

# ENVIRONMENT SCAN: 01-15 JUN 2017

**China(Continental), China(Maritime), Pakistan, Iran, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Afghanistan, Nepal, Russia, Space**

**CHINA (CONTINENTAL)**

**Brig Jai Singh Yadav, VSM**

China's Quantum Satellite in Big Leap.

The Term "Spy Satellite" has Taken on a new Meaning with the Successful test of a Novel Chinese Spacecraft.

The mission can provide unbreakable secret communications channels, in principle, using the laws of quantum science. Called Micius, the satellite is the first of its kind and was launched from the Gobi desert last August. It is all part of a push towards a new kind of internet that would be far more secure than the one we use now. The experimental Micius, with its delicate optical equipment, continues to circle the Earth, transmitting to two mountain-top Earth bases separated by 1,200km. The optics onboard are paramount. They're needed to distribute to the ground stations the particles, or photons, of light that can encode the "keys" to secret messages. "I think we have started a worldwide quantum space race," says lead researcher Jian-Wei Pan, who is based in Hefei in China's Anhui Province.

'Messy Business'. Quantum privacy in many ways should be like the encryption that already keeps our financial data private online. Before sensitive information is shared between shopper and online shop, the two exchange a complicated number that is then used to scramble the subsequent characters. It also hides the key that will allow the shop to unscramble the text securely.

The weakness is that the number itself can be intercepted, and with enough computing power, cracked. Quantum cryptography, as it is called, goes one step further, by using the power of quantum science to hide the key.

As one of the founders of quantum mechanics Werner Heisenberg realised over 90 years ago, any measurement or detection of a quantum system, such as an atom or photon of light, uncontrollably and unpredictably changes the system. This quantum uncertainty is the property that allows those engaged in secret communications to know if they are being spied on: the

eavesdropper's efforts would mess up the connection.

The idea has been developed since it was first understood in the 1980s. The need? Secrecy is the stuff of spy agencies, who have large budgets. But financial institutions which trade billions of dollars internationally day by day also have valuable resources to protect. Although some observers are sceptical they would want to pay for a quantum internet, Pan, Zeilinger and the other technologists think the case will be irresistible once one exists.

Panama Cuts ties with Taiwan in Favour of China. Panama has cut long-standing Diplomatic Ties with Taiwan in Favour of Establishing Relations with China, in a Diplomatic Coup for Beijing. The Panamanian government said it recognized there was "only one China" and considered Taiwan part of it. The governments in Beijing and Taipei insist that countries cannot recognize both of them. China regards Taiwan as a breakaway province. Panama is the latest to switch sides, leaving Taiwan with about 20 allies.

China is the second biggest user - after the US - of the Panama Canal, which provides a shortcut through Central America for shipping between Asia and the Americas. The number of countries recognizing Taiwan has dwindled in recent years as China's importance has grown. The last country before Panama to switch its allegiance was the African island nation of Sao Tome and Principe, in December last year.

Now only 20 countries have diplomatic relations with Taiwan, most of them small island states or in Central and South America - regions that in the past had limited economic ties with China. 'Bullying' Taiwan's foreign ministry said in a statement that it felt "anger and regret" over what it called a "very unfriendly" diplomatic turn by Panama that "yielded to economic interests by the Beijing authorities".

It accused Panama of "bullying" Taiwan while "ignoring the many years of friendship" between the two countries, and added it would "not compete with the Beijing authorities for money diplomacy".

In recent years, China has increased its economic investment in Panama. It was as recently as June last year that Taiwan's leader Tsai Ing-wen visited Panama, on her first overseas trip as president.

Relations between mainland China and Taiwan have worsened since Ms Tsai was elected last year. She has not formally endorsed the "one China" policy - an agreement in 1992 where both sides agreed there was only one China, but had different interpretations of what that meant. Since then, Beijing has intensified its efforts to isolate Taiwan.

