LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES IN HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND DISASTER RELIEF

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IMPORTANCE OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND DISASTER RELIEF (HADR)

A disaster is a serious disruption of the functioning of a society, causing widespread human, material, economic and environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected society to cope with, using its own resources. In the 1980s, natural disasters increased from 100 to 150 per year. By 2000, the average was 392[1]. With rising urbanisation and the information explosion, citizens all over the world demand rapid action which, in turn, demands surge capacities and specialisation that are available with the military. Sluggish responses by governments can be politically fatal. While the Oslo Guidelines of 1994 recommend the use of the military as a last resort, in practice, it is increasingly being used as the first responder[2]. Logically, as an instrument of power and resources, countries must train, and learn to use, their militaries for all kinds of contingencies.

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1. "The Human Cost of Natural Disasters-2015: A Global Perspective", Report of the Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED). Published by UNISDR- isdr@un.org.
2. "The Effectiveness of Foreign Military Assets in Natural Disaster Response", 2008 Report by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). www.sipri.org.

Leadership is prominent in all phases; however, it is a critical factor in the operational response phase. It is also in focus during this period, and open to critiques from all sides.

Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) is a wide domain encompassing not only saving lives, but also saving livelihoods, protection of civilians, risk-reduction, mitigation and post-recovery actions such as rehabilitation. Leadership is prominent in all phases; however, it is a critical factor in the operational response phase. It is also in focus during this period, and open to critiques from all sides. Good leadership is the ability to take a critical decisions for challenging missions in complex, fast-changing and ill-defined environments. It includes complexity in relationships involving information exchange, influence and inspiring real people. And, therefore, it is not only structurally and scientifically based on logic, but is more of an art, based on some innate and some learned or experienced behaviours.

A disaster implies significant loss of life, suddenness of the event and widespread impact over society and geography. There is a large diversity of challenges awaiting the first responders. HADR is an umbrella under which the total effort from pre to post disaster is mounted. Their unique attributes such as mobility, quick response and standard design fits all possible conflict management, make the armed forces eminently suitable for disaster management. However, to address the core issue of timeliness, units need to be self-sustained, possess speed of deployment and flexibility of employment, and autonomy. In India, at least, time and again, the armed forces have been the primary and first responders in both major and minor disasters[3]. However, quite often, due to quick rotation of personnel and unit moves, transfer of knowledge and experience does not happen. The wheel is repeatedly rediscovered in most new disasters.

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3. [3] Col OS Dagur, "Armed Forces in Disaster Management: A Perspective on Functional Aspects of Role, Training and Equipment", *Manekshaw Paper* No. 4, 2008 (New Delhi: KW Publishers Pvt Ltd, Centre for Land Warfare Studies).

COSTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

International concerns on humanitarian crises, natural or man-made, dominate the spectrum of small scale contingencies that occupy many of the armed forces of the world. In the developing world, natural and man-made disasters have taken centre-stage, not only due to the communication revolution which has raised awareness levels, but also because of the obvious impact of such contingencies on the economic and social development of countries. Therein is the importance of this issue as a diplomatic and engagement tool for nations that have the ability to project power. The Indian armed forces have been regularly involved in disaster relief and response across the length and breadth of the country. The reasons are many: unmatched capability for airlift, logistics, planning large scale missions, Command, Control, Communications and intelligence (C3I) assets and organisation. There is an inherent strength to not only protect and support civilian activities but also enhance the humanitarian capacities of civilians in terms of timeliness. When the national and international civilian response is inadequate to meet the demands, military assistance becomes critical. This is especially true in the case of the underdeveloped countries. India too has had its share of military assets deployed for large-scale humanitarian missions abroad; some notable examples being Bangladesh in 1988 and 1991 when Indian Air Force (IAF) helicopters were deployed for cyclone and flood relief, and the Armenian earthquake where IAF IL-76s ferried in relief supplies, helicopters in Sri Lanka during the tsunami relief in 2005, and recently, a multitude of aircraft for the Nepal earthquake.

