

EDITOR'S NOTE

As we approach the end of the year, it is a good time to look back at some of the major happenings during the year. The year started with the inauguration of President Trump and some uncertainty as to his approach to international relations. Very soon, he showed that he would introduce disruptive policies, and many countries are trying to adjust to a new USA. Other disruptive happenings include the election results in Germany and Britain. At the other end of the world, the 'dragon' was baring its economic and military fangs. China's rise, its brinksmanship and use of economic power are impacting the policies of many regional countries. President Xi Jinping's continued rise to a position of near absolute pre-eminence has many countries somewhat worried. How can China be contained is a refrain often heard in policy circles. It is in India's interest to have good relations with China but the Doklam standoff and the vituperative language used during the period is not a good augury. In short, it is unfortunate that the year is ending on a less happy note and we can but hope that 2018 will bring happier tidings.

As usual, this issue of the *Journal* has articles covering different themes. We start with **Tilak Devasher** expounding on Pakistan's non-traditional security threats. Much has been written and discussed about Pakistan's insecurities; the power exercised by its Army; and the impact of US and Chinese initiatives on its polity. Also often mentioned is that Pakistan is a haven for terrorists, and their nuisance value for India. Tilak takes a different tack and examines the internal insecurities in Pakistan that are non-military and non-political. He discusses four major problem areas for Pakistan viz Water, Economy, Education and Population; the acronym WEEP is, indeed,

appropriate. The article is a condensed version of his book *Pakistan: Courting the Abyss* and one wonders why Pakistan is not taking steps to arrest a fast deteriorating situation. It is fairly certain that on reading the article, the reader will reach for the book.

Reorganisation of our higher defence organisation into integrated Theatre Commands continues to exercise our minds. In a far-reaching article, **Air Mshl Ramesh Rai** argues that such organisations have little relevance in our context. Our approach to warfare is insular and we do not envisage our using expeditionary forces in far off lands. He recounts a telling statistic, saying that in World War II, the entire geographical space where war was fought measured 98 million sq km and there were two Theatre Commands: the European Command and the Pacific Command. Our entire geographical area is only 3.3 million sq km and should be viewed as a single theatre. Moreover, our force levels are small and we do not have the luxury of sharing poverty. Often, concentration of force is needed and parceling out of the force is not recommended. The author also quotes examples from military history and the employment of air power. His suggestion that we should concentrate on joint planning is compelling.

The next article is a study on integrated operations by **Air Cmde Ashminder Singh Bahl**. He gives a good definition of jointmanship and argues that it is different from integration. The author is an experienced pilot with a professional approach and this is evident in a largely theoretical construct. He discusses the concept of war, the future battlefields, and how technology has spawned the idea of a faceless enemy. Again, he discusses the import of comprehensive security and the yardsticks to judge success in war. He is also brave enough to advance prescriptions, including the need for understanding concepts, and training in the new form of warfare. The article is well written, well argued and makes for good reading.

Military writings now discuss 'hybrid warfare' at length. Is it something novel or merely old wine in new bottles? After all, all wars have attempted to take advantage and score over the adversary using whatever means are most suitable and they need not be the use of the military alone. Hybrid

warfare encompasses many levels of warfare in a coordinated manner. Now that this type of war has been anointed with a specific terminology, it behoves us to study and imbibe the understanding and planning for it. **Air Vice Mshl Arjun Subramaniam** and **Sqn Ldr Naishad Purohit** have co-authored an article that should interest the average reader of this *Journal*.

It is generally believed that cyber activities will play a part in any future war and may take the lead to start the war. **Wg Cdr Asheesh Shrivastava** suggests that the virtual domain is the new battlefield and cyber capability is increasingly becoming a significant force multiplier. It is true that every major improvement in communication technology leads to the birth of more effective means of cyber interference. A cyber war will be less expensive but could cause considerable nuisance or more. The author touches on some historical references and mentions the technological advances taking place and those in the offing. He also suggests means to combat the menace.

Some foreign authors have questioned our strategic thinking and some have categorically asserted that we are short of strategic thought. Some disparaging terms have also been used. The thinking is indeed erroneous as our history boasts of many examples of a strategic culture. Undoubtedly, individual thinking is tempered by perceptions, compulsions and peccadilloes. In a well thought through article **Gp Capt Ashish Singh** takes a holistic view and argues that the differentiation between tactics and strategy is misplaced. Strategic thought is needed even for tactical actions. The author delves into theory but his experience as a combat pilot is all too obvious. The article makes one reconsider embedded thoughts and ideas. The author intends to write a sequel and our readers will eagerly look forward to reading more on the subject.

The last two articles comprise the work of two young scholars who interned with us at the Centre for Air Power Studies (CAPS). We are proud to publish their work. **Sai Deepthi Paveni** writes on India's hydrocarbon policy and **Ishka Yadav** looks at the evolution of US policy on climate

change. Both subjects are of contemporary relevance and both authors address the subjects in some detail. The authors are mature beyond their years and our readers will appreciate how the thoughts have been well formulated and the conclusions drawn are both cogent and acceptable.

I wish all our readers a Happy New Year.

Happy reading.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'H. Katz', written in a cursive style.