



## **Editorial**

Non-traditional security (NTS) threats are “challenges to the survival and well-being of peoples (sic.) and states that arise primarily out of non-military sources, such as climate change, cross-border environmental degradation and resource depletion, infectious diseases, natural disasters, irregular migration, food shortages, people smuggling, drug-trafficking, and other forms of trans-national crime” (Caballero-Anthony, 2007). These threats have certain common characteristics like transnational in scope, arise at very short notice and are transmitted rapidly owing to globalisation.

Understanding NTS threats is vital because of their increasing impact on daily lives and broader national interests. This is particularly so because at times they are more severe and more likely to inflict harm on a greater number of people than conventional threats. Though the world has taken note of the challenges posed by NTS threats after the Cold War, these issues have continued to plague the underdeveloped and the developing world for many decades prior.

The discourse on NTS threats and responses is fragmented. Today, it is widely accepted that the state cannot be secured without providing for the security of its people, and the people cannot feel secure in a weak state. And more importantly, the glut of non-traditional security threats that we face now does not differentiate between a state and its society and exasperates their insecurity equally. It is important therefore to deconstruct the traditionally held notions of what we mean by non-traditional security.

It has become increasingly clear that NTS threats to the security of states and societies must be addressed urgently and comprehensively. They require new and innovative approaches that are ambitious while at the same time being highly relevant to policymakers. None of the NTS challenges can be addressed by one country alone: they necessitate regional and global cooperation among countries and an active role for non-government actors. More than ever, it is important to facilitate a multi-disciplinary,

multi-stakeholder, and inclusive dialogue to set the contours of a new narrative on the subject.

In this regard, we bring out articles focused on key non-traditional security issues like drug-trafficking, terrorism, illegal migration, refugees, IDPs, maritime and water.

Pushpita Das from the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi, brings out various trends of and responses to the threat of drug-trafficking in India. On illegal migration, Mayilvaganan from the National Institute of Advanced Studies argues that illegal migrants from Bangladesh pose a major national security challenge to India in the form of demographic, socio-economic, political and environmental pressures. Partha Ghosh, formerly professor at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, looks at the issue of refugees by taking two case studies - East Pakistan refugees in India (1971) and Afghan refugees in Pakistan (1979) - in a comparative perspective. IDPs (internally displaced persons) is yet another issue ably addressed by Surendra from Bangalore University. He identifies challenges like inadequate data, limited scope of guiding principles on IDPs, sense of insecurity, inability to address its root causes and failure to achieve a durable solution that confronts states and the international community in addressing the issue. Gurpreet Khurana, formerly Executive Director, National Maritime Foundation, New Delhi examines key issues relating to the emerging maritime security and geopolitical environment in the Indo-Pacific region in the context of India's national security interests. Ambika Vishwanath, Co-Founder and Director, Kuberne in Initiative, Mumbai, analyses the role of water in the larger context of non-traditional security debate and tries to link scarcity of water to several security issues like inter-community conflicts, terrorism, inter and intra-state conflicts, refugees, and IDPs.

This issue also has three special articles on India's neighbourhood policy. The real test of foreign policy of any country is handling of its neighbours. India always wishes to have a peaceful, prosperous and stable neighbourhood to focus on its development. With this rationale in mind, the NDA government invited heads of states/governments to the swearing-in ceremony in May 2014. Prime Minister Narendra Modi also visited all countries of South

Asia. Yet, one cannot assert that India's neighbourhood policy has been successful. For various reasons, India has not been able to enjoy best of its relations with all its neighbours. It is important to look at the challenges and prospects of India's neighbourhood policy of the last decade involving three countries: Bhutan, Sri Lanka and China. These countries are chosen to reflect on three different aspects of India's foreign policy towards its neighbours: one a traditional friend, a southern neighbour and one an extra-regional power. Amit Ranjan from the Institute of South Asian Studies, Singapore, argues that Bhutan is a small but strategically important country for India whose concerns have to be satisfactorily addressed by New Delhi. Jabin Jacob, Associate Professor from Shiv Nadar University, in a perceptive piece 'China in India's Neighbourhood', examines Chinese foreign and security policies working in India's neighbourhood with the help of three brief case studies: China in Nepal's connectivity projects, China's delicate interaction with Bhutan and Beijing's military diplomacy with Sri Lanka. Manoharan N and Riya Arundhati Pawar look at how the recent politico-constitutional crisis in Sri Lanka has wide-ranging implications both at internal and at external levels, especially India-Sri Lanka relations.

We thank our authors and reviewers for contributing to the issue and our readers for motivating us to engage in meaningful academic deliberations regarding the aforementioned issues.

## References

Caballero-Anthony, M. (2007). Nontraditional security and multilateralism in Asia: reshaping the contours of regional security architecture? *Policy Analysis Brief*, 1. Retrieved from <https://www.stanleyfoundation.org/publications/pab/pab07mely.pdf>

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