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Soft Power

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Projecting India's Values and culture

Geo-Strategic Conundrum

- US-India Relations
- Standoff at Sea-Breaking Ties
- India's Maritime Security - A Bibliographic Voyage
- Information and Cyber Security in India

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- Asian to Global Financial Crisis
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- ASEAN-India Cooperation in tourism

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- Textile Trade from Coromandel Coast to Indonesia

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- Plundering Tuna from Indian EEZ
- Polychaete Culture

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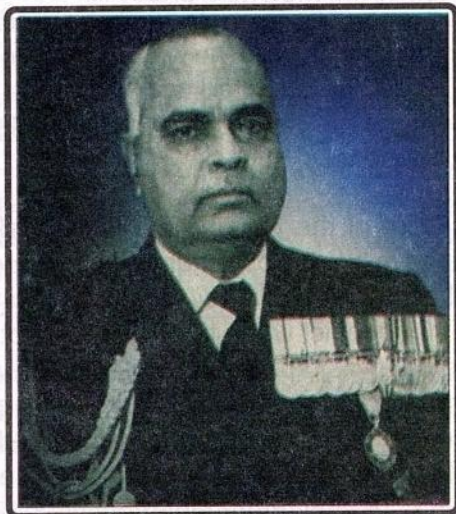
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TO THE OCEAN BORN



ADMIRAL S.M. NANDA
Padma Vibhushan, PVSM, AVSM
(1915 - 2009)

OBITUARY

India has been sea blind for centuries as the earlier invasions were from the Himalayan passes which paradoxically led to the Mughals keeping the seacoast undefended. This enabled the European Maritime Powers to conquer the rich subcontinent of India from the sea.

The sea blindness continued with India having to pay 400,000 pound sterling to Admiralty for the maritime defence of India till the beginning of the Second World War with the Royal Indian Navy continuing to be commanded by British officers.

Even after partition, the Indian Navy continued to be the Cinderella of the Services. Admiral Nanda played a dominant part in developing the resources of the Navy. He went to the Soviet Union for submarines and ships when USA and U.K. would not sell submarines to India.

Sardarilal Mathradas Nanda, whose parents were from Gujranwala in Punjab, grew up at Manora Island off Karachi, where his father served in the Port Trust. His daily trips by sea ferry to attend

the school on the mainland made him in a way, 'ocean born' with salt in his Punjabi blood, and well acquainted with the wind and the waves, which enabled him to stand first in the written examination for joining the Navy in 1941. That, he admitted, with a twinkle in his eye, was because the majority of the candidates were from Punjab and they had not yet seen the seas!

He was the Chief of the Naval Staff, when Pakistan attacked India in 1971. This gave him the opportunity to implement his promise, which was published in the tabloid *Blitz* after the masterly inaction of the Navy in the 1965 conflict when the Pakistani flotilla bombarded Dwarka. He, therefore, was provoked to write that he was determined 'to take the war into Karachi and make the world's biggest bonfire of it'. He was confident of success and when a C-in-C demurred of the rashness of his plans, he responded that in that case it would not be fair to ask the C-in-C to implement his offensive plans. The C-in-C immediately withdrew his opposition! Admiral Nanda's philosophy was 'to aim high'. If you 'aim low consistently, nothing much happens'.

Charles Nanda formed a crack team of three officers and I was one of them who worked closely with him to finalise the operational plans for a total blockade of Pakistan by sea. The ports of Chittagong, Khulna, Chalna and Mongla in East Pakistan were neutralised by Mukti Bahini frogmen with limpet mines which sank or damaged one lakh tonnes of shipping, according to Lloyds Casualty Return. This also prevented the escape of 92,000 Pakistani troops by sea, which resulted in the Pakistani Admiral taken as a prisoner.

Karachi was missiled on 4 December 1971 and he kept his promise of having the biggest bonfire of the Keamiri oil tanks. The Soviets, who sold the *Osa* class missile boats primarily for the defence of Bombay, were amazed at their being used for offensive operations against the heavily defended port of Karachi.

The sinking of submarine *Ghazi* off Visakhapatnam, the amphibious landings in East Pakistan and the Pakistan Fleet hiding behind merchant ships in harbour were all due to Admiral Nanda's vision and his aggressive operational team whom he supported as there is never a lack of the 'argumentative Indian'!

Looking back, a tall young man from the island of Manora joining the Navy in 1941, who in three decades became a living legend as he overturned the mindset of the hitherto defence oriented Indian Navy. His informal way of communicating with both old and young and without fuss or fanfare earned him the friendship of a galaxy of world leaders — Lord Mountbatten, Field Marshals Malinovsky and Grechko, Admiral Gorshkov and Marshal Tito, Sukarno of Indonesia, Hochi Minh of Vietnam, Admiral Zumwalt, Robert McNamara and a host of others who admired the part played by Admiral Nanda in using the Navy for both national development as well as national security.