**CHINA (MARITIME)**

**Capt Ranjit Seth**

South China Sea. The U.S. Navy Arleigh Burke-class guided missile destroyer USS Sterett recently operated in the South China Sea and held a training exercise with two B-1B Lancer heavy strategic bombers in the disputed waters on June 8. The two U.S. bombers flew on a ten-hour training mission over the South China Sea and operated in conjunction with the USS Sterett. The joint training was part of US Pacific Command's continuous bomber presence program (CBP). After the joint exercise in South China Sea, USS Sterett entered Zhanjiang, China for a scheduled port visit

The U.S. Navy destroyer USS Sterett arrived in Zhanjiang, China this week for a scheduled port visit on June 12. Zhanjiang is home to the headquarters of the People's Liberation Army Navy's (PLAN) South Sea Fleet, responsible for Chinese naval operations in the South China Sea. The majority of the fleet's surface combatants are stationed at Zhanjiang naval base, while the South Sea Fleet's submarine force is located at Yulin naval base on Hainan Island. China said that it remains vigilant as the United States is stepping up its military presence in the disputed waters. Earlier last month the USS Sterett and the Littoral Combat Ship USS Coronado along with ships of the Republic of Singapore Navy and the Royal Thai Navy completed a three-day multilateral Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) exercise in the South China Sea. The USS Sterett also participated in the International Maritime Defense Exposition 2017 in Singapore during the same month. Pakistan Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Zakaullah during his visit to Sri Lanka. Admiral Muhammad Zakaullah called on President of Sri Lanka, Maithripala Sirisena, Prime Minister, Ranil Wickremesinghe, State Minister of Defence, Dinendra Ruwan Wijewardene and Secretary to Ministry of Defence, Eng Karunasena Hettiarachchi in separate meetings. The admiral reiterated Pakistan's continued support to Sri Lankan Armed Forces in the field of training, provision of technical manpower and expertise.

The Sri Lankan president acknowledged Pakistan Navy's strenuous efforts for maintaining maritime security in the region and also expressed satisfaction over the historical bonds and defence collaboration between Pakistan and Sri Lanka in various avenues including training, reciprocal visits, port calls and exercises and looked forward to further increase defence ties and bilateral relations.

The Sri Lankan dignitaries highly lauded Pakistan Navy's all out support and assistance to Sri Lankan people during the recent devastated floods. Eastern Fleet Ships In Australia. Indian Naval Ships Jyoti, Shivalik and Kamorta are on a port visit to Freemantle, Australia from 13 June to 17 June 2017.

AUSINDEX-17, a bilateral maritime exercise between the two navies is planned to be held during the ships' visit. This would be the second edition of the exercise with the maiden exercise having been conducted at Visakhapatnam in 2015. The exercises aim to increase interoperability

and are in consonance with the growing cooperation between the two countries. The current deployment will contribute towards the Indian Navy's efforts to consolidate inter-operability and forge strong bonds of friendship across the Seas.

Papua New Guinea. Indian Navy ship INS Sahyadri was in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea furthering India's presence and solidarity and to strengthen good order in the maritime domain and to strengthen existing bonds. Indian naval assets have been increasingly deployed in recent times to address the main maritime concerns of the region. As part of the India's vision of SAGAR (security and growth for all in the region), the Indian Navy has also been involved in assisting countries in the Indian Ocean region with EEZ surveillance, search and rescue, and other capacity-building and capability-enhancement activities.

This also further enhances the bilateral relationship forged during the state visit of the President Pranab Mukherjee in April last year when a number of constructive discussions were held on the shared desire to enhance the ties of friendship and co-operation that defined the relationship between the two countries.

Navy Starts Patrolling High Seas Near Malacca Strait. India has decided to regularly patrol the high seas near the Malacca Strait in an effort to establish its domination on the strategically important Indian Ocean region. Since the last two weeks, naval ships stationed at Andaman and Nicobar are being deployed to keep an eye on the maritime traffic passing through one of the world's busiest sea lanes round the clock.

Over the years, a vast stretch of Indian Ocean ranging from the Strait of Hormuz in the west to Strait of Malacca in the east remains Indian Navy's footprint area. But the patrolling activity was so far limited to the anti-piracy patrol in the Gulf of Aden near the Somalia coast.

With an increasing presence of Chinese and Taiwanese research vessels as well as merchant ships in the Indian Ocean it was felt that it would be appropriate for the Indian Navy to patrol the area for enhanced maritime domain awareness.

Approximately 80% of China's oil imports and 11% of natural gas imports transited the South China Sea and Strait of Malacca.

