

**Review Articles & Book Reviews**



## War Despatches 1971\*

Brigadier BS Mehta

### Introduction

Literature on war can be written from many perspectives, it can be from the top looking on how the events unfolded or it can be across the unfolding events and also from the ground upwards on how those who were part of the events received their orders, carried out the tasks assigned, and their visualisation of being part of an action. Further, it can be written in the form of individual accounts by senior officers or by strategic analysts, historians, and journalists. Finally, it can be written by either of the parties involved or by external independent observers. Each account in its own way adds to the literature of the conflict and contributes in understanding of the events and drawing suitable lessons.

Most books on war are individual accounts of soldiers or their units, describing sacrifice and glory. This book is the first collective war experience of young officers of not only the combat arms leading men in battle but also the support and logistic services like the Engineers, Signals, Electronics and Mechanical Engineers (EME), Ordnance and Supply, whose roles are equally important.

### The Authors

'War Despatches' edited by Brigadier BS Mehta (Retd) is unique in many ways. It's written by a group of officers from the 28 NDA Course. They belonged to various arms and services with the respective Services. At the time of the war, they were all young officers serving in battalions at the cutting edge of combat or in formation headquarters which were deeply involved in the conflict. Hence, the experiences they have written about are at the 'tactical level' and mostly at company and battalion level but their experiences have been recounted with the wisdom of hindsight and the maturity of their experiences 50 years after the event.

The 28th NDA batch commissioned on 15 June 1966 set a new trend for all other NDA batches by publishing 'War Despatches

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*\*War Despatch 1971. Edited by Brigadier BS Mehta; (Noida: Occam (An imprint of BluOne Ink) October 2022); Pages: 368; Price: 899; ISBN-13: 978-9392209123*

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1971' while the country celebrated the Golden Jubilee of Victory in 1971 war with Pakistan. The book contains the first-hand battle experiences of batchmates from different branches of the three Services coming together on a common veteran's platform after six decades of joint training at NDA.

Having passed out of the Indian Military Academy (and other academies) in June 1966, they joined their units soon after the 1965 war with Pakistan and later in their Services would have been Battalion Commanders (and equivalent) during Operation Pawan and Operation Chequerboard and would have been in various appointments including Brigade Commanders while combating insurgency in both J&K and the NE and as Divisional Commanders during Operation Vijay. In fact, both Major General VS Budhwar, who was commanding 3 Infantry Division, and Major General (later Lieutenant General) Mohinder Puri, who commanded 8 Mountain Division, were part of this course. Subsequently, many from this course went on to become Lieutenant Generals, including Lieutenant General Arvind Sharma who retired as an Army Commander. Hence, their accounts are enhanced by their experience in Service.

### **About The Book**

In 'Burinda Bash'; Brigadier Mehta writes how after the destruction of Pakistan's 3 (Independent) Armoured Squadron at Garibpur on 21 November 1971, the 'window of opportunity' for capture of Dacca was opened but was 'not exploited'. This is the epic battle in which a Squadron of 45 Cavalry destroyed fifteen Pakistani Chafee tanks with their PT-76. The Battle of Burinda took place a few days later and has been described in great detail. 'It was a symbol of Pakistan's gumption to fight against heavy odds, not witnessed elsewhere in East Pakistan'. Balram Mehta was a tank troop leader supporting 4 SIKH who suffered 62 casualties including fourteen killed. He quotes General Jacob an unimpeachable source in his "indictment of the quality of higher-level planning, execution and leadership".

Lieutenant General RSK Kapur writes about the personality of Lieutenant General Sagat Singh who as General Officer Commanding (GOC) 17 Mountain Division 'had taught the Chinese a lesson of their lives'. After carrying out a task for which he had 'worked tirelessly' he recalls General Sagat asking his surprised

Military Attache to call his 'son' and then giving him a tight hug and saying 'Well done, son'. He calls him 'the greatest General he ever served with' and this association 'taught him some essential character qualities.'

Major General Vinod Budhwar talks about his accompanying a Mukti Bhaini patrol to destroy a bridge in East Pakistan and the difficulties encountered and the manner in which they carried out improvisations to execute the mission. Brigadier Sukhdev Singh writes about the fog of war where a bridge at Jaintiapur had been captured by the Mukti Bhaini but they failed to hold on to it as they got carried away in their celebrations and began 'looting the bazaar' and the officer tasked for the demolition went missing for two days before he finally returned. He also writes about the 'Khustia Episode', "the attack was a failure. The entire 4 Mountain Division then concentrated on one axis".

