces on counter-terrorism intelligence. It however has no legal authority to investigate an offence, arrest anyone or prosecute them in court.²²

National Investigation Agency (NIA) is the prime central Counter-Terrorism Law Enforcement Agency in India. Although NIA is not an intelligence agency in classical sense, it is an important contributor of intelligence inputs that it gathers during investigation of cases. It was set up under the National Investigation Agency Act, 2008 and is responsible for investigation of offences against the sovereignty, security and integrity of the country, punishable under eight specified laws, such as the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 and the Anti-Hijacking Act, 1982. NIA takes up investigation on the directions of the central government, either on the request of a state government or *suo moto* (i.e., on the central government's own authority). Initially NIA was based only in New Delhi but it has now opened its offices across the country in Hyderabad, Guwahati, Mumbai, Jammu, Kochi and Lucknow. NIA functions in close

22. <http://www.allgov.com/india/departments/ministry-of-home-affairs/intelligence-bureau?agencyid=7590>. Accessed on March 10, 2022.

coordination with the other intelligence and investigation agencies of the Central and State Governments.²³

In addition, the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) under MHA including Border Security Force (BSF), Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) and Assam Rifles (AR) have their own field intelligence units to provide tactical information to their units.

Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) is the apex coordinating agency on issues related to drug law enforcement. It was raised in March 1986 and functions through its thirteen zones located across the country which collect and disseminate intelligence related to narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.²⁴

In 2012, CCS approved the setting up of National Counter-Terrorism Centre (NCTC) along the lines of National Counter-Terrorism Centre of the USA. It was proposed that NCTC will draw its powers from the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act 1967 and set up offices in every state to gather real-time information. It was to be empowered to acquire relevant data, including archives, reports and digital data from any security agency and organisation. However, the office of NCTC has not yet been established because the states objected to NCTC on grounds of being “anti-federal and an encroachment upon the state’s ‘law and order’ domain”.²⁵

AGENCIES UNDER MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

The armed forces of any country have their own peculiar requirements related to the information about the intentions and capabilities of foreign militaries. Since no military plan can be prepared and operationalised without adequate intelligence about the hostile forces, it is imperative that the three services should have integral

23. “Indian Security and Intelligence Agencies and their Mandate”, at <https://www.thehansindia.com/posts/index/Education-and-Careers/2016-01-19/Indian-security-and-intelligence-agencies-and-their-mandate/200964>. Accessed on February 20, 2022.

24. <https://narcoticsindia.nic.in/>. Accessed on April 15, 2022.

25. ET Bureau, “Anti-terror Intelligence Hub gets Cabinet Committee on Security’s Approval”, *The Economic Times*, January 13, 2012, at <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/anti-terror-intelligence-hub-gets-cabinet-committee-on-securitys-approval/articleshow/11467981.cms?from>. Accessed on April 20, 2022.

intelligence and surveillance resources along with the ability to assess and analyse the acquired information.

Based on the directions of KRC and the Task Force on Intelligence, DIA was raised in March 2002 under the Head Quarters Integrated Defence Staff (HQ IDS). It is meant to function as the nodal agency for the analysis of all military intelligence inputs and to synergise the functioning of the three Services Intelligence Directorates (SIDs). It is headed by Director-General (DG DIA) who is a serving three-star general rank officer from the services. DG DIA also functions as the Deputy Chief of Integrated Defence Staff (Intelligence) and is among the principal advisors on intelligence to the Minister of Defence and the Chief of Defence Staff.²⁶

DIA was created to ensure better integration and analysis of intelligence acquired by the three services. It also coordinates their intelligence requirements. After its raising, strategic intelligence assets of the Services like satellite imagery and Signals Intelligence were placed under the DIA.

Signals Intelligence (SI) Directorate which functions under DIA is manned by personnel from the Army, Navy and Air Force. It has a large number of widely dispersed Units such as WEUs (Wireless Experimental Units) that carry out the task of monitoring communication network of adversaries. It is responsible for providing COMINT to armed forces by acquiring and decrypting enemy communications.

