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Quarterdeck

2015

NAVY FOUNDATION MAGAZINE



Platinum Jubilee

12 Dec 1939 - 12 Dec 2014

INS CIRCARS



Contents

28

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Opinions expressed are those of the authors. They do not reflect the views of IHQ, MoD (Navy), Navy Foundation or the Editor.



एडमिरल आर के धवन

पी वी एस एम, ए वी एस एम, वाई एस एम, एन एम, वी एस एम, ए डी सी
नौसेनाध्यक्ष

Admiral R.K. Dhowan

PVSM, AVSM, YSM, NM, VSM, ADC

Chief of the Naval Staff

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MESSAGE



The Indian Navy has emerged as a credible multi-dimensional networked force that is ready to take on any challenge in the maritime domain. A resurgent Navy in the 21st century, it comprises versatile platforms, cutting-edge technology, capable personnel, strong organisational cohesion, and a system of continuously improving procedures and practices. However, none of these has been attained overnight. Each has taken years of persistent effort and continuity of intent, which reflects the Navy's ability to sail steadfastly ahead, irrespective of the myriad challenges it encounters.

Its resilient culture and rich traditions have been established over decades by visionary leaders passing down experiences and achievements for the next generation to carry forward. Indeed, the Navy's unique ability to look back to its past as it reaches out to its future has been one of its core strengths. The Quarterdeck, in its own admirable manner, symbolises one such bridge between the past and the present.



For years, this publication has been an umbilical that links the experience and wisdom of the Navy's Veterans with the energetic youth and techno-savvy acumen of its serving professionals. By providing both communities a platform to exchange views and perspectives, the publication binds them together in a system of strong community ethos.

The 2015 Edition of the publication is significant for several reasons. It coincides with the birth centenary of Admiral AK Chatterji, the Navy's first four-star CNS; the 75th anniversary of INS Circars; the 70th anniversary of INS Venduruthy; and three decades since the commissioning of INS Godavari, a ship whose induction was a watershed in the Navy's journey towards self-reliance and indigenisation. With the same brush, it also paints a picture of 21st century blue water naval operations, thus yet again blending the nostalgia of yesteryears with the clinical precision of modern naval combat. The Edition would thus be of interest to a large section of the naval family. I compliment the Editorial Team, contributors and all others associated with the Edition for their commendable effort in bringing this issue of the magazine to us.

I also take the opportunity to wish all serving personnel, Navy Veterans and families every success in the New Year. May 2015 bring good health, happiness and prosperity to all, as the Navy continues to ensure safe and secure seas for a resurgent nation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'RK Dhowan', written in a cursive style.

(RK Dhowan)
Admiral
Chief of the Naval Staff



At the outset the Quarterdeck extends a very warm welcome to Admiral R K Dhowan on taking over as the Chief of the Naval Staff. Quarterdeck recalls his contribution when he wrote an article on INS Khukri in 1994. This edition carries an interview with him, which will assist readers to know him and his family better. We are thankful to him for graciously and promptly accepting our request and sparing valuable time for the interview.

After a lapse of many years, this edition of Quarterdeck has a small but significant section on 'Indian Navy – a Blue Water Navy.' I sincerely hope that three scintillating articles in this section will generate a true sense of pride among the Veterans on the growing eminence of the Indian Navy.

A special feature on the association with various Training Institutions has been compiled to recall the role played by these centres of learning in shaping knowledgeable and professional generations.

Cyclone Hudhud had caused wide spread devastation of unimaginable magnitude in the Platinum Jubilee year of INS Circars. The damage sustained by the whole city of Visakhapatnam and the Naval Base in particular, was colossal. INS Circars braving through all the difficulties and challenges, commemorated all the events related with the Platinum Jubilee with grace and élan. To commemorate this historical milestone, we take great pleasure in presenting a pictorial depiction of the journey thus far.

The birth centenary of late Admiral AK Chatterji was celebrated on 22nd November 2014 at India International Centre, New Delhi. A presentation, highlighting the life and times of the first Four-Star Chief of the Naval Staff is on Page 69 onwards.

Special narratives on more than three decades of INS Godavari – the first and largest Frigate to be indigenously designed and built - by her first Commanding Officer and the present incumbent, besides others have been included.

Quarterdeck is very keen on introducing a special feature “**Golden Age Leaf**” to commemorate the life and achievements of our Veterans who have crossed the 85-years’ milestone, through own writings, or seeking assistance of others in sketching their life in 80s. We have made a humble beginning in this direction through a contribution from Captain NS Rawat (Retd.) (Page145).

My very special thanks on behalf of the entire Quarterdeck team to Vice Admiral Ganesh Mahadevan (Retd.) who continues to enliven the Quarterdeck through his brilliant caricatures. This year on my desperate request, he produced four additional fine sketches within merely 48 hours. We will continue to depend on his gracious support.

I wish to express grateful thanks to Commodore Ajay Saxena, PDESA, Captain Sanjay Nirmal, DESA and the entire team of DESA without their help and assistance it would not have been possible to present this edition of Quarterdeck. our special thanks to Commodore KS Noor, APDNE for his help.

Last but not the least, our grateful thanks to all enthusiastic contributors, readers and well-wishers of Quarterdeck for their continued support, assistance and encouragement. There was an overwhelming response from the contributors for this edition. It was only due to paucity of space that some of the contributions could not be accommodated.

Finally, I wish you all prosperity, good cheer and sound health, always.



Letters to Editor

Dear Shirley,

Congratulations for Quarterdeck 2014 and for the excellent job you are doing just now. Both my wife and self are away in USA with our daughter and will be here till 25th of Sept. I will record from memory the delightful period from 83 to 85 when as commissioning commanding officer I took Godavari through her paces.

With kind regards,

*Rear Admiral Keki Pestoji (Retd.)
keki@lycos.com*

Dear Mrs Ramsay,

I write to you complementing you and your editorial team in carrying out a stupendous task. I have received several messages from Stockholm, Toronto and California expressing gratitude for Quarterdeck for the information provided in making them know about certain personalities - their whereabouts and welfare. The obituary section ofcourse plays a pivotal role. The reference to the accidental demise of submariner late Lt Cdr Venkatraj in the explosion in the submarine Sindhurakshak written by his friend on behalf of his two year innocent daughter has been very-very touching indeed and on this retired Officers from U.S.A. have expressed their gratitude towards the writer and the Quarterdeck 1914. What could be more sensitive than a scene of infant daughter looking at the coffin containing perhaps some fragments of her deceased father. The article also pays homage to the late officer who paid ultimate price while carrying out his risky duty.

Yours sincerely,

*Cdr Trilochan Singh Trewn (Retd.)
tstrewn@gmail.com.*

Dear Editor,

I had the privilege of visiting Visakhapatnam to attend the Platinum Jubilee celebrations of INS Circars on 12 Dec 2014. All veteran commanding officers were invited and Cmde Gopala Rao, MVC was the guest of honour. The various events marking this momentous occasion were organised with great gusto and zeal. These included the release of commemorative stamp by Postmaster General, a gala dinner at ENC Officers' mess on 12 December, wherein all veteran commanding officers were presented with a silver salver by the C-in-C. On 13 December was a grand musical night cum dinner at the Circars sports grounds for 1500 officers, sailors and families. Kudos to Cmde Saleem Anwer, Commanding Officer, INS Circars and his team for making the Platinum Jubilee events truly memorable indeed.

Finally, few words about the devastating effects of cyclone that struck Visakhapatnam in October this year! The scars of Hudhud are still visible from long distance, even after the herculean work done in the past two months. It will take sustained efforts over several months before the shoots of restoration work within the naval areas would be prominently visible. It is beyond comprehension, how the green cover deserted the naval base, taking along some 50,000 trees. Officers, Sailors, Civilian Personnel and their families had to bear with most of the essential services, foremost among them the drinking water, electricity. Water was airlifted in unimaginably huge quantities. It was heartening to witness that our naval community demonstrated resilience, patience to face the full brunt of the devastation.

All hands of Eastern Naval Command, including the families deserve most earnest compliments for the monumental task undertaken under most adverse conditions.

*Cmde Ajay Parmar (Retd.)
kalpanaajay@gmail.com*



CNS on the Quarterdeck

Quarterdeck (QD): All hands on the Quarterdeck join together in congratulating you on assuming the helm of the Indian Navy. For the benefit of the veterans, we will appreciate a brief introduction of you and your family.

Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS): Let me first thank you and the Editorial Team of Quarterdeck for giving me the opportunity to share my thoughts with your readers. I consider it a great honour to be able to interact with you, and through this magazine, to reach out to the extended naval family. I am also extremely happy to use this opportunity to once again convey the serving naval fraternity's gratitude

to the Navy's veterans for the stellar role they have played in transforming the Indian Navy from the fledgling Service it was at Independence to the credible, multi-dimensional and effectively-networked force it is today.

I also feel very happy to talk to the Quarterdeck because I have always seen the magazine as a bridge that connects current naval personnel and families with the veteran community in an admirable manner, and in doing so, brings generations of naval personnel together on a single platform to exchange views and perspectives.





Coming to your question, well, we are basically a family that belongs to Delhi and has its roots in Punjab. I had the opportunity to spend my early years in Mumbai. I probably acquired my fascination for the sea during those early years. Subsequently, of course, the family moved to Delhi, and I grew up here. I was inclined initially to become a doctor and had in fact enrolled myself for the pre-medical course at the Delhi University. However, I came across an application form for the National Defence Academy, filled it and was selected for the 45th NDA Course. Having two career options in front of me, I consulted my father on what might be a better choice, and he gave me the best advice I could ever receive - to follow my heart. I did that, and the rest, as they say, is history!

Minu was born and brought up in Delhi. She finished her schooling from Mater Dei Convent and Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, graduated in English Honours from Delhi University and went on to complete a course in mass communication and journalism. I met her through common family friends, and we got married in May 81. A creative person with a keen eye for the fine arts, she has devoted herself to the naval way of life and worked for almost all her time in the Navy for the Naval Wives Welfare Association. Her special interest has been in the welfare and empowerment of women and the education of children.

We have three children. Rohini, our eldest, is a banker. She is married to Anand, a consultant in the pharmaceutical industry. They reside in Toronto with Kabir, our one-year old grandson. Rohan and Rahit, our twin boys are pursuing their careers in hotel management and marketing in Sydney. Although stretched across the world in two different hemispheres, ours is a close-knit family, and we try to spend as much time as we can together. We are also blessed to have my mother with us, who has been a

pillar of strength for the family. Kabir's first visit to India a few months back was a very happy occasion for us and brought the entire family back under the same roof once again.

QD: In the recent past, the Navy has passed through trying times and braved a few incidents. How would you like to elucidate the present position and the roadmap for the future of the Indian Navy?

CNS: As you are aware, the Navy went through a rough patch in the second half of last year and the early part of this year, a period that saw some unfortunate accidents receiving intense public attention. While the reasons for these accidents have been varied and have been looked into closely and holistically, let me assure you that we have also introduced measures over and above those already existing, to ensure higher levels of safety awareness in the Navy and to bring about greater operational consolidation.

My priority on taking over the helm of the Navy was to restore the professional image and pride of the Navy, and at the same time, to ensure that all tasks were discharged with professional élan and that all platforms remained combat-ready at all times. This required us to continue operating at a high tempo, ensure that our maintenance activities met the 'quality refits on time' criterion, review our standard operating procedures, and revive a system of conducting safety audits to enhance safety standards. Most importantly, it needed us to ensure that our personnel, whom we consider our most important asset, are provided a harmonious and safe working and living environment, and that their morale and confidence continued to remain high.

Having said all that, let me assure you that the Navy has always been an extremely



professional and competent Service and maintained stringent operating standards. It operates in a complex, challenging and hazardous environment and faces inherent risks in the vast spectrum of activities it carries out. Even today, its safety and operational records match favourably with those of other similar navies. Our personnel are sincere and hard working, and probably among the best in the world.

In order to bring about greater consolidation to all aspects of our functioning, I have recently published an updated Vision Document that outlines to all personnel what the broad philosophy of the Navy's functioning will be. I have also re-promulgated a document called CNS Guidance - Course to Steer, which basically lists out the thrust areas and outlines the short-term tasks and long-term goals for all branches at NHQ to pursue. This has been shared with all Commands so that they are not only familiar with the long-term vision of the Navy, but are also able to prioritise and align their own plans and tasks with the outlined thrust areas. I have also tried to encourage and strengthen interaction at all levels by revitalising our well-established Divisional System. This will ensure that personnel continue to remain united in their purpose, cohesive as an organisation and pull together on the oars as a well-knit team.

As far as the future Navy is concerned, we see it having a credible, effective and expanded blue-water footprint that stretches across the Indian Ocean Region and beyond, which are our primary areas of maritime interest. Our force-development plans are anchored firmly on self-reliance and indigenisation, and currently, we have 41 ships and submarines on order, all in Indian shipyards, both public and private. This is hugely impressive by any standards. Our challenge will be to ensure that while we continue planning for new capabilities and platforms, we

ensure timely completion of the projects and programmes we have already initiated. It will be our endeavour to progressively increase the indigenous content across the 'float', 'move' and 'fight' segments, so that future warships can be 100% 'Made in India'.

The Navy today is at the threshold of a qualitative and quantitative transformation. I see the coming five years being a period of consolidation, both operationally and organizationally. We are expanding and modernizing fairly rapidly, and our thrust will remain on meeting project and procurement timelines. The large number of inductions planned in the near future include the first Indigenous Aircraft Carrier, several surface and sub-surface combatants, a variety of aviation platforms, and several state-of-the-art equipment and systems. We also hope to enhance our support infrastructure significantly in the period.

QD: With the new government at the centre, is there a change in the strategy for development of the Indian Navy?

CNS: The new Government has been very supportive of the Navy's requirements. It has been appreciative and understanding of the work we do, the environment we operate in, and the urgency of our force-development needs. Its 'Make in India' policy has been a bold and welcome initiative and is entirely consistent with what the Navy has pursued for over five decades now. My interactions at various levels of Government leave me very confident that the Navy will continue to receive all the support it needs from the government in its growth and modernisation plans.

QD: How do you envision Indian Navy's growing eminence as an instrument of state policy?



CNS: You are aware that the Navy is a silent service. It operates hundreds of miles away from the shore and distant from the public eye. However, it plays a vital role in protecting India's vast maritime interests. There is growing recognition in the nation and the national leadership of this fact.

As a maritime nation with a natural outflow towards the seas, India has an inextricable link with the seas, and depends on them critically for her economic growth and energy security. This is particularly the case in the 21st century, where the threats and challenges in the maritime domain are as wide and varied as they come. Today, India's economic growth and national development agenda are even more dependent on maritime security than before. Being the nation's primary instrument for ensuring security in the maritime domain, it is inevitable that the strategic importance of the Navy will grow as the nation's economic and geopolitical interests expand outwards.

The Navy's principal objective in the 21st century is to leverage maritime power to ensure that national growth is unhindered both in peace and war. For this, it undertakes a wide spectrum of operations on a daily basis. Good order at sea is a strategic imperative for India's growth and economic development. Protecting and promoting our maritime interests requires an environment that is secure and stable, which in turn needs a collective and collaborative approach in the Indian Ocean region, given the transnational and pervasive nature of threats and challenges the region faces. The Indian Navy, therefore, engages actively with other maritime forces and makes significant contributions to maintaining peace and good order in the region, and in protecting what we see as the 'global commons' in the maritime domain. Other friendly regional navies

recognise the compelling logic for maritime cooperation with India and are appreciative of the Indian Navy's stabilising role in the region.

Today, the Indian Navy is cognisant of all developments in the region, continuously evaluates the changing dynamics in it, and applies course corrections where necessary. It remains a credible, multi-dimensional and networked force that is ready to safeguard India's maritime interests at sea, and to meet any challenge it may face in the maritime domain.

QD: What message would you like to convey to the Veterans through the medium of this Navy Foundation Magazine?

CNS: I take this opportunity to convey to our veterans three short but important messages. First, we remain extremely grateful to them for their pioneering effort in making the Navy the formidable force it is today. Second, we continue to value their support and guidance in all that we do, and the strength they add to the fraternity of serving personnel. And third, their welfare and well-being will continue to be of high importance to us. We will not only continue doing what we can to ensure they are comfortable and well looked after, but also find new ways of doing so. In fact, we have mentioned quite clearly in the Vision Document that the welfare of the veteran community will remain a priority for us.

The Navy has always been an organisation that cares for its personnel. It is my intention to ensure that we carry forward this culture and ensure that our personnel, both serving and retired, receive the best possible support and attention at all times. It is my firm view that our veterans are very much a part of our Navy today, as they were yesterday.



Finally a (true) “Blue Water” Navy!

Vice Admiral Anup Singh (Retd)

Looking back at the proclamation of the Republic, and consequent ‘conversion’ of the Royal Indian Navy to the Indian Navy in 1950, extraordinary changes have taken place since, in the life of the nation and its navy. Three years before that event had come the painful division of the country’s navy. India’s share – an unenviable make-up of 33 vessels that included two old frigates, four sloops, a hydrographic ship, a corvette, and a score smaller platforms – wasn’t the Royal Indian Navy that an independent, vast peninsular country (along with island territories), should have deserved! That frugal offering couldn’t have been any one’s envy and it triggered the nascent (Royal) Indian Navy’s planners to redraft the post war proposals, suggesting a force structure that would include a couple of cruisers, destroyers, frigates, minesweepers, and some auxiliaries and small craft. It was an attempt to raise a ‘*balanced force*’ that would do justice to a maritime state’s defence. This plan never

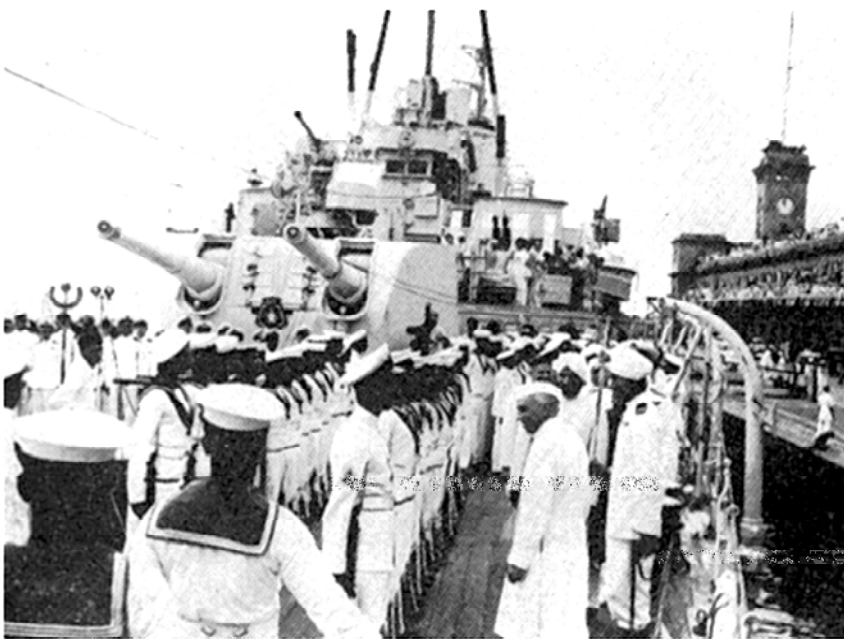
fructified however, and it was to the credit of the post- independence planners that India’s first formal Plan Paper added two Light Fleet Carriers, four submarines, and a Fleet Air Arm to truly ‘balance’ the initial draft. Tributes should be paid to the initiators of that exercise which, so soon after independence, scored a perfect ten for determining an ideal architecture for the nation’s maritime force. Though all the elements of the first Plan Paper did not materialise due to the fiscal imbalance of 1950, induction of two cruisers, three destroyers, six frigates, an amphibious ship, and a couple of small vessels did make a loud beginning. But it was the arrival of the first carrier, Vikrant, in 1961 followed by the first modern tanker a few years later which made us look a formidable, 20th century navy. The late sixties saw a new source of induction – the former Soviet Union, and the Navy received vessels of, what became known as the “Eastern Stream”, at the time. Simultaneously, the strong impetus for a





builder's navy stoked the furnaces of the national industrial establishment which started rolling out indigenous ships that made us more proud than ever before. By the late eighties, the world knew that it had to sit up and take notice of a country that was marching towards self-reliance in sculpting its own maritime force – despite having missed the industrial revolution! In Apr 1989, the Time magazine put up an imposing cover story on India's burgeoning military power. We were brimming with satisfaction, bathed in the glory

of the new look Indian Navy's potential, and started to think that nothing could stop India's unannounced desire for building the prowess for true power projection from the sea. Western powers started looking at us with envy, if not jealousy, and we – the Indian Navy – began to bask in the genteel applause of the world! That was just before all appeared to suddenly crash! In end 1989, the economy started its nose dive, the Government had no alternative but put all capital proposals on the back burner, and money dried up even for fuel and spares. As if this was not sufficient misery, just two years later, the Soviet Union broke up –drying up the resource chain for weapons, critical systems for new projects, and spares for most of the fleet. The depletion of the force was more than conspicuous. This period of eclipse lasted a full decade. While ten years is just a '*moment*' in the life of a nation, it becomes magnified for a developing nation's navy. These were huge negatives in the (poor) decade of the '90s, and had a cascading effect on the planned trajectory of the nation's primary maritime force. The subsequent growth plan had to be

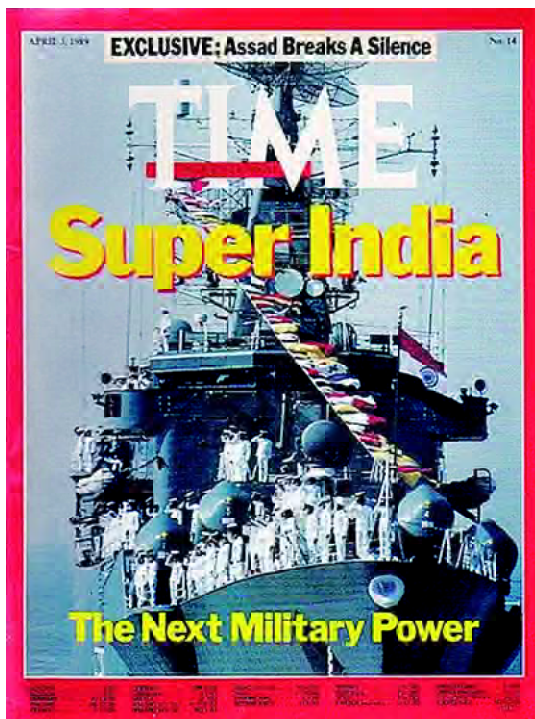


tweaked many a times to cover the serious voids created by that decade.

