



# Editorial: Maritime Affairs Winter 2013 Edition

The latter half of the year 2013 saw increased turbulence in the maritime domain particularly in the Indo-Pacific Region. The challenges of coping with man-made designs were almost as intense as those of nature's dispensations and where the two combined, the challenges magnified. Through such periodic developments, events and accidents; our editorial team continued to maintain its sights on the larger picture to make *Maritime Affairs* intellectually stimulating and a thematically relevant platform. We remain thankful to our readers and to the contributors who have ensured that *Maritime Affairs* continues to be a journal of objective non-partisan analyses, and look forward to their continued support.

The National Maritime Foundation consolidated the half year with round table discussions, interactions with various think tanks and institutions, eminent person's lecture (delivered by Shri Dinesh K Sarraf, the Managing Director of ONGC Videsh Ltd.) and felicitation of Lieutenant Commander Abhilash Tomy for his herculean feat of circumnavigating the earth under sails – solo, non-stop and unassisted. The Foundation team visited Singapore for its bilateral interaction with RSIS at a workshop covering Southeast Asia, maritime connectivity, regional security, cooperative mechanisms and filling up of gaps therein. The Foundation's senior faculty conducted a maritime strategy capsule at the Naval War College, Goa and also shared views at the IONS Operational Seminar conducted in Mumbai. In collaboration with the Indian Military Review, NMF also conducted a seminar on Maritime and Coastal Security in Mumbai which was attended by the stakeholders, Navy Foundation as well as industry representatives.

The scholars' round tables continued with monthly regularity covering diverse issues such as maritime security, the effect of the Bangladesh environmental crisis on India, application of game theory in countering maritime terrorism, the Trans Pacific Partnership and the maritime history of Gujarat on the eve of Portuguese arrival.

The current edition of *Maritime Affairs* puts together a collection of contemporary articles that contribute to the ongoing discourse on security and maritime concerns. Ajay Bohtan, in his article, writes about militarisation of space and the increasing use of space technology for using weapons on the ground and in the Earth's atmosphere with greater accuracy. Kamlesh Kumar Agnihotri follows with his article looking at "Naval Power Dynamics in the Western Pacific Ocean: Impact on Maritime Situation in East and South China Seas". He postulates that with many of the East China Sea and South China Sea disputants actively engaged in modernising their defence/maritime forces, the US 'rebalance' will bring in foreign policy challenges that will need to be overcome for lasting peace and stability in the region.

Directed Energy Weapons (DEWs) have been the next big thing in armament development for a while now and B. Bose, in his article "Directed Energy Weapons for Indian Armed Forces", makes a case for developing DEWs for the Indian Defence Forces. He analyses the threats to India in the near future and takes a comparative look at the economies of India and China before discussing the merits of a non-lethal directed energy weapon. Amit Singh writes about the important role that the diaspora can play in international relations in general and on India–Myanmar relations in particular. He avers that their recognition as an asset would see a positive improvement in the ties between India and Myanmar.

Sahana Bose analyses the environmental crisis of Bangladesh taking into consideration sea level rise, tropical cyclones, soil salinity and mangrove depletion. She also discusses its impact on India with special emphasis on the problem of illegal Bangladeshi migration on three areas: North Bengal, Indian Sunderbans Region and North East India. Riddhi Shah in her article titled "Maritime Counter-Terrorism: The Challenges of Centre-State Relations in India" brings out that the centre-state differences have cast systemic implications on India's maritime security and has largely done more harm than good to collective initiatives that aim to minimise, if not prevent, future risk of terrorism from the sea or on the sea.

This edition also carries two book reviews. Raghvendra Mishra analyses Thomas Mahnken, Ed, *Competitive Strategies for the 21st Century: Theory, History and Practice*, a compilation of essays by various authors, addressing the military strategic dimension

of Sino–American relationship in an era of uncertainty and the constraints that the United States currently faces. And, N. Manoharan takes a close look at the Indo-Pakistan war and reviews Commodore (retd) Vijay Jerath’s book, “25 Missile Boat Squadron – An Untold Story”.

As always, we have sought to present a bouquet of issues in the Journal that would appeal to a broad cross section of our readers and reflect reality in an accurate and relevant manner. In our perennial quest to improve the quality of the Journal, we would welcome suggestions and comments from our wide readership.

The MA editorial team extends Season’s Greetings to our readers and wishes them all a very Happy New Year 2014.

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Director, National Maritime Foundation