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एडमिरल डी के जोशी
पी वी एस एम, ए वी एस एम, वाई एस एम, एन एम, वी एस एम, एडीसी
नौसेनाध्यक्ष

Admiral DK Joshi
PVSM, AVSM, YSM, NM, VSM, ADC
Chief of the Naval Staff

रक्षा मंत्रालय
एकीकृत मुख्यालय(नौसेना)
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MESSAGE

It gives me immense pleasure to pen down my first message as CNS for 'Quarterdeck', which provides a bridge between the 'past' and the 'present' Navy. I am confident that we, the present baton holders of Navy, will continue to benefit from the experience and wisdom of veterans accrued during their days in Service.

In order to augment the philanthropic venture of the Navy Foundation, the Navy had declared 2012 as the 'Year of the Ex-Serviceman'. During this, we were able to focus on resolution of a range of issues pertaining to Naval Veterans and accord greater focus towards the welfare of Naval widows and veterans. Apart from strengthening the Naval Regimental System (NRS), ESM Melas & Pension Adalats were conducted at 17 locations. Command Regimental System Officer (CRSO) teams also visited 177 remote locations, to reach out to veterans and widows. To facilitate better job opportunities to veterans and personnel about to retire, Job Fairs were conducted at Delhi, Mumbai, Visakhapatnam and Kochi. Within two years of its inception, NRS has extended its footprint to the interiors and rural areas of India. It is now providing relief to the widows as also assisting Naval ESMs. The ECHS system is also being strengthened and towards ensuring faster clearance of bills, the requisite staff at various ECHS Regional Centres are being positioned progressively.

Our theme for this year, "Indian Navy - Maritime Power for National Prosperity", encapsulates our mandate in today's evolving security environment. The veterans have an onerous task, which I have no doubt they will undertake to the best of their ability, of sensitising the populace about maritime issues, as enshrined in the MoA of Navy Foundation. Towards this, the Charters may consider conducting lectures & seminars on relevant topics with youth and intelligentsia, who contribute towards nation building, as target audience. The recent initiative of the Navy Foundation, Bangalore Charter to commence lectures on the lines of the existing Memorial Lectures is certainly a proactive step. Navy Foundation Charters are very critical channels to reach out to the Veterans and Naval Widows in their regions, to resolve their problems inhouse or with the help of Naval resources around. Our endeavour will be to continue to sustain the welfare of ex- servicemen in the coming years to the best of the Navy's ability.

My warm welcome to the members of newly formed Navy Foundation Charters at Lucknow and Jaipur. I wish them success in all their endeavours. As always, the Editorial Team of 'Quarterdeck 2013' has been proactive, and deserves felicitations. I wish them and our readers an exciting year ahead.

Shano Varuna !



(DK Joshi)

Admiral

Chief of the Naval Staff



Change of Command





Editorial

At the very outset, I would like to wish all Quarterdeck contributors, readers and the Naval Veterans' community a happy and healthy 2013. I take this opportunity to extend heartiest congratulations to Admiral DK Joshi on taking the helm of the Indian Navy and convey our best wishes for the voyage ahead. I also wish to convey our good wishes to our former CNS, Admiral Nirmal Verma, on assuming charge as the High Commissioner of India in Canada.

Last year, the Indian Navy observed the 'Year of the Ex-Serviceman'. This issue of Quarterdeck (QD) has, therefore, highlighted significant features of the Naval Regimental System (NRS) and presents an overview of its activities. NRS has emerged as an effective forum through which veterans can reach out to each other in the time of need. Besides this, we also carry a few articles from veterans who are involved in inspiring social work.

It has been more than five years since I have been interacting with contributors of QD. This has been a humbling and enriching experience. I am delighted at the opportunity to piece together this beautiful mosaic, while maintaining that it is really our passionate contributors who make QD successful. The content of QD generates justifiable pride among readers and strikes an emotional chord.

My earnest request to our patrons is to keep sending us their invaluable contributions. Veterans have an abundance of memories that they wish to share and QD is an excellent platform to share only pleasant and fond memories. While doing so, do keep within the prescribed word limit and send in your inputs via email only. Photographs, images, text, Book Reviews, etc. from the internet attract copyright issues for publication in QD, and should be best avoided by contributors.

I also appeal to contributors to bear in mind the themes that are approved by IHQ, MoD (Navy) for each edition of QD, and endeavour to give us contributions that conform to the current themes. This will help us introduce 'layers' of different flavours within the magazine. Various Charters of the Navy Foundation are doing a great job in promptly disseminating the approved themes and deadlines for the ensuing edition of QD. So, please keep in touch with the Charters for this information.

The Navy Foundation has spread its wings with the induction of two additional Charters - Jaipur and Lucknow - into its fold. We extend a hearty welcome to both the Charters.

The cover design QD 2013, proudly displays Boeing P8i, Neptune, Vikramaditya and Chakra, the powerful platforms which have joined and are soon to join during the course of the year adding to the might of the Indian Navy.

I wish to record my gratitude to Vice Admiral Ganesh Mahadevan, our endearing and longest-contributing caricaturist, who continues to brighten up QD with his creations, even after his retirement. Many thanks to him for promptly answering QD's call!

I thank PDESA and his entire staff who make it possible to publish QD on schedule each year. A special mention is in order too, for the steady, willing and valuable support lent by Captain B Bhattacharya.

Happy reading!





Letter to the Editor

Dear Mrs Ramsay,

Thanks to modern technology, it was a pleasure to read the Silver Jubilee Anniversary edition of QD 2012, with its informative and interesting articles, a lovely poetic introduction by Mrs Nalini Das and an excellent format. Congratulations to the Editorial Board.

It was also tinged with sadness at my very good mate Admiral Stan Dawson dropping anchor in that Grand Harbour above. May his soul RIP. We were shipmates, both as Lieuts of the same age and Commanders in the 40's and the 60's. I remember Lt Dawson in command of ML 420 in Cochin who also had a sea training role. He was kind enough to take me to sea on a couple of occasions. Even then, his dedication to the service, was second to none.

Venduruthy those days soon after the WW2 was run by Lieuts even all OIC Schools I remember, Narpati Datta, Dara Kharbhari, Chandy Kuruvilla, Bamby Barboza, Das Gupta, Ramesh Batra, Inder Singh, Freddy Nazareth, Henry Sopher, Roy Fanderlinden. The seniormost officer was Lt Cdr Mike Collins who was both the CO Venduruthy and the NOi/c Cochin. Things changed dramatically after the arrival of Commodore Ellison, RN as COMCHIN. Collins was promoted to Cdr and appointed the CSO. Commander Beckett, RN was appointed CO Venduruthy, and I was appointed Secretary to COMCHIN.

Finally, QD 2012 is a shining example of excellence. May it continue to grow from strength to strength in the service of the Indian Navy.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

Fred Menzies
Commander (Retd)

prince24@tadaust.org.au

Dear Mrs Ramsay,

Hats off to Commodore JS Brar (Retd.) and the family for the thought provoking article titled 'Some Noble Initiatives' published in QD 2012. It speaks volumes of high quality and standard of the Brar family's life. The article also inspired me to forward an article titled 'Quality of life' quoting Brar family's remarkable example for publication in QD.

VMT. Undoubtedly you will not only keep it up but will also keep improving.

With warmest regards,
Commander VK Mohan(Retd.)

cdrssparmar2010@hotmail.com

Some of the retired naval officers of local charter were in a meeting when the Silver Jubilee Edition 2012 was received in Chandigarh from New Delhi. All of us were very excited, indeed.

As desired, I rushed to read out the headlines of contents. Once again the Editor and the Editorial Team have succeeded in producing an excellent edition of this lively magazine with which our past is so intimately linked. I do not precisely know the channel through which retired Indian Naval



Officers in USA receive their information but several contributors have conveyed their liberal thanks for what has been written in various issues of Quarterdeck during the last eight years.

Some retired Indian Naval Officers narrate their experience during their time with the Royal Navy. That is enormously interesting. Although it is painful for me to mention this here the contents of the obituaries pages play a vital role in publication of this great annual magazine. How else we can so conveniently know whether those who served with us or whom we knew intimately during our naval service are still around or not?

Commander Tirlochan Singh Trewn
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ERRATUM

Quarterdeck 2012, Silver Jubilee Edition - 2012. Pages 69-70. "The President's Colour" by Vice Admiral MP Awati (Retd.). In the article by Vice Admiral MP Awati (Retd.), there was a printing error in the phrase "President's Colours". The correct form of address, as pointed out by the Author, should have been the "President's Colour". The error is regretted.

Editor



NAVAL MARITIME ACADEMY



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The Naval Maritime Academy (NAMAC), Mumbai was set up in 1998 to provide the required training to facilitate the transition of retired naval personnel opting for a second career in the Merchant Navy. Approved by the Director General of Shipping, NAMAC trains over 11000 naval, ex naval, dependents & civilian candidates each year. Using our quality infrastructure, an experienced merchant marine faculty supplemented by serving & retired naval personnel and the naval resources at Mumbai, NAMAC today conducts 45 courses that include Basic and Modular STCW courses, offshore safety courses as per the highest international standards and numerous value added courses. Recipient of the "Samundra Manthan Award 2011" for the Best Offshore Training Institute, NAMAC has been assigned GRADE I - OUTSTANDING by ICRA Ltd for all 45 courses conducted, a reiteration of our commitment to the highest quality of training.



Veteran's Life

Admiral RH Tahliani (Retd.)

When one has been fortunate enough to have had the honour of wearing a uniform of any of the three Armed Services of India, it is but natural that one wants to do one's best to help defend not only the borders of our great nation, but also the values enshrined in our constitution and our heritage.

In the last thousand odd years India faced a rapid decline unlike the first thousand of those millennium. India was one of the most important and prosperous countries in the world and could boast in the Chola and the Mauryan empires and the rule of King Ashoka everywhere; Gautam Buddha who founded the Buddhist religion was born in our country. The cultural influence of India spread far and wide. Today in Indonesia, for example, which has largely a Muslim population, Hindu cultural traditions are enshrined as part of their culture. The question now arises whether those of us who have had the good fortune to wear the uniform of one of the three Armed Services have any responsibility for doing a little bit towards nation building when we have hung up our hats and retired. My answer is emphatically yes. The question which one naturally asks - how does one do it?

In the Armed Forces we are taught that the nation and its interests must always come first, the welfare and well-being of our subordinates must come second and our own welfare must take last priority. Put it in simple words – one is taught honesty, ethics and elements of self-sacrifice and doing one's very best in whatever work one finds oneself engaged in after retirement.

I have had the good fortune to come across

several veterans, who in their second careers outside the Armed Forces, have carried out their responsibilities with the same honesty and dedication as they have in their service life. They have as a result not only gained a large measure of satisfaction and happiness in the process and some times even achieved certain monetary pluses.

One of the areas where one can contribute is social work. Social work is giving back to society as a measure of gratitude for what one learnt and earned in one's younger years. I can do no better than quote from my personal experience. When I retired from the Indian Navy, I was offered a few Non-Executive Directorship by well-known corporate bodies. I went straight to my good friend – Fali Nariman to seek his advice. I must confess that I was tempted. My friend Fali in his usual no non-sense way asked me, "Do you need the money?" I said to him, "I can live on my pension and savings." He said promptly that its wrong notion that Non-Executive Directors are not liable for the misdeeds of the Corporate bodies. Therefore, I declined all such invitations.

I happened to have heard of Servants of the People Society (SOPS). I went to Lajpat Bhawan in New Delhi, met Late Shri Sevak Ram who was the Chairman of the Delhi branch of Servants of the People Society. I volunteered my services pro-bono. He said that they would have to have a big enough project for me to handle. He asked to see if, I could get land for SOPS and build a Senior Citizen's home. I tried without much success and in early 1990s I was offered the Governorship of Sikkim. I accepted it. But contrary to the common perception that



Governors are rubber stamps, for what the Cabinet decides, I did my bit to ensure that Sikkim remained a peaceful State unlike other North-Eastern States. And I succeeded. I resigned not because of any problems created by the local politicians. The then Prime Minister of India, Shri Narasimha Rao wanted by hook or by crook to

make the local government a Congress party government. As a keeper of the constitution I was unhappy with his tactics. So I quit and came back to doing social work which I have found most satisfying.

admiralrht@hotmail.com

The time has come

Commander Gaurav Agarwal (Retd.)

*With a heavy heart
And emotions pulling me apart
After twenty years and then some,
The time to leave this fine service, dear Sir, has finally come.*

*Next month, much before this time
I shall be in civvy street (in my prime)*

*Looking forward to your continued support
Assistance given will be mentioned in your heavenly report*

*The Navy, without a doubt, is a mighty fine service
It made me a man from a wet-behind-the-ears novice*

*As I step out of this wonderful life
My mind is a ablaze, thoughts a-rife*

*You were, I know, always on my side
Being the proverbial friend, philosopher and guide*

*For all the help given to me
All I can say is - VMT (Very many thanks)*

*I wanted to continue in this service I wedded
It's traditions, glories and wonders embedded*

*But with a veteran's measured step and a spring anew
I leave the Navy for my life to renew*

*After twenty years and then some
The time to leave this fine service, dear Sir, has finally come.*

geetee1990@yahoo.com



Justice RN Sharma (Retd.), the 108 year old

Vice Admiral Mihir Roy (Retd.)



Justice Ram Nath Sharma, my neighbour in Sector 15 of Gurgaon (Haryana) for over 20 years is affectionately called by many names including Grand young old man, Sanskrit Pandit, Lord Denning of Allahabad High Court and honoured by the Judges Association of the Supreme Court and High Court when he reached 100 years.

Born in 1904, Justice Sharma had a humble beginning but by dint of hard work, intelligence and above all integrity rose to be a High Court Judge. He was also the Chairman of the Official Language Legislative Commission and other important assignments. After retirement, he has been helping poor people with legal advice and arguing their cases without charging any fees.

He gets very nostalgic over old times but is just as progressive to accept change.

When asked what is the biggest change in the life style, he replied that in the old days the first thing they

did everyday was praying to God. Now, he chuckled, it is seeing the email!

Full of humour he has many stories to tell. An interesting judgement he talks about is getting Hindus riding elephants in the narrow streets of a Muslim community which enabled them to peep at the Muslim women folk, was to insist that bells were tied on the elephant which enabled the Muslim women folk to go into purdah when they heard the 'jingling'. This judgement was contested by both parties but

upheld by the Appeals Court which in turn prevented communal riots!

When asked by the media that he was perhaps the oldest recipient of pension, he pointed out that he was perhaps the longest tax paying citizen.

When quizzed about the secret of his long life, he quips that perhaps his case file had been lost by the court of Lord Yama and his case was, therefore, adjourned! He is, therefore, patiently waiting in the departure lounge until his file is recovered!

His sense of humour, wit and intelligence and devoted care by his naval son Rear Admiral Ramen Sharma (Retd.) and daughter-in-law Usha perhaps gives courage to Veterans to remain a lovable replica of "Father Time". Justice Sharma is also uncle of his brother's sons, Commodore Gyanu Sharma (Retd) and Captain Guddu Sharma (Retd).

sios@bol.net.in



Father Time

Rear Admiral Ramen Sharma (Retd.)



My father, Justice Ram Nath Sharma, had a very humble beginning being born in a family of meagre means. Always a brilliant student, he topped in Sanskrit in 1925 BA examination of Lucknow University and was awarded the Queen Victoria Medal. He topped again in his MA examination. As a student he participated actively in the freedom movement and came under the influence of national leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Subhash Chandra Bose, Moti Lal Nehru and Jawahar Lal Nehru, which kindles an inner flame and deep nationalistic feeling in him. He remembers forming a cordon around Jawahar Lal Nehru to protect him from a lathi charge. With a smile he also recalls that he was arrested along with many others during a pro-freedom demonstration and huddled in a truck but was soon pushed out of the vehicle by a British Sergeant. The Sergeant yelled, "Laddie you are lucky to escape as there is not enough space in this truck". He shot back at the Sergeant, "I will wait for you here if you promise to come back with a bigger truck". Everyone laughed even the Sergeant gave a smile.

He is god-fearing, without being staunchly

religious. During a conference in the UK, he was asked that in a country like India where communal hatred and castism was so deep rooted, how he born a Brahmin could be a fair judge. He answered saying that he remained fully conscious of his birth and feared the prejudices they could instil in the dispensation of justice. This constant apprehension kept him on an even heel and did not let him lose his sense of fair play. He was guided by the feeling that there is God above and duty before him. His religion was giving even-handed justice and nothing else. As regards the current situation in the country, he feels with the ever increasing complexities of a democratic state run on party lines, a judge's role is assuming greater importance and his duties are becoming more onerous than before.

The rolling by of years has somewhat dimmed the sparkle in his eyes and sharp intellect but not his will to be at peace with his surroundings as he waits patiently for the ultimate. Come rain, come sunshine he stays a loveable living replica of Father Time.

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Philanthropic work of late Rear Admiral PN Gour

Mrs Pramila Gour

Late Rear Admiral Prakash N Gour had an illustrious career in the good old Indian Navy and he topped it off with an even more valuable second career working as a volunteer for the visually handicapped for over a decade after his retirement. His years in uniform spanned 39 from 1951 to 1990 and salt water flowed in his veins. During his naval years, life revolved around ships, the sea, dockyards, refits, exercises and what have you. In those days Rear Admirals retired at 56 and he discovered himself retired while still in his prime. The choices ahead were many - lucrative assignments in the private sector, safe assignments in the public sector, consultancy options, etc. After retirement, his priority was to contribute to society rather than simply earn a living as a corporate employee.

He chose to serve as a volunteer at ICARE, a charitable eye hospital in NOIDA. ICARE is a large and unique eye hospital in that part of the country. It performs between 10,000 to 13,000 eye operations a year and treats about 1.5 lakh patients each year.

Most of these operations and treatments are done free of cost or at significantly subsidized rates. The beneficiaries are the poor and rural folk of Western UP, Haryana and Delhi. ICARE was founded and is led by Dr Sushil Choudhry, a visionary maverick with a deep motivation to serve the under privileged.

Gour devoted his full day at ICARE as 'manager at large' taking care of several functions such as administration, people management and motivation, facilities, and building the organizational team to deliver on the constantly increasing volumes of operations and patients. He brought to the hospital the right dose of Naval discipline and 'bandobust' and

sense of 'esprit de corp'. His significant contributions were in developing the Human Resources department, the medical library for doctors, extension of the facility and training the personnel in management and administration. **Moreover, being an electrical engineer, he kept a hawk's eye on electrical equipment fitted in ICARE during its growth. His interest and contribution spread across nearly all departments.** Had it not been for the deterring presence of the doctors, he might have even wielded the surgeon's knife in the operating theatre!

Dr Sushil Choudhry the founder of ICARE says of Gour, "He was a loving, caring, generous, calm ever smiling person - Admiral Prakash Gour is one of the finest men I've had the pleasure of working with. His humaneness and sensitivity, his caring ways with those working under him, endeared him to one and all."

Dr Choudhry goes on to say, "An erudite person, we learnt so much from him about mythology, history, geography and nautical terms. He lent a naval touch to all he wrote, the projects he prepared, the charts he made, the humorous captions to the photographs are a delight to read over and over again. His day to day dealings with everyone - patients, staff members, colleagues bore a distinctive aspect of his career - his sincerity, humaneness and his interest in every individual. He always had time to listen - a rare quality which endears to one and all. He was so kind hearted that we have seen him moved to tears while trying to solve someone's problems. He left his footprints in every nook and corner of ICARE and its activities. His presence is everywhere - the void he has left behind is difficult to fill."

A very senior volunteer at ICARE, Mrs Aloka Das,



says, "Admiral Gour joined us after retiring from the Navy at the time we started the Hospital in Sector 26, NOIDA. Popularly designated as PNG - I still would not know what PN stands for - a lovable character, full of verve, vigor, virility and vivacity steered us through the most difficult times when we were finding out ways and means to run this large organization. He applied very aptly all his valuable Ship experience to ICARE model. Ship and Navy was so ingrained in him that he had designated a day in a month to do the House Keeping, called it "Cleanship" - everyone across layers were involved in "Cleanship". His widespread knowledge spanning diverse fields like HR, Project Planning, Nature, Eclipse, Kailash were astonishing and some even were published in various magazines and newspapers. In fact, his innumerable writings and quotes could easily be turned into a book in itself. He left an indelible impression on each one of us. We still feel his presence and follow his guidance, though he left us five years back."

In more ways than one his contribution to the world of the visually impaired was as great if not greater than his contribution to the Indian Navy. He played a key role in supporting Dr Sushil Choudhry and his team of doctors to save the sight of literally tens of thousands of poor and rural patients.

In January 2008 Prakash Gour sailed over the horizon. Every year, on his birthday, 28th January, he organized a special lunch for the staff and patients of ICARE. Even today, after five years of his passing away, his birthday is celebrated as a tribute and remembrance of his great contribution to the growth of ICARE Hospital.

His wife Pramila Gour today works at ICARE once a week as a volunteer.

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INTERESTING ANECDOTE

In 1953, Late Prakash Gour along with a group of Indian cadets was training under the Royal Navy on the British carrier HMS Triumph. On Sundays a church service was conducted on board the carrier's deck. The Indian cadets were given the option of holding their own 'church service' in the officers wardroom to which the dozen odd cadets readily agreed. During the hour long service the XO of the ship would peep in and returned satisfied that oriental hymns were in progress....the cadets were playing 'antakshree' the game of Hindi film songs, clapping and swaying their heads in unison!!

The Bible and the Vedas

Rear Admiral Y N Inamdar (Retd.)

When I was Admiral Superintendent, Naval Dockyard, Visakhapatnam in the early eighties, Admiral OS Dawson who was C-in-C, Southern Naval Command sent one of his tugs called the Matanga to my Dockyard for a refit. The Matanga was probably expecting to be treated as an unwelcome burden. He was pleasantly surprised to receive VIP treatment instead. In fact, so pleased was the Matanga that he flashed me a signal which I could read from my office window. It said, "When I was naked you clothed me; when I was hungry you fed me," and so on. The duty signalman who received the signal brought it to me and asked, "What reply shall I make, Sir, he is quoting from the Bible?" I said, make "Atithi Devo Bhavh", from the Vedas meaning 'Guest is God!'. Just as the Matanga disappeared over the horizon, there was no comeback!

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Arogyaswami J Paulraj

Admiral RH Tahliani (Retd.)

In 1982 when I was posted in Cochin as Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Southern Naval Command, it was my good fortune to come across a bright and energetic young officer – Commander Arogyaswami Paulraj. He was at that time deputed to the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) and was heading the APSOH sonar project at the Naval Physical and Oceanographic Laboratory (NPOL). APSOH, of course, later become our fleet sonar and was a major success for Indian R&D.

We in India often excel in locking ourselves up in bureaucratic prisons. One tiny example was that despite the obvious utility of a residential telephone for Paulraj, given his project responsibilities, the DRDO was unable (or perhaps unwilling) to sanction him one. However, in order to ensure Paulraj was not handicapped, I allocated him a residential telephone from the Naval quota. The Navy was quick to spot the potential in Paulraj and I am proud that we backed him in many ways – both big and small. Paulraj not only built our core sonar capability but went on to make major technology contributions at the global scale earning kudos for him and bringing glory to our country.

Paulraj is now easily among the very top scientists in the world in wireless technology. One of his inventions (1992) known as MIMO (Multiple Input Multiple Output) dramatically speeds up wireless communications. MIMO is now the key to today's wireless broadband networks. Paulraj, a few years later, combined MIMO with another concept called OFDM and this became the core technology of 4G mobile networks and is used by billions around the globe. India already uses MIMO powered WiFi and 3G mobile and the 4G networks are due soon. Paulraj's ideas spawned well over thousand PhDs

worldwide and underpin a \$100 billion plus annual equipment industry. Not surprisingly Paulraj is known both as the Father of MIMO and 4G Cellular Technologies.

It is worth briefly outlining Paulraj's career. He joined the National Defence Academy in 1961 and graduated at the top of his class. This was followed by training at INS Tir, Shivaji and Valsura, Given his stellar course record, the Navy nominated him for an M.Tech Program at the IIT, Delhi in 1969. The IIT was so impressed with Paulraj that they soon pressed that he works for a PhD instead. I am glad that we had the foresight to quickly agree. The pay back came soon enough. After the 1971 Indo-Pak war and the loss of INS Khukri, Paulraj led a project at IIT, Delhi to design a new electronics package for Sonar 170B. The new design was a great success and was fitted in all 170B sonar ships. After a brief stint in the UK, Paulraj launched the APSOH project that I have referred to earlier.

After APSOH, Dr. Arunachalam, then DRDO's chief, offered Paulraj a sabbatical, and he spent this at Stanford University, USA. While at Stanford, and not surprisingly, he discovered a major new idea in antenna signal processing that earned him an open offer to join the prestigious Stanford faculty. Paulraj was, however, keen to return to India. I was then the Chief of the Naval Staff and at Paulraj's request, I persuaded the DRDO to let him start a new laboratory, i.e. Center for Artificial Intelligence and Robotics, rather than taking over one of the existing DRDO labs.

Dr. Arunachalam was keen to get Paulraj to co-lead the LCA program but Paulraj's suggestions for a less cumbersome administrative structure did not get the



final approval and Paulraj moved on to start two other labs-the Central Research Labs for Bharat Electronics and Center for Development for Advanced Computing for Department of Electronics. However, the bureaucratic culture of Indian science in 1990s (I hope things have changed since then) was a far cry from what Paulraj had come to know well in the US. So in 1992, Paulraj returned to Stanford and was appointed Professor in 1993. He invented MIMO - one of the most important ideas in telecommunications history, within months after returning to Stanford.

Like most Stanford professors, Paulraj founded two high technology companies in the Silicon Valley. The first - Iospan Wireless Inc. developed the core 4G wireless technology and was acquired by Intel Corp. In 2003, his second company - Beceem Communications Inc. became the market leader in 4G chip sets and was acquired by Broadcom Corp. in 2010. At Stanford, Paulraj has graduated over 50 PhD and Post-doctoral students and has, of course, a notable publications record of textbooks, papers and patents.

Paulraj has received several recognitions at the international level including the IEEE Alexander Graham Bell medal, the highest award in telecommunications. The Bell Medal is reserved for major Telecom pioneers such as the inventors of the internet, World Wide Web and satellite communications. He is an elected member of several prestigious national scientific academies including those of US and Sweden. The Indian Government awarded him the Padma Bhushan in 2010.

Paulraj is now a Professor Emeritus at Stanford University (he retired in 2010) and a Senior Advisor to Broadcom Corp. Paulraj is also an Honorary Professor in the People's Republic of China, the UK, and India and he serves on several boards and councils around the world. Paulraj keeps in close touch with India and visits here several times a year. He has taken time off to visit our training schools and I understand that he addressed the cadets at the Indian Naval Academy, Ezhimala, recently. I hope he will continue to engage and inspire our young officers.

Paulraj is also easily the most internationally known telecommunications engineer/researcher to emerge from India in recent decades and made more remarkable because he is also completely self-taught. We, in the Indian Navy, can take special pride for nurturing and protecting this global talent during his early formative years. I am keeping my fingers crossed that one day he will be shortlisted for a Nobel Prize (even though engineers are traditionally not eligible). It will be the first for a former naval cadet from India's National Defence Academy.

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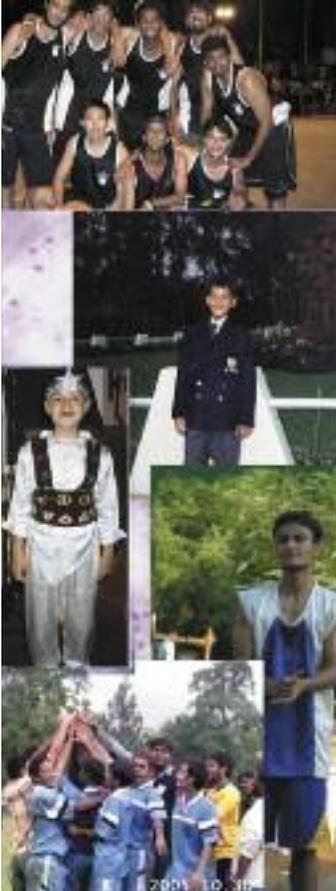
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A brave boy's prophetic vision

Commodore Arun Kumar (Retd.)



There when God loved, the young, says an old sage, his sleep continues to inspire the living through prophetic guidance. Aljoshka was one such young boy ordained to live even after death.

Aljoshka Kumar was born on the Human Rights Day on 10th December 1984, in the freezing winter of the far eastern port of Vladivostok's Vladivostok where his father, Indian Navy Officer Mr. Arun Kumar (then Commodore) was training as submarine. The hours of distant homecoming snatched him, very tragically and untimely, from our midst even before he could celebrate his 24th birthday.

Aljoshka, in his wisdom and foresight, had willed ideas to the only one part of you that "I want my sleep to be used to start a charity from after I am no more. I also want to donate my spot. Those were prophetic words from a super intelligent child prodigy who contended his rare and irreproachable to invest with great sleep to the limited time available to him.

...and... Aljoshka, the Founder of... (text partially obscured)

Aljoshka touched all our lives briefly, but deeply. Maybe he was just supposed to be that, because, as they say, the brighter the flame, the shorter of a life it has. That is precisely what Aljoshka was in our lives. A bright flame that shined brightly, but briefly, and in its short span of his several decades with its warmth, and its courage. The earliest, and the most vivid memory that I have of Aljoshka is of a bright cherubic face with twinkling eyes, and spiky hair. He used to come to class CPSE at that time, and he had come to discuss an error regarding the school which greatly troubled his young mind. I remember telling his father later that year that he was 'the war & head for a peace & body'. But that is what Aljoshka was. Never afraid to express an opinion, no matter how dissenting it might be under the circumstances, never afraid to reach out to meet new conceptual environments might he never expect to be different if the cause was right. Aljoshka epitomized all that is known about 'The Brave New World'. Whenever you may be Aljoshka please know that you were a blessing to our lives, and we were privileged to have known you.

Aljoshka was a special boy with a philanthropic soul. Our parents and some well-wishers have set up a public charitable trust called 'The Brave New World Foundation', which is registered with the Charity Commissioner at Chennai. The objectives are to educate deserving children who do not have financial means. This trust has instituted scholarships for the students' needs in Government, Public Schools. There are scholarships instituted at the Central and the New Territories. The website for the Trust is www.thebravefoundation.org

humanities and joined the National Law School of India University, Bangalore (No 1 Law School in India) in June 2002, standing 9th in order of merit, all India, in the entrance exam.

He completed his graduation from NLSIU in end Sept 2007 and had already been appointed as a junior lawyer by a reputed Law firm Wadia & Ghandi in Mumbai where he was to join on 16th Oct 2007.

Destiny, unfortunately, snatched him from us in very unfortunate and tragic circumstances. In the wee hours of 30th Sept 2007 at Bangalore, he was brutally

Alyosha Kumar, my son, was born on 10th December 1984 during the freezing winter, in the far eastern Russian Port of Vladivostok, where I was posted, undergoing Nuclear Submarine Training.

Ever since his birth, it was apparent that Alyosha was a special child, exceptionally gifted. Throughout his primary and secondary schooling at Naval Public Schools, Lawrence School, Lovedale and later Modern School, Barakhamba Road, New Delhi, he excelled in academics and sports with equal ease. He appeared for SATS in 2001 and obtained a score of 1500, which was exceptional by any means.

For his higher studies, he opted to go in for

and fatally stabbed to death on the roadside whilst defending the honour of his friend, who some hoodlums tried to molest.

Alyosha was a very intelligent, compassionate and humane person, who always expressed his views with conviction and without fear or favour. He would stick his neck out to fight injustice and would often say "I cannot stay quiet in the face of injustice". It may not be coincidental that he was born on Human Rights Day!

During his stay at the Law School, he was funding the education (out of his pocket allowance) for the granddaughter of a lady (Amma as he would call her)



vending tea outside his college premises. He had also desired to, later in his life, work in the field of micro financing for the upliftment and empowerment of the poor.

Wealth accumulation and materialistic values for personal comfort had no attraction for him. His Head Master at Lawrence School Mr. Dev Lahiri (a Rhodes Scholar) during Alyosha's stay there from 1994-98 has very appropriately summed up his short life in an obituary he wrote on him - "Never afraid to express an opinion no matter how dissenting it might be under the circumstances, never afraid to reach out no matter how uncongenial the environment might be, never afraid to be different if the cause was right, Alyosha epitomized all that is brave about "The Brave New World".

At the tender age of nine and a half years, Alyosha wrote, "I am normal like all others with good and bad feelings as I also am the one who does good and bad. Though I'm immensely intelligent, I do not designate myself as the best person, who definitely has a better personality than myself. Though I do not show affection outside I have a soft corner for but some. Those I love, I love truly with all my heart. I am reasonably daring with quite a bit of courage. I understand people but I can't fulfill their needs. That is why I want my money to be used to start a charity forum after I'm no more. I also want to donate my eyes."

It is absolutely unusual for a mere boy to think, leave alone write like that. It was a gift to him from the Lord. To honour his wish, we his parents and friends have

started a public charitable Trust "The Brave New World Foundation". The Trust is presently supporting more than 25 children across the country including in Naval schools, Army schools, Lawrence school, Lovedale, St Joseph's Boys school in Coonor, as also some blind children in Ratnagiri and Shimoga districts. The website for the Trust is www.thebravenewworldfoundation.com. This is our endeavour to realize the vision of a gifted and exceptionally bright boy.

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MY LIFE OF UPS AND DOWNS
INCIDENTS
IMPORTANT DATES IN WEEKS

TODAY WE HAD A SHOCK WHEN MR. BACHHAN SAID
DUE BATHS WERE ALTERNATE DAYS AS THERE
HAD BEEN NO RAINS, & WE HOPE IT STARTS RAINING
IN THE NEAR FUTURE.



MY PERSON IN BRIEF

I am normal like all others, with good and bad feelings and I'm also one who does good and bad. Though I'm immensely intelligent, I do not designate myself as the best person, who definitely has a better personality than myself. Though I don't show affection outside, but have a soft corner for but some. Those I love, I love truly, with all my heart.



I am reasonably daring quite with a bit of courage. Though I understand people I can't fulfill their needs. That is why I want my money to be used to start a charity forum after I'm no more I also want to donate my eyes.



Captain of the Ship

Commodore MV Suresh (Retd.)

Everybody has to retire from the Navy. Some retire prematurely, some normally, some reluctantly, some assiduously work to seek extension, in exceptional cases, some seek legal opinion of their birth certificate. Yet inevitably, inexorably the door is shown to you - graciously you accept, sometimes you are pulled out ceremoniously, I am not using the phrase pushed out, although that may be more appropriate. Sometimes the same red carpet is made ready for the incumbent Commanding Officer. It was the final hand shake, if you do not understand then, when it was the time to understand, there is nothing you can do, it will sink in perceptibly, insidiously, that you are alone, utterly alone. New skills have to be learnt, the Navy had provided a warm cocoon, comfortable accommodation, free ration, leave travel, you take everything for granted, that such a life will extend till perpetuity. The impending retirement starts nibbling your ego; out in the wild world how will you survive, pension will help to support one leg, now you are looking on timorously as to where to keep the other leg. Politics is not a career option, it is a burning hot plate; Naval Officers are notoriously incompetent in this field. The sea teaches you to be honest and brave, such qualifications are grossly inadequate to meet the challenges of politics. No Naval Officer to my memory has become a cabinet minister.

Most naval officers migrate towards the Merchant Navy, the environment is the Sea, the Mother's bosom which nurtured and made us what we are. The sea remains our protector, our provider, those who sail the high seas have always reaped bounteous rewards from time immemorial. The brave who face the rough seas and persevere return to harbour to claim his just share, sometimes you have to face its cyclonic weather, the sea is a tough task master, unforgiving and yet benevolent, mysterious, arcane and yet serene and soothing.

Taking over command in the merchant navy was an anti-

climax to what I went through in the Navy; in the Navy we had a ceremonial guard, Divisions, sparkling uniforms, a sword. I had a problem handling the sword!. In the Merchant Navy, an agent met me at the airport with the name board, I was glad to see my name scribbled on a cardboard. The taxi came, luggage was loaded and I was driven straight to the port gate. The agent runs to the security office indicating in-coming Captain, the taxi is allowed, cab reaches the ship, the agent escorts you up the gangway, the duty Seaman stands up and smiles; no salute, his right hand moves up to waist height indicating welcome. I am ushered into the Capt's cabin. After due introduction the taking over documents are kept ready. You check the ship's certificates, check cash in hand, sign the documents and in half an hour you have taken over command. Invariably the agent will escort the old Captain in the same taxi back to the airport. You are now the Captain of the ship, sometimes the Port Pilot will embark and sail the ship to your next voyage in less than half an hour.

Introduction to the crew takes place in due course, invariably the crew are as diligent and as conscientious as you want them to be. It is amazing to see a crew of 15 to 20 manning the entire ship, and yet everything is spic and span, you may not see even a rag piece in the engine room bilges, every spanner kept in the marked slot. Sometimes you do meet characters, that you may classify as certified fit to be thrown overboard, you learn to adjust to them, they may not adjust to you. However, the Capt's authority remains supreme and is generally inviolable.

Once I was called urgently to join a ship, the incumbent Capt had run the ship aground and damaged the ship's rudders. He refused to accept the blame, the refusal to accept the blame is a common feature in the Merchant Navy. The ship was entering the Kamorta Harbour in the Andamans, there was an entrance buoy in the



channel. You are supposed to leave the buoy on the starboard side which is the right side of your ship. That day he left it to the port side which is on the left side of the ship. He inadvertently entered the shallow patch, the ship touched the bottom of the channel and in a panic he ordered "Full Astern". The ship gathered stern momentum. When you panic the mind goes blank, he was in a state of frozen inactivity, the ship gathered momentum and hit the opposite bank and the rudder stock got twisted, the ship was towed back and dry docked. The Capt demanded that he sign off, hence I was called. The insurance claim was made, repairs were carried out and the voyage was resumed. End of the episode, chapter closed.

In the Navy, there would have been a Board of Inquiry. Many a bright careers were broken for much smaller

mistakes - the agony of the Board of Inquiry, the Court Martial, the tenebrous atmosphere, an ineluctable struggle, the tension that drags for weeks. Even if you are found not guilty, you are marked for life. Your name may even be forgotten, the incident never, they would say, remember the Capt who ran aground in Kamorta. There was a Naval Capt who collided with the Venduruthy Bridge, few would remember who the Capt was, I don't. But I heard that during the court martial, the Capt was asked, where was he after the accident, the famous reply, "I was on Vendurthy Bridge", the story is apocryphal, the exact details are unverifiable. In the Merchant Navy, it is just "Sign Off", end of contract, settle my payment, give me my air ticket, thank you and goodbye!

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The origin of the greeting Jai Hind

Commodore Subrata Bose (Retd)

The common form of greeting in the Armed Forces is "JAI HIND". However, I wonder how many of us know how and when this form of greeting originated. I must confess that I did not. It is only whilst reading a book "His Majesty's Opponent", the biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, that I came across the origin.

After escaping from house-arrest in Calcutta in January 1941, Subhas Chandra Bose arrived in Berlin in April 1941, via Kabul and Moscow. In Berlin, he set up a Free India Centre and from amongst the prisoner-of-war Indian soldiers captured in North Africa, he raised an Indian Legion which numbered about 4000. In a departure from the British system, Bose had the soldiers from all castes, communities and religions integrated in the smallest tactical unit.

A Tagore song, "Jana Gana Mana Adhinayak Jaya He", seeking divine benediction for India was chosen by

Bose as the national anthem. Bose asked his aides to "find a common national greeting that would have a nice ring to it and would be acceptable to all religious communities". One day, Abid Hasan, one of his deputies, heard some Rajput soldiers greet each other with "Jai Ramji Ki", a phrase that had a musical quality. Hasan changed it to "Jai Hindustan Ki." This did not quite work, but the abbreviated form "Jai Hind" sounded perfect and Netaji enthusiastically embraced it as India's national greeting. These words became India's national slogan in 1947, and continues to reverberate across the length and breadth of the country.

Note: With kind permission of Prof. Sugata Bose, Gardiner Professor of History, Harvard University and author of "His Majesty's Opponent".

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What the Navy gave me

Captain Ravi Mehta (Retd.)

Retirement in the Navy happens at an early age. In these days of longevity, one is fit to put in several years of active service even after retirement.

The Navy gave me my first break out of uniform in the Merchant Marine. The first act on joining the Shipping Corporation of India was to go on strike, along with the other officers agitating for parity with the salaries paid by foreign companies.

It was a baptism to civil life where adjustment is the key to survival. We in the Navy, learnt to be flexible in dealing with people without sacrificing discipline.

Another virtue that comes naturally is teamwork. We were taught that the 'speed of the convoy is the speed of the slowest ship'. This essentially means teamwork, which is vital in getting things done.

The day starts with 'both watches' reaching office punctually, well groomed and dressed, keeping workplaces clean and planning the day according to priorities. Like 'clean ship', we have to identify areas that need greater attention and areas that can wait before applying the paint.

Leadership attributes in the Navy translate into management skills, out of uniform. I was indeed fortunate to serve under great leaders like Mohinder Nath Mulla and Ronnie Pereira. Mulla was known for his bold leadership and skills in oratory. He would speak his mind out without fear on the VHF and at Commanding Officers' meetings with the Flag Officer. His talks in INS Rana to the ship's company at 'Clear Lower Decks' were truly inspiring.

Ronnie Pereira, the most loved Chief that the Navy has produced was an epitome of leadership by

example. His integrity and sincerity were exemplary and infectious.

As a malleable young officer, Mulla and Pereira left a deep impression on me. It is heartbreaking to read in the newspapers these days regarding controversies involving Service Chiefs. Gone are the days of Amar (General Malhotra), Akbar (Air Marshal Latif) and Anthony (Ronnie Pereira) - when the services were held in high esteem.

Amongst the other things, the Navy prepares you for hardships in day to day living. Life in ships is not a bed of roses. One has to share cabins and on occasions bunks as well. Water rationing is a way of life. Sleeping hours are irregular for watch-keepers. Although sleep is severely restricted at sea, one has to remain alert throughout the day. We are, therefore, better equipped to handle the water and power cuts that are endemic to life in cities today.

May I, therefore, through these pages in the Quarter Deck, thank the Navy for twenty years of an exhilarating experience in uniform followed by a rewarding and unbeaten innings outside...

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On being promoted

Mrs Dulcie Suresh



The stork came calling last October. He brought a bonny baby girl full of smiles, burps and gurgles. We were promoted right away from parents to grand parents. We didn't have to wait for the third time to be lucky. No effort on our part was required. I was immediately catapulted to my primary school days and recalled these lines:

*"Granny Grindle loves her Spindle
Very seldom she comes out;
Granny Bowing does the sowing
For the children round about"*

The reds, blues and greens were put away. The dominant colour became gray and brown for the first few months. As both of us could neither spin, weave or knit, the Kids Corners were invaded. Thank heavens for the baby bonanza shops, which offered mittens, caps, socks, bibs, baby clothes and disposables; also an assortment of toys. We had to learn a new wave of baby care - no water or fruit juice

till five months. Gripe water was banned. We witnessed painful spasms. The paediatrician won.

Life during the early days made us recall the Grand Old Duke of York. He figured in pre school rhymes. We shared the same title 'grand' and a similar life style. For those of you who have forgotten the rhyme, here it is:

The Grand old Duke of York
He had ten thousand men,
He marched them up to the top of the hill
And he marched them down again,
And when they were up
They were up,
And when they were down
They were down,
And when they were nearly half way up
They were neither up nor down.

Like the Duke we travelled from Trichur to Bangalore and back again on a regular basis. Sometimes we were neither in Trichur nor in Bangalore but in Mysore, almost half way up. Life was quite stressful and I never understood the predicament of the Duke until my own successive travels up and down.

Life changed in other ways. It was one more person to look after and pray for. We often wonder why there are new births when the earth is bursting at the seams with people. Perhaps the Creator has not given up on the rebellious and disobedient. He hopes to create another immortal playwright, artist, philosopher or perhaps just another affectionate, cuddlesome grandchild to cheer up her aging grandparents.

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Leh-Ladakh a naval medical perspective

Major General Subroto Kundu (Retd.)



