

Late Major General Samir Sinha, PVSM
(Director, USI from 24 Nov 1987 to 30 June 1996)

Born in Kolkata on 28 January 1926, Major General Sinha received his early education at Bishop Westcott School, Namkum (Ranchi), and later, from 1937 to 1942, at the Royal Indian Military College, Dehradun. He was commissioned into the 15th Battalion of the Maratha Light Infantry in December 1943 and volunteered for the Parachute Regiment in 1945.

He saw active combat in the 1947–48 War and was wounded in the Battle of Jhangar. After graduating from the Defence Services Staff College, he served on the staff of 50 (Independent) Parachute Brigade in key appointments, including Deputy Assistant Adjutant and Quartermaster General (DAA & QMG), and subsequently as the Brigade Major (BM).

He participated in Operation Vijay—the liberation of Goa in 1961—as the Second-in-Command of 2 PARA (Maratha). In 1963, he had the honour of raising 6 PARA. After attending the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, USA, he served as General Staff Officer Grade I in the Military Operations Directorate at Army Headquarters from 1965 to 1967.

He achieved the rare distinction of commanding three brigades—82 Mountain Brigade, 51 Parachute Brigade, and 47 Infantry Brigade. During the 1971 Indo-Pak War, he was attached to Headquarters Eastern Command as Deputy Director Civil Administration for Bangladesh, a critical role in which he made a significant contribution to the success of the campaign.

Following the war, he commanded 19 Infantry Division in Jammu & Kashmir from 1972 to 1974 and subsequently served as Chief of Staff, Northern Command (July 1974 to October 1975). He later held several important appointments: Commandant of the Indian Military Academy (1975–76), Director of Military Training at Army Headquarters (1976–79), and Chief of Staff, Central Command (1979–81). From 1981 to 1984, he served as Inspector General of the Special Frontier Force (SFF), retiring after 40 years of distinguished and dedicated military service.

Post-retirement, he served as Director of the United Service Institution (USI) of India from 24 November 1987 to 30 June 1996. His association with the USI dated back to 1947 when he became a Life Member. During his tenure as Director, he played a pivotal role in overseeing the construction of the current USI building and the Institution's relocation from Kashmir House to its present premises. He was also an elected member of the USI Council for several years. His contributions to the growth and legacy of the USI remain deeply cherished and enduring.

Major General Sinha passed away on 26 January 2002. He is survived by his two sons, Brigadier Deepak Sinha and Colonel Ashok Sinha, both of whom have since retired from the Indian Army.

Today, the USI honours his memory through the Major General Samir Sinha Auditorium.