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.

The Editorial Team

Lt Gen Ghanshyam Singh Katoch, PVSM, AVSM, VSM (Retd)
Head Editorial Team

Gp Capt Sharad Tewari, VM (Retd)
Consultant Editor

United Service Institution (USI) of India: Vision and Transformation 2030

Major General BK Sharma, AVSM, SM and Bar (Retd)[@]

"For nearly 100 years, USI has been of great use to the professional Soldier, Sailor and Airman. It has kept them up to date in their outlook and military matters and has done to foster an inter-service feeling. It is necessary that all of us — the Ministry of Defence, the three service Headquarters and individuals — who are interested in the territorial integrity of this country should take an active personal and continuous interest in the success of the institution."

Field Marshal KM Cariappa,
All India Radio Speech in February 1949

Introduction

In the last 150 years since its inception, the USI of India has emerged as India's pre-eminent think tank on matters of national security. During the pre-independence period, the USI had played a leading role in shaping the strategic thought of British Empire — not only on how to rule India but also in generating informed policy debates on its expeditionary forays in the strategic neighbourhood of Afghanistan, Tibet, China, Burma and elsewhere. Much of those perspectives and reflections are encapsulated in the old journals of the USI and the plethora of archives preserved in the USI library. Post-independence, the USI has transformed into a typical track 1.5 institution that has rendered 'yeoman' service in developing strategic culture amongst the policy-makers and strategic community of modern India. The USI has acquired a unique multi-disciplinary character vis-à-vis other think tanks in terms of its activities, which range from historical research to publications of diverse literature, career progression of military officers, and a niche in net assessment, scenario building and

strategic gaming. The year 2020 marks the celebration of the 150th Anniversary by way of organising special events such as making a documentary on the awardees of MacGregor medal, publication of selected articles from last 150 years of USI journals, special commemorative issue of the journal, a book on the history of USI, release of postage stamp, wreath laying at the National War Memorial, and the conduct of an international seminar. Even though the Covid pandemic has somewhat hampered the physical conduct of planned activities with fanfare, our enthusiasm remains strong to complete the roadmap of the 150th year celebrations using digital platforms where they can be used. While it is good to bask in the glory of this heritage institution, one cannot ignore the necessity to reflect on challenges the USI faces and the opportunities it could seize. More importantly, the abiding need of the moment is to have a new vision and a comprehensive roadmap for the USI to transform itself in the coming decade.

Challenges

The major challenge faced by the institution is the perennial financial resource crunch. The USI was raised as an autonomous body so as to allow the institution significant freewheeling in critical thinking and articulation of alternate views in policy debates. Post-independence, the USI closely worked with the Service HQs and received full staffing and administrative support in its functioning. Being the only 'Think Tank', it was widely patronised by the service officers, diplomats, civil servants, academia and other members of strategic community. The USI received support from the then Prime Minster and the Service Chiefs for the construction of its majestic new premises. However, since it's shifting to the new location in 1996, our expenditure grew exponentially whereas the sources of income remained miniscule. In the meanwhile, the three Service HQs raised service specific think tanks, which functioned directly under their tutelage. With the raising of HQ Integrated Defence Staff (IDS), instead of utilising the USI as a tri-service think tank, a new think tank 'Centre for Joint Warfare Studies' (CENJOWS) was raised. Each of these four new think tanks were provided corpus from the Ministry of Defence (MoD), besides financial and administrative support from

respective headquarters. In contrast, USI, India's oldest and premium think tank, got not only overlooked but was also left to fend for itself. Moreover, in the past three decades many other government and privately funded think tanks have mushroomed, thus, encroaching upon USI's long-held sway in the field of strategic discourse.

The USI incurs huge expenditure in maintaining its infrastructure and payment of salaries to its staff that is governed by labor laws. The institution faces paucity of funds for inducting multi-disciplinary research talent. Earlier, each Service used to depute about three scholars on study leave to research at the USI. However, with the passage of time, the number of uniformed scholars assigned to the institution has dropped considerably; the Service-specific think tanks are accorded higher priority. The Corona induced lockdown has badly disrupted assured flow of income accruing from the USI Residency guestrooms, restaurant, rent from seminar rooms, membership, and conduct of courses and projects. In order to tide over the ongoing financial crisis, the staff has voluntarily accepted temporary curtailment in pay and allowances till the situation improves.

Opportunities

While the institution faces challenges of finance and ownership by the Services, new opportunities are coming its way. The institution has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Assam Rifles, India's oldest paramilitary force, for cooperation in research and conduct of annual events. The Assam Rifles have funded a Chair of Excellence for undertaking research on India's north-eastern region — the strategic gateway of India's 'Act East' policy. The annual Assam Rifles memorial lectures are now being organised under the aegis of USI. Efforts are afoot to invite Assam Rifles units and officers to become USI members. Another Chair of Excellence is being funded by India's War Wounded Foundation for undertaking research and organising lectures at the USI to highlight problems of war wounded soldiers, sailors and airmen, and build up a national narrative for their rehabilitation in society.

The Centre for Military History and Conflict Studies (CMHCS), thanks to untiring efforts of its Secretary, Squadron Leader Rana Chhina, has emerged as an accomplished node of excellence at the national and international level. Its expertise is much sought after in providing consultancy for curating the National War Museum, writing of Indian Army history, digitization of historical archives, and for preparing themes for the celebration of India's grand 1971 war victory that led to birth of Bangladesh. The CMHCS is most ideally suited for mentoring the proposed Military Heritage Trust of India. The services of the USI can be optimally utilised to enlighten the young generation about India's rich military heritage and traditions — a sure way of imbibing national pride and patriotism in our youth.

Centre for Strategic Studies and Simulation (CS3) is the hub of USI research work. The domain expertise of CS3 in strategic net assessments, scenario building and strategic gaming is much sought after by the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS), MoD, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), Service HQs, premium military and civil training establishments, and universities in India and abroad. The USI, together with the DRDO, is toying with the idea of developing a National Strategic Gaming Model for India. The USI has a cherished tradition of grooming military officers and in their career progression. The USI is fast-emerging as a node of excellence of higher learning for senior Indian and foreign military officers. New opportunities are arising for utilising our knowledge and facilities for conduct of customised Jointmanship workshops, Core programme for senior military officers and specialised training programs such as Executive NDC, International Strategic Security and Defence Management Programme for senior ranking foreign military officers. The USI, in essence, can be used as the institution of choice for enhancing defence diplomacy, as part of India's foreign policy outreach initiatives.

The USI had raised and nurtured the Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping (CUNPK) for 12 long years, before it was adopted by the Indian Army as its unit. USI is a founder member of global UN networks namely, 'Challenger's Forum' and 'Forum of Effectiveness of Peace Operations Research Network (EPON)'.

The USI, with its wide institutional knowledge and resource faculty that is endowed with rich diplomatic and operational experience in UNPK, could easily be harnessed to address policy and doctrinal issues concerning UN Peacekeeping. The USI, in tandem with CUNPK, can enhance India's stature in generating policy debates for reforming peacekeeping and show-casing India's potential in capacity building at the regional and global level.

Vision

It is aptly said, 'when vision is clear, decisions are always easier'. The founder of USI, Colonel (later Major General) Charles Metcalfe MacGregor established the institution with a lofty aim, "for the furtherance of interest and knowledge in the art, science, and literature of national security in general and of the defence services in particular". The regulations were drawn with such foresight that they are still applicable today, albeit with minor modifications necessitated due to changed circumstances. Since those formative years, the USI Governing Council and its sagacious secretaries / directors have continually nurtured the institution during its glorious journey. Post-independence, the institution was led by distinguished scholar soldiers and each one of them made significant contribution in enhancing the stature and reputation of the institution. In 2004, a sub-committee chaired by Vice Admiral PS Das, and comprising Lieutenant General SK Sharma and Air Marshal Bharat Kumar prepared the USI Vision Paper 2020. The vision paper was approved by the USI Governing Council on 14 January 2005. The document inter alia underscored the need for the USI to work closely with the Services while maintaining its traditional autonomy. Creation of centres viz, CMHCS, CS3, and CUNPK (now CMHCS) was in keeping with enhanced scope envisioned in that document.

In last 15 years, unprecedented developments have taken place in the field of geopolitics, strategic security, revolution in military affairs (RMA), and research methodology. It is now time for the USI to imbibe digitisation and adopt a holistic approach to research work. The need of the hour is to formulate a new vision for the USI for the coming decade. My association of more than four decades as a life member of the USI, a decade of experience

with CS3 and one year as Director impels me to suggest a vision for the USI. My considered vision is to ***'consolidate transformation of USI into a digitally enabled premier Track 1.5, multi-disciplinary national security policy research institution, with core competency in strategic security, scenario gaming, military doctrinal thought, historical research, career progression learning programs and defence diplomacy while preserving its rich heritage and unique character as India's oldest think tank'.***

Transformation 2030

Keeping in view the suggested vision articulated above and the environmental realities, the focus for next 10 years should be as elucidated below:

- **Resource Generation.** Enhance income by optimally marketing USI domain expertise and infrastructure, undertake membership drive, generate competitive bids for 'Net Assessment' projects from government establishments, seek sponsors for events and elicit support from the Department of Military Affairs (DMA), HQ IDS, Service HQs and other interested entities such as DRDO, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI), Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) etc.

- **Harmonising with DMA, HQ IDS and Services.** Identify their knowledge, advocacy and training needs and align USI research work and other activities to meet the same. Make USI as a bridge between the Services, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), NSCS, DRDO and other establishments on matters military

- **Induction of New Talent for Research.** With the improvement in financial status, induct multi-domain experts who have flair for critical thinking and innovative research, combining modern tools of research with practical wisdom. Lay added focus on questioning of conventional wisdom and on formulation of scientifically derived alternate perspectives and policy choices.

- **Focus of Research.** Lay added focus on national security strategy and structures, new generation warfare, grey zone conflicts, non-traditional security, threat perception and capability scans, disruptive technologies, joint doctrines, military strategy, operational art, jointmanship, force structuring and development.

- **Brand Name in Net Assessment and Strategic Gaming.** Hone domain expertise in Strategic Net Assessment, Scenario Building and Strategic Gaming at the national level. Develop a National War Gaming Model in conjunction with the DRDO and leverage USI's potential as a National War Gaming Centre.

- **Enhance Reach of Publications.** Convert the USI journal in e-format and promote it on various digital portals. Produce high-quality policy research papers, pitched at the strategic level, for use by policy makers.

- **Promote Domain Expertise in Consultancy in Military History.** Showcase CMHCS as a repository of India's Military Heritage and node of excellence for consultancy services in curating war museums, memorials, staff rides on epic Indian battles and research on post-independence military history.

- **E Education.** Explore feasibility of conducting on line courses and contact programmes for promotion and competitive examination for Service officers.

- **Digitisation.** Produce and propagate high-quality digital content with media partners and promote it through social media platforms such as USI Facebook Page, Twitter handle and You Tube Channel to USI members and the environment.

- **Visibility and Outreach.** Enhance visibility and outreach through the following means :

    - Social Media Platforms
    - Fortnightly email updates to USI members.

- Outreach to military establishments, IAS Academy, National Police Academy, Foreign Service Institute, foreign missions and lastly, universities in India and abroad.

- Production and propagation of digital knowledge content such Strategic Insights with Strategic News International, USI Strategic Dialogue and Braintrust series produced with the help of Peninsular Studio.

- Improve USI website and make it user and mobile friendly.

- Expand Track 1.5 Dialogues with foreign think tanks.

- Joint projects and events with foreign think tanks.

Conclusion

In the 150th year of its existence, the USI has published a brief history of the institution, taken out a publication on selected articles from the old journals and seeks to produce a digital episode on the Macgregor's medal. The commemorative journal issue has the memoirs of two distinguished directors; Lieutenant General Satish Nambiar and Lieutenant General PK Singh who individually had more than a decade long stint as head of the institution. The issue also contains the short biographies of two legendary directors, late Colonel Pyara Lal and late Major General Samir Sinha, who nurtured the institution with great foresight and dedication. These writings and biographies motivate us immensely. I am aware that my vison for the USI and roadmap for transformation in the next ten years are goals which are not easily achievable. A quote which encapsulates my thoughts in this context is, "We are kept from our goals, not by obstacles, but by a clear path to a lesser goal". We will not get tempted to go on the easier path because we owe that to our predecessors. I am sanguine that the USI team will continue to work with its characteristic vigour not for personal gain but for the furtherance of knowledge in the spirit of the following *shloka* from the Bhagavad Gita:

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन।
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि ।।2.47।।

‘Thy right is to work only, but never with its fruits;

let not the fruits of action be thy motive, nor let thy attachment be to inaction’

@**Major General BK Sharma, AVSM, SM and Bar (Retd)** is the Director, United Service Institution (USI) of India since January 2020. Earlier, he has been a Distinguished Fellow at the Centre for Strategic Studies and Simulation (CS3) at the USI from 2012 to 2014 and thereafter, Deputy Director (Research) and Head CS3, USI till December 2019.

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A Glimpse of USI: 1870-2020

Colonel VK Singh, VSM (Retd)@

Introduction

The United Service Institution (USI) of India was established in Simla (now Shimla) in Apr/May 1870 through the efforts of a far-sighted scholar-soldier Colonel (later Major-General) Charles Metcalfe MacGregor. The USI was registered as a society under The Societies Registration Act, 1860 on 02 Jan 1874 in Lahore, present-day Pakistan. The object was 'the promotion of Naval and Military Art, Science and Literature'. After independence it was changed twice, to finally read: 'for the furtherance of interest and knowledge in the Art, Science and Literature of National Security in general and Defence Services, in particular'.

The initial 'Regulations', now called 'Rules and Bye Laws', were drawn up with such foresight that they are still broadly applicable, albeit with minor modifications which were made due to changed circumstances. The USI had a modest beginning with a membership of 215 in the first year, and was housed in a portion of General Headquarters (GHQ) India building. It went through many a difficult time, mainly due to financial constraints. Today, it has come a long way, has a home of its own and is self-sustaining. It has expanded its activities, particularly after moving into its new premises in June 1996. Presently, it has a membership of over 13000. It has established a venerable reputation in the country, and abroad, through its quality programmes. Throughout its history, it has flagged important developments in the defence field and kept the country well-informed of their implications. It has the largest pool of military wisdom and experience. It functions like a well-oiled machine to accomplish various activities effortlessly and efficiently.

Governance and Ups & Downs

The initial Regulations laid down its activities as delivery of lectures at any station, debates on military subjects and

publication of a journal. For this purpose, the governance was vested in a Council. Initially, the Council had way more ex-officio members than elected ones. In 1877, Colonel MacGregor felt that the Institution had lost its vitality. In 1895, Lieutenant Colonel AB Stopford expressed dissatisfaction on many counts. After wide consultations, a number of measures were taken and number of Council members made equal from both sides. Senior members used to preside over the Council meetings.

In 1912, the Chief of the General Staff (CGS) was nominated as the permanent President. Presently, the Council has 10 ex-officio and 14 elected members. Every three years elections are held through posted ballots. In July 1947, it was decided that the Institution will now be known as 'The United Service Institution of India and Pakistan'. Four issues of the Journal, as such, were published in 1948 with flags of both the countries on the cover. However, Pakistan did not accept this arrangement and the USI reverted to its original form in 1949.

In Dec 1994, the Council decided that the Director will be a member of the Council, not merely its Secretary, and further clarified in Feb 1996 that he has full voting rights. In 2004, a 'Vision 2020' document was prepared and approved. It endorsed the centrality of the laid down objectives which had stood the test of time. It emphasised on research quality/expansion while retaining the Armed Forces orientation. Traditional autonomy was to be maintained even while working closely with the Services Headquarters.

To conduct the ordinary business of the Institution, a three-member Executive Committee was appointed by the Council on an annual basis. The first Indian to be appointed to it was Mr Ram Chandra, ICS (1933-35). Presently, the Executive Committee comprises the DCIDS (DOT) as Chairman, DGMT/DNT/ACAS (Ops) as Service representatives, apart from the seven elected members nominated by the Council and the Director. From the inception of the Institution, the Viceroy/Governor General/President of India were the Patrons till 25 July 2002, when Dr APJ Abdul Kalam declined the proposal as he did not wish to be associated with any non-government bodies. The position has not been filled since.

Vice Patrons

Starting with four Vice Patrons, the number kept on increasing; reaching 23 in 1990 as Governors/Raj Pramukhs and some others had also been invited. From Oct 1990, only the three Service Chiefs have been Vice Patrons. It may be noted that this is not an ex-officio position as Vice Patrons have to be invited to be so.

Secretaries / Directors

The USI could not afford to have a full-time paid Secretary for nearly ninety years. The army used to provide a part-time officer to act as one. Till 1948, there were only two who had three-year tenure, two had four-year tenure and one had five-year tenure. Commander KV Cherian was Secretary from Sep 1948 to Dec 1956. His contribution needs to be given more recognition as it was during his tenure that the USI moved from Simla to Delhi. The building at Simla, near Combermere post office, was disposed of and events/meetings were being held both at Simla and Delhi.

Major (later Colonel) Pyara Lal was Secretary from Jan 1957 to Nov 1987, till the time he passed away. He stabilised the USI and increased its activities. The Council recognised his contribution by naming the USI library after him in the new premises. His brother, Shri SL Agarwal, contributed Rs 1,25,000/- to institute a lecture in his memory, which the Council accepted.

Major General SC Sinha was the Director (designation changed) from 24 Nov 1987 to 30 Jun 1996. It was largely through his efforts that the present land was allotted and funds obtained from the PMO. The building came up in his time and the USI moved into it. The Council recognised his contribution by naming the USI Auditorium after him. Mrs Krishna Sinha contributed Rs 2 lakhs to institute a lecture in his memory, which was approved by the Council.

Lieutenant General Satish Nambiar served as Director from 01 Jul 1996 to 31 Dec 2008. During his tenure, USI Centre for Armed Forces Historical Research and USI Centre for UN Peacekeeping were established, and the USI Centre for Research was expanded to become USI Centre for Strategic Studies and Simulation (CS3).

Lieutenant General PK Singh headed the Institution from 01 Jan 2009 to 31 Dec 2019. During his tenure, the annual seminar was upgraded to international level, foreign cooperation was enhanced with many countries and USI contributed significantly to UN Peacekeeping at the policy level. From 01 Jan 2020, Major General BK Sharma started his tenure as Director. His tenure, though severely challenging due to the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, has seen a great push towards use of digital and electronic social media.

Membership

Starting with 215 members in 1870, today the membership is over 13000. Initially, only a one-year ordinary membership was offered for Rs 10/-. Life membership was initiated in 1879 at Rs 55/-. From 2004, ordinary membership was allowed for three years. Associate membership without voting rights, for academics/journalists, was started in 1992, the number being limited to 100. Corporate membership was started in 1925 but was not popular. In 1950, officers of Senior Division NCC were made eligible and in 1989, cadets of NDA/IMA but only for ordinary membership. A course membership was started in Oct 2015 for one year and one course. A special Civilian membership of 10 years for a fee of Rs 25,000/- was started in 2019 for those interested in defence studies but not otherwise eligible; adult children of Life members were also made eligible for this at a fee of Rs 20,000/-.

In Jul 1899, Honorary membership by invitation of the Council was started for diplomats, foreign military officers, eminent persons and benefactors of the Institution. As per available records, the Japanese Defence Attaché was an Honorary member in 1925. In 1935, Field Marshal Sir Philip Chetwode was made an Honorary member after his retirement due to the support he provided while in service. The last was Major Robert Hammond (1989) of Norfolk Regiment as he wrote a book on the MacGregor Medal.

Presently, only officers of the Armed Forces, Class-1 gazetted officers of Group ‘A’ Central Services and cadets of Service academies are eligible for regular Life/Ordinary

membership. Some of the early Life members were Lieutenant Colonel Nawab MA Beg (1903) who was at that time ADC to the Nizam of Hyderabad and rose to be Commander of the Hyderabad State Forces, Major DD Khambata (1912) of cricket fame, Major GR Rajwada (later Major General and Commander Gwalior State Forces), Captain AJ Sen Gupta (1921), Lieutenant KM Cariappa (1923) later Field Marshal and C-in-C Indian Army, and Maharaja Hari Singh of J&K (1943). Shri C Rajagopalachari was an Ordinary member in 1946.

The Journal

The USI Journal has been the flagship of the Institution. Its actual designation is 'The Journal of the Proceedings of the United Service Institution of India'. Besides articles and text of papers presented, it earlier contained minutes of the Council and Executive Committee meetings, Secretary's Notes and other information. The Journal is published under the authority of the Council, but the views published in the articles are of the individual authors and not the Institution's. The Journal has always flagged all developments concerning the Armed Forces strategic, tactical, weapons, technology, logistics, leadership, international affairs, etc. During *Pax Britannica,* its publication was keenly awaited across the world.

Initially, it was priced at Re 1. Today, the cost stands at Rs 300/-. It could be subscribed by military units, etc., and members received a free copy till Dec 2016; now it is posted on the website. The maximum number printed was 14,250 in Mar 2012; now about a thousand copies are printed.

The Library

The Library is the heart of the USI. It now boasts of over 69,000 books, including a large number of rare books over 300 years old, on a variety of subjects though emphasis remains on defence issues. Many researchers from across the world have made use of its rich collection. It is spread over 12330 sq ft and has a pleasing ambience. While non-members may be granted permission to use the reading room, books can be drawn only by the members.

It has a large collection of historical Army Lists and a few Navy and Air Force Lists. Many members have presented their books to the library; notable amongst them, Field Marshal KM Cariappa, Mrs Vijay Lakshmi Pandit (200) and Major General DK Palit (500). In the year 2003, 10,009 books received from the Defence Library were accessioned. It also has a precious collection of over 400 medals, duly catalogued by Squadron Leader Rana Chhina (Retd) and Prof Ed Haynes. The library was fully digitised by 2011, converting over 7.5 lakh pages into digital format. For the first 45 years or so, there was only a part-time Librarian, usually a sergeant from GHQ. Ms Susanne was the first full-time Librarian who worked from 1915 to 1925. The present Librarian is Mrs Anita Midha who has been looking after the Library since Feb 2012.

Lectures

Lectures were listed as the first activity of USI in the Regulations of 1871. The emphasis continues. Many a time, the Viceroy and the C-in-C have presided over the lecture or have attended it. Till the USI got its building in 1910, lectures were held in the Town Hall or Gaiety Theatre at Simla. In Delhi, use of the central hall 129-D under the dome of South Block was permitted to be used. In 1895, Colonel Maitland raised the case of a young officer who had delivered a lecture and was criticised by the C-in-C, who disagreed with the former's view. Colonel Maitland felt that this is injurious to the Institution as it puts a curb on individual views. The practice then evolved that the Chair will only introduce the Speaker and only summarise in the end, keeping his views low key. By and large, the practice is still followed. The USI also gives complete freedom to junior officers to express their views during the question/answer session following a lecture.

The first lecture by an Indian, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, was delivered in 1931. Slides started being used from 1913. An optical lantern and a magic lantern procured before 1934 are displayed in the library. Numerous lectures, and sometimes seminars, have been organised by the USI at other stations. The first such lecture was held on 30 Jan 1871 at Gwalior. In subsequent years, they

have been held in most important military stations in pre and post partition India.

Essay Competitions

The Gold Medal Essay Competition. The medal was initially instated by Mr Mortimer Durand and came to be known after him. The first medal was won in 1872 by Lieutenant Colonel FS Roberts (later C-in-C). It continued for three years and then no entry was considered suitable for the next four years. In 1979, the USI instituted its own medal, deciding subjects in advance and laying down a maximum length of 32 pages. The essays were to be submitted anonymously under a motto and were to be examined by a panel of three expert officers. The practice still continues, by and large. Sometimes, a silver medal was also awarded.

In 1969, the Council decided that from the centenary year, 1970, another medal be instituted for Captains/Majors below 10 years of service, called Group 'B'. The original competition open to all was now called Group 'A'. The practice of awarding cash prizes, in addition to the medal or without medal, was started in 1926. Starting with Rs 50/-, it is now Rs 15000/- since 2010. From 1989, the officer standing second was also given a cash prize of Rs 1000/-, revised to Rs 10000/- from 2010. The first Indian to win the competition was Lieutenant Colonel DK Palit (1948 and 1957). Brigadier BS Bhagat won it four times (1950, 1951, 1952 and 1958).

Lieutenant General SL Menezes Memorial Essay Competition. Lt Gen Menezes had a long and close association with the USI. After he expired in 2012, his family donated Rs 1,40,000/- to start a memorial essay competition, which the Council approved. The competition started in 2015. The subject generally pertains to military history. A certificate and cash prize of Rs 10,000/- is awarded to the best essay.

MacGregor Memorial Medal

Major General Sir Charles Metcalfe MacGregor, KCB CSI CIE, Quarter-Master General (QMG) of India and Head of Intelligence

passed away on 05 Feb 1887 at an age of less than 47. A Memorial Committee was formed and the USI nominated its administrators. A sum of Rs 12,600/- were collected by Jul 1888. As reconnaissance and exploration were very dear to Major General MacGregor, it was decided to institute a medal in his memory, to be awarded for significant military reconnaissance. A silver medal of standard size was to be given to officers and viceroy's commissioned officer (VCOs) and a reduced size silver medal with gratuity of Rs 100/- to soldiers. For specially valuable work, a gold medal could be awarded. More details are covered in the article titled 'The MacGregor Memorial Medal' by Squadron Leader Rana TS Chhina, MBE (Retd).

Educational Activities under the Courses Section

Though not listed in the Bye Laws as an objective till 1989, professional advancement of officers has always been an important activity of the USI. In 1880, military war games were started and lasted for some years. In 1903, the USI helped officers preparing for examinations in the areas of tactical fitness and command/promotion. This also continued for some years. From 1910 till WW-II, the USI assisted candidates for Staff College Examination. Colonel Pyara Lal made courses as one of the areas of his core efforts. He started 'Revision Courses' for Staff College, Part 'D' and Part 'B' promotion examinations in 1958 and 1962 respectively. Classes were conducted in the afternoon. Thereafter, 'Correspondence Courses' were started as numbers increased due to expansion of the Army. These started in 1968 for Staff College (Army); Part 'D', Part 'B' and Defence Services Staff College (DSSC) (Air) in 1969; and DSSC (Navy) in 1989. From 1972 to 1980, the USI also conducted courses for promotion examinations for the Air Force. The 'Contact Programme' for DSSC (Army) started in 1998, with over 200 officers joining every year.

In 2012, over 3500 officers joined USI courses. But thereafter, the Army HQ started supplying Part 'B' and 'D' précis to candidates free of cost. USI enrolment fell below 1500 from 2014 onwards. However, USI candidates' performance in Staff College entrance examination could not be matched by any one and here

the enrolment continued as it was. In this examination, the USI students have always secured over 90 percent of competitive vacancies and formed a significant proportion of the nominated category. The credit for this must go to the Chief Instructors, Brigadier YP Dev (Dec 1996-2000), Brigadier MS Chowdhury (Sep 2000-Mar 2015) and Major General SB Asthana since Mar 2015. Further details are covered in the article by Major General SB Asthana, SM, VSM (Retd) titled 'USI of India: An Epitome of Professional Learning of Indian Military for Last 150 Years'.

Centenary

National Security Lecture and National Security Seminar were commenced as annual public events. An additional essay competition was started for junior officers. A special 'Centenary Issue' of the Journal was brought out. A commemorative USI Shield bearing the USI crest was fabricated. An exhibition of rare books was held. The government provided a grant of Rs 29,000/-.

However, certain projects which were initially planned could not be implemented – a commemorative stamp, a History of USI by Prof Adrian Preston of Canada (who was recommended by General JN Chaudhuri), a commemorative volume of selected articles from USI Journal.The Council also noted that the USI was no longer a sinking ship.

USI Digest

As it was difficult for the units and formations to get foreign periodicals on defence matters, the USI accepted an offer from the Army HQ to bring out the 'USI Digest', containing relevant articles from foreign periodicals after acquiring due permission for reproduction. A one-time grant of Rs 75,000/- was given. The Digest came out twice a year from 1999 to 2013. Service Headquarters used to buy 2000 copies at concessional rates for further distribution to the units. In due course, it became financially unviable and as the internet became widely available, its publication was stopped.

Interaction with Foreign Institutions

Distinguished foreign dignitaries and experts have been visiting the USI for talks/discussions since many decades. Formal interaction at delegation level started in 1992, when a USI team visited China Institute of International Strategic Studies (CIISS), China. Such interactions increased significantly in the new premises. Memorandums of understanding (MOUs) were signed with many foreign and Indian institutions. The USI has been formally interacting with countries such as Egypt, Germany, China, USA, Japan, Russia, Taiwan, Vietnam, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Cambodia, South Korea, UK, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Norway, Sweden, Kyrgyzstan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nigeria to name a few. The USI also gets invited to a large number of seminars in various countries. Experts from staff, scholars and members are sent to these seminars to present papers. National Defence College (NDC) and Staff College students from various countries have been visiting the USI for day-long interaction on Indian strategic perspective. The USI Centre for Strategic Studies and Simulation (CS3) is the nodal centre for such interactions.

USI Centre for Strategic Studies and Simulation (CS3)

The forebear of the CS3, the USI Centre for Research (USI-CR) came into being in Nov 1995. Its funding was initially received from the three Services, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). Five Chairs of Excellence were instituted and named Field Marshal KM Cariappa Chair, Vice Admiral RD Katari Chair, Air Marshal Subroto Mukherjee Chair, Prof DS Kothari Chair and MEA Chair.

To widen the scope of research and related activities, it was decided to merge the USI-CR into USI CS3 from 01 Jan 2005. The article titled 'The Centre for Strategic Studies and Simulation (CS3): The Journey to its Quadranscentennial' by Major General RPS Bhadauria, VSM (Retd) elaborates further details.

USI Centre for Armed Forces Historical Research (CAFHR)

In 1996, Army HQ forwarded a proposal to establish an Armed Forces Historical Society. USI asked the Army HQ to re-cast the proposal if it was to be under its aegis. The USI-CAFHR finally

came into being on 01 Dec 2000. A Board of Management was nominated by the Council. The objectives laid down were – to study history of Indian Armed Forces with objectivity, covering different facets like strategy, tactics, logistics, organisations, and socio-economic aspects. Priority was given to the post-independence period followed by 1900-1947, 1750-1900 and prior to 1750. Historical flaws were to be studied and military historical archives built. The Centre established two Chairs of Excellence – Chhatrapati Shivaji Chair and Maharana Pratap Chair. The Centre has awarded 21 Chairs so far, most resulting in publication of relevant books. A vision document was prepared in Dec 2003. The first projects to be completed were Editorial Reviews of the official history of 1962 and 1971 wars, outsourced by the Ministry of Defence (MoD).

CAFHR has played a major national role in highlighting the contributions of the Indian Armed Forces in the Great War (1914-18), which many in India were not aware of and which were hitherto remained formally unrecognised abroad. Towards this, a number of events were organised in India and many other countries. In recognition of his work in this field, Squadron Leader Rana TS Chhina, Secretary CAFHR, was awarded the Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) by the Queen of England and Order of the Leopold by the King of Belgium. CAFHR has contributed to many other projects. Squadron Leader Rana TS Chhina, MBE (Retd) has covered further details in the article titled ‘The USI Centre for Armed Forces Historical Research 2000-2020’.

General Palit Military Studies Trust

Major General DK Palit had established a Trust in 1988 with branches in Delhi and London. The management and funds of these were transferred to the CAFHR in 2002. The London branch was closed. General Palit’s idea was to re-examine India’s military history as most of it was written by Britishers, and as many archives of former princely states were now available. A number of projects have been awarded by CAFHR under the Trust and as a result, relevant books have been published.

USI Centre for United Nations (UN) Peacekeeping (CUNPK)

As India has been at the forefront of UN Peacekeeping activities, a need was felt to create a training facility for our personnel. A proposal was floated by the MEA and Service Headquarters to initially start such a centre under the aegis of USI in view of the expertise and facilities available. The Centre came into being in Dec 2000. The MEA provided funds, on event-by-event basis, for international courses as did the Army for their officer's courses. The Centre functioned under the USI till 14 Aug 2014 when it moved out to be directly under the Army HQ.

CUNPK soon became a member of International Association of Peacekeeping Training Centres (IAPTC), a body recognised by the UN. It also provided the secretariat of IAPTC for ten years from Oct 2005. CUNPK also became a partner in the Standard Training Module Project of UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UNDPKO). Its courses were recognised by the UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR). As per its charter, it conducted courses of two to three week duration, including for foreign officers. These were UN Contingent Junior Officers Course, UN Military Officers and Staff Officers Course, UN Civil Police Officers Course, UN National Course for Indian Officers, Assam Rifles Course and capsules for all ranks of the Air Force and 86 such courses were conducted. A total of 263 Indian and 638 foreign officers were trained. 19 capsules were conducted for the Air Force and 3483 personnel were trained. A number of seminars were also conducted. A major command post exercise was held over two weeks in Feb 2003, jointly with the US Pacific Command, in which 35 Indian and 110 foreign officers from 14 countries participated. Notwithstanding the delinking of CUNPK from USI in Aug 2014, USI continued its efforts to provide policy-level inputs on UN Peacekeeping.

USI Buildings

For the initial 40 years, USI functioned from a portion of GHQ as it could not raise funds for its own building. In 1895, Colonel MJ King-Harman offered to contribute Rs 500/- towards the cost of building if ten other members residing in Simla will each give a similar amount. The Council enlarged the scope of donation but sufficient funds could not be collected. In 1908, the United

Services (US) Club, Simla, generously agreed to lease a portion of its premises for 25 years on lease rent of Rs 300/- pa.

The building, near Combermere post office, was completed in 1910, built at a cost of Rs 16,000/-. The USI used this building for 43 years. As GHQ shifted to Delhi, the Council felt the necessity of shifting to Delhi. No suitable accommodation could be found in Delhi. The Army HQ offered a Lahore shed at Red Fort but the offer was not accepted. Finally, Major General CH Williams, the then E-in-C, offered to accommodate the USI in a portion of Kashmir House. Hence, the USI moved into it in 1953 for the next 43 years. The USI building at Simla remained vacant till it was sold for Rs 18,000/- in 1956.

After a gap of many years, 5.2 acres land was allotted on Ridge Road near Army Public School (APS). The USI spent Rs 88,963/- on an architect and project manager for this which had to be written off as Urban Art Commission refused to give clearance for a building on South Ridge. Ultimately, 2.984 acres was allotted on 26 Oct 1990 at the present location, subsequently increased to 3.26 acres. A 30-year renewable lease was signed at an annual ground rent of Rs 300/-.

A design competition was held. M/s Dulal Mukherjee and Associates were selected. Army Welfare Housing Organisation (AWHO) was chosen to execute the project. The foundation was laid by the three Service Chiefs on 26 Apr 1993 and the building completed on 26 Apr 1996. The USI moved to the new premises on 17 June 1996, though it was formally inaugurated on 20 Sep 1996 by the then three Service Chiefs.

From 1963, the USI had started creating a building fund from its savings. In 1980, each Service gave Rs 5 lakh as an interest free loan, later converted to grant. Former Prime Ministers Shri Rajeev Gandhi and Shri PV Narasimha Rao gave Rs 1.2 crore in Sep 1986 and Rs 1.3 crore in July 1992 respectively from the National Defence Fund (NDF). To meet the escalation on completion, Army HQ gave Rs 30 lakhs, Naval HQ Rs 5 lakhs and Air HQ Rs 4.5 lakhs. However, the final AWHO bill was higher than the amount collected. As Service HQs were not willing to meet this cost, the then Director, Lieutenant General Satish

Nambiar wrote directly to the Prime Minister Shri IK Gujral, who was magnanimous to give Rs 60 lakhs from the NDF. The net final cost was Rs 5.11 crore. The result is a self-contained pleasing premises/building.

Some Financial and Administrative Trivia

The USI bankers were Alliance Bank (53 years), Lloyds Ltd (27 years), Grindlays (33 years), and currently is Syndicate Bank since 1983. There were six British auditors from 1870 to 1926. From 1926 to 1956, M/s PN Aiyer served as the Auditors. From 1956 to 1982, M/s Bhargava and Co was the Auditors. Since then, M/s Luthra and Luthra are the Auditors.

USI got a grant from Canteen Stores Department (CSD) trade surplus from 1975-76 to 2000-01, starting with Rs 25,000/-, reaching Rs 5 lakhs and ending with Rs 1 lakh.

Conclusion

Not many institutions last 150 years. None can match the activities of the USI in terms of numbers, scope, reach and expertise. It has built a venerable reputation and is continuously improving. Though working closely with the Services, it has managed to retain its traditional autonomy. It follows its ethos and traditions, and its rules and regulations. This has been possible due to the support of the Services and the dedication of its Secretaries/Directors, duly assisted by the staff. Those interested in more details may like to read the 'History of the USI' written by the author.

@**Colonel VK Singh, VSM (Retd)** was commissioned in the Corps of Signals in June 1963. On superannuation, he joined USI of India in November 1991 as DS (Coord) in Course Section. Subsequently, he served as DD (Adm) from January 1997 till August 2015. He has authored a book titled 'A Brief History of the United Service Institution of India (USI)', published in 2020.

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The Story of Major General Sir Charles Metcalfe MacGregor, KCB, CSI, CIE

Shri Adil R Chhina[@]

In 1839, the British East India Company commenced the disastrous campaign in Afghanistan which came to be known as the First Anglo-Afghan War. The war lasted three years and finally came to an end in October 1842. Far removed from this turbulent backdrop, in the dusty plains of northern India a young boy was born on 12 August 1840. Christened Charles Metcalfe MacGregor, he would eventually go on to establish the United Service Institution (USI) of India.

Major General Sir Charles Metcalfe MacGregor, KCB, CSI, CIE

This year being the 150th anniversary of the founding of the USI, it is befitting to recall the Institution's founder. A man of exceptional ability and energy, he achieved a great deal during his relatively short lifespan. And yet, the two overly ambitious goals he desired the most remained elusive till the end: to win the Victoria Cross (VC) and become the Amir of Afghanistan.[1] Given the outstanding gallantry he displayed in the field on several occasions, many of his contemporaries felt he was deserving at least of the VC. Paucity of space does not permit a detailed retelling of all his deeds. However, this article endeavours to highlight certain key aspects and achievements of his life.[2] By virtue of the nature of such an article, some amount of repetition of previous biographical accounts is unavoidable. However, it is hoped that the information culled from disparate sources provides a fresh account of the man and his times.

Charles MacGregor was of Scottish descent and was born into a family of considerable note. Several of his forebears had distinguished themselves in numerous battlefields. His lineage can be directly traced back to the famous Scotsman, Robert 'Rob Roy' MacGregor. Rob Roy fought, along with his father, in the Jacobite rising of 1689 in support of the Stuart King James II. A man of strength and conviction, Rob Roy's conduct reflected the ancient Gaelic proverb which described the notable character of the Highlanders, 'That he would not turn his back on an enemy or a friend'.[3] He was sharp, courageous and determined, and clearly bestowed these traits on his progenies.

Charles MacGregor's great-grandfather, James MacGregor, was a captain in the 60th Regiment of Foot. He served, with credit, with his regiment during the American Revolution (1775-83) and lived up to the regiment's motto 'Celer et Audax' (Swift and Bold), being repeatedly mentioned in General James Murray's despatches. Charles's grandfather was in the Bengal Cavalry and retired as Major General. He was present at the taking over of Seringapatam (now Srirangapatanam) (1799) and in various other battles and sieges; and was mentioned in despatches and general orders on several occasions for his gallant conduct. Charles's father, Robert Guthrie MacGregor, was a Major in the Bengal Artillery. He served in the First Anglo-Burmese War (1824-26) and was present at the capture of Rangoon and the storming of Donabiew, where he was severely wounded. He subsequently served in the capture of Bharatpur in 1827, where he was once again severely wounded and lost function in one leg. On 06 January 1838, Robert married Alexandrina, who was the daughter of Major General Archibald Watson of the Bengal establishment.[4] The long family tradition of military service and gallant battlefield exploits was bound to influence young Charles and sure enough, he followed in the footsteps of his forebears and joined the army at the very young age of sixteen.

MacGregor's early childhood was spent in Scotland. At the age of 13 he became a boarder at Marlborough College in Wiltshire. As a young boy, he was reserved in his association with others and had a strong temper but he was an outstanding pupil; a prize winner. Pierce Connelly, his one close friend at school, recalled that, "His whole mind was towards the army; he, at least, never talked about 'choosing a profession' – his profession was chosen".[5] After leaving Marlborough College, MacGregor joined his brother, Edward, in 1856 and they were both commissioned into the Indian Army. Following his commission, MacGregor was once again back in India, arriving at the port of Calcutta on 01 December. Unbeknownst to him, trouble among the ranks of the Bengal Army had been brewing for some time and would come to a boil six months later in May 1857. The start of his career would be forged by fire and sword as he fought and gained widespread recognition during the Great Uprising of 1857.

After a short stint at Dinapur, MacGregor was appointed second ensign[6] in the 57th Regiment of Bengal Native Infantry (BNI), in February 1857, stationed at Ferozepur. In May, shortly after the outbreak of unrest, his regiment was disarmed and disbanded. He personally felt that his men had not been of a mutinous bent of mind and what had happened to them was unjust. During the course of the uprising, MacGregor saw extensive active service while attached to a number of different units and all throughout distinguished himself. In September, he found himself at the siege of Delhi, arriving two days after the first assault. He had been attached to the 1st Bengal Fusiliers and served with Colonel Gerard during the capture of Rewari and Kanaonda; and at Narnaul in November. This was MacGregor's first action since being commissioned. He went onto to serve in the siege and capture of Lucknow. This period saw MacGregor assuming command of several mounted regiments. He charged at the head of his men on many occasions. In August 1858, he was appointed to the command of a squadron of Hodson's Horse. Between 1857 and 1859, he was twice wounded in action and was mentioned in despatches four times.

