



Editorial

The latter half of 2010 was a period of considerable research activity at the Foundation. A large number of Round Table Conferences (RTC) covering a variety of topics were convened, and the feedback from our members has been positive. Select guest speakers were also received at the Foundation. We were particularly gratified to have conducted RTCs led by His Excellency Prasad Kariyawasam, Sri Lankan High Commissioner on May 4 and His Excellency Tariq Ahmed Karim, High Commissioner, Bangladesh on November 29.

As part of the NMF Eminent Persons Lecture (EPL) series in this period, two such public events were held. The first EPL, in July, was delivered by Dr. C. Raja Mohan, Strategic Affairs Editor, *Indian Express*, who spoke on the role for India in the changing geopolitics of the India Ocean. The second EPL, in November, was by Smt. Nirupama Rao, Foreign Secretary, who dwelt on the foreign policy contours for India as a consensual stakeholder in the India Ocean. Both public lectures were well attended by a wide cross section of the academic community, policymakers and students from local schools, colleges, and universities.

As always, in this issue we carry a wide collection of well-researched articles and a detailed book review. Robert Kaplan's *Monsoon: The Indian Ocean and the Future of American Power* is addressed in an insightful manner by Admiral Arun Prakash in his critique. The next article is a comprehensive analysis of China's naval aviation capability and its prospective role in the PLA Navy by KK Agnihotri. The author brings out the challenges faced by China in projecting its maritime power in the Indian Ocean and the planning underway to overcome them.

The fourth article, also on China, is by Joshy Paul and provides an instructive maritime perspective into the energy security of China and the resulting challenges to its foreign policy as also the implications for India. The next piece, by Anushree Bhattacharyya, highlights the contribution of regionalism towards a secure and stable Southeast Asia and examines the maritime cooperation in the region under the ASEAN umbrella. This is followed by a cogent cultural analysis of the ethno-political conflict in Sri Lanka by Trinanjan Radhakrishnan. He argues that though the war in Sri Lanka has finally come to an end, one cannot conclude that the core issue of Tamil minority rights and cultural autonomy has been resolved. Trinanjan draws from the theory of multiculturalism to assert that the Sri Lankan state has interpreted and projected minority group rights and cultural autonomy as a threat to the island's national security and thereby securitised the debate on Tamil minority rights.

The seventh article, by Abhijit Singh, reviews the sustained growth of Iran's naval forces in the past two decades. Abhijit has closely examined the Iranian Navy's war-waging capacity in the Persian Gulf, its new unconventional fighting philosophy, force imperatives, doctrinal underpinnings, combat objectives, and the implications that these might have on shipping and oil trade in the Persian Gulf. This is followed by another well-researched article, by Shishir Upadhyaya, on piracy in the Gulf of Aden and the challenges being faced by the various naval forces employed on anti-piracy patrols. Shishir identifies the lack of adequate legal mechanism for prosecution of pirates and onboard security for merchant ships as the key impediments to naval efforts to combat piracy. The last piece in the journal, by Neil Gadihoke, highlights the potential of the four main 'renewable' energies i.e., wind, solar, ocean, and geothermal, including potential assessment of their growth in the IOR and the attendant challenges in their future intensification and acceptability. In his paper Neil brings out the plans and investment of China and the resultant implications on the emerging geopolitics.

On balance, this issue of the *Maritime Affairs* covers a wide spectrum of current issues that should engage the interest of our readers. As always, the NMF welcomes your suggestions and comments to improve our journal.

Along with the editorial team, allow me to wish you all a very Happy 2011.

C. Uday Bhaskar