Brigadier Shimi Kanbargimath gives an insight into the human aspects through selected excerpts of letters to his wife. He had been moved to East Pakistan from the Commando Wing in Belgaum where he was an instructor. He recalls taking a Sikh officer to a hospital in Dhaka after the surrender and how a Pakistani nurse asked if it was safe for her to attend to the Sikh officer, who had a dental issue. She was nervous because, "They had been told in schools and at home to stay away from Sikh men". It reveals the psyche created amongst the people.

Air Commodore Arun Karandikar writes about Kilo Squadron a 'clandestine unit' formed with a few Pakistani Air Force pilots who escaped from East Pakistan with the refugees. He also recalls Group Captain (later Air Vice Marshal) Chandan Singh a 'dynamic go-getter' and how he made him "undertake an urgent flight in a Dakota alone. He ended up flying 49 sorties including five single sorties in fourteen days".

In 'The Battlefield Blues', Brigadier Mehta covers the battle of Garibpur including the bravery of Major 'Chiefy' Narag, the Squadron Commander of 45 Cavalry who was destined 'to play his role', and made the supreme sacrifice and was later awarded the Maha Vir Chakra (MVC). On completion of his orders when he asked his Troop Leaders if they had any questions, a newly promoted JCO asked, "Who will give the orders to open fire".

Used to formation level exercises reality had now hit, the war had started. It turned out to be an exceptional and rare tank battle. The early victory served as a trumpet call.

Major Pradeep Sharma recalls being the solitary Sapper having been heli dropped to the location of the advancing Independent Squadron of 7 Light Cavalry to render engineer support. He single handedly prodded the area in front for mines throwing out all the rules for such procedures, thereafter, deciding that prodding was too tedious he moved on the leading tank observing the area for tell-tale signs of mines and he even removed explosives with his hands from a bridge that had been prepared for demolition by the enemy, "just doing what you are trained for and able to do".

Lieutenant General Arvind Sharma was a Captain in a brigade headquarter which had moved from Nagaland. He gives an insight into the personality of his Commander, Brigadier RCV Apte, the GOC Major General (later General) KV Krishna Rao and Major (later General) Zia ur Rehman of 8 East Bengal Regiment which was placed under the command of the Brigade. He also talks of the manner in which he directed an air strike at Maulvi Bazar on 08 December.

Brigadier Trigunesh Mukerjee was also a Staff Officer as a Captain in a leading brigade and recalls dealing with questions from the local Bengali population regarding their missing kin who had been picked up by the Pakistani soldiers and were untraceable. He also talks of the war correspondents and remembers the words of Melville DeMello, "if you don't love the army, you can never be a war correspondent".

Part 2 of the book covers the Western Front. Colonel Tarlochan Singh Kalra writes about the capture of a Post after the cease fire by 2 SIKH in the Amritsar Sector and the praise given by the Pakistani CO a few days later, "your men fought heroically in battle and were definitely superior". Lieutenant General PPS Bhandari writes about his experience as Adjutant of 72 Armoured Regiment a new raising being bloodied in battle and been awarded the 'Battle Honour Chhamb'. This was also the battle in which Deccan Horse lost Captain Daljinder Singh who 'lived life king sized', Brigadier Gautam Tandon has captured his personality perfectly in a moving tribute.

Captain SS Sethi covers the naval operations in great detail. Being the navigating officer of a frontline ship, he was hardly able to sleep during the twelve days. Wing Commander S Balasubramaniam describes an operational mission and states how the “attack was the ultimate test for a fighter pilot”.

Lieutenant Colonel RC Chetri and Major General Subash Bindra write about inventory management and ammunition supply in war. While Major General CP Tewari recalls how “they issued supplies without any indents” and Major (later Lieutenant General) Krishen Bhatia signing the receipt on the back of a cigarette packet. Brigadier ML Jaisinghani writes about the famous battle of Shakargarh where his artillery guns were supporting 3 SIKH LI and ‘brought down accurate fire to silence the enemy’.

Air Commodore Kurivilla gives out his experience as a Prisoner of War including how Bhutto visited their camp in November 1972 and said, “I want you to go home... and please return our prisoners of war”. Lieutenant General Mohinder Puri was posted in 25 Infantry Division as a Captain and describes the build up to the war as also the attack on Poonch which the GOC Major General (later Lieutenant General) Kundan Singh had anticipated and asked for additional troops. He sums up his account by saying, “intelligence continues to remain a weak spot, though our acquisition capabilities have vastly increased”.

Colonel KK Nanda was part of his battalion 13 PUNJAB deployed in Ferozepur and describes leading a Patrol deep into Pakistan and the capture of Southern portion of the Mamdot Bulge in great detail. He says, “his achievement in the war has been the high point of his life”. Brigadier Vijay Rai who was with 15 DOGRA gives out the role of his battalion in capturing the Northern portion of the Bulge. While listing out various ambiguities and shortcomings he concludes by saying, “all our shortcomings got drowned in the celebrations”.

