



# Near Term Needs to Long Term Planning

Pakistan's enhancements to infantry training and equipment to meet immediate counter-insurgency needs are transitioning to a soldier modernisation programme

***The Pakistan Army has been traditionally trained to fight a conventional war which has emphasised the skills necessary to effectively conduct operations in any state-on-state conflict, characterised with force-on-force engagement. Though a low intensity conflict doctrine has existed this has evolved significantly in recent years.***

The Pakistan Army is conducting full fledged counter insurgency operations in Swat and South Waziristan in Swat and other tribal areas employing infantry, armour, artillery, aviation assets and Special Forces.

"While we have learnt the value of small unit tactical operations, we have also developed an appreciation of critical enablers in hardware without which even the best trained troops would be hamstrung in optimizing their combat efficiency," stated Lt Gen. Muzammil Hussain, Inspector General Training and Evaluation (IGT&E), GHQ speaking prior to his appointment to this role at IQPC's Soldier Transformation APAC 2010. "Enhanced lethality, increased mobility, improved communications, and battle space domination are general objectives of our force modernization efforts."

For the dismounted soldier, recent operations have emphasised the need for improved surveillance equipment, protective gear, small arms, and communications equipment. Gen. Hussain commented, "A sure recipe for success in Low Intensity Operations is reliance on individual initiative, timely dissemination of intelligence, efficient communication, lightly armed troops packing lethal fire effects."

In addition to new procurement, operational demands have seen a shake-up in training procedures with different Training Modules placing special emphasis on subunit and group level with the Organization of Small Combat Teams / Quick Reaction Forces.

Gen. Hussain emphasised the importance of core infantry skills, "This changed scenario and threat spectrum led to formulation of a new training regime based on refined individual responses. Hidden enemy seldom offer opportunities to be targeted. Hence high standards of training are essential to engage and destroy targets when appeared with personal weapon/ supporting fire."

The changes have also seen the introduction of new training aids and simulators like the new Infantry Reaction Course, Stress Course Fire Ranges and Static Pop Up Target Systems.

Near term procurement had resulted in the Introduction of the latest communications including Motorola sets, surveillance systems, FM Transmitters and Global Positioning System. Doctrinal and organisational changes has seen the organisation of Air Control Teams at the lowest Level.

In term of lethality new Automatic Grenade Launchers have been introduced to offer a standoff capability. This is also being matched to mobility platforms. Gen. Hussain stated, "We are endeavouring to mount this system on a lightly armoured transport vehicle to provide mobile firepower to our infantry."

## **Future Soldier**

While near term capability enhancements are the current priority, thinking has moved over to what Pakistan's soldier modernisation programme might look like with planning for Pakistan's SMP being in its initial phases.

Improvement to lethality figures strongly in Pakistan's thinking which will see the replacement of the 7.62mm H&K G3 with light caliber assault rifle with various attachments and add-on features such as under barrel grenade launcher, holographic sights and multi-function

laser pointer/target designator. To this will be added Non Lethal Weapons to better cater for the requirement of Operations Other Than War, Gen. Hussain stated that NLWs are currently being evaluated from the international market. Modern portable Anti tank weapon systems are being assessed.

Unusually on the requirements side, Pakistan is seeking a new flamethrower. Pakistan's current equipment is seen as being of an "old vintage" and the military is currently "evaluating latest standards of Flame Throwers with enhanced capacity of fuel and range." Battle field Identification Friend or Foe for vehicles and dismounted infantry soldier systems available on the international market are now being examined.

In communications terms a "Personal Net Digital Radio" is required with integrated GPS and with the, "capability to be linked with a PDA (Personal Data Assistant) at second in command level." A low level Multi-band inter/ intra team radio with ground to air transmission facility is also required.

This will be supplemented by an Individual Soldier's Computer Communication. Which is described as being smart enough to display information and provide position/navigation data. Soldiers will be able to view information through a hand held colour display or through an integrated head gear subsystem display.

Pakistan has a requirement for an Infantry Battle Field Command and Information System. This will integrate infantry soldiers' communication with other arms especially with air assets and permit unit command posts to exchange data from battalion level down to infantry platoon and section levels as well as to higher Headquarters.

In term of personal protective equipment, a Light weight helmet compatible with NBC masks and night vision is

▶ being pursued with integrated headgear for a ballistic protective helmet shell, light weight garments, lightweight anti-mine combat shoes and body armour with integrated elbow and knee protection being some of them.

Gen. Hussain stated that Pakistan is currently evaluating modern lightly armoured and air transportable vehicles from the international market which can perform the role of "Mother Ship" for Infantry sections or teams by enhancing the Infantry man's mobility under armour protection.

In terms of Night Vision Gen. Hussain stated, "Our area

of focus is on Image intensification sights and thermal sights for Small Arms and Light Anti Tank weapons, Hand held image intensification scopes and Night Vision Goggles for commanders and operators of crew served weapons/drivers and Light weight observation kit for mortar fire controllers."

He continued that there is a "dire need" for Night Vision Devices which is being felt during cordon and search operations suggesting this is the near term priority.

In terms of night vision requirements Pakistan sees these as; light in weight, water proof, small in size,

user friendly and having functional controls like polarity, brightness, gain, recital movement and focusing. The systems should also have auxiliary Infra Red illumination facility for map reading and multi-functions like night driving, patrols, combat action and security duties should be able to fix an array of weapon systems manufactured by the Pakistan Ordnance Factory. ■

*Gen. Hussain was speaking at IQPC's Soldier Transformation APC 2010.*



*Pakistan's COIN strategy has emphasised the ability to operate effectively in difficult terrain amongst the population © DoD*