Defence Imagery Processing and Analysis Centre (DIPAC) is tri-Service Organisation that controls India's satellite-based image acquisition capabilities. It processes satellite imagery received from providers like ISRO, commercial entities like Planet Lab, Maxar, Google, etc., and has a data bank to meet the imagery requirements of the Armed Forces. Although it was initially placed under DIA, after the creation of Defence Space Agency (DSA), DIPAC, along with Defence Satellite Control Centre located in Bhopal, now forms part of the DSA.²⁷ The newly created DSA is an expansion of the erstwhile

26. <https://www.ids.nic.in/dgdia-dcids.php>. Accessed on April 21, 2022.

27. Sudhi Ranjan Sen, "India to set up 3 New Agencies, including Cyber and Space, to Boost Defence Capabilities", *Hindustan Times*, October 16, 2018, at <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/india-to-set-up-3-new-agencies-including-cyber->

Integrated Space Cell located at the HQ IDS and is now directly under the command of the Chairman, Chief of Staff Committee (CoSC).

Besides SI and DIPAC, another key tri-service agency in the intelligence domain is the newly created Defence Cyber Agency (DCA). Although its role and tasks are not specifically known, it is probably responsible for mitigating cyber threats in all three Services. It reports directly to the CoSC and can perform cyber-warfare tasks such as intrusion operations.²⁸

The three services also have their own intelligence directorates at Service HQ level and separate intelligence wings. While Indian Army (IA) has a separate cadre of Intelligence Corps, Indian Air Force (IAF) and Indian Navy (IN) do not have a dedicated cadre but their intelligence set-up is manned by personnel on a rotational basis. In addition, the units and formations have different types of integral surveillance equipment for gaining battlefield intelligence.

AGENCIES UNDER MINISTRY OF FINANCE

Since financing and funding of terror networks and other anti-national elements is also a critical intelligence requirement for ensuring national security, the agencies under Ministry of Finance also contribute to intelligence gathering by providing inputs which they might gather while performing their core functions. The Economic Intelligence Council (EIC) formed in 1990 is the apex forum overseeing government agencies responsible for economic intelligence and combating economic offences in India. It functions under the Ministry of Finance and has the representatives of Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs, Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), Directorate of GST Intelligence (DGGI) and Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI). It also coordinates the sharing of economic intelligence with the NSCS.

Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) is responsible for collection of intelligence about smuggling of contraband goods, narcotics, etc. Spread over twelve zonal units across the country, DRI

and-space-to-boost-defence-capabilities/story-umuS4UOsDavc0MhHkUjuWN.html. Accessed on April 16, 2022.

28. Lt. General P. C. Katoch (Retd.), "Defence Cyber Command", SP Publications, July 6, 2021, at <https://www.spsnavalforces.com/experts-speak/?id=454&h=Defence-Cyber-Command>. Accessed on January 30, 2022.

is also responsible for maintaining liaison with foreign countries, Indian Missions and Enforcement agencies abroad on anti-smuggling matters.²⁹

Central Economic Intelligence Bureau (CEIB) is the nodal agency for economic intelligence and provides a platform for such exchange between various agencies within the Department of Revenue and other intelligence and enforcement agencies, including IB and RAW. It was established in 1985 and is responsible for gathering intelligence on economic and financial offences such as foreign exchange violations, supply of counterfeit currency, hawala transactions, financial frauds, etc.³⁰

INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES UNDER OTHER DEPARTMENTS

Besides the two primary civilian intelligence organisations, Military Intelligence (MI) infrastructure and Financial Intelligence Units (FIU), there are a number of other organisations which carry out the task of intelligence gathering and analysis. Most of these organisations under respective ministries are primarily oriented towards security and vigilance functions while contributing towards fulfilling the specific intelligence requirements of their organisations. For example, the Central Bureau of Health Intelligence (CBHI) which functions under Directorate General of Health Services is responsible for gathering information on a “broad range of indicators related to health status and health services in the country”.

Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is the principal investigating agency which functions under the Ministry of Personnel, Pension and Public Grievances. The origin of CBI can be traced back to 1941 when Special Police Establishment (SPE) was raised in the then Department of War with a specific mandate to investigate cases of bribery and corruption in transactions with which ‘War and Supply Department’ of the Government of India was concerned. At the end of 1942, the activities of the SPE were extended to include cases of

29. <https://dri.nic.in/main/charter>. Accessed on April 20, 2022.

30. Shantanu Nandan Sharma, “Why India needs a Powerful Think Tank in Economic Intelligence to Stop Niravs & Mallyas”, *The Economic Times*, February 25, 2018, at <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/why-india-needs-a-powerful-think-tank-in-economic-intelligence-to-stop-niravs-mallyas/articleshow/63059235.cms>. Accessed on April 10, 2022.

corruption on Railways also, presumably because the Railways were vitally concerned with movement and supply of war materials. It is responsible for investigating serious crimes such as those related to corruption, financial scams and organised crime. CBI is now the nodal police agency that coordinates investigation on behalf of member countries of Interpol.

At the state level, while the police are responsible for maintaining law and order and investigating crimes, central forces assist them by providing them intelligence and necessary help for dealing with internal security challenges.³¹ Nevertheless, the police due to their presence at grassroots level has an enormous responsibility for monitoring ground situation and acquiring intelligence through their “boots and ears on ground”. Special Investigation Branch (SIB) of police at state level deals with the collection, collation and dissemination of intelligence having security and law and order implications. It usually deals with sensitive matters like subversive activities, public agitation, security of vulnerable persons and vital installations. Monitoring of movements of VIPs and ensuring their security arrangements also fall within its purview. The distinction between the Subsidiary IBs and the SIBs is important. Subsidiary IBs report to the Centre while SIBs report to the State government. Many states have also raised special cells and Anti-Terrorism Squads (ATS) to focus on internal security challenges. The role and performance of police in J&K, Delhi, Assam, Telangana and other states towards generating intelligence has been exemplary.

MECHANISMS FOR INTELLIGENCE COORDINATION

Incisive analysis and timely sharing of inputs is a vital cog in the entire process of intelligence. Over the years, it was felt that this critical aspect of intelligence cycle suffered from serious deficiencies. Ram Pradhan Committee, for instance, pointed out that six inputs of likely terror strikes in Mumbai were developed by agencies from August 2006 up to August 2008.³² These inputs were not analysed in correct

31. Anviti Chaturvedi, “Police Reforms in India”, PRS India, June 2017, at <https://prsindia.org/policy/analytical-reports/police-reforms-india>. Accessed on April 26, 2022.

32. Janani Krishnaswamy, “Why Intelligence Fails”, Policy Report, October 8, 2013, The Hindu Centre. Accessed on April 15, 2022.

perspective and were 'mechanically' passed on to the consumers. It is therefore vital that appropriate mechanisms for intelligence analysis and sharing are activated.

In order to address this aspect, Multi-Agency Centre (MAC) was set up in 2002 based on the recommendations of the Special Task Force headed by Mr. G. C. Saxena. Its role is to collate, coordinate and evaluate terror-related intelligence inputs from all agencies. It is primarily an intelligence sharing platform for internal security and is controlled by IB. Twenty-four different agencies form part of the MAC at the Central level. All these agencies have appointed a nodal officer to interact with MAC. Similar arrangement exists at the state level where Subsidiary Multi-Agency Centre (SMAC) has been established under the state offices of the IB (SIB). At MAC Headquarters in New Delhi, activities of MAC include daily Nodal Officer's meetings, monthly meetings on Cross-Border Terrorism (CBT) in J&K and NE, fortnightly meeting on Left-Wing Extremism (LWE). In addition, Focus Groups Meetings, based on emerging requirements, are also organised.³³ As in the year 2021, 429 SMAC nodes and 251 district-police offices have already been connected to the MAC/SMAC Network.