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Asia is one of the world's most disaster prone regions, and has 88 percent of the total people affected by natural disasters. The most flood prone countries of Asia form the rim around the Bay of Bengal, and the countries of West and Central Asia. Comparative assessments of the damage done by certain major disasters to the total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of nations clearly brings out the magnitude of the social and economic implications. Countries around India suffer the most mainly due to heavy population pressure; poor social and economic status; lax laws and enforcement policy towards building norms, etc; climatic changes due to environmental damage; and mass urbanisation (unplanned).[4] The point that comes across is that the region around India is most prone to natural disasters and susceptible to damage to its people and environment. This makes multinational HADR a powerful tool to mitigate the consequences of these disasters. Another interesting fact is that not only is the number of annual disasters going up but the region's share of complex emergencies is more than two-thirds. Small scale contingencies, including humanitarian assistance and disaster relief and peace-keeping ventures around the world are potentially very powerful influencing and diplomatic tools. India, emerging from the status of a regional power to a world player, needs to take note. Economic necessities would drive us to influence such contingencies across the world.

DISASTER MANAGEMENT: INDIA

With the enactment of the Disaster Management (DM) Act 2005, a paradigm change of focus took place in the way disasters are handled by the Indian state. Yet, the level of preparedness varies across the country. While the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) lays down national policies, plans and guidelines, the responsibility for administration and execution is with the state governments. The Centre aims to only augment or fill gaps in capacities through various means such as the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), Central Armed Police Force (CAPF), armed forces, etc. The principle to be followed for military deployment is "the last to enter and first to leave", however, in many cases in India, the converse has been

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4. "Measuring the Human and Economic Impact of Disasters", Commissioned Review- *Foresight, Govt Office for Science*, United Kingdom, URN 12/1295, Crown copyright 2013.

true. The scale of intervention by the Centre is dictated by the gravity and scale of the event, and the gaps in the capacities urgently required.

The orientation to disaster management has transformed from response and relief-centric to a holistic approach involving multi-agencies, and a focus on disaster risk reduction. The evolution of the NDMA, NDRF and National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM) and their constant improvement in core functions is a good sign. The NDMA policy of 2009 states that the armed forces are to be brought in only when the coping capacity of the civilian authority is exhausted. The surge capacities of the armed forces are always asked for and the response has been prompt for both within and abroad. Training for Nuclear, Biological, Chemical (NBC) contingencies, helicopter-based operations, high-altitude rescue, watermanship and training of paramedics is undertaken by the armed forces all across the country. Their role in NBC disasters is critical. However, it is accepted by all that over-reliance on the military blunts initiative and self-reliance in the civil authorities.

A LOOK AT THE PAST

Some lessons and observations of past disasters broadly bring out the following:

- **First Responders:** The time sensitiveness of the effort required does not allow much time for reflection, elaborate planning, detailed analysis based on verifiable information flow, and smooth coordination among different agencies. It only brings in long hours, difficulties and stresses of various types for the participants.
- **Central Information Collection and Analysis:** The extremes between no information at the onset of a disaster, resulting in lack of situational awareness, to the deluge of inputs later that can easily overwhelm are a common feature. A nodal centre having good credibility with all agencies should be the first step in the response. Data management and effective dissemination comprise the backbone of any HADR mission.
- **Organisational Structure:** With a variety of players ranging from the military, civil administration and private players, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), etc, it is important to create an informal/ formal

structure to coordinate resources, abilities and competencies of all the players. A strict military type hierarchical system is difficult to follow in such circumstances. A form of collective leadership seems to work the best.

- **Barriers to Actions:** A plethora of rules and bureaucratic templates often hampers creative solutions. The military and administrative leadership needs to have the power and experience levels to waive off barriers to effective action.

- **Prioritisations and Job Distribution:** The key to saving maximum lives and bringing succour is correct prioritisation of the relief effort, capabilities, equipment and material. This is a situation wherein there are multiple competing demands, a cacophony of vested interests, political undertones, etc. Each agency brings its unique competencies that need to be well understood and grasped by the leaders in order to optimise task allocation. Additionally, priorities change rapidly in a dynamic situation such as a disaster.

