

The MacGregor Memorial Medal

Squadron Leader Rana TS Chhina, MBE (Retd)®

Introduction

Founded in 1870, for the promotion of interest in 'Naval and

Military Art, Science and Literature', the United Service Institution (USI) of India was the creation of the energetic and ambitious Assistant Quarter-Master General (AQMG) of India, Colonel (later Major General) Sir Charles Metcalfe MacGregor, KCB, CSI, CIE (1840-1887). The USI library, in its early years, also served as the 'back office' of the Intelligence Branch of Army Headquarters. Military Intelligence was then a function of the QMG¹ and MacGregor was responsible for laying its foundations in India. MacGregor had a keen insight into the political geography of the Indian frontiers and Central Asia. In 1875, he had reconnoitred, on horseback, the country and land routes through Iran to the interiors of Afghanistan, reaching to within a few miles of Herat.² Military intelligence was the basis of inception of the Macgregor Medal. In post-independence India, to date it is the only non-presidential award permitted to be worn in uniform.

The Background of the Medal

In the second half of the nineteenth century, Great Britain and Tsarist Russia were the two major power blocs that influenced world affairs. In 1885, Russian forces seized Afghan territory south of the Oxus River near a place called Panjdeh (modern Serhetabat in Turkmenistan). The Panjdeh Incident, or Panjdeh Scare, rekindled British fears of a Russian threat to their Indian Empire through Afghanistan. Following the incident, the Anglo-Russian Boundary Commission was established to delineate the northern frontier of Afghanistan. Imperial Russia and Britain had been locked in a power struggle, fuelled by conflicting interests in Central and South Asia, for many years. The conflict was known euphemistically as 'The Great Game'; and the Panjdeh Incident came close to triggering full-scale war between the two powers.³

One of the aspects that troubled the authorities in India was the lack of reliable information about the vast tracts of uncharted territory that lay along the remote and inaccessible frontiers of their Indian Empire. The person who devoted his energies to filling this gap, in his capacity as QMG and originator of the military intelligence set-up in India, was Major General Sir Charles MacGregor. Therefore, shortly after he passed away in February 1887, the USI Council instituted the MacGregor Memorial Medal (MMM) in May 1887 to commemorate his memory.⁴

The criteria for award of the MMM were laid out at a meeting held on 03 July 1888 at Shimla, presided over by the Commander-in-Chief (C-in-C) General (later Field Marshal) Sir FS Roberts, with the Earl of Dufferin, the Viceroy, being present as Chief Guest.⁵

Initially, the award was to be given only for significant military reconnaissance or journey of exploration or survey in remote areas of India, or in countries bordering, or under the jurisdiction of, India, which produced new information of value for the defence of India. The award was usually of a silver medal, but a gold medal could be awarded in place of a silver medal, or in addition to it, for especially valuable work. During the period of the British Raj, the MacGregor Medal became the de facto award of 'the Great Game' and among its recipients were names such as Sir Francis Younghusband (1890) and Major General Orde Wingate (1943). The first Indian soldier to get the award was Havildar (later Subedar, IOM) Ramzan Khan, 3rd Sikh Infantry, Punjab Frontier Force (PFF) for a military reconnaissance carried out during the campaign in Samana in 1891.

The Rules Governing the Award

Pre-Independence. Before independence, the rules for award, made annually in the month of June, were as follows:

- Only officers and soldiers belonging to the Army in India (including those in civil employ) were eligible for the award of the medal.⁶
- For officers – British or Indian – silver medal.

- For soldiers – British or Indian – smaller size silver medal with Rs 100 gratuity. (No British soldier ever received the award).
- For especially valuable work, a gold medal could be awarded in place of one of the silver medals, or in addition to the silver medals, whenever the administrators of the fund deem it desirable.
- Also the Council could award a special additional silver medal, without gratuity, to a soldier for especially good work.
- The award of medals is made by His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, as Vice-Patron, and the Council of the United Service Institution, who were appointed administrators of the Fund by the MacGregor Memorial Committee.
- Personal risk to life during the reconnaissance or exploration is not a necessary qualification for the award of the medal; but, in the event of two journeys being of equal value, the man who has run the greater risk will be considered to have the greater claim to the reward.
- When the work of the year has either not been of sufficient value or has been received too late for consideration before the Council Meeting, the medal may be awarded for any reconnaissance during previous years considered by His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief to deserve it.
- The medal may be worn in uniform by Indian soldiers on ceremonial parades, suspended round the neck by the ribbon issued with the medal.⁷

Post-Independence. Subsequently, as opportunities for journeys of reconnaissance or exploration declined; on 22 October 1986, the USI Council expanded the scope to include mountain/desert expeditions, river rafting, world cruises, polar expeditions, running/trekking across the Himalayas, and adventure flights amongst the eligibility criteria. First priority, however, was to continue with military reconnaissance. This decision regarding expanded scope was again confirmed by the Council in its meetings held on 22/23 Dec 1994 and 11 December 1997.

