

Alumni Connect

NDC Alumni Newsletter: September 2022



National Defence College Building: Front View

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Hon Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi led India's 76th Independence Day Celebrations by addressing the nation from the ramparts of historic Red Fort, Delhi.



Prime Minister stressed on the vision for India to be a developed nation in next 25 years, terming it as an aspirational society.

He appealed and asked for the support of the people to walk forward with him on FIVE pledges to make India a developed nation.

- India will have to walk forward with very big resolutions. If we have to achieve the target of a developed nation then nothing less than this will matter.
- We have to leave our servitude mindset from every inch, corner, thinking, and mentality. We don't have to carry forward any reflection of our servitude in any form in the country and have to overcome this.
- We have to be proud of our heritage which gave India its golden glory in the past.
- We have to keep in mind our '...ekta and ekjutta (Unity and solidarity) ... na koi apna aur na koi paraya (we belong to everyone and everyone belongs to us) ... ek barat shresth bharat (one country, pride country).
- Responsibilities of citizens in which even a Prime Minister is not excluded, because he is also a citizen first.

Editors Page

The 62nd NDC Course started as per schedule on 3rd Jan 2022, the first Monday of the year. The world was still reeling under effects of Covid-19, and at the onset it became a hybrid mode of interaction and eventually with a strength of 118 participants we actually came onto a fully offline mode.

NDC Commandant, Lt Gen MK Mago, AVSM, YSM, SM** in his first interaction with the course drew out the broad contours of National Security and Strategy facing any country. He urged the participants to understand the underpinnings and linkages in social, political, cultural, economic, technological, diplomatic and military dimensions for a nation state. The essence of thinking at a strategic plane, while evolving the policy directions in the government as also providing strategic leadership was the focus enunciated by the Commandant.

Even at the onset of the course, it was endeavoured that the course curriculum is run as per the traditional norms. Therefore lectures, panel discussions, IAG (Integrated Analysis Group) sessions, visits to local historic sites, visits to states and foreign countries as also the social interactions with the participants and their spouses were all part of the eagerly looked for schedule, thus the Covid solace of work from home was no more an option.

The 62nd NDC benefited from a large strength of participants from friendly foreign countries (FFC). They brought forth rich and varied experiences from across the globe into the discussions, and the 35 FFC participants represented 22 nations.

The social life in the course was galvanized with rekindling of old bonds of various hues as also saw emergence of new tapestry of causes to hang out together. The lovely children of the course families added to the richness and flavour of the camaraderie.

The Covid Experience

At the onset of the course, the most emergent disruption at the global scale was the Covid-19 pandemic. The military stand-off around Ukraine had commenced, yet till February 2022 – one felt the looming shadow of the pandemic in all the nations of the FFC participants. Therefore, to enhance the understanding of the impact the pandemic was having on different societies and nations, the participants were asked to contribute writeups on the subject issue. The writeups were varied, very critical for preservation of national interests, and a few of which are presented hereafter.

Politics and Security

Every situation in the world is changing day by day and various challenges are emerging. The world has been reshaped by Covid-19, as social economic situations changed during the pandemic. Politic and security sectors were also greatly impacted during the pandemic and the virus gave the world many lessons. Before the pandemic, the world was busy and anxious with the US-China Trade War, Iran's secret weapon plans and tensions with the US, challenges and Missile threat of North Korea, crude oil business and civil wars in Middle East. Suddenly, the hot topics and the trend of the world changed and the virus started taking eminence on the news and televisions. Afterwards, the virus stands as a common enemy for all humanity. In early 2022, the global crisis in Russia and Ukraine, which could escalate into Third World War, coincided with the outbreak of Covid-19 epidemic (omicron).

That is why the United States is facing tensions not only with China but also with Russia. The tensions between powerful countries have risen temporarily and price of crude oil also rose. The productivity of the whole world decreased suddenly and almost all the economic sectors face great losses except very few businesses such as online based business and medical services. Governments around the world were shocked and not only focused on their rivals but also tried to find solution to fight against the virus. The lifestyle of people, methods of doing business and education are also impacted.

Actually, the world had already faced worse pandemics such as Plague in the history which had higher death toll compared to Covid-19. But, the outbreak

happened once in a while during several decades and first time in 21st century when the world countries are rivalling each other for dominance and speeding up their economic growth rate. In so doing, the powerful nations used all possible approaches for their national interest. Throughout the history, the countries within the ideology and political rivalling zones of powerful countries faced civil unrest, civil war, armed conflict and insurgency.

The problems of security issue are normally based on geopolitical locations and long history of religion, multi-ethnic population (majority and minority ethnic group) and legacy of colonization. It is not just rooted in recent / immediate happenings. For example, a country like Myanmar which has majority people and several minority ethnic people who have different religion and languages, has legacies of colonial divide and rule system; besides it is caught between the USA's China Containment Policy and China's Regional Dominance.

Col Myint Naing OO

Impact on National Power

The spread of coronaviruses has had a profound impact on national security by reducing national power as a result of death toll, its impact on the economy and the security cooperation framework.

Coronavirus has had varying impact on the population of different countries. Population will of course fluctuate due to births, immigration, acquisition of nationality, etc., but comparing the number of deaths to the pre-pandemic population provides a simpler measure of the impact of the pandemic. In this way, it can be derived the percentage of population loss due to the coronavirus, i.e. the loss of national strength, and thus the impact on the national strength of a country can be visualised. The results reveal that the most affected countries in terms of deaths are Brazil with 0.3%, Argentina with 0.275%, the USA with 0.274%, followed by Mexico and Italy with 0.243%. The least affected major countries, with the exception of China, were South Korea at 0.013%, Japan at 0.015%, Australia at 0.016%, Saudi Arabia at 0.026% and India at 0.036%.

The GDP of each country cannot be directly attributed to the impact of the coronaviruses, because there are other factors besides the coronaviruses. The

countries with the largest negative growth over the period are Argentina - 26%, Brazil - 24.6% and South Africa - 17.9%. If we also include countries with a negative growth rate of 10% or more, we find Mexico - 12.2%, Saudi Arabia - 11% and Russia - 10.5%. Italy is also close to 10% at -9.7%. These countries can be assessed as having been severely affected by the decline in national strength, with growth rates swinging downwards by more than 10%. And if we look at the changes throughout the period 2018-2020, 15 countries have negative growth, except China, the US, Indonesia and Japan. Even more striking is the fact that only in China has there been positive growth over the whole period, and that this growth has been steady despite the impact of the coronavirus in many countries. From the point of view of security, this means that while other countries' economic power, or national power, has been affected by the coronavirus, China has steadily increased its power and can be evaluated as having strengthened its national power relatively in terms of security. It will be very interesting and something to keep an eye on.

In the field of military security, the new coronavirus has had a variety of effects, but perhaps the most significant of these is the "physical distance between people". This has had an impact on the economies of many countries, as mentioned above, but the reduction of human flows and restrictions on foreign traffic has had other security implications. One of the most directly affected areas is security cooperation and defence exchanges. This is because the basis for the development of a relationship begins with understanding the other person. There is a difference in understanding between face-to-face conversation and online conversation, where you are exposed to the culture, customs, society, atmosphere and ideas of the other country. In this sense, there is no doubt that military security has been greatly affected.

Col Yoshimitsu Junichi

Challenges on International Peace and Security

International order by its basic nature is a dynamic. The current world order though evolved over years through major world-shaking events was set up after WW-II. It has experienced cold war to the current global pandemic. Emergence of new order is a long process unless forced by major events. Leadership's common understanding on their commitments, principles and framework institutional modality are some of the basic for an international system to begin or change from

the existing. The world is in a transition that doesn't mean it moves rapid through a gap and void. Without strong necessity being felt and addressing the fundamental principles and framework required for a workable international order, hasty transition toward new order is not going to happen and if happens it will lead to a chaos. Security interests and narrow nationalistic views are commonly emerging these days contrary to widely professed principles and norms of rule-based multilateralism. This indicates that the world is going through a process of self-preservation of own strength. This may aggravate mutual alienation, geopolitical confrontation and risk of reviving the bloc security thinking.

The world has been more interdependent but the emerging trends shows increasing mistrust and mutual suspicion hence the international security will be more unstable due to various reasons. First, the deepening mistrust between and among the great powers and growing rivalry in strategic space of various domains. Adversarial competition between power nations is increasing not only between US, China and Russia but also between regional powers. Microscopic common enemy such as COVID-19 could not pull these leading nations together. This confrontational and non-co-operational climate further exposed the vulnerability of human security. It is likely to deteriorate further irrespective of existing common challenges such as climate, pandemic and poverty.