Admiral Nanda took a keen interest in the activities of the Society for Indian Ocean Studies in enhancing the country's understanding of the various aspects of the Ocean.

*Till the dusk of memory thus ordained
Admiral Nanda, thy name in archives will remain
When the twilight gently lifts
Our eyes will still moisten in emotional mists.*

(Mihir Roy)

EDITORIAL

The first issue of Vol. 17 of 2009 contains four sections with twelve articles, two reports and selected news and views concerning the Indian Ocean Region.

The first article is by Robert Blackwill, former U.S. Ambassador in Delhi on US-India relationship in the context of the changing political scenario and the aftermath of the historic US-India 123 agreement as also the economic downturn and the turbulence in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran and West Asia.

Prabhakaran Paleri who was earlier the Director General, Indian Coast Guard draws attention to the stand off between China and the United States in the Exclusive Economic Zone and the fragile nature of international relations.

Navjot Bir Singh's paper is a bibliographic voyage in the literature encompassing India's maritime security which merits greater attention as also additional research and debate in the rapidly evolving maritime scenario.

Y.K. Gera's article on information and cyber security states that there has been a dramatic increase in the use of personal computers, cell phones as also e-commerce and e-governance which forms the core for the full spectrum of corporate activities.

Professor Andrew Sheng who was the chairman of the Hongkong Securities and Future Commission in his KB. Lal Memorial lecture emphasis that financial engineering cannot create perpetual prosperity as it takes good governance at the corporate, financial and social levels to generate long term sustainable stability.

Baladas Ghoshal's paper on the political atrophy in Thailand analyses the bitter political division in the country against the backdrop of the failing health of the constitutional monarch and the resultant instability that has been affecting trade and tourism in the region.

Ranjit Rai in his paper on the Indian Navy has emphasized that India is a major stakeholder of the Malacca Straits and has pledged

\$1.2 million to the Tripartite Technical Export group of Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia (TTEG) for maintaining the navigational assets of the Malacca Straits and has already advanced \$774,00 for removing wrecks for safe navigation.

Anushree Bhattacharyya's article on India's maritime diplomacy stressed the zeal of the Indian Navy that goes beyond its traditional military responsibility to also include the relations of economics and politics.

Gautam Murthy from Osmania University highlights the expanding volume of tourism in India and ASEAN which is encouraged by the entry of global brands as also the spread of cell phones.

In the sections of Maritime resources, K.P. Biswas, a former Director of Fisheries and a frequent contributor, seeks to provide expertise to maximize Tuna fishing returns in the Indian Ocean.

The last article is on the importance of polychaetes which are marine worms in various field and future projects in India.

This issue of the journal concludes with two reports. Dr. Simon Boxwall who is an oceanographer from Southampton spoke on 'Climate Change from the Arctic to India' – myths, facts and way forward. The other is the report on the seminar sponsored by the Society of Indian Ocean Studies on "Culture, Trade and Development in Southeast Asia and India's Response"

The issue concludes with selected news and views concerning the Indian Ocean.

Mihir Roy

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The third issue of Volume 17 will be published earliest with the focus on the 'emerging partnership between India & Africa' which is being inaugurated by the Foreign Minister, Hon'ble S.M. Krishna with the valedictory address by Hon'ble Dr. Shashi Tharoor on 4/5th March 2010 at Teen Murti House.

Mihir Kumar Roy

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Hon'ble Minister of External Affairs
Government of India

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International Seminar

on

"India and Africa -
An Emerging Partnership"

on

March 4-5, 2010

at

Nehru Memorial Museum & Library
Teen Murti House
New Delhi

Inauguration by

SHRI S.M. KRISHNA

Hon'ble Minister of External Affairs
Government of India

The Directorate of Adventure, Physical fitness and Sports activities of the Indian Navy regularly conducts adventure expeditions such as the Training Vessel, INS Tarangini circumnavigating the world in 2003. Lt. Cdr. Kohli led the Indian Navy's first successful expedition to Mt. Everest. Another Navy team led by Commander Satyabrata Dam also scaled Everest from the north face. The Indian Naval ensign was first flown in Antarctica in 1981. The Navy team also traversed to the South Pole on skis. Cdr. Dam and his team are currently amongst the few people in the world to have visited two poles and summited Mt. Everest.

The third report in this journal is focussed on the solo round the world voyage of Commander Dilip Donde which is nearing completion.

The fourth report is that of Prof. Swaran Singh of JNU, who is on our Board of Advisors is on 'India and Russia seeking better relations through Nuclear technology which in turn reflects India's growing image as a World Power.

Mihir Roy

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