While full recovery is impossible to envisage, we haven't done badly in the last couple of years. Big ticket acquisitions in the recent past should have restored the nation's confidence in the capacity and capability of its navy. First, the Navy crossed the magic figure of 138 ships – determined as the optimum force level, by the Emergency Committee of the Cabinet (ECC) of 1964! Second, the pace of indigenous construction picked up in the late nineties. And third, the Navy finally started getting its resource elements in the form of Logistic Support Vessels. The arrival of the Vikramaditya, and induction of two Deepak Class Logistic Support Ships before it, have provided fillip to the Blue Water capability of the Indian Navy. Hereafter, there should be no looking back! The one milestone that we await is the commissioning of the first Ballistic Missile Submarine (SSBN) – the Arihant, after successful conclusion of her trials.



However, the current force structure does not mean that one can sit back on one's laurels. Much more needs to be accomplished to replace the ageing part of the fleet – including conventional submarines – and to induct cutting edge technologies that will enable this Navy to stay ahead in our environment that is now more 'full' of challenges than at any other time. In fact, this region that had remained placid for decades after the last war, has, in recent years, got completely transformed with non-traditional, and unpredictable challenges like piracy, drug trafficking, human trafficking, gun running, and most damagingly – maritime terrorism. As if all these challenges were not enough, the frequency of natural disasters that strike our waters has been on the upswing. The aggregate of this scenario requires pre-emptive as well as mitigation capabilities at sea. Which country other than India can be depended upon for security against these threats in the North Indian Ocean? None else! In fact, most countries of the Indian Ocean Rim now recognise India's predominance in the affairs of the ocean, and expect its navy to deliver on their security concerns as well. That means that rather than just depend upon technology for its prowess, the Indian Navy must engage in numerical assessment of requirements for deployment of its platforms even for mundane tasks brought about by these new challenges and responsibilities. That would mean creating a Balanced Fleet for the morrow. Most pre-emptive tasks need patrolling by low-



end platforms like offshore patrol vessels. Therefore these will certainly be required in large numbers. Similarly, more Fleet (Logistic) Support Ships (old nomenclature 'Tankers') will be required in adequate numbers – not just for Fleet activity, but for Task Groups, and for missions involving humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR). The old tankers were small compared to today's needs, and 'embryonic' in the sense that their only purpose was to supply fuel. The first time the concept became contemporary was, with the first indigenously built supply ship "Aditya" which included a hold for containerised provisions, a workshop for mobile fleet maintenance tasks, and, even space for some ordnance for the fleet. The new Fleet Support Ships have gone a step further, and hopefully the future ones will add further versatility to the Navy. Fleet Support Ships provide reach and staying power to a navy. They are what make the first distinction between a 'Brown', and a 'Blue' Water Navy!

There's no gain-saying the fact that a 'potent' maritime force is an inescapable pre-requisite for the defence of a maritime nation. But in our case, one has to understand the geostrategic complexities of the land. It is said that geography is destiny; it is also said that one cannot choose one's neighbours. The figure of 15,000 km length of our land borders may be the envy of many in this world, but contemporary history, and peculiarities of terrain along our



border have denied any benefits of this impressive figure – when it comes to the nation's trade. Therefore, India's engagement with the rest of the world is dependent almost entirely, on the seas. Our connectivity with the seas is from the Indian peninsula. Therefore, it would not be out of place to describe (treat) our nation as an island state for all practical purposes. That is why India is dependent on the seas for 95% of its trade by volume, and 77% by value. The rest is enabled by air, and (very little) by road –only with some neighbours. So, when most of our global economic engagement is dependent upon our sea lines of communication (SLOCs), these trade routes need protection, and that protection can come only from the navy. Now-a-days, it has become normal for navies to conduct SLOC security patrols, and not leave them only for times of crises. This activity is meant to firstly acquaint a fleet with the environment, and trade route density; secondly – to create confidence amongst vessels plying cargoes to/from Indian ports, about their security. Few would be aware that Indian ports handled close to a billion tons of cargo last fiscal, and this figure is growing at a rate of 5.5% annually. That traffic, translated to 765 Billion US Dollars in 2013-14. The navy therefore, protects, and supports the Indian economy, apart from its many other roles. This is a fact that is not seen, and not realised by the common man. But that is also because the navy is known as the '*silent*' service. In India's case, due to our location, and geographic construct, it

has become a responsibility for India to provide security to international routes passing close to its shores, and island territories. The North Indian Ocean is one of the most critical and dense shipping water bodies – because all cargo that moves from the Pacific to the Atlantic, (and vice versa), has to transit through these waters. Besides, two-thirds of the world's fossil fuels move through these waters. In this scenario, the Indian Navy has had its resources stretched to the limit, due to vastly added responsibilities in the wake of new, non-traditional challenges. The demand for more platforms is therefore a 'need', not a 'desire'!

What kind of a navy should the country therefore be looking for hereafter? It should be a navy that is a visible deterrent to anyone harbouring nefarious designs against India – be it in terms of territorial ambitions on land, maritime terrorism or other forms of asymmetric warfare at sea. It should be a navy that possesses the sinews for flexibility, adaptability, perseverance, and quick mobilisation – even in times of natural or man-made disasters. The world around us should be able to identify India's Navy as a versatile maritime force that can be capable of





power projection even in distant waters; have the capability to launch expeditionary operations, joint operations, and even combined operations intended to restore peace in any area. In other words it should be a “standing” navy, as against a “fleet in being”.

The Indian Navy had imbibed the trait of exercising sea control a long time ago, and demonstrated that ability with great aplomb during the '71 war, the Kargil conflict, and Operation Parakram. We can ill afford to lose that art! That ability requires numbers, contemporary technology, and the right mix. Well, a truly Blue Water Navy is finally here, and with three carriers – in the next couple of years – will add the muscle to expand the arc of influence that India must possess. There should be no more reservations on this score, because more and more Indians are now beginning to look seawards and clearly understand that their money is being put to good use through investments in the Navy. The new Government has done justice by endorsing the planned

growth of the Indian Navy. One hopes for good tidings to keep coming, and for voids to be filled up soon. The old and ageing platforms must give way to newer ones soon. If a war is ever fought by the modern Indian Navy, there would be no better place to witness it than from an IN platform, for it will be carried to the adversary's heart from stand-off range, and with no room for him to manoeuvre. But much more importantly, it is the force architecture of today's Blue Water Navy that will prove as a deterrent to any potential adversary by keeping the *Balance of Power* equation tilted in India's favour. Finally, this article would be incomplete if it did not pay handsome tribute to our naval architects who manage the design bureau – the Directorate General of Naval Design, or DGND. They are the ones who have fulfilled the dream of a builder's navy, and continue to cross new milestones with every design, and innovation.

This navy has always lived up to its credo: “Anything, Anytime, Anywhere”!

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'Blue Waters' and the Indian Navy: India's 'Blue-Riband' Force

Vice Admiral Pradeep Chauhan (Retd.)

A surprisingly persistent question that has, over the six-and-a-half-plus decades since the country's Independence, dogged the Indian media and many an Indian armchair-strategist alike is whether the Republic of India possesses a true 'Blue-Water Navy' or whether this is merely one more elusive chimera. The younger lay-reader could certainly be excused for wondering what this apparent 'colour-consciousness' is doing lurking about like some vestigial-organ amongst the political correctness of the body-politic of contemporary India! Nevertheless, thanks to the reach and power of the print and electronic media, the term seems stuck in our strategic consciousness.

For the most part, three colours have been used to colloquially describe and differentiate between maritime spaces (collectively called 'waters') as a function of their distance from one's own land-territory. These are 'Brown Waters', 'Green Waters', and, 'Blue Waters' and these are often used (albeit equally colloquially) to categorise the world's navies.

'Brown Waters' and 'Brown Water Navies'

'Brown Waters': It is generally conceded that the term 'Brown Waters' was first popularised (if not coined) in the USA and generally described waters of navigable bays, rivers and estuaries — all of which were characterised by a source (whether coastal or riverine) of soil run-off from the land into the sea.

'Brown-Water Navies': Insofar as navies are concerned, '*Brown-Water Navies*' are those that are competent and capable of being deployed in 'brown waters', but cannot really operate at

any significant distances from the coast for any significant periods of time. The term 'Brown Water' is also occasionally used as a prefix to describe a specific segment of a nation's military forces that is deployed either exclusively or principally within riverine environments or for close-coast operations. In such a case, the platforms are often collectively known as '*Brown-Water Combatants*', even though they may well be only one of many components of a 'Blue-Water Navy' — and not a 'Brown-Water' one. Some 'Brown-Water Navies' operate solely in landlocked seas, while others are deployed in riverine waters that may or may not provide access to an open sea or ocean. Illustrative examples of the former would include the Kazakhstan Navy, the Azerbaijan Navy and the Turkmenistan Navy — all of which operate solely in the Caspian Sea. The latter case is exemplified by the Paraguayan Navy, which is a riverine force operating in the Paraguay River and Paraná River, and, the Lao People's Navy, which operates on the Mekong River. A 'mixed example' is offered by the Bolivian Navy, which operates in Lake Titicaca, as also in the larger rivers of Bolivia.

However, the term *per se* offers no indicator of the offensive or defensive fire-power of the navy (or segment of the navy) concerned. A very large number of 'Brown Water' military maritime forces — whether entire 'navies' or segments of these — have substantial (i.e., ample) and substantive (i.e., meaningful) offensive and defensive firepower (along with associated surveillance-chains) in multiple dimensions — surface, sub-surface, air and cyber-space — and some even extend these capabilities to space-based surveillance!



‘Green Waters’ and ‘Green-Water Navies’

‘Green Waters’: Once again coined in the USA, the term ‘Green Waters’ is an even more colloquial, recent, and, fairly non-specific expression. Its contemporary usage is to describe the sea areas that extend seawards from the shore of a coastal nation-state up to the outer limit of its extended Exclusive Economic Zone (i.e., a maximum width of 350 nm from the promulgated baselines of the coastal State).

‘Green-Water Navies’: Most of the world’s navies fall under this category. Indeed, a typical online search would probably commence with ‘Wikipedia’, which states (in its usual authoritative but often unsubstantiated fashion) that insofar as the expression ‘Green-Water Navies’ goes, “..... *authors have applied it to other national navies that can project power locally, but cannot sustain operations at range without the help of other countries. Such navies typically have amphibious ships and sometimes small aircraft carriers, which can be escorted by destroyers and frigates with some logistical support from tankers and other auxiliaries. The term is sometimes applied to navies that focus solely on coastal defence*” [emphasis added]. However, since terms such as the ones under discussion here are colloquial in nature and not definitive in any doctrinal sense, they are open to several interpretations. On the one hand, it is nearly self-evident that the US Navy, with its impressive logistic and operational ability to sustain protracted naval deployments on a global scale, is far more than a ‘Green-Water Navy’. On the other hand, even for the US Navy, its ability for timely response and protracted deployment — in distant waters — cannot be sustained without “*the help of other countries*”. It is this very constraint that forms the governing rationale underpinning the American quest to

secure and retain naval ‘bases’ in countries other than the USA itself. Restrictions in timely-reach and protracted-sustenance similarly underpin the US Navy’s drive for cooperative/collective concepts of maritime security — such as the “Global Maritime Partnership Initiative”, the “Proliferation-Security Initiative” and even the many “*coalitions of the willing*” that are typified by the Coalition Task Forces (CTFs) engaged in ongoing naval missions against terrorism and piracy. If this ‘embedded constraint’ is removed from the description (if not ‘definition’) of Green-Water Navies’, then a number of navies could no longer be confined to the Wikipedia listing. In sum, there is clearly a need for lay-readers and media-pundits alike, to temper the enthusiasm with which Wikipedia articles are — all-too-often — accepted as gospel truths. Wikipedia itself is hardly to be blamed, as it does include such caveats as “*It is often not clear what they [various authors] mean, as the term is used without consistency or precision.*”

‘Blue Waters’ and ‘Blue-Water Navies’

‘Blue Waters’: This is an older term which, in contemporary usage, denotes waters that simultaneously conform to several criteria. In spatial terms, ‘Blue Waters’ are generally considered to lie at distances in excess of the outer limits of the extended ‘Exclusive Economic Zone’ (i.e., at distances exceeding 350 nm from the promulgated baselines of a coastal State.) However, it would be readily appreciated that ‘distance’ cannot be a sole criteria, because it is entirely possible for the ‘waters’ found at this distance from one coastal State to be so close to another coastal State as to themselves constitute ‘Brown Waters’! So there is a facet of ‘depth’ that probably needs to be additionally factored. This leads us to a delightfully vague description wherein the ‘*deep waters of distant oceans*’ constitute ‘Blue Waters’!



‘Blue-Water Navies’: Here we find a third criterion that must be added to ‘distance’ and ‘depth’ — that is ‘duration of time’. It is this ‘temporal’ consideration, added to the spatial ones of ‘distance’ and ‘depth’ that allows one or another of the world’s navies to colloquially describe itself (or be classified by others) as a ‘Blue-Water Navy’. Thus, a ‘Blue-Water Navy’ is one that can *sustain* its required (or ‘desired’) maritime operations in distant, deep waters, without *continuous* logistic-support or resources from other nation-States. As the preceding discussions on ‘Green-Water Navies’ show, it is well-nigh impossible to do without ‘*continual*’ (periodic) logistic (or even ‘operational’) support. However, a ‘Blue-Water Navy’ ought not to require ‘*continuous*’ (non-stop) support in terms of either logistics or operations. Does this provide any greater specificity? I’m afraid not. This is because, while it is all very well to correctly distinguish between ‘continuous’ (‘uninterrupted’ or ‘non-stop’) and ‘continual’ (‘start-and-stop’ or ‘periodic’), it is not practicable to unequivocally state whether support that is ‘periodic’ is also to be ‘regular’ (that is, provided at fixed intervals of time). If, ‘irregular-periodicity’ is to be acceptable, then is there some outer limit of time for the occurrence? (i.e. the ‘request-for’ or the ‘provision-of’ logistic and/or operational support)? What all this shows is that the purported certainty’ or ‘definitiveness’ with which ‘largely-Wikipedia-informed’ media-analysts make their (often pontifical) assertions, is actually very far from being either certain or doctrinal.

This brings us to the central point of whether or not the Indian Navy is or is not a ‘Blue-Water Navy’.

Since India continues to consciously and deliberately abjure any formal military/naval alliances with other regional and/or extra-regional maritime powers, the Indian Navy —

unlike navies such as the British Royal Navy (which Wikipedia surprisingly includes in its list of ‘Blue-Water Navies’!), or, for that matter, many of the navies of either NATO or the European Union — has to achieve and attain ‘*holistic balance*’ and **cannot** afford to concentrate upon developing any specific set of ‘niche capabilities’, leaving the remaining alliance-partners to provide other capabilities.

This business of ‘*holistic balance*’ is not a simple one. Take, for example, the ‘Brown Water’ imperatives of coastal security. Given the profusion of ‘malevolent’ or ‘ill-intentioned’ State-sponsored, non-State actors that strut about the regional maritime stage, it is quite evident that the Indian Navy needs to devote itself to the addressal of issues that impinge upon the sanctity of the maritime borders of India and the consequent territorial integrity of the country. Thus the Indian Navy will have to field competent and numerically-sufficient ‘brown-water combatants’ capable of effective deployment and operation in the surface and air mediums in particular, with a particularly heavy investment being made in surveillance — both physical and cyber-based — and in acquiring, retaining and (perhaps most important of all) disseminating ‘capability’ by way of training and optimal organisational and deployment patterns. Of course, as the Indian Coast Guard consolidates its ongoing exponential growth and brings about the requisite correspondence between its ‘capacity’ and its ‘capability’, the pressure on the Indian Navy to sustain and deploy ‘Brown Water’ forces will decline.

In any case, navies do not assure the territorial integrity of their nations by standing off their own coasts, but rather, by remaining ‘poised-in-theatre’ off the coast of a current or potential adversary, capitalising upon their versatility (adaptability-in-roles and flexibility-in-



response), mobility, reach, and endurance — all of which are the intrinsic characteristics of warships. In times short of conflict, the Indian Navy is engaged in (a) ‘gaining India a geopolitically advantageous position’, and, (b) in ‘shaping the probable maritime battle-space’. It does so through sustained perception-management mechanisms. This requires that the Indian Navy lodge itself permanently and prominently into the collective consciousness of the individual littoral states that form the region of our maritime interest, namely, the India-Pacific. This, in turn, requires preponderant ‘Blue-Water’ capability and is what drives the Indian Navy’s impressive indigenous ship-building programme. As is the case with all navies, the effectiveness of our Navy is a direct function of perceptions of its military capacity and capability.

Centred upon a concept of two Carrier Battle Groups (CBGs) — one on either seaboard — and supported by between four and nine underway-replenishment-cum-Fleet-Support ships — the Indian Navy already fields a blue-water capability that is far in excess of many erstwhile global maritime powers such as the British Royal Navy. Its contemporary and future aircraft carriers (the *Vikramaditya* and the future-*Vikrant*) displace some 45,000 tonnes and, with their complement of MiG 29K aircraft (soon to be joined by the naval LCA) are considerably larger and more capable than the ones deployed by India thus far. The aircraft carriers currently in the pipeline are even larger — of the order of 65,000 displacement-tonnes and may even be provided with nuclear-propulsion. A formidable mix of state-of-the-art guided-missile destroyers (of the *Delhi* Class, the *Kolkata* Class, the *Ranvijay* Class and the *Rajput* Class) and guided-missile frigates (of the *Shivalik* Class, the *Teg* Class, the *Talwar* Class, the *Brahmaputra* Class, and, the *Godavari* Class) — all equipped with the latest versions of the BrahMos and the Barak

family of missiles and carrying multi-role helicopters — along with nuclear-propelled submarines such as the *Chakra* Class SSNs, make each CBG a formidable, synergistic and mutually-supporting conglomerate of warships centred upon an aircraft carrier. The adjective ‘synergistic’ is particularly apt because the combat-capability of a CBG as a whole is almost always greater than the sum of its parts.