My first sight of Leh–Ladakh was way back in Oct 1988, when as a Surgeon Commander at NHQ, I was detailed along with Lt Cdr CS Patham, a diver, to have a look at the problems being faced with regard to the Recompression Chambers (RCC) at the MH, Leh and a Field Hospital in the Nubra Valley. Our arrival at Leh by AN-12 of the Air Force from Chandigarh was itself an experience. The only seats available to the two naval passengers were in the toilet with a seat cover which I laid claim to being the senior and the other on the oil stained deck which was allocated to Patham. After weathering the initial discomfort of the flight, our Air Force pilots once over the snow covered mountains, invited us to the flight deck to enjoy the most fabulous panoramic view of the peaks below and the dark blue sky above. It was breath-taking to say the least especially from the Navigator's bay in the snout of the aircraft.

On landing, Patham and I decided to skip the Army officials waiting to take us for a complete bed rest for the next 4-5 days. At 12000 ft, we quickly disembarked from the AN-12 and made a quick get away. This was possible for the sole reason that an Indian Airlines flight had landed ahead of us and our welcome group were quite busy attempting to sight us amongst IA passengers. Outside the airport we hijacked an Army

jeep without too much difficulty and got a drop at the nearby Field Ambulance close to the MH. Being a Medical Officer, the Officer Commanding of the Field Ambulance welcomed us and immediately put us up in his Mess.

At about 1600h, the two of us decided to go for a stroll, and we hit the main road as we took deep breaths of the chilly but purest form of air. It was heady, quite possibly, due to a mild mountain sickness, but that did not deter us as we enjoyed the jaw dropping beauty of the snow covered mountains in the setting sun. However, in a little while we were waylaid by the same Army welcome group who had missed us at the airfield. While the IA flight turned out negative with regard to two Naval officers, the Air Force pilot did affirm our presence on their aircraft and how we had slipped away to avoid the compulsory quarantine. They had little difficulty in locating us for the sole reason that Medical Officers prefer to reside in the local MH or Field Ambulance all for the sake of familiarity.

We arrived back at the Mess at 1900h and decided to go straight to the bar which was closed. The bar in-charge initially hesitated to let us in, as the timing for the service to commence was only at 1930h. Once we introduced ourselves and pulled rank (the OC being of the same rank) and the fact that Naval officers cannot wait beyond 1900h for a first drink, the Steward gave in docilely. By the time the OC and his officers arrived a little while later, Patham and I were already two large Rum ahead.

The third day we managed an Army Aviation chopper ride across the Khardungla. The chopper perforce had to fly upward in a spiral, gradually gaining height from 12000 ft to 19000 ft. The main village, Deskit, was left behind as we approached the landing pad at Partapur



located at a height of 10000 ft. We had the pleasure of calling on the local Brigade Commander viz Brig Nanavati a veteran of the region. We requested for a visit to the Siachen Base Camp and the glacier which he most willingly acceded to, knowing our background.

The following day we were provided a Cheetah helo lift to Base camp at 15000 ft. The Base camp is at the snout of the glacier which was at that time 80 km long and 5 km wide – a highway into our country from neighboring nations.

Flying at those heights was extremely challenging and risky. In fact most flying sorties were completed by 1400h because of the rapid change in weather as also the extreme winds that build up thereafter. We too got caught up in one such surge resulting in the helo actually being forced 90° to its flight path. The razor sharp mountain sides approached rapidly as the pilots attempted to pull out of the wind current with all muscles and sinews straining. The pilots did succeed finally only because the wind suddenly dropped and we got back on course for the Base Camp.

Our final day was as exhilarating as the previous ones. We now had to get back to Chandigarh. We reported to the Thoise Air Base but found a large crowd of soldiers and a few officers awaiting an airlift to Chandigarh too. Some had been waiting for week at the Transit Camp. As luck would have it the Vice Chief of Air Staff arrived in an AN-32 followed by another with journalists on board. While the Vice Chief's aircraft was parked for the day, the second AN-32 after disembarking the journalists was getting ready to return to Chandigarh. Patham and I being in our white uniforms stood out amongst a sea of OG and we were soon approached by the BBC journalist, Mark Tully, who enquired as to whether the Navy was going to establish a Submarine/ Diving Base at Pangong-Tso lake, the largest brackish body of water at high altitude in Asia. Our reply was, "No Comments." Mark Tully gave us a wry grin and went on his way.

It was at that moment, the returning AN-32 began taxiing towards the runway without a single passenger on board. My reaction was spontaneous, "Patham hold onto the baggage, I have got to stop this aircraft." I did the 100 mtrs dash in record time as I overtook the taxiing aircraft and stopped directly ahead of it. The aircraft stopped rolling. The portside cockpit window was opened.

On spotting the pilot, I indicated that I was a Navy Commander and Doctor. He indicated his acceptance to embark the two of us. Patham had to cover 100 mtrs with two suitcases on the double while the Airmen quickly opened a hatch and lowered the steps. For some reason they were returning empty to Chandigarh while a 100 Army personnel awaited a lift. The moment we stepped into the aircraft, the pilots commenced taxiing towards the runway. The waiting Army Officers and Jawans just stood and stared. The AN-32 climbed into the air in front of their eyes. On querying, no plausible explanation was given to us for some reason.

Leh-Ladakh surely is a paradise of peace, tranquility and simplicity. This was all so visible in the various Gompas dotting the region. It was an entrancing experience. Who was to predict that I would keep officially returning to this region till I retired. The appointment to the Army Northern Command way ahead of my time would be a gift on a platter one day!

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Second Innings

Rear Admiral JMS Sodhi (Retd.)

Every Navy man has to retire one day unless he kicks the bucket whilst still in service but unfortunately majority of the serving personnel think that they will not retire soon and therefore pay little attention to their own retirement plans or the plight of the veterans. Life after retirement can be very fulfilling provided you have no bitterness of the past and are determined to make your life tension free and enjoyable and to do things which you always wanted to do but could not spare the time or effort due to service commitments.

The second innings comes to people at different stages in their life and for Naval Veterans (officers) usually depends on the age and rank at which they retire as well as the financial background and network of contacts that they have developed during their first innings. Those officers who retire before completing pensionable service are a class apart and usually have some avenues like family business or extensive financial backing and can also pull the necessary strings to leave the service. These people are usually well settled and always look back to their career in services with pride and do not mind flouting their rank in the civilian arena.

The most difficult and challenging age to retire is after 20 years of service when one is relatively young but promotion avenues are not available and the future is uncertain. With minimum pension assured one can look for a career in the civil field and there are tremendous opportunities for this highly motivated and developed person who is generally an asset to any organization he goes to as the military training has made him a very useful citizen of the country though at times I feel that the military makes us unfit for the society we live in.

The category which has a soft landing during the second innings are the very senior officers who retire

with handsome pension and with the contacts cultivated by some during their first innings in high position are generally assured of some goodies in the form of appointments as advisers and consultants to various shipyards, PSUs, Ministries etc. They also have the wherewithal to do social work and therefore their second innings is bound to see them scoring high on the satisfaction level. The category which faces the maximum difficulties is the officers in the age group of 45-55 who are considered old for a second career in the corporate world and their domestic requirements are also at the maximum as the children are usually not fully settled. They are left to fend for themselves, though there are many success stories in this category also.

However, notwithstanding the above categorization, the second innings usually depends on you and your family's attitude to life and how you can make the best of the truncated career. Firstly, I think that playing golf is the greatest leveler as it keeps you busy for 4-5 hours and gives your spouse the necessary space to attend to domestic chores. All sporting activities are good but golf takes a lot of time which the retired community has in abundance and therefore is a great pass-time. Then some other mental activity is also required as otherwise time will hang on you and here the veterans have found several ingenious ways to keep themselves busy and the society enriched.

Thus the second innings which has come to most not as a choice, but, as a requirement of the very steep pyramid structure of the defence forces, it has to be enjoyed to the fullest and one should not forget the wonderful first innings we had and the comradeship we developed during our formative years

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Another Port of Call

Rear Admiral SK Das (Retd.)

After a long First Innings of 35 years in white uniform, my second innings commenced somewhat prematurely in 1995.

The 35 years took full 35 years throwing me from ship to ship, place to place. I thought that I had achieved a whole lifetime of experiences and jobs. Now, for a break into the easier retired civil life.

Four days after retirement from DSSC Wellington, I was at my work station at Pipavav, the start of the Second Innings. The job at hand was not to sail a ship from A to B or to conduct the Fleet Regatta or to arrange a Navy Training Conference. It was to build a seaport where none existed! Yes, a whole port. Divine justice this, from merely oiling a running machine of the Navy for 35 years, to creating a whole port at a remote waterfront of a wasteland...that too, in just 6 months!

Yes, justice had caught up with me, it was to be 24X7 for the foreseeable future. Sure, I had visited a lot of ports, but such visits were from Seawards. I saw the enormity of effort that was required to develop a port from waterfront, landwards. My boss and mentor was not going to give me a good or bad ACR based on how I did it, he was going to whip me into getting it done, at any cost, his money had been sunk into it. In the Service, time was a matter of discipline. Out here, time was money.

The days, the weeks and months just rolled by, daylight merging into darkness of the nights. In flat six and a half months, the 'port' was ready, a vessel came in, loaded and sailed off. I recall, it was the MV Kwang Myong carrying oil cakes to China. Done at last!

Not so fast, far from done. It never stopped there, the port being constantly upgraded, enlarged and modernised. The saga for me went on for just short of 14 years, little less

than what Lord Sri Ram endured in the desolate forests. These fourteen years, however, went like fourteen months. Today, looking back from a serene place like NOIDA, I realise that I had been given an easy educational 35 years in the Navy, to prepare for real work which was at Pipavav.

How did I manage? Simple, the Navy had groomed and prepared me. Life outside was no better or no worse. It was different - and the Navy trains one for different situations all the time! More important, the Navy trains the wives too, in handling changed circumstances, emergencies and dealing with the unknown. From a bit of a pampered life in the slightly higher ranks in the Navy, particularly a wife needs to adjust to a whole new and sometimes daunting world outside.

It was amazing how Gitu, my wife slotted in to the new routine, even picking up Gujarati lingo and creating a civilian style 'NWWA' in the port campus. She also quickly started a 'Tiny Tots' for the little ones who would otherwise have missed schooling, as rural mothers cannot be blamed for not wanting to send their three or four year olds to schools some 40 kms away by bus. A wife settling down without too many complaints is a great help indeed, anywhere.

All that is now behind us, just fond memories linger. In the bargain, very many new friends have been made, but the truth is, our happiness and comfort zone still lie in the company of our Navy (Army, Air Force incl.) friends, both, in and out of uniform. No doubt, son and son-in-law being now in white uniform add sparkle to our naval camaraderie.

Yes, the Second Innings has been a great experience, wonder if there will be a third or 'extra' innings - maybe beyond the pearly gates because one is being constantly reminded that this stage of life is akin to waiting in the departure lounge of an airport!!

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AMEN to Colonialism-Operation Vijay-Goa-1961

Vice Admiral Mihir Roy (Retd.)

India became a Republic on 26 Jan 1950. France thereupon gave up her sovereignty over Pondicherry. But, Dr. Salazar, the Portuguese dictator continued to claim that Goa and the enclave of Daman and Diu were not colonies but an integral part of Portugal.

The US Ambassadors in Delhi particularly Ellsworth Bunker and then John Kenneth Galbraith proposed various options such as the purchase of these enclaves by India or accepting the United Nations verdict which were sympathetically considered by Pandit Nehru who was loathe to use force. Portugal had, however, the support of the U.S. Secretary of State Dulles with the possibility of Goa becoming a NATO base as they were not comfortable with Nehru's authorship of the Non-Aligned Movement which he considered was against the interest of United States. The Indian Legation at Lisbon had perforce to close down in June 1953.

Confrontation between the two countries further escalated into a seven member Pakistan military delegation visiting Daman with the Pakistani frigate Zulfiqar patrolling the Konkan coast! Lisbon also suggested to the US to request Islamabad to move a couple of Pakistani divisions to the border to frighten the Indians!

Satyagrahis entered Goa on the night of 14/15 Aug 1955 but were met with force resulting in the death of 22 Indians and injured 225 satyagrahis. Prime Minister Nehru still flinched from using force.

Acrimony between Lisbon and New Delhi further increased when Indian fishermen were being fired upon from Portuguese-held Anjadip island which was eight kilometers South West of the Indian Port of Karwar. This came to a boil when of Atmaram Kochrekar was killed in his fishing boat. The Indian passenger ship

Sabarmati also came under fire on the night of 17 Nov 1961 when a bullet ricocheted and injured the Chief Engineer Mr. Pehna.

NHQ thereupon executed 'Operation Chutney' with the gun frigates, Betwa and Beas patrolling outside Goan territorial waters. Naval Dockyard, Bombay was also instructed to ensure the operational availability of Vikrant, Mysore and Delhi as also four frigates which were undergoing planned maintenance.

The planning of 'Operation Vijay' for the liberation of Goa was initially based on the exclusive appreciation of GOC-in-C, Southern Army Command, Lt. Gen Chaudhuri who was designated the Theatre Land Force Commander. Major General Candeth of 17th Infantry Division was held responsible for the liberation of Goa where it was estimated that 5200 Portuguese soldiers were located. Air Vice Marshal Pinto of the Operational Air Command was designated the Theatre Air Commander. The Fleet Commander, Rear Admiral Soman was the Naval Theatre Commander.

The Naval Task Force consisted of four Task Groups. The Surface Action Group comprising the cruiser Mysore and four frigates were given the task of liberating Anjadip Island. The carrier task group consisted of Vikrant, cruiser Delhi and four frigates for the protection of Bombay. The mine sweeping group of four Minesweepers as also the support group of the logistic ship Dharini completed the Indian Navy's order of Battle.

Accordingly, a landing party of 72 sailors with Lt. Auditto and Commissioned Gunner Kelman were given crash training at Cochin for assaulting Anjadip in two ships boats. But, at no time were air strikes from Vikrant whose squadrons were at the peak of their operational readiness, considered or planned.



Intelligence

The hand intelligence put out prior to the operations was widely off the mark. The authorities concerned were the Intelligence Bureau, a relic of imperial governance serviced by articulate police officers and the disjointed Chiefs of Staff Committee.

The Intelligence hinted the presence of four Portuguese frigates, submarines, coastal batteries and attack aircraft based at Dabolim. These reports also highlighted the presence of a 'snooper' which turned out to be a RN Submarine which was transiting to the Far East. Moreover the British frigate Rhyll also arrived off Goa ostensibly to evacuate foreign nationals and was politely told to lay off.

It was also reported there was a possibility that the approaches of Marmagoa and Panjim were mined. In addition it was signalled that aircraft carriers from Brazil and Argentina could arrive for assisting Portugal. Perhaps the adage of never under estimating one's opponents was being strictly followed by grossly over estimating the opposition! No elementary recce flights were carried out and no information was obtained of coastal defences, presumably as none existed!

Vikrant was positioned well out of harm's way with instructions to prevent foreign warships or submarines from attacking Bombay or reinforcing the Portuguese Garrison at Goa.

An Alize aircraft from Vikrant, with 'yours truly' in command was fortunate to locate and shadow an aggressive frigate in the vicinity of the Lakshadweep and shadowed it outside gun range till the contact was handed over to the relieving aircraft and returned back to Mother (Vikrant) with less than the permissible fuel state! But on reporting to the bridge for a task well carried out, the Alize Squadron Commander was shown a signal from Indian frigate Trishul which stated that the ship was being buzzed by a warplane which they attempted to shoot down but the snooper had

operated well beyond gun range.

Therefore, as stated by the humour of Commanding Officer, INS Delhi (Captain and later Vice Admiral Krishnan), it was getting more and more curious and when the mad hatter tea party was over, it was a relief to revert to peace time exercises and debriefs!

Attack on Anjadip Island

The first wave went ashore at about 0715h on 18th December 1961 when it was reported that a white flag had been hoisted at the northern end of the island. The landing was unopposed. However, the second wave came under fire which took a toll of seven sailors killed and a further 17 sailors and two officers wounded as against six Portuguese soldiers killed.

The Indian tricolor was hoisted at 1430h although mopping operations continued. Lt. Auditto (later Rear Admiral) and Gunner Kelman were decorated with the Nau Sena and Kirti Chakra medals, respectively. Chief Petty Officer Ali Mohammed and Able Seaman Jaswant Singh Bawa were awarded the Shaurya Chakra. Four other sailors were decorated posthumously with Ashok Chakra Class II. A monument in memory of those killed was later unveiled at Anjadip Island.

Surface Gun Action

The battle for Goa commenced with four Canberra bombers of IAF attacking Dabolim airfield on the morning of 18th December 1961 in the face of anti-aircraft fire from the Portuguese frigate, Affonso de Albuquerque. Soon after an Alize aircraft, piloted by Lt. Anderson safely landed on the airfield carrying urgent orders for Commodore Agate of the Indian Navy who had taken over as the Naval Administrator of Goa. The Army entered Goa, at a trot from three directions.

At about midday, Betwa received a personal signal from Chief of the Naval Staff which read 'capture me a Portuguese frigate please'. This was manna for the



gunnery officers of Betwa who closed to 6000 yards and signalled “please surrender or I will open fire!”

The Portuguese frigate continued to weigh anchor and fired erratically at the Indian warships. After about ten minutes, she hoisted a large white flag and beached on the Northern shore of Marmagoa harbour with her armament destroyed, her magazine flooded and superstructure decimated. Such was the damage that she could be sold as scrap for only Rs. seven lakhs. In this melee, it is to the credit of the accuracy of the gunnery of Betwa that only one round hit the merchantship S.S. Ranger in the crowded harbour. Ships in Bombay manned and cheered ship as Betwa entered her home port.

General Manuel Antonio Vassallo de Silva, Commander-in-Chief requested a cease-fire at about

1400h on 19th December 1961 followed by unconditional surrender at 2030h.

Postscript

There were several fall-outs of ‘Operation Vijay’. USA and Western powers looked askance at India’s military machine and bent backwards to assist the military dictatorship of Pakistan to counter India. Delhi on the other hand was content to bask in the success of a victory without any credible opposition for which India had to pay a heavy price in the 1962 conflict with China.

Each service was content to fight their own battles. Pakistan also neglected the seas and paid the ultimate price in 1971.

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Indo-Pak interactiveness

Commodore Mukund B Kunte (Retd.)

In our batch in Dartmouth there were three from then RPN – Sayeed and Iftiqar Ahmad from the West and Musharraf Hussain Khan (MHK) a ‘Bong’ from the East (later to be C-in-C of the Bangladesh Navy). They certainly proved the two-nation concept wrong. MHK even shared a car with three of us of the IN at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich – Khullar, myself and Radheshyam Sharma.

Anyhow, to return to modern times - in 1985 my wife was to attend an International Conference on Islamic Architecture in Lahore and was having difficulty with her visa. So, one day at Delhi Golf Club I casually mentioned it to Riaz Khokhar the Pak Ambassador (when I was heading Naval Intelligence in 1980-81, he was a Senior Diplomat in the Pakistan Mission and later became the Foreign Secretary in Islamabad) who was a conspicuous member being hugely built

and one of very few left handed golfers on our course. ‘That is not a problem’, he replied. The HC staff collected the passport and delivered it at home with the endorsement ‘police reporting not required’.

There is a sequel to this narration. In Lahore, at the official reception, Anuradha got a chance to make a mention to General Zia-ul-Haque the Pak President that while all the delegates were being taken to the Khyber Pass next morning she had not been included. Lo and behold! An official was immediately summoned to the President’s side and her passport duly endorsed for ‘Peshawar, Khyber Pass and Swat Valleys’. Such may be the ways of the high and mighty but importantly it was a question of Indo-Pak civility. Of course the times were different.

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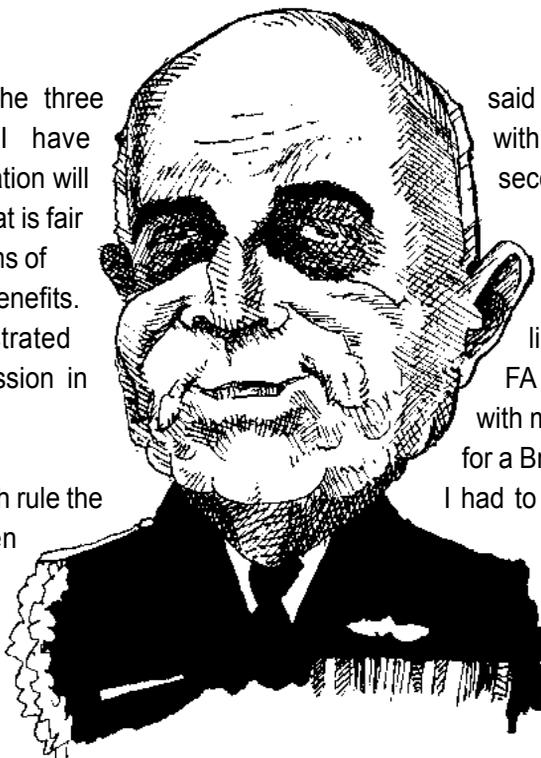
Chiefs of Staff

Admiral RH Tahliani (Retd.)

In our Armed Forces, if the three Chiefs stand together, I have always believed, that the nation will never deny the services what is fair for the Armed Forces in terms of emoluments and other benefits. This was amply demonstrated during the IV Pay Commission in the mid-1980s.

During the days of the British rule the Armed Forces were given scales of pay which were marginally higher than the Civil Servants in the country. After independence, during the second post war Pay Commission and the Third Pay Commission, these were brought down drastically. A Joint Secretary in the Government of India was equated with a Major General and equivalent in the Armed Forces, although the former had only 17 or 18 years service. This seemed to me and my colleagues most unfair because it took an officer about 27-28 years to become a Major General.

I became Chairman Chiefs of Staff Committee after late Arun Vaidya retired on 31 January 1986, since Lakshman Katre had, sadly for the Air Force and the country, passed away on 1st July 1985. I remained Chairman for 22 months out of my three years tenure as Chief of the Naval Staff. I was lucky to have colleagues like late General Sunderji and late Air Chief Marshal La Fontaine, who thought the way I did. I had decided that if I did not get justice from the IV Pay Commission then I would resign. I asked my two colleagues whether they were with me. One of them



said without any hesitation that he was with me and he would also resign. The second one had no choice but to agree!

We asked for a running pay band and not scales of pay which were linked to particular ranks. I recall the FA (Defence Service) coming to plead with me that we should accept Rs. 50 less for a Brigadier compared to Joint Secretary. I had to see the Prime Minister a couple of times to plead our case. I requested that pay should also be governed by length of service and not merely by the rank and appointment. Late Justice Shinghal, who was the Chairman of

the Pay Commission was gracious enough to ring me up and say that the Pay Commission had approved our proposal. To cut a long story short, a Brigadier on promotion got Rs. 6150/- or Rs. 6300/- depending upon years of service whereas a Joint Secretary's pay was fixed at Rs. 5900/-. Because we dug our heels in, the award for the Armed Forces was given in May 1987, three months after the award for the Civil Servants. I was scheduled to visit the U.S.A. in early May 1987. I was apprehensive that behind my back the Government may issue a notification putting us on par with the Civil Servants as hitherto. I left my letter of resignation with my Vice Chief to be used in such an eventuality. I am happy that the letter remained unused.

I wish the Armed Forces had dug their heels in with subsequent Pay Commissions also to get what is only fair for the uniformed fraternity, but that is another story.

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Monsoon memories of Hamla

Ms Radha Nair

I know too well the fury of the monsoons in Hamla, when on our return from school in Bandra, my sister and I had to take the local tin top bus full of Koli fisherfolk at Malad station to our naval base.

We alighted at the second gate as we used to call it then - which is the main entrance now (Formerly the guard room, sentry box and the main gate were located where the Koli fishing boats docked).

The gale force winds, near the parade ground, would instantly whip off every single button of our duckback rain coats, hood and all, and we would be lashed by torrential rain. We would totter home dripping wet, where my mother would have the best tea waiting for us, which we would wolf down after a hot bath.

We were accommodated in tiled, barrack type houses, each with a deep verandah, quaint by present standards, but nevertheless charming.

By the end of May, recruits would come to the officers' quarters, with bamboo poles and woven cane fixed onto rectangular wooden frames.

The poles would be driven deep into the sand, and on to the poles would be mounted the cane frames. Once the rains arrived, the poles would be pulled out and backed into the verandahs. The cane frame would fold down, and the verandah became a dark enclosed space, a secret place for any child. There were spells of sunshine. Then the poles would be pushed up to let in fresh air and weak light. It was a great way of building up muscles.

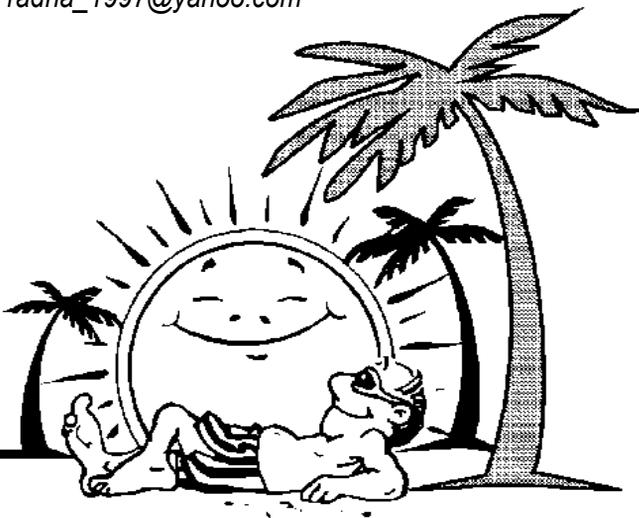
By June, in the '50s all of Hamla used to be fully fortified to face nature's fury. We would live thus, in siege-like conditions for the next five months. There

used to be devastating thunder storms, and we children were eternally cautioned never to venture out at such times, as we were told the story of Joseph, the butler, for effective drama.

Joseph was a very endearing sort of person, in his mid-forties, who along with another butler, whose name I forget, used to be Man-Friday to all the newly arrived cadets from NDA. They used to get the cadet officers' bed coffee, blanco their shoes, lay out their uniforms, change the cap covers, fix the epaulettes on their uniforms, etc.

Off duty he used to be Joseph uncle to all of us children. Hamla in those days had a few coconut trees, and sadly most of them had lost their tops to lightning strikes. One day as the story goes, Joseph uncle stepped out into one of the worst thunderstorms Hamla ever had, only to return with the hair on his head all gone. All that remained was a shining pate. Like the coconut trees, lightning made him look different, and from then on he passed into Hamla folk lore, and a living legend of what Hamla storms can do to you!

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Glimpses into a golden era of naval leadership and style

Captain C Raghuram and Cdr Shyam Nambiar



It is indeed rare when mere mortals (even if they are naval officers!) get to meet and talk to immortal legends; and hence, a God-sent opportunity when we were 'tasked' to meet and interview Vice Admiral (Retd) JTG Perreira, one of the oldest and most renowned Admirals amongst the retired IN fraternity today. What made this assignment even more alluring was the prospect of visiting his marvelous seaside bungalow on the Uran Island on a working day, apart from the chance to interact with the much-admired and affable Admiral who had spent more than 15 years at Naval Dockyard, Mumbai in various capacities.

So, on a sunny Wednesday while the rest of the Yard sweated away, we headed out on a boat to meet Adm Perreira; not without a trace of guilt, at having to bother him during an afternoon siesta (his!). But no sooner had we announced ourselves to his staff (post

the demise of his wife, he lives alone, supported by his staff, who also manage a small beach resort at the premises named 'Uran Plaza'), and the soon-to-be 90 Admiral stepped out, leaning on a walking stick, and looking not a year over 60! And when he responded to our awestruck wishes in crisp, commanding and verbose Queen's English, we felt like kids at their first day in school! The initial speechlessness (ours) was totally complemented by the grand old Admiral's delight at such Naval company after ages, quickly filling us in on anything we wanted to know.

And that is how he took us to his roots, an English mother who died early, a Keralite father who travelled on job through the length and breadth of India, his resultant boarding school at Ahmedabad, and, on to joining the Navy, and training at Dufferin. In between, as he exclaimed aloud at probably being the 'only one still around' of his peers, what struck us was his photographic memory! The years, the places, people and events he rattled off without a pause were familiar to us only from history lessons or books, but even eight decades did not seem to affect the clarity and detail of his reminiscences.

From the high quality of instructors at Dufferin to returning to India as the Senior Watchkeeper on the INS Delhi, IN's first cruiser, he sailed us through his first years in a Navy transforming from RN to IN. What followed was a Bollywood fare, when at the welcome party for the ship by Mumbai's populace, he met a girl, fell in love and married his pretty wife. Moving to the Naval Dockyard was a matter of time, being the lone qualified Engineer around as the Brits left for home for good. Soon, he found himself, as a young Lieutenant, trying to shore up and build expertise, infrastructure and more at the Yard. Old ships meant more work, and fewer officers meant longer hours,



leading to his wife sharing back then a sentiment most Naval wives at the Yard today share - "he is married to the Yard".

As we prodded him on work ethos, quality of personnel et al at the Yard then, the words gushed out, carrying within them a plethora of instances of exemplary tasks accomplished, of which a skilled plater planning and undertaking complete re-fabrication of the bow of the Cape Town (which was blown away in the war!) stood out for its magnitude, technical acumen and dedication. The examples just went on and on, and glided over how the Yard, then the major storehouse of skill even helped set up the famous US Club at Colaba. How the Naval Dockyard Cooperative Bank was set up with Rs 100/- each from Admirals Karmakar and Perreira as start-up capital. How the who-is-who of Mumbai turned up at parties hosted by the Naval fraternity (and vice versa). The close rapport and interaction he enjoyed with multiple key political leaders and ministers, collaborative funding between the Navy and the Maharashtra government for a water line at Karanja, and so on.

We continued to listen, the Dictaphone equally amazed as we were, absorbed in the commanding voice, British accent, twinkling blue-grey eyes, ramrod straight posture and the superb memory, as he recreated his entire life sans a pause for us, all in a span of under two hours. We had seen, heard and known a few Admirals and senior Naval officers, retired and serving, but the pure charisma and vision that was displayed that afternoon took the cake. Here was an Admiral who could, without even a word, command respect, and when he spoke, leave us yearning to hear more, learn further.

As the conversation turned more generic and mundane, and our gazes started to absorb the intrinsic beauty and appeal of the man and the

residence, the colourful MF Hussains, Hebbur and Gaitondes that lined the walls of this naturally lit, spacious and wondrous villa seemed to stand testimony, to the resolve and personas of its inmate (and his late wife), who, between the two of them, had seen and done much more than any human normally would, in a lifetime, or two, for that matter!

As we set to depart, both our minds struggled to fully comprehend this larger-than-life Admiral, a true officer and a gentleman, with the Naval Dockyard writ large and bold over every line he uttered and who seemed to have an aura as gregarious, positive and imposing as what we learnt from our time spent with him. And fact that he rattled out Indira Gandhi, Krishna Menon et al as 'acquaintances' did nothing at all to lower our awe and admiration!

And to paraphrase William Wordsworth, while on the homeward boat (rather than the 'Solitary Reaper' mounting up the hill),

"...and as we sailed the choppy waters home
His words and thoughts in our hearts we bore
Long after they were heard no more."

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The Sea, my Guru and me

Commander KV Subba Rao (Retd)

*I groomed my attitude in life, from the sea,
Just stand on the shore, you too will see,
The energy of each following wave is higher,
So I learnt to try again, why should I ever tire?*



*Waves cut through eroding rocks, in a hundred of days
So I learnt perseverance and honest effort pays
Try relentlessly and finally you shall succeed
Even with rock solid opposition just proceed.*

*If everything is peaceful. I rest not
I use every minute that I have got
There is an uneasy calm in the eye of a storm,
The sea taught me 'be cautious' now it's my norm.*



*Even in a turbulent sea, there is calm below,
So with life - with unrest around buffeting blow
I understand that in life, I cannot change my fate,
The sea's inner calm tells me relax and meditate.*

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Four decades later...

Captain Mohan Narayanrao Samant (Retd.)

I was in Delhi, enjoying our grandchildren at our daughter Meghana's, when a call from Shri Mofidul Haque, Trustee of the Liberation Museum in Dhaka was followed by calls from their Foreign Ministry inviting Nirmala, myself and Meghana to Dhaka, for an event honouring the Bangladesh Liberation War and the Friends of the Liberation War from various countries. The Office of the CNS also invited us to see how their Navy had blossomed from the seeds sown during my tenure as the Chief of Naval Staff after liberation in 1971.

This was unexpected for a lot of water had flown down the Buriganga, Padma and Meghana rivers since 1972, when I handed over charge of the nascent Bangladesh Navy to the then Lt Cdr Nurul Haque, first Pakistan Navy officer of Bangladesh origin from Pakistan. After my pre-mature release from the Navy in mid-June 1974 I visited Bangladesh in my new avatar as a Merchant Marine Master Mariner but for obvious reasons, had not stayed in touch. Hence, this was an unexpected gift and we accepted the invitations to visit.

Thus began our pilgrimage to Bangladesh, after a lapse of 40 years plus, where I had the best professional opportunity to put into practice all that I had learned in the Indian Navy, from the Royal Navy College, Dartmouth (UK) to Vladivostok, ex-USSR. A grand reception awaited us at Dhaka airport; their foreign service Protocol officers, the liaison officer, Captain SG Rehman (NHQ), Sqn Ldr HS Sidhu (Indian High Commission) and representatives of my Naval Commandos. Nirmala and I were driven in style to our hotel with escorts,

outriders, etc. The Indian Military contingent comprised of Smt. Balamdin Ekka, widow of Lance Naik Albert Ekka, PVC, Smt. Saroj, widow of Brig Kailash Prakash Pande, MVC, Brig Sant Singh, MVC & BAR, PSC (Retd) and Col Ashok Tara, VrC (Retd).

Although the official program started the next day, for me it was all action from the time we landed. I was commandeered by my comrades of yesteryears, followed by the media and believe me I enjoyed every energising moment! Throughout the trip, there were moments of sorrow and anguish on hearing about the deaths of many. This was a trip of nostalgic return, celebration and sombre respect.

On 19th Oct, we began by visiting the National Martyr's Memorial at Savar, where I had the honour of placing a wreath, taking me back to 1972, when it was constructed to honour the memory of the fallen members of the Armed Forces. I still remember and am tickled by the expression on the face of the Late Shri Zulfikar A. Bhutto, Prime Minister of Pakistan, who visited it during his official visit to Dhaka after normalization of their relations!





20th October saw all of us congregated in the Banglabandhu International Conference Centre, welcomed by Shri. AMH Bhuiyan, Cabinet Secretary, followed by citations, honours conferred on each invitee by Hon. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and HE Shri Md. Zillur Rehman, President of Bangladesh. It was indeed a thrilling moment - so much affection, friendship and bonhomie all around. Really marvellous. After the awards ceremony, we visited the Rayer Bazaar Martyred Intellectuals Memorial, honouring Bangladeshi intellectuals murdered in cold blood by the retreating Pakistan Army. Having visited the actual scene of this butchering immediately after

the war, Nirjala and I were full of remorse and tender feelings - our eyes misted by memories of that horrible scene.

The rest of the time was filled with festivities - a river cruise from Postogola Army jetty in the Army LST Shakti Sanchar, dinners by the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister Dr Dipu Moni, Capt AB Tajul Islam, MP, Minister of State for Liberation War Affairs. Nirjala and I rekindled our memories of those days with the Prime Minister, when my services were placed at the disposal of the Bangladesh Government. We visited their old house at 32, Dhanmondy (now a national museum) where Sheikh Saheb and most of his family were brutally murdered. After the official ceremonies, I was mobbed by the media and that continued till 22nd Oct, when thankfully the Bangladesh Navy "rescued" me.

They say all good things must come to an end - so we can start all over again! The festivities ended on the

morning of 22nd Oct and most invitees left. Col Ashok Tara, Vrc stayed back to escort Smt Ekka, who was taken by the Bangladesh Navy to the battle ground where her husband Lance A Ekka, PVC fell. A magnificent gesture by the Bangladesh authorities.

On 22nd October, I called on V Adm Zahir Uddin Ahmed, the CNS, Bangladesh Navy. After a ceremonial reception, the Admiral, a friendly personality, kindly briefed me privately about the present Bangladesh Navy, the Naval Commandos; an illuminating session, which cleared cobwebs accumulated during years of no contact! He graciously



marshalled a large number of my former Naval Commandos who had performed deeds of supreme courage during the liberation war who have excelled in their post-war careers, ending up as Secretaries in the government, retiring as Commodores, etc. It was very emotional being with them after a gap of 40 years plus. The boys of those days have matured into respected fathers and in some cases, grandfathers. Life goes on and thank God for it.

Later, I was briefed by various PSOs and finally the dreaded part - delivering my many scheduled talks. I was bombarded with professional questions about the 1971 war, with particular reference to the role played by Bangladesh Naval Sailors, who had deserted from the

Pakistan Navy and had provided middle level professional leadership to Bangladesh youth, who had volunteered as Commandos. I took the opportunity to highlight the role of my Indian Navy colleagues, (who like the rest of us preferred to remain silent), and the leadership provided by Lt VK Kapil, VrC the first CO of the initial training camp, Late Cdr George Martis, Vr C, who ultimately took

charge of the training camp, Lt Cdr JK Roy Chaudhary, VrC and Lt SK Mitra who commanded BNS Padma and Palash during the war. I explained in detail and at length, the role played by these stalwarts and Bengali boys under them, their supreme sacrifices. They were instrumental in disrupting the logistical lines of the Pakistan Forces, facts authenticated by Lloyds of London and Mrs Clare Holligworth, of the British daily "Telegraph". I had to submit the birth date of their Navy

was the night of 14/15 August, 1971 and not after the day of arrival of their Naval contingent from Pakistan after liberation. The true birth of their Navy was when the Naval Commandos simultaneously conducted raids on sea ports - Chittagong, Chakna, Mongla - and riverine ports!

Chittagong, another whirlwind trip, with cultural programs, visits to the Bangladesh Naval Academy, BNS Issa Khan (Former PNS Bakhtyar), the school of Maritime Warfare and Training and addresses to their respective cadets and officers. Incidentally, the present generation of service Chiefs is indigenous – trained in Bangladesh with no professional ancestry with the Pakistan Navy.



Thus ended our brief, hectic sojourn in Bangladesh, returning with sweet memories, satisfaction of renewing ties with old pals, their families and sadness for those who left us. What next? Maybe 40 years hence....?

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From snake charmer to a great Navy

Commodore Vimal Kumar (Retd.)

You must be wondering as to what a snake charmer has to do with the Navy! Yes it has. To have a glimpse of this transformation, I will take you through my eyes to a beautiful lake in Scotland and to a significant port in England called Portsmouth. A part of the travel would be back in time. Enroute, will meet graceful lady veterans of World War II and also come across a strange Brit named Mr. Smith. I would start my journey from a place on the Caspian Sea, famous for sea food caviar, a symbol of luxury and once enjoyed by Russian Tsars and other royalties. At the end of it, you are sure to recall your days in the Navy and feel nostalgic about it.

The year was 1969. I was a Sub Lt. and had come to Kirova Naval Higher Academy in Baku for the first deep diving course. This city on the Caspian Sea and the capital of Azerbaijan, was a part of the then USSR and was getting ready for a colourful parade of 7th November. It was my first outing from the Academy. Suddenly, I spotted a poster of Hindi film stars at Nizami theatre prominently located in the heart of the city. Being new, I did not understand the local language and was trying to decipher what the picture was. All of a sudden someone approached me and spoke to me in Russian language. Except one word INDOOS (Indian), I did not understand it at all. I simply kept saying yes. He guided me to a fully packed cinema hall and placed a chair for me. The person who did all this was the Manager of the theater. The picture was MAMTA (Macheriskaya Lubof dubbed in Russian language). Except for the songs, I was unable to understand a word but I had to sit in the hall for almost three hours to respect the honor given to an Indian. At the end of it the Manager did not accept anything from me. But a thank you was sufficient to see a real smile on his face. What I had experienced was not uncommon for Indians in many

cities of the USSR that I visited. Not only this, the shops would attend to us out of queue. Attractive and short supply items in shops would generally be offered to us. At times some unknown would pass by singing the song “Mera Juta Hai Japani” and try shaking hands with us.

After getting pampered like this and seeing the beautiful cities of a Communist country, a thought crossed; why not visit few cities in the UK on leave. I had a big image of the UK in my mind from my childhood. After all, number of reputed authors of text books of my college days, in the fifties, suffixed “UK returned” after their names. It was considered a prestigious suffix.

At the end of the deep diving course in mid-December 1970, I flew to London on leave. Soon I realized I was in a different world. I sensed racial problems on the streets and in restaurants. At times people won't even reply. After seeing all these, I started missing the respect that I had enjoyed for many months in the cities of Russia. Here I was Black and from a poor country. Anyway, after seeing our Kohinoor in the Tower of London, I went to Edinburgh in Scotland, a





place of James Watt and Encyclopedia Britannica. While visiting a scotch distillery, I stopped at Balmaha a hamlet on the bank of lake Loch Lomond. Loch is the Scottish word for a lake. Finding a beautiful water body with a number of sailing boats I was excited, being a Navy person. People around did explain about sailing activity, but gave an impression that such things are not for the Browns.

beautiful.

The tide did change. After more than four decades, in the summer of 2011, I and my wife landed in London. But I was curious to get a feel of change of wind by revisiting the places I had been to earlier. After a brief stay in the suburb of London, we arrived at Balmaha in Scotland. I had visited this place as a bachelor, but



Being a diver, I had a great desire of visiting Portsmouth, a big port for centuries with a big naval presence. The Royal Navy's Diving School is here. While standing near "Portsmouth Harbour" station, I enquired about the way to the dockyard from a person passing by. I was well dressed. He looked at me from top to bottom and explained the route with courtesy. Sensing that I could be a naval guy, he gave direction using naval terminologies. His name was Mr. Smith. After exchange of pleasantries when we were about to part, he suddenly asked me, "Are you from India?". With my affirmation, he gave me a dirty look and started jabbering and left by mimicking a snake charmer. In those days literature on India in the west would mostly have a photograph of a snake charmer. I felt very insulted and it made a deep scar on my mind. I consoled myself that such nasty people are everywhere. One day the tide will change when young nations would grow and these countries would age. May be then it would be worthwhile to revisit these places which are so well organized and

my memory failed to recognise this place from earlier visit. Suddenly, I recognized a very old oak tree. The tree gave me a feeling of a known place. Soon I reached the bank of beautiful shore of Loch Lomond, where five graciously aged ladies were trying to take group photograph with sailing boats in the background. I did help them in taking a group snap. They were retired WRNS (The Women's Royal Naval Service) veterans who served in the Royal Navy





during World War II. It was a coincidence meeting of ex-service members of two Navies of two generations. They were extremely courteous and respected my naval rank. They were well read, had great respect for India and appreciative of the growth of our Navy. We shared our experiences as ex-servicemen, and parted with a promissory note to be in touch. Later I met one youngster on one of the jetties of the lake. The moment I said hello, his response was "From Mumba..ai." He must have guessed about our nationality and offered to take us around the lake in his boat when he came to know that I was ex-Indian Navy. I couldn't believe it was the same place where four decades ago I was unwelcome here for water borne activity.



Revisit to Portsmouth was an eye opener. I stood near Portsmouth Harbor station and was hoping for the impossible to happen. That is to meet Mr. Smith. I did not find people like Mr Smith. Things had changed and the attitude towards Indians has changed for the better. A visit to the National Museum of the Royal Navy was most memorable. I introduced

myself to one of the officials of the Museum. He was excited and explained to me some of the important items in the Museum. "How did your Navy take a submarine on beach without much of an infrastructure in Visakhapatnam?" was a curious question from him. I promptly said a Veteran submariner Adm. Auditto moved the mountain. He asked me to visit the hall where topsail of HMS Victory is spread for display. This sail, of about 320 sq meters in an area with 90 shot holes, was located by



the Royal Navy only a few years ago. The sail was spread in a very big hall. Large crowds of visitors to see this visibly unattractive item of heritage speaks volumes about the British culture. Finally, while parting he said, "you have a great Navy and a great force". I and my wife were deeply touched by his assertion, as the British mostly don't say such thing just to please someone.

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Meeting retired Indian naval officers

Commander TS Trewn (Retd.)

Like many other retired naval officers I took an opportunity of serving in foreign going cargo ships for several years. It was a valuable and fully satisfying experience as Chief Engineer, more so because my wife was with me on board. In most of the voyages Ships' captains happened to be ex-navy. During my first eight years of tenure with the shipping company, myself and my wife covered Mumbai, Goa, Colombo, Calcutta, Singapore, China, Australia, Japan, Argentina, Wilmington, Brazil, Florida, New York, Detroit, Toronto, England, Amsterdam, Stockholm, Gibraltar, Malta, Cape Town, Suez, Bordeaux, Naples, Aden, Karachi, etc.