- **Decision-Making and Coordination:** The leadership of the broad overall organisational structure and all the agencies face the task of taking decisions that will achieve success while working in chaotic, physically challenging and insecure environments. The challenges of managing information, logistics, politics and human stresses are greatly demanding and are not for the faint-hearted. Consensus-building among agencies is another challenge requiring skills of another order.

TRENDS: INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

The consensus among major HADR players in 2015 is that empowering local communities and national responsible players is the most effective way, as evident in the recent Nepal earthquake. The long list of gaps in effectiveness and capability within international agencies can be bridged only by raising local capacities and resilience. Investments in local capacity development are the way forward for mega players[5]. What constitutes 'local' is a big question—local government, NGOs, community-based organisations are

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5. "World Disasters Report 2015: Focus on Local Actors, the Key to Humanitarian Effectiveness", The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). Printed by Imprimerie Chirat, Lyon, France, ISBN: 978-92-9139-226-1, www.ifrc.org

all part of the set-up. Standards and quality control, with high levels of accountability, are issues that trouble large international players. Also, important is changing roles, depending on the phase of the disaster. While immediate responders are inevitably local, an overwhelmed society may initially require proactive outside help to tide over.

The monopolies of Western donors and organisations are being increasingly questioned by national authorities. In conflict scenarios, there are issues of agendas, neutrality and impartiality, overt or covert. Increasing local resilience, with high accountability, seems to be the trend for the future. The next major investment would be in partnerships and tie-ups for creating and training this capacity–building effort. Models of remote management of local bodies by donors are being experimented with all over the world in HADR situations.

A key enabler in this and much more in making HADR action effective is technology. Key areas are mobiles and the internet which are growing exponentially in poor states where the effects of disasters are the worst. Local volunteer technical groups are on the rise, with contextual innovation taking place everywhere. The flip side is the adverse effects of social media and SMS when used in negative ways to shape perceptions. This is a battle that the authorities would have to monitor and address in real-time.

MILITARY AND NGOs IN HADR

Worldwide there is now a trend to bilaterally or multilaterally use military forces to provide direct aid. As of now, wherever humanitarians have not gone or to make good the aid gap, the military forces have been widely used, with national consent. Sometimes, they have even been used without consent. There is a trend for countries that are perceived neutral in a region to move into the humanitarian area to earn goodwill and long-term relationships with countries of the region. With the information age, it is possible to influence positively the public at large through benevolent and well-managed aid in times of difficulty. In turn, national governments get influenced for a favourable response in other areas or agendas. Militaries bring an array of capacities to the humanitarian table. Sophisticated

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equipment for search and rescue, delivery of life-sustaining aid, medical support and repair of vital infrastructure are just some of the tasks they can easily adapt to.[6] They are fit physically and mentally to take on all kinds of challenges, can sustain themselves for long durations under the most difficult conditions, and have assets such as airlift, helicopters, Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAVs), communication equipment, transports, etc. Yet, this is not a core task that the military should take on for a long duration. The golden hours of the response phase is when militaries should come in with a clear aim to exit once civilian capacities catch up for other phases.

There are more than 36,000 NGOs including the Local (LNGOs) and those with International Cover (INGOs). The UN listed 20,000 INGOs in 2014. When operating in the same area, region (or space), they actively compete with each other for donor funds, influence and operating space. The common themes running through NGOs is independent, diverse, flexible, grassroots focus with work in mainly humanitarian issues such as human rights, conflict resolution, civil society, etc. While NGOs are extremely dependent on the military in high-conflict areas, they bring local and national expertise, networking, rapid deployment capacities and enduring commitment to the military. They are there for the long-term and have far greater flexibility in dealing with all actors, including illegal organisations. However, treating NGOs as collection agents has its own ramification and dangers.[7] Due to dependency on donor funding, NGOs are necessarily driven by donors and countries in terms of priorities, strategies, funding cycles and preference. Militaries have to be involved in humanitarian activities because the way to stabilisation and a final

6. "Guidelines on the Use of Military and Civil Defence Assets to Support United Nations Humanitarian Activities in Complex Emergencies", United Nations, March 2003, pp. 1-21.
7. "Peacebuilding and Linkages with Humanitarian Action: Key Emerging Trends and Challenges", OCHA Occasional Policy Briefing Series, No. 7, August 2011, Policy Development and Studies Branch (PDSB).

military exit is dependent on issues such as population health and conditions. This is seen as infringing on pure humanitarian agendas. Unless well exposed and trained, many cannot do justice to humanitarian work. Also, militaries expend too much of capacity on self-protection and security, and are too rigid and bureaucratic in their functioning, which is the opposite of the humanitarian ethos. Militaries can provide unprecedented surge capacities in logistics, transportation facilities and delivery in otherwise unapproachable areas.