Colonel Mahendra Singh Joon was part of 3 GRENADIERS in the historic battle of Jarpal. This is where Major (later Brigadier) Hoshiar Singh and Second Lieutenant Arun Kheterpal were awarded the Param Vir Chakra (PVC) and his Commanding Officer Lieutenant Colonel (later Lieutenant General) VP Airy was awarded the MVC for their gallant actions. He recalls the seven enemy counter attacks and the handing over of the body of Lieutenant

Colonel Akram Raja with a citation 'based on which he was awarded Pakistan's second highest gallantry award'. Major General PJS Sandhu was also in this sector as a Staff Captain with 16 (Independent) Armoured Brigade and recalls how Brigadier (later General) Vaidya "operated from his track group throughout the war with just his haversack and never came back to his Headquarters, that was the major reason for success of the operations by the Brigade. He was always present at the point of decision".

### **Conclusion**

The 1971 war was a glorious victory in which all cogs of the wheel performed admirably. It was no doubt a whole nation approach. While there is a lot of literature covering various facets of the conflict, this remains a rare book as while it is a narrative from the perspective of young officers it is a reflection of their wisdom and experience after many years in Service shedding light on the significant aspects important to win a war. Their points of view were those of young officers taking orders and passing on orders while being in the thick of action themselves.

Authored by those who fought the war with grit and courage in the face of adversity, this is a lucid recount of their triumphs and challenges. The book will serve as an inspiration for the next generations of warriors due to the unique insight it has given into a very important chapter of India's military history. There is no doubt that we as a nation need to salute all those who contributed to the victory and particularly those who made the supreme sacrifice.

Finally, the book serves as an important reminder of the contribution made by the defence forces in nation building. The book records how as young Troop Leaders, Pilots, Sailors contributed to achieve victory to finally shed the 'historical baggage of a military defeat' and emerge as a regional power.

*Major General Jagatbir Singh, VSM (Retd)*



## Review Article 2

# ARMOUR '71\*

Cavalry Officers Association

## Introduction

The Indian Armoured Corps has fought and ensured victory in all major conflicts in post-Independence. It has operated effectively in diverse terrain and climatic conditions ranging from the high mountains in Zojila (1948) and Chushul (1962), in developed terrain including Patton Nagar at Khemkaran (1965), Akhnoor and Shakargarh (1971), in the deserts to include Laungewala (1971), riverine terrain of Bangladesh (1971), in the jungles and built-up areas in Sri Lanka during the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) Operations (1987) and recently at the high altitude in Eastern Ladakh (2021). Armour assures both deterrence and destruction.

It is thus apt to document the various battles - both for their remarkable operational execution as well as lessons for current military professionals, which are relevant even today. It is with this in mind that the Cavalry Officers Association launched an outstanding initiative under Lieutenant General Amit Sharma (Retd) and a team of three highly committed authors who have meticulously researched and recorded the history of armour operations in 1971 with a great deal of granularity.

## The Authors

The book has been co-authored by four authors headed by Lieutenant General Amit Sharma who was then the President of the Cavalry Officers Association. Commissioned into 45 Cavalry, he retired as the Commander in Chief of the Strategic Forces Command and has commanded an Armoured Brigade, an Infantry Division, and the Strike Corps, all in the Desert Sector.

Lieutenant General Rakesh Chadha, was commissioned into and Commanded 66 Armoured Regiment. He commanded an Armoured Brigade as part of an Armoured Division and retired as the Director General Operational Logistics.

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\***Armour 71.** By Cavalry Officers Association (Publisher-DEFSTRAT Books, December 2022); Pages: 280; Price-1200; ISBN: N/A

Major General Jagatbir Singh belongs to 18 Cavalry and has Commanded an Armoured Brigade in the Desert Sector and the strategic Black Elephant Armoured Division. Post retirement he is a Distinguished Fellow with USI.

Sagat Shaunik, comes from a family with a rich military heritage, his father and grandfather were both in the Army and he is the grandnephew of Major Somnath Sharma who was awarded the first Param Vir Chakra (PVC) and General VN Sharma who was the Army Chief. His area of interest is India's military history.

### **The Book**

Beginning with the politico-diplomatic perspective of the war, the build up to the war, armour operations in each theatre, followed by naval and air operations, the canvas of Armour 71 is undoubtedly wide. The book covers interesting viewpoints and the role of armour in offensive and defensive operations. It also includes the employment of tanks in East Pakistan which posed many problems due to the riverine terrain with the large numbers of rivers and streams that were required to be crossed.