In all these ports we had the chance to socialize with local people both on board and ashore on every port except in Japan. Out of these were business class as well service class. It was among the service class where we found ex-Indian Navy officers and others all having decent jobs with salaries equivalent of four lakh Rupees per month, minimum.

At port of Rouen, France in the shipping office I was surprised to see a retired navigation specialist occupying position of Harbour Master with six French pilots operating under him. In Wilmington capital of North Carolina there was a surprise for us. The port workshop chief happened to be one of my students from INS Shivaji, Lonavla who had settled down there. Before departing from the port his wife presented my wife with a high quality wig which could be used by her with remarkable effects!

In Melbourne Australia we had the chance to stay for a week. We had heard that most immigrant Indians were carrying out petty jobs and the lure of foreign living had brought them there. Many Indians we met were shopkeepers, hairdressers, wine dealers etc.

But some others, mostly retired Indian Naval Officers impressed us. They lived elegantly and some of them displayed copies of Quarterdeck in their study rooms. One of them having his own home in Melbourne had served in various Indian Naval Ships as a Commander in the Executive Branch. He was then serving as harbour master. He narrated his days in the Indian Navy with pride and gratitude and wanted an Indian Naval liaison office to be set up there. Considering the number of such persons settling down in Australia and New Zealand such a proposal was mooted earlier too, but it was advised that such liaison or information regarding welfare measures etc. could be more conveniently served through existing naval offices of Australia and New Zealand.

During one of our trips we sailed to Venice to pick up a cargo of olive oil in drums. Captain Totorizzo introduced us to one of his senior pilots who had served as a gunnery officer in Indian Navy. The officer had an Italian wife and became poetic while describing the good old days he spent in the Indian Navy. He had not visited India for long and missed his Goa curry in the Taj Mahal Hotel, Mumbai and South Indian dishes at the Malabar Hotel, Kochi. He had been a communication specialist and socially visited every Indian ship that touched Venice. It was he who arranged our meeting with Miss Miraben, a colleague of Mahatma Gandhi who had left India after Gandhi's death and had settled down in a place not far from Venice. She was the daughter of a British Admiral.

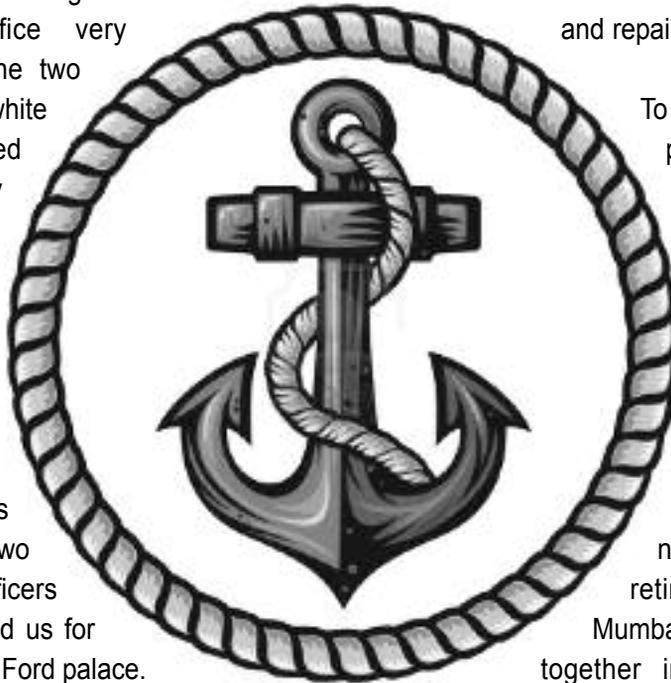
I had specifically chosen a ship proceeding to Great Lakes, USA for one of our sea trips. My son was there studying in Wayne State University for his doctorate degree in Industrial Engineering. It was regatta time in the Lake when we entered the area after unloading at Toronto. It was really beautiful sailing in such calm



waters of lakes Ontario and lake Erie. The university Vice Chancellor had taken a personal interest to make the event a success. About 30 boats took part. One of them was manned by two retired Indian Naval Engineer officers who were then serving in the Ford Motor car company in Detroit. Both of them had received their training in marine engineering in INS Shivaji at Lonavla and were then occupying positions of senior managers in the engine division of the Ford Company. Me and my Captain who also was a ex-Indian Naval officer and had long served in the Hydrographic Office very thoughtfully presented the two officers a replica of our white ensign. This unexpected gift was cherished by them immensely and the crowd cheered joyfully. Early morning next day a white car drove to the berth on the jetty where our cargo ship was berthed. One of the Ford company directors accompanied with the two retired Indian Naval officers came onboard and invited us for dinner that evening in the Ford palace. We were pleasantly surprised when they handed over to us the invitation for dinner. Lavish menu of the dinner apart, the layout, decorations, long drive inside the palace, several models of Ford cars and above all the warmth of the family members touched our heart. The Youngest member in the household, William Ford, hailed us with 'Namaskar' by his tiny hands. Besides Michigan wine, cheeses, mixed vegetables, Indian curry, pizza and some other vegetable dishes; two South Indian dishes were also prepared by their Indian cook. It was a well thought out treat. Very appropriately Gajar ka Halwa was served as sweet dish. After dinner, my Captain presented them a replica of fouled anchor with

inscription in Sanskrit saying 'Shanno Varuna' below.

As regards our retired officers settling down in India story is simple, immediately after retirement jobs in Indian ports in various trades are convenient. Only elderly persons seek to spend their evening of life in places like Pune, Chandigarh, Shimla hills, Mumbai suburbs, Ahmedabad, New Delhi and other places close to where their close relatives lived. There are hundreds of retired Indian naval officers employed in various Indian ports, including shipyards and repair yards.



To conclude, this narration of post retirement life of some of the officers as an example I wish to add one most important achievement of one of the retired commanders of Indian Navy who owned several ships soon after he retired and made his name in the list of foremost retired naval officers in

Mumbai. I met him in a small get together in DSOI Colaba, where

Mukesh Ambani, one of the top industrialist of India, was the chief guest. He knew the shipping tycoon and proudly introduced him to others. The officer resided in a palatial flat in Napean Sea Road close to the six room luxurious flat of Shri Narpat Singh Ji Maharaj, prince of a southern Rajasthan state. My last reference was a retired Director of Marine Engineering from the Royal Indian Navy who settled down in the outskirts of Srinagar. I met him in his farm house where he grew beautiful coloured tulips and saffron.

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Of Maids and Mermaids

Commander Noel Lobo (Retd.)

Ask any old salt of the old Indian Navy, 'who had done the Baltic exercise in HMS Devonshire for which the European Royal family had a very special affection for this old cadet training cruiser'. Pat would come his answer: Norway.

Now ask him the same questions regarding another cruiser of yore HMS Marlborough, and I doubt if more than a couple of us would know the answer. I did not till I read the review of a book in the Spectator of 29th January 2011: the Russian court at sea by Frances Welch.

HMS Devonshire rescued the Norwegian Royal family from the advancing Germans in 1940, while Marlborough carried to safety the mother of Tsar Nicholas II and 16 other Romanovs in April 1919 from Yalta in the face of the Bolshevik threat. They were never to see their beloved motherland again where the Norwegian Royals were back in Oslo in 1945. The Russians were all that remained of the murdered Tsar's family. His mother resisted rescue. To the very end of her life she maintained that no one had seen the killing of her son.

The book has some memorable vignettes of the Royals and even of the crew. They painted Easter eggs for the children; they cordoned off a portion of the wooden deck for the dogs-borzois or Samoyeds? (our Alize pilot Sweeney Mehta had a Samoyed name Ivan).

But what struck me most, for the purposes of this article anyway, was the mutual affection between Russian masters and their servants. Here is Grand Duchess Xenia giving up her bed to sleep on the deck because her maid had a bad back.

There's a real royal for you, come to think of it, and yes a real maid. And what follows is an account of a real mermaid seen by 'BB', the author of one of the many journeys across Scotland.

"My collie dog suddenly let out an agonised howl and crouched in terror close into my feet for protection, with hair bristling, ears set back, and tail between his legs. What I saw was so sudden and unexpected that it took my breath away....I observed right above me, what I at first took to be a human being reclining on a rock only six feet away, was a mermaid.

"To this day (in June 1939, when the speaker related the incident which took place on 5 January 1900), I can distinctly recall her appearance which left a vivid picture on my mind which I cannot forget.

"She was a mermaid, a bonnie lassie, clear in complexion. Her hair was reddish yellow in colour and curly, and she had a wreath of seaweed round her neck....., greenish-blue eyes arched eyebrows and she stared at me with a kind of frightened expression on her face. She had a dark yellowish body.

"Like myself, she too got a fright. She never moved, not even her wee short arms with her fish-like tail dangling over the rock. She did not speak. She could not move till the high-tide; She was marooned on the rock. She was in an angry mood, angry that I had discovered her, frightened too. She was the size of an ordinary human being, with the same features, but with an arched back. She was very beautiful ravishingly so."

The Speaker and the mermaid gazed at each other, "then realising what I saw was supernatural I took to



my heels in terror. I recalled my dog's howls and I followed after my dog in trembling fear of the maiden of the sea."

The author ('BB' who told the story in 1939 in Gaelic) wonders whether it was the same mermaid or her sister who appeared on 24 June 1939 to a lady while fishing from a boat only three miles from where the shepherd had sighted his mermaid in 1900.

The lady suddenly saw, floating in the water not far from her boat what she took to be a bunch of yellow seaweed. "To her utter astonishment it turned about in the water revealing a beautiful girl's face with blue eyes and delicate colouring. Then with a splash of her big tail she was gone." (The title of BB's book from where this is taken is 'The Autumn Road to the Isles').

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Encounter with Union

Commodore SM Sundaram (Retd)

In 1986 as CSO (P&A) of the Southern Naval Command, I encountered a tricky situation with the MES union. Due to manpower shortage, MES decided to outsource manning of water pumping and power supply services to outside agencies. The problem started there.

One evening the MES workers cut off water and electricity supply to INHS Sanjeevini, the Hospital in the Naval Base and locked up the Chief Engineer and his staff inside their office. When I reached the CE's office at Katari Bagh I met with a belligerent lot of MES workers. Their contention was that such off-loading will affect their promotion prospects and by allowing outsiders inside the base (a protected area) security will be compromised.

I explained to them that engaging the contract labour was an emergency measure to tide over the shortage of manpower as the Government has imposed a ban on fresh recruitment. With the present staff it was not possible to man all the points to ensure uninterrupted power and water supply. Though it took some time to convince them, the Union leaders appreciated the situation and agreed to discuss the problem in detail. They lifted the

gharao and connected the power and water supply to the Hospital.

Next day the Union leaders, the MES Staff and the State Government Labour Officer met in my office. We discussed the issue in detail. We proved to them that it was not possible to man all the points with the existing manpower to ensure a smooth running of essential services. After prolonged discussions, it was agreed that all the points inside the protected area will be manned by the MES employees and only points outside the Base will be looked after by the outside labour. A tripartite agreement was signed. It was also agreed that E-in-C will be appraised of the contention of the Union and asked to take up a case with the Government to accord immediate sanction to employ additional MES employees so that the contract labour could be removed.

What would have been an ugly situation was amicably settled thanks to the understanding and co-operation of the Union leaders who appreciated the problem and were willing to agree to a logical solution.

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The old Gomati 1961-62

Commodore Ravi Sharma (Retd.)

We old fogies are now living on memories and celebrating all kinds of golden and silver jubilees! This takes me back to my first ship just over 50 years ago as a full-fledged watchkeeping officer.

In April 1961, I, Sub Lt RN Sharma, was appointed to INS Gomati, the old Hunt class destroyer. The ship was berthed alongside the breakwater jetty at Bombay, now Mumbai, a change not as monumental as Constantinople to Istanbul! We were due for a refit but obviously our priority was low as the Dockyard kept saying it had no capacity to take the ship in. This was frustrating for every one particularly the Captain, Lt Cdr RN Batra, who was looking for his brass hat.

The monsoon was coming to an end but the fury had not quite died down when the Headquarters received a distress signal from a merchant ship, Maharashtra, that its engines had failed and it had anchored off Port Albert Victor off the Gujarat coast and was in danger of capsizing. Lt Cdr Batra thought this was a good opportunity to do something noteworthy and volunteered to sail to the rescue of Maharashtra.

So we sailed, anchored off Port Albert Victor in the evening and established communications with Maharashtra telling her that we would take her in tow the next morning. All was proceeding as planned until the XO, Lt Cdr Dinker Rao, went on the night rounds and discovered that the 'X' magazine had developed a hole and was flooding. Efforts commenced to plug the leak but the hull was weak and flooding continued and, in fact, more leaks sprang up. After a sleepless night, it was clear that we were in no position to tow and weighed anchor to get back to Bombay.

It was a frightening passage with further leaks developing and the stern increasingly going underwater. The weather was foul and our speed slow. It was a wonder that we made it back to Bombay safely!

Now the ship needed a major refit which was not in sight. We missed the Goa operation but our D22 was kind enough to get us a flask of wine which was consumed one afternoon by the three bachelors on board namely Lt Jack Suri (who perished with Khukri during the '71 War), Sub Lt Dharam Singh and self, resulting in monstrous hangovers!

Meanwhile, NHQ started posting out senior officers from the ship. Lt Cdr Batra was the first to go and handed over to the XO, Lt Cdr Dinker Rao who in turn handed over to Jack Suri. Jack was the next to go and that found the last man standing, yours truly, who by then had been promoted to Lt, taking over command as well as No.1! This state of affairs carried on for a number of months during which the ship carried out a number of smart cold moves under my command!

Finally, it was decided that the ship would be sent to Calcutta, not yet Kolkata (!), for the refit after a bit of patching up. I was thrilled as I thought I would be in command. The Navy, however, had other plans and I suffered a double demotion. First, Lt Cdr Divakaran, an old-time surveyor, was appointed as CO and then Lt Ravi Khanna was appointed as the XO. I finally wound up as the Navigator!

So we set sail for Calcutta via Cochin and Vizag (I am not going into the name changes again!) in October 1962. While on the way to Cochin, the Captain asked me if I had all the required charts etc. for the passage.



I confirmed with a confident, “Yes, sir”. He then asked me if I had Weir’s Azimuth Diagram. I was completely foxed as this was the first I had heard of the aforesaid document. At this, I got a solid bottle and was asked how I would get the sun’s bearing while rounding Ceylon (!) without it. I told him about the Nautical Almanac and stuff but he would have none of it and said I must procure the Diagram at Cochin.

On arrival, I darted off to the ND School where I was directed to the Training Coordinator. On hearing my request, the TC gave a loud guffaw and asked why I needed it when nobody since Lord Nelson had used it! Taking pity on me, however, he asked his assistant to give me the Diagram if it was available.

Happily, he found one and I returned to the ship and confirmed to the Captain that I had procured the precious document.

The passage to Vizag commenced with the senior ship, Godavari, escorting us. The next afternoon with land out of sight, I took a sunsight and showed my

position, quite off the DR, to the Captain who asked if I had used the Weir’s Diagram. I frankly confessed that I did not know how to use it. Angrily the Captain stormed in the Charthouse with my readings and the famous Diagram. This was followed by a loud yell for me with the Captain waving the Diagram and asking “What the hell is this”. Quite confused, I mumbled, “Weir’s Azimuth Diagram”. “Yes,” said the Captain, “but, you idiot, this is for latitudes 75-90 degrees North!”

Now how the hell was I to know these Diagrams are latitude specific! Anyway, when asked for the noon position, the Captain ordered me to ignore my workings and give a position close to the DR. But when Godavari passed her position it was close to the one originally worked out by me!

The rest of the passage passed off without any incident and thanks to good weather, the ship reached Calcutta safe and sound. My marching orders to Khukri were received on arrival.

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Parasailing in the A&N Islands

Commodore RK Dass (Retd)

In the summer of ‘93, I assumed command of the air station INS Utkrosh at Port Blair in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands. During one of my rounds, I noticed some small-sized packets smoothly tucked in one corner of the safety equipment section. I was told that these packets contained two parasails that had never been used. There were two sailors who had some knowledge on their basic care and maintenance. I enquired further and to our delight found that Wg Cdr Rodrigues the Air Force LO at Port Blair had prior knowledge about parasailing and kindly

agreed to give us a demo.

The parasailing demo was fixed one afternoon at the airport after the day’s flying was over. Usually parasailing is considered a water sport activity, but here it was being undertaken on an open runway. The setup looks simple enough but required teamwork and coordination. In the front is the jeep heading into the wind with the driver and an assistant facing backwards towards the para sailor. The para sailor tightly fitted in the harness is attached to the jeep via a 100ft rope.



Neatly laid out behind the para sailor are the parasails with two persons to keep it in position. The first thing when launch is initiated is to get the wind in the open parasail and to keep the sail steady. With the wind in the sails the jeep moves forward with the para sailor sprinting slightly to keep up with the jeep. Within a few sprints the wind sweeps up the para sailor into the sky. For landing the jeep is steadily slowed down. The para sailor is advised to cycle his feet to keep with the momentum of the landing and run along a few steps till the two helpers pull down the sails and collapse it to prevent an unwanted re-launch.

Wg Cdr Rodrigues duly inspected the laid out parasail gear. One of the Safety Equipment (SE) sailors who had experience of two launches agreed to be the first candidate to go up. Wg Cdr Rodrigues took the wheel of Maruti Gypsy and we expectantly set for our first launch. To our dismay the wind directions along the runway were rather unfavorable causing crosswind conditions. We then shifted the launch to the taxi track and to everyone's elation had a successful launch. The weather conditions only permitted us to have a solitary launch. And as luck would have it before we could have more launches, Wg Cdr Rodrigues and the SE sailors were transferred out.

I was very keen to kick start parasailing, but was little apprehensive being a novice. After consultations with my staff we decided to give it a try one Sunday morning after the civil flight had taken off. The weather was friendly and positively encouraging. On the tarmac, I questionably looked around for a candidate who would agree to parasail. Due to the lack of experience all around there was an observable reluctance amongst the personnel present there. My elder son Amit who had accompanied me that morning willingly volunteered to be the first. I took the wheel of the Gypsy and with prayers on my lips

started the first launch. Fortunately, to our good luck it was a copybook smooth launch and landing. Seeing this, one more sailor volunteered and we had yet another amazing launch. This boosted my confidence and of those present. We carried out eight successive launches on the first day. All launches were very good except one. Due to cross winds my younger son Nikhil suffered minor bruises during landing.

Parasailing on Sundays became a regular feature at the air station. It also became a captivating novelty for passerbys who would often stop and huddle at the Lamba line fence to see this activity.

With the blessings of the then Fortress Commander a parasailing camp was held at the air station for the service personnel, families and children at Port Blair. The camp was a roaring success receiving an overwhelming response. Over 50 personnel including ladies and children participated. Personnel who carried out four successful launches were awarded a certificate. The scene at the Utkrosh airport during the camp was akin to a festive mela. Multiple launch requests were in popular demand and we tried to accommodate as many as possible. The presence and participation of Mrs Nalini Das was very encouraging. We conducted more than 200 launches without a single incident or injury to any person or equipment. This was possible due to the hard work and dedication of the Utkrosh team. For sometime parasailing was a regular feature at the air station.

Parasailing at the waterfront with the boat was later introduced in the islands by the A&N administration at the water sports complex.

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Convoy to Darbuk via Kargil and Leh

Commander RM Verma (Retd.)



The mountains have a singular fascination for one and all especially for those born and brought up in the hot and dusty plains. They provide you with an escape from the sweltering heat of north Indian summer and a mind boggling landscape together with the dose of adventure to soar your sinking spirits. The snow covered peaks, waterfalls, gushing streams of icy and crystal clear water, deep valleys and soothing greenery all around cast a mesmerising spell.

In Lahore, now in Pakistan, as a child I often used to go on top of Lawrence Gardens which was planned and developed in steep steps and terraces. After partition in 1947, the family moved to Nawanshahar, in district Jalandhar, which is at the foot hills of the Shivalik range of the Himalayas. As an aftermath of partition, the schools remained closed for a long period and we were free to go up and down these hills.

After selection for the Joint Services Wing in Dehradun the cadets used to trek up the Musoree hills and beyond, and in NDA at Khadakvasla we often used to trek to Sinhgarh Fort in Pune hills.

In 1973, I underwent Long Defence Management

Course at the College of Defence Management at Secunderabad. As part of the course we were divided into batches and sent to different Army, Navy and Air Force Commands for study of their Logistic patterns and suggest improvements to the Area Commanders. I was the only naval officer who volunteered to do a study in the Northern Command of the Army units at Sirinagar and Leh in Ladakh. I along with 11 Army Officers and one Air Force officer went to Chandigarh for our onward journey. At Chandigarh we had a choice to either fly by an Air Force Transport plane to Leh or go with an Army convoy via Pathankot. All the Army and Air Force Officers decided to go by flight, whereas I decided to go with the convoy.

This convoy had a number of three Tonners, Jongs and Jeeps. The officer-in-charge was an Army Captain and I was the senior officer present in the convoy. We left Pathankot and went over to Jammu, Udhampur and then to Srinagar where we halted for getting our snow clothing and provisions as required for high altitude. From Srinagar the convoy moved to Sonmarg, Kargil, Budhkarbu, Drass and Leh. All along the route the Army had set up some checkpoints where we could get some hot food and spend the nights in tents. The snow clothing was



quite adequate and we could sleep in tents without much of a problem. Along the route whenever the convoy stopped, the troops had tea and snacks cooked over stoves on the wayside. We also, as a precaution, carried oxygen cylinders but they were not required as we were slowly getting acclimatised as the journey was done gradually with necessary night halts.

When we stopped at Kargil, I casually enquired about the battalion which was stationed there and came to know that one of my NDA course mates Major Ashok Mehta (now a Maj Gen – Retd. and a defence analyst) was the battalion commander. I requested the convoy to halt for half an hour and met Ashok Mehta and exchanged pleasantries. We spent the night at Drass which during winter goes below 40 degree centigrade and is probably the coldest place in India. We finally reached Leh and spent a few days in the Army mess for rest and preparation for the logistics study of that area. In the mess, my roommate was one Brig. who was seen gasping for breath due to high altitude sickness. He had landed from Chandigarh (by flight) without the necessary acclimatisation. This once again highlighted the importance of acclimatisation in a gradual way whenever one has to move from a low to high altitude.

From Leh, on my special request, a small convoy was formed to go to the Indo-China border at Darbuk. We were required to go over Changla Pass at a height of 17000 feet. At Changla pass our one tonner got stuck in snow. We somehow, by wrapping steel chains on the tyres of the truck, were able to clear the pass and reach Darbuk after crossing rough terrain of boulders, rubble, rivulets and landslides. There, at Darbuk, we were able to see movement of Chinese troops across the border.

During our visits to different units at Srinagar and Leh and as a part of our logistics study, we found soldiers

with unnecessary items like shorts, mosquito nets, etc. which are not required at all at high altitudes. The unloading of stores from convoys was done in an unplanned fashion on the roadside and were then taken by local transports to their unit lines. We suggested that this process could be done in one go by constructing suitable high ramps where the unit transports could simultaneously come close and the loading-unloading operations could be done much faster. It came to our notice that the soldiers who returned to Chandigarh from Leh by air were carrying their accumulated rum rations etc. It was suggested that they could get vouchers for their rations and this would reduce the load on the aircraft. On reaching Leh a lot of damage was found in the rum packages. Some of the drivers and troops were intentionally smashing the packages so as to filter the rum through muslin cloth for personal use. This was taken up and the malpractice was stopped thereafter. When we returned to Srinagar and Udhampur we did a presentation to the Corps Commander Lt Gen Nakai at Srinagar and Lt Gen Bhagat who was GOC Northern Command at Udhampur.

Later in life, we always have made it a point to go to the hills particularly during summers. Manali and Rohtang Pass remain our favourite destination. Thus, the love for the mountains continues to hypnotise us.

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Coastal Minesweepers

Rear Admiral GC Thadani (Retd.)

In 1955, the Indian Navy had placed an order on the RN for purchase of four Coastal Minesweepers. These were to be built in four small UK shipyards and were fitted with state of the art minesweeping equipment and powered by the latest design of diesels the Deltic engines. Prior to building these four ships for the IN, the RN had only one wooden Coastal Minesweeper in commission, recently built, and fitted with these Deltic Engines.

On completion of my Marine Engineering Specialisation course in Manadon, Plymouth, UK, in early 1956, I reported to the Naval Advisor's Dept in London for repatriation to India. The DNA - Cdr PC George informed me that I was being retained in London and took me to see Cdr Tyabji, the senior DNA. Cdr Tyabji briefed me on the four Minesweepers being acquired and my duties were to visit these shipyards and participate in sea trials, and eventually I would be a part of the commissioning crew as the Squadron Tech Officer. The officers to man these four ships would be those who were at that time undergoing long C and TAS courses and also those undergoing Sub's courses. The Senior Officer, Cdr Jadaveshwar Chatterji, would come from India as also the sailors to man these ships.

During a visit to the Shipyards and participating in trials, I met Commander Chandy Kuruveilla who was the IN liaison overseer on acquisition of ships. All went well with the trials and harbour inspection of three ships namely Karwar, Cannanore and Kakinada. The fourth ship, the Cuddalore, was being built in Grimsby port well-known for building fishing trawlers. The harbour inspection of the Cuddalore took place and was cleared by a RN Commodore. However, Cdr Kuruveilla was not happy with the state of overall cleanliness and informed the Shipyard that the ship could not be accepted in its present state, and suggested that he would be happy to carry out harbour inspection again after a week subject

to the Shipyard undertaking a thorough clean up. The Shipyard was taken aback at this decision. Perhaps, unimaginable in the eyes of the Royal Navy and a British Shipyard.

Cdr Kuruveilla stood firm and courageously pointed out the shabby appearance of the wooden decks etc. After some frowns from the builders it was decided to reinspect Cuddalore after a week. The week passed and Cuddalore was reinspected and cleared. To me Cdr Kuruveilla's courage and firmness made a lasting impression and he earned great respect and admiration. The ships were commissioned as the 149 Mine Sweeping Squadron in Aug 1956. Cdr Chatterjee was the senior officer and CO Karwar. Cannanore was commanded by Lieut S L Sethi (became V Adm, VCNS), Cuddalore was commanded by Lieut Dighe and Kakinada was commanded by Lieut Rajagopalan. The other officers, all Lts, were PJ Baron, N Radhakrishnan, Benji Dutta, Babru Yadav, Cajitan D'Souza and S Subramanian. The Sub-Lts who joined the squadron were KC Gairola, Suren Govil (became V Adm and VCNS), Suresh Chitale and Arun Rao. Lt OP Sharma (an officer with a brilliant memory and became R Adm) came from India and was our Supply Officer and I was the Tech Officer. After four months of work up in the RN base on the island of Hythe, we set sail for India with a few days stopover in Portsmouth for logistics, and a day in Plymouth. The C-in-C Plymouth was Adm Sir Mark Pizey, ex-IN Chief.

From Gibraltar, we sailed to Malta for a work up with the RN minesweepers. We soon heard that the Egyptians had closed the Suez Canal in retaliation to some political problems with the UK and France. We were now stuck in Malta and this lasted for over two months. It was great fun while it lasted, even for the married officers. There were a lot of combined minesweeping sea exercises and



in many sweeping and recovery events, our ships beat the RN records. Our TAS specialists were in great form. When the Suez Canal finally got opened to the sea traffic, we sailed and were the first warships to go through. Enroute to Bombay, we stopped in Aden for logistics, and finally arrived in Bombay sometime in April 1957. We were received by the Defence Minister, Shri Krishna Menon.

The long course officers were soon transferred. Amongst the new faces, two outstanding officers - Lt KK Nayyer (later V Adm and VCNS) and Lt Ravi Sawhney (retired as V Adm and C-in-C) joined the Squadron. Looking back, these four small ships manned by 16 officers produced four V Adms, one R Adm, and one MVC.

The induction of Coastal Minesweepers must have been a bonus for the TAS specialists, but for Engineers and the Dockyard the Deltic Engines brought in umpteen maintenance problems. The main engines would throw out considerable unburnt oil with the exhaust gases, up

the funnel and fall as a spray on to the wooden decks. This created a perpetual cleaning problem and XO's were always furious. Funnel fires were also experienced due to accumulation of oil in the funnel and high exhaust temperatures when steaming at high speeds. Additional repair facilities had to be created to modify Deltic engines and in due course we managed to improve the situation and ships did considerable sailings, and in their time the ships were decommissioned.

Looking at the brighter side, the experience gained in those years of operating, maintaining, and repair of high speed diesels brought a lot of confidence in our tech sailors who upto that period were more at home with the boilers, steam turbines and steam pumps. This confidence stood us well in the years to come as we were soon going in for acquisition of larger ships powered by high speed diesels with latest powerful diesel generators.

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‘Going got tough’

Commander Kannan Ramdas (Retd)

Life on a submarine can be hard but I also learnt that life on the depot (mother) ship can be harder. It was in 1978 when the mother ship INS Amba always seemed to be in a perpetual state of repairs. We submariners would watch this curiously as we made our way from our cabins on board to the Subs alongside her. One morning we were dismayed to find all the commodes in the WCs missing. Anxious voices could be heard as I sleepily opened the door of my cabin. Plans were made to jog down to Taj Hotel and ‘do it’. Finally, we went to INS Vikrant berthed ahead of Amba. We visited Vikrant frequently till we got the commodes. But there was another nasty surprise for us – the pipelines were stripped away and back we were as guests of Vikrant!

Several years ago as a cadet in the Navy, I was given leave to attend my sister’s marriage at Udaipur. I disembarked the ship at Port Blair with air concession forms for the journey. On reaching Kolkata from Port Blair, I was told that the air concession form was from Kolkata to Udaipur but they could give me the ticket to Delhi only. On reaching Delhi I went to INS India but found that the duty officer was on night rounds. I was tired and hungry and fell off to sleep in his bed. The good soul came and woke me up and on learning of the problem, opened the Captain’s safe and handed me a sheaf of signed forms – ‘keep some as spare’, he said. We miss such guys!

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A Phaeton, a horse and an Admiral, rather a Vice Admiral

Vice Admiral MP Awati (Retd.)



During a fairly long stint in the Navy, I was sent to New Delhi just once, during 1979-80, for exactly twenty one months as Chief of Personnel, a period in my career which I would rather cast to amnesia. It was a forgettable period in an otherwise happy service in the Navy. New Delhi, during that period in my career, was a city growing and spreading in all directions. But I have deviated from the story I set out to tell, about an Admiral in his self-driven, horse powered phaeton, buggy, if you prefer. The story is surely symptomatic of how the equine breed continues to be associated with royalty, with the high and the mighty and therefore with prestige and pomp even with a bit of envy in a

democratic dispensation. Our esteemed President wishes to dispense with the honorifics preceding his name and be addressed as simply Shriman (Shri, for short). Why not? It is all a part of shedding the vestiges of undemocratic usages. But let me get on with my story of the horse and the buggy.

It happened like this.....to me, in New Delhi of 1979-80.

On April Fools' Day I assumed the chair of Chief of Personnel at Naval Headquarters the very day that Ronnie P became Chief of the Naval Staff



following the retirement of Jal Cursetji. I had never served in Delhi before and on hindsight I was not destined to go there again. Thankfully! The date proved to be ominous for me, the next twenty one months, a tale of misery, deep distrust and near despair, dealing with uncomprehending (deliberately so) bureaucrats, attempting to improve Navy's human resource management, recruitment and training for a more strident, purposeful Naval force. It was like bashing one's head against a rock wall. You made no impression except to show a bleeding head. I came to dislike the place, Delhi, intensely, pompous, insecure and inane, as it appeared to me. After being accosted twice on my early morning walks along its deserted avenues for the watch I normally wore, I gave up walking along the roads and did my walking on the spacious lawns of No 21 Safdarjung Road, our Lutyen's bungalow at the opposite end of No 1, the PM's residence. That was to be my undoing one day, I mean No. 1 Safarjung, the following year, which was to bring IG to power, as the reader will discover from the narrative.

Delhi in 1979-80 seemed to me to be a place for lunatics, gadabouts, political, bureaucratic and military who seemed to operate with one aim in view, no two, really; one-upmanship and keeping up with your apparently more successful neighbour. Very fortunately, we could not fall into that trap because our neighbour was A.B. Vajpai, the Minister for External Affairs until end 1979 and after that an M.P. in the opposition, at No. 19 Safdarjung Road. We could not have had a more affable neighbourhood. Across the road was a wood, behind which were the polo grounds, Safdarjung Race Course and horses, plenty of them. Horse became the redeeming agent for me through those dismal months of despondency, of intense heat after March and intense cold from December. It was a place of extremes, as it still is,

no doubt, a humourless political jungle. Delhi, Shahjehanabad, Indraprastha of the Mahabharat, has been the capital of Bharat that is India longer than one need, count. It has, through history, not been lucky for those who moved there to make it their capital. The latest movers and shakers in Delhi, by then New Delhi, went thither in 1920 from Kolkota (erstwhile Calcutta). In less than thirty years they had to pack up their bags and leave, not only Delhi but India, the Jewel in their monarch's crown. Some Vaastus have this strange reputation, onerous history. They are not kind to those who occupy them. The present occupants have been there sixty years plus. The saving grace for them may be that they did not go there from somewhere else. They had been tenants there long before they became rulers.

Be that as it may, the horse and the buggy came to my rescue, allowing me to see my dismal situation in perspective. Colonel VP Singh, my old friend, now Commandant of the President's Body Guard offered both to me, together with a smart Lance Daffadar to lend the right airs to the mode of transport. 'Nobody uses them any longer. At least the animal will be exercised regularly and the buggy will not fall apart through disuse. It is a fine piece of workmanship, well sprung and an excellent drive', he said. I gratefully accepted the offer of the princely mode of going to my office in Sena Bhavan and began using it almost immediately. I had used this mode of commuting at the National Defence Academy not so long ago.

Every morning I would go clip clopping to my office, with me in the driver's seat, reins in hand, in my working whites, complete with a V Adm's car flag in the whip socket, with the Daffadar in his white vardi and red safa, smartly in attendance right behind me. It must have been quite a spectacle, judging from the number of heads which turned to gaze at it, as we passed along



Safdarjung Road and the other wide avenues of South Delhi to Sena Bhavan. They must have thought that an apparition from the Raj, now gone some thirty years, had resurrected itself, complete with horse and wagon and a bearded sahib driving it. I used to look forward to that drive and after a while the morning walkers must have got used to it, judging from an occasional wave from some of them. I believe many of them appreciated the return of a bit of colour to an increasingly drab Delhi.

One day, I deliberately drove along Rajaji Marg, past the homes of CNS and COAS and then the British High Commissioner's residence. Someone out in the grounds in a summer frock waved to me vigorously. I waved back in appreciation. I had a call that morning from Ronnie P who thought that it was just like me to do such an outlandish thing. He was appreciative. That was all that I needed to continue the charade. So I did through 1979. The Daffadar would take the outfit back to PBG until the next morning when he would arrive promptly at 0830, ready to take the General sahib of the Navy to his duty. I have a sneaking feeling that the cavalryman of the 61st enjoyed the drive as much as I did, with those appreciative people all around us. I especially recall the sharp winter mornings. Delhi was then at her best, crisp and business like. Much work would be done during those winter months and I thought I would request VP to let me have the transport for the homeward journey. Unfortunately that plan broke against the uncertain times I tended to keep in the office clearing my table before home. It had to be the universal road transport of all government functionaries, the trusty Ambassador, in the hands of my trusted Thomas, a local Christian and a most competent driver. Then as suddenly as it had begun the idyll came to an unexpected end.

In January 1980, IG came back to office and to

No1 Safdarjung Road and I, unsuspecting, continued to drive past that address as I had done for the past months. Then one fine, clear and cool morning in February the telephone rang. Ronnie P was at the other end. He said in a matter of fact way, 'Manohar, the Prime Minister wished to know who the naval officer is who drives past her residence every morning in a horse buggy, and where does he go? I told her because I know that it is you and that you go to Sena Bhavan to your office. She was amused and wanted to know why he does not use a car like all the others. I wanted to tell her but I stopped short. She evidently does not like you going past her in that horse drawn contraption. So will you please discontinue and get back to your car as of now, please?' Now that was an order and it implied that I must not go past the PM in the morning. So I changed course and began taking a dog leg along Aurangzeb Road. All went well for a few days and then somewhere short of the round about the PM passed my carriage in her car. She must have noticed because the telephone in my office rang. Ronnie P was on the line. 'Manohar', he almost yelled out the name in his best gunnery voice, 'I thought I told you to quit that silly contraption and get into your car. Now please do that forthwith. The Prime Minister does not like you going about the city in a horse and buggy. Please for God's sake do that. I do not wish to hear from the Prime Minister again. I said, 'Aye, aye sir.' The horse, the phaeton and the Daffadar were returned to Colonel Sodhi, VP's successor at PBG with my grateful thanks for those many enjoyable morning rides, accompanied by that wonderful aroma of horse dung! It had been a great interlude. IG brought back a semblance of order and discipline to the country which surely included a return to an accepted and acceptable mode of road transport by an apparently wayward senior naval officer!

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Flying the flag for Inder

Air Vice Marshal Cecil Parker (Retd)



In school (during World War II) we were taught that a flag was a piece of cloth tied to a pole and served as a symbol. Transition to college in the immediate aftermath of Independence made us familiar with our new national flag and we took great pride in hoisting and flying the flag every 15th August, thereafter. Joining the Air Force (1951), however, taught me that in the Armed Forces, the term 'flying the flag' had several subtle connotations and meanings.

Each of the three defence services has their own service flag which carry the national tricolours and service symbol on a coloured background: Red (Army), White (Navy) and Blue (Air Force). 'Flying the flag' also meant 'showing the flag' (to assert claim by military presence), 'flags of inconvenience', 'flag waving', and by extension went on to cover 'flag

marches', 'flag meetings', 'white flags', 'flag ships', 'flag officers', 'flag cars', and a few more non-literal meanings and service derivations. As a very young and junior student at our Staff College in Wellington (1960-61), my impassioned championing of air power in a joint land-air exercise led the Directing Staff (DS) in his sum-up to light heartedly laud my 'flying the Air Force flag' so effectively as to make the land forces feel totally redundant! The good natured DS concerned was Lt Col Inder Gill who immediately following the exercise invited me to join him at the bar.

Though very much my senior and despite our infrequent actual meetings, our relationship was sustained over the years and I learned to respect and admire this legendary (to quote an Army colleague) 'soldier's soldier'. A thorough professional with a



colourful personality, down-to-earth attitude and a gift of understated humour, Inder's great popularity was matched only by his thirst. Though a very busy DGMO (Director General Military Operations) during the 1971 Indo-Pak war, he still found time to call up a certain Wing Commander in Pathankot to congratulate him on the award of the MVC and to encourage him to continue to keep our flag flying high!

While commanding our Air Base in Adampur (1977-1979) I once received an urgent call from the Chief Operations Officer to say that an unscheduled Air Force helicopter had sought permission to land in 20 minutes, required refuelling and requested that the AOC be informed that Inder was on-board. I had no previous intimation but gave necessary permission, instructed my staff to carry a Red 3-star car plate, a Lt Gen's car flag and to alert our officers' mess. As I was leaving for the helipad my Adjutant informed me that we did not have the required star plate or flag. Out of the helicopter stepped Lt Gen Inder Gill, GOC-in-C, Western Command who immediately apologised for lack of notice. He explained that he was on a short notice exercise and did not want his destinations known in advance.

I, in turn apologised, for not having the required protocol star plate and flag. He laughed and said that his SO had both, but since this was my station and my Staff Car, it must fly my flag and promptly got into the front passenger seat while I took the wheel. Not too many 3-star uniformed Generals would be so comfortable being driven in a Staff Car flying a one-star blue car flag! I drove him around the Air Base and wound up at our mess where he quenched his legendary thirst. I saw him off at the helipad with his destination known only to himself and the Captain of the helicopter. This was to be our last meeting. A few days later I received a hand-written personal letter (50p postage) thanking me for our hospitality and expressing great delight at my flying the right flag! When I received the news that Inder Gill passed away,

I (metaphorically) flew the flag at half-mast in honour of an officer, gentleman and a great human being.

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Lowering a Sea Boat

Commander JK Sharma (Retd.)

A sea boat gives very good training in hoisting or lowering while at sea.

Long ago, a sea boat was lowered at sea by the cadets on board the training Ship, INS Delhi, in very trying conditions. If the sea is rough, the order is timed so that the boat will drop on the crest of the approaching wave and not in a trough...

The OOW commanding the operation while lowering the boat ordered 'slip' on a falling wave through oversight and with the result the boat dropped in a trough, instead of a crest, and was damaged. Water started filling the boat. The boat was transformed into a swamp boat.

The OOW must have faced music for the lapse. However, the following brief communication was carried out between INS Delhi and C-in-C, South:

"Regret to inform, the Ship's boat got damaged while lowering. It was a big training exercise for the cadets to learn the intricacies of hoisting and lowering a boat at sea."

"Yes! Very good", came the reply from C-in-C, "Get the boat repaired, so that it can be used again." Thus a Board of Inquiry was evaded.

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Despite all odds...ingenuity!!

Commodore Vijay Thapar (Retd.)

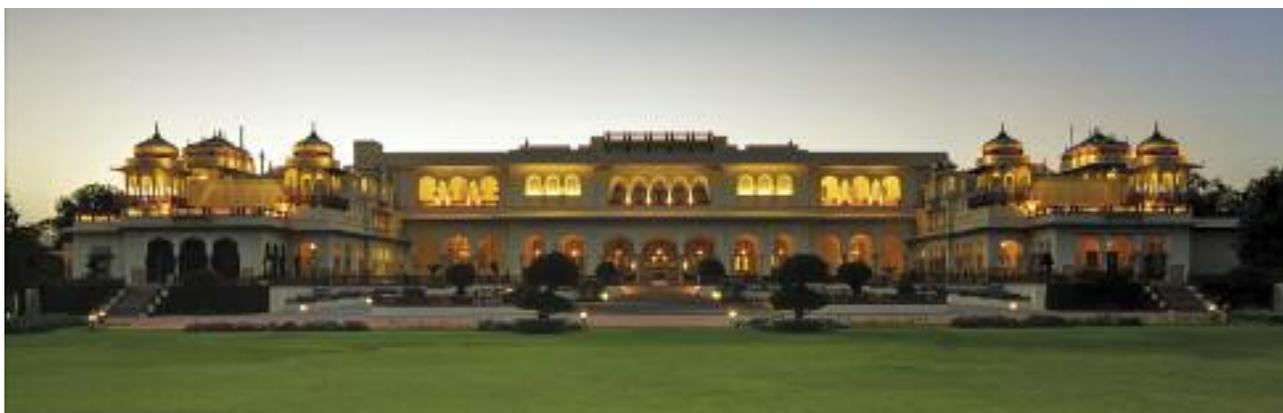
“There is no limit to the ingenuity of man, if it is properly and vigorously applied”Winston Churchill

I was appointed Captain (Protocol) at Naval Headquarters in August 1988 and during my two years brush in this assignment, it was not uncommon to be in situations which demanded extreme tact, persuasion, never giving in, nor giving up and making things happen... and it was sheer ingenuity which came to my rescue more than once, despite all odds. How true was the very first advice given to me by my predecessor, then Captain Arun Madan that, “in this job, there is no second time. You have to get it right the first time! You must be able to face situations, which at times, come thick and fast and apply ideas to solve the problem at hand....in other words, give full play to your “ingenuity.”

But for some ‘ingenuity’, the official visit of Seychelles Naval Chief, Commodore Francis Hodoul and his wife, Mrs Sheila Hodoul, to India in November 1988 may not have been very smooth. As per his official itinerary received by us, the Seychelles Naval Chief was scheduled to arrive in India a day prior to Diwali, after his visit to Singapore. I had strict instructions to make sure that the dignitary steps on Delhi’s terra-

firma only the day after the “Festival of Lights”. There was no way that I could make or even suggest a change in his already scheduled programme, nor could I compromise on instructions received.....well, this was the situation, which pushed me to ingenious plan and saved both ends.....I flew down to receive the Hodouls at Mumbai itself, where their flight was landing and made them the irresistible offer to first visit Jaipur with me and my wife (we were nominated to accompany them during their official tour to India), where they would get a chance to be a part of Royal Diwali celebrations in the Pink City of the Princely State. While Hodouls were overwhelmed by this hospitable offer, we were able to adhere to the given instructions. So I managed to “do and NOT die!”