Personnel of the Armed Forces, Territorial Army, Reserve Force, Assam Rifles, and Militias are eligible for the award. Recommendations are received by the USI through the Joint Planning Committee. However, for non-military reconnaissance, these can also be sent directly to the USI, duly endorsed by the CISC/Vice Chief. The award is decided by the USI Council.

The Medal

The obverse of the medal has the effigy of Major Gen Sir Charles Metcalfe MacGregor, while the reverse side depicts figures of personnel belonging to various communities that were enlisted in the Army at the time. The ribbon of the medal is composed of the colours of the MacGregor Tartan.



The Obverse and Reverse of the MacGregor Medal



MacGregor Medal with Ribbon

The medal may be worn around the neck, in uniform, on ceremonial occasions prescribed by the respective services. It is the only non-presidential award permitted to be worn in uniform. The medal is not issued unnamed. Apart from the recipient's rank, initials, name and regiment, the year of reconnaissance/journey is inscribed on the rim, along with the words 'For Valuable Reconnaissance' or 'For Specially Valuable Reconnaissance' or 'For Valuable Survey' or 'For Journey of Exploration' or 'For Adventure Activity', as the case may be.

Major Bob Hammond, in his book on the history of the MMM, starts with a quote from Kipling's poem *The Winners*: "Down to Gehenna (Jahannum) or up to the Throne, He travels the fastest who travels alone". The sentiment epitomises the spirit that infused most recipients of this unique award. They usually had a

love of the outdoors and exulted in the wide open spaces in the deserts or mountains along India's vast and remote frontiers.

So far 122 medals have been awarded: 07 gold medals to officers, 67 standard size silver medals to officers, including 5 VCOs/JCOs (one officer winning it twice in 1938 and 1946), and 48 reduced size silver medals to soldiers. The last medal to a soldier was awarded in 1944, and to an officer in 2013. 18 Indian officers and a JCO have won the medal since independence. The year wise details of the recipients are listed in the last part of this journal.

Endnotes

¹ Robert Hammond, History of *The MacGregor Memorial Medal*, New Delhi: Lancer, 1994, p.10

² Anon., *A short biography of the late Major General Sir CM MacGregor, KCB, CSI, CIE, Bengal Staff Corps*, Govt Central Press, Simla, 1888, p.5.

³ For a brief encapsulation of the Russian threat, see: David Omissi, *The Sepoy and the Raj: The Indian Army, 1860-1940*, London: Macmillan Press, 1998, pp. 203-207.

⁴ The medal became effective only from 1888 onwards.

⁵ Sqn Ldr RTS Chhina, 'Award of the MacGregor Memorial Medal to Colonel Narinder Kumar, PVSM, KC, AVSM (Retd)', *Journal of the United Service Institution of India*, Vol. CXL, No. 580, April-June 2010, p.155.

⁶ N.B. – The terms "officer" and "soldier" include those serving in the British and Indian armies and their reserves, also those serving in Auxiliary Forces, such as the Indian Auxiliary and Territorial Forces and Corps under Local Governments, Frontier Militia, Levies and Military Police, also all ranks serving in the Royal Air Force, Indian Air Force, Royal Indian Navy and the Indian States Forces.

⁷ Replacements of the ribbon may be obtained on payment from the Secretary, USI, Simla.

©Squadron Leader Rana Tejpratap Singh Chhina, MBE (Retd) is a recipient of the Macgregor Medal. He is a military historian of repute and heads the Centre for Military History and Conflict Studies at the USI. He has been honoured by the King of Belgium with the Order of Leopold for his studies of the contribution of the British Indian Army in the defence of Belgium in World War I.

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Gold Medal Essay Competition

List of Winners



| Year | Subject | Winner |
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| Durand Gold Medal | | |
| 1872 (71-72) | On the equipment of a field force for field service. | Lt Col FS Roberts, VC |
| 1873 | On the organisation of a Transport Department suitable to the exigencies of the British Army in any part of the Globe. | Capt JAS Colquhoun |
| 1874 | On the organisation of an Intelligence and Topographical Department, best calculated to meet the requirements of the Army in India. | Capt JAS Colquhoun |
| 1875 to 78 | No award. | |
| USI Gold Medal (Hereafter) | | |
| 1879 | Persia – It's political past and future. | Maj St John |
| 1880 | A transport service for Asiatic Warfare. | Lt EG Barrow |
| 1881 | No award. | |
| 1882 | Strategical measures best adapted for enabling our troops to meet an army provided with artillery and all modern arms of precision beyond our North West Frontier. | Lt AH Mason |
| 1883 Gold Medal | The Volunteer Force of India – It's present and future. | Lt Col EHH Collen |
| 1884 Gold Medal | A system of reserves for the Native Army as at present organised. | Capt EG Barrow |
| 1885 & 86 | No award. | |
| 1887 Gold Medal | The formation of a railway service corps from the North Western Railway. | Lt AC Yate |
| 1888 Gold Medal | Infantry tactics of the future. | Maj FN Maude |

