

## EULOGY\*

### Major General Indar Jit Rikhye (Retd)



1920 – 2007

A soldier dies and we remember.....

Major General Indar Jit Rikhye, a peacekeeping legend of India, expired on 20 May 2007 in Charlottesville, Virginia, USA. His wife Cynthia and family members were by his side when he breathed his last in the hospital.

General Rikhye was born on 30 July 1920 in Lahore. He graduated from the Indian Military Academy, Dehradun in 1940 and was commissioned in the 6<sup>th</sup> Duke of Connaught's Own Lancers, which served as the reconnaissance regiment of the 8<sup>th</sup> Indian Division in World War II, with the British 8<sup>th</sup> Army and the US 5<sup>th</sup> Army.

After the War, he served on the North West Frontier of India. In 1947, he led armoured cars into Kashmir and thereafter commanded the Royal Deccan Horse (9 HORSE). Later he served as an instructor at the Senior Officers' School, Mhow and as General Staff Officer Grade-1 of the Armoured Division.

His association with international peacekeeping began in 1957 as Commander of Indian troops in the UN Emergency Force (UNEF) Gaza. He returned home to command an independent infantry brigade group in Ladakh. Thereafter, he was Military Adviser to UN Secretary Generals Dag Hammarskjöld and U Thant in the 1960s. He carried out many special assignments in the Congo, West Irian, Yemen and Cyprus for the UN Secretary General and accompanied U Thant to

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\*We gratefully acknowledge the write up sent to the USI by Mrs Kavita Sharma (Major General Rikhye's niece)

Cuba to negotiate an end to the 1962 Missile Crisis. He participated in the Spinelli-Rikhye mission to Jordan and Israel in 1965 and commanded UNEF from 1966 to 1969. After retirement from military service, General Rikhye set up the International Peace Academy, New York, and was its first President for many years.

General Rikhye was a visiting Distinguished Fellow, and later Adviser on the United Nations at the United States Institute of Peace; Visiting Professor, School of International Affairs, Ottawa; Adjunct Professor, School of International Service, Washington DC; and a Senior Research Associate, Institute of Public Policy on Peacekeeping, George Nelson University, Four Fax, Virginia. He was also an Honorary Research Fellow of the South Asian Centre and Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for Global Affairs and a member of several organisations; notably the India International Centre and the United Service Institution of India, New Delhi, and the Cavalry and Guards Club, London. He was the founding President of the US-India Society, whose membership he later merged with the Asia Society, New York. He was on the International Advisory Committee of the Institute of World Order and the International Advisory Board of the 'Peacekeeping and International Relations', a periodical published by the Pearson International Peacekeeping Centre, Canada.

His honours and awards, after he left the United Nations, include the UNESCO Prize for Peace Education, 1985; The Medal of Honour from Kyung Ree University, Seoul; Doctor of Law from Carleton University, Ottawa; the Order of Merit by the Republic of Austria and the Distinguished Peacekeeping Award from the International Peace Academy. He wrote several books and articles on peacekeeping and negotiations within the United Nations system. His book on United Nations Peacekeeping : 'The Politics and Practices of Peacekeeping, Past, Present and Future' was published by the Pearson International Peacekeeping Centre, Canada. The story of his life "Trumpets and Tumults" reveals much about him along with details about the forces that shaped the major events of the world over the past seventy years.

His life's achievements have been aptly summed up as under :-

"A fighter on the battlefields of Kashmir and Italy, a peacekeeper on the frontlines of the Middle East and Africa, a trusted adviser within the highest councils of the United Nations and a distinguished educator in the art of peace -Indarjit Rikhye has never been far from the action that has reshaped our world".