Second is gradual weakening of existing international institutions. Institutions such as UN, its special agencies and financial institutions are the collective reflection of member states commitment from the Great War in order to save humanity from the curse of devastation. Without macro consensus and strong political as well as financial support from world leadership, these institutions become less effective. Resultantly, during lethal pandemic, each government's capacity was quickly overwhelmed and did not get timely external support because of the absence of efficient international coordinated effort due to the lack of global leadership, will and the scale of crisis itself. Hence it may lead to the practice of unilateralism by power nations and development of alliance and partnership of convenience which ultimately leads to the emergence of more bilateral and regional conflicts in and around existing and/or emerging contested strategic spaces in larger scale.

Third, addressing problems of transnational nature such as climate, pandemic, drug, crime and terrorism will be less effective in the absence of global cooperation. If nations focus inward and look more into their petty national interests, then even

state's proxy involvement into such illicit activities cannot be ruled out. This will lead to more regional conflicts thus making international and regional organizations even weaker creating serious threat to existing principles and values upon which current global structure of multilateralism is based. If such situation develops and conflict erupts in any part of the world, conflict management and resolution may be a distant wish hence protracting of such conflicts is more likely. The obvious example is Ukraine-Russia conflict.

Despite of many shortcomings, the blink of de-globalization and weakening multilateralism are temporary. World is now even more connected than ever before. Although big powers relationship is at its low nevertheless, international order at this time demands more collective and collaborative approach by all in order to give a safe and better direction for the future. The alternative to weakened multilateralism is more strong and updated multilateralism and failure is more conflicts. Sharing strategic space among power nations, respecting sovereignty of comity of nations and working collaboratively by maintaining healthy competition in all strategic space is desirable from world leadership for the greater good of humanity.

Col Purna B Khatri

Challenges in Maritime Domain

The Covid-19 pandemic led to increasing hazards in the maritime domain, noticeably an increase in crime at sea such as sea piracy and armed robbery. Based on the report from The Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Armed Robbery Against Ships in Asia (ReeCAP), in 2021 there is increasing incidents in Singapore Straits as compared to previous year. The last quarterly report from the International Maritime Bureau shows the negative effects of the Covid-19 on maritime security. There tend to be noteworthy increases of piracy during times of economic slump, and the economic devastation shaped by the Covid-19 pandemic is largely to blame for the resurgence of this global threat. Covid-19 would decrease global trade which lowers growth, upsurges poverty and joblessness and then leads to rise in sea piracy.

The pandemic led to fewer sailors on board ships, and therefore fewer crew

monitoring for potential pirates or armed robbers. This condition explains the increase in the boarding of ships. However, it is interesting to see that the policies promoted to prevent hijacking and firearm use against commercial ships bore fruit, with no notable increase during the peak of the crisis.

To tackle those impacts, global community should work together in order to maximize result instead of working alone or without unity efforts. There are some steps that all parts should take. First, socialization of all guidance or protocol related to Covid-19 from International Maritime Organization (IMO) and also from local government. By understanding the protocol profoundly, all maritime security and law enforcement agencies will not hesitate to run their jobs. There will be no rejection as well from the commercial ships to be boarded by law enforcers for the purpose of both law enforcement and saving them for any threat and hazard. Second, all parts should maximize online communication in order to prevent all possible maritime security threats. To send messages related to documents for example, shipping line should use online system to law enforcers wherever their ships will go in order to make them well informed and can prevent from all possible threats and unnecessary VBSS (visit, boarding, search and seizure). All local and national maritime agencies should also share all data via online in order to prevent waste efforts.

These steps would minimize and reduce the impact of Covid-19 on maritime security. Combination of Covid-19 protocol based on IMO standard and maximizing online method in running and maintaining maritime security and law enforcement will be the solution for both Covid-19 and its maritime domain impacts.

Captain (N) Salim

Readiness and Response

Pandemics have occurred throughout history and appear to be increasing in frequency, particularly because of the increasing emergence of viral disease from animals.

- Some geographic regions with high spark risk, including Central and West Africa, lag behind the rest of the globe in pandemic preparedness.

- Probabilistic modelling and analytical tools such as exceedance probability (EP) curves are valuable for assessing pandemic risk and estimating the potential burden of pandemics.
- Marginalized populations, including refugees and people living in urban slums and informal settlements, likely face elevated risks of morbidity and mortality during a pandemic.

A country's expected ability to curtail pandemic spread can be expressed using a preparedness index developed by Oppenheim and others (2017). The index illustrates global variation in institutional readiness to detect and respond to a large-scale outbreak of infectious disease. It draws on the IHR core capacity metrics and other publicly accessible cross-national indicators. However, it diverges from the IHR metrics in its breadth and focus on measuring underlying and enabling institutional, infrastructural, and financial capacities such as the following.

- Public health infrastructure capable of identifying, tracing, managing, and treating cases.
- Adequate physical and communications infrastructure to channel information and resources.
- Fundamental bureaucratic and public management capacities.
- Capacity to mobilize financial resources to pay for disease response and weather the economic shock of the outbreak.
- Ability to undertake effective risk communications.

Well-prepared countries have effective public institutions, strong economies, and adequate investment in the health sector. They have built specific competencies critical to detecting and managing disease outbreaks, including surveillance, mass vaccination, and risk communications. Poorly prepared countries may suffer from political instability, weak public administration, inadequate resources for public health, and gaps in fundamental outbreak detection and response systems. Some generic impact can be listed as:

- Pandemics can cause economic damage through multiple channels, including short-term fiscal shocks and longer-term negative shocks to economic growth.

- Individual behavioural changes, such as fear-induced aversion to workplaces and other public gathering places becoming a primary cause of negative shocks to economic growth during pandemics.
- Some pandemic mitigation measures can cause significant social and economic disruption.
- In countries with weak institutions and legacies of political instability, pandemics can increase political stresses and tensions. In these contexts, outbreak response measures such as quarantines have sparked violence and tension between states and citizens.

Pathogens with pandemic potential vary widely in the resources, capacities, and thus mitigation strategies also are required to be designed accordingly.

- The most cost-effective strategies for increasing pandemic preparedness, especially in resource-constrained settings, consist of investing to strengthen core public health infrastructure, including water and sanitation systems; increasing situational awareness; and rapidly extinguishing sparks that could lead to pandemics.
- Once a pandemic has started, a coordinated response should be implemented focusing on maintenance of situational awareness, public health messaging, reduction of transmission, and care for and treatment of the ill.
- Successful contingency planning and response require surge capacity—the ability to scale up the delivery of health interventions proportionately for the severity of the event, the pathogen, and the population at risk.
- For many poorly prepared countries, surge capacity will likely be delivered by foreign aid providers. This is a tenable strategy during localized outbreaks, but global surge capacity has limits, that likely will be reached during a full-scale global pandemic as higher-capacity states focus on their own populations.
- Risk transfer mechanisms, such as risk pooling and sovereign-level catastrophe insurance, provide a viable option for managing pandemic risk.

Brig Essam Galal Ibrahim Abdelghany

Information Sharing

An effective national disaster management strategy is dependent on a shared understanding of the situation at all levels of government. The ability or willingness to share information between levels of government or government and non-government results in an aligned picture of what is occurring. Better decisions, decisions that keep pace with the situation and better outcomes for communities. People lose trust and faith in their government, when it is clear government responses lack coordination.

Limiting information sharing may be based on legal and technical issues or perceived issues. Limitations to sharing information must be resolved to establish a nationally consistent information sharing framework. An endorsed national information sharing strategy would establish an approach to the collection, management and sharing of quality information within the government and across the disaster recovery environment.

Following a disaster, at a time of great vulnerability, people that need assistance can find it difficult to know what services are available and how they are accessed. Often

people are bounced around service providers, sometimes ineligible for services they approach, while telling their stories over and over. Sharing information reduces the need for people to retell their stories multiple times to different levels of government and non-government. A more person-centric model for service delivery with the provision of a 'once only' process for registration would facilitate the management and sharing of information within and between recovery services.

Data provides an evidence base to drive facilitation and collaboration across governments, the non-government sector and communities to achieve this vision. Data provides a basis for governments at all levels, private sector organisations, not-for-profits and charities, to continue the work with communities to create a better future for recovery and resilience. There are established targets and standards that benchmark evaluations that inform recovery pre-planning, coordination, training and exercises. Analysing workforce performance needs and gaps in the current training and education system is essential.

