

## EDITORIAL

The article titled 'Beyond the 123 - Is there a Plan B' by General Shankar Roychowdhury, PVSM (Retd) focuses on pros and cons of the Indo-US Nuclear Agreement and need to work out an alternate Plan B to avoid putting all eggs in the same basket. The author asserts that nuclear technology has intrinsic strategic connotations and even civilian usage envisaged in the Henry J Hyde India-US Civil Nuclear Co-operation Act signed into law by the US President on 18 December 2006, is no exception. The Act and the formal 123 Agreement to follow is ultimately more about the overall strategic relationships India and the US look to construct. For India the core issue is not so much about purely civilian use of nuclear energy, rather the unstated objective of preservation of country's indigenous nuclear weapons programme under all circumstances. Unless this can be ensured the agreement will not be in the national interest. Formal discussions on the agreement are yet to commence, but the Hyde Act carries clear directive to the Government of the United States to adhere to the parameters of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in all transactions under the Act – a nuanced reiteration of the dictum "Cap, Roll back, Eliminate". Reverting to the strategic connotations, the author has emphasised that China demonstrates its "peaceful rise" not only through surging economic growth, but also by periodic displays of iron beneath the velvet, this time the anti-satellite missile. For India, this is specifically manifested in the ring of China's regional defence agreements with countries in the neighbourhood particularly the military-nuclear nexus with Pakistan. Both the USA and India cannot be faulted if China's galloping advance creates concerns of thunderclouds on the horizon. Perhaps India needs to examine the feasibility of initiating an Indian military-nuclear strategic nexus of its own. This strategic partnership at least in the short or middle term could be with the United States. Public responses to such proposals have to be of denial, framed in politically correct phraseologies. The US has also discovered the limits of its power in Iraq and Afghanistan during war on terror. Under the circumstances, India and the US might be receptive to strategic partnership on mutually beneficial terms. However, if the US side builds around the NPT, 123 Agreement may not go through. Alternatives for such a contingency are needed. These according



to the author boil down to two – either acquire alternate “natural allies” agreeable for nuclear co-operation on mutually advantageous terms, or resort to the self reliance mode of nuclear development both for civilian and strategic purposes. There is a need to move forward on 123 Agreement with caution after having worked out an alternate plan.

On 24 Aug 2006 Air Cmde Jasjit Singh, AVSM,VrC,VM (Retd) presented a paper at the USI on the subject of ‘Security Environment in 2025 : India’s Interests and Strategies’. The script of the talk is published in this issue of the Journal. The author has focused on major trends that are likely to impact the security environment in the near future. During the past couple of decades a global power shift from the Euro-Atlantic West to Asia-Centric East has been taking place. Some of the contributory factors for this shift are ; high growth of economic and military power of China; economic growth of India; economic recovery of Japan; economic and political recovery of Russia and renewed urge to play a global role with closer strategic ties with China ; rising prices of oil affecting energy security and religious extremism acquiring global linkages and greater sophistication. Each of these factors have been discussed in detail in the Article. According to the author, in the year 1820 China accounted for 32.4 per cent of the global income which dropped to 5.00 per cent in 1978. India was the second advanced and rich country with 22.6 per cent of the global income in the year 1700 which dropped to 3.40 per cent by 1978. Both countries are now doing well economically. As per the author’s perception China’s national power is likely to remain ahead of that of India through the coming decades. But that by itself does not create adverse security challenges unless asymmetry in specific areas like the balance of military power usable across the frontiers becomes very significant. Currently, we live in a unipolar world with the USA as the sole super power. The US would do its best to prolong its current status for as long as it can. However, a multi-polar international order with six major players – the USA, China, Japan, European Union, Russia and India – has been evolving. China – Russia axis is gathering strength with China as the stronger partner. The US has sought to have closer relations with India. The United States till recently tended to balance the rise of China unilaterally. It is only now that the US



has said that it would like to help India to become a global player which may imply supporting India as an emergent balancer to China. The author has emphasised that India should respond appropriately keeping her national interests in mind. It may be in India's interest to work through multiple cooperative bilateral relations rather than any polarization. We need to focus on long-term national security planning and strategy making. The NSC Task Force addressed this in its recommendations in June 1998; but these have remained unimplemented. We need to do something about it.

In India 'Naxalite Problem' has become the second major internal security problem after *Jehadi* terrorism and needs to be addressed expeditiously. Shri EN Rammohan in his paper on the subject of 'Rise of Naxalism and its Implications for National Security' has stressed that in any insurgency, the first step should be to study the economic background, assess the causes and then dovetail the security strategy with the plan of setting right the economic, social and developmental failures by the government so that the economic and social issues are set right as the security operations progress. Handling of insurgency should be left to the professionals without political interference. As far as Naxalism is concerned, security and delivering economic and social justice are the key areas. The issues in 'Naxalite Problem' are the 'land' and 'forest produce'. The author has opined that land ceiling should be enforced, forgetting the political factor. The Security Forces should be used to enforce the land ceiling, evict the landlords from their excessive holdings, and ensure that the surplus lands are cultivated by the lowest classes and tribals. They should ensure that the crops grown by the new land holders are secure and they harvest the crop, keeping the landlords away. As far as the forest tracts are concerned, laws should be legislated that only forest dwelling tribes and scheduled castes should have access to forest lands. Cooperatives should be organised of tribals who can be trained and only tribal cooperatives should be allowed to trade in forest produce. The author has emphasised that when these steps are taken, the tribal will know that the government is with him and he will befriend the police force and stop putting land mines for them. The 'Naxalite Problem' will then wither away.