

Editorial

The 34th National Security Lecture on “Security Strategies for India as an Emerging Regional Power with Global Aspirations” was delivered at the USI on 05 December 2018 by Shri Shivshankar Menon, IFS (Retd), former National Security Advisor to the Prime Minister of India. Edited version of the talk is the lead article in the Journal. The author has stated India’s Strategy as – “The Transformation of India”. At independence in 1947, the abject condition of India left the nation with no choice but to make the transformation of India into a strong, prosperous and modern country as the national goal. As professionals our task, therefore, is to protect and secure India’s integrity, citizens, values and assets, and enable development and opportunities where every Indian can achieve full potential. To do this adequate hard power is required to have a say in the international system to transform the lives of our people. A proactive strategy with a vision can help to shape the environment. For achieving credible deterrence capability, adequate budget support is required. However, India’s defence budget for current financial year is only 1.56 per cent of the GDP and is the lowest during the last five decades or so. Corrective measures are called for. India has improved her relative position vis-à-vis every other country except China. And yet, today India is more dependent on the outside world than before. We rely on the world for energy, technology, essential goods like fertilizer and coal, access to markets, and capital. Consequently, we cannot think of securing India without considering energy security, food security and other issues, that can derail our quest to transform India. We need to shape the external environment along with our partners. We need to address issues like the contested global commons in outer and cyber space, and the high seas, claims on our territory, nuclear proliferation, state sponsored cross border terrorism, and so on. Fundamental reforms of our internal security apparatus and military reforms are overdue for ensuring enhanced capability of security forces in keeping with our core values and national interests. China – US contention and trade war is likely to continue for sometime with a paradigm shift away from co-operation. This opens up opportunities and space for other powers. Both China and the US will look to put other conflicts on the back

burner, while they deal with their primary concerns. While China is busy with trade war, India should exploit strategic window to build up credible deterrence capability or else we will become vulnerable to strategic coercion.

Article titled “Impressions of Visit to Chengdu and Tibet Regions of China” authored by Maj Gen BK Sharma, AVSM, SM and Bar (Retd) makes interesting reading. The author visited these Regions in September 2018 on invitation from South Asia Centre, Sichuan University of China. The author is of the opinion that China believes; the US sanctions notwithstanding, it would remain the centre of gravity of the global supply chain. The sanctions are bound to hit American consumers and give jitters to the World economy. China intends to mitigate reductions in exports by enhancing domestic consumption. Suburbs of Chengdu have a number of model villages, farmhouses, restaurants and recreational facilities. Tibet figures prominently in China’s strategic calculus, it being the water tower of Asia, rich in resources and shares borders with India, Nepal and Bhutan. China has adopted two pronged strategy to assimilate Tibet. Firstly, massive development of the region. Secondly, social re-engineering of the Tibetan population. About 20 per cent Hans have settled in Tibet. Schooling till 12th standard is compulsory. Mandarin is compulsory from first class level and is a criteria for getting government jobs. Majority of youth in Lhasa speak Mandarin and lure for Tibetan language is fading. Tibetan Buddhists feel major spiritual deficit and a loss of inheritance. Massive multi-modal connectivity has been developed in Tibet. Gongga near Lhasa is a modern airport. The airport has multiple run-ways and a portion of the airfield is used for military aircraft. Nagqu is the mother logistic base in Tibet. Lhasa city wears a modern look with wide roads, public squares and multi-storey flats. While Chinese respect India’s resolve to maintain strategic autonomy, the skepticism about growing strategic proximity between India and the US persists. China perceives that in the near future; India and the US are bound to emerge as strategic allies which would be inimical to China’s interests. China, therefore, seeks to improve relations with India lest it out-rightly falls in the US orbit. The Sino-Indian relations probably will continue to be characterised by – cooperation, competition and conflict, Realpolitik on the part of China demands a tactical adjustment to steer relations

with India to a manageable level, so that the American challenge is mitigated. India, on her part should make efforts to achieve credible deterrence and show deft diplomacy in engaging China.