I had also managed to get in touch with the erstwhile last titular Maharaja of Jaipur, Brigadier (Retd.) Sawai Bhawani Singh, whilst he was on a visit to Rambagh Palace hotel, where we were staying. On being informed that the Seychelles Naval Chief and his wife were keen to visit the City Palace and witness the Diwali festivities, he graciously invited us all over to his Palace for Royal Diwali celebrations in the evening. The new “catch” on this regal Diwali track was that as per their tradition, all invitees to the Palace were to wear dark coloured attire on Diwali





night and Mrs Hodoul did not have any dress in that colour..... I managed to arrange for a dark blue stole for her to wear with her attire and the Maharaja and his wife, Maharani Padmini Devi warmly welcomed us to their Palace. The Hodouls were introduced to the other past Princes and Royalty from neighbouring Principalities, as they stepped before the Maharaja, and bowed before him one by one, as per protocol and thereafter the extraordinary fire works display followed. On their completion, we were escorted to the “Khaas” Room where around a long table the guests (gents only) assembled with small mounds of coins/cash for “Diwali Gambling”. The Maharaja, in his magnanimity, pushed a mound of ‘coins’ with his hands before Commodore Hodoul and invited him to partake in the activity, for fun. Commodore and Mrs Hodoul had never experienced an evening like this before.... as we took our leave from the Palace, I had this distinct feeling that the visit of the Seychelles Naval Chief had started on the right footing... thanks to the play of ingenuity!!

Yet another instance comes to my mind when the Russian Naval Chief Admiral Vladimir Chernavin paid an official visit to our country. The Chief of the Naval Staff normally hosted official dinners for the visiting dignitaries at “Villa Medici,” the roof-top dining hall of Taj Mansingh hotel, which offered a picturesque view of the capital. As luck would have it, on the day the dinner was to be hosted, Villa Medici was already booked by noted industrialist and President of FICCI, Mr Raunaq Singh of Apollo Tyres. Moreover a day before the scheduled banquet the Chief desired that a Kathak recital be put up at the hotel for the dignitary and “custard apple” be served to him at dinner. The moment I walked into the office of Mr. Ronnie Lobo, General Manager of the hotel and explained to him our requirements, his initial response was “sorry Captain, no way are these possible at such short notice....we cannot cancel the booking of Mr. Raunaq Singh as we get a lot of business from Raunaq Group and it will be unethical to do so. As regards the

Kathak recital, all the halls of the hotel are booked and it would only be possible by the pool side, in the open wintery night, for which a stage will have to be erected and other guests of the hotel kept indoors. Moreover, Kathak artists are fussy about being asked to perform at short notice and that also in the chilly weather, outside, which would further be compounded by guests having their drinks while watching the recital. To top it, custard apples are out of season.” Remembering my predecessor’s ‘golden words’ I took a chance and told the General Manager. “Mr. Lobo, in that case, much as I understand your predicament, I have no other option but to cancel all our bookings which we have done in Delhi, Mumbai, etc. and we would be switching over to the Oberoi Hotels Group, forthwith”. For effect, I asked my colleague to ring up the General Manger of Oberoi hotel and fix-up our meeting with him. I was at my wit’s end as I was not even sure if the Oberoi hotel could ‘take on’ our requirements at such short notice and we may land up being left high and dry. As I left Mr. Lobo’s office and was sitting in the hotel’s lobby, thinking of my next move, Ronnie got in touch with me after some time and told me that he would be able to meet our first two requirements but not the one regarding the custard apple. He had apparently rung up Mr. Raunaq Singh and told him that he would be shifting his dinner venue to “Cassa Medici” (the Italian Restaurant, which they closed down for the public, for that evening) as the air conditioning was not satisfactory in Villa Medici, due to a technical glitch! Another General Manager with Ingenuity. The Kathak recital was appreciated by one and all and the custard apple were procured by a fellow officer from the Azadpur mandi, after scouting for them in all the main markets and cold storages of the Capital.

At the end of it all.....where there is a will, there is a way...or is it Ingenuity?

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Those pristine Islands of the Andaman Sea

Dr Anuradha Kunte

*Once again, after many, many years
In front of a calm and tranquil Bay
I sit on the patio of JARAWA'S beautiful cabin,*

*And look out within me, as also seawards...
And memories of events, markers of my life
Come tumbling out..but do not choke me
They come more in the manner of a slow
and comforting release,
Old memories come flooding and my life
lies bare before me.*

*So much has happened,
So much indeed...but at this point of time
It all seems to have followed an inevitable line
Leading, ineluctably, to what I am today,*

*On balance, I feel happy and satisfied.
It had to be this way, I feel
Then I wonder now where do I go from here?
Wherever it may be, I say,
I must go with a calm disposition.*

*I will always remember that I had this great opportunity
Of drinking in, the serene beauty of this seamless sea.*

*Just then, etched against the skyline of the Cove
I see the Viper gallows standing taut and aloof...
A stark reminder of the rougher outcomes
of much of human endeavour.*

*I feel humbled by this thought
As also I do by the memory of this seamless sea.
Whatever life has on offer, I pledge
to never ever despair
And, reflecting on that pensive note,
I to my cabin repair.*

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A call of Duty and Mother

Commander JK Sharma (Retd.)

We the veterans are indeed very proud of our Navy. In June 2011 what began as a scare for Mumbai's Iconic Sea link had turned into a 10,000-tonne headache. MV Wisdom, an aged cargo ship reduced to scrap-transport vessel, washed upon Juhu beach, got stuck on 13 June 2011 morning and was badly damaged. It was an impossible task to re-float it from its present location. Even the Big 'B' was taken aback, as if the vessel was going to hit his mansion straight-ahead! It was towed away in a very short time only with the help of our Navy. Yet from nowhere, another liner MV Pavit followed and ran aground. This was also cleared very soon, obviously by our Navy.

Navy has expertise of salvaging her own Ships. Admiral JG Nadkarni has described in QD-2010 as to how INS Godavari was rescued off Male in very difficult conditions in 1976. The ship had run aground on a reef. Admiral JG Nadkarni, the then Captain, was the CO of INS Delhi and also Senior Officer of the 1st Training Sqn of IN Ships Tir and Delhi. The Ships were on a visit to Mauritius. INS Deepak came along for logistic support.

Cdr Daryao Singh an old veteran has narrated his reminiscence of the event. He was well known for his hard work and being on board the Training Ship INS Delhi, he was in the thick of rescue-operation. He was indeed fighting on two fronts.

He had to go to see his ailing mother and as per custom, he had promised to honour his mother by placing a 'Dushala' on her. After getting a couple of telegrams, it was very clear that her condition was grim. Yet the call of duty compelled him to keep struggling in trying conditions to re-float INS Godavari. He got all the cadets and

midshipmen available on board Training Ships as additional hands to dismantle all the fittings and to make INS Godavari completely de-ammunited. Whole load was taken to INS Delhi, so that a lighter Ship could be pulled, by tugs at high tide.

Meanwhile the kind hearted CO, Captain JG Nadkarni, allowed Cdr Daryao Singh to go on a short leave to see his ailing mother. He was jack-stayed to INS Deepak and the ship was rushed to Cochin to drop Cdr Daryao Singh ashore, where he along with his wife took the first available train to rush home. Due to financial constraints he could not take a flight. Unfortunately he was not destined to meet his mother. During the journey his mother left for her heavenly abode. His desire to meet his mother and place a 'Shawl/Dushala' could not be fulfilled.

INS Godavari was floated and towed away to Cochin.

Cdr Daryao Singh had retired in 1996 after putting up 36 years of long service. He has been doing very well in real estate business, ever since his retirement. He has generated employment to the younger generation. He gives entire credit for his successful second innings to Navy.

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A nostalgic trip along Gujarat coast

Commander Rajnish (Retd.)

My wife Rekha and I had had a wonderful opportunity to go on a trip along the Gujarat Coast in March 2010. We started our trip from Jamnagar. For me personally, it turned out to be a nostalgic journey. It brought back to my mind many fond memories of my days as a cadet on board INS TIR during Spring Term 1959. Having sailed from Bombay with Commander Kirpal Singh (Later Rear Admiral) in command, the ship made its first call at Okha. We had the opportunity to visit Dwarkadheesh Temple. Later the ship called at Veraval, Porbander and Diu among other major and minor ports off the Indian Coast till Calcutta. We had the opportunity to see the Dwarkadheesh Temple, Mahatma Gandhi's birth place at Porbander, Gir Forest and Somnath Temple. It was indeed a nostalgic experience to visit these places again in March 2010 after a span of 51 years.

Later, I was one among 15th NDA Course Sub Lieutenants of the Executive Branch to go to INS Valsura in summer of 1960 to attend Electrical Course. On one of the weekends, Soli Contractor, Lalit Talwar and I went on bicycles to Rozi Harbour, about three kilometers from INS Valsura. It was a state of low water; consequently we could go right up to Rozi light house located at the end of about half a kilometer long break water. The shoreline over there is gradually shelving, hence the waterline rises and recedes over long distances to cover the breakwater at high water and expose it completely till Rozi Light House at low water. Subsequently, during 1970, when I was Navigating Officer on board INS Trishul, the ship had visited Rozi Harbour and anchored off Rozi Light. In the evening, officers of the ship were invited for a cocktail party in INS Valsura. It was easy to land by ship's motor cutter while going for the party. However, on our return well after dark (the only light visible was a flashing light of the Rozi Light House), to our horror

we found that the waterline had receded due to low tide. The top of the break water had become very slippery and we had to catch one another to be able to walk till the seaward end of the breakwater, to embark the motor cutter near the Rozi Light House.

During our visit to Jamnagar in March 2010, I made it a point to go to Rozi Harbour. I was somewhat disappointed to see that the Rozi Light no longer existed; a factory had come up in its place. It was connected to the shore by a high breakwater, with a motor-able road on top of it. I enquired about the old break water and the Rozi Light House. A local inhabitant told me that the Light House had given its place to a factory. He pointed out to remnants of a disused breakwater, almost buried in sand a few meters away and said that that was the old breakwater.

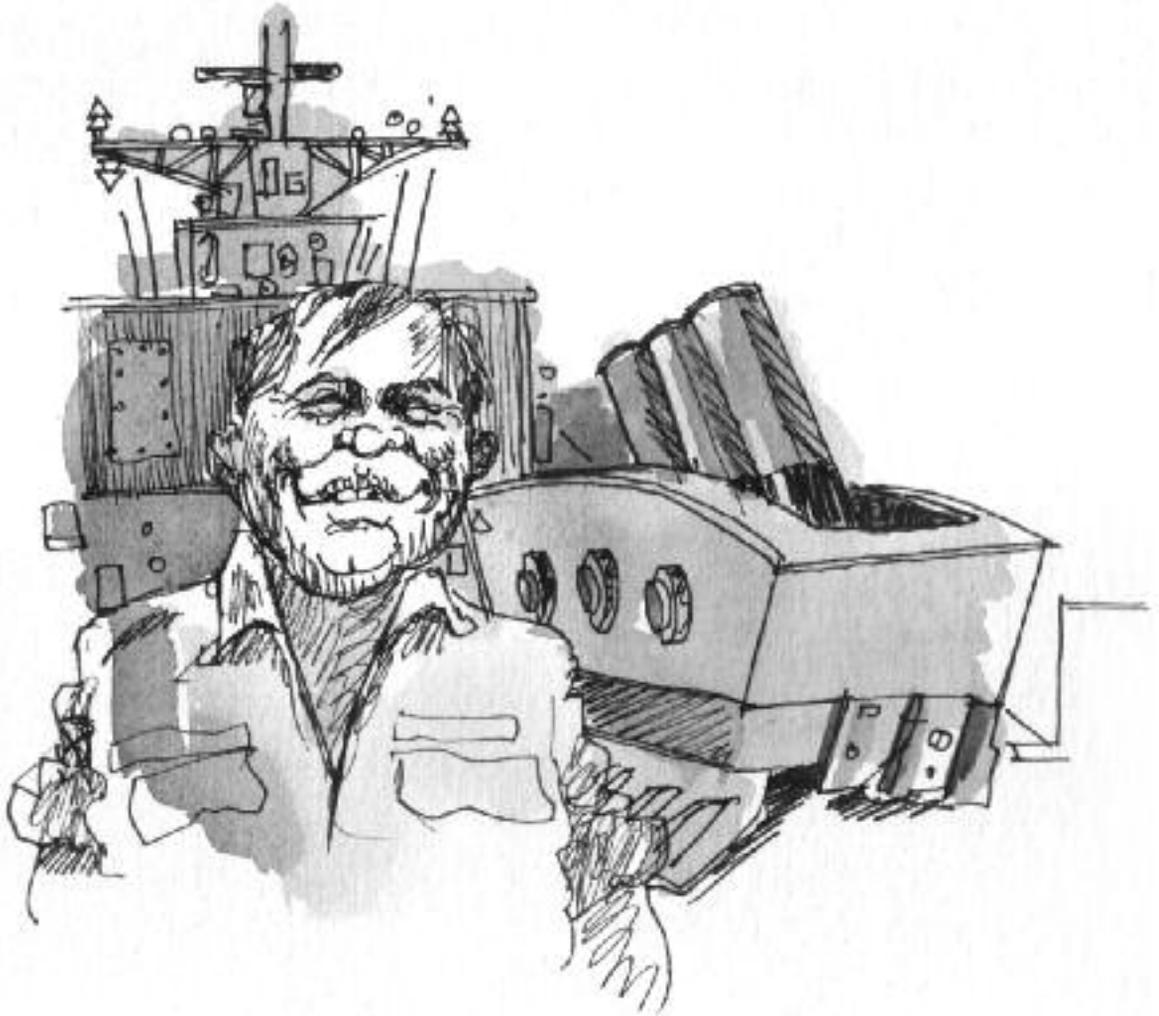
Another nostalgic experience I had during our Gujarat Coast Trip in March 2010 was a visit to the INS Khukri Memorial erected at the top of a hill feature overlooking the sea at Diu. The memorial is in the form of a scale model of the ship placed in a glass house. Alongside it is a granite slab with names of Captain Mulla, officers and sailors who had gone down with the ship when she sank about 40 miles due south of Diu Head in December 1971. I could not control my tears when I read the names of Captain Mulla and Lieutenant Kundanmal among others. Captain Mulla was the Executive Officer of INS Kistna during her cruise to East African Ports in summer of 1960. Lalit Talwar, TH Chofin and I were appointed on board that ship to obtain our watch keeping certificates. Kundanmal and I were shipmates in 1968. My wife and I had attended his wedding in Bombay. Well, that is life.

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Nath and his beatific smile

Captain S Prabhala (Retd)



Early 1961 INS Talwar was in Singapore on a routine visit. Mixing business with pleasure, A/S Mortar Mk 10 Range Calibration was fitted into the schedule on one of the days.

TALWAR was a Type 12 anti-submarine frigate and was commissioned less than a year before in Birkenhead, England. The commissioning crew of Commander BK Dang (Commanding Officer), Lieutenant Commander MM Johri (Executive Officer), Lieutenant Commander NP Bhalla (Engineer Officer), Lieutenant JA Fernandes (Supply Officer), Lieutenant

MM Atal (Gunnery Officer), Lieutenant DP Sarin (TAS Officer), Lieutenant DK Ghosh (Navigating Officer), Lieutenant VP Shekhawat (Assistant Gunnery Officer), Lieutenant MM Puri (Senior Engineer) and myself, then a Lieutenant, Electrical Officer were still manning the ship.

Alas, on the day of the calibration, as we were reaching the calibration range a few miles off Singapore, Mortar Mk10 started 'hunting' in elevation. The system had been checked thoroughly the previous day and everything was perfect. But such is



the perversity of electronics that Murphy's law decided to assert itself at the crucial moment. There was no quick-fix remedy and we returned to Singapore. And calibration was scheduled for the next day.

The A/S Mortar Mk 10 system was in the care of an Electrical Petty Officer by the name of Nath. He was a wonderful person: short and chubby with an enormous capacity for work. He gave loving care to his equipment and was naturally crestfallen when it let him down at a critical time. He was a man of few words. For good reason, because he had a peculiar difficulty in speaking - his face would go into painful contortions as if he was extricating words from the inner recesses of his stomach.

Nath set about investigating what went wrong. After thoroughly checking all signals, he reported to me that there was a break in the feedback loop. It was traced to a loose contact in one of the connectors. The connector was replaced but we soon found out that something else was wrong. Eventually, we found that a thermionic valve had gone 'soft'. It was replaced and the system worked beautifully. Further checks were carried out and we were satisfied that nothing would go wrong the next day.

Early morning next day, Nath brought a Petty Officer of the Royal Navy to me saying that he had to come to help us to make sure that the A/S Mortar system did

not fail again. Nath was standing behind the RN PO and I could see utter distaste written all over his face. Apart from Nath's obvious revulsion, I learnt that the man was no expert on the system and therefore told him that he was not needed.

I then went up to the CO's cabin to make the usual report about being ready for sailing. "Incidentally L" said Cdr Dang, "last night at the dinner party in C-in-C's house, I met the Command Electrical Officer and he promised to send a PO(ELP) to sail with us when I told him about the aborted calibration yesterday. He must have reported by now. Sorry, I didn't tell you this earlier". I replied that indeed a PO(ELP) had come on board and that I sent him back immediately. Visibly upset, Cdr Dang said "I asked for him", implying how dare I go against his wish. With as calm a voice as I could muster, I told him that the man had no expertise on the Mortar system and Nath has set things right and that I was satisfied. Cdr Dang had known me for almost a year and I suppose he had enough confidence in me to end by saying, "well then, it is on your head now". No doubt in my mind what he meant - my head would roll if things went wrong again.

The calibration shoot went off without a hitch that day. Nath's beatific smile said it all: he was vindicated and my head would stay in its place.

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CDA in Ramraj

Lieutenant Commander Sonali Pattanaik

After completion of Lanka war, Hanumanji was enjoying his well earned annual leave with his vaanar friends. One fine day he got a voice mail on Aakashvani from CDA requesting him to send his TD claim - dues related to his tour for bringing Sanjivani

Booti for Laxmanji etc for Lanka Operations before 31st March. He ignored the first voice mail.

But after 3-4 reminders in two day's time and receiving a reminder from CDA through his Adjutant



Angad, he had to at last go to Ayodhya cancelling his leave and submit the TA/DA claims.

He submitted the TA/ DA Bill, bills of Sushen Vaidya, hospital charges incurred for Bharatji when he met with an accident during his travel, flight tickets and boarding passes of Garud airlines from Lanka to Sanjeevni mountain and back to get the Booti for Laxman, rental charges for horse to find the booti in forest, cost of Sanjeevani Booti for Laxmanji, coolie charges etc.

(1) "Where is your Temporary Duty sanction? Who authorised your move," Asked the Desk Officer of CDA. Hanumanji didn't have any move sanction. He explained to the desk officer that seeing the emergency-grave condition of Laxman who had become unconscious, he (Hanuman) had moved on his own initiative and to save time he decided to fly to Sanjeevani mountain by air through Garud airlines. Somehow Hanumanji got the ex-post facto sanction by requesting the concerned official Bali 2-3 times as Bali's brother Sugreev was Hanuman's coursemate at the academy.

(2) Hanumanji had claimed TA bill for air travel. But his claim was passed only for rates applicable for hiring a horse. And all other expenses on medical, Sanjeevani Booti, consultation charge fee of Sushen Vaidya for his examining Laxman and conduct of blood and urine tests, ECG, ultra sound and X-ray etc of Laxman bhrata were not reimbursed.

When he asked for the reasons, he was told that:

(a) As per his designation, he is entitled to travel by horse only.

(b) He cannot get refund claim for other things as he does not have the proper bills. And he did not have the minimum three quotations for Sanjeevani Booti.

Saddened by these strong Audit objections, Hanumanji went to General Shri Rama and explained to him about the deduction on his claim. Hearing this, Ramji ordered the related CDA official to pass the air travel and other charges as claimed by Hanumanji. The officer came back with TR, FR and the latest TA/DA rule books published after the 6th Pay Commission and told Shri Ramji, "Sir, these rules have been made by your father Dasharathji. If you want to overrule your father, I don't have any problems". Pitrabhakt Ramji became speechless.

So he thought of another way to compensate Hanuman. He called him and gave him the claimed amount in cash from his pocket. But how could Hanuman take cash from Ramji? Hanumanji said "Sir, how can I take money from you for treating Laxmanji? Laxmanji is as revered to me as you are".

But in his heart of hearts, Hanumanji cursed himself as to why he listened to the accounts fellow, cut short his leave, completed all the formalities and put the TA/DA claim and placed Shri Ram in such an awkward position.

Hanumanji, a sincere soldier that he was, kept doing his work with the same sincerity and dedication which he had prior to Lanka Operation, even after this incident also.

Now you see, Hanuman was almost a God and he was perhaps born to serve Ram. But for us mortals, there is a different lesson and that is -

"Don't do anything without proper sanctions, whatever may be the urgency or importance of the job".

At the most Laxmanji will die - nothing more will happen!!

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Kwaheri Kenya

Commodore Srikant Kesnur

(Author's Note. Kwaheri is 'farewell' in Swahili the principal lingua franca of East Africa. Swahili is also used to describe the East African coast and is itself derived from the Arab-Hindustani word 'S(w)ahil' for coast. In this piece I have used the terms Nairobi, Kenya and East Africa interchangeably with a view to see them more as a region animated with similar characteristics and to describe our common experiences rather than as precise geographical entities.)

In a Navyman's life, change and movement is a constant. After our work is done (or sometimes even before) we pack up and move. This having been the pattern in the last 26 years of my life in the Navy it did not make sense to feel deeply attached to one place or set of people. Yet, the heart has its own reasons and there was unbearable sadness not only in me but also my wife and son (perhaps even more for them) as we bid adieu in March 2012 to Kenya which was characterised by beautiful places, warm people and great sights.

We left with a heavy heart but happy memories - for some of our best times were spent there. A detailed Kenya chronicle would best encapsulate our experiences but for now suffice it to say, that we always looked with incredulity at people who rolled their eyes and condescendingly said 'TIA' (This is Africa). Nairobi (and Kenya) certainly did not fit the stereotype. The flower capital of the world, a place brimming with the best of fruits and vegetables (and fish and fowl and meat as per my carnivore friends), a city with the most salubrious climate, a land of great sights (not just game but rivers, forests, dales, mountains, beaches and deserts) this was indeed a paradise for us, made even more serendipitous by the fact that very few people know about it, hence it is the world's best kept secret.

Not many people know, for example, that Nairobi has, after New York, the highest number of UN offices. This made Kenya a country of cheery cosmopolitanism and Nairobi a place where cultures and cuisines of many countries are on offer.

Sure enough, if the country can overcome the three 'C's of crime, corruption and congestion (traffic) it would become even better but personally for me it is always fascinating to see societies and nations in transition and somewhere 'in-between' on the development trajectory. Seeing a similar transformation in India, it was exciting (and educative) to watch the huge surge of energy that colours the palate of this vibrant multi-cultural and cosmopolitan place. There are many stories to tell and many nuggets to absorb in a region where, to borrow a 'Naipaulesque' metaphor for India, a million mutinies (both real and allegorical) occur. We witnessed history unfold in the region. Be it the birth of a new nation - South Sudan, a referendum and a new constitution in Kenya, Presidential elections (and greater democratisation) in Tanzania and Seychelles, instability and successive governments in Somalia, we saw a region in a state of flux and on the move.

Instability and the attendant problem of piracy off Somalia converted my job into a busy operational billet and several times my office functioned as a 24x7 MOC and piracy reporting centre. I had a ringside view of the way the entire issue played out at the political, legal, operational and humanitarian levels and it was fascinating seeing several dimensions and contours of what a 'layperson' may imagine is quite a simple issue. One feels privileged to have played a small part in our country's counter piracy efforts or in enhancing the relations between India and Seychelles and India and Kenya. There can be, at an individual humanitarian



level, no greater satisfaction than having assisted in getting a few people out of captivity in Somalia which I was privileged to undertake. Towards the end of my watch a war broke out on the Kenya-Somalia border - in short there was never a dull moment throughout my tenure. The cumulative effect of all this was a massive leap in our understanding of the region and the forces that operate there alongwith a greater appreciation of India's own progress on the path of democratic development in its tryst with destiny.

We tried in our humble ways (and subject to our budgetary constraints) to wander around the region - Kenya of course, and Tanzania, Seychelles, Uganda and Zanzibar. My official assignments also took me to Eritrea, Djibouti, Mauritius, Reunion Island and Egypt. We did many safaris and tried to enhance value in each of them by going off the beaten track – a battle field safari once of WW-I killing fields, old dilapidated railway stations that once upon a time breathed history and watched this nation (Kenya) being built, ancient places with liting names like Laetoli, Kariandusi and Olduvai which verily saw the birth of mankind and each time we were both dazed and humbled at what we saw and experienced. For India which prides itself as the cradle of civilisation there is a greater truth - Kenya (and its surroundings) is the cradle of mankind wherein stones and soil seem to whisper stories of time steeped in antiquity and mystery. Another happy commonality between Kenya and India are forests and jungles. Is it any wonder that two of the most classic tales of our childhood – Jungle Book and Lion King are set in India and Kenya respectively?

Each of our trips to the forests was a unique experience. We were fortunate to see lions hunt (and also mate), to see the elusive black rhino, to witness of all the rare sights a classic cheetah hunt, to watch transfixed the great migration and river crossings (called the eighth wonder of the world which it truly was), to see elephants bond within a herd and so forth. But to reduce our safari to just a montage of wild life

images would be missing the point. These safaris taught us about the environment and ecosystem in more ways than one. For example, our son learnt more about the world around him through these visits than he would have through any TV shows or books. He aims to become a wildlifer one day but even if he does not, I can guarantee that he will be a life-long environmentally conscious and evolved person. My wife similarly managed a perfect mix of her interests in nature, wildlife, photography and trees in this place where all these ingredients effortlessly came together. Other places in the region also had some fabulous sights to offer – Jinja in Uganda which is the birthplace of river Nile and a pretty 'Indian' town, Seychelles whose beaches were the most picturesque that we have ever encountered and which boasts of a stunning tropical forest Valle De Mai, in the island of Praslin, considered by many as the original garden of Eden where Adam and Eve sinned, Mombasa with its history imprinted Fort Jesus, Zanzibar with its streets redolent of spice markets and with some great beaches on offer, Reunion with stunning landscapes and active volcanoes, Tanzania whose forests rivalled and often bettered Kenya's – each of these places were unmatched in their own ways and gave much to savour for the sights and souls alike.

India has a ubiquitous presence in the region in many different ways. In fact, and paradoxically, it is only when one moves to the 'peripheries' of the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) does one realize the centrality of India in the scheme of things. Whether it is the influence in language or other modes of expression or the presence of a well to do diaspora, the cultural markers of our country can be constantly felt and seen. In Kenya alone four distinct strands of Indian influence are visible – the early maritime traders and settlers from Gujarat, the (predominantly) Punjabi work force that came to build the Railway line from Mombasa to Kampala in Uganda which ultimately resulted in the birth of Kenya, the Indian soldiers who fought in the region in the Great War (nearly 3000 Indian soldiers



died and are commemorated in the many cemeteries across East Africa) and more recently the Indian corporates and business professionals who see an economic boom in the region. In short, the region had sufficient Indians to make you feel at home and enough foreigners to make you feel you were abroad. The diaspora stories are also unique and fascinating in their own ways with different narratives within the common larger construct. If it is the enterprising Gujaratis who dominate in Tanzania, it is the Tamilians who occupy the pride of place in Seychelles. If it is the Bihari 'jahajbhai' who rules the roost in Mauritius, it is the Pondicherry emigrant who is ensconced in Reunion. Kenya is like the rainbow nation even when it comes to Indian diaspora and that is one reason why the festivals there are celebrated with more pomp and vigour and in true traditional manner than even in India. But India-Kenya connections are not limited to people or festivals alone. The ancient maritime links that date back almost 2000 years have many remnants; a more recent connection is the fact that it was from Malindi in Kenya that Vasco Da Gama was navigated to Calicut in India by an Arab-Gujarati Captain called Ibn Majid thus irrevocably changing the course of history. Throughout the Portuguese and British conquests of IOR. India and East Africa operated as maritime neighbours. Many Kenyan elites, including those amongst their Armed Forces, have studied in India and have (mostly) fond recollections of the food, movies, bustling life and Old Monk. Just to illustrate, their current CDF, CNS, COAS equivalents have all attended courses in India. The same is true with minor variations in respect of Tanzania and Seychelles as well. These connections, I must confess, have not been adequately harnessed by policy makers but still give us enough cause to celebrate India's 'soft' power.

As far as we are concerned we deeply felt the karmic connection between India and the Swahili coast or the land of Zanj as it was known. A posting back to Goa, much against expectation and normal pattern, only completed the loop for Goa and Kenya too have many

connections. But that would be the subject of another essay. Meanwhile, we have learnt to lead life with the famous Kenyan motto of 'Hakuna Matata' meaning no problem but colloquially implying the need to be positive and unfazed.

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Taking a dig at her

Unknown

An old man and a woman were married for many years, even though they hated each other. When they had a confrontation, screaming and yelling could be heard deep into the night.

The old woman would shout, 'When I die, I will dig my way up and out of the grave, and come back and haunt you for the rest of your life!'

Neighbours feared her. They believed she practiced black magic because of the many strange occurrences that took place in their neighbourhood. The old woman liked the fact that she was feared. To everyone's relief, she died of a heart attack when she was 65.

Her husband had a closed casket at the wake. After the burial, he went straight to the local bar and began to party, as if there was no tomorrow. His neighbours, concerned for his safety, asked, 'Aren't you afraid that she may indeed be able to dig her way up and out of the grave, and come back to haunt you for the rest of your life?'

The husband put down his drink and said, 'Let her dig. I had her buried upside down.'



“We’ve gathered here today...”

Commodore Saleem M Anwer

We walked – my wife and I – in complete silence to the foyer of the officers’ institute, the venue of our farewell party. Our teenage daughter and younger son ambled behind us with conspicuous lack of enthusiasm. The sombre mood was somewhat justified. This was, after all, our third transfer in that many years. That it happened just as we were about to be allotted an A-type accommodation did not help. Incidentally, I have always suspected that a copy of accommodation allotment order is secretly marked to our appointers. How else do you explain most transfers either just prior to or immediately on allotment of an A-type accommodation!

Nevertheless, we entered the party area with appropriate smiles pasted on our faces. With practiced ease, we executed the customary splitting manoeuvre at the entrance, heading separately for carefully created gender-based groups. The ladies did a quick scan of each other’s dresses for fashion tips or faux pas (ranging from mismatched accessories to – gasp! – sarees repeated from the previous party). The men, on their part, could not care less if the person in front of them was dressed in a tuxedo or chicken furs. They focused all their attention on the bar instead.

I looked around to confirm the presence of all the usual suspects. And there they were! Bristling Moustache, Shifty Eyes, Madame Nosey (in perpetual quest for gossip), Lady Cheerful (whose exuberance could light up the local neighbourhood brighter than the last Diwali) and Cribber Singh (his actual name was CBR Singh, inevitably tagged thus since he could find a fault faster than it could be created).

I exchanged perfunctory hellos with a few colleagues and moved on from the din, hoping to find solace in seclusion. Or so I thought. “Congratulations! Looooovely place you are going to!” I turned around, with mounting

dread in my heart, to face the source of this chirpy voice spreading good cheer. Lady Cheerful, naturally! The ‘oooo’ in ‘looooovely’ had lasted some 15 seconds. I smiled noncommittally. “You know,” she continued with that mega-watt smile, oblivious to my reaction or the lack of it, “I am soooo (another 15 seconds) sentimental, every time I attend someone’s farewell party, I get teary-eyed”. I was kind of teary-eyed myself, albeit for an entirely different reason. Despite a violently protesting jaw, I smiled some more with ‘gratitude’ for her kind words. I was saved by a drinks tray thrust under my nose by a Steward whose expression suggested he could not care a fig whether I drank or drowned. I all but hugged my saviour and grabbed a drink. Further divine intervention came in the form of Madame Nosey. She caught Lady Cheerful in the midst of her benevolent outpouring and urgently demanded as to why her neighbour was not seen at any social event of late. I quickly excused myself to let them analyse the serious situation.

“Oye,” boomed Cribber to the accompaniment of a resounding slap on my back, “this transporter you have hired is not at all trustworthy, friend. A crook, if you ask me.” Had I not been busy choking on my drink I would have told him I did not intend to. “And, by the way, there’s no married accommodation available at your next station, let me tell you,” he continued, livening up my day just a wee bit more. “Lousy arrangements,” he commented on the party, in his inimitable style and directed his focus on a Steward passing by. “Oye, what happened to the ice I asked for? And the soda? I tell you...” I slipped away quietly, as he directed his toxic tirade at the hapless soul.

To escape any further reminders of my misery by well-meaning people, I clutched my drink and sought shelter in the lee of the bar. The spirit did little to lift my spirits.



Three transfers in three years! Why, I could recall even the minutest detail from the last farewell party. Not too difficult since these occasions are generally more identical than Siamese twins. So, reclined on the bar table, I went into flashback mode recalling the last party, a year earlier.

Cut to the last farewell party...

It had all the usual ingredients – attendees in distinct gender-based groups, standard brands of drinks, ‘small’ eats in rather small portions, forced smiles, casual conversation, the works. The routine progressed on predictable lines with mind-numbing banality till someone thumped a table rather hard, with scant regard for frailty of MES furniture, to draw the collective attention of the gathering. It was time for the speech. The table-thumping, as always, elicited interesting reaction from the gathering, ranging from relief to boredom to panic (the last coming from those much short of their self-assigned drinking targets). Some people moved forward, some melted into the drapes, most shuffled to dutifully orient themselves to the general direction of the speaker. The ladies quickly perched themselves on the nearest available sofas to rest their pencil-heel tormented feet.

With a last furtive glance at a discreetly passed chit, the boss faced the audience and politely cleared his throat. “We’ve gathered here today to bid farewell...”, he enlightened those of us harbouring a mistaken impression about the real purpose of the party. The audience’s smiles dropped in dread of a long speech. Now, farewell speeches are a sure-shot cure for insomnia. They range from the mildly interesting to the yawningly boring. This one was no different. As my boss waxed eloquent about me and my work, I gradually got acquainted with several very pleasant facets of my life that I was not even remotely aware of till that moment. He charitably shared happy excerpts of my declassified ACR with the audience. My reaction, meanwhile, vacillated between surprise, complete disbelief and

fervent hope that some of what he said had actually gone into my report.

In due course, my wife’s role and contribution as the ‘sheet anchor’ was celebrated with due veneration, after which my boss moved on to ‘the lovely children’. What really bothered me was that the lovely children were nowhere in sight. Some frenetic rubber-necking later, I discovered our teenage daughter seated in a forlorn corner, sulkily giving me a why-do-I-have-to-be-dragged-through-this look. Quite naturally, she had an iPod plugged into her ears and chewed gum with vengeance - an act of defiance. Almost simultaneously I noticed my younger one by the heavy drapes down the hall, either hugging or strangulating another boy his age. I hastily looked away, hoping it would absolve me of any parental responsibility.

Speech over, the boss presented the unit crest to me with a hearty ‘hope it will find the place of pride in your house’. Sure, I thought ruefully, in the old trunk at the rear end of the garage, along with the rest. That is what they are relegated to by the good lady, without any pity. It was almost tragic; the manner in which the sole proof of my toil was superseded by expensive crystal, onyx, Lladros and such like, that adorned our modest house. I wonder if that was the genesis of the term ‘crestfallen’.

Suddenly, the collective bored gaze of the gathering shifted to me - an indicator that a speech was expected of me to provide an expeditious closure to the evening. Having suffered enough such speeches in my career, I entirely commiserated with the audience and did a hop-skip-and-jump through my ‘thank you’ note, finishing in record time. I was especially careful to avoid the part where one magnanimously throws an open invitation to all and sundry to visit them at Tirunelveli, Agartala or wherever they are off to. Not that there is anything wrong with the gesture. It just leaves people wondering why such an amiable person never offered them even a glass of water while they were next door neighbours for years. So, I quickly concluded, thanked all and was



looking around to gather my brooding brood when some sadistic soul gleefully suggested the 'jolly good fellow' routine. I froze in abject terror as I found myself being hoisted aloft by a huffing and puffing jolly group. My fervent pleas and protests fell on deaf ears, and so did I shortly thereafter - fall to the ground, that is, during the third 'bump'.

The painful episode snapped me out of my reverie, as I returned to the present, partially disoriented. Bristling Moustache leaned across and whispered, "Welcome back to planet Earth." I grimaced at the ironic statement since that is exactly where I had landed during the last party. Déjà vu! It was speech time, once again! My current boss cleared his throat politely and spoke.

"We've gathered here today..."

He paused for dramatic effect and scanned the faces around him for the profound impact made by, what he obviously considered, an unprecedented opening in the history of farewell speeches.

One could feel, rather than hear, a collective sigh of resignation from the audience at large.

Me? I lapsed into another merciful flashback from one of the many transfers...

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Evaluation of Etendard IVB

Admiral RH Tahiliani (Retd.)

Since VIKRANT had a short stroke catapult of 103 feet, an aircraft which required higher speed at the end of catapult run could not be operated from this ship. MARCEL DASSAUT had developed the ETENDARD IVB based on the ETENDARD IVM which had been developed for the French Navy and had a longer stroke catapult. The Indian Navy, which had been made to settle for the Sea Hawk aircraft, was on the look out for a more modern fighter aircraft which could operate from VIKRANT as a replacement for the Sea Hawk.

On completion of my test pilot's course in France in early December 1960, I was asked by the Indian Navy to stay put in Paris and wait till further orders. Around the middle of December, I was asked to proceed to ISTRES to evaluate the ETENDARD IVB which ostensibly had been developed by MARCEL DASSAUT with a blown wing and was claimed to have reached a coefficient lift of 1.65 which would

enable it to be operated from VIKRANT.

In ISTRE I did three evaluation sorties in this ETENDARD IVB aircraft. I was able to establish conclusively that at the development stage in which this aircraft was then, its coefficient of lift was a mere 1.35 and not 1.65 as was claimed by the manufacturer MARCEL DASSAUT. The Indian Navy was thus saved from buying an aircraft which would have been a pup and not a fighter/strike aircraft because of its inability to operate from VIKRANT in nil wind conditions.

MARCEL DASSAUT could have continued the development process to achieve the coefficient lift of 1.65 which they claimed they already had reached. However, they dropped this project because they got a large order for MIRAGE III aircrafts from Switzerland.

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Kalvari's maiden voyage

Rear Admiral JMS Sodhi (Retd)



INS Kalvari, Indian Navy's first submarine was commissioned at Riga, USSR on 8th December, 1967 under the command of Commander KS Subramanian and I had the good fortune to be the officer of the commissioning guards in sub zero temperatures. This was indeed a historical moment for the nascent submarine arm of the Navy.

There were two major issues to be resolved before we set sail for India. The first was how many officers and sailors from the Soviet Navy would come with us to India as the Soviets stated that for all their previous submarines sold to foreign countries, the full Soviet crew also came on board. Here the Captain of Kalvari stated that there was no requirement of any Soviet crew to come with us to India as he was fully competent and capable to command the submarine and the crew was fully trained. Unfortunately, Naval Headquarters felt otherwise and decided that the Soviet CO, Engineer Officer and one Communication sailor was to accompany us and regrettably they were really given the cold shoulder on board.

The next issue was for a ship to escort us. Here again the Commanding Officer felt there was no requirement but INS Talwar under the command of the then Commander OS Dawson was sent to Riga to escort us. Now the fun and games started. Firstly, we

were denied shore accommodation in foreign ports as we had to be accommodated on board INS Talwar and I remember having slept on the floor of a cabin occupied by an officer much junior to me. Then Talwar required to fuel very often and she visited over 20 ports as against our four and was in fact hardly escorting us but always sailing to fuel. Thus, during the 90 day passage Talwar was with us only for approx. 10-15 days. Fortunately, Naval Headquarters realized its mistake and henceforth none of the submarines were escorted except for Khandheri which was accompanied by INS Amba after commissioning in Odessa. All the remaining submarines came unescorted and the crew had proper rest and recreation during their long voyages to India.

It may be mentioned that the Suez Canal was closed and our submarines had to come via the Cape of Good Hope and cross the equator twice during the passage to India. Very few submariners had the opportunity to sail around the Cape of Good Hope on three occasions and I was one of them together with Commodore PS Bawa and Commodore Gilbert Menezes.

On arrival in Indian waters we were met by INS Betwa and escorted to Visakhapatnam where the Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral AK Chatterjee was present on the jetty to receive us. On the same day the foundation stones of the Submarine Base Complex (Virbahu and Satavahana) and the Naval Dockyard Visakhapatnam were laid. Today the Naval Base at Visakhapatnam is the only true operational naval base and the submariners are proud to be part of this historical event in the Maritime history of the country.

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A Toast to the Supreme Commander

Commodore PR Franklin (Retd.)

The Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces does find time to visit defense organizations when he or she can spare time away from Presidential duties in the capital or abroad. This is the story about a little incident that formed a part of the many preparations that go into making the visit a successful and memorable one. The visit was to Cochin, now known as Kochi, and the Indian Navy based there was playing host to the President.

With clockwork precision, the Navy – from the Commander-in-Chief (C-in-C) down to the junior most rating - went about attending to details, fine-tuning the program, sending it up to Rashtrapati Bhavan for approval, and sprucing up the place to befit the visit. The Chief Staff Officer (CSO) to the C-in-C and the Commanding Officer (CO) of the Base were summoned one morning to the C-in-C's office to attend to a matter of detail.

“For the toast to be proposed during the Mess Night for the President, I want the same drink they have in Rashtrapati Bhavan during banquets to be served here” said the C-in-C. Presidential toasts in India are proposed with water or soft drinks and not with port wine or liquor, as done in other countries

The CSO and the CO looked at each other for inspiration but neither of them had dined in Rashtrapati Bhavan to know what that drink was. They asked the C-in-C to describe the drink since he had had the privilege of dining in the Rashtrapati Bhavan, and herein lay the problem. His experience was quite some time ago.

“The one I had was a very nice one and tasted something like orange juice, and yet was not orange juice. It had a tangy flavor but it was not that drink

named ‘Tang’. The orange juice colored drink had a mild but sharp, gingery, taste to it...”

He looked out of the window, as if going back in time to that evening when he had the privilege of toasting His Excellency with this exotic orange juice. He was searching for a more accurate description.

“Don't worry, Sir,” said the CSO, “I will try and see if I can do something. I will bring it to you for tasting in two days' time, and then you can tell me what is to be added or subtracted”. The C-in-C was relieved and the meeting was over. The CSO went into top gear and got on the telephone right away. He rang up the naval establishment in Coimbatore and asked them to send some one immediately up to the well-known Spencer's Department Store up in Coonoor, and procure a case of ginger beer. Ginger beer was hard to find in common stores as it was rarely consumed and very few bottling companies made it. However, the CSO was sure it would be available in that well known store up in the Nilgiris that had stocked every possible thing that attracted our colonial masters in days gone by, and continued to do so as a matter of form. In fact, he had seen it there during one of his recent visits to those hills and made a mental note of it. The crate was to be sent to Cochin by road by the fastest means. He rang up the naval set up in Madras (now named Chennai) and asked them to procure a crate of ‘tonic water’ and send it under escort by the overnight train to Cochin. Locally, he procured a packet of ‘Tang’ and two dozen small glasses – the ones used when a toast is proposed during weddings. He then got down to work.

Two days later, after the ‘morning staff meeting’, the CSO requested the C-in-C to stay back, and in a trice summoned two Stewards who marched in with a tray



full of toasting glasses. Each glass was numbered and filled with an orange colored liquid. The CSO then whipped out his diary in which he had written down the combinations and proportions in each numbered glass.

“Sir, if you could please taste each of them and short list the ones that come close to the drink you had, we can work on them and further refine the drink” he said.

There was a hesitant look on the C-in-C’s countenance, but as it was his idea to replicate the drink from Rashtrapati Bhavan for the Mess Night in Cochin, he gamely went about the business of tasting, like an experienced tea or wine taster. Each glass that he sipped and tasted was rejected. The whole lot was rejected!

