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## **AIMS AND SCOPE**

The Journal of Defence and Security is a publication of the Malaysian Institute of Defence and Security, MiDAS. The journal publishes original papers and reviews covering all aspects of defence and security. It is a platform to promote awareness on the capabilities and requirements of modern defence & security technologies and policies, covering topics in the areas of, but not limited to, Evolution of Military Information & Communication Systems, Smart Weapons, Modern Vehicle & Aerospace Engineering Challenges, Intelligence, Surveillance & Reconnaissance, Biological & Chemical Terrorism Countermeasures, Personnel Protection & Performance, Military Medicine, Emergent Naval Technology, and Defence & Security Strategic Management.

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Malaysian Institute of Defence and Security (MiDAS)  
Ministry of Defence  
Jalan Padang Tembak,  
50634 Kuala Lumpur  
Malaysia  
Tel: + 603 20598400; Fax: + 603 20715636  
Email: [midasteam@mod.gov.my](mailto:midasteam@mod.gov.my)  
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## ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

**Maj. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Lee Kuok Tiung** currently is the head of the Communication Department, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS). He received his Doctoral degree (Doctor of Philosophy) from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) in 2011 (the same institution where he obtained his Master of Arts in 2003). He did his bachelor's degree in Social Sciences at UMS from 1997 - 2000 where he joined the Reserve Officer Training Unit (ROTU) and was commissioned as a second lieutenant in Territorial Army on 13 May 2000. His research interests broadly include journalism research specifically news framing, changing journalistic norms and values, communication laws and ethics, and political communication.

**Lt Col Hasmady Bin Alim** is a PhD candidate in the Faculty of Defence Management and Security Studies at the National Defence University Of Malaysia (NDUM). Before starting his PhD, He served as an officer commanding (OC) at Regiment 21 Commando, Sungai Udang, Melaka. He did his Master in Defence Technology (Operational Research) at the National Defence University of Malaysia (NDUM). His research interests encompass Human Resources, Operational Research, and Military Training His Master's dissertation focus was a Factor that enhanced the Interagency in Eastern Sabah Security Command using the Operational Research (OR) method. Currently, in her PhD research, He is exploring the concept of Transfer of Training for the development of military personnel readiness in the Malaysia Army. For correspondence, He can be contacted via hasmadyalim@gmail.com

**Dayangku Norasyikin Pengiran Tejuddin** is a Lecturer at the Department of International Relations, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS). She holds a Bachelor of Social Science (Hons) in International Relations and a Master of Strategic and Defence Studies (International Relations) from Universiti Malaya (UM). She is also an active member and researcher of EAIR CAUCUS - East Asian International Relations Caucus, a scholarly network that fosters the study of East Asian international relations. Her research interests include various aspects of International Relations, Security Studies (traditional and non-traditional security issues), and Contemporary Issues of International Relations. She is currently pursuing her PhD in International Relations, focusing on the area of Sarawak Food Security. She can be contacted via email at atdnorasyikin@unimas.my

**Syafina Zuhani Mohamad** is a Master student in International Relations at School of International Studies (SoIS), Universiti Malaysia Sarawak. Her research interests encompass Geopolitics, and defence and strategic studies. Her MPhil dissertation focus is Russia-Ukraine Conflict: Online News Media Agenda Setting from the Perspective of University Students in Borneo. For correspondence, she can be contacted via syafinazm1997@gmail.com

**Nabil Haziq Bin Yazid** is a graduate from the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) majoring in Political Science. Specialising in International Relations, he has deep interest in Middle Eastern politics, Muslim Politics and Political Islam. Coming from a background of Islamic schools influenced his thoughts in International Relations understanding the dynamics of politics in the Middle East region and searching for answers of the restless conflicts, wars and disputes surrounding the region. For his Final Year Project, he is currently writing on the topic of The Emergence of a New Hegemonic Order: Türkiye and Iran Influence as A Regional and Global Power. Seeking the potential of Muslim countries to enter the international politics arena as a major player. He has interests in the field of research and analysis in International Relations, is constantly seeking to learn further and aspires to provide deeper insight into the realm of international relations.

**Syed ‘Akasyah Bin Syed Zulkifli** is a graduate from Universiti Malaysia Sarawak from the course of International Studies. As an undergraduate, he wrote papers surrounding the application of theories and the pragmatic angles surrounding international relations and its issues. For his undergraduate degree, his Final Year Project’s paper was written on the comparative of containment strategies in the cold war and contemporarily in China. He has interests in the field of research and analysis in International Relations, is constantly seeking to learn further and aspires to provide deeper insight into the realm of international relations. He can be contacted via email at: syedakasyah@gmail.com

**Nurul Shafiqah Binti Azami** is a dedicated final year undergraduate student at the University of Malaya, majoring in International Relations. She has a strong academic background and a genuine passion for exploring security-related issues in the field of international relations, as evidenced by her research papers. Prior to her current academic journey, she completed a foundation program in law at UiTM Dengkil, broadening her knowledge of legal frameworks. Nurul Shafiqah is enthusiastic about international affairs and can be contacted via email at pikaazami11@gmail.com to discuss potential opportunities and collaborations.

**Lt Col Ts Dr Maimunah Omar** is the Deputy Director for the Contemporary Security Study Centre at the Malaysia Institute of Defence and Security (MiDAS), Ministry of Defence. She graduated from the University of Science Malaysia in 1999. She holds a Master’s Degree in Science and Engineering for Defence Security from the University of Warwick, United Kingdom, and a Ph.D. in Defence Management from National Defence University Malaysia. Her area of research is on Supply Chain Management for Effective Disaster Response. She has published several articles in academic journals and presented many research papers at international conferences in HADR, Disaster Management, Climate Change, and many others. She is actively involved with the Network of ASEAN Defence Institute (NADI). She is a Chartered Member of the Malaysia Institute of Logistics and Transport (CMILT) and a member of the Malaysia Board of Technologists with Professional Technologist recognition. She was an alumnus of two prestigious programs: The International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) and The Study in the United States Institute for Scholars Program (SUSIs) sponsored by the Bureau of Education, Department of States, USA. For SUSIs, she is the first Malaysian to represent her country under the foreign policy category and it was also the first time ever for Malaysia to have been selected for this category. Previously, she served as Key Performance Indicator Officer for the Ministry of Defence



## **ROTU IN MALAYSIAN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES: EXAMINING THE PAST IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PRESENT FOR THE PURPOSE OF THE FUTURE**

Maj. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Lee Kuok Tiung  
University Malaysia Sabah (UMS)  
*lee@ums.edu.my*

### **ABSTRACT**

*The Reserve Officer Training Unit (ROTU) programs at public universities, while distinct from the Malaysian Territorial Army Regiment 500 Series, share close ties. This study builds upon previous literature that explores historical contexts to shed light on the present and future. The research findings highlight that a primary factor contributing to inactivity in ROTU programs is the intersection of career and family commitments. Students' motivation to participate while studying at the university often stems from benefits such as on-campus accommodation and training allowances. However, the academic environment and lifestyle during university are markedly different from the demands of professional life, which has led some individuals to lose interest in pursuing their involvement in the reserve army. Curriculum and training-related factors, as well as negative experiences during the three-year campus training, have further dissuaded participants. Notably, the curriculum's focus on war courses reflects the broader concepts of the Higher Army Education Policy (HANRUH) and Army for the Next Generation (Army for Next G). In summary, this study's findings underscore the diverse interests encompassed by ROTU and reflect the multifaceted nature of both ROTU specifically and the Territorial Army (TA) more broadly.*

**Keywords:** Reserve Officer Training Unit (ROTU), Territorial Army Regiment 500 Series, total Defence (HANRUH), Army for next G, Territorial Army 'Askar Wataniah – AW'

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Reserve Officers Training Unit (ROTU), also known as Pasukan Latihan Pegawai Simpanan (PALAPES), in Malaysian public universities plays a crucial role in the nation's promotion of the total defence concept (HANRUH) and the Army for the Next Generation (Army for next G). It was established to strengthen the civil-military relationship (CMR) in the country. The history of ROTU dates back to the 1960s when Malaysian universities collaborated with the military to prepare for threats posed by the communist insurgency and the Indonesian Confrontation, which involved armed conflicts. The initiative began on January 1, 1959, offering full-time university students the opportunity to join the Territorial Army service. The first university territorial infantry battalion was founded at University Malaya (UM) on April 3, 1965. This initiative started when 30 alumni of the Royal Military College (RMC), who were studying at the University of Malaya, voluntarily enrolled for military training at the Siputih Training Camp in Batu Gajah, Perak, during their semester break. This endeavor expanded to include the establishment of Coy A Inf Bn (A Company, 1st University Malaya Reserve Army Battalion) at Institute Technology MARA (now UiTM), Coy B at Kolej Pertanian (now known as University Putra Malaysia), and Coy C at University Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) on January 1, 1971.

ROTU was officially founded on December 18, 1978, with the primary mission of training commissioned officers. This initiative was the result of a collaboration between the Ministry of Defence Malaysia (MinDef), the Ministry of Education Malaysia (now the Ministry of Higher Education), and the various Public Universities (UA). Notably, each public university in Malaysia enjoyed a degree of autonomy in this endeavor. Credit is due to Brig. Gen. Dato Abdul As Ismail,

the then Commander of the Territorial Army (TA), as he can be considered the driving force behind the concept.

On February 26, 1979, a significant meeting was held in the Klang Valley, chaired by the Army Chief of Staff, the Vice Chancellor of Public Universities (UA), and the director of ITM (currently known as UiTM), to establish ROTU programs at their respective universities. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) formalizing the partnership between MinDef, KPT, and the universities was signed on August 20, 1979. The 1st University of Malaya Reserve Army Battalion was officially dissolved on February 2, 1980.

ROTU officially commenced at Universiti Malaya (UM) on February 5, 1980, followed by Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) on February 7, 1980, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) on February 8, 1980, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) on February 17, 1980, and UiTM on February 8, 1980. Over time, ROTU has expanded to nearly every public university, including the Navy and Air Force branches. The Navy's version of ROTU was first introduced at Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) in 1986, and the Air Force's version was established at Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) in 1989.

Date	ROTU
5th February 1980	Universiti Malaya (UM), Kuala Lumpur
7th February 1980	Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), Bangi, Selangor
8th February 1980	Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), Serdang, Selangor
17 February 1980	Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), Gelugor, Pulau Pinang
6th March 1980	Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam, Selangor
16th February 1984	Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM), Sintok, Kedah
11th April 1991	Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM), Skudai, Johor
15th April 1985	Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Arau, Perlis & Dungun, Terengganu
24 November 1996	Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS), Kota Kinabalu, Sabah
1 July 1997	Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas), Kota Samarahan, Sarawak
1 October 2003	Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM), Parit Raja, Johor
15 January 2004	Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI), Tanjung Malim, Perak
3 March 2005	Universiti Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP), Arau, Perlis
21 July 2007	Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT), Kuala Terengganu, Terengganu
28 March 2016	Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM), Nilai, Negeri Sembilan Universiti Malaysia Pahang Al-Sultan Abdullah (UMPSA), Gambang, Pahang Universiti Islam Antarabangsa Malaysia (UIAM), Gombak, Selangor
3 November 2011	Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin (UniSZA), Kuala Terengganu, Terengganu
12 April 2018	Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM), Durian Tunggal, Melaka
20 August 2020	Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK), Kota Bharu, Kelantan Universiti Pertahanan Nasional Malaysia (UPNM), Sg. Besi, Kuala Lumpur

**Table 1: Chronology of ROTU Establishment in Public Universities**

The establishment of ROTU programs at public universities is contingent upon approval from the Malaysian Armed Forces Council (MAFC). The MAFC was instituted in accordance with Article 137 of the Malaysian Federal Constitution and is responsible for overseeing the administration of Malaysia's armed forces. Consequently, ROTU programs are governed by the

Territorial Army Ordinance, 1958, Territorial Army (Terms and Conditions of Service) Regulations, 1958, and The Territorial Army (Pays and Allowances) Rules, 1959.

Under usual circumstances, ROTU units fall under the purview of the Malaysian Army Training and Doctrine Command (MyTRADOC or PLDTD), with the exception of the National Defense University of Malaysia (NDUM), which operates under the Malaysian Army Headquarters (ATM). It's worth noting that NDUM initially began as the Malaysian Military Academy (ATMA) and was founded on June 1, 1995, before changing its name to its current designation on November 10, 2006. A commissioned officer trained by ROTU is required to hold a bachelor's degree in their respective field of expertise. It becomes a concern when some commissioned cadets fail to obtain their bachelor's degrees or when there are degree programs that require four years of study while ROTU training spans only three years, enabling them to be commissioned as second lieutenants. However, these instances may be isolated and uncommon, given that the primary objective of ROTU is to impart management and leadership skills vital for national defense.

Nonetheless, the introduction of ROTU programs in public universities has broadened the scope of military training activities beyond military science. It now encompasses the guidance of graduates to become dynamic, disciplined, dedicated, and enthusiastic Volunteer Officers. The overarching goal is to shape citizens who exhibit patriotism and possess qualities of national resilience, fostering a spirit of unity among diverse ethnicities and communities. Furthermore, ROTU programs aim to provide a pool of human capital with academic qualifications for both the Permanent Force and the ATM Reserve Force. This is especially pertinent in the context of modern defence, which encompasses not only military strength but also a comprehensive approach to political, economic, and social issues, including addressing digital poverty and food security. Our nation's educational disparities are exacerbated by the digital divide, emphasizing the interconnectedness of these factors.

The role of the Territorial Army (Askar Wataniah - AW) extends beyond the roadblocks (SJR) that many civilians often associate with their activities during the Movement Control Order (MCO). The Malaysian Territorial Army Regiment used to comprise two series of reservists, namely the mobilized (kerahan) 300 series and the volunteer (*sukarela*) 500 series. The 300 series consisted of reservists mobilized for full-time duty, and in 2008, all five infantry battalions under this series were transformed into a new regular border regiment (Rejimen Sempadan - RS). Presently, there are sixteen volunteer Territorial Army Regiment 500 Series units located in major cities across the nation. Each of these units is organized into three battalions with deployments across the entire country.

In terms of combat support elements, these units include squadrons specializing in signals, engineering, artillery, intelligence, and military police. Meanwhile, the service support element comprises a service corps, an ordnance corps, a corps of electrical and mechanical engineers, and a health corps. Notably, the Territorial Army includes specialized units in the form of two corps: the Signals Corps and the Engineer Corps. The Royal Signals Specialist TELEKOM Regiment (56 RSPT AW) is tasked with managing communication maintenance and primarily comprises TELEKOM Malaysia staff. In contrast, the Royal Corps of Signals (R SIGNALS or R SIGS) welcomes civilians with telecommunications expertise.

Under the Corps of Engineers, specialized regiments have been established, including the Port Specialist Engineers (40 RAJD AW) at major ports nationwide, whose membership consists of port workers. The Train Specialist Engineers (50 RAJD AW) are responsible for maintaining KTMB during emergencies, and their unit comprises KTMB staff. Water Handling Specialist Engineers (60 RAJD AW) exclusively consist of Water Supply workers, while the Power Operation

Specialist Engineers (70 RAJD AW) are composed entirely of employees from Tenaga Nasional Berhad. All of this underscores the wide-ranging opportunities for members of the public to join the Territorial Army, aligning with their respective expertise and interests.

The primary goal and mission of the Territorial Army, which serves as the reserve force for the Malaysian Army, is to provide assistance in replacing regular troops (permanent forces) during times of emergencies, domestic security operations, and support to public authorities during natural disasters, particularly floods. These dedicated reservists undergo training to remain prepared for mobilization, enabling them to assume the responsibilities of regular forces in specific missions. Some are tasked with organizing defenses for vital targets, key terrain, and strategic installations, while others may operate as intelligence agencies, engaging in counterintelligence and sabotage activities. Additionally, specialist units are responsible for operating and maintaining essential services as needed, along with safeguarding and sustaining communication networks.

The formation of the Border Regiment (RS) on January 12, 2008, was significantly influenced by the role played by the Bn Series 300 INF AW in enhancing border surveillance and security. The challenge faced by Malaysia, as a maritime nation, is its extensive borders, necessitating substantial manpower and considerable costs to manage cross-border issues, such as crime, public health concerns, smuggling, and human trafficking. These critical matters are not solely the responsibility of the security forces but require concerted efforts from government agencies, the public, and policymakers, all driven by political will.

The issue of illegal immigrants in Sabah, which remained unresolved due to the indifference of the previous federal government (as security was under the Federal List), has escalated to a stateless crisis. Deporting undocumented individuals without the necessary legal documentation to their country of origin is complicated, as host countries typically require proper documentation for entry. Therefore, addressing this issue is a complex process. While there may be calls to repatriate these individuals for political support, the implementation is far from straightforward. The reemergence of polio, after 19 years of Malaysia being declared polio-free (in 2000), highlights cross-border health concerns and underscores the ongoing illegal immigration across Malaysia's borders. Tackling this problem demands cooperation from all stakeholders and cannot be resolved by the security forces alone.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Many countries maintain reserve forces, each with its own name and organizational structure. For instance, the British Territorial Army was rebranded as the Army Reserve in 2014. In the realm of scholarly articles and academic research, past investigations into territorial armies have scrutinized specific facets of reserve forces in various nations. These inquiries have delved into their structures, appraised their contributions to national defense, and explored their ability to adapt to evolving security landscapes.

According to Ben-Ari and Lomsky-Feder (2011), reservists constitute a readily available pool of manpower, although this resource can be expensive. They can be mobilized at any time, but their military skills and abilities often face criticism, as they may not consistently meet the standards expected of professional standing forces. In many respects, they are recognized as not possessing the same level of expertise as career soldiers. Parmak (2015) underscored the shortcomings of reserve armies, including lackluster attitudes toward military training, low motivation, and some reservists who, caught between military and civil society, may harbor anti-war and anti-military sentiments. It is imperative for organizations and employers to comprehend their employees' participation in volunteerism (Vest, 2014).

In addition to academic research, there exist government reports that delineate the roles and blueprints of territorial armies. Academic interest in studies related to reserve forces, encompassing various dimensions, has been steadily growing. Several studies, analogous to Malaysia's ROTU program, can be found. For example, Meseroll (1998) sheds light on the United States Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) as a leadership training initiative for students with the aim of commissioning future officers for the U.S. Army. Хамула (2012) delves into specific aspects of the Reserve Officer Training Corps program within the U.S. Army and provides a historical overview of its inception and evolution. Revere (2019) has suggested modifications to the ROTC curriculum after scrutinizing the conflicts the U.S. Army has engaged in and forecasting future challenges. Lim et al. (2017) concentrate on strategic planning tools for evaluating and selecting ROTC units to ensure the Army attracts and commissions highly qualified officers. Their study encompasses elements such as productivity and the location of ROTC units. Collectively, these papers provide insights into the ROTC program's objectives, historical context, and possibilities for improvement.

Understanding how to attract and retain qualified personnel is of paramount importance. This involves exploring recruitment and retention strategies to ascertain the motivations behind individuals' decisions to join and remain in the reserves. Research related to the Territorial Army (TA) or Army Reserve frequently covers topics of operational effectiveness, encompassing training, readiness, and performance. There are also studies focusing on force structure and integration, allowing researchers to investigate how the TA integrates with the regular armed forces and contributes to the overall force structure. The quality and relevance of training programs should also be examined, including the evaluation of training modules and syllabus (alongside the certification of trainers).

Additionally, one area of exploration pertains to the utilization of technology and innovation in training, such as the integration of virtual reality, simulation, and other modern training methods. This inquiry extends to the skill development opportunities provided to ROTU cadets and TA members. In general, research on reserve forces is diverse and multifaceted, encompassing topics such as the effectiveness of reserve forces, their roles in humanitarian assistance, and disaster relief.

## METHODOLOGY

This preliminary study employs the focus group discussion (FGD) method, a qualitative approach commonly used for exploratory purposes to gain a comprehensive understanding of social issues. The insights gathered through this qualitative approach will be valuable for future research, which will involve testing the findings with statistical methods on a larger and more representative sample to make generalizations. A series of semi-structured questions were developed to collect data from a purposefully selected group of ROTU alumni.

### Semi-structure Questions

Active	Inactive
a) <i>Apa yang mendorong tuan/ puan terus aktif dalam askar wataniah?</i> What inspires you to remain engaged in the Territorial Army?	a) <i>Apakah faktor-faktor yang menyebabkan anda tidak aktif dalam wataniah?</i> What factors contribute to your inactivity in the Territorial Army?



Please evaluate your experience in ROTU.

a) *Apakah kenangan (memori) daripada tiga tahun latihan PALAPES yang anda masih ingat sehingga hari ini?*

What lasting memories do you retain from your three years of ROTU training?

b) *Apakah nilai-nilai (atau norma-norma) yang anda perolehi daripada menyertai ROTU yang masih dipegang sehingga hari ini?*

What values or norms did your participation in ROTU instill in you that you continue to uphold today?

c) *Apakah yang mendorong anda menyertai PALAPES di universiti dulu?*

What motivated you to enroll in ROTU during your time at the university?

Two focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted, one representing the ROTU in UA (public universities) and the other consisting of ROTU graduates, the majority of whom were inactive (with a few exceptions) within the Territorial Army.

## FINDINGS

The findings from this preliminary study hold significant value, even though the exploration of additional perspectives may be achieved through the inclusion of various sample groups in future research. The informants provided a rich and varied array of opinions and emotions, reflecting the depth of their diverse experiences.

### Experience of Joining ROTU

The experiences shared by informants in evaluating their participation in ROTU encompassed a diverse range of perspectives, both positive and negative. Participants expressed the following positive aspects:

Enhancement of personal character and self-confidence.

*“membantu pembentukan sahsiah diri dan meningkatkan tahap jati diri”*

Improved self-discipline.

*“mendisiplinkan diri”*

The acquisition of positive values that facilitate job opportunities.

*“Nilai-nilai positif yang dipelajari membantu mendapatkan pekerjaan”*

Improved self-presentation, including attire, respect for others, and good manners.

*“berketerampilan yang lebih menarik khususnya pakaian kemas, menghormati orang lain, dan berbudi Bahasa, dan sebagainya”*

Increased resilience to face mental and physical challenges.

*“lebih cekal dan bersiap sedia menghadapi sebarang cabaran mental dan fizikal”*

Academic improvement.

*“membantu dalam pencapaian akademik”*

Development of soft skills and enhanced graduate employability.  
*“meningkatkan soft skill dan seterusnya kebolehpasaran graduan”*

Financial support, particularly through training allowances that help ease family financial responsibilities.  
*“membantu dari aspek kewangan”*

On the other hand, some participants shared negative experiences, particularly concerning ad-hoc requests for ROTU cadets and other uniformed units to attend university events, especially during ministerial visits.

The insights shared by these informants underscore the multifaceted nature of their experiences in ROTU, demonstrating its impact on personal development, career prospects, and financial well-being, while also shedding light on some of the less favorable aspects of their involvement.

*“Kadet PALAPES dan pasukan-pasukan beruniform yang lain sering kali ad-hoc disuruh memenuhi dewan apabila ada program universiti khususnya lawatan ..... ”*

### **Motivations for Enlisting in the ROTU**

The informants shared several main reasons for joining ROTU, reflecting a diverse range of motivations:

Some joined ROTU to secure on-campus dormitory accommodation, as hostels are typically reserved for first-year students, and accommodations off-campus can be challenging to find.

*“memperolehi keistimewaan penginapan kolej kediaman.”*

Students were compelled to participate in ROTU due to university curriculum requirements, where co-curricular activities were mandatory for graduation. In the past, a particular public university established a rule whereby newly enrolled undergraduate students with a CGPA (cumulative grade point average) of 2.40 or below, such as those with a Diploma, Matrix, or STPM qualification, were obliged to register for uniformed units or rescue corps components in order to fulfil the curriculum course credit requirements. Consequently, some students joined ROTU due to the university’s regulations.

Some individuals had a pre-existing interest in uniformed activities, while others were drawn to ROTU by the prospect of learning about firearms and gaining new experiences and skills.  
*“saya dari sekolah dulu memang minat pasukan beruniform. Bila dengar PALAPES boleh menembak M16 lagi, apa lagi ... terus join lah”*

Some have held an interest in uniformed activities since my school days. When they learned that ROTU offered the opportunity to handle M16 firearms, it immediately motivated them to join. Several individuals have actively participated in uniformed activities since their school years, driven by a desire to uphold that tradition. Additionally, some individuals decide to join ROTU out of a genuine interest in the subject, particularly the opportunity to learn about firearms—a skill that is seldom accessible to the general public.

Some individuals had a pre-existing interest in uniformed activities, while others were drawn to ROTU by the prospect of learning about firearms and gaining new experiences and skills.  
*“..memperolehi pengalaman, ilmu dan kemahiran”*

Their interest encourages them to join ROTU to gain new experience, knowledge, and skills. Often these are also adventurous people. Peer influence during university orientation, family connections in the military, and ROTU promotions during orientation week all played roles in motivating individuals to join.

*“Frankly speaking, it was during the new student’s orientation week, the then deputy commandant did the promotion. My friend pulls me to join. I missed the first session of the physical test. The next evening, my friend pulled my leg from the bed in the dormitory to go to the physical fitness test. Next thing I remember is that I was commissioned as second lieutenant.”*

The quoted passage highlights the significant role that peer influence and the orientation week played in the decision to join ROTU. The individual mentioned that their friend’s persuasion was a key factor in their choice. This emphasizes the importance of social networks and peer relationships in influencing decisions related to ROTU enrollment.

The mention of missing the initial physical test session and being physically pulled out of bed by the same friend to attend the test the following evening underscores the role of social pressure and encouragement in ensuring commitment to ROTU activities. It reflects the peer’s dedication and enthusiasm to involve the individual in the ROTU program.

The narrative concludes with the individual being commissioned as a second lieutenant, illustrating how a simple decision influenced by a friend during orientation week led to a significant outcome in their military career. This story underscores the power of peer influence and how even small actions, like attending a physical fitness test, can have a substantial impact on one’s trajectory within ROTU. It showcases the dynamic and transformative nature of ROTU experiences, often driven by interpersonal relationships and shared goals.

*“saya tertarik dengan promosi PALAPES. Saya masih ingat saya difahamkan join PALAPES tambah peluang pekerjaan masuk tentera.... Of course, saya tidak masuk tentera, tapi masa itu sebagai pelajar fikiran kita ialah menambah peluang untuk dapatkan sebarang pekerjaan lepas habis belajar”*

“I was drawn to the promotion efforts of ROTU. I distinctly recall being informed that joining ROTU could enhance our job prospects, including opportunities in the military. While I ultimately didn’t pursue a military career, as a student at the time, I was eager to maximize my job prospects upon graduation.”

The sentences emphasize the influence of ROTU’s promotional activities during orientation week on the decision to join. The individual describes being attracted to the promotion and how they were informed that ROTU membership could lead to improved job opportunities, particularly within the military.

Although the person did not ultimately choose a military career, the passage underscores the persuasive impact of the promotional message conveyed by ROTU. It highlights the broader appeal of ROTU as a pathway to enhancing job prospects, not solely limited to military service. The mention of increasing job opportunities after graduation reflects the common desire among students to secure meaningful employment after completing their studies, suggesting that ROTU’s promotional efforts successfully tapped into this aspiration. This insight illustrates the significant role that promotion and messaging can play in motivating individuals to join ROTU.

*“ayah saya ialah tentera”*(my dad is a soldier)

Certain individuals enlist in ROTU due to family members' military service. In essence, their motivation stems from deep-seated patriotic family values, often intertwined with a longstanding family tradition.

For some, the desire to maintain physical fitness and engage in challenging activities motivated their ROTU participation.

*“mau jaga badan bah... ”*

Some students are motivated to stay physically fit, driven by their own sense of self-efficacy. They have heard that ROTU's activities are rigorous, and cadets must ensure that their Body Mass Index (BMI) meets the necessary criteria. The entire three-year training process demands a consistent commitment to maintaining their physical fitness. Previously, meeting the BMI requirement was a prerequisite for commissioning as a Second Lieutenant; failing to do so would result in cadets only receiving grades for university co-curricular activities. Additionally, during recruitment and periodically thereafter, they are required to pass a basic fitness test (UKA).

These diverse motivations illustrate the range of factors that drove individuals to become part of ROTU, showcasing how personal interests, family ties, and practical considerations all played a role in their decision to join.

### **Factors Contributing to Inactivity in the Territorial Army**

Several reasons have been identified for not being active in the territorial army, including lost interest, career constraints preventing involvement with the Wataniah (territorial army), health issues, family factors, reluctance to engage in strenuous activities, failing to meet BMI requirements, lack of time, residing too far from the nearest territorial army regiment, and discontent with regiment management or bureaucracy within the regiment.

**Relief of Duty (ROD) Expiration.** Some individuals find the 'tedious' and lengthy process of renewing the Relief of Duty (ROD) also known as service end date (TTP - tarikh tamat perkhidmatan). In some instances, individuals express their disappointment at the oversight or disregard of the officers and administrative clerks within the regiment in their efforts to facilitate ROD renewal. The consequence of this oversight is an extended re-commissioning period for officers. Also, not to forget there is an age limit for ROD renewal.