Article titled “US-China Heated Cold War finds Taiwan as a Sensitive Spot” authored by Maj Gen SB Asthana, SM, VSM (Retd) focuses on Taiwan as a raw nerve of China. US - China contention and trade war is on. It is likely to continue for some time with paradigm shift away from co-operation. USA by signing of Taiwan Travel Act, sale of modern military equipment to Taiwan and sending two warships to Taiwan Straits indicates that the USA and its allies will insist on freedom of navigation, and not accept unilateral interpretation of South China Sea as China's lake. China should be ready for escalation, having created features into artificial islands in South China Sea and then creating military infrastructure and arming artificial islands and claiming sovereignty on 'water' which the world perceives as global common. As far as people of Taiwan are concerned, increasing numbers have started identifying themselves as 'Taiwanese' and feeling of 'nationalism' is on the rise. They want to enjoy freedom, democracy and prosperity. China claims Taiwan as its integral part. Its independence will affect Chinese reputation. Reunification of Taiwan continues to be China's dream. Taiwan is crucial for strategic dominance of South and East China Sea and Asia Pacific Region. The US has major trade interests in Taiwan besides strategic dominance. US prefers to have democratic, independently governed Taiwan as an ally, where they have strategic and economic leverages, rather than forming part of Communist China. US is looking at sale of advanced military weapons to Taiwan, which is also seeking to buy such weapons to boost their defences. These are new measures to put China under pressure for its adventurism in South China Sea. The emerging scenario in Taiwan affects India. Taiwan is looking at developing alternate trade partners with Asian democracies like India rather than excessive reliance on the PRC. Taiwan is looking for cheap labour, raw materials, skilled english speaking man power and good infrastructure, which is available in India along with a big market. For India; Taiwan can be a potential source of FDI. Taiwan wants to build its own military capability to withstand coercion from China.

The subject for USI Gold Medal Essay Competition 2018 Group 'A' was "The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) of China: Security Implications for India and the Indo Pacific Region and Response Strategies". Captain T Sugreev, IN, got the first prize and has been awarded the Gold Medal. Edited text of the Essay has been published as an article in this issue of the Journal. The article is very well written. BRI proposes to connect 65 countries, representing 55 per cent of world's Gross National Product (GDP), 70 per cent population and 75 per cent of energy resources. According to Beijing, substantial diplomatic, financial and intellectual resources being poured into the Project, make it the most defining economic and political construct of the 21st Century. The Vision Document on the subject describes BRI narrative as win-win cooperation, inter-governmental coordination, connectivity of infrastructure, opening bottlenecks, unimpeded trade, and integration. However, analysis of the Project reveals that it involves certain risks. The Belt passes through one of the harshest terrains in the world and cost of investment to be made by stake holding countries is high. There is political instability in some regions and territorial and maritime disputes of China with its neighbours, make the BRI inherently a risky preposition. Also countries signing up for BRI may end up in massive debt traps. The Chinese economy may not be able to sustain its growth in view of tariff war unleashed by the USA. As per the Asia Development Bank (ADB) report, Asia will require US \$ 26 trillion from 2016 to 2030 i.e US \$ 1.7 trillion investment per year to maintain balanced growth. On the flip side, in case BRI is successfully completed, Chinese penetration in these countries will increase and latter's dependence on China will increase substantially. As far as India's response, the author has suggested that India should emulate Deng Xiaoping's stratagem – "hide your brightness, bide your time, build capabilities". We should try to bridge the gap vis-a-vis China in all dimensions of national power.

The subject of USI Gold Medal Essay Competition 2018 Group 'B' was "India – A Net Provider of Security in Indian Ocean Region (IOR) – A Roadmap". Major SK Misra of 25 Madras got the first prize and has been awarded the Gold Medal. Edited text of the Essay has been published as an article in this issue of the USI

Journal. IOR is bounded by landmass on three sides. It comprises 38 littoral states and the Indian ocean, which is third largest ocean in the world. The Indian subcontinent, Africa, the Arabian and Malay Peninsulas, Indonesia and Australia bound the IOR. India dominates the Region because of its strategic location. Indian island territories of Andaman and Nicobar and Laxadweep, further accentuate its access. India's coastline is 7500 kilometres or so. 90 per cent of India's trade by volume and 90 per cent of energy supplies come from seaborne traffic. India has been at the centre of the IOR historically; spreading commerce, culture, religion and ideas via the sea. However; a changing world order in the past two decades with rise of China and relative decline of the USA led global order has upset India's strategic space in the IOR. This trend needs to be reversed, before China becomes the foremost power in the Region. By 2025, India must become 'Net Provider of Security' in the Region by leveraging its geographical advantage, military engagement with littoral states, as well as world powers to reclaim its position of eminence and secure its maritime interests. Countering the influence of China and combatting piracy and non-traditional security threats, can help attain the goal. National Security Council (NSC) should prudently integrate efforts of the MoD, intelligence agencies, MEA and Ministry of Finance. Armed Forces have a role as security providers. The joint publication Indian Armed Forces 2017 and India's Maritime Security Strategy 2015 describe India's security interests as seeking constructive engagement and shaping conducive maritime environment. The Armed Forces lack expeditionary capability to operate and project power to become net security providers. Military reforms are required to make them a "Joint" force with synergy in all domains. Joint Commands are required on the West as well as East Coasts in addition to the Tri-Services Andaman and Nicobar Command. These Commands must be capable of executing maritime operations with the Army and Air Force operations in support of the Navy. Amphibious capability is essential for projecting power and establishing hold over distant littoral islands. The Navy and the Air Force already have certain sealift and airlift capabilities. However, synergy needs to be achieved and vital deficiencies need to be made up. Currently the world order is in a flux. Rebalancing of power between the US and her allies on the one

