

Editorial

The article “Aren’t We Already in Undeclared Third World War with Changed Dimensions and Instruments” by Maj Gen SB Asthana, SM, VSM (Retd), makes interesting reading. The author has brought out that because of mutually destructive capabilities of a large number of powers, full scale declared world war between combat forces may not occur. However, military hardware including nukes will continue to grow for deterrence as well as trade. Reality check as per the author reveals that the present global situation has every element of a world war except that the dimension, instruments and modalities have changed as war has not been formally declared. The world is yet to accept mentally the transition of world war into a new dimension to encompass, economic warfare, trade, diplomatic manoeuvres, space and information warfare including cyber warfare. The conventional war has taken a backseat, but the space exists for such wars at regional level within the overall ambit of undeclared third world war. The battleground for ‘undeclared third world war’ appears to be the Indo-Pacific, and the world has probably already entered the preparatory phase without fully recognising it.

The article titled “The Strategic Dynamics between the US, China and Russia” by Shri Asoke Kumar Mukerji, IFS (Retd) has clearly brought out that over the last five years or so, strategic dynamics between the three powers have been marked by disruptions in their interaction. To assess the complex interplay, the author has looked at the strategic drivers of the bilateral equations between the US and Russia, the US and China and China and Russia. In 2017, the US legislated law called CAATSA allowing the US to increase pressure on Russia for its economic and human rights policies. The law included provisions for targeting countries having strategic relations with Russia. In May 2018, the US announced its withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) Agreement, under which multilateral sanctions on Iran, imposed in 2006, were lifted in return for Iran’s restraint in enriching uranium stockpile. Countering Iran signalled US response to Russia, taking strategic confrontation to Asia. Russia responded by supporting Iran as part

of its JCPOA Agreement. As far as US-China equation is concerned. China is harbouring aspirations to displace the US as the foremost world power in the 21st Century. This has been recognised by the US. As far as China – Russia relations are concerned, the 2003 US-led invasion and occupation of Iraq stands out as the defining moment. Strategic interests of China and Russia vis-à-vis the US converged. The US sanctions on Russia have probably pushed Russia closer into China's economic embrace. The current strategic dynamics amongst the three major powers substantiate the perception that international relations are being propelled by competing national sovereignties. However, complex international challenges require multinational response based on shared values. The strategic battle has been joined.

Article titled "Geopolitical Developments in the Indo-Pacific Region" authored by Shri Sanjay Singh, IFS (Retd) traces the path of development and progress in the Region. The Indo-Pacific Region, with over 3.5 billion people has combined GDP of over US \$ 20 trillion. It has been the fastest growing Region over the past half a century or so. While economic partnership with China is advantageous for its partners, its growing military capabilities constrain the strategic space of other regional countries and increase their threat perceptions. China wants to change the status quo and desires to fashion rules and norms to its advantage. There is increasing stress on regional fault-lines, boundary tension such as between China – India, China -Vietnam, China-Japan, China – US / Taiwan and disputes in South China Sea. North Korean activities continue to be worrisome. These disputes can have adverse effects on sea lanes of communications (SLOC) and on trade and maritime security. Russia under President Putin is now more assertive and is developing new relationship with China and increasing its presence in the Region. Japan has amended its Constitution, allowing its forces to act abroad and is likely to focus more on enhancing its own defence capabilities. The US continues to maintain the largest security presence in the Region. However, its behaviour has been somewhat erratic. China's quest for domination is being challenged by regional powers who see a strategic threat to their interests and wish to safeguard them.

Efforts are on to build an open, multipolar, pluralist and participatory global economic order to enable development and eliminate poverty and inequality.

The article titled “Role of Military Diplomacy in India’s Foreign Policy” by Shri Kanwal Sibal, IFS (Retd) is perceptive and covers a number of grey areas. It is generally felt that India does not make use of “military diplomacy” as an instrument to advance foreign policy interests adequately. There appears to be chariness about projecting military strength to realise national aspirations in full. The author is of the view that behind this feeling and ensuing debate lies a strong sentiment in Armed Forces that their role in formation of security policies is limited. Indian Armed Forces participate in Joint exercises with a large number of countries. They serve the diplomatic purpose of confidence building, improved operational skills, exposure to best practices, demonstration of capability and state of readiness of the Armed Forces. It facilitates power projection, interoperability with forces of friendly countries and also political signalling.