**Physical Capability Affected by Aging (Age Factor).** Remaining active in the Territorial Army demands physical endurance. Individuals who are over 40 years old are required to undergo an annual medical checkup. Undergoing a medical checkup is mandatory for renewing the ROD or applying for promotions. This highlights the consideration of physical capabilities in relation to age within the context of the Territorial Army. It emphasizes the importance of maintaining physical fitness, especially for individuals above the age of 40. The mandatory annual medical checkup serves as a measure to ensure that members meet the necessary physical requirements for ROD renewal or promotion. It underscores the significance of assessing and preserving physical fitness as individuals age, which is crucial for their continued service in the Territorial Army.

**Limited Promotion Opportunities.** The organization within the regiment follows a pyramid system, which results in promotional opportunities. The advancement within the hierarchy is constrained. The current system might not always reward individuals based on their qualifications and abilities. The frustration experienced by some individuals who, despite completing all required

courses at the Territorial Army Training Center (*Puswatan*), find themselves unable to secure promotions because there are no available positions, unable to secure a post due to a lack of vacancies, as there is no possibility of advancement when the current post holders have not retired. The current practice indicates that it might not always provide fair recognition to individuals based on their qualifications and skills. It suggests a misalignment between the system's criteria for reward or promotion and the actual qualifications and abilities of the individuals. This can lead to a lack of motivation and a sense of unfairness among members who believe they should be acknowledged and rewarded based on their merit. This situation can lead to discouragement and a sense of stagnation. Consequently, they become discouraged. Promotion based solely on seniority is also not favoured by those who value merit-based promotions. Certainly, some individuals have personal reasons for their dissatisfaction with regiment management and bureaucracy.

Commitment: Some individuals find it challenging to commit to the Territorial Army due to various factors. Career and family responsibilities often limit their ability to participate actively. Time constraints, such as job-related travel and the desire to spend more time with family, contribute to this difficulty. The situation during their university days was different, as the training centre was conveniently located on campus, and cadets were motivated by the prospect of securing campus accommodation and a training allowance. Most of them have established careers and stable incomes after graduation, reducing their financial concerns.

“Living and working too far from the nearest unit” (“*tempat tinggal (& kerja) terlalu jauh dari pasukan yang terdekat*”) is a common obstacle, but localizing the army may not be a viable solution, especially for individuals with jobs that require frequent domestic and international travel.

“Time constraints” (“*tiada masa*” / “*kesuntukan masa*”) further hinder participation, as reservists must dedicate weekends and holidays to army activities, missing out on leisure time with friends and family. Some states, like Johore and Kedah, operate on different workdays, creating scheduling challenges. Private sector employers may not accommodate these schedules, limiting participation to government servants.

Reservists often encounter challenges with their employers when called for military service or training. This commitment entails participating in training sessions during weekends, work hours, or outside regular working hours. The training duration varies based on the unit, ranging from 240 to 360 hours, which presents additional difficulties for working civilians with family commitments.

Army Reserve officers typically need to complete one of five courses, which are Platoon Leader (*Ketua Platoon*), Support Weapon (*Senjata Bantuan*), Staff and Tactics G3 (*Staf dan Taktik Gred 3 – G3*), Company Leader (*Ketua Kompeni*), or Senior Command (*Pegawai Kanan*). Each of these courses requires a two-week commitment at the Puswatan. Thus, serving as a reservist while managing work responsibilities and family commitments has never been an easy task.

Some perceive military knowledge as a source of pressure or burden because it's an unfamiliar subject, exacerbated by time constraints for revision. Proficiency in the English language becomes significantly important during training, as a substantial portion of military doctrine and knowledge is presented in English. Many participants at Puswatan Training Center find that having a strong command of the English language provides an advantage during the course.



The available information regarding topics like insurgency in Malaya, the Malvinas-Falklands War, Iraq War, or tactical operations other than war (OOTW) is primarily in English. Even basic commands like “advance” (adv), “attack” (atk), “defend” (def), and “withdraw” (wdr) require trainees to be fluent in English. Most reading materials related to peacekeeping operations, counterinsurgency, counterterrorism, and aid to civil authorities are in English. While this is not an issue for some, those with limited English proficiency may face difficulties and challenges.

Another challenge arises when officers are trained in English, while enlisted ranks (LLP - Lain-lain Pangkat) receive training in the Malay language (Bahasa Melayu). Consequently, it can be challenging to comprehend what the instructor is teaching. This difficulty may be attributed to the inherently distinct nature of military content, significantly different from university courses, and sometimes, the instructor’s teaching methodology.

ROTU alumni have encountered various positive and negative experiences or memories of the three years of training at the university. These experiences can be categorized into two main groups: direct experiences from ROTU training and experiences within the university setting. Some students join ROTU partly due to university requirements. Unpleasant experiences in ROTU training may stem from issues like coaching, relationships with teammates, sometimes intense training regimens, frequent ad-hoc commitments to fill up the hall during ministerial visits, delayed or deducted allowances for commissioning clothing, and adapting to a military culture different from their usual routines. The adverse experience entailed frequent requests for cadets to participate in university events, who were often the first to be called upon to “fill up the hall.” This practice often disrupted students’ planned schedules, especially events with short notice, which could be quite frustrating. It appears that such practices are common in some public universities.

### **Motivations for Active Participation in the Territorial Army**

This section provides a much-needed explanation for the enthusiastic participation in ROTU by some individuals. The primary motivation often boils down to personal interest. Some are genuinely drawn to volunteerism, while others have nurtured a fascination with uniformed activities since their school days. The military offers distinctive experiences, such as the opportunity to handle firearms like Glock, M16, M4, and even grenade launchers – activities beyond the reach of the general public. For some, staying active in the reservists is driven by a commitment to maintaining their physical fitness, a factor often reflected in their BMI. This focus on health is also a common reason why university students choose to participate in ROTU.

A number of informants cite discipline as their reason for involvement, which underscores the importance of professionalism. The military places a strong emphasis on punctuality and teamwork. Regardless of whether it’s morning parades, classes, or sports activities, everyone is expected to arrive early. Teamwork is a fundamental value, transcending sections, platoons, companies, or battalions – in this context, no one is considered smarter or less capable. The culture of mutual assistance and ensuring the smooth execution of any activity is paramount. Even during marching training, every participant takes responsibility for their part, engages in self-reflection, and strives for personal improvement, ultimately enhancing overall team performance. This dedication to teamwork is vital during operations like advancing, attacking, defending, or withdrawing. Moreover, the training in ROTU imparts essential leadership skills through the ability to issue commands and directions within a team. The evidence suggests that ROTU instils valuable human capital in its participants. The activities cultivate a strong sense of discipline that eventually becomes a work culture characterized by punctuality and an unwavering commitment to teamwork.

## **DISCUSSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

These preliminary findings provide initial insights from exploratory research. However, it's essential to acknowledge that these findings have limitations due to factors such as the relatively small sample size. To establish the priority of these factors, further research employing quantitative methods with a larger sample is necessary to draw more generalized conclusions. Nonetheless, these findings can serve as foundational data for more comprehensive studies in the future.

The challenges related to commitment in the Territorial Army can be attributed to career and family responsibilities, time constraints, and varying work schedules. There is a notable contrast between the ease of participation during university days and the complexities faced by working civilians. It also mentions the motivations that continue to drive individuals to overcome these challenges and participate in the Territorial Army, highlighting their determination and commitment to serve despite the obstacles.

Nevertheless, the motivations and reasons why some individuals eagerly participate in ROTU cover various factors contributing to their active involvement. These factors include personal interests, the desire for unique military experiences, health considerations, and the value of discipline and professionalism within the army. ROTU graduates can play a crucial role in safeguarding the country's sovereignty and protecting national interests. The Territorial Army (Army Reserve) serves as a national platform to unify Malaysia's diverse societies. A pressing issue in Malaysia is social segregation, often observed as "masing-masing duduk di kampung masing-masing," signifying that people tend to stay within their respective communities. In urban areas, social classes can be a dividing factor, with affluent individuals residing in high-end condominiums while those less fortunate may dwell in low-cost housing or squatter settlements.

## **PATRIOTISM AND UNITY**

The ROTU programs extend beyond the development of well-educated military officers trained for effective leadership in combat. There is an ongoing debate about the level of patriotism among ROTU cadets and graduates. The core issue revolves around the measurement of patriotism and the need for a standardized scale for this purpose. Accusing young ROTU officers of lacking patriotic values due to their report with any of the 500 series (infantry battalions) raises questions about fairness and objectivity. The main issue that needs to be resolved first is indeed how to measure patriotism. How patriotism is operationalized and what is the measurement scale to be used? Only then can we determine whether they have patriotic values or not, or else it's just merely a biased swing statement which is very unfair to them.

While the curriculum primarily focuses on military science, it does not preclude the incorporation of elements that promote patriotic values. For instance, discussions on armed conflicts in Malaysia, like the communist insurgency, indirectly foster awareness of national history among trainees. However, there is a need to establish whose version of history should be taught, and addressing the ongoing debate about the content of history textbooks in primary and secondary schools being Malaya-centric is still a hot debatable topic.

To further enhance the education of ROTU cadets and graduates, it is crucial for the ATM in collaboration with the universities to develop a comprehensive history of the military in Malaysia, spanning from the British colonial era to the formation of Malaysia. This history should emphasize how the military contributed to the nation's security and harmony, as well as the emergence of nationalist movements. This broader perspective aims to provide valuable insights and lessons from historical events and promote a deeper understanding of the military's role in national development.

The primary purpose of a reserve army is to provide additional manpower and support during times of need, aligning with the concept of total defence embraced by the Malaysian military (ATM). It is important for everyone to be involved in defending the nation based on the concept of total defense (HANRUH – *pertahanan menyeluruh*) embraced by our military (ATM). The Army Strategic Capacity Development Plan (Army 4NextG) 2021-2050 serves as a long-term strategic guide for the development and management of the Malaysian Army (TDM) launched by TDM in 2021 in conjunction with the 88th Army Day. According to the 28th Army Chief General Tan Sri Zamrose Mohd Zain, “the Army 4NextG 2021-2050 is a long-term strategic plan on the Army’s operational capacity, supported by systematic capacity development management with a focus on the goal of capability detection, survival and strike, sustainment, protraction and nation-building, he told reporters at a media conference here yesterday.”

Given Malaysia’s geographical challenges, maintaining security is complex, as it encompasses long coastlines, forest borders with neighbouring countries, and national sovereignty concerns. The incident in Tanduo, Lahad Datu, highlighted the importance of public involvement in safeguarding national sovereignty and security. The cooperation between the military and the public is vital to address potential threats and security issues effectively. It was the tip-off from the public in February 2013 about suspected suspicious activity occurring at Tanduo, Lahad Datu where a band of intruders with rifles and in military fatigues who self-proclaim to be members of the Royal Sulu Force (RSF) from South Philippines had come to invade Sabah.

The unpredictability of the global and regional strategic landscape is influenced by uncertainties in regional and international relations. Safeguarding our nation is a complex task, encompassing not only the extensive coastlines along the South China Sea and the Sulu Sea but also the forested borders with Southern Thailand and Kalimantan on the island of Borneo. Sabah has the longest coastline with more than 1,000km revealing the difficulties in maintaining the security of the territorial waters. Thus, the national defence is not solely the responsibility of the authorities but requires a collective effort from various sectors, including social scientists, government agencies, and the public. Complex national interest issues, such as the presence of Rohingya refugees in Malaysia, demand a multidisciplinary approach to finding solutions. The involvement of all stakeholders, not just the authorities, is crucial in addressing these challenges effectively.

In prioritizing the total defense concept, it is the responsibility of relevant ministries and agencies to formulate and implement the plan. Public universities have the potential to produce highly educated individuals who can contribute significantly to national defence. ROTU graduates, with proper guidance and military training, can become dedicated and dynamic officers. They can help shape disciplined and resilient Malaysian citizens capable of facing challenging situations. An alternative model to the National Service Training Programmed (PLKN) can be introduced, offering military training to eligible students entering various educational institutions. Collaboration and commitment from all parties are essential to turn this concept into a reality. ROTU is a comprehensive model that upholds the idea of the togetherness of both armed forces and society in ensuring national security would not be jeopardized. There are groups of combat support military units of the Malaysian Army that provide combat signals and engineering support to the Malaysian Army. The existence of multiple Territorial Army corps, squadrons, and regiments indicates the wide-open opportunity for members of the public to join based on their respective expertise and interests.

### **PLKN 3.0**

The government's announcement of the intent to resume the National Service Training Programme (PLKN 3.0) has garnered mixed reactions. While the program initially proposed voluntary enrollment, there are concerns and opportunities to align it with the National Blue Ocean Strategy (NBOC). The decision to make PLKN mandatory for certain age groups can further enhance the nation's preparedness and resilience.

PLKN and ROTU share several common goals and principles. Both PLKN and ROTU aim to prepare individuals with basic military knowledge and skills. They serve as training grounds to create a pool of individuals who can support the armed forces during emergencies or conflicts. It focuses on instilling essential qualities such as discipline, teamwork, leadership, and resilience. They shape participants into responsible and disciplined citizens who can contribute positively to society. PLKN and ROTU bring together young people from diverse backgrounds. By fostering a sense of unity and shared responsibility, they promote social integration and provide opportunities for participants to interact with peers from various ethnic, cultural, and social backgrounds. Both programs incorporate community service components. Participants are given opportunities to contribute to society through activities like disaster relief, environmental conservation, and community development.

Given these shared objectives, there's potential for PLKN to draw inspiration from the ROTU model at public universities to enhance its effectiveness. Universities can contribute to PLKN 3.0 in several ways like offering academic courses and workshops related to national defense and security as part of the PLKN 3.0 curriculum to equip participants with valuable knowledge and skills. Universities have the potential to enhance the effectiveness of PLKN by providing education, leadership development, research, community engagement, and public awareness initiatives. ROTU can also help incorporate leadership training into PLKN 3.0 activities, helping participants develop crucial leadership skills, such as event organization, community service project leadership, and team management. Universities themselves can engage in research related to national security and defense to provide valuable insights that can inform government policies and strategies. ROTU can help foster a sense of civic duty and an understanding of the importance of serving the nation. This can contribute to public awareness campaigns about the significance of national defense and the role of PLKN 3.0, which can help generate broader community support and participation.

### **RESERVE OFFICERS' TRAINING UNIT (ROTU) CURRICULUM AT MALAYSIAN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES**

Improvements and refinements in the curriculum are essential, and it's imperative to make the modules and syllabus more engaging and sustainable. The syllabus in ROTU at universities should be consciously integrated with the needs and opportunities of the Territorial Army. These volunteers or civilians must be equipped with sufficient military knowledge to serve alongside the regular armed forces when the need arises. Currently, the existing module is categorized into three levels: junior (year one), intermediate (year two), and senior (year three). However, there's a need for comprehensive research to make the teaching and learning methods more creative and captivating. While the syllabus emphasizes guerrilla warfare tactics, it's crucial to incorporate modern urban warfare strategies in line with the changing global context and the country's political stability. The collateral damage to civilians in urban warfare and the taxonomy of military science must also be highlighted.

Mission-oriented teaching with a clear architectural framework is essential. Setting a standard as a role model and instilling a sense of ownership is key. Notable ex-ROTU members, like Datuk Ayub Khan Mydin Pitchay, can be inspirational examples. The present Deputy Chief of Army (Dy COA), Lt. Gen. Dato' Tengku Muhammad Fauzi Tengku Ibrahim, stressed the significance of the taxonomy of military science in understanding the principles and organization of military knowledge, ensuring that military strategies and tactics are well-founded and effective.

Every unit should adopt a proactive approach, just like PALAPES UMS, to promote participation in the Territorial Army by portraying it as an exciting and adventurous opportunity. This approach is essential to attract potential recruits and instil a sense of enthusiasm about the experience. Highlighting activities such as climbing Mount Kinabalu as part of this adventure is a compelling way to showcase the thrilling aspects of the Territorial Army service and pique the interest of prospective members. In the broader context, the threat from both domestic and international sources is borderless in the era of globalization. Psychological warfare through new media disrupts public order, causing moral panic among citizens. This emphasizes the need for collaboration between academics, researchers, and the armed forces, creating innovations for public defence and addressing various social issues.

In the current landscape of warfare, study involving experts from various fields is paramount. Lessons must be learned from conflicts and invasions in the 21st century, such as the US invasion of Iraq, intelligence failures, terrorism threats, and conflicts. The curriculum should align with the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) requirements, beginning with updating the syllabus to integrate military knowledge into university learning methods.

Consideration has been given to offering a Diploma in Military Science (Diploma Sains Ketenteraan) to public university students joining ROTU, similar to a dual-degree program. The proposal presented by Lt. Col. Prof. Ts. Dr. Muhd. Zuazhan Bin Yahya on behalf of the National Defence University of Malaysia (UPNM) should be implemented. Integrating military knowledge with university courses poses challenges, particularly in terms of diploma accreditation. This move is expected to enhance students' interest in ROTU participation and foster collegiality among public universities.

### Volunteer Officer at ROTU

The shortage of Commissioned Officers is another area that requires consideration. Newer universities provide more opportunities for individuals to serve as volunteer officers in ROTU. Universiti Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP) has notably set a strong example in this regard. However, established universities face constraints as most of their positions are already occupied. In contrast, newer universities have more vacancies available for individuals interested in joining the Territorial Army.

No	University	Available Post (Excludes Comdt)	Existing officers		Vacancy	Vacancy Availability by Rank				% Percentage
			M	F		LTC	MAJ	CPT	1LT/ 2LT	
1	PALAPES UM	20	11	0	9		2		7	55%
2	PALAPES UKM	15	6	1	8	1	1	2	3	47%
3	PALAPES UPM	20	3	3	14				14	30%
4	PALAPES USM	20	5	1	14				14	30%



5	PALAPES UUM	20	8	1	11		2		9	45%
6	PALAPES UiTM SHAH ALAM	20	2	1	17		2	13		15%
	PALAPES UiTM ARAU	6	1	0	5		1	1	3	17%
	PALAPES UiTM DUNGUN	6	2	1	3		1		2	50%
7	PALAPES UTM	20	4	0	16		4		12	20%
8	PALAPES UNIMAS	20	1	0	19		3	1	15	5%
9	PALAPES UMS	20	2	0	18	1	3	14		10%
10	PALAPES UTHM	20	4	0	16		2		14	20%
11	PALAPES UPSI	5	2	1	2	1			2	60%
12	PALAPES UniMAP	20	6	1	13		3	10		35%
13	PALAPES UMP	5	1	0	4			1	3	20%
14	PALAPES USIM	5	1	3	1			1		80%
15	PALAPES UIAM	5	1	0	4			1	3	20%
16	PALAPES UTeM	5	3	0	2		1	1		60%
17	PALAPES UMT	5	2	0	3			1	2	40%
18	PALAPES UMK	5	1	0	4	1		1	2	20%
TOTAL		262	66	13	183	4	25	47	105	33.9%
			79							

**Table 3: ROTU Officer Vacancies in Public Universities (source: MPLTD, 31 May 2023)**

The proposition of volunteer officers at ROTU can only be filled by university staff with strong reasons that cannot be compromised. This is especially the case when it comes to financial matters and university governance for ROTU activities. For instance, financial issues, such as advances for ROTU activities, should be conducted in the name of university staff. The involvement of more staff from the university administration category has unveiled the paradox that voluntary officers consist of academics only. The participation of university staff is not necessarily as voluntary officers but as facilitators for handling various matters related to ROTU at universities. In some public universities, ROTU has been established as a department (PTJ) with an allowance paid to its director or department head. A few universities have proactively assigned university officials or staff to facilitate ROTU administration since all the instructors are regular army personnel of ATMs. These instructors are typically attached to ROTU for a specific period only. Moreover, the public service circular allows financial matters to be handled by university staff. Additionally, it's worth noting that the number of female cadet officers exceeds that of male cadet officers.

### Alumni Association

Establishing a ROTU alumni association is of paramount importance, as it serves multiple valuable purposes. This initiative not only fosters the spirit of esprit de corps, creating a strong sense of belonging among graduates but also offers a unique opportunity for alumni to give back to their alma mater. Alumni associations could play a pivotal role in connecting former students with their alma mater and peers, fostering a sense of community and belonging. It provides a platform for alumni to stay engaged with the institution, not only as recipients of education but

as contributors to its growth and development. Alumni associations serve as a valuable bridge between the past and the present, preserving institutional traditions, histories, and legacies. They help maintain a sense of continuity, ensuring that the contributions and experiences of former students are not forgotten or lost to time.

While some alumni may not commit to ongoing training or active service in the Territorial Army, their military spirit and discipline remain unwavering. Alumni associations are essential for maintaining the legacy of educational institutions, fostering lifelong connections among graduates, and facilitating the exchange of knowledge, resources, and opportunities. They contribute to the ongoing success of both alumni and their alma mater. As one informant aptly put it, “Once a soldier, always and a soldier.” The values of discipline and teamwork instilled during ROTU training continue to influence their careers. Many alumni are eager to engage in activities like shooting events if given the opportunity.

ROTU graduates possess the potential to contribute not only to their respective universities but also to national defense in various capacities, even if they are no longer actively serving in the Territorial Army. Alumni associations often contribute significantly to fundraising efforts, scholarships, and other initiatives that directly benefit the institution and its current students. Their involvement in philanthropy and volunteering is vital for the sustainability and growth of educational institutions.

Creating a platform for PALAPES cadet officers across Malaysia’s accredited Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) is an attainable goal, thanks to modern communication technology and social media. Coordination is key in this endeavor, ensuring the development of a user-friendly and easily accessible website and social media presence for ROTU alumni. These associations also offer a network of professional and personal connections. Graduates can leverage these connections for career development, mentorship, and job opportunities. It’s a platform for networking that extends beyond the university years, creating a support system that can be beneficial throughout one’s life.

Universities, as alma maters, should take a proactive role in mobilizing their alumni, leveraging their dynamic and contextual nature. Policymakers must also think beyond the traditional role of military personnel and focus on transforming them into versatile human resources who can contribute to a wide range of job sectors. The prevailing practice of providing re-skilling and up-skilling opportunities to military personnel in their final year of service before retirement should be expanded to create a more diverse and flexible workforce.

Lastly, there’s an urgent need to improve the identity (Bat-C) card for the Territorial Army, reflecting elements of pride. The approach of working with commercial banks to provide student IDs, which also serve as ATM cards, is commendable and could contribute to the training allowance disbursement. This collaboration benefits both the bank’s branding and customers.

## **SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

**Role of Territorial Army (TA) in National Defense.** Future studies should prioritize investigating the performance of the Territorial Army in various military operations and exercises in Malaysia. This research could shed light on the processes and challenges involved in deploying and mobilizing reserve units during national emergencies, such as the Movement Control Order (MCO) and flash floods.

**ROTU Training Experience.** Research on the ROTU training experience should encompass various aspects, including the training location, type of training, facilities, coaching, cadet management, and the clarity of training goals and objectives. Evaluating the comprehensiveness of training modules and their impact on career opportunities is crucial. Psychological aspects of ROTU cadets, including potential burnout from their university experience, should be explored. It is essential to assess the support and well-being of cadets during their university studies.

**Demographic Representation and Inclusivity.** The representation of different demographic groups within the Territorial Army, focusing on diversity, equity, and inclusion, is vital to understanding its unit cohesion and effectiveness. A broader perspective should also consider the cultural and organizational characteristics of the TA. This includes addressing issues related to employment rights, benefits, and legal obligations. The impact of TA involvement on individuals' careers, as well as the level of employer support, should be explored.

**TA Roles During Peacetime and Crisis.** Research should examine the roles of the Territorial Army during both peacetime and crisis situations. Understanding how the TA contributes to restoring peace, especially through civilian assistance, is a critical area of investigation. Redefining ROI (Return on Investment). Future research should redefine the concept of Return on Investment (ROI) concerning PALAPES alumni/members. The focus should extend beyond active and inactive members, providing a more comprehensive understanding of their contributions.

**International Comparisons.** Comparative studies with the reserve forces of different countries can provide valuable lessons and best practices for enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the Malaysian Territorial Army. This international perspective can contribute to the development of the TA's capabilities.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The study of the Territorial Army, often known as the army reserve in different countries, holds great significance in understanding its role and functioning, particularly in the context of Malaysia. This research contributes to a deeper comprehension of the issues surrounding the Territorial Army, shedding light on its importance and impact on national defense.

The findings of this exploratory study serve as a crucial foundation for enhancing the implementation of the Reserve Officers Training Unit (ROTU) in Malaysian public universities. It is expected that these results will stimulate further research in this area, driving a more comprehensive understanding of ROTU's effectiveness within the framework of the Higher Education Ministry's initiative to produce graduates who are not only academically proficient but also patriotic, disciplined, and committed to defending the sovereignty of the nation.

This preliminary exploratory study highlights the necessity for a paradigm shift and process of renewal and improvement within the existing system. The Malaysian Territorial Army plays an indispensable role in realizing the concept of total defense. It serves as the linchpin in fostering strong relations between the public and the armed forces, especially concerning national security issues. Civilians' contributions in reporting and preventing criminal activities cannot be underestimated, as their information is often invaluable to authorities for preventing and solving cases. With concerted efforts, the Malaysian Territorial Army has the potential to gain prestige akin to reserve armies in other nations, further bolstering the country's national defence capabilities.

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## **THE COGNITIVE READINESS: EMPOWERING FUTURE MALAYSIA ARMED FORCES DEFENCE FORCES**

Lt Col Hasmady Bin Alim  
National Defence University of Malaysia  
Email: [hasmadyalim@gmail.com](mailto:hasmadyalim@gmail.com)

### **ABSTRACT**

*In an era defined by rapid technological advancements and a complex operational environment, the preparation of military personnel for future warfare takes center stage in Malaysia's defense strategy. This article describes the concept of how to empower Malaysia's future defense force. Future warfare needs military organization to prepare military personnel capabilities to perform in military operations. Key to this preparation is cognitive readiness. Cognitive readiness is a theoretical concept that refers to the mental preparation needed to establish how to maintain cognitive performance in military operations. The development of future forces depends on the military personnel who are cognitively ready with military knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs). Future military conflicts are expected to be far more complex and need military personnel who can think critically, about problem-solving and decision-making at all levels (strategic, operational, and tactical). Therefore, the cognitive readiness of Malaysia's future defense forces stands as a cornerstone in force development for safeguarding national security and interests.*

**Keywords:** *Defence Strategy, Cognitive Readiness, Human Dimension, Military Training,*

### **INTRODUCTIONS**

Military personnel in military organizations must remain “ready” to perform in military operations. In an era where the human mind is as crucial as any weapon, managing human resources development is a priority for military leadership at all levels (strategic, operational, tactical). Now military organizations face a different complex operational environment (COE) of military operation. Answering this question is arguably the most important issue facing the Armed Forces organizations today. Billion-dollar investment related to research and development to enhance military readiness.

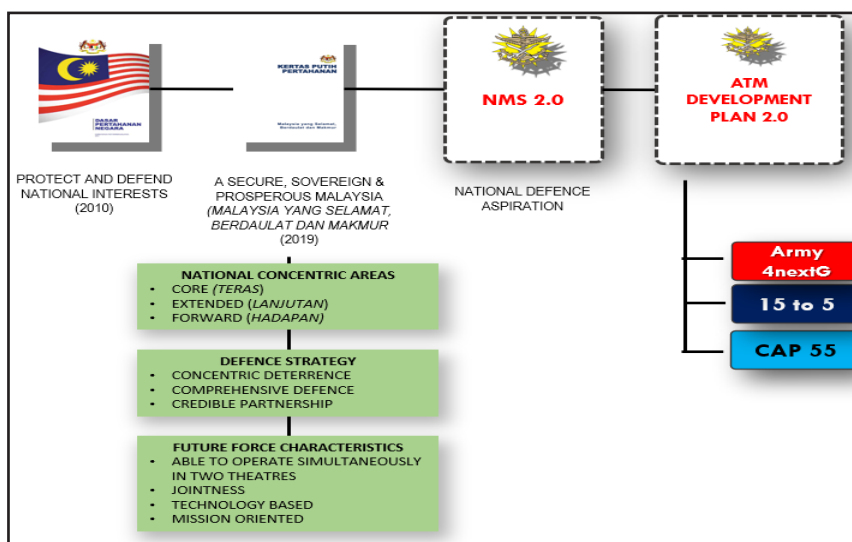
Readiness is defined as the ability of armed forces to fight and meet the demands of assigned missions. Readiness becomes complex when one considers how we prepare military personnel for war. The kind of military operations the military personnel will fight is as unknown as the location or date. Researchers agree that success in the COE of military operations depends on cognitive readiness. Cognitive readiness (CR) is a theoretical concept of the mental preparation an individual needs to establish and sustain competent performance in modern military operations.

Therefore, the Malaysian Armed Forces (MAF) must also prepare the CR of military personnel for future warfare. The MAF preparation should extend to develop a training design model for military personnel to be prioritized and to ensure defense strategy and transformation for modern warfare. Relevant components of cognitive readiness and training design need to be identified for development of CR that contribute significantly to success in military operations.