side and China, Russia and some other powers on the other side. The IOR is India's backyard and must remain so. Military engagement with littoral states and some other powers is essential. In securing own interests, India would also secure stability of the world order; which is crucial for India's growth and development.

The article titled "Tactical Nuclear Weapons : Myths or Realities" authored by Air Commodore Rippon Gupta is well written. A tactical nuclear weapon refers to a weapon which is designed to be used on a battlefield during military operations. It is designed for use in battle as part of an attack with conventional weapon forces. India and Pakistan are both nuclear powers. Both continue to develop their nuclear weapon capability. The main purpose of strategic nuclear weapon is deterrence. India's nuclear programme is firmly controlled by civilian leadership, who view nuclear bomb as a political instrument. Pakistan's nuclear programme is run by military officers, who think of use of the nuclear bomb in military terms and are filling in perceived shortfalls in nuclear capability to shore up deterrence against stronger neighbour. With India's growing conventional capability and pro-active military plans, Pakistan has been emphasizing the utility of tactical nuclear weapons. India's stand is that a nuke is a nuke and use of even a tactical nuclear weapon will receive a response leading to unacceptable damage. This is in keeping with India's declared nuclear doctrine. Pakistan has not announced its nuclear doctrine. The author has brought out limitations of tactical nuclear weapons in a comprehensive manner. In the context of serious geographical challenges, it has been spelt out that Lahore in Pakistan is only 25 km from border between the two countries and Islamabad less than 300 kms. Usage of nukes can cause damage to civilian populations, thus making the impact strategic. Tactical nuclear weapons are small and light. These can fall in the hands of terrorist groups leading to loss of central control by the Government. Author is of the view that India should not go in for tactical nuclear weapons because it has serious misgivings which are hard to ignore.

Article titled "UAVs – The Silent Force Multipliers in Future Air Defence Operations" has been authored by Lt Col Piyush Kumar Sanwal of Army Air Defence. The tussle for dominance in

the defence-offence equation has been going on ever since dawn of conflict among human beings. With advancements in Information and Communication Technology (ICT), there has been a paradigm shift in war fighting concepts. The author has taken pains to spell out various contingencies, in which Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) can be employed in modern warfare. Contemporary roles, missions and capabilities have been explained in a logical manner. Harnessing of potential of UAVs in likely future operations has also been discussed. Their utility in reconnaissance, intelligence, surveillance and target acquisition (RISTA) missions has been highlighted. UAVs can be fruitfully employed for waging network centric warfare (NCW). Besides force multiplication in conduct of tactical operations, UAVs can help in promoting synergy in operations involving the three Services facilitating integrated employment of terrestrial, airborne and space based systems.

Current issue of the Journal has 12 articles in all. Of these, abstracts of five articles have been given at the beginning of each article. These have been authored by eminent authors and make very interesting reading.

Review of the following books has been published in this Journal :-

- (a) "Will Tibet Ever Find Her Soul Again? India Tibet Relations 1947-1962".
Reviewed by Lt Gen BS Nagal, PVSM, AVSM, SM (Retd).
- (b) "Jamal Mian : The Life of Maulana Jamaluddin Abdul Wahab of Farangi Mahall, 1919-2012".
Reviewed by Maj Gen Ashok Joshi, VSM (Retd).
- (c) "China in the Indian Ocean : One Ocean, Many Strategies".
Reviewed by Commander S Sarangi.
- (d) "Pakistan's Tactical Nuclear Weapons: Giving The Devil More Than His Due?".
Reviewed by Maj Gen Ashok Joshi, VSM (Retd).

Major General Y K Gera (Retd)