The deployment-pattern of the Indian Navy over the past decade offers eloquent testimony to its ‘Blue-Water’ capability. In the aftermath of the *tsunami* of 2004 that devastated much of the Indo-Pacific regions, the Indian Navy was able to **simultaneously** deploy substantive naval forces on HADR (Humanitarian-Assistance and Disaster-Relief) missions in a broad swathe from Indonesia to Maldives in a far more comprehensive manner than many navies that are often trumpeted as being ‘advanced’ navies. Likewise, the Indian Navy was a ‘first-respondent’ in the aftermath of the seaquake off Java, Indonesia, in May 2006. Our warships have sustained **continuous** and extremely effective presence in the Gulf of Aden and off the coast of Somalia — at distances of some 1,800 nm (3,330 km) from Mumbai, for the past **six** years! Indian Naval ‘Overseas Deployments’ to the far reaches of East Asia (as far as Vladivostok, 5575 nm [10,325 km]) on the one hand, and to Atlantic Ocean ports such as Brest, France (6,600 nm [12,225 km]) — involving self-sustaining frontline flotillas of guided-missile destroyers, frigates and underway-replenishment tankers — have now become routine activities.

These facts speak for themselves in eloquent response to the query raised far too often by a plaintive (and perhaps Wikipedia-fed) media — “Is the Indian Navy a truly ‘Blue-Water navy’?” The unequivocal answer is a resounding “Yes”.

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Our Blue Water Navy

Vice Admiral Pradeep Kaushiva (Retd.)

As a nine year old I was privileged to photograph Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru from close quarters and felt a special bond with him thereafter. So, it was natural that his assessment that India had transitioned from bullock cart age to the bicycle age would fire my imagination when I was twelve. It was many years before I realised that the pronouncement had issued forth not from Nehru the politician but from Nehru the philosopher. And, that he was not referring to the mode of transportation of his countrymen at all!



It was Nehru the strategist who initiated the transformation of Indian Navy (IN) from a coastal force at the time of Independence to a Blue Water force with the acquisition of a light aircraft carrier, two cruisers and eight reasonably modern frigates within his time as the Prime Minister. The IN of the 1960's that we joined, thus, comprised two types of ships viz. many World War II vintage ships with steam leaking pipes, shorting wires, soundless telephones; and a few air conditioned, modern

ships with enclosed bridge! If the crew of the former considered themselves the real professionals who could and did extract extraordinary performances from their ageing equipment and machinery, the crew of the latter considered themselves the elite handpicked to handle modern equipment. The thread running common to both groups was that they firmly believed in their ability to do the nation proud in the maritime domain east of Suez and west of Singapore – a catchy phrase those days. But, it pretty much described aspirations of the generation born after Independence and Blue Water notion of their mentors from the earlier generation.

A few examples of how we operated those days. During a visit to Colombo, Captain of the Royal Ceylon Navy (Commander of Sri Lanka Navy in today's parlance and counterpart of our Chief of the Naval Staff) came on board our Training Ship to address and informally interact with the Cadets after the formal "Call On" by our CO had been "Returned" equally formally by the R Cy N Chief of Staff! During the next leg of the "foreign cruise" – as the overseas deployments were known those days - our CO, a senior Lt Cdr, was hosted and accommodated overnight by the Indian High Commissioner at his residence in Kuala Lumpur when the ship visited Port Swettenham (since renamed Port Kelang) in Malaysia. In 1969-70, two Commanders in command of training ships, who were bosom pals from their Long C days, would invariably be together in one or the other ship when in harbour. But at sea, the one who was marginally senior in the Navy List could unhesitatingly call the other to order by signal to effect "Your last signal tantamount to insubordination at sea. Request refrain in future. Proceed expeditiously to



execute the last order"! And, when their ships entered harbour next, the two were singing along together once again!

History has it that around that time, there were great changes in the offing for Indian Navy. Acquisition of the Foxtrot Class submarines, Petyas (Kamorta Class) and missile boats (Project 205 better known as AK Project named after the CNS, Admiral AK Chatterji in whose time the contract was signed!); was followed up by the Rajput Class, Vijaydurg Class and the minesweepers (called SNF's, SNR's and SNM's respectively in deference to Admiral SN Kohli during whose tenure this contract was signed!). In between the Projects AK and SNM/R/F, Blue Water credentials of the service were spectacularly established in December 1971 even though those were contiguous area operations and not quite out of area contingencies.

A few gems from those days. INS Krishna towing one of the first missile boats from Sandheads (off Kolkata) to Bombay (Mumbai) found the boat always approaching too fast for comfort when connecting up. When queried about the high speed of approach, the boat CO informed that he could do about 12 knots without damaging his engines. XO Krishna pondered this for a while and then nodded very understandingly "That seems quite fair because even I can do about 12 knots without damaging my engines" – the brand new boat's minimum speed corresponded well with good old Krishna's maximum speed! The dawn of a new age was clearly imminent!! On 7th Dec 71, I was ordered to go to the Maritime Operations Room (MOR) and collect the sailing signal for my ship. Nobody seemed to know or even care about the temporarily commissioned INS Sagardeep's sailing, so I was sequentially referred to the inner chambers till I was in the sanctum sanctorum of the MOR. As I sought

the missive on the mezzanine floor, I walked the C-in-C, Vice Admiral SN Kohli and everyone's attention focused upon him! The exploding expression of C-in-C's frustration at not knowing where his own Western Fleet was and why it was not where it was supposed to be, doing what it was supposed to; was invaluable education for me, the interloper, who had no business being there at the time. As if reading my thoughts, Admiral Kohli suddenly looked up, sighted me, stopped mid-sentence and demanded to know who I was. No key functionary seemed to know and those who did, wisely opted silence. So, it was left for me to announce my own introduction and the mission. I did not miss the colour of C-in-C's outburst even in the flourish of all concerned, and many not concerned, to hand over my sailing signal and bundle me out of the MOR!

Interestingly, Indian Navy's exercises, such as the Joint Exercises Tricomalee; and professional interactions with other navies, such as with HMS Onslaught in 1967, remained frozen between mid-1960's and early 1990's even though port calls – incoming as well as outgoing- continued.

Modernisation of armed forces is not a one time event but an ongoing activity. So it has been with the IN. Yes, the Cinderella Service had its own year-to-year ups and downs relating to budgetary allocations. But over decades, its growth was steady. In 1987, with the acquisition of Viraat, the nation came to own a two carrier Navy. The three year lease of Chakra gave to IN the foretaste of a new dimension altogether. By this stage, the Navy's warship design bureau was fully at work and the indigenous construction had begun to look beyond the Leanders – standard, stretched and broad beam. Parallely, the IN was learning to integrate equipment acquired from diverse sources and based on different design philosophies,



technology bases and functional doctrines. Over the next twenty years, the service grew in a balanced manner even though the process was sub optimal and less than cost effective. This period sequentially saw the resource crunch, forex crisis, Asia's economic crisis etc. the budgetary allocations oscillated and the IN acquisitions' mean line of advance described the equivalent of three steps forward, one sideways and two backwards before repeating some variant of this cycle. But even during this plodding progress, the navy's inventory of operational assets was getting continuously upgraded – somewhat slowly in numbers as the old units were also retiring, but surely in capability as unit for unit there was firepower enhancement. And, most importantly, the personnel were getting used to maintaining and operating increasingly sophisticated machinery and equipment. Training curricula of officers and sailors have also since been upgraded to make up for the lack of ab initio scientific temper that Pt Nehru had alluded to close to sixty years ago.

Today, as IN fields the Vikramaditya, Kolkata, Kamorta, Chakra II, P8is; looks to deploy the the first indigenously designed and constructed nuclear propulsion ballistic missile submarine INS Arihant and prepares to progressively induct 143 platforms currently on order including the first indigenous aircraft carrier in the coming years; the mood is clearly upbeat. Admittedly, there are gaps – such as in construction line for conventional submarines, in timely development of assured performance equipment at originally agreed prices by DRDO, in modernisation of Government owned shipyards and in demonstrated resolve of the political leadership to provide uninterrupted funding for approved projects.

A few signs of the changing times! IN today conducts regular maritime exercises with

countries like USA, Brazil, South Africa, France, Indonesia, Thailand, Russia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Oman and UK. Visits by IN ships to several countries in the IOR as well as to the Far East, Mediterranean, East Africa, Gulf etc. are also conducted regularly for operational and exercise requirements. Such professional interactions are facilitated by close coordination between the diplomats and naval officers. I fondly recall a High Commissioner ringing me up in Vizag to assure every support during my Fleet's forthcoming visit to his parish. He was true to his word and more. Predictably, the visit was a resounding success. Attributes of human nature and professionalism, however, are not uniformly distributed. There was another High Commissioner who wanted to host a Lunch on my Flagship. When I gently pointed out the impropriety and offered to host it instead, he was not only insistent but flippant as well in suggesting if he could do so in another ship and wondered whether it would help matters if he took it up with the CNS. At this stage, I rejected the request outright and invited him to go right ahead and seek CNS' intervention. For a good measure, I added that the CNS' decision would be no different and in the unlikely event of a contrary order being given, I would unhesitatingly disobey it and accept the consequences. I heard nothing further on the issue but, again predictably, this visit was only moderately successful. Fortunately, such instances are few and far between. Mutual respect, cordiality and professional coordination between the Navy and the Foreign Service directly contributed in India's swift response during the 2004 tsunami. IN's actions did the nation proud and reaffirmed her blue water credentials.

Happily, things are a changing elsewhere too. There is increasing acceptance that one cannot expect the Ambassador Car assembly line to deliver a Honda City and also that if one pays



peanuts, one will get only monkeys. Hopefully with a politically stable Government at the centre now, matters maritime will receive the attention that they merit – Prime Minister Modi’s announcement to this effect from the flight deck of the Vikramaditya and President Pranab Mukherji’s announcement to the first joint session of the new Parliament about setting up of a National Maritime Authority were good auguries. The Government’s challenge is to demonstrate to the nation that these are not mere words crafted to draw upon the public sentiment or to further strengthen the bureaucratic strangle hold over professionals. The Defence Acquisition Council’s recent clearance for six conventional submarines to be made in India is a small, much belated but significant step in the right direction. There can be no doubt that the nation needs separate full time Ministers of Finance and Defence. But, if a single individual donning these two hats can expedite the modernisation programmes of the three services, there may well be some good

coming out of a bad arrangement. Another opportunity to reaffirm its understanding of and sensitivity towards the Armed Forces will also become available to the Government of India when the 7th Pay Commission recommendations come up for its consideration. To deliver 21st century tasks, the armed forces not only need to attract and induct suitable personnel but also to retain and keep them motivated. The totalities of their service conditions including the pay package and lzzat in the relative order, which have been systematically diluted over time, need a serious review as a matter of utmost urgency. It has been historically and universally well understood by all governments – whether democratic, autocratic or even theocratic - that the gun matters but it is the man behind the gun that makes the difference. Only when our own Government does so too, will the nation’s Blue Water Navy and her sister services be able to celebrate “Achhe Din”.

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Learning the basics 60 years ago– INS Venduruthy

Captain S. Prabhala (Retd)

Joining the Navy was a pure accident, not a planned career move in my case. Soon after graduation in Electrical Engineering from Guindy Engineering College, Madras, in April 1953, I was lucky to get a job with Larsen & Toubro, Madras as a Technical Assistant since jobs were scarce in those days. My job was to sell Caterpillar earthmoving equipment, John Deere tractors and Coles cranes. One day, sometime in November 1953, an unemployed classmate of mine asked me whether I would like to join him on a free trip to Bangalore adding that Bangalore had no Prohibition. Why

not, I thought and applied for the Direct Entry Naval Officer’s job advertised that day. In any case, I was not greatly enjoying what I was doing in L&T.

In January 1954 my friend and I were asked to appear before the Selection Centre, Cubbon Road, Bangalore. I went through the precarious obstacle jumps and Tarzan rope swings but, halfway through, my friend withdrew saying that he came to get a job, not to risk his life! At the end of the third day, I was interviewed by Cdr Godrej. He was worried that I was under-



weight. I did not give it further thought and went back to Madras.

I was therefore surprised to get an appointment letter a month later asking me to report to the Basic and Divisional School in Cochin on 8th March, 1954. I was an Acting Sub-Lieutenant and my salary was to be Rs. 320 per month, an improvement of Rs. 80 over what L&T was paying me. There was hardly any opposition from my parents even though there was no family tradition of serving in the Defence Services. My father, who was then serving in Vizag, apparently met Captain B.S. Soman, Commanding Officer, INS Circars and must have been satisfied with what he was told.

Lt Cdr Kripal Singh was the head of Basic and Divisional School. I do not remember the name of the course officer, but Lt G Nadkar, Lt Narasimhan, Lt Rodrigues (migrated to Australia soon after) and Lt M M Atal come to my mind as instructors. We were about twenty five in all – Marine Engineers, Electricals, Supply and Secretariat and Instructors. The Himalayan mountaineer M S Kohli was among the Instructor Trainees. The 'L's were: B R Vasanth, P G Dongrey, H D Singh, N C Sinha, G C Bhatnagar, J R Mehra and myself. Among the 'E's were Darshan Singh, brother of Kripal Singh, who had a penchant for getting into trouble.

The first appointment was with the tailor who in a very short time stitched the uniforms. No winter clothing for now; that was to come in INS Valsura later. We were put through the usual breaking-in for new entrants: parade drill, seamanship, sailing, swimming, etc. And of course, how to eat with knife and fork; how not to blush when risqué stories were told at mess nights; how to dance; that port wine is always passed to the left and that POSH was an acronym for **P**ort **O**utbound **S**tarboard

Homebound, the preferred location of cabin for voyage between England and India to avoid the sun. Royal Navy culture and traditions had not yet disappeared. There were still a handful of Royal Navy Officers on deputation including the Chief of the Naval Staff. Our Parade training instructor was a RN Warrant Officer.

We spent a few days each in the Gunnery School, ND School, TAS School and Signals School to learn the basics of each discipline. And one day on board INS Tir.

INS Garuda was just a year old and was commanded by Cdr McGregor RN (if my memory is right) and we were taken up in a Sealand plane two at a time. Lt. Menon was the pilot when I flew and he was not amused when I went forward to have a better look; the plane tilted dangerously!

Weather was hot and humid and hours on the parade ground in the hot sun was certainly not fun. Most excruciating were the weekly cross country runs.

Woodlands Hotel was the destination for Sunday breakfast. When we were allowed to sail independently, S. Kalidas(E) and I made the mandatory trip to Vypeen Island and Bolgatty Palace. The Chinese fishing nets were a fascinating sight, as was the Jewish town in Fort Cochin.

Commodore Soman, who had moved from Vizag to Cochin by then, addressed us at the start of our course. He bluntly told us, "If I ask you what made you join the Navy, you will probably say 'to serve the country' thinking that is what I would like to hear. Be honest – you joined the Navy for the pay. It is a perfectly good reason, nothing to be ashamed of. But deserve it by doing your job well and honestly. Earn the respect of your men because that's what



matters in the end.” True words from a man whom I came to know well later and admired as a forthright, patriotic and no-nonsense person!

My course-mate, Prabhakar Dongrey met Asha, daughter of Commodore Soman, in the Badminton court and that was the start of a romance which led to their marriage later.

Three and half months were over soon and we boarded the Madras Mail onward to Jamnagar which took all of three days in those leisurely times.

I never served in Venduruthy again - unless being a “Venduruthy Additional” when I was on

deputation to Bharat Electronics counts - but visited it often later in my career. The last occasion was a Sonar Symposium a few years ago. The late Rear Admiral K R Nair (Retd), a TAS officer himself, was the guest of honour. His sense of humour was well known and he regaled us with witty anecdotes. One is unforgettable: As CO Venduruthy he was having a tough time with Cdre. Soman. One day while passing by the Church at Velankanni, known for fulfilling wishes of its devotees, he went in on an impulse and said a prayer for his transfer. Within a few days, his prayer was granted: **Soman** was transferred!

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Marching on – INS Venduruthy

Lieutenant Augustin Raja

INS Venduruthy has strived hard to meet all infrastructure requirements of developing navy in terms of training. Today the base is bustling with activities round the year. Passing through Travancore Gate, INS Venduruthy is one the first Naval Base that most officers and sailors see in their naval careers. It also plays a very important role in terms of providing helping hand to civilian counterparts like state police etc. Every year free medical camps along with various other activities are organised for local residents. Various relief operations undertaken by the unit like assistance to drowning fisherman at sea has been appreciated by the government.

Decades on, now it houses some of the Navy's Ivy League training institutions. The task of organising the annual Navy fest during the Navy Day celebrations rests with INS Venduruthy which then throws open the Naval Base to local residents. It also equips and imparts training on changing technologies to the Indian as well as Officers and sailors trainees from the friendly foreign countries. The Establishment is advancing steadily and marching ahead and taking on new responsibilities and roles of a modern and growing navy.

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A salute for bitter pill

Commodore Vimal Kumar (Retd)

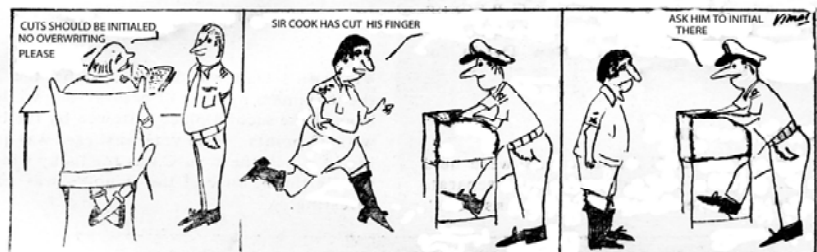
INS Venduruthy was in its twenties when I put first step in this establishment of knowledge in 1966. B & D School of this naval base was the gateway for newcomers like me. The Staff of School was nice. We could see officials after dogwatches for any personal problem. Before joining Navy as Sub-Lt, I was involved in many extracurricular activities in university life, but was unable to pursue any one of them in the Navy. It was hurting me.

One day I mustered courage and entered the office of Training Coordinator after dogwatches. He looked straight in my eyes and asked what matter was? I remained silent. Just to make me comfortable he asked me what were you doing before joining Navy? With this I got life in my tongue and politely mentioned that while doing M.Sc. Physics I was involved in many areas in Allahabad. I was university Capt. of rowing, represented university in swimming and water polo, had record in 100 m free style swimming and was associated with press. He exclaimed what press! "Sir, I was making cover cartoons of a Humour magazine and occasionally contributed cartoons to two national dailies" was my reply. For this hobby I was paid well. He stood up patted me, took a brief walk in room and sat in his chair. I got elevated, not realizing that soon I was going to get a bitter pill. "What do you want from me?" was his question. "Sir I want to participate in aquatic competitions," was my submission. With this there was a silence for a while. He said I value your talent. For the time being you have to forget swimming etc. After training when you get appointed on ship, manage this sport.

Use your other talent when you grow but press material must be cleared from service.

Later when I joined my first ship, I realized that sportsman were termed as sports party and valued only during competitions. In my many other appointments, whenever there was an opportunity I organized swimming or pulling teams and teams mostly won the swimming championships and regatta.

As for cartooning goes, I made only two cartoons in service, one for Eastern Naval News that is reproduced below-



ENC News Oct. 1973

BY Lt. Vimal Kumar, INS Nistar

The other was for a famous Russian painter who had visited our ship *Nistar* in Odessa in 1971. Forty three years later, this cartoon and related event created excitement amongst artists in an exhibition in Navi Mumbai and became a good story for Times of India and other media in 2013. I will write about that interesting story sometimes later in "Quarterdeck".

Finally, I salute the great officer Commander JS Shahid, who was the Training Coordinator of B & D School for his guidance that once appeared bitter to me, but greatly helped me in service in many way.

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INS Venduruthy – Seventy Glorious Years

Contributed by ASW School, Kochi

INS Venduruthy, as the flagship of the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Southern Naval Command, has burgeoned to become one of the premier establishments of the Indian Navy which provides logistical and administrative support to plethora of units under the Southern Naval Command. INS Venduruthy celebrated its seventy glorious years on 24 June 2013.

