

Editorial

The Seventeenth Colonel Pyara Lal Memorial Lecture on 'Revitalising the Image of the Indian Armed Forces' was delivered by Lieutenant General Vijay Oberoi, PVSM, AVSM, VSM (Retd), former Vice Chief of Army Staff on 04 Sep 2013 and a text of the same is being carried as the lead article in this Issue of the Journal. Lieutenant General Oberoi covered a very wide canvas bringing out both the systemic and non-systemic aspects of the subject which is very close to the heart of every member of the Service fraternity. Lieutenant General SK Sinha, PVSM (Retd) who chaired the event added a lot of value to the talk quoting from his personal experiences during the concluding remarks. Mr and Mrs SL Agarwal (Colonel Pyara Lal's brother and his wife) also graced the occasion. The lecture was well attended and as expected, generated a number of questions and comments.

The next article is the first prize winning essay of the USI Gold Medal Essay Competition 2012 – Group B, on the subject of 'Geostrategic Importance of India's Island Territories and Implications for National Security' by Captain Balamurugan R Subbu. Captain Subbu after a geostrategic survey of the Indian Ocean Region has very clearly brought to fore the importance of island territories and the need to develop them as a 'strategic strongpoint' to safeguard India's national interests in the Indo-Pacific Region.

Continuing in the same vein, the next two articles also deal with different aspects of national security. Lieutenant General PC Katoch, PVSM, UYSM, AVSM, SC (Retd) in his article 'Military Diplomacy and National Security' has highlighted the importance of military diplomacy in the conduct of international relations in today's world and the need to synchronise the same with Country's foreign policy. Captain JC Sharma, SM, IFS (Retd) had delivered a talk at USI on the subject 'Diaspora, Foreign Policy and National Security' on

13 Aug 2013. A text of his talk is being carried in this Issue of the Journal. Based on his personal experience, he has analysed the role played by the diaspora in furthering the interests of their country of origin and how at times their actions and interests can also become a major strategic liability. In today's globalised and interconnected world, diaspora is playing an ever increasing role in international relations; hence it is equally important to have an active diaspora policy for a mutually beneficial engagement.

The next article 'The Afghan National Solidarity Programme : A Grassroot Development and Governance Model' by Ms Swati Kundra deals with an aspect of life in war torn Afghanistan which has not received much attention in the media but is playing an important role in bringing about a change at the grassroots level. She takes stock of the National Solidarity Programme (NSP) which was started in 2003 and has been making a 'sure and gradual progress' behind the scenes in transforming lives of the common Afghan people.

Lieutenant Colonel Arun Kumar Vashishta in his article 'Service Jurisprudence in the Defence Forces : A Conceptual Approach – An Overview' has critically looked at the Defence Services Jurisprudence in India as it has evolved and has been practised since Independence, including the establishment of the Armed Forces Tribunals. He argues that Jurisprudence relating to Defence Forces in India is in a state of evolution and is a subject for research and innovation.

Health Care is an important aspect of human life, even so for the veterans who move into civilian life after years of hazardous military service. Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS) which came into being in 2003 has been a major step in providing health care to the veterans after retirement; yet even after a decade, the level of satisfaction remains low. Brigadier Amarjit Singh Randwal

(Retd) in his article 'ECHS – Needs Restructuring' has analysed the scheme in its functioning, identified major lacunae and made far reaching recommendations for its restructuring. The article definitely provides a food for thought for the policy makers!

Indianisation of the Armed Forces during the British rule was a subject which came up often enough during the early part of the 20th Century; yet it made only a halting progress, till the beginning of the Second World War which necessitated large scale induction of Indians into the officer cadre. In the next article 'Indianisation Process and Creation of an All India Brigade', Mr Narender Yadav traces the chequered history of Indianisation through early years leading to the formation of an All India Brigade (51st Indian Brigade) which came into being towards the end of 1944 and fought its maiden battle "The Battle of Kangaw" against the Japanese in Jan-Feb 1945 and acquitted itself creditably. The process of Indianisation was neither easy, nor smooth and the author captures its ups and downs as also various forces at work to stall the same with remarkable insight.

Squadron Leader RTS Chhina (Retd), Secretary and Editor of CAFHR at USI was called upon to deliver a talk on All India Radio on the subject of 'Documenting of Indian Defence History' on 27 Aug 2013. A text of his talk is the next piece in this Issue of the Journal. Apart from many other issues, he particularly brings out the inadequacies in our system which prevents historical documents coming into the public domain.

Encouraged by the response from our readers about the earlier two articles on 1962 War in the Kameng Frontier Division, I was motivated to undertake research into the War in Ladakh of which not much has been written about or known. It was a revealing as well as a humbling experience. I have once again taken the liberty to pen down an account of the '1962 War in the Western Sector (Ladakh)' which has primarily

been put together from Chinese sources. Due to the constraints of space it is an abridged version and there may appear some gaps in the narrative. My apologies for the same. We do plan to carry a fuller version in a book on the same subject which is a work in progress.

In continuation of the ongoing series, the last section of the Journal carries four personal experiences of 'Wars – As Seen Through Soldiers' Eyes'. These are: 'My Experience of the Retreat From Tiddim During World War II : Feb to Apr 1944' by Late Lieutenant Colonel RK Duleep Singh (Retd); 'First Hand Account of Delhi During Partition in 1947' by Major General SS Chhachhi, SM (Retd); 'Battle of Naushera – 1948' by Major General Lachman Singh Lehl, PVSM, VrC (Retd); and '1962-63 : The United Nations Operations in the Congo' by Major General SP Mahadevan, AVSM (Retd). If you have an experience to share, please do pen it down and send it to us. However, please keep in mind that this is not an attempt to produce a history of various battles, nor is it meant to eulogise oneself, justify one's actions, run someone else down or even to draw lessons, **but a personal experience which captures the heat and dust of the battle in all frankness and humility.**

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Reference Page 458, sub-para (d) of this Issue of the Journal.

Please also see Page 523 of the Journal for some details regarding the airlift and use of tanks by India in the Chushul Sub-sector.

Editor