The article titled “Terrorism – The Grey Zone of Chaos” by Lt Gen GS Katoch, PVSM, AVSM, VSM (Retd) focuses on evolution of laws for just way to wage war; necessity to circumvent rules, and need for countries to militarise police for countering terrorism. The requirement of having rules and laws under which war should be conducted on land came about as the “Hague Conventions 1899”. The laws did reign in truant states and permitted trials of war criminals. However; in a period of a century or so after the laws emerged, countries and organisations had learnt to circumvent them in the form of proxy war and terrorism. Conflict is based in a zone where the rules can be twisted in a manner that neither do they follow the law, nor legally do they infringe it. Conflict is opaque, it is in the “Grey Zone”. Nowadays, more states in the world are fighting terrorists than ever before. Police forces often find themselves outgunned, if asked to operate against terrorists. This has resulted in militarisation of police all over the world. According to the author, counter-terrorist operations require either a militarised police or a constabularised military. The former is better for gaining actionable intelligence. The latter is better for bringing in destructive fire power. The Army, with its ethos,

discipline, unit cohesion, esprit de corps and élan will remain the sword arm of the nation.

Article titled “Evolving Scenario in Afghanistan : Implications for India” authored by Maj Gen BK Sharma, AVSM, SM and Bar (Retd) traces the hardships that Afghanistan as a nation has been subjected to for decades. Instability and violence have turned Afghanistan into a very fragile state. The National Unity Government is facing intense tension due to persistent factional politics of warlords and high intensity of terrorism launched by Taliban. The international community has espoused support to “Afghan led Afghan owned Peace Process”. However; major players are adopting contradictory approaches to deal with the problem. The US President Donald Trump asserts for renewed effort in combating terrorism, building Afghan National Security Defence Forces including special forces and Air Force, putting pressure on Pakistan to dismantle terrorist infrastructure and solicit Indian support in peace building and development in Afghanistan. Moscow opposes Taliban, calling them terrorists. However, Zamir Kubalov, Putin’s special representative for Afghanistan termed ISIS a bigger threat than the Taliban. China perceives security in the region essential for mitigating ETIM threat to Xinjiang province, protection for BRI project; securing investments in mining in Aynek and oil exploration. Iran had supported Northern Alliance; against Taliban, but is now engaging Taliban. India’s strategic interests in Afghanistan, besides combating terrorism, revolve around gaining access to Central Asia, economic engagement in Eurasia and energy security. A stable Afghanistan is vital for operationalising of Chabahar – Zaranj – Delaram axis. India should work towards a regional grouping for peace building in Afghanistan. There is need to seek a stable, prosperous Afghanistan that is fully integrated with global trading network.

The article titled “The Pakistan Elections 2018 : An Overview and the Road Ahead” authored by Shri Tilak Devasher focuses on the Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan and Tehreek-i-Insaaf (PTI) party. In 2013 PTI had 30 seats in the National Assembly (NA) and after 2018 elections, it has 116 general seats. Though PTI does not have majority in 342 members NA, Imran Khan has

cobbled together Government in Islamabad with support of 27 members from seven parties. PTI has become a national party, winning seats from all the four provinces. Imran Khan campaigned relentlessly to end endemic corruption in Pakistan. He also has support of Pakistan Army. His success has introduced third national party into electoral calculations instead of two party system of PML-N and the PPP and their dynastic politics. An important takeaway of elections was lack of seats that religious parties won, reflecting disconnect of voters with hardline narrative. As Imran Khan settles into governance, he has to face myriad challenges. He is an untested politician and an untried administrator. He has to keep the flock together, both at the Centre and in Punjab. With a simple majority in the NA and only 12 out of 102 seats in the Senate, to get legislations passed will not be easy. Revival of economy is bound to be the most daunting task. Soaring external financing requirements, repayment of debt and mounting import bill are immediate issues. Defence spending is high; foreign currency reserves are barely sufficient to cover less than two month's imports. An IMF bail out (if it materialises) is bound to be accompanied by stiff conditions. Imran Khan will have to convince the Army that finances required to sustain military engagements on eastern and western fronts concurrently are no longer available. Pakistan must be at peace with its neighbours in the region. Pakistan Government will have to quickly get out of the campaign mode, shun politics of vengeance and tackle a broad range of challenges quickly.

Article titled "Pakistan – Crystal Gazing Beyond Elections" by Lt Gen PC Katoch, PVSM, UYSM, AVSM, SC (Retd) is second pertaining to Pakistan being published in current Issue of the Journal. Points having commonality of 2018 elections in Pakistan; and challenges being faced; commented upon in previous paragraph are not being repeated. Imran's links with Taliban and his funding Haqqani seminary known as the 'Oxford of Global Jihad' is well documented. There were hopes that the economic quagmire and new Prime Minister would bring change of course by the military and the ISI. However, recent indicators point otherwise. In August 2018, Taliban attacked Ghazni in Afghanistan. Taliban were supported by foreign militants including Pakistani, Chechenya and Arabs. 194 militants were killed and

