CENTRE FOR LAND WARFARE STUDIES (CLAWS)

VISIT HIGHER DEFENCE ORIENTATION COURSE SER 8
23 May 2014

VISIT REPORT

Higher Defence Orientation Course Ser 8 from Army War College, Mhow visited CLAWS on 23 May 2014. The course was given two presentations. The first was on "UN Peacekeeping Operations" and the second on "Shaping the Information Environment", followed by an interactive session.

Modern Trends in United Nations Peace keeping and its Challenges including Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration - Lt Gen Chandra Prakash (Retd)

Peacekeeping has a sense of different views, misconceptions and a sense of ignorance. The cost of conflicts has changed, previously there were border disputes, wars and you went as a military observer, you patrolled and then came off. Today, multiple factors such as oppressive regimes, instability, military coup, economic instability etc. contribute to issues, which require the deployment of peacekeeping forces. Previously, conflict was managed between two states and that was easier to do. In traditional peacekeeping, you only supervise a cease fire between two belligerent. The presence of UN peacekeepers was the only deterrent. Today, the job also involves protecting the civilian population. Humanitarian assistance is also required for beleaguered populations. In addition, for peace to be established, stability in governance is required, which in turns requires national capacity to bring in the rule of law and security. We are hence looking at multi layered, broader areas of responses and not just one aspect. Present day conflicts also cause a lot of internally displaced people and refugees and cross border movement of arms. This has regional ramification, necessitating cross border cooperation.

We tend to confuse between two terms peacekeeping and peace building. In the modern day peacekeeping mission, you are expected to do both peacekeeping and peace building. Peacekeeping is an activity of preventing war and violence between hostile parties by maintaining peace between them. Peace building is an activity which goes beyond crisis intervention and focuses on long term development. The ultimate goal in both cases is to eliminate human suffering and create conditions for self sustaining peace and security. When we talk about the Peace Keeping Mission in the Dominican Republic of Congo, there were 52 tasks for a peacekeeping mission to perform. The challenge, which arises as a mission leader, is that you have to maintain peace while implementing other programmes such as providing humanitarian assistance, building infrastructure among other things. If you do not have roads, how can you provide accessibility, which provides security? Therefore, there is an overlap between peacekeeping and peace building.

Four critical areas need to be addressed; restoring the rule of law, support to the emergence of the legitimate political institution, participatory process, and promoting social and economic development. These are also the big challenges. Both

peacekeeping and peace building have to be addressed simultaneously through short and long terms agendas, need for force enablers and force multipliers and inter mission operations.

Peacekeepers have to deal with a humanitarian situation that continues to severely affect the civilian population, persistence of high level of violence, violation and abuse of human rights and violation of international law. At times, the degree of violence being tackled is beyond one's expectations. There is also targeted attack on civilians, wide spread gender based sexual violence, recruitment of children by the parties in conflict and displacement of significant number of civilians. These issues affect the reconstruction and development efforts of peacekeeping mission. Let us take the example of the Dominican Republic of Congo whose size is approximately that of Western Europe. Here we have about 20 armed groups and many more individual groups operating. The National Army should be addressing this problem, but the Army itself is part of the problem. The soldiers are not paid, and hence live of other means. The peacekeeper is expected to protect about 77 million people of which about 10 million are high risk and 2.9 million people are displaced.

While the mandate is challenging, it is not impossible. Today there is a change that is happening, previously the peacekeeper was not expected to use his weapon, he did not even have a weapon but today he is carrying a weapon and ammunition ranging from small arms to attack helicopters. He is expected to protect the civilians with weaponry attack and that's what they call the Chapter VII of peace keeping, it was previously under the category of Chapter VI. Chapter VII also has its connotations; it does not give you a free hand. It however permits you to use force in self-defence or in support of the mandate for which the UN has framed the rules of engagement.

Here, it is important to understand the difference between robust peacekeeping and peace enforcement. In the former, one can use force in self-defense. Peace enforcement has pro-active implications. Robust peacekeeping is at tactical level whereas peace enforcement applies at the statutorily international level. The traditional peacekeeping even if it is talking about robust peacekeeping needs to have the consent of both the parties and the courts. This is actually enshrined in the basic principles of United Nations. But under peace enforcement, you may not have the consent of parties in conflict so for that there needs to be special authorisation by the UN Security Council. The UN Security Council extends the mandate of MONUSCO on an exceptional basis and without creating any prejudice to the elite principle of peacekeeping if intervention began under the UN Security Council resolution 2147. That means that it is sanctioned to undertake the peace enforcement task. Even if you have all of this resource, challenge is that troops come without any proper reinforcements; they lack the basic skills of peacekeeping. When you have the peace enforcement mandate, you have to keep in mind the humanitarian aspect. There is a thinking that we should employ organisation which utilises resources of the region but then we should provide standardised peace keeping training both bi-laterally and through regional training centres to increase the global peace capacity.