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| Silver Medal | Specially awarded | Maj GF Young |
| 1889 Gold Medal | The organisation of European and Eurasian subjects in India (including volunteers) not belonging to the Army and Navy. | Capt B Duff |
| | Second prize (but not silver medal) | Capt AH Mason. |
| 1890 Gold Medal | The organisation and employment in war of Native Cavalry. | Capt CM Maguire |
| 1891 Gold Medal | On recruiting grounds of the future Indian Army, the Pax Britannica having reduced the warlike spirit of some races. | Capt CM Maguire |
| 1892 | No award. | |
| 1893 Gold Medal | Mountain warfare as applicable to India. | Maj GM Bullock |
| 1894 Gold Medal | On the tactical training in district concentrations best fitted for preparing the Army of India for war against a civilised country and against savage tribes in mountain or jungle warfare. | Capt FC Carter |
| 1895 Gold Medal | Six tactical problems, with solutions applicable to India. | Lt Col JPC Neville |
| 1896 Gold Medal | The improvement of the present organisation of transport in India. | Capt AH Bingley |
| 1897 Gold Medal | The best method of recruiting the Indian Armies from sources not hitherto tapped. | Capt GSF Napier |
| 1898 Gold Medal | The creation and maintenance of a reserve of officers for the Indian Army. | Maj H Mullaly |
| Silver Medal | Specially awarded | Capt CH Clay. |
| 1899 Gold Medal | The tactical principals and details best suited to warfare on the frontier of India. | Lt Col JPC Neville |
| 1900 Gold Medal | The use of light railways (2'6" gauge) in Indian Warfare, and the organisation and working of Railway Corps. | Capt HF Thullier |
| Silver Medal | Specially awarded | Capt G Lublock |

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| 1901 Gold Medal | The practical training of British and Native Troops in India with reference to the lessons of the war in South Africa. | Lt Col GP Ranken |
| 1902 Gold Medal | The training and equipment of Cavalry and Mounted Infantry in India and their tasks. | Capt HHF Turner |
| 1903 Gold Medal | A review of our system of military education and training of regimental and staff officers, and suggestions for its practical improvement. | Maj WG Hamilton |
| Silver Medal | Specially awarded | Capt RFG Bond |
| 1904 Gold Medal | The influence and application of sea power on expeditions based on India. | Maj GF MacMunn |
| 1905 Gold Medal | A comparative study of the organisation, training and duties of the staff in the Armies of France, Germany and England, with proposals deduced therefrom for the organisation and training of staff suited to imperial needs. | Maj GR Cockerill |
| 1906 | No award. | |
| 1907 Gold Medal | The use of entrenchments and field fortifications in the attack, and entrenchment tools. | Maj EJM Wood |
| 1908 Gold Medal | The manner in which the infantry attack can best be supported by artillery fire. | Maj HS Jeudwine |
| 1909 Gold Medal | The future of the Native Officer – Direct promotion, employment and career. | Maj EMJ Molyneux |
| 1910 | No award. | |
| 1911 Gold Medal | The maintenance of law and order in India, in relation to cooperation of civil and military powers. | Mr D Petrie (Punjab Police) |
| 1912 Gold Medal | In appears to be generally recognised that the three principles of sea command, self defence and mutual support must be the basis of any sound system of imperial defence. Discuss the responsibility | Maj BC Carter |

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| | of India in regard to the use of her existing military forces in giving effect to the above principles. | |
| 1913 Gold Medal | Examine the application of the main principles laid down in field service regulations (The Battle) to conditions of a campaign in a terrain similar to that of Baluchistan and Afghanistan, against an army organized on modern principles. | Maj AG Thomson |
| 1914 Gold Medal | The tactics of street fighting as applied to Eastern Countries. | Lt Col WF Bainbridge |
| Silver Medal | Specially awarded | Maj CL Norman |
| 1915 | The best method of utilizing the domiciled community for military purposes, and suggestions for its training. | Mr RB Ewbank, ICS |
| 1916 Gold Medal | The improvement in strength and efficiency of volunteer force in India. | Maj WE Crum |
| 1917 Gold Medal | The possibility of utilizing India as a military asset to the empire more in accordance with her size and population than at present. | Maj WF Blaker |
| 1918 Gold Medal | The manoeuvres of the future and the general principles on which the higher peace training should be conducted, in view of the lessons of the present war. | Capt AV Gompertz |
| 1919 Gold Medal | The duties and organisation of the Indian Army after the war and its relation to the British Army. | Capt MLA Gompertz |
| 1920 Gold Medal | Under KR 106, COs are responsible for the systematic and efficient instruction of officers in all professional duties and for preparation for examinations. Is the system best calculated to secure efficiency, and if not what system should take its place. | Lt Col FS Keen |
| 1921 | No award. | |
| 1922 Gold Medal | India and the next war. | Maj HG Martin |