Findings in Australia, the United States and the United Kingdom show common

factors in disaster management failure to include inadequate training and exercises, no national systems to gather and validate lessons, and no national systems to disseminate and monitor corrective actions and training. Learning from the past and learning from others' experiences is a national security priority. A nationally consistent workforce who are masters in the art and science of disaster preparedness and recovery is essential to drive and inspire betterment transformation.

The federal government must develop a national disaster data strategy and formalize data sharing arrangements across levels the government. Establishing a national centre for resilience and recovery knowledge management is an option to bring professionals and community leaders together.

Col Anthony Criag Hoyer

The Pandemic of Internet Extremism

In the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, in May 2020, the Kyrgyz special service detained an active employee of the Hizb ut-Tahrir media centre in the Osh region. Being a member of this religious extremist organization (REO), the detainee - a citizen of one of the neighbouring countries -was engaged in the dissemination of extremist materials, having a full arsenal of technical means to work in the Internet space.

The detention changed focus of various agencies on the specific actions of extremist groups during epidemic and the closure of borders situation. COVID-19 could not push the leaders of the REO to self-isolation, but forced them to a technological shift to emphasis of extremist activities online. The process of recruiting new cadres to the ranks of extremists and destabilizing the situation in the region continues.

Extremist and terrorist organizations, using the Internet, conduct a whole range of activities in cyberspace. They conduct information and propaganda, recruitment work, recruit training, fundraising, and cyberattacks. The psychological impact is based on the desire to sow fear and a sense of helplessness in the minds of people and to demonstrate the power and strength of an extremist organization. It is possible that extremist forces were behind the fake news about the coronavirus

pandemic which was floating in social media during that time.

A month after the detention of the Osh media extremist in the Naryn region of Kyrgyzstan, the activities of members of the women's wing of Hizb ut-Tahrir was suppressed. Extremist literature, electronic media (tablet, laptops, phones, SIM cards) and notebooks with notes containing propaganda material of the REO was recovered from the detainees.

Detentions of distributors of extremist materials on social networks for Kyrgyzstan is not an accidental phenomenon but is quite common. The extremist, who was detained in Bishkek in February this year, was pushing the idea of a caliphate through the Internet. Extremist propagandists, who are people of different age and social groups, are exploiting internet to further their activities. In 2019, an eighteen-year-old student from the Jalal-Abad region was found distributing extremist materials on social networks. Similarly, in the Chui region a forty-eight-year old supporter of the REO was found doing the same.

On June 30 2020, during joint operational activities of the special services of Uzbekistan, the illegal activities of a group of adherents of the international terrorist organization "Tawhid va zhohod Katibasi", which was behind the explosion in the subway in St. Petersburg on April 3, 2017, were exposed. Fifteen passengers and a suicide bomber were killed in the incident while more than 60 people were injured. The underground group consisted of 11 people operating on the territory of Tashkent.

According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Uzbekistan, these people, having fallen under the influence of militants operating in the ranks of an international terrorist organization in Syria, shared extremist videos downloaded from the Internet during underground gatherings and planned to travel to the Syrian Arab Republic in order to commit "hijrat" (resettlement) of "jihad".

The internal affairs bodies of Uzbekistan issued an appeal in connection with the detention of jihadists. The minister said, "I would like to warn our citizens, especially young people, not to violate the law, not to fall under the influence of destructive ideologies, not to be deceived by calls on dubious sites in social networks, not to use, store and distribute materials that are a threat to society".

During the expert round table meeting “Strengthening the capacity for inclusive prevention of online extremism and terrorism”; held in Bishkek last year, it was announced: “Mapping violent online extremism in Central Asia shows that Telegram and Facebook remain the most used online platforms for terrorist purposes”.

Often multilingual content is distributed through neutral “entry points”; (news or religious sites) by stuffing. Joint measures to counter online propaganda being adopted by States and transnational information providers are gaining momentum, forcing destructive groups to find new ways to disseminate information. They are now increasingly committing their online actions on the Dark Web.

In 2018, access to 139 extremist websites and 210 pages on social networks were blocked in Kyrgyzstan. On the facts of propaganda and distribution of extremist materials of the Taliban, Hizb ut-Tahrir, IG, the Prosecutor’s Office of the Republic made 38 submissions to the courts. In 2019, 15 court decisions were issued for the dissemination of information of terrorist and extremist nature on the blocking of 20 Internet sites, 98 accounts in social networks and 26 groups in mobile messengers. Thirty-three facts of the dissemination of information of an interethnic, interregional and interfaith nature were recorded.

The illegal actions of the extremists are based on intentions to destabilise the situation in the country, the region, and to increase their support base. It is worth remembering this and being vigilant.

Lt Col Soatov Ulugbek Rustamovich

Education is the backbone of any Nation

Covid-19 has disrupted the entire education system around the world. It's no exaggeration to say that Covid-19 has seismically affected the entire education system in Bangladesh. As the pandemic passes through 100% of education institutes (approximately 200,000 educational institutions across the country which have over 40 million students) had to be closed for years in an attempt to stop the spread of the violent and uncontrolled virus. However, the Government's endeavour to continue the education system online was quite praiseworthy but the outcome is highly debatable. Millions of young boys and girls from remote areas and poor family backgrounds were out of online education provided to them. Therefore, thousands of students in various categories might have gone out of schools or colleges. Thus,

it is going to be a prime challenge for the future generation to mitigate the post pandemics impact.

Due to the lockdown being imposed, the conventional learning setup has been transformed into a virtual learning session. Due to this, teachers essentially communicate what is stated in the books aiming to wrap up the curriculum thereby defeating the purpose of a holistic education that schools are meant to provide. The long-established school setup did not only provide students with a classroom teaching experience but also provided 'room' to grow as a person, inculcating values as a part of the teaching process and explaining the know-how of each concept.

Online classroom education also comes with its own set of problems in a country wherein teachers are not sufficiently equipped with the skills to facilitate an online class at maximum efficiency. In Bangladesh, internet facilities are yet to be very cheaply available in many parts of the country due to various reasons like poor mobile network, lack of equipment, absence of expertise and lack of interest, etc. At the same time, many parents could not provide smartphones to their children to study online. Therefore, all segments of the educations system – primary, secondary, under-graduate, post-graduate, or competitive, had been getting worse by the day.

Students could not sit for any exams in 2020 due to the country-wide lockdown and there was now no board examinations or evaluation that could be done all over the country. Hundred percent of students were given 'auto pass' to the next higher class up to HSSC (Higher secondary school certificate). Students not satisfied with the stated results were given the option to retake their exams in August 2021 for further evaluation. Again in 2021 students were evaluated based on only three major subjects where only two chapters out of whole books they had to study for full marks. There was no practical exam taken but they all got marks in practical exams also. However, despite all-out endeavours taken by all agencies under the government guide-line about 10% (ten percent) of students out of thirteen lacs could not achieve their desired pass mark. The following can be summarised as an effect of Covid-19 on education:

- Kids in primary grades fails to develop the ability to socialize, gets isolated, are addicted to TV or mobile gaming, fails to develop a friendship with peers, etc.

All these social, environmental, and situational barriers will no doubt hinder the mental development of our future generations.

- The very foundation of young adults in secondary grades to be inquisitive is being compromised and weakened as the golden time of their life span has been taken out by the pandemic through the lockdown.
- Absence of a competitive exam made them confused as to what the future holds for them and make them frustrated.
- Under-grads and post-grads students continue to miss out on networking opportunities and the much looked forward to college experiences.

The impact of Covid-19 on the students can be best gauged by the sentiments expressed by one of them – “that the pandemic confined them in a single room without friends and peers and study was online but in a very limited scale. It is also said that in the last two years’ time, very small learning has taken place but the smartphone and television have taken off very important and valuable time from our life”.

It is now understood that education cannot remain within the rigid structure of a classroom. The inclusion of television, radio, and the internet has proved that the medium needs to be flexible and accommodative. Then again, the learn-from-home model has made the guardians the proxy educators. The vertical relationship between a teacher and a student has found a horizontal model in which the delivery of education requires new sponsors, new levels of participation of others.

Therefore, returning to school will require a new kind of readjustment. Already, the extreme form of individualization, isolation, quarantine, and lockdown have affected the mental health of our children. Many are struggling with the trauma of losing loved ones, the vulnerability of being affected by the disease, and the fear of being so close to death. We may not simply assume what the students are going through but we must create a space for them so that they can voice out their concerns, helping us draft a public policy for the psychosocial wellbeing of our future generation.