The crest of INS Venduruthy depicts three fruit laden coconut palms on the old island of Venduruthy. The motto in Sanskrit “Tejasvani Navadhautamastu” means “Let our learning manifest vigorously”.

INS Venduruthy has a rich history to stake claim for. It is named after the island on which it is situated, the Willingdon Island. Incidentally the Willingdon Island was reclaimed from Kochi Lake to aid the construction of the Port of Kochi in 1936. It was established originally as a small naval contingent way back in 1939 under Royal Indian Navy Captain L Wadeson for defending Kochi and operating a port wireless signal station with just about 20 officers and 50 ratings (sailors). The naval unit was set up at the location just two days prior to the outbreak of World War II. During the war, the rudimentary airstrip near the port was transferred to the Royal Air Force in 1941. It was then called RNAS Chinkara. On 22 June 1943, the facilities were transferred to the Royal Navy. With the ongoing war, the base quickly expanded to become the headquarters of the Royal Navy in southern India.

HMIS (His Majesty's Indian Ship) Venduruthy, with Commander G S Baker RINR (Royal Indian Naval Reserve) at the helm, was

commissioned on 24 June, 1943. In 1946, after the end of the war, the base was deserted and transferred to the Royal Indian Navy which maintained a small establishment of about 20 officers and 130 enlisted men. On 26 January, 1950, when India became a Republic, the name was changed to INS Venduruthy. Post-Independence, following the shifting of some naval training schools to Pakistan, INS Venduruthy was identified to set up corresponding training establishments. The buildings vacated by RNAS Chinkara were earmarked as training schools until new buildings could be constructed. As a result, a majority of training schools/institutes for example Navigation and Direction School, Anti-Submarine Warfare School, NIETT, PT School, CLABS and Seamanship School started functioning under INS Venduruthy.

INS Venduruthy over a period of time has grown and become a statue pillar by supporting and providing a common platform for all the training establishments and schools based in Kochi. Its vision is to pursue and implement significant infrastructure enhancements in a meaningful time frame with concurrent modernisation of the establishment and fulfilling the commitment of sustained support for increasing operational requirements of the West coast by enhancing coastal security and ensuring total logistic support for the professional schools. The mission for INS Venduruthy has been fittingly charted to provide sustained and optimum support in a secure environment for developing trained manpower to significantly improve the operational capabilities of the Indian Navy.

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Shivaji the legend

Vice Admiral SKK Krishnan (Retd.)

The year was 1994 and we in Shivaji were preparing for the Golden Jubilee celebrations scheduled for 15th February 1995. All the scheduled formal events were falling in place. The Governor of Maharashtra was to be the chief guest. All the senior officers had accepted the invitation and had promised to attend. While planning for the formal events like divisions, mess night etc. followed the predictable lines, the question arose about the informal part. We had to put up a grand evening show that befits the occasion. The normal ships concert, pepped up with some energetic escapades by the Cadets and supported by the rich talent of young NWWA members was considered. Then we felt it would have looked rather mundane and wanted to do something different for the Golden Jubilee.

That is when a thought came up why not project the legend of Chhatrapati Shivaji. It actually came from then Cdr Sanjay Deshpande and Mrs. Vishranti Mahajan (wife of Cdr Mahajan) who was independently assisting us to bring out a coffee table book. We realised that the greatest show on Shivaji was the “Jaanta Raja” choreographed and conducted by Sri Balasahab Purandare. This is magnum opus conducted on a large stage, where even elephants come up for some scenes. Somehow we felt such a show would not be appropriate for the occasion. More importantly, we could not have afforded it; given our limited budget. Then we realized that in the life history of Shivaji, there was an incident of his maritime involvement, where he had defeated the British, who were against his building the Janjira fort. Since that story had some maritime dimension to it and immediately appealed to us.

So we approached Sri Balasahab Purandare to see whether he can put up a show relating to

this event. I along with my Cdr Deshpande and Mrs. Mahajan went to Pune and met him in his place at Sanivarwada. A wise old man, Sri Purandare knows every living moment of Shivaji. He operates from a place, which is museum of sorts and has many relics of Shivaji.

I explained our requirements. The show should relate to the maritime event in the life of Shivaji, it should not exceed 45 minutes, should be in Hindi etc.; typical service requirements. He listened patiently and later took us to another room. There he showed us what he had created. When he had gone to Madame Tussaud's in London, he had seen the model of Lord Nelson on the deck and had recreated a similar scene for Shivaji. It was a life size model with a fairly large section of the boat. The whole model was programmed to roll and pitch with sound and light effects, along with a scintillating commentary in Marathi lasting for eight minutes. I was left speechless. He assured me that he understood our requirements entirely and was proud to be associated with an educational institution named after Shivaji.

Knowing the scale of his shows and the precision with which he choreographs them, we were quite scared of the budget even before we approached him. What we saw there confirmed our fears. At the end of our discussions I tenderly broached the subject. He mentioned that his deputy Mr. Pradhan would discuss that with us. Mr. Pradhan took us aside and even before he could say anything I mentioned about our limited budget. He assured us that once Balasahab has committed, the budget will never be an issue. They were proud to put up a special show to meet our unique requirements and we could talk about costs etc. later. We only had to arrange a stage 40m by 20m.



Sri Balasahab and his team were true to their words. They visited the base a few times and we decided to put this up in the football field, so that the entire base can see. The scope was getting bigger and bigger. Once Balasahab realised that we cannot manage to build an appropriate stage, he asked his team to move in. They set up an enormous stage with a variety of props. He was so exacting in his requirements that he wanted all the nearby lights including street lights to be put off, so that the stage stood out in the inky darkness.

The day of rehearsal came and we had an audience of over two thousand. The show went like clock-work. The voice of Harish Bhimani boomed. The entire show was pre-recorded in stereophonic sound and the actors were only lip syncing. All the main actors were leading figures from Pune. We only provided the numbers for the marauding warriors on stage. There was actual firing from the muskets and cannons. It was a breath taking show lasting 42 minutes and left the audience speechless. The final show with all VIPs present was even a grander show and unquestionably the best many had seen within the naval fraternity. Sri Balasahab was duly felicitated on the stage.

Couple of weeks later I got a call inviting me to Pune to meet Balasahab and his team. I felt the time of reckoning had come. The bill will have to be settled. I had mentioned to Mr. Pradhan that our initial budget was Rs 50,000, which could be stretched marginally. From what I saw, the show would have cost nothing less than 5 lakhs. I was quite worried when I entered Sanivarwada, but the meeting they had organised surprised me. The entire team was present and they felicitated me in typical Maharashtrian style with a garland and Thambul. I was quite surprised at such a reception. Then they explained how this show had shown them that they could do something

different than their magnum opus “Jaanta Raja”. They had accepted my initial conditions with many internal doubts. They had never done a show in Hindi to start with. To compress all the events within 45 minutes was another challenge. They had to retain most of their on stage special effects for impact, but slash the time. All in all they felt this was a challenge and were visibly glad that they had excelled on all counts. They felt indebted that INS Shivaji had thrown up this challenge and they could meet that with great success. It was indeed a memorable evening for all of us. I was humbled by their humility and sincerity.

On the way out we stopped by Mr. Pradhan’s office to discuss the bill. He told me we will stick to the amount I mentioned initially; Rs 50,000 for the show and an additional Rs 10,000 for the stage which we could not arrange. He smiled when he saw the relief on my face. My problem however, was not yet over. I needed a specific bill from them for posting on my accounts. He understood my predicament. He rummaged through his table and gave me the bill from the studio that had done all the recordings of various voices. That alone was Rs. 60,000.

Rarely have I seen such a dedicated team. Most of the participants were part time actors and real big-wigs in real life. Whenever they came to the base to practice, they politely refused our hospitality and ate their Dal Chawal (literally) cooked close to the changing room. Their ceremonial attire on stage was very elaborate and we had to give the entire badminton court building to keep their dresses and minor props. It was a show that most in the audience remembered for long. What I remember the most of course was their humility and sincerity. No wonder the show was repeated again 10 years later during the Diamond Jubilee.

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Damage Control Simulator

Commodore C M Belliappa (Retd.)

“Scientists study the world as it is; Engineers create the world that has never been.”
-Theodore Von Karman

INS Shivaji is the premier technical training establishment of the Indian Navy (IN). It imparts high quality technical training to the officers and sailors in general, marine engineers in particular. The establishment obtained ISO certification in 1998. Apart from training the officers and sailors of the IN, the establishment trains personnel from Coast Guard and foreign navy personnel from Sri Lanka, Maldives, Seychelles, Bangladesh to name a few.

For an engineer officer of the IN, commanding INS Shivaji is the dream posting. I was fortunate to have commanded this premier institute from end 1998 to mid-2002.

The training facility in INS Shivaji includes one of the most important facets of training in the navy i.e. Nuclear Biological Defence, Damage Control & Firefighting. The IN constantly strives to keep its training up to date with the emerging technologies. Keeping this in mind, to give impetus to the training, it was decided to establish the Damage Control Simulator (DCS) in NBCD School at INS Shivaji. Earlier on, IN personnel did not have the opportunity to be trained on a Dynamic platform, which could simulate the real life adverse conditions which sometimes prevail on board a ship which is damaged due to flooding in the compartments caused by various factors such as grounding, torpedo hit, to name a few. Only few advanced navies like the Royal Navy had the privilege of such simulators, for training their personnel on damage control.

For those who have less or no knowledge of

what DCS is... A brief—the simulator replicates the inner design of a ship and it simulates flooding of the compartments due to battle action/grounding. Training is run from a control room overlooking the practice area. The DCS is essentially a training system that simulates a realistic stressful situation on board to contain the damage and save the vessel. The ships roll is simulated with hydraulics and the severity of flooding can be changed from minor flooding to most severe flooding. The degree of roll of the ship can be varied up to 15 degrees, fire on board can be simulated with smoke generators and blackout is also simulated to give real feel of a damaged ship. The DCS contributes immensely in driving away fear among the trainees and in improving team building. Apart from training ship's crew on damage control, this platform can also be exploited to bring cohesiveness in any team, be it naval team or team from industries. The fear inside a totally dark ship which is dangerously flooding is immense and total camaraderie amongst the crew is essential. Training in the DCS will help naval personnel keep their fear under control and make them understand how camaraderie amongst them is essential in crisis.

The contract was awarded by Naval Headquarters to Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) to design, carry out engineering, fabricate, install and commission the DCS. GSL being ship builders, had good knowledge of fabrications, but, they had no knowledge of the hydraulics and engineering of the simulator. Finally, work was sub contracted by GSL to a company- Electro Hydraulics at Chaken, Pune, to carry out the design, engineering, fabrication, installation and commissioning of



the DCS. The company (Electro Hydraulics) had good knowledge of hydraulics, but no knowledge about the Simulator and naval requirements. They had not seen such a simulator till then, neither had they executed similar project in the past. Also, they had very limited knowledge of the layout of a warship. The company therefore, hired Commodore MK Mukherjee (Retd) as their consultant. To every one's surprise the consultant had not seen such a simulator. The situation was such, that, all involved in the project had to integrate their respective expertise, in designing and executing the DCS from scratch. Here, I would like to state, that Cmde Mukherjee's brilliance and his engineering knowledge came into force, during designing of the simulator. He conceptualised the hydraulics and designed it. Cmde Mukerjee was well known to me, during my tenure as Asst Manager (E) in the rank of Lieutenant at Naval Dockyard, Visakhapatnam in 1975, when he was Manager- Fabrication in the yard in the rank of Commander.

Many officers were very sceptical about the success of this project. In fact, there were very strong suggestions to procure readymade simulator from UK. Notwithstanding, we went ahead full steam with the project. A team of two officers and three sailors (one each from E, L & SW specialisation) from Shivaji were made in charge for technical support and coordination. Cdr S G Deval was the leader of the team. We had the first meeting at Shivaji under my chairmanship. The meeting was attended by the simulator team of Shivaji, representatives from DOS (E), GSL and Electro Hydraulics when the basic design was presented.

The project consisted of the dynamic simulator, representing the part of ship in steel which is damaged and a building adjacent to the

simulator, for housing, hydraulic pumps, hydraulic accumulators, control systems, office, stores etc. Number of issues was raised by the core group, which subsequently got clarified and corrected as we went along. The final design took shape after considerable deliberations.

The foundation stone was laid and the project started, though at a slow pace. We had weekly meetings at site without fail, attended by the project team and personnel who were physically involved with the site work. Review meetings were held once a month, attended by all including representative GSL and representative DOS (E). The quarterly review of the project was done under the chairmanship of ACOM (D&R). In one of the review meetings, it was felt that, at least from operational and training point of view, there is a need to depute personnel to UK to understand the training methodology, safety aspects during training, documentation and other issues. Personnel had to gain experience on a working simulator. We decided to depute a team to UK to obtain first-hand information. Naval Headquarters DOS (E) promptly obtained Govt. sanction. The team consisting of Cdr Deval, Lt Jangam and three sailors were deputed to Portsmouth for training on operation of simulator. They were also tasked to obtain details of any shortfall in our design for smooth operation of the simulator. The team did an excellent job their feedback was very valuable, which enabled us to make few minor but very important corrections. Their inputs helped tremendously in designing field exercise, for exploitation of the simulator, record keeping, documentation etc.

The whole project was completed without any hitch, without cost and time over-runs. Even setting to work and trials were conducted very



smoothly and the simulator was commissioned on 18th Dec 2001 by Vice Admiral AS Krishnan, then COM. The commitment demonstrated towards successful completion of the project by Cmde MK Mukherjee, Cdr Deval and his team, M/s Electro Hydraulics and GSL is highly appreciable.

The project is such a great success, thanks to all those involved in the project at I N S Shivaji and is extensively used for training and I am very happy to know that the Navy has now commissioned another identical DCS at Kochi.

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Interesting Episodes from I N S Shivaji

Commander Trilochan Singh Trewn (Retd.)

I served in INS Shivaji, the premier Engineering establishment of Indian Navy four times in various capacities. During these periods various odd and interesting happenings occurred, recalling those today excites interest.

During very early days of commencement of training several Royal Navy officers used to serve in the establishment. One of them was Lt May who served as one of the divisional officers for the artificer apprentices. He was a popular officer. He narrated to me that there used to be no roll call on the individual apprentices during morning parade on the main parade ground. Once, a very senior British Army officer took salute when all personnel were required to be on parade. The parade was held gracefully but four of the apprentices found their uniform misplaced just half an hour before the parade. They joined as a group and planned to scale a small hill close by. There was no boundary fencing/sentry post during those days. They were also bold enough to take their camera along. They reached a high spot overlooking the parade ground. Six clear pictures were taken. They returned undetected, while all were busy in mess for their lunch. After two days Lt May was told this story and he related the same to me later.

The second episode relates to the period when Lt M S Kohli of Mount Everest fame was serving there as an Education Officer. He narrated us the technique of spotting and shooting of 'jungle murgie' as an item of interesting sport. The Royal Navy senior engineer of the establishment had a sports gun. We had neither a gun nor a licence for the same. We persuaded him to part with the gun for just four hours. He did oblige us and gave necessary ammunition too for the game. Similarly we organised a very interesting and daring trip to Tiger's Leap with famous film actress and singer Suraiya who lived in Lonavla town. She came with some of her relations and sang melodious songs to entertain us. On that day we had arranged a menu of her choice of Biryani in the Officers' Mess.

Then I recall a day during the month of August when the local cinema hall inside the base was not yet operational. Therefore there used to be an unusual rush of liberty men proceeding ashore to watch cinema shows in the town. Evening six O'clock show in the town cinema hall was popular. So the liberty truck leaving the base at five O'clock was preferred. One day just at the time of departure of the truck at 1700h the Commanding Officer happened to pass that way in his car. Just then he noticed a



large number of libertymen with their rain coats on their left arm. It was not raining and sky appeared to be clear. The Captain stopped his car and asked the Duty Commander the reason for liberty men carrying heavy raincoats with them. The smart Duty Commander replied that the old structure roof of the cinema hall in the town was leaking and in case of likely rain it was not possible to watch any cinema. The Captain smiled and drove away!

Then about the Navy Ball conducted by Hamid Sayani outside the Officers' Mess of INS Shivaji! We had purchased the brochure for the show two days in advance and had come to participate about half an hour prior to the commencement. We decided to meet our friend the Senior Technical Officer who was staying close to the mess premises adjoining the Navy Ball venue. However when we had reached the Mess we realised that the brochure had been forgotten inside and the keys to the locked room was in the pocket of the Senior Technical Officer. Soon the programme advanced and surprisingly my name was announced as the first prize winner. The item was a two-in-one portable radio and tape recorder set which had just arrived fresh in market. Item was too attractive to be foregone. I got up and requested the announcer to allow me five minutes to get my brochure from nearby locked cabin. I started looking for the cabin owner who could not be located in that hurry. Finally friends advised me not to lose the excellent prize and break the cabin window glass to open and retrieve the brochure. It was done and we got the first prize assuring that we shall pay barrack damage cost. Hamid Sayani specially thanked us for the daring action.

Again during early years of commissioning of INS Shivaji we had an instructor Commander

from Royal Navy posted there. Besides his educational brilliance he was an excellent artist in creating sketches of human beings and surroundings in quick time. Same applied to sketches of local tourist attraction places like Duke's Nose and Tiger's Leap etc. Every Sunday morning near the lake he used to take classes for those interested in the art. About ten sailors responded. This initiative was well rewarded when products of three sailors amongst them were appreciated by two top dignitaries from J. J. School of Arts Mumbai who visited INS Shivaji to meet the talented artists.

One evening we had invited also the Station Master of Lonavla for a get together in the naval base. It became a regular practice every year to maintain harmonious relations with Railways. Lonavla-Mumbai rail link was vital for our premier establishment. One Sunday afternoon, while I was in the Regulating Block as Duty Commander, I saw the Station Master in person entering my office and sought to have a word with me in person. He narrated that every weekend at least twenty apprentices in uniform board the evening Deccan Queen from Lonavla Railway Station to Mumbai in a group. They possess valid tickets but no reservation for seats. For convenience they tend to board the dining car together and occupy the empty seats there. As per normal practice dining table have their plates, spoons, forks, glasses and even full tomato sauce bottles already laid. And even before the train crosses next two stations the young sailors polish off the available tomato sauce, leaving very little for the regular customers entering the dining car. I assured him of the necessary action by deputing one naval patrolman every weekend during this particular time to ensure that sailors do not occupy the dining car in this manner!

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1972 – Yumraj came to stay with us – INS Shivaji

Commodore SK Bhalla (Retd)

In the late evening of my life I wish to share some of the unusual happenings at INS Shivaji, the premier training establishment, during my tenure.

Soon after the 1971 war, I was appointed by early March 1972 as Executive Officer, INS Shivaji. Captain Anmol Rattan was the Commanding Officer and I was to take over from Commander Mullerworth. When I joined, Executive Officer was also acting as Commanding Officer as Captain was away from the establishment. This extended period gave me great opportunity to take over as XO in my own time. After a couple of weeks Commanding Officer returned and Commander Mullerworth parted after a very suitable farewell. He also brought the news that the Establishment will be inspected by FO C-in-C, West, Vice Admiral SN Kohli, in the first week of May 1972. With this news we dug deep into getting the establishment ready for Annual Inspection.

In the month of April, Command Staff Officers came for Departmental Inspection and made report to FO C-in-C, West keeping the Commanding Officer in picture. Then came the day of inspection by the C-in-C! INS Shivaji was looking like a bride, all decked up to receive Admiral and Mrs Kohli. C-in-C arrived at 0900 hrs. His programme was Rounds of the Establishment, a sports fixture and reception in the Wardroom on Day 1, and Divisions and discussions with the Commanding Officer and lunch with senior sailors in their Mess on Day 2. He was also to be presented with collection made in the establishment towards welfare of 1971 war casualties and their families. The Commanding

Officer was in a happy mood. The only function remaining was dinner in Shivaji House in the evening of Day 2.

