EDITORIAL

Lieutenant General Davinder Kumar, VSM and Bar, SO-in-C, in his article titled "Network Centric Warfare" (NCW) has brought out that the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have proved beyond doubt that the future belongs to the NCW which is essentially technology driven. Smart weapons and munitions have led to stand off strikes from long ranges with increased lethality and accuracy. Only 10 rounds per target were used in the Gulf War, compared to many times more during the World War II. Improvements in technology in the fields of computers and communications have led to quicker decision making by commanders and a high level of sensor-shooter integration. State of the art surveillance devices have turned night into day. During 'Operation Iraqi Freedom' 70 per cent of information on military targets was available. According to the author, NCW is "a product of convergence of computers and communications and its exploitation to bring to bear maximum combat power at the right time and at the right place". The essence of NCW lies in translating information superiority into combat power by effectively linking knowledgeable entities in the battle space. The author stresses that information sharing promotes awareness across the networked force, improves collaboration and synchronisation leading to success of missions with speed. Network centric operational concept is based on speed of manoeuvre, precision engagement, full dimensional protection and focused logistics support.

Vice Admiral PS Das, PVSM,UYSM,VSM (Retd) in his article titled "Terrorism at Sea : Role for India and Japan" examines the adverse effects of dangers posed by terrorists at sea in areas of our concern. Shipping on the sea routes of the Indian Ocean pass through waters having choke points such as the Suez Canal, the Bab el Mandeb south of Yemen controlling the Gulf of Aden and the Rea Sea, the Strait of Hormuz dominating the Persian Gulf, the waters south of Sri Lanka, the Malacca, Sunda and Lombok Straits which open into the South China Sea. Non-state actors of even modest means can interfere with shipping passing through these constricted channels. More than 60 per cent of the world's oil reserves are located in the Gulf region. India and Japan depend

on Gulf oil, and this dependency is likely to increase over time. Of the $200 billion worth of oil that is sent out through the Strait of Hormuz annually, nearly half is destined eastwards through constricted sea channels. Among the several Sea Lanes of Communications (SLOCs) vitally important to Japan, those connecting it with the Arabian Gulf are the most critical and constitute the lifelines of Japan carrying as they do, vital energy supplies and bulk of the overseas trade. As per the author, India is also similarly placed. India will soon import 85 million tons of oil annually. By the year 2020, India is likely to become one of the four largest importers of oil in the world, along with the USA, China and Japan. The SLOCs of the Northern Indian Ocean, thus become vital as they bring energy from the Gulf. India's overseas trade is likely to exceed $1 trillion by the year 2020. The author has emphasised that India and Japan are two credible regional maritime powers in their respective areas. They share common concerns and interests, and are well equipped to counter threats to security to the Japan-Indian Ocean-Arabian Gulf SLOCs to their mutual advantage.