For global peace operation initiatives, many countries cannot provide troops to the peacekeeping missions and they end up providing support through financing the mission. They do this under the head global peace operations initiatives wherein billions of dollars are spent which are given to the troop contributing country and some

organisations involved in imparting knowledge to the troops. Here the challenge is that people who provide you training have never been in peacekeeping missions themselves or have not been exposed to different environments. Not many countries have the capacity to provide the kind of resources that peacekeeping requires and then there are the financial implications. Peacekeeping needs political fuel and engagements at every level. People are willing to deploy if there is peace to keep, but people are not willing to deploy if it is conflict management because of domestic pressures. Therefore, for the sake of humanity much more can be achieved provided we have the right mindset and approach.

Interactive Session

Why UN Missions in some parts have not been successful despite being engaged in the area for such a long time?

The problem of UN missions, particularly in Darfur, Syria and Congo is not of peacekeeping but the role of parties involved in the conflict that do not help in solving the problem. There is a lack of flexibility in movement of UN peacekeeping forces in the conflict zones. The magnitude of the problem and the natural resources are limited. There is little help from the local population in national capacity building and thus, the results of the UN missions aren't as expected. Peace cannot be restored unless the people contribute positively in solving the problem.

At times, contingents of some nations find problems in operating under UN. What are the reasons?

The UN administration works on a tight budget and anything not catered for in the budget is not provided for. But the UNSC supports the troops with the flexibility to operate in the conflict areas and there is availability of technological and logistic support to the forces. However, there arises a conflict of interest when the force commanders refer the issues back to their national leaders who take decisions without knowing the situation in the conflict zones and purely on political considerations.

What are the arrangements for training of troops for UN Missions prior to their deployment?

The UN training department gives out training packages, which are generic in nature and are mission-specific to the recognized and certified countries. However countries from South Asia, particularly India, having a vast experience in UN operations and contributing troops largely for missions, the armies have developed training centres for UN peacekeeping and there is no need for an external agent to control these. There are concerns that each country has developed its own training modules with regard to peacekeeping missions but the need is to have consistent standards with regard to the training and deployment.

Please elaborate 2013 Peace Accord in Congo and problem of security reforms there?

Apart from the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), a special envoy of the Secretary-General, Mary Robinson was appointed for Congo and there was a peace accord signed at Addis Ababa in February 2013 which also included 11 neighboring countries basically to ensure peace in the region. But whenever there are

national interests involved, the signatories find it difficult to adhere to the agreement. The problem with the Security Sector Reforms (SSR) is of finances. The government in Congo was averse to the UN taking SSR and training of local armed forces. They felt they only needed finances and material and were keen to make their own decisions keeping in mind their interests. The truth behind this is based on perception. The Congolese government preferred to operate bilaterally.

Shaping the Information Environment- Maj Gen Dhruv C Katoch,SM, VSM (Retd), Director, CLAWS.

Information warfare is a term commonly used in the Armed Forces across the world. For long, information warfare consisted of three major elements - denial and protection of information, exploitation and ability to attack enemy information and data systems and deception by various means. To this a fourth element has now been added - The ability to influence attitudes, whereby opinions of target populations are favourably shaped or influenced through Perception Management. The methods, procedures and techniques applied to achieve the above are termed as psychological operations (psyops). Psyops could hence be thought of as tools to shape perceptions. Psyops missions are delivered as information for effect and are used during peacetime and conflict to inform and influence both within and outside the country. Psyops relates to the delivery of information through various mediums such as the print and electronic media and human contact. In its implementation, psyops should enjoy wide leeway in the manner in which selected information is conveyed and in the specific actions taken to influence the emotions, reasoning, and behaviour of target audiences. This can be accomplished through multimedia messages, civic action programmes and other types of civil affairs projects and by face-to-face communication with the local population and their leaders. Influence however is not just about what is said. It is also very much about what is done. While words can be drafted and communicated in very short order, the deeds of individuals, organisations, and even the nation tend to have the strongest and most enduring message that is understood by audiences. The Indian Army's excellent human rights record while combating insurgency over six decades gets sullied with a few incidents. In a sense then, everything a military force does in a conflict zone has a psychological impact, favourable or negative, whether intended or not. The behaviour of every soldier affects public perception of the Army. Because of the globalisation of media, how a single soldier or small sub unit handles a tactical situation in an out-of-the-way location still has the potential to make global headlines and have strategic impact. Indigenous individuals with whom troops interact form favorable or unfavorable impressions and spread those impressions by word of mouth throughout surprisingly large networks. The behaviour of troops with the local population in conflict zones would thus form a critical input in how they and the organisation they represent are perceived. While economic and other assistance rendered to the local population by the military through civic action and other programmes contributes to building goodwill, it must be remembered that best practices are simply avoidance of worst practices.
Psyops functions