While MAC addresses the requirement of intelligence sharing and coordination, it was also felt that a common database be created and made available to intelligence agencies. NATGRID, under the Ministry of Home Affairs, is the integrated intelligence framework connecting the databases of security agencies of the Government of India to gather inclusive patterns of intelligence that can be accessed by intelligence agencies. Drafted after the 26/11 Mumbai attacks, NATGRID was originally envisioned as a unified database that would compile a wide variety of currently available intelligence inputs. Presently, ten agencies are designated users who can access the data provided by 21 different government departments. It is, however, facing challenges in smooth implementation due to apprehensions of possible infringement of privacy and leakage of confidential individual data. The data recovery centre of the

33. Answer to the unstarred question no. 2988 in Rajya Sabha by Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs (Shri Kiren Rijiju), at <https://www.mha.gov.in/MHA1/Par2017/pdfs/par2014-pdfs/rs-060814/2988.pdf>. Accessed on March 12, 2022.

NATGRID has been constructed in Bengaluru and its headquarters are located in Delhi.³⁴

Financial Intelligence Unit–India (FIU-IND) is an independent body which was set up in November 2004 as the central agency responsible for receiving, analysing and disseminating information relating to suspect financial transactions. It reports to the EIC and is also responsible for coordinating and strengthening efforts of the intelligence and law enforcement agencies in pursuing the national and global efforts, such as those of Financial Action Task Force (FATF), against money laundering and terror financing.

National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) is the nodal mechanism for sharing of crime related information. It collects and maintains the records on crimes across the country. It also coordinates and disseminates the requisite information to various state police, investigating agencies, prosecutors and courts. NCRB also functions as the national storehouse for fingerprint records of convicted persons. As per an announcement made in November 2018 by the chief of NCRB, 14,749 out of the 15,655 police stations in the country have been connected with the Crime and Criminal Tracking Networks & System (CCTNS), to allow for better information sharing.³⁵

ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE AND INTERCEPTION

Due to the technological advancement, electronic surveillance has emerged as the mainstay of intelligence gathering. Presently, interception of electronic communication is done under the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885, and Information Technology Act, 2000. The IT Rules, 2009, specify the procedure and safeguards that the government must follow for interception, monitoring, and decryption of information.³⁶

34. Amit Chaturvedi, "Delayed by Covid, NATGRID likely to be Implemented Soon", *Hindustan Times*, September 14, 2021, at <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/delayed-by-covid-natgrid-likely-to-be-implemented-soon-check-details-101631609979429.html>. Accessed on February 14, 2022.

35. Press Information Bureau, "MoS (Home) Shri Hansraj Gangaram Ahir Inaugurates Conference on 'CCTNS—Good Practices and Success Stories'", Press Release, October 29, 2018, at <https://pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=184449>. Accessed on January 15, 2022.

36. Regina Mihindukulasuriya, "Who Legally Authorises Data Interception & on What Grounds: A Study of 5 Democracies", *The Print*, January 30, 2022, at <https://theprint.com>.

However, not all the agencies in the country have been provided with the powers to monitor communication. As per directives issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs, ten central intelligence agencies have been given such powers.³⁷ These are IB, R&AW, NCB, DRI, NIA, CBDT, Enforcement Directorate (ED), Delhi Police and Directorate of Signal Intelligence (only for Jammu and Kashmir, Northeast and Assam). Besides these, state police also have interception cells in their respective areas of responsibilities.

The advent of internet has led to complex challenges for intelligence agencies resulting in a need to closely monitor this medium. Specialised software, NETRA, or Network Traffic Analysis, has been developed by the Centre for Artificial Intelligence and Robotics (CAIR), a unit of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).³⁸ It captures data, based on key words and filters, from the Internet traffic, analyses it and alerts the concerned agencies in case it identifies a potential security threat.

ANALYSIS—INTELLIGENCE STRUCTURES AND FUNCTIONING

The security environment confronting India is extremely fragile. While territorial disputes with China, state-sponsored terrorism by nuclear Pakistan and porous borders within South Asia are primary concerns for national security, the internal security situation in Jammu and Kashmir, Northeast India and in areas affected by left-wing extremism (LWE) along with the rapidly emerging communal faultlines have further complicated the threat matrix. Intelligence agencies therefore have a very challenging and complex responsibility of ensuring peace in the country.