Global Supply Chains

At the onset of the pandemic, and with most of the world's population quarantining in their homes, global supply demands on personal protective equipment (PPE), critical lifesaving ventilators, and even basic subsistence, fuel, and consumables skyrocketed exponentially. This quickly depleted available stocks putting further strain on supply chains that were being disrupted or virtually cut due to border closures or lack of available shippers. This was further exasperated by our highly globalized and interconnected supply chains or what is commonly referred to as global value chains (GVCs).

In the quest for more efficient and cost-effective supply chains, many leading companies had inadvertently weakened them. Thus, the high-speed, low-cost supply chains were unable to respond to unexpected changes in demand or supply and the most productive supply chains possessed 3 main qualities:

- Agility: They react speedily to sudden changes in demand or supply.
- Adaptability: They adapt over time as market structures and strategies evolve.
- Alignment: They align the interests of all the firms in the supply network so that companies optimize the chain's performance when they maximize their interests.

An examination of the 10 best supply chain companies in 2021, found the top-rated company was Cisco Systems. They were highlighted for their commitment to creating a dynamic, distributed supply chain, focussing on dual sourcing to build resiliency, and fostering meaningful relationships with its suppliers and made a concerted effort to integrate sustainability initiatives with its supply chain. Key words like "dynamic", "distributed", "resilient", and "fostering meaningful relationships" align well with the principles of agility, adaptability, and alignment and show that these were crucial in allowing Cisco Systems to thrive despite disruptions of the past 18 months and sustained their growth through the pandemic. Not surprisingly, companies like Walmart and Alibaba also made the top 10 list for their ability to adapt quickly to the new forms of distribution through innovations like Walmart+ that rivals Amazon Prime, and "implementing a range of new fulfilment options – such as curb side pickups" and Alibaba.com Freight, a supply China-as-a-service initiative allowing SMEs to compare,

book, manage, and track bulk ocean and air freight in real-time. Conversely, examining 10 major companies that went out of business during the pandemic, many chalked it up to pandemic-related supply chain and business disruptions. However, in reviewing the reasons listed it was evident that their inability to remain, agile, adaptable, and aligned with their supply networks were the true reasons for their demise. In fact, it was estimated that nearly 100,000 businesses (in the US alone) that had temporarily shut down at the beginning of the pandemic are now out of business.

This economic shock wave felt around the world caused many countries to re-look at their supply chain management and many argued for a more protectionist stance and need to develop more robust organic sources of key supplies. Although this might sound logical at first, economists continue to argue that localized supply chains are found to be more, not less, vulnerable to shocks in most countries.

In an article written for the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), economists explored the effects of shifting towards the localised regime on key economic variables such as trade, production and real Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and the overall cost of making the supply chains more local or efficient. The results showed that the localised regime, where economies are less interconnected via GVCs, has a significantly lower levels of economic activity and lower incomes in all economies. This would suggest that greater localisation of value chains would add further GDP losses to the economic shutdown caused by the pandemic. The shift to localized regime is estimated to have decreased global real GDP by more than 5% compared to the interconnected regime. It is important to note that the 'supply chain shocks' are:

- Country-specific, where supplies across many industries were initially disrupted in China and subsequently in other countries.
- Sector-generic, that is they are applied equally across all sectors to capture the fact that sectors source from a range of different industries.

Therefore, one can say that the GVCs, in addition to generating efficiency gains, play an important role in cushioning economic shocks.

Impact on Sri Lankan Economy

Analysis of Sri Lanka economic data indicates that the gradual opening of the country subsequent to the inoculation of a large percentage of the adult population contributed to a moderate recovery in the Sri Lankan economy in 2021. Real economic growth increased by 4.3% in the first nine months of 2021 compared to the first nine months of the previous year. Further, all three sectors of economy has recorded moderate growth in the first nine months of 2021. The agriculture sector expanded by 5.3%, the industry sector by 6.8% and the service sector by a 2.3% respectively in first nine months of 2021 compared to the first nine months of 2020.

The robust growth in the agriculture sector in the first nine months of 2021 was primarily driven by the improvements in the performance of the tea, rubber, and fishing industries, whilst robust growth in the construction and apparel manufacturing industries were the main drivers of growth in the manufacturing sector. The moderate performance of the service sector in the first nine months of 2021 was due to the weak recovery in tourism and hospitality services which undermined the robust performance of telecommunication and information services during this period.

Moderate economic recovery contributed to an overall improvement in the unemployment rate in the country i.e., unemployment rate declined to 5.1% in the first nine months of 2021. Further, whilst the robust growth in the apparel manufacturing industry in the first nine months of 2021 increased foreign exchange inflows, overall foreign exchange inflows declined by 24% during this period due to the exponential decline in worker remittances.

The uptick in the economy in 2021 failed to address economic vulnerabilities faced by the country caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. The inflow of foreign revenue declined due to the weak recovery in the tourism and hospitality sector, foreign reserves of the country declined despite the ban on the importation of non-essential items such as automobiles, low foreign reserves resulted in the country facing significant difficulties in servicing foreign debts, inability to service foreign debt was compounded by annual debt repayment of approximately U.S.\$ 4billion over the period 2020 to 2025. Concerns that the country would default on its debt led to the downgrading of Sri Lanka's sovereign rating by Fitch and other international rating companies.

Downgrading of the sovereign rating increased borrowing costs. High borrowing costs coupled with low foreign currency reserves resulted in the Sri Lankan Government facing difficulties in purchasing essentials such as crude oil and milk powder.

Further, high unemployment forced the Sri Lankan government to continue Covid-19 pandemic related welfare programs introduced in 2020, whilst government revenue only recorded a marginal improvement during the first nine months of 2021.

Government expenditure was also significantly impacted by expenditure incurred to vaccinate the population against the Covid-19. High welfare and health expenditure coupled with a marginal improvement in revenue resulted in an increase in the budget deficit in 2021.

[Note: This paper was written well before the present economic crisis in Sri Lanka]

Cmde MDK Wijewardana

Economic Security in Nepal

The rapid spread of the Covid-19 variants has continued to devastate the economy of Nepal through disruption of supply chains, immobilization of labour, and loss of investor confidence. According to the 2020 UN report, around 1.2 million people living in Nepal were pushed below the poverty line and Nepal's dream of upgrading itself to the league of developing nations from the least developed countries has also been shattered. Agriculture, tourism and remittances are the mostly affected economic sectors of Nepal.

Tourism industry which contributes a major share in the GDP of Nepal is the foremost to be hit. In 2018 tourism accounted for 7.9% of the country's GDP and supported more than 1.05 million jobs. Nepal received 1.19 million foreign tourists in 2019. However, due to the pandemic, 'Visit Nepal 2020' campaign which had aimed to attract 2 million tourists was cancelled. The decline of foreign tourists has led to closure of many hospitality services. The GoN in an effort to revive domestic tourism also decided to grant a 10-day travel leave to all the government employees. However, the provision has been affected due to the travel restrictions imposed to contain the pandemic.

Remittance which contributed 28% to the GDP of Nepal in the Fiscal Year 2018–2019 has been adversely affected due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The decline in remittance inflows and potential deportation of large number of Nepali migrants is likely to impact the economic, social and political aspects of Nepal. There are around 3.2 million Nepalese who have migrated for work, education or other reasons to other countries. Because of the Covid-19 pandemic approximately 10–30% of Nepalese workers in Malaysia and the Gulf lost their jobs and about 20%–25% of the estimated 3 million Nepalese workers abroad are likely to return home.

Similarly, Nepal's effort to promote Foreign direct investment (FDI) by creating investment friendly environment has been considerably affected due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Apart from the investment, FDI also benefits Nepal by transfer of technology, knowledge and upgrading the productivity of various industries. Since, the Covid-19 outbreak, FDI inflows in the global world has declined in an astounding pace and least developed countries like Nepal are mostly affected. But with vaccination drive being sped up in Nepal, there are expectations of the revival of Tourism, Agriculture, Remittances sectors and FDI contributing to the recovery of the economy of Nepal in days to come.