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| 1923 Gold Medal | To what extent would the use of the latest scientific and mechanical methods of warfare affect operations on the North West Frontier of India? | Col FS Keen |
| 1924 No Medal | Rs 100/- | Maj CF Stoehr |
| | Rs 50/- each | Capt Birdwood Maj Birdwood |
| 1925 | No award. | |
| 1926 Gold Medal + Rs 150/- | Bearing in mind the responsibility of the British Government for the well-being of the empire as a whole discuss the progressive steps to be taken to create an Indian Army commanded, trained and administered by the Indians, and capable of affording that support to a self-governed India without which she will be unable to take her place in the empire on the terms of co-partnership. | Maj LE Dennys |
| 1927 Gold Medal + Rs 50/- | In the event of war threatening British interests in the Far East and Indian Ocean, consider the best method of employing the fighting forces of India, pending the mobilisation of the resources of the empire. | Maj D Mc A Hogg |
| | Rs 50/- each | Capt JGO Whitehead Lt Col JC Dundas |
| 1928 Gold Medal + Rs 100/- | Consider the necessity of increased mechanisation of the Army in India. | Maj KF Franks |
| | Rs 50/- | Maj J Mc LG Taylor |
| 1929 Gold Medal | How can we protect ourselves in future operations against Tribesmen. | Maj LE Dennys |
| 1930 Gold Medal + Rs 150/- | In view of the tribal raids at the frontier reducing and economic conditions remaining poor, how best can we assist in the economic | Maj CMP Durnford |

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| | development of the tribal territory? | |
| 1931 Gold Medal + Rs 150/- | Discuss the organisation and control of the Military, Naval and Air Forces in India during the future advance towards responsible government, and their relation to the police and other civil forces of the crown. | Lt Col GN Ford |
| 1932 Gold Medal + Rs 150/- | Disarmament and its effect on the foreign policy of the British Empire. | Lt RG Thurburn |
| 1933 | No award. | |
| 1934 Gold Medal | Compare and contrast the French in dealing with tribes in Morocco and by British in North West Frontier, and arrive at the best system for defence and control of North West Frontier. | Maj CMP Durnford |
| 1935 & 36 | No award. | |
| 1937 Gold Medal | Discuss Mr Baldwin saying that "The Rhine is our Frontier". | Lt Col RPL Ranking |
| 1938 Gold Medal | Discuss the dictum that the size of modern armies has rendered strategy wholly subordinate to tactics. | Maj JD Milne |
| 1939 to 43 | No award. | |
| 1944 No Medal Rs 300/- | In the past it has been the policy that training of the Armed Forces of the Empire should not be related to any particular type of terrain. Discuss this policy in respect of land and air forces in the light of the experience gained in the present war. | Lt Col JFR Forman |
| 1945 Gold Medal | In what manner the Armed Forces can best meet their peace time commitments within post war limitations of finance and yet form a basis for expansion. | Col ECV Foucar |
| 1946 No Medal Rs 250/- | Coordination and control in peace and war of the forces of all three Services, British and Dominion, in the Indian Ocean and neighbouring countries. | Lt Col GLW Armstrong |

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| 1947 Gold Medal Rs 200/- | Man Management. | Cdr CW Morton |
| 1948 No Medal Rs 250/- Rs 150/- | Are Officers Messes suitable for Indian Conditions? | Lt Col DK Palit Flt Lt BK Roy |
| 1949 No Medal Rs 200/- | What are the qualities required of a successful unit commander and how best can we ensure that our officers are trained in leadership to become good commanders and good leaders? | Lt Col BL Raina |
| Rs 100/- | | Col Rajendra Singh |
| 1950 Gold Medal | India can ill afford the present cost of Defence Forces. Can they be used for nation building and revenue earning without detriment to their efficiency in war? | Brig BS Bhagat |
| 1951 Gold Medal | Military lessons of the recent Korean War. Do these suggest any alteration in the organisation of our Armed Forces? | Brig BS Bhagat |
| Rs 300/- | | Lt Col DK Palit |
| 1952 No Medal Rs 400/- | Examine the complaint that the right type of Young Man is not coming forward for recruitment. What are the reasons and likely remedies? | Brig BS Bhagat |
| Rs 300/- | | Col MN Batra |
| 1953 No Medal Rs 200/- | How can Officers be encouraged that helped to bracken their outlook? | Maj GS Wakanar |
| Rs 100/- | | Lt Cdr NS Tyabji |
| 1954 Gold Medal Rs 200/- | Methods and modifications for fostering and maintaining a strong, healthy fighting spirit. | Maj J Nazareth |
| 1955 Gold Medal | A major modern war affects all aspects of a nation's planning and economy, and all sectors are involved. What steps should be | Maj VP Naik |