The very nature of the business of intelligence is such that the intelligence community is noted more for its shortcomings and failures rather than its successes. In the Indian context too, several questions

in/india/who-legally-authorises-data-interception-on-what-grounds-a-study-of-5-democracies/816613/. Accessed on April 10, 2022.

37. Shyam Balasubramanian, "Is the Government Now Tracking Everyone's Computer? Here's All You Need to Know", *DNA*, December 21, 2018, at <https://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-is-the-government-now-tracking-everyone-s-computer-here-s-all-you-need-to-know-2698700>. Accessed on April 16, 2022.

38. "NETRA: A Vigilant Eye on the Internet", March 8, 2017, at <https://researchmatters.in/article/netra-vigilant-eye-internet>. Accessed on January 21, 2022.

have been repeatedly raised about the efficiency of intelligence agencies. Some of the common shortcomings that have been identified by various analysts relate to lack of meaningful coordination due to turf wars between the agencies operating under different ministries and an absence of systemic tasking and control mechanisms. KRC had observed that “There is no institutionalised mechanism for coordination or objective-oriented interaction between agencies and consumers at different levels. Similarly, there is no mechanism for tasking the agencies, monitoring their performance and reviewing their records to evaluate their quality. Nor is there any oversight of the overall functioning of the agencies.”³⁹

Over the years, a lot of improvement and coordination through creation of new structures and sharing mechanisms has been achieved. Despite these measures, timely acquisition of quality intelligence, incisive analysis of inputs and its seamless flow to other intelligence agencies and end users remain a formidable challenge for the intelligence agencies. Many observers and consumers therefore feel that despite occasional incremental changes induced by crisis situations, India’s intelligence apparatus hasn’t been sufficiently enhanced and modernised.

The higher intelligence and security management in the country has now crystallised with the enhanced role of NSCS and establishment of several high-powered advisory and coordinating bodies. However, in the absence of a formal National Security Strategy, the intelligence apparatus focuses mostly on immediate and emerging challenges, and lacks the ‘Strategic Clarity’ to work towards clearly stated long-term goals. For example, United States of America issued a formal National Intelligence Strategy in 2019 which is meant to serve as the guide for intelligence community for the next four years. A similar exercise by a single unified supervisory mechanism at the apex level will significantly enhance and improve the coordination of intelligence acquisition and analysis.

Institutional cohesion between the different intelligence agencies can be better achieved by creating a dedicated appointment such

39. Report of the The Kargil Review Committee (KRC), at https://eparlib.nic.in/bitstream/123456789/63945/1/15_Defence_2.pdf. Accessed on January 29, 2022.

as the director of National Intelligence or intelligence advisor to the NSA. Similarly, NSCS has no primary collection source but receives the inputs from various intelligence agencies and prepares reports which help in policy formulations on various issues related to national security. Former NSA M. K. Narayan was fairly critical of NSCS and had critically remarked that the “The principal responsibility for intelligence assessment and analysis rests with the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) and India’s external intelligence agency, the Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW), and to a lesser extent, the Defence Intelligence Agency. It may not, perhaps be wrong to surmise that the decision of the NSCS to dismantle the Joint Intelligence Committee has contributed to a weakening of the intelligence assessment system.”⁴⁰

While this criticism of NSCS seems somewhat unfair and exaggerated, it is apparent that in the absence of sufficient domain expertise in fields such as proxy war and counter-intelligence, NSCS may find it difficult to focus on long-term strategic issues and end up duplicating the efforts of multiple other agencies.