After seeing off the C-in-C from Senior Sailors' Mess, the Commanding Officer requested me to give him a lift to Shivaji House as his car was tied up with C-in-C. We set out in the jeep. As we came to the Administration Block on the way to Shivaji House he said, "I will go to my office instead as Mrs Rattan is entertaining Mrs Kohli at a NOWA function in Shivaji House". We went to his office. He asked Commander Loveji Mehta (Admiral's Secretary) and me to join him in his Office for informal chitchat. Once there, Captain Rattan and I settled in the double-chair and Loveji in the single-chair. He got up and said, "Satish now that inspection is over I propose to make some reforms as recommended by the Institute of Defence Management Team during their study in the Establishment". He went to his table and picked up the report.

He came back and sat next to me and opened the cover of the report. In the process of doing that he slumped on to me as though he had noticed something unwanted under the coffee table in front. When there was no further movement, Loveji and I realised Captain had fainted.

Cdr Loveji Mehta and I laid him on the floor. I shouted for Captain's Secretary to immediately summon PMO, Ms Arora who was in Shivaji House, attending NOWA function. In the meantime Loveji and I gave Heart Massage and mouth to mouth breathing first aid. His clothes were partially loosened and shoes removed. To our dismay there was no pulse or



movement. PMO arrived in five minutes and repeated the heart resuscitation drill. *Alas, he was gone!!*

News spread like wildfire. Admiral's Secretary informed the Admiral in VIP Block. Whole establishment submerged into gloom. Captain JS Anand (the Command Engineer Officer) who was accompanying the Admiral got me to make a signal to FO C-in-C, West info NHQ. "Regret to report the death of Captain Anmol Rattan due to Heart Attack. Have assumed Command till further Order".

Whole atmosphere in the Establishment changed. Everyone got involved with consoling the bereaved family due to untimely tragedy for the family, Establishment and the Navy. Fortunately, C-in-C, West was present in the Establishment. Mrs Kohli and his presence was a great help in this tragedy. He stayed back to attend the funeral. The funeral was befitting a king with roads lined up with sailors and officers. Town of Lonavla too joined in expressing solidarity with the establishment. Gloom was sought to be controlled by activity, Bhajans and Kirtan, prayer meeting, etc.

During the next 14 days establishment slowly worked its way back to some kind of normalcy.

Soon, one evening while playing hockey for ships' company, Officer of the Day came rushing, "Sir, there has been a major accident. Two trucks that had taken a team of Apprentices to an Outward Bound Exercise, one of those had over turned near Karad, Satara District. First Information Report stated that two Apprentices had died and few others injured. Injured Apprentices were brought home in the other truck. Another truck and ambulance was to be dispatched immediately. I got into my car with another Officer and

headed for the accident site. We retrieved dead and living after completing police formalities in the middle of the night.

Once again the establishment was in total gloom. Similar procedures as in recent past were followed except that young Apprentices with their instructors were given full liberty to organise the funeral and other associated rituals. The gloom in the establishment extended by another few weeks!

As we were believing that establishment was leaving behind the tragic untimely deaths and onset of heavy rains a senior sailor's wife locked herself in the house, poured kerosene and set herself on fire. With over 90% burns she did not survive. This time the gloom shifted to senior sailors. Same procedures of Bhajan, kirtan, Hawan had to be revived once again.

My morale was beginning to get affected and I was pleased to learn of appointment of proper Commanding Officer - Captain N Bhalla who joined INS Shivaji end Jul 1972. We prayed that everything will settle down and we could concentrate on the primary job of training.

Within a month of new Commanding Officer taking over there was a young ME brought up as defaulter for having overstayed Annual Leave. ME's defence was that he got married on the auspicious date which was after the expiry date of leave. His parents and girl's people insisted that marriage be solemnised before he returned to join duties. Of course this excuse was not good enough and he was awarded 15 days No.11. The Commanding Officer regretted being tough on young ME. As the luck would have it, there came an opportunity for few sailors to be deputed to Delhi on temporary duty. Out of benevolence the Commanding Officer asked me to nominate



this ME for temporary duty and the awarded punishment to be carried out after his return from temporary duty. This could afford the sailor an opportunity to visit home and meet his young bride. The sailor was on seventh Heaven. On a Saturday he was to catch 3 O'clock transport to catch 4 O'clock train at Lonavla station.

He was packed and ready. He requested his mates in the barrack, "I am going to have shut eye and wake me up at 1430h". He laid down for a nap. At 1430h his mate shook him up only to find he had died in his sleep. Young bride and his parents came for the last rites. After 40 years I still cannot forget that pathetic sight. Poor girl and parents were in deep shock and girl totally lost to the impact of this tragedy.

The ME, was given farewell with full service honours. The gloom because of death continued.

I was away on Annual Leave to help shift my family from Mumbai to Lonavla. Whilst on leave I got the news that one DSC Jawan whilst

on duty at night had drowned in the swimming pool. By now Establishment was well accomplished in handling untimely deaths and funerals.

There was a sad pattern to these deaths. All were untimely. Victims were one each from the community of Officers, Senior Sailors, Junior Sailors, Apprentices and DSC. All the deaths happened in a short period of seven months. After that Yumraj called it a day and we were not troubled again.

There is famous saying "When a big tree (Peeple or Bod) falls, the consequence has to be borne by those crushed under."

I tell this unusual Yarn as it is a unique happening in the history of Indian Navy. No Commanding Officer has died whilst in Command that too with FO C-in-C, West present in the establishment. Then untimely five more deaths in quick succession amongst all communities of a training establishment! This is history for Indian Navy and INS Shivaji.

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MRE 31, aage dekha nahi

Commodore Vijay Vaid (Retd.)

It was Year 1970. I was posted on board INS Vikrant. I had just got my new Vespa Scooter and the number plate was yet to be painted. The allotted registration number was written with white Chalk. Old timers will remember that DSC Jawan at Lion Gate used to shout the Vehicle number and JCO sitting will write

it in the vehicle entry Register. My Scooter registration number was MRE 3174. As I was crossing the Lion Gate, I heard the DSC Jawan shouting MRE 31, AAGE DEKHA NAHI. I immediately turned my scooter and asked him to note down the registration number.

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Early 'Ls'

Captain S Prabhala (Retd.)

Pioneers of the Electrical Branch

When I joined the Electrical branch as an Acting Sub-Lieutenant in March 1954, there were just 56 electrical officers in the Navy. Only half of them had a degree in Electrical Engineering. The others were war-time recruits into the Torpedo and Anti-Submarine Branch. In fact, INS Valsura, commissioned in December 1942, started off as an Anti-Submarine warfare training school.

N E Warner (retired as Commodore) was the senior-most electrical officer. He served in Bombay Electric Supply Company before joining the Royal Indian Navy. He was a perfect gentleman, courteous and measured in his talk. He had a habit of throwing his back and laughing when something amused him. His hand writing was beautiful and since he used a broad-nib pen, his writing had the quality of calligraphy. He used to address young officers and sailors with an avuncular "my boy".

Warner was the first 'L' officer to command Valsura, in 1955. He married late in life. He and his wife were perfect hosts and the Jamsaheb of Navanagar was a frequent guest at the Wardroom dinners.

Warner disliked controversy. After his return from a Senior Officers' Meeting in Delhi in 1956, I asked him what takes place in such meetings. With a bored expression on his face, he said "my boy, I sit through it and come away with the writing pad and pencil". He eventually retired as CSD, Naval Dockyard, Bombay and settled in Hyderabad. His hobby was composing crosswords for The Hindu, a hobby he shared with Vice Admiral R D Katari.

Next in seniority to Warner was B.R. Singh (retired as Rear Admiral). He was studying Electrical Engineering in Glasgow University when World War II started. It was rumoured that he joined the RIN only because it enabled him to return to India after completing his studies!

Behind his rustic appearance and lack of sophistication lay a bold and brilliant mind. B.R. Singh was a good judge of men. He was quick to grasp the core issue of any problem and take it head on. One couldn't fool him. He had full trust in the officers he handpicked and gave them full support in their initiatives. He revelled in controversy and never shied from tough decisions.

One instance to show his characteristic style! Milk supply for Valsura had always been problematic – poor quality, erratic supply and high price. When he became the Commanding Officer of Valsura in 1957, he decided to tackle it. He would go before dawn to the cowsheds when cows were being milked, buy what was needed before the middlemen arrived. There was tension for a few days but B.R. Singh earned the gratitude of Valsurians by breaking the cartel.

B R Singh had no taste for Notings on files. He would tell a staff officer what to write in the file and then write "approved" and sign below. His handwriting was unformed like that of a school child.

He often used to say, "Only idiots follow all rules strictly". What he meant was that to get things done, one should get round the rules and even break some if need be. Of course, the *end* has to be important.



His contribution to building the fledgling Electrical Branch was immense. Marine engineers naturally feared loss of supremacy with every new electrical officer's post, but B.R. Singh was unstoppable. Besides, there was a quantum shift in ships' electrical and electronic content with the acquisition of AC Frigates in early '60s. But for his strategy and boldness – at one time half of all graduate electrical officers were in England on training and other assignments – the new ships would have been ill-served.

He was eager to learn. When I joined Valsura as an instructor in 1958 after being trained in the UK in AC ship systems, B R Singh asked me to acquaint the other officers about the new equipment. Classes were held for three months between 6.30 – 8.00 AM and B R Singh never missed a session.

Typical of his courage was his readiness to take up the manufacture of boilers for Leander frigates in Naval Dockyard, Bombay. What BHEL and ABB-Vickers were unwilling to take up, B R Singh took up as a challenge and succeeded without cost and time over-run.

Next in line were L, C and R (familiar electrical symbols) as B R Singh named them! L was M B Lele (retired as Commodore), C was B C Chatterjee (retired as Commodore) and R was K R Ramnath (retired as Rear Admiral). In addition, there were Cmde PK Sinha, Cdr V Murugesan and Cdr Y Anandkar but they counted little in B R Singh's estimate.

While Lt Cdr was the order of their seniority, B R Singh was heard saying that their merit was in the reverse order!

K R Ramnath was the blue-eyed boy and B R Singh had total confidence in him. Ramnath

used to be entrusted with important jobs but his style of functioning did not always endear him to many. His last assignment was as Chairman and Managing Director, Hindustan Shipyard where I believe he played his cards wrong with the trade unions and his tenure ended pre-maturely.

B C Chatterjee was the exact opposite - a thorough gentleman, unassertive and unassuming. Equally different from his brother Admiral A K Chatterjee, who was the CNS in late 1960s. Even when B C Chatterjee had to take someone to task, he did it so gently that the culprit felt no hurt. It was injustice that he was not promoted to the flag rank. In retirement he faced the tragedy of losing a son and his wife. He deserved better from life.

M B Lele was an enigma. He was intelligent and knowledgeable but his manner was haughty. He was confident and sure of himself but was seen by others as arrogant. He could spot talent and encourage them, but he would appear to them as someone aloof and imperious. I was to experience it when, in 1962, as the first Dean of the Institute of Armament Studies, Pune he asked me to teach a course on Naval Radars. When I called on him on arrival in CME (College of Military Engineering, Kirkee where IAT was housed temporarily), he was abrupt and said he had no time for small talk. Yet, he sat through my lectures and complimented me at the end. He liked being disliked.

True to our diversity, these five pioneers of the electrical branch came from different corners of India – an Anglo Indian, a Rajput, a Maharashtrian Chitpavan, a Bengali Bhadrakol and a Palghat Iyer.

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Leaders and Managers

Commodore RK Dass (Retd.)

I frequently transited via Coimbatore on my way to Wellington Staff College and Lawrence School Lovedale during the 1970's and 1980's. However, my first visit to INS Agrani located in Coimbatore, was in the early 1990's to participate in the intra command golf match at the Chetipalayam Golf Course.

Ironically a few years later (1996) I joined INS Agrani after a posting at the Fortress Headquarters, Andaman & Nicobar.

INS Agrani is located in the one of the finest areas of Coimbatore called Redfields. Nearby are the Air Force Administrative College and 110 TA Battalion. An Artillery Battalion is also located near Madukarai which affords an opportunity for army personnel from the area for a home posting.

Coimbatore the second largest city of Tamil Nadu is also an industrial hub for textiles, textile machinery, compressors and pumps. It's a pioneering educational hub with number of engineering, medical and management institutions. Coimbatore is home to one of the oldest Agricultural universities including a Forest Institute. It once had over 100 water ponds which were used by the amphibious aircrafts in the early 1940's. A nearby city of Tirupur is also famous for major textile and knit wear.

INS Agrani was a compact establishment and in addition to its primary task of training, it looked after quite a few things. The Naval shooting team with a small arms firing range was based here. This team had brought immense laurels to the nation and the Navy by winning numerous medals at various championships. Then Satendra Kumar PO was awarded the prestigious Arjuna award and promoted out of turn to CPO. In fact, he had bettered the record of ace Indian shooter Jaspal Rana. The coach

of the team from 1996 to 1999 was Dharma Lingam MCPO also known as the Navy's Dronacharya. Introduction of Yoga helped the team in improving concentration.

INS Agrani also looked after the rifle range at Madukarai and conducted the Navy's annual Musketry Championships.

The Aircraft and Engine Holding Unit (A & EHU) of the Navy was also located in INS Agrani with its office at Sulur. A & EHU is the custodian of all Naval Aircraft and Engines. The 300 Squadron was stationed here before it shifted to Dabolim, Goa.

The unit conducted Leadership and Management courses and Pre-SSB training for prospective CW and SD List candidates. The leader's course for Petty Officers and Manager's course for Chief Petty Officers were centrifugal in the career progression of sailors to next rank. These courses were non branch courses. They were designed to be physically and mentally challenging bringing sailors of different branches together. The trainees were divided into houses with a branch mix. Public speaking, problem solving, team work and decision making were part of the course. Guest lecturers were also made a part of the syllabi.

Sailors underwent a rigorous physical routine. A morning run was followed by physical training and compulsory evening games. Initially, personnel coming from desk jobs or those out of shape found it challenging to keep awake in class room after a gruelling morning. However, with time they gained physical strength and stamina. On completion of course all personnel prided themselves in running over 5 kilometres followed by half an hour of physical training with ease. In fact many sailors were happy on being able to shed about 5 kg of weight in a short



duration. On the flip side owing to the course's tough reputation some sailors were not signing for further service. The route march to Madukarai Rifle range and the night climb up the hill were a test of physical endurance. Team mates were often carried by other members to complete the march in a display of team spirit.

We often heard sailors expressing that while their department worked hard, sailors from other departments were having a gala time. After discussions with the training staff a session was planned to showcase each department's role and its importance in running an efficient ship. During this session the sailors nominated two representatives from each branch to present their case. A set of moderators were also nominated from the manager's course with the Master Chief Training as the facilitator. As expected each department's representative described their hard work but also nonchalantly pointing that others were having a gala time. The engine room sailors said they were working hard in the hot conditions of engine room where as the seamen were enjoying the upper deck fresh air. They indicated that without the engines working the ship would not be able to go anywhere. The cooks said that was it not for the nourishing and tasty food they were providing personnel would not be able to perform efficiently. But the best discerning statement came from Chief Topass which had the audience non-plus. He quietly acknowledged the importance of other departments, but asserted that they too had an essential role. Firstly, no one would be willing to exchange jobs with them. Secondly if they stopped cleaning the unhygienic conditions could leave everyone sick and hence unable to perform any of their duties which the teams had expounded earlier. The point that each department had an important role to play got home.

Agrani had a solar water heating plant installed

for the ships galley. The plant however had not been working for some time. The firm which had installed the plant quoted Rs.10000/- for repairs. We felt the amount was very high. We thought of using the expertise of the trainees and this gave us the idea of giving them projects to suggest improvements and innovations.

The problem about galley's solar water system was given to a team of seven members which included a Chief Shipwright, Chief ERA and a POME. During the case presentation, the team stated that they found that the heating system was functional except that valves were not positioned correctly. By adjusting the valves they had the system functioning perfectly. We were so happy that the team was able to sort out the problem with no expense.

A water sports facility was designed and developed by INS Agrani at the Singannalur pond on a request from the civil administration. Contribution of the project teams for this task was commendable. The facility was officially inaugurated by the Tamil Nadu Forest Minister P Palani Swamy, CO Agrani and the Municipal Commissioner.

The Army and Air Force were also keen to start a course for their senior NCO's as was being done at Agrani by the Navy. We had number of team visits from both the services including two trips by AO C-in-C Training Command from Bangalore. The Army started a course for the Subedars at the Commando's Training School Belgaum and CO Agrani was invited to address the pilot course.

Our stay of over three years at Agrani and interaction with the senior sailors was a great learning experience. The Leadership and Management are excellent non branch mid-level courses which help in building team work and general awareness, besides helping personnel regain physical fitness.

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INS Circars - a journey worth its weight in platinum

*Compiled by Commander Avaneesh Jain,
Lt Cdr GSR Krishna and Sub Lieutenant Rohit Reddy.*

Every name, be it of a human being or a place or a creation has its own history behind it. So is the case with this establishment, INS Circars. The word "Circar" in the Urdu language means 'His Highness'. The Nizam of Hyderabad under whose jurisdiction this part of the country remained was addressed as "Circars" by the natives as well as the Europeans, who were slowly making forays into southern India, first as merchants and then as rulers. The Nizam entered into a treaty with the French Governor General Dupleix during the first Carnatic War and gave away revenue on the coastal region comprising of three provinces namely, North Andhra coastal region, Godavari region and Krishna-Guntur region (which now covers the districts of Nellore, Prakasam, Guntur, Krishna East and West Godavari, Visakhapatnam and Vizianagaram) to the French as a compensation for the security provided to him. These districts being originally the 'ilaka' (area) of the 'Circar' were generally referred to as "Circar's" or belonging to the 'Circar'. Of course the apostrophe in the word vanished in the gradual run. No wonder the first naval establishment in this part of the eastern seaboard was named "Circars" (perhaps a befitting title to the depot ship of this Command), keeping in view its historical background and geographical association. The legacy of "Circars" continues. The Crest of Circars has a circle, representing the 'ilaka', with three white stripes flowing from top to

bottom representing the three provinces the 'ilaka' was made of those days. The anchor in the background obviously symbolizes the Navy.

Way back in 1923, having recognised the geographic advantage of India in the Bay of Bengal region, the British identified Visakhapatnam as an important convoy assembly point, mainly for military operations, with lot of potential. Later on in due course of time, it was developed into a naval base and was formally established as HMIS Circars on 12 Dec 1939, locating the office of the Senior Naval Officer, Visakhapatnam in a small building next to the old Harbour Dispensary. Lt Cdr HE Passmore Edward, RINR was the first to hold the charge as Senior Naval Officer-in-Charge with his jurisdiction extending from the

port of Baruva in the North to Vadarevu in the South. The Primary aim of establishing this Naval Base was for exercising naval control on merchant shipping as well as to have operational and repair facilities for naval ships on the East Coast of India during the tumultuous later thirties. Gradually with the increasing demands expected during the Second World War, this naval base assumed the role of refitting and

operational establishment. Incidentally, it was in that very year, the naval base and harbour were bombed by Japanese bombers. However, the damage sustained was reported to be very little.





Thereafter, the role and infrastructure of the establishment underwent rapid changes. Circars became an advance base for the coastal forces and small crafts of the Allied Forces, which used to assemble at Visakhapatnam for their work up in 1943. However, it was in the year 1945 that Circars took the shape of a Depot Ship to provide administrative, logistic and maintenance cover for the Warships based at, as well as those visiting Visakhapatnam from time to time.

Consequent to the division of assets between Pakistan and India, post-independence, the Boys' Training Establishments HMIS Dilawar and Bahadur located in Karachi had gone to Pakistan and there arose the need of such an establishment for India. Then Circars had taken over the role of training the Boys in Dec 1947. Initial three months of training for the new entrants i.e. Boys was given at New Entry Camp (subsequently known as New Entry Wing (NEW) established at Naval Coast Battery after which they joined at the main campus of Circars for further training. Due to this activity, Circars was, during those days, popularly known as Boys Training Establishment (BTE) and continued training the basic work force of the Indian Navy for almost four decades till the mandarins of NHQ found a more serene and conducive location for the BTE at Chilka, away from the hustle and bustle of Visakhapatnam

and so shifted there in April 1980.