1971 is widely remembered as a liberation war, a war that led to the creation of a new nation. Of all four wars with Pakistan, the 1971 war is remembered as the decisive one. All wars and battles lead to outcomes, invariably interpreted as victory or defeat by the protagonists and the India-Pakistan wars are no different, but the 1971 war is still accepted as a decisive victory for India, for it achieved an outcome that changed the regional and world map forever.

The objectives of the military campaign were clear. In the East, it had to be the decisive defeat of Pakistan; in the West, it was to ensure that Pakistan was unable to make any gains in Jammu and Kashmir while exploring possibilities of capturing territory in Rajasthan and Sindh that could be politically useful at the negotiating table. The force levels were deployed accordingly. General Candeth, in his book on the 1971 War, stated- "The Chief of Army Staff informed us, his Army Commanders that the aim of the government was to create conditions by helping the Mukti Bahini drive out the Pakistanis and install a popular government in Dacca so that the ten million or so refugees could go back home and live peacefully. He told us that it was not part of India's

policy to humiliate Pakistan. India sought to achieve a quick victory in the East and carry out only holding operations in the West”.

While the Indian Army had undergone major modernisation and expansion post the 1962 conflict, the focus was on the Northern Borders and lesser emphasis was laid on armour. In fact, in 1965, Pakistan had more Armoured Regiments than India. But after 1965, the focus fell on Armoured Corps and ten additional Regiments were raised and our holdings were modernised with the induction of T-54, T-55 and PT-76 tanks from USSR and our own Vijyantas. The older equipment continued too, including the mighty Centurions, the Light AMX-13 and some Shermans.

In the East, there were three Armoured Regiments, 45 Cavalry and 69 Armoured Regiment equipped with PT-76 tanks and 63 Cavalry with recently inducted T-55 tanks. In addition, there were two independent Armoured Squadrons equipped with the PT-76's discarded by 63 Cavalry.

45 Cavalry was the first Regiment to be blooded in battle in this war on 21 November 1971. Over the next twenty-six days, the Regiment fought twenty-nine actions with seventeen battalions of 4 Mountain Division and 9 Infantry Division, the last two being on 16 December, the day of the surrender. The actions by Major DS Narag at Garibpur, where they destroyed five Pakistani Chafee tanks and Second Lieutenant Sam Chandavarkar have been beautifully illustrated. Major Narag who was killed in battle was awarded the Maha Vir Chakra (MVC).

5 (Independent) Armoured Squadron of 63 Cavalry commanded by Major SS Mehta was involved in three major operations which were Akhaura, Ashuganj and the crossing of the mighty River Meghna in the most innovative manner. This Squadron was the only Armour element to be present in Dacca for the 'Surrender Ceremony'.

On 17 December 1971, Lieutenant Colonel Pawittar Singh Takhar, Commandant of 69 Armoured Regiment, had the unique opportunity to accept the surrender of Lieutenant Colonel Bukhari, Commanding Officer Pakistan 29 Cavalry.

It was decided to use a mix of T-55 and PT-76 tanks in each Regiment evolving the concept of light armour supported by medium armour. T-55 Squadrons were employed along the axis

which had firm terrain and PT-76 tanks were employed to carry out an outflanking manoeuvre across wet paddy fields. Armour operations in East Pakistan were successful due to correct employment and aggressive action with high initiative at the sub-unit level. Nevertheless, it must be remembered that tank actions can only succeed if they have dedicated infantry, artillery, and air support, with very carefully executed logistics support.

### **Scenes from East Pakistan**

India's strategy in the West was more aimed at preventing loss of territory. Several small offensives were planned to capture vulnerable salients across the Cease Fire Line as also across the International Border. The original plan was to launch offensives in Chhamb and in the Shakargarh Bulge. A major advance was to take place in the desert towards Naya Chor. A smaller push in the direction of Rahimyar Khan was also considered. A contingency plan to employ the Armoured Division across the border was also made in the event of Pakistan committing its reserves in the Shakargarh area. Neither this nor the plan for the offensive in Chhamb were executed. In fact, the Armoured Division remained on 'a tight leash' throughout.

The battle of Chhamb where two Armoured Regiments, The Deccan Horse and 72 Armoured Regiment fought an integrated battle as part of 10 Infantry Division displayed gallantry, resolute grit and determination which led to destruction of enemy armour and stymied their offensive on the West bank of the Munawar Tawi has been covered in a great deal of detail. Yet it is quite inexplicable that The Deccan Horse which blunted the Pakistan armour in the initial stages was denied the Battle Honour of Chhamb.