Intelligence agencies lack a legislative mandate and are undertaking operations without any legal cover or statutory charter. L. P. Singh Committee, which was set up in 1978 to inquire into the misuse of intelligence agencies during the period of emergency, recommended the issue of a formal charter to R&AW and IB as also formulation of an oversight body to review the actions of intelligence agencies. Even the operations of intelligence agencies on foreign soil are conducted without any legal cover unlike the USA wherein law, under 50 USC 3093 56 (Title 50), allows the American President to authorise covert action by an agency or entity of the US Government.⁴¹ Similarly, the intelligence services of the UK are covered under the Intelligence Services Act and the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005,

40. FP Staff, “Galwan Valley Clash: Defence Experts Question Dismantling of JIC, say it ‘weakened’ System of Assessing intel”, *FirstPost*, July 17, 2020, at <https://www.firstpost.com/india/galwan-valley-clash-defence-experts-question-dismantling-of-jic-say-it-weakened-system-of-assessing-intel-8608021.html>. Accessed on January 15, 2022.

41. Legal Information Institute, “Presidential Approval and Reporting of Covert Actions”, at <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/50/3093>. Accessed on April 20, 2022.

which provides the Intelligence Services authority to obtain a warrant to conduct activities in the UK as well as overseas.

Notwithstanding the reluctance of intelligence agencies to submit to any oversight, due to concerns of potential leaks of sensitive operations, safeguarding the identity of their sources and distrust with the political class, there is a definite requirement of a mechanism such as an “oversight committee” to monitor the capabilities, financial allocations, audit and accountability of Intelligence agencies. A private bill titled “The Intelligence Services—Powers and Regulation Bill” drafted by Mr. Manish Tiwari was presented to the Lok Sabha in 2011.⁴² The bill which hasn’t yet been discussed in Parliament seeks to bring “appropriate statutory basis” for intelligence agencies and advocates the creation of an ‘Intelligence Ombudsman’ to address departmental grievances and a National Intelligence Tribunal to investigate into public complaints against the abuse of power by intelligence agencies.

The creation of MAC and SMAC has significantly improved the coordination between intelligence agencies but there is still reluctance amongst them to share the inputs on a real-time basis after a proper analysis. The real challenge before intelligence agencies, though, is more about improving the functional aspects that are related to the prioritisation of intelligence collection effort and enhancement of acquisition and analysis capability.

It has also been observed that a credit oriented approach and vested interests of each agency at times result in an unhealthy competitive spirit and unethical practices such as source poaching. Sharing of generic inputs and inability to meet the specific intelligence requirements of the consumers, especially the armed forces, further erodes the credibility of intelligence agencies.

Almost every intelligence agency in India suffers not only from a severe manpower deficit, but also lacks qualified

42. Sobhana K. Nair, “Pegasus would not have Happened if Intelligence Agencies were held Accountable: Manish Tewari”, *The Hindu*, July 21, 2021, at <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/pegasus-would-not-have-happened-if-intelligence-agencies-were-held-accountable-manish-tewari/article35440798.ece>. Accessed on January 30, 2022.

personnel with specialised skills such as language and cyber.⁴³ The over-reliance on TECHINT over the last few years has also resulted in a serious degradation of HUMINT capabilities. As per distinguished journalist Praveen Swami:

RAW's presence in West and Central Asia, as well as in Afghanistan, has been severely restricted by the lack of officers with language skills and regional knowledge. Its deficiencies in Pakistani languages such as Pashto were brutally exposed during the Kargil war.⁴⁴

The human resource management within the intelligence community is another serious lacuna which needs to be addressed. The intelligence agencies must focus on creating a pool of specialists who are suitably employed as per their domain expertise. Similarly, recruitment of persons with specialised skills such as technical and language expertise with an aptitude for intelligence work must be ensured.

The cadre management by the intelligence agencies both in terms of career progression and deployment of their personnel is also often considered inadequate.⁴⁵ It is generally felt that the number of personnel involved by any intelligence agency in routine administrative tasks and desk analysis duties are much greater than the field operatives. This results in disconnect from the ground realities and leads to the generation of inputs which are of poor quality. The incidents like the "pen down strike and dharna" in November 1980 by the employees at R&AW headquarters point to the fundamental issues of morale and work ethic.⁴⁶ In 2018, approximately 70 senior and mid-level functionaries of R&AW were sent on compulsory retirement, as part

43. Mahendra Kumawat and Vinay Kaura, "Building the Resilience of India's Internal Security Apparatus", ORF Occasional Papers, November 26, 2018, at <https://www.orfonline.org/research/building-the-resilience-of-indias-internal-security-apparatus-45753/>. Accessed on March 10, 2022.