## **MALAYSIAN ARMED FORCES DEFENCE STRATEGY AND TRANSFORMATION PLAN**

The defense landscape of any nation is dynamic and evolving ranging from multi-domain operations to the range of peace support missions that need an overarching strategy to modernize and strengthen its armed forces. In the case of Malaysia, a Southeast Asian nation with a history of non-alignment and a commitment to self-reliance, the defense strategy and transformation plan have been essential components of safeguarding national sovereignty and ensuring regional stability. Malaysia has repeatedly stressed the importance of adhering to the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of its neighbors. Three key areas of interest in Malaysia's National Defence Strategy involve national strategic interests, the policy speaks of Malaysia's defense principles and self-reliance. The Malaysian Armed Forces (MAF) transformation plan objectives to support the national defense strategy focus on capability enhancement, force development, and force structure in force modernization to meet new security and defense challenges.

Despite technological advances, humans remain the central element in military operations and are required to maintain emotional, cognitive, and behavioral for decisions and actions. Today's military personnel need the ability to rapidly respond in an environment of complex operational environment (COE). The future direction of the MAF needs a balanced and credible future defense force cognitively ready to fight modern warfare. MAF cascading document related to transformation plan as shown in Figure 1. These documents related to MAF's future development are projected toward the development of Thinking Soldiers. To manage modern warfare, the MAF readiness strategic plan has acknowledged the importance of the concept of Cognitive Readiness as one of its strategic objectives for future forces development.



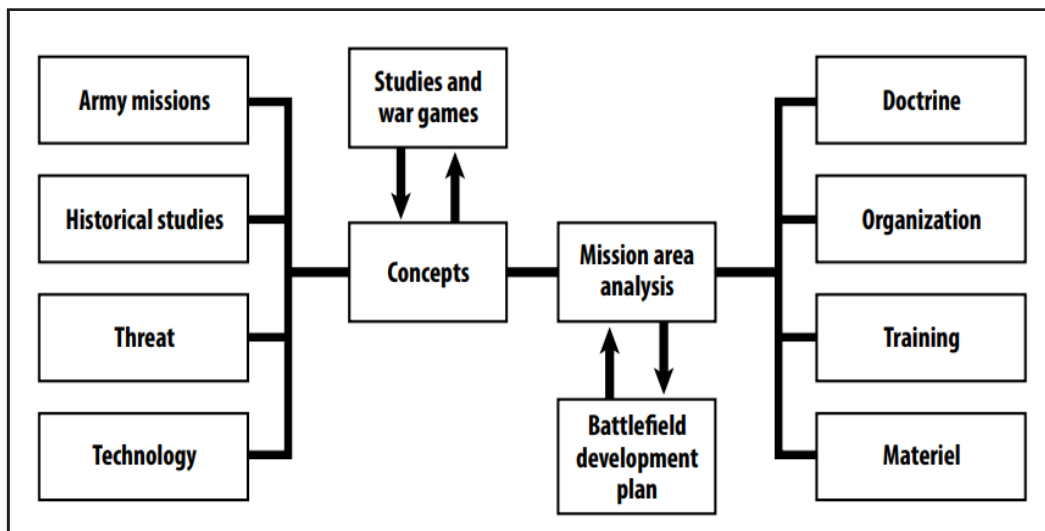
**Figure 1: Malaysian Armed Forces (MAF) cascading document**

## **EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES AND WARFARE**

In an era defined by rapid technological advancements, and evolving geopolitical complexities, let's delve deeper into what cognitive readiness (CR) entails and how it can empower Malaysia's future defense forces. The concept of CR is a crucial element in modern military strategy where the mental fortitude and adaptability of military personnel are paramount. In this

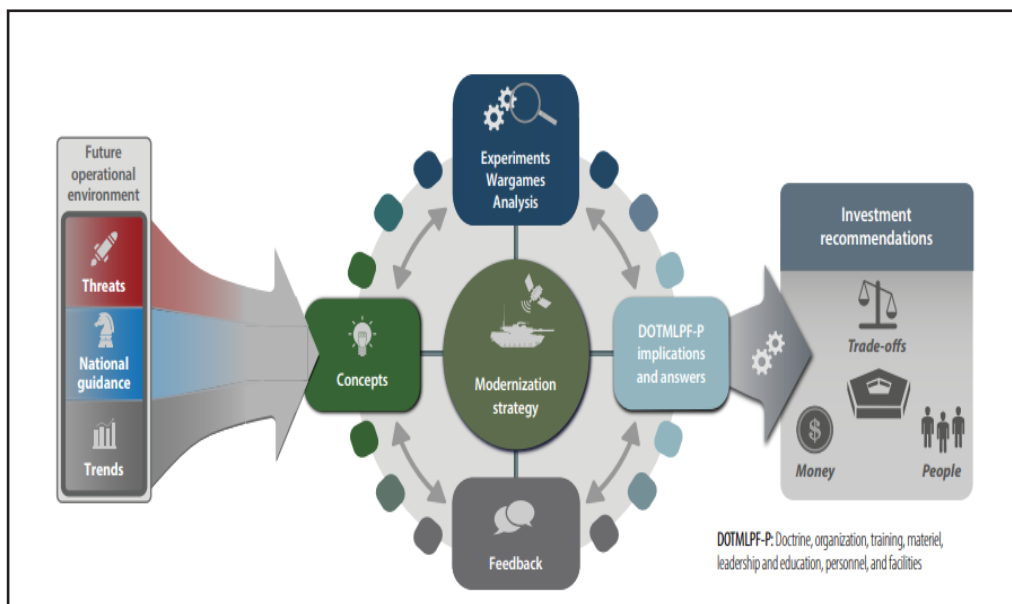
context, the cognitive domain has emerged as a pivotal element of the human dimension soldiering on the ability of military personnel in critical thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making. By prioritizing CR, MAF can ensure that its military personnel's cognitive capabilities are necessary to navigate emerging technologies and warfare.

Future warfare is intricate to emerging technologies. The landscape of warfare is undergoing uncertainty. Recognizes the need to empower military personnel with cognitive readiness to gain a strategic edge over their adversaries. Modern armed forces are reliant on the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) to ensure that rapid technological advancements are utilized to their full potential. To change an Army-winning tomorrow researchers explained the Concept-Based Requirements System as shown in Figure 2. This concept has been developed by examining the Yom Kippur War between Israel and Arab states (Egypt and Syria) related to United States (U.S) Army tactics, doctrine, training, and materiel development. This framework provided a structure for assessing the future operational environment (threat), envisioning how the Army must fight, and developing a capabilities strategy for Army modernization.



**Figure 2: The Concept-Based Requirements System**

Investing in military training is not just about preparing military personnel readiness but also will be key to ensuring national security and defending its sovereignty. The MAF's commitment to empowering its future defense forces will be a key determinant of its security and prosperity by ensuring that military personnel are well-prepared for future operational environments. This related directly to the development of human dimension soldiering on how to train military personnel with KSAs to fight in military operations. An increasingly complex operational environment (COE) demands that our Armed Forces focus on readiness to enable roles for the joint force: shaping security environments, preventing conflict, prevailing in large-scale ground combat, peacekeeping operations, and military operations other than war (MOOTW). The Army Modernization Framework proposed by [2] is the model that evolves personnel management processes, its training and education paradigm for a strategy to modernize the Army (modernization strategy) as shown in Figure 3.



**Figure 3: Army Modernization Framework**

## **HUMAN DIMENSION DEVELOPMENT**

As the landscape of modern warfare evolves with Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity (VUCA), the importance of the development of the human dimension related to cognitive enhancement in empowering Malaysia's future defense forces cannot be overstated. In this context, CR emerges as a defining factor in a defense force's ability to think critically, problem-solving, and decision making in the face of evolving threats and challenges. Providing the MAFs with a clear objective to develop human resources, especially military personnel capabilities needs to combine theories and practice.

Researcher provides a new modernization armed forces framework concentrated on force development, doctrine, training developments, material requirements, and organizational structures. The Reforming U.S. Modernization Army faced several other significant obstacles related to poor morale and discipline as well as a lack of unit cohesion, and the Army's leadership. Military organizations realize that military personnel are central to mission success. The human dimension of soldering meets the complex operational environment that exists today across a full spectrum of operations and considers the importance of better understanding the moral, cognitive, and physical aspects of military personnel performance. The dimension is about the way military personnel capability integrates the moral, cognitive, and physical aspects so that they can fight more effectively in meeting the challenges of the complex operational environment (COE).

The human dimension encompasses the moral, physical, and cognitive components of military personnel who need to be developed and trained. Figure 4 shows the model whole soldier performance attributes of the U.S. Army. This model has been developed by interviewing hundreds of army personnel including recruiters, drill sergeants, squad leaders, platoon sergeants, platoon leaders, first sergeants, company commanders, command sergeant majors, battalion and brigade commanders, and special forces team leaders to identify the readiness of military personnel that need to establish.

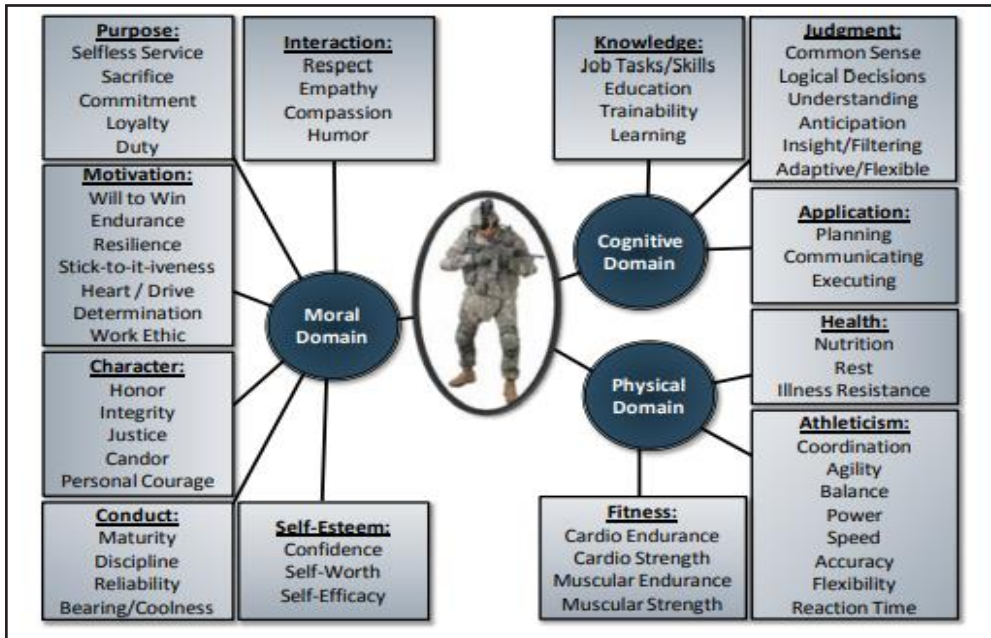


Figure 4: Whole Soldier Performance Attributes

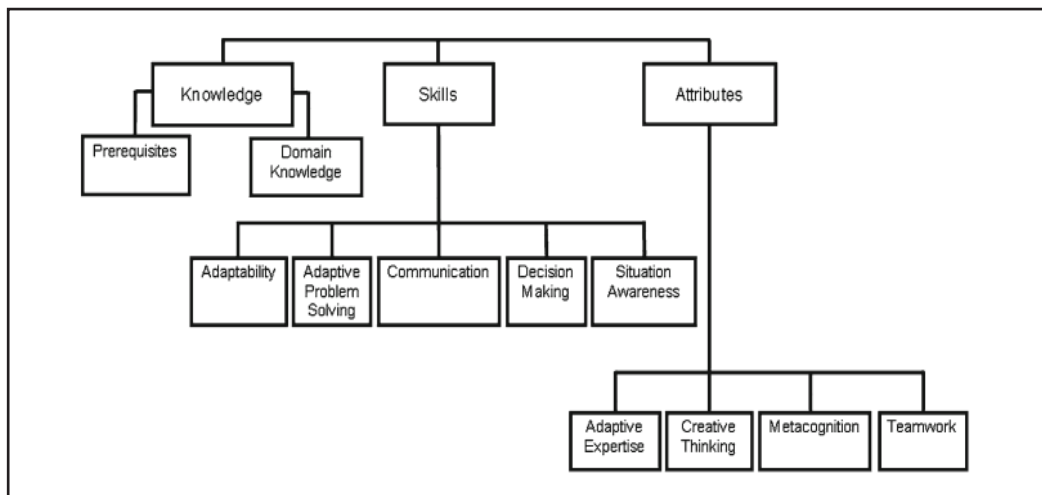
By referring model of whole soldier performance attributes, the cognitive dimension is important for military personnel in military operations. It enables them to think critically, problem-solving, and decision-making that can be utilized in a complex and dynamic environment. Hence, empowering military personnel's cognitive readiness is a fundamental aspect of developing the mental tools and capabilities needed to excel in challenging and unpredictable environments for the success of military missions.

## THE CONCEPT OF COGNITIVE READINESS

Cognitive readiness is an important concept focus for national security. Researchers agree that military personnel must not only be ready physically but they must also be ready cognitively in unpredictable environments of military operations. The challenges of military personnel in unpredictable environments of military operation include sustained operation, environmental ambiguity, military systems becoming complex, new technology, and information overload requiring military organizations to focus on the development of military personnel's cognitive readiness of military personnel at all levels (strategic, operational, and tactical). This is especially true because in an era of unpredictable, routine assessments of military readiness focus on material, equipment, and performance-based training. The questions here are what cognitive capabilities need to be developed and trained to sustain competent performance in modern military operations? Modern military operations, ranging from traditional warfighting to the range of peace support missions, encompass varied doctrinal and tactical differences, humans remain the central element in military operations and are required to maintain emotional, cognitive, and behavioral control to maintain operational effectiveness.

Morrison and Flechter identified 10 psychological components or theoretical mechanisms underlying the concept of cognitive readiness. These components are situation awareness, memory, transfer of training, metacognition, automaticity, problem-solving, decision-making,

mental flexibility, and creativity, leadership, and emotion. To perform a multitude of mission tasks, it summarizes the relevancy of each component for military personnel readiness. Ensuring that military personnel are cognitively prepared and perform in their mission requires a multifaceted approach involving tools and new techniques. In contrast, although there are many definitions of CR, researchers view cognitive readiness through knowledge, skills, and attributes/abilities (KSA). The KSA that military personnel need to sustain competent professional performance during military operations and accomplish their mission. It is important to develop methods on how to ensure cognitive capabilities are available for military operations. It involves a combination of training, resilience building, mental health support, and efficient resource allocation to prepare cognitive readiness for them. A model of CR developed by researchers is illustrated as shown in Figure 4



**Figure 5: Cognitive Readiness Model**

Figure 5 shows O’Neil’s model conceptualizes cognitive readiness into three major categories: (1) knowledge, (2) skills, and (3) attributes (KSA). Knowledge includes domain-specific knowledge for developing cognitive readiness in specific domains as well as prerequisite skills. Adaptability, adaptive problem-solving, communication, decision-making, and situation awareness are five cognitive readiness skills. Adaptive expertise, creative thinking, metacognition, and teamwork represent attributes of this model. O’Neil’s CR model also refers to Morrison and Fletcher’s identified 10 psychological components. Overall, O’Neil also agrees study of cognitive readiness requires extensive research.

In the US Army, the concept of CR becoming a consideration in how to prepare military personnel readiness for the unexpected complex operating environment. The US Army realizes the importance of CR of military personnel to success in complex military operations demands KSA to execute responsibilities, tasks, and missions Therefore, for the successful performance in military operations, military organizations should ensure the the human that the human beings, who are essential at the highest level of cognitive competence of which they are capable. Military personnel need to be trained but need systematic development on how to develop cognitive readiness. Research is still needed to verify and focus on the cognitive readiness of military personnel through military training must be determined and included in the training system and policy.

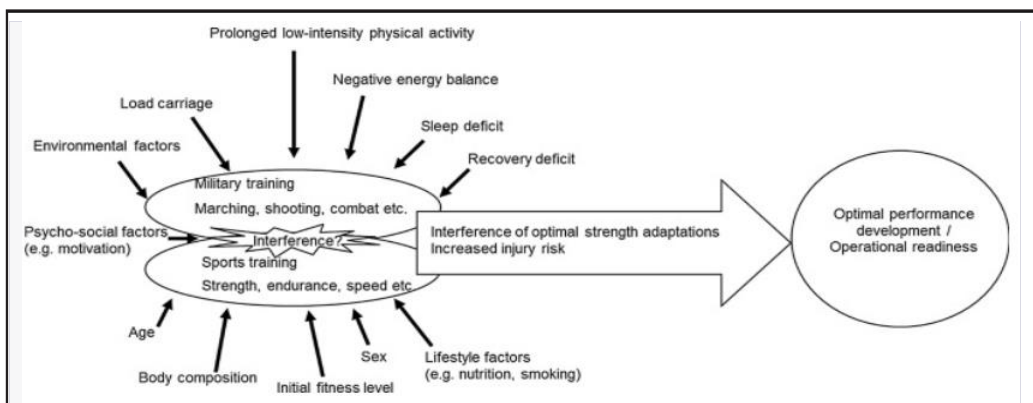


## MILITARY TRAINING FOR COGNITIVE READINESS

Military organizations invest a great deal of resources into training their military personnel to be ready in the face of complex mission demands. Military training has traditionally focused on skill acquisition, and development of technical proficiency, discipline, strength, endurance, and teamwork. One common method of preparing military personnel readiness is to ensure that they are cognitively ready. Cognitive enhancements becoming an essential aspect of military training in the 21st century. The changing nature of war leads to military leaders focus on CR preparations. The researcher mentioned that the U.S. Army does a good job of training military personnel physically but lacks focus on cognitive and emotional readiness. In effect, this broadened conceptualization of training calls for military training to include a cognitive component consistent with the “train as you fight” doctrine and for defense research communities to expand the conceptualization of CR readiness.

The evolution and development of military training will continue because of the changing nature of war. Military training for CR is crucial for preparing military personnel to effectively in high-stress environments involving life-and-death situations. CR training helps military personnel develop thinking skills, problem-solving, and decision-making. Success in training is often dependent upon the trainer’s familiarity with the medium of training design. In addition, maintaining or improving cognitive enhancement among professional military personnel in various military environments is crucial for overall military readiness. However, military training must also meet the demands of and be relevant to the work environment, especially military operations. Training strategies, systems, and policies for conducting military training need to be developed and applied to perform as professional military personnel. To the military leader, it means preparing, training, and equipping military personnel with KSA to execute mission tasks at the highest possible levels of proficiency.

Military training needs a greater variation in training stimulus to induce more effective training adaptations and performance in the military environment. Figure 6 shows several factors such as age, sex, training history, recovery, sleep, and nutrition, as well as environmental, psychological, and social factors, which can significantly affect training adaptations. For professional military personnel, the challenges arise more from reaching and maintaining the performance level set for deployment standards. Military operations consist of tasks that can be attained through combined physical and cognitive capabilities. Therefore, the combination of physical and cognitive training is aimed at cognitive readiness development.



**Figure 6: Factors that affect military training environments**

**PROPOSED TRAINING DESIGN FOR THE DEVELOPMENT COGNITIVE READINESS**

Military training plays an important protective role in enhancing the cognitive readiness of military personnel. Studies found that military training has a positive effect on increasing the cognitive readiness of military personnel. These studies explain that individual characteristics (trainee), instructor (trainers), and training design an important criteria for establishing CR of military personnel to sustain competent performance in complex and stressful environments. Although research on the prediction and assessment of CR is certainly important, explain that a lack of research regarding training design aiming at enhancing CR. Researchers agreed that research is still needed regarding training for readiness and “principles of training design and presentation that ensure reliable achievement of individual and team CR.

This article proposed how best to apply training design to develop military personnel’s cognitive readiness as shown in Table 1. By referring to this table, training design for military personnel is intended to develop expertise involving military knowledge, military deployment, critical thinking, problem-solving, personal skills, leadership, and teamwork. Therefore, training design for MAF personnel should be integrated using classrooms, seminars, conferences, scenario planning, simulation, cognition training, situational training exercise (STX), effectively shooting and moving, communication, virtual training, and combined training exercises (FTX). CR stands as a cornerstone in the empowerment of the future MAF defense forces. In an era where the strategic landscape is defined by uncertainty and rapid change, a cognitive advantage will be the linchpin of success for MAF. The path forward is clear, invest in research and development for training to develop CR of military personnel and in doing so, safeguard the security and prosperity of our nation.

Training Design	To develop expertise	
The History of Warfare/ Multi-Domain Operations - Theory and the nature of war	Classroom Seminar Conferences	Military Knowledge Military Deployment Develops important critical thinking skills
Expertise in adapting to uncertainty - The ability to adapt a plan to meet a new crisis or capitalize	Scenarios Planning Simulation Cognition Training Situational training exercises (STXs)	Thinking Skill Problem-Solving Decision-Making
Expertise in the environment, weapon systems, and equipment	Effectively shoot, move, and communicate in a variety of environments Virtual training Video game Field training exercises (FTXs)	Develop personnel skill Leadership Teamwork

**Table 1: Proposed Training Design for Cognitive Readiness**

## CONCLUSION

Modern Warfare is very uncertain. Military personnel leaders face tough decisions and actions to perform in military operations. To develop military personnel who are cognitively ready to become challenges in military organizations. Cognitive Readiness (CR) is the concept of how to prepare military personnel with military knowledge, skills, and abilities to execute tasks in military operations. By identifying emerging technology and warfare, the development human dimension of military personnel has to be related to physical, cognitive, and moral for developing future defense forces in the Malaysian Armed Forces (MAF). The adaptation of the concept of CR creates potential and consideration for MAF to enhance military personnel readiness.

Malaysian defense strategy and transformation plan reflect the MAF's commitment to developing *Thinking Soldiers* as part of the human resources development strategy to maintain combat readiness. The emerging concept of military CR is focused on military personnel capabilities and performance potential for designing related training for the development of CR. Gaining a deeper understanding of how to develop military personnel who are cognitively ready to meet new security challenges requires a theoretical and conceptual framework to guide the development of CR at all levels of military organization (strategic, operational, and tactical). Recommendations for future words towards the development of the model CR of military personnel in MAF organization for empowering future defense forces.

In conclusion, the concept of CR represents a pivotal aspect of the paramount importance of mental preparedness for military personnel to perform in the increasingly complex and dynamic landscape of national defense. It is clear that a well-prepared mind is as crucial as advanced weaponry and technology.

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## **NEWS FRAME AND NATIONAL SECURITY: THE IMPACT OF NEWS FRAMING ON INTERNATIONAL CONFLICTS, IN THE CASE OF LAHAD DATU.**

Dayangku Norasyikin Binti Awang Tejuddin  
*International Studies Lecturer, UNIMAS*

Syafina Zuhani Binti Mohamad  
*International Studies Postgraduate, UNIMAS*  
Email: syafinazm1997@gmail.com

### **ABSTRACT**

*The contemporary relationship between the news media, public perception, and national security imperatives constitutes a crucible of study within the sphere of international relations and communications. This triangular interaction, which is intricately integrated into democratic governance, creates a dynamic environment where the distribution of information and the interpretation of the information by the populace have significant ramifications for the creation and implementation of security measures. Media framing was crucial in the Lahad Datu incident, a standoff between Malaysian security forces and militants from the Sulu Archipelago, in influencing public opinion and the national security policy agenda. The way the conflict is presented in the media directly affects how the general public views the wider implications of the events for national security. Security measures are more likely to receive public support if the public believes that the government is a capable and dedicated steward of national security. This emphasises the complex interdependence of media framing, public perception and opinion, national security, and foreign relations. It also accentuates the imperative for policymakers to understand and navigate the complex landscape of public sentiment in the formulation of effective security policies and diplomatic strategies.*

**Keywords:** *Security, Regional, Geopolitical, Militans, Archipelago, Volatile*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The contemporary relationship between the news media, public perception, and national security imperatives constitutes a crucible of study within the sphere of international relations and communications (DeHaven, 1991). This triangular interaction, which is intricately integrated into democratic governance, creates a dynamic environment where the distribution of information and the interpretation of the information by the populace have significant ramifications for the creation and implementation of security measures. The interplay of public perception formation, news framing, (Entman, 1993) and national security imperatives creates a complicated tapestry requiring careful analysis. A crucial example of this complex dynamic is the Lahad Datu dispute in 2013. The confrontation, which occurred at a pivotal point in Southeast Asian history, provided evidence of how geopolitical interests, concerns over regional security, and the pervasiveness of digital media collided.

The internet sphere emerged as a crucial setting for the quick spread of information as militants from the Sulu Archipelago confronted Malaysian security forces in the coastal town of Lahad Datu, Sabah. A crucial element in how the tragedy was framed was played by news media outlets, who had a significant effect on how the public perceived and comprehended what

happened. A fundamental component of journalism, news framing includes the intentional choice of viewpoints, putting emphasis on significant information, and contextualizing events (Entman, 1993). It goes beyond merely conveying facts. The conceptual framework that frames articles helps to structure the story and gives it significance and resonance. As a result, this dialectical process of selection and interpretation has a significant impact on how the public sphere perceives, values, and responds to events like the Lahad Datu standoff.

The crucible for forming the public's perspective is this perceptual revolution, which is intrinsically dependent on how the news is framed. Public viewpoint is a crucial element of democratic administration since it is the collective cognitive framework through which citizens digest information, form views, and express preferences. It pervades public discourse, influences political decisions, and provides a social mandate that reverberates throughout the corridor of power (Lippmann, 1921). Parallel to this, the public's diverse viewpoints have become an important factor in the field of national security. The effectiveness of security measures depends on a populace that is not just informed but also invested in the underlying reasoning, regardless of whether they are calibrated in reaction to external dangers or propelled by the necessities of internal stability. Thus, the success or failure of efforts to promote national security depends critically on public opinion. With the Lahad Datu incident serving as a prime instance, this study aims to examine the complex interplay between news framing, public perception, and national security inside the crucible of contemporary democratic administration.

This study attempts to define the boundaries of this trilateral interaction using a multifaceted analytical lens that includes media studies, international relations, and the dynamics of public opinion. This study offers insights that reverberate throughout the fields of academia, policy development, and journalistic practice by identifying the complex intersections, dissonances, and feedback loops that animate this dynamic.

## **LAHAD DATU STANDOFF**

The Lahad Datu standoff in 2013 arose from a historical backdrop of colonial legacies and territorial disputes. The British colonial rule in Sabah, which was subsequently followed by its participation in the creation of Malaysia in 1963, impacted the region's history and laid the groundwork for current problems. Armed insurgents, supporters of the self-declared Sultan of Sulu, Jamalul Kiram III, who claimed Sabah on the basis of a 19th-century lease to the British North Borneo Company, fuelled the crisis with their ideological zeal (Ali, 2013). This ideological motivation tried to uphold the legitimacy of the Sultanate of Sulu by framing the conflict as a struggle for territorial sovereignty (Nik Mahmud, 2001). The conflict had a significant ramifications straining Malaysia's diplomatic relations with the Philippines owing to the latter's long-standing claim to Sabah. An already complicated geopolitical landscape became more sensitive as a result of this territorial conflict, which was interwoven with wider regional factors. The Malaysian government responded with a comprehensive security plan, quickly deploying armed forces to retake the afflicted area and mobilising resources to protect national interests and public safety. The tragedy sparked a thorough reevaluation of long-term security tactics, including border control measures, intelligence capabilities, and counterterrorism initiatives in the eastern states, in addition to crisis management (Hamdan et al, 2023).