In the Western Sector, Second Lieutenant Arun Kheterpal of Poona Horse was awarded the PVC whereas Brig Arun Vaidhya, Cdr 16 (Independent) Armoured Brigade, Lieutenant Colonel RM Vohra, commanding The Hodsons Horse, Lieutenant Colonel Sukhjit Singh, commanding The Scinde Horse, and Lieutenant Colonel Hanut Singh, commanding The Poona Horse, were all awarded MVCs. The battles of these and many other illustrious Regiments which fought in the Western Sector have been covered in greatest of detail bringing out issues that have not yet lost their relevance.

## **Conclusion**

Though 1971 reflected a combination of strategic decisiveness among the political leadership, unity across the party lines, setting out of clear political objectives, and a relationship of trust in the advice rendered by the military leadership. It was no doubt a whole nation approach working on a common script, that enabled India to claim that it was on the right side of history.

However, as General VN Sharma wrote, "Despite India's great victory, in the Shimla Agreement, it is not clear why PM Indira Gandhi let Pakistan 'off the hook' on the question of the conflict in the state of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) and the need for settlement of the border and termination of terrorist activity by Pakistan".

An extremely detailed book backed by painstaking and meticulous research, it will undoubtedly assist future military leaders in training for the next conflict in varied and difficult terrain, and understanding the express need for effective cooperation between all military arms and services and departments of government, for success in battle. The book will also be of interest to fellow Indians and students who will feel proud of the great achievements of the Indian Defence Forces. The book also needs to find a place of pride in libraries of training academies and armour training schools across the world.

*Major General VK Singh (Retd)*

**Chinese Military Legal System: An Analysis.** By UC Jha and Kishore Kumar Khera; (New Delhi: Vij Books India Pvt Ltd, June 2022); Pages: 308; Price: Rs 1750/-; ISBN-13: 978-9393499608.

The Chinese military legal system is headed by the People's Liberation Army (PLA) Military Court, which is under the Political Department of the Central Military Commission and the Supreme People's Court. Below the PLA Military Court, there are courts in the military regions as well as 'in' the military services—Navy, Air Force, Armed Police, and below those courts, are basic level courts within each of these regions, military services, and other units. The PLA consisting of nearly two million active-duty officers and civil cadres, Non Commissioned Officers and conscripts are governed by numerous laws, rules and regulations. The book goes on to suggest the inherent lack of transparency and openness not only in the Chinese military court system but also in the personnel system. Under the current government, the PLA, which is also a subset of Chinese society, is undergoing a major reform in terms of structure and values and, hence, the governing laws and codes of conduct play a major role. This book looks at various facets of Chinese military laws, their implementation process, their inherent strengths and inadequacies, and their future impact on its military.

The book is laid out into nine chapters and seven appendices which analyse the military legal system of the PLA, including matters related to administration, administrative and disciplinary measures, and trial by military courts in a simple and lucid manner. The first chapter gives a clear overview about the Peoples' Liberation Army, the Central Military Commission (CMC), the composition and reorganisation with changing ethos. The second chapter elucidates the administrative aspects contained in the Interior Service Regulations of the PLA which are the military administrative law and regulations defining the basic system of military activities, including induction, oath, system of rank, internal relations, and personnel policies. It also discusses issues related to appointment and removal, administrative violations, disposal of complaints and grievances of the service members.

Chapter 3 covers the historical evaluation and progression of the Chinese military legal system from the times of earliest ruling dynasties till the present time. The chapter also gives an account

of the military law codified and evolved over the millenniums and how the codes transitioned and progressed after the establishment of Republic of China in 1912. It discusses the constitutional provisions and the relevant laws affecting military service and analyses the development of military laws and regulations.

Chapter 4 reveals the substantive provisions in Criminal Law of PRC which exclusively deal with 'Crimes of Servicemen's Transgression of Duties', contained in Articles 420 to 451. The natures of crimes range from wartime crimes, crimes in violation of military discipline, crimes endangering military secrets and fighting capacity to crimes infringing the interests of the soldiers and civilians. The PLA personnel are liable to be prosecuted in a military court for these offences. The criminal procedure law followed in a trial by a military court has also been briefly covered in this chapter. Military courts are standing courts organised under the Organic Law of the People's Court. They hold jurisdiction over both criminal and civil cases. Chapter 5 discusses the hierarchical structure and functioning of the three levels of the military court system under the PLA. The chapter also discusses the extent of jurisdiction of the military courts in criminal and certain civil cases.

