

From the Managing Director

It is our constant endeavour to improve the quality and range of articles for the discerning readers of the *Journal of Defence Studies*. Your feedback and constructive criticism will spur us on to make even greater effort in future. We are also trying to reach out to a larger number of authors with new ideas to convey. The present issue before you carries articles and commentaries covering subjects like internal security, defence procurement and quality assurance, maritime security and laws covering incidents at sea, nuclear proliferation and influence of nuclear weapons on political decision-making during war, intriguing behaviour by China and naval weapon systems.

In 'Reinventing Defence Procurement in India: Lessons from Other Countries and An Integrative Framework', Vandana Kumar opines that despite reforms in the defence capital acquisition process over the past decade, the system still grapples with delays, cost escalations and gaps in operational preparedness. She explores the structure, process and cultural dimensions of the acquisition system, unpacking the underlying linkages between policy, planning, budgeting, strategic direction and outcome-focused, analytical decision-making, all of which are factors influencing effectiveness of the procurement system. She also makes a comparative study of the defence acquisition system of six countries—USA, UK, France, Canada, Brazil and Australia. The article endeavours to steer the reforms debate beyond procurement procedures to performance management, strategic planning and risk management towards delivering a culture of professionalism, innovation and outcome-focused decision-making, which will help establish an acquisition system best suited India's defence needs.

Mahendra Prasad, in 'Effectiveness of Quality Assurance in Army Procurements', expresses concern about high failure rates of various items of Army equipment, which results in avoidable casualties and non-availability of equipment for deployment at crucial times. He examines the manner in which the closed feedback system is utilized for

incorporating improvements in General Staff Qualitative Requirements, Acceptance Test Procedures, and Quality Assurance Plans, among others, to ensure that a better quality product is procured. Based on his analysis, he provides certain recommendations to improve the existing system.

Stefan Lundqvist—in ‘From Protection of Shipping to Protection of Citizens and National Economies: Current Changes in Maritime Security’—analyses how the referent object for maritime security has altered from protection of shipping and port facilities to protection of citizens and national economies. He presents a tentative answer on the extent and consequences of this alteration applied by states in a global perspective, and focuses on validating four explanatory factors on why the alteration occurred, covering the time period between 1991 and 2013. The article highlights the transition in states’ security policies from traditional expressions of maritime security to broader security perspectives.

In ‘Restraining Kargil: Nuclear Caution in the Shadow of Kashmir’, Brent Thomas Gerchicoff analyses the conflicting view points on the logic of nuclear deterrence. Using the 1999 India-Pakistan conflict as his case study, Gerchicoff has opined that the nuclear deterrent logic was the most compelling explanation for the conflict not developing into a full-scale war. He tries to demonstrate that the caution and, therefore, deterrent effects associated with nuclear weapons in the India-Pakistan rivalry confirms that introduction of nuclear weapons brought stability to the Sub-continent.

Brij M. Dimri, in ‘Arrest of Argentine Warship “ARA Libertad”’: Revisiting International Law Governing Warships, Sovereign Immunity, and Naval Diplomatic Roles’ points out that the ‘ARA Libertad’ Case (Argentina v. Ghana) was the first instance where the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) in Hamburg, considered the issue of release of a warship, detained in a foreign port contrary to the principles of sovereign immunity of warships. He examines the peculiarities of the case involving detention of a warship based on a commercial case filed by an American hedge fund against Argentina in the Ghanaian Court. This article examines the ITLOS order in the backdrop of warship rights and duties under the International Law of the Sea.

In a timely commentary, 'Chinese Intrusion into Ladakh: An Analysis', Mandip Singh makes the reader question whether China's new leadership is in full control and if it failed to demonstrate its grip over PLA during the recent Chinese intrusion into Indian territory in Ladakh. The apparent brinkmanship may actually have been a missed opportunity for the Chinese leadership to demonstrate their good intentions by rolling back the thoughtless act of aggression and stamping their authority on power domestically.

In 'India's Geostrategy and China: Mackinder versus Mahan?', Zorawar Daulet Singh argues that a maritime role closely linked to enhancing Indian deterrence and influence in the Sub-continental realm seems more in tune not only with India's national challenges but also with the geostrategic direction of pressures that keep recurring.

In 'Political Abstention in War and the Influence of Nuclear Weapons: A New Research Puzzle', Yogesh Joshi examines the suitability of the generally accepted 'normal theory of civil-military relations' when the opposing forces are equipped with nuclear weapons. He argues that need for civilian oversight of operational component of war has increased with the danger of use of nuclear weapons in a limited or full scale war fought under the shadow of nuclear weapons.

Arnab Das, in 'Effective Underwater Systems: A New Perspective', highlights the necessity for India to acquire effective sensor-based underwater weapon systems that are able to strike with precision when deployed. He argues for a high degree of effective maritime situational awareness and deployment of modern sonars and underwater gliders in the tropical littoral waters of India.

Deepak Kapoor contributes a timely perspective piece on 'The Maoist Threat' to this issue. Wrapping up the issue are the book reviews: Vivek Chadha reviews *Aspects of Leadership: Ethics, Law and Spirituality*; Prashant Kumar Singh reviews *Learning by Doing: The PLA Trains at Home and Abroad*; Gulbin Sultana reviews *Confronting the State: ULFA's Quest for Sovereignty*; and P.K. Chakravorty reviews *The Soldier and the State in India*.

Our esteemed readers may like to know that we have instituted a 'Letters to the Editor' section in the journal. The idea is to engage with our readers, to know what they think about the content of each issue as well as seek their help in making JDS into a world-renowned journal that

appeals to the strategic community. I would also like to mention here that the Journal reserves the right to use the letter in its original form and/or modify, carry excerpts from the letters. Letters can be emailed to associateeditor.jds@gmail.com.

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Managing Editor