In early 1860, MacGregor joined Fane's Horse[7] which was being raised for service in China for the second Opium War and served with the regiment throughout the campaign. He was wounded five times, twice severely, and was specially recommended for gallantry by Sir Hope Grant, commander of the force in China. Upon his return to India, he was appointed second-in-command of the 10th Bengal Cavalry (Hodson's Horse), a post he held between 1861 to 1864. Subsequently, MacGregor was appointed Brigade Major of the Bhutan Field Force (1864-66) during which period he once again showed conspicuous gallantry on several occasions. His final service in the field was in the Abyssinian Campaign in 1867. Following this, MacGregor was appointed Assistant Quartermaster General of the Sirhind Division.

In 1867, before embarking on service to Abyssinia, Charles MacGregor had conceived of an idea to establish an institution for the Indian Army similar to that of the Royal United Service Institute at Whitehall Yard in London. MacGregor continuously laboured to

bring this idea to fruition and it was only in 1870 that he was finally able to establish the United Service Institution (USI) of India, at Shimla. During its first year, he served as its secretary and the first annual report in 1871 proved it to be a worthy match to its older sister institute in England.[8]

The mid-19th century was a period marked by Russian expansion into Central Asia, bringing them closer with each passing year to British India's ill-guarded frontiers. The vast expanse of perilous and inhospitable tracts of land, inhabited by hostile peoples, that lay between the advancing Russians and India needed to be mapped. Both, the Russians and the British, hoped to gather as much intelligence as they could and the 'shadowy struggle' that ensued came to be known as the Great Game.[9] While there was considerable danger in manoeuvring through these lands, there was no shortage of intrepid young officers who preferred risking their lives than languishing in the plains of India. It is no surprise then that MacGregor – given his fearless and adventurous spirit – would become involved in this endeavour. He was nominated to compile a gazetteer of the countries that lay between Russia and India. This project took him on a journey of 5000 miles, on horseback, in order to gather as much information as he could. The compilation was by no means an easy task and, after five long years, resulted in the successful publication of the *Gazetteer of Central Asia* comprising of seven voluminous parts.

In late 1880, MacGregor became Quarter Master General of India and was promoted to the rank of Major General. He was only 40 years old at the time and had 24 years of military service. A few months later, he was made Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath. MacGregor wrote a number of books covering his travels. His most significant work, *The Defence of India: A Strategical Study* reflected the thinking of those who backed the 'Forward Policy' in India. This policy regarded the control of territories bordering the North-West Frontier as a crucial necessity to prevent Russian expansionism.[10]

MacGregor, undoubtedly, achieved a lot during his lifetime. However, the man was not without flaws and received a fair amount of criticism – mostly after his death in 1887. Much of this

criticism came when his personal diary, written during the Second Afghan War, came into the public domain. It shed light on Macgregor's egotism and self-serving attitude as well as his harsh criticisms of his Chief, Lord Roberts. By its very nature, it is unlikely that the diary was ever meant to be for anyone else's eyes other than its author's. An edited version of it, however, was eventually published in 1985.[11] The criticisms based solely on the man's most intimate thoughts, and after he was no longer around to defend himself, can perhaps be deemed somewhat unjust. Nonetheless, the diary proved to be an invaluable resource for future scholars and was used by Major Robert Hammond for his book on the history of the MacGregor Memorial Medal.[12] The Medal itself was instituted in 1888 by the USI in memory of its founder. It is the only Raj era medal that is still awarded till this day and is, along with the unique Institution that he founded, a befitting tribute to a truly remarkable man.

Endnotes

[1] Robert Hamond, *History of the MacGregor Memorial Medals 1889-1989* (New Delhi: Lancer, 1994), pp. 7-8.

[2] For a more comprehensive account see *The Life and Opinions of Major-General Charles MacGregor, KCB, CSI, CIE, Quartermaster-General in India, Vol I,* ed. by Lady MacGregor (Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1888).

[3] J. Bernard Burke, *A Genealogical and Heraldic Dictionary of the Landed Gentry of Great Britain & Ireland for 1852, Supplement* (London: Colburn and Co, 1852), p. 215.

[4] Ibid, pp. 216-17.

[5] *Life and Opinions,* p. 10.

[6] The rank 'ensign' was formerly the lowest commissioned rank for an infantry officer.

[7] Fane's Horse was raised at Kanpur in 1860 with volunteers from Hodson's Horse. It became the 19th Regiment of Bengal Cavalry in 1861. In 1903 it was styled 19th Lancers (Fane's Horse) and after independence the regiment was allotted to Pakistan.

[8] *Life and Opinions,* p. 329.

[9] For more details see: Peter Hopkirk, *The Great Game: The Struggle for Empire in Central Asia* (New York: Kodansha International, 1992).

[10] Hamond, p. 8.

[11] *War in Afghanistan, 1879-80 : The Personal Diary of Major General Sir Charles Metcalfe MacGregor,* ed. by William Trousdale (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1985).

[12] Robert Hamond, *History of the MacGregor Memorial Medals 1889-1989* (New Delhi: Lancer, 1994).

Colonel Pyara Lal: A Soldier and Scholar (15 August 1916 - 23 November 1987)

Major General YK Gera (Retd)@

Colonel Pyara Lal was born on 15 August 1916 at Lahore, now in Pakistan. After graduation from Punjab University in 1938, he went to England for higher education at Oxford. He did law at the Inner Temple in 1943 and was called to the bar in 1947. During the Second World War, he was commissioned as 2nd Lieutenant in the 2nd Battalion Worcestershire Regiment in 1943. In the same year, he got transferred to 4/5 MARATHA Light Infantry in India. He served as Public Relations Officer (PRO) (Army) in Imphal during the Burma Campaign (1943-44) and with British Commonwealth Occupation Forces for Japan (BCOF), after World War II, in Kure, Hiroshima Perfecture. He left Japan in 1947 and later served as PRO in Jammu and Kashmir Operations of 1948, Hyderabad Police Action in 1948, Sino-Indian Conflict of 1962 and India-Pakistan Conflicts of 1965 and 1971.

During 1948-49, he was Military Advisor, Development Board, Ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation. In this capacity, he was responsible for planning and development of the Defence Colony in New Delhi.

He also had a tenure as Deputy Assistant Military Secretary in Military Secretary's branch and in his spare time, he looked after the USI as its honorary Secretary. On 01 January 1957, he was appointed Secretary USI. During the period 1960 to 1972, he worked as Colonel General Staff (Training) at the National Defence College (NDC), New Delhi. Concurrently, he looked after the USI as well. He contributed a lot during formative years of the NDC and helped to lay strong foundations on which the NDC firmly rests. In the history of the NDC, he was their longest serving staff member. His task was to locate and get eminent speakers for the NDC lectures. Colonel Pyara Lal has described this period as

among his most intellectually satisfying and stated that, “I was like a Hollywood Scout in those early days [of the NDC] but instead of looking for [handsome men] and beautiful women I was looking for eminent people to talk to the students”.

On retirement from Service, Colonel Pyara Lal was able to devote full time to the USI though even earlier he devoted a lot of time. One special task which was closest to his heart was that of looking after the USI and the USI Journal. He continued to perform it till the last.

There was a time when USI faced lack of funds and its closure appeared likely. It was due to Colonel Pyara Lal’s efforts that financial stability was brought about. He was also the Founder Director, correspondence courses run by the USI for the benefit of Armed Forces officers for promotion examinations as well as entrance examination to Defence Services Staff College. He consulted some of the serving officers who had done metropolitan correspondence course from England and decided to structure a similar course for wider utility. The USI courses became the main source of income of the USI. A large number of officers join these courses yearly and the high percentage of successful results has been greatly appreciated by the Services Headquarters. Colonel Pyara Lal made tremendous efforts to build a corpus for the USI by being thrifty and getting maximum mileage out of every rupee spent by the Institution. He raised a fund of nearly rupees 1.2 crores for the USI building complex besides getting an allotment of five acres of land for the present USI building.

In 1970, Colonel Pyara Lal was awarded Ati Vishisht Seva Medal (AVSM) for his distinguished service to the Armed Forces of India. In the same year, Colonel Pyara Lal organised centenary celebrations of the USI, with a special centenary issue of the USI Journal and an exhibition of rare books from the USI library, including photographs on military subjects, which was inaugurated by the then President Dr Zakir Hussain.

From 23 October 1986, the designation of Secretary USI was changed to Director and Editor. Colonel Pyara Lal continued to hold the appointment till his demise, in harness, on 23 November 1987. Colonel Pyara Lal was Secretary and later Director and Editor USI for over three decades. During his tenure, he

husbanded the resources of the USI extremely well. He worked devotedly to bring up one of the oldest autonomous defence institutions in Asia to a level which is praiseworthy.

Colonel Pyara Lal was sought after by many of our universities to help in setting up their departments of defence studies. He had vast experience in public relations and was very popular with our press. He was helpful by nature. Many Service officers, spanning more than three generations, who came in contact with him can never forget his helpful attitude and useful guidance, and encouragement, which they received from him in their early literary efforts. He advised and encouraged officers to read and also attempt writing articles, and monographs, to disseminate knowledge so acquired.

Colonel Pyara Lal's contribution was well recognised by USI members, and the USI Council decided to name the USI library after him when the new USI building came up in 1996. A number of articles also appeared in the USI Journal in recognition of his contribution. The annual 'Colonel Pyara Lal Memorial Lecture' was instituted from a grant given by his brother, Shri Sardari Lal Agarwal, from the Colonel Pyara Lal Welfare and Education Trust. The first memorial lecture was held on 19 September 1997. Every year, the memorial lecture is programmed generally in September. In the year 2020, due to the restrictions posed by the Covid-19 pandemic, for the first time the lecture was held as a Webinar discussion online. USI members continue to fondly remember the tremendous contribution made by Colonel Pyara Lal as a soldier, scholar and a helpful human being.

@**Major General YK Gera (Retd)** superannuated as Chief Signal Officer Central Command Lucknow. He has done the Defence Services Staff College, Long Defence Management Course and also the National Security Management Course from the National Defence University, Washington (USA). He is an alumnus of National Defence College, New Delhi. He has been the Deputy Director & Editor, the Head Centre of Strategic Studies & Simulation and Head Editorial Team at the USI.

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Late Major General Samir Chandra Sinha, PVSM: A Biographical Sketch

Brigadier Deepak Sinha (Retd)[@]

Introduction

Charles Dickens once wrote, “Whatever I have tried to do in life, I have tried with all my heart to do it well; whatever I have devoted myself to, I have devoted myself completely; in great aims and in small I have always thoroughly been in earnest”. For those who knew the late General Samir Chandra Sinha intimately, he wholly exemplified Dickens belief in the way he led his own life. A stalwart soldier, paratrooper, scholar and visionary, the late General was born to Shri Kumar Dhiresh Chandra Sinha and Smt Swarna Lata Sinha on 28 January 1926 in Kolkata. He was the grandson of Raja Shib Krishna Sinha, the youngest brother of the Maharaja of Sushong Durgapur, now in Bangladesh, one of the pre-eminent *zamindari* families of undivided Bengal.

At the young age of seven he tragically lost his mother, to whom he was very deeply attached. He spent his early years at his maternal grandparents’ residence at Lansdowne Road, Kolkata, till he was admitted into the Prince of Wales Military College (now the Rashtriya Indian Military College) in August 1937, one of only eleven selected to join the 32nd Course. He was academically in the top half of his class, an excellent boxer who had made his name against Doon School in the Inter School Boxing Tournament in 1941, and excelling in Physical Training and Gymnastics. It is here that he made steadfast friends, some of whom later joined the Pakistan Army, relationships that he maintained and enriched, especially after his retirement, till his unexpected demise on 26 January 2002, just short of his 76th birthday.

First Innings - Army Service

Samir Sinha completed his Senior Cambridge in December 1942 and applied for a commission in the army. Towards the latter half of 1943, he passed the Services Selection Board and was instructed to report to B Company, Officers Training School at Belgaum in March 1944. His course mates included later Chief of Army Staff, General AS Vaidya and Lieutenant General SK Sinha who retired as Vice Chief of Army Staff and subsequently served as Governor of Assam and Jammu & Kashmir. The latter has this to say of his course mate:

> "I admired my friend Samir Sinha who was a wizard on the horse, doing scissors, back roll etc. with great aplomb…. I considered his performance as a cadet outstanding. At the end of our training at Belgaum, much to my surprise I heard the announcement that I had been declared the best cadet of our batch and was to be awarded the Commandant's Baton at the passing out parade. That was the war time equivalent of the Sword of Honour. I felt that I did not deserve this distinction which more appropriately should have gone to Samir Sinha. Samir, on the other hand, was emphatic in saying that I fully deserved this distinction. Possibly this was because we were such good friends…."[1]

Pre-independence. He was commissioned into the 15th Battalion of the 5th Maratha Light Infantry Regiment on 10 December 1944, a month and a half shy of his 19th birthday, but volunteered for parachute duties while still attached to the Maratha Light Infantry Regimental Centre. Therein, too, is a story that gives us some insight into his character. While attached to the Centre, he became aware that a team from the Indian Parachute Regiment was visiting the station to motivate personnel to volunteer for parachute duties. He immediately requested that he be allowed to volunteer, an act thoroughly disapproved of by the Centre Commandant. Not soon after, just before the team arrived, he found himself at the Regimental Jungle Training Camp, approximately 20 km away from Belgaum, undergoing 'orientation' training. He did not let this small matter stop him and as soon as the team arrived, trekked across at night to meet them to submit

his volunteer papers. He was back in camp by the morning without any suspicions being raised. One can imagine the surprise and consternation of the Commandant when he was informed that Army Headquarters had issued transfer orders for the young officer to report forthwith to the 1st Battalion, the Indian Parachute Regiment, at Quetta to undergo probation.

In March 1945, after having passed probation, he successfully qualified as a paratrooper at the Parachute Training School, Chaklala. In 1946, on the disbandment of the Indian Parachute Regiment, because his parent unit was the Maratha LI, he was posted to its 3rd Battalion that was on its way to Quetta for conversion to parachute duties, as a part of 2nd Indian Airborne Division. Much to the consternation of the Military Engineering Services, they found themselves dealing with an officer responsible both for handing over assets on behalf of his disbanded unit and then taking them over on behalf of his new unit. It ensured that the barrack damages recovered from his previous unit were properly utilised for that very purpose! In May 1947, he was given Permanent Commission, news that he received with mixed emotion as all service prior to his 21st birthday no longer counted for seniority, allowing his juniors to be promoted ahead of him as Company Commanders.

Post-independence. In November 1947, the unit moved to Amritsar where it was placed under the Military Evacuation Organisation that had been established to escort minorities from West Pakistan to India and vice-versa. One can only imagine the pressures he faced, and the sacrifices required of him as he was completely unaware of the whereabouts of his own family, which had been forced to flee East Pakistan due to the disturbed conditions at the time. The task of escorting refugees was extremely heart-wrenching and difficult, given the scale of violence that had occurred.

On one occasion, he was detailed to accompany the sister of late Lieutenant Colonel Dewan Ranjit Rai, MVC, of 1st SIKH, who had just been killed in Jammu and Kashmir, to bring back her belongings from their house in Lahore. In his own words:

> "When we reached her house in Model Town, we found it occupied by her once friendly neighbours. They very politely, but reluctantly, helped me load all her belongings including a refrigerator. We then went to the Lahore University to recover the books belonging to her father who had been the Head of Department there and had been murdered in his office during the recent riots. A Professor very superciliously reminded me that it was a place of learning and that there was no need to bring in an armed escort. When I pointed to the blood stains on the office floor and asked him whether these were the signs of learning, he did not know where to look. Later, when I reached the Wagah Border, the Pakistan Post halted my vehicle and told me I had a refrigerator, which was machinery, and could not be taken out of Pakistan — obviously our friendly neighbours had not been so friendly after all and had informed the Post to intercept the refrigerator. Fortunately for me, just then a JCO with a whole platoon of 2 Maratha LI, stationed at Lahore, returned from some escort duty. The JCO, seeing my Maratha Hackle, came to find out why I had been halted. Seeing the sudden change in numbers, the Pakistani Post Commander realised that discretion was the better part of valour, and waived all his objections to machinery being taken out of Pakistan and waved me on."[2]

In December 1947, the battalion was ordered to join 50 Para Brigade at Naushera. By the time the battalion joined the Brigade, Jhangar had fallen and Naushera was under siege where the battalion saw tough fighting in its defence. He recalled that:

> "Enemy shelling was a regular occurrence at Jhangar and for a while we did not have guns to respond. The usual reflex response was to dive into a trench even if asleep, to wake up in the trench in due course. One day as they woke up in the trench to the whistle of artillery shells above, everyone started laughing as realisation dawned that our guns had been brought up and they had all dived into the trench at the sound of our own shelling for the first time in the sector."

Subsequently, during the attack to recapture Jhangar, he was sent by the CO to regain contact with ‘C’ Company that was pinned down on the forward slopes of Pir Thil Naka. Upon arrival, he found that the Company Commander had been killed while his Radio Operator lay critically wounded. After giving first aid to the Operator, he assumed command and was able to withdraw the company, along with the casualties, to the reverse slope despite their being under effective fire. Following this, he was made Company Commander and led the battalion advance to Jhangar, after the heights of Pir Thil Naka had been captured in the second attempt.

A few days later, after occupying the dominating heights ahead of Jhangar, ironically, he was injured by artillery fire, refusing to take cover while laying mines ahead of his company defences resulting in his evacuation to Delhi. On his return, he was posted out as the Brigade Intelligence Officer of 50 Parachute Brigade, at that time commanded by Brigadier Mohammed Usman, MVC (Posthumous). As a matter of fact, he was only a few steps away from the Brigadier, sheltering behind a rock, at the time of his tragic death due to artillery shelling.

In December 1951, he married Ms Krishna Bagchi, the daughter of noted Indologist Dr Prabodh Chandra Bagchi, the then Vice Chancellor of Vishwa Bharati University at Santiniketan. He was, at that time, posted as Brigade Major to 50 (Independent) Parachute, after which he was posted to 2nd Battalion of the Assam Regiment for a short stint. In 1954, he proceeded to Wellington for the Staff College course and as his wife once related that when she went to join him, he received her at the railhead. While travelling up to Wellington, in the cold hill air, he brought out a thermos but rather than hot tea, it had ice-cold water. He offered her a cup, explaining that it was from their first refrigerator which he had just purchased. Incidentally, that refrigerator, a Philips, was finally sold in full working order in 2019. Upon completion of the course, he was posted back to 50 Para Brigade as the Deputy Assistant Adjutant and Quarter Master General (DAA&QMG). He was then nominated to attend a course at the School of Land/Air Warfare in the United Kingdom, on completion of which he was posted to the newly established

School of Land and Air Warfare (now College of Air Warfare) in Hyderabad as an instructor.

He finally returned to his battalion in 1960 as the Second in Command and participated in Operation Vijay, the Liberation of Goa in 1961. In February 1963, he was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and given the task of raising 6 PARA in Agra. In 1964, he was nominated for the Command and Staff College Course at Fort Leavenworth, in the United States of America, from where he graduated at the second position in the course. During the Indo-Pak war of 1965, he was in the Military Operations Directorate at Army Headquarters and in 1966, went on promotion as a Brigadier to command 51 (Independent) Parachute Brigade. His first command, in Sugar Sector, ended abruptly as he was seriously injured in a road accident when the road suddenly gave way and his vehicle rolled down into the Sutlej River below. After his recovery, he was given command of 81 Mountain Brigade in Arunachal Pradesh and subsequently, 47 Infantry Brigade in Hyderabad.

In March 1970, he was posted as Director Combat Development at Army Headquarters for a year before being posted to Mhow as the first Commander of the Higher Command Wing in the newly established College of Combat (now Army War College). During Operation Cactus Lily, the Liberation of Bangladesh in 1971, he was attached with Headquarter Eastern Command as the Deputy Director of Civil Administration for Bangladesh and was responsible for assisting the Bangladesh Government in Exile in establishing itself in all liberated areas. It gave him an opportunity to visit his ancestral place and connect with those who stayed behind. In January 1972, he proceeded on promotion as General Officer Commanding (GOC) 19 Infantry Division in Kashmir. Lieutenant General KK Nanda (Retd), one of his former Brigade Commanders, has this to say:

> "Samir Sinha, as he was popularly known, proved himself to be a very fine GOC in a very short time… a bold paratrooper and a very fine infantryman, he was a thorough gentleman. Sinha was very sound in both operations and administration. He was frank, blunt and straightforward and

> called a spade a spade. He was fair, firm and friendly to all and did not differentiate among the officers, particularly the Brigade Commanders, irrespective of the lanyard they wore. He proved to be a very popular and effective GOC."[3]

He subsequently went on to hold other important appointments such as the Chief of Staff of Northern Command and Commandant, Indian Military Academy, though his tenure as Commandant was cut short due to a major colorectal surgery for cancer, an experience he used to boost the morale of others, around him, suffering from this debilitating disease. Upon recovery, he was posted as Director Military Training and then, as Chief of Staff Central Command before being seconded to the Cabinet Secretariat as Inspector General Special Frontier Force, an appointment from where he finally retired after a long and distinguished service on 31 January 1984. In addition, he also held the appointment of the Colonel of the Parachute Regiment from 1977 to November 1983. He was awarded the Param Vishist Seva Medal (PVSM) by the President, in 1981, for distinguished service.

Final Innings with the United Service Institution (USI) of India

After retirement, he voluntarily assisted Colonel Pyara Lal, the then Director of the USI of India, the only think tank of the defence forces at that time, till the latter's death in harness. He was then appointed as Director, a post he accepted without any remuneration, and held till he voluntarily resigned six months after moving the USI to its new and imposing premises on Rao Tula Ram Marg, New Delhi, in June 1996. Colonel VK Singh (Retd) writes this of his tenure, "He played a major part in getting the land allotted and arranging funds for the new building, and left the Institution in a healthy financial position, large membership and facilities for growth".

On his untimely demise on 26 January 2002, he was remembered for his immense contribution to the development of the USI with the naming of the USI Auditorium in his honour, and the institution of an Annual Memorial Lecture in his name. He was survived by his wife of over 50 years, Smt Krishna Sinha, his two

sons, Deepak and Ashok, both of whom joined the military, the elder in his father's regiment and the younger as a paratrooper doctor, their wives Rima and Anita, and four grandchildren.

Endnotes

[1] SK Sinha, *A Soldier Recalls* (New Delhi, 1992), p. 45.

[2] M Thomas (Retd), *Glory and the Price: A History of 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment (MARATHA)* (Meerut, 2002), pp. 288-289.

[3] KK Nanda, *War with No Gains: Operation Cactus Lily Indo-Pak War 1971* (New Delhi, 2013), p. 256.

[4] VK Singh (Retd), *United Service Institution of India: History 1870-2008,* New Delhi: USI, 2008, p. 30.

@Brigadier Deepak Sinha (Retd) is a second generation paratrooper with over three decades of service in the army. He held the Field Marshal Cariappa Chair of Excellence at the United Services Institution of India, New Delhi, in 2003-04 and is the author of the book "Beyond the Bayonet: Indian Special Operations Forces in the 21st Century". Presently he is a Consultant with the Observer Research Foundation.

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USI of India: An Epitome of Professional Learning of Indian Military for Last 150 Years

Major General SB Asthana, SM, VSM (Retd)@

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

---Nelson Mandela

Backdrop

The United Service Institution (USI) of India as an institution of learning in all aspects of military life has been part of the professional journey of India's military, even before its formal inception in 1895 when an 'Indian Army' was created along with the three Presidency armies which then became informal 'Commands'. In 1903 all three were amalgamated into a British Indian Army. For any professional military, Professional Military Education (PME) of its leaders is synonymous to its effectiveness in employment, as late President John F Kennedy remarked *'Leadership and Learning are indispensable to each other'.* Accordingly, in the British Indian army PME was given due importance.

As USI celebrates 150th Anniversary this year, it proudly unwinds the memories of its glorious past with the soldier-scholar Field Marshal WJ Slim, MC, who as a mid-rung officer headed the USI in the early thirties and whose memoirs 'Defeat into Victory' is a must read for every military leader in the world. A flagship of the USI's contribution to PME is the USI journal, which is the oldest uninterrupted defence publication in Asia. It was started with an aim of enriching professional awareness of military officers, as well as to provide an opportunity to them to write articles, and book reviews, to enhance their writing skill. Interestingly, 1948 issues of the institution's journal (total four) were published jointly for the Indian and Pakistani military as the USI of India & Pakistan, before Pakistan conveyed that it did not want to be associated

with the Indian military. This was no surprise because for the whole of 1948, India and Pakistan had been at war. The Institution moved from Shimla to Delhi in 1953 and it continues to contribute as a strategic think tank, tri-service institution for professional development and training of officers, helping them in career progression through education programs.

Epitome of Professional Learning of Indian Military

As mentioned, professional learning and career progression of officers has always been an important activity of the USI since its inception. This activity continued as we saw through the transformation of British Indian Defence Forces into Indian Defence Forces. Thus the USI played a key role, in pre and post-independence era, in the arena of professional learning. It realigned its PME programmes accordingly, being the only such institution for military officers at that time. The Institution has rendered yeoman service to thousands of officers and the history of legends of Indian military is synonymous to history of USI of India, as most of them had been members of this institution, and grew up in their career reading professional material from this institution.

As part of its educational activities, the USI started holding military war games in mid-1880s. In 1903, it began assisting officers to prepare for examinations in tactical fitness for command and for promotion. In 1910, it began its programme to assist officers in preparation for the Staff College and by 1914, there were 23 programmes offered to interested officers. The institution had continued with its learning programmes even during various conflicts, with exception of short interruptions during World War II, partition of the country and move of the Institution to Delhi.

From 1958 onwards, promotion of educational activities has remained a major area of focus at the USI and it has been regularly conducting courses for promotion as well as competitive examinations for the Indian military including entrance examinations for Defence Services Staff College and Defence Services Technical Staff College (DSSC/DSTSC). In 1999, in the wake of the Kargil conflict, USI undertook evaluation of the answer books of all promotion examinations in order to reduce the load on

serving officers. Besides conducting courses for career progression, USI prepares study material for benefit of officers in various subjects in tactical to strategic domain, including specialised subjects like analysis of military history, law, technological applications in military domain, leadership and management issues. Being a tri-service organisation, adequate emphasis is being given to joint warfare, cyber, information warfare and other subjects crucial for warfare in 21st century.

USI undertakes professional learning activities in strategic domain also, like scenario building exercises and Net Assessment, for institutes like National Defence College, Indian Institute of Public Administration, Foreign Service Institute, IAS Academy and Army/Air Force war colleges. Specific researches in military subjects are also undertaken by various officers, which add value to professional enrichment of Indian Military as well as institutional memory to be disseminated to future generation of officers. USI also conducts conceptual level courses for selected future senior military commanders.

Modalities of Professional Military Learning

Professional education of military officers is an on-going process in which units, formations, training institutions, Directorate General of Military Training, Department of Naval Education etc. and institutions like the USI have an important role to play. Due to shortage of officers in units/formations and pressure of work, a large number of officers find it difficult to do much study work, especially under suitable guidance. Considering the challenges of deployment and awkward locations of officers in many areas, due to operational compulsions, it is difficult for them to access the latest study material online or even through regular conventional means. That is where the USI correspondence courses/distant learning programmes help out officers.

The Institution runs regular correspondence courses for officers of the Armed Forces to assist them in preparing for promotion exams, and DSSC/DSTSC, and PME exam for Indian Navy. The study material and question papers are sent to officers to answer the same advisably under timed conditions, and send it back to USI. The answers are carefully evaluated and sent back to them along with guidance remarks by experienced Directing Staff

(DS) for improvement, which helps them in performing better in examinations. All such courses are interactive; wherein the officers can speak to DS/Chief Instructor or clarify things through internet or phone. The interactive courses are very popular as officers regularly ask questions during their preparations throughout the year and receive answers.

USI courses have evolved over five decades and continue to enjoy the patronage of serving officers, who benefit from these courses in their career progression by passing promotion exams and qualifying in large numbers in competitive exams. These programmes are continuously evolving through interactions with the Service Headquarters and with the mentors, and officers participating in USI courses. Besides distant learning, USI conducts contact programmes for officers, wherein the officers come to the USI for short duration, are put through crash course involving classes, mock examinations, panel discussions by experts on the subject, correction of their written work and discussions on areas of improvement in respect of each individual officer. USI maintains a large pool of experts, who are veteran and serving military officers in Delhi, for such interactions.

USI also undertakes lectures in military units and formations and various organisations for PME and preparing officers for promotion and competitive exams. The lectures can be organised by specialist DS/ Chief Instructor in person or electronically through video conferencing tools as per the requirement of military formations. The institute adopted online model for conduct of all courses even during the COVID-19 pandemic and ensured that PME is not disrupted.

Faculty and Resources

USI continues to excel in many fields beyond the realm of a think tank, with over 13000 members and experts in various subjects including United Nations Peace Operations. With diversification and modernisation, and varying experiences of its members, USI also has the expertise and resource faculty to undertake professional education, leadership, management and motivational courses of various professionals in other fields, including various government/commercial sectors and institutions. A large number of lectures are being taken by Chief Instructor and the faculty in

various universities in India, and abroad, in person or through video conferencing tools. Joint seminars with various universities, organisations like Confederation of Educational Excellence are part of such contact educational activities.

Colonel Pyara Lal Memorial Library (Information Resource Centre) of USI is a knowledge hub in the areas of relevance to all Services, defence studies, strategic perspectives, warfare, military history, United Nations Peace Operations, international relations/Diplomacy, country studies, security, insurgency/naxalism/terrorism, nuclear issues, other academic subjects, historical studies and autobiography/ biography/memoires. The library has an enormous collection of military study material. It is a highly specialised library for enhancing and enriching knowledge while concurrently facilitating education, research, training, self-development, well-being, and lifelong learning. A full spectrum of ever-expanding body of worldwide knowledge and information superiority is maintained by acquiring, and furthering ease of access to books, manuscripts, and other print and non-print materials and preserving these for the benefit of the members. It has a unique collection of historical records and study material, with large collection of rare books befitting the age of the organisation. USI has enough knowledge resource for any syllabus on strategic and military courses, to suit various programmes for professionals.

Conclusion

In this 150th year of its raising, the USI of India can say with pride that it has been the teacher and mentor of the officer cadre initially from the army and then from all the three Services. From writing essays to appearing in exams which help them in career progression, the USI has played a yeoman role. After independence, in close coordination with the training directorates of the three Services, the USI has conducted coaching, provided speakers, and conducted war games. The USI has proved the fact that military education is valuable because it provides an intellectual architecture for battlefield success. It contributes to stable civil-military relation. The USI faculty and resource persons have the challenging and profound responsibility to conduct and

promote educational activities, which they have rendered successfully. Having all type of high-quality collections, USI library has been reflective of the paradigm shift that defence and security studies have undergone in the last one century. The USI has provided a culture of reflection, and a capacity for critical analysis. Lastly, military education matters because it cultivates an aspiration to excellence.

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The Centre for Strategic Studies and Simulation (CS3): The Journey to its Quadranscentennial

Major General RPS Bhadauria, VSM (Retd)[@]

The United Service Institution (USI) of India — colloquially called

'The USI' — is probably the oldest think tank of India. It was established in 1870 by the British for furtherance of their aims in sustaining their Empire in South Asia. However, it did not have a separate 'Research' vertical for contemporary national security studies. It relied on the submission of papers of interest by its members, and has been publishing the USI Journal since its inception. It was understandable that, since the need of the British Empire was more to secure and defend its Crown Jewel — India, not much was done to train the native Indian minds on these aspects. Post India's independence, while the same model was followed, a need was felt to have a 'Research Wing' in the USI. It was essential for the furtherance of interest and knowledge of national and military security not only amongst its members, but also within the Services, bureaucracy, scholars, and the polity at large.

The spade work for the same was done by the doyen of the USI, the first Secretary cum Editor post-independence, subsequently the first Director and Editor, Colonel Pyara Lal (Retd). It was pursued further by Major General Samir Sinha (Retd), who succeeded him. The aim was to provide a platform for interested members to undertake study and research on selected security related subjects. The Centre for Research, USI-CR, which celebrates its Quadranscentennial (Silver Jubilee) this year, was finally approved by the Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC) in November 1995, but the process was stalled, somewhat, by the need to focus on construction of the new premises (present

location) where the USI was to move from its then limited space in Kashmir House. The new building had the requisite provision of a dozen rooms to enable the setting up of work stations for research scholars under the USI-CR.

Once the USI moved in to its new premises, Lieutenant General Satish Nambiar (Retd), the next Director, was able to actualise the Research vertical. The then Service Chiefs, Admiral VS Shekhawat, General Shankar Roy Choudhury, and Air Chief Marshal SK Sarin, provided grants as corpus for instituting three Chairs of Excellence at the USI, appropriately named after the first Indian Chiefs of the three Services — Field Marshal KM Cariappa, Admiral Ram Dass Katari and Air Marshal Subroto Mukherjee. Subsequently the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) acceded to the request from the then Director USI, and provided a corpus respectively, for two more Chairs of Excellence — the DS Kothari Chair and the MEA Chair. Thus, the USI-CR, under the oversight of the Deputy Director & Editor (DDE), began functioning.

A few years later, to widen the area of research and related activities, the USI Council approved increasing the scope of activities of the USI-CR, its re-designation as the Centre for Strategic Studies and Simulation (USI- CS3), and instituting a new post of Deputy Director (Research), or the DDR, as its Head. The USI-CS3 was established on 01 January 2005. CS3 is managed by a Board of Management (BoM) appointed by the USI Council. In addition, the USI now started receiving servicing officers on one to two years' study leave as Senior Research Scholars, who conduct deep research on subjects related to national and military security as desired by the Service Headquarters. At the end of their study, USI publishes their research as a book, post its peer review, thus adding to the scholarly work of the institution and also meeting the requirement of Service Headquarters. An up-to-date data bank was also started being maintained.

The scope of CS3 was also enlarged to encompass military-oriented studies aimed at conducting comprehensive enquiry, research and analyses on national and international security

issues, military oriented strategic gaming and simulation to evolve options for wider discussion and considerations, and also undertake contractual studies outsourced by Net Assessment Directorate, HQ Integrated Defence Staff, National Security Council Secretariat, and the MEA. Two more Chairs of Excellence have been added to the five that were already established earlier. Colonel PS Gill, father of late Flying Officer Amandeep Gill, provided a corpus for a Chair in the memory of his son, in 2015; similarly, in February 2020, the USI and HQ Assam Rifles (AR) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) wherein the HQ AR provided a corpus for a Chair of Excellence, especially for studies relating to the North East. As on date, CS3 has a total of seven Chairs of Excellence. Till now, a total of 59 fellowships have been awarded to these Chairs of Excellence (including USI-CR); books, based on these researches, have been published in most cases.

Over these years, the CS3 has evolved as one of the leading research centres in India. In order to undertake its projects, the CS3 regularly engages the services of members of the USI who have specialised knowledge in various spheres. The CS3 also runs a blog and accepts written papers which it publishes digitally as ‘Strategic Perspective’ on the USI website. The CS3 also vets and organises peer reviews of longer research papers, published as Occasional Papers and Monographs.

CS3 has been regularly contracted by the National Defence College (NDC), New Delhi to conduct Strategy Gaming Exercises for officers of the NDC course. Such exercises are also being conducted for Higher Command Course at Army War College. Strategic and security capsules/lectures have also been regularly held at Naval War College, College of Air Warfare, Jindal Global University (now discontinued), and National Police Academy. CS3 has been conducting workshops for Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officers, undergoing courses at the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) of the MEA, and also Strategic Panel Discussions for foreign diplomats undergoing professional courses at the FSI. The expertise of the CS3 in this field is recognised, which is why in 2019 it was involved in a special Strategic Gaming Exercise on behalf of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) for the QUAD

countries, the strategic grouping of India, Australia, Japan, and the USA. The DRDO has also utilised the expertise of the USI on tactical/operational orientation for its scientists, to assist them in grasping the military nuances that is necessary for making war gaming software at the tactical, operational and strategic levels. Higher Defence Management Course (HDMC) officers have also been visiting USI since 2000 for their project briefing, and Net Assessment courses have also been conducted for the Services. The CS3 has also been commissioned by the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) to conduct a Jointmanship Training Capsule for the mid-level officers of the three Services.

Since 2009, the USI commenced conducting the annual International Security Seminar that attracts experts and scholars from all over the world. The proceedings of the seminar are then published as a book. Similarly, the USI has participated in all the editions of the Xiangshan Forum hosted by the PLA in China, the SCO Forum conferences in Tashkent, Moscow and Sochi, and the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore. It has also been a part of the Track 1.5/Track 2.0 dialogue process, especially with Afghanistan, Vietnam, and Taiwan. Foreign delegations which visit the USI are conducted by the CS3, and their subject of interest is discussed with them. The MEA has also reached out to the USI for conduct of courses for key senior level officers, diplomats and bureaucrats of friendly foreign countries as part of its defence-diplomacy outreach.

The USI, through the CS3 vertical, has signed a number of MoUs with national and international institutions, media establishments and universities (both Indian and foreign) for furtherance of research and study. The USI has a very robust international engagement programme and its scholars and experts have participated in events with other think tanks in USA, EU, China, Japan, Russia, South Korea, Vietnam, Israel, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Sweden, Norway, Jordan etc.

It was felt that despite the books and monographs published by the researchers, there was a great reluctance on the part of thinkers and domain experts to articulate their perceptions on

strategic issues or help formulate long term strategic views. To contribute to the evolution and dissemination of strategic thought, it was decided during the tenure of Lieutenant General PK Singh (Retd), as Director, to bring out an annual 'Strategic Year Book' covering topical issues relating to geo-politics, geo-strategy, and national security. Major General BK Sharma (Retd), as the then DDR and Head CS3, took on this project and the first issue was published in the year 2016; since then, five annual issues have been published with each one having been received extremely well by the apex policy and decision makers.

The CS3 has come a long way since its journey started under Brigadier Vinod Sehgal (Retd). It then took wings under Major General YK Gera (Retd), former Head CS-3 and, thereafter, attained its prominence under the guidance of Major General BK Sharma (Retd), the previous Deputy Director Research and Head CS3 and present Director USI. The contribution of the Distinguished Fellows with the CS3, over this period, has also enabled it to reach such acme of excellence. In this journey, the CS3 has been ably served by Lieutenant General Chander Prakash (Retd), Lieutenant General GS Katoch (Retd), Major General PK Goswami (Retd), Major General Rajiv Narayanan (Retd), Major General RPS Bhadauria (Retd), Brigadier Narender Kumar (Retd), Major General Rajendra Kumar Yadav (Retd), Group Captain Sharad Tewari (Retd), Dr Roshan Khanijo, and Mr Gaurav Kumar.

USI and CS3 have met the challenge posed by the pandemic admirably by exploiting the digital world to connect with our members. A large number of Webinars have been conducted over the digital platforms Zoom and WebEx. USI has also partnered with other Indian and foreign think tanks in conducting such web discussions, like NIICE and AIDIA of Nepal, BIPSS Bangladesh, AISS of Afghanistan, RAND Corporation USA, ICWA India, CAPS Taiwan, and Hudson Institute USA. It has also partnered with media establishments for video recordings on Strategic Issues, like Strategic News Global (SNG) India of journalists Mr Nitin Gokhale, and Ms Gaurie Dwivedi. USI-CS3 is also active on social media notably Twitter, Face Book, and YouTube.

The eminent professor of leadership studies, Lee Bolman at Kansas University has said, “[a] vision without a strategy remains an illusion”. The CS3 will continue to provide strategic choices to policy and decision makers of India to enable them to fulfil our national vision.

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The USI Centre for Armed Forces Historical Research 2000-2020[1]

Squadron Leader Rana TS Chhina, MBE (Retd)[@]

Background

In 1996, Army Headquarters (HQs) came up with a proposal to set up an Armed Forces Historical Research Society at the United Service Institution (USI) of India. Its envisaged scope of activities/study was, however, limited only to the army. The proposal was then revised in January 1998 to include all the three Services within its ambit. After due consideration by the Service HQs, the suggestion to establish an Armed Forces Historical Research Centre at the USI was accepted in principle at a meeting of the Joint Training Committee (JTC) in Mar 1999. The proposal was then examined in detail by the USI and a draft Constitution was prepared and discussed by the USI Council in December. The Council was unanimous in accepting the desirability of establishing the Centre under the USI but directed a review of the scope and purpose of the proposed activities. A revised Constitution was accordingly prepared in consultation with the JTC and after approval by the Army, Navy and Air HQs, it was ratified by the USI Executive Committee on 23 Jun 2000. The Centre for Armed Forces Historical Research (CAFHR) began functioning from 01 Dec 2000, under the aegis of the Council of the Institution.