44. Pravin Swami, "India's Secret War", *Frontline*, February 16, 2018, at <https://frontline.thehindu.com/the-nation/indias-secret-war/article10055129.ece>. Accessed on April 10, 2022.

45. Anand Arni, Shibani Mehta and Pranay Kotasthane, "India's External Intelligence Agency: Managing the Human Resources Challenge", Takshashila Discussion Document, January 12, 2019.

46. Ashoka Raina, "RAW Employees Announce Pen-down Strike", *India Today*, November 30, 2013, at <https://www.indiatoday.in/magazine/indiascope/story/19801231-raw->

of the clean-up drive by the Government.⁴⁷ Similar issues affect other intelligence agencies also and need to be resolved.

The training of intelligence professionals is also an area of immediate concern. Every intelligence agency has a separate training establishment for basic training of its personnel. R&AW has its training academy in Gurgaon while IB runs the National Intelligence Academy in New Delhi. MI conducts the training of its cadre at Military Intelligence Training School (MINTS) in Pune while others also have their own training infrastructure. The training curriculum and methodology in most of these establishments does not cater for modern intelligence requirements and methods. A greater synergy and sharing of training expertise within the intelligence community is also essential.

The rapid advances in information technology especially in the field of cyber and communications has transformed the manner in which intelligence operations are being conducted globally. Intelligence agencies in India have also begun to leverage technological tools in their functioning but there is further scope for adoption of niche technologies for intelligence gathering and processing. Development of indigenous solutions to remove reliance on foreign technical tools of intelligence acquisition and staying ahead of the “technology curve” is a must for Intelligence agencies.

CONCLUSION

It is often felt by many that the intelligence set-up in India is inadequate and ineffective. This perception has been reinforced by certain major historical events such as the Sino-India conflict in 1962 and the Kargil war in 1999. Recently, the military stand-off against China in Eastern Ladakh⁴⁸ has also brought to the fore inadequacies of the intelligence capability of the nation.

employees-announce-pen-down-strike-773687-2013-11-30. Accessed on January 15, 2022.

47. Shibani Mehta, “RAW Officials are being given Pink Slip because of an Archaic British-era Appraisal Process”, *The Economic Times*, June 12, 2019, at <https://theprint.in/opinion/raw-officials-are-being-given-pink-slip-because-of-an-outdated-british-era-appraisal-process/248901/>. Accessed on January 30, 2022.

48. Vinayak Dalmia and Vrinda Kapoor, “Bring Make in India for Intelligence Agencies”, *The Print*, December 10, 2020, at <https://theprint.in/opinion/bring-make-in-india->

The modern-day security challenges demand that intelligence agencies are agile, synergised, empowered and accountable in their operations. However, despite many attempts to reinvigorate the intelligence set-up as seen in the formulation of numerous committees and recommendations of study groups, our national intelligence structures and processes continue to be considered as sub-optimal.

Since intelligence is a sensitive subject and involves multiple agencies at national level, it is imperative that a realistic view of their performance is taken and feasible intelligence reforms are undertaken with a long-term strategy in mind. It is also important to take into perspective the views of intelligence community who feel that blanket criticism of intelligence agencies is unfair and there is a need for a better understanding of intelligence concepts and functioning amongst the users.

It is vital to place focus on enhanced acquisition capabilities, analytical expertise and seamless information sharing across the intelligence community. The nation must invest in creating an integrated and responsive national intelligence framework which can fully meet the intelligence requirements of the modern-day threat environment.

[for-intelligence-agencies-stop-overrelying-on-foreign-vendors/564322/](#). Accessed on January 21, 2022.