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Militaries have to understand the nuances of NGO work.[8] These organisations and their functioning are different and they are fiercely protective about their independence in their work and their image. Their access to humanitarian funds and supplies is better and their experience in this sector makes them better at assessing needs. Even medical care is better in the long run since they are proficient in utilising local capacities. Their tapping of local capacities effectively allows them to outsource most activities to the community. They manage camps and refugee centres far better than the military can. Many NGOs in core sectors such as camp management and sanitation are extremely well trained and experienced. While military intelligence is superior in terms of satellites, analysis, drones, etc, the grassroots understanding of communities and situational awareness of NGOs may be better because of their closer involvement.[9]

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Complex Environments: There were more than 2,000 different agencies operating in Haiti post the January 2010 earthquake that killed or injured more than 500,000 people. The primary reason why the Humanitarian

8. "National Disaster Management Guidelines: Role of NGOs in Disaster Management", National Disaster Management Authority, Government of India, December 2013.
9. "Civil-Military Operations". Joint Publication 3-57, September 11, 2013. Publication for Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, USA.

Information Management Exchange (HIME) went wrong initially was due to the absence of qualified senior leadership. Most agencies initially had no data-bank or analysis while local governments, NGOs and civil society were marginalised from HIME flows.[10] Even within clusters, the framework was restrictive, hierarchical and too bureaucratic. Each cluster ought to have dedicated cluster coordinators, information management focal points and technical support capacity, which was missing. HIME is a principal source of situational awareness, crisis decision-making and coordination, and better communication, data collection and information management will lead to quality risk assessments and focussed preparedness.

HADR settings are extremely fluid with an influx of actors and an unregulated landscape, and with an unpredictable impact of interactions between them. There is a tendency to rely on the initial framework that gets established in the immediate response phase. Decision-making gets affected by two central factors: ambiguity and equivocality. Inevitably, there is both shortage and overload of information, but it is the absence of comprehensive, accurate and timely information that affects accurate analysis. In such environments, where sense-making is difficult, data and information become critical to avoid multiple frames of references of situational awareness which can compete with each other to create confusion on 'what to do'. Coordination frameworks vary between hierarchical and service (autonomous NGOs) models. Both have their pros and cons in terms of adaptability, timeliness of decisions and effectiveness. High quality information, data and analysis at sub-unit levels will boost responsiveness and coordination, and reduce ambiguity and equivocality.

Challenges to HIME in HADR mainly emanate from the nature of the setting—a need for urgent response in conditions of uncertainty and extremely temporal or short operational life-cycles. HIME ranges from data collection (damage, vulnerabilities, needs and capacities), information processing (data banks and resource allocation) and information sharing

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10. "Disaster Relief 2.0 the Future of Information Sharing in Humanitarian Emergencies", Harvard Humanitarian Initiative. Washington, D.C. and Berkshire, UK. Report by the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, the United Nations Foundation, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and the Vodafone Foundation. 2011.

(networks). Unlike commercial environments, it is the nature of the disaster that dictates the specific configuration of networks. Quite obviously, in such settings of temporary nature and short life-cycles, the networks need is critical and of a specialised nature.

