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Editorial

As we discover the power of interdependency that has been brought forth into sharp focus by this pandemic, each of us has become acutely aware of those around us and observe what they are doing primarily because our survival depends on others behaviour too. This aspect has been an enduring idea in the context of nations and states as we all try to coexist with our varying and changing ideas of freedoms and policies. However, the health crisis brought heavy human and economic costs for every nation, while collective action towards managing this has not been most effective. As we watch, the impact on international relations will continue to evolve.

The main theme for this issue of *Artha* (Vol. 19 Issue No. 4, 2020) is: **Major Issues in International relations in the 21st Century**. This issue is curated and presented by Dr. Madhumati Deshpande (Section Editor).

Dr. Madhavi Rangaswamy

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The discipline of International relations has been going through several changes in the 21 Century because of the changing world order and emerging issues among the countries and has been a cause for reflection. Political, social and economic changes in the world have reshaped relations among nations over the last century. This article collection explores how continuity and change have shaped current International relations, and how different social science disciplines, and interdisciplinary work have viewed and discussed these continuities and change to explain the role of different forces and institutions in the 21 Century. The changes in International relations caused by the pandemic, brought to focus certain accepted paradigms and the hitherto neglected area of human security through the non-traditional ways.

The first article on 'Changing Dynamics of Regional trade and cooperation: A Case of Japan And South Korea' looks at how the two strong economies of East Asia have started to face off once

again as the competition between the two increases. Traditionally the two countries were enemies but the post war economic boom in these two countries was heavily dependent on each other and led to the Asian economic boom in the 1990s. However, the old wounds have resurfaced once again as the competition between the two has increased. This does put a strain on the East Asian economic cooperation. Globalization and economic boom had increased the regional cooperation in East and Southeast Asia. But the changing dynamics may bring in a security dilemma especially with the rising China.

The second article on 'Digital world: threats to security and the scope for South-South cooperation' looks at how the digital technology, which has brought the world closer together in times of pandemic has also brought newer security threats and inequalities in the international relations. The article discusses the digital divide among the developed and developing countries and how that impacts the governance of the cyberspace, a zone that is yet to be regulated.

The next article on 'Impact of the Pandemic on extremist organizations' looks at the most recent issues in International relations, that of terrorism and pandemic. International relations had undergone significant change with the inclusion of the non-state actors but the increase in the number of terrorist groups and their impact on relations among the states had occupied the minds of the scholars in the last decade. The Pandemic brought a similar shift in the conventional theories. The article looks at the impact of pandemic in states which are struggling to cope with the economic downturn and break down of law and order due to the hardships experienced because of the pandemic. Extremist organizations are known to take advantage of the weak governments. In this situation, how much of an impact do these groups have on the societies?

The fourth article looks at another major issue for twenty-first century - migration. This article examines the major causes for why groups of people decide to move out from one country and migrate to another. The case study in the article is on Bangladeshi migrants to India. The article discusses the causal factors that push the

people out of Bangladesh and in to India. If the causal factors are not addressed by the country of origin or the host country, in this case India, the issue of migration can not be addressed effectively.

The issue also features reviews on two recent books on important regional developments in international relations. The book *Contest for the Indo-Pacific: Why China Won't Map the Future* By Rory Medcalf is an important contribution to the politics of nomenclature of Indo-Pacific as opposed to Asia-Pacific. The reviewer looks at how this change in nomenclature has impacted the politics and strategy of the United States in the region and how the regional players have responded to the same. The second book *In the Name of the Nation: India and Its Northeast*, Sanjib Baruah has looked at how Indian state has struggled with post-colonial nation building in its north-eastern states. The reviewer looks at the current issues that have historical antecedents discussed in detail in the book.

The issue also highlights an article from our archives which examines a topic that continues to be a burning issue in International relations. The issue of nuclear North Korea continues to plague the regional politics and hegemonic aspirations of the ruler of North Korea. The reviewer looks at the original article “The Korean Nuclear Imbroglia: Can India be a Muted Spectator?” By Dr. Sitakant Mishra and positions that in the overall strategy of nuclear deterrence in that region.

These and other borderless issues in the 21 century have made it imperative for the countries to cooperate with each other in order to ensure development and welfare of their populations. The pandemic has also shown the world that it is important focus on the human security and cooperation is key to achieving success in combating the borderless problems of the twenty first century.

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