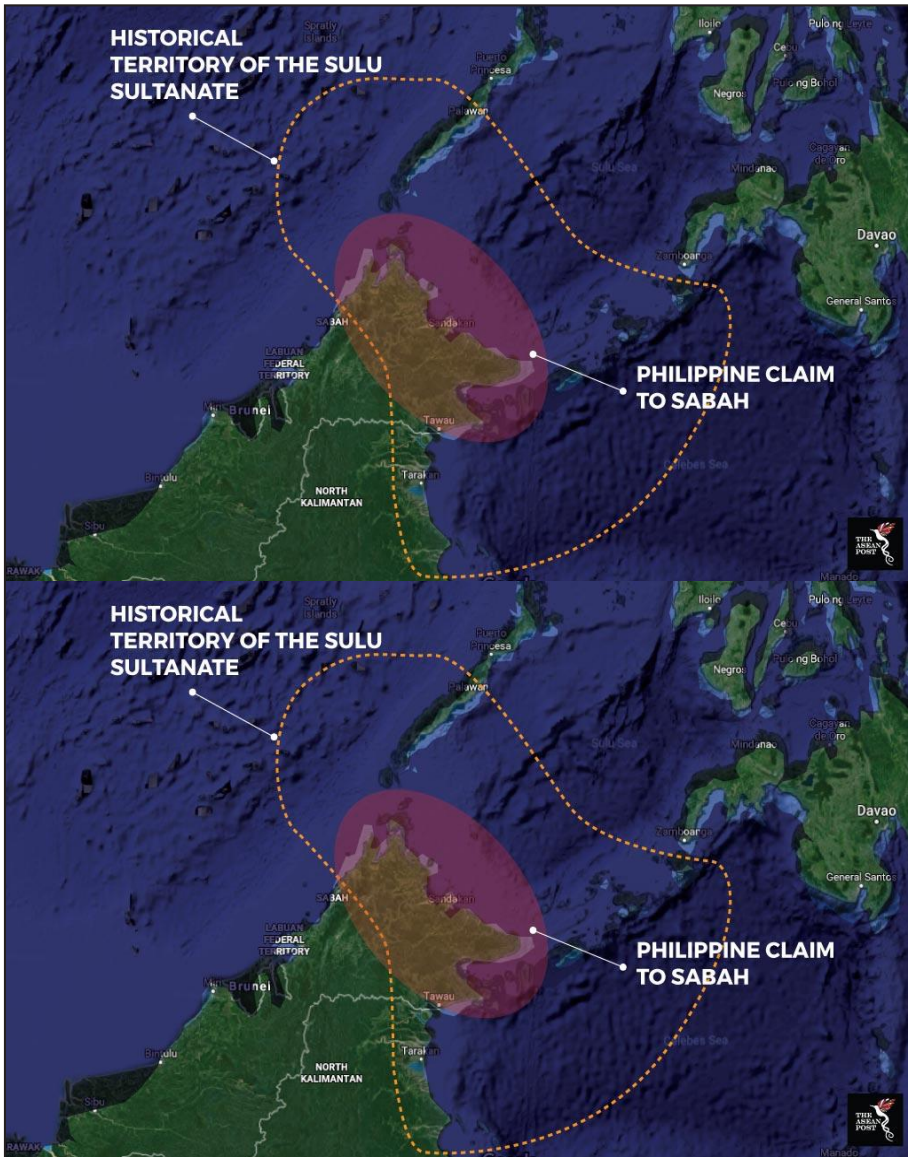


Figure 1. Sulu Sultanate Territorial Claim of Sabah

## NEWS FRAMING OF LAHAD DATU AND PERSPECTIVES

Public policy and national security both place a great deal of weight on media framing. It relates to the purposeful selection, emphasis, and interpretation of the material by organizations, which ultimately affects how viewers perceive and comprehend a specific event or problem (Entman 1993). This procedure may have a noticeable effect on how policy agendas are created and prioritized. Media framing was crucial in the Lahad Datu incident, a standoff between Malaysian security forces and militants from the Sulu Archipelago, in influencing public opinion and the national security policy agenda. This is due to the incident occurring in a volatile maritime border zone and having significant regional and geopolitical ramifications.

The way the conflict is presented in the media directly affects how the general public views the wider implications of the events for national security. It is crucial to understand that media agenda-setting goes hand-in-hand with media framing. In his piece, Cohen (1963) echoed McCombs and Shaw's emphasis that media agenda-setting serves as a tool that directs society's thought processes. The core theoretical postulate of the triangle-shaped interaction between the news agenda, the public agenda, and the policy agenda was stressed by McCombs and Shaw in 1972. Littlejohn (2002) discussed the manner in which the public agenda, which influences the policy agenda, is molded by the media agenda. Political agendas are essential in politics as it have the capacity to influence the public agenda (Auwalu, 2018). A process known as "media framing" involves the construction of a specific narrative or interpretation that affects the way the audience perceives and comprehends the subject matter. News outlets and journalists choose and emphasise certain aspects of an event, issue, or topic while underplaying or omitting others. People's perceptions of an issue's magnitude, causes, effects, and potential remedies can be influenced by the framing of the situation. The subjectivity of news reporting and its influence on public perception are highlighted by the possibility that different frames can result in different perceptions of the same information (Entman, 1993).

Therefore, the framing of the incident could be interpreted as a localized occurrence or as part of a larger tapestry of regional security concerns, depending on the framing decisions made by news outlets. A more thorough and well-rounded policy response, possibly incorporating diplomatic outreach and cooperative initiatives with adjacent nations, would naturally result from the latter approach. This emphasizes the critical role that media framing serves in shaping how seriously and urgently the security problem is taken, which in turn affects policy priorities. Additionally, the way the media frames a situation has a big impact on how the public views government response attempts. A narrative that shows the government's actions as prompt, organized, and determined is likely to inspire confidence and faith in the government's ability to protect national security interests. Contrarily, a framing that raises concerns about the sufficiency or relevance of the response may prompt calls for changes to policy or reevaluations of security procedures. The five frames proposed by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000)—*attribution of responsibility*, *human interest*, *economic consequences*, *conflict*, and *morality* frames—are those that the media embrace. In the area of national security, media framing may also have an impact on how resources are allocated and which policies get priority. An increased allocation of funds and resources towards security measures, both within the afflicted region and at the national level, may result from portraying the Lahad Datu episode as representative of larger security concerns.

The incident in March 2013 was covered by Malaysiakini's online news portal and presented in the context of *attribution of responsibility* frame. This frame was adopted to illustrate the government's efforts for a solution to the crisis and to ensure a stable situation in the country. This shapes the public's perspective and restores their faith in their government's capability to handle the crisis. Thus, the news portal amplified the discourse on the state's ability to protect its territorial integrity. As a result, it was claimed in the news media that the police had ringed the invaders'-occupied Tanduo hamlet and reinforced security measures there as well as along a pathway to track their movements in and out of the hamlet (Malaysiakini, 2013).

*"...polis kini mengepung Kampung Tanduo yang masih diduduki sebahagian anggota kumpulan itu dan kawalan keselamatan di kawasan berkenaan semakin diperketatkan. Polis juga telah mengawal segala laluan dan sukar untuk pihak penceroboh untuk keluar atau masuk ke kawasan kampung berkenaan..."*  
(Malaysiakini: 1 Mac 2013)

Regarding the context that highlights the efforts to reestablish peace and security, Malaysiakini highlighted the efforts and alliances of the governments of both nations in peacefully settling the problem through diplomacy (Malaysiakini, 2013).

*“Hishammuddin berkata kerajaan Malaysia dan Filipina sentiasa bekerja rapat dalam menyelesaikan konflik ini dan memberitahu ia akan dilakukan secara diplomasi tanpa sebarang pertumpahan darah.”*  
(Malaysiakini: 2 Mac 2013).

Astro Awani online platforms have adopted the terrorism and insurgency frame which contextualized the incident within the broader narrative of asymmetric threats to the nation's security architecture. This was done by emphasising the threat posed by the Filipino gunmen who ambushed the police in a village in Semporna, Sabah. This frame was followed by a *conflict* frame which highlighted casualties as the result of the aggression. The news reports six Malaysian police officers were slain in the terrorist attack, along with seven attackers, and four of the cops had their bodies disfigured and one had been beheaded (Najib, 2013).

*“In the early hours of March 3, a group of Filipino gunmen believed to be less than 10, ambushed the police village in Semporna, Sabah. The media reported that six Malaysian police officers and seven assailant were killed. It was also reported that four of the policemen had their bodies mutilated, with one beheaded.”*  
(Najiah Najib, 30 Disember 2013)

Reporting on the skirmishes, casualties, and government intervention, the Borneo Post online platform has utilised both *conflict* and *attribution of responsibility* framing. The news media reported that the conflict will be resolved diplomatically and peacefully, implying that Malaysia and the Philippine had held a number of negotiations (The Borneo Post, 2013).

*“When they came across a police patrol at about 10am at Felda Sahabat 17, Kampung Tanduo, the armed group attacked them, killing two police commandos and injuring three others. In the ensuing 20-minutes shootout, all armed foreigners were killed, said the police. The stand-off between security forces and the rebel group continued and the cordon remained intact, Sabah Police Commissioner Datuk Hamza Taib told a press conference this evening.”*  
(The Borneo Post, 2 March 2013)

*“Since then, Malaysia has held series of negotiations and fixed Feb 22, as the last day for them to leave. However, Malaysia extended the deadline to Feb 26, while awaiting a Philippine army boat to take them home.”*  
(The Borneo Post, 2 March 2013)

Reader's attention is captured by commencing with the conflict frame serves to immediately foreground the intensity and contentious nature of the Lahad Datu standoff, demonstrating a high-stakes situation. This highlights the critical nature of the conflict, potentially evoking the reader's concern and trepidation. The reader is assisted in identifying the parties held culpable for the crisis by the reader's subsequent introduction of the attribution of responsibility framework, which places the dispute within a framework of casualty. The Borneo Post employs this sequential framing method to offer readers a thorough account of the events that happened at Lahad Datu as well as influence the way they perceive the government's response. The conflict frame encourages

readers to view the government's involvement as a response to an urgent and imminent threat, positioning them as players in the settlement of a critical national security issue. The *attribution of responsibility* frame, on the other hand, clarifies the government's part in containing the crisis and upholding territorial integrity, positioning it as a responsible and accountable body. This intentional framing sequence highlights the government's effectiveness and ability to manage the crisis, encouraging comfort and trust in the government's competence to safeguard national security interests. Furthermore, by accentuating *attribution of responsibility*, the framing strategy gently highlights the government's commitment to upholding the rule of law and guaranteeing accountability in situations of national security. This framing sequence thus creates a narrative in which the government is portrayed as responsible and determined toward national security, in addition to plainly affecting how readers interpret the material. This can therefore have an impact on public opinion and discourse, which can affect how policy decisions are made in the wake of such crises and have an impact on the greater narrative of national security.

## **PERSPECTIVES AND PUBLIC OPINION IMPACT ON NATIONAL SECURITY**

According to Lippmann (1921), democracy is based on the concept of public policy that is responsive to public opinion. He cites "Plato and Aristotle through Machiavelli and Hobbes to the democratic theorist" as its foundation. On the other hand, Page and Shapiro (1983) refuted the idea that public opinion and government policy have a positive relationship. The congruent changes in public opinion and policy over a 50-year period and 357 occurrences of opinion shift were shown to be as high as 66% (Page & Shapiro, 1983, p. 175). The notion of a capricious public is a fallacy, they go on to say (Page & Shapiro, 1988). They also showed that this fundamental connection holds true for foreign policy (Page & Shapiro 1988). Recognizing the intricacy involved in converting public opinion into workable policy outcomes—complexity that is equally pertinent in the context of national security—is at the heart of their research. Viewpoints on issues of national security cover a broad range of issues, from defense spending to counterterrorism initiatives, much like popular attitudes towards legislation pertaining to civil rights. These opinions are influenced by a wide range of variables, such as ideologic leanings, individual circumstances, and media influence. In the area of national security, where decisions are influenced by a variety of factors, including geopolitical imperatives, legal restraints, and the expertise of security professionals, their study also explains the obstacles preventing a direct translation of public opinion into policy action.

Additionally, their emphasis on the facilitating function of political institutions has implications for how decisions on national security are made, which involves complex political procedures involving several levels of government and input from experts and advisors. These organizations act as crucial filters that determine how policies are implemented, frequently forcing delicate compromises between divergent policy goals. Furthermore, just as Page and Shapiro (1988) emphasize the necessity for policymakers to navigate trade-offs in the context of civil rights policies, the issue of national security is rife with similar conundrums. Here, decision-makers must deftly strike a balance between the imperatives of protecting the country and other factors, such as upholding civil liberties, protecting economic interests, and fostering diplomatic relations.

Relationships between opinions and policies are quite susceptible to the impact of external security threats. Both internal and external factors can affect foreign policy (Gallhofer, 1976). According to his research, judgments about foreign policy are not only influenced by logical assessments of the national interest but also by a complex interplay of political, psychological, and social variables. Goldman emphasizes the significant impact cognitive biases and perceptual



distortions have on how threats are assessed and security plans are created. The study also accentuates the importance of leaders' beliefs, personalities, and psychological tendencies in influencing foreign policy decisions, indicating a key finding that is pertinent to the field of national security. Leaders' attitudes towards security risks, risk tolerance, and their perceptions of the global environment have a significant impact on the direction and intensity of national security policies. Furthermore, Goldman's identification of social values, public opinion, interest groups, and bureaucratic institutions as powerful variables fits in perfectly with the ideas surrounding national security. The public's views of threats, their expectations for security, and their reactions to crises have a significant impact on how the government approaches defending national security interests. Additionally, national security-related interest groups and bureaucratic organizations put significant pressure on decision-makers, affecting the order of priority and the implementation of security measures. Goldman's study sheds light on the complexity underlying the creation and implementation of national security policy by breaking down these diverse determinants.

DeHaven (1991) likewise postulates that elite opinion can be influenced by public opinion. He used the Soviet Union and NATO cases as an illustration. The Soviet Union exploited public opinion to influence NATO members' foreign policy, which resulted in a change in public opinion. By hinting that Western measures would make the conflict more likely, the Soviet Union attempted to influence foreign policy decisions by manipulating Western public opinion (DeHaven, 1991, p. 87). His study into the complex interplay between elite ideas and popular opinion shows how significantly it affects matters of national security. In the context of developing security policy, the study's analysis of the similarities and differences between popular opinion and the perspectives of political elites is very important. DeHaven's research emphasises the possibility for inequalities to emerge due to variations in information sources, levels of political knowledge, and interpretive frameworks. While there may be instances of alignment, particularly during times of national crisis or consensus, these instances are not always the case. This difference in viewpoints between the general population and the elite will impact the formulation of national security strategies. It highlights the need for policymakers to handle the complexity of balancing public feeling with professional opinions and geopolitical factors in the pursuit of effective security measures. Deliberations on matters of national security must be informed and democratic in order to ensure that decisions are made that reflect the values and concerns of the populace while upholding national security interests. This requires an understanding of the complex relationship between elite perspectives and public opinion.

The Lahad Datu standoff in 2013 gave tangible evidence of the manner in which public opinion and perspectives affect national security. The conflict frame, which was adopted by a number of news outlets, most notably The Borneo Post and Malaysiakini, was followed by the attribution of responsibility frame, which had a significant impact on how the public saw the government's handling of the situation.

In line with the observations made by Page and Shapiro, Goldman, and DeHaven, the Lahad Datu standoff in 2013 serves as a vivid illustration of the complex interaction between popular opinion and national security. The conflict frame subsequent to the attribution of blame frame used by well-known news organisations including The Borneo Post, Malaysiakini, and AstroAwani is an example of the framing effects mentioned by Page and Shapiro. The public's opinion of the government's response to the crisis is significantly impacted by this deliberate framing arrangement. Page and Shapiro's claim about the complexity of public opinion resonates with the incident's increased intensity and contentiousness as well as the sense of urgency. Public

perception of the Lahad Datu standoff in Malaysia was significantly shaped by the multifaceted nature of public disposition, which was impacted by an array of variables including media narratives and political ideologies. The attribution of responsibility frame, where the government's actions and decisions were scrutinised and assessed, also reflects Goldman's emphasis on the relevance of individual leaders' views and personalities in shaping policy choices. According to Goldman's observations, the public's evaluation of the government's contribution to the crisis management was influenced by notions of accountability and responsibility. Furthermore, the Lahad Datu case clearly illustrates DeHaven's research on the convergence and divergence of public and elite thought. Public impression of how the government handled the crisis was influenced by the framing sequence, which may have caused discrepancies between popular opinion and elite viewpoints. As explained by Page and Shapiro, Goldman, and DeHaven, the dynamic interaction between public opinion, media narrative, and government response during the Lahad Datu standoff highlights the intricate relationship that exists between public feeling and national security. It serves as an example of the way framing effects, personal leadership dynamics, and the interaction of elite and public opinion work together to shape the story and impact of a national security crisis.



**Figure 2: Eastern Sabah Security Zone Established after the Lahad Datu Incident**

## CONCLUSION

The Lahad Datu Standoff in 2013 is a potent illustration of the enormous influence that public perceptions have on national security and diplomatic relations. Public opinions of the incident were significantly shaped by the way local media sources framed it. The conflict frame and the attribution of responsibility frame heightened the perceived gravity of the issue, arousing urgency and worry among Malaysians. This purposeful use of narrative structure affected national security in a more general way than just how it affected public opinion as public opinion is a vital component of a nation's security apparatus. Security measures are more likely to receive public support if the public believes that the government is a capable and dedicated steward of national security. On the other hand, a disgruntled or doubtful populace might hinder government efforts to defend the country. Public opinion can put significant pressure on decision-makers in the



context of diplomacy. Due to the historical territorial claims involved, the Lahad Datu impasse caused diplomatic relations with the Philippines to deteriorate. The public's perceptions, which are framed by the media, can affect the government's position and strategy in diplomatic negotiations. Depending on the prevailing opinions of its populace, a government aware of public sentiment may be forced to adopt more forceful or cautious diplomatic postures. On the other hand, in circumstances where public opinion can affect governmental choices, shape the path of crises, and influence diplomatic engagements. This emphasises the complex interdependence of media framing, public perception and opinion, national security, and foreign relations. It also accentuates the imperative for policymakers to understand and navigate the complex landscape of public sentiment in the formulation of effective security policies and diplomatic strategies.

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## THE CONTAINMENT STRATEGIES IN US COLD WAR FOREIGN POLICY

Syed 'Akasyah Bin Syed Zulkifli  
University Malaysia Sarawak  
Email: Syedakasyah@gmail.com

### ABSTRACT

*The paper applies a comparative method of identifying the differences and similarities of the foreign policy in the form of containment strategies applied by the US against its peer competitors in a great power competition in two different contexts, during the Cold War against the USSR, and in the status quo against China. In doing the comparative, the paper reaches the conclusion that there is a distinct difference in each form of containment from two different angles. Firstly, in the execution of containment, there is a larger weightage put upon non-traditional security aspects where there is a lesser emphasis on conventional weapons and warfare, but more emphasis on the economic and global perspective aspects. Second, the paper identifies that the reactions of parties facing containment greatly differ, where the USSR are necessarily confrontational and retaliative in nearly all aspects, China chooses to pick its battles and only engage on dimensions in which it feels it can gain the upper hand. China also notes that there is a long-term battle at hand and there is no need for any haste in its reactions towards the US. Lastly, this paper identifies that even in structures of containment, there seem to be benefactors from a great power competition, in this case, are the states in the SEA region, at the same time acknowledging that they may face potential problems in the future if not handled properly.*

**Keywords:** *Containment, USSR, non-traditional security, great power competition, Southeast Asia, Comparative, China, US.*

### INTRODUCTION

The rise of China has garnered attention from the US, in recent times, the effort to contain China has rampantly increased either directly (as seen in trade wars/public denunciation of China) or through soft power strategy involving regional actors. There are similarities in this same scenario as observed in the past in the US's containment strategy of the USSR during the Cold War post the fall of Germany. Particularly, the enactment of China's premier, Xi Jinping's policy of the Belt Road Initiative and the formation of the AIIB are constant points of contact that are contested by the US. In particular, the increasing interest in the Asian region seems to be of priority for the US as seen in multiple case scenarios such as the enactment of the Australia – United Kingdom – United States agreement, (AUKUS) - the increasing military presence in the South China Sea - the establishing of stronger relations with India by the US. Drawing similarities to the past USSR containment strategy can be made via the establishment of NATO, the embargo of states allied with the USSR, the arms race and increasing military presence globally. Importantly, however, is important to recognize and analyze potential opportunities and threats that this may bring into the region and how naturally states would react to mitigate such scenarios.

### What is Containment Strategy?

In order to understand what containment strategy is, it is important to understand the origins of the concept. In essence, it ties into the foreign policy of the US, specifically the US in tackling

the USSR's communist ideology from spreading beyond the Soviet Union. The application of containment strategy in particular was applied and classified under the US grand strategy. Under this strategy, "The main objective of the U.S. grand strategy has been to prevent territorial expansion by the Soviet Union while avoiding a major war. Although both ends and means have varied over time, the central elements of this strategy- commonly known as "containment"-have been military alliances with Western Europe and Japan and the deployment of U.S. armed forces in Europe and the Far East." (Walt, 1989, p.5).

"A US containment strategy for China differs from engagement in that it relies mostly on the traditional "hard power" tools of military might and alliance diplomacy to thwart China's great power emergence. Containment calls for the United States to emulate its anti-Soviet Cold War strategy by assembling a 15-powerful coalition of states sharing a common interest in curbing rising Chinese power—particularly by tightening the US security relationship with Japan while simultaneously investing that alliance with an overtly anti-Chinese mission." (Layne, 2008 pp.13-18) Establishing that, we necessarily see clear similarities between the Cold War containment strategy and the current China containment strategy.

For the sake of this paper, the definition of containment strategy shall be divided into three dimensions, Economy, Security and Global Perception. The application of the containment strategy is often linked on such levels with each one being major points of contention in the containment strategy. The economic aspect of containment shall primarily focus on the economic application of containment, a major dimension due to it being about the allocation of resources among states and the ability to economically sustain a state. While applying and facing containment. The economic dimension is important because of the impact it has, if a state is unable to sustain its resources when executing a containment strategy, it is thus unlikely to achieve success likewise if a state is unable to properly sustain its resources when facing containment, it is more likely that a state would fail in such scenario.

The security dimension of containment shall then for the sake of the paper be purely constricted to conventional traditional security in the form of militaristic security, this paper recognizes that there are multiple different forms of security in the status quo, where environmental security and non-traditional security threats exist as well, however, to specify and allow for greater room of exploration, militaristic security shall be the only form of security discussed. Security is an important aspect of containment as well, especially when viewing through the realist lens, in which power attainment and detainment require a strong militaristic force, specifically in the context of containment, militaristic power is a requirement in ensuring that potential military conflicts are won and also as additional layers of deterrent against any potential military aggression. The global perception dimension shall be limited to the application of any and all forms of attempt to sway and shift the global narrative surrounding a state, therefore it exists as an important part of the paper when acknowledging the liberal school of thought in which it argues that the will of states to concede to containment, is dependent on its ability to gain superiority of influence in the global sphere. Therefore, every reference to containment in the paper shall fall under these three dimensions.

## **Cold War Foreign Policy**

The Cold War "arose in the wake of the Second World War, between two rigidly hostile blocs, one led by the Soviet Union, the other by the United States" (Schlesinger, 1967, p.22). The Cold

War foreign policy primarily shall be focused on the US's application of policy, specifically in its containment strategy of the Soviet Union, particularly regarding the containment strategy during the Cold War. The US, "Containment was a United States policy using numerous strategies to prevent the spread of communism abroad. A component of the Cold War, this policy was a response to a series of moves by the Soviet Union to enlarge its communist sphere of influence in Eastern Europe, China, Korea, and Vietnam:" (*The History of American Foreign Policy | Boundless Political Science*, 2016 p.1). The enactment of the containment policy in particular revolved around the US diplomat George F. Kennan, regarding it as a necessary policy to halt the spread of communism. "During the Cold War, for example, the United States could use economic containment in the form of embargoes on the Soviet bloc and China to prevent its rivals.

### **US's Foreign Policy towards China (US Grand Strategy)**

In the status quo, the application of foreign policy towards China is centred on the American Grand Strategy, a strategy formulated around the US's ideals of the world surrounding it. In particular, "United States has pursued a remarkably consistent grand strategy toward East Asia. It is built around American power, interests, and ideals. In this sense, it is not best seen as simply a geopolitical strategy of hegemony or balance of power. Rather, it is infused with distinctive American ideas about order, identity, and community" (Ikenberry, G.J., 2014, pp. 41-63)

Therefore, the infusion of American ideals, which among them are the retention of its position at the top of the global order, and the stopping of China from rapidly rising to replace America as the global leader position is top of the priority list. The enactment of policy greatly differs between leaders, on a micro aspect, different leaders chose to use different methods of containment, Trump as example, enacted direct economic confrontation through the establishment of a trade war, in an attempt to halt China's progress while also ensuring the US's industries are protected. On the other hand, the previous leader Barack Obama, employed an economic containment strategy in the form of increasing the sphere of influence in the Asian region, such as establishing the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) as an act of retaining and putting American interests first. "In 2015, Obama said, "TPP allows America — and not countries like China — to write the rules of the road in the 21st century." (*The Pivot to Asia Was Obama's Biggest Mistake*, 2017, pp. 1-2). Establishing this, clearly points out how even through multiple different leaders, the strategy has always had the common factor of the containment of China.

### **Great Power Competition**

The great power competition that this paper shall refer to is the competition between the major players of the international arena, if in the context of the past, the paper refers to the great power competition as the peer competition between the US and the USSR in the race to the top of the international sphere, where else in the case of status quo, this shall be the peer competition between the US and China. "The United States finds itself in a period of renewed great power competition with a rising People's Republic of China (PRC)" (*Global Development in an Era of Great Power Competition*, 2022, pp. 1-2). The great power competition specifically has impacts beyond just the two states of China and the US, impacts and methodological applications affect states in between this conflict, therefore there is an inherent need to identify such impacts towards states in between the great power conflict. The economic and security effects could ripple throughout the world, particularly within regions proximate to the conflict such as the South China Sea conflict and the potential impacts to the stability of the Southeast-Asian region. In such situations, if the conflict

is not contained properly to ensure that it does not escalate beyond reasonable control, there is a higher likelihood that the security of states within those regions to greatly suffer. Therefore, the definition of Great Power Competition is not one that is limited to great powers but also the entities in the form of states involved within this competition and the conditions of those states post the Great Power Competition. The usage of the term “great power competition” is one that will be frequent as a reference to the scenario, closely tied to containment as the strategy in managing the “great power competition”.

### **The US’s Pursuit of International Glory**

The United States, the land of the free, a state in which it prides itself on its practice of free and fair elections, a beacon of democracy. The US sits at the pinnacle of the international order, where states look up to the United States. This part of the paper shall explore the multifaceted reasons as to why the prior statement is considered true. Charountaki (2014) defines it as with only very slight deviations, U.S. foreign policy speech and practice under the various presidents during the twentieth and into the twenty-first century followed the same pattern. They were all focused on maintaining the status quo and the balance of power, especially in the oil-rich Gulf region, vigorously opposing revisionist powers like the Soviet Union and the ideology of communism, safeguarding the flow of oil to the West, increasing global trade, and maintaining international stability under American leadership.

The United States, post the Second World War, became a powerhouse for multiple distinct reasons, beyond being part of the victorious Allied forces and an important turning point to the victory, the US also became an economic powerhouse through the economic decisions of dollar pegging. “As The Bretton Woods agreement of 1944 established a new international monetary system. It replaced the gold standard with the U.S. dollar as the global currency. By doing so, it established America as the dominant power in the world economy. After the agreement was signed, America was the only country with the ability to print dollars” (*How a 1944 Agreement Created a New International Monetary System*, 2022, pp. 1-2)

Additionally, post the Bretton Woods agreement, the US created the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) as organizations to strengthen its position economically and use economic leverage as a tool of foreign diplomacy. The key takeaway to acknowledge from this portion is to note that the US pre-cold War already had an established economic position within the global order. This fact has not changed in the status quo, where the US Dollar is still the currency used as the World’s reserve currency, with according to *Countries Using the U.S. Dollar*, (2022) A total of a minimum of 66 countries participate in the global economy and hold their reserves through the usage of the US Dollar. In fact, because of the usage of the USD as the currency for World Reserves, there is an ability for the US to apply further economic leverage in the status quo through the sanctioning of banking transactions, essentially blocking out all forms of trade that would go through towards states that are sanctioned by the US. This works in two ways, either through (1) blocking out all transactions from a sanctioned country (if the country uses the USD as its reserves’ currency), or (2) blocking of transactions from a third-party state trying to conduct trade with a sanctioned country.

As an amalgamation of the US’s impact on the world, the domestic politics of the state is also considered an international affair, in which the decision of the leader of the states would likely shape and affect the current position of the world. In a two-party democratic system where the



application of foreign policy could greatly differ between elected representatives of the state, it is clear to understand why there is much attention given to the position of a hegemonic and economic superpower where the foreign policy decision-making process would ripple globally. Additionally, when exploring the fusion of domestic politics and the economic leverage in which the US uses its international actors such as the IMF and World Bank, there is a link in which states dependent on the US are beholden, where if the elected state officials are lobbied or propose to retain a dependent on lobbying power, either an isolationist or an interventionist stance, this drastically changes the policies in which the monetary bodies would allocate resource “At the IMF level, we find that the size of a loan to a country is positively and significantly related to the degree of money-centre bank exposure in that country, controlling for other factors. An important implication of this result is that moral hazard in international finance is at least partly a function of the interests of private actors seeking to externalize the risks of cross-border lending.”(Broz and Hawes, 2006, pp. 77-106).

This proves the role of lobbying parties and the representatives who represent the parties. “when distributional consequences are most salient, legislators’ votes on aid respond to the material interests of their constituents, and to a lesser extent to organized interest groups” (Milner and Tingley, 2010, pp. 200-232). This then proves that in addition to lobbying powers, there seems to be a strong political push from constituents and their demands in comparison to purely lobbying powers. Either way, the role that domestic politics plays in the shape of foreign policy applied by state leaders is sufficiently proven. Extrapolating from this very information, the spheres which it affects are not only limited to the economic sphere, this includes the security sphere such as military funding, expansion or decrease of international influence which are part of the same lines of discourse.

