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## Editorial

I consider it a matter of great honour to write my first editorial for *Maritime Affairs*. Since its first edition came out 10 years ago, its readership has grown in both numbers and its geographical spread. *Maritime Affairs* also records the transition in Chairmanship of the National Maritime Foundation (NMF). The outgoing Chairman, Admiral Sureesh Mehta (Retd), now hands over the baton to Admiral DK Joshi (Retd), the former Chief of Naval Staff. The NMF faculty and staff join me in conveying our grateful thanks to Admiral Mehta (Retd) for ably guiding the Foundation. We wish him all the very best and hope to continue drawing on his immense intellectual capital. We also take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to the incoming Chairman, Admiral Joshi (Retd). A short biographic sketch of the Admiral is available on the inside cover.

The NMF is India's only maritime think tank and therefore considers it its duty to build a discourse on matters maritime, which are currently trending and are the flavour of the day. This edition of *Maritime Affairs* is therefore a yet another step in this direction and puts together well-researched articles that present different insights and perspectives on the maritime domain. It focuses on the Asia-Pacific region and its increasing "strategic relevance". It also highlights its expanded "avatar", i.e. the Indo-Pacific that in contemporary discourse is closely linked to the story of "Rise of Asia". This is evident from the animated nature of the discourse, which has fair share of competition and cooperation in the narratives, and transcends the political, economic and security continuum with an added factor of "geography". While some analysts have focused on the "pure power politics" that drive the regional security dynamics, others have chosen and argued for an inclusive and cross-cutting cooperation. It is difficult to determine the future of the Asia-Pacific region and it may even be

hazardous to forecast, but the centrality of Asia will remain in the future global architecture. The emerging trends, policy choices and state behaviour are some of the issues that would serve as the indicators and would determine the contours of the architecture stretching across the Indian and the Pacific oceans with a predominant “maritime” flavour and character.

In the above context, the first two papers of the journal deal with China and the impact of its growing influence in the maritime domain. Gurpreet Khurana in his paper analyses the geopolitical, geoeconomic and security import of China’s maritime-strategic presence in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). The paper examines the possible implications in terms of regional stability, balance of power, maritime security, economics and the adversarial potential in India–China relations. The paper concludes that the outcomes are likely to lie somewhere between the “zero-sum” and “win–win” extremes, depending upon the actions of states that have stakes in the region. The second paper by Sumathy Permal examines China’s burgeoning military power, and growing naval and maritime capability. The paper analyses the Anti-Access/Area-Denial (A2/AD) strategy, as a component of overall Chinese maritime strategy. The paper suggests that the People’s Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) military capabilities and force developments are inter-related to the evolution of China’s maritime strategy and the A2/AD would pose a significant challenge for regional security.

The next two papers examine the emerging security architecture in the Asia-Pacific and the implications on regional power dynamics. Anna Kireeva in her paper titled “Regional strategies and military buildup in East Asia and Indo-Pacific” presents the Russian perspective in East Asia, which is undergoing a strategic transformation due to the ongoing power shift. The paper assesses regional strategies and military buildup of various countries such as the USA, China, Japan, India, South Korea, Australia and other states in the Indo-Pacific region. The paper concludes that the region is undergoing a complex dynamics of competing strategies and a new regional order. Raghavendra Mishra in his paper examines the maritime–military context of the US “Rebalance” to the Asia-Pacific. The author suggests that this strategic recast has far-reaching implications and the maritime element would play a crucial role in the rebalance and strategic posturing. The paper attempts to deconstruct the maritime–military context of the rebalance and draws out necessary implications for global, regional and Indian strategic calculus.

The next paper deals with growing threats and challenges in the maritime domain. Aditi Chatterjee in her paper “Non-Traditional Maritime Security Threats in the Indian Ocean Region” analyses the causes and the patterns of various non-traditional maritime security threats such as piracy, maritime terrorism, illegal and unreported fishing, illegal immigration, and smuggling of arms and drugs, and examines the effects of these threats on the IOR littorals. In the last paper, Kapil Narula focuses on the maritime aspects of climate change. The paper presents various observations on ocean warming, sea level rise, ocean acidification and de-oxygenation, and charts out the impacts on the oceans. The author notes that climate change poses substantial risks to human and natural systems, which have significant implications for India. The paper concludes that there is a strong case for bringing oceans into the public debate and strengthening India’s resilience capacity is the key to face the growing threat of climate change.

This edition also carries three book reviews. Maneo Kayina reviews Dave Sloggett’s book, *The Anarchic Sea: Maritime Security in the 21st Century*, which attempts to look at the subject of maritime security holistically. In light of the unqualified success of BrahMos and its induction in the Indian armed forces, Bali reviews the book by the well-known defence technologist, Dr A. Sivathanu Pillai, titled *The Path Unexplored, Success Mantra of BrahMos*. In the last piece, Chattopadhyay reviews the book titled *Integrated Maritime Security: Governing the Ghost Protocol*. The book is authored by Prabhakaran Paleri, a former Director General of Indian Coast Guard, who highlights the exclusiveness of maritime security domain and focuses on the problems faced in the governance of maritime security by comparing it with a “ghost protocol”.

The second half of this year also saw a number of bilateral interactions with delegations from Australia, New Zealand and the USA, who visited the NMF. There was also a visit by the NMF delegation to the “Academy for World Watch”, Hainan, China. The scholars’ round tables continued with regularity covering diverse subjects such as “Non-Traditional Maritime Security Threats in the Indian Ocean”, “India’s Maritime Neighbourhood” and “Assessing India’s Emerging Energy Insecurity”. There were also round-table discussions on book projects sponsored by the NMF, namely “The Diplomatic Dimensions of Maritime Challenges for India in the 21st Century” and “India’s Maritime Strategy”, which enhanced the maritime discourse.

We are now preparing to host the next Annual Maritime Power Conference on 19–20 February 2015. After the grant of permanent observer status to India and four

other Asian countries in the Arctic Council, and in accordance with the growing interest in the Arctic region, the selected theme for the forthcoming conference is “Asia and the Arctic: Challenges and Opportunities”. The flagship event will further the case for cooperation amongst the Asian and the Arctic countries. I invite all of you to add to the academic discourse and participate in the forthcoming conference. I also extend an invitation to researchers and practitioners to contribute their papers to this journal for taking the debate on maritime matters forward. The editorial team joins me in conveying to all our readers Season’s Greetings and a Very Happy New Year.

Dr Vijay Sakhuja  
Director, National Maritime Foundation