The next chapter describes the rules of discipline of the PLA and discusses discipline-related offences, punishments that can be awarded to soldiers, officers and members of the civilian cadre of military, and their implementation in accordance with articles 132-145 of the regulations on the discipline of PLA. The chapter 7 of the book relates to the wave of judicial reforms related to the rights to a fair trial, designed to protect individuals from the unlawful and arbitrary deprivation of their basic rights and freedoms. It is contained in Article 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which has been signed by the PRC. The chapter also covers the right to fair trial under international law, and critically analyses whether trials in the military courts of China are just and fair. This chapter, as also the Chapter 8 highlight the large number issues related to instilling discipline amongst its cadre. The foremost issue remaining that of corruption among senior officers and the enforcement measures in place to check the systemic corruption in higher ranks. Chapter 8 stretches to examine the root of the issues related to corruption and the effectiveness of the recent attempts by Xi Jinping to root out corruption from the military. The military law reforms are an important part of President Xi Jinping's

comprehensive reforms of the political system and the military modernisation programme. The last chapter of the book under the title 'Gestalt' broadly draws the verdict on various aspects of the military legal system of the PLA and evaluates the efficacy of the military legal reforms especially those in last two decades.

The book provides a wholesome reading experience to military lawyers and scholars alike since it not only covers the administrative and criminal aspects of the military legal setup in the PLA, but also the unique role and position occupied by the government functionaries in the administration of military justice in PLA. The book would immensely add to readers' knowledge and help in drawing comparative analysis between the legal system of major armies of the world and suggest way forward for learning lessons, adopting best practices, and new approach to study military law.

*Group Captain Sharad Tewari, VM (Retd)*

**The Eastern Gate: War and Peace in Nagaland, Manipur and India's Far East.** By Sudeep Chakravarti; (Simon and Schuster, New Delhi, India, January 2022); Pages: 477; Price: Rs. 899/-; ISBN13: 978-9392099212

The Eastern Gate is Chakravarti's second book on the northeast, an area that he calls far-eastern India, after *Highway 39*, which was released in 2012. It was Chakravarti's previous attempt at unravelling the brutal history of Nagaland and Manipur, and their violent and restive present. The book touches upon issues of other states in the northeast but is essentially focused on Nagaland and Manipur. There are 42 chapters divided into three sections titled 'Smoke, Mirrors, and Smoke and Mirrors'.

Northeast India accounts for nearly a seventh of the country's landmass and is home to nearly 50 million people. It is a gateway to immense possibilities, from hydrocarbons to regional trade, and a bulwark of the country's security in the shadow of China. The region is also home to immense ethnic and communal tension, and an ongoing Naga conflict that is shrouded in a cloud of uncertainty. No wonder the author writes, "India's eastern elixir is a seductive, stunningly complex cocktail". The agenda is open ended and issues are picked up along the way and analysed through interviews with interested parties or by re-reading news reports concerning them.



In the book, the author discusses in detail the “issues that snarl community relationships in Manipur, and the massive umbilical of the Naga question that is irrevocably tied to this state and irrevocably affects the region”. The author also dwells on the Kuki community and its history and aspirations in the book. According to the Nagas, all the land in the hills actually belongs to them and the Kukis were ‘vagabonds’ who came and settled there. The Meiteis feel the entire state belongs to them — it was a part of their old kingdom. So, unless this major issue of land or territory gets resolved, we are not going to head anywhere, an Intelligence Bureau official puts in the book. The book attempts at peace-making at the community level between the Kukis and Nagas in Manipur. The bloodshed during the 1990s has remained a bitter memory and a sticking point between the two communities. The author records the peace overtures made by the Kuki Inpi Manipur (KIM) to their Naga counterpart, United Naga Council (UNC).

The Eastern Gate seeks to background the ambit of that ambition in this geo-strategic, geo-economic sweet spot with a combination of research and reportage in a narrative that draws in policymakers from politicians and bureaucrats to academicians and analysts, players of every hue from rebels to intelligence operatives, and people in whose name policies and plays are made. The book also highlights the mechanics, the pressures, and the counter-pressures of peace-making that has the potential to transform and elevate this region; the Naga peace process that saw an uptick in mid-2015 and; the crucial, and often misunderstood, ethno-political umbilical that ties it firmly to Manipur and, to a lesser extent, to Arunachal Pradesh and Assam.

A close watcher of the complex geo-ethno-political developments in the north-eastern states, Chakravarti, in this book, offers crucial historical perspectives into the beginning of the Naga problem, elaborating how the British started showing Naga homelands as part of their territory on papers even as they enjoyed little or no authority over the land and its people, and how the government of India, thereafter, continued with the British policy. The book, however, uses history mostly to elaborate the context of the present and the recent past, especially 2014 onwards, but the focus has been on discussing and weighing possible ways to bring peace to ‘the interlocked histories and territories of Manipur and Nagaland’.