167 wounded. According to a report Imran could be expected to persuade Afghan President Ashraf Ghani to include Taliban into the core of governance mechanism in Kabul. Once ensconced, Taliban would push out other elements, topple Ghani and replace him by a Taliban commander. If plan succeeds, Taliban would rule Afghanistan again. Exit of US forces from Afghanistan will be facilitated. The next objective of Pakistan is bound to be Jammu and Kashmir. The US estrangement with Russia and Iran and trade war with China have made these three countries to support the Taliban. US pilots in Afghanistan are facing laser attacks in addition to Middle East. Source is bound to be China or Russia. The US is finding it more and more difficult to operate in Afghanistan. The trade war, global awareness of China's 'debt trap' policy, Malaysia cancelling Chinese projects and hiccups in China's BRI project have imposed caution on China and her major concern is success and security of CPEC. China - Pakistan aims vis-à-vis India are likely to remain unchanged. Pakistan is likely to try and induct more foreign terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir for Jihad, given the boost that the JeM is getting under Imran's dispensation.

The article titled "Strategic Significance of Chabahar for India and the Region" by Professor Nirmala Joshi focuses on strategic and economic issues of the region. As globalizing trend of the 21st Century gained momentum with trade and economic engagement among nations; connectivity projects also moved to the centre stage of international politics. Opening of land locked Eurasian landmass after break-up of the Soviet Union in 1991 gave more stimulus. Eurasia is rich in natural resources and vital minerals. Against this backdrop centrality of Iran both for sea and land options appears very significant. Iran accorded due importance to Chabahar port, which received priority in the economic agenda. Chabahar offered an alternate option to landlocked Afghanistan and the Central Asian Republics (CARs) to reach the Indian Ocean. Chabahar is poised to emerge as a major centre for trans-shipment to the shipping industry as well as link to the hinterlands. In May 2016, Trilateral Transport and Trade Agreement between India, Iran and Afghanistan was signed. From Chabahar a road link 600 km or so connects Zahidan on the Iran-Afghan border. India has built a 217 km road link that connects Zaranj (Afghan-

Iran Border) with Zahidan on the one side, and Delaram on Afghanistan's Garland Highway on the other side. From Delaram, cargo is transported by road to Herat, Mazar-e-Sharif and thence to Uzbekistan. Chabahar's location on the Makran Coast is highly advantageous because of its accessibility by sea and by transport corridor to Afghanistan and Central Asia. For India, Chabahar enables to overcome the road block imposed by Pakistan and, therefore, is a strategic asset. India will also be able to cement its partnership with Iran. Chabahar is likely to emerge as a competitor to Gwadar Port. Chabahar connects regions and nations as far away as Russia through the International North South Transport Corridor; whereas Gwadar connects only with China.

The article titled "Defence Reforms in India Need Strategic Direction" by Brig Narendra Kumar, SM, VSM (Retd) focuses on vital issues of Indian Armed Forces acquiring credible and visible operational capabilities. The political leadership has to decide whether the country should have threat based force structure or threat - cum - capability based forces. Connotation of adopting either of the models is completely different. Threat based force structure is capable of dealing only with the threats that are already known and are on the horizon whereas threat-cum-capability based force is structured to deal with the threat that is on the horizon and also the threat that could manifest in future whose contours are not yet defined or known. Considering that China is likely to be our major adversary and is in the process of modernisation of its military with clear mandate that People's Liberation Army (PLA) should be ready to fight and win wars with regional and extra regional powers; India must adopt the model of threat-cum-capability based military forces. Given the volatile nature of threats, Higher Defence Organisation (HDO) should be an apex body that is able to take quick decisions, create inter-ministerial coordination to build capabilities and leverage them during war. HDO must meet periodically to review national security and preparedness of all organs of state to deal with the threats. It assumes greater significance in the multi-domain threat scenario since all domains are not military in nature; however; other domains should ideally be developed around military organisations so that they dovetail seamlessly with the military operations during war. The three pillars of national security –

political leadership, military and bureaucracy have to be on the same page to carry out defence reforms. Political leadership is to give directions and determine what capability the nation must possess, military is required to then formulate nitty gritty of capability building; and bureaucracy is to ensure desired quality resources are made available by agencies responsible, and in time. This process is conspicuous by absence in India. Reforms are required to reset this process and develop synergy for securing vital national interests.