## **PAKISTAN**

### **Brig Deepak Malhotra**

Chinese Teachers Abducted and Killed in Pakistan. China has expressed "grave concern" over reports that ISIS has killed two Chinese teachers kidnapped in Pakistan. The man and woman, said by Chinese media to be a couple, were kidnapped by armed men from the city of Quetta, the capital of Pakistan's Balochistan province, on their way to teach a Chinese language class. Amah,

a news agency affiliated with ISIS, said that Islamic State fighters had killed two Chinese teachers who were being held in the Mastung, Balochistan. The group also released a video, which showed two bodies shot and bleeding on some grassy ground. Comments. Chinese nationals have settled in Pakistan in greater numbers since the announcement of a \$46 billion investment plan known as the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in 2015 as part of China's One Belt One Road initiative. The deaths underscore the risks of China's growing international reach and influence as guarding Chinese nationals overseas has become a new and serious challenge for China.

## **IRAN**

### **Brig Deepak Malhotra**

ISIL attack in Iran. The June 7 terror attacks in Tehran, executed by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as ISIS), were a major landmark in Iran's history of dealing with terrorism. The last time Iran had witnessed an assault of this scope and significance in its capital city was in the early 1980s, when armed opponents of the Islamic Republic assassinated its key figures and sympathizers in an attempt to topple the nascent revolutionary regime. Significantly, last week's ISIL attacks targeted two chief symbolic components of what has come to be known as the "Islamic Republic" - Ayatollah Khomeini's mausoleum and the Iranian parliament building. Comments. There are aggrieved religious and ethnic minorities living in Iran's border areas - particularly Kurds in the northwest, Arabs in the south and Baluchis in the southeast - who have long been discriminated against and neglected by the central government, making them amenable to militancy. Much as the June 7 terror attacks reinvigorated Iranians' sense of patriotism and thus had a unifying impact on the state and society, they were also a blow to the newly re-elected government of moderate President Hassan Rouhani and his "moderation project" at home and "engagement policy" abroad.

## **BANGLADESH**

### **Col Saikat Roy**

Sunderbans Goes Hi-tech to Keep Infiltrators, Smugglers at Bay. The porous riverine border with Bangladesh at Sunderbans are shortly to be equipped with infra-ray pillars and smart sensors to prevent rampant infiltration and smuggling. The decision to install laser walls in areas where barbed wire fences could not be erected due to the treacherous terrain or marshy riverine

topography was taken by the BSF two years ago. The infra-ray pillars and smart sensors will be monitored through a satellite-based signal command system. They will have night and fog operability tools.

Already installed in a 3-4 Km stretch as a pilot project, the devices would start operating once the monsoon was over in the next three months. If trials are successful the sensors would be installed by 2018.

Comments. Of the 4,096-km Indo-Bangladesh border, as much as 300 km is riverine border with Bangladesh in the Sunderbans. The BSF patrols amid the dense mangrove forests or where the rivers meet the Bay of Bengal.

Modi, Hasina Urged to Protect Bangladeshi Tribals. Various tribal groups have urged the Prime Ministers of India and Bangladesh to protect the minority tribals and non-tribals in Bangladesh. Chakma National Council of India (CNCI) and other tribal organisations have sent separate letters to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Bangladeshi Premier Sheikh Hasina to protect the tribals and other minorities residing in Bangladesh.

"At least seven aged tribal men were brutally killed by the Muslim settlers in Langadu Upazila in Rangamati Zilla on June 2. Bangladesh Army and police remained spectators when the Muslims attacked the innocent tribals," CNCI President Sobha Ranjan Chakma said on Friday. He said: "The Bengali Muslim settlers also set afire and vandalised several hundred houses and shops of the Chakma community following the death of a local Muslim youth leader." After the massive attacks, thousands of tribals, including women and children, fled to jungles to protect themselves from the attackers. Chakma said, "We have also urged the Bangladesh Prime Minister to implement the 1997 Peace Accord signed with the Shanti Bahini. Many provisions of the peace accord are yet to be executed, leading to the sufferings of the tribals."

Comments. The Shanti Bahini was the armed wing of the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS), a political organisation of the tribals in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT). The PCJSS and the CNCI have been demanding withdrawal of the army from the CHT, where once the Buddhist tribals population formed the majority in the population.

## **SRI LANKA**

### **Col Saikat Roy**

Pakistan's Naval Chief Discusses Bilateral issues with Sri Lanka Military Leaders. Pakistan's Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Zakaullah is in Sri Lanka on a five-day official visit at the invitation of Sri Lankan Navy Commander. During his visit, Admiral Zakaullah called on top military officials in Sri Lanka including Chief of Defense Staff Air Chief Marshal Kolitha

Gunatilleke, Commander of Sri Lankan Army

Lt. Gen AWJ. Crishanthe De

Silva and Secretary to the Ministry of Defense Karunasena Hettiarachchi at their office. Chief of the Naval Staff was also the Chief Guest at the Passing out Parade held at the Naval and Maritime Academy Trincomalee.

