

**From our Chief Executive**

**Creating Leaders of Tomorrow  
Issue 68, October 2008**



Lt. General Arjun Ray, PVSM, VSM (Retd.)

**Dear Friends,**

In 2000 I was commanding a corps in Ladakh opposite POK in the west and Western Tibet in the east. To prevent insurgency from spilling over from across the Kashmir Valley, we launched a mass movement to win over alienated communities. One of the pillars of this campaign was setting up 13 schools in remote mountainous areas, with each having stand-alone Internet connectivity. All children were given laptops, and I was trying to figure out how best to use computers and technology for peace. Help came to me from two renowned IT gurus at MIT – Professors Nicholas Negroponte and Seymour Papert. Seymour Papert is the renowned mathematician-turned IT expert who developed Lego robotics technology known as Mindstorms. Their teams came over to show me how computers could be used for creative purposes. As part of their contribution they presented us a few sets of Lego. These contraptions were embedded with smart chips, and Ladakhi children were taught how to make simple robots with commands being sent from their laptops.

That kindled my interest in robotics for schools.

Our generation pursued hobbies like collecting stamps, autographs and match labels, listening to music or writing to pen pals. Of these, none stimulated the mind as much book reading. Today, in a technology-driven world, nothing stimulates the brain and gives a sense of the future world as much as robotics. I believe that the primary aim of introducing robotics at school level should be to instil the

scientific temper, develop trans-disciplinary thinking, and encourage creativity in students. Robotics also represents the deepest symbiosis between man and machine.

My compliments, therefore, to Sarojini for leading the robotic initiative in Indus Bangalore. I hope the other schools will follow suit.

With warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Arjun Ray". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Lieutenant General Arjun Ray, PVSM, VSM (Retd.)  
Chief Executive Officer,  
Indus Trust.