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on employment within the country, 61% of businesses - industries of Nepal are on the verge of shutting down making thousands of workers jobless. In the absence of employment opportunities at home, large number of workers have migrated to foreign destinations. This has not only created an acute shortage of labour in the various sectors of the country but has also led to a huge brain drain in the recent years. Covid-19 pandemic is likely to affect 81% of the workers in the informal sector and 1.4 million in home-based works. As per the ILO report, 1.6 to 2 million jobs have been disrupted in Nepal in wholesale and retail trade, manufacturing, construction, transport, accommodation, food services and real estate sectors. While the job opportunities inside Nepal have been shrunk, the Nepali workers working abroad have also become sufferer. With huge working population increasingly becoming jobless, the possibility of amplified criminal activities and protests against the state mechanism seems imminent. This in turn is likely to bring security implications to Nepal.

In lighter side, despite having multiple impact on several sectors, the Covid-19

has also exposed Nepal's vulnerabilities and made realisations of many lessons learnt specially to have the stable & reliable sources of national economy, urgency of robust health mechanism, importance of self-reliance in agricultural & industrial sectors and endeavour to generate sufficient employment within the country in order to withstand, strongly against any black-swan events in days to come.

Col Pawan Khatri

Economic Outlook of Bangladesh and Unemployment

Bangladesh, like many other countries faces the daunting challenges of tackling the Covid-19 economic fallout. The very nature of world economy is based on interdependency. Therefore, one country alone cannot do better on its own. However, generally speaking, Bangladesh did relatively better than many small countries in the economic parlance by showing a very positive trend even in the pandemic. Before the pandemic the country was maintaining an average growth of her GDP at 7%. It graduated from the LDC status of the UN in 2015.

Covid-19 has reversed some of the gains during the last few decades wherein export declined, rate of poverty reduction went down, inequality increased. Bangladesh's GDP growth during 2019 was 3.45%, in 2020 5.47% and in 2021 it recovered to 6.91% as per data of Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics. It has a promise of becoming a higher middle-income economy by 2026. On the flipside, World Bank report 2020 shows that inequality in different dimension of economy of Bangladesh has increased from 14.4% to 18.1% during the Covid.

Household income data by Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) shows that the monthly income of the 16 selected districts came down by 37.3% (from 16594 taka to 10442 taka) between Jan 2020 to Jul 2020. Major cause attributed to this decline is the loss of income source or employment scarcity. Since Bangladesh is not exactly a welfare state creating scope for the population to work is a concrete way for the government to reduce poverty and inequality. The concept of social safety net is just taking shape and the current government is keenly focusing on the welfare of underprivileged people.

There are both formal and informal sectors where the population works. Since 2000

lot of employment has come up in the Services and Industries sector, one can say the formal sector of the economy. Official unemployment rate in Bangladesh was 4% in 2019 and each year 2.2 million educated youth are joining in the employment seekers list. Many of these people are employed in the informal sectors and export-oriented garments factories. These peoples' suffering was the most due the lockdown in different phases in Bangladesh. Data now shows, lot many people have declined to poverty, the number of which is 16.5 million as per estimate. In Bangladesh, 85% of the low-income population works in the informal sectors like agriculture, domestic works, day labourers, transport sector, daily vendors etc. ILO report suggests that 57% of the informal sector workers job security is fragile due to lack of proper contractual or legal obligation. This gets further exasperated due to sector's dependent on trade and travel in a multiconnected world.

The livelihood of poor people from the urban area and the villages are very different. Loss of a job in the city makes it impossible to make up with the rising prices. However, villages still provide for some opportunity in the form of unorganized works. Hence, a large migration was observed from urban areas to the villages before and during Covid-19 lockdowns.

The garments sector employs 4.1 Million workers and about 1 million of them remained at the risk of job loss. This was due to the cancellation and holding up of the orders by the western buyers which amounted to 1.9 Billion USD. 18 million people in Bangladesh are engaged in Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) as an informal sector. Data on them are not accurate due to the diversity of their demography and transitional nature of work. However, most of their family members are dependent on the only income source and they suffered the maximum loss during the lockdown. Therefore, extreme economic uncertainty led to their job loss and relegation to below the poverty line. With positive indicators of economic recovery, the government is taking all inclusive effort to come back on the track of achieving its goal.

Cmde Jahangir Adil Samdany

Impact on Consumer Behaviour and Markets in Myanmar

Societies were in lockdown and citizens were asked to respect social distancing and stay at home. Feelings of loneliness have, among other things, been connected to poorer cognitive performance, negativity, depression, and sensitivity to social

threats. During the pandemic there are indications of increase in domestic violence, quarrels among neighbours and an increase in the sales of firearms. People have started to nest, develop new skills, and take better care of where they live. There were instances of people stockpiling essentials, panic buying and escaping to rural area.

Another consequence of lockdown is the extreme increase the usage of internet and social media. Social media also may bring out the worst to users through trolling or sharing of fake news. This is to some degree, not as damaging as the real life is lived in the physical world and the internet is an “add on” with, in most cases, limited impact on the physical world.

While some businesses are struggling, and some businesses are thriving. This is true for a number of Internet based business such as those related to online entertainment, online shopping, online education, food delivery and solutions for remote work. People have also changed their consumption pattern, increasing the demand for takeout, snacks, junk food and alcohol as well as cleaning products as they spend more time in their homes, resulting in more trash being generated.

Other industries that are doing well are those related to health care and medication as well as herbs and vitamins. There is one thing Covid-19 outbreak has shown, it is that market is dynamic and can move rapidly. Consumers learn to adapt quickly and take an improvised approach to overcome constraints that have been imposed by governments. A dramatic change in consumers' behaviour was feasible because of sophisticated technology. In addition, consumers discovered new talents as they spent less time on the road and more at home. They experimented with cooking, learning new skills and soon become producers with commercial possibilities. In the end, most consumers' habits will return to normal while some habits will die due to adaption to the new norm.

Embracement of digital technology, through online services or information sharing platforms like Zoom, have kept people connected around the world. Digital savviness has become a necessity for schools, business and healthcare providers. Social distancing is prompting educational institutions to incorporate remote learning from an algorithm to the traditional route of learning based on a human teacher in classrooms. Special interaction is becoming the new norm, and the blurring of physical and virtual communication is likely to continue until the pandemic

is overcome. Globally the higher education system will undergo a decade of radical technology-led transformation.

Col Soe Shwe

Pandemic and Health Security

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought sweeping and profound changes to the world. The novel coronavirus has plunged the global economy into a deep recession, exacerbated existing political divisions, and changed the conception of human security. The global pandemic has not so much changed the basic direction of world history but has significantly accelerated the pace. It is apparent that the trend toward greater equality and justice in global power distribution is now unstoppable. The major powers are beginning to come to terms with this. They need to assume the special responsibility for upgrading and updating the principles, concepts, and institutions for a new world order. Major obstacles to a smooth transition to a new order include the US policy shift to unilateralism, protectionism, and nationalism. Just as it will take a coordinated global response to contain and defeat the virus, it will take complementary rather than confrontational policies of major powers to ensure a peaceful transition to a new world order.

The Covid-19 pandemic is not only a health crisis, as it affects other aspects of human security. It is a human security crisis because it deprives us of our freedom from fear, freedom from want, freedom of association, freedom of movement and our freedom to live with dignity. The Covid-19 pandemic has been compared to a war and there is yet no effective vaccine and existing treatments are still experimental. In responding, a medical solution alone is not enough. The only remedies available are non-pharmaceutical measures to prevent the spread and transmission of the virus. These include national lockdowns, ban on social gatherings, schools and recreational facilities.

The global health security situation post-pandemic, will require a human security approach which is all encompassing and comprehensive. The Covid-19 pandemic has exposed critical failures in global public health policy preparedness and response. The last decade was fraught with minor pandemics such as the SARS MERS-2, Bird Flu and Ebola. Despite the spread and eventual containment of these infectious diseases which were not declared as pandemics, most nations of the world and the global community has not integrated the lessons from these for a

more coordinated response plan to be better prepared for the Covid-19 pandemic or any other pandemic in the future.

On the global economy, stocks have fallen and global value chains have been disrupted with the effects reverberating all over the globe. The closures of markets and national lockdowns have affected the international supply of goods and services including vaccines. The pandemic has also affected global politics on the global and domestic levels. Some countries like China have gained from the pandemic while many other nations are counting their losses. This has led to new rivalries and may lead to further competition and confrontation among nation states. The Covid-19 pandemic also risks affecting traditional security by sending the wrong signal to those keen to develop biological weapons. The drive now is for the world powers and emerging powers to provide an effective and efficacious vaccine to their citizens and those of their allies. The nations that emerge from the pandemic the strongest economically and militarily will create a multi-polar world.