Information Technology (IT) solutions are available and evolving at a rapid pace for improving and sharing of situational awareness and the incident management process in HADR.[11] Information and analyses flow from responders to decision-makers and vice versa are crucial to effectiveness. Currently, no one single system is available that can meet the requirements of encompassing all activities of HADR; handling all the different data formats used in information exchange; functionality reliability; verifiable accountability of input givers; and standardisation of semantics, visualisation, integration of all sources, including those deployed on the scene. Traditionally, the 3-C model, i.e. Chaos, to be put under Control, by a Command structure, has dominated HADR scenarios. But this military approach by government authorities tended to ignore the most vital component of community capacities and resilience. Research has shown that this control and centralisation is counter-productive to the response capability of various actors, agencies and authorities. Alternately, a C-3 model has been suggested that relies on effective networking of all actors with minimal bureaucratic control. It is based on: Continuation of societal and institutional structures after a disaster; requirement of Coordination of different stakeholders; and, Critical cooperation of citizens. Essentially, it means a bottom-up approach with a focus on local ownership and participation. While the 3-C model has a good hierarchical command and control structure that works well in a predictable environment, the flexibility and decentralisation to handle turbulence that is unpredictable is afforded by the C-3 model.

A Common Operating Picture (COP) is a mix of geographical representation, along with a checklist that describes the response operation in detail. Unlike drawing outputs from a warehouse, the COP facilitates a trading zone where exchanges take place which include information,

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11. Maereg Tafere, "Knowledge Management in the Humanitarian Sector: Challenges in Improving Decision-Making", Blog on March 12, 2014 at www.phap.org, Professionals in Humanitarian Assistance and Protection.

analyses, negotiations, agreements on diverse issues and alternative ideas – all in order to make better sense that leads to better coordination. The common sense-making and understanding leads to referent boundaries and lines that allow reasonable cooperation without completely compromising diverse perspectives. Adequate synchronisation takes place through compromises based on good Situational Awareness (SA) and understanding.[12]

Aid agencies are using mobile-based apps to access and analyse market data for sourcing relief supplies.[13] This also helps in determining the supply levels that direct cash voucher programmes or physical movement of supplies by agencies. Health related updates for AIDS, malaria and others diseases are being sent as SMS on mobiles by all large agencies. The Red Cross in Sierra Leone uses an SMS system called Trilogy Emergency Relief Application which can reach 36,000 phones in less than one hour. Many national and state governments have incorporated mobile technology as early warning systems for impending calamities. Many agencies have made use of mobile messaging for cutting down time in distributing relief supplies. Cash programmes via mobiles are already in vogue. Urbanisation and its attendant problems in HADR can make multiple use of modern communication technology. Face-to-face meetings are possible between the affected and the aid giver which brings in accountability and transparency. But care is to be taken that technology does not act as a barrier to real human connections or does not get dehumanised. Real-time monitoring and crisis mapping bring in unimaginable situational awareness, but this must lead to better effectiveness and efficiencies.

LEADERSHIP ISSUES

A survey of aid workers in 2010 pointed to leadership and coordination as the most critical issues for effective HADR. An ALNAP (Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance) study defined operational

12. "Relationships Matter: Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief in Haiti", *Military Review,* May-June 2010, pp. 2-12, US Army.
13. "A Vision for the Humanitarian Use of Emerging Technology for Emerging Needs: Strengthening Urban Resilience", 2015 Report commissioned by American Red Cross and IFRCS. Tech4Resilience.blogspot.com

leadership as: providing a clear vision; building consensus on objectives; and finding ways to realise them under great challenges.[14] Leadership relates to working together whereas pure coordination is working in parallel. How can we incentivise leadership that is dynamic and takes well-judged risks in an environment where information will never be complete or reliable? Has the mountain of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), guidelines and standards curbed initiative and innovation? While competence can be achieved with mediocre bureaucratic leaders, excellence and results beyond the ordinary demand a far greater leader in thought and action. It is not that all procedural aspects are a waste—they are very much essential to the framework. Dynamic leaders should be able to look beyond the simple framework, generate visions and ideas, and grab any opportunity to make the mission more effective. Review of SOPs, guidelines and compliance requirements is a good place to start improving. People should be trained formally and by example on the benefits of well-judged risk taking. What is valued most by an organisation has the most telling effect on the culture that pervades. Successful organisations that are not risk-averse can be looked into for better practices followed.

