

## EDITOR'S NOTE

As noted in the contents section, with this issue, we complete seven years of continuous publication of this journal. In order to facilitate easy identification of the articles published, an issue-wise index has been included in this issue. And with that we thank the authors and readers of *AIR POWER*, especially the larger community of the Indian Air Force (IAF) and its air warriors whose support has made the success of the journal possible. We will continue our efforts to bring you professional writings on national security and aerospace power issues.

The long awaited finality of acquisition of the MMRCA is at last getting closer to the end with the down selection of two aircraft types (from a total of six in competition), that is, the French Rafale and the Cassidian/EADS four European nations consortium's Eurofighter Typhoon. What has been significant is that this down selection has been accepted gracefully though with natural disappointment by the rival companies and their countries (the US, Russia and Sweden). No complaints of bias or scam have yet appeared although the deal had meant a great deal in techno-economic and geopolitical terms to all the competing nations and companies. This is largely due to the extensive and detailed evaluation system designed by the IAF and Ministry of Defence to work out the relative criteria that would meet IAF requirements.

For the first time in Indian aviation history, the MMRCA evaluation of each of the contending aircraft was carried out in-country at three different locations (Bengaluru, Jodhpur and Leh) to test their performance

in different climatic and altitude conditions against the listed criteria. This acquisition, as we have said so often in the past, would and should set the pattern for future acquisitions of defence equipment not only from abroad but also from indigenously produced systems.