The separation was, as all partings are, painful and sentimental. The shifting of BTE left a void behind, both inside and outside Circars. NEW became a no man's land for a long time. All the men's blocks and Boys' barracks at the main campus slowly got re-appropriated and were occupied by HQENC offices and the Ship's Company of Circars and also by additional units. The sports grounds which were fully occupied in the evenings and were the venue for many ferocious Divisional competitions bore a deserted look. The imposing mast of Circars Quarter Deck, which used to be manned by the passing out Boys as a prelude to their "Ship Ahoy" that lay ahead, lost the honour to Chilka. The Circars parade ground, which bore the brunt of the boot thumping of thousands of Boys for decades, got a respite at last. However, for all those who served on board or passed out through the portals of Circars, the nostalgia lingers. The BTE left an everlasting impression on the Vizagites as well with the missing of the sight of Boys in their shorts, singlet and duck caps that used to throng the local restaurants and cinema halls on their liberty days, those years.

Circars continued its role of training establishment even after 1980 when it hosted training of Non Matric Entry Recruits for 1982 to 1987 and the Matric Entric Recruits and Diploma Holders as well from 1984 to 1987 before the complete basic training of all new entrants shifted finally to Chilka.

Circars Parade Ground has been witness to many VIP visits. One of them, the most historic one is the visit of Mrs Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India post 1971 Indo-Pak war.

In the long list of military ceremonials witnessed on the historic Circars parade Ground perhaps one of the most solemn and inspiring is the receiving of President Colours by the Eastern



Naval Command from the then President Giani Zail Singh on 05 Apr 1987. That was indeed a momentous and memorable occasion in the annals of Circars.

On completion of its 50 years of existence as a Naval Base, Circars celebrated its Swarn Varsh on 12 Dec 1989 with great pomp and show. Ships were anchored outside the harbour and the then Governor of Andhra Pradesh, Her Excellency Smt Kumudben Joshi reviewed the Ships and also witnessed a naval parade at the RK Beach. A Maritime Museum (Swarn Jyoti) was set up inside the base to commemorate the occasion – this museum has since been shifted to the Beach area and is now a section of the Visakhapatnam Museum.

Many distinguished officers held the reins of



Circars over the years. It is worth mentioning that two former Commanding Officers of Circars viz. Captain BS Soman (12 Dec 1951- 11 Dec 1953) and Captain OS Dawson (26 Aug 1968- 11 Apr 1971), rose to the highest chair and held the helm of the Indian Navy with distinction.

With its long run over the last about seven decades, Circars today stands as the depot ship of ENC and the Flag Ship (stone Frigate) of FOC-in-C, East.

INS Circars celebrated its 75th anniversary on 12 Dec 2014. The Platinum Jubilee logo of INS Circars has a wooden hull ship flying the flag of FOC-IN-C, East against the backdrop of the rising sun and the numerals seven and five in front of the ship encompassing the crest of INS Circars depict “INS Circars – Flagship of the East celebrating its Platinum Jubilee”.





INS Circars celebrates Platinum Jubilee

INS Circars the depot ship of Eastern Naval Command is also known as the Flagship of the East, celebrated its Platinum Jubilee on, 12 December 2014. It was in 1923 when the British identified Visakhapatnam as an important convoy assembly point for military operation a small Naval Base was set up on 12 December 1939. With need to expand, the base was formally established as HMIS Circars on 12 April 1942.

During the eight decades of existence INS Circars has seen the changing face of Navy. Circars donned the hats of Convoy Assembly Point, Ship Repair Yard, Boys Training Establishment and Service Provider. Today, INS Circars stands as the Flagship of the East performing numerous tasks of providing administrative and logistics support not only to the afloat and shore units but also to family members staying in naval residential colonies spread from Dolphin Hill to Naval Coast Battery at Beach road.

In this Platinum Jubilee Year, the unit undertook many philanthropic activities such as Blood donation camp, support to orphanages,

creation of Platinum Food Court on Dolphin Hill. On the adventure front a two day Trekking cum Cycle expedition to Thattapudi Dam was organized where 30 participants covered a total distance of 150 km.



The Platinum Jubilee Celebrations culminated 12 December 14 where Cmde KP Gopal Rao, MVC, VSM (Retd) ex-Commanding Officer INS Circars from 03 January 1974 to 16 January 1976 was the Chief Guest and unveiled of Platinum Jubilee Plaque. As part of the ongoing Harita Visakha drive, Tree Plantation was undertaken by many ex-Commanding Officers. A Special Cover was under taken by released by the Postal Department to commemorate this momentous occasion.





Three tenures at Circars

Commander V Sriramulu (Retd.)

I can safely presume that at the age of 92, I am the oldest living naval officer staying at Visakhapatnam and the only one who had joined the Navy before independence and partition.

Before I write about Circars during my three tenures at that establishment, I need to say something about my joining the Navy. After completing my graduation I came to Vizag for doing post-graduation in Andhra University. But because of some family compulsions I went to Pune and took up a job of local auditor in CDA. As I was keen to join the Defence Services, I applied for Air Force and got through successfully in the first stage of tests but could not go beyond the second.

Then I came across an advertisement for Instructors in the Navy. I went to the recruiting officer and he told me that a CPO was indeed an officer. That was how I joined the Navy. I underwent the initial training at HMIS Angre at Thane, Bombay that time. My first appointment was at HMIS Dilawar Karachi from Oct 1944 to Nov 1945. By that time the impending independence and the consequential partition was already in the air. Some officers and senior sailors in Dilawar had already decided to become part of Pakistan Navy and their interaction with those who were likely to become part of Indian Navy was that much less congenial. I had to face this as I was one of the junior most.

May be things became slightly better after I joined HMIS Circars in Nov 1945 for my first appointment which was not long. At that time the most talked about event of the pre-independence Navy took place i.e. the so called Navy Mutiny. Soon after that I was drafted

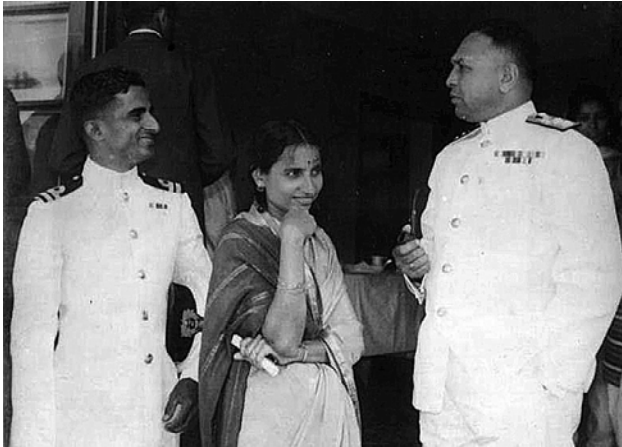
back to HMIS Dilawar, the Boys Training Establishment at Karachi. I remember that CO HMIS Circars was also the NOIC, East Coast.



I had come back for my second appointment, this time to INS Circars in May 1952 as Warrant School Master. I don't remember the name of the Commanding Officer at the time of joining but he was a British officer. After a short time Captain BS Soman took over as the Commanding Officer. The photograph of ladies get together is from that time.



I again don't remember the name of the then first lady of the Navy sitting dressed in a European attire but the lady on her left is Mrs Soman. Mrs Sriramulu is the fourth in the first standing line and Mrs Satbir is the lady sitting on the arm of chair. Warrant School Master Satbir was my batch mate.



In the above photograph Lt V Sriramulu with his wife is interacting with Admiral BS Soman at a get-together at NDA.

I can never forget the weekly sailing competitions in the channel on Saturday afternoons in dinghies, skiffs, whalers and cutters, the most popular sporting event of the week. My third and last appointment at INS Circars was from May 1966 to Apr 1968 in the

rank of Lt Cdr and that of Senior Instructor Officer. I don't remember the name of the Commanding Officer but the Base Commander was one Commander Mishra who wanted to write ACRs of officers working under me. I had to take up the matter with the CO who ruled that I should be rendering the reports and not the Base Commander.

I can proudly say that the active life and healthy habits which I acquired at the then Boys Training Establishment still persist and keep me healthy and agile even at the advanced age of 92. To cite the latest event, in the year 2011 I won the gold medal in 20 km race walk and silver medals in 10 km and 5 km race walks in the age category of 85-90 years in the World Masters Athletic Championships held at Sacramento, California USA.

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My first appointment - INS Circars

Commodore KVS Prakasa Rao (Retd)

As a young Ag SLt, I joined Circars early Jan 1970, for my very first staff appointment and the only tenure there, fresh from training at INS Vendurthy. Capt OS Dawson was the Commanding Officer, Cdr MHU Khan was the XO and Cdr K Srinivas Moorthy the SEDO and my boss.

Those were formative years of my service life and the impressions which were created in my mind last even today. Though we received the orientation training, I was quite new to the actual tasks to be carried out by the then instructor officer. As it is my name was quite long and I had to prefix it with Acting Instructor Sub Lieutenant, while introducing myself to someone, at least, initially. Somehow, all this was very strange for me. A little bit about the layout of the naval base, I think, is not out of place. Those days naval base was mainly INS Circars as HQENC was just born. The main gate called Circars gate was at the northern end of the wall next to channel. With reference to parade ground the CO's office was on the east side adjacent to parade ground. On the southern side was the Officers' Mess. Opposite to the mess was Circars House. Adjacent to Circars House, on the east side was Kalyani House. Opposite to Kalyani House was INHS Kalyani commanded by Surg Capt GJK Peck. On the east side of CO's office block was INCS. The SBI Naval Base branch was opened near INCS during our time only. There was no dockyard. There was a hill called 'Tummedala Metta' meaning the hill of beetles. We used to go to city on cycle on a road next to the hill crossing a wooden bridge near port administrative office.

INS Satavahana was not in existence. A Petya training school was there in the area where the

Dockyard Apprentice School is now located. The SBI was later shifted to this area.

What all I remember from my first appointment are the personal examples of some great officers and things I learnt from them and also some war time events, as the most memorable event which occurred during my Circars tenure was undoubtedly the Indo-Pak war 1971 and the signing of instrument of surrender at Dhaka. So my tenure can be broken into pre-war and war/post war periods. Interestingly the Commanding Officers would also fit in the break-up chronologically.

The pre-war CO was Capt OS Dawson. R Adm KR Nair was the FO C-in-C, East. The photo shows Adm SM Nanda CNS shaking hands with me, the junior most officer of Circars at that time, with R Adm KR Nair C-in-C and Capt OS Dawson, CO Circars looking on.



Capt Dawson was very keen to teach young officers, the service like conduct and service writing. He used to encourage sports and insisted that officers play field games along with trainee sailors (boys). Lt H G Michael was a good foot-ball player. Capt Dawson used to



play foot-ball himself. He used to be present at the colours at a corner of parade ground to salute the colours and also at evening quarters. He was the first and last CO to give me a flimsy which practice was discontinued because of legal complications.

Before the war he was transferred to NHQ as DNO. I particularly remember one event which occurred during his farewell dinner. He called all the young officers separately to a corner and told all of us very clearly, "Youngsters! Don't commit the mistake I did. Get married when you cross twenty five".

As far as my memory goes, there was a time gap between the departure of Capt Dawson and arrival of next CO. There was a big suspense after some time we came to know a Commodore who was NA Bonn (the capital of the then East Germany) was going to take over. Still the name was not known. Even after his arrival the name did not reach the lower echelons. We, all the young officers had a competition. Whoever could get his correct name on the day of 'Take Over Parade' would be the winner. I could proudly announce at the end of the parade that it was Cmde TJ Kunnenkeril (Thomas Jacob Kunnerkeril).

Cmde Kunnenkeril commanded Circars during the war and for some time later. He knew each officer under his command by his strength and weaknesses. His style of leadership was totally different from that of Capt Dawson. One advice he gave us remained with me forever and that is "if a thing is worth doing, it is worth doing well".

Those days we used to have daily parade and one junior officer used to carry out Guard Cdr duties each week but during CO's divisions, whenever held, another senior officer used to take over as Parade Cdr. During a particular

week I was doing the Guard Cdr duties. On Friday of that week the CO's divisions were to take place. MCPO GI Somnath was called by CO and it seems was told, "let S Lt KVS Prakasa Rao be the Parade Cdr". The GI came and told me.

We used to have regular route marches and annual camp and a host of inter-divisional competitions. I was conducting an inter-divisional quiz competition and that time XO Cdr MS Ratra found fault with me about the pronunciation of a particular word. I stood my ground. Lt SM Rangapati was supporting me. He said that if I were correct he would stand drinks for me and Lt SM Rangapati. We had shown him a dictionary. He insisted on seeing Fowlers dictionary of English usage. We had shown him that also. He accepted that I was correct and stood us drinks. That was the spirit.

We used to be the assistant divisional officers of boys divisions. Lt RK Singh was the divisional officer and I was the assistant divisional officer of Ashok Division. I was officiating as the divisional officer when he was away and received the trophy from R Adm Katdare, that time DGNP.

During the war we used to do DSCO (Duty Signal Communication Officer) watches and narration officer in PDHQ watch. One Lt Cdr GD Mukherjee (Gopal Das Mukherjee) was our First Lt, a son of a judge of Allahabad High Court. He was very forthright in his Comments. He was the PDHQ Cdr and I was the narration officer on watch. There was a signal from Command reading "disregard my last". He immediately quipped "when did we regard it". He defended one officer in a court martial and saved him from a big likely punishment.

Coming to court martial, which was again new



to me and a highly deterring ceremony, I remember I did the duties of court interpreter in one of the court martial for which the then JAG Shri OP Sharma, a civilian, came from NHQ as TJA. I was paid officially for that duty. The JAG told me that the only person to be paid in a court martial was a court interpreter. Late Sri Burra Suryanarayana Sastry, a famous advocate of Vizag was the defence counsel and his assistant was Shri Kandala Srinivasa Rao.

V Adm N Krishnan was the FO C-in-C, East during the war. There were some VIP visits. The then Prime Minister of India Smt Indira Gandhi paid a visit and addressed the officers and sailors of ENC at Circars parade ground. Shri Jagjeevan Ram the Raksha Mantri also paid a visit.

The major event at Visakhapatnam during the

1971 war was sinking of a Pakistani submarine, PNS Ghazi at the entrance of the channel. Some items were retrieved and a Ghazi exhibition was organised. There was big public relations campaign being personally monitored by CINC.

I remember that one afternoon we were in mess committee meeting in the Ante Room of officers' mess in front of Circars House under the chairmanship of Cmde TJ Kunnenkeril. The announcement came of the end of the war and surrender of Pakistani forces at Dhaka and signing of instrument of surrender.

Following the advice of Capt Dawson, I got married to K Nagasiromani on 21 Feb 73. I was transferred to INS Garuda end Mar 73.

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Napier's formula

Commander L Radhakrishnan (Retd.)

DCPT

During 1980, Admiral OS Dawson as C-in-C, South came for annual inspection of INS Dronacharya. During the course of walk around, he asked one of the Staff Officers what is his other secondary duties in addition to his primary appointment. The officer immediately said he is the DCPT in the base. Admiral asked him whether he meant Director of Combat Policy and Tactics. The officer said no sir, I am the OIC Dairy, Canteen, Piggery and Transport in the establishment.

OIC P.C.

In early 1973, I joined as E2 in N.D.School. As part of additional duties I was assigned the duty of OIC P.C. It was the most sought after duty, not because it was to do with Personal Computers (there were no computers that time) but it was OIC Paddy Cultivation. Paddy was to be cultivated in N.D.School between the blocks and the harvest distributed amongst the staff. There was acute shortage of rice in Kerala that time and hence OIC PC was most sought after.

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My association with INS Shivaji

Rear Admiral SM Luktuke (Retd.)

Man proposes but God disposes

First Impression

First impressions can be misleading! On joining the Indian Navy, my first exposure to INS Shivaji, was certainly not a pleasant experience. It was in the midst of monsoons in Sep 77, and we had completed our basic training of eight weeks at Naval Academy, Kochi. Contributory factors being gloomy surroundings, very wet weather, all pervading musky and dank smell in the cabin/cupboards, black fungus patches on clothing items and last but not the least a demanding training schedule. It was depressing indeed! The morale was definitely at the lowest ebb to say the least.

A month's stay for the Marine Engineering Introductory Course (MEIC) and off we went for afloat training only to return in Feb 1978 to continue our Marine Engineering Professional Course (MEPC) culminating in Sep 1978. In those days, INS Shivaji had not seen modernisation and with barely adequate infrastructure for the increased number of trainees things remained unchanged. To add to my woes, on completion of training I was re-appointed in the unit for instructional duties at Naval College of Engineering. I consoled myself that things at least can't get worse!

Wishful Thinking

As with all things, nothing lasts long. Soon enough I received transfer orders for sea time in Feb 1979. I hoped fervently that I never return here for any posting.

The Throw of Dice

As it turned out, I ended up doing two tenures and one long temporary duty of 16 weeks (SNF

PCT) in this establishment interspaced with a fairly large number of short visits. Looking back with nostalgia, my family spent some of the most wonderful times of our naval life at INS Shivaji.

The Place

Before proceeding further, a brief description of the establishment will be in order here. Nestled in the Sahyadris, in Lonavla (Maharashtra) occasionally blanketed in clouds, the source of the river Indrayani and at times lifting its veil, is the Alma Mater of Naval Engineers-the Marine Engineering Training Establishment of the Indian Navy, INS Shivaji. The surrounding hills and valleys have been spectators to the voyage of this ship since its commissioning on 15 Feb 1945, when HMIS Shivaji cast off on the uncharted waters of Marine engineering technology. Today, almost 70 years later, it is a seat of advanced learning and fountain-head of marine engineering knowledge, imbibing in its alumni its very essence-Professionalism, Confidence and Strength.



A small segment of INS Shivaji, as seen from the air!
The Transformation

When I arrived for 16 weeks SNF (EO-PCT) course in Aug-1993, the establishment had indeed evolved, and a pleasantly changed



scenario greeted me. The transformation was remarkable and I had a memorable stay. A number of short visits from DIAT Pune, in 1995-97 further reinforced the positive impression. INS Shivaji, was beginning to alter my past negative opinion.

In fact, after the introduction of 10+2 Technical Entry scheme in the 1980s, the establishment has improved with leaps and bounds. With the inclusion in Southern Naval Command, addition of modern infrastructure/facilities for, training and sports, construction of the Shivsagar Dam in the 1990s, creation of the Classification Firing Range, New Swimming Pool etc. It has now blossomed into a high class technical training establishment of repute. There has been a steady improvement in quality/standard of training because of enrichment of course content/curricula, consistent inclusion of modern training aids and proactive environment prevalent in the establishment. The majestic and picturesque parade ground has a bold caption painted on the drill shed – “Drill is the Bedrock of Discipline”, as a backdrop, which is very apt for instilling the right attitude in the trainees as well as trainers and motivating them to hone their skills in conformity with the motto on its crest “Karmasu Kaushalam”.

Monsoons and Scenic Beauty

Monsoons are severe here, but innovative and practical measures have been evolved to overcome this constraint. Barring the three months of severe rains, the weather is very pleasant. In fact the heavy rains add to its beauty as the surroundings, the adjacent hills and valleys do come alive post monsoons and present a breath-taking tapestry of colour of every hue.



Lakes/Dams

The lakes, Shivsagar Dam and the Shivaji Lake enhance the beauty of the place. Shivsagar Dam reservoir, which caters to the drinking water requirement of the base, is an excellent venue for sailing and watermanship activities. It has beautiful spots around its periphery and is a bird watchers paradise. The road skirting the dam waters with the mountains as the backdrop is a nature lover's delight. Holiday home Aashiana, initially built as an inspection bungalow for construction of the dam, now a beautiful spot on the banks of the lake, is a tranquil place.



A view of Shivsagar Dam and watermanship Training Centre

Sunset Point

Sunset point ridge with the majestic peak of Duke's Nose at one end and the well maintained/manicured Classification Firing Range at its base is another scenic spot. This area is also a favourite choice for joggers,



cyclists and casual strollers as the serene atmosphere and scenic beauty is overpowering. The gurgling streams which start from its base towards the Shivaji Lake are in fact the popular choice for yearly event of monsoon picnic of officers/families. Myth goes that on a clear day one can see the Arabian sea/sky crappers of Mumbai from the ridge of the Sunset point. The sundown at Sunset Point is just glorious and seen to be believed when the horizon presents a mesmerising view like a kaleidoscope. The phrase Auburn Veil comes to mind when one experiences the sun setting in the hills afar. This ridge acquires various shades of colour during the different seasons. In monsoons it is bewitching green, in spring it wears a golden brown sheath.