HADR missions are complex, involving variables such as: life and death situations; pressure to act rapidly with less or unreliable information; poor security in the field; intense internal and media scrutiny; dissonance between short-term and long-term objectives; paucity of resources; and a great requirement for adaptability to novel circumstances. In an international environment, political overtones and the need to balance competition and collaboration add to the complexity. While the UN-led Humanitarian Country Teams (HCT) and the Cluster System are the beginnings of collaborative or shared leadership, it is still a tough call for the HCT or cluster leader to lead those who are under no obligation to be led. Inter-agency rivalries and agendas mean decisions may not necessarily be optimal or even correct. While single-agency leadership is relatively easier, inter-agency leadership requires talent of a very high order.[15]

14. Paul Knox Clarke, "Who's in Charge Here?" A Literature Review on Approaches to Leadership in Humanitarian Operations, 2013, *ALNAP*, London.
15. "Coordination to Save Lives", OCHA Policy Study Series, 2012.

Organisational leaders derive power from the position, formal mandates and job description. However, the meta-leader has a far less formalised and scripted framework which relies on effective influence based on personal credibility, negotiating skills and bringing value to the table for everyone.

While organisational change is slow and evolutionary, leaders who are agile and adaptive can lead flexible, resilient and quick changes required to respond to an emergency. But this meta-leadership is different from the usual meaning and is about an overarching vision and action that connects the work, purposes and agendas of different organisations. It is about creating guidance, momentum and direction across organisations that allows shared thinking, action and purpose in extremely demanding situations. This requires a capacity for effective networking, a distinct and fast mindset, and finesse in negotiating and collaborating group activity. By influence, leaders should be able to not only connect and integrate diverse agencies, but be able to motivate them to effectively synergise. The goal is a seamless web of organisations, information, resources and people that can best detect, and respond to, a calamitous terrorist event and help recover to normalcy in the shortest time.

Understanding the Meta-Leader: Organisational leaders derive power from the position, formal mandates and job description. However, the meta-leader has a far less formalised and scripted framework which relies on effective influence based on personal credibility, negotiating skills and bringing value to the table for everyone. This is a difficult job and proposition because there may be little or no direct compensation to sharing culture, and even sacrifices of resources involved; and, it is difficult to put traditionally competing agencies that have deeply embedded antagonism and contest for control together in a collaborative box. In a regular organisation, a leader is in a comfort zone of conventions, established practices and vocabulary. Careers and credibility grow along a well-trodden path. The meta-leader does not have this luxury and operates in the space of others and works to make bridges between insiders and outsiders of organisations. He rises above narrow parochial and provincial

interests to indulge in true innovation, adaptability and flexibility of ideas and action. The effort may go unrewarded because it is outside traditional career advancement. Also, public scrutiny in such intense situations has a high risk of failure.[16]

The meta-leader is able to visualise the potential of a sum of efforts that far exceeds individual contribution and, with a frame of reference that is mostly out-of-the-box, he finds means to inspire, network, communicate and persuade broad participation. Not only does he understand individual differences and nuances acutely, he is able to make these characteristics of each organisation complement each other. The buy-in of this larger picture by all is the main job of the meta-leader. This requires an approach of multi-dimensional problem solving. The key questions that he poses at the start are about key stakeholders, their own interests and perspectives, division of tasks and responsibilities, prioritisation of objectives, constraints and end-goals that also satisfy all. He has to have exceptional analytical skills and creativity to synthesise disparate information into a coherent and acceptable message that others can be inspired to believe in[17].

Leadership for Collaborative Inter-Agency Work: Fusing of the domains of the military and non-military (humanitarians) has sparked off a lively debate among those in the space of international humanitarian law. The complexity of the HADR space encompassing diverse issues such as protection of civilians, security of humanitarians, volatility of politics and players, requires a large range of expertise and capacities for effectiveness.[18]

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16. Marcus, Dorn and Henderson, "Meta leadership and National Emergency Preparedness", Working Paper Centre for Public Leadership, Harvard University 2005.
17. Kelly Discount, "Adaptive Leadership Styles in Emergency Management", Presentation at 57th Annual Conference of International Association of Emergency Managers, November 2009. Florida, US.
18. Johan M. Berlin and Eric D. Carlström, "Collaboration Exercises: What Do They Contribute? – A Study of Learning and Usefulness", *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management*, vol 23, no 1, March 2015.

Some of these challenges are too big to counter without a shared vision and collaboration.