During the meetings both sides exchanged views on issues of bilateral importance and mutual interest.

Sri Lanka will not Allow 'Offensive Weapons' in its Waters – FM. Sri Lanka will not allow 'offensive weapons' from any country in its waters, the island nation's Foreign Minister Ravi Karunanayake has said. "Naval and offensive weapons don't fall into this category (shipping routes). Offensive weapons are not welcome in Sri Lankan waters. We are not targeting any country," he said.

Comments. In the wake of Colombo refusing permission to Beijing recently for docking of a Chinese submarine in its port, the comment by visiting Minister, was a clear signal to China that Sri Lanka will not allow Chinese submarines to dock at Lankan ports, and would respect Indian security concerns.

India, Sri Lanka Sign Agreement for US\$ 318 Million line of Credit to Develop Railway Sector. The Prime Minister of India Mr. Narendra Modi, at his first visit to Sri Lanka in March 2015 had declared a fresh Line of Credit (LOC) of US\$ 318 million for the development of railway sector in Sri Lanka. Government of India has already provided four Lines of Credit for the development of railway sector in Sri Lanka through its EXIM bank amounting to approximately US\$ 966 million. These credit facilities have been utilized to improve the Southern and Northern railway lines and for the procurement of rolling stocks for the Sri Lanka Railways.

Comments. The Government of India is the major development partner of Sri Lanka in South Asian region over 40 years since 1973. During the last few years Indian foreign direct investment in Sri Lanka has expanded exponentially. Presently Indian development assistance mainly focusing on improvement of economic infrastructural facilities, livelihood development, education, healthcare, capacity building and economic renewal of Sri Lanka.

## **MALDIVES**

### **Col Saikat Roy**

Foundation Work on new runway at Velana International Airport Begins. General Manager of Maldives Airports Company Limited (MAACL), Hassan Areef said foundation work on the new

runway at Velana International Airport has begun. The new runway at the national airport will be 3,400 meters long and 60 meters wide, and able to accommodate A380 aircrafts.

Comments. The runway project is contracted to Beijing Urban Construction Group (BUCG) for USD 400 million – USD 373 million of which is financed through loan assistance from China.

## **MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**

### **Col Saikat Roy**

India, Israel close to Signing US\$500 Million Spike ATGM Deal. India and Israel are close to signing a deal for Spike Anti-Tank Guided Missiles (ATGM) worth an estimated INR 3,200 Crore (US\$500 million approx). The deal is expected to be on the anvil when Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi visits Israel next month. The move is the latest in a series of big-ticket defense contracts that were approved recently. “The Spike deal is not yet sealed, but it is almost done. We expect to conclude it very soon,” an official was quoted as saying by The Hindu Sunday.

Comments. The purchase of Spike missiles was approved by the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) in October 2014, but negotiations on the contract ran into trouble over cost and technology transfer. The deal includes 8,000-plus missiles, 300-plus launchers and technology transfer. Further, the deal is likely to expand as the Army aims to equip its 382 infantry battalions and 44 mechanised regiments with new missiles.

Indian Scientist’s Bullet-Proof Jacket will be Ready in a Year. A scientist from the Amrita University is designing a bullet-proof jacket for the Indian Army and paramilitary forces, using the ultramodern lightweight thermoplastic technology. The official said that the jacket would be manufactured using indigenous technology, for which an empowered committee of the Ministry of Defence has given its go-ahead. “It will be developed in collaboration with the DRDO (Defence Research and Development Organisation),” he said.

Comments. This is for the first time that Indian Army will have a jacket made indigenously. At present, India spends Rs 1.5 lakh on a single jacket, which is imported from the United States. The Indian version will cost Rs 50,000 per jacket, which means India will save Rs 20,000 crore every year.

DRDO Successfully Test-fires Anti-tank Nag Missile Nag in Rajasthan. The DRDO on Tuesday successfully test-fired Anti-tank Guided Missile 'Nag' in a desert in the western sector of Rajasthan.