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| | taken in peace time to develop this homogeneity to ensure full coordination and cooperation. | |
| Rs 200/- | | Maj MRP Varma |
| 1956 Gold Medal + Rs 200/- | Discuss the validity of the statement, with special reference to Armed Forces in India. "A truly National Army recruited without reference to areas, regions and classes can be a great instrument to secure cohesion and transmutation of provincialism into an integral nationalism". | Lt Col Naib, VP |
| Rs 200/- | | Maj J Nazareth |
| 1957 No Medal + Rs 200/- | All the three Services and the Civil Administration have increasingly become inter-dependent in the conduct of war. Is there a case, for a planned progression from three Services into one Defence Service? | Col DK Palit |
| 1958 Gold Medal + Rs 200/- | What changes should be made in the organisation of the Defence Services and their system of commands, Central and Administration in the Changed Circumstances from being part of GM imperial requirement to that of County's Defence? | Brig BS Bhagat |
| Rs 125/- | | Maj SP Datta |
| Rs 75/- | | Sqn Ldr SR Abbot |
| 1959 | Suitable Higher Defence Organisation at Government Level. | Lt Col VP Naib |
| 1960 No Medal Rs 250/- | Organisation and type of Auxiliary Forces required for India. | Brig R Sawhney |
| Rs 150/- | | Lt Cdr KR Rao |
| 1961 | | |

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| 1962 | | |
| 1963 | | |
| 1964 | There is a demand for giving military training to the citizens. NCC etc. are already there. What are the best ways of meeting this demand, taking into consideration the economic factors and training methods? | Col J Nazareth |
| 1965 | How can India successfully fight ideological and military onslaught by China? | |
| 1966 | | |
| 1967 | | |
| 1968 | Discuss the broad features of integration of Canadian Armed Forces, and applicability to Indian defence requirements during the period 1969-79. | Brig NB Grant |
| 1969 | Cost effectiveness of defence in relation to the threat to India and its economy. | Brig NB Grant |
| In the centenary year 1970, another medal, called Group 'B' , instituted for Capts/Majs below 10 years of service. The original competition open to all was now called Group 'A' . | | |
| 1970 No Medal Rs 300/- | Group A An optimum Defence Force for India. | Sqn Ldr AK Dutta |
| Gold Medal | Group B Man, the deciding factor. | Maj UBS Ahluwalia |
| 1971 | | |
| 1972 No Award | Group A Defence policy for India in the 70s. | |

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| No Award | Group B Military lesson of 1971 War and changes required in training, tactics, organisation. | |
| 1973 | Group A The establishment of Naval Bases in the Indian Ocean by the Great Powers as also the military rise and potential of countries in vicinity create a situation of significance to our National Security. What strategy should India adopt in relation to the Indian Ocean? | |
| | Group B The Necessity of keeping our Armed Forces young is causing increasing personal problems. Careers are short and absorption in civil life difficult in middle age. Discuss the possible ameliorative measures. | |
| 1974 | Group A Keeping the recent use of oil as weapon in mind and the situation in neighbourhood, discuss the measures we should adopt to ensure our National Security and required military capability. | Maj MR Surkund |
| | Group B What are the reasons for Armed Forces not attracting the best recruits in all ranks and remedial measures? | Flt Lt RM Nair |
| 1975 | Group A Discuss the present entry, training and educational system of the Defence Services and steps to produce the type of officers who are professionally competent and have | |

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| | <p>the necessary intellectual make up.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Motivation is declining amongst officers. Discuss the causes and suggest remedies.</p> | |
| | <p>Group B</p> <p>Environmental Changes have affected the attitude of troops towards discipline. What is your concept of discipline and ways of improving it.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>How best can adventure training be organised</p> <p>.</p> | |
| 1976 | <p>Group A</p> <p>Future of strategy of nuclear deterrence and possible use of nuclear weapons and their effects on warfare.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Terrorism could become a powerful weapon of achieving political aims. How can it be combated?</p> | |
| | <p>Group B</p> <p>Is there a need to have separate Para Military Forces? Why cannot they be merged in Army to meet all needs in peace and war?</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Would it be correct to plan on employment of nuclear weapons in any war ten years hence?</p> | |
| 1977 | (3 entries) | |
| 1978 No Medal Rs 250/- | <p>Group A</p> <p>In the context of socio-economic constraints, international environment and likely threats, should India have small, highly</p> | Maj AK Awasthi |

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| | trained and well equipped forces or continue have large voluntary forces. | |
| No Medal Rs 250/- | Group B Men are no longer accepting hierarchical and semi-feudalistic officer-men relationship. How can training be reorganized to improve junior leadership? | Capt R Jaya Kumar |
| 1979 | | |
| 1980 | Group A Integration and Restructuring of MOD and Service Headquarters. | |
| | Group B The need for Service officers to pursue post graduate training in India and Abroad, their availability and utilisation. | |
| 1981 | | |
| 1982 | | |
| 1983 No Award | Group A A reasonable nuclear deterrent and options for a developing country. (Decided on 21 Mar 1986). | Shri Johny Mehta, IRS |
| No Award | Group B How to improve reconnaissance. | |
| 1984 Gold Medal | Group A The nature of current disintegrating trends and measures to promote harmony. | Lt SV Nilkund, IN |
| No Award | Group B Unattractiveness of unit command and passing time to obtain a good ACR – Measures to rectify the situation. | |