Early Years

The primary purpose of the Centre was to, "…Commission and encourage research and study into the past and contemporary history of the Indian Armed Forces, for an objective understanding of events that have taken place; and equally importantly, to record for posterity, the lessons that have been learnt. The Centre is to be funded by a Corpus set up at the USI with grants from the three Service Headquarters, and its activities monitored by a Board of Management constituted by the USI Council. The

Service Headquarters would position some essential staff under Director USI, for running of the Centre".[2]

The Centre's aim was later condensed to, "Encourage the study of the military history of India in general and the Indian Armed Forces in particular". As a first step towards setting up the Centre, a suitable re-employed officer of the rank of Colonel was to be posted as Secretary and Editor. Accordingly, Colonel Mahinder Kumar, Corps of Indian Engineers, was posted to the USI on 02 Jan 2001 and served as the first Secretary of the Centre up till 01 Jan 2003. The author joined the Centre as a Research Associate in Dec 2001 and was appointed Secretary and Editor of the Centre after Colonel Mahinder Kumar relinquished the post. A Board of Management (BoM) was appointed by the USI Council. It consisted of ex-officio representatives from the training and military operations directorates from each of the three Services as well as HQ IDS and three senior retired officers of each Service. The Chairman of the Board was to be appointed in rotation from amongst the latter. The first Chairman was Lieutenant General Mathew Thomas, PVSM, AVSM, VSM (Retd). The Board held its first meeting on 10 Apr 2001 to discuss the Centre's draft Constitution.

In the initial years, after the Centre was established, the focus was on the grant of the two research fellowships[3] with the intention of encouraging research and publication of studies dealing with different aspects of Indian military history. The Centre's corpus only allowed for the grant of two fellowships. However, after a few years it was felt that the scope of the Centre's activities needed to be expanded in order to attract a better standard of scholarship and build it up to an international standard of excellence. There were, in addition, a number of areas for improvement within the Indian military ecosystem and, to address these, a 'Vision Document' was prepared and accepted by the BoM on 01 Dec 2003. In January of the same year, the Centre also took over the administration of the General Palit Military Studies Trust (GPMST), which has enabled greater assistance to be provided to scholars in the form of small research and travel grants over the years.

Research Activities

Over time, in addition to its own research fellowship grants, the Centre began to undertake projects sponsored by the Service HQs or Ministries of the Government of India. While it is not possible to list all the projects undertaken by the Centre, some of the prominent ones are briefly touched upon in the succeeding paragraphs.

In 2004, the Centre undertook an editorial review and revision of the official histories of the 1962 Sino-Indian conflict and the 1971 Indo-Pak war for the Ministry of Defence (MoD); and an illustrated history of the Indian Army for Army HQs (2007). It also worked on the official history of Indian Peacekeeping, compiled under the authorship of Lieutenant General Satish Nambiar (Retd) (2008)[4]; and on a compendium of Indian War Memorials around the world (2014)[5] for the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). In addition, for the very first time, copies of two official Chinese accounts of the 1962 conflict were obtained, translated for use by researchers and released as a book[6]. Other significant and ground-breaking research projects undertaken by the Centre were compilations of the Historical Records and Iconography of Indian Cavalry Regiments 1750–2007[7] and a History of the Indian State Forces[8].

'India and the Great War' Centenary Commemoration

However, by far the most ambitious venture embarked upon by the Centre was the Joint USI-MEA 'India and the Great War' centenary commemoration project (2014-2018), which sought to examine both, the role played by India in the conflict and also the social, political and military changes that resulted within India as a result of its involvement with the war. To this end, the project engaged with a wide spectrum of partners, from governments down to individuals including descendants of veterans of the Great War from all countries of South Asia. Carried out with the support of the Government of India, MEA, as a public diplomacy initiative, the project reached out to audiences in the UK, France, Belgium, Australia, New Zealand and Bangladesh. It produced a number of

publications including a history of the Indian Army at Gallipoli[9] and a history of the Indian State Forces in the Great War[10].

'India and the Great War' Conference: 2014

Through the course of the four years, the project undertook and supported a number of commemorative activities, academic research and community engagement projects, all of which combined to influence the manner in which the war — with its colonial roots and postcolonial legacies — was viewed and understood within India. The project significantly helped shape public perception of the Indian involvement in the Great War, both within India and abroad.

Another major achievement of the Centre was the construction of an Indian War Memorial in France. To honour the sacrifices of Indian servicemen who fell in France, the Centre conceptualised the plans for the Indian Great War Military Memorial in collaboration with the commune of Villers-Guislain, the Indian Armed Forces and the MEA. Although a memorial dedicated to the Indian war dead, maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) exists at

Neuve Chapelle, a need was felt to build a unique Indian Memorial incorporating the Indian national emblem to honour the services of the Indian Armed Forces in France in WW1. The Hon'ble Vice President of India, Shri M Venkaiah Naidu, inaugurated the Indian Memorial at Villers-Guislain on 10 Nov 2018. The then Director USI, Lieutenant General PK Singh, PVSM, AVSM (Retd), attended the ceremony on behalf of the Institution. It is the first Indian national memorial in France and is located near the battlefield where Lance Dafadar Gobind Singh won the Victoria Cross for his death defying deeds of valour on 01 Dec 1917. An annual ceremony of 'Remembrance' is now held here on the weekend closest to 26 Sep, the date on which the first Indian troops set foot on French soil in 1914.

Construction of Indian Armed Forces Memorial at Villers-Guislain in France: 2018

In continuation of its Remembrance activities, from Jul to Nov 2017, the Centre worked on a joint Indo-Belgium project in

collaboration with the Embassy of the Kingdom of Belgium, New Delhi, the Indian Army and the In Flanders Fields Museum, Ypres. Through a publication and an exhibition titled 'India In Flanders Fields', the project marked 70 years of bilateral relations between India and Belgium; and further cemented the historical ties, that have existed between the two countries, by highlighting the sacrifices of Indian soldiers who laid down their lives for Belgian freedom during WW1. The publication and the exhibition were released and inaugurated respectively by their Majesties, the King and Queen of the Belgians, during their State Visit to India on 08 Nov 2017. The month long exhibition at the National Museum in Delhi was extended by another fortnight on popular demand.

In addition, the USI-CAFHR also assisted a French production house in making a documentary on the Indian Contribution in WW1. The documentary film, by Ms Mandakini Gahlot, titled 'India-The Forgotten Army' was screened at the Embassy of France in New Delhi on 13 Nov 2018 and was subsequently aired on Channel News Asia.

Bangladesh Liberation War Museum

From Mar to Jun 2017, the CAFHR was also tasked with collating material for the Bangladesh Liberation War Museum, Dhaka, on behalf of the MEA. The project focused on the landmark political, diplomatic and military events that occurred through the course of the Indo-Pak war of 1971 with special reference to the role played by India in the conflict. The collation of material included sourcing relevant images from archives and personal collections along with archival audio and video clippings of statements or speeches made at the time by political and military leaders of India and Bangladesh, etc. Interviews of a number of veterans who served in various operations during the war were also recorded.

On 08 April 2017, a ceremony was organised by MEA at Manekshaw Centre to honour the soldiers who laid down their lives in the 1971 war. It was attended by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Prime Minister Narender Modi. At the ceremony, an exhibition curated by the CAFHR as part of the Bangladesh Liberation War Museum Project was showcased and a brief on the project and the exhibition was provided by Secretary CAFHR to the two Prime Ministers.

USI curated exhibition on Bangladesh Liberation War Museum: 2017

Bangladesh National Museum

The USI-CAFHR assisted the Bangladesh National Museum (BNM), Dhaka to reorganise and renovate its permanent exhibition galleries (four in numbers) relating to the War of Liberation of 1971 and the Museum of Independence it operates. In this regard, Mr. Faizul Latif Chowdhury, Director General, BNM, invited Secretary CAFHR and Mr AR Ramanathan, Architect M/s TEAM and Expert on Design of Museums & Exhibitions, to participate as trainers in a three day training workshop for Curatorial Staff of BNM and other museums. The visit of the two experts was facilitated by the High Commission of India at Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Staff Rides

The USI-CAFHR tri-service 'Staff Ride' concept is based on the principle that the study of historical military campaigns and battles emphasises the enduring nature of warfare as well as its changing character. Confronting the realities of the former and managing the latter are eternal challenges to the soldier, and the

commander in particular. Especially, as the modern officer is not now often engaged on operations of significant scale, the value of Staff Rides in keeping the conceptual component of fighting power in good order is being freshly appreciated in professional armed forces.

As part of this project, the first Staff Ride was conducted for a period of four days, jointly with the UK Centre for Historical Analysis and Conflict Research (CHACR) and the Service HQs. It covered the sites of 1857 in Delhi. The exercise instructed and educated service officers in various aspects of strategy, tactics and doctrine through the medium of military history, in keeping with the professional requirements of the Indian military. It was attended by officers of the Indian and UK Armed Forces.

After the success of the first Staff Ride, USI-CAFHR conducted a two-day Staff Ride focused on the Chhamb battles of 1965 and 1971. It was organised at Kachreal, Jammu in collaboration with the Military Operations (MO) Directorate of Army HQs. The Staff Ride was conducted in Sep 2018 by Major General Ian Cardozo, AVSM, SM (Retd), Chairman of the Centre's Board of Management, and Major General AJS Sandhu, VSM (Retd). It was attended by officers of an Infantry Division.

As an adjunct to the Staff Rides, the Centre is promoting the concept of 'Battlefield Tourism' to enable visitors to historic battlefields to understand the sequence of events that then took place and relate them to the present terrain and surviving landmarks. The Centre's first Battlefield Guide titled 'The Indian Corps on the Western Front' was published in 2014.[11]

Remembrance and Commemoration

In an attempt to inculcate a grassroots culture of remembrance in the country, the Centre launched the 'India Remembers' project in collaboration with the CWGC. The pilot project commenced on 14 Jul 2016 and culminated on 07 Dec 2016. Through the course of six months, the project engaged with diverse community groups (schools, NGOs, etc.) from across the country and encouraged them to undertake various commemorative activities. To support the project, participating groups from Kalimpong and Darjeeling in

West Bengal, Bangalore in Karnataka, Kohima in Nagaland, Surat in Gujrat, Jaipur in Rajasthan and New Delhi organised commemorative events to raise awareness about the project and to highlight the importance of remembrance amongst the local communities. At most commemorative events, held on various days, war veterans and serving and retired defence personnel from the respective regions were felicitated. The groups also visited local war memorials in an effort to explore their regional military heritage. The project's last event was held on 11 December in Pune: a commemorative cycle rally, which began from CWGC Kirkee War Cemetery and ended with a reception at the Apshinge Military Village in Satara, covering a distance of 130 km (one way).

In May 2017, at the request of the Indian High Commission (IHC) UK, the Centre organised a wreath laying ceremony at India Gate to commemorate the Indian Labour Corps that had participated in WWI. The ceremony was organised as part of the 'India Remembers' and 'Unremembered' projects. The latter was an initiative undertaken by the IHC, UK to highlight the role of Indian communities who served in the Labour Corps in WW1. A similar event was held on the same date and time at the Arch of Remembrance in Leicester, which is a prototype of India Gate. This event connected the two memorials together, for the first time, with a powerful remembrance moment by the simultaneous playing of the Last Post on the 'Dilruba' instead of military bugles. The High Commissioners of India and Great Britain laid marigold wreaths at the memorials in Leicester and New Delhi respectively.

In 2019, the Centre was active in the commemorations of the 75th anniversary of the epic Battles of Kohima and Imphal. It participated in ceremonies at both these places where wreaths were laid by the Ambassador of Japan to India as well as the British High Commissioner in a spirit of friendship and reconciliation.

Also as part of its Remembrance project, the USI-CAFHR mooted the proposal that the 'marigold flower' join the poppy as an Indian symbol of Remembrance. Since 2016, the marigold has been widely used in India-related commemorative events around the world. The Great War Indian War Memorial that was

inaugurated at Villers-Guislain in France on 10 Nov 2018 has a bronze marigold wreath as an integral part of its design. The USI continues to promote the marigold as an Indian symbol of remembrance and aims for its symbolic significance to be understood at a grass-roots level. The marigold was chosen because it is easily and widely available and also because saffron is often seen as a colour of sacrifice.

Other Activities

In addition to its research activities, the Centre has been actively lobbying for the adoption of a comprehensive military record management policy by the Indian Armed Forces. The maintenance of records is a statutory requirement under the Public Records Act but the preservation of records is far from satisfactory. The Official Secrets Act provides a cover for ineptitude and excessive caution which, combined with bureaucratic apathy, serves as a deterrent to the transfer of military records into the public domain. As a result, records pertaining to significant aspects of our nation's military history are regularly destroyed instead of being preserved for posterity.

The Centre has also been campaigning to establish a 'national military oral archive' but has not as yet been successful in its endeavours although the Centre's oral recordings include the reminiscences of the late Havildar Umrao Singh, VC, the late Lieutenant General Dewan Prem Chand, PVSM, whose United Nations (UN) service was extraordinary and who served a Force Commander on three UN missions, among numerous others. Another proposal along similar lines is the suggestion to establish a National Military Heritage Trust for the conservation of the country's tangible and intangible military heritage.

British-Indian Military Heritage Partnership

Since Jan 2019, the Centre has been working closely with the National Army Museum (NAM), UK, to build upon areas of mutual interest and shared history. An annual Military Museum Curators' Course has been launched to build up the military heritage sector in India. Other activities to facilitate training, education, community engagement, and academic exchanges are also being undertaken

under the aegis of the joint USI-NAM British-Indian Military Heritage Partnership. The intent of the partnership is to strengthen the strong bonds that exist between India and the UK through projects and activities that serve to both educate and inform a wide spectrum of communities in both countries, with a special focus on a younger demographic.

Conclusion

In the two decades of its existence, the Centre has made a significant contribution to the field of Indian military history in general and the history of the Indian Armed Forces in particular. This is reflected in the quality of its publications and its achievements in the field of military diplomacy and community engagement. In Dec 2019, it was decided to expand the scope of activities of the Centre to include research in a broader range of subjects and the name was accordingly changed to 'Centre for Military History and Conflict Studies (CMHCS)'. As the country embarks into a new decade laden with fresh challenges, the Centre has its work cut out to map these in the years ahead.

Endnotes

[1] Now the USI Centre for Military History and Conflict Studies or CMHCS.

[2] USI CAFHR. F No. 1059/USI/CAFHR (1), 'Draft Press Release', May 2000.

[3] These were named the Maharana Pratap and Chhatrapati Shivaji Chairs, respectively.

[4] Lt Gen Satish Nambiar, *For the Honour of India: A History of Indian Peacekeeping,* New Delhi: USI, 2008.

[5] Sqn Ldr Rana Chhina, *Last Post: Indian War Memorials around the World,* New Delhi: USI, 2014.

[6] See Maj Gen *PJS Sandhu, 1962: A View from the Other Side of the Hill,* New Delhi: VIJ Books, 2015.

[7] Ashok Nath*, Izzat: Historical Records and Iconography of Indian Cavalry Regiments 1750-2007*, New Delhi: USI, 2009.

[8] Richard Head, Tony McClenaghan, *The Maharajas*' *Paltans*: *A History of the Indian State Forces (1888-1948)*, New Delhi: Manohar Publishers, 2013.

[9] Peter Stanley, *Die in Battle, Do Not Despair: The Indians on Gallipoli, 1915*, West Midlands: Helion & Company, 2015.

[10] Tony McClenaghan, *For the Honour of My House: The Contribution of the Indian Princely States to the First World War (War & Military Culture in South Asia)*, West Midlands: Helion & Company, 2019.

[11] Simon Doherty and Tom Donovan, *The Indian Corps on the Western Front: A Handbook and Battlefield Guide*, Brighton: Tom Donovan Editions, 2014. A series of guide books is currently being published by Harper Collins India.

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A Most Rewarding Second Innings

Lieutenant General Satish Nambiar, PVSM, AVSM, VrC (Retd)[@]

During most of the period of just under four decades that I served in Indian Army uniform, I had vaguely heard of the United Service Institution (USI) of India, and occasionally perused the contents of its hallmark journal in one or other Service libraries. My first direct interaction with this unique Institution came only at the closing stages of my Service career. Soon after my return in mid-March 1993 from the one-year contracted assignment as the first Force Commander and Head of Mission of the United Nations (UN) peacekeeping forces in the former Yugoslavia and having declined an offer of extension, I was collared by the then Director of the USI, Major General Samir Sinha, and asked to speak to the members of the Institution about my experiences in the UN assignment. I clicked my heels and accepted the commitment. On finding out that I was not a member of the USI he got me to fill the application form, pay the entrance fee and life subscription in his office in Kashmir House, where the Institution was then housed. And, lo and behold, I was a member of the USI of India. And the rest, as they say, is history.

General Samir Sinha was among that breed of senior officers, who were mentors and role models for my generation in the Indian Army. Outstanding individuals who took great pride in the profession of arms, strove for excellence in that chosen field, and lived by the right values and principles. Some individuals like me were privileged to be taken by them under their wings, guided, tutored and encouraged as youngsters, no doubt in the hope that we would keep the flag flying high when our turn came around. As it happened, my association with General Samir Sinha went back a long way, to the time when he was Commanding Officer 2nd Battalion the Parachute Regiment, because of the regimental connection: 2 PARA was formed by the conversion of the 3rd Battalion, the Maratha Light Infantry; and I was then on the rolls of

the Maratha Light Infantry. We met each other a couple of times after that; the most notable occasion being on 17 December 1971 in Dacca (now Dhaka). As a rifle company commander in 1st Battalion the Maratha Light Infantry (Jangi Paltan), I had entered Dacca the previous afternoon (16 December) with the Commanding Officer, then Lieutenant Colonel KS (Bulbul) Brar, some elements of the Battalion Headquarters, and my company, and was patrolling the streets of Dacca, when a couple of my colleagues, and I, bumped into 'Brigadier' Samir Sinha, who had apparently come in that morning with a Civil Affairs team to liaise with the local authorities. I then served with him in 1979, albeit very briefly, when he was the Director Military Training at Army Headquarters.

This preamble was required because therein lay the origins of my odyssey with the USI. Soon after I had given the talk at the Institution in mid-1993, General Sinha became aware that given the age factor, I was not in the running for any greater assignments in the Service and was due for superannuation in August 1994. Since he had already done about eight or nine years as the Director of the Institution and getting on in age, he was apparently keen to step down. He, therefore, homed in on me and started moves towards getting me to take over the reins of the USI from him on my superannuation. With plans of settling down at an Army Welfare Housing Organisation (AWHO) flat in Bangalore, I was uncertain and non-committal in my response. But in the last six months before superannuation, for various reasons, we had decided to park ourselves in the National Capital Region. Having reconnoitered houses from Gurgaon, through South Delhi, to NOIDA, we finally bought a house in NOIDA in May 1994. I hung up my boots on 31 August 1994 and by early February 1995, we were ensconced in our new home; in which we remain 25 years on. No sooner was he aware of my plans, that General Samir Sinha got after me with greater vigour, and, in mid-1995, goaded me to get my name included in the list for the impending elections to the USI Council. To which, I was duly elected securing the second largest number of votes after Air Commodore Jasjit Singh. In early January 1996, at the very first meeting of the newly elected Council, that comprised three former Chiefs in Admiral RH Tahiliani, General VN Sharma and General SF Rodrigues,

together with the legendary Lieutenant General ZC Bakshi, and luminaries like Lieutenant General K Balaram, Lieutenant General S Menezes, Lieutenant General RK Jasbir Singh, Vice Admiral Subhash Chopra, Air Marshal Vir Narain, etc., General Samir Sinha expressed his desire to step down as the Director of the Institution and went on to suggest my name as his replacement. In a display of unanimity that embarrassed me no end, all the members endorsed the suggestion and literally issued me a command that I should assume charge of the USI of India with effect from 01July 1996, on completion of its move from Kashmir House to the newly built premises in Vasant Vihar. As the junior most veteran member on the Council (though almost 60), I had no option but to meekly agree. Even so, I worked up the good sense to record one stipulation and make a couple of requests before expressing my agreement to take on the assignment. The stipulation was that, like General Samir Sinha, I would work in a totally honorary capacity, and would not draw any pay or allowances from the Institution; which remained the arrangement till mid-1999. The first request I made was that I be permitted to fulfil, at my discretion, the commitments, and invitations, for delivering talks and participation in international and national events that were coming my way in context of the exposure I had at the international level as the Head of the UN forces in the former Yugoslavia; needless to say, without any expenditure, whatsoever, to be incurred by the USI. The second request was that an appropriate arrangement be made for me to commute from my residence in NOIDA to the USI and back. The stipulation and the two requests were unanimously endorsed without any reservations whatsoever. That set the stage for me to assume charge as the Director USI of India on 01 July 1996 from my worthy predecessor, Major General Samir Sinha.

Notwithstanding the fact that the contribution made by General Samir Sinha will, no doubt, be appropriately recounted elsewhere in this publication, I would be failing in my duty if I did not record for posterity the fact that most of what was achieved by the USI under my stewardship, was possible due to the untiring efforts he had made towards securing land for a permanent home for the Institution, getting funding from the Prime Minister's Office, and having the premises built under the aegis of the Army Welfare

Housing Organisation. Though I am not personally privy to the fact, there is little doubt that a good deal of credit for the stature of the USI also goes to Colonel Pyara Lal, who ran the Institution for almost 30 years prior to General Samir Sinha's stint.

As things went, the USI completed the shifting of all its assets, in particular the precious library, to the new premises by the third week of June 1996. At Kashmir House, given the fact that the USI was housed in a couple of large sized rooms within a massive building that was the preserve of the Engineer-in-Chief's Branch of Army HQ, on closing down after the day's work, all that had to be done was to lock the sturdy front door and go home, leaving the security of the place in the tender care of the Defence Security Corps personnel who manned the place. At the new premises, we were immediately confronted with a major problem of security of the premises. Thanks to some quick thinking and action by General Sinha, the rapport he had with the Establishment, and the respect he still commanded, a guard comprising an NCO and a few other ranks from one of the local units was made available to the USI for a brief period till appropriate arrangements could be put in place. A contract with a security agency (fortunately run by one of our veterans) was entered into without delay, and put in place within a couple of days. This also brought home the fact that many more such arrangements would need to be put in place: conservancy and cleaning staff, maintenance staff for electricity and water, arboriculture, and so on. All this was going to cost money; a commodity in very short supply with the USI that was always run on a shoe-string budget based on membership subscriptions, and fees that accrued from running preparatory courses for officers appearing for promotion examinations and for entrance to the Defence Services Staff College.

At this stage, it is probably appropriate to record for posterity that the construction of the new premises, a dream of the redoubtable Colonel Pyara Lal, became a reality through the determined and untiring efforts made by General Samir Sinha; no doubt, with some assistance from the then Service Chiefs and their senior colleagues. Through those dogged efforts, a grant of Rupees Two Crores was made to the USI in the early 1990s by

the then Prime Minister Narasimha Rao from the Prime Minister's Relief Fund. As a result of which, I was able to take over as the Director from 01 July 1996, from General Samir Sinha, of an Institution housed in imposing and well-designed premises.

While the staff was setting up the Library, offices, and so on, together with General Sinha and a couple of senior members of the Executive Committee, I applied myself to the primary task of reworking the earlier plans for utilisation of the facilities, in order to generate finances, on a regular basis, to cover running costs. Hence, the grandiose plans of using the five-apartment block for accommodating the Director and senior staff, and the 30 single room block for research staff, were shelved, and with the concurrence of the Executive Committee and the Council, it was agreed that these premises would be re-appropriated for use on payment of rentals, and preferably run on a commercial basis, together with a restaurant facility in the main building, by someone who had the experience and competence to undertake such a venture. As it happened, a group of 1st Joint Services Wing (JSW) Course veterans (that included Lieutenant General Gurinder Singh, Major General MM Rai, Brigadier Rusty Dey, Colonel Virmani, and Vice Admiral Subhash Chopra), together with two of their civilian colleagues who had the requisite expertise and finances, got together and offered to run the venture on a commercial basis. The proposal they submitted was approved by the Executive Committee which had been authorised by the Council to take the decision. And, within a couple of months the venture was up and running. Thus, was born 'Residency Resorts'. A contract was drawn up between the USI and the group by which a mutually agreed percentage of the profits accruing from the venture were paid to the USI on a monthly basis. This income, together with that generated through member subscriptions and course fees, enabled us to meet the running costs of the Institution that included the pay and allowances of the staff, security, conservancy, and arboriculture contract obligations, electricity and water charges, etc. There was, however, a 'Damocles sword' still hanging over our heads in the form of an over-run of Rupees 60 lakhs beyond the budgetary allocation for construction of the premises. Here again, thanks to the continued efforts of General Sinha, together with those of Shri NN Vohra the

then Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, and, I would like to believe, the soft corner that the then Prime Minister Shri Inder Gujral had for me personally, an amount of Rs 60 lakhs was released to the USI from the Prime Minister's Relief Fund. The Institution was, therefore, out of the woods in as much as we had no outstanding financial obligations, and had arrangements in place for meeting running costs. Thanks to the efforts of my great predecessor General Samir Sinha, the members of the Governing Council, and other well-wishers like Shri NN Vohra, as also the 'Residency Resorts' group, I was now able to focus on pursuing the activities of the Institution, to the benefit of our membership, in this wonderful set of premises.

In this endeavour, I was indeed not only fortunate to have the backing and support of the members of the Council and my worthy predecessor General Sinha, but to have the privilege of working with some truly wonderful individuals; three of them my seniors by many years. The Deputy Director and Editor (DD&E) was Air Commodore NB Singh; with a proven record as a professional, as an analyst, and most importantly as a person. I could not have asked for a better arrangement in terms of deftly guiding me through the initial months at the helm. The Chief Instructor (CI) was the redoubtable Brigadier Yash Pal Dev; 2nd Course IMA I think. Still sporting the handle bar moustache that I first saw in 1952 when, as a student in St Xavier's College Bombay, I was a member of 1st Bombay Battalion NCC, and he was Officer Commanding 1st Bombay Battery NCC. What a joy it was to not only see him again, but to be privileged to work with him. He took me under his wings quite unobtrusively and saw me through the process of 'learning the ropes' as it were. The Deputy Director Administration (DD Adm) was another senior person, Brigadier Sachdev, who had been with the Institution for some time and was familiar with much of its history; which he shared with me in the knowledge that it would assist me in running the Institution in the best interests of the membership. The Assistant Director Administration (AD Adm) was Colonel VK Singh, an indefatigable, totally trustworthy and quite outspoken individual who had served with the Institution for many years; initially while still in uniform, as the Directing Staff Coordination (DS Coord) in the Course section, and on superannuation was taken on as AD Adm. He was with me

throughout my tenure as the Director and was a source of great strength primarily for his integrity, frank expression of opinion, capacity for dedicated hard work, and intimate knowledge of almost everything about the Institution. He is second only to Colonel Pyara Lal in terms of the number of years with the USI. It is, probably, only appropriate to record here the fact that like me, both Air Commodore NB Singh and Brigadier YP Dev, worked in our respective appointments without taking any remuneration from the USI.

In due course, as they were getting on in years, both Air Commodore NB Singh and Brigadier Sachdev sought to be relieved from their duties. Accepting their requests, the Executive Committee approved the appointment of Major General YK Gera, selected from among a list of applicants, as the DD&E, and appointed Colonel VK Singh as DD Adm. In 1999, on his way back from a visit to his son in the USA, Brig YP Dev suffered a fatal heart attack, and was replaced by Brigadier MS Chowdhury as the CI through a process of selection by the Executive Committee. Brigadier Chowdhury not only pursued the activities of the Course section with renewed vigour, but also put in place well received 'contact programmes' of a fortnight duration each for those attending the preparatory courses for the Defence Services Staff College entrance examinations. After about five or six years as DD&E, Major General Gera was replaced by Major General PJS Sandhu, an old friend and colleague who had served as my Colonel (General Staff) when I was commanding the Mechanised Division. All these colleagues were outstanding in their commitment and dedication to the USI in their respective appointments, allowing me to devote attention towards exploiting the excellent facilities created at the new premises. Firstly, by organising the Library well for effective use by members, as also by visiting researchers and analysts. At one of the early meetings of the Council, it was unanimously decided that the Library would be named after Colonel Pyara Lal; a most appropriate recognition of his sterling contributions to the Institution. The spacious Auditorium (again very appropriately named after Major General Samir Sinha, after he had passed on) and seminar rooms provided most suitable venues for the conduct of USI sponsored events that were well received by members and other invitees.

These facilities were also made available to other organisations, institutes, publishing houses, etc. on payment of rates that were approved by the Executive Committee; providing some welcome funds for meeting running costs. The wealth of expertise and experience within the USI membership through the veterans, and its close association with the establishment by virtue of its large (and ever growing) numbers from the serving fraternity in the Armed Forces, as also the Ministry of Defence (MoD), Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), and so on, was soon recognised not only by the strategic community within India but also internationally, as also by universities and academics, business houses, industry, and the local diplomatic community. The USI soon became a 'port of call' for visiting dignitaries, particularly those associated with the defence establishment, like Defence Ministers, Armed Forces Chiefs, internationally recognised analysts, etc. affording our members an opportunity to listen to and exchange views with them. As we increased our activities, almost all visiting defence delegations sought briefings and interaction with the USI; as also did heads of diplomatic missions on being posted to New Delhi.

A few words now on the increased activities. I turned my focus on pursuing a couple of 'visionary ideas' of my predecessors, Colonel Pyara Lal and Major General Samir Sinha. Firstly, providing a platform for interested members to undertake study and research on selected security related subjects. And secondly, setting up a programme for research work on the history of our Armed Forces. General Sinha, while at the helm, had already initiated action for setting up a Centre for Research but the process was stalled somewhat by the need to focus on construction of the new premises where provision had already been made in the main office block for a dozen rooms to enable the setting up of work stations for research scholars. Thanks to the understanding, magnanimity, and goodwill displayed by the then Service Chiefs, Admiral VS Shekawat, General Shankar Roy Choudhury, and Air Chief Marshal SK Sarin, all former colleagues (who had jointly inaugurated the new premises), in providing grants as corpus, we instituted three Chairs for Research at the USI, appropriately named after the first post-Independence Chiefs of the three Services. Thus was born the USI Centre for Research

to function under the oversight of the DD&E. In a short while, through the rapport we had with the DRDO and at the MEA, two more Chairs of Excellence were instituted with the corpus they provided, named the DS Kothari Chair and the MEA Chair. A few years later, on the basis of a suggestion submitted by me, the Council approved increasing the scope of activity of the Centre, its re-designation as the Centre for Strategic Studies and Simulation (USI CS3), and institution of a new post of Deputy Director as its head. Through a process of selection by a Sub Committee constituted for the process, Brigadier Arun Sehgal, who had recently retired from the Net Assessment Directorate at HQ Integrated Defence Staff, was appointed as the first Deputy Director of USI CS3. Arun had served as my Brigade Major in 1983 and it was a pleasure to have him join my team. As things went, we were able to achieve a fair bit, including initiation of the conduct of 'Net Assessment' exercises at institutions like the National Defence College, and compilation of a National Security Strategy paper for submission to the then National Security Adviser, MK Narayanan, an old friend and colleague from the days when he was Director Intelligence Bureau and I the Director General Military Operations.

The next area of focus was the setting up of a Centre for Armed Forces Historical Research. In this endeavour, in addition to the unqualified backing of the members of the Governing Council, I was privileged to have the support, advice, and assistance of senior USI members like Generals Samir Sinha, Stan Menezes, JFR Jacob, Mathew Thomas, VK Singh (my predecessor as DGMO), Ian Cardozo, and many others at various levels. With some persistent efforts, I was able to get the three Service Chiefs to issue directions for the allotment of grants amounting to Rupees 40 lakhs (of which the Army HQ contribution was 30 lakhs) as corpus to the USI for setting up a Centre for Armed Forces Historical Research (USI CAFHR). The funding aspect having been successfully resolved, I got Army HQ to depute a re-employed Colonel to help in setting up the Centre as its Secretary. A great dedicated individual was deputed, whose only knowledge about history was the spelling of the word. That notwithstanding, he set about the tasks I gave him and we soon had a couple of projects under way, under the watchful eyes of the

members of the USI CAFHR Board of Management headed by Lieutenant General Mathew Thomas, another great mentor and a person with a sense of history. In the meanwhile, it so happened that I caught up with Squadron Leader RTS Chhina when he came to the USI to receive the MacGregor Medal that had been awarded to him for a particularly commendable helicopter reconnaissance that he had carried out in the Northern Glaciers area. In my conversation with him, I determined that he was a military historian, having already done some work not only on Indian Air Force history but also on the wider range of Indian military history. I, therefore, coaxed, cajoled and finally got him to sign up as the Assistant Secretary at the USI CAFHR. With that arrangement, the CAFHR took off and began to establish itself as the fountainhead for research on the Indian Armed Forces and the repository of artefacts, documents, etc. on the Indian military. In due course, Rana Chhina assumed charge as the Secretary of the Centre and carried forward its activities with greater vigour. It is indeed a matter of tremendous satisfaction that, both the USI CS3 and the USI CAFHR have established themselves as recognised centres of excellence in their respective areas of expertise. Another aspect that gives one great satisfaction is that the various projects undertaken by the two centres have been published in book form by various publishing houses that were only too keen to do so, and have found wide circulation; besides, of course, complimentary copies having been sent to the Ministers of Defence and External Affairs, the Scientific Adviser to the Defence Minister, and the three Service Chiefs.

While doing all this, I also fulfilled the commitments that came my way of participating in United Nations peacekeeping events at UN HQ in New York, and various other international forums. In the process, I was motivated into initiating action on something that had been on my mind ever since I returned from my assignment in the former Yugoslavia. Namely, the imperative need for institutionalising the preparation and training of our contingents, and personnel, being deputed for the increasing number of peacekeeping missions being mounted by the UN. Notwithstanding the outstanding performance of Indian peacekeepers over the years in various parts of the globe, there

was little doubt that a couple of weeks training devoted to familiarising our personnel with UN procedures, the specific nuances of UN peacekeeping, dealing with other UN agencies in the field particularly United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), human rights aspects, role and function of some of the international non-governmental organisations (NGOs), dealing with the media and so on, would go a long way in enhancing their performance. Having consolidated my thoughts on the subject, I tested the validity, desirability and acceptability of the proposal by interacting with a sampling of serving colleagues at the working level, like the Staff Duties Directorate who were responsible for the deployment and oversight of our personnel on UN missions, former force commanders, military observers, staff officers and contingent commanders, as also some veterans who had been on missions. I was indeed overwhelmed by the unanimous and enthusiastic endorsement of the idea, and then thought it fit to run it past the Joint Secretary UN Division in the MEA. Here again I was completely overwhelmed by the enthusiastic support it received from Ambassador Dinkar Srivastava, who played a stellar role later in getting it through the maze within the MEA, particularly in terms of the funding aspect that was vital for the effective implementation of the project. I then ran the proposal past the USI Governing Council and secured unanimous endorsement. Thus buoyed, I set about putting together a formal proposal for setting up Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping under the aegis of the USI. With the USI providing the premises for housing the Centre, Army Headquarters providing the operating staff (of a colonel, a couple of lieutenant colonels, a couple of clerks and an office orderly or two), and the MEA providing the funds for the conduct of formal courses, particularly the ones in which it was intended that students from friendly foreign countries of the developing world be invited to attend. In order to get things moving without the usual bureaucratic hurdles, I decided to take the proposal to the very top. Since I had already established a reasonable working relationship with the then Defence Minister Shri George Fernandes, I called on him to make my submission, and not only found him receptive to the idea but quite enthusiastic about it. I then called on my old colleague and batch-mate from our days at

the Indian Military Academy, Jaswant Singh, who was the External Affairs Minister, and secured his unqualified endorsement. Armed with these endorsements, I worked on the Defence and Foreign Secretaries, both of whom I knew quite well, and the Chief of the Army Staff, General Ved Malik, an old friend and colleague, and in no time at all, had things moving towards establishment of the USI CUNPK as it came to be known. With the approval of the Council, the USI CUNPK was launched through an inaugural event in the form of an international seminar in collaboration with the Challenges Forum affiliated to the Stockholm based Folke Bernadotte Academy of whose International Advisory Board I had been nominated as a member. The seminar was well attended in terms of international participation, by USI members, personnel from the Service Headquarters and local units, and local diplomatic mission representatives. I look back with great pride and joy at the initiative as, besides continuing to run national courses and assist in the training of contingents deputed for UN missions, the CUNPK has gone on to become an internationally acclaimed Centre of Excellence that is increasingly being called upon to run events and courses on behalf of the UN Department of Peace Operations, as also in collaboration with many countries of the developed and developing world, and with organisations like the International Committee of the Red Cross. While with UN peacekeeping, I am happy to recall that one of the major events conducted at the USI, during my tenure, was a talk by my good friend and former colleague Kofi Annan, when he was on a formal visit to India in his capacity as the UN Secretary General, and graciously acceded to my request that he speak at the Institution. It was the only occasion in the twelve and a half years tenure as Director that I found the Major General Samir Sinha Auditorium not only filled to capacity, but overflowing.

As I close this rather long and rambling narrative on the occasion of the 150th Anniversary of the founding of the United Service Institution of India, I cannot but express my joyful gratitude to the Almighty for granting me, after a successful first innings of just under four decades in Indian Army uniform, a most rewarding ‘second innings’ of twelve and a half years at the helm of this unique Institution. May it continue to thrive in the years ahead and serve its membership that comprises the Indian Armed Forces

fraternity of those in uniform and its veterans, and the wider strategic community in the country, in full measure!

@**Lieutenant General Satish Nambiar, PVSM, AVSM, VrC (Retd)** is a PadmaBhushan awardee who was commissioned in 1957 into the 20th Battalion of the Maratha Light Infantry. He was the first Force Commander and Head of the United Nations forces in the former Yugoslavia. He superannuated, as the Deputy Chief of the Army Staff, on 31 August 1994. He was the Director USI from 1996 to 2008.

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Reminiscing My Tenure as Director USI: 2009-2019

Lieutenant General PK Singh, PVSM, AVSM (Retd)@

The United Service Institution (USI) of India is a unique, autonomous institution which is unparalleled in its scope, reach and expertise. Founded in 1870, it is one of the oldest institutions of its kind in the world and has built an outstanding reputation. As an old member of the institution, it was a great honour and privilege to be informed by the USI Council in Oct 2008 that I had been selected to be the next Director, and would take over from Lieutenant General Satish Nambiar on 01 Jan 2009. On retirement as the Army Commander of the South Western Command, Jaipur, I had moved to Kasauli in Sep 2008 and had to repack and move to Delhi in Dec 2008. It was a memorable 11 years thereafter that I spent in Delhi as the Director, USI.

Like all members of the USI, I was generally aware of the activities and functioning of the institution but was not aware of the opportunities for the growth of the institution and the challenges that I would face in running it. I was fortunate to have the frank advice of committed senior officers who were serving or had served in the USI in different capacities on the Council as also on the staff of the institution. I am particularly grateful to Generals SK Sinha, SL Menezes, VR Raghavan, Vinay Shankar, HS Lidder, YK Gera, PJS Sandhu, Air Commodore Jasjit Singh, Brigadier MS Chowdhury, Colonel VK Singh and Squadron Leader RTS Chhina for their support and guidance. Having gone through Minutes of the Council meetings, the SOPs and the briefings, I decided on the following:

- To enlarge the national and international footprint of the institution by participating in seminars/workshops etc., and forging partnerships including with universities and research

institutions. This would also enable us to send a large number of our experts to represent the USI.

- There was a need to host preferably two international seminars every year, with one focussing on China and the Indo-Pacific Region.

- The Centre for Armed Forces Historical Research (CAFHR), which was set up in the year 2000, had established a niche for itself but the time had come to enlarge its activities into different fields nationally and internationally. Similarly, the Centre for UN Peacekeeping (CUNPK), which was also set up in the year 2000, had established a name for itself as a training institution pitched at the tactical level. There was a need to enlarge our contribution on policy, doctrinal and strategic issues related to UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding issues.

- The Centre for Strategic Studies and Simulation (CS3), which was set up in the year 2005, had the potential to carryout Net Assessment and Strategic Gaming Exercises at different institutions, nationally and internationally.

- To reach out to institutions in our neighbourhood as also countries with which our strategic national interests coincide.

- Last, but not least, were two inter-related issues which were to remain major challenges throughout my tenure. The first was the issue of financial health of the Institution. While it was far-sighted to set up CS3, CAFHR and CUNPK with the concurrence of the Service Headquarters, finances for running these Centres was not adequately thought through. We were running these Centres by allotment from our Corpus Fund thereby depleting our financial resources – this is not a sustainable model. The other issue was of support from the Service Headquarters. Till the USI was the only Service think tank/institution, we had all the support including limited financial support, but with the raising of four new think tanks by the Service Headquarters and Headquarters IDS, their patronage of the USI kept declining.

The USI is a membership based institution and the members are our greatest asset. During the last decade over 3500 Life Members were enrolled. However, there is a declining trend which can only be reversed by the support of the Services. Since many of the young officers were not too enthusiastic to join as Life/Ordinary members but were keen to join the courses being conducted, we introduced a category termed 'Course Membership' which received a good response. A new category of Life Members called 'Special Member Civilian', with tenure capped at 10 years, was also introduced. Professional advancement of serving officers has always been an important activity of the institution and as far back as 1903 we began assisting officers in preparing for examinations in tactical fitness for command and promotion. The Course Section continues to do yeoman service by helping officers in their professional advancement through correspondence courses and contact programmes. During the period 2009 to 2019, a total of 23,330 officers subscribed to the various courses conducted by us. I would like to compliment the Heads of the Course Section during my tenure, viz. Brigadier MS Chowdhury (Retd) and Major Gen SB Asthana, (Retd) for their hard work and tireless efforts in carrying out the duties of Chief Instructor in an exemplary and thoroughly professional manner; and their entire team for its hard work. Their dedication has been appreciated by all and has brought added laurels to the USI.