Comments. The "fire and forget" third generation anti-tank guided missile 'Nag' is equipped with

the highly advanced Imaging Infrared Radar (IRR) seeker with integrated avionics, technology which is possessed by very few nations.

## **AFGHANISTAN**

### **Brig Deepak Malhotra**

Trump gives Pentagon Authority to Set Afghanistan troop Levels. President Donald Trump granted the Pentagon the authority to manage troop levels in Afghanistan. Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis, who is believed to support sending additional U.S. troops to Afghanistan, will determine if the approximately 9,800 U.S. troops currently deployed in there should be reinforced. Trump gave Mattis similar authority over troop levels in Syria and Iraq in April. Comments. Giving more authority to the Pentagon allows military leaders more latitude in planning and conducting operations. Options were developed to deploy up to 5,000 more U.S. troops, including hundreds of Special Operations forces, to augment the international coalition force of about 13,000 troops presently in Afghanistan. About 2,000 U.S. troops there are currently assigned to fight al-Qaida and other militant groups.

## **NEPAL**

### **Col Harpreet Singh**

Challenge for New Nepal PM - Madhesi Faction Strike. President Bidya Devi Bhandari administered the oath of office and secrecy to newly elected Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba after resignation of previous PM Prachanda. One of his first tasks is to hold the imminent second phase of local elections.

However, a prominent faction of Madhesi-based parties in Nepal on Sunday decided to boycott the second phase of local polls and announced a general strike ahead of the elections scheduled for June 28. The Rastriya Janata Party-Nepal, a coalition of seven parties led by Mahanta Thakur, announced fresh protests saying all doors have been shut for meaningful talks with the government on amending the Constitution to meet demands of the Madhesis. Local general strikes will be held in Madhes, Tharuhat and Limbuwan focusing on the nomination days--June 13 to 16--and a national indefinite general strike will be organised from June 24.

Another faction of Madhes-based parties led by Upendra Yadav and Bijaya Kumar Gachhadar have already decided to take part in the elections.

A meeting held by the ruling Nepali Congress and CPN (Maoist Centre) with RJP-N earlier ended inconclusively, leading to the latter's decision to go for protests. Thakur said the government failed to fulfil the commitments such as declaring those who died in the Madhesi agitation as martyrs, withdrawing fake cases, releasing those languishing in prisons and compensating those injured during the anti-Constitution protests.

Comments. Apart from fulfilling the expectations of the people, the new Prime Minister of Nepal also has numerous tasks to accomplish. Deuba, who is supported by the agitating ethnic minorities, has the mammoth task to pass the amendment bill tabled in the Parliament garnering two-third majority along with improving his image which was diluted in his previous term as PM. In addition, Deuba has the challenge to appease all the supporting parties to stay firm on the issues.

Deuba at first has the challenge to hold the second phase election which is 21 days ahead from the day of his swearing-in. Though the Madhesh-based agitating parties had initially signalled to go for the elections, the RJP-N boycott has come as a big blow especially as the June 28 election covers most of the southern plains of Nepal which is volatile and will cover 41 districts and 4 provinces which has about 9 million eligible voters.

India to Set Up National Police Academy in Nepal. India is helping Nepal to set up a national police academy near Kathmandu at a cost of Rs 550 crore which will provide training to 410 Nepalese police officers annually. The academy at Panauti, 35 km south-east of Kathmandu, will be on the lines of Hyderabad-based Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel NPA, the alma mater for the officers of the Indian Police Service.

The feasibility study for the national police academy (NPA) was done by the NPA, Hyderabad, while India's Ministry of Home Affairs is doing consultancy service for the project monitoring and quality assurance services. Nepal's Ministry of Home Affairs is the executing agency and coordinating with the government of India-nominated officials in a joint project monitoring committee.

Comments. India provides substantial financial and technical development assistance to Nepal, which is a broad-based programme focusing on creation of infrastructure at the grass-root level, under which various projects have been implemented in the areas of health, water resources, education and rural and community development. In recent years, India has been assisting Nepal in development of border infrastructure through upgrade of roads in the Terai areas, development of cross-border rail links and establishment of integrated check posts. The NPA will help improve policing in Nepal and projects like this are essential to counter the growing Chinese influence in Nepal.

## **RUSSIA**

### **Col Harpreet Singh**

Opposition Leader Detained. Russian Authorities detained opposition politician Alexei Navalny and more than 900 of his supporters as they mounted demonstrations across the nation against government corruption. The protests are the second mass action since March called by Navalny, who has announced his intention to run for president next year and has drawn a new generation to the streets through a relentless online campaign.

