

Editor's Epistle

The Centre for Strategic and Contemporary Research (CSCR) is pleased to successfully deliver the subsequent publication of *Stratagem* for the year 2018. The Centre has sought to incorporate subjects that are intriguing for the readership. A particular emphasis is laid on relatively newer themes that are playing a critical role in shaping the current global order.

The second edition of *Stratagem* has a global focus and covers crucial topics which are imperative in understanding the contemporary global political arena. Research articles, book reviews, a transcript of a conference on significant queries pertaining to the megaproject the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), and an introduction to a thorough research conducted on the CPEC projects are included in this issue.

As part of our research projects, the CSCR's Internal Research Unit has worked towards compiling a data-bank of basic and detailed information on the projects under the CPEC. This edition of *Stratagem*, begins with an overview of this research conducted over the past six months. It is noteworthy that the repository is one of its kind, since the official source has not been able to provide a compilation of all the projects in a similar all-inclusive manner. The database is an accumulation of basic details such as location, status, cost of construction etc., as well as each projects historical background and its benefits for both countries, particularly Pakistan.

In the transforming global order, the contemporary world faces more complexed challenges to the security of nation states. As states advance technologically in a bid to have an influential role in global politics, there seems to be a different kind of threat emerging. In the 21st century, cyberspace and Artificial Intelligence have given way to a fifth domain of warfare. Due to the increasing significance of both fields in international relations, two separate research papers have been included in this issue to discuss this important theme.

The paper on international cyber regime discusses the weaponisation of cyberspace in the modern day, and the need for an international cyber regime to address growing security concerns of states. Shedding light on the challenges for the formation of an international cyber regime, the author uses

the approaches of the United States, Russia and China on cybersecurity with overlapping perspectives as a means for a possible agreement and cooperation at a global level.

In his personal reflections in the New Reformation (1970), Paul Goodman infamously penned down, 'Whether or not it draws on new scientific research, technology is a branch of moral philosophy, not of science'. How the technology ought to conduct itself is central to the advancements in Artificial Intelligence, especially as this burgeoning scientific field correlates with the war discipline. With no mutual understanding on the moral and decision making nuances among the key scientific players on Artificial Intelligence, humanity is standing on the brink of crisis. Such considerations have been made part of another research paper, where the future scenarios of Artificial Intelligence have been discussed, in the context of the changing nature of warfare.

Climate Change and its effects cannot be overlooked as a growing concern for the international community. A research paper included in the journal, studies a very different dimension of the effects of climate change. It focuses on the relationship of climate change and conflict with specific examples from the Pakistani society, concluding that climate change has an impact on human security. It goes on explaining that effects of climate change tend to widen the gap between the socioeconomic classes within a society as well as the rural-urban divide.

The receding of pluralism with a rise of identity politics in Europe has necessitated a rethink of the political and economic thought. Display of frigid nationalism by political and other interest groups is gaining traction. The paper titled 'Evolution of the Welfare State: The Left-Right Divide' explores this point while juxtaposing about the left-right dilemma with the welfare role of the European Union.

In the backdrop of the American negotiations with the Afghan Taliban, it is worthy to reminisce Afghanistan as a buffer state between the two powerful empires; the British and the Russians in the 19th century. A historical account charting the clash of masters of the earlier global order for the extension of political clout over Afghanistan has been made a part of a research paper by a contributing academician for this issue of the journal.

Finally, a conference transcript on the CPEC is appended. The conference was held at the National Defence University, in collaboration with the Faculty of Contemporary Studies, Department of International Relations. The speakers included government officials such as Senator Kahuda Baber from Gwadar, Deputy Chief of Mission of the People's Republic of China to Pakistan Mr. Zhao Lijian, and academicians from the University. The panel discussion centred around, Pakistan-China strategic partnership, CPEC's benefit to the province of Balochistan, CPEC and regional connectivity, and challenges and opportunities facing the CPEC.

Lastly, two books have been reviewed. First is Bob Woodward's 'Fear – Trump in the White House', and the second is 'The New Arthashastra: A Security Strategy for India' by Gurmeet Kanwal. 'Fear' is a critical account of President Trump's workings both at the time during the campaign as well as after being elected as the head of the state. It is based on personal collection of information at the White House and all in all sums up his inefficiency as a President. The New Arthashastra is a contemporary take on the writings of Chanakya, chief adviser of the Mauryan Empire. In contemplating modern security threats, the book does not shy from projecting a grand strategic vision for India in the 21st century in the form of essays by notable military personalities having a scholarly reputation.

We would like to apprise our readership that the journal has been kept open-access for encouraging scholarship and developing a research culture conducive for Pakistan. Stratagem can also be retrieved electronically via the Centre's website without any subscription charges. We have also integrated our web platform with the Open Journal System (OJS) for manuscript management and publishing purpose, and also the unrestricted accessibility of knowledge in the public domain. It is hoped that this exercise shall bear fruition for the academia.

Syeda Ailiya Naqvi
Managing Editor