Employing a 'dispatches' style of storytelling, and interviews with rebel leaders, politicians, bureaucrats, policy makers, security specialists and operatives, gunrunners, narcos, peace negotiators and community leaders, Chakravarti's narrative provides a definitive guide to the transition from war to peace, even as he keeps a firm gaze on the future.

*Dr Jyoti Yadav*

## USI LATEST PUBLICATION DURING 2021-2020

Pub Code	Title of Book & Name of Author	Price(Rs)	Year
R-111**	"STRATEGIC YEAR BOOK 2021" Concept and Structure by Maj Gen BK Sharma, AVSM, SM & Bar (Retd), Edited by Lt Gen GS Katoch, PVSM, AVSM, VSM (Retd), Gp Capt Sharad Tewari, VM (Retd) and Dr Roshan Khanijo	1850	2021
R-112	"Maritime Corridors in the Indo-Pacific : Geopolitical Implications for India" By Cdr Subhasish Sarangi M/s Pentagon Press	1295	2021
NSP-38**	"Role of Niche and Disruptive Technologies in India's Deterrence and War Fighting Capabilities" By Lt Gen PJS Panu, PVSM, AVSM, VSM (Retd)	295	2021
NSS-66**	"TRANSNATIONAL TERRORISM – Evolving Threats and Responses" Edited by Maj Gen RPS Bhaduria, VSM (Retd) and Dr Roshan Khanijo	850	2021
M-1/21**	"The Determinants of India's National Military Strategy" By Lt Gen (Dr) Rakesh Sharma, PVSM, UYSM, AVSM, VSM (Retd)	295	2021
OP-1/21**	"Russia-China Relations and Future Dynamics" By Brig LS Lidder, SM, VSM (Retd)	250	2021
OP-2 /21**	"India's Space Programme - Capabilities, Organisations and Warfighting Potential" By Lt Gen RS Panwar, AVSM, SM, VSM (Retd)	195	2021
OP-3 /21**	"The China-Pakistan Collusive Threat" By Maj Gen VK Singh, VSM (Retd) and Maj Gen Jagatbir Singh, VSM (Retd)	195	2021
OP-4 /21**	"The Coup in Myanmar : Strategic Implications and Breaking the Impasse" By Lt Gen Shakti Gurung, PVSM, UYSM, AVSM, VSM (Retd)	195	2021
CS3 /R-113**	"Cyber Security & Cyberspace in International Relations - A Roadmap for India's Cyber Security Policy" By Professor Gautam Sen	895	2021
Adm-1 (UNPO)/ 2021**	"India and UN Peace Operations Part - 1 : Principles of UN Peacekeeping and Mandate" Edited by Maj Gen AK Bardalai and Maj Gen PK Goswami, VSM (Retd)	295	2021
Adm-2 (UNPO)/2021**	"UN Peace Operations Part - II: Hostage Taking of Peacekeepers" Edited by Maj Gen AK Bardalai and Maj Gen PK Goswami, VSM (Retd)	295	2021
Adm-3 (UNPO)/ 2021**	"UN Peace Operations Part - III : Effectiveness of UN Peace Operations : Dynamics of Composition of Troops and Diversity on UN Peace Operations" Edited by Maj Gen AK Bardalai and Maj Gen PK Goswami, VSM (Retd)	295	2021
Adm-4(UNPO)/ 2021)**	"UN Peace Operations Part - IV : Protection of Civilians" Edited by Maj Gen AK Bardalai and Maj Gen PK Goswami, VSM (Retd)	295	2021
CMHCS-3	"WITH HONOR AND GLORY - Five Great Artillery Battles" By Maj Gen AJS Sandhu, VSM (Retd) Published by USI (CMHCS)	–	2020
R-105**	"Tao of Soldiering the Chinese Paradigm – The Shift in Human Resources Development in PLA and Lessons for India" By Col Nihar Kuanr	1995	2020
OP-1/2020**	"The Dynamics of the India – Nepal Relationship" By Lt Gen Shokin Chauhan, PVSM, AVSM, YSM, SM & VSM (Retd)	295	2020
OP-2/2020**	"Chinese Intransigence in Ladakh : An Overview" By Maj Gen PK Mallick, VSM (Retd)	295	2020
OP-2/2019**	"Unpacking SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region)" By Cdr Subhasish Sarangi	150	2020
CMHCS-1	"Traditions and Customs of the Indian Armed Forces" By Brig SP Sinha, VSM (Retd) M/s Manohar Publication, New Delhi	4500	2020
CMHCS-2**	"Laddie Goes to War – Indian Pilots in WWI" By Mr Somnath Sapru	1250	2020
R-106**	"India and China Building Strategic Trust" By Maj Gen Rajiv Narayanan, AVSM, VSM (Retd) & Professor Qiu Yonghui	1950	2020
R-107**	"Strategic Year Book 2020" Edited by Maj Gen BK Sharma, AVSM, SM & Bar (Retd) Lt Gen GS Katoch, PVSM, AVSM, VSM (Retd) and Dr Roshan Khanijo	1850	2020
R-108**	"The End of an Era India Exits Tibet - India Tibet Relations 1947-1962, Part-4" By Claude Arpi	1950	2020