At least 600 people were detained in Moscow -- where riot police tried to push the crowds back sometimes by beating them with batons -- and 300 in Saint Petersburg. Navalny himself picked up by police as he was headed to the event.

The wave of protests called by Navalny coincides with a public holiday, Russia Day, with Putin handing out awards and holding a reception in the Kremlin.

Comments. Navalny's anti-corruption videos have needled the country's most powerful and drawn to the streets crowds unseen since a wave of protests against President Vladimir Putin's re-election for a third term in 2012. The recent rallies were galvanised by a film released by Navalny in early March which accused Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev of controlling vast personal wealth through a shadowy network of foundations, which has since been viewed over 22 million times. Navalny has brought a new generation to the streets through his embrace of YouTube, and his team was broadcasting from a studio set up in Moscow. He is showcasing the power of social media and seems to be the most credible challenger to Putin in the next elections.

## **CAR & STRATEGIC RELATIONS**

### **Air Cmde T Chand (Retd)**

Statement by the Heads of the Member States of the SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation) on Joint Counteraction to International Terrorism. SCO Heads of States annual meeting was held at Astana from 08 to 09 Jun 2017. India and Pakistan were admitted as fully fledged members and a few more countries like Iran and Afghanistan are likely to join in future. A three page statement on joint counteraction to international terrorism by the heads the of member states was issued at the end of the meeting. Several Indian concerns on terrorism have found place in the statement; some of which are:

“We Resolutely Condemn Terrorism in all its Forms and Manifestations.” “It is absolutely

unacceptable to use terrorist and extremist groups to further political and geopolitical objectives.”  
“We reaffirm our common commitment to fighting various organisations and groups recognised as terrorist and extremist in the territory of any SCO member state.”

“We stress the need for collective measures to counteract the dissemination of the ideology of terrorism and extremism, including the prevention and curtailment of terrorist and extremist propaganda, incitement to terrorism and extremism, as well as recruitment, including recruitment via the internet.”

“We are confident that the fight against terrorism cannot be effective unless we reliably cut channels for its funding.”

Similar statements against terrorism have also been included in the Astana declaration of the Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation with a noteworthy declaration that, the member states will continue to cooperate in order to counteract the activities of individuals and legal entities related to the recruitment, training and utilisation of terrorists, public calls for terrorist activities or the justification of acts of terrorism, and financing terrorist activities.

Since India and, Pakistan are both members of the SCO, India may use this platform to pressurise Pakistan to wean her away from the state sponsored terrorism.

## **SPACE**

**Gp Capt GDSharma, VSM ( Retd )**

US Role in Qatar Imbroglio. Qatar and Saudi Arabia have often in past face delegations of funding the terror groups in the Middle East. Both however, deny their roles. The current crisis is reported to be apparently caused by Saudi Arabia and Sunni ruled states to settle scores with Qatar on its alleged funding support to terrorism. However, it is a Saudi ploy. Actually, Saudi Arabia is cut up with Qatar for duplicity in its conduct. It believes that Qatar is two timings with both Saudi Arabia and Shia Iran. It has maintained relations with Iran and praised Israel despite being a part of Saudi led GCC and Islamic Military Alliance. It has been seen propping up the Jihadis of all hues (ISIS/Hamas) despite being a US ally. Hence, the current imposition of blockade by Saudi led group may even have American blessing. What makes it probable is the reason that it was imposed just after US President's visit of Saudi Arabia. Qatar owes its security to the American presence on its land. So while Saudi's blockade has led to an explosive situation in the Middle East, it may not go out of control due to US presence on its land and joining in of Turkey and support of Iran. Further, US tacit support to Saudi action could indirectly restrain Qatar and even Saudi Arabia to support the terror groups.

There is a misplaced apprehension in some quarters on the future of the nearly 6.5 lakh Indian

Diaspora. We need to wait and watch the situation. It is not likely to escalate with multinational involvement and being in no one interest. Ultimately, both Saudi Arabia and Qatar would relent mainly on persuasion by the America. Hence, there would not be any need to evacuate Indian national from Qatar. US should restrain Saudi Arabia from further escalation. This will deny Turkey to use the situation to compete with Saudi Arabia for dominance of the region.