

Editorial

1. This year is the 150th Anniversary of the United Service Institution of India. The quarterly USI journal has been printed without a break from 1872 onwards with some special issues in between. This is its 620th issue. We believe that the selected topics in this issue are particularly relevant for the year at hand and will have an enduring relevance as they cover potentially growing threats, important issues and policy challenges. This issue has 10 researched articles and one personal narrative. The articles are grouped in five specific areas. As in previous editions, we invited some experts to write articles analysing emerging or evolving trends in conflict. Other articles were selected from those sent to us by military writers who want to air a view point on subjects on which they have expertise.

4. The first two articles are about India's neighbourhood. They are 'Afghanistan: Déjà vu or a New Beginning' by Shri Amar Sinha, IFS (Retd) and Dr Geeta Kochhar, of the Jawaharlal Nehru University, who has written an article titled 'Kalapani-Lipulekh Row: Rift between India and China Serves Nepal'. Shri Sinha goes into the Afghan peace accord and the problems it faces in implementation. He concludes that India must retain a presence in Afghanistan in its national interest. Dr Kochhar writes about an issue which is presently straining Indo-Nepal relations. She writes that unless the Indian government settles the issue, the irritants will become a major factor used by Nepal to impact India's role in the region.

5. The next two articles are about new ways of war. Air Mshl Anil Khosla, PVSM, AVSM, VM (Retd) writes on 'Offensive Use of Air Power in No War No Peace Situation'. He brings out that in this scenario, the intelligence driven counter-terror strike against a terror camp in Pakistan last year highlighted the flexibility of air power to be used in a No War No Peace situation. He brings out that in this presently predominant way of war, a potent aerospace force has to be ready to deliver decisive blows at very short notice with precision and minimal collateral damage. The second article, 'Suicide Terrorism — The Divine Grey Zone Weapon' by Lt Gen Dushyant Singh,

PVSM, AVSM (Retd) delves into deterring terrorist organisations especially those which undertake suicide terrorism. He argues that such terrorists can be deterred by building a perception of invincibility through the twin strategies of deterrence by denial and punishment as also certain environmental factors.

6. The next three articles are about organisation and structuring of the armed forces. Maj Gen Harsha Kakkar (Retd) writes on 'Creating Theatre Command to Meet Our Specific Conditions'. He states that there is no escaping the fact that Integrated Theatre Commands will be established. However, Indian conditions and requirements are at variance from other countries and, hence, require a considered solution, therefore, we need to move with caution and not make rushed judgements leading to subsequent changes. Maj Gen RS Yadav, VSM (Retd) writes on 'Re-structuring, Staffing and Equipping of the Indian Armed Forces'. He brings out that the Indian Armed Forces ought to be structured, manned and equipped on threat basis and not on short term considerations of revenue availability, though this factor must be kept in mind. Lastly, Brig Narendra Kumar, SM, VSM (Retd) writes on 'Hybrid Warfare Division: An Urgent Operational Requirement for India'. He argues that India needs to develop asymmetric edge and build capabilities to fight ambiguous and amorphous adversaries through synergised application of intelligence, information, cyber, electronic, conventional and unconventional means. For this, India requires a new organisation for Hybrid War

7. The next two articles are in the realm of history as well as its application to current issues. 'Historicity of the Non-Expansionist Indian Strategic Culture' by Col PK Gautam (Retd) gives a rare look into the reasons why it is not considered righteous to undertake colonial conquest in Indian strategic culture from ancient times. He states that this continues to be the underlying principle and ethics of Indian foreign policy behaviour. An article like this can help the world understand our strategic choices and our benign intentions. In the article 'Evolution of Veteran Medical Care Support System in India', Maj Gen Ashok Kumar, VSM covers the evolution of the

veteran healthcare of the Indian Armed Forces post-independence until the start of the Ex-servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS) in 2003. He brings out the challenges faced and the efforts made to surmount them. An article like this, besides adding to the history of the evolution of veteran healthcare, also helps veterans understand the systems' strengths and constraints better.

8. The last article is on an important internal security issue. In the article 'Neighbours Yet Strangers: A Critical Analysis of Naga Peace Accord', Maj Gen VS Ranade writes that the signing of the 'Framework Agreement' between the Government of India and the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Isaac-Muivah), on 03 August 2015, has far reaching consequences not only for Nagaland but also for other North East states. The author brings out that the potentiality of the 'Framework Agreement' to restore peace in Nagaland needs to be examined by a critical scrutiny.

9. **This issue also has a Personal Narrative.** *The USI Journal will carry only one Personal Narrative per issue. Submissions should not exceed 2500 words, preferably be in the first person, and written in a narrative style without self-aggrandisement. The subject should fall in the genre of history.* This issue carries a personal narrative which was a WhatsApp post by the author, Col Bhupinder Shahi (Retd), and the same was converted into an article with the author's permission. Titled, 'Seven Days without Fire!', it is an account of how the inability to have the means to light a stove can spell disaster in an environment like the Siachen Glacier.

10. **The issue also carries four short book reviews of the following books:**

- (a) Missing in Action: The Prisoners Who Never Came Back.
By Chander Suta Dogra.
Reviewed by Maj Gen BK Sharma, AVSM, SM & bar (Retd)

- (b) Allahu Akbar: Understanding the Great Mughal in Today's India.
By Manimugdha Sharma.
Reviewed by Sqn Ldr Rana TS Chhina, MBE (Retd).
- (c) Kashmir: Beyond Article 370.
By Bashir Assad.
Reviewed by Maj Gen Ashok Joshi, VSM (Retd).
- (d) The Fragility of Order: Essays in Honour of KPS Gill.
Ed. Ajay Sahni.
Reviewed by Lt Gen PC Katoch, PVSM, UYSM, AVSM, SC (Retd).

11. As I sign off, I place on record the USI of India's appreciation for Maj Gen YK Gera (Retd) from whom I have taken over the reins of Chief Editor. Gen Gera has edited the USI Journal for two spells, from 1997 to 2007 and 2018 to March 2020. We wish Maj Gen YK Gera (Retd) all the best. We also wish good health and 'stay safe' wishes in these extraordinary Covid pandemic times to all our readers.

Lt Gen Ghanshyam Singh Katoch, PVSM, AVSM, VSM (Retd)