At the national levels, the concept of health security post-pandemic will be operationalized within the traditional state and military-centric notion of national security. This will emphasize protection against those public health threats that pose a threat to the peace, sovereignty and economic interests of the nation state. Bioterrorism, infectious diseases and pandemics are the potential security threats because they can potentially lead to:

- Erosion of public trust in state institutions potentially leading to the failure of the social contract between the citizens and the state.
- Economic instability leading to weak state capacity and heightened risks of war in vulnerable regions.
- Heightened incentives for some state and non-state actors to exploit the situation and create turmoil.
- Risk of mass migration of people escaping the fragile states and posing border security challenges to other countries where there is better health security.
- Increased risk of infection for military personnel deployed in foreign countries and regions where the public health infrastructure has failed.

The active involvement of military forces by some countries mimics a classic war like effort in providing logistics support as an effective emergency response strategy to contain the Covid-19 pandemic. This approach is counterproductive from a global perspective as it appears to be nationalist and can potentially undermine the

collaborative effort needed to promote global public health.

Investment in domestic health infrastructure, that is critical to respond effectively to public health emergencies remains divorced from the national security strategies and apparatuses. This disconnect appears futile given that many countries recently adopted a ‘whole-of-government’ approach by deploying military personnel while responding to Covid-19. In Japan, the Self Defense Forces have played a supporting role in terms of material and logistics support for Covid-19 related efforts by implementing ‘disaster relief’ operations as Japanese citizens returned to Japan during the initial spread of the virus. In India, military forces were mobilized under ‘Operation Namaste’ to respond to Covid-19 by providing material, logistics and technical support for quarantine and containment measures. In several African countries too, the military provided material and logistics support.

Gp Capt DE Laha

Impact on Health Sector in Oman

In my life, I do not remember a state of terror and panic in the world as the spread of the Coronavirus caused, perhaps because we did not live in a time of epidemics, we did not know what the plague did, for example? History will preserve that the Coronavirus has changed the world more than wars, and even famines, and that this virus that initially invaded the Chinese city of Wuhan has become trans-geographical, defying the arrogance and tyranny of countries, and forcing the world to retreat, isolate and close its borders, and sometimes perhaps set the rules of democracy in managing the societies, resorting to emergency laws, and restricting public and personal liberties.

When the virus was announced in China, the belief was that it was a transient condition and its damage would remain limited, and debates of a political nature ignited surrounded by conspiracy theory. The conspiracy theory fell quickly and the virus emerged from the walls of China. As the most powerful countries of the European continent fell into its clutches, the world woke up to a danger that could not be ignored, as the doors couldn’t be closed onto it.

The golden rule that countries apply and resort to is that the right to life and health is superior to all other rights, and this is why many countries were quick to quote the

Chinese experience in closing disease hotspots, banning travel, declaring a state of emergency, and even curfews despite criticism and reservations by human rights institutions against using exceptional measures to undermine human rights. The world changed after the Coronavirus, and the cities that were full of life became ghost cities, and people voluntarily chose to stick to their homes for fear of infection. The whole world has been affected by the virus and the accompanying precautionary measures taken by countries have had a direct and indirect negative impact on their national security, which is evident from the numerous statistics that monitor the social, political and economic changes of countries.

The Corona pandemic revealed the inability of health systems to deal with emerging epidemics in many countries of the world, and many health systems witnessed a collapse in front of this pandemic that killed and continues to kill in an unprecedented way, especially the elderly. After decades of focusing on building health systems that rely primarily on prevention, early detection, and primary health care, this pandemic has once again reminded us of the need for integrated planning to ensure the control of diseases at all stages. This experience has proven that countries that are better equipped with specialized staff, intensive care rooms and the required equipment were better able to deal with this crisis and stay away from the spectre of comprehensive closures, despite the collapse of global health system due to sudden pressure placed by the pandemic. In addition, many opportunities for urgent advancement in the health sector were presented to the countries of the world in general.

This pandemic has also contributed to revealing gaps in the distribution of workers in the health sector, which contributes to solving part of the false unemployment in important sectors such as the pharmacy and nursing sectors. In clinical pharmacy within the medical staff of critical care, the large increase in the number of drugs used in critical care patients, the attendant possibilities of exposure to side effects of these drugs in addition to the urgent need to deliver them in safe effective concentrations, required the presence of such specialists in the field of drugs in all hospital departments. This means an increasing demand for such staff, opening up new job opportunities, and addressing part of the problem of false unemployment. The challenge that the Corona pandemic poses to the health sector is nothing but a great opportunity to advance and rehabilitate this sector.

Mental Health Security

The prevalence of Covid-19 disease around the world has endangered the psychological and physical health of individuals that may lead to psychological problems due to its mysterious, uncontrollable, unpredictable and rapidly spreading nature. There are several factors that cause a person with Corona disease to suffer from stress in addition to the physical suffering of the disease, and as a result some people suffer from mental disorders due to the severity of these stresses or the duration of conflict with it. It may even be present after the person has recovered from the illness.

A common reason for the disorder in people with coronavirus is the fear and anxiety caused by the disease, because due to the available statistics of deaths with coronavirus, the patient is afraid of what will happen. In addition to fearing the disease and its future, a person with the disease also worries about the spread of disease to other family members, and these cases can increase the stress of the disease many times over. Another factor that causes people with corona disease to remain stressed and anxious after their illness has healed is that a person does not have the opportunity to meet with the loved ones at the time of illness and hospitalization or during quarantine at home.

While the patient needs the sympathy of his relatives during his illness, yet the protocol of quarantine results in loneliness, distancing from family and close relatives. This has a very negative effect on the person's nerves and mood, and at times leads to symptoms of mental disorder such as anger, aggression, stress and anxiety. It is believed that financial and job security provide the best way to reduce stress during the outbreak of Covid disease. In fact, people who have financial problems and whose job security is endangered during the outbreak of Covid-19 disease experience more stress. Low incomes households face concerns about the cost of living in quarantine and treatment if you become ill. This makes people more stressed. As Iran went through five waves during the outbreak of Coronavirus and experienced severe inflation and recession, people became stressed.

It seems that due to the widespread use of disinfectants and chemical cleaners, the number of referrals to dermatologists will increase in the post-corona period, and many others will be hesitant to return to normal life and communication. The continuing need for excessive hygiene has a profound effect on human lifestyle,

and by the time the threat of the coronavirus is eliminated, the people will become so accustomed to health issues that they will no longer be able to reduce their use of health products.

Refraining from shaking hands, kissing, and attending gatherings that are currently performed to prevent coronavirus infection will, over time, force people to reconsider many customs and make people long for these in the future. Avoiding crowded places, gatherings, parties and weddings, closure of schools, universities and other institutions to prevent the spread of the corona virus has caused people to spend a lot of time at home. This transformation allowed people to acquire skills and hobbies such as reading, painting, music, cooking and so on, thus as a result many hidden talents will be discovered. While on the other hand the quarantine and isolation from the community can have many negative effects, and one of the psychological problems of the pandemic period was divorce due to unemployment and reduced income. As the children of these families grow up in the post-Corona era, this will be one of the challenges of that era. Thus, one can say that staying at home has impacted people's lives both positively and negatively.

Col Masoud Sharif Kazemi

Raksha Rajya Mantri address to the 62nd Course

Lt Gen MK Mago, Commandant National Defence College, members of the faculty, and members of the 62nd NDC.

It gives me immense pleasure to be here today at the NDC, the highest seat of strategic learning of our Country.

I would also like to congratulate our guests, the **35 officers from 22 friendly foreign countries** who are currently with the NDC participating in the programme. You are part of an illustrious and select group from seventy friendly foreign countries who have been through the portals of this institution.

Over the years this premier Institution has grown both in stature and reputation internationally, and today is an ever-increasing demand amongst the international community to be associated with it. The College has shaped the thoughts of many strategic leaders and practitioners of our own country, as also from seventy friendly foreign countries. **Of the 3999 members till date, many have risen to high positions in their governments and have served their countries with distinction.**

I am told that the current course commenced in Jan 2022 and you are currently undergoing the **fifth study module of the course, ‘India’s Strategic Neighbourhood’.**

Foreign policy is an instrument for protection of national interest. While National interests in the larger sense remains the same, the policy could change depending on the shifting nature of threats. Strategic decision-making to maximise national interests hence is the core objective behind a nations' foreign policy.