Sites for Training Camps/Adventure/Trekking

A number of famous forts and lakes/water bodies in the vicinity are well sought-after by trekking enthusiasts. Some of the popularly conducted Treks include nearby Air Force station, Korigad fort located at a distance of 15 km, Tungar Lake and Pavana dam. During my tenure as O/iC Centre of Marine Engineering Technology/ Training Captain in Jul 2001–Oct 2003, I had several opportunities to scout/visit surrounding areas and environs in connection with training camp/adventure activities sites etc.



View of a campsite

Vibrant Environment.

As the Commanding Officer of the unit (Feb 2006-Sep 2007), I had the opportunity to see every nook and corner of this lovely base from within and outside which only reaffirmed my belief about its abundant natural beauty. It has a unique charm of its own which is to be experienced. I vividly remember the mesmerising sight of the distant Sahyadri ranges and Korigad Fort which meets your eyes from the top floor of Indrayani Block (One of the quarters of U/T sailors). The youthful energy and enthusiasm brought in by successive batches of young under-trainee Officers and Sailors inject vibrancy and hope in the surroundings.

Association Continues

We bade farewell to this wonderful establishment in Sep 2007. My association with it however continued as I had two more opportunities to return, once for the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of the Naval College of



View from Indrayani Block - Sahyadri Ranges with Shivaji Lake

Engineering in Dec 2007 and the second time for Valedictory function in Jan 2011. Post retirement, we have settled down at Pune and I am sure I will be making the hour and half long drive to Lonavla often and my association with the place will continue. We will always cherish our association with INS Shivaji and the wonderful times spent there.

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Satavahana....40 years young and going strong

Commodore PJ Sudhir

The 40—year young story of Satavahana began when the Integrated Technical Training Establishment was established on 10 Mar 1974, followed the end of the same year, by the commissioning of the establishment on 21 Dec 74. The base was set up to conduct training for personnel joining Soviet ships and submarines, including submarine escape training. To meet these requirements, Satavahana then comprised the Surface (wonder how many remember the 'C' stream), Submarine and Escape Training Schools.

My first memory of this venerable institution was in 1983 when we joined for Subs' Courses (regrettably the Submarine capsule since the early 1990s is conducted in Mumbai – and I dare say leading to lesser understanding of these complex platforms by many naval officers). In the early 80s I hazard to say that training and other arrangements were rather rudimentary and haphazard, no offence meant. To cite an example-Satavahana on commissioning was not on the road map for officers' in-living accommodation. Consequently we officers were meant to stay at the Command Mess, which however at that time (and even now) was overbooked (a common occurrence in today's airlines). Thus on joining, we were herded to the CPO's mess and were tripled up in cabins which were OK, except the facilities were meant for a single thinner person than I was (even way back then). Nonetheless, what we lacked in comfort, we more than made up in learning, camaraderie and having fun at the Officers' Institute - today's parking lot in the ENC Officers' Mess. Two distinct memories come to mind - the quality (and quantity) of *standeas* and acute water shortage in the cabin (till today I don't understand why some of us got marched up to



the Mess Secretary for retro-fitting the garden hose pipe connection from the overhead tanks to our bathrooms – to this day I have an aversion to watering lawns). Before we forget we are talking training – those days instructors taught us in their version of Russian – FOOT BAY (some may remember these as FUT B radars) or even worse expected us to figure submarine systems from Soviet era BRs of Foxtrots - and I quote from my fading memory – “by opening cross connecting valve of the sweet water system and kind courtesy of operating valve X 2098, water will be available in the CO's wash basin” (BTW by the way for the non-smart phone generation, these instructions served as theoretical instructions for our engineering escapades). But learn we did, because our instructors knew their onions and not least because of an on board visit conducted by the OOD who treated us like we were the last in the proverbial marine food chain.

This was followed a year later when I did the Basic Submarine Course. As we had moved up the pecking order, we got individual cabinseven had civilian bearers who we saw every day. Importantly, since we had volunteered for submarines, we showed more interest in class and considerably more in



sports. Hence, the less said about overall ENC Sports Championship standings....the better. Remarkably, we did have our own personal masseur (who was running the piggery) for our sore legs. One thing that had not changed was the heat...so we saw every 9 PM show at Samudrika (even the weekly regional movie) to enjoy the cool air-conditioned confines.

Since then, one came back at regular intervals in the 1990s for the SSK PCT, PCO and COQC Courses and Satavahana invariably welcomed us back with open arms. Each time we noticed the changes and improvements to training patterns and infrastructure and wondered how this came about. These improvements were brought about by people we at that envied for being posted ashore (with not much work?). It's only later that one realised the demands, challenges and joys of teaching and training in the Navy. The turn of the century saw Satavahana answering to two bosses – C-in-C, South for training and of course C-in-C, East for administrative duties. The days of managing one or the other were over, since training could not be sacrificed at the altar of Command communal duties.....and over the years Satavahana has had its fair share of these duties (Command Gas Agency, the Sailors' Institute and even a Piggery). But in

the face of this administrative load, we also saw the concurrent evolution of this establishment... with the arrival of simulators, cut-out models, mock ups and a host of PC-based training aids ensuring quantum improvements in the standards of training. Training processes were refined and standardised and along the way, the establishment was certified by ISO in recognition of the stellar work put in for training naval personnel over the years.

The first decade of the century saw Satavahana grow with the addition of the School for Undersea Warfare (aka SAUW) for training Chakra (the second) and Arihant crews. Given the *hush-hush* nature of these projects, many officers of the Navy probably retired without even knowing of this facility. With SAUW came some modern (and very expensive) training aids, which our intrepid instructors adapted and soon enough introduced in the Submarine School. A need was felt to introduce a small capsule on the history of the Submarine Arm for those who follow to connect with our founding fore-fathers. Meanwhile, in a split from type training, generic submarine concepts were introduced for the first time - to be followed by class specific training. During this decade, Satavahana also saw the advent of foreign training including personnel from Myanmar, South Africa and later Indonesia-now one hears the Vietnamese are coming. This in itself





speaks for the quality of training, that foreign navies are coming to learn about Western and Russian submarines in India.

Then I got lucky in January 2009, when for the first time I was appointed to Satavahana, not as a trainee but as a trainer and got to spend two wonderful years here. During this time I learned multi-tasking how to conduct training while concurrently undertaking a range of administrative roles like running the Command Auditorium and Cinema, managing the Command Stadium (and helipad), the onerous tasks of running the School Bus Routine for the Eastern Naval Command, not to forget conduct of Vizag's annual mega event – the Navy Mela. Amidst one particular busy training period we also conducted a Gala Nite with Hollywood singers and stand-up comedians performing for personnel of the Command and their families (as well as the visiting Western Fleet), followed by packed dinner from Green Park for the 10,000 strong crowds. I am pleased to report that the event went off well, though had the lead singer arrived three minutes later, my EXO and I would probably have had to lead the dance performance in the first act. Before one gets the impression that we had no time for training - courses came and went with clockwork precision; classes, parades and Camps (a



great idea for the basic course officers and sailors to bond) and visits to Escape Training sessions helped our instructors mould budding young submariners, as has been happening over the past 40 years.....with so much having changed, this remained constant. While everyone would like to remember their tenures as singular...I was fortunate to oversee two unique events in the history of this fine institution. We set up an Equestrian Training Facility (even bought horses from Bengaluru) and commissioned Satavahana's Officers' Mess on 10 Mar 2010, exactly 36 years after the establishment was set up. While the latter was a joyous event, mostly appreciated by the young officers who were joining the Submarine Arm, the former helped some of us learn about equine belly construction and right types of





feeds for a horse. Since then many improvements in training have been incorporated – computerized setting of question papers, online examinations, availability of training material on PCs in the students' accommodation and a host of other best training practices.

Over these past 40 years, one thing clearly emerges.....Satavahana has been evolving and improving each year, while the quality of training today is world class. I say this after visiting the Submarine Training School at Eckernförde, Germany. I remain sanguine that as we celebrate Satavahana's 40th anniversary, this would be the refrain of all those

who count this great institution as their Alma Mater including those 'C'-Streamers of yore (who did time on the old Petyas, SNRs, SNFs and the LSTs) as well as those who proudly wear Dolphins close to their hearts. Also, like in the past, I am also happy to report that the *standeasy* (quality and quantity) has not changed and back benches still remain the choice of seating). Most importantly, whilst meeting all assigned communal duties, the establishment stands proudly today, ever ready to train bright young men to better prepare them for their futures in the Navy.

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"The Four-Star with his three Three-Stars"



Former CNS, Admiral RH Tahiliani with his former Flag Lieutenants - Vice Admiral Satish Soni, Vice Admiral Sunil Lanba & Vice Admiral Harish Bisht"



My tenures in MWCs and CNW

Commodore RPS Ravi (Retd.)

I have had the rare distinction, of having been the Director of all three Maritime Warfare Centres (MWCs) and the College of Naval Warfare (CNW; now Naval War College). To the best of my knowledge, the Navy hasn't had another officer who was given all these appointments together. If I count the time I spent in Spain for writing the operational specifications of Action Speed Tactical Trainer, Vizag, a little more than one fourth of my time in the Navy has been spent in training others in tactics, operations and strategy.

Until the time I left the Navy in end Feb 2010,

with the exception of two officers: Vice Admiral SCS Bangara and Vice Admiral P Chauhan, no one commanding these operational training units in the Western Naval Command ever made it to their next ranks (indeed, these two officers too made to their next ranks in spite of being posted there and not because of it). However, these institutes continue to do yeoman service to the professional upbringing of officers of the executive branch.

My repeated tenures in MWCs reminded me of this classical violinist giving a solo-performance on stage. Every time he finished, someone from the audience shouted: *Encore* and so the violinist played the piece again. After these *encores* happened a number of times, the exasperated violinist shouted back, "Encore, encore, encore; just how many times you want me to re-play the piece?" At this, one man in the audience shot back, "Until you get it right". I don't know whether I finally got it right or not, but, after Feb 2010, I did not hear any more encores.

Why Tactical Trainers? The fact is that it is really very expensive being at sea; it is much costlier training at sea. When I was the Ship's Commander of the aircraft carrier Viraat, a quick calculation brought home the point to me that it was costing the nation Rupees Two Crores a day to have her at sea. If we now start adding to other costs such as for having other ships, aircraft and submarines at sea, and the cost of missiles and other ammunition, one would know the extent of how *really expensive* it is. Tactical Trainers are, therefore, excellent and very cost effective alternatives to going to sea. General Patton's "The more you sweat in peace, the less you bleed in war" aptly sums up the rationale of the Tactical Trainers; indeed, that was the motto of one of the MWCs I





commanded, written in large letters above the Large Scale Display.

In Vizag's ASTT (Action Speed Tactical Trainer) and MWC, Mumbai, I was able to sell the idea to the Fleet Commanders and their staff to even try out their Fleet Exercise Programmes (FXPs) in the Tactical Trainer with the Ship's command teams before proceeding to sea so that precious time at sea won't be wasted on such signals as 'Where are you going?' and 'Read Back your station'. The FXPs could then concentrate on more professional aspects.

MWCs conduct training and games at varied levels: from the operators' level to the highest operational level as in *Shiksha* series. Games for operators are generally procedural including communication procedures.

A major tactical game between Blue and Red normally takes about two days of setting up and testing. A typical game starts with briefings by Blue and Red OsTC (Officers in Tactical Command) of their respective forces. The MWC staff would normally not interfere with the concepts and tactics being tried out. However, they would assist in verifying the soundness of plans and their conformity with existing concepts and tactics.

When the ships' command teams with their operators occupy the cubicles allotted to them, the MWC Control Team begins the game. MWC Control Team is forever concerned about progressing the game in such a way so that not only the *conops* and tactics as planned are tried out but also that appropriate lessons are learnt. Hence, they would run the game at





various speeds (including 16 times normal speed) and also jump to pre-defined game times. Often the actual encounter or engagement between the forces is not as significant as the actions and events leading up to it. Sometimes, a game is frozen to give the OsTC chance to re-appreciate the situation.

A common debrief is held at the end of the game. As the game is replayed for the benefit of the forces, screen shots are presented of important situations and the Control and forces can exchange views on what, where, how and why of situations. MWCs have Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) on every field and they guide and advise the Command Teams on desired improvements and lessons learnt.

MWCs are also employed for analysing, briefings and debriefings of major exercises such as SPRINGEX, SUMMEREX and TROPEX. All the tracks of all units taking part in the exercise – ships, aircraft and submarines – are reproduced on ASTT as per the reports received from the units and all encounters and engagements are analysed. The hot wash-ups and debriefs of these exercises often comprise big-wigs from Naval and Command Headquarters. These are very challenging tasks for the MWC staff as often the time available after all narratives and tracks arrive is not more than 36 hours before a hot wash-up is held. On the morning of the debrief you stand at the podium bleary-eyed and fatigued but satisfied as a cow who has been milked for enormous quantities. The trick, during the debriefs, is not just to keep yourself awake but also to keep everybody's attention through clever use of humour and even apt cartoons so that desired lessons learnt will sink in with alacrity. MWC staff has to also keep strict impartiality and objectivity. One has to also keep the auditorium cool since heated discussions often follow the debrief by MWC. In one of the exercises, curiously, a major ship of Red force, insisted that they had not only



detected Viraat (of the opposite Blue force) on radar but had visually sighted it ("clear lower decks was sounded and the entire ship's company saw Viraat") when Viraat was as many as 380 nautical miles away. Even after the tracks were shown, the ship insisted that they had seen Viraat. Then there was another time when a ship, in her narrative, single-handedly demolished the complete opposite fleet whereas our analysis showed that she came nowhere near engagement ranges.

Incidents like these are fascinating enough to conclude that there are many who like to do during debrief what they couldn't do at sea.

I also endeavoured to help utilize MWCs for limited war-gaming of new concepts and tactics either thought about by MWC staff or by INTEG (Indian Naval Tactical Evaluation Group). During my tenures we did considerable brainstorming and used to not only question the validity of old tactics and concepts but also come up with new ones. One of our recommended concepts was later adopted by the Fleet as viable concept and changed the way we looked at carrier formations. This made us very happy and satisfied. Another significant paper of MWC (MB) was presented in the Commander's Conference, accepted and approved in totality and that's how the Indian Navy started with the institution of a Doctrine and Concept organization called Maritime Doctrine and Concept Centre under the Flag Officer Doctrines and Concepts. We at MWC



felt proud that a concept devised by us was adopted navy-wide.

Since MWCs have large auditoria to seat about 120 to 140, these were also utilized to host visiting dignitaries of India and abroad. We learnt a lot from these interactions, whether it was debriefs of Malabar series of exercises with the US Navy or even with the PLA (Navy) Chief Admiral Wu Shengli. The latter helped me in having a most successful visit of the Naval Higher Command Course when I was director, College of Naval Warfare (CNW) to China (the first of its kind ever).

That brings me to my tenure in CNW. I was there as a Director for nearly three years before my retirement. I had decided, on joining, to raise the level of training (of mainly operational art and strategy) by a few notches. This is despite not having even one fourth of the officers as directing staff. To give you a feel of how scarce the staff was, I am reminded of the visit of Lieutenant General Mohanty, the then Commandant of Army War College (at Mhow, MP). He said that he had heard a lot of the quality of training at CNW and wanted to visit and see for himself. As his car arrived at the portico, two of my officers (from the executive branch) stood next to me to receive him. Later, whilst having coffee with me in my office, he expressed a desire to “meet the rest of your officers”. When I told him that there was no “rest” and had seen them all at the portico, he nearly fainted out of disbelief. Between one DS (the other being a sort of XO) and me, we managed the complete NHCC and never made the student officers feel that there was anything wanting. We conducted seminars, panel discussions and invited the very best to deliver talks to them including Ambassadors and even the former President Dr APJ Abdul Kalam.

During my tenure we introduced the study of the Peloponnesian War for the NHCC. I invited former Navy Chief Admiral Arun Prakash to

deliver a talk to the officers on the War (of course before all talks, the officers are prepared to receive these talks appropriately through self-study, presentations between themselves and by the DSs (in this case me and one more). A few days before Admiral's talk, I met him in Varuna Mess in New Delhi. He was re-reading books on Peloponnesian War that he had last read when he was a student at NWC, USA. He said having a smattering of the subject was one thing but facing bright students of the rank of Captain (and equivalents in the Army, IAF and CG) required in-depth study. When he delivered his talk, the extent of his preparation was evident. I saw Deputy Chiefs, Fleet Commanders and other senior officers arriving at CNW to deliver talks with assiduous preparation. I think that's the real strength of this fine institute of highest training in the Navy; the felt need by senior hierarchy to prepare the officers for higher responsibilities.

It was extremely satisfying to get the feedback from the students after leaving CNW. I met one of them in Naval War College, Rhode Islands, USA, when I accompanied the CNS for the Sea Power Symposium there. He was undergoing the Naval Command Course there and he openly admitted that he learnt more and better at CNW than there. Another former student phoned me after completing his NDC (National Defence College) course and told me with pride that he conveyed to the Commandant of NDC that the level and quality of speakers at CNW was much higher than even at NDC.

With the resources (including officer manpower) that we had, it was a tough going both in MWCs and CNW. However, the best reward that you ever get is accolades like these from those that you helped train. These are enough to last a lifetime considering that – as the saying goes – men give their lives in battle for merely two inches of ribbon.

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Naval War College *chale* Bombay to Goa

Commodore Srikant B Kesnur

It was in the early 1980s that a need was felt for training of Senior Officers on Strategy and Defence Planning, with the institution having an ability to act as a 'think tank' for the Navy on 'strategic issues'. Karanja, in Mumbai was chosen for the space it provided and its remote location - away from the hustle and bustle of the city - and the College of Naval Warfare (CNW) was inaugurated on 17 Sep 1988 by the then Defence Minister, Shri KC Pant. The first NHCC commenced in 1988, the first Senior Officer Study Period (SOSP) followed the next year and the first Technical Management Course (TMC) commenced in 1994. From these modest beginnings the College continued to expand over the years with inclusion of officers from the Army, the Air Force and the Coast Guard in the NHCC and gradual increase in course duration and curriculum. In early part of the last decade, linkages were established with Mumbai University and this was followed by the institution of M Phil Degree for NHCC participants and Post Graduate Diploma in Management Studies (PGDMS) degree to officers undergoing TMC.