“You haven’t got the taste” he said. “It was orange in color, but did not taste like orange juice. It had that special taste that made it different to any other soft drink” he said. As he was a teetotaler, this pronouncement was taken as an input from an expert on soft drinks. He got up and walked away. The CSO looked disappointed as he had taken great trouble to mix ‘Tang’, Ginger Beer, Tonic Water, and orange juice in various permutations and combinations to get the taste that was being looked for. He was also perplexed as he hadn’t got an accurate enough description of the drink from his superior officer.

The CSO would not give up! Showing great tenacity, he sat up late that night with his staff and produced another set of decoctions for the C-in-C to taste the following morning. Once more the C-in-C rejected all of them.

“Your combinations are not right. The Rashtrapati Bhavan drink had a very pleasant taste to it that I don’t find in your drinks”, he said.

“Sir, why don’t we ask Rashtrapati Bhavan as to what that drink was? We can then get it” suggested the CSO.

“No! I don’t want them to know. I want to surprise the President and his accompanying staff” retorted the C-in-C. The CSO was back to square one. For the third time he attempted to produce samples that were ‘pleasant’ to taste. For the third time all the samples were rejected.

Time was now running short and the President’s visit was impending. This business of the toast was still not resolved. The C-in-C was still keen on that special orange juice to be served – the one that had not been replicated so far. It remained for the Headquarters staff to now persuade the C-in-C to drop the idea of replicating the Rashtrapati Bhavan drink, and serve a fruit juice or fruit punch in lieu. But there was no one willing to bell the cat.

The CSO was a fellow who loved challenges and was the last one to give up when faced with one. He now decided that the ‘tasting’ phase was over and he would now ‘go-it-alone’, so to speak. He got all the ingredients and some of his staff to his residence and set about getting that ‘pleasant’ taste the C-in-C had mentioned.

The President arrived and, contrary to Murphy’s Laws, everything went off with clockwork precision. The Mess Night was the last event of the day. The Naval Band welcomed the President and the dinner began. The food was good and even those who had attended Mess Nights in the Mess earlier declared that this particular menu was the best they had eaten. The toast was proposed and replied to. The CSO, sitting not far from the C-in-C and the President, watched with bated breath as he went through the motions of drinking the toast mechanically. He saw the President say something to the C-in-C as everyone sat down after toasting His Excellency. The



C-in-C looked at the CSO and winked with a smile on his lips. The Mess Night also ended successfully and the President retired for the night to the Presidential Suite. He left the next morning.

There was a 'debrief' conducted after the visit ended. It was then that the C-in-C announced that the President liked the contents of the soft drink for the

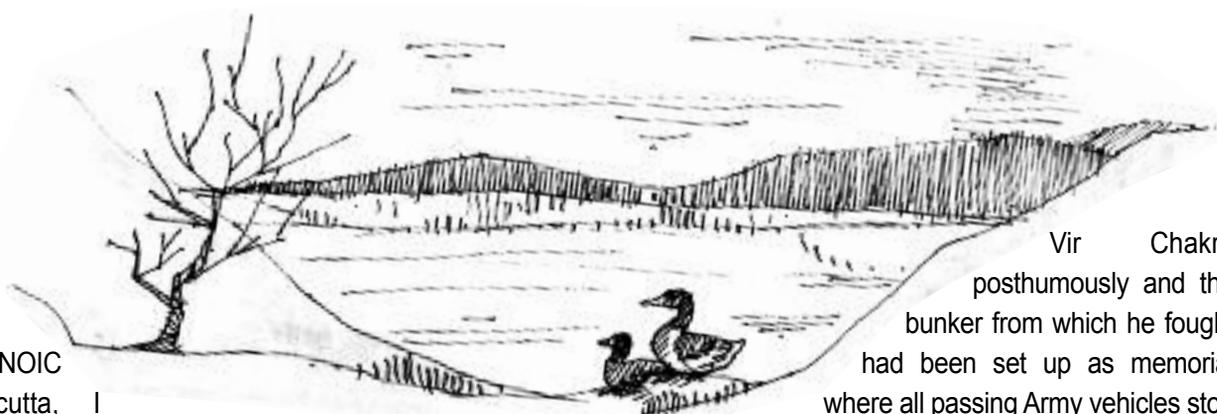
toast and wanted the recipe sent to Rashtrapati Bhavan so that his staff could reproduce the same drink for State occasions!

The CSO strutted and purred all day after that. No one could get him to reveal the recipe.

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The Legend of Lake Nura Nang

Commodore Subrata Bose (Retd)



As NOIC Calcutta, I went on a liaison visit to the Forward Areas of the Army in the North East in mid-November 1989 and I was being driven in an Army jonga to Tawang on the last leg of my visit. I experienced snowfall at Se La which is at 14,000 ft. The road beyond and the surrounding mountainside was covered with snow. Some distance beyond Se La, I saw two ducks standing beside a lake. I was intrigued because the lake was frozen and as far as I knew all waterfowl would normally have migrated to the plains by that time of the year.

My next stop was at the Brigade Headquarters at Jaswantgarh, named after Rifleman Jaswant Singh of 4 Garwhal. It was from a small bunker here, that Jaswant Singh and two other companions held off the Chinese soldiers for three days during the Sino-Indian conflict in 1962. After his companions were killed, Jaswant Singh continued to fight on until he ran out of ammunition and was killed. Jaswant Singh was later awarded the Param

Vir Chakra posthumously and the bunker from which he fought had been set up as memorial where all passing Army vehicles stop to pay homage.

When I enquired about the two ducks on the frozen lake, I was told that during Jaswant Singh's heroic fight against the Chinese troops, two local girls, sisters Nura and Nang, helped him by supplying food and ammunition until he died. The Chinese soldiers captured the two sisters, tied them to a tree and shot them dead. After the conflict was over and the Chinese occupants had left the area, two ducks were often observed at the lake. Local folklore has it that the two sisters were transformed into ducks after their death and kept visiting the locality where they had lived.

Thus was born the legend of Lake Nura Nang, and twenty seven years after the two sisters had died, I was lucky to have seen the two ducks.

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Navy House, 12 Rajaji Marg: a Flag Lt remembers

Vice Admiral Avinash Bhatia (Retd.)

Admiral AK Chatterji took over as CNS on 4th March 1966. I write here to share some memories about the Navy House in the 18 months that I served as his Flag Lt.

The Name

The official residence of Chief of the Naval Staff is designated Navy House. Senior veterans may remember that it was called 'Admiral's House' at one time. Change to Navy House came about in 1966 soon after Admiral AK Chatterji took over as CNS.

Being new to the national capital, I started by getting to know the A to Z of Lutyen's City. As I saw, the residences of the COAS and CAS were designated as Army and Air House respectively whereas the CNS's residence was called Admiral's House. I suggested that it should be changed to Navy House. CNS approved the change but wanted an address board with an appropriate design be mounted at the gate to make the change known. Naval Dockyard, Bombay was requested to help and soon an elegant board was designed, minted and put up at the gate. In the last 45 years, the looks of the address board have been updated

in keeping with the contemporary style.

Portico, a Necessity

Navy House was a magnificent building but did not have a portico. CNS decided that one must be added. CPWD officials told me that a portico was not provided for in the standard design of this class of houses and a special government sanction would be required. Senior veterans will remember our country went through a severe drought in the years 1965 to 67 and all ministries were observing austerity in official expenditure. The case for the portico, therefore, had to be lobbied at many levels including the Secretary, Ministry of Works and Housing. The portico came up in 1967-68. Besides its utility, it has added to the elegance of the house.

Grow More Food

The severe drought in the years 1965 to 67 led to failure of crops in many states. There was acute





shortage of basic foods and appeals for help from the better off. Our people, young and old, came forward voluntarily to make a contribution towards drought relief. Families decided to miss a meal once a week. In the Navy, it was unanimously decided to forego 5% of entitled rations for feeding the needy in the affected areas. The Prime Minister appealed to all to grow more food. There was enthusiastic response everywhere; CNS decided to grow wheat over the rear lawn of the Navy House. He studied the crop cycle thoroughly and advised me also to learn sufficiently so that I could implement it efficiently. Some experienced colleagues also gave me valuable advice and help. To begin, a 'hal' with a pair of bullocks ploughed the field. Next, the right quality and quantities of seeds and fertilizer were procured. Regular watering and weeding was ensured. The efforts were rewarded with a bountiful crop in Apr 67. The rear lawn, I may add, is presently the venue for Navy Day Receptions every year.

House Guests

Today we have two messes of our own with comfortable suites for accommodating visiting senior officers. In the 60s there was no naval mess and it was customary for visiting senior officers to stay as house guests with CNS and PSOs, particularly during Senior Officers' Conferences and Meetings. That system also made for much warmth and informality off the Conference Table.

For the Nov 66 Conference, CNS

had invited Rear Admiral SM Nanda, Flag Officer Commanding Indian Fleet and Rear Admiral RS David, Flag Officer Bombay and Captain KL Kulkarni, Naval Officer-in-Charge, Goa to be guests at Navy House.

As it happened, CNS had just returned after a visit to some Army formations in the North-East where some mementos including two spears and a shield were presented. Mrs Chatterji was keen that these be mounted on the wall of the inner courtyard. With only one working day in hand, I requested CPWD office to send their carpenter early to complete the job in good time. As is their wont, the workers showed up just as our honoured guests were having leisurely tea and 'gup shup'. Soon, the carpenter started to hammer the wall when I heard Captain Kulkarni telling the Steward, "Flag Sahib ko hamara salaam do." I went to apologise for the disturbance when Captain Kulkarni said, "Flags, whatever you are doing, don't bring down this house, I have to live here in the near future."

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KayGee Menon

Vice Admiral Vinod Pasricha (Retd.)



Petty Officer (REL, Air) KGN Menon (KayGee) was in the first batch of Air Electrical Technical Support sailors in Indian Naval Aviation and went to the UK in end-1951. On completion of his training in HMS Ariel in 1952, he was transferred to HMS Fulmar (RNAS Lossiemouth), Scotland, where he was to receive practical hands on training on aircraft. KayGee arrived at Lossie on a sunny summer afternoon, when the Annual Sports day was in progress. While waiting in the queue for his cup of cha after the Meet, KG casually turned and saw a lady behind him. He immediately asked her whether he could get her a cup of tea also. She answered, "Yes please, no sugar". The next thing that he asked her was whether she had read any good books lately.

In modern jargon, "they were an item" from then on and they still are! This lady was Lesley, a PO WREN in the same trade that KayGee was in Navigation. Soon, he was allotted in her care for training on Airborne Radars. It didn't take them long to get to know each other. Both had one great hobby – reading. Soon thereafter, when the Indian High Commission at London came into the picture, alarm bells started ringing. KayGee was summoned to London and then had a long chat with the Naval Advisor, Capt AK Chatterjee*. This was a totally one-sided conversation, since it was then unheard of, for a sailor to marry a foreigner! KayGee's training was immediately cut short and he was sent home to India,

in the hope that the distance would cool off their amorous attraction. Little did the Naval Advisor know that they had already tied the knot! Thus, KayGee returned in January 1953 and Lesley arrived in India in May that year, after completing her contract with the WRNS. The rest is history.

(*When Capt AK Chatterjee became the CNS, he met both KayGee and Lesley during his first tour to Goa in 1966. Recognising him during an evening reception, he smiled and said, "So you didn't take my advice! I am glad.")

In 1959, KayGee was appointed as the Air Electrical Officer Designate of 300 Sqn. Thus, he went back to Lossiemouth again with Lesley and their two children. Later, he moved with the squadron to RNAS Brawdy, Haverwest. Soon after 300 Sqn was commissioned on 07 July 1960, KayGee left for France and took over as the ALO Designate of 310 Sqn, which was commissioned in France on 21 March 1961. He therefore has the unique distinction of being the commissioning ALO of both the frontline squadrons of INS Vikrant.

KayGee retired in 1969, whilst he was Vikrant's ALO. He and the family then left for Australia. Soon he sought and got employed by another Navy, the Royal Australian Navy, from where he retired in 1986.

One of KayGee's major hobbies these days is to help retired Indian Officers and ORs. Some have not got any pensions/arrears for over three decades after they moved to Australia. Thanks to his regular correspondence with the Indian Army, Navy and Air Headquarters he has been able to ensure that there are over a score of such beneficiaries.

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Hindi - Cheeni Bhai Bhai

Commodore RPS Ravi (Retd)

To most Indians China is a quaint country. One hears of it, admires its culture and food but does not routinely plan to visit it. It is only recently that we have had a renewed interest in China, thanks to a series of postures and events culminating in the efficiently conducted Beijing Olympics. China fills us with emotions ranging from awe to anxiety. In 2010 we conducted the Commonwealth Games and sobriety about our oft repeated comparison with this emerging superpower did hit us like a wet towel.

I was fortunate to have visited China in my official capacity as Director of the College of Naval Warfare in Jan 10 with the entire Naval Higher Command Course (NHCC) and many of our ladies. Earlier in Nov 2008, Admiral Wu Shengli, the PLA (Navy) Commander, during his visit to Mumbai had interacted with the NHCC. Considerable bonhomie was developed during this interaction. The Admiral invited the CNW officers to visit the Naval Command College in China. No one took it seriously except me. I planned a visit to China during the FCT or the Foreign Country Tour for the NHCC. In 2009 the tour did not come through because of "short notice". I persisted and in Jan 2010 the tour actually materialised, though with a little persuasion.

Why was the persuasion necessary? My own assessment is that PLA (N) although taking great strides and making ripples in international arena, is still the poor cousin of People's Liberation Army. Many high ranking Indian delegations visit China every year and our visit might not have been considered a high priority by the PLA. However, once the planning had been done with the PLA, some of it at the eleventh hour, my insistence that we were to be there at the invitation of the Admiral made the visit exceedingly important and successful. I was not sure

whether the Admiral would have even remembered the invitation until we landed at Shanghai.

We had a grand reception at the airport. Suddenly, we were told that Commander Shanghai Naval Base, RAdm Xu Weibing, would be our chief host in place of the Deputy Commander as had been planned earlier. The next evening we had a visit to the Shanghai Naval Base where we were received by the Base Commander himself. During the banquet dinner, as he sat next to me and I thanked him for looking after us so well, he said he had received a call from Admiral Shengli and the latter had told him to spare no efforts to make our visit successful, fruitful and comfortable. At one time, before leaving for China, we were worried whether the naval delegation would be welcome there. But, once there, thanks to the Admiral, even the ladies were looked after in a grand manner. We visited the Pearl Tower, the main tourist attraction at Shanghai. In a public place we were received by a reception party accompanied by a military band. In the evening, we were told that the Admiral had gifted tickets for the world famous Shanghai Acrobatics show for all of us. And what a show it was. For nearly two hours we sat spellbound as we watched the acrobats perform their miraculous acts in a continuous flow of music and performances.

The city ranks amongst some of the world's great cities such as New York and Sydney. There were no slums anywhere and the traffic ran smoothly. Young men and women moved around as freely as in any western country. We saw all the sites for Expo 2010 to be held from May to Oct. And yet, all the centres and infrastructure were ready good five months before the Expo. There was a sense of pride in the Shanghai people to put their best foot forward. Most of them said that the Expo would be to Shanghai what Olympics were to Beijing.



Our next city visit was to Nanjing. Rear Admiral Li Zhouming, Commandant, Naval Command College, was our host there. I had received the Commandant in my capacity as Director Maritime Warfare Centre, Mumbai, in Feb 05. He remembered that and also said that Admiral Shengli had phoned him to make our visit successful. In addition to official interactions we visited the Nanjing Massacre Museum showcasing the Japanese atrocities and the Nanjing Brocade Museum.

At Beijing, thanks once again to the personal instructions of Admiral Shengli, we interacted with a high level delegation comprising the Chief of Staff, General Staff, PLAN Headquarters, V Adm Su Shi Liang, and his entire team of senior staff including the Deputy Chief of Staff, R Adm Liu Shining.

A visit to the Great Wall of China and to a Chinese Duck restaurant were thrown in at Beijing. Even

though the weather is reputed to be bad during January, in keeping with the warmth we had generated, wherever we went it was nice and sunny. I was relatively junior in hierarchy but I was treated with a protocol befitting an Admiral; complete with police pilot escorts wherever we went.

We hear a lot about Chinese incursions in the Indian Ocean; their doggedness in what they call their private lake, that is, the South China Sea, string of pearls theory and refusal to let Lt Gen BS Jaswal, Northern Army Commander, visit China on a planned visit. But, we of the CNW, for those seven days in January completely forgot about the Dragon and were as much home there as we would be, say, in Mauritius. Naval diplomacy worked and worked well.

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Memories of 1971

John Philip

We used to have prayer meetings every morning on board INS Talwar during the Indo-Pak war of 1971. My Commanding Officer, Cdr SS Kumar, used to say in his speeches - "Be alert. We are going to war but you and I don't know when the war will start". True to his words, the War began on 3rd Dec 1971. At midnight, on the same day, our INS Rajput succeeded in sinking the Pakistani submarine PNS Ghazi, positioned off the Visakhapatnam Harbour.

On 4th Dec also our Naval Ships had attacked the Karachi Harbour. On 8th Dec evening, my ship INS Talwar sank the enemy's Patrol Craft. By midnight, INS Trishul and INS Vinash approached Karachi Harbour and fired missiles that sank three Pakistani ships and oil storage tanks. All of us onboard watched the huge fire and I cannot forget the experience. It will never ever be erased from my mind.

On 9th Dec evening, I watched INS Khukri manoeuvring near our ship but within a couple of hours, the Pakistani submarine sank it. I cannot forget the pain of losing my friends onboard. Captain MN Mulla also went down with his ship in accordance with the age old tradition of the Navy.

On 16th Dec Pakistan surrendered and India declared unilateral ceasefire. I had joined the Navy in 1969 as a Boy and was selected for the electrical branch later. I left the Navy in 1980. I had served on INS Talwar from 25th July 1970 to 19th Feb 1972. I am grateful to the Navy for all the lessons it taught me. My achievements in my present occupation are solely because of the self-discipline, refined behaviour and a sense of organisation that I imbibed during my Naval days.

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INS Pilani

Commander TS Trewn (Retd.)

Most of us retired naval officers and particularly Marine Engineers and Electrical Officers are familiar with excellent training being imparted at INS Shivaji, Lonavla for Sailors, Artificers as well as Officers. Besides a quality NBCD School, training facilities available inside the premier establishment also make us feel proud. Soothing hilly climate coupled with existence of two artificial lakes, 'Duke's Nose' and 'Tiger's leap' attract every resident and visitor there. Thousands of men who studied in INS Shivaji have settled down in international mercantile marine trade world, shipyards, industrial houses etc. in lucrative and responsible jobs.

However, we cannot ignore the contribution of a small naval technical training institute at Pilani near Jaipur, Rajasthan, set up to train direct entry artificers in marine engineering, electrical, shipwright and ordnance trades during the last world war as an interim measure to meet the immediate manning requirements of Indian Naval Ships. During that phase, the merchant ships were fitted with guns in Naval Dockyard, Mumbai. The industrial house of Birlas was contacted by Naval Headquarters to set up initially a civilian naval training center at Pilani. The role of Captain (E) Mukerjee the first Indian Engineer Officer and Vice Admiral Daya Shanker contributed immensely in arriving at these historic decisions. Vice Admiral Daya Shanker, who also served as the Chief of Material, advised landscaping of the waste area for the naval establishment at Lonavala.

The site selected for locating the naval technical training centre was near an artificial lake in Pilani. The lake surrounded an elegant bungalow and had a very imposing and tall statue of lord Shiva. The

lake bungalow was very appropriately allocated to be the official residence of the first Officer-in-Charge of the naval technical centre Lt (E) CL Bhandari who later retired as Rear Admiral. The new workshop area with classrooms as well as the hostel type residential quarters was constructed keeping in view the likely future utilization of the entire setup after the war. It was in 1942 when batches of young men with qualifications generally of intermediate with science subjects started arriving in Pilani from all over India. Before pucca construction work commenced the residential area and workshops comprised of temporary sheds. An educationist Mr. Sukhdev Pande represented the Birlas to coordinate and assist the local naval contingent after its arrival. Machinery for training purposes was procured through defence priority basis and the task of training went on quite well to provide direct entry Artificers in shortest possible time. Those passing out from Pilani were further trained for a short period at INS Shivaji Lonavla or at INS Valsura (for electrical Artificers) before joining ships. This arrangement saved a lot of training effort and time to meet the urgent requirement of Artificers.

As I understand the naval technical establishment at Pilani was subsequently named as INS Pilani. Soon after the world war ended arrangements were made to hand over the establishment back to Birlas. A full-fledged engineering college had come into shape during 1946 when navy vacated the establishment with Shri Sukhdev Pande as the Principal. The engineering college was suitably upgraded to establish the next prestigious Birla Institute of Technology and Sciences (BITS) which is rated as one of the best universities of our country. The closing down ceremony of the naval training



establishment at Pilani was a very touching affair.

Before ending this narration I cannot refrain from recalling some humorous incidents. In the early days of commencement of the naval centre, new entry boys for navy were received by Birla education centre staff in a local serai (rest house). Since the local bus from the nearest railway station used to arrive in the evenings every trainee had to stay one night before reporting to the naval technical training centre. In the serai pure vegetarian food was served. No spoons or glasses were provided. One had to drink from a lota made out of copper. Menu was mostly tasty Rajasthani food including baati. However, inside the establishment non-vegetarian food was also served but meat was supplied separately by a butcher, as local ration suppliers were strictly vegetarian. One day a complaint came to the officer-in-charge that camel meat was being supplied in the mess instead

of goat meat. The complaint was referred to Mr. Sukhdev Pande who listened to the complaint, smiled and remarked, “to me one can be either a vegetarian or non-vegetarian I see no difference between goat’s meat and the camel’s meat. However, now onwards I shall arrange meat supplies from New Delhi”. After some years I happened to visit the place in connection with admission of my cousin in BITS Pilani. Mr Pande the then Vice Chancellor recognized me and invited me for tea. We talked about very early days of the establishment. The next day a film showing various types of warships in action at sea was also shown. Later, I managed to send a beautiful ship’s crest of INS Mysore India’s flagship then, to decorate the office of the Vice Chancellor who was for several formative years associated with the naval establishment.

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The Western seaboard golf course

*Captain BR Prakash**

One of the changes I found after returning back to sea was that “Tent Pegging” had lost its spot in the WFXPs (WEFDEPs). Perhaps indicating changing times, and the new addictions of the current generation of sea lords. The Western Seaboard Race Course (WRSC), where tent pegging used to be held was given a makeover as the tide had turned in favour of the more appealing sport – golf. The Aegean blue meadows were remodeled by a great many architects, whose obsession for the game was only overshadowed by their passion for the high seas. The WRSC was transformed into one of the finest golf courses vying with the best known in the world such as St Andrews, Scotland, The Muirfield, East Lothian or The Pebble Beach, California. The magnificent blue that lines the long fairways lives up to its name,

as christened now. The Western Seaboard Golf Course (WSGC).

The WSGC situated in the midst of the vast blue expanse of the Arabian Sea has been modeled as a classic 18 hole course, drawing inspiration from many of the famous and legendary courses spanning across the world. The WSGC is a golfer’s delight and it takes time to appreciate the subtleties of this course. A round of golf here is played in the company of the spirits of the golfing immortals.

For the players (new and old)–diesel, steam, gas, combinations, water jet, and air cushion – the beauty of golf at sea lies in the constant search for perfection, for that spectacular shot which is ultimately



unattainable. The greatest advantage that golf has over racing is the handicap system, which allows competitive matches to be played between players of diverse caliber (Steam, GT and Diesel players with assorted weapons and sensors) on level field. The handicap is determined by a complex algorithm. The exact algorithm is a closely guarded secret. However, discussions with the handicap allotment committee (peer group) reveals that the formula takes into account many factors as diverse as the IHQ inter se merit or course rating, platform type or course slope, crew performance, age and quality of the systems, past scores, etc . The player's handicap differential is re-calculated after each appointment.

Practice matches (IDEPs), minor tournaments (WEFDEPs) and major tournaments (TROPEX and DGX) are held regularly at the WSGC and produce some spectacular play. The majors held once a year, provide some of the best moments of the golfing season and attract professionals with talent, skill and tenacity. There are brief glimpses of brilliant play with an equal number bordering on the pedestrian. Watching the 'greats' play the major tournaments inspires the less talented golfers to keep improving their game. The post tournament analysis (hot wash up and debrief) involves high drama and is eminently watchable.

The players set off from the club house (harbour) for the tee-off. It's a long walk and the time is used to warm up the old bones, loosen those muscles for the game ahead. They head directly for the 17th hole.

The famous 17th the "Road hole" of St Andrews, which has been the downfall of many a would-be champion, has been the source of inspiration for Area "Arjun", the gun shoot tee-off point. The golfers line up and await their turn to tee-off. It is a tough one, as the hole (RCTB) is known to move randomly and play truant at times. The wind, sea and visibility add further uncertainties to obfuscate the FCS of the golfer. The

tee-off begins with the usual hiccups, quite common on the course at sea. The first player limbers up, sights the hole (RCTB) and swings his carefully selected club (MR gun) in the direction of the hole. He then assesses that the line of sight is clear and checks the safety of the other golfers around ensured before continuing play. The other players ensure their safety by not closing in on the partner taking the shot. A warmer, followed by an observatory and the confirmatory complete the mandatory practice swings off the tee. The player is now ready for the tee shot (fire for effect). All goes well with him and he completes his shot in good time and happily observes it falling on the green close to the hole (target effective area). However, not everybody is as lucky and quite a few have despondently stared at their shots landing way off in the water hazards or bunkers that abound (off the rake – high). As each golfer moves to tee-off, there is a palpable silence all around to avoid distracting the player when the stroke is being played, keeping with the etiquette on the Course. Everybody waits patiently for him to complete his shot. Slow play due to the system playing truant, which is also quite usual, quickly brings the wrath of the master of the game (read Flag) who could easily banish the player to the end of the line. The players, who have rightly gauged the wind conditions manage a birdie or eagle (over 25 or hit), while a few end up with a bogey or double bogey (read over 200 or off the rake). A few others have silent arrangements with the caddy (rake reporter) to ensure a par on this hole.

With the "Arjun" Hole behind, the players slowly lumber up to the next hole, which is quite a challenge for even the most intrepid player. It's the AA hole (air shoot on the Lakshya). It's a savage dog leg. It is easily possible to lose sight of the hole (wrong lock on the Lakshya instead of the tow body), as it executes a boomerang maneuver. The AA hole requires a great deal of practice to hack, else quite a few shots simply vanish into the vast void. It calls for power off the tees (quick lock on), great nimbleness on the fairway



(continuous tracking) and soft touch around the greens (engage the closing target). Some clearly haven't judged the wind or the distance or the blades of grass on the fairway correctly and wordlessly stare at the drone buzzing past. A 'missed opportunity' is what the analyst (WAU) sitting ashore would say. A few gamely coax their ageing bones (old systems) to chance a shot. May be a lucky "hole in one". Of course that does not happen. There are some with a serious handicap who just walk away to the clubhouse. A few others stay far off to practice their swings.

The third hole is a delightful one and is an all time favorite of the players. A simple one where no great skill is called for and none expected. It's a straight 200 yards with no bunkers or hazards around. The players quickly line up at the "Tee" and fire off at the "51" flare in the air. The sky is lit up with those luminous balls streaking towards the 51" hole in air. Most of the players do it right, as it is quite impossible to screw up on this hole. However, on odd occasions, the 51" hole fails to illuminate and the player just lets loose on the nearest one.

After an energy sapping play off, it's time for the players to head to the clubhouse to tank up. The players make a bee line to "Connect up" at the club house (read tanker) so they could recharge their energy cells (tanks). This too is always a race and needs to be done on the double. It does remind one of the pit stop in an F1 race - zip, zap and zoom back to the greens. Get off the race track (leave screen station), race into the standby station followed by a quick connect up and head back to the track. Sometimes a little trouble with "mating up", delays a few players to get back to the greens, which undoubtedly have them fuming at their caddies (read EXO) and the greens.

The players now head for the 11th, 12th and 13th holes, which are named the "amen corner" as in St

Augusta for pretty much the same reasons. A quiet word with the Almighty is essential as an aid to playing these holes without disaster. This one is again a nasty dog-leg defended by bunkers all around (a steep negative gradient). It is akin to being raked by a special furrow rake to exact a severe penalty on any wayward shot. This is where the quiet submarine lurks below the confounding layers shrouded in the mysterious laws of underwater propagation of sound. The players approach the hole cautiously. They spend a great amount of time to observe the lay of course (bathy), the blades of the grass and wind before deciding on the iron and tactics for the shot. The devil is in negotiating the fairway and the negative gradient greens. Quite a few pings of the sonar simply disappear into the blue yonder never to give a return. It's like a shot gone rogue into the woods. The players take their time discussing the merits of each of the pings which return. One of the players whose ball (read ping) was lost suddenly finds it. An ecstatic shout from the caddy (sonar operator) rejuvenates the player. Energy is now focused on the ball. Some quick mental calculations and discussions ensue with the caddy to classify the target. The caddy then hands over the putter for the player to sink the put. There is intense activity on the greens now, as the players close in on the elusive submarine. Urgent attack followed by a deliberate attack and the player then pumps his fist in air to signal his triumph. It's a par. Sometimes, it's just not his day and his search for that extraordinary shot and birdie remains elusive.

The last hole sunk, the players slowly make their way to the club house (harbour) for a well-earned glass of beer. It's also time to compare notes on the game and prepare for the next round.

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Submariners then and now

Commodore MV Suresh (Retd.)

It is more than 44 years, when I first stepped on board a submarine, it was a momentous occasion for most of us, Riga was then cold. There was ice everywhere, chunks of it floating along the submarine. As we stepped on board the black painted submarine, there was happiness and apprehension. This was our own submarine. The title "Indian Naval Submarine" sounded musical then, to some of us it is still musical and mellifluous, we proudly went down the hatch, to claim our sovereign right.

The task ahead was daunting. We had a formidable commanding officer, his reputation preceded his arrival, sure enough he did not mince any words in his inaugural address. The work-up now began in real earnest. Each one of us had a small pocket book, all the evolutions were written to be absorbed and assimilated, to us it was a mini Bible.

Armed with this pocket book I was on watch at sea on the submarine bridge. I knew the Captain would come up at this time of the day. I used to keep a packet of Rothmans cigarette, the brand he smoked. I offer him one, with anticipation that it would soften him, before the inquisition starts - it makes no difference, the opening remarks of a criminal interrogation, "OK, tell me the sequence of orders and actions for an Urgent Dive". I rattle out what has been rehearsed a hundred times, I shout "Urgent Dive, Urgent Dive, Urgent Dive" jumped down and closed the hatch. But before I closed the hatch I get a thump on my head, my hair line had commenced receding, it progressed rapidly thereafter. "Do you not check if anyone else is there on the bridge, or the bridge toilet?" I said, "Yes Sir", "Then what"? Then my head goes blank.

The sequence of orders that I had meticulously rehearsed is floating beyond the horizon, it does not reach my tongue, it had become dry, lucidity disappears. I cannot look up at the Captain. I know the face, the large nose would become larger, the eyes smaller, his hair would stand up vertical, he does not say anything, a wild grunt, the same sound a butcher makes before cutting the animal's throat....nothing more need to be said, as I watch him going down the hatch.

The next day AM in the control room, I know the Bull Dog (Capt) would come. But AM prepared, I have been rehearsing the sequence and orders ever since, We were at 30 meters depth at sea, the submarine well under control, I am aware that now the question would be how to come up to the surface of the sea or to the periscope depth. I can rattle out the orders like a parrot, "Now tell me what all light indicators you check up as you surface? "

No matter how conscientious, how punctilious your preparation, when the goal post gets shifted during question hour, the consistence is broken, interrogation interrupts, I gather my thoughts, I start again. The Capt stands before me, legs spread out, hands uplifted holding over-head valve, my mind freezes first, then my throat, then everything else that remains. There is no requirement to describe anything further; I withdraw, straight and erect, walking backward. After some time I gather the resolve to open the small pocket book, everything is given in my small pocket diary, crystal clear in the right sequence. I resolve this obfuscation of the mind, I have to overcome, all battles are fought and won in the mind. I resolve that I should take command of the situation, my mind should function instinctively and automatically, the reaction should



be cool and sangfroid, I said onto myself Ice Cold, Ice Cold.

Thus resolved I lay in my bunk, the sequence flowed fluently and spontaneously, slowly and imperceptibly, every evolution every sequence fell into place, once the tension disappeared, the mind attained its own tranquility, all apprehension disappeared. I was confident, with diffidence gone I was not found wanting, I had gained the Capt's trust.

Down the years I became the Capt myself, I found the same dilemma in the new under-trainee, my effort was not to make them nervous. I could see smart young officers looking blank, as I see beads of sweat on their brow even before I ask a question. I made my second in command, my EXO to guide them and come to me when he is satisfied. He made them go up and down the hatch, surfacing

and diving. The Russians had a phrase "Make sure the no. of times you dive should equal the no. of times you surface, as long as you make this equation you are doing fine".

It has been years since I have visited a submarine, when I see the shining badge of the submarine on a smart uniform, my heart swells with pride. They do not know me, I recognise them, I carry my badge inside my heart, it is still shining there.

We older submariners were more adventurous, enjoying the depths of the ocean with glee. We were more like dolphins, surfacing was fun, I feel the present day submariners are more focused, they patrol the ocean depths like deadly sharks, perpetually on the prowl to attack.

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Liaison Officer for an Afternoon

Lieutenant Commander James John

As we tread our daily life with a hope of a wonderful day, each day presents itself with an opportunity which we in naval parlance sometimes perceive as BJ. One such BJ which I thoroughly enjoyed doing is narrated below.

I was in Goa, the tourist's paradise, at the most happening Indian Naval Air Station - INS Hansa posted as Cdr (Ops) II, which, I felt was not so happening during the year 2011. On 19th Dec 2011, I received a call from SO to FOGA informing me that I was nominated to volunteer as the liaison officer to Adm (Retd) Arun Prakash, former Chief of the Naval Staff for a function organized by Goa Government to commemorate the Goa Liberation Day. As a good naval officer, I

expressed the usual response to a senior "Aye sir". And from his end the usual response as a good senior "very good".

As all naval officers would have felt at some point in their career, I felt the uneasiness of being 'nominated to volunteer' which I felt so often as Ops II. I gave the Admiral a call to inform him that I am his liaison officer, and that I would be coming to pick him up for the function at 1400h. The Admiral quietly remarked, "I don't need a liaison officer and I wonder how Hansa can spare its Cdr (Ops) II for me! Anyways you are welcome to come along if you like". I told him that I was nominated to attend the function anyways and I would be glad to accompany him.



More importantly, I wanted to meet the ex-Commandant, NDA whom I used to admire for his views on “honour code” since the time I was a 1st term in NDA. And life presented me an opportunity to hear it from the horse’s mouth.

I was on time to reach the Admiral’s residence in Bagmalo. The Admiral was ready and looked majestic in his black Jodhpur suit.

We left for Kala Bhavan in Panjim where the function was being organized. During the hour-long drive we spoke on different issues and most interesting was the element of socializing in the young officers. Nowadays with the communication technology advancing, distances have reduced drastically, but have increased physically. You would have said “hi” to your course-mate many a times on Facebook but physically you would not have interacted with him in the playfield/ NOI etc. for many a days, despite being neighbours.

The other issue that came up during our car journey was the interest he took in grooming cadets at the Cradle for Leadership. One of the attributes that I imbibed thanks to the Admiral’s correction in right time was the respect for the fairer sex. In any gathering social or otherwise, I used to hurriedly spring to my feet from my chair to greet a lady approaching our table. The quick, respectful and chivalrous gesture amazed not only my wife and her friends, but also impressed my course-mates. This alacrity specially for an approaching target, sorry, a fairy, was imbibed, whilst I was in 2nd term in NDA. Pavlov’s theory of conditioning emerged after many trials but my conditioning needed just one incident, at the correct time.

I narrated an incident to the Admiral (which he did not remember) about the time I was a second term at NDA. A group of cadets including me

along with the Admiral and a group of officers and ladies were sitting and feasting on the amazing breakfast at the Academy Equitation Lines after a cross-country horse ride (known as “hack ride”). A lady approached to greet us and share her experience on the ride. The Admiral rose to greet the young lady and started a conversation with her. Since I was busy eating my breakfast I didn’t rise. The Admiral didn’t check me then. While departing he gently reminded me of the social offence that I had (inadvertently) committed, earning me three restrictions. Ever since I spring up for any lady who approaches me whilst I am seated.

We reached the Kala Academy in Panjim at 1500h with full sixty minutes to go due to security reasons. The function was scheduled to start at 1600h on the arrival of Smt. Sonia Gandhi, UPA Chairperson. We walked inside the hall and I informed the Admiral of his seat in the front row. But he said he would be comfortable in the back rows and took a seat in the 3rd row. I went to check with the Colonel in-charge of the seating plan, who re-confirmed the seat in the front row and the Admiral shifted to the front row, reluctantly.

The next meeting with the Admiral was for a game of tennis in the Naval Officers’ Institute. He had been waiting for many months to find a partner, and when this subject came up during our car journey, I offered to play with him. He was very happy at this opportunity, and his passion for outdoors, especially tennis, was more than evident from his supreme fitness and finesse. I being a regular player had to sweat out for every point and the game went well beyond my imagination. Although, I barely managed to steal the winning point for the match, I was on my fours and the Admiral, still fresh, came and congratulated me.

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Our stay in Dhanraj Mahal

Mrs Veryam Kaur Trewn



I and my husband stayed in Dhanraj Mahal, Mumbai, during his six different appointments while serving on ships, staff and Naval Dockyard, Mumbai. Recounting those days has been an exciting experience as we stayed close to his place of work, Gateway of India, Radio club, the museum, Asiatic library, Mumbai University, Taj Mahal Hotel, Yacht Club, Jehangir Art Gallery, Naval Dockyard and above all the very seat of Maharashtra government the Mantralaya. The Headquarters Western Naval Command, Government Mint, Reserve Bank of India, National Stock Exchange in Dalal Street, Headquarters of leading banks were too close by. This provided sufficient opportunities to forward looking families residing in Dhanraj Mahal to socially interact with important families located in Fort and North Colaba area. Most retired naval officers are familiar with Dhanraj Mahal's name. In fact it was the largest naval residential complex in Mumbai before Navy Nagar Colaba came up.

Residential accommodation in Dhanraj Mahal provided spacious coloured bathrooms with large capacity geysers, bathtubs, piped cooking gas, lifts

and servant rooms with bathrooms attached. I was able to socially interact with some of Parsi neighbours and ladies club members based in Colaba. The ladies club, Colaba had mostly wives of officers serving in Corporate houses. I made it a point to once take them to a naval ship at anchorage. The fast boat ride from Gateway of India to ship thrilled them all as a life experience. However, I was no match for them when they proceeded for diamond shopping to Zaveri Bazar as a matter of routine. Being a wife of a young Lieutenant my budget was severely limited. Still I enjoyed the thrill of watching their expensive purchases and the red carpet treatment extended to our group by jewelers. This group also had monthly get together in Taj Mahal hotel and sometimes camped in our Dhanraj Mahal flat to watch Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth of England and the Beatles passing through the street down below on their way to the Taj.

Throughout our years of stay in Dhanraj Mahal we remained in touch with Bade Mian the seekh kabab specialist who used to supply his delicious preparations for parties being held onboard Indian naval ships in harbour from time to time and had his shop close to Dhanraj Mahal. My husband, availing this opportunity of being close to the British Yacht Club used to attend their special meetings which used to be held at the Taj. I remember to have immensely enjoyed a one day family boat trip organized by the Yacht Club to Elephanta Caves from Gateway of India and back.

I cannot forget the rare momentous occasion of assisting in organizing and attending a Film Fare Award ceremony held in Regal cinema located close to Dhanraj Mahal. One initial organizing committee meeting was held in my flat as this show had active



support from naval authorities in Mumbai. Film actor late Abraham was Master of Ceremony with participation of Devanad, Dalip Kumar, Begam Para, Raj Kapur, Suraya and Lata Mangeshkar besides others. During these arrangements I could interact with several film actresses who invited me to witness some shooting scenes in their Chembur studio. While staying in Dhanraj Mahal I could walk across and attend a ladies party right in the residence of Managing Director or top boss of these institutions although I was the wife of a naval Lieutenant only.

Once my neighbouring officer's family celebrated the wedding of Tulsi and Shaligram at their residence. Two British naval officers' families residing next door were also invited. They were excited to watch on arrival that wedding gift brought by them for the bride was for a Tulsi plant and not a human being. Madam Madhuri Shah Chairperson of University Grants Commission also attended the ceremony. One day we were invited to Parsi Navroz ceremony in Cusrow Baug in Colaba Causeway. The Parsi cum Gujarati style food served was simply special. Curiously enough I was informed that two of the smart ladies presenting flowers to guests were wives of Reserve Bank of India Chief and Director of National Stock Exchange in Dalal Street Mumbai! In fact they were fascinated by my Punjab chunni and they borrowed from me on that day.

On my first arrival in Dhanraj Mahal I was excited to watch that the portable milk container from the Parsi dairy carried by the milkman had its lid connections sealed so that milk can pour out from it but nothing can go in. The same was true for the supply of special Parsi Kuan drinking water. But, something more happens when you reside close to your work place like in Dhanraj Mahal. One day at midnight my domestic help woke me up and told me that some persons were enquiring about my husband. They were waiting with a jeep and cars in Dhanraj Mahal parking below. Just then our doorbell rang. On

opening the door the persons introduced themselves as General Managers of Central and Western Railway as well as Chief Mechanical Engineers of the two railways. They narrated their problems in brief. During those days my husband happened to be officiating manager Engineering in Naval Dockyard. They said that President of India was expected to travel from New Delhi to Mumbai soon while the propeller shaft of the President's Saloon was observed vibrating excessively. They felt that Naval Dockyard with its large balancing machine should undertake urgent defect rectification job. Finally the matter was resolved next morning. However, the point is made that legendary Dhanraj Mahal lying in close proximity with Dockyard was also the place where one could make crucial decisions on matters of urgent repairs at midnight!

Many senior officers before attaining their Flag rank had stayed in Dhanraj Mahal. Once I attended a Thumri get together hosted by Mrs Chatterjee wife of Captain Chaterjee later Admiral Chaterjee and attended by several senior naval officers and families and to-be flag officers was held in a Dhanraj Mahal ground floor flat where I too was asked to sing Punjabi Tappas. There was present too Madam Sudha Mohite my tabla instructor who also was teaching tabla to a Maharashtian minister's wife. Some frequently visiting film stars had suggested that young naval officers could participate in part time job in film industry. We did not agree so it was decided to stage a drama named 'Tipu Sultan' in INS Hamla, Malad, Mumbai where three naval officers' wives from Dhanraj Mahal also participated.

To conclude I would say that we young juniors enjoyed good relations with families having prestigious positions around us and upto whom we could walk across in the evenings and socially interact.

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Quality of Life

Commander VK Mohan (Retd.)

Having served in the Navy for more than three decades, I have a lot of sweet memories of a regulated life and a good standard of living leading to all around happiness.

It would be helpful to understand the following differences between the standard of living and quality of life:

- a) The standard of living when regulated within certain limits leads to quality of life.
- b) The standard of living depends upon the number, amount and types of items acquired e.g. wealth, property and objects of comfort as also luxury. However, the quality of life depends upon our attitude while living in moderation by limiting our needs, so as to help out others who are more needy than we are. By doing so we reduce our tension as also dependence on people and items, thereby increasing our peace of mind and the level of happiness.
- c) Unlike standard of living, quality of life does not need appreciation or recognition from others. It is self appreciating and increases our sense of achievement even while living alone.

Now let us start with detailed understanding of the quality of life. The vital point to remember is that all of us wish to be happy for good. However, while trying to ensure so we believe that the happiness lies by interacting with people which is called socialization as also in objects. Accordingly, we tend to amass the items which would be appreciated by others. No doubt, this leads to short term happiness but not without tension. The items are liable to break, become useless with age or get stolen in certain

cases e.g. jewellery etc. Therefore, to remain happy regardless of circumstances, we must understand that happiness lies within us. In addition, it depends upon our reaction to the changes around us thereby resulting in joys and sorrows. So, we need to analyse the causes of sorrows for finding solution. These could be of various types e.g. losses due to breakage or natural calamities. In such cases, the objects could be replaced subject to their need and the availability of funds. In case of theft a report could be lodged with the police. While doing so, let us not forget that our happiness and health which are inter-connected are more valuable than the items. As such brooding over the loss must be avoided at all costs.

