

Editorial

The world has literally come to a standstill during the last two months due to the corona virus pandemic. After breaking out in China's Wuhan city in late December 2019, the pandemic has spread to all parts of the world, forcing countries to shut down and bringing hitherto fast-moving economies including India's to a grinding halt. As a result, the impact of the corona virus disease (Covid) has begun to be felt outside the domain of medicine and health, especially on economic well being.

The disease was first seen in China's Wuhan city, with the first cases being reported in late December 2019. It soon spread to other countries seeing an exponential increase in the number of cases and fatalities. In Europe, Italy and Spain, and now the United Kingdom, have taken the brunt of its impact; the United States is another that has seen a large number of infections and Covid-induced mortalities. As many countries instituted national lockdowns following China, the impact of Covid began to be felt outside the domain of medicine and health, especially on economies.

The lockdown resulting from the pandemic also led to the delay in publishing the January-March issue of this journal. We have consequently chosen to combine the January-March with the April-June 2020 issue. Despite the larger situation of abnormality, or the 'new normal' as it is often called, we are happy to be able to bring to our readers an interesting and informative combined issue.

The issue begins with an insightful perspective by Prakash Menon titled 'Human Capital for the Department of Military Affairs'. Menon opines that the surprise creation of the Department of Military Affairs (DMA) in the Ministry of Defence (MoD), concurrent with the appointment of a CDS, is a structural reform that could deepen civil-military interaction and facilitate substantial improvement in military effectiveness. The challenge for the DMA is in populating it with a mix of military and civilian cadres that are specially equipped to deal with issues that require an understanding of both the military and civil dimensions. The MoD's existing staffing system cannot meet the

demand in expertise and tenure. According to Menon, there is a need to design a new staffing system akin to that prevalent in the National Security Council Secretariat.

In 'United Nations Peace Operations: Personal Experiences and Reflections', Satish Nambiar brings to bear his considerable experience on the United Nations (UN) and the international system. He begins with a concise exposition of the pulls and constraints on the UN over the past three decades, explaining how this exposed deep divisions among members over fundamental policies on peace and security in a unipolar world. Various debates have served only to highlight the urgent need to restructure and reform the UN machinery to meet the new challenges that lie ahead. The changes called for are not merely a matter of the functioning of the UN Secretariat and other such administrative details, but also the need to focus on the UN's character and ethos. Within this context, Nambiar specifically discusses UN peacekeeping operations and India's role therein.

Ashish Singh's contribution – 'Achieving Jointness in War: One Theatre < One Strategy' – explores the way forward to create wartime jointness in the armed forces. India finally saw the long-standing demand for the creation of the position of Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) come to fruition in December 2019. It is definitely a start to defence reforms and should improve jointmanship in peacetime. Singh, however, says that joint wartime performance needs further reform and improvement. According to him, the armed forces currently face three problems: (i) historical lack of unified warfighting strategy formulation at the apex military level; (ii) unclear division of responsibility and resources between service Chiefs and Commanders-in-Chief (C-in-Cs); and (iii) differing natures of command and control between the three services, which manifest as differences in structural organisations. Taking a new approach and treating India as a unified theatre can reduce these problems. It would allow the creation of a joint structure for strategy formulation at the apex level, resulting in one national strategy to guide the subordinate strategies of the three services. Furthermore, it would give ownership of all warfighting assets to a single commander who can centralise or decentralise at will, and yet not preclude the formation of smaller military entities with co-located headquarters (HQ) of subordinate service formations. Singh highlights examples from history to support his argument.

In 'Influence of Alfred Thayer Mahan on Japanese Maritime Strategy', Himadri Bose brings a historical perspective by recounting

how the exponential growth of the Imperial Japanese Navy (IJN), modelled on western navies, was concurrent to the ideas put forth by naval strategist Alfred Thayer Mahan. The IJN's attempt at resurgence during the Meiji Restoration was challenged by the absence of maritime capability and an equivalent strategic underpinning. In the article, Bose discusses how the IJN, in turn, reached out to Western navies to develop its capability and establish its maritime moorings, and how Mahan's musings served to fill this void. The IJN studied Mahan's tenets and became particularly fixated on certain ideas which fuelled its tactics and hardened its war plans. Well into the Second World War, the IJN remained oblivious to self-evident triggers for change, and its deep-seated doctrinal rigidity precluded questioning Mahan's conceptions, which eventually underwrote its defeat.

Yashasvi Chandra's article 'Illicit Drug Trafficking and Financing of Terrorism: The Case of Islamic State, Al Qaeda and their Affiliate Groups' discusses how revenue generated from the drug trafficking business constitutes a fifth of organised crime revenues, with annual worldwide value of the trade estimated to be around US\$650 billion. As drug trafficking provides a lucrative opportunity, transnational terror groups such as Al-Qaeda, the Islamic State and their affiliates are increasingly using the illicit drug trade to fund their expenses and operational costs. Increasing surveillance of security forces on the financial routes of terror groups has meant that traditional sources of revenue have dried up. On the other hand, the investment in drug trafficking is low and profits considerably high. The drug trade, therefore, provides terror groups with an adequate and sustained alternative means to generate funds.

In 'International Trends and the Evolving Role of the Finance Officer in Defence', Sumati Kumar discusses how the development of the Indian economy in the past decades gave rise to complex challenges. Policy makers thus needed to effect institutional changes in financial management systems. In the current system, Financial Advisers are expected to provide independent advice to the administrative authorities in decision making to achieve the goals of an organization. Allocated resources are to be spent in a timely manner and prudently to achieve pre-defined outcomes. Integrated Financial Advice (IFA) in defence has also been evolving in recent years. To refine the present system, Kumar's article looks at extant systems in the United States and in the United Kingdom to derive best practices and adapt them to Indian requirements, so that the IFA system functions with greater efficiency and effectiveness,

thereby optimising the utilisation of precious resources towards enhanced combat readiness of our forces.

The issue also features five book reviews: Roby Thomas reviews *Naval Modernisation in Southeast Asia: Problems and Prospects for Small and Medium Navies*; Nazir Ahmad Mir reviews *Power and Diplomacy: India's Foreign Policies during the Cold War*; Prashant Kumar Singh reviews *India and China in Asia: Between Equilibrium and Equations*; Kishore Kumar Khera reviews *The Absent Dialogue: Politicians, Bureaucrats, and the Military in India*; and Daniel Balazs reviews *China's India War: Collision Course on the Roof of the World*.

We hope that the January-June 2020 issue (Vol. 14, Nos 1-2) would find resonance with our readers and serve to inform and educate on key issues and draw attention to important and new areas of research.