Indian thinkers from the early days of recorded history have written on the significance and importance of foreign policy in governance. References are evident in early thoughts. A codified approach towards political and diplomatic strategy finds



reference in the Arthashastra of Kautilya or Chanakya – the first structured treatise on statecraft. Kautilya strongly believed that nations acted in their political, economic and military self-interest. In Kautilya's view expediency was to be the main consideration in foreign policy. Kautilya laid down measures to be adopted in carrying out an effective foreign policy. The contemporaneous Thirukkural has an entire Chapter outlining the essential attributes of an envoy in the conduct of foreign policy and diplomacy.

As a country content with its borders as defined in its constitution, our foreign policy has, is, and continues to focus **on two inter-linked objectives**.

- First, **the security of our country and** second, **the prosperity of our people.**
- Security covers integrity of our borders, safety of our people from cross-border terrorism, energy, water and food security and security from depredations caused by climate change.
- Promoting prosperity of our people includes access to capital, technology, raw materials, markets, and employment opportunities abroad.
- These are thus the touchstones on which we'll have to measure our foreign policy's successes and failures.

India places significant importance on her neighbourhood and has always advocated, as Prime Minister Vajpayee once said, **the need 'to grow rich together'.**

In the neighbourhood, India recognises that its sheer size, physical centrality and standing in global affairs places significant responsibility in ensuring that her neighbours are treated with respect, especially when there are disagreements. **Disagreements must not lead to irreconcilable differences.** How they are handled, is therefore crucial.

Consequently, India has followed a dictum that it will treat its neighbours with respect and unilaterally offer more when it sits across the table. We believe that **a friendly and secure neighbourhood is to India's advantage.**

India's 'Act East Policy' has underscored the importance of the Asia-Pacific region to India in contemporary international relations. The objective of "Act East Policy" is to promote economic cooperation, cultural ties and develop strategic relationship

with countries in the Asia-Pacific region through continuous engagement at bilateral, regional and multilateral levels thereby providing enhanced connectivity to the States of North Eastern Region with other countries in our neighbourhood. Various plans at bilateral and regional levels include steady efforts to develop and strengthen connectivity of Northeast with the ASEAN region through trade, culture, people-to-people contacts and physical infrastructure (road, airport, telecommunication, power, etc.) benefiting the peoples of partner countries. As is evident, the major projects ie Kaladan Multi-modal Transit Transport Project, the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway Project, Rhi-Tiddim Road Project, Border Haats, etc. are all designed to further these objectives.

There are several other new challenges that India's foreign policy faces. The recent pandemic demonstrated how health is a global concern and the critical need for countries to work together to find a global response. Countering terrorism, climate change and the environment, global trade issues, and many other issues are now very much a part of the foreign, neighbourhood first and Act east Policies.

New policies are being crafted, resources are being allocated and a series of actions are being taken to ensure that we don't repeat the mistakes of the past. The clarion call to **make India Aatmanirbhar**, is a step in this direction.

Self-reliance in defence is the single-most-important fundamental of strategic independence. The indigenous industry would assume significance in the days to come, not only to meet the requirement of Bharat but also to export. Since its independence, India has pursued self-reliance, yet efforts have resulted in suboptimal outcomes. Increasing allocations for domestic defence procurement, PLI scheme for a number of important sectors of the economy, massive incentives for semiconductor and chip manufacturing, increasing encouragement to private sector in defence production are just some initiative to incentivise the private sector participation in defence production which we think is critical to make Aatmnirbhar a success.

When India speaks of becoming self-reliant, **it doesn't mean or promote a self-centred system.** It is not looking at being self-sufficient in all domains. Instead, India is concerned about the happiness, cooperation and peace of the world community- the ancient concept of "**Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam**", while being self-reliant in critical areas in keeping with our National interests.

Foreign policy of any country cannot be divorced from its domestic policy and governance – the influence and outcome of each impact with equal measure on the other. Over time, India's foreign policy has undergone significant modifications in response to global shifts and realignments, ushering in not only opportunities, but also significant challenges.

While it is premature to draw any lessons from the ongoing Ukraine-Russian conflict but what is clear is that, the world will not be the same after this conflict is over. New world order will emerge.

Two things have emerged clearly in this ongoing conflict: -

- Firstly: Information warfare, economic sanctions, and social media have become a vital part of the new warfare.
- Secondly: The importance of self-reliance. India has realised the importance of being self-reliant in the Defence sector. We need to have a clear road map for the indigenous to avoid any knee jerk reactions at the later stages.

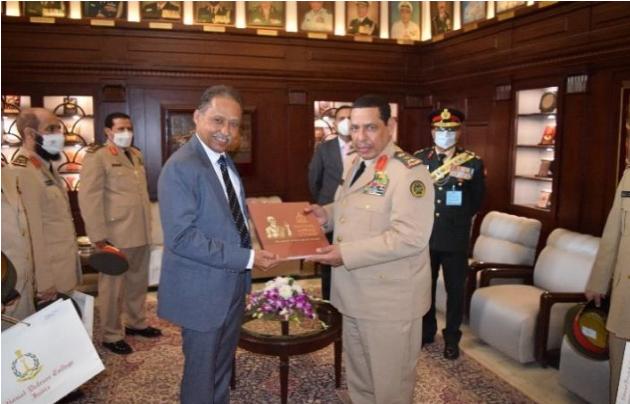
Today is also a period when an emerging great power is challenging the established power. Such periods are difficult to handle and miscalculations are possible. **We will have to be forever vigilant but not sit on the side-lines.** After all we are also an aspiring great power.

But make no mistake. We will be challenged ever so often from outside and from within we need to be prepared and capable of facing these challenges as and when they are thrown at us.

Jai Hind

Shri Ajay Bhatt

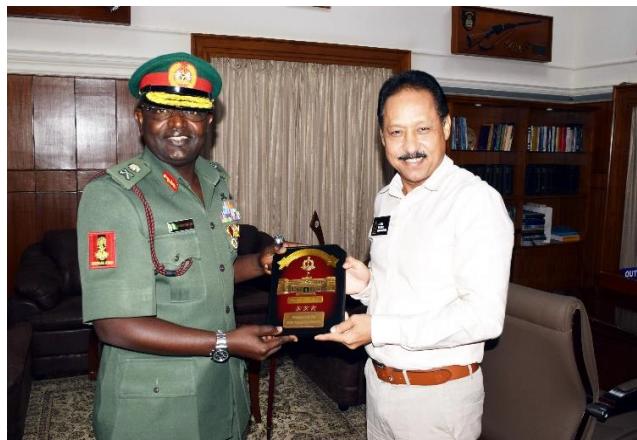
Distinguished Visitors from Abroad

1.	Saudi Arabia	15 Feb 2022	 <p>Lt Gen Fahad Bin Abdullah Mohammed Al-Mutir Commander, Royal Saudi Land Forces</p>
2.	Australia	09 Mar 2022	 <p>Lt Gen Richard M Burr, AO, DSC, MVO Chief of Staff</p>

3.	Kenya	07 Apr 2022	 <p>Lt Gen AK Kendagor, CBS, NDU(USA), psc(K) Commandant, NDC Kenya</p>
4.	France	26 Apr 2022	 <p>Lt Gen Benoit Durieux Director Higher Military Studies Commander of the National Order of Merit</p>

5.	USA	06 May 2022	 <p>Dr Patrick Bratton US Army War College</p>
6.	Australia	22 Jun 2022	 <p>Hon Richard Marles, MP Deputy Prime minister of Australia, Minister for Defence</p>

7. Nigeria 02 Aug 2022



Maj Gen Jamal Habu Abdussala
Military Secretary (Army)