\* Available at USI of India    \*\* Available at M/s Vij Books of India Pvt Ltd

# USI

(Estd. 1870)

## OUR ACTIVITIES

### Library and Reading Room

The library holds over 68,000 books, and journals, including some books of 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, on an astonishing variety of subjects. While the principal emphasis is on strategy and defence, there are a large number of works on different vistas of Indian life. There are memoirs, biographies, recollections, diaries, journals, manuscripts for scholars and researchers. The reading room is air-conditioned, spacious and well stocked in terms of current reading material. The library was automated in 2002.

### Correspondence Courses

The Institution runs regular correspondence courses for officers of the Armed Forces to assist them in preparing for promotion examinations, and for the entrance examinations to the Defence Services Staff College and Technical Staff College. Over the years, this has been a significant and well-received activity.

### USI Journal

The *USI Journal* is the oldest surviving defence journal in the country and in Asia, having first appeared in 1871. In an era when there is a feeling that free expression of views by Defence personnel is not looked upon kindly by the establishment, the Journal in fact provides just such a forum, without regard to seniority and length of service in the Armed Forces, subject of course, to propriety and quality of the written work.

### Centre for Strategic Studies and Simulation

The Erstwhile Centre for Research and its resources have been merged into the new Centre named as USI Centre for Strategic Studies and Simulation (USI-CS3) w.e.f. 01 January 2005. The Centre aims at conducting detailed and comprehensive enquiry, research and analyses of national and international security related issues, and gaming and simulation of strategic scenarios, to evolve options for wider discussion and consideration.

### USI Centre for UN Peacekeeping (CUNPK)

The Centre was established in 2000 and functioned with USI till Aug 2014, when it moved out of USI premises and was delinked from USI. Its aims were organising workshops, seminars and training capsules for peace-keepers, observers and staff officers – both

Indian and foreign. It also oversaw the practical training of Indian contingents. It functioned under a Board of Management headed by the Vice Chief of the Army Staff and worked in close coordination with the Service Headquarters and the Ministries of External Affairs and Defence. In August 2014, CUNPK moved out to the accommodation allotted by the Army HQ.

### Centre for Military History and Conflict Studies (CMHCS)

The USI-Centre for Military History and Conflict Studies (USI-CMHCS) was established in December 2000 at the behest of the three Service Headquarters for encouraging an objective study of all facets of Indian military history with a special emphasis on the history of the Indian Armed Forces. It focuses on diverse aspects of the history of Indian military evolution, policies and practices-strategic, tactical, logistical, organisational, socio-economic, as well as the field of contemporary conflict studies in the broader sense.

### Gold Medal Essay Competition

Every year the Institution organises a gold medal essay competition open to all officers. These essays, the first one of which was introduced in 1871, constitute a barometer of opinion on matters that affect national security in general and the defence forces in particular.

### USI-War Wounded Foundation Joint Essay Competition

This essay competition was instituted in 2021 after signing of the MoU between USI and the War Wounded Foundation. The competition is open to all across the globe and must be on the subject of issues relating to the experiences and/or rehabilitation of war disabled personnel of the Armed Forces of India.

### Lt Gen SL Menezes Memorial Essay Competition

This has been instituted from 2015 on a subject related to Armed Forces Historical Research. The Essay Competition is open to all across the globe.

### Lectures, Discussions and Seminars

A series of lectures, discussions and seminars on service matters, international affairs, and topics of general interest to the Services, are organised for the benefit of local members in Delhi.

### MacGregor Medal

This medal is awarded to Armed Forces personnel for valuable reconnaissance and adventure activity they may have undertaken.

## MEMBERSHIP

The following are eligible to become members of the Institution :

- Officers of the Armed Forces
- Class I Gazetted Officers of Group 'A' Central Services.
- Any category mentioned above will be eligible even though retired or released from the Service.
- Cadets from the NDA and Cadets from the Service Academies and Midshipmen.

For further particulars, please write to Director General, USI of India, Rao Tula Ram Marg, (Opposite Signals Enclave) Post Bag No. 8, Vasant Vihar PO, New Delhi – 110 057