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| 1985 | | |
| 1986 No Medal Rs 400/- | Group A Unity in Diversity and Diversity in Thirty. | Maj VS Panwar |
| Rs 200/- | Group B Consolation prize | Capt RS Aujla |
| 1987 | No Award | |
| 1988 | | |
| 1989 No Medal Rs 2,000/- | Group A Employment of Indian Armed Forces. | Brig PK Pahwa |
| Rs 1,000/- | Second | Cdr CT Joseph |
| No Medal Rs 2,000/- | Group B India's Role in the context of Indian Ocean Security. | Lt Sanjay Jasjit Singh, IN |
| Rs 1,000/- | Second | Capt H Dharmarajan |
| 1990 Gold Medal Rs 2,000/- | Group A Defence production in the private sector. | Maj Rajiv Kumar |
| Rs 1,000/- | Second | Brig BN Rao |
| Gold Medal Rs 2,000/- | Group B Impact of technology on modern warfare. | Lt Sanjay Jasjit Singh, IN |
| Rs 1,000/- | Second | 2 Lt AS Mallapurkar |
| 1991 No Medal Rs 2,000/- | Group A Foreign policy options for India. | Wg Cdr SC Sharma |
| Rs 1,000/- | Second | Maj Rajiv Kumar |
| No Medal Rs 2,000/- | Group B Military leadership in today's economic and political environment. | Capt Akshya Handa |

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| | (No 2nd prize) | |
| 1992 No Medal Rs 2,000/- | Group A Creditable defence with reduced expenditure. | Lt Col Rahul K Bhonsale |
| Rs 1,000/- | Second | Maj BA Prasad |
| No Medal Rs 2,000/- | Group B Growing deployment of the armed forces in aid to civil power. | Lt J Ajit Kumar, IN |
| Rs 1,000/- | Second | Maj Akshaya Handa |
| 1993 Gold Medal Rs 2,000/- | Group A The need for sustainable organisation to meet insurgency conditions with emerging internal turmoil. | Lt Col Rajiv Kumar |
| Rs 1,000/- | Second | Lt Cdr OP Dua |
| Gold Medal Rs 2,000/- | Group B Impact of technology as a battle winning factor. | Capt AN Mutualik |
| Rs 1,000/- | Second | Lt SK Singh |
| 1994 Gold Medal Rs 2,000/- | Group A India's role in future of SAARC. | Lt Col KS Ramnathan |
| Rs 1,000/- | Second | Maj SP Yadav |
| Gold Medal Rs 2,000/- | Group B Human rights and the Armed Forces in LIC operations. | Maj Harcharan Singh |
| Rs 1,000/- | Second | Capt DJS Chahal |
| 1995 Gold Medal Rs 2,000/- | Group A Integration of the MOD with Service Headquarters. | Col Kanwal Mago |

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| Rs 1,000/- | Second | Col Ivan David |
| Gold Medal Rs 2,000/- | Group B The impact of social, political and economic conditions on recruitment, training and career of defence personnel. | Maj Niranjan Kumar |
| Rs 1,000/- | Second | Capt HS Kahlon |
| 1996 Gold Medal Rs 2,000/- | Group A Privatisation of support facilities in Defence Services. | Cdr AN Sonsale |
| Rs 1,000/- | Second | Col RK Bhonsle |
| Gold Medal Rs 2,000/- | Group B Threat to Indian society posed by man-portable weapons and explosives. | Sqn Ldr Anu Rana Saluja |
| Rs 1,000/- | Second | Lt Ashish Khurana |
| 1997 Gold Medal Rs 2,000/- | Group A Natural perspective on information warfare. | Maj Gen Y Deva |
| Rs 1,000/- | Second | Col Narinder Singh |
| Rs 2,000/- | Group B India's China policy in perspective 2020. | Maj Manwindra Singh |
| | Second | Not Awarded |
| 1998 | Group A Counter insurgency and human rights. | Gold medal and cash award to Cdr AN Sonsale was cancelled and not presented due to a confirmed case of plagiarisms. |