The USI-CAFHR and the USI-CS3 have, during the last decade, covered new ground nationally and internationally. While the many faceted new activities have been spelt out in the Annual Reports of the President of the Council, I would like to highlight a few over here too in the succeeding paragraphs.

To honour the sacrifice of Indian servicemen during WW I, the CAFHR conceptualised and executed the plans for the construction of the Indian Great War Memorial at Villers-Guislain, France. The onsite work was supervised by Squadron Leader Rana Chhina (Retd) and Major General PK Goswami (Retd). The memorial was inaugurated by Shri M Venkaiah Naidu, Hon'ble Vice President of India, on 10 Nov 2018. I had the proud privilege to represent the institution at the inaugural ceremonies. The CAFHR also successfully spearheaded the 'India and the Great

War Centenary Commemoration Project' during the period 2014-2018 and as part of this, conducted activities in India and abroad. The Seminar of the Great War Centenary Commemoration Project was inaugurated by HE Shri Mohammad Hamid Ansari, the then Hon'ble Vice President of India. It is to Squadron Leader Rana Chhina's credit that he also assisted the Bangladesh National Museum to reorganise and renovate its permanent exhibition galleries relating to the 1971 War of Liberation. The CAFHR also curated 'Travelling Exhibitions' on India and the Great War, which travelled to 18 different locations across France and Belgium during Aug-Nov 2018. The CAFHR also conducted 'Staff Rides' on the Chhamb Battles of 1965 and 1971 at Kachreal, Jammu, in collaboration with the Directorate General of Military Operations. The CAFHR also commenced a community engagement programme 'India Remembers' in 2016. As part of this, we also mooted the proposal that the Marigold flower join the Poppy as an Indian symbol of Remembrance. The CAFHR and the National Army Museum (NAM), UK, collaborated to organise the first Military Museum Curator's Course in New Delhi; which was extremely well received. This course was the first among the list of activities planned under the British-Indian Military Heritage Partnership signed between the USI and NAM. I must also bring out that an excellent biography of Lt Gen Sagat Singh, titled 'A Talent for War: The Military Biography of Lieutenant General Sagat Singh', was authored by Major General Randhir Sinh and published in 2013. I met the then Chief of the Army Staff (COAS), presented him with a copy of the book and recommended that the biography of Lieutenant General Sagat Singh be included for study in promotion/competitive exams. I regret to say that despite my meetings with subsequent Chiefs too, this has not happened.

The CS3 continued its efforts to expand the range of activities in various domains. It undertook important Net Assessment projects for the HQ IDS and the National Security Council Secretariat. The CS3 also conducted Strategic Games and panel discussions at the National Defence College, the Services War Colleges, the Foreign Service Institute, the National Police Academy, the RSIS Singapore, the National Defence College, Oman and Amity University. It also conducted the Core

Programme at the Army and Naval War Colleges. The CS3 received a large number of foreign delegations and also conducted customised programmes for military officers, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) scientists, and interns from various universities. The internship programmes for under-graduate and post-graduate students that we conduct twice a year are extremely popular. The USI has signed numerous Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with international institutions and conducts joint programmes with them, the latest being a joint book project with the Sichuan University, China and the Nigerian Army Resource Center, Nigeria. Our bilateral interactions in Afghanistan, China, Vietnam etc. are conducted annually. Sadly, in the year 2020 these got curtailed due to the Covid pandemic. We had commenced holding an international seminar on the Indo-Pacific Region in Nov 2009 and the eleventh edition of this seminar was hosted in Nov 2019, and it was my privilege to have mentored these very educative and successful International Conferences for 11 years. The USI has participated in all the editions of the Xiangshan Forum hosted by the PLA in China. We have also participated in the SCO Forum conferences in Tashkent, Moscow and Sochi, and the Shangri-la Dialogue. Our international seminars attract experts from around the world. The proceedings of the seminar are published as a book annually, the one published in 2019 was titled 'Evolving Geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific Region-Challenges and Prospects'. Needless to say, the CS3 continued to focus on quality research and it is a matter of pride for us that all our research scholars, whether on 'study leave' with us or those holding 'Chairs of Excellence' have researched and published high quality single author books. We continue to encourage our scholars and interns to write for our 'Strategic Perspectives' and 'Blog' which are available on our digital webpage. The USI has a very robust international engagement programme, and our scholars and experts have participated at events in USA, China, Japan, Russia, South Korea, Vietnam, Israel, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Sweden, Norway, Jordan etc. I was conscious of the fact that the USI has a large number of experts amongst its members and it would add to our reputation if they could participate in international conferences abroad on different

themes and subjects. Therefore, during my tenure over 100 scholars/experts represented the USI abroad and their presentations were extremely well received.

To carry out research on 'India-Tibet Relations 1947-1962', the Field Marshal Cariappa Chair was allotted to the eminent historian Mr Claude Arpi for a period of four years during which he published a four volume treatise on the subject. Three other research projects which gave me great joy are the book researched and authored by Major General AJS Sandhu on the Battle of Chhamb titled 'Battle Ground Chhamb – The Indo-Pak War of 1971'. It was our proud privilege to host the legendary Marshal of the Air Force Arjan Singh who released the book titled 'In Memorium – The Fallen Air Warriors' authored by Air Marshal Bharat Kumar in 2018. We had constituted a Study Team to analyse some material we had obtained about the Chinese View on the 1962 India-China War. It is to the credit of Major General PJS Sandhu, Deputy Director & Editor USI, who steered the Study Team and brought out an exceptionally well researched book titled '1962: A View From the Other Side of the Hill' – a must read book.

Despite the books and monographs published by our researchers, we found a great reluctance on the part of thinkers and domain experts to articulate their perceptions on strategic issues or help formulate long term strategic views. To contribute to evolution and dissemination of strategic thought, we decided to bring out an 'Annual Strategic Year Book'. The CS3 took on this project and the first issue was published in the year 2016 and since then, we have published four annual issues, each one of which was received extremely well. The 'Strategic Year Book 2020' on which we had commenced work in mid-2019 has since been published. Major General YK Gera and Major General BK Sharma steered the CS3 exceptionally well as Head of CS3. They were very ably supported by Lieutenant General GS Katoch (Retd), Major General Rajiv Narayanan (Retd), Major General PK Goswami (Retd), Major General RKS Bhadauria (Retd), Brigadier Narender Kumar (Retd), Group Captain Sharad Tewari (Retd), Dr Roshan Khanijo and Mr Gaurav Kumar.

The USI had set up the USI CUNPK in Dec 2000 and nurtured it for 14 years during which period it established a name for itself as a Centre of Excellence for training of potential and serving peacekeepers. During my visit to the UN Headquarters, I had met the Under-Secretary-General (USG), Department for Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and briefed him about the USI and the CUNPK and requested him to support the USI in conducting events which would help the UNDPKO. The USG very graciously accepted my proposal and in Apr 2011 we conducted an international seminar on 'Peacekeeping Vision 2015: Capabilities for Future Mandates' supported by the UNDPKO and Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI), Norway. General VK Singh, the then COAS, delivered the Inaugural Address and also interacted with the UNDPKO team which was led by the Assistant Secretary-General (ASG), DPKO. Though the Army Headquarters decided to move the CUNPK from the USI after a fire incident that occurred in 2014, we continue to support their activities and are happy to see them grow.

To enlarge upon our contribution on policy, doctrinal and strategic issues related to UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding, the USI became founding member of three international organisations viz., The Challenges Forum, The Peace Capacities Network, and Effectiveness of Peace Operations Network (EPON). In addition, our interaction with the Swedish Armed Forces International Centre continues and the USI has a member on their Advisory Board. I must acknowledge the support that I received from former Blue Berets, Generals Jetley, Bhagat, RK Mehta, Rajender Singh, Abhijit Guha, Chander Prakash, AK Bardaloi, Shashi Asthana and Karunakaran, who represented the USI in projects and conferences abroad. Our outreach did not end there. In Feb 2015, we hosted a three member delegation of the UN High Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (also informally known as the Horta Panel) comprising Mr Jose-Ramos Horta, Nobel Laureate, former President of Timor-Leste and Chair of the Panel, Ms Ameera Haq, Deputy Chair, and Lieutenant General Abhijit Guha, a distinguished Blue Beret, member of the USI and member of the Panel. The interaction was extremely well received by the Panel. In March 2015, we had organised a UN

Force Commanders Meeting which was attended by serving and former Force Commanders from India, Nigeria, Norway, Bangladesh, Nepal, Ethiopia and Tanzania. The aim was to share experiences and discuss the broad recommendations that could be sent to the Horta Panel. Based on the discussions and suggestions made by the three Indian Force Commanders who had participated, I sent out our recommendations to HE Mr Horta for consideration by the Horta Panel.

I also strongly believed that the time had come for India to participate in international conferences on the Responsibility to Protect (R2P). In March 2015, Lieutenant General Rajender Singh, a former UN Force Commander, represented the USI at an international workshop on the subject in Cambodia. Based on our inputs, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) supported us in hosting an international seminar on 'R2P' in Apr 2015. The Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, New York, partnered us. The Secretary, Additional Secretary, and the Joint Secretary MEA participated and articulated India's position on R2P. We also ventured into the field of 'gender issues' and hosted a joint USI-UN Women integrated training programme on 'Mainstreaming Gender in UN Peacekeeping to end Conflict Related Sexual Violence' in Feb 2018. In Nov 2018, supported by the MEA we organised a discussion with a US Department of State delegation on issues pertaining to Peacekeeping at the strategic level and the possibility of increasing India-US partnership in this regard. In May 2019, we hosted the Countess of Wessex, who is the Brand Ambassador of the UN on Women, Peace and Security to a Round Table Discussion on the subject 'Women, Peace and Security in the New Dimensions of Conflict'.

Our library, with over 69,000 books, is a storehouse of knowledge and archival material. We have added over 7,500 books during the last decade but unfortunately the library remains under-utilised which in this era of digitisation and internet available knowledge is a world-wide malaise. The USI Journal continues to provide members with a forum to express their views and keep abreast of developments in the field of security, defence strategy and international relations. In keeping with contemporary trends and to make our humble contribution to the environment, the

Journal has been digitised since Jan 2017. A new website was also designed in the year 2019, and we also set up account on social media like Facebook and Twitter to increase our outreach.

We also broke new ground by sending our experts to participate in international conferences on nuclear issues and also on Special Forces in Amman, Jordan. The participation of our experts was very well received. We also ventured into the field of 'Glacier Studies' and 'Solar Power'. To highlight the importance of our glaciers, we initiated a project to fix the snouts of some important glaciers. During the period 2010 to 2012, we sent out small teams supported by the Army to Gangotri and Siachin in 2010, Kolahoi in 2011, and Baspa and Bara Shigri in 2012. As far as the solar power project is concerned, we are the first institution to install roof top solar panels for power generation. The generation capacity of the solar power plant is 270 KW.

It gives me great satisfaction to highlight that during the period 2009 to 2019, we published 166 books/monographs on a diverse range of subjects. During this period, we also signed 34 MOUs with foreign institutions.

Having given an overview of the activities carried out, a word about matters financial. As I have mentioned above, I was worried that we would face financial difficulties as we were eating into our Corpus to run our Centres, our expenditure would continue to rise, the interest rates would decrease, and there was no financial support forthcoming from the Services. To address this challenge, I followed a multi-pronged approach – first was to reach out to our training institutions and Colonel Commandants of all Regiments asking them to encourage passing out Gentlemen Cadets (GCs) and officers to join the USI. I must place on record that the Officers Training Academy (OTA), Chennai supported us wholeheartedly and my special thanks to Lieutenant General RP Sahi, then Commandant OTA for his unqualified support. Next, I reached out to embassies, universities and institutions abroad to give us research projects. I would like to thank NUPI, Norway, American University, USA, Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), USA, British High Commission, New Delhi, Belgian Embassy, New Delhi amongst others for their support.

I must place on record my sincere appreciation of the Service Chiefs who wholeheartedly supported my request in the year 2010 to make a onetime grant of Rs 10 crores to the USI, so as to bring it at par with the financial support provided to the other Service Think Tanks by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) on the recommendation of HQ IDS (the USI for some reason was excluded from the proposal sent by HQ IDS). After a formal presentation by me to the Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC) in Aug 2010, the COSC approved the proposal for a one time grant of Rs 10 crores to the USI. Despite the approval of the COSC, and my pursuing the case with Shri Antony, Shri Parrikar, the then Raksha Mantri (RMs), the Service Chiefs and the USI Council, over nine years have elapsed but the USI has still not received any funds.

I would like to bring to the notice of all members of the institution, the noble gesture of my NDA course mate and friend Colonel PS Gill. One day Colonel and Mrs Gill came to my office and expressed their desire to establish a Chair of Excellence in the memory of their son Flying Officer Amandeep Singh Gill, a fighter pilot, who was killed in an IAF air crash. Colonel and Mrs Gill willingly and very graciously donated Rs 20 lakh to establish the Chair of Excellence, which we have done. In the 150 years of history of the USI, no other member has made a donation to establish a Chair. What is more, the amount donated is more than what we have received to establish the other Chairs! On behalf of all members of the USI, I would like to sincerely thank Colonel and Mrs Gill. The memory of their son, Flying Officer Amandeep Singh Gill, will always live in the USI.

And finally a few words about our ‘Administrative Section’ which is truly the backbone of the USI. They remain in the background and silently work for the good of the entire Institution. Believe me, it is the most important Section of the USI and the Deputy Director Administration has a 24/7 job which requires total commitment. I was fortunate to have Colonel VK Singh and Major General PK Goswami as the Deputy Director Administration (DDA) during my tenure. They not only ran the Section efficiently but coordinated all activities of the USI. More importantly, they gave me frank advice on all facets of the running of the institution.

Nothing escaped their sharp eyes! My sincere appreciation and thanks to Colonel VK and General Goswami.

It has been an honour, and a privilege, to have served the USI and its members. I would like to pay tribute to the dedication and commitment of the staff of the institution who, by their dedicated hard work, made my task so much easier. I would like to particularly acknowledge the sterling contributions of Major General YK Gera, Colonel VK Singh, Major General PJS Sandhu, Lieutenant General Chander Prakash, Major General BK Sharma, Major General SB Asthana, Major General PK Goswami, Brigadier MS Chowdhury, Lieutenant Colonel BS Verma, Squadron Leader RTS Chhina, and core team of Distinguished Fellows and Senior Research Fellows comprising Lieutenant General GS Katoch, Major General Rajiv Narayanan, Major General RPS Bhadauria, Brigadier Narender Kumar, Group Captain Sharad Tewari, Dr Roshan Khanijo and Mr Gaurav Kumar, who worked tirelessly to bring up the name of our institution. I would be failing in my duty if I did not acknowledge the contribution of 'Residency Resorts' to the USI, so ably led by Shri Sudhir Kapoor. The subordinate staff in the various sections contributed in considerable measure to the effective functioning of the Institution. I must place on record my compliments to Mrs Savita Saluja, who as my Personal Assistant served with devotion and dedication.

The years I have spent as Director of the institution have been very satisfying and rewarding. Whatever I have achieved was due to the support of the Service Chiefs, Council Members, 'elders and well-wishers' of the institution, and the totally dedicated team that we have at the USI. It has indeed been an honour to have been the Director and I will treasure the memories of my tenure here. And, finally I would like to wish Major General BK Sharma, who served with distinction as the Deputy Director (Research) under me and has taken over from me as the Director, 'Good Luck and God Speed' in all his endeavours.

May God bless the USI.

Jai Hind!

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The Ethos of the Indian Armed Forces

Major General Ian Cardozo, AVSM, SM (Retd)[@]

The greatest love a person can have for his friends is to give his life for them.

- John: 15:9-17

The Indian Army draws its ethos from the philosophy and beliefs of the society that it serves and of which, it is an integral part. It draws its vigour and vitality from the deep sources of strength that has moulded successive generations of soldiers from India's ancient past. No people or race, however, can remain unchanged with the passage of time. Great leaders like Chandragupta Maurya, Ashoka, Samudragupta, Shivaji, Ranjit Singh, Krishna Deva Raya, Guru Nanak and Mahatma Gandhi, to name a few, realised that change is inevitable but that it must be for the better. Both, ancient and modern values have shaped the ethos and the moral code of the Indian Army which is an amalgam of diverse philosophies, traditions and beliefs drawn from the rich tapestry of histories, myths and cultures of the various races that make up India's heterogeneous whole.

The 'unity in diversity' phenomenon of India is truly astonishing. The beliefs and value systems of the *Marathas, Sikhs, Dogras, Garhwalis, Tamils, Malayalees, Andhraites, Kashmiris, Coorgis, Assamese, Manipuris, Punjabis, Jats, Rajputs, Nagas, Bengalis, Mizos, Oriyas, Gorkhas,* the residents of the Konkan coast and many other clans, tribes and communities have all contributed to the ethos of the Indian Army to make it truly representative of the Indian nation. It is the fusion of these diverse cultures, philosophies and traditions that continue to be the bedrock of the attitude and behaviour of the Indian soldier that teaches him how to live and behave in peace and how to fight and die in war.

The fate of a nation in war depends on how well its soldiers fight. War has the ability to discover the quality of an army and the nature of its soldiers. It would, however, be foolish to wait for war to discover its proficiency and potential. It is here that the ethos of an army plays its vital part in shaping it before it goes to war. This includes an emphasis on a high moral code, sound leadership, good training and high morale. How well soldiers fight depends much on how well they are trained, motivated and led. Leadership at every level, therefore, plays a critical role in translating the ethos of the Indian Army into performance in peace and war.

The selection of leaders, therefore, is important. Nations which recruit their officers and soldiers with methods that analyse character, sense of duty, commitment, integrity and self-discipline are more likely to get men of moral and physical courage, particularly if the system is able to weed out candidates with character defects; rather than nations which make up deficiencies in their cadres by allowing entry of candidates who do not measure up to the exacting demands that war makes on its soldiers. Selection systems should, therefore, be able to identify persons with qualities of integrity, self-discipline, self-sacrifice, honour, commitment and personal example – qualities that will make them think and act beyond self and for the good of larger causes and institutions, like the country and the people of India. The moral force that drives the conduct of soldiers in war is based on love. Love may not be a very military word but it is on the altar of love that men and women in uniform place their lives in the line of fire and, if necessary, make the ultimate sacrifice and disappear in the smoke and fire of battle – love for India, love for its people, love for the Regiment, love for adventure, and for a way of life that has no equal.

There are many sources that have fashioned the contours of the philosophy and ethos of the armies of medieval India. Stories of Rajput chivalry is one of them. Most of these stories are heroic in concept and teach adherence to truth and the pledged word whatever the consequence, faithfulness unto death, loyalty, honour, and sacrifice for the common good. They have always maintained their traditions of fearlessness, chivalry, love for battle, and utter disregard for life when it came to defending their honour

and the integrity of their women and their kingdoms. Soldiering, for the Rajput, was not only his profession but also his love.

In southern India, for more than a thousand year after the *Mauryan* Empire had shrunk, and ceased to exist, great states flourished. The *Andhras,* the *Chalukyas,* the *Rashtrakutas,* and the *Pallavas* were powerful kingdoms, some of who had conquered Sri Lanka and Southern Burma. The Indo-Aryan theory and practice of warfare was strictly followed and illegitimate methods of warfare were not permitted. They believed that war for a righteous cause must be righteously conducted. The tragedy, however, is that throughout history, Indian states never united against a common enemy whether it was the Moguls, the British, French, Dutch or the Portuguese. Divisiveness was the cause of their downfall.

The *Marathas,* at their zenith, suggested some form of a nation state. The *Maratha* power was swift in its growth because it was founded on new principles. Shivaji established himself against the Mughals and was eminently successful in his use of guerrilla warfare as his strategy to defeat them. Had he lived longer, and had his principles been followed by his successors; the *Maratha* spirit would possibly have grown into nationalism. Shivaji owes his success to discipline, simple habits, and care and concern for his soldiers who were mobile, hardy and united. He enforced a high moral code amongst his troops. Looting was prohibited and women were treated with respect. His troops had the military virtues of discipline and fidelity; they could move fast and manoeuvre quickly against the enemy. The *Maratha* Empire continued to grow as long as the character qualities demanded by Shivaji were maintained.

The Sikhs are another race that has contributed significantly to the ethos of the Indian Army. After the martyrdom of *Guru* Arjun Singh, the Sikhs changed from a pacifist to a martial lot. Arjun's son, Hargobind, who succeeded him as the sixth Guru, organised his following into an army. The final transformation of the Sikhs into a martial sect came with the last of the ten Gurus, Gobind Singh who succeeded to the guruship at the tender age of nine. Later, at Anandpur, he began to organise the Sikhs into a fighting force. He described his mission in the following words: "To uphold

right in every place and destroy sin and evil; that right may triumph, that good may live and tyranny be uprooted from the land". Guru Gobind realised that in order to change the peaceful followers of Guru Nanak, he had not only to teach them the use of arms but also to convince them of the morality of the use of force. He said, "Light your understanding as a lamp and sweep away the filth of timidity". With this mission he set about earnestly to 'to teach the sparrow how to hunt the hawk and one man to have the courage to fight a legion'.

Ranjit Singh is the next most important figure in Sikh military history, next to Guru Gobind Singh, and is the Sikhs' venerated warrior. He united the Sikhs into the Khalsa brotherhood. He expanded the basis of his state from a religious to a secular one, giving positions of power and trust in civil and military matters to Muslims and Hindus without any discrimination. He raised the most powerful fighting force in two thousand years and brought the traditional conquerors of India – the Pathans and the Afghans – to their knees. However, even at the peak of his power he did not lose the common touch. He was devoid of arrogance and, despite his many conquests, he did not allow wanton destruction of life or property. He led his army personally into battle and risked his life like the rest of his troops. His values rubbed on to the Sikhs, his followers, who form a sizeable portion of the Indian Army of today. The focus of the ethos of the armed forces of India, therefore, is to prepare its members for their ultimate test, which is conduct in war.

The destiny of a nation during times of war often hangs in the balance on the outcome of a battle and the outcome of a battle often depends on the courage and competence of its soldiers. Regimental spirit is one of the primary motivators that make men fight without counting the cost. In the history of our armed forces, there have been many instances where men have performed outstanding acts of courage for the sake of their regiment. To them, it did not matter if they died as long as the honour of the regiment was protected. The regimental spirit of units of the Indian Army, and the traditions which nurtured them, is the strength of the fighting arms, particularly in times of war. It is this 'cause' larger than the 'self' that is the ultimate of all motivators that has

fortified men against death and put ‘duty above fear’ and ‘death above dishonour’. Anyone, therefore, who meddles with the composition of our regiments, does so only at the peril of our nation’s safety.

Leading men into battle is a privilege given to very few. It is an awesome responsibility because both, the officer and the men he leads, are aware that some of them may not come back alive. Leadership, therefore, has to be of the highest order. The officers of the Indian Army lead from the front and the exhortation is ‘Follow Me’! Therefore, percentage wise, the casualty rate of officers is very high. My own Battalion – the 4th Battalion the 5th Gorkha Rifles (Frontier Force) entered the 1971 war with eighteen officers and at the end of a fourteen day war, only seven survived unscathed. Four were killed and seven badly wounded.

The Indian soldier is amongst the best in the world because he too is imbued with the qualities of putting country above all else. He follows his officers unquestioningly and undergoes great discomfort in unbelievably difficult circumstances without complaint because he knows that his officer is there right in front facing the maximum danger and setting the right example. The ethos of the armed forces is the life-blood of its members and inspires them to carry out extraordinary acts of courage. A few examples of leadership, and the outcomes that it generates, would be useful to understand the important part that honour, courage, self-sacrifice and personal example plays in translating these beliefs into action.

A classic example of leadership linked with the honour of the Regiment is the battle of Dograi. In the Indo-Pak war of 1965, Lieutenant Colonel Desmond Hayde led 3 Jat to capture Dograi across the Ichhogil Canal. It was a hard fought battle and many soldiers were killed and wounded. However, the Brigade was not able to reinforce the Battalion and 3 Jat was ordered to withdraw from the area it had captured. The Battalion was unhappy and considered this to be a slur to its honour. Therefore, when Dograi had to be recaptured, 3 Jat volunteered to be in the forefront. For them, it was a matter of honour to be given the privilege to recapture Dograi. But by then the Pakistanis had reinforced Dograi with armour and infantry and the capture of Dograi would

be even that much more difficult. On the eve of the battle, the Commanding Officer addressed the men in Haryanvi (the vernacular of his troops). He made it clear to them that the battle would be tough and that many more would be killed and wounded. And then he said: “I will be leading you into battle and if I die, I want you to carry me to Dograi because I want to be there with you – dead or alive”! And then he said: “Where will we be tomorrow morning”? and the Battalion roared “In Dograi”! Many more were killed and many more wounded but Dograi was recaptured in an epic battle by the invincible 3 Jat. But what was it that made 3 Jat so invincible? And the answer is Regimental spirit and morale.

When Desmond Hayde was an instructor, as a Captain, at the Indian Military Academy, he constantly dinned into our young minds that *’Battles are won or lost in the minds of men, before they are won or lost on the ground’!* He made this happen at Dograi under impossible conditions and this battle continues to remain an outstanding example of Regimental honour and courage and exemplifies what the ethos of the Indian Army is all about.

Self-sacrifice is another characteristic of leadership that inspires the soldier to go beyond the call of duty. An example of self-sacrifice is what happened in the Navy during the 1971 war. So successful were the two attacks by the Indian Navy on Karachi that the Pakistani Navy bolted into Karachi harbour and refused to fight. However, their submarine arm was far superior to ours and they were successful in sinking *INS Khukri.* Captain Mahendra Nath Mulla, the captain of the Khukri, when faced with the choice of saving his own life, rejected the easy option because it was not part of his character to save his life when his men were trapped in the sinking ship and he gave his own life jacket to a sailor who was without one. As a leader, he practiced what he believed was right – to his very last breath – when he chose to go down with his ship because he could not accept that he should save his own life when he could not save the lives of his men. Personal acts of cold courage like this are rare to come by, and when they do, they shake the world by their heroic content and epitomise the moral code which is so much part of the ethos of the armed forces. The

way he lived, and the way he died, has become part of the folklore of the Indian Navy and a guiding light not only to the officers and sailors of the Navy but also to all personnel of India's Armed Forces.

Another example of self-sacrifice is what happened in a raid across the border by the Indian Air Force (IAF) during the 1965 war. Squadron Leader 'Tubby Devayya' set a strong example of cool courage and diehard determination in the face of impossible odds. On an attack on the Pakistani airfield at Sargodha, he was faced with the option of returning to his air base in India or engaging in combat with a supersonic Pakistani Starfighter, which was far superior in weapons and avionics to his subsonic Mystere. His orders were to return to base because his fuel was just enough to hit Sargodha and return. However, being the last aircraft at the tail-end of his wave, it was also his duty to protect the other aircraft of the team of which he was a part. So he turned around and took on the Pakistani Starfighter in an unequal combat setting. Although the Pakistani pilot was able to damage his aircraft, Devayya continued to take on the Starfighter and managed to destroy it but was killed in the process. He lies today buried in a corner of a farmer's field in Pakistan. His action is an outstanding example of self-sacrifice of the highest order in keeping with the moral code set out in the code of conduct he was taught when he was a young pilot officer in the IAF.

There are many other stories that exemplify the spirit of the armed forces but there is a limit to stories. However, this account would be incomplete if one does not look at the conduct of Lieutenant Manoj Pandey and Captain Vikram Batra, whose exemplary conduct during the Kargil war typifies the code of conduct of the armed services officers groomed at the defence academies – the cradles of leadership.

Lieutenant Manoj Pandey constantly and persistently volunteered for the most difficult missions. In his diary, he had noted before the commencement of the war, *"If death strikes before I prove my blood, I promise I will kill death".* Philosophical words from one so young! He continued to lead mission after mission on the snow covered slopes of the Kargil mountains and, at last, when he was mortally wounded and lay dying on his last

mission, he said, *"I regret that I have only one life to give up for my country".*

Captain Vikram Batra became an icon well before the termination of the Kargil war. Due to his many skirmishes with the enemy, he was nicknamed 'Sher Shah' by the Pakistanis and that is how they addressed him above the tumult and din of battle. He is the one who made famous the quote *'Dil mange more'*[1] that typifies the spirit of the Indian Army. Prior to his last mission, he said, *"Either I will come back after hoisting the tricolour or I will come back wrapped in it but I will be back for sure"!* Prophetic words because that is what happened. He died saving the life of another soldier after a series of missions in which he displayed uncommon qualities of leadership, sacrifice and love for his country and his men.

Both officers were awarded the Param Vir Chakra – India's highest award for gallantry in war.

Equally important, however, is the selection of senior leaders of the armed forces. It is they who set the pace and ensure the high code of conduct which is the essence of the character and spirit of the armed forces. Some countries are allergic to appointing strong Chiefs. They prefer to select someone who would be pliable and who would toe the government line. This is a catastrophic way of thinking. All armed forces need strong Chiefs who understand the threats that face the nation and take appropriate measures to ensure the security and sovereignty of the country. They need to have Chiefs who have long term strategic vision and ensure that the armed forces have the requisite weapons and infrastructure to face all possible threats, and that the morale of the armed forces remains at an exalted level.

Selection of pliable Chiefs will result in the government having its own way in matters it has little understanding of and is not competent to handle. This is the first step to disaster and by the time the government tries to make amends it will find that it is too late. Such an instance occurred in India in 1962, when an army officer with political connections, who had never commanded a company, battalion or brigade, was found fit by the government

to command a corps in NEFA. The result was a humiliating defeat. Nine years later, during the Indo-Pak war of 1971, India was fortunate to have a strong set of Chiefs – Army, Navy and Air force – and the result was an outstanding victory, the liberation of East Pakistan and the birth of Bangladesh, and a great honour that projected India as a strong regional power.

High morale is the most important weapon in the arsenal of any army. It is also a principle of war and a weapon which relies on honour, physical and moral courage, integrity, professional competence, discipline, sense of duty, commitment, dedication, a spirit of self-sacrifice, and high standards of training. It also depends on how well soldiers are treated. Kautilya, the advisor to the *Mauryan* emperors, has in his discourses made it clear that soldiers will fight well if they are treated well. General Sam Manekshaw was one Chief who echoed Kautilya's teachings and under his leadership, the Indian Army did exceedingly well because, in addition to his great qualities of leadership, his concern for the welfare of his officers and men motivated the Indian Army to outstanding performance in battle.

The Indian Armed Forces have, over the years, earned a place in the hearts and minds of the nation. In consequence, they have been given honour, status and privileges which have been earned on the battlefield with the blood of countless soldiers. Removal of these privileges and status adversely affects the morale of the armed forces. Destroy morale and you destroy an army. The ethos of the Indian Armed Forces, therefore, has to be understood and protected. Without high morale, an army will find it difficult to fight. A typical example of poor morale, which resulted in an army's loss of will to fight, is what happened to the Pakistan Army in East Pakistan in 1971. In that war, the officers and the soldiers were given license to murder, rape and loot the citizens of East Pakistan. Led by debauched officers, depraved Pakistani soldiers lost all sense of good conduct and morality. Men were massacred and women, and young girls, raped and killed. As a result of this diabolical behaviour, the soldiers lost all respect for their officers and also their own self-respect and when that happened, the Pakistanis lost the will to fight and were convincingly defeated.

The ethos of the Indian Armed Forces, however, needs to be alive to the ethos and code of conduct, both military and political, of countries inimical to India. Whereas the ethos of the Indian Armed Forces flows from the nation's belief that progress and development must be through peaceful means, we must be alert to the aims and ambitions of both China and Pakistan who seek to destroy India through every means possible and cloak their aims and intentions with deceit, duplicity and guile. Individual or collective acts of heroism, therefore, are not enough. The Indian Army needs to move with the times and the practice of *dharmayudda* needs to be tempered to an understanding of the practice of treachery and deception followed by our hostile neighbours. We need to be clear that both China and Pakistan are doing everything to destroy us. So, what are we doing about it? Our long term strategies need to take into account the aims of Chinese hegemony, and Pakistan's eternal urge to wrest Kashmir from India. We need to be self-sufficient in weapons and technology, and not dependent on countries whose loyalties and affiliations could change with the passage of time. But for this, we need a succession of leaders, civil and military, who have vision and who can ensure India's place of honour in the world 50 years from now. It needs to be remembered that the defence budget for 2019-20 has been the lowest since India became independent.

The armed forces of any nation, therefore, need to work towards making their government understand that unless the needs of the army, navy and air force are met in a substantial way, they will not be able to do their duty to protect the nation against its hostile neighbours. This cannot, and will not, happen if the Chiefs of the army, navy and air force selected by the government are persons who will supinely accept decisions that affect the armed forces to fight competently. The American magazine Time, when reporting on the Sino-Indian war of 1962, stated, *"The Indian Army lacks everything except courage".*

Good ethos of any military does not mean subservience to unsound decisions and defective directions by politicians. This happened in India in 1962, when the Prime Minister favoured the strategy of a policeman heading the Intelligence Bureau over the strategy of competent military officers. Shri BN Mullick projected a

strategy, called the *'Forward Policy',* which had no strategic or tactical sense whatsoever, but Prime Minister Nehru accepted this policy and rejected the strategy presented to him by the Indian Army. The result was a humiliating and decisive defeat. Unfortunately, the Army Chief of that time had no moral courage to stand up to interference in military matters by unqualified agencies. The ethos of the armed forces took a beating because the military hierarchy did not stand up to political wrongdoing. The translation of the ethos of the armed forces into action on the ground lies on the shoulders of every member of the armed forces. Whereas the military history of the Indian Army in 1962 is replete with outstanding acts of courage by the rank and file, the same cannot be said of the military hierarchy who caved in to wrong decisions without taking a stand.[2] There is a saying, *'An army of sheep led by a lion will fight better than an army of lions led by a sheep'.*

Whereas the ethos of the armed forces lays down loyalty and obedience to the Constitution, the country and the government, it cautions its members against the divisiveness of politics. The difference between the government in power and a political party may at times be wafer thin, but the armed forces must be clear that their loyalty lies to the Constitution and the country only and not to any political party. If there is a doubt then, the Heads of the armed forces must have the courage to stand up to orders that violate the Constitution, and if that doesn't work then to resign rather than accept wrong orders to the detriment of the country and its people. An excellent example in this regard, on a minor matter, occurred when Sanjay Gandhi, the son of the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and leader of the Youth Congress, rang up Lieutenant General Inder Gill, the then Army Commander Western Command, requesting for military barracks for his Youth Congress personnel, after requests by his officials were turned down by the staff of Headquarters Western Command. General Gill made it clear to Sanjay Gandhi that the Youth Congress was part of a political party and, therefore, they were not eligible to receive any assistance from the military and the matter ended there. Whereas this may have been a small matter, the principle remains the same.

General KM Cariappa, India's first Army Chief, made it clear that the Indian Army would be 'apolitical'. He echoed the thoughts of other senior army officers who felt that to have a politically oriented army was to head for disaster. A soldier's duty and loyalty is to his country and not to any political party or to any political figure. It has no business in political matters. The military owes its allegiance to an elected government and, through it, to the people of India. The military in India has never been disposed to intervention. The military has to be content to do its own duty and to do it to the best of its ability. They need, however, to voice their concern when the government falls short of its commitment to give the security forces the wherewithal to execute their duty.[3] The ethos of the Indian Army is allergic not only to the divisiveness of politics but also the divisiveness caused by religion. In the Indian Army, it is spirituality that shapes the attitude and behaviour of its officers and soldiers towards God. Religion in the army is a personal matter and the army focuses on the integration of men of all faiths to emphasise 'unity in diversity' and working closely together with differences intact.

In single-class units like the Sikhs, *Gorkhas,* the *Garhwalis, Kumaonis,* and other one-class units, religion does continue to be a motivating factor in war and peace. In such units, religious functions are considered to be a parade. Officers and men of other faiths attend such functions as part of their military duties. This helps in cementing regimental bonds and the officer man relationship. In mixed-class units; the *mandir, masjid, gurudwara,* and *girja ghar* are often seen together as separate parts but under one roof, with men of different faiths attending each other's religious functions. In the Indian Army, all religions are respected and there is no difference whatsoever in consideration of creed, cast and community. In all the wars that India has fought before and after Independence, soldiers of different faiths have fought shoulder to shoulder with outstanding results.

It needs to be remembered that in the Indo-Pak war of 1971, although the majority of the generals were of the Hindu faith, the Indian Army had a Parsi Chief, a Sikh Army Commander, a Jew as the Chief of Staff of Eastern Command, a Sikh as the Director of Military Operations, a Christian as the Commander of a Strike Corps on the Western front, and three Christian officers

commanding infantry divisions spear heading offensive operations on both fronts. It is this unity in diversity that makes the Indian Army the finest in the world. There is no distinction, whatsoever, in the Indian Armed Forces between caste, creed and community. In this respect, the Indian Army is an example to the world in contrast to the army of our western neighbour where the dictates of religion are paramount.

As has been said at the beginning of this article, the ethos of the Indian Armed Forces draws its inspiration from the beliefs of its people and, therefore, the government elected by the people of India needs to reflect the beliefs and aspirations of the people of India in its policies, programmes and strategies. India is a spiritual country and people of various faiths believe that belief in God and a high moral conduct is essential for progress of the country in peace and war. This belief needs to permeate into the conscious mind of every person of the armed forces, from the Chief to the junior most soldier, sailor and airman. This consciousness must translate into a habit because habits transform attitude, which in turn affects behaviour and, which in turn, affects conduct. It is this that motivates personnel of the armed forces to put country first, courage beyond fear, and death above dishonour.

Endnotes

[1] Translates as “The Heart Wants More”

[2] Regimental tradition narrates an allegorical example in this regard. An officer asked the Regimental Contractor of his Unit to provide him with a cycle on hire. The Contractor asked the officer, “Should it have a carrier or a stand?” On the officer asking the Contractor what was the difference; he was told, “Sahib, in the Army you have to decide what is more important - your career or taking a stand!”

[3] Stephen Cohen. *The Indian Army,* Delhi, pp.166-168.

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The Evolution of Indian Orders, Decorations and Medals during the Era of the USI: 1870-2020

Prof Edward S Haynes[@]

Introduction

When the United Service Institution (USI) of India was founded in 1870, it constituted a significant and conscious advance in the professionalism and separate identity of the Indian military establishment. Not only did it represent an institution that was increasingly establishing itself as something independent of the parental British military but also one that was moving from a presidency-based military to a separate freestanding and unified Indian system. While this would not be accomplished until 1895, these seeds were planted in the era in which the USI of India was born. The dedication of the institution to the serious examination and study of all aspects of the military craft was central to this process.

Pre 1870

One aspect of that professionalism, one that is frequently overlooked in more recent times, lies in the various tangible and wearable manifestations of the military profession: the decorations and medals that are worn to display achievements. As it had evolved, the Indian Army in 1870 possessed a unique and ever-changing system of recognising achievement and service by its personnel. Such phaleristic devices are important aspects in all countries and all areas, and are adapted over time to serve the changing ethos of the states and systems that employ them.[1]

As will be addressed below, the Indian Army in 1870 had inherited venerable traditions of recognising gallantry, achievement, and service. But in 1870, new customs and traditions were rising in this arena. Most importantly, and publicly,

the wearing of ribbon bars rather than full-size medals was coming into fashion. This was, and is, important not only because it represents a more manageable way of displaying achievement but because it constitutes an every-day statement of one's professional achievement, in a sense a public display of the history and resume of one's career. For those who can read the ribbon bars worn, whether in 1870 or 2020, the career and, indeed, the credibility of the wearer are placed on public display. Without overstating the obvious, the Indian Army in 1870 represented two separate and distinct worlds, career paths, and professional traditions: that of the European officers and that of the Indian Viceroy's Commissioned Officers (VCOs) and enlisted personnel. As segregated as these two were in the social ideology of the day, they were rewarded in different fashions in different manners. To understand the past and its evolution to present forms, it is necessary to understand these two traditions.

European officers functioned very much as an ancillary to the British military system and received the same decorations for gallantry and distinguished service as did their cousins in the British Army.[2] The highest decoration for gallantry was the Victoria Cross (VC), only recently established in 1856. After much debate, the decoration had been extended to European officers serving in the forces of the East India Company (EIC) and after the end of the Company the award was continued in the Indian Army. While there was confusion in the early years, only European officers (and the rare European enlisted man) serving with, and in the, Indian Army were eligible for this decoration and it was not available to Indians until 1911. It was, within the class system of the day, an unusual decoration in that it could be awarded for the highest degree of gallantry to both, British officers and enlisted personnel. For distinguished service (sometimes mixed with a degree of gallantry), senior officers could receive the various classes of The Most Honourable Order of the Bath, created in 1725 to recognise military services in the British forces. It, like the VC, was a tool of recognition drawn very much from the habitual British toolbox of recognising honour. While it could be awarded in exceptional circumstances to mid-rank and even junior officers, it was in practice very much an award for senior officers. It would not be until 1898 that the first awards of this order would be made

to Indians holding honorary commissions, and these were also distinguished by being ‘princes’. The only distinctions for gallantry for British enlisted personnel were the Distinguished Conduct Medal (created in 1854 for the army) and the Conspicuous Gallantry Medal (created in 1855 for the navy). These were not available to Indians in the Indian Army.[3] It was very much a central part of the contemporary British understanding of society and class that decorations for gallantry and achievement were separated by rank, with awards for officers and other awards for enlisted men.

