

EDITORIAL

This issue of the journal consists of 12 articles. Of these five are based on talks delivered at the USI. Two articles are by serving officers which is an encouraging trend. We would welcome more articles by serving officers on topical issues. The subjects covered in the current journal include International Relations, Terrorism, Maritime Dimensions of Energy Security, Proliferation of Uranium Enrichment Technology, Dimasahmar conflict in the North East, A Perspective on Force Development and Doctrine in the Army, Defence Procurement and so on.

The lead article in the Journal is excerpted from the talk delivered at the USI on 28 May 2004 by His Excellency Mr Yasukuni Enoki, Ambassador of Japan in India on the subject of "The Japan-India New Partnership". The author has highlighted that India is one of the three major powers of Asia together with Japan and China. According to him certain perceptive changes have come about both in India and Japan leading to a new positioning of India in Japan's Asia diplomacy. On the Indian side, prospects of a robust economic growth is a positive development. The Goldman Sachs' BRICs report has forecasted India's ascendance as the number three economic power of the world by 2050. India's 'Look East Policy' has reduced psychological distance between India and Japan. The collapse of the Soviet Union has removed the invisible fence between India perceived as a friend of the erstwhile USSR versus Japan a friend of the US. A properly functioning democracy in India is a good example for other countries to follow. On the Japanese side a major change is the return of Japan to Asia demonstrated by strengthened interdependent relations with East Asian economies. Japan is engaging in the Free Trade Area networking of the region. Japan is also engaging in the politico-security areas such as the development of the ASEAN Regional Forum dialogue. The globalisation process has also resulted in Japan taking into account the huge Indian market. Japan has upgraded India as number one recipient of the Japanese Overseas Development Assistance by providing loan worth more than one billion US dollars. Japan depends for 90 per cent of its crude oil imports from the Gulf countries. Japan's peace keeping co-operation in Afghanistan and Iraq for logistical support has given significance to the Indian Ocean. Once the Japanese vessels cross the Malacca Strait and navigate westward, they need protection of sea lanes by the Indian Navy. The case of nuclear technology proliferation from Pakistan to North Korea has brought home to the Japanese the pressing need to undertake non-proliferation co-operation in Asia. According to the author, there is convergence of national interests of India and Japan and they need to co-operate and share joint responsibility for steering the region to prosperity and stability.

Vietnam as a nation faced tremendous hardships during decades of war which ravaged the country and had adversely effected its economy. His Excellency Mr Tran Trong Khanh, Ambassador of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in India gave a talk at the USI on 7 July 2004 on the subject of "Vietnam's Foreign Policy : Adapting to a Changing World". The article has been excerpted from his talk . The author has focused on the process of adaptation which began in 1986. The thrust was to carry out comprehensive reforms, optimise internal strength and attract foreign investment for speedy economic development. In the mid 1980s, Vietnam's relations with China could be described as prolonged confrontation. The Vietnamese had to cope with hostile policy of embargo and blockade from the US. Ties with many Southeast Asian countries were strained. Vietnam, as a result of strategic appraisal reached out to most countries, improved international relations, participated in multilateral arrangements, discarded the old centralised economic model and forged ahead on the path of peace, stability and co-operation. Vietnam has been able to improve relations with the United States of America as well as China and established economic and trade relations with 170 countries. On the economic front, Vietnam is participating in globalisation, has attracted over \$ 40 billion in Foreign Direct Investments from more than 60 countries and received \$ 13 billion of Official Development Assistance. According to the author, 20 years ago, in some parts of the world it was conventional wisdom that Vietnam had won the war but lost the peace. This has now changed. Gross domestic product (GDP) of Vietnam doubles every 10 years, literacy rate is high, poverty is declining and the country is on the path of accelerated industrialisation and modernisation.

An article titled "China's Rise and the US Leadership in Asia" by Professor Robert G Sutter based on his talk at the USI on 15 June 2004 traces the moderate and flexible approach adopted by China to expand its influence over Asian neighbours over the past decade or so. The country seeks to offset the China threat syndrome in the region by deft diplomacy backed by the dynamism of its economy and strengthened military power. This peaceful rise poses challenges to the USA especially when it is heavily occupied in the Middle East. The USA's military and economic dominance is well understood by China, which follows a strategy of developing peacefully without upsetting the USA. According to the author this represents a sharp reversal from China's post Cold War efforts to wear down the US superpower and seek to create a multipolar world. It reflects an adjustment to realities and asymmetries of power and influence between the US and China prevailing in Asian and world affairs. The author recommends greater US activism and sensitivity to concerns of Asian states in order to enhance the US influence in Asia.