Photo Gallery



Visit to War Memorial



Visit to Parliament

Visit to States: Meeting with Governor's



Hon Shri Ravindra Narayana Ravi, Governor of Tamil Nadu



Hon Shri Phagu Chauhan, Governor of Bihar



Hon Dr. Tamilisai Soundararajan, Governor of Telangana



Hon Shri Kalraj Mishra, Governor of Rajasthan



Hon Shri Mangubhai Patel, Governor of Madhya Pradesh



Hon Shri Jagdish Mukhi, Governor of Assam



Hon Shri Thawar Chand Gehlot, Governor of Karnataka

Visit to States: Cultural Sites



Bodhi tree, Bodhgaya, Bihar



Bodhgaya, Bihar



Bodhgaya, Bihar



Sanchi Stupa, Madhya Pradesh



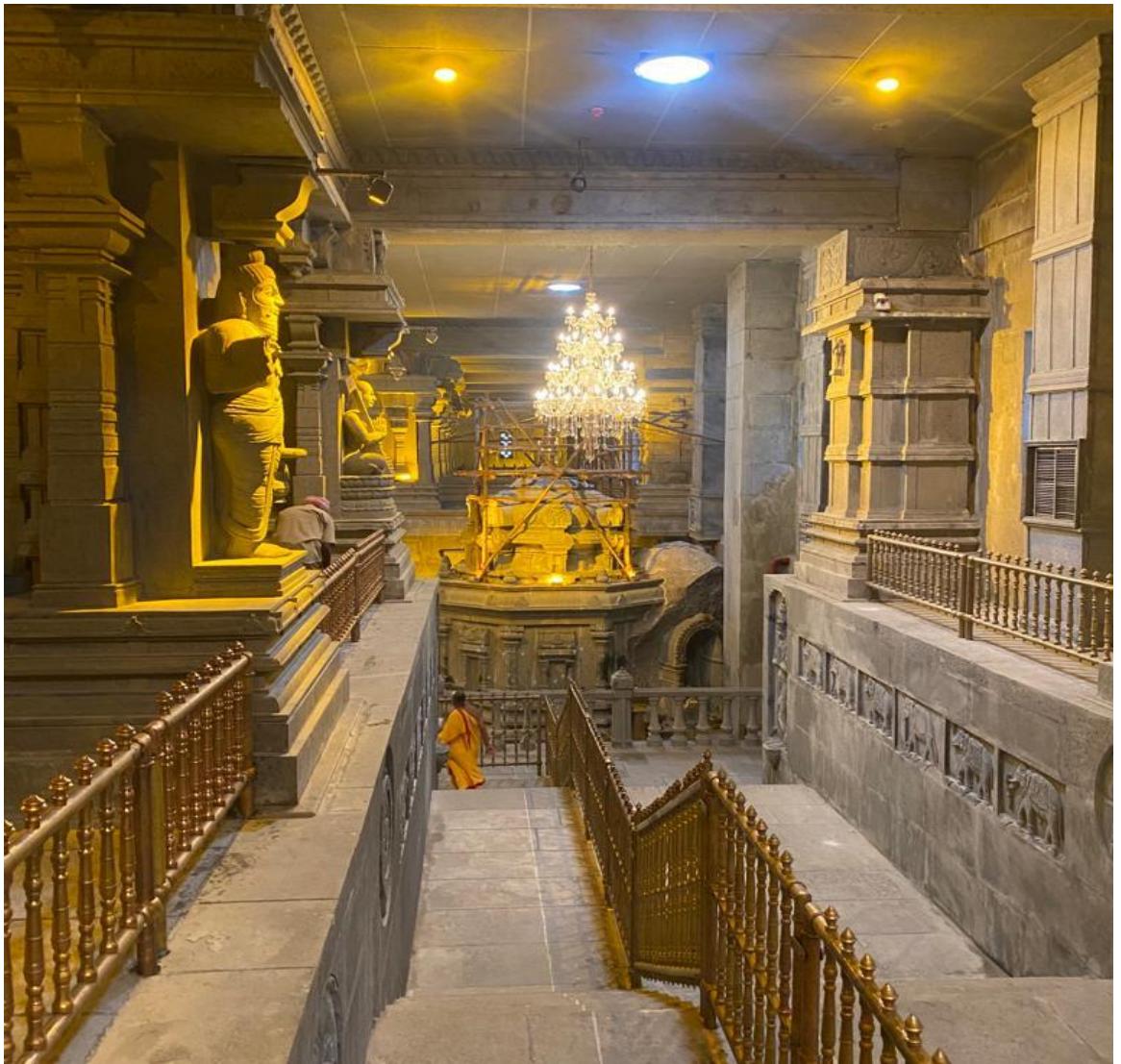
Statue of Equality: Ramanuja statue, Telangana



Kamakhya Temple, Assam



Yadadri Temple, Telangana



Yadadri Temple, Telangana



Church, Tamil Nadu



Charminar, Telangana



Mysore Palace, Karnataka





Social Functions at NDC











FFC participants of 62nd NDC



AIR CMDE MD ABU RAYHAN
BANGLADESH



CMDE JAHANGIR ADIL SAMDANY
BANGLADESH



BRIG GEN MD ALIMUL AMIN
BANGLADESH



COL MASOUD SHARIF KAZEMI
IRAN



COL ABDUL RAHMAN SAID
INDONESIA



CAPT(N) SALIM
INDONESIA



COL SOE SHWE
MYANMAR



COL AS BUGAJE
NIGERIA



COL SHOBENDRA SINGH MAHAT
NEPAL



BRIG GEN MD SHAHEN SADI
BANGLADESH



COL LHATU TSHERING
BHUTAN



BRIG ESSAM GALAL IBRAHIM
ABDELGHANY
EGYPT



COL MOHAMED SALEEM
MALDIVES



BRIG PATRICK OCEN
UGANDA



COL MYINT NAING OO
MYANMAR



COL PAWAN KHATRI
NEPAL



COL PURNA BAHADUR KHATRI
NEPAL



BRIG GEN PAKASH RAJ THAPA
NEPAL



GP CAPT DE LAHA
NIGERIA



COL RONALD ALBERT GENETE
PHILIPPINES



COL BLB MZAMBO
SOUTH AFRICA



COL ROBERT EMIL MARO
TANZANIA



LT COL KHURSHID KHUDOYNAZ-
AROV
UZBEKISTAN



LT COL SOATOV ULUGBEK-
RUSTAMOVICH
UZBEKISTAN



COL YOSHIMITSU JUNICHI
JAPAN



AIR CMDE SAIF ALI MARHOON AL
JABRI
OMAN



COL DONGYEOL SHIN
ROK



BRIG UKDDP UDUGAMA
SRI LANKA



CMDE MDK WIJEWARDANA
SRI LANKA



GP CAPT KAPS KURUWITA
SRI LANKA



COL NAM SY DANG
VIETNAM



SR COL THUONG
VIETNAM



COL ANTHONY CRIAG HOYER
AUSTRALIA



STAFF COL ABDULLAH BATAL A
ALQAHTANI
SAUDI ARABIA



COL ROBERT JAMES KONGAIKA
USA

Commandant NDC

Lt Gen Manoj Kumar Mago, AVSM, YSM, SM** is an alumnus of Indian Military Academy, Dehradun. He was commissioned into the elite Brigade of the GUARDS on 15 Dec 1984 in 7 GUARDS and commanded 16 GUARDS. In his distinguished military career spanning over 36 years, the General Officer has a rich operational experience of serving in Siachen Glacier, OP VIJAY in Kargil Sector, OP PARAKARAM in Desert Sector and Counter Insurgency Operations in Jammu & Kashmir, Nagaland and Assam.

The General Officer has tenanted all his command assignment in a challenging operational environment. Having commanded his Battalion, 16 GUARDS, one of the largest and challenging Infantry Brigade and a versatile Infantry Division, all on the active line of control in Jammu and Kashmir. He has been the Deputy Commander of an Infantry Brigade in Counter Insurgency Operations in Jammu and Kashmir.

He is an alumnus of Defence Service Staff College, Wellington and attended the prestigious Higher Command and National Defence College Courses. He has held important staff and instructional appointments like Brigade Major of a Mountain Brigade in (Counter Insurgency Operations) Jammu and Kashmir, Director in Military Operations Directorate dealing with policy formulation on security in Jammu and Kashmir, Deputy Military Secretary of Headquarter Southern Command, Principal Director in Headquarter Strategic Forces Command and steered the Operational Logistics of Indian Army as Director General (OL & SM) at Integrated Head Quarters of MoD (Army).

His instructional experience includes tenures as Weapon Training Officer in GUARDS Regiment Centre (Kamptee), Directive Staff, Senior Command Wing, Army War College, Mhow and Commandant of one of the most prestigious Institute, famous for Counter Insurgency and Jungle Warfare Training.

The General Officer is also tenanting the prestigious appointment of 'The Colonel' Brigade of The Guards since 01 April 21. Prior to taking over as the Commandant, National Defence College, he was tenanting the appointment of General Officer Commanding of the prestigious 10 Corps.

The General Officer has distinguished himself on two United Nations peace keeping assignment in Somalia (UNOSOM-II) and as Force Chief of Staff in Congo (MONUSCO) where he was also awarded Force Commander (MONUSCO) Commendation.

The General Officer is married to Mrs. Komal Mago who is a qualified Interior & landscape designer and a homemaker. Mrs. Komal Mago is actively involved in welfare of the families and Veer Nari's and continues to involve herself in issues pertaining to the social upliftment of women.