Likewise, the social understandings and constructions of the day did not admit Indians to the recognitions or ranks available to Europeans. The segregated awards dated back to a period in the evolution of the Indian Army when officer ranks, previously available to all, were being restricted to Europeans and Indians were being relegated to lower responsibilities and titles. These awards of the EIC were absorbed by the government and military as India moved under crown governance in the years after the ‘Mutiny’ of 1857. These represented a move away from the earlier Indian traditions of recognising gallantry and distinguished service by grants of land (land that would be removed from the governmental tax base), tangible objects of gold or silver (expensive objects), or the award of personal or hereditary titles (which were much cheaper). The idea of a wearable decoration to indicate gallantry or distinguished service was something new and was emerging even into European usage in the early years of the 19th century. In 1837 (19 years before the VC would be invented), the EIC established the Order of Merit in three classes (renamed as the Indian Order of Merit in 1903 after King Edward VII created another award in the same name).[4] The award was open to all Indian personnel of the Indian Army regardless of rank. Consciously patterned on the Russian Cross of St. George, a recipient would be admitted to the third class for an act of great gallantry. Subsequent acts of gallantry could earn promotions within the order to the second or even first class. Eventually a unique bar would be created for a fourth act of gallantry by Subedar Kishanbir Nagarkoti, 5th Gurkha Rifles, in 1888. In essence, this exceptional award represented the equivalent of a VC with three bars for subsequent acts. The Order of Merit would

be, and would remain until 1947, the distinctive Indian gallantry award. At the same time that the Order of Merit was established, the need to recognise distinguished service by the emerging subordinate class of Indian officers (what would eventually evolve into VCOs and today's Junior Commissioned Officers (JCOs)) would be filled with the creation of the Order of British India in two classes. Recalling older traditions, the first class carried the personal title of *'Sardar Bahadur'* while the second class allowed the recipient to be styled as *'Bahadur'*. When first established, this order was severely limited in numbers available though over time the numbers bloated and expanded.

At the time of the creation of the USI of India, these two segregated worlds of recognising gallantry and achievement represented the toolbox of honour available to the Indian Army. But there was another level of recognition: awards for campaign services. It would be in the arena of campaign medals that new phaleristic customs and traditions came to be led most prominently by the Indian example. Beginning with the First Anglo-Maratha War of 1775-82, a campaign medal would be issued by the EIC to all Indian soldiers involved in the conflict: in gold to *subedars,* in silver to *jemadars,* and a smaller silver medal to all other ranks. There was no corresponding award to Europeans, whether in the service of the Company or the crown. The medal was worn from a cord around the neck. The same medal and structure were used for the Second Anglo-Mysore War of 1779-83. New campaign medals with the same organisation but new designs would be issued for the Third Anglo-Mysore War of 1789-92, the capture of Ceylon 1795/96, the capture of Srirangapatna in 1799, the expedition to Egypt in 1801, the capture of French island possessions in the Indian Ocean (Mauritius and Réunion) in 1809 and 1810, the capture of Dutch possessions in Java in 1811, and the First Anglo-Nepali War of 1814-16. The tradition would be modified slightly when it came to the campaign medal for the first British invasion of Burma, 1824-26, as the campaign medal, with the same metallic rank structure as the earlier awards, began to be worn in the tradition of British medals from a suspension ribbon, in this case the generic 'military ribbon' that had been used since the campaign medal for the Battle of Waterloo in 1815. Subsequent campaigns would see an entirely new general

tradition introduced, a new ribbon, the ‘India ribbon’ of a shaded rainbow said to represent the sunset, a common obverse often showing for the first time the British Queen Victoria whose authority over the EIC and its forces was at best vague, and a reverse representing specific battles or other actions.[6] Such medals were awarded to both Indians and Europeans for action in the first British invasion of Afghanistan 1841-42 (six different medals) and the annexation of Sind 1843 (three different medals). A similar general pattern was used for the Anglo-Gwalior War of 1843.

It would be with the two British wars against the Punjab, of 1845-46 and 1848-49, that an entirely new tradition would be introduced. This would be a custom that would influence both Indian and British phaleristic and military culture from that time until its apparent abandonment in recent decades. For the first war, a medal that was essentially transitional in nature was employed: for the first battle in which a soldier had participated, the name of the battle would appear on the reverse of the medal and any subsequent combat actions would be represented by clasps to be attached to the medal and its ribbon. For the second war, there was a common medal which could be awarded for combatant or non-combatant services but would have clasps attached representing participation in specific and sufficiently important battles. A new pattern was established. The same pattern of common medals with attached clasps would be employed in 1851 by the British when they created their retrospective campaign medals for the Napoleonic Wars, one for the army and one for the navy, decades earlier. As Wellington was Commander-in-Chief and had learned his craft on Indian service, he arranged a third retrospective medal, commonly known as the ‘Army of India Medal’, to cover various conflicts from 1799-1826. The elderly recipients, both European and Indian, had to apply for the medal, and it is far from clear how many were awarded in India.

The new method of recognising campaign service was clearly established. In 1851, a new ‘Indian General Service Medal’ was established with retrospective clasps extending back to operations on the Northwest Frontier in 1849. In part, this was

done for reasons of economy, in that a single medal could have subsequent clasps attached to it to cover multiple operations. Governments always keep one eye focused on the financial bottom line. Over time, individual actions would be debated in Calcutta (as it was then called) and London, clasps would be accepted or rejected for this medal; services would be recognised or ignored. The idea of a common medal with multiple clasps representing not merely battles but entire campaigns was established as a firm tradition. This resulted, of course, in a potentially ungainly award where a medal might have as many as six or seven clasps. By the end of its life in 1895, 23 clasps had been authorised for this medal. It would take an extraordinary moment for a standalone medal even to be considered and only a traumatic event such as the Indian 'Mutiny' of 1857 would qualify for a separate campaign award. There was occasional grousing, some of which appears in the early issues of the USI journal, that an entire lifetime of service under fire would be represented by only a single medal with numerous clasps.

The ordeal of 1857 brought several relevant changes to India and to the Indian military. The EIC was ended, investors in the Company (especially those serving in parliament) had their potential financial losses covered, and India was transferred to some vague form of rule by the British crown. It would take decades to sort out the full significance of this. But in terms of decorations and campaign medals, everything that had existed before 1857 was de facto transferred to the new government of India. While it would have only limited impact on the military, a new order was created to reward both Indians and Europeans for loyalty and service, The Most Exalted Order of the Star of India. It was originally created only in a single class and would over time sprout lower classes which would occasionally be awarded to military personnel. A sibling order, The Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire, would be created in 1878 in a single class and over time would grow higher classes in the order.

1870-1914

This was the state of general play regarding orders, decorations, and medals that presented a central pillar of the emerging

professionalism and tradition of the Indian Army. As with all customs and traditions, especially in a military environment, the system would be slow to change and evolve. Service in India would be recognised by the familiar gallantry and distinguished service decorations and campaign service would be commemorated primarily by new clasps to the established General Service Medal. Services outside of India, especially in China and Africa, would see additional medals added. All these campaign medals would also be awarded to British troops and to European officers in the Indian Army.

One of the first major challenges came at the time of the second British invasion of Afghanistan in 1878. While the initial proposal had been for two, or perhaps three, clasps to the Indian General Service Medal, political pressure from prominent generals with direct access to the British royal family resulted in the invention of not only a separate campaign medal with six clasps but a duplicative campaign star for another aspect of the war. This was one of the first occasions in India in which political intervention altered the policies and decisions of the government, and resulted in what many saw as a needless proliferation of medals.

Only in 1886 would gallant and distinguished services by mid-ranking European officers be blessed with a decoration for their deeds. In that year, the Distinguished Service Order (DSO) was created for British officers and would be extended to European officers serving in the Indian Army, but of course not Indians who could not serve as officers except in honorary ranks.

The merger of the three presidency armies in 1895 into, what was for the first time, officially the ‘Indian Army’ saw few changes in the system of honours and awards but it, combined with the journalistically prominent siege and defence of the fort at Chitral on the North-West Frontier, granted an opportunity to deal with what had been a growing cause of concern. As was mentioned above, the Indian General Service Medal had over the years sprouted a prodigious number of clasps and many felt had come to minimise rather than display their service resume. Additionally, changing military fashion saw full-size medals worn on fewer

occasions, replaced by ribbon bars which would display only a single ribbon for a General Service Medal that might have four or five clasps when worn in full size. In 1895, a new medal, the India General Service Medal 1895 (officially, the 'India Medal 1895') was introduced as a successor to the old General Service Medal which was then stopped. At the time it was suggested that pin-on rosettes be added to the ribbon of this new medal to represent multiple clasps; this idea was promptly rejected on the basis that such ribbon appurtenances constituted no more than needless clutter. In effect, if one counted the 'Army of India Medal', this was the third in the venerable sequence of general service medals for service in India. This medal would be continued through the rest of the reign of Queen Victoria and into the early years of her son, King Edward VII, and would have seven clasps before it was replaced by a new Indian General Service Medal in 1908. This medal, in turn, would continue under Edward VII and his son, George V, (twelve clasps) until a new medal was introduced by George VI in 1936. This, the final Indian General Service Medal of the pre-1947 years, would have two clasps created for it before it was suspended during World War II. The assumption at the time was that it would be reinvigorated after the war when business as usual was resumed. Events, of course, would invalidate this hope.

Although their forces lay outside the scope of the British Indian Army, the symbolic value of orders, decorations, and medals was such that in the last years of the 19th century and into the following century, many of the most prominent of the Indian states would create their own awards for their subjects and their military forces. As the King-Emperor was the 'font of honour' for his subjects so were the *Maharajas* for theirs. While the British resented and tried to halt this practice, there was little they could do about it and this dimension of Indian phaleristics blossomed.[7]

It had been increasingly realised that when it came to recognising gallantry by Indian enlisted personnel, there were relatively few awards to be employed. In effect, there was only a single award – the Indian Order of Merit (IOM). As the Indian Army was called upon to serve in increasingly diverse operations in theatres, there was the very real risk of cheapening the venerable IOM through too many awards. In 1907, the Indian Distinguished

Service Medal was added to the toolbox of gallantry awards (and, on occasion, as recognition for distinguished service).[8]

At the time of the Durbar in 1911 in which King George V was installed as Emperor of India, several changes were made to the Indian system of honours and awards. The most relevant one for the military was the extension of the VC, for the first time, to enlisted personnel of the Indian Army. While it had been available to European officers of the service, it had been denied to Indians. While there were different opinions regarding this change, especially since it carried the abolition of the first class of the IOM and the renumbering of the two lower classes, it represented a gradual process of bringing Indian military honours and awards into resonance with the British system. Unfortunately, it is difficult to gauge how Indian enlisted personnel reacted to the substitution of an enamelled gold star by a rather plain bronze cross. While there would be no awards of the VC to Indian enlisted personnel until the Great War, it had been added to the pyramid of honour.[9]

1914-1947

It is difficult to overstate the importance of the Great War (World War I) in human history. There are few moments in time to which we can point and with certainty observe a change of such magnitude. The Indian Army and its professional voice, the USI of India, felt the impact of that conflict and, in many ways, it still resonates in our world today. Compared to all the other results, the arena of decorations and medals may seem mundane but it constituted a major watershed moment in that area as well.[10]

Within the British service, new awards were created as the range of decorations available to them came to be strained under the pressure of the new responsibilities added to the battlefield. In 1914, at the outbreak of hostilities, the British created a new decoration, the Military Cross, to recognise gallantry by their junior officers. There was much debate at the time whether this decoration should be extended to Indians in the Indian Army since few held King's commissions as officers and there was an expressed concern over the use of a cross-shaped decoration for personnel who were overwhelmingly non-Christian. In the final decision it was extended to the Indian Army, to those few

commissioned officers who existed and to the VCOs (today's JCOs).[11] Quite by accident, the DSO was awarded on several occasions to Indian officers, particularly to *Parsis* serving in the medical corps, one of the few branches in which an Indian could obtain a commission. In 1917, the British created another new award for the army, the Military Medal, an award specifically for bravery by non-commissioned officers and enlisted personnel. It was intentionally not extended to the Indian Army although occasionally ethnic Indians serving in other military units would receive the award during the war.

The years after 1918 were a time of challenge and soul-searching for the Indian military as much as they were for wider Indian society. The trauma of the war years transitioned into a time of economic difficulty, of political challenges, and of new stresses and opportunities in all aspects of society. The gradual commissioning of Indians as officers, the rise of the Indian Navy and Air force, and the pressure for forces to be deployed in 'aid to the civil operations' to counter the rising Freedom Struggle, all presented challenges to the older systems and traditions. While many of these challenges fell as heavily on the police as they did on the military, they were in a time of professional readjustment. While the police saw a proliferation in their awards for new kinds of service and challenges, the military continued with the same resources of honour.

The renewal of global conflict in 1939 thrust India into a truly 'world war' that would strain the professionalism of the military institution. However, there would not be any major alterations in the modes of recognising gallantry and achievement until the final years of the war. With increasing demands on the Indian Navy and Air Force, they became increasingly likely to receive the same gallantry and service awards as would be extended to their British siblings. In 1940, a new pair of awards was created to recognise civilian gallantry and military gallantry in a non-combatant situation: the George Cross and the George Medal. These awards were extended to India and recognised an important broadening perspective beyond a military-specific concept of bravery. In 1944, the decision was made to extend the Military Medal to the Indian Army.[12] This was a fairly controversial decision in many circles as

it carried with it the further reduction of the IOM to a single – and fairly crippled – class. From what had once been an esteemed three-class award for the highest levels of gallantry, the IOM had been demoted to a mere single-class award. This step represented the culmination of a process that had been underway since at least World War I of integrating the awards system of the Indian military into that of the United Kingdom. It is ironic that as this merger was underway, the South Asian subcontinent was moving in a quite different direction, one that would culminate on 15 August 1947.

1947-2020

As the years after India's independence were a challenging time for the USI of India and the defence forces it represented and served, they also presented trials for the established systems of recognition of gallantry and distinguished service.[13] Not only was the subcontinent's territory and administration partitioned, not only were the military forces partitioned, but the system of honours and awards used by pre-1947 India seemed to be up for vivisection as well. As with any divorce, question of custody of the orders, decorations, and medals was a subject of discussion. Not only was there the logical impossibility of independent India and Pakistan simultaneously continuing earlier awards, awards that often carried heavily Imperial symbolism, but there was the irreconcilable problem of the two States sharing the same awards in some fashion, awards that would be awarded first of all for a war between the two nations. This was complicated by the simple fact that London and the King were unwilling to cooperate in a situation that would lead to awards granted in the name of the King (until India and Pakistan wrote and implemented constitutions as republics, they were still dominions and required approval from London for any awards) for conflict between two members of his 'Commonwealth'. It was clear to all involved that there could be no resolution to the problem of decorations and awards for the two sibling nations until they wrote their own constitutions. This was a particular problem given that active military operations were underway in Jammu and Kashmir. Prime Minister Nehru was acutely aware of the need to recognise gallantry and distinguished service by the military forces as

promptly as was possible, but the delay of a few years was a constitutional necessity.

Meanwhile, India had to confront unfinished business of striking and awarding campaign medals for the recently concluded World War II. In a very real sense, they were doing the job of the British. This did allow India to do something that the British had neglected to do for their own forces: to name individually the campaign medals for this service. Although not every medal was named, the vast majority were. Unlike those who went to Pakistan or those *Gorkhas* that went into British service, Indian recipients would receive individually named medals. This naming, which had been conducted on a routine basis ever since the First Anglo-Afghan War, was an important and central aspect of the professionalism of the Indian military and of the government showing proper respect to those who had served it on the field of battle. Unfortunately, this process has been stopped in recent years for reasons that are often explained away as being 'financial'.

The system of honours and awards that had evolved in India during the period of British occupation had moved over time to more and more closely resemble that of the United Kingdom: a system that reflected the class structure of the British nation, that mirrored the division between officers and enlisted personnel. For independent India, there was a sense, perhaps overly optimistic, that India had entered a new world, those earlier divisions of class and caste could be swept away in a spirit of freedom. It was made quite clear in the drafting of the Indian Constitution that any neo-British system of orders, classes, hierarchies, or of superiority/inferiority would be impossible. Not only would 'orders' be impossible and quite unconstitutional, but awards partitioned between officers and enlisted personnel or even decorations that came in 'classes' would be problematic. It is important to understand the new and self-consciously revolutionary ideas that lay behind the Indian Republic and would be reflected in the recognitions of service extended to all Indian citizens, those in uniform and those not in uniform.

As new decorations for gallantry and distinguished service were debated for the Indian military, several things were clear: there would be no division between officers and enlisted personnel, they would all be eligible for the same decorations and medals; there would be no titles, no *'Sardar Bahadur'* name augmentations, and even the habitual postnominals of the pre-1947 era would be rejected with no 'OBEs' and sparing use of postnominals for new awards. Not only would the earlier awards and their underlying ethical ideals not be continued but there would be no conscious analogies to earlier decorations. While it is clear that people thought unconsciously within terms inherited from the British, there was an effort not to say that the newly created decoration 'A' equals the old decoration 'B'. When such questions are raised, even today, they are difficult to answer in any meaningful way.

To commemorate India's independence, a medal was created to mark that moment. It was an extraordinarily controversial medal, coming as it did at the end of one era and the commencement of another. The instituting warrant signed by Jawaharlal Nehru and countersigned by George VI reflects that transition. Problems arose with the ribbon which was to represent the Indian tricolour flag. Since this replicated (although reversed) the King's South Africa Medal's ribbon, the suggestion was raised to stitch a blue chakra onto the white stripe of the ribbon. This proved to be too expensive and the suggestion was made to use a silver chakra glued to the ribbon. This too was rejected as a piece of needless clutter that would only snag on the uniform. Suggestions were raised for a civilian version of the medal as the Independence Medal 1947 was only for the military. This idea was speedily rejected though it resurfaced in 1950, when an independence medal was created for the police although the date 1950 had nothing to do with independence.

Regarding decorations for combatant military gallantry, a three-tier system was established on 26 January 1950, as one of the first presidential actions after the promulgation of the Constitution. Again, there was no distinction regarding the rank of the recipient, but degrees of gallantry were recognised by the Param Vir Chakra, Maha Vir Chakra, and Vir Chakra. For non-

combatant gallantry, rendered both by civilians and the military, the Ashoka Chakra was created at the same time. When first established, it was in three classes but in 1967 these classes would be renamed as today's Ashoka Chakra, Kirti Chakra, and Shaurya Chakra to remove the class distinctions. While these were intended to be awards for both civilians and the military, in recent years they have become increasingly the preserve of the military. Also, as the police wished to retain their own medals for gallantry, they were to be specifically excluded from receipt of the Ashoka Chakra series.

Also, in January 1950, a new General Service Medal was created, in many ways following in the venerable pre-1947 tradition, to be awarded with clasps for specific campaign services. The first class would be for service in Jammu and Kashmir in 1947-48 and over time six additional clasps would be created until the replacement of this General Service Medal by the Samanya Seva Medal in 1975 (which would have six clasps across its lifetime). Never awarded without a clasp and awarded only for specific campaign/operational services, these medals represent (or must we now say represented?) an unbroken chain of tradition within the Indian military.

In 1960, several new decorations were created to deal with expanding expectations of the Indian military. To reward distinguished service by all ranks, the Vishisht Seva Medal was established in three classes, not by rank but by degree of service. Like the Ashoka Chakra, this decoration would require renaming in 1976 to remove the class distinctions, becoming today's Param Vishisht Seva Medal, Ati Vishisht Seva Medal, and Vishisht Seva Medal. In the early years, this decoration was awarded sparsely, was much respected, and was available in all three classes to all ranks of the military. As is so often the case, over time these earlier standards seem to have deteriorated and some may argue that the decoration has been transformed into a supplementary badge of senior rank. Additionally, in 1980, the Sarvottam Yuddh Seva Medal, Uttam Yuddh Seva Medal, and Yuddh Seva Medal were created to supplement – some might say duplicate – the Vishisht Seva Medal for services particularly in a combat environment.

Another child of the 1960 expansion of awards was service-specific medals for a poorly defined mixture of bravery and commendable service: the Sena Medal, Nao Sena Medal, and Vayu Sena Medal, for the army, navy, and air force respectively. The dual purpose of these awards has remained a source of confusion and although in recent years they have been separately announced in the *Gazette of India,* the same decoration and ribbon are worn for different achievements.

While such medals are controversial in many military services, India created a Wound Medal in 1973 for wounds received in combat (but not available for posthumous award). This represents an important statement in that in many military services, wounds are seen simply as a cost of doing the job. In 2000, this medal was, somewhat inexplicably, renamed as the Parakram Padak (Courage Medal).

The growing recognition of the climatic extremes of India and the demands for military service under challenging conditions resulted in the creation of the Sainya Seva Medal, also in 1960, with individual clasps for specific services. This medal and its clasps have in recent years found themselves augmented and duplicated by new awards such as the Ucchh Tungta (High Altitude) Medal[15] and as the police have begun to award this medal to themselves together with their own Police (Special Duty) Medal. It is often forgotten how integral these clasps are to the medals, especially in these days when they seem not to be worn. And as India began to play a wider role on the world stage, the Videsh Seva Medal was also created in 1960 to reward overseas deployments, either in multinational training operations or United Nations service. As with all other medals, specific clasps were authorised for a wide range of specific services.

Until the 1965 India-Pakistan war, this remained essentially the state of play for Indian military decorations and awards. Even accounting for pre-1947 service, a senior officer might have two or perhaps three rows of ribbons with the only appurtenances being those for subsequent bestowals of gallantry or distinguished service awards. This uncluttered professionalism would, of course, be eroded over time. For the 1965 war with Pakistan a new

approach was adopted. For pre-war hostilities, a clasp was added to the General Service Medal of the day. For the war itself a separate medal, not a bar to the General Service Medal, was established, the Raksha Medal. For combat service during the war rather than mere service during a block of time, a companion star, the Samar Seva Star, was created. Curiously, by almost independent invention of the same system, Pakistan would embrace a similar solution to the Indian one. This same pattern would be adopted for the 1971 war with Pakistan, with two combat service stars, depending on the theatre of deployment, the Poorvi Star or Paschimi Star[16], instituted along with a medal for service during the period of the conflict, the Sangram Medal. Subsequent conflicts with Pakistan, or even non-conflicts, have seen additional medals created: OP Vijay Star, Siachen Glacier Medal, OP Vijay Medal, and OP Parakram Medal. In 1986, another new medal was created for services that could not be easily subsumed under other decorations, the Special Service Medal with its own pair of clasps. In effect, the Special Service Medal constitutes the latest, and possibly final, evolution to the general service medal series as it is a replacement for the Samanya Seva Medal (though many continue to wear this medal but as it is worn without any clasps, is difficult to know what service it is intended to represent).

As a continuation from pre-1947 practices, the Meritorious Service Medal and Long Service and Good Conduct Medal were continued for enlisted personnel in independent India although they were sparsely awarded. In 1971, these were expanded with the introduction of long service medals for all ranks, initially for nine years and twenty years, with a medal for thirty years being added in 1980, and with rumours of possible future expansions. Curiously, the older medals have been continued.

There have been a variety of other new decorations, awards, and badges created in recent years, for example the ever-burgeoning commendation badges. However much military awards seem to have proliferated in recent years, the picture is nothing compared to what exists elsewhere in Indian society most particularly in the Indian police, though that lies beyond the scope of this article.

In the realm of physics, there is something called ‘Boyle’s Law’ which, to put it simply, states that the pressure of the gas increases as the volume of the container decreases. In many ways, there seems to be an Indian military inverse analogy to that law in which the number of awards increases as the rank of the wearer increases. This is not to suggest that undeserved awards are presented at a rate any higher than other professions or in other nations. But it is more than simple change over time. There has clearly been a proliferation in the number of awards often with needless appurtenances glued onto the ribbon bars even while the medals themselves must stand without their integral clasps. It seems there has been a relaxation of earlier standards. Few awards now have recommendations published in the *Gazette of India* and many medals and clasps are created not by Presidential notification but by notifications from individual government branches. Central supervision over awards and decorations – to say nothing of their actual bestowal – seems to have been largely abandoned in recent decades.

Concluding Thoughts

The USI of India has, over a century and half, been the touchstone of Indian military professionalism and standards. Maintaining those standards even in the face of social, political, economic, and technological change has been a challenge, a challenge to which the highest values of the institution have always risen even in the most difficult of times. As has been suggested, a central part of any military system is custom, tradition, and heritage and the ongoing struggle to maintain those in the face of changing social standards has always been and will probably always present a great challenge. A significant factor in this military professionalism and tradition are the decorations and medals awarded for gallantry and service. For those who can read the code, the medals or ribbons worn by the military are a clear statement of the individual deeds and achievements of the recipient within the overarching environment. For those who cannot read the code, which will inevitably include far too many civilians and perhaps a few serving personnel, those bits of coloured cloth or overly shiny metal are seen as no more than baubles, as a stylish addition by some military tailor to an already

gaudy and strange multi-coloured outfit. Over time there has been a trend toward other institutions in society encroaching on the traditions, and even the awards, of the military services, adopting them as their own, and pretending to a false 'military' status. All of these seem to be challenges for leadership, to take decorations and medals seriously, to award them professionally and appropriately (including maintaining high standards of manufacture by the mint, attaching appropriate clasps, and naming the medals), and to preserve them as representations of service to the nation and not as mere fashion statements. Moving forward, beyond the sesquicentennial of the anniversary of the founding of this venerable institution, the maintenance of knowledge of the professional core and tradition will be a challenge to preserve them from becoming submerged beneath discussions of new technology and strategic trends and slogans. Recognition of heritage, of change over time, of adaptation to altered circumstances, and of the modest pride that should be taken in medals and ribbons should remain a part of the mission of the USI of India.

Endnotes

[1] Many of the issues addressed here will be discussed in greater depth in Edward S. Haynes, *From Izzat to Honour: Changing Modes of Representing Honor in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century India,* forthcoming.

[2] It is important to distinguish clearly between the British Army and the Indian Army as they were entirely separate bodies. Very often, especially among amateur historians, these two are confused and conflated. The British Army served in Britain and wherever deployed by authorities in London. This deployment included service in the colonies and in India. When serving in India British regiments were often described as the Army in India. While these regiments were often brigaded with Indian units (to keep them under control and 'loyal' in the aftermath of the 'Mutiny') they remained part of the British military establishment. The Indian Army, sometimes referred to as the Army of India, was a separate institution quite distinct from the British Army and under a different command structure. While some use the strange term 'British Indian Army' there never was such a thing.

[3] For those who are interested, specimens of these and all the other awards I will be discussing are held in the very rich collection of the USI, held in the Colonel Pyara Lal Memorial Library.

[4] For more on this decoration see Cliff Parrett and Rana Chhina, *Indian Order of Merit: Historical Records 1837-1947,* three volumes to date ([Brighton]: Tom Donovan Editions, 2010—).

[5] To date, the best source on these campaign medals is John Hayward, Diana Birch, and Richard Bishop, *British Battles and Medals,* 7th edition (London: Spink, 2006). When it deals with India, however, the volume is weak and something much better, more focused, and deeply researched is needed.

[6] This is somewhat of an oversimplification.

[7] For more on this topic, see Tony McClenaghan, *Indian Princely Medals: A Record of the Orders, Decorations and Medals of the Indian Princely States* (New Delhi: Lancer Publishers, [1996]).

[8] For more on this award, see Rana Chhina, *The Indian Distinguished Service Medal* ([New Delhi]: Invicta India, [2001]).

[9] Interestingly, there was never serious discussion to extending the British gallantry award for enlisted personnel, the Distinguished Conduct Medal, to the Indian Army. Perhaps it was seen as duplicated by the Indian Distinguished Service Medal.

[10] For more on this complex period, see Edward S. Haynes, "The Phaleristic Impact of the Great War on Indian Military and Civilian Society," *The Great War in Phaleristics: I International Colloquium Proceedings,* eds. Humberto Nuno de Oliveira, José Vicente de Bragança, and Paulo Jorge Estrela ([Lisbon: Academia Faleristica de Portugal], 2014), pp, 127-66.

[11] For more on this award, see Sushil Talwar, *Indian Recipients of the Military Cross,* two volumes ([New Delhi: KW Publishers Pvt. Ltd., published in association with the United Service Institution of India, 2017).

[12] For more on this award, see Sushil Talwar, *Indian Recipients of the Military Medal,* forthcoming.

13 For more on post-Independence Indian awards, see Edward S. Haynes and Rana Chhina, *Medals and Decorations of Independent India* ([New Delhi]: Manohar, 2008).

[14] See Edward S. Haynes, “A Medal that almost destroyed a Commonwealth: The Indian Independence Medal, 1947”, *Journal of the Orders and Medals Society of America,* 55, 6 (November-December 2004): 19-26.

[15] High Altitude Service Medal. High altitude being service over 9000 feet for one year.

[16] The Eastern Star and the Western Star.

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The Indian Army Memorial Room and Indian Army Museum at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst

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Introduction

In 2019, the National Army Museum (NAM), UK and the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (RMAS) carried out a major refurbishment of the Indian Army Memorial Room situated in the Old College of the Academy. Whilst the display was to be refreshed and renewed, a key part of the curatorial ethos was to retain or put back as many as possible of the historic artefacts that had been in the room since its inauguration. This meant a great deal of research into the history and origins of the room and displays therein. This article looks at some of the results of that research. Although now based in Chelsea, London, the NAM originated at the RMAS, and continues to maintain displays there. The museum was founded in 1960 by Royal Charter, but it is important to note that charter incorporated into one national body the existing museum sections based at RMAS for cavalry, disbanded Irish Regiments, and the British Indian Army. The development of the Indian Army Museum section and the Indian Army Memorial Room is inseparable, and both will be discussed here.

Origins

It is common to the birth of many regimental museums that they were formed from the accumulation of silverware, paintings, and memorabilia owned privately by the officers and traditionally displayed in messes. However, with Indian independence in 1947, the contents of the British Indian Army officers' messes were generally left behind as British officers left the new armies of independent India and Pakistan and handed over to their Indian and Pakistani counterparts. It was rare for British officers to elect

to bring their mess property back to the United Kingdom, particularly when there were fellow Indian and Pakistani officers in place and able to sustain the officers' messes. In England after 1947, there was a gradual accumulation of artefacts at RMAS, often presented by families with a long-standing and often multi-generational history of service in the armies of the East India Company and the Indian Army, and that stimulated the idea that an Indian Army Museum should be formed. At the time, the only national museum which collected material relating to the Indian Army was the Imperial War Museum, with a remit limited to the First and Second World Wars.

In 1948, Field Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck, the last Commander-in-Chief of the British Indian Army, left the Commander-in-Chief's private residence 'Snowdon' in Simla for the last time. The house had hung a series of coats-of-arms, one for each Commander-in-Chief from Robert, Lord Clive in the 18th century to Auchinleck himself. The tradition was that each incoming Commander-in-Chief commissioned and paid for his own coat-of-arms to hang with the others. As Snowdon was the C-in-C's private residence and was privately furnished, Auchinleck, on the disbandment of the British Indian Army, had the coats-of-arms sent back to the then Commonwealth Relations Office[1] (CRO). The CRO, evidently unsure what to do with them as they were private rather than government property, sent them on to the RMAS. It was artefacts like this that formed the nucleus of the museum collection there.

Image 1 : The Commander-in-Chief coats-of-arms at 'Snowdon', Simla circa 1947

At the RMAS, some Indian Army colours were already hanging in the chapel and other items were displayed in the separate library building, situated between Old College and New College. Some of the coats-of-arms sent by Auchinleck were first displayed there in 1948. That display also included medals from two collections: a series originally compiled by Lord Birdwood[2] when he was secretary to the Government of India, Army Department in 1913, and a second collection from the Adjutant General's office of the medals issued from 1913 to the Second World War. The medals are almost all unissued specimens of every medal for which soldiers of the British Indian Army and its predecessors, the Presidency armies of the East India Company, were eligible. Birdwood's original collection was formerly displayed in the offices of the Military Secretary at General Headquarters (GHQ), New Delhi. The second collection was in the Adjutant General's office of the same building. GHQ India briefly became the Supreme Command Headquarters, covering both the new

armies of Pakistan and India, but was disbanded in 1947, and as there was no equivalent supreme headquarters for the partitioned sub-continent, Auchinleck sent the medals awarded by the British Indian Army back to Britain.

As the Indian Army collections at Sandhurst continued to grow, it became clear that the display in the library was inadequate for them, and there was much talk at Sandhurst about what to do with them. The then Commandant, Major General FRG Matthews, sent a firmly-worded memorandum on 13 April 1948 which brought about the birth of the Indian Army Room (later to be called the Indian Army Memorial Room):

> "There has been endless talk about the conversion of the old College Library into the new Indian Army Relics Room. I have decided that this room will now be the Indian Army Room and having made this decision require all the Indian Army flags, shields, pictures, relics, etc., to be in the room by 26th April".[3]

The Old College Library (not to be confused with the separate library in which the original Indian Army display was created) was formerly the chapel of the Academy. As the Academy expanded, the chapel was deemed to be too small and a new chapel was built in 1879. After it ceased to be used for worship, the old chapel was used for various purposes, including a dining hall (fondly remembered as such by Auchinleck from his time as a cadet in 1902), and, until 1948, as a second library. It was this room that was to become the centrepiece of the British national Indian Army collection, as it remains to this day.

Image 2 : The Indian Army Room circa 1950

Whilst the Indian Army collection was quietly evolving at RMAS, the idea of establishing a national Indian Army Museum was being discussed at a high level. On 13 May 1948, Brigadier L Monier-Williams and General Sir Geoffrey Scoones (both of the CRO) held a meeting with General Sir John Coleridge (formerly of the Indian Army and at that time a trustee of the Imperial War Museum), Captain E Altham (curator of the Royal United Services Institute museum), Colonel CG Robins (representing RMAS), and LR Bradley (Director of the Imperial War Museum from 1938 to 1960). The meeting was 'in connection with a proposal to form a collection of trophies and exhibits of the late British Indian Army, to discuss (a) sources from which material can be drawn (b) accommodation likely to be available'.[4] Coleridge was one of the most important early advocates for the creation of an Indian Army Museum. As a trustee of the Imperial War Museum from 1943 to 1949, he had an understanding of how museums worked, and was able to influence their collecting policy so that some Indian Army material went to Sandhurst. Furthermore, he had friends in

high places. In August 1948, he wrote to Robins that he had seen Auchinleck and told him of the proposal for an Indian Army Museum, arranging for him to come to Sandhurst and see the Indian Army Room.[5] This was the first direct involvement of Auchinleck in the development of the Indian Army Museum, although artefacts presented by him were already on display there. Coleridge spent some time trying to find accommodation for the museum in London, but eventually, as the Indian Army collection at Sandhurst grew, it became inevitable that that would be the natural home for the museum.

To establish the nascent Indian Army Museum on a secure footing, an advisory committee, initially known as the India Room Committee (later the Indian Army Museum Committee), was convened for the first time on 11 November 1948. Its purpose was to discuss the offers of artefacts for the Indian Army display, and (inevitably) the costs of creating high-quality displays. Until its last meeting in 1981, the committee continued to advise the Indian Army Museum (until 1960) and subsequently the National Army Museum. The committee is important to the history of the museum, and the Indian Army Memorial Room, not least because its first two presidents were Field Marshals Auchinleck (until 1960) and Slim (from 1960). Both took a keen interest in the development of the museum. In 1948, Auchinleck and Lord Birdwood launched an appeal in *The Times* requesting artefacts and financial donations for the new museum. This was successful in raising the profile of the museum, as well as funds, and donations of objects. Many donations came from veterans of the British Indian Army and families with strong connections to India over generations.

As the collections grew, the first curator of the museum[6] was appointed in 1950. He was Lieutenant Colonel Henry Leonard Boultbee, a former officer of Skinner's Horse. He was succeeded in 1955 by Lieutenant Colonel Charles Bernard Appleby, late of the 1st Punjab Regiment. Appleby was to become the first Director of the NAM in 1960, and after his retirement in 1966, remained on the Indian Army Museum Committee until his death in 1975; a poignant note in the minutes of that committee records that the members stood in silence to remember him in the meeting

shortly following his death. In 1965, Appleby was able to report to the committee that the 'greatest authority on Indian Army uniforms', William Young Carman had joined the museum as deputy director.

Museum Exhibits

Regiments of the new armies of India and Pakistan were involved with the museum right from the start. Apart from donating artefacts for display, they were subscribers to a long-running scheme to make carved wooden plaques of all of the badges of the regiments and corps (regular and auxiliary) of the Indian Army as it stood in 1947. The badges were carved in the 1950s and 1960s.

Regiments of the armies of India and Pakistan also subscribed to two portrait commissions specifically for the Indian Army Memorial Room. In 1963, Appleby suggested to the Indian Army Museum Committee that they should commission portraits of Field Marshals Auchinleck and Slim to hang in the room. Auchinleck's was first, intended to be produced in time for his 80th birthday in 1964. Auchinleck requested that the well-known artist Edward Seago painted the portrait. They were good friends, near neighbours in Suffolk at the time, and Seago had served as a Royal Engineers camouflage officer under Auchinleck during the Second World War. Auchinleck was a keen painter in his spare time, and corresponded with Seago about technique and other aspects of painting. The artist's fee was 500 guineas. This sum was raised by subscription from individual former British Indian Army officers, regimental associations, current Indian and Pakistani Army Regiments and admirers of the field marshal. It was presented by Slim at a ceremony on 07 October 1964. Auchinleck, ever a humble man, wrote afterwards that he 'was really quite overcome'[7] by the presentation.

Slim's portrait was painted in 1967 by Leonard Boden. Slim initially felt his facial expression was too severe, and wrote on 07 March 1967 that he had 'complained some time ago the [facial] expression was "another word from you, and I'll knock your ruddy block off"! But Boden has softened it down a bit'.[8] The portrait was presented in a ceremony in the Indian Army Memorial Room on 06 May 1967 by General Sir Frank Messervy.[9] Lady Slim wrote privately to the artist with the high praise that 'it was wonderful for

me to feel so certain that I liked it'. As with Auchinleck's portrait, the painting was paid for by subscription from similar subscribers. To this day, both portraits continue to hang in the Indian Army Memorial Room.

Image 3 : The Indian Army Memorial Room circa 1960

The Memorial to the Indian Soldier

1969 was an important year for the museum. It was only then that a decision was made to formally adopt the name Indian Army Memorial Room, though the room had generally been called that for many years. The room was in need of updating and it was in that year that the committee started a project to commission three stained glass windows for it to commemorate the Indian soldier in the period 1914-1947. These would complement existing stained glass in the former chapel, including the 2nd King Edward VII's Gurkha Rifles (the Sirmoor Rifles) memorial window. The windows were officially unveiled in 1971 by Auchinleck. They depict the Indian soldier in the First World War; the period 1919-1939, in particular on the North-West Frontier; and the Second World War.

They are of particular importance as a memorial specifically to the Indian soldier rather than to their British officers, who are well-represented throughout the memorial room.

The 2019 Refurbishment

In 1950, a dedication ceremony had been held to underline the commemorative purpose of the Indian Army Memorial Room. It was a place primarily for former officers of the British Indian Army and their families, rather than for the general public. Those who visited on a Sunday would often attend chapel, then the museum, where they could enjoy a glass of sherry with the curator. As time went on, the purpose of the room evolved. The former officers of the British Indian Army gradually died out and interest in the room declined, leading to a period of neglect. The 2019 refurbishment was probably the most significant change to the Indian Army Memorial Room since the unveiling of the stained glass windows in 1971. That year had also seen the NAM open its building in Chelsea, London. From that time onwards its focus was naturally on its London displays, and the memorial room display became a secondary concern.

In 2018, Brigadier Justin Maciejewski was appointed Director of the NAM. Maciejewski visited India to develop the idea of setting up a British Indian Military Heritage Partnership with a view to reinvigorating collaboration on various aspects of the shared history, and heritage, of the regiments of the British and Indian Armies. Whilst in India, a number of people suggested that a reinvigorated Indian Army Memorial Room at Sandhurst would be a good place to start this process of a renewed focus on shared history. Foremost amongst the advocates of this idea were Squadron Leader Rana Chhina (Retd) of the United Service Institution of India, Major Kinny Khanna (Retd) of the Indian Cavalry Association and Lieutenant General Tajindar Shergill (Retd), advisor to the Chief Minister of Punjab. Fortuitously, Brigadier Bill Wright, the Commander at Sandhurst, had recently launched a programme to reinvigorate the display of heritage at the Royal Military Academy as a source of inspiration to the cadets. The stars were aligned.

A joint NAM and Sandhurst team was swiftly mobilised and started work. The intention was to maintain or reinstate as much

as possible of the artefacts which had long been on display, along with enhancing the commemorative nature of the room through the use of pictures that present a balance of stories of Indian soldiers and British and Indian officers who had served in the British Indian Army and the armies of the East India Company. The vast height of the room presented the opportunity to display a large number of portraits from the museum's unrivalled collection of material relating to the Indian Army. Highlights include pictures of Victoria Cross winners Gaje Ghale, Yeshwant Ghadge and Mir Dast, along with the commissioned portraits of Auchinleck and Slim. The picture display is complemented by showcases displaying regimental silver and mess china; together with the specimen medals and coats-of-arms presented by Auchinleck in 1948.

