



## EDITOR'S NOTE

It is axiomatic that the nature of war keeps changing with changes of environment, technology and military capability. It would follow that, if for no other reason than the changing nature of war, the higher defence organisation and its management require regular reviews and adaptation if joint planning and operations are to be successfully undertaken. Similarly, intelligence, especially intelligence assessments of military significance, would continue to be crucial for the higher management of defence and employment of military power at all levels. This has been a weak area in the past and would need to be continually addressed on priority.

Our economic growth and technological development also imply an expansion of interests well beyond our land borders. These interests, like security of energy supply lines, would require protection, as much as our borders would demand continued attention to their defence. Air power from this perspective would have to undertake additional tasks and responsibilities, as the Lebanon War again highlighted the need for evacuation of Indians living abroad, by air and sea.

The war between Hezbollah and Israel during the summer led to questions on the efficacy of air power in neutralising short range missiles fired from mobile launch facilities, with very little reaction time available to strike them. The result was that while the longer range missile launchers were destroyed very rapidly, Hezbollah kept firing an average of 150 such missiles and Katyusha rockets into Israeli populated areas every day throughout the 34-day war. This is likely to provide incentives to non-state actors and even states to use this low cost offensive weapon system on targets close to the borders. Considering that political measures to eliminate such threats are unlikely to be successful, technological and operational solutions would need to be evolved sooner rather than later.

Meanwhile, serious thought needs to be given to arms control measures like agreements not to deploy missiles within a specified distance of borders and lines of control (similar to the 1993 India-China agreement).

As part of the Platinum Jubilee celebrations, our 3rd "Subroto Mukerjee Seminar on Aerospace Power" was devoted to the theme of the "IAF at 75: From Subcontinental to Continental Force." We have had to start the numbering of the journal afresh with effect from the July 2006 issue due to technical requirements of the Registrar of Indian Newspapers which also led to the delay in publishing this volume. Kindly accept our apologies. We will be back on schedule from the next issue.