So far, this space has been dominated by individual leaders requiring exceptional qualities and the focus of agencies has been to develop and invest in them. With growing demands and specialisation complexities, the load on individual leaders has grown exponentially, requiring a culture of collectivism, participation and collegiality, as also collective accountability. Knowledge management and organisational learning through collaborative effort among agencies would play an important role in the future. But, in practice, this is easier said than achieved. Lack of trust, competition for funds and attention of the media create a climate that impacts effective collaboration and learning though collective action. In the HADR space, the term collaboration would be defined as, and would encompass, the following:

- A cooperative relationship between organisations that is not based on market or hierarchical control forces.
- Primarily based on negotiations and effective communication that result in synergy and greater output than the sum produced individually.
- Leadership in such activity gets value addition from the differences in culture, experience or skills.

Leadership in HADR is highly contextual i.e. the situation on the ground e.g. conflict, post-conflict, genocide, failing state, etc. Therefore, leadership may be dictated by expertise, domain-knowledge and skills, experience, needs of the team and situation and capacity to influence peer organisations rather than conferred as positional authority. In other words, leadership may be fluid and dictated by priority tasks, and, therefore, an activity that can be distributed, shared or collaborated. This is in contrast to what individual leaders aspire to, which can lead to disenchantment after some setbacks. The UN's integrated mission concept is based more on the individual leader e.g. SRSG [Senior Representative of the Secretary General (of the UN)], Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) leader, etc. This is seen by detractors as subordinating humanitarian priorities to political and military

objectives that require compromises with various actors. More importantly, it puts humanitarians at great risk.

Adaptive Leadership: Heroic leadership as a concept is premised on: a leader having all the answers or solutions; followers doing what they are asked to do by him; and, work of an urgent and risky nature, requiring high control. What is forgotten is that knowledgeable and evolved followers might resent the elite and closeted nature of decision-making by the leader and his small band of experts. In certain chaotic and complex environments, control may be illusory and inviting different perspectives and inputs may lead to a better order. Trust in people and the belief that motivation, creativity, commitment and skills exist at all levels in an organisation, permits useful participation[19].

Adaptive leaders have curiosity that allows them to explore uncharted human potential and capacities, and then bend rules or SOPs to accommodate them. People tend to be more loyal or committed to plans or ideas that they participated in evolving rather than something imparted or thrust on them by outsiders. Good leaders understand this yearning in people to contribute and find meaning in their lives as a strength that needs to be built up. To do this, a leader becomes the facilitator or host for people to get together and collaborate. He provides an environment with due processes, resources, support, confidence and his own passionate involvement. He monitors and evaluates progress and defends his team from interference, impediments and other restrictive agendas. People at the higher echelons of a hierarchy would look at this type of engagement as a threat to power and control, leading to chaos. Bureaucratic means allow them to choose control over effectiveness. This vicious cycle of mistrust and insecurity leads to apathy and a couldn't-care-less altitude in the entire organisation. A leader not only needs to prove to others his commitment to a shared environment but to continually work towards building faith and belief in others in such a system. It is not about team members liking each other – it is about creative and vibrant interaction of diversity to generate ideas.

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19. Margie Smith with Kim Scriven, "Leadership in Action: Leading Effectively in Humanitarian Operations". *ALNAP Study*, June 2011. ISBN- 9781907288371, Overseas Development Institute, London.

AREAS OF CONCERN

The hypothesis is that a fundamental element that contributes greatly to efficacy in HADR is leadership at various levels. This starts from first-responders, i.e. the community, right up to national leadership at the NDMA and central government. The problem is that while in most cases leadership is well identified and even defined, not much goes into formal training and exposure to hone the skills in leading various facets of an HADR mission. A number of research areas and questions need addressing. First, what are the deficiencies at various levels of HADR leadership in India? Second, identification of grey areas in the structural mechanism of disaster management, especially where leadership plays an important part in terms of coordination among various agencies. The third issue is identifying the challenges to the military leadership in HADR. What changes are required in training and orientation for military units? Finally, what are the challenges to Indian leaders when leading HADR teams abroad? Is there a need to have a coherent and comprehensive policy as part of a national agenda?