

Editorial

The 21st Colonel Pyara Lal Memorial Lecture on the subject 'Transforming the Indian Armed Forces for Meeting Future Security Challenges' was delivered by Lieutenant General Vinod Bhatia, PVSM, AVSM, SM (Retd) former Director General of Military Operations and presently the Director of Centre for Joint Warfare Studies (CENJOWS) on 20 Sep 17. Military transformation is not an end in itself, but is much needed necessity to address the emerging and long term challenges. Many competing requirements have to be taken care of and, therefore, there are limitations to what can be accomplished. The bottomline is that the Armed Forces have to match, if not overmatch, the opponent's capabilities and be a deterrent to any of the adversary's nefarious designs. Modern technology can be a good tool, but the issue is 'what is available and affordable'. Shekatkar Committee, of which Lieutenant General Bhatia was a member, has been a step in the right direction taken by the Government of India to enhance the combat potential of the Indian Armed Forces and re-balance defence expenditure. 65 out of 99 recommendations of the Shekatkar Committee pertaining to the Army have been accepted. The implementation of the recommendations may be spread over a period time but cannot be selective.

The next article 'Trajectory and Future of India-Bangladesh Relations' is text of the talk delivered by His Excellency Syed Muazzem Ali, the High Commissioner of Bangladesh to India, at the United Service Institution of India (USI), New Delhi on 06 Sep 2017. The article outlines the historical and emotional bonding, and the challenges in relationship that exist between the two countries. It provides good insight into the Bangladesh's perspective of the relationship between India and Bangladesh on wide range of contemporary issues such as security and terrorism, energy, bilateral and sub-regional connectivity, trade, commerce and the water sharing arrangements. Notwithstanding the fact that the Teesta water sharing issue could not be resolved during the recent visit of the Honourable Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina to India from 07 to 10 April this year, the bilateral ties between India and Bangladesh are now at a new height. The fact that eleven agreements and twenty-four Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) were signed during the visit encompassing important sectors such as security, trade, energy, defence and civil nuclear issues etc., are a testimony to this. The efforts on part of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina are aimed at making it a win-win situation for both the neighbours with common heritage, cultural and historical linkages.

Operations by highly trained and motivated troops behind the enemy lines have always been an essential tool of warfare. Air dropping of troops and equipment behind the enemy lines provides the commanders a potent offensive capability that can put off an adversary's defensive plans and preparations. Lieutenant General PC Katoch, PVSM, UYSM, AVSM, SC (Retd), in the next article 'Airborne Operations – Imperative Future Strategic Capability' highlights the value of Airborne Forces. The author underlines the operational, strategic and political significance of the capabilities of the Airborne Forces and makes a strong case for the retention of Parachute Battalions and does not want these to be confused with the Special Operations Forces (SF Units). The fact that the success of the Airborne Forces is greatly dependent on availability of intelligence, air superiority, neutralisation/suppression of enemy's air defence and availability of aircraft etc. is acknowledged by the author.

An adversary's strategy and security objectives need to be studied as these have significant implications for conceptualising and evolving own policy responses. Once the adversary's military strategy is correctly understood, the political, diplomatic and military responses to neutralise it can be accordingly evolved. Chinese military strategists and think tanks periodically undertake this exercise with respect to India and their other adversaries. In

the next article 'Chinese Military Perspective on the Indian Military Strategy', the author, Brigadier Iqbal Singh Samyal, who has been India's Defence Attaché in Beijing, highlights that the Chinese military's perspective is not divorced from the overall strategic environment. People's Liberation Army, being an important pillar of the Chinese political structure, has great influence on building perceptions about Indian military strategy. It is interesting to note that the Chinese analysts are of the view that India's strategic intent vis-à-vis China is to "win a high technology limited conventional war under conditions of nuclear deterrence". In their view, India's strategic objectives are primacy of politics, favourable military employment that facilitates compromise on favourable terms. Hence, it may be incorrect to be of the view that the Chinese perceptions of the Indian military strategy are coloured by historical biases or are subjective.

Owing to China's rapid economic growth, its crude oil consumption has multiplied over the years. Like many other nations, Chinese domestic supply can be increased only modestly. Increasing demand for oil will have to be met mainly through imports. Thus, energy diplomacy has become more and more important for China's energy security. The next article in this issue of the Journal i.e. 'China's Energy Diplomacy and Changing Contours of Security Structure in the Indian Ocean: New Scramble for Sea Power' by Ms Dhanwati Yadav seeks to illustrate how, India and China, following their swelled economies and military modernisation, has triggered a new wave of power projection in the Indian Ocean. She cautions that the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) is emerging as a serious challenge to the Indian Navy in the Indian Ocean Region. The author makes a case for upgrading of India's naval assets quantitatively and qualitatively, and for external diplomatic balancing by deepening ties with island nations in the Indian Ocean Region to secure India's long term strategic national interests.

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons also referred to as the Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty was passed in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on 07 Jul 2017, and signed by 50 nations on 20 Sep 17 at a ceremony held at the United Nations Headquarters, New York, during the period of the recent UNGA session. The Treaty is the product of increasing concerns over the risk posed by the continued existence of nuclear weapons, including the catastrophic humanitarian and environmental consequences of their use. This is the first legally binding agreement which prohibits the proliferation of nuclear weapons with an ultimate objective of their total elimination. It is a comprehensive treaty that prohibits the development, testing, production, stockpiling, stationing, transfer, use and threat of use of nuclear weapons, as well as assistance and encouragement to prohibited activities. For the nuclear armed states signing the Treaty, it provides for a time-bound framework for negotiations leading to the verified and irreversible elimination of their nuclear weapons programme. The Treaty has been opposed by some world powers. The United States, United Kingdom and France did not take part in the negotiations of the treaty and do not intend to sign, ratify or ever become party to it. Japan, the last country to be hit with a nuclear weapon, did not sign on the Treaty either. Dr Roshan Khanijo, in the next article 'Effectiveness of Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons Treaty', examines the current nuclear environment as it prevails and amplifies the characteristics as well as the legal aspects of the Treaty. She highlights the weaknesses of the Treaty and argues that it is not the lack of treaties but the global will that prevents their implementation. While India should support steps taken for global peace, India's response and approach has to be pragmatic and realistic, based on geostrategic realities and her national security objectives and needs.

In the next article 'Nuclear Instability in South Asia: Is Someone Shaping the Narrative', Colonel Inderjit S Panjarath, SM brings out that there is an attempt by Western think tanks and some others to shape a narrative that India is drifting away from its nuclear doctrine of "No First Use" of nuclear weapons to "Strike First". There is also an attempt by some with vested interests to sow the idea in the minds of the international bodies such as the Nuclear Supplies