

United Service Institution of India

'Lt Gen SL Menezes Memorial Indian Military History Essay Competition 2024'

**Subject: Meghna Heli Bridging Ops 1971 War : Appraisal
and Lessons**

Concept

1. The essay on the subject should be approached keeping in mind the following:

(a) The Liberation War in Dec 1971 was won for a variety of reasons which resulted in liberating and converting East Pakistan to the new democratic country 'Bangladesh'.

(b) One of the lesser known and remembered facts, is about a few helicopters, pilots and technical personnel of IAF, who rose to the occasion to help the soldiers of IV Corps to leap over the riverine and marshy areas quickly in four 'Special Heli Borne Operations' (SHBOs), with no precedent or doctrine. The Helicopter Operations shortened the war and contributed to the quick victory, thus saving lives and the agony of long war - before the world powers intervened to call for a cease fire.

(c) Four Special Heli Borne Operations across the mighty Meghna River, proved particularly invaluable in the rapid movement of ground forces inside East Pakistan, where the terrain was criss-crossed by innumerable rivers and rivulets. The complete air supremacy achieved by the IAF in the east enabled the helicopters to operate safely.

(d) These Special Heliborne Operations provided a new dimension to warfare.

Rules

2. **The competition is open to all members of the Armed Forces of India, the Territorial Army, Assam Rifles and the Senior Division of National Cadet Corps, and the Paramilitary Forces, Police and Civil Administration in India including retired personnel. Entries by foreign nationals are also accepted.**

3. The word limit of the essay is between 3,000 to 4,000 words (including endnotes). The word-length should be shown in brackets at the end of the essay. **Entries not exhibiting the number of words or those exceeding the word limit are liable to be rejected.**
4. Essays should be written in the English language and printed on one side of the paper in double space and should be submitted in TRIPLICATE in hard copy.
5. Entries will be strictly ANONYMOUS. No detail pertaining to the author is to be mentioned on the essay or in the covering letter. One sealed envelope is to accompany the essay with a paper indicating the author's name, address, email. Service officers are to indicate their personal number, rank, date of commission, unit, address and e-mail. On the outside of the envelope, only the title of the essay is to be written. These envelopes will be opened during the USI Council meeting, after the judges have given their decision. **Essays violating the anonymity rule will be rejected.**
6. The essay must be an author's personal and original effort. Sources are to be cited in the laid down format. Jointly written essays are not accepted. Winning entries will be run through an anti-plagiarism software. **Entries displaying blatant plagiarism of content and for which a soft copy is not received will be rejected.**
7. Three judges chosen by the USI will adjudicate. Marks will be given on the basis of the following:
 - (a) The extent to which the contribution throws fresh light on the subject.
 - (b) Whether in the whole or in large part it is in a form suitable for publication.
 - (c) Understanding of the subject.
 - (d) Thought, logic, development of theme.
 - (e) Language/expression.
 - (f) Essays must have relevant footnote references and a bibliography, as applicable. Essay NOT having footnotes or bibliography will be rejected.

8. **The award of the judges will be final.** They may recommend the first prize to the winner (a certificate and cash prize of Rs.10,000/-), as well as a certificate only to the runners-up. USI life membership will be given to the essay competition winners on gratis basis. The names of the winners of the essay competition and the winning essays if recommended by the judges for publication will be published in the forthcoming USI Journals.

9. The Institution reserves the right not to make an award, if none of the essays submitted are of a standard which the judges consider adequate.

10. Copyright of all essays submitted will be reserved by the USI of India.

11. All essays should be sent to the Director General, United Service Institution of India, Rao Tula Ram Marg, Post Bag No.8, Vasant Vihar PO, New Delhi-110 057, **to be received not later than 15 Sep 2024. Softcopies should be emailed to menezesessay@gmail.com. Essays received after last date will not be accepted. The envelopes should be marked as follows:**

**‘Lt Gen SL Menezes Memorial Indian Military History
Essay Competition 2024’**

12. For any clarifications/queries please contact the Director CMHCS at menezesessay@gmail.com.

Style Sheet

13. All essays must conform to the CMHCS style sheet, available at <https://usiofindia.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/style-guide-CMSCS-1.doc>.