The above attitude can be achieved by emulating Brar family's example of doing good to others and remaining happy in other's happiness as brought out in the article titled 'Some Noble Initiatives' published in QD 2012.

A similar outlook would be helpful when someone loses his near and dear. In such cases, we may focus our attention to others who are more unfortunate than we are. For instance those who may have lost their only earning member or are disabled and staying in orphanage. With such attitude, we may find many more in the offing who are similar to Brar family. This would enable all concerned to get back from setbacks in negligible time.

To rule out the possibility of 'easier said than done' I joined a study group five years ago at Andheri, Mumbai. The group comprised of 30-40 ladies and gents including senior citizens. The membership was free and voluntary. We meet for 1 to 2 hours twice a week. The aim is to exchange our knowledge and experience so as to remain happy and keep others



happy regardless of circumstances. For this purpose, we keep reading the relevant books and magazines apart from 'The speaking Tree' on the editorial page in Times of India. On my part I write comments on the 'Speaking Tree' and distribute the copies free of cost to all members once a week. Additional copies are distributed to others as well who are on my mailing list in India and abroad. The system helps all concerned to face setbacks including bereavements.

The following salient points are kept in view while holding discussions:

- a) Unlimited desires are the main obstacles in our long term happiness. The more items we get, the more we want with the result that this anxiety leaves no time for us to enjoy what we have. On the other hand, when we don't get what we want, the situation leads to anger which spoils our happiness. Hence, the desires need to be controlled so as to be happy in the present.
- b) Apart from items, most of us have desire for respect, recognition, fame etc. which makes us

dependent on others thereby losing our mental tranquillity. So the solution lies in changing ourselves depending upon circumstances and respecting/recognizing the talents of others. What we give would come back to us in due course without expectation.

- c) Apart from socialization, we need to do social service as well if not already being done. Our study group members provide support to orphanage in cash and kind for benefit of school going children, as also for disabled senior citizens. Contributions are also made to other philanthropic organizations.

The Brar family's aforesaid noble initiatives have given further impetus to the activities of our study group. I therefore, express my gratitude to them on group's behalf and conclude by reiterating the following -

"If you want to be eternally cheerful and happy, be helpful and live for others".

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A Mother's prayer

Commander Fred Menezies (Retd)

Late Admiral Stan Dawson was a deeply religious person and he gave me a copy of a prayer his mother had sent to him, when he joined the Navy during WW II. This poignant prayer, I reproduce below:

"God father of love, look after that boy of mine wherever he may be. Walk in upon him, talk with him during the silent watches of the night and transfer my prayer to his heart.

Keep my boy inspired by the never dying faith in

his God. Throughout all the long days of a hopeful victory wherever his duty takes him. Keep his spirit high and his purpose unwavering. Make him a loyal friend. Nourish him with the love that I gave him at birth and satisfy the hunger of his soul with the knowledge of my daily prayer.

He is my choicest treasure. Take care of him. God keep him in health and sustain him under every possible circumstance. I once warmed him under my heart. You warm him anew in his shelter under the stars. Touch him with my smile of cheer and



comfort. My full confidence is in his every brave pursuit. Fail him not and may he not fail you nor the mother who bore him."

As a Commander as OIC of Tactical School we used to have long discussions on the military strategy and the doctrine which must be related to the objectives of a nation's foreign policy, to the nature of external threats that are perceived and to the military capabilities of potential adversaries, when deciding the role, the composition and the size of the Navy.

I did write a paper on this subject, which was published as a lead article in the USI Journal of 1963 under the pen name of FREMEN.

He also got me to speak on the International Law of the Sea to a very distinguished audience of the Fleet and the Command which included COMCHIN, FOCIF, COs and Staff Officers on its brief history, territorial sea, contiguous zones, continental shelf the doctrine of Hot Pursuit, the right of innocent passage, war zones, defence of sea areas, embargo, pacific blockade, and the maritime blockade, with particular reference to "measures short of war employed in peace, and their legality" and "The legality of Pakistani maritime actions in the recent conflict" on 14th December 1965 which was a pleasure and a privilege. There was a lot of interest and a lively discussions which lasted three hours. I remember particularly Captain Ronny Pereira and Admiral David, may be because they were more proactive in discussions.

I retired from the Navy and migrated to Australia in 1968. We kept in touch via Xmas Cards. I visited him in New Zealand when he was the High Commissioner, and he was my house guest in 1991. This event appeared in the QD of 1991.

He introduced me to QD in 1989, and I, my son Dean, and sometimes my good mates Richard Schneider and Cdr Michael Rinehart RAN (Retd.) contributed to QD from 1991 to 1997 "A View from Australia" when Mrs Govil was the Editor. When Mrs Nagpal became the Editor I was told QD was not interested in contributions from foreign countries. More is the pity!! Somehow, I lost touch with QD after 2004 until now.

Father time marches on, I hardly recognise any names in QD 2012, except the post war old timers, such as Admiral Tahiliani, whom I first met as a cadet on board HMS Mauritius in the '50s together with cadets Bhalla, and Barron, Admiral Ramdas as the Flags to Admiral Katari and of course, Admiral Awati who was my shipmate in Mysore, and thereafter in Cochin whose contributions in the QD I have had great pleasure in reading.

With the passing of Stan, I do not know how many WW II naval veterans, if any, are left in India. I belong to the local RSL and march on every ANZAC Day. Even here the ranks are thinning every year.

I had a nostalgic tour of India by a private jet and visited Cochin from 22nd to 24th March 2011. We stayed at Taj Malabar Hotel in Wellington Island. Having served in Venduruthy, both in the '40s and the '60s I had sent an invitation to dinner to the Commanding Officer, Commodore Ajay Kumar and his wife in January 2011. It was acknowledged by his Staff Officer. I regret to have to say that he did not even have the courtesy to send an MRU!! Manners maketh the man it is said. Perhaps not, for the modern Indian Naval Officer!!

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Our own Patron Saint

Ms Radha Nair

Hamla's Sick Bay and Shivaji's MI Room lived up to their no nonsense names in the late '40s and early '50s. Headed each time by Surg Cdr Jaganathan, a stern looking doctor who took his work very seriously, he epitomized the legendary doctor on call at all hours of the day and even unearthly hours of the night.

In Shivaji, we were given barrack type houses, where long nails remained unseen until they struck where it was feared most. I was a child of four then, who believed that merely being wished a good night by my father was not enough before turning in. Every night he had to tell me stories of kings and queens, mice and men. And so, one cold Lonavala night, I hung round at the doorway of the room where my father's head was buried deep under mountains of examination answer sheets. He was obviously under a lot of pressure. But how was I to know that?

As I continued to pester him, the normally gentle father, suddenly lost his temper and roared. I had never seen this father. So frightened was I, that I bolted as quickly as I could, only to have a rusty protruding nail on the door bite deeply into my right cheek just below the eye. So scared was I of my father, that I never felt the pain or the rip of flesh. My mother went into shock, and soon my father left everything and carried me all the way to the MI Room, his white shirt front drenched in blood. Cdr Jaganathan reached the MI Room in no time, calmed me down, changed into a gown and donned a mask, turned on the lights above the operating table and I passed out. For weeks after that, his surgeon's hands took gentle care of the wound, and when the stitches were removed, there was only a small signature of the accident on my cheek.

On another occasion, his medical expertise gave a new lease of life to a man whom everybody had written off as dead. During the interval at a film show screened in the gymnasium, a young recruit had gone outside to answer nature's call. Lonavala in those days was swallowed up by a dense tropical jungle, and was home to the most poisonous snakes from kraits to cobras that the Western Ghats are famous for. When he sat down he felt a sharp bite on his right forefinger, but saw nothing in the darkness. He dashed back in the proper light and saw the fang marks of a snake. Within minutes he lost consciousness, turned blue and was rushed to the MI Room.

Everybody in Shivaji had given him up for good, for who has survived a cobra bite? Cdr Jaganathan on being notified, rushed immediately to the hospital and spoke little. The whole base was tensed up and ready to hear the bad news any moment. Not Cdr Jaganathan. He kept solitary vigil by the stricken man's side the whole night and all of the next day, pumped him with anti-venom and saline, and best of all just stayed by his side even refusing food and drink. Towards evening, the man slowly opened his eyes and weakly asked for water.

That was the most joyous moment, not only for Cdr Jaganathan, but for the Commanding Officer of INS Shivaji, his ship's company, their wives and children. All of Shivaji erupted into euphoric joy when this young man's life was saved, and we called out in true naval tradition, "Three cheers for Cdr Jaganathan, Hip Hip Hurray!". Cdr Jaganathan from then on became the patron saint of INS Shivaji.

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Naval Garrison, Kamorta

Lieutenant Commander Ravi Batra (Retd.)

The first Naval Garrison at Kamorta was formed out of a COMBRAX list of 80 men, herded at the Gunnery School in 1967 for two months training prior to departure on INS Ranjit to Port Blair. My 2i/c was Sub Lieut Achyut Madhav Gokhale - with one year's service, three years less than mine. No one at Cochin could tell us much and sent me for a briefing at NHQ. The DNO official assured that a Garrison at Port Blair was in existence and a proper briefing would happen on reaching there.

The RNO, Port Blair, Cdr Malai Ghosh, was surprised to find us arrive without any stores and would have asked to disband our group. I pleaded that we would move on to Kamorta and be a live problem for the Navy (I was selfishly not keen to lose the job of being Officer-in-Charge before it was earned). Cdr Ghosh was kind to give us stores out of the spare stock of those for the Port Blair, Garrison and we sailed by the TSS Yerrawa for Nan Cowry. He also gave me 100 day-old Leghorn chicks to start a poultry farm, wishing us luck. He was flabbergasted that the new Garrison had arrived like the proverbial cart before the horse and was contemplating asking NHQ to postpone a Garrison being positioned at Kamorta for another year. The spirits of the men were very high. We offered to live on the island as a beacon to guide all concerned to expeditiously get the needed deficiencies of stores, equipment and furniture to reach.

At Kamorta, the accomodation for 200 men, had been built by the Army Engineers. They were then extending the runway at Car Nicobar. A Galley, messroom, wardroom, office block, officers' cabins, and a generator room with two Ruston Hornby generators were spanking new. Wiring and fans

existed. But we had no furniture at all! Pumps on two wells would dry out the water in 20 mins running and provide a 3" level of water in the huge steel header tank (16x16x8 feet). This promptly leaked as the rubber jointing had deteriorated.

We took over the communication equipment from the Platoon Commander on deputation from Port Blair and saw them off by the TSS Yerrawa the next day.

Everybody had immediate work to do. Jungle wood provided makeshift cots (snakes - were a cause for worry). A very tall mast with a yardarm came up with a small drill square. The steel tank was dismantled and re-fabricated with lead packing.

The two wells were cleaned out and the depth increased by about 10 ft in each. A third new well was dug close to the beach where a sweet water spring was found. At 20 ft depth the concrete tubes used as a wall lining by the Japanese during WW II, were found.

A couple of months later Surg Lt Rao joined us - I will always remember that he relished a python portion for breakfast. Fortunately he had little medical problems to deal with but his earlier experiences from the Army were very useful stories to recount.

The remains of Japanese trucks were found at many places on the track leading north from our living area. An Electrician, G Singh had managed to dismantle the crankshaft out of one of these engines, which had a dipstick show 'full oil level' in the sump after some 27 years of disuse. He carried the piece back to Ludhiana. Many years later he met



me at Masjid Bunder to inform that he was in the transport business with base at Indore.

At the Western end of the Nancowry harbour an 8" gun emplacement was once installed by the Japanese and a similar one guarded the eastern harbour entrance being located at the southern tip of Trinkat Island a mile east of Kamorta.

Surprisingly, 15 new assault boats had arrived before us along with seven US Army surplus Johnson outboard motors. Our very resourceful LME put his hands onto the OBMs and got six going smoothly. Thus, we had ferrying means to go across to Nancowry for football with the local Ulchus and to other nearby villages for camping deployments. There were no spares for the engines and the much needed replacement was the main Gasket on the cylinder head. The art of making and replacing this gasket was soon mastered by every Platoon Commander and section leaders – Seaman! The cardboard used would work for a week or so on the twin cylinder engine. The propellor's shear pin was managed by use of lengths cut from copper/aluminium wire. Frequency of shearing was high as coming onto coral was often unavoidable. The boys also soon became adept at cleaning carburetors and spark plugs.

The locals had canoes with outriggers for transporting persons and materials as well as for fishing. These sleek craft with a large sail could do very good speed and were easy to steer with a small oar.

In March we had the distinction of being visited by the CNS. Admiral Chatterjee told us that he was going to be the first full Admiral in the following week. Cdr Tony Jain, his FOO, later wrote from Vizag to NHQ, "...with a TCS transciever whose reciever does not work, and a 622 transciever whose transmitter does not work, it is a matter of

propogational wonder that the Garrison at Kamorta has maintained some contact with Port Blair for the past six months....."

These sets were battery operated and for charging we had a petrol driven, again US Army surplus type, charger. There were no spares. Here too cardboard was the material for gasket replacement.

Furniture for the 200 men Garrison arrived, cots, tables, chairs, cupboards, along with a full four platoon Garrison by INS Magar in Oct 1968. This included five 10 ft Kelvinator refrigerators (which also worked on kerosene) and I could have a cold beer with Lt Cdr Prabhakar, Lt AD Mathur and the six-footer S Lt (S) Mishra.

We managed to carry out deployments to the neighbouring islands and also visited Campbell Bay in Great Nicobar. I also had a memorable visit to Car Nicobar where my brother joined me from the Barrackpore Air Force Base.

The Ulchus across the harbour regularly invited us for football matches held there. The local manager of the Nancowry Trading Company lived with his dainty wife and small child there. He was a champion of the cause for the evening sport. From him I learnt that it was after his uncle, RA Jadwet started the trade in Copra and Supari from the islands, with the presence of mainlanders amongst them, the locals had only recently taken to eating rice and other food items brought by the NTC. Women who always wore only a sarong had taken to wear Saris too. Rani Laxmi, then in her 50s was always wearing a Sari.

I left with Cdr MHU Khan on INS Magar the next day along with the boys filled with memories and experiences to remember.

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Reminiscences of 1971 War

Commodore RS Vasan (Retd.)

The forty years of the war to liberate and create Bangladesh was commemorated on 7th Jan 2012, under the aegis of Navy Foundation, Chennai Charter. The programme was originally scheduled for 30th December 2011 but had to be postponed due to storm Thane which was hovering near Chennai. The veterans based in Chennai who participated in 1971 war shared their experiences with the audience and the press members who had turned out in large numbers. The audience was given rare firsthand account of the experiences of the war.

Those who shared their experiences included Rear Admiral Ramsagar, Commodores Subramanian, RS Vasan, KC Shekhar, Commander's Ramanathan, Gunasekaran, Captain Shivman Mehta and other veterans. Those who could not attend took the trouble of even sending a written account of their own experiences to be shared with the audience. Here are some excerpts from the veterans.

The Carrier was deployed for the first time in classical operations to support the Army action over land. The Seahawks and the Alizes carried out attacks on targets in the then East Pakistan. On many occasions, it was not possible to launch the Seahawks due to insufficient wind on deck. The Alizes became the workhorses flying by day and night from the Carrier (The Seahawks did not fly at night) carrying successful bombing of shore targets and rocketing of ships and craft off Chittagong/Khulna harbor.

Admiral Ramsagar and his crew were hit in the anti-aircraft fire and returned with serious hydraulic, electric and even communication failure. Admiral Ramsagar who successfully brought back the aircraft and landed it at night despite the damages caused by

direct hits was decorated with an MVC for this valiant effort.

While this was the scene on the flight deck, the Commander (E) and his team worked relentlessly below the decks to keep the propulsion and catapult machinery going despite many odds and technical challenges. Admiral Ramsagar brought out that due to the non-availability of the essential winds on the deck for launch, it became necessary at times even to resort to free take offs without the use of the catapult though it did limit the payload.

Commodore Gopal Rao now settled in Chennai, who had spearheaded the attack on the west coast with the missile boats towed and escorted by him as P 31 had shared his experiences in writing.

The daring attack in an operation code named Operation Trident opened a new era in the Indian Navy which signaled its intentions to be a major player in the region.

While the naval veterans who were present were already aware of the details of the two successful attacks, the press representatives and the families present were given the overview of the entire operation by Admiral Ramsagar who gave an overview of the entire operations from the day it started till the surrender of the Pakistani forces in Dhaka on 16th Dec 1971.

The concept of submarine operations and the challenges of operating in patrol areas close to the enemy shores were brought out by Commodore Subramanian. It was also brought out that the rules of engagement that were in force did not allow any attacks until positive identification was established or



if own submarine was under attack. With the limitations of the Foxtrot class, this was indeed a tall order particularly when someone has to be positively identified. Commodore Subramanian also brought out the lessons for the navy of the future in terms of conducting such operations.

The case of sinking of Khukri off Diu head was also mentioned with recollections of the act of Capt Mulla who went down with the ship as there were others who were trapped in the ship which was going down after a successful torpedo attack by the PN Submarine. A commemorative stamp was issued in 2000 in the honour of Late Captain Mulla.

Some of the officers who were very young at the time of the war and were exposed to the fog of war also recounted their experiences. Commodore RS Vasani recollected a case of a surface contact that appeared on radar during heavy rains that appeared to be closing his ship. The conclusion on the ship was that it was perhaps a Pakistani warship that is trying to close in to identify the Indian Ship prior to engagement. Action stations were sounded and the crew was ready to engage the ship with both the batteries trained on the ship. However, the ship on closing and being challenged, replied that he was lost and not aware of where he was and could we give him the present position. The navigational facility being what it was those days and with dark clouds that did not allow astronomical sights to be taken; the navigating officer passed a position close to the Dead reckoning position. The ship thanked and proceeded. The ship resumed normal patrol thereafter and first thing in the morning was shocked to hear that the ship to which the navigational position was given had run aground in one of the Islands in L&M! The sub alterns on board coined a new phrase "Navigational Warfare" to describe what happened to the ship, indirectly also questioning the ability of the NO on board. He also recounted the lost opportunity to shoot down a Pakistani Albatross which was keeping the

ship on patrol in the eastern theater. The aircraft kept circling Amba then fondly called the cruiser of the Eastern Fleet.

The ship requested for engaging the aircraft and the whole process took its own time with signals and the wait for the response from the command. Unfortunately, by the time the approval came it was already late and the aircraft had moved away after tracking the ship for some time. The lesson obviously was that if there was an exhibition of hostile intent, no approval should be necessary and therefore, it should be the call of the Captain of the ship or the OTC to initiate such action.

The special meeting thereafter encouraged the participants to interact with the veterans on many aspects of naval warfare and the meeting came to a close with lunch.

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Where did that come from?

The navy psychiatrist was interviewing a potential sailor. To check on the young man's response to trouble, he asked, "What would you do if you looked out of that window right now and saw a battleship coming down the street?"

The young sailor said, "I would grab a torpedo and sink it."

"Where would you get the torpedo?"

"The same place you got your battleship!"



'A Sailor's Story, Vice Admiral N Krishnan'

Edited by Arjun Krishnan

Reviewed by Captain Sushil Das

'A Sailor's Story', is an autobiography of Padma Bhushan, Vice Admiral Nilakanta Krishnan, PVSM, DSC (1919-1982). The book has been edited by his son, Arjun Krishnan, from a compilation of the draft and notes left behind by the author, about 28 years after the demise of the Admiral in 1982. The book is illustrated with unique photos of the period including some letters, treasured certificates and titular recognitions given in the days of yore.

Known as the 'Sailor's Admiral', his dedication for the Navy was surpassed only by his love for his Country. A flamboyant, charismatic, and a dynamic leader of men, it is his story, that is inextricably associated to the story of India in general and Indian Navy in particular. In his own words, he shares his experiences spanning across some of India's most turbulent times, from pre-independence to post independent modern India, including his part in building the Indian Navy more so in shaping the Fleet Air Arm. He also accounts for his central role in one of India's greatest military victories, the 1971 Indo-Pak war which resulted in the liberation of Bangladesh from Pakistan.

Admiral Krishnan was a wartime hero having seen action in the Arctic Ocean, the North Sea, the Norwegian campaign, the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf, initially with the Royal Navy as part of the Home Fleet (later known as the Royal Indian Navy) and post-Independence in the Indian Navy. Many of his war experiences have been recounted in the book in lucid detail. One such account in a chapter aptly titled "An Hour of Battle-A Medal for Life" describes an incident in the Persian Gulf during WW II, where a young Lieutenant Krishnan then

commanding a tug boat, with twelve sailors, the Khor-Kuwait was on patrol off Khorramshar. In the encounter with a Persian (Iranian) Navy gun-boat, he boarded and captured the vessel without incurring any casualties. This operation was successful, owing to the surprise and stealth achieved, coupled with his grit, guts and gumption that despite being under fire he could draw the enemy crew out of their hold and with their 'hands-up!' He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross (DSC) for this gallant action.

He commanded other ships as well, notably the INS Delhi and INS Vikrant. Whilst in command of the Delhi (the second time) he participated in the liberation of Goa. "On D-Day", he narrates, "11 December 1961, at about 3.30 AM, I arrived off Diu. It was pitch dark and our radar picked up four echoes on the screen which were closing in on Delhi at high speed...We tracked the boats carefully and let them come to within five miles and then opened fire, first lighting them with star-shells, then with shells from Delhi's guns. Two of them were sunk almost immediately and out of hand. The other two turned tail and raced away back towards harbour...We sent a signal to the watch-tower in the citadel 'strike your flag immediately and surrender.' Since there was no reply to my signal, we opened up with all our six inch guns...We sent some hundred shells in to help them make up their minds. Just fifteen minutes later, down came the Portuguese flag, planted in our country by Vasco da Gama some five centuries ago."

Of course, he has also dedicated a full chapter to the 1971 war, 'Bay of Bengal and the Sinking of the Ghazi', which includes excerpts from his book, 'No Way but Surrender: An Account of 1971 Indo-Pak War in the Bay of Bengal', to describe the 'kill'. He



describes the surrender ceremony at Dacca as well in some detail. He had been the Commander-in-Chief, Eastern Naval Command during the war.

His life was a fascinating one. He rubbed shoulders with Royalty, Presidents, Prime Ministers, politicians, military brass, war heroes, extraordinary and ordinary people in the course of his life. Every encounter has a fascinating tale behind it, be it with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi, Sardar Vallabhai Patel, VV Giri, Ace fighter pilot Guy Gibson of WW II 'dam busters' fame, Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, Lord Mountbatten of Burma, or Admiral Gorshkov, not to miss the mafia Don and his moll in

downtown San Francisco. Krishnan served and loved the Navy, right through, despite the pin-pricks of the pre-Independence days.

Admiral Krishnan's recall is one great adventure which makes for an extremely interesting yet light reading and is bound to bring value-addition to military history buffs. Do sit back and enjoy the voyage of the life of a compassionate Indian military hero and patriot, who often said, 'If you cut open my chest, embedded in my heart you will see four letters in bold: NAVY'.

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Downwind, Four Green's

Author-Vice Admiral Vinod Pasricha (Retd.)

Reviewed by Admiral RH Tahiliani (Retd.)

Vice Admiral Pasricha has compiled a fascinating book titled "**Downwind, Four Greens**" with his usual untiring efforts.

In India, most of us are not historically minded. Over the ages, the Hindus have been led to believe that life itself is transitory and there is no reality in anything. This has resulted in most people paying scant regard; even those who have contributed much. Vinod Pasricha is an exception to this rule.

In his book, 'Downwind, Four Green's', V Adm Vinod Pasricha has given an excellent history of India's first carrier-borne aircraft, the Seahawk. With his association of over forty years with Naviation (a word coined by Pasha) and his memory and penchant for collecting valuable data, he has been able to make his book most interesting. He has added a number of his personal experiences, along with those contributed by other senior Naviators, who have seen

our naval aviation evolve to its present level. In fact, his first four Chapters on the history of Indian Naviation, right from its birth to the time that INS Vikrant and her two embarked squadrons (INAS 300 and INAS 310) commissioned in 1960/61, are of great historical value.

His book has also researched our purchase of 28 German Seahawks Mk 100/101. This happened in 1964, when our CNS, V Adm BS Soman met his German counterpart in India and they discussed the possible sale of some of their Seahawks to India. This was done in total secrecy and at a time when the western countries had put a total embargo on the sale of any military weapons/equipment to both India and Pakistan. The account of how these Seahawks were then crated in containers and came to NARO, Kochi a year later, makes very interesting reading. In 1978, V Adm Johnson, himself a first commission 300 Sqn pilot, was our Naval Attache' in Bonn. With his assistance, Pasha was able to collect information, as well as experiences from the German CNS, V Adm



Günter Luther, who was one of their first officers to fly Seahawks.

Other interesting episodes in Pasha's book relate to:

a) The four Navies that flew Seahawks. In fact, Seahawk landing trials were also done on the Canadian and Australian carriers, though eventually they settled for newer aircraft, rather than the Seahawk.

b) The work-up of Vikrant and the two squadrons off England, France and Malta and the journey to India in 1961.

c) Their participation for the liberation of Goa in December 1961, soon after being welcomed to India by Pandit Nehru.

d) The remarkable story of how a young sailor decided to take off in a Seahawk from Meenambakkam airport. Since he had neither been briefed nor knew how to fly a jet, he had to finally ditch off the coast.

e) The wonderful account of six really long ferries from England to Sular by 16 Seahawk pilots, with no maintenance crew/logistic support accompanying them.

f) Just prior to the possible outbreak of war with

Pakistan in 1965, how the Fleet Commander permitted two pilots to be launched in Seahawks, from Vikrant at sea, for a night-out at Bangalore and Santa Cruz. All arrangements had been made earlier for their weddings, but at the last minute Vikrant had been ordered to sail out with her squadrons embarked.

g) Vikrant's operational role in the North Bay of Bengal during the 1971 Bangladesh War and how the German Seahawks were of great value, since nearly all British Seahawks had finished their life.

h) The emergency that resulted when R Adm Peter Debrass was being launched from Vikrant and his Seahawk got disengaged just before the Catapult fired.

i) The joint exercises between Vikrant and HMAS Melbourne in 1977.

Despite my knowledge and long association with Naviation, a few incidents appeared new even to me. This book is not merely a collation of historical data, but also an interesting collection of human interest stories. Pasha's apt descriptions make his book valuable not just for all Naviation personnel and their families, but also for all others who are interested in Military History and in flying operations from an aircraft carrier.

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Emma's escapade in Incredible India

Author-Captain GV Rama Rao (Retd.)

Reviewed by Commander KY Narayana

India ushered in economic reforms in the early 1990s and set the country on the road to become one of the fastest growing nations. Today, India is a trillion dollar

economy, important member of G20, founder member of the BRIC group of nations amongst other major roles in international forum. The significant contributions made by Indians worldwide in the fields of IT, science and engineering have made the world



sit up and take notice of India as a global player. International travel to and from India for trade, commerce and tourism has grown by leaps and bounds in the last couple of decades.

In this context, there have been several books on travel to India mostly covering statistical data or historical information but rarely has there been a book that focuses on human emotions and bonding.

Captain GV Rama Rao (Retd.) has broken away from the routine and focused on human facets in his latest book titled "Emma's Escapades in Incredible India".

The author has touched on ground realities in India, emotions, the good and bad psyche of Indian males in general towards women, particularly foreign white women, religious beliefs, Indian values, culture, history etc. in a simple lucid manner through the protagonist Emma's interactions with those around her.

The author has woven a fascinating story line to hold reader's interest throughout the novel. The characters of Lt Cdr Rahul as the love interest and Col (Retd.) Murthy as guide and father figure to Emma are very well sketched and bring out the best traditions of the armed forces.

Emma's escapades with her boyfriend Mark in the US and later with Rahul in India; Mark's romance with Emma's best friend Latha highlight the cultural differences towards institution of marriage in India and the US.

The novel will be a valuable yet entertaining guide for expatriate Indians or foreigners visiting India for the first time. It provides lighthearted and fascinating material for general reading while still making a deep impact.

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PIPAU



Coronation Naval Review

Commander Fred Menzies (Retd.)

My most memorable experience in the Navy was the Coronation Naval Review at Spithead of Queen Elizabeth II on 15th June 1953 where 156 RN warships and 76 from foreign Navies had assembled. I was on board INS RANJIT under the command of Cdr Nanda. The other ships were INS DELHI (Captain Chaterjee) and INS TIR (Cdr Krishnan) One of the most spectacular sights was the Italian three-masted ship AMERICO VESPUCCI coming up the SOLENT under sail with the cadets manning the yardarms.

The other warship that attracted a lot of attention was the USSR Cruiser SVERDLOV not only of Naval personnel, but all the world press and the military that had assembled at Portsmouth. She had been launched in 1952 and was so secret that there was not even a photo of her in the official Review Program. The story at the time was that an RN officer, a Diver, had dived under the ship and was captured by the Russians. This was very hush, hush and an unconfirmed story going around. They had armed guards all over the ship, and bright lights illuminated the ship at night. She had no scuttles at all!!

The night before the Review, the Fleet was illuminated. It was a majestic sight. The Review took place at 1500h on 15th June when all ships were precisely in line and HMS BRITANNIA the Queen's Yacht passed between the lines. All ships were manned and gave the Queen three cheers as she passed between the lines. It was a mastery of seamanship to predict the tides so accurately.

The other event of great interest was the Fleet Air Arm fly past that followed the Review. There were 300 aircraft flying past at 45 second intervals. A sight and sound to behold!! That time at Spithead will always

have the most vivid memories for me. The wonderful spectacle that has not been repeated in size and versatility, the Coronation Naval Review at Spithead on 15th June 1953.

The Coronation Naval Ball

There was a ball on board the battleship HMS VANGUARD that evening attended by the Queen and the Royal family, to which the Admiralty Board, the C-in-Cs, Senior Admirals, and Commanding Officers of all ships were invited. Commander Nanda represented INS RANJIT.

The Blonde In A Red Car

On a lighter note, with thousands of sailors ashore at any one time, hospitality girls from all over England and Europe had assembled at Portsmouth. Some of our sailors ashore were standing at a bus stop when a lovely blonde in a red car drove up and ignoring dozens of sailors in square rig, went to a young Topass and asked him why he was dressed differently. Because I am an Officer he said. They went together to the undying envy of his shipmates. Thereafter, the story goes that every sailor in fore and aft rig, took turns each evening to stand at the same spot waiting for a blonde in a red car that, alas, never came!!



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A holiday down under

Vice Admiral Vinod Pasricha (Retd.)

In 1977, when I was in 300 Sqn on INS Vikrant, HMAS Melbourne visited India for exercises with the Western Fleet. Although I was able to visit over 35 countries, including South Africa, Brazil, Cuba, as also a round trip around the world for Indo-US Naval discussions (which started in Washington and ended in Hawaii), my trip to Australia never happened.

Finally when we decided to visit New Zealand to spend time with Uma's sister in the North Island, we thought this would be an ideal opportunity to also visit Australia. We left Mumbai after midnight on 24th Sep 2012 and flew straight to Auckland, with a two hour break in Singapore. Since we were heading East, it was soon daylight and we were able to get a good aerial glimpse of the lovely countries and islands en-route, including most of Australia from Darwin to Sydney. Because of our short visit, we chose to concentrate on sightseeing and culture. Fortunately, just North of the Bay in Auckland, there is a good naval museum at Torpedo Bay, Davenport. Like India, where a large number of officers and men served under the British flag, it was interesting to note the similarities in the New Zealand Navy. They too had seen a lot of active service during the two World Wars.



Visits to other museums were equally fascinating - particularly as many of the exhibits felt familiar. At the same time, they showed diversity in culture and the

history of the British, who first came from England on HMS Endeavour with Captain James Cook in 1769. They found that the Polynesian Maoris, known for their war-like nature and ancient cannibalistic tendencies, were already there. Photographs of Maori culture, their tattooed faces and the boats that they carved out of large tree trunks abound in the museums of New Zealand.

From Auckland we took a bus to Hamilton. This was a fascinating drive, during which the bus driver, who was also the conductor, gave a running commentary of the areas as we drove past. After two days of sight-seeing in Hamilton, we drove up to the National Park. The next day, we did a complete trip around the volcano, Mt Ruapehu. This region actually has three active volcanoes, which erupt occasionally. In fact, the brochure that we picked up at the museum-cum-information centre, Whakapapa, specifically mentions the precautions to be taken when their Eruption Detection System gets activated. Thereafter, we went for a long drive on the road which skirts this volcano, to eventually end up at a snow cabin on the eastern side. Fortunately because we were in a four-wheel drive van, we were able to go right up to the ski camp and hut at 2800 ft. On reaching the hut, we had a welcome cup of hot soup, before returning to National Park. Whilst we were on the southern leg of our drive, we saw a fascinating sight of steam continuously emitting from one of the craters.

The next day, we drove to Rotorua. On the way, we spent time at one of the rapids, which was an offshoot of the melting snows. This area had lovely hiking treks and jungle walks, where many adventure enthusiasts were enjoying their week-end. Unfortunately, we did not see any water-rafting in the rapids, which is common. En-route, we stopped at Lake Taupo, which had some pumice stone lying on its shore. It was only



when we saw a few floating that its lightness became obvious! Our next stop was the hot mud pools and springs/geysers at Te Puia. Here too, we were lucky, as the Pohutu, the Prince of Wales Feathers and the Keruru Geysers there started spouting just as we reached, with steaming hot water rising to over fifty feet. Our guide mentioned that after all visitors leave at five, the Govt has permitted all members of his tribe to continue with their ancient tribal custom of soaking in the hot sulphur waters for health benefits. We reached the Rotorua Museum just in time to see a film, which covered details of the steam baths in one section and the Maori culture in the other.



From Auckland we left for Brisbane, where our ex-300 Sqn friend, Prem Kumar and his wife Betty, took us on long drives to the Sunshine Coast and then the Gold Coast. What a pleasure it was to see their beautiful countryside, houses with boats tied alongside their personal quays and the beaches. Australians of all ages love outdoor activities – hiking, long distance cycling, swimming, wind-surfing, kayaking and even kite flying or jumping off high bridges into a river. Our next halt was New Castle where my friend from NDC days, AVM Neil Smith, showed us what he said was the real Australia. It started with the RAF Museum, where they have preserved their aircraft in perfect condition. The next day, we saw a lot of New Castle and drove along the coast to Sydney. En-route, just as we were leaving a beach near the Captain Cook Memorial Park, a lady standing there asked us to wait. She had been watching a whale spouting 2 kms away and was sure it would happen again. It did and

even though we were quite far, one saw the full whale splash out of the water and then a huge spout for nearly a minute. After a lovely lunch at RSL (Returned Service League) we then went to the Australian Reptile Park at Gosford. This had many animals peculiar to Australia - Kangaroos, Dingoes, Koalas, some snakes, platypus, Wombats, etc.

Our time in Australia was most enjoyable. In Melbourne, we had the opportunity to meet Lt Cdr KGN Menon (ALO Vikrant, when I first embarked on board) and his wife Lesley. Then, because of free Tourist City Circle trams and buses, we were able to see all places of tourist interest, get off and on at will and then continue to the next item on our itinerary. The Melbourne aquarium was very good. Fortunately, we reached at feeding time and saw divers feeding the fish, which included huge sharks and sting rays. Soon thereafter it was the turn of penguins being similarly fed, with the male penguins stealing parts of neighbours' nests at these times.

Whilst there is a lot in common between India and these two countries, including a common bond of right-hand drive vehicles and the English language, despite the differing accents, there are many areas that we could emulate. These include courtesy and helpfulness, community spirit, dignity of labour, cleanliness of public places, respect for elders, discipline, good governance, RSL and beach cleaners.



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There is always room for more

Mrs Padmaja Parulkar-Kesnur

Nairobi mornings were the caw-caw of the pied crow, distinctly different from the call of the Indian house crow. That soundbyte - my earliest impression of the then alien city and country - kept me aware, without any doubt, of my new bearings even when other things reminded me so much of home! I would see the crow on a tall post of the Norfolk pine, big bird with a white collar patch, unlike the smaller grey-black Indian one, daily. This bird of the high altitudes and elevation did not deign to come down and I saw it only in flight, rarely on ground or on a low perch. Hence, though my Africa album is replete with wildlife images, I do not have a trophy photograph of the pied crow.



A pastiche imprinted on mind, but one that eluded my constant companion camera once again, was that of the Jacaranda blooms. Towering Jacaranda mimosifolia trees made an imposing arch - resembling a chapel doorway - in our residential complex. Spring, post long rains, saw the foliage transform into mauve florets overnight. Summer showers gently shook the tree tipping its bounty to the floor laying a bewitching tapestry for us to tread on. The driveway, too, got paved in molten mauve. On our evening walks, I would promise myself to come back during daytime to confine the violaceous carpet in my lens, but three seasons came and went; the desire simply remained a yearning.

The entire garden city of Nairobi wore a lovely lavender look, come September. Many Kenya-based authors and poets – contemporary and classical - wrote florid prose or odes in praise of its blossoms. But for all that, the Jacaranda was an exotic tree transplanted from the shores of South America, smuggled in by intrepid explorers and enterprising colonists. It was the *Spathodea campanulata*, also called the Nandi flame (Nandi is a county in Western Kenya) that was truly a native beauty. I had seen this “African tulip” in Mumbai’s naval area, a legacy of the Brits’ enterprise, no doubt. The upturned orange-red bells earned it the other fetching name of 'Flame of the forest', immortalized by Elspeth Huxley in her book, “The Flame Trees of Thika”. Our Embassy complex, like all colonial copycats, ironically, sported only the foreign Jacaranda and Pines, but not a single Tulip tree.

I vowed to rectify the anomaly and plant one in my garden. But fate intervened unfavourably. It did not happen not because of any lack of time or inclination; the idea just fell through - just one of those things. Ironically, towards the fag-end of my African journey, I came across a *Spathodea* with mango-coloured blooms in my neighbourhood for the first time in my life. I searched for seedlings and saplings of this rare hybrid with little success.





Our family went on safaris to almost all important game parks in Kenya, from Maasai Mara to the friendly neighbourhood Nairobi National Park. We saw the 'Big Five' and the 'Small Five' (well, almost), and all the mammals and critters in between. I wouldn't get taken in much by the shibboleths, though. They were just fancy gimmick, I realized later. The small five (corresponding to the Big Five) are elephant shrew, ant lion, leopard tortoise, buffalo weaver and the rhino beetle (Can you guess the big five). The rhino beetle proved tricky, but we got to see the rest in the wild at Arabuko Sokoke – a remnant of prehistoric forest - near Mombasa. Surprisingly, of the Big Five, the rare and endangered black rhino gave us the slip (Black rhinos are excruciatingly shy and sightings are rare). We did see one in repose in an extra longshot at the Ngorongoro Crater in Tanzania, in a day-trip, but hardly any in Kenya where we logged days of safaris over three years!

Something similar, but a reverse happenstance was the case of Kili – Mount Kilimanjaro, the symbol of African romanticism, the mountain Ernest Hemingway deified in the award-winning book, "Snows of Kilimanjaro". Kili's famed snow-capped mantle opened up for a magnificent view on a clear morning when we were in Amboseli game park, in Kenya, on the Kenya-Tanzania border. The rivulets of cream dripping down the table-top only whetted my appetite for more and I got another opportunity on a holiday in Tanzania. Four road trips to and fro along the lone-standing tallest mountain in Africa – from Arusha to Moshi (the foothills of Kili) and back, and Arusha to Serengeti and back – failed to hype our chances of Kili-spotting. The mountain remained shrouded in clouds refusing to reveal itself! And I am only talking of 'seeing' the mountain, leave alone climbing it. We did not even consider doing Kili's Coca-cola route, a 7-day basic level climb; we simply had no space for it in our itinerary.

In the final analysis, I may not have climbed the

Kilimanjaro but I did a pilgrimage to Oldupai Gorge – the cradle of humankind. I did not do the (hot-air) balloon safari over the savannas - an experience of a lifetime, but went on a night safari and also got to witness the wildebeest migration, touted as the eighth wonder of the world. I did not get to see the African tulip flower in my garden, but was able to nurture African violets and African lilies. I did not get to fulfill my desire to do photo essays on the Baobab and Kenyan women in khangas (sarongs), nevertheless with my Canon SX 100 I visited trees, birds, mammals, landscapes and people, differently, deeply. I may not have engaged with the isolated and unadulterated Maasai or Samburu tribes that I read about vastly, but had a sustained and intimate interaction with the locals of various other tribes that were in the mainstream. I did not learn Kiswahili, not even the kitchen variety (my biggest regret), but learnt the language of universality. I did not get to meet my idol, Prof. Wangari Maathai, but got to see her work and her "karmabhoomi". I did not take to running as a fitness regimen (as I planned to) in the country of runners, but got to witness the glory of marathon champions on their home turf. I did not lose weight, but gained wisdom.

There is always so much to do, and then there is only so much you can do. There will always be travel regrets, but who's complaining!



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Cidade Maravilhosa Do Rio De Janeiro

Commander Deepak Loomba (Retd.)



It was in the summer of 2010 that we received an invitation from our daughter and son-in-law to join them in exploring the wonderful Cidade Maravilhosa do Rio de Janeiro (City of River of January). They had

recently shifted Marvellous base to this beautiful city on a new assignment. This is the world's largest country in the tropics, and my travels here have made me realise that the only limit to a journey here is one's imagination.

Setting the stage are idyllic, palm-covered islands, pristine stretches of coastline fronting emerald seas and jewel-box colonial towns framed against verdant peaks. Whether or not you come for the Carnival (held each year in February), music is a big part of the Brazilian experience. There are numerous ways to discover the perfect beat, from dancing with Cariocas (Rio dwellers) at Rio's atmospheric samba clubs to



following powerful drumbeats through the streets of Salvador.

Brazil's rich ecosystems make for some exciting journeys. You can go horseback-riding through the Pantanal or whale-watching off the coast. There are adventurous river trips along the Amazon, descents into yawning gorges, picnics by thundering waterfalls, swimming in forest streams and treks up rocky cliffs to unforgettable views.

Given the country's many riches, it is no surprise that Brazil has been turning heads for centuries. Among the first to fall under the spell was the Portuguese King Don Joao VI, who came, fell in love and just could not tear himself from his adopted homeland – something to keep in mind when booking that return flight!

Travel Advisory

We were advised to learn some basic Portuguese before we reached Rio as the inability to speak and understand the language would be a handicap. It is easy to ignore this advice and to assume that English can get one by. As we were to learn very soon after landing in Rio, it is essential to know some basic Portuguese, even in this multicultural city.

Another advice was to not wear any valuables, such as expensive watches or jewellery as Brazil is famous for daylight robbery and gun-running. So I decided to leave my Omega behind and wore my good old Titan watch. However, with a sense of bravado I did not take off my rings. I was pleasantly surprised when my fellow Brazilian passengers advised me to remove my rings before landing at Rio.

The journey from India to Aeroporto Galeao (GIG) or International Airport, Rio is nearly 24 hours. By the time we reached there, we were exhausted but were truly delighted to arrive.

The City

Gaspar de Lemos, the Portuguese explorer sailed from Portugal for Brazil in May 1501 and entered the huge Bay in January 1502. Mistaking the Bay for a river, Lemos named it Rio de Janeiro or River of January.

Spread over 808 sq kms and with a population of seven million, Cidade Maravilhosa or Marvellous City of Rio has unusual urban diversity, with beautiful pristine beaches, tall mountains, skyscrapers and of course the omnipresent 'favelas' (slums) all harmoniously woven into the fabric of the landscape. Rio remained the capital of Brazil until 1960, when the capital shifted to Brasilia. Rio boasts of having hosted PanAm Games 2007 and is scheduled to host the World Cup Football championship in 2014 and the Olympics in 2016.

Our first few weeks in Rio were hectic as my daughter had planned a busy itinerary to show us the sights that Rio has to offer. Rio has a large number of popular tourist spots, such as Cristo Redentor -- the open-armed statue of Cristo (Christ) which stands guard over the city, Sugar Loaf Ropeway, which runs across mountains and stretches over Rio giving a spectacular bird's eye-view of the city, the pristine beaches of Copacabana, Ipanema and Leblon, Plataforma, which has mini shows of Carnival with dancers performing Brazilian colourful tribal dances, Parque Nacional da Tijuca overlooking Rio, Lagoa (Lagoon), a picturesque saltwater lagoon ringed with 7.5 kms walking/biking trail and dotted with lakeside kiosks serving Brazilian cuisine, and last but not the least, Jardim Botânico Garden spread out with stately palms, rare orchids and colourful flowering plants.

