

Editorial

The subject for 33rd National Security Lecture for this year was 'Media as a Force Multiplier for National Security'. Dr Sanjaya Baru, former Media Adviser to the Prime Minister of India, currently the Secretary General of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and Senior Distinguished Fellow of the United Service Institution of India (USI) delivered the lecture. General Bipin Rawat, UYSM, AVSM, YSM, SM, VSM, ADC, Chief of the Army Staff attended the lecture as the Guest of Honour. Dr Sanjaya Baru covered a wide canvas of issues that included – political and business context in which the media operates, the changing nature of media itself, relationship between media and national interests, and the role of strategic communications and media strategy for the government as a whole. The message from the lecture was quite clear i.e. "the media today is an extremely competitive business enterprise with diverse ownership and readership and there is a fundamental change in the objectives of the media. Therefore, only elite consensus can ensure that it acts as a force multiplier for national security". He acknowledged the balanced coverage by the Indian media during the Doklam standoff which gave space to the government, the Armed Forces and diplomacy to work together and made the Indian government's position strong.

The term "Indo-Pacific" in place of the "Asia-Pacific" of late has been of much talk both in the diplomatic as well the security circles across the globe. Indo-Pacific includes South Asia and the Indian Ocean. Recently, the US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, talked of the need to support a "free, open and thriving Indo-Pacific". He described the Indian and Pacific Oceans as a "single strategic arena", with India and the United States as "bookends" within this region. It seems that the American intent is to elevate India to the status of a rising global superpower that is able to contain China. It is, thus, evident that India no longer can be excluded from any over-arching reckoning in the Indo-Pacific, be it economic or security related. Shri Yogendra Kumar, IFS (Retd) in the article 'Indo-Pacific Developments and Future Challenges' has carried out an analyse of the major strategic developments in

the region and highlighted the prevailing tensions and challenges that are likely to spill over to the Indian Ocean Region from both the sides i.e. the South China Sea and the Mediterranean.

The next article is on the 'Future of Nation State Concept in the Era of Global Interdependence: Options for India in the Indo-Pacific' by Major General Rajiv Narayanan, AVSM, VSM (Retd). The author argues that the current World Order is in a state of flux and the emerging World Order is tending towards multi-polarity wherein the Middle Powers and Rising Powers, in particular the smaller States of the Global South due to the nature of global interdependence, need to remain vigilant so that their core national interests are protected. The author makes a case for a regional multilateral federal structure among the States in the Indo-Pacific so that there is better inter-connectivity, social and economic cohesion in this region. In the author's reckoning such a scenario provides an opportunity for this Regional Structure to be a net security provider in the Indo-Pacific.

The strategic and economic significance of the western Indo-Pacific Region is continuously growing. The western Indo-Pacific incorporates some of the busiest sea lanes in the world. The statistics of the trade and oil flow through this Region are testimony to this fact. The trade has surged especially with the rise of Asian powers like China and India. The rise in commerce has created political and strategic interests along with some concerns. With the rise of China and its assertive maritime behaviour, some of these interests would be under threat. Shri Asoke Kumar Mukerji, IFS (Retd), in the next article "India: The 'Western Beacon' of the Indo-Pacific Region", post the reference by the US Secretary of States to India as the "Western Beacon" of the Indo-Pacific views it is an opportunity for India to pursue her core national interests in the western Indo-Pacific Region, and he also underlines the importance of building peace, security and prosperity in a holistic manner. In this regard, he highlights the requirement to have an interface between the security and policy structures of the United States and India.

China has embarked on a massive expansion of its Navy to extend its global reach. She, in the last few years has built up

naval capacity, bases and relationships in the Indian Ocean Region, and is poised to become a pre-eminent maritime power in the Region. Chinese activity in the Indian Ocean has touched a new high in recent months. The PLA-N's growing area of operations in this region places it in direct competition to India's defined interests. However, some analysts are of the view that the PLA-N and its current force structure is aimed at securing the South China Sea and East China Sea, which it claims as its territories and is embattled in a bitter dispute with neighbouring countries as well as the US. Lieutenant General PC Katoch, PVSM, UYSM, AVSM, SC (Retd) in the next article 'Coming - Chinese Tide in the Indian Ocean' has carried out analysis of various reports, in particular those emanating from the Chinese media related to the Chinese activities in the Indian Ocean, and has concluded that there is little doubt that China is embarking on a path to militarise the Indian Ocean Region akin to the South China Sea.