The United States has always had the interest of retaining itself at the top of the international order, in order to retain that position, it has to eliminate all forms of peer competitors that may exist. The strategy this paper shall explore is the usage of the containment strategy, and it does this by retaining and improving three important dimensions its economy, its military and its global perception. The US’s economy, as established previously, still maintains an extremely strong position, strong international economic influence and huge buying power with a relatively stable economy, the US retains its position as the world reserves’ currency through the dollar peg, additionally at 24.4% of the global GDP the US still remains as one of the most important major economic player. Militarily, the US maintains the biggest military budget “US military spending amounted to \$801 billion in 2021 comprised 38% of the year’s total military spending

## **STRATEGIES IN THE CONTAINMENT OF THE USSR**

### **Economic Dimension**

As explained by Maddrell (2013), the economic dimension domination over the USSR was not only a major objective, it was also an essential method to prevail over the USSR. The economic dimension application of containment from the US which this part of the paper shall explore is the application of economic sanctions on the USSR, and (2) the opening up of the World Trade Organization to China, a country deemed as communist.

“Economic sanctions are penalties levied against a country, its officials or private citizens, either as punishment or in an effort to provide disincentives for the targeted policies and actions” (*How Economic Sanctions Work*, 2022, p. 1) In the application of economic sanctions on the

USSR, the US applied the concept of sanctions as a means of economically suffocating the USSR in its ability to attain resources, an extremely important part of sustaining a state, especially in the form of weaponry and the wellbeing of the citizens of a state such as food and shelter. “In 1948, the United States began a campaign of economic sanctions against the Soviet Union that would last more than fifty years. In March of that year, the Department of Commerce announced restrictions on exports to the Soviet Union and its European allies. Congress formalized these restrictions in the Export Control Act of 1949” (*Cold War sanctions - Embargoes and Sanctions*, 2022, p. 1). The implementation of the economic sanctions effectively made it harder for the USSR to maintain its military and the internal contentment of the states within the USSR. Arguably, as the coherence of the states became less possible to sustain, the USSR effectively became weaker in handling the increased pressure put on by the US, a major factor in the larger demise of the USSR.

The involvement of foreign actors in the Cold War is definitely not limited. The existence of the Free Economic Order was a critical force for the US to achieve its goal of creating an internationalized global trade. As a part of the process to contain the USSR, the US was willing to strengthen relations with China which, ironically, exists as a communist state and a standing ally to the USSR. “Richard Nixon’s opening to China was a logical extension of the already long-standing commitment to do whatever was necessary to prevent defeat in the Cold War” (Fingar, 2018, p.1). The process however did not end with Richard Nixon’s process of opening up relations with China, eventually, the process was finalized by Jimmy Carter with finally opening up trade to China. As said by Fingar (2018, p.1) Jimmy Carter supported Deng Xiaoping’s “Reform and Opening” approach to attain riches and power through modernization and export-led growth almost ten years later, when he saw an even bigger opportunity to restrain Moscow. This process included the opening up of the global markets to China as a means of selling the idea of internationalism to China as opposed to a communist isolated state. The Reform and Opening approach of Deng Xiaoping prioritized alleviating poverty in China through the opening of the markets to international trading. Deng Xiaoping’s strategy focused on enabling the large human capital that China had.

Deng Xiaoping wanted to alleviate poverty in China and in the process of doing so saw the US and global trade as a viable platform to do so. The principle behind this action was to reduce the economic support on which the USSR could rely on, essentially the acceptance of China into global trade was principally aligned with the concept of reducing communist influence, even though China still existed as a communist authoritative state, the opening up of trade made the dissolution of USSR, as a prerequisite in order to achieve economic prosperity a juicy proposition. This is in line with the liberal lens of containment which argues that the containment strategy was successful when states were drawn in by what internationalism and free trade necessarily consisted of. The impact of opening up trade to China, separate from the economic chokehold on the USSR, allowed China to exist as an antithesis to the USSR’s communist ideology. Not only did the US necessarily creep into the backdoor of the USSR, but it also gained access to a market otherwise non-accessible, greatly benefiting the US and its allies with the large population and market that China offered.

## **Security Dimension**

A significant and key aspect of the security dimension early on in the containment of the USSR is built upon the formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1949, a security pact built to create a security environment in fears of the USSR expansion westward. On the other hand, it is also a means of increasing security pressure eastward to ensure that states that

feel necessarily threatened by the strength of the USSR. “As the world’s premier multinational military organization, comprising many prosperous nations with a vested interest in maintaining global stability, NATO is uniquely suited to meeting such demands” (Daalder and Goldgeier, 2006, p. 105). The formation of NATO specifically pushed the ability for the military presence of the US and its allies geographically and not constricted to region, therefore one out of the three dimensions is already established strongly through the formation of NATO. Additional insight into the NATO impact can be seen through the reaction of the USSR, the USSR in retaliation formed the Warsaw Pact in 1955, as a counter-security pact to NATO in order to protect itself from a potential eastern front invasion from NATO. This clearly shows how much the USSR feared the power and potential threat of NATO. Conclusively, the creation of NATO applied enough military pressure on the USSR and played a key role in the dissolution of the USSR.

The arms race, at its base, is the chase of power through the military, in which the US and the USSR focused on increasing their own weapons arsenal. “For the Soviet Union, the nuclear arms race began as an issue of prestige: the A-bomb was perceived as important for great-power status. Nikita Khrushchev discovered in nuclear-tipped missiles a cost-effective fix for Moscow’s security concerns” (Radchenko, 2016, pp.158-175). The US equally amassed a large nuclear arsenal, and both sides of the war continued to believe in the need for conventional warfare strength.

The usage of non-direct confrontation which arguably can be considered as a “non-military” aspect of the containment strategy is the achieving of foreign policy through the proxy, in which the countries do not necessarily send in their own military force into foreign territory. However, for the invasion of the Bay of Pigs, this aspect shall be considered as a security dimension, especially when noting that there is a need for military expertise to be applied in order for such an execution, even though not directly, the need for military training and equipment can be contended as a military aspect. The case in point which would be used was drawn in the Bay of Pigs Invasion in 1961 which the United States used multiple means as a retaliation in hopes of toppling the newly formed government via Fidel Castro’s rise to power in Cuba through a communist revolution.

The methods in which the US executed under President Eisenhower, were in the forms of the CIA discretely and secretly funding and training the democratic revolutionary front (DRF) a group of anti-Castro Cubans who were exiled from Cuba, a group of “rebels” as a means of creating internal conflict within the state. Retrospectively analyzed, the failure of the Bay of pigs invasion could be tied down to the change of administration in which President JFK eventually chose to recall air support, which eventually led to the defeat of the DRF after only three days at the hands of the Cuban Revolutionary Armed Forces. However, the ideal outcome from the Bay of Pigs invasion was to regain control over the Latin American region in order to halt any and all forms of the spread of the communist ideology in the region and globally, perspective additionally as a narrative setter in order to push other states from repeating an equivalent revolution.

The final case in which this paper identifies as a significant aspect of the security dimension is the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962. In The aftermath of the failed bay of Pigs invasion, the Cuban administration under Fidel Castro requested for the shipment of nuclear weapons from the USSR into Cuba as a means of deterring another potential invasion. The USSR additionally, had justification for arming nuclear armaments in Cuba by calling out the actions of the US in planting Jupiter Ballistic Missiles in both Turkey and Italy. The Cuban missile crisis, in essence, is the pinnacle of the Cold War, in which the fears of a mutually assured destruction through nuclear warfare was at its peak. The necessity for both the US and USSR to properly handle the

situation to avoid an all-out destructive outcome. In the case of the Cuban missile crisis, the US retaliated by “deciding to place a naval blockade, or a ring of ships, around Cuba. The aim of this “quarantine,” as he called it, was to prevent the Soviets from bringing in more military supplies. He demanded the removal of the missiles already there and the destruction of the sites” ( *Cuban Missile Crisis* | *JFK Library*, 2022, pp. 1-2). The conclusion of the Cuban missile crisis ended with Nikita Khrushchev agreeing to back down and dismantle the Nuclear sites in Cuba.

## **Global Perspective Dimension**

The non-military aspects of the Cold War also revolved around the dimensions as in the aspect of the *global perception*, the argument can be made for the technological race in the form of the Space Race, where the US and the USSR used the advancements of science as methods to showcase each states’ technological prowess and superiority over the other, noting that this is feats in which other states around the world could never have done in that time period. Additionally, because of how these feats were naturally extravagant, it had a rippling global effect in which a state which gets to “1 -up” the other is able to by virtue of perspective, portray itself as the better state. Retrospectively in this aspect, the US managed to “win” the battle by sending Neil Armstrong to land on the moon whereas the Soviets could only send Yuri Gagarin into space. “Nationalism and ideology, along with the propaganda that came from them, were the primary motivating factors in the development of spaceflight technology during the early few decades of the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union” (Kallen, 2019 , p.1).

Beyond the space race, the usage of media and culture were among the key strategies in ensuring victory for the US in the Cold War. The exportation of culture and media became a major strategy to defile and demonize communism and the USSR as an entity on a global scale. The exportation of media rapidly allowed for on a global dimension, the perception of the communist USSR as a chokehold on the freedom of individuals on the ground, thus far domestically and internationally justifying the mass amount of resources put into the containment strategy, additionally this provided global pressure on the USSR and created a perspective wall upon the expansion of the USSR, in order for the USSR to retain any kind of respect in the global scene, it had to take down the exaggerated portrayal of itself in the media, however, the US and its mass strategy unequivocally won on this front by massively pushing out media content beyond the ability for the USSR to do so.

From the global perspective dimension, the US strategized itself and positioned itself as a major exporter of culture. A strategic method in which the US exports its culture is through the usage of media, according to Bielby and Harrington (2008), American producers created multiple different strategies to export its media, and among the methods is the usage of “package deals” in which TV Series and Movies are promised towards foreign states as a method of negotiation to allow for American media to penetrate into foreign markets. This allows for the exportation of culture through the media as a method of either selling a sugarcoated image of America or equally likewise selling demonized representations of opposing states; as in the Cold War, the usage of Media to incite anti- communist rhetoric through propaganda material such as the *red scare*. “The detailed reconstruction of the FBI’s role in the Red Scare during 1919 and 1920 shows that the federal intelligence officials played a crucial role in initiating the anticommunist hysteria in the United States.” (Regin Schmidt, 2004). The Red Scare played a big part in ensuring that not only were the domestic consumers of American media sold to the anticommunist idea, but it also ensured that states that foreign consumers of American media were aligned in the same direction.

This essentially concludes why even a concept which is arguably non-militaristic and unimportant in the context of a “war”, is still considered a defining factor in gaining an advantage in the process of containment.

As a conclusion, the justification for the containment of the USSR still falls within the perimeters of the US’s national interest of reaching the pinnacle of the international realm, with the justification being the “protection of democracy”, labelled as an ideology battle against communism and the painted picture of the tyranny and authoritative governmental structure of communism. The strategies applied within the containment strategy during the Cold War still was heavily driven by a militaristic approach, as seen in the Arms Race, with the US and USSR in a constant battle to achieve military superiority as a tangible show of power, however, there still needs acknowledgement towards the other dimensions of containment as critical aspects towards the success of the containment.

### **Efficacy of the Containment of the USSR**

As established in the past subtopic, the execution of the containment strategy was largely a success. This part of the paper shall then explore the efficacy of the containment in two parts the impacts and effects of the containment strategy towards the USSR, and the impact on the image of the US as an international actor. The impact of the containment strategy retrospectively observed was the dissolution of the USSR. According to *Milestones: 1989–1992 - Office of the Historian*, (1992) things quickly altered in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. The fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 and the subsequent toppling of Communist rule in all of Eastern Europe were both influenced by Gorbachev’s decision to remove the Soviet burden on the nations of Eastern Europe. Additionally, beyond the dissolution of the USSR, the US, gained an unequivocal victory on the international perspective of itself, positioning itself favourably in the pursuit of glory, arguably the moment where “when the Soviet Union imploded, bipolarity in the sense of two predominant powers ended, as did the division of the world into two opposing blocs” (Nadkarni, 2010, p.1). Efficiently, the status quo shifted into a unipolar world with the US as the hegemonic power at the pinnacle of the world.

Beyond this point, the US has worked towards retaining this position by ensuring that any form of displacement from any possible challengers becomes an increasingly uphill battle. As discussed earlier in the context of the US’s pursuit of glory, the US continues to work towards maintaining itself in the pinnacle of the world, thus any and all forms of competition from any power competitors are handled efficiently. In the status quo, the US has successfully probably become the most important actor in the international realm, with any and all decision-making, even domestic decisions, ripple through the global arena. Essentially if the US hurts, everyone else hurts as well. This could be tied to the success that the US achieved post the Cold War, and the ability to retain itself at the top of the international order. Therefore, this undoubtedly proves the efficacy of the implementation of the containment strategy on all three dimensions in the form of the impacts it holds for the US and the current privilege it holds at the top of the international order.

### **China: The Rising Dragon A New Challenger Arrives**

The growth of China has been a long time coming, a country with a large population and resources. Deng Xiaoping’s decision to open up China to the world was the precursor to China’s meteoric rise to power. In the status quo as of 2022, China enjoys a 2.3% growth rate in terms of

GDP, whereas the US retains a miserable -3.5% annual GDP growth rate. “Since China began to open up and reform its economy in 1978, GDP growth has averaged almost 10 per cent a year, and more than 800 million people have been lifted out of poverty” (*The World Bank*, 2022, pp.1-2). Under administration changes and specifically the aggressive policies which Xi Jinping the current premier of China applied to materialize his dream of getting China back to its ancient *Silk Road* glory days, China has effectively rocketed in its growth. Xi Jinping employs an aggressive counter-mechanism to American influence, this part of the paper shall explore China’s current context and its duels against the US in the three dimensions of containment.

As of 2022, China’s economy is the second largest economy in the world, with only the US maintaining a larger economy than China. “The economic reform and economic policy of the Xi Jinping Leadership can be divided into three issues. The first issue is the Comprehensively Deepening Reform, which aims to limit the role of government while giving a decisive role to the market economy and thereby achieving its definitive goals by 2020. The second issue is the Promotion of a New Type of Urbanization, which aims to give an urban family registry to farmers who have moved from rural areas to urban areas and to grant urban public services, including residential security, social security, and compulsory education for children while driving the growth of China by urbanization. The third issue is the Innovation of Macro-Control, which aims to specify a reasonable range for economic management, setting the inflation rate goal as the upper limit and the growth rate and employment goals as the lower limit; if the economy is within the range, short-term economic stimulus measures will not be taken, but economic system reform and economic structural adjustment are given priority.” (Tanaka, 2015). According to *China’s Economic Rise: History, Trends, Challenges, and Implications for the United States*, (2019), Despite being a sizable and expanding market for American businesses, China’s partial shift to a market economy has led to economic practices that are viewed detrimental to American interests, such as industrial regulations and the piracy of American intellectual property.

In the economic sphere, as discussed earlier, the way in which China chooses to handle the World Bank and the IMF, two major prongs in the domination of the US in the economy, Xi Jinping formulated the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, according to (Tien, 2019), The AIIB is similar to the IMF and the WB while being lower in size and capacity. As a result, the AIIB is viewed as a rival of the IMF and WB and will pose threats to the Bretton Woods system’s continued existence with the two top World Bank and IMF financial organizations. This particular policy shows how China, in itself, is pushing to challenge the economic dominance that the US currently holds, providing an alternative to the US’s prongs of global economic control. Being the world’s second-largest economy, China is in a prime position to challenge the position of the US at the top of the global order.

In the security dimension, China continues to enforce its military strength outwards, primarily in the South China Sea and its enforcement of the nine-dash line, constantly sending in naval troops into sovereign territory as a clear show of power within the region. China however is shown to portray no fear in the face of the US’s military strength in the region, potentially this could come from the fact that the security aspect is not the major contender for China. It still chooses to tackle the US’s supremacy by maintaining a large power however it is still no match for the military superiority of the US. In the context of security alliances, China too chooses not to engage in any form of alternative security pacts in response to the still-existent NATO, clearly showing that China has lesser interest in the aspect of conventional military warfare. This could also be a result of China’s nuclear arms and how the establishment of the theory of Mutually



Assured Destruction means that all nuclear states by all means would choose not to engage in any form of warfare between nuclear states in order to avoid any form of ultimate destruction as drawn in parallel to the Cuban missile crisis.

According to *Global Times* (2019), a country's overall national strength reflects its worldwide standing and influence and has a direct bearing on its willingness to work with other members of the international community. From the aspect of global perspective, China has challenged the USA's dominance, A case in point can be looked at the aspect of The UN Climate Change Conference (COP26), in which China tries to sell itself as a cooperative international actor. China additionally during COP26 calls out the climate financing in which developed states, owe a moral obligation to play a role in ensuring that developing states are aided in the fight against climate change, this in itself is a statement which allows for the betterment of the image of China when talked in the context of developing states, something that China sees as an important part of the battle against the developed US.

Knowing that it is nigh impossible to displace the export of American culture and media, China uses more classic and conventional forms of global perception to tackle the US. China uses its willingness to work with developed states via the economy as its critical aspect of the challenge. Therefore, there is a need to acknowledge the overlap of the economic influence China has and its ability to shift its global perception. China uses aggressive investment policies such as the Belt Road Index/One Belt One Road Policy as a mechanism to increase its image towards developing states, investing in states where the WB or IMF is unwilling to do so such as African states. This challenges the image in which the US maintained itself as the economic saviour of smaller developing states and pushes a narrative that China can do it as well. China knows that it needs not to do so much to handle allied states of the US, knowing that it is nearly impenetrable to change the thoughts of close allies of the US, especially when such states are highly dependent on the IMF and WB as economic backbones.

Therefore, because it is established that a core part of the US's national interest is to retain its position in the international realm, it is immediately threatened by this newfound challenger in the form of China.

## THE AMERICAN GRAND STRATEGY AND ITS APPLICATION

The American Grand Strategy is a term coined as a means of classifying foreign policy decision-making by the US. "Grand strategy is a term of art from academia and refers to the collection of plans and policies that comprise the state's deliberate effort to harness political, military, diplomatic, and economic tools together to advance that state's national interest" (O'Brien, 2021, pp.1-2). This part of the paper shall like in the previous parts, explore the strategies in reference to specifically the containment of China, which may involve actors other than China in the efforts to contain China.

In the economic dimension, the US uses its mass financial resources to build up its influence globally. Noting that the ASEAN region is a disputed and important region, the US looks to build economic blocs within the region such as the formation of the Trans- Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA) during the Barack Obama administration The agreement which excludes China, looks to reduce the Asian reliance on the Chinese economy and instead bolster relations with the US as a major player in the TPPA. However, with the withdrawal of the US during an

administration shift towards Donald Trump, the remaining countries chose to renegotiate and form a new economic agreement which later on revamped and changed itself to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). The US, as of 2022 is looking to revisit the idea and recreate a new form of economic partnership within the region, however, the US still actively voices out against China attempting to join the CPTPP even though it is no longer a part of the partnership. The US also looks towards aggressively investing in developing states as a means to react to China's BRI, according to Shalal (2022), Over a five-year period, the United States will mobilize \$200 billion in grants, federal cash, and private investment to assist initiatives in low and middle-income nations that combat climate change, advance gender parity, advance global health, and upgrade digital infrastructure.

In the dimension of security, the US enforces its military superiority within disputed regions as a means of counterbalancing all of China's intrusions into the ASEAN region, uses its freedom of navigation, seas and skies exercises, sending in naval warships into the region as a means of military pressure upon China and its naval navigation in the region. "The USS Carl Vinson and USS Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Groups with more than 14,000 sailors and marines began dual carrier operations in the South China Sea" (*US Ships Enter South China Sea, China Aircraft Sent into Taiwan ADIZ*, 2022, pp.1-2).

In terms of security agreements, the US recently enforced the formation of AUKUS as a means of arming allies in the region to counteract Chinese superiority in the region. "AUKUS will provide Australia with a conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarine capability" (House, 2022, p.1). The ability for Australia to now necessarily challenge China's military superiority in the region is a mechanism in which the US is able to delegate security to other actors in the region while overseeing the security aspect of containment. AUKUS aims to balance the security issues that China poses in the Asia Pacific region, with the added military capability of a nuclear submarine in the hands of the US allies, Australia. This serves as a reminder of US military superiority outside of its own region, and as a warning to China against its encroachment upon the Asia Pacific region. Outside of purely security agreements, the US maintains relationships with "proxy" states in the form of South Korea and Japan, two particularly important and long-standing allies, noting that these are states which are geographically proximate to China and retain a mutual fear of China's potential security threat. The US maintains the largest amount of personnel outside of the US in Japan, with a total of according to Nikkei (2022), according to Department of Defense figures, the United States has over 56,000 active-duty military personnel in Japan, more than any other nation and far more than the 35,000 or so in Germany. Thus, the US pursues an active military balance in response to China's increasing influence in the region.

In the global perspective dimension, the US chooses to establish strong regional ties as a means to respond to China's growing influence in the region. As Birchill (2021) defines American strengthening of relationships in the Asian region, In India's ongoing struggle against the COVID-19 pandemic, the people of India have the support of the United States. Since the COVID-19 pandemic started, the United States has given India more than \$200 million for relief and response efforts, including more than \$50 million in emergency supplies and training for more than 218,000 frontline health workers on infection prevention and control, which has benefited more than 43 million Indians. Beyond India, as established earlier, the US still maintains a position as the largest exporter of culture and media, heavily consumed by the Asian region as well. This allows for media perception of China to exist on a bias towards the US. In particular scenarios such as criticizing China's human rights abuse, it gets much more attention due to the media influence

that the US has, it is unsurprising that the US has the ability to recreate a potential “red scare” scenario as seen in the past containment of the USSR, having maintained its position culturally.

“Geopolitical tensions are high in the Asia Pacific region and have the potential to result in repercussions that will greatly affect U.S. allies in the region as well as U.S. security, political, and economic interests. Maintaining and fostering strong alliances, and understanding and addressing challenges in the region and how they affect the U.S. homeland will be key to ensuring the success of U.S. policy in Asia” (*Foreign Policy: Asia Pacific*, 2022, pp.1-3) Therefore, bolstering ties as a means of control is the go-to global perspective mechanism of control for the US in tackling China, coming hand in hand with its media control. Another angle to consider is the combination of the economic-global perspective angle, in which the usage of economic frameworks are means of increasing the US’s influence within the region. “The Indo-Pacific Economic Framework was agreed by 13 countries, accounting for 40% of global GDP, and was introduced by Vice President Joe Biden in Japan at the end of May” (*US official says diplomatic push in Asia paying dividends | AP News*, 2022, p.1). When concerning national interests, it is important to note the concept of reliance and the formation of mutual understanding. The US uses this concept to bolster its position and emulate its dominance in its global perception of the region via economic benefits.

The final angle to explore is to identify how the US uses its position to create negative security situations for China, by eliminating its closest allies within the region. The point case that shall be explored is the way in which the US tries to eliminate North Korea, a geographic and political buffer zone for China against South Korean and Japan, which are East Asian allies of the US. “During a high-level meeting with South Korean officials in Pyongyang in March 2018, Kim Jong UN conveyed his interest in meeting with U.S. President Donald Trump. Trump accepted the offer and the two leaders met three months later in Singapore, signing a joint statement seeking a more stable bilateral relationship and greater cooperation toward the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula” (*Chronology of U.S.-North Korean Nuclear and Missile Diplomacy | Arms Control Association*, 2022, pp.1-3). In this pursuit, the main idea behind it is to stabilize the region and reduce the threat that North Korea poses, however, this is two-pronged because the denuclearization of North Korea would also mean the reduction of China’s reliable ally in the region.

## **THE COMPARATIVE OF USSR CONTAINMENT AND CHINA CONTAINMENT STRATEGIES.**

In formulating a comparative, this part of the paper shall explore on a holistic basis the comparative principle behind action, and the weightage of each of the dimensions. To do so, the comparative would be divided into three parts, Strategic decisions and their application, the impacts and reactions towards containment and the difference that can be drawn temporally. The major differences and similarities that can be seen are in the emphasis and weightage on non-security dimensions in the current containment of China, where the focus of the containment of the USSR was on the security aspect, as seen in the Cuban missile crisis and the arms race, with less significance put upon the economic and global perception, China, by its choice, chooses to engage more on the economic and global perception, noticing that it is nigh impossible to handle the security aspects that the US applies. The US, as a means of balancing out China, is forced into a position to focus on strengthening its economic and global perspective dimensions of containment. Where applications of NATO as a security pact existed to contain the USSR, the containment of China chose a milder position with the enactment of AUKUS instead, a security arrangement with

lesser antagonistic perception towards it in comparison. Arguably, there is a possibility of NATO's direction to be against China in the future, in so far as this has not happened it is an unnecessary extrapolation to happen within this comparative. Therefore based on the context and status quo, it is clear to see how the strategy shift happening is one that allows for more diplomatic conduct as a means of handling containment. The similarities in the security aspect can be seen in the form of how states still are respectful of each other's military capabilities, even in the context of mutually assured destruction, there is an inherent fear towards security when it comes to military power, therefore even in situations where security is less significant, it still plays a major role in keeping powers in check.

The impacts and reactions of the states being contained greatly differ. In the containment of the USSR, the choice of reaction by the USSR is primarily focused on a retaliation basis, the reaction of China against containment is considered mild. The USSR's reaction to NATO, for example, is the formation of the Warsaw pact, and the reaction to the placement of Jupiter Ballistic Missiles is the armament of Cuba, in such scenarios, the reaction of the USSR is almost always a direct confrontation against the US. However, when identifying China's responses it is always to tackle the US in dimensions in which it can gain the upper hand. China's formation of AIIB against the WB and IMF is an example in which China uses the national interests of other states as a mechanism to incline states towards China instead of the US. This method is seen as less confrontational and one that induces reactions from third-party states instead of the US. This in principle, disallows the aggressive justification from the US to directly confront China, as such, the US is precautionary in ensuring that it is not seen as the antagonistic actor within its strategy of containment. Thus conclusively, there is a clear difference in reactions between the strategy of containment. The similarities that can be seen between the containment strategies are the application of building up and strengthening foreign diplomatic relations between states, acknowledging that in the past the diplomatic relations were mostly zero-sum, the conditions of the current position allow for diplomatic relations to be way more flexible between states, it is not seen as problematic for a small state to retain good relations between both China and the US.

Lastly, in analyzing (3), the difference between the status quo and time has proven the importance of the Mutually Assured Destruction theory, where parallels to the Cuban Missile Crisis can be drawn, especially noting that the advancements in nuclear warfare and conventional weapons are far more advanced in comparison to the Cold War, both the US and China are reluctant to engage in direct confrontation with security positions. Acknowledging that a nuclear war would be an unwinnable situation for both sides, the US and China chose to tone down military confrontation as a means of not escalating the security situation. Instead, through advancements in technology, the US and China choose to battle on the sphere of the non-traditional security aspect. This allows for "cleaner competition" between states and fewer conflicts to occur on hand. In this aspect, the impact on third-party states involved in the confrontation is also noticeably lessened in comparison to the Cold War. This allows for the growth of such states to not be impacted by the great power competition between both states, in fact arguably such competition allows for smaller states to prosper noting that there is an influence competition that happens and the best way that both states identify in order to increase its influence is by positive mechanisms of national interest. Undeniably, the creation of alternatives and options through this competition such as the AIIB and the IMF and WB, allows for the smaller states to gain benefits, instead of definitive losses on a scale.

## CONCLUSION

There are clear differences and similarities when comparing the containment strategies, arguably these differences have brought about a much more positive power nexus between the two states and have brought about a greater ability for smaller states to engage in relations with each great power, without necessary detriment being brought upon it.

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## **AN OUTLOOK ON TÜRKİYE: GROWING MALAYSIA DEFENCE INDUSTRY**

Nabil Haziq Bin Yazid

*Political Science, International Islamic University Malaysia*

*Email: nabilhaziq72@gmail.com*

### **ABSTRACT**

*Malaysia's defence industry is in Bitzinger's third-tier classification of a country's defence industry and level six of Krause's Ladder of Arms Production. Competition and tension in the Southeast Asia region are greater than ever before. The effects of the big power struggles are becoming more and more pronounced. Malaysia's defence and security industry must be met with a rigorous development process to adapt to the conflicts in the region. Achieving self-independence in producing and supplying arms to the Malaysian Armed Forces (MAF) is presently critical. A comparative study was conducted between the Malaysian defence industry and the Türkiye defence industry. This article contributes to the field of research in developing Malaysia's defence industry to a greater height.*

**Keywords:** *Defence industry, Security, Regional Power, Defence White Paper, Resilience*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The development of the defence and security industry in the Southeast Asia region was heavily influenced by the defeat of the United States (US) in the Vietnam War in 1975 and the end of the Cold War in 1989 (Arsy et al., 2019). Regional disputes further contributed to the presence of a security dilemma and the beginning of an arms race between Southeast Asia countries. Fast forward to 2023, Indonesia and Singapore are the two leading countries in the defence and security industry in the region. PT. Pindad a state-owned defence company from Indonesia and ST Engineering from Singapore are two of the best defence and security companies in the region. They have provided their motherland with adequate defence equipment for the armed forces' utilization which can be said that they achieved autarky in the defence and security industry.