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| Rs 1,000/- | Second | Col RK Bhonsale |
| Rs 2,000/- | Group B Concept of modern warfare – Are be Prepared? | Maj TD Kumar |
| Rs 1,000/- | Second | Maj DN Pandey |
| 1999 Gold Medal Rs 5,000/- | Group A Surprise and Deception in Modern Warfare. | Cdr Tony Chacko |
| Rs 2,500/- | Second | Cdr S Krishnamurthy |
| Gold Medal Rs 5,000/- | Group B The MCC or compulsory National Service for two years. | Lt Suneel D Dogra, IN |
| Rs 2,500/- | Second | Lt MC Aiyappa |
| 2000 Gold Medal Rs 5,000/- | Group A Exploitation of space for military purposes – An Indian perspective. | Col AK Lal |
| Rs 2,500/- | Second | Maj Suyash Sharma |
| Gold Medal Rs 5,000/- | Group B (a) The challenges for Junior Leaders. | Lt B Gurumurthy, IN |
| Rs 2,500/- | Second | Capt V Guleria |
| Rs 1000/- each consolation prize | (b) Emerging regimes of the oceans and exploitation of ocean resources. (c) Evolving joint operation doctrine. | Capt JPS Johal Capt D Huidrom |
| 2001 Rs 5,000/- | Group A Managing change in the Armed Forces. | Cdr SM Anwer |
| Rs 2,500/- | Second | Lt Cdr SS Kinagi |
| Rs 5,000/- | Group B Economic power as a concomitant of military power. | Maj R Rajesh Bhat |

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| Rs 2,500/- each | Second | Capt NR Rajinder Capt Sunil Gautam |
| 2002 Gold Medal Rs 5,000/- | Group A Psychological impact of protracted service in LIC on Armed Forces personnel – Causes and remedies. | Maj P Badrinath |
| Rs 2,500/- | Second | Wg Cdr NN Aggarwal |
| Gold Medal Rs 5,000/- | Group B Managing technology – A challenge for military leadership. | Capt R Vadhyar |
| Rs 2,500/- | Second | Lt Neeraj Malhotra, IN |
| 2003 Rs 5,000/- | Group A Restructuring military hierarchy – Can it be made more horizontal? | Col PS James |
| Rs 2,500/- each | Second | Lt Cdr Sanjiv Kapoor Col PK Mallick |
| Gold Medal Rs 5,000/- | Group B The Armed Forces and increasing career aspirations of Young Officers. | Lt SS Randhawa, IN |
| Rs 2,500/- | Second | Lt YV Athavale, IN |
| 2004 Gold Medal Rs 10,000/- | Group A Establishing joint Special Forces – Tasks, training and equipping philosophies. | Col BS Dhanoa |
| Rs 5,000/- | Second | Cdr SR Rai |
| Gold Medal Rs 10,000/- | Group B The changing nature of leadership in the 21 st Century. | Lt Yogesh V Athawale, IN |
| Rs 5,000/- | Second | Capt S Ramakrishna |

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| 2005 Gold Medal Rs 10,000/- | Group A Role of Armed Forces in internal security. | Brig RK Bhonsale |
| Rs 5,000/- | Second | Col PK Mallick |
| Gold Medal Rs 10,000/- | Group B Image of the Armed Forces – Arresting negative trends. | Lt Cdr Yogesh V Athawale |
| Rs 5,000/- | Second | Maj (Mrs) Manisha Sharma |
| 2006 Gold Medal Rs 10,000/- | Group A Continuity and change in war fighting: the Indian experience. | Lt Col Khalid Zaki |
| Rs 5,000/- | Second | Col HS Parmar |
| Gold Medal Rs 10,000/- | Group B Changing socio-economic values and their impact on the Armed Forces. | Maj SS Arya |
| Rs 5,000/- | Second | Lt Ashwath Mythraya, IN |
| 2007 Gold Medal Rs 10,000/- | Group A Asymmetric Wars – Lessons from Afghanistan, Iraq and Lebanon. | Lt Col GDS Baath |
| Rs 5,000/- | Second | Brig PK Mallick |
| Gold Medal Rs 10,000/- | Group B Role of women in the Armed Forces. | Capt PK Sanwal |
| Rs 5,000/- | Second | Maj SS Arya |
| 2008 Gold Medal Rs 10,000/- | Group A Principles of War-Need for Re-evaluation in Context of Indian Experience. | Cdr Ashwin Arvind |
| Rs 5,000/- | Second | Maj Gen AK Shrivastava |
| Gold Medal Rs 10,000/- | Group B Stress Management in the Armed Force. | Maj SS Arya |
| Rs 5,000/- | Second | Lt Cdr JS Sachdeva |
| 2009 | Group A | Lt Cdr Yogesh V |