The Experience

While Rio has plenty to keep the tourist busy, there is a wealth of interesting places to visit outside the bustling metropolis. To the North are Petropolis, a lovely mountain retreat with a distinctive European



feel, and Parque Nacional da Serra dos Orgaos, which was established in 1939 and which covers 118 sq kms of mountainous terrain popular for outdoor pursuits. To the East are the beautiful beaches of Buzios and Cabo Frio, and in the Costa Verde region is Paraty (pronounced 'Parachi'), a culturally vibrant 17th century seaside town with cobbled streets, colourfully painted doors and windows, surrounded by thickly forested mountains, roaring waterfalls, and Angra dos Reis beaches. In the Itatiaia Region is Parque Nacional de Itatiaia, Brazil's oldest national park, ruggedly beautiful with lush dark foliage and home to more than 400 species of native birds, primates and sloths.

Outside the state of Rio, on the border of Brazil and Argentina is the UNESCO-declared world heritage site of Iguacu (great waters) waterfalls. Iguacu consists of 275 waterfalls, which together occupy an area of more than three kilometres wide and 80 metres high, making them wider than Africa's Victoria Falls, higher than North America's Niagara Falls, and more beautiful and majestic than either. These thundering waterfalls are exceptionally beautiful and a treat to watch. A sight as wondrous and awe-inspiring as these waterfalls cannot be appreciated fully in a rush and it is easy to spend a full day here. These waterfalls are unequally shared between Brazil and Argentina, with a national park on either side, offering innumerable opportunities for trekking, bird-watching and river-rafting.

Brazilians enjoy a life full of fun, music, caipirinha (Brazil's national alcoholic drink), beach volleyball and football. They do not need an excuse to party. Their days

are spent lounging in the sun, partying on their lovely beaches, or simply enjoying their beer or caipirinha in between dips in the sea. Their diet typically consists of rice, black beans, frango (chicken), beef, fish or other various varieties of seafood, which is available in plenty but is not inexpensive. Metros like Rio have innumerable restaurants along market walkways selling fresh fruit juices, beer, caipirinha and hot snacks like pastel (cheese-filled savoury), batat frita (French fries), burgers, etc.

People are hard-working, industrious and warm-hearted. Women are pretty, peach-complexioned, fashion-conscious and men are handsome. You can tell that people of all ages are fitness-conscious as they are seen jogging/cycling along the beach, exercising under tented gyms along the beaches or playing beach volley ball.

Conclusion

We did not realise how quickly the eight-week holiday was over, it was definitely not enough to admire and enjoy this beautiful city and country.

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Notings from the North East

Commander Ninad Phatarphekar



It indeed takes a rare alignment of the celestial constellations of the planets and stars for one to sneak leave from the office, to coincide with the kid's term break and the wife's annual vacation. My propitiation of the Gods must have found favour and I was able to squeeze a week in March wherein all the three configurations coincided and we were able to proceed on a family holiday. The unanimous choice by voice vote was the North East and we did the Gangtok, Pelling and Darjeeling circuit. All of us had a rollicking time.

The first impression of Gangtok as you approach it, is a functional sprawl of multistoried concrete boxes not unlike randomly stacked Lego bricks all precariously embedded on the numerous hillsides. I had carried with me the baggage of some pre-conceived notions of an old-world hill station in isolation attributable in part to numerous viewings of the Dev Anand movie Jewel Thief. Gangtok, however, has all the charm of a small town belying its status of a state capital. One can find almost all the trappings of urban modernity like Café Coffee Day, Dominos Pizza, Big Bazaar and Bennetton outlets in an area not bigger than Lonavala. But what really astounded me was the Bank of Maharashtra branch open for business on the high street.

Gangtok has a very first world feel to it. The traffic in spite of the narrow and winding roads is neat and orderly. The rules are ruthlessly enforced and one has to really strain oneself to hear the honking of a horn. It was a revelation what self-discipline complemented by strict policing can accomplish. The main boulevard, inevitably named MG Road, is a vehicle free zone, laced with shops, cafes and hotels on either side. The center of the street is lined with gardens, fountains and benches, and could easily be mistaken for Brussels or Paris or any such downtown pedestrian plaza in Europe. The local populace is friendly and polite to fault that is so characteristic of a tourist dependent economy. All the hotels have standardized their mode of welcome. Every guest is traditionally received by a receptionist draping a silk scarf (Khada) around his (the guest's) shoulders.

A quaint feature of the buildings in Gangtok is that, the entrance is not necessarily from the bottom tier. Since most of them are built on ridges they may have their main entrance from the top tier and some even from the middle. The place could easily earn the sobriquet of 'City of Steps' taking into account the large number of steps that one has to ascend or descend to get anywhere in town.





Sikkim seems to have two main USPs. One is the awe inspiring view of mount Khangchendzonga which towers over the State like some benevolent patron deity. The other is Danny Dengzongpa, the Bollywood actor and scion of the Royal family. Every taxi driver will point out Danny's school, Danny's beer factory, Danny's house, the café where he had his first date ...get the drift?

What really strikes you is the relative prosperity in the surrounding countryside. Most houses have gardens in their windows and verandahs brimming with colourful blooms in every hue of crimson, magenta, violet and pink. The regional pastime appears to be road building and huge congregations of humanity all over the State are engaged in this endeavour. The result is that Sikkim boasts of better roads than downtown Mumbai (which is really not saying much but at least someone is working on it).

One must not miss a day's outing to the Nathu-La Pass along the ancient silk route. As the mountain road snakes up to 16,000 ft like some monstrous anaconda, the overbearing flavour of the rip is olive green with the all pervading presence of the Indian Army throughout the 50 kms drive from Gangtok. At Nathu-La, one is within hand shaking distance with the Chinese Sentries. The tall smart sentinels on the Indian side seemed to be quite bemused by all the attention of the camera wielding tourists. They

sheepishly posed for a 'wish you were here' moment and even offered to click the family picture.

Whilst one is motoring in the countryside, one is privileged to witness a spectacular panorama of Alpine vistas, humongous snow capped mountains capes, half frozen lakes, majestic valleys abundant with conifers and blessed with a profusion of colorful orchids and rhododendron bushes and, some of the most beautiful rosy-cheeked womenfolk in India. Dramatic cliff edge drives around precipitous mountains embellish the delight. The fern which is the ubiquitous flora and of which there are 362 species covers the landscape like some huge community carpet exerting its presence over the surrounding vales and hills.

There is a distinctive Tibetan and Buddhist seasoning to the tourist attractions with a number of monasteries and temples and museums that suffuse one's itinerary. The entire countryside is speckled by thousands of multi-coloured fluttering prayer flags. The Buddhists have a unique method of offering prayers. Each monastery has hundreds of prayer wheels, which are basically rotating copper or brass cylinders on which a specific prayer is inscribed. All one has to do is to twirl the cylinder and the prayer is delivered to the desired metaphysical in-box. Automated Nirvana indeed! Tibetan refugees sell exquisite hand knitted sweaters, socks and other items for a song. Curio shops abound all hawking the





same bric-a-brac like miniature prayer wheels, incense sticks, prayer flags etc. The surprising thing is that most of them are made in China, a clear indication that business and politics don't always mix.

The Tibetan equivalent of fast food is momo, a steamed savoury that is peddled from all street corners and road side stalls. Hot steaming momos are served with spicy chutneys and make a delectable snack. For the ones with an adventurous streak there are Yak rides to be taken at most tourist spots. But one has to be careful to negotiate beforehand as you are likely to be ripped off in a manner worse than what the horse rides at Juhu beach do.

The most famous product of Darjeeling is the eponymous tea and one cannot escape from its omnipresent presence. Buying tea in Darjeeling has never been so complicated or confounding. Hundreds of varieties abound. White, Black, Green, Herbal, First, Second and Third Flush (crop) with cost ranging from Rupees 100/- to 25,000/- per 100 gms. One can in the finest traditions of Baskin Robbins taste the brew before buying. The proliferation of tea almost makes one yearn to be a coffee drinker.

Darjeeling has a colonial and old world charm to it; with its numerous Raj era buildings, churches, hotels, schools and shops all contributing to muster a Raj nostalgia. The Das Photo Studio located on Mall

Road has displayed hundreds of black and white prints reminiscent of life in the erstwhile summer capital of India, all of them over a century old, that instantly transcend one through a time warp into 19th century India.

One must not miss the ride on the Himalayan Mountain Railway (Toy Train) which has been operating since 1881 along a precipice skirting route which periodically intertwines with the narrow mountain road; made famous by Rajesh Khanna singing 'Mere Sapanon Ki Rani Kab Ayegi Tu' to a dimpled Sharmila Tagore traveling in the train. The axiom that some songs last for four minutes while others for forty years was proved with every twist and turn reminding one of a oft hummed stanza from the song.

There are two world class zoos that are not to be missed at Gangtok and Darjeeling respectively. Both house some of the most exotic Himalayan wildlife in their natural habitat recreated in huge open enclosures. One can see the red panda, civets, vibrantly coloured pheasants, snow leopards, mountain wolf, musk deers and other fauna of their ilk.

The whole family had such a wonderful time that we are going back next year also.

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Commodore JS Bawa

Commander TS Trewn (Retd.)

Commodore JS Bawa commonly known as Jaggi Bawa expired on 7th January 2012. He had been ailing for some time.

I had a fine time serving with him at the shipbuilding yard of John Browns on river Clyde in Glasgow and subsequently on board INS Brahmaputra, the first contract built ship specifically for the Indian Navy in the United Kingdom. He was present at the launch of the ship by Her Excellency, Ms Vijaya Laxmi Pandit, the then High Commissioner for India in London. On that auspicious occasion one of the Admiralty officers close to me and Jaggi Bawa had specifically admired the chanting of the Vedic hymn "oh Aditi may the ship bows be strong and bilges clear". The large British gathering for the launch was excited to see a coconut being broken at the ship's bows instead of a champagne bottle.

As a leader of a stand-by team during a ship under construction in a British yard one has also to be a diplomat, clever enough to get quality work done without encroaching upon the delicate relationship with the builders and Jaggi Bawa did that part very well. Inadequacies of shipyard workmanship were pointed out and corrected where required in a spirit of cooperation.

A curious and unusual event occurred on the day of commissioning of the ship at Clyde bank, Glasgow. As it happened the wives of Engineer Officer, Electrical Officer and the Communication Officer were booked for sailing to India from a British port on the same night. Mrs Bawa did not leave for India with the other three wives as she had some commitment in Europe before leaving for India. The three key ship's officers had to be away from Glasgow for about six hours to bid goodbye to their wives. The all Indian crew was in the process of working

up the machinery of the just acquired ship but their testing time came before anyone's expectation just two hours after taking over. A severe sea storm and gale developed suddenly in that part of the river Clyde. The ship started bumping against the shipyard jetty and authorities advised her to leave that alongside berth and shift to another berth somewhere on the other side of the river some miles away where weather conditions were favourable. Jaggi Bawa, who was a Navigation specialist, rose to the occasion and assured the Captain that this sudden development would be well looked after. Very skillfully all officers and sailors brought the ship to the new alongside berth away from the centre of the storm. The Commanding Officer, Commander Sanjana admired this quick response and patted Jaggi Bawa and his team of officers and sailors. He remarked that all concerned had watched this incident with interest pertaining to the new ship with controllable pitch propellers about which the all Indian crew had no previous experience. This instant preparedness by the Ship's Company within hours of commissioning won praise from all quarters.

Use of controllable pitch propeller while providing certain distinct advantages in the realm of improved science of Navigation required certain extra care in jobs like handling wires and ropes during berthing of ships. Very wisely, under the guidance of Jaggi Bawa, who was the Executive Officer of the ship and was a Navigation specialist, a detailed paper was prepared titled "Navigational characteristics of controllable pitch propeller" and forwarded to Naval Headquarters for information and record. Needless to say that it generated immense professional interest amongst all senior officers who had experienced handling of ships in restricted waters.

Commodore Bawa had always the good of his



colleagues at heart. While at Glasgow, Admiralty London wanted me to be attached to a Royal Navy Leopard class ship similar to the Brahmaputra for two months for familiarization. Commodore Bawa discussed with Admiralty officers and got me a ship which besides machinery familiarization would enrich my experience regarding availability of correct variety of fuel and lubricating oils at various ports. The ship earmarked for

me was a ship sailing from Portsmouth to Rome, Venice, Athens and Odessa in the Black Sea where lubricating oils available ashore were to be meticulously ensured to match required specifications. This experience helped me when INS Brahmaputra visited odd ports and received fuel and lubricating oils from ashore.

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Jai Mundkur

Commodore Ravi Sharma (Retd.)

In December 1963, I was transferred to NDA Kharakvasla as a Divisional Officer and, being a bachelor, moved into my allotted cabin in the Officers' Mess. Also staying in the Mess was Lt Jai Mundkur, a personable young officer who I did not get to know for quite some time due to the fact that he was Staff Officer to the Commandant which necessitated his keeping different hours and schedule from the other bachelors who headed for sundowners as soon as civil twilight approached.

On a Sunday morning as I was passing by, I heard beautiful music wafting from his cabin. Fond of western classical music, I had pretensions of being a 'know-all' but this piece was completely new to me. I knocked on the door and walked in to find Jai completely absorbed in the sounds emanating from his record player. He beckoned me to a chair and we sat silently till the record was over. We then started talking and he told me that the piece was Jean Sibelius' Second Symphony. We exchanged views on music and I discovered that his musical taste was a little different from the usual Beethoven/Tchaikovsky types and Sibelius was his favourite composer. This initial meeting was the start of many visits to his cabin and music sessions. Jai was kind enough to record a lot of music on my tapes.

Soon after, we moved our separate ways. He, I think, went to Cochin for his Long ND course and I came to Delhi to be Flags to Admiral Chatterji, Commandant NDC. I really can't remember ever meeting Jai again but the news of his passing away immediately brought back happy memories of the time spent together listening to some exquisite music.

One story about Jai is worth recalling. Before coming to NDA, Jai, as a non-specialist, was the Navigating Officer on Kuthar. It is said that for close manoeuvres such as coming alongside, RAS etc., all the conning orders were given by him hidden inside the Compass Platform while his Captain only lip-synched on the disconnected intercom from a prominent position on the bridge wing. No wonder he was recommended for Long ND!

Jai was a very likeable person with no airs about him and treated me as an equal despite being senior to me. He was pleasant company and talking to him was intellectually stimulating. Too late now, I wish we had been able to get together more often so that I could have known him better.

May his soul rest in peace.

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Cdr Satbir Singh Butalia

Mrs Vibha Sharma

Cdr Satbir Singh Butalia, a name we all associate with a life lived to its fullest. His kindness and generosity has touched many lives, but he will be remembered more, for the way he made his everyday - purposeful.

Commissioned in the Royal Navy in 1940, he retired in 1965, after which he marched on to serve DCM for another 15 years. A man whose vibrant personality was the essence of strict discipline and regimentalised lifestyle, along with the gentleness of an understanding, protective father figure. It always brought a smile to my face to see him driving the car and walking briskly till the ripe age of 93.

We have a lot to learn from him. He is missed by his family and more so by his grandchildren for his loving care and timely guidance, making life a smooth ride over bumpy times. Cdr Butalia's life epitomizes the highest order of humaneness.



Dear God Almighty, grant him peace in heaven.

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Captain BP Sinha 15-8-1918 To 6-8-2012

Ms Urmilla Sinha



My Father, Bhagwati Prasad Sinha (known to his friends as “Bob”) was born on 15th August 1918 in Nanpara, UP and joined the Royal Indian Navy in 1937. It was an unusual career choice for a Srivastava, who were traditionally civil servants.

It was at Lucknow University that he encountered a book in the library about the Royal Navy and was impressed by the sight of the naval uniform with all its gold braid. The thought of travelling abroad also appealed to him. He joined the University Training Corps and with the encouragement of his Sergeant he sat the Army, Navy and Air Force examination in 1937, coming first in the Army, and second in the Navy sections. That year, as in the previous year, there was only one vacancy and it was for an Engineering Officer. His ambition was to command a ship and stand on the bridge, not work in the engine room, but by the following year he would have been too old to apply so he took the place. His father sold his stepmother’s jewellery to pay for his training in England and an English acquaintance of his uncle’s taught him to use a knife and fork.

He arrived in England on 1st April 1938 and was horrified to discover that he would be training at Portsmouth dockyard to be what he called ‘a dockyard matey’, followed by two years of engineering training. There was no officer or sea training at all for Indian engineer officers in those days. Enraged by this injustice, he wrote a letter of protest, which nearly got him thrown out of the navy, but he persisted despite his father’s pleas to behave himself. As a result of his complaint he, and a fellow cadet, Tandon, were sent for sea training

and to the Royal Engineering College at Keyham, near Plymouth, and the subsequent training of all Indian engineer officers was changed to match that of British officers. While at Portsmouth he used his leave to visit France, where he learnt to speak fluent French.

Two years later he graduated from Keyham with five firsts, which qualified him for advanced training at Royal Naval College, Greenwich but he was told that Indians were ineligible. Again he complained and again won his case and was the first Indian officer to be admitted to RNC, Greenwich for the “Dagger Engineer’ course. John Pereira, later Vice Admiral Pereira, followed him three years later.

In 1939 war broke out and through 1943, before taking up his place at Greenwich, he served on the Atlantic and Arctic convoys serving ports in Russia, and in December 1943 his ship, the HMS Jamaica, was involved in The Battle of the North Cape, in which the German battleship SS Scharnhorst, the pride of the German Navy, was sunk.



During this period he was in trouble twice more, when he made a speech on graduating from Keyham about how India would one day be free, and again aboard HMS Malaya, when he was reprimanded by the Captain for having an argument in the mess room with a fellow officer where he had expressed similar 'treasonous' sentiments. The conversation ended with the Captain offering him a drink!

On the whole though he enjoyed his time in England recalling that during the war everyone in uniform was equal and treated with respect and on the whole he felt he had been treated fairly in his time there. He also enjoyed the London nightlife and fire-fighting during German incendiary bombing raids on Plymouth, and helping on farms in Devon and Cornwall during his leave, as going abroad was not possible during the war.

In 1945 he returned to India and was sent to the HMIS Kistna, a new sloop that he had seen being built in Glasgow. Their job was to ferry Japanese prisoners of war from the Andamans to camps in Malaya, along with the 'pleasure girls' the Japanese had abducted. In February 1946 the Naval Uprising broke out at the Communications Centre at Bombay and the crews of ships were urged over the radio to imprison their officers and take command. BP Sinha was then the senior Indian officer on the ship (he was 27 and a Lieutenant with two years seniority) and had the task of persuading the British officers to remain in their cabins while he calmed the situation. Fortunately both sides used restraint and unnecessary bloodshed was avoided.

In 1948 he married Irene Elizabeth Phare, known as 'Liz', whom he had met at the end of the war in Chatham Dockyard, and their son - the writer Indra Sinha - was born in 1950. Two daughters, Urmilla and Romilla, were born in 1952 and 1954. Around this time he was sent to London as Naval Attache and while there he passed his Bar exams at Lincoln's Inn.

Later he was CO at INS Shivaji, where he met Krishna Menon, the Defence Minister, who instituted India's own Leander shipbuilding programme and appointed him Director of Naval Construction at Mazagaon Docks – a position that took him back to Riga, which he had visited on the Arctic convoys, and to Japan, Switzerland and many other places, fulfilling his schoolboy dreams of travel.

He took early retirement in 1966 and became of Managing Director of Vickers-Babcock in Durgapur. It was difficult choice – he was then Acting Vice-Admiral, and his lifelong ambition to become an Admiral with those five alluring gold stripes was almost within grasp, and he also knew that he was in line to be the next Managing Director of Mazagaon Docks – but he decided to make the sacrifice for his children's education.

In 1973, at the age of 55, he rediscovered his interest in law and started a new career in Bombay High Court, specialising in naval matters and shipping arbitrations, which took him all over the world, and he continued to handle some cases well into his eighties. At around the same time he took up the practice of yoga and meditation and was still doing his yoga exercises up to a month before his final illness.

Just weeks before his death the Ministry of Defence in London finally awarded him the Arctic Emblem and the Russian Convoy Medal-“**The Medal of Ushakov**” - for his service on the Arctic and Russian convoys during the war.

He died peacefully at home nine days before his 94th birthday and all three of his children were fortunate enough to be with him in his last days.

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Reminisces: the sailor from Kocheri

Commodore Prem Kumar (Retd)

It was in Jan 1975 that I was posted to NHQ. Being a bachelor (Lt) in order to get admission into the Armed Forces Mess, Kota House, one had to approach the elderly lady Mrs. Bakshi at CPWD for the accommodation slip, which served like an entry permit. Initially I was allotted a partitioned cabin on the first floor on sharing basis with a Lt Cdr, who was serving in the NCC Directorate at RK Puram. He told me the wooden partitioned cabins used to be a resting place for American soldiers during WW II. For me it was the start of an association with an interesting Nausena thorough bred...to use a naval term, a regular sea dog, with tales of the navy and its men especially during the Commonwealth exercises with spicy experiences in Trincomalee and later in Africa etc. Finding me too involved with my profession, he took it upon himself to get me hooked into marital bondage. His anecdotes gradually moved into prohibited area concerning his family members and at times those who had been his colleagues to drive the point home...Since Kota House inmates included families, a social conversation with a college going service officer's daughter... was enough for him to seek my permission to approach the parents. I never felt offended as his intentions were more of concern and not wanting me to miss the marriage wagon (?)...like they say in tamil KALYANA VYBHOGAM. In spite of realising that I had created a firewall on this issue, he kept hacking until the blessings of Mrs Bakshi showered on me and I got my own cabin.

The dining table discussions during dinner time were always interesting as both of us skipped the Doordarshan teleserial HUMLOG to avoid the crowd at the the table to get exclusive service from Munnalal the No. 1 Bearer. It was during one such occasion we were joined by DDOP(X), who seemed to be concerned about an issue limiting a Director's tenure at NHQ to three years. When I mentioned that my Director had completed

over five years, he said that it was due to lack of a suitable vacancy. At this point, my former roommate said the Addl DG NCC post was lying vacant for months as the Navy did not seem to be interested in filling it. Immediately, DDOP(X) requested him to send a note on the unfilled vacancy. Rest was history. A Lt Cdr became responsible for moving a Commodore from his bastion. Those who came to hear about this move assumed we had high connections in the MoD!

We maintained our friendship over the years, by occasionally speaking over the phone and exchanging our welfare news and Christmas cards. He had settled down in Kocheri with his ailing wife whom he looked after till her demise in 2009. His two sons and three daughters are all well settled in life. Born on 10th Sept 1923, he joined the navy as a sailor, served in the Communication Branch and retired after attaining the rank of Lt Cdr. Even after crossing the 80 barrier, he used to cover the 40 kms distance between Irinjalakuda and Kochi on his scooter, to attend the Navy Foundation get-togethers.

Hypertension and mild heart stroke in 2010, did not deter him from living alone in his Kocheri House, with his children constantly dropping in to look after him. He kept saying that he would live to see 100 years....but it was not be. He passed into eternal sleep in the presence of his son, Anthony, on 20th June 2012. His son called to convey the news of his peaceful demise and acknowledged the support extended by Navy Foundation, Kochi Charter.

Diaynose saab...as I used to call him....was a great companion inspite of our age difference.

His CONCERN AND EARTHY WISDOM will be missed.
RIP Lt Cdr K. Daiynose (81870W)

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Akku Roy – a tribute

Lieutenant Commander Deepak Sikand (Retd.)



Lt Cdr Akku Roy was my Training Officer on the old Ranjit where I was a Midshipman in 1970. He had his quirks no doubt. On one occasion the Quartermaster informed us Midshipmen at five minutes to Colours that the Duty Lieutenant Commander (read Akku Roy) desired us to be present for the 8 am Naval ensign hoisting ceremony in our Ceremonial No. 2 Uniform. It was the fastest rig change we Midshipmen had ever done. We lined up on the Quarterdeck just as the bugler was about to sound the alert. Fearing which one of our misdeeds had been found out, we waited in anxious anticipation for the proceedings to be over. Much to our relief and bewilderment, he informed us that he was merely testing our efficiency. On another occasion Akku Roy was dressing up to get ready for a formal party on board Vikrant. He was fumbling with his bow tie which never came close to looking like a butterfly. We three Midshipmen were the audience for this dressing up routine. Now the panic was beginning to show as he was getting late for the party. Finally, in exasperation he asked, "Does it look anything like a bow?" We knew better. All three of us nodded our heads while trying not to smirk.

I never tried to find out how Akku Roy died. I am not even aware if he received any gallantry awards. Fair, tall and chubby he could easily pass for a model for Amul Butter. Who could have said there was a Rambo hidden behind this soft exterior? In fact I never saw him after my Midshipmen days in 1970. It was only recently when I asked myself the question as to who was the bravest officer I encountered during my Naval Service that I remembered Akku Roy.

We Midshipmen were required to be present at the Gangway to receive our Training Officer when he came on board in the morning. He had a 'Standard 10' car. The individual parking spaces were marked on the jetty. Akku Roy would continue to struggle back and forth while trying to position his car in his assigned parking slot. We would be observing his antics from the Quarterdeck of Ranjit. Finally, having somehow parked his car,



Akku Roy would come huffing and puffing on board. He would remark, "I am different in the cockpit of my Alize". We three would hide our smirk while nodding our heads as we saluted him on board.

Akku Roy proved he was not a chump we imagined him to be. The day of reckoning did not take long to arrive. INS Ranjit, the post World War II destroyer was raising steam in her Boilers in preparation for sailing. Having received the Training Officer on board and having attended the Both Watches, our job for the day was done. We Midshipmen decided to retire to our Quarters, having no intention of surfacing before lunch. There were three ships berthed on each other at the Destroyer Wharf. First was the Survey Ship Darshak, then Ranjit and Cauvery, the Sub Lieut Training ship in that order. Suddenly we noticed our ship had started moving. The shore supply cables snapped with a loud crack and the ship went into darkness. Then the mooring ropes attached to Darshak started snapping one by one with a loud noise. We rushed to the upper deck only to notice that our ship had broken loose from Darshak and was taking along Cauvery, which was still tied to us. We were headed towards Ballard Pier where Vikrant used to be berthed. Fortunately, Vikrant was not in port. Naval Dockyard Dredger Nikarshak was carrying out dredging operations at this berth. Behind Nikarshak was berthed Dharni, another WW II Depot Ship. On Dharni, towards the seaward side, was berthed the old Sutlej. This was the general scenario at the beginning of action which lasted just 45 seconds. Here goes!!

Those of you who are familiar with WW II Destroyers would know that these Warships have a sleek, heavily reinforced Forecastle which functioned like an Infantryman's bayonet and a low Quarterdeck. There is no poop deck. They have

heavy plating to take impact of shells and bows are meant for ramming, should such a need arise. The Ranjit packed a 40,000 HP brute power derived from its steam turbines. While the ship was raising steam, the maneuvering valve gave way. This released a massive rush of steam into the turbines which turned the propellers at full throttle. Ranjit started accelerating with the power of forty thousand horses let loose. Impact was imminent. There were no two ways about it. Survival instincts took over and I looked for a safe place where the effect of the impact would be least. I chose the area where foxle meets the Quarter Deck.

INS Cauvery had a boat lowered which now lay wedged between the two ships. A seaman had been deputed to clean the Ship's Whaler. This boat was about to be crushed. The seaman shouted 'Chief Sahib Bachao!' to the CPO who stood frozen on Cauvery's Deck. Akku Roy now rushed, picked up a life buoy from Ranjit and threw it to the sailor under whom the boat had crushed by now. The sailor was helplessly splashing in the water. The two ships were on a divergent course as their mooring ropes parted. Cauvery was headed towards the Bucket Dredger Nikarshak which, oblivious of the impending collision was merrily chugging away. Sutlej had her plungers out and Seamen were painting the ship's side. We were headed straight for the hapless men perched half way on the other ship's side. Akku raced towards the Emergency Steering Position which was located on top of the poop and moved the wheel hard 'a Stbd with the intention of altering the course of the ship to avoid a collision. Unfortunately for all of us, the steering motors were not connected at that time. So, the rudder could not be moved. Realising the futility of his action, Akku figured that the only option left before him was to let go the Anchor. He rushed to the foxle where he was joined by my coursemate



Hardeep (Picky) Sandhu. Since the vessel was not yet ready to proceed to sea, the Anchor lashings had not been removed yet! Akku and Picky quickly released the Anchor Lashings and let go the Anchor. That was the time Ranjit impacted Sutlej and sliced through it like a knife through butter. Total time elapsed from beginning to end: 45 Seconds.

While Ranjit was hurtling towards Sutlej, another drama was unfolding on board the Sutlej. Horrified to see their own Man of War in a belligerent mode, the sailors did the fastest rope climbing in the history of the Indian Navy, a record not yet broken. They reached the upper deck of Sutlej, raced across the Gangway to Dharni and did not stop until they were safe on the jetty. The OOD on Dharni wearing dark glasses and a telescope tucked under his arm was strutting about the deck in his immaculate white uniform. He panicked when he saw the charging hulk of Ranjit hurtling towards him. The terrified OOD shouted "Abandon Ship!" and promptly tripped on a deck fitting and fell on the deck on all fours. One hapless engine room rating, unaware of the drama being enacted on the upper deck, was in the heads (toilet) when he noticed the sharp bows of a Destroyer coming to stop within inches of him after the huge thud of the impact.

I felt nothing of the impact from my safe perch. When I reached the foxle, I found Akku Roy and Picky sitting on top of bollards and panting. The ship's paint store located in the foxle was

punctured and paint of all colours was now trickling down. No one was injured in this collision. OOD of Sutlej had to send his Uniform to the laundry, though. Since Cauvery was just a training frigate and her engine was not running, her acceleration was checked by the breaking of the mooring ropes. The sturdy Dredger was only dented slightly and all it had to show was a set of dazed civilian crew.

I finished my Mid's time and was transferred out of Ranjit a few weeks later. I never bothered to track Akku Roy thereafter.

The Alize was essentially a single propeller driven, Carrier launched, French-built Anti-submarine Warfare Aircraft. She also had a twin 20 or 30 mm cannon. During the Indo-Pak war of 1971, which occurred a few months after this incident, I understand Akku was deployed on a Patrolling Mission from Jamnagar or Bhuj or thereabouts. It is believed that on one such patrol he sighted a passing Pakistani Sabre. It would not be beyond Akku Roy to take on an F-16 leave aside a sabre Jet. It was definitely an unequal fight. I am reminded of Alfred Lord Tennyson's Poem 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' whose last lines read something like this:

When can their glory fade? O' the wild charge they made!

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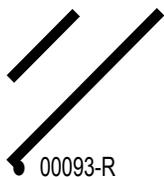
It's what each of us sows, and how, that gives us character and prestige. Seeds of kindness, goodwill, and human understanding, planted in fertile soil, spring up into deathless friendships, big deeds of worth, and a memory that will not soon fade out. We are all sowers of seeds-and let us never forget it!

- George Matthew Adams

Obituaries

The Navy Foundation deeply regrets the demise of the following retired naval officers and extends heartfelt condolences to their family members:-

● 00162-T	Cdr DK Ghose	Smt Subhasree Ghose	12 Feb 2012	14/ A/ 1, Rajpur East Road, Jadav Pur, Kolkata – 700032 Tele: 033-24126390 Mob: 09923478313
● 41306-A	Cdr Sanjay Wadhwa	Smt Misba Wadehra	06 Mar 2012	J 337, Brigade Courtyard Near HMT Cinema Jalahalli West Bengaluru – 560013 Mob: 09243605389 / 09342253869
● 00921-T	Cmde KSK Prasad	Smt Preet Prasad	22 Mar 2012	415, 5th Main HRBR II Block Kalyan Nagar Bengaluru – 560043 Tele: 09341907859 08032717914
● 81988-K	LCdr Yamuna Singh	Smt Asha Singh	25 Feb 2012	Plot No. 14 Trimurti Nagar Phase-1 Sarojini Nagar Lucknow – 226008 Mob : 09891152052 / 0964675388
● 87582-Z	Cdr Shashi Pal	Smt Bimla Dogra		605, Subh Home Tower Sector-20, Plot 71 Kharghar – Navi Mumbai Pin – 400210 Mob: 09769888340
● 01447-N	Cmde KPMS Nair	Smt Swati Nair	29 Apr 2012	'SONARBUT' Verem, Goa – 403109 Mob: 09325604779
● 75068-H	Surg VAdm GP Panda	Smt Bidyullata Panda	16 Apr 2012	Shree Vihar Colony Tulsipur Cuttack – 753008 Mob: 09437030845
● 01223-B	Cdr Anil Kumar Chopra	Smt Sudha Chopra	08 Apr 2012	15 Kennerly House Mumbai Port Trust Colony Bumayne Road Coloba, Mumbai Mob: 09869284442 Tele: 022-66564875
● 01344-B	Cdr RPS Malan	Smt Shashi Malan	31 Mar 2012	401, Mahgun Maestro F-21A, Sector-50 Noida-201301 Mob: 09871150142 / 09654677467
● 81860-W	LCdr K Diaynose	Smt Anthony Kaochery	20 Jun 2012	Aziz Baugh – Near Ashish Cinema Chembur, Mumbai-74 Mob: 09224739207 Tele: 022-25545640
● 89060-H	Cdr Antony Selvaraj	Smt Chitra Selvaraj	21 Jun 2012	H.No.202, A-Block Sai Krupa Elite, 39/2 Fern City Road, Doddenakundi Bengaluru – 560037 Mob: 09741113628 Tele: 080-42116186
● 83936-N	Cdr MR Mareppanavar	Smt Laximi Mareppanavar	18 Apr 2012	F-216, Raghunath Vihar Sector-14, Kharghar Navi Mumbai – 410210 Mob: 09619665109 Tele: 022-39283216
● 00955-N	Cdr AK Ganguly	Smt Durga Ganguly	06 Jun 2012	Smt Durga Ganguly 57/ 6D, Santosh Roy Road James Long Sarani Kolkata – 700008 Tele: 033-24944268
● 01252-W	Cdr MV Dhavale	Smt Neela Dhavale	19 Jul 2012	Smt Neela Dhavale Flat No.6, Bhosale Enclave, Plot No.15 Bhosale Nagar Pune-411007 Tele: 020-25511284
● 89716-Z	LCdr SK Kaushik	Smt Naresh Kaushik	01 Jul 2012	H.No. 343, Dilsukh Bhawan Panditan Wali Gali VPO – Barwala Distt – Panchkula Pin – 134118 Tele: 01733-256463
● R4011R	Capt BP Sinha	Mr Kanwaljit Singh Butalia	06 Aug 2012	D-112 Defence Colony New Delhi – 110024 Mob: 09958048224 / 09877171741



● 00093-R	Cdr SS Butalia	Mr Kanwaljit singh Butalia	09 Jul 2012	D-112 defence Colony New delhi – 110024 Mob: 09958048224 / 09877171741
● 83954-H	LCdr Joginder Singh Parmar	Smt Sukhdev Parmar	25 Sep 2012	R 564, Dera Baba Jaimal Singh Radha Soami Satsang Beas Dist: Amritsar Punjab – 143001 Mob: 09878902697
● 75045-F	Surg RAdm PN Suri	Smt Uma Suri	03 Aug 2012	E-10/ 7 Vasant Vihar New Delhi – 110079 Mob: 09871266772
● 88559-T	LCdr Bansi Lal Sharma	Smt Sarala Sharma	29 Oct 2012	M 65, Jalvayu Vihar Ridge Street- Powai Near Hiranandani Gardens Andheri East Mumbai – 400076 Mob: 09757107061 09820671166
● 82011-N	Cdr TP Singh	Smt Chandrika Prasad	14 Nov 2012	Gethalayam Thuravur South Alapuzha Distt Kerala – 682532 Mob: 0919961599484
● 40146-R	Cdr SN Jha	Smt Manjula Kumari Jha	07 Nov 2012	D-3, Baisaki Appartment 153/ 1, Jessore Road Kolkata - 700074
● 89007-N	Lt MPV Nair	Smt C Sarala Nair	06 Nov 2012	7/ 411-B, Plot No. 39 Alappat Nagar Kunnumpuram, Kakkanad Kochi - 682030 Tele: 0484-2425299
● 00292-N	Cdr Arvind Kumar Jha	Smt Nita Sood	30 Oct 2012	63 E, Rajpur Road Dehradun - 248001 Mob: 09412058402
● 01020-T	Cdr Mammen Mathew	Smt Suma Mathew Mammen	27 Nov 2012	Pallathu, 48/ 622 Keerthi Nagar Deshabhimani Road Elamakkara PO Kochi – 682026 Tele : 0484-2537462
● 98005-N	Cdr Rathin Kumar Das	Smt Dolly	22 Nov 2012	158/ 1A, New Alipore Block- G Kolkata- 700052 Mob: 09334981157 Tele: 033-23961157
● 50030-B	Cdr Balakrishna Sreekuaran Nair	Smt Saraswathi Nair	20 Dec 2012	H.No. 212, Defence Colony Indra N agar Bengaluru – 560038 Mob: 09611635532
● 03530-A	LCdr Krishna Chandra Bansal	Smt Samir Bansal	17 Nov 12	Kothi B-1, Sector 61 NOIDA – 201307
● 50031-F	Cdr NC Sinha	Smt Rekhabei Sinha	03 Jan 2013	Smt Rekhabei Sinha H. No. 12F Baishnab Ghata Lane Kolkata – 700047 Tele: 033-24309398
●	Cdr SB Anand	Smt Rashmi Anand	06 Oct 2012	Q-454, Sector 21 NOIDA – 201301
● R0182-W	Cdr BE Todd	Smt Barbara Ethel Todd	21 Dec 2012	Collier Park Village Unit, 10/ 2 Bruce Street COMO, WA 6152, Australia Tele: +61893130310
●	Capt DC Chopra	Smt Urmila Chopra	14 Dec 2012	Chopra House Near Dhakauli Dist. Zirakpur Punjab Tele: 09779801655
● 00109-Y	Capt Beney Bhushan	Smt Kamala Bhushan	13 Dec 2012	9-E, Harbour Heights 'A' Building, N.A. Sawant Marg, Colaba Mumbai – 400005 Mob: 09840066637 Tele : 022-22852381
● 01786-H	Cdr DN Sinha	Smt Shirley Sinha	30 Oct 2012	C/o Maj Divya Sinha MH Pangode Trivendrum – 695006 Tele: 0760 7206610
● 00733-R	Cdr S Goyal	Smt Darshana Goyal	14 Nov 2012	L-223, Sector 25 Noida Tele: 0120-2539323
● 82011-N	Cdr TP Prasad	Smt Chandrika Prasad	14 Nov 2012	Gethalayam Thuravur South Alapuzha Dist Kerala – 682532 Mob: 09961599484
● 00292-N	Cdr AK Sood	Smt Nita Sood	30 Oct 2012	63 E, Rajpur Road Dehradun – 248001 Mob: 09412058402
● 00869-Z	LCdr BS Redhu	Smt Raj Redhu	14 Oct 2012	B-158, DDA (SFS) Flat Seikh Sarai Phase-1 New Delhi – 110017 Mob: 09958870797 / 09811020688



Charter News

The Navy Foundation spread its wing with induction of two additional Charters, Jaipur and Luckhnow Charters into its fold. We extend hearty welcome to both the charters.



Jaipur Charter

The first meeting of Navy Foundation, Jaipur Charter (NFJC) was hosted by Admiral and Mrs Madhvendra Singh on 18 Nov 2012 at their Heritage Hotel, Devi Niketan in the heart of the posh locality of Jaipur. We were also fortunate to have among us Admiral VS Shekhawat, our Senior Patron. The gathering of more than 30 persons included Veterans, spouses and children. The meet was opened on a formal note with address from Rear Admiral PS Byce, NFJC President. Our Patrons blessed the NFJC with a short speech each. The essence was on what principles has the Navy Foundation been created and what must be done to give effect to the aims and objectives laid down in the Charter of Association.

The 'Birthday Cake' of the founding of NFJC was cut by the oldest and youngest members of the Charter. Also a bouquet was presented to Mrs Madhvendra Singh as a gesture of thanks for hosting the meet.

The guests then took part in light refreshments and tea laid out by our hosts. Old Comrades at Arms exchanged pleasantries and the stage was set for





reviving the bonding of Naval Veterans. We are now 15 Veterans strong and their families. Our numbers will slowly grow as also our future activities.

Lucknow Charter

Apart from the nucleus of four office bearers [founder members of Lucknow Charter] twenty more members have been enrolled making it a total of twenty four in the last month or so. There are still forty odd retired officers settled in Lucknow on the horizon and efforts are on to contact these and take them on board as the time goes.

The inaugural General Body meeting, comprising the existing twenty four members was held on 27th January 2013 to ratify the present office bearers and also take in more members to form the executive committee. The future course was discussed among those present and a schedule of activities crystallised.



Cdr Arvind Wilson, Secretary has made untiring efforts to contact retired naval officers in Lucknow and we have reached a stage from where we can only go forward to make this new Charter a success and a meaningful organisation. Lucknow has expanded in all directions and most retired officers have settled in suburbs. It was therefore an uphill task to get in touch with prospective members and follow-up. There are not many who are visible in the clubs.

Delhi Charter

Annual General Meeting. Annual General Body Meeting of the Charter was held on 24th March 2012. During the AGM, besides presenting the annual Audit and Financial reports, elections were held for the new Management Committee. New Committee comprising Rear Admiral SK Das as the President, Cdr N Mahajan as the Vice President, Cdr SK Sud as the Secretary and Cdr NK Singla as Treasurer of NFDC was elected. Cdr SS Ahuja was re-nominated as the Web Master. NFDC recorded its deep appreciation and gratitude to the outgoing members; Vice Admiral Harinder Singh, President, Commodore Gyanu Sharma, Vice President and Commodore VK Thakur, Secretary and Cdr SS Ahuja, Treasurer for their contribution towards uplifting the image of NFDC. The new Committee assumed charge on 1st May 2012.

NFDC Get together. The first get together for the year 2012-13 was over a lunch on Saturday, 4th August 2012 at the Kota House, Gold and Silver Rooms. At this lunch, NFDC members bid farewell to CNS, Admiral Nirmal Verma and Mrs Madhulika Verma. A few serving officers and their wives were also invited to the function.



NFDC Dinner. NFDC Dinner with music of yester years at the lawns of Naval Officers' Mess, Varuna was held on Saturday, 17th November 2012. After taking over as CNS and President, Navy Foundation,



Admiral DK Joshi, and Mrs Chitra Joshi were invited. A very warm welcome was extended to them by the NFDC.



Navy Day Reception. The Navy Day reception at Navy House scheduled on 4th December 2012 was cancelled due to State mourning announced over the demise of former Prime Minister, Shri IK Gujral.

Navy Day Message of CNS. Forty one years ago on this day the Indian Navy took the fight to the Adversary's doorstep and delivered a decisive punch in the war at sea. This heralded a new chapter in the Navy's deployment as an instrument of State policy. Since then, the prominence of Indian Navy's role in securing the nation's sovereign interests in the maritime domain has grown exponentially. '**Indian Navy - Maritime Power For National Prosperity**', our theme for this year's Navy Week, encapsulates our mandate in today's

evolving security environment. Economic progress and consequential national prosperity leads to generation of resources vital for fulfilling the aspirations of the nation, to deal with internal challenges and to ward off external threats. Indian Navy is committed to ensuring a conducive maritime environment for the nation-state to progress socio-economic and development activities. On Navy Day let us reaffirm our commitment of duty to the nation. Towards this, we need to focus on following:

- Unflinching vigil across our entire maritime domain from the coast to distant areas of national interest.
- Consolidation of capabilities that have been acquired or are being acquired and their effective integration into our operational structure.
- According of high priority to indigenisation and self-reliance by strengthening domestic shipbuilding industry and equipment manufacture.

To achieve our objectives we need a professionally competent, ethically upright and physically fit human capital. Therefore, all facets of human resource management such as training, service conditions and health merit requisite attention and thrust.

Ideas that were received from various authorities and individuals for incremental improvement in the Navy have been holistically examined. Steps have been initiated to pursue the implementable proposals.