Bitzinger's classification of a country's defence industry placed Malaysia in the third tier of the categorisation. Producing only relatively 'low tech' and can only produce small arms, ammunitions, armoured vehicles and small-sized ships including small arms licensed production such as rifles and putting together imported parts for specific military equipment such as helicopters and armoured vehicles. In comparison with Indonesia and Singapore, they are classified as second-tier arms-producing countries that possess an indigenous defence industry which is quite substantive and sophisticated and capable of designing, developing and manufacturing their own weapons systems. Other than Bitzinger's classification, earlier scholars in this field notably Wulf (1985); Krause (1992); as well as Ross (1988) in Kinsella (1998) described the level of capability in terms of defence industry phases of arms production as follows: Repair, maintenance and overhaul of imported weapon systems; Assembly of imported arms; Production of simple weapons components under license; Production of a major portion of weapons systems under license; and Indigenous design and production of weapons system. In reference to Krause's (1992) model in measuring a country's defence industry capability called The Ladder of Arms Production, Malaysia's defence industry (MDI) can be categorised in level six. The ability to co-production or complete licensed production of less sophisticated weapons.

Competition and tension in the Southeast Asia region are greater than ever before. The effects of the big power struggles are becoming more and more pronounced. Malaysia's defence and security industry must be met with a rigorous development process to adapt to the conflicts in the region. Achieving self-independence in producing and supplying arms to the Malaysian Armed Forces (MAF) is presently critical.

## **BACKGROUND**

In recent years, Malaysia has faced several cases of encroachment, intrusion and harassment in the water territorial areas of the long-disputed South China Sea. This is with the claimant by China of the nine-dash line parts of which are claimed by Malaysia, Vietnam, Brunei and the Philippines. This is considered a provocation of the four countries' sovereignty as the nine-dash line is included in the country's exclusive economic zone (EEZ). The EEZ as defined by the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, is an area of the sea in which a sovereign state has exclusive rights regarding the exploration and use of marine resources, including energy production from water and wind. It stretches from the outer limit of the territorial sea (12 nautical miles from the baseline) out to 200 nautical miles (NMI) from the coast of the state in question. In June 2021, 16 Chinese Air Force planes intruded Malaysia's air space over 60 nautical miles off the Sarawak state of Malaysian Borneo. July 2021, this is the third time China Coast Guard (CCG) vessels harassed Petronas subsidiary *Petronas Carigali* project at Kasawari gas field in the Malaysian part of the South China Sea in Block SK316 offshore Sarawak. In September 2021, Malaysian authorities detected a large Chinese survey ship, the 4,600-ton Da Yang Hao in an area that runs through the EEZs of three countries: Brunei, Malaysia and the Philippines. Most recent dispute in May 2023, Malaysian authorities detained a Chinese-registered vessel illegally anchored in the Malaysian part of the South China Sea looting two British World War Two shipwrecks.

Malaysia responded with a diplomatic protest, and diplomatic note and called the ambassador to give an explanation of the situation. While Malaysia's approach to foreign policies has been consistent in maintaining good bilateral and multilateral relations between all parties and resolving issues diplomatically and peacefully, some might view it as a passive approach. Contrary to the Philippines and Vietnam, who are louder in opposing China's baseless action? In April 2023, the Philippines invited journalists aboard a Coast Guard vessel to witness the aggression of China themselves to be recorded and expose China's authorities illegally enforcing jurisdiction in the disputed water areas. A month before, the President of the Philippines, Ferdinand Marcos Jr. justified his decision to allow a larger presence of the US military in the Philippines territories as a deterrence mechanism to safeguard its interests from China's aggression in its part of the South China Sea. Vietnam began to expand their territories in the Spratlys Island, the West Reef and Sin Cowe Island. Improving fortifications and infrastructure with the installation of several coastal defence installations, administrative buildings, concrete pads and bunkers, and a large tower structure presumably for communications or signals intelligence as reported by the Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative (AMTI). These actions by the Philippines and Vietnam are considered a direct challenge to China. An offensive approach.

Despite the contestation, interestingly economic ties between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries and China presently are still significant in importing and exporting goods and services for the consumption of the people. Customs data showed that in 2022, China's trade with ASEAN accounted for 50.3% of the volume of imports and exports to other Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) members, of which China's trade in

intermediate products to ASEAN came to 4.36 trillion yuan, an increase of 16.2% year over year, accounting for 67% of the total trade value between China and ASEAN. Understanding that the majority of ASEAN countries heavily depend on China to survive. On the other hand, is Malaysia not capable of responding in an offensive way as with the Philippines and Vietnam? Tensions are growing for Malaysia to safeguard its national interests in the waters of the South China Sea. What we can assure is that Chinese ships and vessels will continue to violate the United Nations Convention for the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the 2016 decision of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague over the demarcation line on a 1947 map of the sea brought up by China. The public has call on the Malaysian government, the Ministry of Defence (MINDEF) and the Malaysian Armed Forces (MAF) to mobilise military assets to protect Malaysia's sovereignty rights in her part of the South China Sea. In the worst situation if the dispute escalates to an all-out arms conflict, in the current situation, is Malaysia capable of deploying its military assets to protect the nation?

### BRIEF HISTORY OF MALAYSIA DEFENCE INDUSTRY (MDI)

Initiated in 1976, Malaysia's defence industry started off with venturing into the aerospace industry repairing aircraft and overhaul depots. Since then, it has expanded to producing weapons, information and communication technology (ICT), automotive, aerospace and maritime. During the time of the late Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tun Hussein Onn in the 1980s, RM7.19 billion was allocated to the defence sector with the intention to modernise and enhance the MAF proficiency under a special program called *Perkembangan Istimewa Angkatan Tentera* (PERISTA). In 1982, taking the matters of defence seriously, the National Defence Production Policy (NDPP) was formed. This is the principal written framework for the evolution of the Malaysian defence industry along with the National Defence Production Committee (NDPC) to supervise the implementation of the NDPP.



**Figure 1: Framework of National Self-Reliance on the Defence Industry**

Episodes of economic recession withheld the results of the execution of the NDPP. Later in 2005, MAF felt the urge to rapidly modernise the national military assets and combat ability

of the armed forces in times of war. The Ministry of Defence (MINDEF) published the Defence Industry Blueprint (DIB) to promote investments in the domestic defence industry sector that will be able to provide first-line support to the MAF.

Furthermore, in 1990, the Malaysia Defence Industry Council (MDIC) was formed to encourage the industrialisation of the defence sector in Malaysia while supporting the initiatives taken by the Defence Industry Division (DID) placed under MINDEF. Its functions are to promote the development of local defence manufacturing and maintenance capabilities; implementation of defence privatization policy and projects; implementation of offsets programmes and transfer of technology activities; monitoring of companies under the supervision of MOD and also secretariat support to the international defence exhibition. In bolstering the local defence industry, MINDEF created the Defence Research Organisation called the Defence Science Technology Centre (DSTC) in 1968 which was later renamed as Science, Technology and Research Institute for Defence (STRIDE) in 2002. There were efforts to bolster the aerospace industry to venture into the defence aerospace industry. A particular agency with a focus on aerospace, the Malaysian Industry-Government Group for High Technology (MIGHT) was established to coordinate and track the development of the aerospace industry. To significantly advance Malaysia's defence sector, The Malaysia Industry Council for Defence, Enforcement and Security (MIDES) was founded by the government in August 1999, and it underwent revamping in March 2010.

## **CHALLENGES IN THE MALAYSIA DEFENCE INDUSTRY (MDI)**

Sulaiman et al. (2020) pointed out several challenges faced by the MDI. For over 40 years of venturing into the defence industry, the responsible parties have not provided a strategic framework for developing the MDI. PERISTA, initiated under the helm of Tun Hussein Onn, was a good start. DIB later intended to complement and resume the efforts in modernising the competence of MAF but fell short of political willingness to push for the agenda. Priority should be given to MIDES in concerting efforts and ideas between government ministries or agencies and industry players to identify the root problems of stagnancy in the MDI together with addressing and laying out solutions. Balakrishnan (2008) further elaborated on the government's incompetency in handling MDI. Balakrishnan raised concerns about the government's effectiveness in implementing defence industry policy development, increasing the local content of equipment in the MAF as the majority of it is still sourced from abroad especially from Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEM), having few research and development (R&D) activities or export opportunities and the OEMs' reluctance to share their technology out of concern for increased competition.

Moreover, opinions from industry players view that the MDI needed an overhaul of its structure and organisation to rebuild its foundation that will further bolster MDI relevance and sustainable development contributing to the growth of the local defence industry. It has been identified that the government practices a stop-go approach to the defence development policy. Resulted in a waste of time and resources. Other feedback includes the use of 'agents' in the procurement process where the supply does not meet the demand of MAF and unequal level playing field competition between established companies and small companies in the industry. In addressing the challenges of MDI, Balakrishnan & Johar (2021) extensively commented on the issue limiting the growth of the MDI. Four points were brought up: Lack of strategic approach in procurement of defence assets; Limited local industrial technological absorptive capability; Lack of strategic fit between local and foreign partners; and Lack of defence R&D spending leading to innovation. Over-reliance on imports for assets procurement programme reflects the poor

governance in planning and policy direction of the defence industry. Even though Malaysia has spent RM40 billion for the past 15 years on procurement of strategic assets, the capability of technology transfer and absorption is still on tier three of Bitzinger’s classification of a country’s defence industry or level six in Krause (1992) The Ladder of Arms Production. Producing only comparatively “low tech” and limited to small arms, ammunition, armoured vehicles, and small ships, including licenced manufacturing of small arms. Imports of assets procurement come with foreign technology from the OEM industrial capability. Strategic collaboration between OEMs and local industry is paramount to expand the local industrial base. Misalignment of choosing local partners for the collaboration program that are inferior financially and technologically resulted in significant obstacles to the completion of procurement initiatives, with costly consequences for the MAF and the industry. Reluctance of the government to invest in R&D projects stunted the growth of MDI on account of R&D is regarded as a high-risk activity that necessitates significant expenditure and a lengthy gestation period before seeing a return on investment, which only serves to compound the problem.

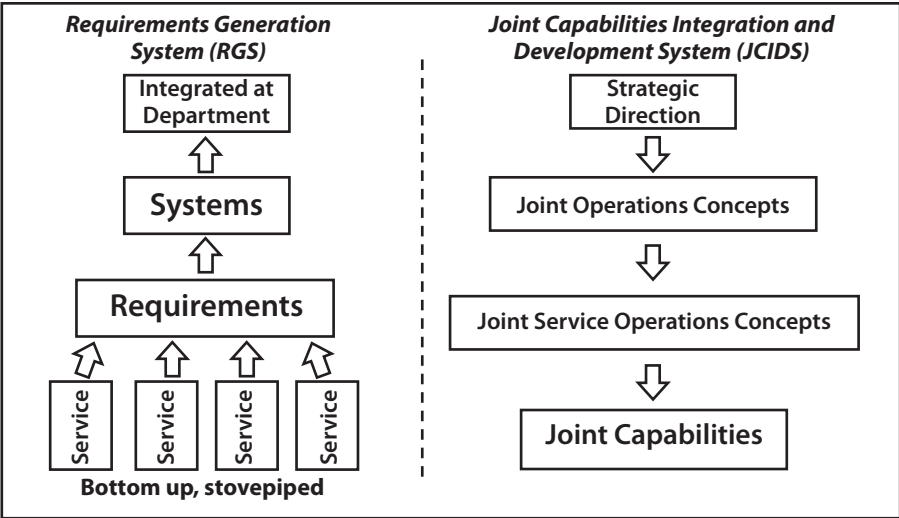


Figure 2 : Framework of Capabilities- Based Planning Force Development

**BRIEF HISTORY OF TÜRKİYE DEFENCE INDUSTRY (TDI) DEVELOPMENT**

From the Ottoman Empire to the Republic of Türkiye, the transition to the modern defence industry and technologies were delayed efforts/actions. During the decade’s end of the Ottoman Empire, they heavily relied on imported military assets for their armed forces. Despite economic, technological and infrastructural challenges, the Republic insisted on pushing the agenda of rebuilding the defence industry. According to Yilmaz & Yorulmaz (2023), TDI development goes through four phases. In the first phase, big investments were encouraged by the Republic with state-funded or private-funded projects. The General Directorate of Military factories, the Gölcük Naval Shipyard and the Airplane and Motor Turk Company are products of the early TDI foundation investments. 1939 to 1974 was the second phase of TDI. Seeing the negative repercussions of World War II, some defence companies were made state-owned. Turkish Aviation Association aeroplane factory in 1941 and the General Directorate of Machinery and Chemical Industry Corporation in 1950. Erdinçler (2019) explained the third phase of TDI and further asserted Türkiye’s ambition to develop its own defence industry infrastructure and attain defence autarky after the Cyprus Peace

Operation in 1974. The United States (US) imposed an arms embargo on Türkiye restricting the use of military equipment with a US provenance. Learning from the mistake, Türkiye underwent a major overhaul of its defence industry. Established the Turkish Air Force Strengthening Foundation (Türk Hava Kuvvetleri Güçlendirme Vakfı) in 1970 and the Turkish Land Forces Strengthening Foundation (Türk Kara Kuvvetleri Güçlendirme Vakfı) in 1974. Both foundations were merged in 1987 to constitute the Turkish Armed Forces Foundation (Türk Silahlı Kuvvetlerini Güçlendirme Vakfı). The result of the consolidation bears fruit for the Türkiye defence industry. Myriad of strategic defence companies were founded: ASELSAN (Military Electronic Industries), İŞBİR (İŞBİR Electrical Industries), ASPİLSAN (Military Battery Industries), HAVELSAN (Aerospace and Electronics Industry), ROKETSAN (Rocket Industries) and Turkish Aircraft Industry Joint Corporation (TUSAŞ) (Erdoğan, 2019). The fourth phase, saw the modernisation of the Turkish Armed Forces (Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri) and the formation of Defense Industries Research and Development Institute (SAGE) in 1985 currently known as TÜBİTAK Defense Industries Research and Development Institute (TÜBİTAK Savunma Sanayii Araştırma ve Geliştirme Enstitüsü) (Yılmaz & Yorulmaz, 2023).

Literature from Bağcı & Kurç (2017) eloquently construed TDI development in relation to the pursuit of power, wealth and prestige. Lessons from the arms embargo in 1974 by the US were the determining factor that motivated Türkiye to evade the influence of importers in national affairs by venturing in high-technology production. Bağcı & Kurç (2017) explained the behaviour of developing states where they seek to have greater access to high technology to build stronger armed forces and to become less reliant on industrialised nations as suppliers. Dependency on foreign companies for strategic defence equipment would make a state vulnerable to threats of purchasing control and foreign policy direction whereby it will be formulated according to the foreign companies' interest. As how the US imposed an arms embargo on Türkiye. Wealth is attained through safeguarding their foreign exchange reserves while also generating a foreign exchange surplus by selling weapons and reaping the benefits of the defence industry's spillover effects. In discussing the pursuit of wealth, scholars have various opinions on how defence industrialisation would benefit a state's economy. Gansler (1982, p. 25) & Bitzinger (2003, p. 73) as cited in Bağcı & Kurç (2017) placed defence industrialisation as the basis of state economic modernisation and expansion of domestic technological base that will translate to an economic spur. Sanders (1990), as cited in Bağcı & Kurç (2017), contributes to Gansler's (1982, p. 25) & Bitzinger's (2003, p. 73) points by highlighting the potential to harness political power that is available through arms export. Benoit (1973) as cited in Bağcı & Kurç (2017) opines that having a national defence industry to implement the 'import-substitution' model will have a positive impact on the domestic economy, supporting the growth of the local defence industry with economic policies of nationalization, subsidization of manufacturing, and highly protectionist trade policies that will lessen the burden of solely purchasing from foreign companies. Other than that, the power display of their technological prowess in the regional and international arena is considered a symbol of prestige for the nation. Brozka & Lock (1992, p. 145) as cited in Bağcı & Kurç (2017) opined that deterrence and coercion are two advantages of massive possession of artillery to the state's adversaries. From a different angle, it can be viewed as military diplomacy. Türkiye in her quest to be a regional power has been ensuring her interest in the Middle East, the Mediterranean and Central Asia peacefully assured by extending military aid.

Afghanistan received \$4.5M in military aid through a bilateral agreement agreed on between Kabul and Ankara in 2018. Comprised of logistical operations support of the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces to recover from the fight with the Taliban (Saif, 2019).



On top of that, the assistance given in 2020 to the Libyan armed forces helped turn the tide of the Libyan civil war. Forcing Haftar's self-styled Libyan National Army (LNA) to retreat from being overpowered by the Türkiye drone force (Traina, 2020). Ultimately, the national defence industry provides state actors with a strong technological base that goes hand in hand enhancing the national economy while acting as a deterrent and coercive military tool from adversaries and an item of military diplomacy in foreign relations. These tenets are the catalysts that propel TDI to new heights in defence technology and military capability while reducing Türkiye's susceptibility of over-reliance on foreign companies.

Realising the urgency of equipping the armed forces for peacekeeping while simultaneously advancing the local defence industry, Türkiye implemented the "two-prolonged approach: production of equipment locally wherever possible; and imports of both modern equipment and technology where necessary" as cited from Günlük-Şenesen (1993, p. 261) in Bağcı & Kurç (2017). The infant stage of the Türkiye local defence industry in the 1980s could not supply the TAF with an adequate number of arms and weapons and heavy artillery although defence industrialisation captured the interest from investors. Hence, Türkiye relied on import assets in the early stages of TDI development for TAF sustainability. This policy founded TDI backbones later. Marking the shift to a new era of defence industrialisation from Türkiye's most significant investments, the F-16 Fighting Falcon and the Advanced Infantry Fighting Vehicle procurements. At this stage, Türkiye was evolving to the second tier of Bitzinger's classification of a country's defence industry (Bitzinger, 2015) and stage six of (Krause, 1992) Ladder of Arms Production in 1990 and shortly after that to the first tier of Bitzinger's and stage ten of Krause's. Advancement in capabilities changed the procurement model of Türkiye from off-the-shelf direct purchase to licensed and co-production, and to local development followed by an increase in local assembling of defence equipment from 52% in 2011 to 60% in 2014. Research & Development (R&D) companies rose to 157 companies in 2015 compared to just a few companies in 1987. The period of 1980s was the early phase of TDI, saw the close cooperation between Türkiye and the US in defence cooperation to modernize TAF which brought substantial gain with the defence industrial relations focused on co-production, joint development and subcontracting agreements, which increased the integration of Turkish defence firms to the US supply chain (Bağcı & Kurç, 2017). The efficiency of TDI continued to be apparent in its concerted effort of centralising command and production among stakeholders to bolster the industry. An interconnected network of partnerships within the industry ensures accurate demand from TAF being supplied by the industry players. The Turkish Defence Industry "consists of military factories affiliated to the Turkish Armed Forces, the Machinery and Chemical Industry Institution of the Ministry of National Defense, companies belonging to the Turkish Armed Forces Foundation and private companies" (Yilmaz & Yorulmaz, 2023). This is vital as information or concerns can be addressed appropriately by avoiding blunders that would monetarily cost the governing body of the industry.

## GROWING MALAYSIA DEFENCE INDUSTRY

Türkiye and Malaysia have a similar starting point in the modernisation of the defence industry. Through the comparative study conducted between these two countries, we can see that Türkiye is superior to Malaysia in technological advancement, military might and great ambition. The success of TDI can be measured by the number of Turkish defence companies listed in the Top 100 Defense News yearly best defence companies in the world. In the last three years from 2020 to 2023, 16 Turkish defence companies have successfully entered the list (*Top 100*, n.d.). 4 companies in 2020, 2 companies in 2021, 3 companies in 2022 and 4 companies in 2023. Malaysia and Türkiye

established their bilateral defence relations in 1985 with actions taken, including staff talks, ship visits, exchanges of visits, training for army, navy, and air force personnel, and cooperation in the defence industry. In growing MDI to match the champions in the region, Singapore and Indonesia and to have a greater deterrence mechanism amid the big power threats, Malaysia must increase its cooperation in the defence industry with Türkiye. With that being said, what are the areas that Malaysia can learn from the Türkiye defence industry? What area can we improve? How do we create our own success story for our locally-grown defence industry?

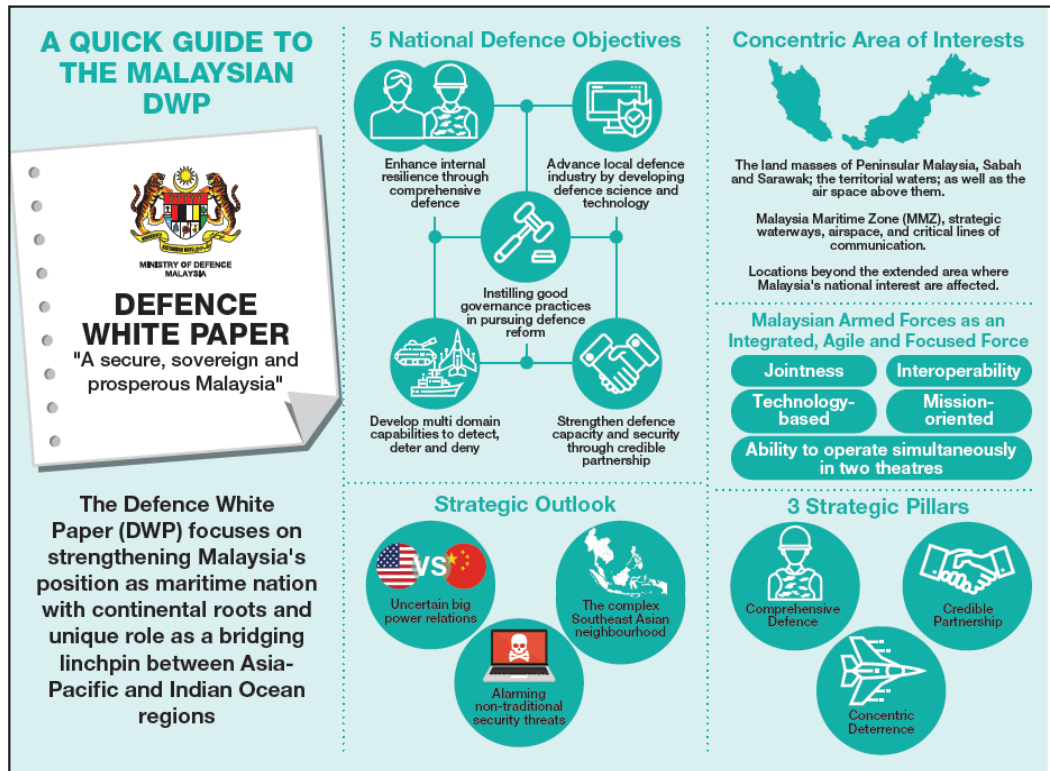


Figure 3: Defence Industry in the Defence White Paper

**Encourage the participation of Government/ Government-Linked Companies (GLCs)/ Government-Linked Investment Companies (GLICs)/ to invest in the defence industry**

TDI in its early phase of development were funded by the state and private entities. This was encouraged by the Turkish government. Malaysia has a history of Government/ GLCs/ GLICs investments in an industry or company, making the industry or company a lucrative business. Some examples are Petroliaam Nasional Berhad (Petronas), Sapura Energy Berhad, Projek Lintasan Kota Holdings Sdn Bhd (PROLINTAS), Astro Malaysia Holdings Berhad, Axiata Group Berhad, Telekom Malaysia Berhad, TIME dotCom Berhad, Farm Fresh Berhad, UEM Edgenta Berhad, Tenaga Nasional Berhad (TNB) and PLUS Malaysia Berhad. These are some of the various successful companies taken up by the Government/ GLCs/ GLICs in Malaysia. Most of these companies are multimillion or some of it is multibillion companies. With a clear objective, strategic planning and accommodative policies, these companies succeeded. Now, these investment entities can look at the potential of the defence industry with assistance from ministries and agencies to be the next economic engine of the country.

## A State-Owned Defence Company

Other than opening the market to invest in TDI, the Turkish government-owned some of the defence companies. This practice was the result of the negative impact of World War II on the Turkish economy. To ensure its vision of attaining defence autarky viable, the state bought the company out. Direct involvement of the Turkish government in the Turkish Aviation Association aeroplane factory and the General Directorate of Machinery and Chemical Industry Corporation guaranteed a stable cash flow for the companies. The Malaysian government could imitate this step. A programme to select the crème de la crème potential companies with an excellent board, track records and human resources to be funded for a period of time, with signed contracts of achieving certain KPIs set by the government coupled with a highly valuable partnership programme with companies from Türkiye that can provide knowledge and skills in the defence industry. The government as the guarantor will provide the companies with high industrial technological absorptive capability with the collaboration from GLCs/ GLICs companies that have experience in heavy industries. Boustead Holdings Berhad (Boustead) a GLC under Lembaga Tabung Angkatan Tentera (LTAT) the smallest GLIC in Malaysia could become one of the potential candidates to be a state-owned company dedicated to defence technology in the early phase of revitalizing Malaysia's defence industry.

## Presidency of Defence Industries, Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye

Türkiye put much emphasis on its vision of attaining defence autarky with the establishment of the Savunma Sanayii Başkanlığı (SSB) or the Presidency of Defence Industries in 1985 which is now led by Prof. Dr. Haluk GÖRGÜN. The goal of the SSB is to establish mechanisms with the power and duty to carry out policies pertaining to the construction of a military-industrial infrastructure in Turkey, as well as to develop a cutting-edge defence sector and guarantee the modernization of the Turkish Armed Forces. These are the responsibilities of SSB (Savunma Sanayii Başkanlığı, 2017):

- To implement the decisions taken by the Executive Committee,
- To connect the purchase schedules to be made on a project basis over the years to the order contract,
- To reorganize and integrate the existing national industry according to the needs of the defence industry, to encourage new enterprises and direct them according to this integration and needs, to investigate foreign capital and technology contribution opportunities, to direct the enterprises, to plan State participation in this regard,
- Determining procurement programs and financing models, taking into account funding sources,
- Planning the production of needed modern weapons, tools and equipment in private or public institutions,
- To support private, public or mixed new investments, when necessary, provided that they are open to foreign investors,

- To research and develop modern weapons, tools and equipment, to ensure the production of prototypes, to provide advance payments, to determine long-term orders and other financial and economic incentives,
- To make contracts covering technical and financial issues, taking into account the conditions of the purchase to be made over the years, depending on the nature of the work, and the specifications and standards to be determined by the need authority,
- Coordinating the export of defence industry products and off-set trade,
- Giving loans from the fund or receiving loans from within the country and abroad and establishing and participating in companies with domestic and foreign capital, when necessary,
- To monitor whether the goods produced comply with the contract content and whether the contract conditions are fulfilled through quality controls,
- Ensuring that application problems are resolved by relevant institutions and organizations,
- To fulfil other duties assigned by the President

The structure of the SSB is similar to MIDES, STRIDE, MIGHT, the Defence Industry Division of MINDEF and the Procurement Division of MINDEF all put together into one governing body. Lack of coordination in the Malaysian defence industry is the core reason for the arguments stated by Balakrishnan in the previous literature mentioned on the challenges of Malaysia's defence industry. The SSB formed by the Turkish government is a good model for restructuring Malaysia's defence industry to a competitive industry in the country for locals to invest in. Having a good infrastructure instils trust in the investors. This allows Malaysia to implement the "two-prolonged approach: production of equipment locally and imports of both modern equipment and technology necessary" without being concerned about being largely dependent on foreign companies for assets procurement or fear of maintaining current assets and purchasing new assets for the armed forces efficient mobilisation.

### **Inserting Ambition as a Regional Power**

Yeşiltaş (2020) in his literature decipher the reasons behind Türkiye assertive military and defence strategy. Türkiye has the ultimate objective to gain strategic autonomy. It refers to the freedom of deciding their foreign, security and defence policies independently void from any external influences and determining their own strategic priorities through defence autarky. A sustainable and self-sufficient defence industry. Complementing strategic autonomy is operational autonomy. This refers to the state's technological and industrial capability. The agenda of achieving strategic autonomy will drive Türkiye as a dominant actor in the region. A long-term goal that has already been in play since 2002." Türkiye's quest to become an assertive regional power was to achieve greater strategic weight to counter the new geopolitical antagonism in the region". By increasing its military prowess, Türkiye will have an upper hand in the region with a strategic leverage of avoiding being tricked with *fait accompli* actions that will disrupt their strategic interests and further assert dominance in the handling of regional crises.

Unlike Türkiye, Malaysia's foreign policy is a friend to all, an enemy to none. Utilising diplomatic tools to resolve regional crises and establishing matured bilateral relations with ASEAN countries. Malaysia has never placed itself to become a regional power possessing dominance that will serve as a strategic leverage in the region. Yet, this might be the main driver of MDI growth and development. China's aggression in the South China Sea, the 2013 Lahad Datu incident where the self-proclaimed heir to the Sulu Sultanate claimed Sabah as their territory, the Myanmar military junta genocide and ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya ethnic resulted in an influx of refugees to Malaysia and the increasing extremism ideologies in the surrounding region. These are the security issues that threaten Malaysia's sovereignty, security and prosperity. Increasing our hard power size can be the answer to these concerns. Inserting ambition to become a regional power in Malaysia's foreign policy will have impacts of fear and respect from the regional community. Ensuring Malaysia's sovereignty, security and prosperity.