The article titled “Agni I to VI – Not Just a Number Game” by Lt Gen AK Saxena, PVSM, AVSM, VSM (Retd) focuses on how the qualitative requirement of each type of missile is based on meeting the operational needs of the Armed Forces and it is not merely a function of increase in range. Integrated Missile Development Programme (IGMDP) was started in 1982-83. Agni was conceived as a technology demonstrator (TD) or prototype. In 1998, India carried out nuclear tests, making the nuclear boosted fission weapon available. However, after the nuclear tests, Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) imposed technology denial on India preventing us from importing missile related technologies. All systems and sub-systems were to be developed indigenously causing some delay. **First launch of Agni 1 having range less than 2500 km was carried out on 25 January 2002.** This was followed by several successful launches including one on 06 Feb 2018 by the Strategic Forces Command. Agni II was developed from the TD version and achieved range of 2500 to 3500 kms. Agni III has a range of 3000 to 5000 km falling in the category of Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile (IRBM). With miniaturisation of components, progressively missiles have become more compact as well as more accurate. Agni IV has been technology driven, having range of 3000 to 4000 km. It has cutting edge features of improvement in flight of missile technology and reduction in weight. Agni V has range of 5500 to 8000 km. It does not need pre-built launch site and can be quickly launched from pre-surveyed location. It can be developed into anti-satellite (ASAT) capable missile. Agni VI ICBM is under development. Each new version is driven by specific operational needs and new security challenges as they develop.

The article titled “Re-energising Indian Intelligence : A National Imperative” authored by Lt Gen Kamal Davar, PVSM, AVSM (Retd) focuses on strengthening defence intelligence. Acquisition of Intelligence, accurate interpretation, analysis and seamless flow to government institutions in time, is a compelling challenge for the intelligence agencies. India has land borders with assertive and powerful China and nuclear armed terror-exporting Pakistan. The two countries also have strategic partnership and good understanding. The scenario gets further compounded due to internal security challenges in Jammu and Kashmir, Northeast and left wing extremism. A major restructuring of Indian intelligence came in the aftermath of the 1999 Kargil War. Based on the recommendations, an apex inter-services agency – Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA) and National Technical Research Organisation (NTRO) have been raised. The government also established National Security Council and National Security Advisory Board (NSAB) for management of intelligence in a more cohesive manner. After Mumbai Terror Attack in 2008, National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID) and National Intelligence Agency (NIA) were established. NIA is the sole agency legally mandated to supersede state Police Forces in investigation and prosecution. With growing technological advancements, issues pertaining to satellite imagery, cyber intelligence and monitoring of space need to be addressed in a professional manner. Security challenges will continue to deter the nation’s rise unless all the constituents of Comprehensive National Power including intelligence are addressed with alacrity, resources, and a long term perspective.

The article titled “Emerging Chinese Aerospace Capability and its Impact on Regional Balance” authored by Air Cmde AS Bahal, VM (Retd) focuses on modernisation of People’s Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) and widening technological and operational capability differential as compared to the Indian Air Force (IAF). PLAAF modernisation encompasses doctrinal, strategic, organisational changes and acquisition of appropriate hardware for operations. The creation of Western Theatre Command by merging two former Military Regions (MRs) is likely to ensure better synchronised operations against India. China’s Air Force has improved significantly during the last decade or so.

PLAAF has 1693 combat aircraft. Its fighter strength is 700 aircraft comprising SU-27, SU-30, J-10 and J-11 class - fourth generation aircraft. By 2020 PLAAF is likely to field about 1000; 4th / 5th generation fighters. Prototypes of J 20 and J 31- fifth generation have been tested. On the other hand India's fifth generation fighter aircraft development with Russia has had a set back. The Tibetan airfields, potentially can render Himalayan barrier ineffective. China's military space capabilities are in areas of launch, tracking, telemetry and command network in space orbital systems. These provide connectivity to military operations and counter space technologies. China's navigation system (Bideou) is operational since 2011. These are complemented by surface to surface cruise and ballistic missile capability. China thus has the capability to strike any vital asset of India with limited warning, coupled with nuclear weapons, this capability portends serious connotations. India is developing ballistic missile defence (BMD) shield. However, system is quite some distance away from deployment. Comparison between the IAF and the PLAAF indicates that PLAAF has significant superiority in terms of fighter aircraft. This asymmetry is likely to increase with China's indigenous production in the near future. At the current pace of modernisation of PLAAF; capability differential is likely to be such that by 2025 Chinese regional dominance is likely to become a reality.

The article titled "Ladakh Marathon - Short of Breath and Full of Pride" has been authored by Maj Sonali Gupta (Retd). She participated in the Marathon in Leh on 09 Sep 2018 and has described her experience in a very interesting manner. While covering challenges of high altitude, she has set about it in a logical manner. Before participating in marathon, focused regular training and strict discipline to complete the distance in a reasonable timeframe are essential. To run at 11,500 ft is not easy and physical fitness and robust heart are pre-requisites.

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

- (a) China's Faultlines : Implications and Lessons.
- (b) The Tartan Turban : In Search of Alexander Garden.
- (c) Tryst with Perfidy – The Deep State of Pakistan.
- (d) United Nations Peacekeeping and Conflict Resolution.
- (e) The Information Game in Democracy.

- (f) Indian Recipients of the Military Cross Vol. I and II.
- (g) Karan Singh : Jammu and Kashmir (1949 – 1967).

Major General YK Gera (Retd)