

Director's Page

Dear Members,

For a creative and forward looking organisation like the United Service Institution of India, enjoying a rich heritage of 143 years of innovative work, beginning of a New Year is a special time. It compels me to look back and look ahead, simultaneously; both by reflecting on the work on hand and contemplating on threats to National Security on the horizon which require renewed analyses and fresh ideas to tackle them effectively. Of course, military preparedness and diplomatic initiatives which need to be woven into enhancing Comprehensive National Power (CNP) also deserve to be looked into.

Last year, I drew your attention to our 'path-breaking endeavour in the realm of strategic thinking' by introducing Net Assessment, Scenario Building and Strategy Formulation exercises in the scheme of our meaningful activities. It is a matter of great satisfaction that our efforts have been appreciated by all those who are engaged in ensuring that National interests are safeguarded with utmost efficiency to put the ingredients of CNP to best possible use.

The Centre for Strategic Studies and Simulation (CS3) conducted workshops on '*The Art of Long Strategic View*' (Net Assessment, Scenario Building and Strategy Formulation) for the National Defence College (NDC), New Delhi; the three War Colleges of the Army, Navy and Air Force; for the Indian Foreign Service probationers and a select group of senior officers from the three Services. Besides the strategic games on strategic neighbourhood, the USI team conducted two strategic game exercises for the NDC; one on the '*Internal Security Scenario*' and the other on '*Security Scenario in Asia-Pacific and IOR*' in the coming decade. Similar strategic games are being conducted at the Army War College and College of Defence Management during the next year. The USI team was invited by S Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Singapore to conduct a workshop on Net Assessment / Scenario Building and to play a strategic game on '*Asia - Pacific 2020*'. Presently, USI is in the process of formalising

similar tie-ups with other foreign institutions and think tanks on this novel approach to strategic thought and planning.

The USI Journal, our flagship on Defence Affairs since 1870, continues to engage the attention of the thinking classes across the country; and, internationally too. A look at lead articles and principal contents in the four issues of the Journal in 2013 provides a glimpse of why it is so. Articles on '*Wars – As Seen Through Soldiers' Eyes*', covering accounts from World War II, 1947-48 War in Kashmir, 1965 and 1971 Indo-Pakistan Conflicts, and Counter - Insurgency Operations in the Northeast and IPKF Operations in Sri Lanka, have been widely acclaimed and I thank all those who shared their unique personal war experiences for posterity. Similarly, our articles on '*1962 War – A View from Other Side of the Hill*' based on Chinese literature have received wide appreciation from our readers and students of military history.

USI's association with foreign think tanks/institutions and dignitaries continues to grow significantly to broaden our vision on global security scenarios and international strategic thinking vis-à-vis India's strategic interests. In the International Conference on '*Military Records Management*' (13-14 Mar 2013), amongst others, three foreign delegates took part. The seminar on, '*Enhancing India-Central Asia Engagement : Issues and Prospects*' (18-19 Mar 2013) had eight foreign panelists from four Central Asian countries. The USI National Security Seminar 2013 on '*Perspectives of the Indo-Pacific Region – Aspirations, Challenges and Strategy*' (7-8 Nov 2013), which had 21 foreign panelists from eight countries, enthused all like the previous years.

Our distance learning programme through the Course Section continues to deliver good results which is of considerable help to our Young Officers who are heavily committed in their duties. During 2013, 2960 students attended our courses. Out of these 756 took the DSSC/TSOC Correspondence Course. The results once again were commendable. 19 out of the 20 competitive vacancies for the DSSC were secured by the officers who had attended the USI Correspondence Course. Out of 234 nominated seats, 209 were taken by officers who had attended the USI Course. In addition, out of 80 officers nominated for the TSOC, 60 were our students. A number of officers also benefitted from the

three contact programmes run for the DSSC and TSOC. The Chief Instructor and his team of dedicated serving and retired officers are deserving recipients of accolades all around for the yeoman service they have continued to render devotedly year after year. I would appeal to more serving and retired officers to come forward and add to the strength of the pool of our directing staff to provide continuity to this important facet of USI's academic activity.

The Pyara Lal Memorial Library is the heart of all our futuristic output. It has been nurtured devotedly by all those who have been at the helm since 1870. Today, it is a repository of a remarkable collection of reference material in the form of rare books, reconnaissance reports, seminar proceedings, biographies, archives and talks by eminent speakers which are a cynosure of all those engaged in research work related to matters military and looking for something more than what is available anywhere else. The library staff is diligently engaged in upgrading the existing facilities, digitisation of rare books and adding latest books to the shelves – a list is carried in every issue of the Journal. Books presented and bequeathed by members have enriched the library significantly. I reiterate my request to all members to keep this process going; instead of, allowing the books in their possession to either continue to remain unused at home or allowing them to fall in the hands of the *raddiwala*. I am happy to share with our members that the complete catalogue comprising about 65,000 titles has been physically screened by the library staff.

The Centre for Armed Forces Historical Research (CAFHR) has taken a notable initiative of highlighting the Indian military's substantial contribution to the First World War. The steps taken in this direction have taken off in a big way. The CAFHR is coordinating India's commemorative activities at a global level under the direction of a USI-MEA Joint Steering Committee. In addition to this, the CAFHR continues to actively support quality research on subjects of Indian military history. Publications in this year include a Seminal History of the Indian State Forces, the Military Biography of late Lieutenant General Sagat Singh, PVSM (Retd), whose *'saga is now a part of India's military lore'*, among others. A project to catalogue all War Memorials to commemorate 'fallen

servicemen of the Indian Armed Forces around the world' is set to be published next year.

The Centre for UN Peacekeeping (CUNPK) continues to receive worldwide acclaim for training Indian contingents as well as officers from Friendly Foreign Countries. Since its inception, it has trained 647 officers from 79 countries. The year 2013 has been a landmark year for CUNPK. A seminar on "Women in Peace Building" was conducted in Feb 2013 and a tri-lateral Table Top Exercise on UN Peacekeeping Operations for India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA forum) was conducted in Nov 2013. The United Nations Military Observers Course conducted by CUNPK in Apr-May 2013 was assessed and has been given training recognition by the UN Department of Peacekeeping (DPKO) which is valid till August 2017.

Lastly, I am deeply concerned about the inconvenience caused to the members sometimes due to last minute cancellation/postponement of scheduled events at USI due to reasons beyond our control. May I request you to access and browse through the USI website : www.usiofindia.org regularly to keep yourselves updated on USI activities. We hold our members in great esteem and look forward to your participation in the USI events in large numbers. The USI membership has steadily increased upto 15068 and I welcome all the new members to our fraternity. I would also like to draw the attention of all serving officers that they are permitted to attend USI events, even if they are not members. I am confident that you would stand to benefit from these interactions in the long run. Your attendance and participation would also add to the sum and substance of events during the interactive sessions.

I wish all our esteemed members, on behalf of all of us on the USI staff, a VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR. We look forward to meet you whenever you come to the USI.

With regards

Lieutenant General PK Singh (Retd)
Director