## CONCLUSION

Threats from the big powers are now more pronounced. Be it in security, economy and politics and security is the first layer to retain sovereignty and prosperity. In the past decade, Malaysia has been numerously vulnerable to attacks and threats. The uniform bodies of the police, armed forces, coast guard, healthcare personnel and the fire department need modern, functional and robust equipment and assets to execute their tasks. The Malaysian defence industry is not something to be proud of from the early days of it. Lack of coordination and mismatched policies made the industry fail. On the other hand, the Türkiye defence industry is the industry that drives the Turkish economy with being the engine of it. The economy was modelled to fit the defence industry frame and act as the centre of wealth distribution. Technology is developed in the defence industry. Creating jobs for the locals and spurring the domestic economy. Towards a greater strategic defence cooperation, Malaysia must find common ground with Türkiye. An important equation to a long-lasting bilateral relationship. The topic of Muslim solidarity is one that can be contemplated. Increasing cooperation with a Muslim country would contribute to amassing power and dominance in the international politics arena as an en bloc of Muslim states. Possibilities of ending and resolving issues of the Muslim world, especially wars and conflicts. Building back the Muslim civilisation one at a time through addressing problems and issues in some Muslim countries, injecting funds to revive the economy, and giving humanitarian aid of necessities food, water, healthcare and education. What happened in Gaza, Palestine must be our determining factor of unity? Ending the Western world's hypocrisy and cruelty. A comparative study of Malaysia-Türkiye in the defence sector should be studied more for the Malaysian defence industry. \

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## **NORTH KOREA DEFENSE POLICY AS A NATIONAL INTEREST**

Nurul Shafiqah Binti. Azami  
University Malaya  
pikaazami11@gmail.com

### **ABSTRACT**

*This paper examines how North Korea's defense policy and nuclear capabilities are intricately intertwined with the pursuit of its national interests. It scrutinizes the alignment of nuclear strategies with the objectives of promoting an independent public image, strengthening government stability, and enhancing regional influence under the current leadership. Rooted in the philosophy of "juche" (self-reliance), North Korea's nuclear projects are considered indispensable for the government's survival and the maintenance of internal peace and security. The steadfast dedication of the current North Korean leadership to nuclear capabilities underscores their commitment to prioritizing national interests and projecting power on the global stage, even in the face of international isolation and economic challenges. This study offers a comprehensive analysis of the complex dynamics between North Korea's defence policies, nuclear capabilities, and the pursuit of national interests.*

**Keywords:** *North Korea, defense policy, nuclear capabilities, national interest, leadership 'juche' government stability, regional influence, strategic value.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Over the course of many years, North Korea's nuclear development has consistently commanded global attention and raised significant concerns. This development serves as a critical instrument for the North Korean government, not only for ensuring its survival but also for bolstering its bargaining position on the international stage. Under the current regime, extensive efforts have been made to expand the nation's nuclear program, manifested through a series of ballistic missile tests and the enhancement of nuclear weapon capabilities. These nuclear weapons act as a formidable deterrent against potential military interventions or attempts at regime change by external actors. Central to North Korea's security policy and the pursuit of specific military advancements is the assumption that the international community inherently bears hostile intentions. The North Korean leadership perceives the dissemination of politically subversive external information as a significant threat to its ability to maintain ideological authority and internal stability. This article's primary objective is to thoroughly examine the intricate nexus between North Korea's national interests and its nuclear program. A comprehensive understanding of North Korea's nuclear program, its underlying objectives, and the ramifications it holds for regional and global dynamics is imperative for effectively addressing these multifaceted challenges.

### **BACKGROUND-LEADERSHIP IN NORTH KOREA**

North Korea is renowned for its primary objective of preserving its ability to wield significant influence over the Korean Peninsula. The current leadership of the nation is characterized by its determination to maintain an autonomous and sovereign republic under the rule of its incumbent leader. A prolonged history marked by invasions and the domination of larger countries, including Japan's occupation from 1910 to 1945 and the division of the Korean Peninsula by

foreign powers post-World War II, has significantly shaped this perspective. The present leadership has harnessed this historical backdrop to establish an authoritarian political culture grounded in the notion of resolute resistance against external forces, with the current leadership wielding absolute authority to safeguard the Korean populace. This underscores the substantial influence of leadership decisions and individual choices on a nation's security strategy and its endeavours to advance its military capabilities. In the given context, North Korea's security strategy is rooted in the premise that the wider world is fundamentally antagonistic, a belief that has been moulded by past experiences of foreign invasions and the hegemonic dominance of more potent nations.



**Figure 1: Shows the States in North Korea Surrounded between China and South Korea**

Through a pronounced emphasis on the military, the autocratic regime succeeded in preserving internal stability and enhancing its legitimacy. The military continued to occupy a central position within North Korea's strategic framework and was sustained beyond the era of Kim Sung Il following his demise in 1994. Under the leadership of the successor, North Korea's new head, the nation redirected its efforts towards fortifying its nuclear strike capabilities while concurrently bolstering the Korean People's Army's (KPA) focus on asymmetric capabilities, including special operations units, biological and chemical weaponry, and long-range artillery primarily aimed at the civilian population residing in Seoul. During this period, the leader also disseminated the Songun ideology, often referred to as the "Military First" policy, underscoring the pivotal role of the KPA within the regime.

In safeguarding the well-being of the Korean populace, the leadership of the dynasty has established an authoritarian political environment rooted in the resistance to foreign incursions. This enduring influence of the dynasty and its determination to protect the Korean people have left a discernible imprint on North Korea's security strategy and its pursuit of military armaments, as perceived through the lens of a neoclassical realist perspective. North Korean authorities regard the enhancement of their military capabilities as a fitting response to imminent risks, serving to deter external adversaries, preserve the nation's sovereignty, and ensure its continued independence. While North Korea's capacities have evolved over time to counter various perceived threats, these

fundamental elements have remained consistent throughout the tenure of all three generations of the ruling family dynasty.

### **“Military First” Policy**

The North Korean military’s enduring and paramount role in the country’s political landscape is fundamentally underpinned by the “Military First” or Songun doctrine. This ideology posits that the armed forces represent the linchpin for addressing and resolving North Korea’s multifaceted challenges spanning economic, political, and societal realms. While the roots of this doctrine can be traced back to the 1930s, when the nation’s founding leader led a covert resistance against Japanese colonial rule, Songun was not formally institutionalized until after the passing of the leader in 1994. Its appeal lay in its ability to garner support, eclipsing that of the Korean Workers’ Party.

Embracing this doctrine, the succeeding leader, shrewdly placed the military at the forefront of his leadership strategy, thereby consolidating his position and fortifying his grip on power. The emphasis on the military and its elevated stature within the state structure aimed at ensuring political stability and regime continuity. Consequently, the Korean People’s Army (KPA) witnessed an expansion of its responsibilities beyond its traditional defense role. It began actively participating in a wide array of social and economic initiatives, including substantial reconstruction projects, infrastructure development, agricultural tasks, food distribution, and manufacturing.

This multifaceted involvement of the military was aimed at highlighting its relevance to the lives of North Korean citizens and underscoring its critical role in the nation’s overarching developmental agenda. Despite the enduring influence of the Military First doctrine on North Korea’s defence strategies, there have been noticeable shifts in the approach under the current leadership, which seeks to strike a delicate equilibrium. While prioritizing the military’s dominance, the contemporary leader also strives to restore the influence of the Korean Workers’ Party, striking a balance between maintaining the military’s pre-eminence and safeguarding the political equilibrium and legitimacy of the ruling party.

Examining the historical context of North Korea’s military strategy provides insights into the genesis of the Military First doctrine, tracing it back to the leader’s anti-Japanese resistance in the 1930s and its subsequent evolution under successive leadership. This enduring emphasis on the military as a core institution has left an indelible mark on various aspects of North Korean society, the economy, and governance. It underscores the pivotal role played by the military within the comprehensive framework of North Korea’s defence policy, reflecting its enduring importance in shaping the nation’s trajectory. North Korea’s military-first policy, known as “Songun” in Korean, has been a defining feature of the country’s governance and national strategy for decades. This policy places the military at the forefront of the nation’s priorities, granting it a central role in shaping North Korea’s domestic and international affairs. Here, we delve into the key aspects of North Korea’s military-first policy:

In summary, North Korea’s military-first policy is deeply entrenched in the nation’s governance and security strategy. It places a strong emphasis on the military as a deterrent and means of regime survival, impacting the country’s economy, society, and international relations. Understanding this policy is essential for comprehending North Korea’s actions and priorities on the global stage.

## **North Korea as a ‘Self-Reliant’ State”**

In constructing a belief system and an image of North Korea as a “self-reliant” state, the role of propaganda and symbolic representations cannot be overstated. At the heart of this ideology lies the concept of Juche, which places a profound emphasis on North Korea’s sovereignty, autonomy, and self-sufficiency. Juche serves as the guiding principle underpinning North Korea’s political, economic, and social systems, as well as its foreign policy. To promulgate the Juche concept and the vision of a self-sustaining nation, the North Korean regime employs an array of propaganda strategies. This propaganda exerts its influence across various spheres, encompassing state-controlled media, public discourse, educational materials, and artistic expressions.

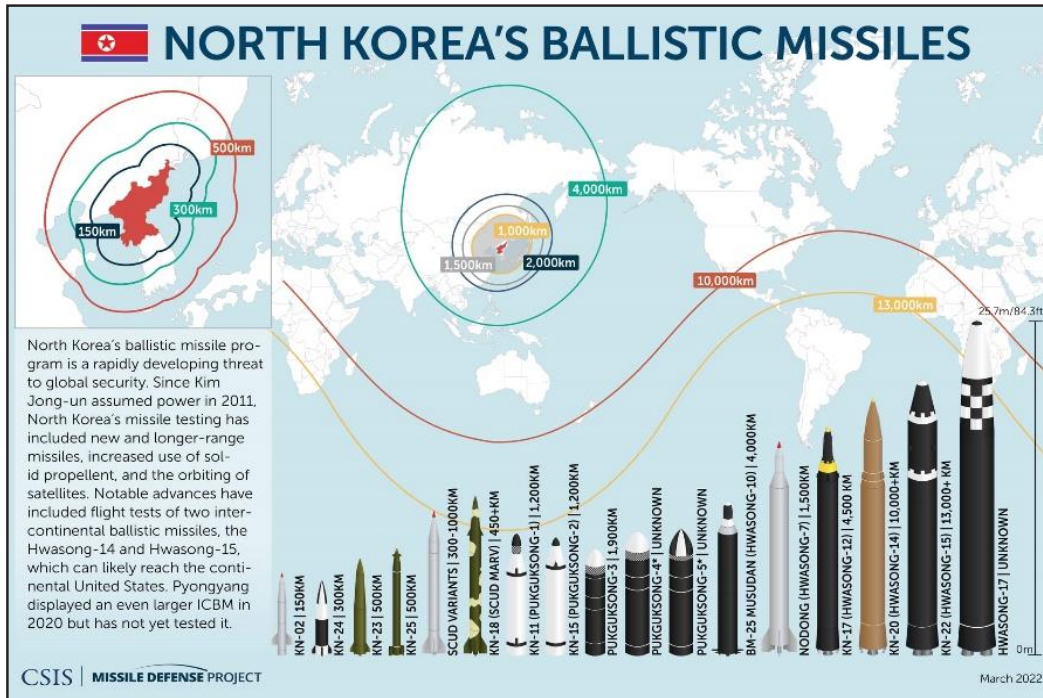
Juche (self-reliance) and Songun (politics based on military strength) have stood as the guiding philosophical principles in North Korea’s governance. Over successive leaderships, the military gradually expanded its role and influence in political affairs, assuming a pivotal position in these matters. The North Korean regime remains deeply apprehensive about the prospect of hostile external forces, including South Korea and the United States, potentially launching an attack. Consequently, Pyongyang asserts that the development of unconventional arsenals is imperative to counter perceived threats and safeguard the nation’s continued existence.

The governing authority endeavours to instil in the populace a deep-seated sense of patriotism, solidarity, and allegiance through multifaceted means. Illustrations emerge as potent tools in the hands of North Korean propagandists, effectively conveying the narrative of independence and self-reliance. Notable symbols such as the national anthem, flag, and depictions in sculptures and paintings of the country’s president and other leaders all carry profound symbolic significance, reinforcing the notion of a resilient and self-sufficient nation. The genesis of the Juche philosophy is attributed to the nation’s founding leader, Kim Il-sung, who holds the revered title of the Eternal President. His memory is perpetuated through memorials, ceremonies, and commemorative events.

In efforts to underscore North Korea’s professed independence, propaganda campaigns also spotlight the nation’s achievements across a spectrum of domains, including technological innovation, scientific advancement, agriculture, and industry. These endeavours serve to project the image of a prosperous nation, resilient in the face of external criticism and sanctions, with narratives emphasizing technical accomplishments, economic growth, and cultural prowess.

## **Strategic Value of North Korea’s Nuclear Weapons in Preserving Security**

The strategic importance of North Korea’s nuclear weapons is a complex and multifaceted topic in which one of the key areas of exploration is how North Korea’s national defense policy is primarily centred on its nuclear arsenal. These nuclear arsenals play a vital role in deterring perceived threats, both from within and outside the country, and are instrumental in shaping the defensive posture of the nation. The examination delves into the evolving nature of North Korea’s nuclear strategy and considers the driving forces behind its quest for nuclear weapons, which encompass factors like regime survival, international recognition, and negotiation leverage. The strategic significance of these missiles is evaluated in the context of their relevance to North Korea’s comprehensive defence strategy and deterrence tactics, taking into account their implications for regional stability, global interactions, and national security within North Korea.



**Figure 2: Range of Ballistic Missiles in North Korea**

There's a question that many people ponder: why does North Korea persist with nuclear weapons, even in the face of almost unanimous international opposition? Numerous efforts, particularly by the United States, have been made to address the issue and denuclearize the country, but they have thus far been unsuccessful. For the North Korean state, the pursuit of nuclear weapons is of utmost importance. These weapons offer significant advantages, including bolstering the younger generation, increasing military support by justifying high defense expenditures, fortifying the regime's internal cohesion against external pressures (such as economic sanctions), enhancing the regime's credibility by heightening the sense of accomplishment and importance of North Korean individuals, and enhancing Pyongyang's ability to engage in nuclear extortion.

The pursuit of nuclear weapons also serves to consolidate unity within the military, a crucial factor for an authoritarian regime like North Korea's. This unity is particularly essential due to the high cost associated with military operations, including nuclear and ballistic missile testing. Despite ongoing economic difficulties, North Korean troops find morale in the nuclear program, believing that once they possess nuclear weapons, their adversaries will be deterred from invasion. Additionally, the existence of nuclear weapons adds to the leadership's legitimacy and fosters national pride and reputation. Integrating nuclear weapons into North Korea's national identity has long been a goal, showcasing the nation's boundless potential and asserting its superiority in science, technology, and organization. These weapons serve as a unique development plan and an escape route to fulfil North Korea's aspirations of becoming a superpower. Particularly, given North Korea's rivalry with South Korea, its nuclear weapons carry special significance. In the ongoing status competition with Seoul, the one comparative advantage North Korea holds is its possession of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles, given South Korea's higher GDP and more robust conventional military capabilities.

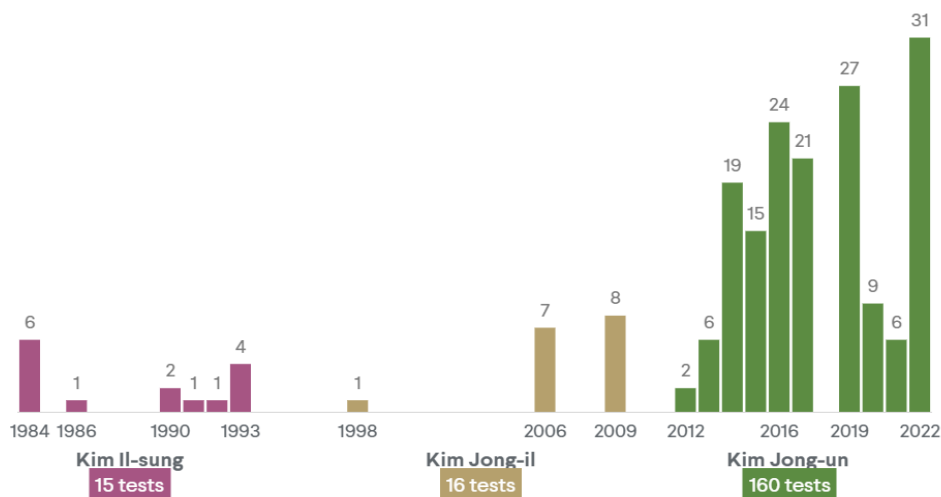


North Korea leverages its pursuit of nuclear weapons to secure critical economic resources, including hard currency, food, and oil from other nations. For instance, under the Agreed Framework, which resolved the initial nuclear threat on the Korean Peninsula in 1994, North Korea received two light-water reactors and heavy fuel oil in exchange for suspending its nuclear program. Additionally, the United States provided \$1.3 billion in assistance, with likely millions more coming from private investments in China, South Korea, and European countries. Furthermore, multiple studies have demonstrated that countries with nuclear weapons are more likely to secure concessions from states without nuclear capabilities. In this regard, North Korea's status as a nuclear state provides it with enhanced negotiating leverage on the international stage.

## Historical Progression of Nuclear Launches in North Korea

North Korea conducted a total of six nuclear tests, with the initial one taking place in October 2006 and the most recent in May 2009. The pace of nuclear development accelerated notably under the leadership of Kim Jong-un, who assumed power in late 2011 as the son of Kim Jong-il. In contrast to the combined figures for his father and grandfather, Kim Jong-un has overseen a substantial increase in missile test launches, totalling 160, and has conducted four nuclear tests in February 2013, January, September, and September 2016 and 2017.

### North Korea's Missile Launches



Note: Includes successful and failed missile launches. Data is as of June 2022.

Sources: Nuclear Threat Initiative; CFR research.

COUNCIL *on*  
FOREIGN  
RELATIONS

**Figure 3: The North Korean Missiles Being Launched by Each Leader**

Over time, North Korea has steadily increased its power, as evident from its nuclear tests. The initial test in 2006 yielded two kilotons, while subsequent tests in 2009, 2013, January 2016, and September 2016 resulted in eight, seventeen, seventeen, and thirty-five kilotons, respectively. By comparison, the nuclear bomb dropped on Hiroshima had an explosive force of sixteen kilotons. Notably, the test conducted in September 2017, with scientists estimating a yield exceeding 200 kilotons, signified a significant advancement in bomb-making technology



and supported North Korea's claim of having developed a hydrogen bomb. Following this, North Korea ceased conducting nuclear tests in 2017, but in 2018, they announced the resumption of nuclear material production at the Yongbyon reactor complex, which had previously been stated to be closed. Satellite images revealing progress at Yongbyon in mid-2022 have raised concerns about a potential seventh nuclear test. Analysts caution that North Korea may soon possess a fully developed nuclear arsenal capable of targeting the United States with nuclear weapons, necessitating a proactive response to this possibility.

### **National Interest and Nuclear Programs of North Korea**

The concept of "national interest" pertains to a nation's overarching objectives and priorities aimed at preserving its independence and improving its citizens' quality of life. In North Korea, the safeguarding of its national interest is intricately tied to the development and utilization of nuclear weapons. The leadership, in the absence of using any specific name, has harnessed these endeavours to advance and secure the regime's fundamental goals. North Korea's nuclear activities hold a significant role in advancing the nation's national interest, serving as crucial instruments in protecting the government from external interference and maintaining domestic stability. The nation seeks to enhance its independence from what it perceives as hostile powers, such as South Korea and the United States, hence the pursuit of nuclear capabilities.

Viewed through the lens of the North Korean government, as mentioned the concept of national interest extends far beyond mere survival. It encompasses a multifaceted tapestry of imperatives, intricately woven together to secure the continuity of the existing regime. At its core, this vision encompasses the cultivation of a self-sustaining and autonomous economic framework, buttressed by a robust military capability. Yet, paramount among these concerns is the unwavering determination to avert any form of external military intervention, which the North Korean leadership perceives as a potent threat to its sovereignty.

In this intricate landscape, North Korea's nuclear initiatives emerge as conspicuous symbols of this unyielding commitment to safeguarding its independence and asserting its pivotal role in the global arena. These projects are not merely about military posturing; they are a reflection of the regime's steadfast dedication to ensuring the endurance of its system. These nuclear endeavours serve as a tangible representation of North Korea's resolve to uphold its principles, reinforcing its significance and influence on the international stage. In essence, North Korea's national interest extends beyond its borders, reaching into the intricate fabric of global politics. It is a tapestry woven with threads of autonomy, self-reliance, and unwavering defiance against external intervention, with its nuclear initiatives standing as vivid testaments to these enduring principles.

Certainly, North Korean officials have consistently cited security concerns as the rationale behind their quest for nuclear weapons. A growing but still limited body of literature explores the military implications of nuclear weapons and the potential ways in which North Korea may deploy and use them. Some have downplayed North Korea's nuclear efforts due to misconceptions regarding the regime's competence and seriousness. However, it is imperative to scrutinize North Korea's evolving nuclear program more closely, considering various factors. Many experts began to take North Korea seriously only after its third nuclear test in 2013. The challenge of studying North Korea's nuclear strategy is exacerbated by the scarcity of data on the size and composition of its nuclear arsenal, as well as the principles governing the deployment of these weapons.

North Korea maintains a notoriously secretive stance on its nuclear program, although certain information can be gleaned from past tests, missile launches, official statements, military parades, and satellite imagery. Furthermore, the belief that non-military motives guide North Korea's nuclear decision-making has diverted scholarly attention from the nation's nuclear strategy. While some attribute financial incentives or the use of the nuclear program as a bargaining chip in diplomatic negotiations, others argue that North Korea seeks international prestige or domestic support for its leadership. Nevertheless, North Korea's nuclear program is driven by strategic considerations that deserve serious consideration. Given the country's resource constraints and the potential for increased military tensions, the authorities must carefully assess the costs, benefits, and security implications associated with their nuclear investments and actions.

### **Role of Nuclear Weapons in National Interest**

Safeguarding North Korea's national interests necessitates a comprehensive examination of the myriad factors influencing the nation's policy priorities. These encompass core objectives such as the preservation of North Korea's sovereignty, its authority, and above all, the safety and longevity of its government – an all-encompassing interpretation of the nation's well-being. Despite this broader interpretation, nuclear weapons have garnered mixed perceptions within and beyond North Korea, with some emphasizing the negative connotations associated with their usage, resulting in a somewhat unfavourable portrayal.

Within this complex landscape, North Korea employs diverse strategies to achieve its objectives. One such strategy, termed the "catalytic approach," aims to escalate international tensions by provoking nuclear conflicts. The intention is to induce major world powers to intervene during crises, thereby restraining adversaries and restoring equilibrium. In contrast, the most formidable and enduring nuclear strategy adopted by North Korea is the war-fighting approach. It is meticulously designed to counteract deficiencies in conventional capabilities by threatening to deploy nuclear weapons directly on the battlefield, shifting the focus from primarily targeting key installations.

It's a common misconception that governments exclusively pursue nuclear weapons for military or deterrent purposes. Nevertheless, varying perspectives exist on this matter. Evidence stemming from two decades of bilateral negotiations regarding North Korea's nuclear and missile programs reveals that the country's leadership has, on occasions, leveraged its nuclear program as a bargaining tool to secure concessions, such as food aid and energy assistance, from the international community. Furthermore, this nuclear program has played a diplomatic role during negotiations. It's vital to note that possessing a comprehensive nuclear arsenal is not a prerequisite for strategies primarily geared towards attaining economic, political, or diplomatic advantages. This approach presents a lower entry barrier compared to alternative methods, with a focus on the technical components of a nuclear weapons program that can be exchanged for concessions. While transparency can enhance the negotiation process, it isn't always an absolute prerequisite for successful outcomes. Over the course of negotiations, transparency can be progressively swapped for concessions. This approach places relatively lower demands on operational complexity and leadership, as it does not necessitate the maintenance of an exhaustive weapons arsenal.

However, it's essential to acknowledge that the international community may become fatigued by the continuous cycle of compromises, presenting a significant challenge. Additionally, diminishing returns on investments over time introduce further complexities that hinder the

effectiveness of this approach. In light of these dynamics, North Korea's multifaceted strategies and the varied perspectives surrounding its nuclear pursuits continue to shape its approach to safeguarding its national interests.

### **North Korea's Self-Reliance through Nuclear Weapons**

North Korea has consistently adhered to a policy of self-reliance, with a strong emphasis on principles of independence, autonomy, and self-sufficiency, as previously explored in the chapter dedicated to the Juche concept. The nation's pursuit of nuclear capabilities, which symbolizes its standing and influence on the world stage, aligns closely with these deeply ingrained ideological tenets. Under its current leadership, the regime prioritizes nuclear weapons as a central element of its national agenda, often placing them above considerations related to the country's economic development, internal affairs, and scientific progress.

The need to consolidate leadership and demonstrate unwavering commitment to the military establishment is a recurring theme within the North Korean leadership, a tradition deeply embedded within the regime. To this end, the regime's actions have included military operations, such as the torpedoing of a South Korean naval vessel and an assault on an island, which serve the dual purpose of showcasing its martial capabilities and garnering the support and allegiance of senior military officials. These actions underscore the regime's commitment to projecting military strength and fortifying its authority.

North Korea's commitment to self-sufficiency, underpinned by values of independence, autonomy, and self-reliance, is deeply rooted in the Juche ideology, which serves as the ideological cornerstone of the nation. It is within the framework of this philosophy that the country's nuclear ambitions find their significance, transcending mere military objectives to encompass a broader perspective.

During the tenure of its current leader, North Korea has placed a pronounced emphasis on nuclear weapons, a marked departure from prioritizing economic growth, internal development, or scientific advancements. This shift in focus can be attributed to the adoption of the Byungjin doctrine, representing the latest phase in the evolution of North Korea's political ideology. The doctrine's evolution traces back to Kim Il-sung's original embrace of Juche principles, further nuanced by Kim Jong-il with the introduction of the Songun doctrine in response to increasing isolation.

In light of these ideological considerations, it becomes apparent that nuclear weapons hold a pivotal role in North Korea's national agenda, extending beyond conventional notions of military might. They embody a symbol of the regime's commitment to its principles, reflecting its determination to assert its position in the global landscape.

Notably, this transition was not merely about strategic considerations; it was also a means for the leadership to establish its authority. With a historical legacy of leveraging military prowess to safeguard state security, the Kim dynasty's rule has been characterized by a commitment to bolstering its martial standing. This imperative led to actions such as the torpedoing of a South Korean naval vessel and the assault on an island, all aimed at underlining the leader's combat capabilities and garnering support from senior military officials.

Simultaneously, diplomatic overtures were extended to the United States, although these negotiations yielded minimal tangible outcomes. This dual approach reflects a nuanced agenda: bolstering the leader's image as a powerful and influential figure on the international stage. The engagement in diplomatic discussions presented the leader as a statesman willing to negotiate and collaborate with the global community, further solidifying his reputation as a dynamic and essential figure in international affairs.

In sum, North Korea's strategic pivot towards nuclear weapons underlines the significance of its leadership's commitment to asserting its authority and maintaining a formidable presence on the global stage. This transformation, driven by a complex interplay of ideology, military tradition, and international engagement, transcends mere military strategy to encapsulate the multifaceted nature of North Korean leadership.

### **The Assured Strategy to Safeguard North Korea's Regime**

The guaranteed strategic response plan aims to protect North Korea from threats like attacks and pressure. Its main objective is to establish a second-strike nuclear capability that can endure an initial enemy attack and respond with catastrophic consequences. Unlike previous strategies, this approach requires a higher level of transparency to convince adversaries that North Korea can withstand an initial strike and launch a counterattack, even when certain details may be unclear or confidential.

To ensure that North Korea's nuclear weapons can withstand an initial attack and deter the enemy with high costs, redundancy is crucial, focusing on counter-value weapons without targeting operational or tactical assets. The adaptability and readiness of North Korean troops are emphasized to enhance deterrence. This strategy involves deploying nuclear weapons in conflict to deter attacks on the regime and compensate for conventional military disadvantages. Unlike assured retaliation, it requires a more potent second-strike capability and emphasizes using nuclear weapons directly against enemy troops. Openness about the strategy's implementation is necessary for effective deterrence, demonstrating North Korea's readiness for a second nuclear strike. The goal is to create a perception that the system operates automatically, leaving commanders no choice but to "use it or lose it."

