

Editorial

To celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the United Service Institution (USI) of India, we have put together a special issue containing articles which retrace the birth and evolution of the USI, and its aspirations for the future. We are indebted to the Hon'ble President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, and other dignitaries who have sent us their good wishes on the occasion, which we have published in the journal. We also express our gratitude to many other eminent personalities and our esteemed members who, throughout this sesquicentenary year, have been pouring their good wishes to us. It is because of their good wishes and support that the USI of India has remained steadfast as India changed and evolved around it.

We thank the authors who have contributed their articles; many of them have been closely associated with the USI for decades. We would particularly like to mention Major General Ian Cardozo (50 years), Major General YK Gera (27 years), Colonel VK Singh (25 years) as well as Lieutenant General Satish Nambiar and Lieutenant General PK Singh, who between them steered the USI as Director for almost 26 years. The two Directors prior to them, Colonel Pyara Lal and Major General Samir Sinha, whose biographical articles are respectively penned by Major General YK Gera (Retd), and his son Brigadier Deepak Sinha (Retd), have been legends of the USI. They steered the USI for 30 and 12 years respectively and contributed immensely to its actuality.

The USI, because of its 77 years of existence before independence and 73 years after independence, has been a valuable link for the historical connects between the military of pre-independence and post-independence India. For this reason, the articles by Prof Edward S Haynes on 'The Evolution of Indian Orders, Decorations and Medals during the era of the USI: 1870-2020' and Mr Pip Dodd FRAS and Brigadier JCW Maciejewski, DSO, MBE (Retd) on 'The Indian Army Memorial Room and Indian Army Museum at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst' are especially valuable; so are those dealing with the history of the

USI, the founding father, Major-General Sir Charles Metcalfe MacGregor, KCB, CSI, CIE, and of one of his legacies — The Macgregor Medal. Equally relevant is 'United Service Institution (USI) of India: Vision and Transformation 2030' by our Director, Major General BK Sharma (Retd). It not only motivates us but also guides team USI on the path to achieve Vision 2030.

Lastly, the editorial team would fail in its duty if it did not mention the financial crisis that the USI is operating under at the moment, to meet which some initiatives have been taken e.g., since mid-2020, the entire staff has accepted voluntary proportionate cuts in salary. Though aggravated by Covid-19, the financial troubles had started earlier as a number of sources of revenue started drying up. It is pertinent to highlight that this is not the first financial crisis that the USI is weathering; in the first few decades after independence, a similar crisis was faced and weathered by Colonel Pyara Lal. We are sanguine that with the support of the organisation and our members, we will weather this crisis also and continue to add value to strategic discourse and professional military knowledge, and in 2070 will celebrate our Bicentennial.

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