I am privileged to acknowledge the supreme contributions of our martyrs and veterans who through their toil and dedication have helped the Navy grow into a militarily lethal and potent force. The nation would remain indebted to them.

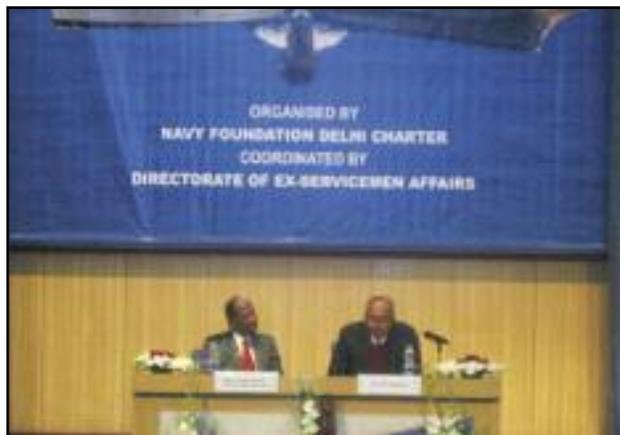
On the occasion of Navy Day I extend my greetings



to all service and civilian personnel and their families.

Shano Varuna and Jai Hind"

Shipyards Golf Tournament. The annual Shipyards Golf tournament at Hindan Golf Course was played on Saturday, 22nd December 2012. The match was between the serving and retired officers' teams. As usual the match was won handsomely by the serving officers' team. The tournament was graciously sponsored by the CMD, Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers, Kolkata. Besides the liberal goodies, the sponsors laid out excellent spread over the Breakfast and Lunch. Many very senior Naval Veterans and advanced in age, braved the chilly winter and foggy morning weather conditions and enthusiastically participated in the event.



Admiral Katari Memorial Lecture. 22nd Admiral RD Katari Memorial Lecture was organised by Navy Foundation, Delhi Charter and co-ordinated by the Directorate of Ex-Servicemen Affairs, IHQ, MoD (Navy) on Friday, 18th January 2013 at the DRDO Bhavan. Shri BG Verghese, an eminent veteran journalist, analyst and co-author of the Kargil Review Committee Report delivered the lecture on India, Pakistan, China: Continental and Oceanic Challenges and Opportunities. He made an excellent presentation and answered the interesting and knowledgeable questions from the audience most comprehensively and in a well rounded response.



Mumbai Charter

Veterans v/s Serving Naval Officers Golf tournament sponsored by MDL was held on 21 Jan 12. Serving Naval Officers won the Tournament. A large number of Non-playing Veterans also joined in the get together.



9th Admiral Soman Memorial lecture on "Humour in Advertising" was delivered by famous Ad Guru Bharat





Dhabolkar in Asvini's Auditorium. Vice Admiral P Murugesan, Chief of Staff, HQ WNC was the Chief Guest on the occasion. The lecture was full of humour and very well appreciated by the Veterans and their spouses present in the hall.

3rd Foundation Picnic sponsored by M/S Pipavav Shipyard Ltd. was held at the Officers' Institute at INS Karanja on 20th May 2012. About 200 Veterans along with their spouses attended the picnic, which was full of fun with drinks galore and professional singers to make it lively, along with a lot of fun games and prizes to the winners of professionally conducted games. During the transit in the naval ferry, from Mumbai Docks to Karanja across the Mumbai Harbour, AGM 2012 was also conducted. This was first ever floating AGM conducted by any Charter which was also attended by a representative of PDESA from NHQ.



Mumbai Charter website "www.navyfoundationmumbaicharter.in" was inaugurated in the Board Room of HQ WNC on 22nd June 2012 by the C-in-C in the presence of all the Committee members and Senior Officers of the Command. The C-in-C complimented the Foundation for an excellent, user friendly and proactive website.

Members of the Navy Foundation, Mumbai Charter, also attended in large numbers, a series of Monsoon Lectures held in the Mulla Auditorium on 20th June,

22nd August and 21st September 2012.



Chennai Charter

Liberation of Bangladesh. The Charter decided to have a special get together of all Veterans on 7th Jan 2012 to commemorate 40 years of the war to liberate and create Bangladesh. The Veterans based in Chennai who participated in 1971 war shared their experiences with the audience and the Press members who had turned out in large numbers. The event was also attended by the NOIC, TN, Commodore Amar Mahadevan, Regional Commander of Coast Guard, IG SP Sharma and a few personal guests of the Veterans. The audience was given rare firsthand account of the experiences in all the three dimensions. Those who shared their experiences included Rear Admiral Ramsagar, Commodores Subramanian, RS Vasan, KC Shekhar, Commanders Ramanathan, Gunasekaran, Captain Shivman





Mehta and other Veterans. Those who could not attend took the trouble of even sending a written account of their own experiences to be shared with the audience.

Farewell to Veteran Submariner. Commodore KS Subramanian (popularly known as Subra hyphen Manian) a veteran Submariner was given a fond farewell on the occasion of his relocation away from India. The meeting held on 15th March 2012 provided an opportunity to all the members to bid farewell. Commodore Subramanian recounted his wonderful experiences in the Navy and had a word or two for the community about how to cope with the modern day challenges of living.



AGM. The AGM for 2012 was conducted on 15th March 2012 and all the office bearers were re-elected. The present office bearers are Commodore RS Vasan, President, Surg Captain Natarajan, Vice President, Commander Bijoy Baruah, Hon Secretary and Cdr Venkatesan, Hon Treasury.

Networking. The Chennai Charter has adopted Google groups since May 2010 for enabling enhanced interaction with members and the same has found many contributors who share various anecdotes, issues of common concern, health, ECHS issues and other related matters of common interest to the retired officers and their families.

Naval Activities. The office bearers and the members have been regularly participating in various naval activities such as the Day at Sea and the Navy receptions based on invitation and representative participation.

Visit to Rajali. The veterans and their families had visited Rajali last year. The President of the Charter Commodore RS Vasan, the commissioning Commanding Officer, briefed the gathering on how the challenges of the initial stages of the projects were surmounted.

AGM of Navy Foundation. AGM of the Navy Foundation was held at Chennai on 4th October at the Naval Officers' Mess, Chennai. The Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral Nirmal Verma chaired the meeting and all issues raised by various Charters were discussed. NOIC Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry hosted dinner for all the attendees.

Remembrance Day 11-11-2012. The Church of South India in Fort St. George conducted a special ceremony to mark the Remembrance Day on 11th November 2012 (which is also a day to honour the Veterans). At a solemn function at the historical church in Fort St George, dignitaries from Chennai laid wreaths in the memory of those who had lost their lives in the World Wars. Commodore RS Vasan, President, NFCC placed a wreath on behalf of the Veterans and their families. As is known, the wreaths are placed at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month to mark the day also known as the day of Armistice. The significance of the day was explained by the Bishop of the Church and special prayers held on the occasion. On completion of the ceremony, a meeting of naval veterans and their families was held at the Naval Officers' Mess. The quarterly meeting started with a two minute silence after a brief talk by the President to highlight the significance of the day and the moment.



Hyderabad Charter

Regular meetings of the Charter were conducted on 22nd January, 15th April and 23rd September 2012. Large number of members along with their spouses attended the meetings. Information received from IHQ MoD (Navy) and other Naval Organisations on various issues was disseminated. Copies of Quarterdeck 2012 were distributed to the Members. Audited Balance Sheets were presented in the Meeting and got approved by the General Body. Commodore MVS Kumar, PDESA also attended Annual General Body Meeting which was conducted at RSI, Secunderabad on 15 April 2012. PDESA gave a presentation on various matters pertaining to the retired Naval Personnel and their family Members.

Navy Golf Cup tournament was organised by DMDE, Secunderabad on 23rd December 2012. 12 teams from Army, Navy and Air Force Units at Hyderabad including two teams from Navy Foundation participated. On completion of Tournament Lunch was hosted for all the participants.

Efforts were made to give wide publicity of the duties and responsibilities of our Charter and the various activities with regard to the Welfare of retired personnel and their families. As a result 20 more retired Naval Officers have joined as Members of the Charter during the past one year.

Lt Cdr A Satyanarayana, member of Hyderabad Charter, passed away suddenly on 23 Aug 12 due to heart attack. All possible help/assistance was provided to his family by the Charter. On our request, Smt Kalyani, wife of late A Satyanarayana has accepted the membership of the Charter.

Kolkata Charter

The new office bearers comprising Cmde BR Sen (Retd)- President, - Cdr ND Rao (Retd) - Vice President, - Cdr B Sengupta (Retd) –Treasurer, - Cdr G Pradeep (Retd)- Secretary, took over on July 2012.

Meetings were held quarterly on 16 Sep and 30 Dec 2012 at INS Netaji Subhas Officers' Mess which included presentation by the President followed by discussions on the issues raised by members and social interaction followed by luncheon. On 16 Sep 2012 the Charter bid farewell to Cmde Brian Thomas, NOIC (WB) who superannuated on 30 Sep 2012.

On 30 Dec 2012, a lecture cum presentation on Ladakh was arranged and delivered by Surg. Cdr T Bera (Retd), author of several books on A&N Islands (pre and post Tsunami), Goa and Ladakh. The lecture was very well appreciated by all members, most of whom were hardly aware that amongst the veteran fraternity there is a passionate author, photographer and chronicler of history, whose books in English, Bengali and Hindi have been published by renowned publishers and have sold several thousand copies both to Indian and foreign buyers.

Rear Admiral Subir Paul, (Retd) accompanied by Mrs Indrani Paul visited Bangladesh from 13-18 Dec 2012 as guests of the Govt. of Bangladesh, to participate in their Victory celebrations. Rear Admiral Subir Paul was among the 16 war veterans and gallantry awardees (1971 war), we feel proud that the only naval representative was from the Kolkata Charter.

Pension Adalat/ESM Mela was held at INS Netaji Subhas on 11 Nov 2012 and conducted by representatives of DESA, CABS, ECHS, DPA and local banks. Many veteran sailors and officers attended and benefitted from the Mela.

Pune Charter

Regular meetings of the Charter were organized to apprise its members about various developments through email. The Charter has launched its own website, www.nfcpune.com where various activities and announcements are updated. The Charter has a yahoo group and My Family.com for interaction amongst its members. To make the atmosphere of the



meetings like an extended family, parents, children and grandchildren of veterans were encouraged to join the meetings. The Charter remains in touch with IESM and other similar organizations to keep updated about any important issues pertaining to veterans to be aware and initiate timely action, where required.



The Charter arranged interaction with Zila Sainik Welfare Officer, Major Tungar, Cdr Makandar from DESA and Cdr Patil from Pune office of DGR on 29 Apr 2012. These officers appraised the members about various welfare schemes and facilities for the retired fraternity. Major Tungar informed the veterans about the schemes being run by the Government of Maharashtra and advantages of registering with the Zila Sainik Board. After the discussions, officers interacted with the veterans over PLD and lunch. Quarterdeck and other important pamphlets were distributed to members. Veteran Car stickers were

also distributed. A presentation by Cdr Deshpande from Nyati Builders, who had various offers for veterans, was also arranged.

On 14 Oct 2012, senior octogenarian veterans were felicitated by the Charter when crystal mementos



were presented by Mrs Nandini Mookerjee.

Members were also introduced to Cdr Arun Patil, Dy Director DGR to discuss any issue regarding resettlement.

NDA invited selected veterans for the Navy Day Dinner on 11 Dec 2012.

Odisha Charter

On my retirement as NOIC, Kolkata end-May 1997, I returned to my roots and came to Cuttack known as millennium city to finally drop my anchor. In early June 1997, I called on Surg Vice Admiral GP Panda (recently passed away) and whilst talking to him why do we not have Odisha Charter here as many of us reside between Cuttack and Bhubaneswar, both being twin cities. His reply was he tried but none cooperated including NHQ. I told him that I will make an effort. On return home I wrote a DO letter to then COP, Vice Admiral Arun Prakash followed it up with a telephone call. Promptly after a fortnight I got all the documents from DESA to start the Charter.





I went to Surg Vice Admiral Panda the next day to chalk out a plan to start the Charter, when we got talking he said, "since you are an Executive Officer the papers came to you so fast, to which my reply was let us start the Charter and we will talk of Branch loyalty later". We both pooled Rs. 3000/- to open a Bank account, as our luck would have it there is a branch of Corporation Bank next to my house and the Manager agreed to open the account of the Charter without much fuss hoping he will get some Fixed Deposits. Our office was from Vice Admiral Panda's home and I agreed to do the donkey's work. We initially could muster 18 retired naval officers to have our first meeting in Cuttack but where was the place? A decision was taken to hold it in a small hotel in a frugal manner. A thought occurred to me to request the NCC authorities to accommodate us in their Officers' Mess once a quarter on a Sunday at Cuttack/Bhubaneswar. Once again I could take the liberty to approach the DG, NCC at New Delhi to permit us to hold our meetings in the NCC Mess. This was permitted with my effort as I had been the DDG, NCC Odisha in 1989-90.

The first meeting was held in Bhubaneswar NCC Mess in early July 1997 and Odisha Charter came into being. Surg Vice Admiral Panda was nominated as President and yours truly VP/Secretary/Treasurer all rolled into one. Charter meetings are held at both Cuttack and Bhubaneswar and NCC has been of immense help. I must also acknowledge the help rendered by INS Chilka in making this Charter to come the present state with almost three times the number it started with. Surg Vice Admiral Panda continued to be President till his recent demise.

Cmde BK Mohanty (Retd.)

Chandigarh Charter

The Chandigarh Charter celebrated the Navy Day



2011--12, as per the tradition on Sunday the 4th December, 2011, at the Community Hall of PGIMER Chandigarh. The creator of Rock garden Chandigarh Mr Nek Chand was the chief guest on this occasion. Cultural programme was presented by senior division Cadets of Naval Wing, Girls and Boys of 1st Chandigarh Naval Unit NCC. The function was attended by 80 personnel. Tea, coffee, soft drinks with heavy small eats were served to the gathering. Mr Nek Chand was presented a memento by Cdr Mahendroo, President of Chandigarh Charter. Few members also shared their views, good old fond memories of naval career and their past experience on this occasion.





Western Naval Command



Mhadei off for Sagar Parikrama-II. The Indian Navy Sailing Vessel Mhadei skippered by Lieutenant Commander Abhilash Tomy was flagged off from Gateway of India, Mumbai on 01 Nov 12 by FOC-in-C, West for Sagar Parikrama-II, a Solo Circumnavigation of the globe. The Circumnavigation of the globe will be unassisted, solo, non-stop and under sail. Lieutenant Commander Abhilash Tomy will sail Mhadei south of all the great capes--Cape Leeuwing, Cape Horn and Cape of Good Hope and cover a distance of 21,600 Nautical Miles, cross the Equator twice and will finish the voyage at Mumbai.



Change of C-in-C. Vice Admiral Shekhar Sinha took over as the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief,

Western Naval Command from Vice Admiral DK Joshi at an impressive ceremonial parade at INS Shikra, Mumbai on 28 Aug 2012. Vice Admiral Joshi, after a tenure of 16 months as the C-in-C, took over as the Chief of the Naval Staff on 31 Aug 2012.



Commissioning of Sahyadri The Defence Minister, Shri AK Antony commissioned INS Sahyadri on 21 Jul 2012. Sahyadri is the third of the indigenously designed and constructed stealth frigates of the Shivalik Class, built by Mazgaon Dock Ltd, Mumbai.



INS Tanaji Commissioned Admiral Nirmal Verma, CNS commissioned INS Tanaji on 10 Jul 2012 at Mankhurd Naval Base, Mumbai. The commissioning of the Base Depot Ship Tanaji is a natural progression



of the Western Naval Command of having an independent organisation to look after the needs of Naval Armament Depot, Trombay, Weapon Equipment Depot and Storehouses of Material Organisation. Commodore Sanjay Bhutani, Commanding Officer read out the Commissioning Warrant.



INS Teg joins Western Fleet INS Teg, the first of Talwar follow-on class was built by M/s Yantar Shipyard, Russia and commissioned on 27 Apr 2012 at Kaliningrad, Russia. The ship has joined the Western Fleet.



Commissioning of INS Makar The FOC-in-C, West, commissioned INS Makar, the Catamaran Hydrographic Survey Vessel, the first of its kind. The ship was built by Alcock Ashdown Gujarat Ltd.

INS Tarkash Commissioning INS Tarkash, the

second of the three stealth frigates constructed at Yantar Shipyard, Kaliningrad Russia was commissioned by FOC-in-C, West on 09 November 2012. The Ambassador of India to the Russian Federation, Mr. Ajai Malhotra was also present along with senior officials of the Russian Government, Indian and Russian Navies, Federal Service for



Military Technical Cooperation, Rosoboronexport, United Shipbuilding Corporation, Yantar Shipyard and Russian Industry representatives to witness the ceremony. The ship is commanded by Captain Antony George.

Visit of Korean Naval Ship Wang Goen Republic of Korea Naval Ship Wang Goen was on a goodwill visit to Mumbai from 25 to 27 Sep 2012. The Ship returned to South Korea after completing Anti-Piracy Deployment in the Gulf of Aden.





Visit of Chile Navy Sail Training Ship Esmeralda

Chile Navy Sail Training Ship Esmeralda was on a Goodwill visit to Mumbai from 29 Aug to 03 Sep 2012. Esmeralda is a steel-hulled, four masted barquentine tall ship. It is the second tallest and the longest sailing ship in the world.



Chief of Naval Operation, US Navy Visited Mumbai

Admiral Jonathan Greenert, Chief of Naval Operations, US Navy, leading a high level naval delegation visited Mumbai from 24 Apr to 25 Apr 2012. During his visit, Admiral Greenert had a meeting with the FOC- in-C, West and other senior officers of the Command. The CNO visited the Naval Dockyard, an indigenously built Guided Missile Destroyer, a submarine and also the Mazagaon Docks Limited.



ETMA Golden Jubilee Seminar

A Seminar cum exhibition was held on 07 Nov 2012

by the Electrical Trials and Modification Authority (ETMA), on 'Power Quality Challenges and Emerging Trends in Electrical Power Systems on board Ships and Submarines' as part of the Golden Jubilee celebration of the establishment, which was inaugurated by Vice Admiral NN Kumar, Chief of Material.



28th Annual Conference of Marine Medical Society

The 28th annual conference of the Marine Medical Society of India was held at INHS Asvini on 20th and 21st of October 2012. The conference was attended by an international faculty, including specialists from United States Navy, and was inaugurated by the FO C-in-C, West. Dr. Carl Edmonds delivered the key note address.

Adieu INS Ratnagiri INS Ratnagiri, a Pondicherry-class coastal minesweeper was decommissioned on 22 May 12 by Rear Admiral BK Verma, Flag Officer Commanding Maharashtra and Gujarat Naval Area. The Decommissioning ceremony was attended by ex-commanding officers of the ship as well as senior officers of the Command. The first Commanding Officer of the ship was Lt. Cdr Shyam Kaushal and the Commanding Officer at the decommissioning was Cdr Amit Nagpal.

Farewell - INS Krishna INS Krishna, the 1st Training Squadron Ship was decommissioned on 24 May 2012. The ceremony was presided over by Rear



Admiral Girish Luthra, Flag Officer Commanding Western Fleet. Commander Varun Singh had the honour of decommissioning the ship.

INS Vindhyagiri Decommissioned INS Vindhyagiri is the sixth and the last of the Nilgiri class of frigates, was decommissioned on 10 Jun, 2012. Rear Admiral Abhay Karve, Flag Officer Commanding Western Fleet, presided over the ceremony.

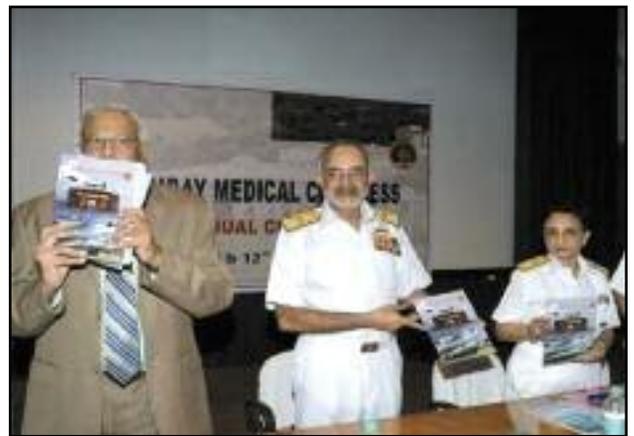


Marine Commandos Celebrate Silver Jubilee Marine Commandos (MARCOS), celebrated 25 glorious years of service from 31 May to 02 Jun 2012. CNS was the Chief Guest. The celebrations included an operational demonstration, a seminar and reunion of the serving and retired MARCOS. The valiant efforts of its cadres during Op Pawan (Sri Lanka), Op Cactus (Maldives), Op Muffet (Somalia), Op Rakshak (J&K), Op Black Tornado (26/11 attacks) and ongoing anti-piracy operations in Gulf of Aden have earned



the force one Maha Vir Chakra, two Vir Chakras, eleven Shaurya Chakras, forty one Nau Sena Medals (Gallantry), two Nau Sena Medals bar and one Sena Medal.

68th Annual Conference Of Bombay Medical Congress The 68th Annual Conference of the Bombay Medical Congress was held at INHS Asvini Auditorium on 11 and 12 Feb 2012. The Conference



was inaugurated by FO C-in-C, West and attended by a large number of senior medical officers of the Armed Forces as well as eminent physicians of Mumbai.

World Environment Day 2012 World Environment day was celebrated on 05 Jun 2012 at the Sqdns/Depts and station level at Goa in keeping with the UNEP theme "Green Economy: Does it include you?" Various events were planned and conducted as





part of the celebrations.



60th Interservices Hockey Championship 60th Inter Services Hockey Championship was conducted by INS Angre from 28-31 Aug 2012 at BHA Ground, Churchgate. Rear Admiral Shankar S Mathur, CSO (P&A) was the chief guest.

Maritime Seminar A Maritime Seminar was conducted at INHS Asvini on 12 Jan 2012 as part of the President Fleet Review.



Pension Adalat & ESM Mela Pension Adalat and ESM Mela were held at Porbandar (15 Apr 12), Ahmedabad (29 Apr 12), Bengaluru (16 May 12), Dharwad (24 Jun 12), Goa (30 Sep 12) and Pune (11 Oct 12). Widows and ex-servicemen attended in large numbers. The presence of representatives from IHQ MoD (N)/ PDP/ PDESA, CABS, NPO and ECHS enabled them to resolve their individual issues. The

assistance rendered by Rajya and Zila Sainik Boards as also by the Department of Sainik Welfare and Resettlement of State Governments has been commendable.



Change of Command Surg Rear Admiral Nirmala Kannan, assumed Command of INHS Asvini on 28 Jun 2012





NWWA

Balpathshala Festival of Rakhi was celebrated on 2nd August 2012 with great enthusiasm. Children made Rakhis and tied them to each other. They were also made to paint the tiles on the festival theme.

Block Printing Unit The month of April 2012, witnessed visits by various foreign dignitaries to the unit. Mrs. Puan Sri Sarah wife of Royal Malaysian Naval Chief and Mrs Darleen Greenert, wife of CNO, US Navy were the prominent visitors, they both were highly impressed by workmanship and enthusiasm observed at the unit. The unit bid farewell to Mrs Chitra Joshi, NWWA (WR) President. She had been a great source of inspiration for the unit. The unit also welcomed Mrs. Mona Sinha, NWWA President, Western Region, on 13 September 2012. She was pleased with the designs, efforts being put in and



standards achieved at the unit.

Kala Kendra Kala Kendra is successfully conducting the classes/activities relating to Aerobics; Art and Craft; Bharatnatyam; Guitar; Keyboard/Violin; Hindustani Vocal Music; Needlework and Fabric Painting; Tuitions – Maths, Physics, Hindi & Science; Western Dance (for both children & ladies); Yoga.

Prakriti On 7th April 2012, Prongs nature walk-2012 was conducted by 22 MVS under the aegis of Prakriti. 270 officers and their family registered for the walk. More than 410 persons participated in the event which was a great success.

Sankalp On 3rd April 2012, six parents and three teachers visited 'Adhar' residential institute for special adults at Badlpur, near Kalyan.





Eastern Naval Command



INS Chakra Inducted INS Chakra, a nuclear powered attack submarine of the 'Akula' Class was inducted formally into the Indian Navy by Hon'ble Raksha Mantri, Shri AK Antony on 04 Apr 2012, at the Ship Building Center, Visakhapatnam, in the presence of CNS and FOC-in-C, East.



Annual Refit Conference-12 A two-day Annual Refit Conference was inaugurated on 30 Jan 12 at the Command. The Conference drew the refit plans for all ships and submarines of the Navy for the ensuing two years and was attended by delegates from the IHQ, MoD(N), Commands, Dockyards, Repair Yards and Material Organisations.



Naval Investiture Ceremony-12 Naval Investiture Ceremony-12 was held at the Eastern Naval Command on 20 Jun 2012. CNS gave away the President's Gallantry and Non-Gallantry Awards to thirty three naval personnel. In addition, CNS also presented Citations to four ships.

Army-Navy Affiliation Ceremony Affiliation ceremony of INS Shivalik and INS Satpura, with two of the oldest and gallant regiments of the Indian Army, the Scindia Horse and the 7th Cavalry was held on 05 Oct 2012. Lt Gen AK Singh, GOC-in-C, Southern Command, Colonel of the Regiment was the Chief Guest at the Ceremony presided over by FOC-in -C, East.

CNS Visit Admiral DK Joshi, CNS accompanied by Mrs. Chitra Joshi, President NWWA was at Visakhapatnam on a three day



visit to the Command on 22 Oct 2012.

NMF Seminar Command hosted a two-day Seminar on 'Maritime Developments to India's East' on behalf of the NMF on 08 Oct 2012. The Seminar focused on maritime security, geo-politics, economic integration and international co-operation among the littoral States that bound the region to India's East including the Bay of Bengal, South China Sea and the Western Pacific Ocean.

Bangladesh Navy Chief Visit Vice Admiral Zahir Uddin Ahmed, CNS, Bangladesh Navy, accompanied by his wife Begum Shabnam Ahmed and a four member delegation arrived Visakhapatnam on 12 Jul 2012, on a two day visit.

Singapore Naval Ships As a part of 'SIMBEX-12', the Joint Naval Exercise conducted between Navies of India and the Republic of Singapore in the Bay of Bengal Region, two ships of the Singapore Navy, RSS Stalwart and RSS Victory arrived Visakhapatnam on 28 Mar 12.

Veteran Sailors' Forum A General Body Meeting of Veteran Sailors Forum (VSF), under the aegis of Headquarters, Eastern Naval Command, was conducted at the Sailors' Institute on 05 Feb 12.

Polyclinic for ESM at Srikakulam A Non-Military Polyclinic for ex-servicemen and their families was inaugurated at Srikakulam on 08 May 2012 by Rear Admiral T Sudhakar, CSO (P&A).

Golden Jubilee of INHS Kalyani INHS Kalyani celebrated the Golden Jubilee on 18 May 2012. A Seminar on 'Recent Advances &



Challenges in Hospitals of New Millennium' was organised. The C-in-C, East along with Mrs Karuna Pillai, Chief Post Master General released a commemorative First Day Cover.

V Adm BK Verma as Chief of Staff Vice Admiral Bimal Kumar Verma, took over as the Chief of Staff, Eastern Naval Command from Vice Admiral Sunil Lanba on 29 Oct 2012.



Change of ASD (V) Rear Admiral GS Pabby, took over as ASD (V) from Rear Admiral KR Nair, on 30 May 2012.

Change of Fleet Commander Rear Admiral P Ajit Kumar assumed the duties of Flag Officer Commanding, Eastern Fleet from Rear Admiral HS Bisht, at a ceremonial parade on 30 Apr 2012.



Change of Flag Officer Submarines R Adm SV Bokhare, assumed the duties of Flag Officer Submarines from Rear Admiral Srikant on 22 Sep 2012.



Services Squash Championship The 51st Inter Services Squash Championship was held from 22 to 25 Oct 2012. The Indian Navy Team emerged the winner from a total of four teams, comprising two from the Indian Army and one each from the Indian Navy and the Indian Air Force.



Flood Relief Operations As the rescue and relief operations continued in Andhra Pradesh, 28 relief teams comprising nearly 60 divers of the Eastern Naval Command were engaged actively in the affected districts of Visakhapatnam and West Godavari post cyclone 'Nilam' in Nov 2012.

Annual Day of NCS (VZG) The Secondary



Wing of Navy Children School (Nausena Baugh) celebrated its 37th Annual Day on 06 Nov 12 at the Samudrika Naval Auditorium. FOC-in-C, East was the Chief Guest. A musical play based on William Shakespeare's 'A Mid Summer Night's Dream' was staged brilliantly by students of the NCS.



NWWA

Little Angels at SVN Colony Little Angels at the SVN colony, 104 Area was inaugurated by Mrs. Ragini Chopra, President NWWA (E/R) in Jul 2012.



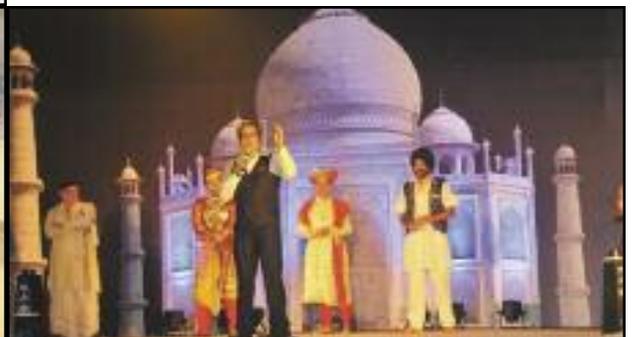
Inter School Quiz Competition Annual Inter School Quiz Competition having participation of 13 leading schools from the city was organised on 04 Sep 2012. FOC-in-C, East, the chief guest felicitated the winners.



NWWA Library The NWWA library at Naval Park, run by ladies from NWWA saw a complete metamorphosis in Aug 2012 with a sleek makeover in interiors.



NWWA Nite 2012 NWWA Nite' was organised on 13 Oct 2012. The chief guest on this occasion was FOC-in-C, East. A night of excitement, splendour, glitz and glamour was arranged with the theme woven around 'The Love Story'.





Southern Naval Command

INS Dweeprakshak. INS Dweeprakshak, the Naval Base was commissioned at Kavaratti in the Lakshadweep archipelago on 30 April 2012 by FO C-in-C, South. The ceremony of naming the establishment was performed by Smt Sunitha Ismail, Chairperson State Social Welfare Board. Thereafter, Captain SM Hanchinal, Commanding Officer, read out the Commissioning Warrant.



Farewell - Vice Admiral KN Sushil. Vice Admiral KN Sushil retired from service on 31st May 2012 after nearly 40 years of distinguished service. In a unique and symbolic ceremony after the Parade, he was "Pulled Out" in a whaler boat pulled by the senior most officers in the command.



Renovated Canteen. The renovated retail outlet of the INCS Complex at Naval Base Kochi was inaugurated by Vice Admiral (Retd) KN Sushil on 24 August 2012, in the presence of FO C-in-C, South. INCS which serves about 50,000 Indian Naval personnel and Armed Forces veterans has an average daily footfall of 3000.



Farewell To INS Krishna. INS Krishna, part of the First Training Squadron since 1995, cast off from Kochi for the final time on 17th January 2012, as she sailed for Mumbai to be de commissioned. Rear Admiral Sudarshan Shrikhande Chief of Staff, and a large gathering of Navy personnel and families had assembled at the South Jetty, Naval Base to bid





adieu to the Ship. Cdr Varun Singh was the last Commanding Officer.

Naval Ship Repair Yard, Kochi. A new machine shop was inaugurated at the Naval Ship Repair Yard, Kochi on 22 June 2012 by Shri PK Ponnappan Pillai aged 82, who retired as the First Principal Foreman of the Yard in 1991. FO C-in-C, South was present on the occasion.



INS Sudarshini Commissioned. INS Sudarshini a three masted barque (sail ship) and the second sail training ship of the Indian Navy was commissioned by FO C-in-C, South at Naval Base on 27 Jan 2012. INS Sudarshini is a follow-on of INS Tarangini which joined Southern Naval Command in 1997. The ship commanded by Commander P K Boyiri Varma is built by Goa Shipyard Limited and is designed by the British Naval Architect Mr Colin Mudie.



Sudarshini Sets Sail. INS Sudarshini set sail on 15 September 2012 from Kochi on a historical mission to celebrate India's warm ties with countries of ASEAN. CNS flagged off the six month voyage- a unique collaborative venture of Ministry of Defence and Ministry of External Affairs- from Naval Base at Kochi. The voyage commemorates 20 years of dialogue partnership and 10 years of summit level partnership with countries of ASEAN. The ship is commanded by Cdr N Shyamsunder.



Vice Admiral Satish Soni takes over. Vice Admiral Satish Soni assumed the office of FO C-in-C, South on 31 May 12.



Year of the Ex-Servicemen. A number of activities were organised as part of the Year of the Ex-Servicemen. Ex-Servicemen Melas were held at Ezhimala on 06 Oct 12, at Kochi on 10 Nov 12 and on 18 Nov 12 at Thiruvananthapuram. A total number of 1100 retired



Officers and Veteran Sailors participated in these melas. Cases pertaining to pension, resettlement and other associated welfare issues were addressed firsthand by Officers from CABS, DESA, Pension Disbursing Banks and State Sainik Welfare Board. As part of the Year of the Ex-Servicemen activities, Naval Widows & widows of War Veterans were given financial assistance by Mrs Payal Soni President NWWA (SR) on 30 Nov 12.



NWWA Quiz Competition. Chinmaya Vidyalaya Vaduthala won the NWWA Interschool Quiz for the second year in a row. Anant M Nambiar and Denita Mendiz from the school received the stone studded Rolling Trophy from FO C-in-C, South at the Sagarika Auditorium. The Rolling Trophy was introduced for the first time this year, for the quiz competition held annually as part of Navy Week celebrations. Navy Children's School Kochi and Bhavans Adarsha Vidyalaya Kakkanad bagged the second and third positions respectively.



Navy Week Celebrations. Other events conducted as part of Navy Week celebrations were medical camps, Navy Fest community service, and deployment of ships to various ports of the state.



NWWA

AROGYA. On the occasion of Independence Day, Mrs Payal Soni, President NWWA (SR) gifted a cheque of Rs 25,000.00 to INHS Sanjivani. This will help the hospital to buy a new ECG machine.

ASHIRWARD. Members of Ashirwad and doctors from INHS Sanjivani gave a presentation on 'Health & Diet' required for senior citizens on 9th August 2012 at Saraswati Hall. The talk focused on diet restrictions during the monsoon. As a part of Navy Week celebrations senior citizens were taken into INS Sharda for visit on 17 Nov 12 followed by lunch onboard.

BALPATHSHALA. The new academic session at Balpathshala commenced with 13 children in LKG and UKG. New uniforms and books have been distributed. Mid-day snacks are provided by INS

Venduruthy, INHS Sanjivani and INS Garuda on a rotational basis. On 14 Nov 12, a fancy dress competition was held. On 23 Nov 12 a medical camp was held wherein a Doctor from Sanjivani carried out routine medical check-up of all children. Children were taken into INS Sujata for visit on 17 Nov 12 followed by a variety entertainment and lunch.

KALA KENDRA. Kala Kendra has been a vibrant hub of activities where children and ladies have actively been pursuing their hobbies and keep healthy and fit. The activities held at the Kala Kendra were Yoga, Painting and Sketching, Dance classes, Abacus, etc.

SURUCHI. Hobby courses in soft toy making and handicrafts are being held at Rameshwaram. Anyone interested from Naval Base kindly approach NWWA Kendra.





CHECK OFF LIST FOR VETERANS & NoK

Death Grant. Inform DESA about death of your husband with following documents:-

- (a) Death Certificate
- (b) Copy of PPO
- (c) Copy of ESM Card

On receipt of above, a condolence letter and obituary would be released and death grant will be paid.

Family Pension. Please approach Pension Disbursing Bank with an application and original death certificate for grant of Family Pension with following documents:-

- (a) Copy of first PPO
- (b) Original Death Certificate
- (c) Dependent Card issued by the nearest Naval authority
- (d) Address proof
- (e) Please seek assistance of DESA in ascertaining the amount of entitled pension
- (f) Once Family Pension is revised, please seek Annexure-IV from your Pension Disbursing Bank to this effect

Health Issues. Inform your ECHS Polyclinic and Director ECHS of death.

Canteen Card. Inform the URC and ask them for your entitled smart card.

Card from ZSB. Visit your ZSB with ESM Card of the ex-Navy person. Deposit ESM Card and seek your ID Card with following documents:-

- (a) Copy of the Death Certificate
- (b) Three passport size self photograph
- (c) Address proof
- (d) Copy of the PPO

REMEMBER. Maintain a personal file with following documents:-

- (a) Original PPO & all Corr PPOs
- (b) Death Certificate
- (c) Copy of all correspondence with NHQ, Bank, ECHS Polyclinic, CSD Canteen and ZSB

- (d) Annexure 4
- (e) Proof of DoB(copy of passport, PAN Card, Matriculation Certificate, ECHS Card, Driving License and Election ID Card) as this will be required at the time of grant of additional pension on attaining 80 years of age
- (f) Address Proof (Copy of ration card, electricity bill, telephone bill etc)
- (g) For Gallantry Award Winners. Original copy of citation, relevant IT exemption rules (can be obtained from IHQ/MoD(N)/DESA)
- (h) Telephone numbers, address and e-mail ID of IHQ/MoD(N)/DESA for assistance in future
- (j) Details of pension disbursement by bank from time to time

FOR WIDOWS WELFARE ISSUES CONTACT

JOINT DIRECTOR (NRS) EXTN. 103

FOR PENSION RELATED ISSUES / RETIREMENT FORMALITIES / PRE-RELEASE COURSES CONTACT

JOINT DIRECTOR (POLICY) EXTN. 102

FOR NAVY FOUNDATION CONTACT JOINT DIRECTOR (NAVY FOUNDATION) EXTN. 116

FOR SECOND CAREER PROSPECTS AFTER RETIREMENT REGISTER WITH INDIAN NAVAL PLACEMENT AGENCY (INPA)

Tele/Fax: 011-24121687

Mobiles: 9560352121, 9560362121

Email: inpacareers@yahoo.com

Website: www.inpa.net.in

WELFARE RELATED ISSUES, POST RETIREMENT BENEFITS, CHILDREN'S EDUCATION ETC., FOR RETIRED SAILORS, WIDOWS & THEIR DEPENDENTS CONTACT

JOINT DIRECTOR (VSF) EXTN. 113

Tele No: 011-24102305 Email:

vsfdelhi@yahoo.com

Website: www.vsf-desa.com



HELP LINES FOR RETIRED NAVAL PERSONNEL

CABS for issues regarding pension of all Retired Sailors
1800-220-560

DPA for issues pertaining to pension of all Retired Officers
011-23010382 & 011-23011536 Ext. 222

INBA for issues related to welfare schemes **011-23010346**

NGIF for issues pertaining to claims under PRDIES (Post Retirement Death Extension Scheme) **011-23010683**

ECHS (Navy) 011-24101319
080-43004300 / 1800-103-8666 (Toll Free)
echs_navy@yahoo.co.in / contact@echs.gov.in

Release Centre : 022-25075449 / 5450

e-mail :
releasecentre@gmail.com

Fax No. : 022-25564823

CABS Exchange : 022-25075400

ESM pension Toll free: 1800-220-560

Fax No. : 022-25563323

Bureau Placement Cell : 022-25075448

e-mail :
bpccareers@gmail.com

Fax No. : 022-25564823

Pension : 022-25075455 /

25075600

e-mail :
navypension@yahoo.co.in

Fax No. : 022-25075653

GB Section : 022-25075446

e-mail :
solegal.pio.cabs@gmail.com

Fax No. : 022-25563323

ECHS Section : 022-25075457

Fax No. : 022-25075653

NPO Demob : 022-22751062

e-mail : sdemob@navypay.com

Fax No. : 022-22751168

NPO IRLA : 022-22751242

CDA (Pension) Mumbai : 022-22751181

PCDA (Pension) Allahabad

: 0532-2421880

website :
www.pcdapension.nic.in

Indian Navy Information website

: www.irfc.-

nausena.gov.in

CGDA, New Delhi website

: http://cgda.nic.in

DGR : 011-26192352
email :
dgremployment@yahoo.com
website : www.dgrindia.com

DESA : 011-24121068
e-mail : desa@vsnl.com
website : www.dgrindia.com

blog :
desanavy.wordpress.com

VSF : 011-24102305
e-mail : vsfdelhi@yahoo.com

Kendriya Sainik Board (KSB)
: 011-26715250
website : www.dgrindia.com

PCDA(N), Mumbai : 022-22882166
Fax : 022--22020772
website : www.pcdanavy.nic.in
e-mail : cda-bom@nic.in

SPECIAL SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME

- Applicable to children of Naval Personnel who die in Harness
- DESA Co-ordinates • Given by INBA

GRANT PER ANNUM

LKG/UKG	5000/-	Post Graduation	20000/-
Class I - VIII	12000/-	Engg/Medical	60000/-
Class IX - XII	15000/-	Computer/Mgmt	45000/-
Graduation	15000/-	Legal/Vocational	30000/-
		Boarding/Lodging	40000/-

TATA DEFENCE WELFARE CORPUS FUND (TDWCF)

- Mobility Equipment for disabled ESMs • Educational Grant to the wards of Naval Personnel who die after retirement • Given by NWWA

Class I - VIII	RS 4,000/-
Class IX - XII	RS 5,000/-
Graduation	RS 10,000/-
Post Graduation	RS 15,000/-
Professional	RS 40,000/-

MERIT SCHOLARSHIP

Only first two children • Children pursuing Recognised Higher Course post 10+2 • Children passing all subjects in first regular attempt and should not have abstained from any paper • Children who take admission within eighteen months of passing 10+2 or graduation • Tenable for max duration of graduation and post graduation • Max 06 scholarships provided if there is no gap in study • Scholarship amount not claimed in a year cannot be claimed in subsequent year • To be renewed every year by fresh applications by 01 Nov of every year irrespective of mark sheet recd or not • Deficient documents to be forwarded on receipt. **Scholarship Amount:** Boarders Rs 15000/- & Day Scholars Rs 10000/- **Widow's Daughter Marriage Grant:** Sailors Rs 12500/- & Officers Rs 25000/-



NAVAL REGIMENTAL SYSTEM (NRS) TO SUPPORT FAMILIES OF DECEASED COLLEAGUES

<u>SL NO.</u>	<u>GEOGRAPHICAL AREA</u>	<u>CRSO</u>	<u>NAME & ADDRESS</u>	<u>CONTACT NOS</u>	<u>E-MAIL</u>
1.	DELHI, NCR, HARYANA, HP, J&K & PUNJAB	CRSO(NORTH-I)	Capt JK Chaudhary New Delhi	011-24121429 / 24121430 8130558888 / 9868174466	crsonorth.navy@gmail.com
2.	MP, RAJASTHAN, UP & UK	CRSO(NORTH-II)	Cdr BS Jakhar New Delhi	011-24121429 / 24121430 09650693980 (Mob)	crsonorth.navy@gmail.com
3.	AP, CHATTISGARH, ODISHA, TAMILNADU & PUDUCHERRY	CRSO (EAST)	Capt CS Panda Vizag	0891-2752771 / 2515834 0891-2515834 (Fax) 09490798360 (Mob)	crsoeast.navy@gmail.com
4.	BIHAR, JHARKHAND, WB & NE STATES	CRSO(NE)	Cdr Naveen Razdan Kolkata	033-22314964 / 22420430 033-22420205 (Fax) 9051208008 (Mob)	crsonortheast.navy@gmail.com
5.	DADRA & NAGAR HAVELI, DAMAN & DIU, GOA, GUJRAT, KARNATAKA & MAHARASHTRA	CRSO(WEST)	Capt S Ruperee Mumbai	022-22751998 / 22665239 022-22698393 (Fax) 09757404628 (Mob)	crsowest.navy@gmail.com
6.	KERALA & LAKSHADWEEP	CRSO(SOUTH)	Cdr HS Girn Kochi	0484-2873333 / 2873334 0484-2667398 (Fax) 0484-2892183	crsosouth.navy@gmail.com
7.	A&N ISLANDS	CRSO(A&N)	Cdr LS Negi Port Blair	03192-248294 / 248333 03192-232829 (Fax) 9531856044 (Mob)	crso.an@gmail.com



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