Psyops functions relate to disseminating information through various means to further own objectives and to counter an adversary's propaganda, misinformation and disinformation to correctly portray friendly intent and actions. Psyops also advises the supported commander through the targeting process regarding targeting restrictions, psychological actions and psychological enabling actions to be executed by the military force. It is mostly truth-telling and good behaviour.

Another important aspect is audience profiling and messaging. Analysis of audiences is a better way to look at this task, for there are multiple audiences with which one would have to deal. These could be the local public, groups with particular religious leanings and beliefs, groups based on language and other cultural facets, women and children in an insurgency affected area, local government officials, politicians, own soldiers, their families and so on. Developing audience analysis and profiles is both an art and a science. Each of these audiences is important. Each is radically different. And each must be understood.

After developing audience profiles, the next step is determining the content of the message that needs to be delivered. Here, we must understand that a message which appeals to one group may well be a turn-off to the other. Each group thus needs to be delivered the message in a manner that it gets them to follow through with the desired response. Specialists such as psychologists, sociologists and scholars must be co-opted in preparing appropriate messages. The challenges of messaging are the need to have a diversity of messages and yet not seem inconsistent. The solution here is to create a set of diverse yet complementary messages. More importantly, as we create messages, we must back them up with action. Without 'mutually supportive words and deeds', the entire communications efforts will be counter-productive. Or as they say in advertising jargon, 'Nothing kills a bad product faster than good advertising'! The message must hence fit in with the execution plan of a campaign and with the capabilities of the troops. It has to be sent to the right audiences, and must be done with 'reach' and frequency.

Strategic Imperatives

Today, the most interesting types of power do not come out of the barrel of a gun, and much bigger payoffs can be achieved by 'getting others to want what you want'. Perception management operations can be one of the primary ways of achieving that objective.

While engaged in counter insurgency or counter terrorism operations, a key component of perception management is the requirement to reach out to the hearts and minds of those people who directly or indirectly support the terrorist or who are simply sympathetic to the 'cause'. At the strategic level, this would involve addressing causative factors through political, social and economic tools. Without this effort, a network can actually be defeated military, but still maintain support for the 'cause' whilst in a period of hibernation. At the operational level, activities which foment divisions within a terrorist network, undermine the morale of its members (particularly those on the fringe), and drive a wedge between the network and its support base will pay dividends. While direct action (military, law enforcement, intelligence, political, economic activities) will assist in this effort in the short term, long-term success will only come about when such support is withheld willingly because the people providing it have been convinced that it is no longer in their best interests to do so. Perception Management

however is not a substitute for capability. In advertising terms, the product has to live up to its brand image otherwise it will lose its credibility. The Army's actions on the ground will thus have to conform to the image that it wishes to create. Capabilities too have to be real otherwise the projection of deterrence will not succeed.

The strategic narrative must not be lost sight of while formulating a perception management campaign. While the tactical and operational level narratives are important, they must not run counter to the long term aims of the country. Whatever themes the Indian Army chooses to propagate must be backed by appropriate troop response from the ground. It is the soldiers who come into daily contact with the people and their actions and conduct must be consistent with the stated policy to be followed. It is also well to remember that truth and accuracy are vital components of any perception management campaign and must not be lost sight of. In addition, the goals set must be clear and achievable. Acceptance and approval of the final goals by the chain of command is also essential and must be based on the situation. In future conflict, perception management will play an increasingly important role. The concept must hence be understood and should be coopted into all military plans.

Interactive Session

While shaping the information environment at the tactical level, there are two parts. One is the perception management activity and second is giving it wide publicity through fastest dissemination mode. There is long chain of command when it comes to publicising the information. Does the information lose its relevance and should it be done at the tactical level by the entity responsible for the perception management activity?

Publicising the good work done by the armed forces is a separate aspect. We should shape the information environment by giving a particular narrative to the people we are dealing with and that has to be top-down driven. There has to be a plan at the Command HQ level looking into various facets of it and then how the information can be disseminated to the concerned people. The leadership of the Army needs to take a call over the dissemination of information and the need is to be proactive lest the other narrative takes precedence.