Image 4 and 5 : Part of the 2019 Redisplay

The refurbished room was opened by Field Marshal Sir John Chapple, late of the 2nd Gurkhas, former Chief of the General Staff and generous benefactor to the museum's Indian Army collection, on 06 September 2019 in the presence of distinguished guests that brought together members of the military, academic and diplomatic communities from the UK, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Members of the Royal Gurkha Rifles provided a Guard of Honour and played the pipes and the opening ceremony was followed by an army curry lunch, that perhaps was the most enduring cultural legacy of the shared service in India.

Image 6 : Distinguished Guests at the 2019 Reopening

The reinvigorated Indian Army Memorial Room has been a tremendous success with a dramatic increase in use and visitors since its reopening. It will continue to act as a focal point and a memorial to the British and Indian soldiers of all ranks who served together in the British Indian Army over nearly 200 years. It represents a physical, and powerful, reminder of the shared military history and heritage that exists between the armies of Britain and those of South Asia. The message that these objects convey to the young officer cadets today of the eternal soldiery values of courage, discipline, loyalty, and mutual respect that transcend religious and cultural differences is powerful and moving. The diversity of the British Indian Army was a source of strength proved beyond question in the battles in Italy, Africa and Burma in the Second World War. This message of 'the strength that can be created through diversity and mutual respect' is a message of enduring relevance in today's world for all those training to be leaders in the British Army and the armies of many

countries who train at Sandhurst, and the members of the public who visit the Indian Army Memorial Room through the tours organised by the Sandhurst Trust. We offer our congratulations to the United Service Institution of India on its 150th anniversary, and sincerely hope its members will visit Britain and see the Indian Army Memorial Room themselves.

Endnotes

[1] In 1968 this was to become part of the new Foreign and Commonwealth Office. In 1948 there was a separate Colonial Office, Foreign Office and Commonwealth Relations Office.

[2] Field Marshal William Riddell Birdwood (1865 – 1951) was C-in-C in India 1925-1930.

[3] NAM Institutional Archive D2/1/1/10

[4] In NAM Institutional Archive C1/2/237/1

[5] On 3 August 1948, General J D Coleridge wrote to Colonel C.G. Robins that 'I saw F.M. Auchinleck recently, and spoke to him about the proposed I.A. Museum and what you had done at the R.M.A. in particular. He was much interested, and would like to go to Sandhurst, see the proposed Museum and have a talk with you'. In C1/2/237/1

[6] He was curator of the whole RMA Museum with all three sections for Indian Army, Cavalry and disbanded Irish Regiments.

[7] NAM Institutional Archive F4/2/31

[8] NAM Institutional Archive C1/2/191

[9] Auchinleck had been approached to make the presentation but was unable to make it; feeling bad for not being able to return the compliment to Slim after his own portrait presentation, he sent an urgent telegram on the day which simply read 'very sorry not to be with you today best wishes Auk'.

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Customs and Traditions of the Indian Armed Forces

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Tradition [is] how the vitality of the past enriches the life of the present.

- TS Eliot

General

Customs and traditions are the foundation on which esprit de corps is built. It binds groups of people together. The purpose of military customs and traditions is to develop pride in military service and establish a strong foundation of professional and personal relations. These may appear strange and idiosyncratic to the civilian eye but are solemn to soldiers, sailors and airmen. Often, it is these customs and traditions that keep them focused during uncertain times, and fighting when everything appears lost. Indian Armed Forces – the Army, the Navy and the Air Force – have customs that are common, and yet some others which are distinctive, to each Service.

The Background

The Indian Armed Forces inherited many of its customs and traditions from the British Armed Forces, but have, since then, developed traditions characteristic to them. And yet, there is a view amongst a section of intellectuals, academics and politicians that our forces continue to display 'Brown Sahib' syndrome and retain a colonial mind-set. It may have been true up to the end of the 1960s; the leadership of the armed forces then was trained and groomed by the British, and with whom they had fought the Second World War. It was but natural for them to have imbibed the customs and traditions of the British Armed Forces. This influence wasn't restricted to the officers alone but had impacted JCOs and other ranks as well. The generations of leadership born

in the 1970s, and thereafter, do not carry the burden of the past and approach concerns in fundamentally different ways.

Both, Indian and British writers have noted that the British colonial rule left behind a nucleus of professional bureaucracy, military, and a government structure that emulated the British parliamentary system and which proved to be the primary stabilising factor in the aftermath of the partition of the country. 'The stability of the Indian Army may perhaps be the deciding factor in deciding the future of independent India', said Field Marshal Wavell in his farewell speech, on 21 March 1947, which proved prophetic. In military histories written after independence, the Indian Army has been described as secular, apolitical and professional, attributes that have defined our armed forces. The apolitical character of the Indian Army may, however, be ascribed mostly, but not entirely, to the character of the Indian nation-state, the nature of the Indian freedom struggle and the way in which the armed forces were built up in the years since independence.[1]

After the Second World War, a section of nationalist leaders held the view that the British Indian Army was a mercenary force, which was in sharp contrast to the legacy of the Indian National Army (INA) as the 'Peoples' Army'. During the trial of INA soldiers after the war, the leadership of the army held the view that the trial should continue as per military law. Field Marshal Cariappa's resistance to the rehabilitation of INA soldiers in the ranks of the Indian Army and his response that it would mean the 'end of the Indian Army' had forced Nehru to abandon the proposal.[2]

The transfer of refugees across the border in Punjab and their resettlement, the tribal invasion in Kashmir aided and abetted by Pakistan within months of Indian independence, and the role played by the Indian Army and the Air Force during the darkest months was to change the public opinion of the Indian Armed Forces as a nationalist force. The Indian political opinion of the army was that it had performed 'loyally, magnificently and effectively' in the period between the partition and the end of fighting in Kashmir.[3]

The evolution of the customs and traditions of the Indian Army, from its colonial past to the present times, must be seen

from the prism of the ground realities that existed in the wake of independence and the decades that followed. If the Army of independent India remained remarkably similar to the old British Indian Army, it was mainly 'because it was there.' The challenges facing the armed forces at the time of independence were daunting enough to leave no time for any disruptive changes in organisational heritage and the well-established traditions inherited from the British. The first 30 years after independence were the formative period in the history of the Indian Armed Forces that saw it fight four major wars, and two major insurgencies in Nagaland and Mizoram.

Field Marshal Cariappa's Influence on Customs and Traditions

Field Marshal Cariappa took pride in his 'Britishness', which he cultivated in his 'personality, language and habits'. Most British officers of the Indian Army spoke Hindustani and had acquired a working knowledge of the language. Field Marshal Cariappa, however, did not speak any Indian language and could hardly communicate with troops in Hindustani. However, credit must be given to Cariappa for preserving, and emphasising, military values that the army inherited from the British Indian Army but were worthy of emulation in themselves: for example, respect for the elderly, the ladies and the seniors; drill, discipline, 'spit and polish'; strict observance of dress code, financial integrity, sanitation and hygiene, and adult education. Had Field Marshal Cariappa, and leaders who followed him, not emphasised these values at a time when the army had officers from different social backgrounds with varying experiences of the war and 'idea of India', the army would have lost its inherited cohesiveness.

The Bogey of Martial Castes/Races

The concept, which originated after the *sepoy* mutiny of 1857, flowered when Field Marshal Roberts became the Commander-in-Chief in 1885. Field Marshal Robert's prejudices were formed under the shadow of the Russian threat. 'No comparison', he wrote 'can be made between the warlike races of northern India and the effeminate people of the south'. Field Marshal Cariappa rebelled against this horrible and nauseating practice. The

continuation of such a divisive practice would have been suicidal for a fledgling armed force. He created a new regiment, the 'Brigade of Guards' that recruited on an All-India basis, which became the official policy for future recruitment in the Services. For better or for worse, groups once designated by the British as 'martial races' still tend to carry that badge with pride. Yet, a spin-off of the regimental spirit has been the absence of prejudice against any group, regardless of the unit's caste or regional composition.

A Matter of Honour

It is sometimes argued that the British Indian Army was a mercenary army. If it was so, then the Indian Civil Service (ICS) and the Indian Imperial Police (IP) were also mercenary.[4] Even when serving a foreign master, the soldiers of the Indian Army were not mercenaries. Plunder and loot were not the motives that inspired the Indian soldiers in battle. What inspired them is encapsulated in the three words: *Naam* (honour of the regiment, army and the country); *Namak* (loyalty to the regiment and the country) and *Nishan* (upholding the honour of the regiment's flag). In the succession of wars over centuries, countless of our soldiers have died, their names forgotten, but their sacrifices gave our armed forces the 'tradition' — courage and the creed 'never to surrender'**.** The Sikhs in Saragarhi in 1897, the Dogras at Ypres in 1914, the Lancers at Bir Hacheim in 1942, the Gorkhas at Mortar Bluff in 1944, blazed a trail of indomitable courage that gained greater heights after independence. Major Somnath Sharma (1947), Havildar Abdul Hamid (1965), Lieutenant Colonel Ardeshir Tarapore (1965), Second Lieutenant Arun Khetrapal (1971), Flying Officer Nirmaljit Singh Sekhon (1971), Captain Vikram Batra (1999) and many others sacrificed their lives and set the highest standards of gallantry. The Battle of Rezang La (1962), where almost the entire company of 13 Kumaon literally fought till the last man and last round against hordes of Chinese attackers, has become a landmark in modern military history.

Officers' Mess and Officers' Behaviour

Customs and traditions in the army are mostly centred round the officers' mess and regimental life. Those who have read Manohar

Malgonkar's 'The Distant Drums'[5] would be surprised to notice both the similarity and the departure in the regimental life as it was in the years following independence and as it exists today. The outward appearance and ambience of officers' messes have been retained; the mess furniture, the display of mess silver, liveried waiters, the bugle calls, officers in their ceremonial dress, the protocol of sitting, drinking a toast to the President, and as a grand finale to the proceedings, a piper playing a regimental piece are still followed with justifiable pride during regimental dinner nights. Such elaborate mess ceremonials are seen by many critics as aping the traditions of the colonial era. While formal regimental dinner nights have been reduced to — in some cases — once in a few months due to many practical difficulties, the tradition has survived as it generates a sense of dignity and a touch of class to the proceedings. Why should critics grudge this if it helps to evoke a sense of pride and worth in the regiment?

In 'The Distant Drums', the Commanding Officer of 'Satpura Rifles' (a fictitious name) lists the conventions and traditions of the regiment for the benefit of a newly commissioned officer. One of the clear prescriptions of the code is that a 'Satpura' officer finishes off his tiger (meaning that an officer does not fire the gun over the shoulder of others); another is that when two officers have a bet, only one of them checks up the fact, the other always takes his word; and yet another is that they never say 'I don't know' but only 'I will find out'. When I was interviewed as a young officer in 1960, I was cautioned, by my Commanding Officer, not to bother about three 'Ps', pay, posting, and promotion, as Army Headquarters had staff to look after officers' career interests. In today's context, such advice would be considered impractical. Although officers today are better educated and professionally more competent, the level of trust and commitment to the regiment has declined. In the present socio-economic milieu, the value system has changed. Today, the self-image of officers is increasingly pegged to money and good life.[6]

Musical Traditions

Infantry regiments inherited a tradition for the band to play the regimental march at the end of regimental dinner nights in the officers' mess. The regimental marches like 'Cock o' the North' or

'Highland Laddie' evoked no emotion or association and were a carryover from the past; over time, Indian tunes have replaced these. The change, however, was not an act of parochialism but an assertion of our lost heritage; the musical extravaganza at the 'Beating Retreat' renders a medley of Indian and western marches – *'Sare Jahan se Accha'* and *'Kadam Kadam Barahai Ja'* interspersed with the famous 'Colonel Bogey March' – which draw spontaneous applause from the spectators. The Retreat ends with the soul-lifting rendering of the Christian Hymn 'Abide with Me', a tradition that draws inspiration from different sources.

Rank Consciousness and VIP Culture

Not long ago, an officer, whether a Subaltern or a General enjoyed the same privileges in the officers' mess (which was his second home) and Defence Services clubs. In many messes, it was customary to address each other by first name, the only exception being the Commanding Officer who was called 'Sir'. This custom is now extinct. It is common now to see separate tables and waiters for General Officers and other civilian VIPs during dinners or other mess functions. The emergence of such a custom goes against the fundamental concept of social equality which was sought to be engrained in the officer corps: 'In the Army, there are no differences in the social status amongst officers... A General and a Second Lieutenant have the same social status as officers. I do not want this point to be ever raised again'.[7] In recent years, rank consciousness has infected 'star' rank officers, both serving and retired, to an extent that they display stars even on the golf caps.

Service Dresses and Accoutrements

Regiments have idiosyncrasy and individual differences in dress. For example, the Brigade of the Guards wear buttons on their cuffs; others wear hackles and 'pompom' on their berets. Artillery regiments do not carry 'colours'; the gun is their 'colours'. Most such dress idiosyncrasies and differences have been carried over from the British Indian Army. If an idiosyncrasy in dress harks back to a past event in history, and its association brings a sense of pride, nostalgia, achievement or purpose, it has been retained. In some regiment, bass and tenor musicians of the regimental

band wear tiger or leopard skin, a relic of the past; the origin of the custom and its association with the present remains diffused. Whatever may have been the rationale for its retention, in the present context when hunting wild animals is a taboo all over the world, the public display of this custom raises concerns. Because of this, and also the ban on hunting, most military bands have 'faux' tiger and leopard skins.

The British Indian Army uniform changed from khaki to olive green when the theatre of operations shifted from the west to the east during the Second World War. The Indian Air Force changed theirs from khaki, which was worn by the police, to a combination of dark blue and sky blue. However, one of the reasons for the change was to preserve their unique identity which was reflected in the dress each service wore. The central paramilitary police forces have imitated army dresses ('add on' and embellishments) to a degree where it became difficult for the general public to distinguish between the army and paramilitary. Disruptive pattern combat dress has been adopted by almost all police forces on the ground of operational requirements, which are restricted to a specific area. The imitations have diminished the value of established dress customs of the Services and the pride in wearing the uniform.

Sanctity of Military Customs

The tradition of flying distinguishing flags in battle has been mentioned in our epics; in modern times, flying of flags, and display of star plates, on motor vehicles are in vogue in armies of most Commonwealth countries. However, every army has its own rules that regulate this privilege. In the case of the Indian Army, only commanders of troops and a few specified staff officers are entitled to the above privileges, which are laid down in Defence Services Regulations (Army).[8] However, in the 1970s there was a sudden proliferation of flag cars in the police and paramilitary forces which put Service officers at a great disadvantage when attending official functions. The Services were forced to allow all officers of the rank of Brigadier, and equivalent, to fly a flag and display a star plate. The virus has even infected the civil servants who took to displaying their designation in bold letters, and beacon lights, on their official cars.[9]

The process of introduction of a new medal and corresponding ribbon, particularly in the paramilitary forces, has lost its heraldic rigour. Before independence, the final authority for introduction and entitlement was vested in the 'sovereign' who had staff trained in heraldic matters to scrutinise armorial claims. In our Presidential system, this practice is non-existent. Consequently, the wearer himself is unaware of the significance of the medal. Another consequence has been that servicemen have retired without receiving their entitled medals, and officers without their commissioning parchments.

Inviting Officers to JCOs' Mess and JCOs to Officers' Mess

A unique tradition to invite officers to the JCOs' mess on Independence Day which was reciprocated by inviting JCOs to the officers' mess on Republic Day was introduced after independence. This tradition is followed by all the three Services, which has contributed to harmony and cohesiveness between officers and JCOs. An atmosphere of camaraderie prevails on such occasions, where the guests and hosts interact freely.[10]

Reverence for Dead Soldiers

America has its solemn ceremony of flag draped coffins and salutes from the President. Israel makes incredible efforts to retrieve the dead bodies of their soldiers from enemy territory. Yet, reverence for soldiers' bodies is a relatively new historical development. Generals and Admirals might be taken home for burial and commemoration, but few bothered for the troops. The Maharaja of Bikaner, who became the only non-Anglo member of the Imperial war cabinet, insisted during the First World War that Hindus be cremated, and Muslims be buried. During Op Pawan in Sri Lanka, the bodies of soldiers were cremated or buried *in situ.* It was only during the Kargil War that instructions were issued to transport the remains of martyrs by service aircraft to an airfield nearest to their hometown for last rites.[11]

Jai Hind: New Form of Salutation

'Jai Hind' was adopted by the Indian Army as the new form of greeting each other, civilian officials and those of the other two Services. The new rule pertains to only officers greeting each other. The *jawans* while saluting officers continue to use their

regimental salutation. *'Jai Hind'* virtually does away with the practice of wishing the time of the day ¯ 'Good Morning or Good Evening'.[12] This is a welcome step but could pose difficulty while interacting with foreign armies.

Regimental Customs

Military customs in the Indian Army have developed primarily along regimental lines manifesting in long-established regimental colours, insignias, crests, mottos, war cries and distinctive features of the uniform. Some elements of regimental customs, for example, replacing the crown with the National Emblem, are in keeping with the republican character of the Indian Union. Over time, some customs have diluted, some have disappeared, while new customs have taken root. The Navy and the Air Force have their own Service traditions. Many naval customs are centred around the hoisting of the flag on the ship's deck.

After independence, recruitment in the army has been broad based; units have soldiers from different parts of the country professing different faiths. 'A unit could have a Muslim company, all other companies being Hindu with a sprinkling of Christians and Buddhists, and more Sikhs. Such a unit is bound to have 'Sarv Seva Sthal' or a place of worship for each faith, but all under one roof with display of flags of all four faiths'.[13]

There was a tradition in all Gorkha units, and in other regiments as well, which required newly commissioned officers to acquire working knowledge of the language of the troops. They were also required to have knowledge of their regimental history. Officers were required to pass retention examination within two years. This laudable tradition became extinct after the traumatic years following the 1962 war.[14]

Conclusion

Customs and traditions are not always established by regulations; for the most part they are unwritten practices that are obeyed just the same. It is possible to change certain aspects of traditions; over time some customs have been added while others have been modified or omitted based on experiences, and consultations, amongst stake holders. The tendency to change or introduce new

customs based on the whims of the Colonel of the regiments or Colonel Commandants or Service Chiefs must be avoided. Customs and traditions are the building blocks for fostering spirit de corps and are not influenced by the fashion of the time.

In the British era, the Indian Navy and the Indian Air Force were virtually at an embryonic stage and functioned as adjuncts of the Army. The two Services have come a long way since then and have developed their independent character and tradition. Naval customs were inherited from the British Navy because of their long historical association, but the Indian Navy has evolved based on practical experiences and country's cultural heritage. Though a young Service, the Indian Air Force already has the tradition of unmatched valour.

Postscript

This article has been written under the shadow of the COVID-19 Coronavirus pandemic. Lakhs have already died the world over and the numbers are rising. Millions are affected but a cure or a vaccine is nowhere in sight. Historical events like world wars, pandemics and development in technology (e.g. artificial intelligence) change the established order and human relations. It is too early to predict how warfare and armed forces may change in future. This article may have to be written differently a decade or two from now.

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[6] Brig. N.B. Grant, 'Value System and Officer Motivation', *Indo-British Review,* op. cit., n1, p. 71. A survey carried out by DSSC, Wellington (Tamil Nadu), to a question put to about 300 officers of field rank, as to which factors would motivate them most, 25% answered 'Money and Good Life'. It was the highest.

[7] F.M. Cariappa in one of his minutes as the Army Chief. Quoted by Brig. N.B. Grant in Indo-British Review, March 1989, op. cit., n1, p. 69.

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[9] Use of red beacon lights by all govt. officials was banned by the Supreme Court in May, 2017, with the exception of ambulances and vehicles of the fire service, police and army, who can use blue flashing beacons; however, there are still many that misuse it.

[10] It is generally accepted that the tradition was formalised by Fd Mshl Cariappa.

[11] Page 509 of the Traditions and Customs, Brig. S.P. Sinha, 'Traditions and Customs', (New Delhi: Manohar, 2020), p. 509.

[12] Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose had introduced 'Jai Hind' as the Indian form of greeting in the INA during the struggle for independence. The new form of salutation was introduced in the Indian Army in 2012 by Gen Bikram Singh.

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Changing Contours of India's Strategic Environment and Outlook: 1870-2020

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Introduction

Since 1870, when the United Service Institution (USI) of India was established 'for the furtherance of interest and knowledge in the art, science and literature of national security', India's strategic environment and outlook has undergone significant changes. This article looks at some of the major changes that have occurred during the past 150 years in terms of India's strategic outlook.

Between 1870 and August 1947, India's strategic environment was viewed within the framework of British imperial interests. From August 1947 till today, this strategic environment is an integral component of independent India's ongoing process of nation-building, with its own priorities and interests. Two major contours emerged in India's strategic environment over this period. One was the maritime domain for protecting and projecting India's strategic interests. The second was the demarcation of India's land frontiers and its impact on the territorial integrity, security and prosperity of India.

The Maritime Domain

The contours of India's strategic environment over the past 150 years have been deeply influenced by the construction of the Suez Canal in 1869. The two chokepoints of the Indian Ocean, at the Bab al-Mandab/Gulf of Aden and the Straits of Malacca, have played a significant role in this process. From the 1970s, a third chokepoint at the Straits of Hormuz has acquired a salience with the emergence of the Gulf oil economies whose exports of energy meet the bulk of contemporary India's energy security needs.[1]

The newly opened Sea Lines of Communication (SLOC), that traversed India's maritime domain[2], required protection from piracy in the Red Sea. This resulted in the fortification of the port of Aden in 1839, using British Indian military resources. Increased commercial shipping along the Indian Ocean SLOC necessitated a more robust deployment of naval assets. Aden was transformed into a major strategic hub. Its significance increased when the first submarine telegraphic cable connecting Aden with the outside world became functional in 1870.[3] Closer to India, the Gulf Region became part of India's strategic environment in 1892, with the signing of 'Exclusive Arrangements' between British India and the local Arab Rulers. These treaties "made it obligatory for the Trucial Sheikhs not to enter into agreement or correspondence with any power other than the British Government. In return, the British assumed the responsibility of defending the emirates from foreign aggressions".[4]

As part of British India's strategic interests, port settlements were established along the littoral of the Arabian Peninsula and the Gulf. Infrastructural support for bunkering of naval and commercial ships, and ancillary economic activities, developed with the participation of Indian traders and workers. The discovery and exploitation of oil in Iran (1911), Iraq, Bahrain (1932) and Saudi Arabia (1938)[5] made this region strategically important. The significance of these ports and SLOC were emphasised during times of conflict, including the two World Wars during which Indian troops were deployed in Egypt/West Asia, Mesopotamia and Persia. The use of the Indian Rupee in several Gulf States till 1970 illustrated the close linkage between India's strategic interests and the region.[6] In the eastern Indian Ocean, British Indian resources were deployed in securing the SLOC from India to the Straits of Malacca. Even after the declaration of the Straits Settlements as a Crown Colony administered directly by London in 1867,[7] this region retained its importance for India's strategic environment.

This maritime domain played a critical role in the victory of India as part of the Allied armies during the Second World War, which made her a founder-member of the United Nations (UN) in 1945. The end of the Second World War and the independence of

India saw the Indian Navy taking on the erstwhile role of the Royal Navy in securing the SLOC of the Indian Ocean. In 1958, India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru said, "Now that we are free, we have once again realised the importance of the sea. We cannot afford to be weak at sea".[8] In 1982, India became a State Party to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), making it the applicable international law for India's maritime domain. When signing the Treaty, India clarified that it understood that "the provisions of the Convention do not authorise other states to carry out in the exclusive economic zone and on the continental shelf, military exercises or manoeuvres, in particular those involving the use of weapons or explosives, without the consent of the coastal state".[9]

Today, international trade transported along these SLOC accounts for 40% of India's GDP. Over 8 million Indian nationals live and work in the oil economies of the Gulf States, remitting about $40 billion annually into the Indian economy. Piracy continues to be the primary threat in the western Indian Ocean[10] Region, disrupting and escalating costs of India's international trade. Over the past decade, Indian naval vessels have participated actively in a UN Security Council authorised operation to counter the threat of piracy from the Somali coast through active international cooperation.[11]

India's strategic environment underwent a qualitative change following the articulation of India's maritime strategic framework under the 'Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR)' policy in March 2015. Its five pillars include India's commitment to secure the SLOC; her willingness to contribute to overall maritime security in the region; collective action to respond to maritime challenges; the linkage between maritime security and the Blue Economy of the Indian Ocean; and partnership with countries outside the Indian Ocean Region in a peaceful manner based on international maritime rules and norms.[12]

Since 2019, India's SAGAR framework has been integrated into a holistic 'Indo-Pacific' strategic framework.[13] The establishment of an International Fusion Centre for the Indian Ocean Region in India, at Gurugram, has become a vibrant platform to implement SAGAR's vision of international cooperation

to collectively respond to threats to the western Indo-Pacific Region.[14] India's proposal for an Indo-Pacific Oceans' Initiative in November 2019[15] carried forward the strategic framework of engagement with ASEAN and Australia within a holistic Indo-Pacific framework.

The outlook for India's strategic environment in the maritime domain continues to be dominated by the need to secure the freedom of navigation along the four major SLOC of the Indo-Pacific. Threats to the security of these SLOC emanate from piracy and terrorism, as well as the increasingly assertive naval presence of communist China[16] in the Indo-Pacific. Agreements with Indian Ocean partner countries for joint stationing of Indian naval assets to respond to such threats is an integral part of India's strategic outlook today. An emerging dimension to India's strategic environment in the Indian Ocean is the fact that most of the critical international infrastructure for the digital communications used in Digital India is carried by fibre-optic cables along these SLOC.[17] This will become more pronounced as India prioritises the use of cyber technologies for her security and prosperity, requiring increased international cooperation with other countries around the Indian Ocean, and her strategic partners.

India's Land Borders

When the USI was founded, the primary strategic focus of British India was on the expansionist role of the Russian Empire into Asia. Russia annexed Central Asia in 1865. British India's response, including through military campaigns, influenced India's strategic environment until 1947.[18] After the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991, and the emergence of Central Asia and Afghanistan as a pivotal strategic space, India has initiated a new strategic engagement with this broad region.[19]

Currently, India's strategic environment in her immediate neighborhood is dominated by two specific issues. These are her unresolved boundary issues with China and Pakistan.

On 03 July 1914, British India and Tibet signed the Simla Convention that resulted in the McMahon Line separating Tibet from India. Chinese authorities participating at the meeting did not

sign the convention because they objected to Article 9 which demarcated the border between Inner and Outer Tibet. The annexation of Tibet by communist China, in October 1950, transformed India's frontier with Tibet into the India-China frontier. In 1959, communist China re-opened the Simla Convention's legal status on the grounds that it had not been agreed to by the Chinese "central government".[20]

The 1962 India-China war froze normal relations between the two countries until 1988. Attempts to resolve, and clarify, the India-China boundary followed the signing of an Agreement on the Maintenance of Peace and Tranquillity along the Line of Actual Control on the India-China Border Areas, signed in 1993 during the then Prime Minister Narasimha Rao's visit. A Declaration on Principles for Relations and Comprehensive Cooperation was issued during then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's visit to China in 2003, which established a Special Representatives (SR) mechanism to explore the framework of a boundary settlement. Despite almost two dozen rounds of talks so far, the SR mechanism has not succeeded in resolving the boundary issue.[21]

India's strategic environment in her immediate neighbourhood became complicated following the partition of India in August 1947, which resulted in new international borders to the west and east of India. Armed aggression by Pakistan, in Jammu and Kashmir, from October 1947 led to instability along India's western border, and generated India's complaint to the UN Security Council on 01 January 1948 on the violation of her territorial integrity.

The UN Security Council failed to vacate Pakistan's aggression in Jammu and Kashmir.[22] China occupied about 38,000 sq km of Indian Territory in Jammu and Kashmir in the 1950s. On 02 March 1963, Pakistan illegally ceded 5180 sq km of Indian Territory in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir to China.[23]

In July 1972, the Simla Agreement between India and Pakistan committed both sides to resolve outstanding issues including over Jammu and Kashmir bilaterally.[24] The Treaty was registered under the UN Charter, allowing it to be "invoked before any organ of the United Nations".[25] Since 1990, Pakistan has

sought to renege from its legal obligation under this Treaty and attempted to internationalise the Jammu and Kashmir issue.[26] It has also openly resorted to the use of cross-border terrorism as an instrument of state policy to destabilise India.[27] This has led to a hiatus in the bilateral dialogue between India and Pakistan, including on regional connectivity to Afghanistan and Central Asia. Since 2016, India has taken the initiative to counter this strategic bottleneck by entering a tripartite connectivity project with Iran and Afghanistan using the port of Chabahar in Iran.[28] The future of this initiative will depend on the impact of the policies of the major powers on Iran, Afghanistan and Central Asia.

In August 2019, China used Pakistan's attempts to re-open its obligations under the 1972 Simla Agreement by convening a closed-door meeting of the UN Security Council on 'The India-Pakistan Question'. The last time the Security Council had discussed this issue had been during the Bangladesh War in December 1971.[29] The meeting did not issue any report or press statement. China followed this up with another informal meeting on the same topic in the UN Security Council in January 2020, again without obtaining any decision or press statement from the Council.[30] This activism by China is expected to continue in the near future, posing a challenge for India's strategic diplomacy.

On her eastern flank, India has brought clarity to her land and maritime borders with Bangladesh. The Land Boundary Protocol of 1974 was implemented with the exchanges of enclaves in both countries and completed by 01 August 2015.[31] Bangladesh took her dispute with India over her maritime boundary, in the Bay of Bengal, to the Permanent Court of Arbitration under UNCLOS. The award of the Court giving 76% of the disputed area to Bangladesh and 23% to India was accepted and implemented by India in July 2014.[32]

This one act underscored India's commitment to the international rule of law in the maritime domain of the Indo-Pacific, and stood out in stark contrast with communist China's rejection of the unanimous award in favour of the Philippines in July 2016 by the Permanent Court of Arbitration on a dispute over the South China Sea initiated by the Philippines.[33] India's action also demonstrated her credibility as a partner in international

cooperation projects designed to integrate India with South-East Asia's ASEAN group of nations as part of India's 'Act East' policy articulated in November 2014.[34]

Strategic Outlook for India

India's strategic environment today is driven by prioritisation of her security and economic interests. Transformation of India requires her to strategize her international relationships for eradicating poverty, generating employment, increasing manufacturing, acquiring technologies, setting international norms, and expanding her role in the global political and economic spheres.

India's strategic outlook must respond to the rapid changes in international relations to achieve her strategic objectives. During the past decade, the rise of assertive unilateralism by the major powers has posed a challenge to the principle of international cooperation, which has guided India's international engagement for more than a century.[35]

The global landscape facing India as an elected member of the UN Security Council for 2021-22 and as the incoming Chair of the G-20 in 2022 requires her to have strategic flexibility. Her primary strategic challenge will come from an increasingly militarily assertive communist China, aligned with Pakistan. The strategic framework of the 'Indo-Pacific', as presently conceptualised, including through the Quad[36], will have to integrate both the maritime and land domains of India's strategic environment to become an effective strategy to counter the threat from China, aligned with Pakistan. India must respond to this challenge through an imaginative use of her carefully cultivated network of significant "strategic partnerships"[37] to transform her into a major global power of the 21st century.

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Indian Air Power in Building Modern India

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The journey of the United Service Institution (USI) of India in the past century and a half encompasses the joys and sorrows, as also the trials and tribulations, of colonial and modern India. Its academic work and research chronicled the growth of the Indian Armed Forces under the British, and thereafter as independent arms in the Union of India. The Indian Air Force (IAF) has a special place in this journey since heavier than air flight started only in December 1903 when the Wright Brothers took to the air … but the USI was already in its fourth decade by then! It is interesting to note that while airships and balloons were written about in earlier USI publications, the first mention of heavier than air aviation was only in January 1910, in an article titled 'Notes on Aeronautics' by Captain WM St G Kirke[1], where the author discussed principles of aerodynamics. One can discern interest in aviation picking up, as in the January 1911 issue Major CD Field wrote an article titled 'Aviation Wireless Telegraphy and Telephony'. Meanwhile, the Royal Flying Corps (RFC) had been formed in Britain in May 1912[2], and this probably resulted in a full-fledged article titled 'Aviation' by Lieutenant LVS Blacker in the July 1912[3] issue where the author laid out the advantages of investing in aeroplanes:

> *"It is, therefore, obvious that a country which means to take war seriously must ensure having more aeroplanes than the enemy, and faster ones. Otherwise, the day after the declaration of war will see the wiping out of the slow aeroplanes and their pilots, and the "command of the air" for the enemy, carrying with it the most minute knowledge of his opponent's entire dispositions and movements and laying open all important points, such as the headquarters of general officers, artillery commanders, ammunition columns, ordnance and supply depots, railway bridges on lines of*

communication, and even the camps and bivouacs of the infantry open to damage or destruction from high explosive shells dropped by the enemy."

'Military Aeronautics' by Captain SD Massy in the October 1912 USI Journal had a very detailed description of what goes in to flying, its nuts and bolts, like engines, meteorology et al, and ends with a plea that a Flying Corps needs to be set up in India on the lines of the one in England. One can notice the impact air was beginning to have on military thinkers, with Lieutenant TC Fowle writing in the July 1913 edition on 'Observations from Aeroplanes in Field Warfare' and Major WGP Murray commenting on 'Aircraft – Influence on Naval and Military Operations' in the October 1913 issue. In the interim, Lieutenant Indra Lal Roy became one of the first Indians to join the RFC in July 1917, but that was in Britain.[4] The RFC, meanwhile, had moved to India too in December 1915[5] to address the threat in the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) of British India. However, the first mention of the Royal Air Force (RAF) is in the October 1919 issue where Lieutenant HT Geary commented on the 'Instructional Methods in a Scout Training Squadron of the Royal Air Force', pointing to the fact that aviation had, till then, been considered an appendage of the ground forces (the RAF, the first independent air force in the world, came in to existence on 01 April 1918). An interesting idea of the RAF operating a commercial transport fleet in peacetime (that would convert to full military use in war) to offset the costs of First World War was put forth in a July 1920 article titled 'A Mercantile Air Fleet as a Factor in Indian Defence' by Captain HV Geary. The idea was indeed unique for those early days of civil commercial aviation and military flying. However, the fact that the aircraft was still looked on as an adjunct to land forces was very clearly stated by Major HG Martin in his Gold Medal winning essay, 'India and the next war', in the October 1922 issue**;** Major Martin wrote that, *"The conclusion is that, while aircraft are invaluable in their legitimate role as adjuncts to our land-forces, they are quite incapable of replacing them".* This was a land centric view, the army being the older service, in contrast to what an aviator felt. The first article by an air force officer is from Flight Lieutenant RL Stevenson on 'The Army Cooperation Squadron' in the July 1925 issue of USI journal.[6] It is interesting to note that while the RAF

author describes the various roles that the Army Cooperation Squadron undertook, he ends up with the advice that, *"Army officers should take every opportunity of visiting aerodromes, and should fly frequently as observers, and it is essential that air force observers visit the units with which they have been or will be working, before and after all operations".*[7] Jointness as a concept in operations is, thus, nothing new that has evolved recently.

And, so flow the chronology of documentation of military air activity in India, as seen through the pages of the USI journals in the early years of heavier than air aviation. On 08 October 1932, the Indian Air Force came in to being through the Indian Air Force Act (XIV of 1932).[8] The first Squadron, however, was established on 01 April 1933 at Drigh Road, Karachi with six RAF trained officers, 19 *Havai Sepoys* and four Westland Wapiti IIA aircraft[9], and has since grown from strength to strength in the intervening years. From guarding the frontiers of British India in the 1930s and 40s, it was thrust into protecting the borders of independent India right from 15 August 1947 when the nation came in to being as a modern state. This article deliberates on the critical role played by the IAF in nation building in three distinct sub-sections, starting with protection of the nation's territorial integrity**;** while analysing this it would become apparent that the IAF has moved on from being a tactical force to one capable of becoming an independent instrument of application of national political will. Second, the invaluable role as a vital cog in the nation's military diplomacy and subtly projecting India's power, both soft and hard, would be evaluated. Finally, an examination of the unspoken, but vital, role of the IAF in maintaining institutions of Indian democracy would be followed by some crystal gazing into where India's air arm is headed-to in the coming decades. For sure, air power of a nation encompasses its total capability, both military and civilian put together; however, it is also true that a nation's air force is the 'business end' of its 'air power' and, hence, this article would treat the two as synonymous.

Safeguarding National Frontiers

Post the First World War, the 'Great Game' was playing up in the north-western part of British India and the RAF was thrust into the contest in an indirect way. With the British trying to enter Afghanistan to thwart the southward movement of the Russians, they came in to direct conflict with the fierce tribal militias in NWFP. With the setting up of the IAF in 1932, the first of the squadrons were bloodied in combat in those mountains; and with the start of the Second World War, the move of No 1 Squadron, with the legendary Wing Commander 'Jumbo Majumdar' at the helm, saw the fledgling IAF operating in the dense jungles of (then) Burma against the advancing Japanese. The real test, however, came immediately after India's independence when the IAF transport fleet of Dakotas airlifted Indian Army troops to Srinagar and saved the Valley from falling to the Pakistan backed raiders.[10] Similar was the airlift to the dusty airstrip at Leh.[11] While the IAF was unable to support the brave garrison at Skardu, which remained under siege for a year, leading to its fall to the enemy in August 1948, however, what demonstrated the innovativeness of the IAF was that Tempest fighters were used to drop some load to the besieged garrison.[12]

The modernisation of the IAF started soon after in the 1950s and 60s with the induction of jet fighters like Vampires, Toofanis and Mysteres, and transport aircraft like C-119 Packets and An-12; however, a fundamental switch in acquisitions occurred in 1963 when the then USSR offered the MiG-21, with manufacture in India through technology transfer. There was no looking back thereafter in the Indo-USSR cooperation and over the next four decades the MiG-23/25/27/29 and Su-7/30 entered the IAF fleet. But a fighter to enter popular folklore was the British Folland Gnat, which earned the nickname of Sabre Slayer due its excellent performance in the 1965 Indo-Pak conflict. The Hunter, Su-7, and later versions of MiG-21 were used in dedicated ground attack role in the 1971 Indo-Pak war, but what also became apparent was the subtle shift of the IAF from being in tactical support to the army to a force engaged in interdiction and striking strategic targets of the enemy; the IAF struck deep in Pakistan at Peshawar, both in 1965[13] and 1971[14] conflicts, and the oil tanks at

Karachi port were destroyed by an audacious strike by Hunters on 04 December 1971.[15]

Missed out, however, in the headline grabbing strike missions is the invaluable role played by the transport and helicopter fleet. In the disastrous 1962 conflict with China, while fighter aircraft didn't take part, transport aircraft and rotary wing fleet did yeoman service by continuously delivering supplies to Army deployments on the frontier (e.g., airlifting of tanks to Chushul by An 12s[16]) and bringing back casualties from the frontline. And in the months leading to the 1965 war, Pakistan's plans to create an uprising amongst the Kashmiri population through their 'Op Gibraltar' were thwarted in no mean way by Mi-4 helicopters which were hurriedly locally modified with guns and bomb racks to strike holed up Pakistani infiltrators.[17] The Bangladesh war saw the famous Tangail drop by transport aircraft and the Meghna heli-lift[18] that shortened India's march to Dhaka.[19]

The two decades of 1980 and 90 saw a rapid deterioration of the security environment around India to which the IAF had to adapt, it also was the period in which Pakistan acquired the nuclear bomb. While the Chinese aviation industry was slowly picking up, the Pakistan Air Force was gratuitously supplied with F-16 fighters by the US under the garb of fighting threats from Afghanistan where the USSR had intervened.[20] This was a steep accretion of modern technology in the sub-continent and to counter it, the IAF modernised with the purchase of Mirage-2000 fighters and the Jaguar deep penetration aircraft. With advantages of network centric operations being vividly demonstrated in the 1991 Gulf War, the IAF went in for the Sukhoi-30 MKI air dominance fighter. There was, thus, a qualitative jump in the way the IAF planned to prosecute air action in India's endeavour to expand its footprints in the sub-continent, attuned to the national aims spelt out by the Ministry of Defence.[21]

India's defence preparedness was tested in 1999 when Pakistani troops occupied the heights of Kargil. While Indian Army troops valiantly stormed the hills to evict them, the IAF played a major role by quick modifications to their equipment and weapons to strike targets at 18,000 feet, something never done before in the world.[22] And, in subsequent years, while the offensive element

of the IAF was transforming to conduct long range strategic strikes through acquisitions of combat enablers like Airborne Warning And Control System (AWACS), flight refuelling aircraft, and Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) assets (all used in the Balakot air strike in Pakistan on 26 February 2019), it is the modernisation of the transport aircraft and helicopter fleet that gave it the capability of becoming a regional Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) provider. The entry of C-17 Globemaster and C-130J Super Hercules in its inventory has given the IAF a true trans continental capability, while the 250 plus Mi-17 series medium lift helicopters, in conjunction with Chinooks, afford it a heli-lift proficiency of a very high order. Together, the two fleets have done India proud in internal and international disaster relief.

In the year 2020, the IAF is at the vanguard of India's response to the wanton Chinese attempts to change the Line of Actual Control on its Northern borders, the system is in place to give a fine riposte to any Chinese misadventure.[23] While the army on ground would get all the close-in support required, it's the strategic reach of the IAF that would tilt the balance if diplomacy fails and the balloon goes up.

