

## Editorial

India's decisive and historic victory in the 1971 India–Pakistan War is considered to be one of the landmark geopolitical events in the history of the sub-continent. Fought for a mere 13 days, which makes it one of the shortest wars in the world history, the lightning campaign brought about a change in the world's perception of India, marking its recognition as an important regional power in South Asia.

The 1971 India–Pakistan War was unique in many ways. Very few wars have led to the creation of a new country; this war turned out to be one. Treated unfairly, denied equitable national resources, refused the fruits of an electoral victory, and subjected to a cruel genocide, the war was indeed a fight for the dignity and independence of East Pakistani citizens. Mukti Bahini, an army of guerillas raised from among the Bengali population of East Pakistan and trained by the Indian Armed Forces, played a crucial role in disrupting and demoralising the Pakistan Army to a great extent. The war resulted in the surrender of over 90,000 troops of the Pakistan Army, the largest military surrender witnessed after World War II. The public signing of the Instrument of Surrender by Lt Gen AAK Niazi of Pakistan Army in Dhaka on 16 December 1971 was another historical event of that time.

Under the guidance of Ambassador Sujan R. Chinoy and the Editorial Advisory Board, we decided to publish a special issue of JDS to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of India's historic victory in the 1971 India–Pakistan War. The publication, anchored by Col Vivek Chadha, has been brought to shape by the consistent efforts of the Editorial Committee and the Associate Editor. In addition to invited contributions, we are happy to note a positive response to our 'Call for Papers' outreach, which we propagated on emails, social media posts and through the MP-IDSA website. After a thorough scrutiny and review of several submissions we received, we have selected 15 articles which are being published in this issue.

What makes this issue of JDS distinct from other contemporary works about the 1971 War, is that it brings a comprehensive compilation of articles that overarch across the multifaceted aspects of the war including the military, political, diplomatic, social and cultural aspects that collectively shaped the outcome of the war. We have brought in perspectives of a Bangladeshi diplomat as well as of military veterans and academicians from India who have lent a singular character to this special issue. The themes have been designed to give a more holistic picture of the military campaign that caused the collapse of the Pakistani Military's grip over East Pakistan, eventually resulting in the creation of Bangladesh.

We hope that the articles of this special issue would make an interesting read and help the readers deepen their understanding of the 1971 Indo-Pak War. We thank the authors and the referees who assisted us in the peer review process, and would like to hear more from our readers about the topics they feel should be addressed by the journal. Do write to the Associate Editor, *Journal of Defence Studies* at [jds.mpidsa@gov.in](mailto:jds.mpidsa@gov.in).

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