### **Nuclear Weapons and North Korea's Sovereignty**

North Korea strategically opted to acquire nuclear weapons to achieve several objectives, including safeguarding its sovereignty from external influences and securing the regime's stability. The development of nuclear capabilities bolsters Kim Jong-un's internal authority and acts as a defense mechanism for the Pyongyang leadership against potential external threats. Moreover, North Korea's pursuit of nuclear weapons aims to protect its autonomy and self-reliance, particularly from China, which is critical for the government's long-term sustainability. These reasons underscore the significance of North Korea's commitment to nuclear weapons.

Preserving the regime's security involves two main components: enhancing domestic stability and safeguarding against external aggressions. Strengthening internal stability entails consolidating the ruler's domestic control and enhancing the government's legitimacy. The second component focuses on defending the regime from external threats within the tumultuous international arena.

Nevertheless, the state's possession of nuclear weapons significantly elevates its autonomy and self-reliance, reducing its reliance on external powers for security. Unlike conventional alliances that can be influenced by changing circumstances, nuclear weapons offer North Korea the highest level of security, enabling independent decision-making. North Korea's deliberate pursuit of nuclear weapons is driven by the necessity to ensure security and autonomy, especially in its relationship with China, its principal ally since the Cold War's end.

North Korea's history reflects its consistent rejection of external influence, even from allies, in favor of relying on its own resources to safeguard the current ruling. This principle aligns with the "Juche" philosophy, emphasizing the importance of securing the country's autonomy. Other than that the rising North Korea's leadership is concerned about the country's growing economic dependency on China, particularly as foreign sanctions have tightened. This over-reliance contradicts North Korea's core principles of political autonomy, military deterrence, and economic self-sufficiency.

North Korea's apprehension about Beijing's influence plays a significant role in its efforts to attain security independence from China. As China has shifted its stance on North Korea's nuclear development, Pyongyang's mistrust of Beijing has deepened. China's official opposition to a nuclear North Korea and its support for UN sanctions have fuelled North Korea's determination to reduce its reliance on China, which it views as unreliable. Despite recent improvements in China-North Korea relations, North Korea remains dedicated to upholding its founding principles of self-sufficiency and independence. This underscores its ongoing commitment to limiting China's sway and bolstering its regional standing. Consequently, North Korea's pursuit of nuclear weapons is driven by the desire to increase its autonomy from various global powers, particularly China, as it seeks to enhance its independence and self-reliance in national defence and economic development.

## **CONCLUSION**

In summary, comprehending the Korean Peninsula's dynamics and their broader implications for international security hinges on our ability to assess the deterrent, defensive, and regional impacts of North Korea's nuclear arsenal. The imperative of maintaining a secure security environment in Northeast Asia cannot be overstated, given the very real threats posed by a nuclear-armed North Korea. The state's pursuit of a nuclear arsenal is fundamentally rooted in its perception of national security. The regime views nuclear weapons as indispensable in ensuring the country's safety, safeguarding sovereignty, and preserving the ruling party's existence. This strategic perspective underscores the paramount significance that North Korea attributes to nuclear arms as a means of defence against potential external adversaries.

Furthermore, North Korea's nuclear quest is inextricably tied to its narrative of self-sufficiency, deeply embedded within the Juche philosophy, which advocates self-reliance and resilience against external influences. The North Korean government strategically portrays its nuclear arsenal as a symbol of the nation's independence and its capacity to fend off perceived foreign threats to its sovereignty. Notably, North Korea's nuclear weapons program serves the dual purpose of asserting independence and resisting external pressures. The regime perceives nuclear weapons as instrumental in balancing the strength and influence of regional superpowers, firmly believing that they are crucial for national security, the demonstration of national sovereignty, and the perpetuation of its governing system. In light of these dynamics, comprehending North

Korea's defence policy and nuclear proliferation efforts necessitates a nuanced understanding of the complex interplay between national security imperatives and the regime's narrative of self-sufficiency and resistance to foreign influence.

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## CLIMATE CHANGE AND IMPACT TOWARDS THE DEFENCE INDUSTRY AND ASIA PACIFIC

Lt Col Ts Dr Maimunah Omar

MiDAS

*o.maimunah@yahoo.com*

### ABSTRACT

*Climate change is one of the most pressing challenges of the present and the future. Rising temperatures and sea levels, as well as extreme weather events, are manifestations of climate change that also influence military capabilities. Increased attention to the climate change-security nexus is visible both at the national and the international level: nationally through incorporating climate change in security strategies and internationally through incorporation in important strategic documents such as the EU's Strategic Compass and NATO's Strategic Concept. This article will look into various aspects of the relationship between climate and security, focusing on the military. It discusses the role of climate change in a country's security and defence strategy and, vice versa, the changing tasks and deployment of the armed forces in response to climate change, the effects of climate change on military infrastructure, and measures to realise a greener defence sector.*

**Keywords:** *Military, Readiness, Operations, Strategy, National Policy, Awareness, Research and Development*

### INTRODUCTION

The threats of our modern world, worsened by rising seas, extreme weather, and creeping erosion desertification, will almost certainly lead to more conflict. Climate change affects people and nature in every corner of our planet and now is an immediate global threat. The increasing risks from climate change mean that it is shifting from being solely a human security threat to a national security threat. Such changes not only result in a physical impact including the increasing number of storms, floods, heatwaves, and droughts but also bring secondary consequences like impacts on the energy infrastructure and generation, with all these having negative repercussions on the economy and employment. These can, in turn, increase popular grievances, and weaken the social compact, further contributing to political instability stressing governance systems and turning human security threats into national security threats.

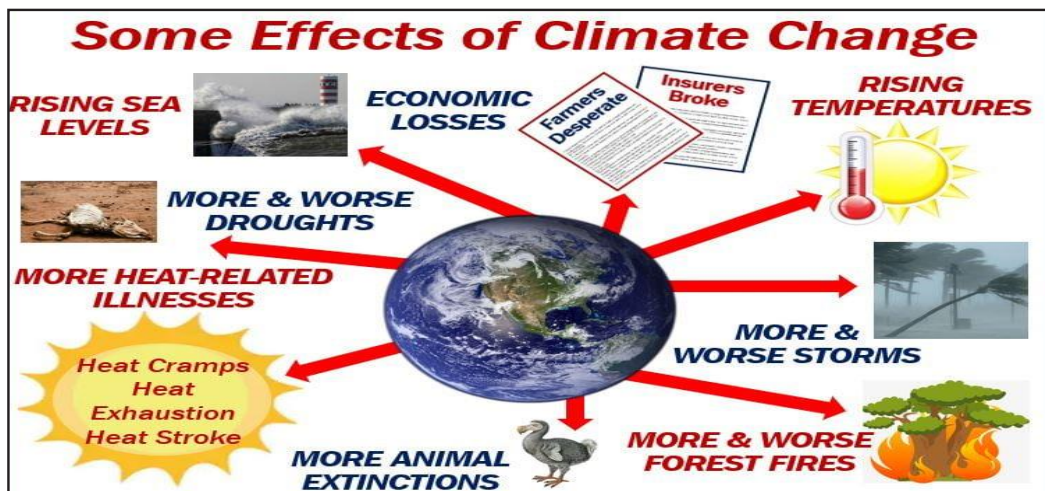
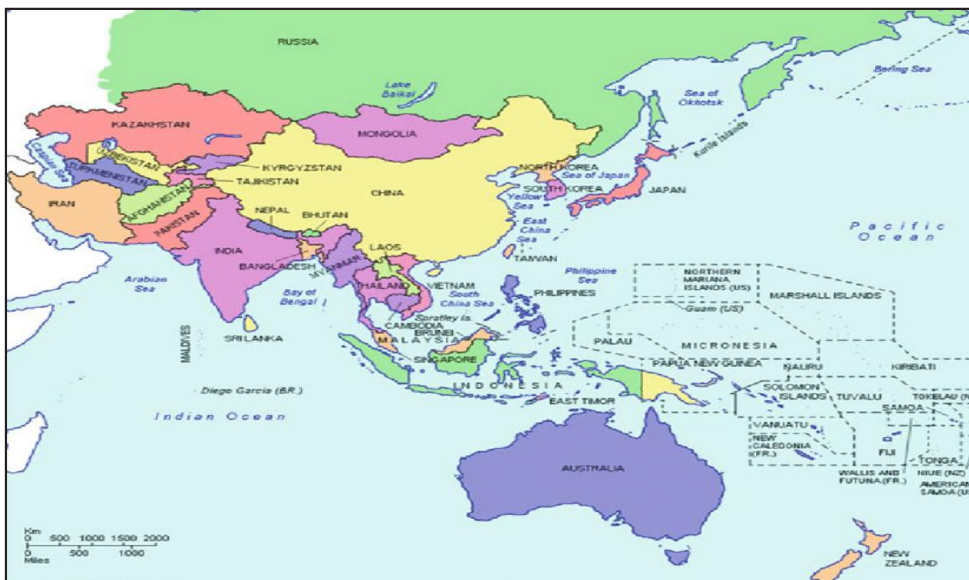


Figure 1: Climate Change Effects

The Asia-Pacific region covering 40 economies, over four billion people and \$ 47 trillion in economic activity, is the world's fastest-growing region. However, Asia-Pacific is the most disaster-prone region in the world. With extensive coastlines, low-lying territories, and many small island states, its geography makes it highly vulnerable to rising sea levels and weather extremes. The United Nations has estimated that the world is set to see a temperature increase of about 2.5 degrees Celsius by the year 2100. Due to that rising sea levels could see smaller island states in the Pacific and Indian Oceans mostly or entirely submerged or will experience serious flooding. Bangkok, Jakarta, Ho Chi Minh City, an area in Bangladesh and the Pearl River Delta in China are all exposed.



**Figure 2: Asia Pacific Region**

## **CLIMATE CHANGE AND IMPACTS TOWARDS MILITARY**

The impact of climate change towards military armed forces and defence establishments will also require a better understanding of the environmental changes that impact military operations. For example, the changing seawater will influence submarine and anti-submarine operations. Changes in weather will affect air operations. Rising temperatures will impact the effectiveness of military personnel and equipment. An 'inconvenient truth' is that, with current equipment, these factors are likely to increase military carbon emissions.

The increase of climate change also will demand the military to face more pressure to develop their humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) capabilities while also maintaining traditional defence capabilities. Militaries have a key role to play in response to climate change, particularly where they are the main responders to disasters. In a simple explanation, climate change does have an impact towards military Readiness, Operations and Strategy

**Readiness.** Readiness refers to the ability of a military to carry out operations in a timely manner. This involves having a stable and secure military infrastructure, including bases, supplies and logistics, in order to carry out missions. Climate change effects have the ability to compromise coastal military installations that are critical for such operations. Other extreme weather events, such as droughts and flooding, can also put stress on critical military infrastructure.



**Figure 3: Climate Change and Impact towards the Military**

**Operations:** An increase in the frequency and intensity of natural disasters may also put a strain on the capacity of armed forces to deliver humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR). For instance, extreme drought or flooding in areas where militaries are engaged in warfighting, for example, can compromise water supply lines, and thus threaten military personnel directly. Extreme drying can also increase the likelihood of non-state actors using the seizure of water resources as leverage against populations and adversaries. Be it war-fighting operations or humanitarian missions. It can place a significant burden on the supply chains and logistical capacity of armed forces engaged in “theatre”.

**Strategy:** Climate change can impact military strategy by increasing the possibility of destabilizing conditions in strategically significant regions of the world. For example, migrating fish stocks in the South China Sea for example may create pressure on the fishing industry to move into disputed water, leading to increased tensions. These risks can increase the likelihood of militaries being called on to resolve conflicts or provide post-conflict assistance. All of these dynamics will adversely impact military strategies.

## DEFENCE INDUSTRIES IN ASIA PACIFIC

The sectors in the defence industry play a vital role towards building indigenous industrial capability, technological development and economic spin-offs including exports and employment creations as well as human capacity building. In Asia and the Pacific region, the effectiveness of it depends on the location, sectoral capacity, and socioeconomic situation, and according to each country.

## HOW CAN THE DEFENCE INDUSTRY HELP TO MITIGATE CLIMATE CHANGE?

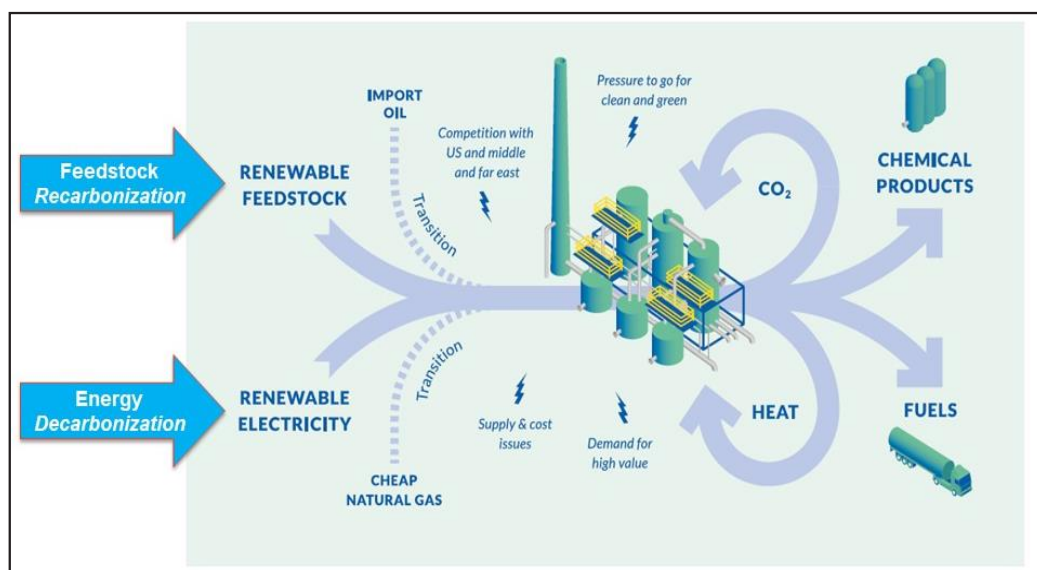
Questions arise on how defence organisations can help to mitigate climate change. It could be done through various actions, as well as services and products. Ultimately, this is the time that the defence industry joins the battle against climate. There are many ways and methods that



could be done.

Firstly, reducing emissions and promoting green technology. The opportunities for emission reduction vary by the military domain – air, maritime, ground, or cyberspace. There is no denying that fuel consumption was so great, especially with regard to the movement of personnel and equipment from one location to another, whether on land, sea or air. Unfortunately, the use of so much fuel has unintentionally polluted the environment. The Defence Industry could play a role by promoting and introducing new green technologies and equipment that can reduce fuel consumption and preserve the environment such as solar cells, hybrid electricity, methanol-based fuel cells, and energy generation waste materials. Although developing power from green technology is much more expensive, long-term efforts and environmental conservation factors make this technology beneficial in the future.

Secondly, it promotes decarbonisation. Decarbonising efficiently will require a holistic approach. This can come in many forms such as increasing efficiency at installations, expanding energy generations, expanding hybrid technology and improving supply chain security for energy storage. These initiatives will vary by company and business unit, but they should include procuring greener inputs accelerating R&D programs to develop new generations of carbon-efficient products, and coordinating with other players to create green solutions at a large scale.



**Figure 4: Decarbonisation and Recarbonisation**

Thirdly, the development of own roadmaps. It is certain that the defence industry or defence players cannot become carbon-neutral overnight but comprehensive road maps will do. In the short term, the demand for retrofitting services to replace parts with more eco-friendly ones in the existing air, ground, and maritime fleets. In the longer term, new generations of emission-efficient products, such as hydrogen-powered aircraft or electric vehicles, will overtake the market. However, investors do expect a commitment to reach net zero by 2050 at the latest, and they demand proof that companies are ready to “walk the talk.” A stronger emphasis on sustainability will also create new opportunities. Demand will also be more pressing for solutions and services that better address climate concerns, such as advanced weather-pattern detection, climate-threat scanning capabilities, simulators, and synthetic training environments. Therefore, the defence industries should have a roadmap.

Fourth, focusing and enhancement of collaboration across the defence industry value chain. Focusing on specific opportunities for reducing emissions, the opportunities for emission

reduction vary by the military domain-air, maritime, ground, or cyberspace. In aerospace, the path to net zero will focus on alterations in engines and fuels. In the maritime domain, fuel and propulsion system alterations will also receive major attention. In the land domain, developing more electric vehicles (EVs) or hybrid versions. In cybersecurity and electronic solutions, the greatest opportunities for improving carbon efficiency lie in the monitoring and management of multi-domain battlefield networks.

Fifth, Significant Investment in Climate Innovation and R&D. In early-phase emissions, defence industry players should identify ways to make manufacturing processes more carbon-efficient, such as by reducing waste and reworking. In the long term, new generations of products and technologies must be commercialized to help defence ministries achieve their net-zero ambitions. This will require significant investment in climate innovation and R&D.

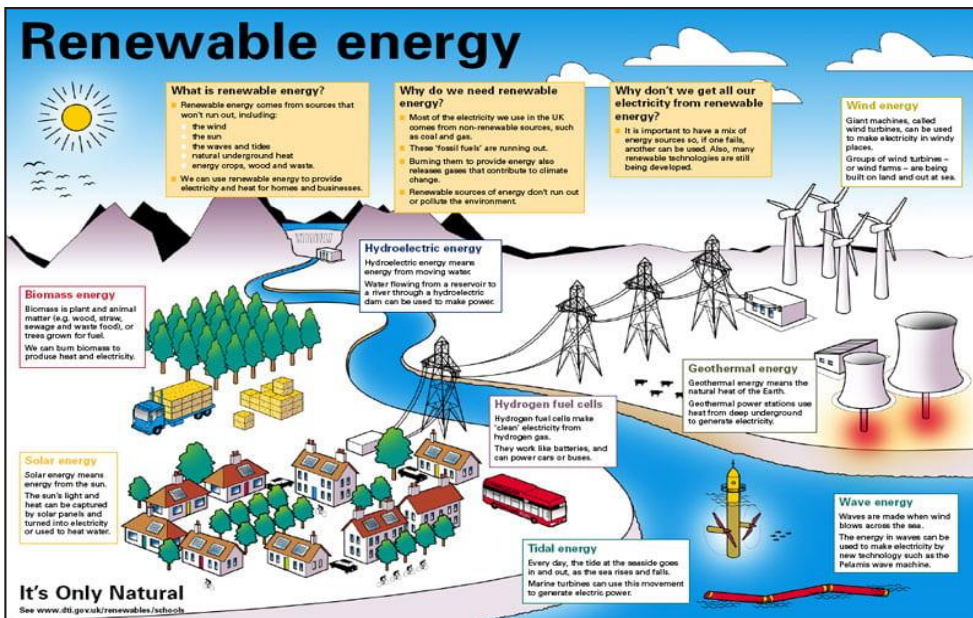


Figure 5: Renewable Energy

## CHALLENGES

Over the years, many countries in the Indo-Pacific have developed their industrial and technological capabilities. Each country has taken various policy initiatives to develop its own defence industry to the extent of being able to provide some degree of support to its respective armed forces. This has been done either through direct procurement, collaborations or offset programs. Yet, there are some challenges that need to be overcome.

**Lack of proper National Policy.** Different countries have different objectives, strategies, sovereignty, structural processes as well and issues of governance. There would be political sensitivity issues arising if governments seem to be prioritising objectives above the national interest and goal. These issues will hinder them from having a proper national policy about it.

**Budget.** Budget. Resources allocated for defence also vary amongst other countries. Some have much larger budgets than others based on affordability and opportunity costs in expanding scarce resources to meet the national socioeconomic demands.

**R&D.** The level of industrial and technological capabilities and capacity differs from one country to another. Some countries are stronger in the aerospace sector while others are in

the weapons, automotive or naval sectors. Similarly, their industries have developed capabilities ranging from research and development to manufacturing system integration, repair, maintenance and overhaul. In this regard, Indo-Pacific countries have different strengths and opportunities. But it is integrated in terms of research and development. In terms of the R&D, it is important to focus on minimizing the logistical footprints of military units and maximizing their energy independence, without reducing their combat effectiveness. This is an opportunity, not a threat. The military has always been among the first to embrace new technologies and has always been a platform for innovation. GPS and the Internet are examples of the technologies yielded by the military and are now being widely used in the world.

**Purpose or Focus Each of the Country.** It is indeed important to recognise the role that changing capabilities play in the various aspects of Asia-Pacific security. In some countries, the Philippines for example, the military-modernisation priorities have shifted to recalibrate the focus of the Armed Forces of the Philippines from internal security towards external defence, particularly maritime security, and the fast-developing technological advancements. For them, a robust and capable military is not only essential for their own national security but also crucial for maintaining stability and peace in Asia Pacific. Like most nations in the region, has witnessed developments in the external security environment, and these developments have brought about a fundamental shift in their appreciation of security threats and the warfare conduct.

**Gaps between the Countries.** Looking at the defence partnerships, among Asia Pacific Countries, there are gaps between the countries. These include among others, the different stages of industrial development and knowledge base, as well as resources allocated for defence by each of the countries. Some countries may have embarked on defence industrialization and have moved up the learning curve of defence technology, while some have engaged and launched joint ventures with countries outside the region. The technological gap that exists among them might pose challenges in terms of deciding what shape and form this defence-industrial partnership should take.

**Awareness.** Concerning the Indo-Pacific region, it must enhance its capabilities to develop situational awareness in all domains. Furthermore, by enhancing the capability to develop situational awareness of the entire Indo-Pacific, the effect of deterrence-by-detection will also increase the defence against any opponent attempting to unilaterally change the status quo by force. In addition, the cooperation by countries in the Indo-Pacific to develop rules for stable use of space and cyber domains will be essential for maintaining their international order based on the rule of law.

## **OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS/WAY FORWARD**

### **National Strategy and Plan**

Some Asia Pacific countries need to have strategies for defence mitigation and actions and develop more comprehensive adaptation strategies like what certain countries in Europe have done. In response to the significant speed of technological development, governments need to minimize bureaucratic red tape and indicate their willingness to accept higher levels of managed risk. This can give confidence to research agencies and private industry alike to develop, test and adjust novel capabilities and technologies and to pursue the act of retaining or obtaining relative military advantage. A few mechanisms need to be introduced to encourage defence industries. For example, certain taxes for carbon emission adjustment have been introduced by The European Union. As the cost of carbon continues to rise, companies with lower emissions will benefit from an increasingly competitive cost base, while high polluters will pay the price.





Figure 6: Summary of EU Climate Pact

Appropriate Resourcing and Procurement

Other factors for success are likely to depend on appropriate resourcing and a more flexible, reactive approach to procurement. Defence needs to reframe the relationship with the industry through an adjusted, sustainable procurement framework. Flexible contracts provide an ability to upscale existing projects and the termination of poorly performing projects or programmes. To facilitate changes such as end-to-end costing which considers the full lifecycle of any technology implemented along with the social value of the project, and the implementation of in response to established needs.

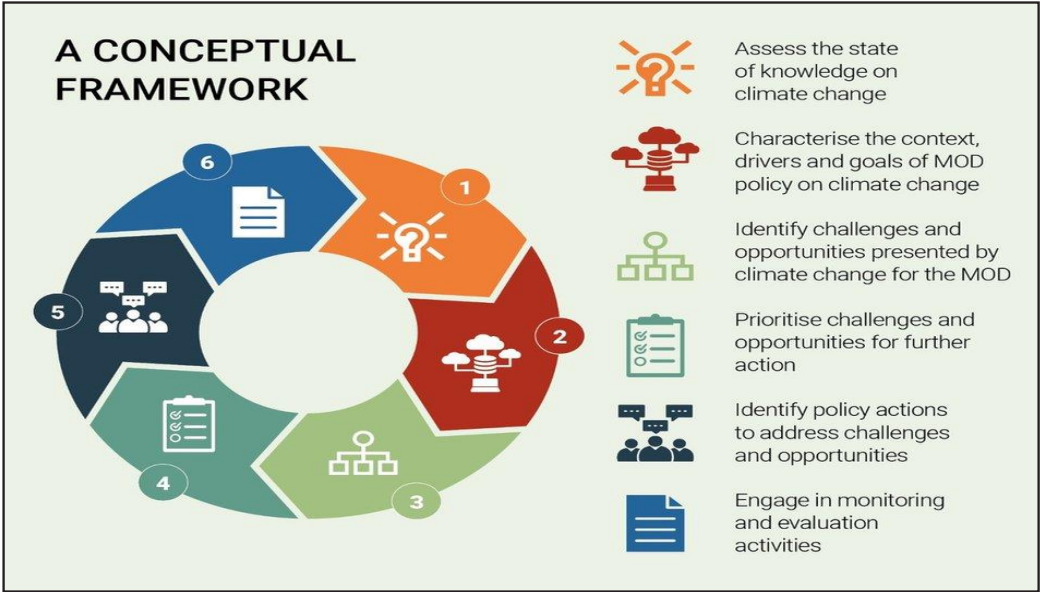


Figure 7: A Conceptual Framework for Climate Change Mitigation Approach

Enhance Collaboration. Collaboration in defence industry activities will boost trust and underplay the issues related to potential conflict. Improving levels of trust will provide motivation and make the defence industry collaboration much easier than would otherwise be possible. The other important, not to mention, novel areas of defence collaboration are system integration and joint production. A joint effort among Indo-Pacific countries in terms of expertise and infrastructure development will reduce the dependence on foreign services for upgrade and maintenance. Countries involved could start to join programs in which they initially participated as minor participants. It is a fact that some countries have radars and communications systems, and given the high costs of advanced defence equipment and the opportunity cost of high defence expenditure, our existing weapon system needs to undergo at least some major midlife upgrade

### Low Hanging Fruit

The most pragmatic ways to mitigate climate change for defence forces are in the short, middle and long term. In the short term, it can start with the low-hanging fruit, meaning the peacetime equipment and the non-operational facilities and capabilities. This can be done relatively quickly with existing civil technologies with current military and defence supply chain installations. Changing the power source for facilities such as barracks, airbases, FOBs and headquarters is possible with the existing technology and offers certain operational advantages. A second category would be operational capabilities that use comparatively small energy sources—lighter vehicles, unmanned systems, and base camps. This implies that there is a need to redesign current capabilities and adapt them, but this may be able to be done within the next ten years. The third category is concerned with heavy capabilities—tanks, naval vessels, and fighter jets—that require very intense energy sources and new energy technologies. For this category, it is crucial to realign R&D to design next-generation capabilities that deploy alternative energy sources and alternative combustion systems, making them more self-sustaining.

## THE ASEAN PERSPECTIVE

ASEAN militaries are connected bilaterally and multilaterally to other militaries in the broader Indo-Pacific through various initiatives. Based on Track II Network of ASEAN Defence and Security Institutions (NADI) Workshop on “ASEAN Defence Industry Collaboration: Potential and Way Forward” (8th – 11th of August in Malaysia). In terms of climate security, ASEAN is well-positioned to lead engagement through the ADMM envisioned by the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific. The impacts of climate change on the Indo-Pacific have become a significant security concern for militaries in the region, particularly considering their involvement in HADR operations.

Therefore ASEAN through the ADMM, developed an agenda on climate security to promote cooperation and share best practices with ADMM Plus countries and ASEAN dialogue partners to address these challenges. The ADMM and ADMM Plus provide a platform for its member states and eight dialogue partners to strengthen security and defence cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region. This is achieved through defence diplomacy which encompasses “military-to-military interactions, activities, and policies to build and maintain national security.

Among the focus areas are first, Climate Intelligence and Information. Sharing climate intelligence and information sharing is an opportunity for militaries to leverage their existing relationships with partners. These could include better information sharing and other climate adaptive solutions with trusted partners as part of an ADMM framework for cooperation. There is also a need for substantive partnerships on military technological advancements to promote a more resilient region.

Next is Research and Development (R&D). Realising the essentials of R & D in the defence industry, the Ministry launched the Defence R&D Cultivation Programme in Schools. True to the saying that ‘we need to start them young’, this initiative aims to provide exposure and

awareness to encourage students' involvement in Science and Technology, specifically in defence research. The main activities of this programme are the Science, Technology and Innovation-Conscious and Defence Innovation Competition.

Finally is to focus on setting up initiative funding among ASEAN member states and ASEAN to embrace new defence technology as a block, particularly technologies for peaceful purposes still have a long way to go, slowly but surely. The only path for ASEAN is to move forward, and need to collaborate. As the saying goes, 'it's the little things that matter'

## CONCLUSIONS

A cultural change of mindset will be required to prioritize the environment and view change as an opportunity rather than an imposition. Each party in the defence sector irrespective of the military, the Defence player, and the government needs to develop a climate-awareness culture; both on mitigation and adaption as for the Military, the adaption is not only in the training and planning but also in operational requirements. For the defence industry, on the investment and R &D, energy efficiency, produce sustainable military equipment in collaboration with a research entity and for the government: emphasises national strategy, engagement, strong policy and suitable and workable future plan.

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#### Journals /Serials

Henderson, D.A., The looming threat of bioterrorism, *Sci.*,283: 1279-1283, 1999.

#### Online Sources

Hurlbert, R.E., Chapter XV, Addendum: Biological Weapons, Malignant Biology, Available from <http://www.wsu.edu/~hurlbert/pages/101biologicalweapons.html>. (Accessed on 30 January 2010).

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