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| Gold Medal Rs 10,000/- | Challenges for military leaders of future due to changing socio-economic norms. | Athawale |
| Rs 5,000/- | Second | Lt Col Ruchin Sodhani |
| Gold Medal Rs 10,000/- | Group B Are we neglecting the training of young officers? | Maj Divik Kandpal |
| Rs 5,000/- | Second | Capt Divya Pillai |
| 2010 Gold Medal Rs 15,000/- | Group A Military actions against terrorist organisations: An analysis of Sri Lankan, Israeli, Pakistani and American Engagements. | Col UM Visal |
| Rs 10,000/- | Second | Lt Cdr Saurabh Kumar |
| Gold Medal Rs 15,000/- | Group B A value system and code of conduct for the Armed Forces. | Capt Neeraj Singh |
| Rs 10,000/- | Second | Maj PK Sanwal |
| 2011 Gold Medal Rs 15,000/- | Group A A case study on strategic and geo-political impact of PLA-Pak military strategic partnership and implications for India. | Cdr B Gurumurthy |
| Rs 10,000/- | Second | Maj Shailender Arya |
| Gold Medal Rs 15,000/- | Group B Leadership below officer level: Have the Indian Armed Forces neglected this aspect? | Capt BR Subbu |
| Rs 10,000/- | Second | Capt Akshant Upadhyay |
| 2012 Gold Medal Rs 15,000/- | Group A Military Diplomacy and Its Employment to Enhance Global Cooperation against Sub-Conventional Conflicts. | Cdr Sudesh Salian |
| Rs 5,000/- each | Second | Col UM Visal, Lt Cdr Yogesh V |

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| Gold Medal Rs 15,000/- | Group B Geo-Strategic Importance of India's Island Territories and Implications for National Security. | Capt BR Subbu |
| Rs 10,000/- | Second | Capt CM Tripathi |
| 2013 Gold Medal Rs 15,000/- | Group A Bridging the Gap – Balancing Personal Aspirations and Service Requirement in the Armed Force. | Cdr Sunil D Dogra |
| Rs 10,000/- | Second | Col Amit Singh Dabas |
| Gold Medal Rs 15,000/- | Group B Officer – Men Relationship: A Critical Re-Appraisal. | Flt Lt Rohan Chacko Jacob |
| Rs 10,000/- | Second | Maj Sushil Rana |
| 2014 Gold Medal Rs 15,000/- | Group A Jointness in the Armed Forces: Existing Gaps and Desired Capabilities. | Col UM Visal |
| Rs 10,000/- | Second | Col V Anbarasu |
| Gold Medal Rs 15,000/- | Group B Challenges of Leadership, Morals and Ethics in the Armed Forces and the Way Forward. | Lt Ankush Banerjee |
| Rs 10,000/- | Second | Maj Saurabh Sharma |
| 2015 Gold Medal Rs 15,000/- Rs 10,000/- | Group A Approach to Formulation of a Comprehensive Military Doctrine and Military Strategy for the Indian Armed Forces for the Future. | The USI Council decided that no prizes be given for both Group 'A' & 'B', the entries being of poor quality and not up to the mark |
| Gold Medal Rs 15,000/- Rs 10,000/- | Group B Professional Military Education – How Much Training, How Much Education and Where Do We Stand? | |
| 2016 Gold Medal Rs 15,000/- | Group A Managing Civil-Military Relations: How to Bridge the Gap? | Cdr Pradeep K Thakur |
| Rs 5,000/- each | Second | Cdr RS Sawan Brig UV Talur |
| Gold Medal Rs 10,000/- | Group B Ransforming Our Armed Forces to | Maj Anirudha Chakrabarty |

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| | Face Challenges of Jointness. | |
| Rs 5,000/- | Second | Maj Sumeet Luhach |
| 2017 Gold Medal Rs 15,000/- | Group A Role of the Indian Armed Forces in Strategic Decision Making – Reclaiming the Strategic Space. | Cdr Pankaj Kumar,IN |
| | Second | Nil |
| Gold Medal Rs 15,000/- | Group B Morals and Ethics – How to Teach, Imbibe, Implement and Enforce Desired Standards in the Indian Armed Forces. | Maj Sushant Rai |
| Rs 10,000/- | Second | Lt Ankush Banerjee,IN |
| 2018 Gold Medal Rs 15,000/- | Group A The One Belt One Road (OBOR)/ Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) of China: Security Implications for India and the Indo-Pacific Region (IPR) and Response Strategies. | Capt T Sugreev,IN |
| Rs 10,000/- | Second | Cdr Apoorv Pathak |
| Rs 15,000/- | Group B India – A Net Provider of Security in Indian Ocean Region (IOR) – A Road Map. | Maj SK Misra |
| 2020 Gold Medal Rs 10,000/- | Group A Emerging Dynamics of Warfare – Role of Artificial Intelligence and Robotics and How can India Exploit it. | Cdr Manish Chowdhury |
| Rs 10,000/- | Second | Lt Col Dhiraj Kumar |
| 2019 Gold Medal Rs 15,000/- | Group A Water War – Implications for India | Cdr Hitender |
| Rs 10,000/- | Second | Col Sourabh Chatterji |
| Rs 15,000/- | Group B Social Media – The New Dimensions of Warfare | Maj Akshat Upadhyay |
| Rs 10,000/- | Second | Lt Col Saurabh Kumar Misra |

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| Rs 7,000/- | Second | Lt Col Saurabh Kumar Mishra |
| Gold Medal Rs 10,000/- | Group B Space – The Next Frontier – Opportunities & Challenges for India. | Maj Chandarpal Singh Chahar |
| Rs 7,000/- | Second | Cdr Pankaj Grover |