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) held its 19th Party Congress, a twice per decade event, in Beijing from 18 – 25 Oct 2017, to set the party's national policy goals and elect its top leadership. At this Congress, President Xi Jinping cemented his status and elevated his thoughts on governance to a new level with their inclusion in the Party Constitution. Xi Jinping announced that China has entered a "new era" in establishing socialism with Chinese characteristics. The words "new" and "innovation" featured quite prominently in his discourse. Xi stated that "The Chinese nation ... has stood up, grown rich, and become strong – and it now embraces the brilliant prospects of rejuvenation ... It will be an era that sees China moving closer to centre stage and making greater contributions to mankind". These words need to be taken in all their seriousness. The next article 'Nineteenth Party National Conference: Xi Sets Course for Ushering China into New Era' by Major General GG Dwivedi, SM, VSM & Bar, Ph D (Retd) brings out that for the long term survival of "one party system", China to sustain its fast pace of growth is an inescapable imperative; not to mention the challenges it faces. Some of the implications in this regard have been vividly brought out.

Traditionally bilateral relations between India and Afghanistan have been strong and friendly. Having committed a US \$2.3 billion

aid programme, India is one of the largest donors to Afghanistan, investing in the economy, humanitarian aid, education, development, construction and electrical projects. India has financed and built Afghanistan's Parliament, helped to rebuild the hydroelectric Salma Dam in western Herat province. India has also built a 133-mile highway linking Afghanistan to Iran. Afghan diplomats, administrators and soldiers come to India for professional training. There is a positive perception of India's role in Afghanistan. The next article 'India's Growing Presence in Afghanistan: Manifestation of its Soft Power and Diplomacy' by Shri Gaurav Dixit brings out that stability in Afghanistan is crucial to its national interest and is reflective of its core values and belief in non-interference and non-coercion. The author views that India's soft power policies, with subtle elements of hard power (termed as smart power) have had a positive impact and are effective.

National Cadet Corps (NCC) which had started with just 20,000 cadets in 1948 today has a strength of around 13 lakh cadets. NCC was raised on 15 July 1948 based on the National Cadet Corps Act of 1948 with the objective to make up for the shortage in the Army. It was given an inter-service make-over in 1950 when the Air Wing was added, followed by the Naval Wing in 1952. During Indo-Pakistan War of 1965 and the 1971 War, NCC cadets were second line of defence. They assisted the ordnance factories in supplying arms and ammunition, and were also employed as patrol parties to capture enemy paratroopers. The NCC cadets also worked hand in hand with the Civil Defence authorities and actively took part in rescue works and traffic control. The aims of NCC, as spelt out in 1988, are to develop discipline, character and brotherhood, the spirit of adventure and ideals of selfless service amongst young citizens. It also aims to enlighten leadership qualities among the youth who will serve the Nation regardless of which career they choose. Lieutenant General Vinod Vashisht, AVSM, VSM and Bar (Retd) in the next article 'National Cadet Corps – The Silent Contributor to Nation Building and National Security' makes a case for harnessing of the youth power of the largest uniformed organisation of the world for Nation Building and National Security and makes some useful recommendations on enhancing NCC's effectiveness.

The last article in this Issue is on 'Decision Dilemmas in UN Peacekeeping' by Lieutenant Colonel RR Laddha. Notwithstanding the authorisation of robust mandates by the UN Security Council and well defined Rules of Engagement, the use of force in UN peacekeeping operations remains a grey area. At the tactical level it always raises decision dilemmas as the UN peacekeepers operate on a cardinal principle of "Do No Harm" and collateral damage is not acceptable. The red line between what a peacekeeper is required to 'do and not do' is very thin. The author in this article has done a case study of four incidents in South Sudan and brought out the challenges with respect to identification of target, judging hostile intent, pre-emptive self-defence and also protection of men of armed group seeking protection at the UN bases. On many occasions the UN peacekeepers have been blamed for inaction. The author views that 'it is better to be blamed for action than inaction' as 'peacekeeping is not a soldier's job but only a soldier can do it'.

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