Military Diplomacy

In the national security construct, diplomacy is the art to avoid war. Military diplomacy supports traditional diplomacy by nurturing a positive perception amongst friend and foe through actions that influence the common populace. With its fleet of eleven C 17 Globemasters and twelve C-130J Super Hercules supported by almost 100 short haul An 32, along with 250 Mi-17 helicopter variants, 15 heavy lift Chinooks, and 80 odd ALH Dhruv, India has been a regional HADR provider for quite some time, as seen in multiple disaster relief operations nationally and internationally.[24] The IAF's contribution to UN peacekeeping has been immense, commencing with the deployment of Canberra bombers and Dakota aircraft to Congo in 1961. Thereafter, helicopters were sent to peace missions in Somalia, Sierra Leone, Congo and Sudan; at one time, between 2005 and 2010, there were 25 IAF helicopters (17 x Mi-17 and 8 x Mi25/35) in MONUC in Congo and UNMIS in Sudan, an aviation package that no country has ever

sent to the UN.[25] The goodwill that the Indian soldier and aviator enjoy in the international arena is commendable. Goodwill is also spread by the crack aerobatic display teams – *Surya Kirans* flying the Hawk advanced jet trainer now and *Sarang* flying the ALH Dhruv ¯ showing their prowess in international air shows and other events. Internationally, the IAF has been exercising regularly with friendly foreign forces, including participating in the Red Flag exercise in the US, and letting friend and foe alike know its professional acumen through such subtle engagements with audiences and other air forces.

Military diplomacy, however, is not just the benign use of air power but also its employment to further national interests through deterrence and compellence. So, the IAF has been an important cog in the foreign policy apparatus of the country, enabling the government in meeting international commitments and safeguarding India's interests through coercive actions. The capability of intervention in a foreign land to help a friendly regime in trouble was clearly demonstrated as early as in November 1950 when the King of Nepal was evacuated by an IAF Dakota during the Rana's revolt. After the revolt fizzled out, he was restored back leading to the commencement of work on the Indo-Nepal Treaty.[26] In 1971, when the *Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna* (JVP) insurrection threatened the stability of the then Ceylonese government, India deployed five Alouette III helicopters and some fighter pilots – the former for airlift task and the latter to train pilots for armament work. 'Op Cactus' was launched in 1988, when sections of the 50 (I) Para Brigade were airlifted by Il-76 from Agra to Male to successfully thwart a coup against President Gayoom. Closer at hand, the reputed India Today magazine reported that the IAF was ready to airlift elements of the Para Brigade in 2010 to aid the Government in Bangladesh when there were reports of a threat of a coup to the life of the leadership there.[27] These interventions went a long way in stabilising and shoring up governments friendly to a democratic India.

Strengthening Indian Democracy

The IAF has played a key role in the strengthening of Indian democracy too. In the first few decades after independence, and to a lesser level even now, many regions of the North East depended on air dropped supplies by the IAF of daily essentials, including food grains. An intangible effect of these drops is the emotional integration of the populace of those far flung areas that are totally cut off from the rest of India due their remoteness. The IAF has been called out on numerous occasions in aid to civil power to transport police and para military forces to areas of internal strife, the latest example being the massive airlift to Srinagar prior to the abrogation of Article 370.[28] It can also be said that elections in certain parts of the country cannot be held (due difficult terrain and/or law and order situation) without the logistical airlift provided by the IAF for transporting election personnel and equipment.[29] And, who could have thought that the IAF's role would be critical in the post demonetisation months in 2018 when billions worth of currency were airlifted to the extremes of our country by its transport aircraft and helicopters.[30] And, as one ponders over new challenges that India, which is a relatively young democracy, faces in the coming decades, it is pertinent to star-gaze where the IAF is headed to.

The Future

The IAF's leadership has its task cut out as India navigates in to a time period where its neighbourhood is rife with security imponderables. As this is being written, there seems to be some cooling-off in the tensions along the borders with China. However, India was bitten once by Chinese machinations back in 1962 where a similar hope of de-escalation was actually followed by a full-fledged war. So, while there is a full 'op alert' in IAF bases, one is acutely aware of the capability voids that exist in IAF's inventory, foremost being the troubling decrease in number of squadrons; the major task for the government is to stop this slide and get the strength back to a minimum of 39 squadrons. This is easier said than done due the acute shortage of monies as funds have been diverted to the social sector on account of the Covid-19 pandemic. There is also the issue of the inefficiency of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited and the not so rosy R&D capability of

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) to support the IAF's faith placed in these two agencies to equip it with indigenous aircraft, Tejas Mk1, Mk1A, Mk2 and the Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft.[31] There needs to be a focussed and single minded drive to get our private industry involved intimately in defence R&D and manufacturing in a big way. The transport and helicopter fleets are well placed for the next decade and a half, but planning beyond that has to happen now. Indigenous radar R&D and manufacturing has been a success story but the same cannot be said of other cogs in the complete air operations chain. There is no choice but to go indigenous, but mere launching of drives like 'Make in India' or the *'aatmanirbhar abhiyan'* would be of no avail if a whole of government approach is not adopted to address the ills of indigenous R&D and defence industry. The whole of government approach can only happen if it is driven from the very top, the way it happens in the nuclear and space realms.

The IAF is the weapon of choice of Indian leadership as seen in the 2019 Balakot strike and the signalling done by Indian air power in the India-China stand-off. The potency of the IAF cannot be allowed to shrivel, for it is the prime instrument of deterrence and, if required, offense for the security of the nation. The dictates of geo-politics are not cast in stone but can be modulated to one's advantage by having the required deterrent capability, and the resolve to use it; only then would the message that India would stand by its national interests get demonstrated. Indian air power would be a major cog in India's journey to attain its rightful place in the comity of nations.

And as this unfolds, one is confident that the USI of India would continue to track the march of the air arm of the nation, as it has faithfully done over the past century.

Endnotes

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[17] Wg Cdr Bhupinder Singh Nijjar, *IAF Helicopters: Aapatsu Mitram to Tejas Shatruh Damanam & Beyond,* (New Delhi: KW Publishers, 2019), pp 27.

[18] Major General JFR Jacob, *Surrender at Dacca: Birth of a Nation* (New Delhi: Manohar Publishers, 1997), p 116.

[19] For details of the air drops and heli-lift in Bangla Desh war see Air Cmde Jasjit Singh, *Ðefence from the Skies: 80 years of the Indian Air Force,* (New Delhi: KW Publishers, 2013), p 146 - 149.

[20] Air Cmde Jasjit Singh, *Defence from the Skies: 80 years of the Indian Air Force,* (New Delhi: KW Publishers, 2013), p 74-75.

[21] The Indian Ministry of Defence publishes an annual report laying out the salient activities and issues handled by it concerning India's defence. Invariably, the report (available on the internet) leads with a threat analysis which points to the scope and range of India's security interests.

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The Indian Navy's Maritime Outlook: The Path Walked since Independence

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Introduction

It is an obvious fact to any student of history that India's security lies on the Indian Ocean: that without a well-considered and effective naval policy, India's position in the world will be weak, dependent on others, and her freedom at the mercy of any country capable of controlling the Indian Ocean. India's future, therefore, is closely bound up with the strength she is able to develop gradually as a naval power".[1] These words of KM Panikkar's, written around the time of independence, preordained the maritime activities of nations in the Indian Ocean like the withdrawal of the British, the entry of the US and Soviets, the gradual rise of India as a maritime power, and the entry of China into the Indian Ocean. Over the years, India's relative position in terms of economy, military power, mode of governance, and good relations with most of its neighbours have aided India to be seen as a stable nation in what had once been termed as 'A Sea of Uncertainty'[2] or 'the stage for the new Great Game'.[3]

The Indian Navy (IN) has been central to the rise of India as a maritime power and is today the nation's principal maritime agency with a wide ambit that covers all the four roles of any modern navy. The IN has evolved from a coastal force to a modern navy which has earned, in the IOR, the tag of 'first responder in the maritime domain'. The path travelled has not been easy and the IN owes its growth to the maritime vision of strategic thinks, both in and out of uniform, who have contributed immensely to its development. This article attempts to trace the path traversed since 1947 and place in perspective many issues that merit attention.

Initial Perceptions and the First four Decades

According to Panikkar, post-World War II, "The new era ushered in by the defeat of the axis powers fundamentally altered the political structure of the areas bordering on the Indian Ocean".[4] In the late 1940s, the reduction in British influence was starting to be realised and at this juncture, the British took some steps that, in a way, lay the foundations of the path that India's maritime strategy followed post-independence, which has possibly influenced generations of maritime strategists. During the late 1940's a committee had been formed to look into the planning requirements of the Indian Armed Forces.[5] The committee based its reports on three assumptions:

- Japan would be defeated.
- USSR and USA would be the principal powers in the east.
- China and India would maintain sufficient forces to overcome a minor power, and would be able to hold out against a major power until Imperial Forces could arrive.

The committee, apparently, did not take into account an independent India and the ensuing partition of India and Pakistan, or perhaps chose to ignore the possibility of independence. These apprehensions contained in the volumes published in 1980 by the British Government covering top secret and secret correspondence just prior to 1947, reveal the basis for developments in the Indian Ocean and the Anglo-American mind-set during the second half of the 20th century. These issues paved the way for Anglo-American strategic anxiety and, perhaps, resulted in the west seeing India as a Soviet ally, which came with the attendant ramifications played out during the Cold War[6]:

- Threat of a Soviet invasion post departure of the British.
- Implications for Imperial Defence if India opted out of the Commonwealth and became susceptible to Russian influence.
- Feasibility of backing Pakistan against threats from India and Russia.

- Soviet domination of India would result in communications with Australia and New Zealand being cut off.

- Effect on the British Commonwealth Defence System should India cease to be a member.

It was evident that “the British wanted an Indian Navy which would assist in serving the wider Allied cause, not one for independent power projection”.[7] However, this aspect was stalled, post-independence, by the first two Commanders-in-Chief of the then Royal Indian Navy, Rear Admiral JTS Hall and Vice Admiral Edward Parry, who ironically were British. These Admirals had the allegiance of the British staff officers under them which made the job easier. The inclusion of Indian officers in the planning stages from the start ensured future consistency in the maritime outlook and enabled emergence of a nucleus of Indian naval planners.[8] It can be said that the base of an India-centric Maritime Strategic thought was established by these two Admirals in the form of an outline plan for the reorganisation and development of the Indian Navy that laid out four roles for the Navy[9]:

- To safeguard Indian shipping.

- To ensure that supplies could reach and leave by sea in all circumstances.

- To prevent an enemy landing on India’s shores.

- To support the army in sea borne operations.

These roles clearly laid the basis for India’s rise as a regional power with a framework laid down in the ten-year plan for expansion formulated in end 1947, which envisaged two fleets based around a light fleet carrier with an increase to four by 1968.[10] The first result was the plan papers of 1947-1948 prepared by a mix of British and Indian naval officers. However, there were some factors that stalled the modernisation plan[11]:

- Absence of government directives regarding defence policy.

- Funding.[12]

- Perceptions of military threat.
- Absence of naval threat.
- Acquisition difficulties from England due to resistance from the Admiralty.
- Absence of a defence industrial base.
- Inadequate training facilities.

Some of these factors are still prevalent, in original, such as funding and the absence of a strong defence industrial base, or with changed contours such as acquisitions and threats. As the years rolled by, the IN grew slowly with modernisation voids due to slow economic growth and recessions. The dominance of the land-based threats, after the 1962 and 1965 wars, slowed down the growth of the IN as a balanced force and restricted its capabilities till 1971. “Despite fiscal stringency—India has established the most powerful naval forces based in the region. After the war with Pakistan in 1971, India developed a very strong sense of naval mission, and it may not be too bold to suggest that she attempted, at least ideologically, to recapture the ocean that bears her name”.[13] The 1971 war saw the emergence of the IN as a potent maritime force.

To the best of this author’s knowledge, in the absence of any other literature in the open domain, the IN’s advocated maritime outlook can be traced to 1998 in the form of directives, doctrines, vision and maritime strategy documents.

1998 and Beyond

Since 1998, the IN has come out with a number of vision documents, and strategic guidance for transformation, which placed the IN’s maritime outlook in perspective with the changing maritime and security environments. This outlook, and accompanying maritime strategic thought and concepts, have been expressed in two unclassified strategy documents and three maritime doctrines.

In May 1998, the Indian Navy carried out a Strategic Defence Review (SDR) that indicated four major roles[14]:

- Sea Based Deterrence.

- Economic and energy security.
- Forward presence.
- Naval diplomacy.

These roles encompassed those initially conceived in 1949 and also catered for the change in threat perceptions, India's growth as a regional power and blue water capability. A fundamental issue that was apparent was that the IN was looking at being a capability-based navy rather than threat based one, seeking cooperation with the navies of like-minded maritime nations. This was evident from the SDR that looked at capabilities[15] of firstly, sufficient maritime power to defend and also further India's maritime interests, raise the threshold of intervention or coercion, and deter any military maritime challenge; secondly, surveillance over large areas; thirdly, assets and weapons to escort, support economic and energy carrying assets; fourthly, presence in areas of interest; fifthly, support national diplomatic initiatives in the region. The SDR also espoused, "..That navies enjoy complete international legality on the high seas can, therefore, operate well away beyond the territorial limits of a nation in different situations covering a variety of contingencies both during war and peace and that the Indian Navy should have the capability to be regarded as of consequence in the region".[16]

Although by this time the IN should have developed into a balanced force, the non-placement of orders for ships for the period 1986-1996,[17] the low budgetary allocations of the 1990s due to the financial crisis of 1991, and disintegration of USSR resulted in a reduction in force levels[18]. The number of ships commissioned in the 1990s (24 were commissioned) was less than the numbers decommissioned. This impacted the ability of the navy to fulfil the roles envisaged in the SDR. This was further accentuated by the holding of only one aircraft carrier since 1961 as against the initial two envisaged in 1947. This resulted in limitation on operations and blue water capability as the operational philosophy of the IN is aircraft carrier centric with operations based on Sea Control. The strength of carriers will, in the near future, increase to two with the Indigenous Aircraft

Carrier 1 (IAC-1), INS Vikrant, joining the INS Vikramaditya, and this would strengthen the IN's operational philosophy.

The first Indian Maritime Doctrine (IMD), published as an Indian Naval Book of Reference (INBR) in 2004, was replaced by the next edition in 2009. The 2009 edition has further been updated by the 2015 online edition, bearing the nomenclature Naval Strategic Publication 1.1.[19] This change in nomenclature from the earlier INBR is indicative of the IN's effort to streamline strategic publications. The first unclassified strategy document titled 'Freedom to Use the Seas: India's Maritime Military Strategy' was published in 2007 (IMMS 2007). This was subsequently replaced in 2015 by 'Ensuring Secure Seas: Indian Maritime Security Strategy' (IMSS 2015) as Naval Strategic Publication 1.2.[20] To augment and streamline conceptual thought and strategic thinking, the IN established the Directorate of Strategy, Concepts and Transformation (DSCT) in 2005 and in 2006 the office of the Flag Officer Doctrines and Concepts (FODC) and the Maritime Doctrines and Concept Centre (MDCC).[21] To ensure collectiveness of thought, monitoring and mentoring at the higher levels of the IN, the Indian Naval Strategic and Operational Council (INSOC) was established as the governing body for the FODC. The Chairman of INSOC was the Chief of the Naval Staff and the then Principal Director of Strategy, Concepts and Transformation (PDSCT — now Commodore SCT) it's Member Secretary, and thus DSCT automatically became the INSOC secretariat.[22] There is also mention of a Maritime Military Strategy written in 1988, which was a classified document.[23]

While evaluating the IMMS 2007 and IMD, references have been made to India's Monroe Doctrine[24] and its mismatch between ambitions and capabilities[25]. Notwithstanding these perspectives, IMMS 2007 spoke of a primary national interest, which pointed to the road that the IN was intending to take, "Our primary national interest, therefore, is to ensure a secure and stable environment, which will enable continued economic development and social upliftment of our masses. This, in turn, will allow India to take its rightful place in the comity of nations and attain its manifest destiny".[26]

IMMS 2007, in addressing India's areas of maritime interest, amplified that "Keeping in mind our existing resources, the present strategy will only focus on areas of primary interest. Areas of secondary interest will come in where there is a direct connection with areas of primary interest, or where they impinge on the deployment of future maritime forces".[27] The document contained three constituent strategies for peace, conflict, and force buildup. While IMMS 2007 has been criticised for aspects like soft-pedaling its combat role, no mention of the IN's role in conflict with Pakistan, no mention of any interface with the Indian Army and Air Force, and containing multiple strains that run counter to each other, it has also been viewed as the first insight into how India and the IN would use maritime power to support its national interests.[28]

IMSS 2015 expanded the base of IMMS 2007 and incorporated changes brought about by the existent maritime security environment, rise in non-traditional threats, increasing interface with other navies, assistance to friendly nations, and the terrorist attack in Mumbai on 26 November 2008.[29] IMSS 2015 consists of five constituent strategies, namely, Deterrence, Conflict, Shaping a Favourable and Positive Maritime Environment, Coastal and Offshore Security, and Maritime Force and Capability Development. The strategy for 'Shaping a Favourable and Positive Maritime Environment' simply articulated the regional actions and interface the IN had been doing for some time. It also made clear the intent of 'Ensuring Secure Seas'.[30] The strategy for 'Coastal and Offshore Security' provided the insight, follow-on actions, and intentions after the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) placed the responsibility for overall maritime security, including coastal and offshore security on the IN.[31] The actions of the IN — like mission-based deployments in India's areas of maritime interest (both primary and secondary),[32] rendering assistance to nations under the ambit of Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) and during the ongoing Covid pandemic, evacuation of civilians from areas of instability under the ambit of Non-combatant Evacuation Operations (NEO), and development of capacity and capabilities — clearly indicate that the tenets of IMSS 2015 are being followed.

Conclusion

"Very few nations in the world geographically dominate an ocean area as India dominates the Indian Ocean from strategic and locational considerations".[33] The islands in the east and west and the mid position of India, especially with respect to the straits and narrow waterways, accord access to the waters of the Indian Ocean and provide a distinct advantage that few nations have. The two strategy documents, IMMS 2007 and IMSS 2015, took cognisance of this factor as well as choke points and placed the IN's maritime outlook in the open domain. Both the documents provided insights into the rationale for strengthening India's maritime security in the coming years, and clarified a few misnomers about India's intents. Some analysts question the absence of threats faced from China and Pakistan, and actions to address these threats, in the documents. The IN is a capability-based force which would address all possible conceivable threats, and add on capabilities to address changes in the security environment including hostile. Navies, the world over, who face multiple challenges always have plans ready to address various situations, and the IN is one such navy.

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Civil-Military Relations: 1947-2020

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Introduction

Civil-military relations in India have undergone a remarkable transformation over the last 70 years. From a relationship where the military had minimal scope to influence strategic policy, Indian civil-military relations today are characterised by greater collaboration, coordination, and synergy. Collaboration, however, has not always meant consensus. There are moments when civil-military relations appear fractured or in conflict, sometimes subject to rancorous debates, but mostly maturing with time. Civilian control of the military in India remains firm and is, perhaps, one of the striking testaments to the resilience of Indian democracy. This article offers a sketch of how civil-military relations have evolved over time including the operational, military, and strategic issues they contend with.

Boundaries in civil-military functions have never been perfect, experiencing shifts during different periods in India's history even while political leaders maintained their ability to determine the nation's strategic policies. The adage that 'the military fights wars while civilians make policy' has largely held true in the Indian case. The complexity of understanding civil-military relations is perhaps best summarised by one of India's prominent military historians. "The notion that there is an inviolable operational domain where the military's writ runs supreme has been problematic. As a principle, it is rather a slippery one. There are no clear boundary lines dividing tactics, operations, strategy, and policy. Even tactical actions could hold important political implications. Besides, the key question is who decides where the boundaries run. In practice, the military has somewhat insisted that it should define what counts as operational. This has enabled the military, as we shall see, to trespass into areas that should be the preserve of the political leadership."[1] What follows is a discussion of Indian civil-military relations in historical phases.

1857-1947: Pre-independence

After the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 and in the years following 1858, the colonial Indian Army was reorganised and came to embrace the theory of martial races. “Those who rallied to the British cause, for whatever reasons of their own, such as Punjabi Sikhs and Nepali Gurkhas, won favourable commendation at the time and subsequently secured a preferential entry into the reorganised Indian Army.”[2] The Indian Army, “Found employment overseas in two related kinds of imperial enterprises: the initial conquest of new territories; and the subsequent suppression of rebellions when reliable local forces did not exist or were insufficient for the task”.[3] It made British expansion possible as far as Mesopotamia, Malaya, and East Africa.[4]

Indian soldiers were active participants in the British Army during both, the First and Second World Wars. 1.5 million Indians fought as part of the British colonial army during World War I, the largest contingent of soldiers from among the British colonies.[5] During the Second World War, the Battle of Kohima and Imphal, acknowledged as one of the bloodiest, served a deadly blow to Japanese forces in Burma. “The Japanese regard the battle of Imphal to be their greatest defeat ever”, said Robert Lyman, author of ‘Japan’s Last Bid for Victory: The Invasion of India 1944’. And, it gave Indian soldiers a belief in their own martial ability and showed that they could fight as well or better than anyone else.[6] The 1942 Grady mission led by Henry Grady, who was later appointed the first US Ambassador to India, developed a plan that made India a significant arms producer. Since Britain was unable to spare equipment, expertise, or raw materials, it was proposed that the United States would help India expand production lines and manufacture or assemble military systems.[7] The Indian Army mostly inherited the British regimental structure post-independence. The Viceroys Commissioned Officers (VCOs) of the British-Indian Army continued as Junior Commissioned Officers in the Indian Army.[8]

1947-1960: Restructuring and Restraint

The period after India’s independence was one that compelled its leadership to focus inward on domestic reconstruction and nation-

building. In this scheme of things, civilians had little time for the military. India's defence, while vital, was not the item that dominated political priorities. Given rising Cold War tensions, Indian civil-military relations emerged in an environment of non-alignment where India disassociated itself from external alliances/partnerships. The liberation movements in Asian and African countries in the 1950s and 60s and the unity that India provided to their shared mutual goals of freedom from colonial rule remained a common theme. In the context of the scars of partition, the accession of Kashmir to India, and unrest in the northeast, the military was required to perform its duties as aid to civil and political authorities solely in the maintenance of law and order. In the aftermath of the 1947 war, India's strategic thinking rested on four pillars: to maintain conventional military superiority over Pakistan; to maintain friendly relations with China; to stay free of Cold War politics and entanglements; and to promote solidarity and cooperation among developing countries.[9] Given the tribal invasion in 1947 and its war with Pakistan, India appeared to be more wary of the former than China. It recognised the creation of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949, accepted China's sovereignty over Tibet in the Seventeen Points Agreement of 1951 and signed the Panchsheel Agreement in 1954.[10]

On defence matters, the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru accepted most of the recommendations of British defence scientist PMS Blackett. The 1948 Blackett Report outlined policies on military spending and strategic posturing. Blackett recommended scaling back on military expenditures and focus on the threats in the north-west. Based on its recommendations, the government pushed infrastructure for technology development over military readiness.[11] Through the 1950s, India's defence budget was cut and remained far shorter in comparison to the defence budgets of both Pakistan and China, minimising its conventional military capabilities.[12] While external involvement of the military was limited, it was active internally in Kashmir, Hyderabad, and Goa. The Indian military also became active in international peacekeeping missions in Congo, Gaza, and Korea.

1960-1980: Institutions, Agencies, and Agreements

The 1960s and 70s brought significant institutional changes in Indian civil-military relations, following India's 1962 defeat in the war with China and China's declared nuclear status in 1964. The much-publicised friction between the then Defence Minister Krishna Menon and General Thimayya revealed deeper problems in Indian civil-military decision-making, influencing political leaders to give the military autonomy in operational decisions during the 1965 war. New Delhi set up various committees to facilitate civil-military dialogue and engage the military on strategic issues. Regular meetings between the three Service Chiefs and the Defence Minister were institutionalised.[13] After the 1971 war, the Political Affairs Committee of the Cabinet was established. The Policy Requirements Committee was also created to elicit regular military feedback. When China conducted its nuclear tests in 1964, it began building a strong strategic and military partnership with Pakistan. To counter the two-pronged threat, New Delhi increased defence spending and sought an alliance partnership with the former Soviet Union.[14] India also signed important agreements with Pakistan, and one with the Soviets. The Tashkent Declaration was signed by then Indian Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri and Pakistani President Ayub Khan, after the war between the two countries in 1965.

The historic Soviet-India Friendship Treaty was signed in 1971 which secured the diplomatic and military foundations of the partnership. The 1972 Shimla Agreement was signed with Pakistan after Bangladesh was liberated, and Pakistani forces surrendered. The Shimla Accord established the 1949 United Nations (UN) endorsed ceasefire line – the Line of Control (LoC) – as the de facto border between both countries. Despite suffering a stinging defeat by the Chinese, but succeeding in 1965 and 1971, India still maintained a relatively ambivalent and relaxed position on military affairs. Its first nuclear test in 1974 was purely for peaceful purposes, disconnected from any strategic or military objective. This position, of course, would change in later years as Pakistan developed a significant nuclear weapons capability with China's support. India's 1998 declared nuclear status and shift to develop nuclear technology for strategic purposes would be the

apotheosis of the Pakistan-China relationship. Pakistan and India would use the 1980s to simultaneously build their nuclear weapons capabilities, each side driven by mutual suspicion of the other's intentions. By the late 1980s, Pakistan was beginning to publicly declare its nuclear weapons capability.

1980-2000: Insurgencies, Pakistan, Nukes, and Civil-Military Tensions

The 1980s introduced a shift in the way civil-military relations in India would mature. The Punjab unrest, the 1986-87 Brasstacks crisis, the beginning of an insurgency in Kashmir in 1989-1990, the 1998 nuclear tests, and the debate on whether nuclear weapons can be used for strategic ends changed the contours of Indian civil-military relations. Perhaps, it became necessary for India's political leaders to address 'how much authority, in strategic affairs' they intended to cede to the military. For far too long, civilians had maintained a tight rein on the military, but external circumstances and domestic politics were beginning to change that.

The early 1980s, and the Punjab crisis generated by the Khalistan movement, set in motion several events that would involve the Indian military in operations that later undercut its image and reputation, notwithstanding inviting a change in perceptions even within the military. The Indian Army's action on the Golden Temple to flush out Khalistan terrorists proved costly for Indira Gandhi, who paid for it with her life when she was assassinated by two of her Sikh bodyguards in 1984. The subsequent anti-Sikh pogrom, which led to the massacre of more than 3000 Sikhs, further complicated the Indian civil-military relations.

Three crises – 1983-84; 1986-87; and 1990 – just short of war with Pakistan, placed major strains on Indian civil-military relations. But' perhaps' the most important crisis in terms of its impact on civil-military relations was Brasstacks, a military exercise designed to test the Indian military's readiness, launched in 1986 that came on the heels of previous mini exercises. The military exercise followed by the crisis it generated did much to accelerate both India and Pakistan's road to nuclear acquisition. It

also fundamentally altered civil-military relations. “In the mid-1980s, senior Indian military officers had mixed opinions about the value of large-scale military exercises, although the majority, including Sundarji, felt they were imperative every few years, especially for ’learning to handle large formations and bodies of men’.”[15] Some members of the Indian Army believed that the army was restructuring itself to improve its mobility and strike capabilities. This restructuring focused on converting two infantry divisions into RAPID formations designed to be partly mobile, yet capable of holding territory.[16] Pakistan viewed these moves with alarm, believing the Indian military was preparing to mount an offensive attack. To make matters worse, the Ministry of Defence was unaware of the assurances the then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi had made to his Pakistani counterparts of scaling down operations. There appeared to be many gaps in communication between military and civilians in India, and between New Delhi and Islamabad. Arun Singh, the then de facto Minister of Defence, also seemed to signal that “Indian Armed Forces were going to develop new strategies and induct new weapons, but that the nuclear option was being reconsidered at the highest level”.[17] From the perspective of Indian civil-military relations, traditional boundaries of civilian and military control appeared diluted.

The beginning of the insurgency in Kashmir posed a new problem for India’s civilian leadership. To what extent would the military be allowed to participate in counterinsurgency operations? While the military had been deployed to aid civilians in the maintenance of law and order during times of domestic turmoil and crises, squashing a mass rebellion that had the full backing of an external state risked compromising the military’s professional role as defender of the nation’s sovereignty. This complex reality changed, much to the detriment of the military’s image, the way civilians would conduct their relations with the military, often placing the military at greater risk both personally and professionally. The first step to quash the mass insurrection was the creation of a specialised counterinsurgency force, called the ‘Rashtriya Rifles’, tasked with conducting small-scale operations through frequent cordon and search operations and sometimes using internal spies to create a counterinsurgent force called Ikhwans.[18] Several legislations were implemented to protect the

scope and actions of Indian paramilitary and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) but these legislations came with a high price. The Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA), introduced in 1958 in the Naga insurgency and enforced in the north-east in the 1950s and 1960s, was extended to Kashmir during the outbreak of armed militancy.[19] AFSPA continues to be a controversial piece of legislation giving the Armed forces of the Union[20] (which includes Central Armed Police Forces and paramilitary) protection from legal action while conducting counterinsurgency operations unless the Central government sanctions it. The BP Jeevan Reddy Commission was asked to recommend whether the Act should be amended or replaced. The committee submitted its report in June 2005 in which it recommended repealing AFSPA. Around the same time, the second Administrative Reforms Commission also recommended scrapping the Act. Further, police and military functions began to merge or overlap placing significant strain on the Indian Army's capability and reputation. Debates over these roles and the extent to which police and military functions need to be separate to maintain the professionalism of the armed forces are frequent, yet mostly unresolved. Moreover, police reform, too, has become an essential component of these roles. Given the criticism directed at the security forces – even if unsubstantiated – for instances of alleged human rights violations in Kashmir that include rapes, enforced disappearances, torture, arbitrary arrests and detentions, and the use of pellet guns that have blinded scores of Kashmiri civilians, management and accountability in how the CRPF and other security forces conduct operations is paramount, though a largely neglected political issue.

2000-2020: Doctrinal Innovation, Modernisation, and Reform

As India prepared to build capabilities to fight a two-front war with Pakistan and China, several doctrinal changes were implemented in the last two decades that suggest a shift toward more offensive-oriented military doctrines. As a response to the December 2001 attack on the Indian Parliament and *Operation Parakram,* the Indian Army produced a new limited war doctrine called Cold Start. To plug the holes in the India's conventional military doctrine and meet Pakistan's provocation, Cold Start intended to develop

the capability to launch a retaliatory conventional strike against Pakistan while keeping the conflict below the nuclear threshold. The doctrine demanded "a reorganisation of the Indian Army's offensive power away from three large strike corps into eight smaller division-sized Integrated Battle Groups (IBGs) that combined mechanised infantry, artillery, and armour" that had the ability to launch multiple strikes into Pakistan along several different centres of attack.[21] In 2019, the India Army's XVII Mountain Strike Corps headquartered in Panagarh, West Bengal was operationalised. This corps has been specifically designed to undertake offensive operations across the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China. The formation of a new strike corps indicates or suggests a change in the way India views its deterrent relationship with China.[22] The 2019 'Him Vijay' exercise deployed three IBGs that were brigade-sized formations with integral artillery firepower to conduct offensive operations. The troop strength of these IBGs suggests that the Indian Army is aligning itself with the logistical necessities of mountainous terrain.[23]

Sophistication in weaponry and upgrades in military technology remain below expectations. According to defence analyst and expert, Ajai Shukla, one of the obstacles to the Indian Army's modernisation is 'too many personnel and too little firepower'. Shukla argues that "the army needs to shed 200,000-300,000 personnel and divert the savings into battlefield fire support, especially artillery and light attack helicopters, and further compensate for manpower reductions with investments in real time surveillance and command systems".[24] Similarly, Shukla advocates several steps that are urgently required to modernise the air force and navy. The Indian Air Force (IAF) needs to upgrade its Sukhoi – 30MKI and Jaguar fleets while adopting multi role combat aircraft. The IAF should oversee the Tejas Light Combat Aircraft and Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft projects. The Tejas fighters can be used to replace obsolete MiG-21 and MiG-27 fighters.[25] The air force is also operating below its 42-squadron threshold at 34 fighter squadrons. The navy requires more surveillance instruments, satellites, long-range shore-based radars and long-range maritime surveillance aircraft like the P-8I Poseidon, and Sea Guardian drones. The warship fleets are in

dire need of helicopters for anti-submarine and airborne early warning roles.[26]

To promote integration of the three Services and facilitate efficiency in war time's crises, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the appointment of a Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), a single point commander for all three Services on warfare and nuclear issues. The primary goal is to enable a more holistic, tri-Service approach to military force structuring and operational planning. The CDS was first proposed after the Kargil war in the recommendations of the Subrahmanyam Report. The idea finally came to fruition in December 2019 when General Bipin Rawat, former Chief of the Army Staff (COAS), was appointed the CDS. The creation of joint theatre commands has also been on the agenda for a while, sometimes generating friction between the army and air force. India has 17 military commands in addition to the Strategic Forces Command and the Andaman and Nicobar Command, the only tri-Services integrated theatre command. As CDS, General Rawat has revealed plans to have five theatre commands along the border with Pakistan and China. There may be a separate command for J&K; and another on the border south of Jammu. The proposed peninsular command will be formed by merging the navy's western and eastern commands and spread from the Sir Creek near the Arabian Sea to the Sundarbans in the Bay of Bengal. Rawat said that the planned air defence command, which will combine the air assets of the Army, IAF and Navy, will be rolled out by mid-2021. The peninsular command will be rolled out by the end of the next year and India's theatre commands are expected to be ready by 2022.[27] Given the possible changes in conventional military doctrines, the nature of India's nuclear command and control system and its No-First-Use (NFU) policy have also been the centre of widespread debates and discussions. After the Balakot strike on Pakistan in response to an attack that killed over 40 CRPF military personnel in Kashmir, strategic commentators wonder whether India might, in future, consider pre-emptive strikes that would call for a fundamental evaluation of its current NFU doctrine especially since Pakistan has always maintained a nuclear posture that could impose unacceptable damage to India in the face of a conventional attack. Would this push India to a counterforce posture?[28]

Conclusion

Indian civil-military relations have witnessed numerous moments that have fundamentally altered the perceptions and debates between India's political leadership and it's military. Even while civilian control remains supreme, the relationship has experienced contentious periods when civilians abdicated responsibility, gave poor directions resulting in poor policy, or attempted to politicise the military.

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India's Strategic Culture and its Kautilyan Lineage

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Understanding Strategic Culture

Strategic culture is an 'ideal-type' concept of a socio-ideational reality that has historically evolved, but is not as such empirically representable. Yet, the 'material' impact of strategic culture on the mind-set and behaviour of actors in the field of national security is empirically identifiable. The term 'strategic' (relating to the state, use of force and security) hyphenates with the term 'culture' (lacking a precise and widely accepted definition). Therefore, we have to interrogate briefly the concept of strategic culture before turning to Indian strategic culture and its main ideational ingredient: Kautilya's *Arthashastra.*

In Max Weber's classical definition, the state – pre-modern or modern – is a political entity, which efficaciously exercises the monopoly of legitimate violence on a given territory. The 'state' and 'security' are intrinsically intertwined concepts because the capacity to apply violence constitutes the essence of the sovereign state and is the basis of its internal and external security. For each state, its security has a 'strategic' quality precisely because it relates to the threat of use of force or the actual use of force, thus bearing upon the most fundamental and lasting of state interests, self-preservation.

Next follows the basic recognition that the inherent logic of strategy is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition to understand the actual behaviour of actors engaging in external and internal security of a given state. All states pursue a security strategy and there are apparently universally valid 'guiding principles'— anthropological constants, rational choices and systemic constraints — that feature in the strategic conduct of all states. However, the ways in which states conduct strategy are evidently

not uniform. States have different 'orientations' in processing experiences and different preferences, and disinclinations, in their strategic conduct. The recognition of rather evident non-uniformity comes with another one: the diverse attitudes of politico-strategic actors in different states are not random.

Here comes the hyphenation of strategic conduct with 'culture'. During the end phase of the Cold War, scholars in International Relations theory and Security Studies began to interrogate whether the USA and the Soviet Union really had the same axioms and thought patterns with respect to warfare, notably nuclear warfare. Then, Jack Snyder (1977) coined the term strategic culture, which, however, has significant theoretical implications.[1] Rashed uz Zaman has rightly noted, "The concept of strategic culture is as dangerous as an unmarked minefield on a dark night. One of the difficulties of understanding culture stems from the fact that culture is difficult to define and has been the subject of intense debate".[2]

According to French historian Fernand Braudel, the central characteristic of all cultures is continuity in historical change. Cultures are uniquely resilient and adaptive structures, they exist in the *longue durée,* which covers not some years or decades, but centuries or even millennia. As realities of enormously long duration, cultures – with a virtually infinite adaptability to their fate – exceed all other collective realities in longevity, they literally survive them all... In other words, cultures survive political, social, economic, and even ideological upheavals – actually, at least in part, they covertly dominate them.[3]

Jawaharlal Nehru has a remarkable understanding of cultural continuity in South Asia. In his *The Discovery of India,* he writes, "I read her [India's] history and read also a part of her abundant ancient literature, and was powerfully impressed by the vigour of thought, the clarity of language, and the richness of mind that lay behind it [...] There seemed to me something unique about the continuity of cultural tradition through five thousand years of history, of invasion and upheaval, a tradition which was widespread among the masses and powerfully influenced them […] Like some ancient palimpsest on which layer upon layer of

thought and reverie had been inscribed, and yet no succeeding layer had completely hidden or erased what had been written previously. All of these existed in our conscious and subconscious selves, though we may not have been aware of them".[4]

Cultures are not quasi-crystalline ideational formations that remain fixed across time. Cultures do change but the change will most likely be what Harry Eckstein (1988) has called 'pattern-maintaining change'. Cultural changes are real and substantial, but they do not eradicate the continuity of basic patterns of thinking and acting. It seems that the longevity of cultures depends on their inner elasticity and latitude for diversity. Indian culture, with its cohesion through plurality, would be a case in point.

From the above, we can conclude that when we use the term 'culture' and hyphenate it with strategy, we must factor in the outstanding significance of; the diversity of states' collective experiences; *longue durée* cultural continuity and; the efficacy of the past experiences and ideas upon the present. In a first approximation, we can say that strategic culture refers to historically evolved perceptions, ideas and behavioural patterns with respect to the internal and external security of a state. Of particular importance are early and endogenous 'foundational texts' addressing politico-strategic affairs.

Occasionally, I have heard Indian strategists proclaim: 'India needs a new (offensive or whatever) strategic culture'! However, a strategic culture cannot be constructed or decreed at will. Political actors might pursue strategic policies that radically deviate from the historically evolved strategic culture — but not for long. Actors can modify and redefine foreign and security policies, but sooner, rather than later, such changes will 'snap back' into the elastic frame that strategic culture has established.

To avoid misunderstandings, strategic culture does not 'determine' the patterns of perception, thought and action with respect to the internal and external security of a state. Rather, strategic culture refers to specific dispositions and preferences and rankings thereof in a state's security policy. The concept of

strategic culture presupposes that such dispositions and preferences are not merely the product of situational 'pragmatism' but are conditioned by the respective state's culture and history.

Indian Strategic Culture

When undertaking the empirical analysis of a state's strategic culture, e.g. India, the difficulty of its operationalisation becomes apparent. For China, AI Johnston (1995, 1998) has developed a methodological approach vis-à-vis strategic culture: Search for early, endogenous and formative texts dealing with strategic issues, i.e. Sun Tzu and the *Seven Military Classics.*[6] These texts are examined for patterns of strategic dispositions and preferences and then compared with strategic practices in later historical period's – down to the present. If a substantive congruence of strategic dispositions and preferences across time can be ascertained, a continuity of strategic thinking and acting and, thus, the existence of a strategic culture can be assumed. Obviously, this approach equally applies to Indian strategic culture – and that means taking Kautilya's *Arthashastra* as the starting point for ascertaining its basic features. This view is also shared by Darryl Howlett and Philip Davies. "Many analysts regard key texts as important in informing actors of appropriate strategic thought and action. Traditional analyses of peace and conflict have long pointed to the influence of such texts throughout history and in different cultural settings. This may follow a historical trajectory from Sun Tzu, who was considered to have written the Art of War during the time of the warring states in ancient China, through the writings of Kautilya in ancient India, and into western understanding as a result of Thucydides' commentary on the Peloponnesian Wars and Clausewitz's writings on the nature of war as a result of observations of the Napoleonic period".[7] "Even though it passed into obscurity for a substantial interval, the *Arthashastra's* legacy and influence have been substantial throughout the evolution of politics, strategy, statecraft, and intelligence on the Indian subcontinent, and they remain so today".[8]

However, for the idea-contents of Kautilya's *Arthashastra* to become an efficacious ideational ingredient of Indian strategic

culture, is it not indispensable that actors belonging to the Indian strategic community have thoroughly studied the ancient work? What, if they have not? On precisely this question, I have conducted expert interviews in the Indian strategic community. The answer is surprisingly simple: Most interviewees did not systematically study the *Arthashastra* but were well acquainted with the Indian epics *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana,* and the *Panchatantra* fables. While the epics and fables are literary texts, they also address political and strategic issues and do so largely in conformity with Kautilya's Arthashastra. Let me quote here the German Indologist Alfred Hillebrandt, "In particular, it is said Book 12 [of the *Mahabharata*] which provides an outline of the main features of ancient Indian political wisdom. It does so vividly, psychologically truthful and without undue detail – and in substantial congruence with Kautilya".[9]

An interesting example of the encounter with Kautilyan thought during primary socialisation is Rabindranath Tagore. In his memoirs, Tagore writes, "[M]y introduction to literature began, by way of the books, which were popular in the realm of the servants [at his family home]. The most important ones were a Bengalese translation of Chanakya's aphorisms [*Chanakya niti*] and the Ramayana".[10]

Here we come to the sub or semi-conscious impact of Kautilyan thought-figures on Indian strategic culture. For theoretically understanding this impact, Pierre Bourdieu's 'habitus' concept is key, which can be defined as the efficacious presence of past patterns of thought and behaviour in the present.[11] That includes the 'active presence' of past ideas that have been 'forgotten' because they are 'taken for granted' or seen as 'common sense'. The habitus is the repository of past ideas, which are 'forgotten' yet, they remain intact and efficacious. The habitus concept does apply to Indian strategic culture because it transcends the exclusivity of the conscious 're-use of the past', i.e. the deliberate reference to past ideas and experiences as the precondition for impacting present thinking and behaviour.[12] Following Bourdieu, I argue that members of the Indian strategic community can be efficaciously, albeit sub or semi-consciously, influenced by the idea-contents of Kautilya's *Arthashastra* –

without having engaged in a thorough study of the *Arthashastra* or having been comprehensively lectured about it in educational contexts.

