



# Lessons from the Osama Bin Laden operation

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# What can we learn from the spotless operation

- Learning from past mistakes
- Eye for detail
- Training the A team
- Meticulous planning
- Speed
- Cutting edge technology
- Obama leading from the front

# Learning from the past mistakes

- **Operation Eagle Claw:**
  - USA learnt from the 1980 US Special forces Operations forces' debacle in Iran which failed miserably as the helicopters crashed into each other.
  - JSOC (Joint special ops command) was formed to ensure the special operators had the equipment, resources and training for such operations.
  - The stalled helicopter was detonated in Osama operation but in Iran it fell into enemy hands.

# Learning from the past mistakes contd.

- **9/11:**
  - USA also learnt that intelligence has to be coordinated better from 9/11, as NSA had information that 11 Al Qaeda terrorists were planning an attack on USA- this was not passed on to FBI.
  - May 2 attack was culmination of a reform to bring together Special operations and Intelligence.
  - Persistent efforts of both over a decade brought this success.
- Oct operation to rescue Linda Norgrove by SEAL team which failed
  - A grenade was thrown by a sailor too close to the hostage who was killed

# Eye for detail

- The smoking signals were small but distinct
- The trash in the house was burnt and not disposed off
- The compound wall was higher than any other near by houses etc
- If children lost their ball inside the compound when playing , they were not allowed in, but were handsomely compensated
- The residents did not come out for anything
- Such clues led the intelligence agency to conclude Osama may be hiding there

# Training the A team

- All Seal (Sea air land team) members face years of brutal preparation, including a notorious six months of basic underwater demolition training in Coronado, Calif.
- During “hell week,” recruits get a total of four hours of sleep during five and a half days of nonstop running, swimming in the cold surf and rolling in mud.
- About 80 percent of the candidates do not make it; at least one has died.
- Team 6 candidates are taught to parachute from 30,000 feet with oxygen masks and gain control of a hijacked cruise liner at sea.
- The SEAL team 6 hunted down war criminals in Bosnia; They rescued the Governor general of Grenada in 1983.

# Meticulous planning

- The SEAL team prepared for months
- In training mock fights they fired upwards of 700 rounds of bullets a week in houses specially built for learning how to dodge and avoid shooting.
- Result- not one casualty from SEALS
- The planning was to the minutest detail
- For instance: After killing Laden, photographing his body, doing DNA testing, disposal of body in the sea after Islamic rites, so that the place of his burial would not become a holy spot.

# Speed

- Entire operation lasted just 40 minutes
- This is after one of the helicopters was damaged and had to be blown up!



# Cutting edge technology

- First time use of stealth helicopters
- Modified tail boom
- Noise reducing covering on rear rotors and special rotor design - neighbors did not hear it until it was directly overhead
- Special high tech material similar to that used in stealth fighters
- Silver finish makes it harder to detect by radar and by infrared sensors
- The helicopters also flew very low to avoid detection

# Leading from the front

- Obama personally led from the front
- Gave the GO himself
- Watched the entire operation with his top team

# Sources

- BBC
- NDTV
- ABC news
- NY Times
- Outlook India
- Mail online
- CSMonitor
- Guardian