Two former National Security Advisers – the late JN Dixit and Shivshankar Menon – have pointed to the sub or semi-conscious impact of Kautilyan thought on Indian strategic culture:

> "Two contradictory trends have impacted on the wellsprings of India's foreign policy at the subconscious level. One trend is rooted in the school of thought led by Chanakya... The second trend influencing the collective subconscious also ironically originated in the thought processes and political impulses generated by another Mauryan emperor, Ashoka the Great, who was influenced by the teachings of Lord Buddha".[13]

> "[T]here is no gainsaying the fundamental importance of the *Arthashastra* in our thinking... Much of this is unselfconscious and instinctive today".

Thus, the habitus of the Indian strategic community is the repository of latent Kautilyan idea-contents, even if strategic experts – 'on top of it' – refer discursively to Kautilya.

Indian Strategic Culture and 'Kautilyan Realism'

As noted by JN Dixit, Indian foreign and security policy is hybrid, encompassing both realist and idealist ideational lineages, which are both consciously and subconsciously efficacious. I argue that 'Kautilyan realism' is the predominant endogenous ideational feature of Indian strategic culture relative to endogenous 'idealist' and exogenous ideational inputs. However, Kautilyan realism is not 'pure power politics' but intrinsically rooted in political normativity (*rajadharma*). To understand the impact of Kautilya's Arthashastra on Indian strategic culture, it is imperative to adequately know its core concepts:

- *Saptanga* theory of the 'the seven state factors' (*prakriti*): ruler, government/administration, the people in the

countryside, the fortress/capital city, treasury, army and ally; the aggregate of which constitutes state power.

- Pre-modern idea of *raison d'etat:* (a) obligation to optimise seven state factors ('internal balancing') and; (b) the welfare of the people (*yogakshema*) since both are intertwined for reasons of purposive political rationality as well as political ethics.

- Political anthropology: intra-societal relations and inter-state relations are anarchic (*matsya-nyaya*), therefore monopoly of use of force for the state (ruler) and necessity to politically unify the Indian subcontinent (*mandala scheme*).

- Pre-modern idea of political prudence: use of force in domestic politics as well as foreign relations is ultima ratio and imperial expansion beyond the Indian subcontinent is eschewed.

- *Upayas* cluster: 'the four means of politics': *saman* (conciliation), *dana* (concession), *bheda* (*divide et impera*) and *danda* (use of force).

- *Shadgunya* theory: 'the six methods of foreign policy': peace (*samdhi*), war (*vigraha*), 'wait and see' (*asana*), coercive diplomacy (*yana*), alliance-building (*samshrya*), diplomatic duplicity (*dvaihibhava*). The policy choice depends mainly on the correlation of forces between competing/adversary states.

While there is an idealist lineage of politico-strategic thought that can be associated with Buddhism grounded 'Ashokan statecraft' of prioritising the non-violent policies, peaceful coexistence and diplomacy, Ashoka's Empire possessed enormous power leverage in political, economic and military terms. In India, there is, in my view, also a Persian-Muslim tradition of politico-strategic thought that was hybridised with indigenous classic statecraft during the Delhi Sultanate and the Mughal era.[15] There is also a latent, and manifest, British input in Indian strategic culture, notably with respect to maritime strategy.

All these ideational lineages influence Indian strategic culture; however, the strongest lineage is Kautilyan realism.

The scholarly literature on Indian strategic culture is of a rather modest size. Some authors have even denied that Indian strategic culture exists at all, e.g. the so-called 'Tanham debate'. Among most scholars, there is consensus that the Kautilyan realist lineage and the idealist lineage of Buddha-Ashoka-Gandhi are most relevant for Indian strategic culture, but they differ on the relative weight of the influence of these two strands (cf. Kim 2004, Jones 2006, Zaman 2006).[16] However, there are divergent views as well. The most articulate – and puzzling – exception from that consensus is Kanti Bajpai[17] who asserts that; India does not have pre-modern politico-strategic traditions that would be comparable to that of China or Europe; Kautilya does not measure up to neither Sun-Tzu nor Machiavelli; Kautilya is effectively irrelevant for India's strategic culture and; Indian strategic culture is based exclusively in contemporary ideational inputs, which are primarily adopted from the West. In contrast, while acknowledging the influence of the Ashokan tradition, WP Singh Sidhu writes, "Another obvious strand of Indian strategic thought, which has remained constant since the time of Chandragupta Maurya, through even Gandhi's non-violence era and right till the present day (but has been mentioned only in passing in the [Tanham's] essay under review), is the concept of realism. Clearly, it was not described as 'realism' by Kautilya, the official strategist for the Mauryan Empire, as for that matter by Gandhi or Nehru. Yet it is something more than evident in their writings and in their actions".[18]

JN Dixit, mentioned above, notes, "It is very important to note, however, the moderate and rational approach to politics and inter-state relations in each stage of the evolution of Indian history as an independent political entity followed a process of political consolidation which required the application of concepts and prescriptions of Chanakya who pre-dated Machiavelli nearly 2000 years. (Chanakya's teachings in statecraft could have taught a lesson or two to Machiavelli)".[19]

Conclusion

To sum up, in the discourse on Indian strategic culture, we can see a consensus that Indian strategic culture is grounded in endogenous, pre-modern politico-strategic thought, of which Kautilyan ideas are the major ideational ingredient.

In my view, a promising approach to operationalising Indian strategic culture has been made by Manjeet Pardesi (2005).[20] He does not explicitly address the concept of strategic culture; instead, he uses the concept of 'grand strategy', but seems to me more a question of terminology than substance. Pardesi conducts a comparative analysis of the pan-Indian states during the past 2300 year-period: Mauryan Empire, Gupta Empire, Mughal Empire, British Raj, and post-1947 India. His finding is that structural homologies exist in the 'grand strategies' of these polities, the vast time horizon notwithstanding. In other words: There are constants or 'lasting patterns' in the strategic posture and behaviour of these pan-Indian polities even though the political regimes have greatly differed. Among the constants in the strategic posture and behaviour, Pardesi lists the following:

- Moral Realism: Power maximisation, including the use of force if deemed necessary, under a veneer of morality, and insistence on strategic autonomy.

- Regional Hegemony: A consistent drive to overcome political fragmentation of the subcontinent and establish pan-Indian state structures. That includes dedicated efforts to prevent meddling of outside powers into the political affairs of the subcontinent. Equally important is the prioritising of internal security to preserve the integrity and cohesion of the pan-Indian polity.

- Politico-Military Behaviour: Indian statecraft has always been multidimensional. The use-of-force, if deemed necessary, goes along with cooperative diplomacy, coercive diplomacy and covert intelligence operations.

- Defensive Strategic Orientation: Pan-Indian states have consistently aimed at deterring and repulsing outside power,

but not pursued aggressive-expansionist policies against them.

- Adaptability: Pan-Indian states have slowly, but effectively adapted to changes in geopolitical constellations, military technology and war fighting, and economic affairs.

New research results on Indian strategic culture have been submitted. A notable one is Kajari Kamal (2018)[21], who has correlated Kautilyan core concepts with the empirical analysis on India's foreign and security policies during the Nehruvian period 1947-1964 (nonalignment, relations with China and Pakistan, and nuclear policy) and during 1998-2014 (nuclear doctrine, strategic autonomy, relations with China, Pakistan and USA). Kamal notes regrettably that very few scholars have actually studied the *Arthashastra,* which obstructs an adequate assessment of its impact on Indian strategic culture. Thus, more often than not, Kautilya's pre-modern concept of 'grand strategy' is missed, which encompasses the political, normative, diplomatic, economic, intelligence and cultural dimensions of a state's external and internal security. Kautilya inter-relates 'realist' calculation of hard-power capabilities (military and economic strength) with political normativity (*rajadharma*) in making policy decisions. The central normative paradigm is that all-out-war is *ultima ratio* and 'indirect' strategic policies are preferred. In congruence with Kautilya's *Arthashastra,* Kamal argues, Indian strategic culture has a 'realist' foundation, but rests on deep-seated normative guiding principles as well.

For the Nehruvian period, Kamal's empirical analysis covers India's policy of nonalignment; bilateral relations with China (Panchsheel, Tibet, China seat in UN Security Council) and Pakistan (patient diplomatic engagement, Indus Water Treaty); the duality of demanding global nuclear disarmament and building up of nuclear capacities. Nehru realised that the lack of economic and military strength (Kautilyan *prakriti* aggregate) constrained India's strategic options. After 1998, these power deficiencies were significantly reduced through economic liberalisation, military modernisation and nuclear weaponisation. Still, India adhered to

the principle of strategic autonomy, notably with respect to the USA.

From her empirical analysis of Indian security policy during the Nehruvian era and the post-Pokhran period up to 2014, Kamal concludes that Indian strategic culture features a preference ranking in the following order; (1) 'Accommodation' (diplomacy, 'strategic generosity', self-restraint vis-à-vis terrorist/military provocations); (2) 'Defensive' (nuclear doctrine of no-first-use/credible minimum deterrence; coercive diplomacy, military mobilisation); (3) 'Offensive' (covert operations, 'surgical strikes', war as *ultima ratio*). The three strategic policy options, however, are not necessarily tightly separated but often form fluid combinations. This grand-strategic preference ranking as well as its optional fluidity is evidently in structural homology with the core concepts of Kautilya's *Arthashastra,* notably the *shadgunya* and *upayas* clusters.

It needs to be emphasised that India's strategic culture shapes not only its external security policy but equally so it's internal security. Empirical analysis of the insurgencies in the North-East, Punjab, and the 'Naxal corridor', Indian counter-insurgency strategies show a clear pattern that is based on the Kautilyan *upayascluster: saman, dana, bheda and danda.*[22] After much vacillation and flip-flopping in configuring and weighing these four COIN policy options (and much loss of life), eventually the 'right mix' of the *upayas* has been adopted leading to conflict resolution.

In conclusion, I want to refer to my numerous interviews in the Indian strategic community; time and again, I heard the following sentence: 'Kautilya is in the DNA of India's security policy'.

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India's Wars since Independence: A Concise History

Lieutenant General Vijay Oberoi, PVSM, AVSM, SM, VSM (Retd)[@]

Preamble

The armed forces of India have a long, chequered and honourable history of hundreds of years. Following India's independence in 1947, the colonial military of British India became the armed forces of independent India. After World War II, in a major demobilisation exercise, most wartime troops, numbering 1.25 million, were discharged and units disbanded. On account of the partition of India, the Indian Military was also divided between India and Pakistan in the ratio of 2/3rd to 1/3rd.

India Partitioned, Princely States & Movement of Refugees

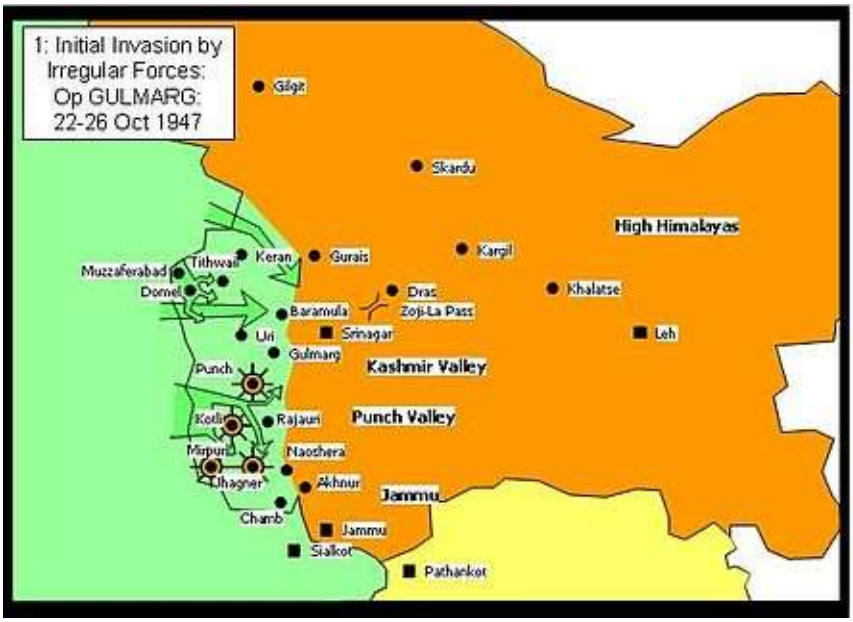
On 25 Nov 1947, the then Defence Minister had announced in Parliament that on account of the partition, the Indian Army had only nine major generals and 17 brigadiers serving in the army. The Indian Military has fought in all four wars of the nation, three against Pakistan and one against the People's Republic of China. They also fought in the border war against Pakistan, better known as the Kargil war in 1999.

One of the major tasks for the new government of independent India was the amalgamation of the more than 500 princely states, which were not part of British India. This task was carried out by the then Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel with great skill and patience, and was completed peacefully. Only three princely states, viz. Hyderabad, Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) and Junagarh created delays, for which military force had to be used.

First India-Pakistan War: 1947-48

The catalyst for the war was the inability of the Maharaja of J&K to decide on whether to join India or Pakistan or opt to be independent. The main reason was that it had a majority Muslim population, especially in the Srinagar Valley, but was ruled by a Hindu Maharaja. In addition, the main political party in the state, headed by Sheikh Abdullah, was opposed to the Maharaja. The Maharaja had entered into a Standstill Agreement, with both India and Pakistan, to buy time. While India had not signed the Agreement, Pakistan had done that but did not adhere to it, in effect, betraying the Maharaja.

In Oct 1947, under the command of Major General Akbar Khan, Pakistan sent 20 tribal *Lashkars* (an Arabic word meaning army), led, trained and equipped by the Pakistani Army, and attacked J&K, with a view to capture the Srinagar airfield, and other objectives, and amalgamate the state into Pakistan by force. The J&K State Forces, depleted by some Muslim elements that had deserted, were deployed in small numbers, along the many entry points on the state border with Pakistan. Attacks by the marauding *Lashkar's* were initially fought by the J&K State Forces.



WINNERS-HIGHEST GALLANTRY AWARDS

India-Param Vir Chakra

Major Som Nath Sharma (Posthumous)
Lance Naik Karam Singh
Second Lieutenant Rama Raghoba Rane
Naik Jadu Nath Singh
Company Havildar Major Piru Singh Shekhawat

Pakistan Nishan-e-Haider

Captain Muhammad Sarwar

On 22 Oct 1947, six *Lashkars* commenced their advance from Muzaffarabad, via Domel, Uri and Baramula, with the task of capturing Srinagar airfield and subsequently advancing to the Banihal Pass. However, they halted their advance at Baramula and took to plunder and rape, thus delaying their advance. The attacks from Pakistan forced the Maharaja to sign the 'Agreement of Accession' to India. Indian military assistance followed immediately with an infantry battalion being airlifted to Srinagar.

The preoccupation of the Pakistani force in Baramulla gave time to the Indian forces to halt them on the outskirts of Srinagar.

By 01 Jan 1948, United Nations (UN) gave a call for cessation of hostilities. By then, Indian forces had secured Srinagar and operations were progressing in the Jammu area towards Naushera and Rajauri. UN Security Council passed Resolution 47 on 21 Apr 1948, which was not accepted by Pakistan. In Jul 1948, UN Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP) visited both countries and on 13 Aug 1948 adopted a Resolution, which included a ceasefire, a truce agreement and consultations for a plebiscite, but again it was rejected by Pakistan.

Stuart Tanks (7 Cavalry) in action at Zojila Pass

Important operations during the war were the Battle of Shalateng, the capture of Zojila, and the link-up with Poonch. By the end of 1948, the Indian Military had driven the Pakistani forces out of the major part of J&K and were in a strong position to recapture the rest of the state, but a number of policy decisions, against the advice of the military, resulted in a UN ceasefire being accepted from 01 Jan 1949 and the Cease Fire Line (CFL) came into being.

The net result was that India had gained control of about two-third of the state (including Kashmir Valley, Jammu and Ladakh), while Pakistan continued to occupy roughly one third of J&K, called Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK) by India and Azad Kashmir (AK) by Pakistan and Northern Areas, which are now called Gilgit-Baltistan. India was undoubtedly the victor but would have done even better if it was not constrained by policy decisions restricting induction of additional troops and not permitting operations in certain areas. These decisions were, surreptitiously, influenced by Britain. The main aim of this skulduggery was to prevent India having a border with Afghanistan, in pursuit of the old 'Great Game' policy of Britain. An internal reason was that Sheikh Abdullah did not want to include POK because the majority of people living there were not ethnic Kashmiris. He was able to influence the then Prime Minister Nehru to his point of view! The inconclusive result of the war still affects the geopolitics of both India and Pakistan.

Second India-Pakistan War: 1965

The India-Pakistan war of 1965 was preceded by two preliminary operations launched by Pakistan. The first was the skirmishes in the Rann of Kutch in April 1965 (Operation Kabaddi) and the second was the launch of Operation Gibraltar by Pakistani troops, disguised as Kashmiris, who infiltrated in to J&K in early Aug 1965. After operations in the Rann of Kutch, Pakistan convinced itself that a quick military campaign in J&K, preceded by an instigated insurrection would enable Pakistan to annex J&K. The strategy was to confine all operations within J&K and it was assumed that India would not escalate the conflict outside J&K.

It was then Foreign Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and his cronies, who persuaded Ayub Khan that if Pakistan were to 'wrest' Kashmir from India by force, 1965 was its 'last chance'. India, they said, was "demoralised and vulnerable" because of the "humiliating defeat at the hands of China"; the feedback of Operation Kabbadi in Kutch; Nehru's death; the "palpable weakness" of his successor, Lal Bahadur Shastri; a virulent anti-Hindi agitation in south India; and an acute food shortage across the country. It was also highlighted that once expansion and modernisation of Indian Military was completed, the balance of

power would shift back in India's favour, and Pakistan's "last opportunity would be lost". The clinching argument was that "fear of China would deter India" from extending the war beyond Kashmir. This took care of Ayub Khan's prime concern, who had once stated: "While winning Kashmir, I don't want to lose Pakistan". At a sand-model presentation at Murree, Ayub had put his finger on Akhnoor on the model and asked, "Why don't you go for the jugular?" Ayub then embarked on the standard Pakistani self-delusion: *The Hindus could not fight. "Such an opportunity should, therefore, be sought and exploited".*

Pakistani Operation 'Gibraltar'

On 05 August 1965, between 26,000 and 33,000 Pakistani soldiers, dressed as Kashmiris, crossed the CFL at a number of points and headed for objectives within J&K. Initially, they tried to spread panic by raiding isolated and soft targets. However, as the Indian Army limbered up, by moving 163 Infantry Brigade from Ladakh to the Valley, the infiltrators were on the run. My battalion, 1 MARATHA LI (JANGI PALTAN) was part of this brigade and it was during a search and destroy operation in the Valley that I was severely wounded, in this my second blooding; the first being in 1961 during the Goa Operations.

Later, with induction of additional troops, HQ Sri Force was formed. Along with anti-infiltration operations commencing from 15 Aug 1965, operations astride the CFL were launched to secure important areas across it. Thereafter, it was a ding-dong battle along the CFL, with attacks and counter-attacks by both sides. By the end of August, both sides had secured a few important dominating heights. While Pakistan had secured important heights in Tithwal, Uri and Poonch, India had captured the prized Haji Pir Bulge and the Pass, and important features in other areas.

Pakistani Operation 'Grand Slam'

Operation Gulmarg (October 1947) having failed, Pakistan launched Operation Grand Slam on 02 Sep 1965, with the aim of capturing the vital town of Akhnoor and severing supply routes and communications of Indian troops in J&K. They were still

confining their operations across the CFL, as they were sure that the Indian Military would also do the same. In the Akhnoor sector, Pakistan made initial gains on account of the surprise factor, but the Indian Army, supported by the Indian Air Force (IAF), stabilised the situation quickly. Brief details of the operations are elucidated below:

Pakistani troops captured Chhamb but Akhnoor held out. At this stage, there was a pause in the offensive as there was a change of command. Major General Yahya Khan took over from Major General Akhtar Malik. This helped the Indian Army to reinforce Akhnoor.

In a bold move, the Indian Army launched offensives in Pakistan's Punjab, its heartland, initially on two thrust lines on 06 Sep 1965. The thrust towards Lahore reached the outskirts of the city but the troops were called back due to 'logistics constraints! On the next day, another Indian offensive commenced in the Sialkot sector, where armour-infantry battles were fought at Phillaura and Chawinda.

Thereafter, the war spread all across the international border, as well as across the CFL, but India deliberately refrained from launching any operations in East Pakistan. Notable action during the war was the Battle of Assal Uttar, where Pakistan's 1 Armoured Division was destroyed piecemeal by both, infantry anti-tank weapons and armour; the flooding carried out; and the sugarcane fields, which made movement and observation difficult. It was later referred to as the 'graveyard of Pakistani armour'.

Abdul Hamid (4 Grenadiers)

Graveyard of Pakistani Armour

A HISTORICAL CONONDRUM

There is confusion about the date of commencement of the war. For Pakistan, it commenced only on 06 Sep 1965. Hence, Pakistan observes this date as 'Defence of Pakistan Day' each year. For India, the war started on 05 Aug 1965, when Op Gibraltar was launched in J&K, but others say it started on 01 Sep 1965, when Pakistan launched its attack on Chamb-Jaurian. That is why it is called the 22-Day War. Unlike Pakistan, India had conducted all operations of 1965 under the rubric of Operation Ablaze. It is also important to note that in all resolutions of the UN Security Council, the demand on both countries was to "withdraw their forces to the positions they had occupied on August 05, 1965".

This then became the basis of the Shastri-Ayub Khan agreement at Tashkent on 10 Jan 1966 and possibly the reason why PM Shastri, much against his will and public utterances had to return Hajipir Bulge and other captured areas to Pakistan.

On 06 Sep, Pakistan Air Force (PAF) had stunned India with dusk raids on its forward airbases, particularly Pathankot, where 10 frontline aircraft were destroyed on ground. There were few losses over Halwara and Adampur too. PAF had an upper hand throughout the war, but it did not launch any further daytime raids over IAF bases.

Navies of both countries did not have the size to be able to weigh-in during the war. Pakistani Navy did bombard Dwarka, but it had little military value. Pakistan had superior, and modern, arms and equipment, in both army and air force. The only Indian superiority was in having a larger number of infantry divisions but many of these were fresh, post-1962 raisings, and had not yet settled and were not fully battle-ready. Major inadequacies of Pakistani officers were arrogance of commanders and lack of respect for the opposition. India's better training and leadership at unit level; better performance in the mountains, particularly in battles at night, prevailed.

The hostilities ended after a ceasefire was declared. Both India and Pakistan claimed victories, but most neutral assessments agree that India had the upper hand as Pakistan lost more territory than it gained during the war and failed to achieve its goal of capturing Kashmir.

Third India-Pakistan War: 1971

Background. This war had many firsts. In all earlier wars India had fought, the enemy had the initiative but in this war, it was India that called the shots. The reasons were that the then Army Chief of India, General (later Field Marshal) Sam Manekshaw had persuaded the political hierarchy that he needed time to get the army fully ready, as well as selecting the most suitable time climatically and strategically to commence operations. The second reason was that this war directly involved participation of all three Services and the coordination achieved was good, albeit it was not a classic joint effort. Thirdly, the Indian Armed Forces had the intimate support of the population of East Pakistan in general, and that of the *Mukti Bahini* (a guerrilla outfit raised specially by the Indian Army) in particular. Fourthly, political and diplomatic efforts had succeeded in near global support for India despite the pro-Pakistan biased attitude of USA. The India-Soviet Union Friendship Agreement was pivotal in its scope as it adequately countered USA.

Another difference was that it did not involve the issue of Kashmir but was precipitated by the crisis created within Pakistan by the political battle between Sheikh Mujibur Rehman, leader of East Pakistan, and Yahya-Bhutto combine, leaders of West Pakistan. The catalyst was the ‘General Elections’ in which Sheikh Mujib was a clear winner but Bhutto wanted to be the Prime Minister. The political battle culminated in Mujib being detained in West Pakistan; launching of a violent military operation (Operation Searchlight) against the Bengali population of East Pakistan by the Pakistani Military; the declaration of Independence of Mujib’s party, Awami League from the state system of Pakistan; more than 10 million Bengalis from East Pakistan taking refuge in neighbouring India; and the formal start of Bangladesh Liberation Movement.

Bhutto and General Yahya Khan, Jan 1971

The 1971 India-Pakistan war saw the execution of a comprehensive strategy, instead of hastily mounting a military campaign, as in the past.

Although the war formally commenced on 03 Dec 1971, it was preceded by a series of border clashes, some of which were prolonged over many days. The Indian Army had encircled East Pakistan and Indian Navy had done the same in the Bay of Bengal. The IAF was also committed before the formal commencement of war and later it gained air superiority within a day in the east. The overall military strategy was a strategic offensive in the East, and strategic defensive in the West, with a bias towards the east. Although no major threat was envisaged from China, one reason for waiting till December was that mountain passes would be closed, thus enabling the army to leave a token force in the North to deal with any mischief from China.

Operations in the East. Speedy thrusts and bypassing main opposition nodes were the tactics employed along the various thrust lines, as the enemy had adopted a forward defensive perimeter posture, with negligible forces in the interior areas.

East Pakistan had four divisions plus, with little chance of any additional troops joining in. Against them, Indian Army had massed three corps, plus adhoc forces created to increase the number of thrust lines to keep the enemy engaged. Indian forces in the eastern theatre comprised 4 Corps under Lieutenant General Sagat Singh, 33 Corps under Lieutenant General ML Thapan, and 2 Corps under Lieutenant General TN Raina. While 2 and 33 Corps operations were based on strong defences and set-piece attacks, it was 4 Corps that went into the offensive immediately and maintained the momentum of their attacks with powerful thrusts, in combination with the Mi-4 helicopters of the IAF commanded by an exceedingly bold officer, Air Commodore (later Air Marshal) Chandan Singh.

The other thrust that also made rapid headway was of 95 Mountain Brigade that advanced north to south from Meghalaya and advanced to Dacca via Jamalpur and Tangail. Jamalpur was cleared on 10 Dec by 1 MARATHA LI (JANGI PALTAN) and the historic link-up was effected on 12 Dec between two Maratha Battalions, viz. the JANGI PALTAN and 2 PARA (MARATHA) (erstwhile 3 MARATHA LI) at Tangail where the latter had para-dropped at night. Their leading elements entered Dacca on 16 Dec.

Mi 4 helicopters during landings in Sylhet Sector during India-Pak War 1971

Commanding Officer 2 Para

Lt Gen AAK Niazi, the overall commander of Pakistani forces in the eastern theatre was forced to surrender. Maj Gen (later Army Commander) JFR Jacob, who was Chief of Staff Eastern

Command, negotiated the surrender, which was formally signed on 16 Dec 1965. The Indian Army pledged to guard the Prisoners of War (PoWs) from the Mukti Bahini and the local population, who were waiting to take their revenge on the Pakistani military and its collaborators. It was the biggest surrender in the history of warfare, as over 93,000 PoWs were in Indian custody. Within two weeks of intense fighting, a new nation, the People's Republic of Bangladesh, was created.

Operations in the West. Operations in the western theatre were conducted by two armies – the Western Army under Lieutenant General KP Candeth and the Southern Army under Lieutenant General GG Bewoor. The western theatre saw action from Naya Chor in Rajasthan in the south to Turtuk in Ladakh in the north. A number of armour battles were fought in the Shakargarh Bulge. 10 Para (Commando), now 10 SF, under Lieutenant Colonel (later Brigadier) Bhawani Singh, conducted a series of raids across the international border in the Barmer Sector. 9 Para (Commando), now 9 SF, similarly earned glory for its actions in J&K.

The role of the IAF, both in gaining local air superiority and provision of ground support to the army was crucial. IAF actions in Chhamb-Jaurian sector (J&K) and at Longewala (Rajasthan) are worth highlighting.

Victory at Longewala

The Indian Navy not only blockaded the Karachi Port, and dominated the Sea Lanes, but even raided Karachi Harbour with missile boats. In the eastern theatre, the first and only amphibious landing was also carried out to secure Cox's Bazaar, besides wiping out all naval assets of the Pakistani Navy.

Among the famous battles of 1971 in the western theatre were Basantar, Longewala, Lipa Valley and Naya Chor. The 1971 war became a game changer in strategic and geopolitical terms, and reconfigured the power balance in South Asia.

As in earlier wars, even in this war what the military had won on the battlefield was frittered away at the political and diplomatic levels. The over 93,000 PoWs captured by us were returned to Pakistan at the Shimla Agreement in 1972, without anything in return. Even our PoWs, languishing in Pakistan, were neither returned nor their whereabouts told to us. The person who was responsible for this war, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, not only went scot free

but became the Prime Minister of Pakistan, and the question of J&K remains unsettled, with no end state in sight!

India-Pakistan Border War: 1999

The Kargil war was fought between May and Jul 1999 in the Kargil district of J&K and the adjoining areas of Ladakh, along the Line of Control (LoC). The army and IAF had different code names for the war – unfortunately – indicating lack of jointness amongst the Indian Military!

The *caucus belli* was the infiltration of Pakistani soldiers, disguised as Kashmiri militants, into positions on the Indian side of the LoC. The Indian Army, later supported by the IAF, recaptured a majority of the positions and the Pakistani forces withdrew from the remaining Indian positions. The war was fought in high altitude mountains, with jagged, near vertical hill faces, which posed both tactical and logistical problems. It was also the only instance of fighting a conventional war among two nuclear armed countries. The area that witnessed the infiltration and fighting is a 160-kilometre long stretch of ridges overlooking the only road linking Srinagar and Leh. The military posts on the ridges above the highway were generally around 5,000 m (16,000 ft) high, with a few as high as 5,485 m (18,000 ft). The operational area was divided in two sectors, viz. Kargil and Batalik sectors. Brief details of operations are enumerated below:

During the winter of 1998–1999, Pakistan had covertly inducted troops to the Indian side of the LoC to occupy commanding positions, in an operation code named ‘Operation Badr’. The aims were to sever the link between Kashmir and Ladakh, to isolate Indian Army troops on the Siachen Glacier, and force India to negotiate a settlement of the broader Kashmir dispute.

The war had three phases. Firstly, Pakistani infiltration across LoC and occupation of posts to bring down artillery fire on the main highway and Kargil town. Secondly, India discovering the infiltration and mobilising forces to respond to it. Thirdly, major attacks by Indian forces resulting in recapture of most of the posts and withdrawal of residual Pakistani troops back across the LoC.

Commencing in Feb 1999, Pakistani troops from the elite Special Services Group (SSG) and the para-military Northern Light Infantry covertly set up bases on 132 vantage points across LoC, and surprised India. Once India mobilised, it regained control of the hills overlooking the highway and then commenced driving the invading force back across the LoC. The Battle of Tololing, amongst other assaults, slowly tilted the combat in India's favour. Some of the posts put up a stiff resistance, including Tiger Hill (Point 5140).

Victory at High Peaks in Batalik and Kargil

Indian artillery, especially the Bofors FH-77B field howitzers, played a vital role, with Indian gunners making maximum use of the terrain. However, lack of space and depth to deploy were major constraints.

The IAF coordinated with ground forces from 25 May. Initial attacks were not effective. On 27 May 1999, it lost two fighters (MiG-27 and MiG-21), both over Batalik Sector. One Indian Mi-8 helicopter was also lost due to Stinger SAMs. IAF’s French made Mirage 2000 H used their laser guided bombs with good effect.

The Indian Army mounted direct frontal assaults which were slow and took a heavy toll, given the steep ascents that had to be made. All attacks were under the cover of darkness. Costly frontal assaults could have been avoided if the Indian military had been permitted to block the supply routes of the enemy, and tackling the posts from the rear or flanks or creating a siege. Although the

army had asked for permission to cross the LoC, it was denied by the government due to the likely expansion of the theatre of war and reduced international support for its cause. An analyst had called the frontal attacks as the *'last battle of World War I'!*

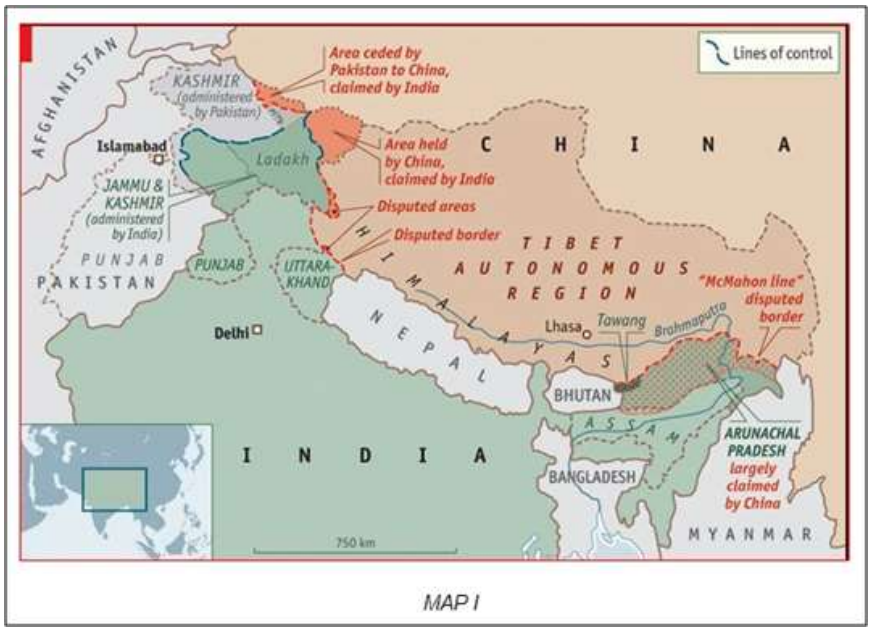
Two months into the conflict, Indian troops had slowly retaken 75-80 percent of the ridges that were encroached upon by the Pakistani troops in the intruded areas. When Pakistan found its plan going awry, it sought America's help in de-escalating the conflict. However, President Clinton refused to intervene until Pakistan had removed all forces from the Indian side of the LoC. Pakistani troops commenced withdrawing, but some forces remained in positions on the Indian side of the LoC till they were evicted by 26 July. Pakistan was heavily criticised by most countries for instigating the war. The Indian restraint for not crossing the LoC and escalating the conflict into an all-out war was applauded, although at heavy cost to us.

India-China War: 1962

India fought a month-long border war against China in 1962. Neither nation deployed air or naval resources during the war that was fought in the high mountains of the Himalayas. China ended the war by declaring a unilateral ceasefire and withdrew their forces to the pre-war positions.

Annotated aerial photograph of Dhola Ridge and surrounding areas where the 1962 war started

On 20 Oct 1962, while the world's attention was on the US-Soviet nuclear standoff in Cuba, China attacked India. The *caucus belli* was the territorial dispute over the long northern border, which was not demarcated or delineated. Tensions over asylum given to the Dalai Lama by India, and over Tibet in general, also contributed to the war. The war was brief and one-sided, with China emerging victorious. However, the war continues to cast a long shadow over Sino-Indian relations, despite substantial improvement over the years.



MAP I

Had the Indian state been functioning collectively, as a modern and effective one should, it would have realised soon after Mar 1959 — when the Dalai Lama fled from Lhasa and was given asylum in India — that the two countries were moving towards a conflict. The trend became even clearer when violent armed clashes began and at Kongka-la in Ladakh, the Chinese drew blood for the first time. Meanwhile, in Sep 1959, in a curt letter to Nehru, China's then PM Zhou Enlai had categorically stated that China did not agree to India's view of the border. All these red signals were ignored because Nehru had, somehow, convinced himself that while there would be border skirmishes, patrol clashes

and even bigger spats, the Chinese would do ‘nothing big’. While in Beijing, Mao Zedong having failed in his ‘Great Leap Forward’ movement that took a toll of 30 million lives in the famine, needed to refurbish his image. He planned a carefully calibrated limited punitive operation to ‘teach India and Nehru a lesson’.

The bone of contention

The border with China runs 3488 km. It can be divided into three sectors:

Western Sector: This includes the border between Jammu and Kashmir and Xinjiang and Tibet. India claims that China is occupying 43,000 sq km in this sector, including 5180 sq km illegally ceded to it by Pakistan.

Central Sector: This includes borders shared by Himachal Pradesh and Uttrakhand with Tibet. Shipki La and Kaurik areas in HP and areas around Pulam, Thag La, Barahoti, Kungri Bingri La, Lapthal and Sangha are disputed.

Eastern Sector: China disputes India's sovereignty over 90,000 sq km, mostly in Arunachal Pradesh. Tawang, Bum La, Asaphi La and Lo La are among the sensitive points in this sector. Strategically vital Tawang holds the key to the defence of the entire sub-Himalayan space in this sector.

Jawaharlal Nehru with Chinese premier Zhou Enlai

On 08 Sep 1962, the Chinese crossed the Thagla Ridge in what was then North-East Frontier Agency (NEFA) and is now Arunachal Pradesh. Mired in old beliefs, Nehru announced that he had directed the army to "throw the Chinese out of Thagla" but had fixed no time limit. The age of innocence for India ended on 20 Oct when both in NEFA and Ladakh, the Chinese struck in strength and overran inadequate, and in many cases isolated Indian defences. Having achieved their immediate objectives, they halted their offensive five days later. So terribly shattered was national morale that the then President S. Radhakishnan accused his government of "credulity and negligence". Nehru himself told Parliament ruefully: "We were getting out of touch with the reality of modern world and were living in an artificial atmosphere of our own creation". The main advisors who had led Nehru up the garden path were then Defence Minister VK Krishna Menon; Director Intelligence Bureau BN Mullik; Army Chief General PN Thapar; and the ambitious military-bureaucrat Lieutenant General BM Kaul.

The second phase of the Chinese offensive, commencing in mid-November, was even more formidable. In a few days, China gave us a humiliating defeat which, in effect, was a combination of a military debacle and a political disaster. China then declared a unilateral cease-fire and withdrew to positions held before the war. The India-China border issue continues to remain unresolved; the

present face-off along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) is a manifestation of this prolonged dispute.

Never a Dull Moment

Besides the above wars, the Indian Armed Forces have participated in smaller internal conflicts like, Operation Polo in 1948 in Hyderabad; Operation Vijay in 1961 to free Portuguese territories in Goa, Daman and Diu; Sikkim border conflict in 1967; Operation Meghdoot in Siachen Glacier in 1984; the Sumdrong Chu stand-off in 1987; operations in Sri Lanka by the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) between 1987 and 1990; and the plethora of counter insurgency operations in many parts of the country, some of which are continuing. In all these, as in the wars, the Indian Armed Forces have shown their mettle and have left a mark for themselves. The Indian Military has also made a name for itself in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations and has earned accolades for its professional acumen and dealings with the local populations.

@**Lieutenant General Vijay Oberoi, PVSM, AVSM, SM, VSM (Retd)** is an Infantry officer (The Maratha Light Infantry), who is a former Vice Chief of Army Staff (VCOAS). A prolific writer and analyst, he was the founding Director of CLAWS and is currently a member of the USI Council and President of the War Wounded Foundation, Delhi.

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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 QMG[1] 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 Gehanna (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
	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

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

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

	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 manoeuvers 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

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

	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

1947 Gold Medal Rs 200/-	Man Management.	Cdr CW Morton
1948 No Medal Rs 250/-	Are Officers Messes suitable for Indian Conditions?	Lt Col DK Palit
Rs 150/-		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 alternation 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

	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		

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.	

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	

	the necessary intellectual make up. Or Motivation is declining amongst officers. Discuss the causes and suggest remedies.	
	Group B Environmental Changes have affected the attitude of troops towards discipline. What is your concept of discipline and ways of improving it. Or How best can adventure training be organised .	
1976	**Group A** Future of strategy of nuclear deterrence and possible use of nuclear weapons and their effects on warfare. Or Terrorism could become a powerful weapon of achieving political arms. How can it be combated?	
	Group B 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? Or Would it be correct to plan on employment of nuclear weapons in any war ten years hence?	
1977	(3 entries)	
1978 No Medal Rs 250/-	**Group A** In the context of socio-economic constraints, international environment and likely threats, should India have small, highly	Maj AK Awasthi

	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.	

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

	(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 Mutalik
Rs 1,000/-	Second	Lt SK Singh
1994 Gold Medal Rs 2,000/-	**Group A** India's role in ruture 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

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.

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

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 21st Century.	Lt Yogesh V Athawale, IN
Rs 5,000/-	Second	Capt S Ramakrishna

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

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

		Athawale
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

	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

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