In 2005-06, the CNW was selected for shifting to Mandovi precincts in north Goa (upon the shifting of the Naval Academy to Ezhimala), so as to bring it under the ambit of the Training Command and thereby harmonize training and doctrine development. The relocation would also provide scope for further expansion including foreign participation. *On 18 Aug 2010, another significant development took place - College of Naval Warfare was rechristened as the Naval War College (NWC).* This was not mere cosmetic name change but a marker of a broader outlook to learning and wider coverage of issues

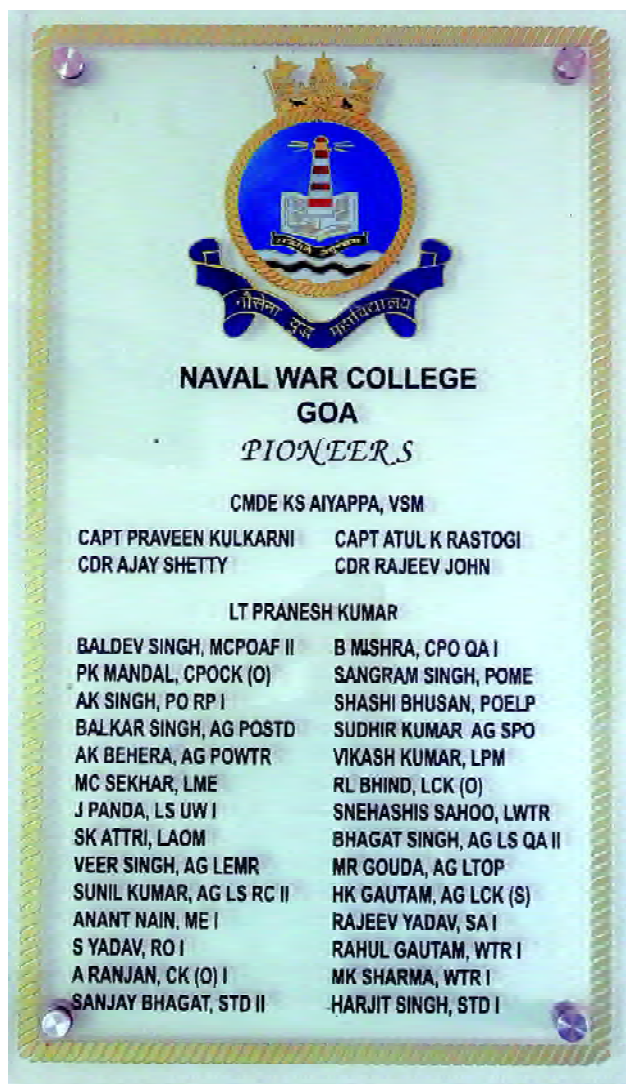
pertaining to war and conflict. The new mandate implicitly envisioned the NWC "to be a pre-eminent institution facilitating higher education, war gaming and cutting edge research on maritime security and warfare at strategic and operational levels, so as to prepare select officers for leadership at these levels by developing critical thinking, analytical ability, strategic vision and proficiency in operational art". *In other words, the NWC would be a think tank, a research institution in matters military and maritime and an institution of learning benchmarked to the best in global standards.*



The final shift to Goa took place in Sep 2011 and the turn of the year 2012 saw the appointment of the first Commandant, a two star officer in place of the one star earlier who was designated as the Director. In the new scheme of things, the NWC functions under the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Southern Naval Command, who heads the Advisory Council constituted to oversee the functioning of the College. The NWC, however, continues to remain affiliated to the Mumbai University and Jamnalal Bajaj Institute of Management Studies, Mumbai. For us, the re-commissioning crew (for want of a better word) the shift was not a mere change of location but the fulfilment



of a cherished dream to give this institution of highest learning in the Navy the necessary physical space and infrastructure to grow to its full potential. It was a call to recast, reshape and reinvigorate ourselves in a new avatar. The physical spaces available at Mandovi compared to the cramped environs at Karanja were a manifestation of the intellectual urge to expand and seek new horizons. So, even as we got down to work and dirty our dungarees we began to dream. This, of course, did not stop us from innovating on almost daily basis with all the energy and enthusiasm of a start-up.



While we are busy looking at ongoing courses, we also set our sights on the future, the very reason for our shift. The road map for the future NWC was drawn out with much enthusiasm and great amounts of cogitation. It aimed at concurrent creation of human capital and material infrastructure. We wanted to aim for the sky and felt that the changes required – be it in the hardware or software – should be transformational and not incremental. We further envisaged that these changes would take place over a period of 5-10 years especially as it would involve de novo construction of several new buildings and facilities. *In conceiving of the future configuration of NWC, we factored in the growing stature and size of our navy, the enhanced value that we are placing on doctrinal and strategic aspects in recent times which in turn needs high and multi-disciplinary academic throughput, the increasing foreign cooperation most manifest in educational and training exchange programmes and the fact that infrastructure once created must have the inherent flexibility to accommodate changes and surges in strength or duration of courses mandated by more contemporary imperatives.*

The first planning parameter related to the courses and curriculum. NWC would continue to conduct existing courses as hitherto with enhanced and enriched curriculum. In addition, other courses would be conducted in line with those being conducted by the Army and Air Force. These included *Junior Professional Naval Command Course* to train officers of 5-7 years seniority with basic principles and nuances of warfighting, *Senior Professional Naval Command Course* to prepare officers selected to take over Command/Executive Officer tenure akin to Army's Senior Command Course, *Higher Defence Orientation Course*



to provide an orientation on higher defence decision making to foreign officers of the rank of Captain/Equivalent, the *Combined Operational Review and Evaluation Programme* for three/two star officers to discuss regional and national security issues and the *Defence Correspondents' Course* for media personnel covering naval and maritime issues.

Certain advanced training facilities to impart quality training were envisaged. These include a War gaming Centre for Op-Level war-games, a Distance Learning Cell to prepare officers prior to reporting at NWC, a University and Production Centre to publish journals and periodicals, digital reference library as an institutional repository of knowledge on maritime security with a dedicated archives section which is necessary for any research. To further enhance our sweep width we imagined that NWC could, in future, incubate a variety of academic programmes and educational research activities. These were setting up of Centres focused on specific subjects like Maritime History or Indian Ocean Studies and hosting 'scholars in residence'

programme and chairs of excellence to encourage dedicated research in specific areas of interest to the Indian Navy.

Since scholars cannot survive on thought alone, progressive creation and augmentation of infrastructure formed a part of our vision. In brief, our road map included new iconic college building along-with state-of-the-art associated facilities. Officers and sailors accommodation, foreign officers accommodation, sports and recreation facilities, have also been catered in our roadmap which we are sanguine will become a master plan for the future development of the area. We also made sure to include, in our blueprint, provisions for green buildings, use of local material and energy saving devices and several ecological housekeeping measures to reduce our carbon footprint.

To sum up, the founding fathers of NWC and the higher authorities have steered this institution towards high quality Professional Military Education through its formative years and now brought us to the take off stage. The shift to Goa is not merely physical relocation



but the academic soul of NWC finding new avenues of expression. While the skeletal framework for the growth has been provided in the charter promulgated by the top bosses, the flesh and blood can be injected only by the vision and purposeful action of the faculty and all those who would serve in her portals. Having celebrated its silver jubilee last year, the NWC is now in the prime of its youth. The next stage involving consolidation, growth and maturity is important especially as she is now finally at her assured moorings and has shed the tag of being perpetually in a 'temporarily situated'

mode. The Indian Navy's highest seat of learning would hereinafter progress in leaps and bounds along a trajectory outlined by its crew and overseers.

Post Script. As I put the finishing touches to this article comes the wonderful news that Mumbai University has accorded recognition for NWC to be a PhD centre which would imply that in a short while from now the College would have officers pursuing doctorate studies guided independently by its own staff and guest faculty.

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Jheel ke us paar

Commodore Srikant B Kesnur

One of the fringe benefits that the navy gives to its newly promoted Captains is a eight month long sabbatical to study 'higher aspects of war', defence management, strategy, Op Art etc. etc. '(you get the picture). The Higher Command Course, as it is called, is conducted at the College of Naval Warfare (CNW) at Karanja. Being a 'temporary duty' course it implies that one attends the course sans family. Lucky are those who are posted in Mumbai, since they can have their family and College in equal measure but luckier still are those who leave behind their families because unbeknown to them they embark on what can only be described as one of the best 'times of their lives'. (In my case at least, it was a win-win situation, the wife would not dream of leaving Wellington where we were posted and I was glad to return to Mumbai – the home port of all navy men!)

The initial impression was nothing fancy; if anything, the matter of fact reception at the airport and being bundled together in a rickety old bus removed all the hot air lurking under

our new stripes. Getting to Karanja after a three hour bumpy ride and having to lug our entire heavy luggage by ourselves ('the CBs had already secured', the Mess Staff said without a hint of apology) further disabused us of any notions of upward mobility. (The only upward mobility in my case was a third floor cabin). The cabins were what can be described in polite terms as 'Spartan' and the wardroom a poor cousin of the fancy WNCO Mess.

When we began the course, we did not know what to expect (and nor I suspect did the College). The first few days at the CNW were of novelty value because suddenly all we had to do was listen to some lectures and talk big about high falutin' things. Coming as we did from billets where we had slogged our butts off as sweating Commanders in consideration zone this was manna from heaven. Read, cogitate, discuss, all without the Damocles sword of evaluation hanging compensated for the limited offerings of the place and, naturally, our social life revolved around the bar.



In the first couple of weeks most of us waited eagerly for the weekend to succumb to the seductive allure of life on the other side of the sea. But as time passed and we became more comfortable with our environs we woke up to the subtle charms of Karanja and to the value of 'College' life. Better still, camaraderie bloomed and friendships were renewed as one spent more time with and amongst each other. Old bachelorhood memories dimmed by the patina of marriage, kids and other existential dilemmas were revived amidst peals of laughter and nostalgia. To use a youngster's lingo, life suddenly began to rock and going to Bombay was no longer on the 'must do' agenda. Karanja itself is, to use a much abused Wellington word, 'salubrious' and a couple of degrees cooler than Colaba. The thick greenery and the gentle breeze make the place very agreeable. It is a bird watcher's paradise and a walker's dream. After the hedonistic excesses of the first few days we began to exert in right earnest and the 12 kilometre brisk walk from the Mess to Jetty end and back provided ample exercise for both body and mind because 'we walked the talk and talked the walk'. Some badminton or yoga or table tennis after that provided both mirth and friendly competition of the oldies. Meal times were eagerly looked forward to more for the quality of the discussion than the quality of food. Hell, we even began to enjoy the group presentations or some such sundry tasks. Maybe now, we could solve the Navy's problems once and for all.

Our course (NHCC 20) was blessed with characters of all hues and entertaining oneself was never a problem. The rickety old bus in which we took rides now was the venue of much 'tamasha' on the move and when it broke down (which it frequently did). In most cases the enthusiasm was in inverse proportion to talent but a couple of mimics and singers compensated for the rest. It helped, of course,

that everybody had a healthy sense of humour and nobody took himself seriously. Soon we had musical soirees - entertainment evenings and ghazal (guzzle) nights where we joined the native Karanjaites in full throated participation. Whether it was picnics or parties, formal dos or informal spur of the moment get-togethers there was a sense of free spirit and joie de vivre. We must be one of the rare courses where the Mess and Bar stewards enjoyed impromptu stand up performances and even had their '*farmaish*' of songs for us to sing. The NHCC 20 cricket team (perhaps the only cricket team in the world to have been captained by a Malayali, how we came to that sorry state is the stuff of another story but let that pass) won some, lost many but had fun. Above all, we also had a course anthem which we sung with much gusto and little else. It was the popular qawalli '*...Chadtha Sooraj Dheere Dheere...*' partly elegiac, partly philosophical and wholly unsuitable to the course atmosphere.

Conducting NHCC 20 meant that the College had completed two decades and stepping into the youthful twenty-first year. So, in a sense we ushered in 'youth' to the College. The very terms that characterise youth – sense of merriment, joyousness and eagerness to learn were the essence of our course. We were an eclectic bunch, may be even esoteric or eccentric. But one thing we did with a sense of zeal and fun was to learn. Despite our egos and own perceptions, we were forever discussing, debating and engaging with one another. Whether in class rooms or our cabins, in the bar or over stand-easy (drool worthy), in the boat or the bus we traded views and exchanged ideas - not like ivory tower intellectuals but in a true spirit of respect for the other's experience and to gain from that. All this was most obviously reflected in JOCAP (the Joint Capsule in Mhow) where we were jocularly told, "You are everything but the silent



service” or in our exchanges with guest speakers where time was always short for discussions and even the ‘beer penalty’ did not deter the intrepid.

The offshoot of all this is that we gained friends and lost kilos. We played and prayed together, we dined, wine and whined together. We finished with great memories, not bad blood; we left with a sense of mission accomplished not regret. We found ways to respect the other’s space and interests and still have a sense of camaraderie and bonhomie - with and without the families. Many of the readers would, justifiably, argue that the courses they underwent had the same sense of fun. The point is to be grateful for the opportunities offered by the Service for vertical and lateral growth and

to be thankful to the CNW for making that possible course after course. For many of us, Navy in Bombay means Navy Nagar or Colaba. Karanja was associated with demolition exercises, snakes (we encountered many) and all the crazy things that MARCOS do. It took a long while for us to unearth the treasures that lurk there but when we did, it was quite a bonanza. In a year or two, CNW is all set to move to more fancy surroundings in place that has brand equity written all over it. Karanja is to Goa what Kadhi Chawal is to Caviar but just as some people will always swear by former, there will legions of Navy (and Army, AF and CG) officers who would swear by the charms of CNW that was ‘**Jheel ke us paar**’.

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Interns ahoy! training at INHS Asvini

Major General Subroto Kundu (Retd.)

After completing MBBS from Maulana Azad Medical College (MAMC), Delhi in December 1969, I was one of the few youngsters selected by the AFMS. In Jan 1970, I received my appointment letter from the Office of the DGAFMS to join INHS Asvini on permanent duty for one year of Internship, in the rank of Surgeon S/Lt.

As advised, in my appointment letter, I was to inform CO Asvini about my details. Since my father was away on his appointment as CO, 158 GH Siliguri, I thus had to take the necessary action. I had no letter head of my own and thus borrowed a sheet from my old man’s desk. The message was crisp and to the point, “Arriving by Punjab Mail on 13 February on permanent posting. Arrange reception, transport and accommodation.”

Surgeon Captain Pinto, the CO received this letter. “XO, what is this? Why is Col Kundu, my course-mate coming on permanent posting to this hospital? Am I being moved out? In fact, he has just taken over command of a huge hospital at Siliguri. So why is this unexpected move?”

“Sir, Col Kundu is arriving today itself at 1500h, and so we have to make arrangements quickly.”

The CO sighed, “Anyway, first things first. XO please tell my Secretary to take my Staff Car and ensure that Col Kundu is received properly.”

“Aye Sir, will do.”

As the Punjab Mail steamed into VT, I quickly washed up and tidied myself. An Uncle who was in the Navy, had told me to exit the platform, turn left where all the Service transport would



be parked so that I could get a lift in one of them. Since I was coming to Bombay for the first time, this information was extremely valuable. I followed the instructions and sure enough, the very first vehicle that I saw was a black Ambassador, with INHS Asvini painted on the rear. So, one can imagine my relief as I stepped towards the vehicle with my coolie carrying my bedding and trunk.

The vehicle appeared locked. So I hovered around it, looked into it and generally hung about, till a man in a white dress and cap who looked like a driver arrived and asked, "Yes, what do you want? Why are you peering into this car?"

I replied, "My name is Surgeon S/Lt Kundu and I am posted to Asvini. I need a lift to this hospital as I have to undergo training."

Aghast, the driver looked me up and down, at my not very clean pair of jeans and crushed shirt and charged towards the station, leaving me quite blank as if I was some sort of ghost.

He met the officer, at the Punjab Mail platform, "Sir, I think the person whom we have to pick up has already arrived. He is near the vehicle

and informed me that he is Kundu."

The Captain's Secretary practically panicked, "What! How did I miss Col Kundu?" He rushed out of the platform, followed closely by the driver.

"Sir, do not worry. The so called Col Kundu is a youngster with the rank of Surgeon S/ Lt and he is reporting for internship training."

The Captain's Secretary continued onward with a puzzled look and when he reached the Asvini staff car, he noted a youngster in jeans sitting on the roadside on a bedding and trunk, smoking a cigarette.

"Hey you, what do you think you are doing near my vehicle?"

I jumped up on hearing a booming annoyed voice of an elderly gentleman in naval uniform. I collected my wits about me, "Well, I am Surgeon S/Lt Kundu and I have been asked to report to Asvini."

Without hiding irritation he asked, "And who is Col Kundu?"

"He is my father, posted as CO, 158 GH, Siliguri."

And then, the Captain's Secretary blew his top, right there at VT, "You dared to use your father's letter head to inform Asvini about your arrival. Do you even realize, to what extent, your letter has caused chest pain and heartburn to the CO, XO and the rest of us since this morning? And you actually posted this letter without a stamp."

I remained silent, wondering why this gentleman was making so much fuss about a little letter.

"Anyway, get into the car."

The Captain's Secretary did not speak to me throughout the drive, although I quite enjoyed the car ride. I was dropped off at the wardroom where a senior resident was deputed to settle



me down as I was in big trouble.

Captain's Secretary reported the entire episode to the CO. The CO instructed that my kitting up was to be completed within the next seven days, and that I be marched up in No 2s."

A week later, Surgeon Captain Pinto taking into consideration my first offence let me off with a rather stern warning.

And so my internship commenced. Three other interns subsequently joined me, two from the Army and one from the Navy.

It was in the third quarter of my internship that I was deputed to the Acute Medical Ward in the first floor of the heritage building opposite the present main gate. A patient of Tuberculosis of the lungs presented with severe breathlessness. An X-Ray revealed a collection of fluid between the left lung and chest wall. The Physician Trainee, asked me to do a pleural tap and drain out the collected fluid and relieve the patient of his breathlessness. The MO's room also served as the minor procedure room. It was here that the patient was brought. Whilst self and a nurse washed up, in the ward, the patient was left on a trolley close to an open window with no grill. As he waited for the procedure, the trolley began to slide towards the window and finally struck the wall with an immense jerk, practically throwing the patient out of the window. He managed to hang on for dear life.

That is how we found him as we re-entered the room.

"Hey," the Nurse yelled, "what are you doing?"

The patient choked as he replied, "Help! I am about to fall out of this window."

Anyway, we got him back safely onto the trolley.

I commenced the requisite procedure and began collecting fluid from his chest. I noted that the colour was something like the colour of tea and I asked, "When did you have a cup of tea?"

"Sir, just before coming in here I had a full mug, since I was quite worried."

"Well, I think, I have just sucked out all the tea that you drank, and, how are you feeling now?"

"Absolutely fine, in fact, it has been a while since I felt so fine."

The Physician Trainee also came by and examined the patient and remarked, "Great job done. Send him for a check X-Ray."

The repeat X-Ray revealed absolutely no change in the fluid level of his left chest. But, the patient was completely relieved. He was put on Anti-TB therapy and sent on sick leave.

Six weeks later, when the soldier returned for a review, he had put on weight and looked well," So how are you feeling?" asked the Physician Trainee.

"Very well, Sir." He continued, "Thanks to the procedure carried out by that young doctor. I think that was the turning point."

The Trainee Physician scratched his head and wondered what exactly I had done. Well, as far as I was concerned it was only a large amount of tea that I had extracted via the lungs.

The days went by with many an untold tale of intrigue, of pure humour and fun, a smattering of a little romance on the side.

Three senior officers heaved sighs of relief, when we interns finally left for our respective postings.

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In the fond memory of Admiral A. K. Chatterji

Lieutenant Commander Gul Masand (Retd.)

Every bit of what Vice Adm Avinash Bhatia and Commodore Rajnish Tandon have already enumerated in their write up about the Admiral in QD 2k2 is true and more. I need not rewrite the whole lot of qualities which resided in a single person I have known, till date.

The attached Lucknow photographs were taken in Dec 1969. He was the guest of honor on the occasion of 'Golden Night' celebrations of Sainik School Lucknow. He and his lady wife Ms Madhobi stayed there for 3-4 days to add to the grandeur of the series of functions. We happened to be at Lucknow and were invited. The then principal, Col Das was a dynamic man, and his naval officer son [former shipmate] too was present with his wife. In the process we spent that period in the august company of one of the most revered chiefs the Indian Navy has ever had.



The Group with Chatterjis: Standing on the right are the author and his wife. At the back one can spot Chhotu Das and the ADC to the CNS.

The canoeing couple [the Chatterjis]: This Lake was created by filling an abandoned brick kiln across the road from Sainik School and it took months to fill. Still the water level was much below the bank and a 'Machaan' was erected, with wooden stairs descending to water level to enable boarding the boats. That the task was gigantic would be an understatement.



The group on the flat top: This was a rare occasion when a lady stayed overnight on board. Indira Gandhi was accompanied by her lady companion Ms Krishna. It started drizzling just before she was to board the chopper to fly ashore. This resulted in an opportunity to capture her with two of the eminent Admirals - Chatterji and Nanda. The author is on extreme left.



The group with late Indira Gandhi was taken in 1967 on board Vikrant.



I left the service early [mid-72] and had switched over to the corporate sector. We had just reverted to being 'resident Indians', from our NRI status abroad, and had anchored at our home base Lucknow, in early eighties.

I was on a visit to Delhi in connection with a project [81-82], and one fine morning when I came down for breakfast at Hotel Janpath, I noticed the Admiral sitting with his daughter [I don't recall if it was Bula or Tuk Tuk]. He gave me a smile of recognition [we were meeting after 1969], and I spent some quality time with them. This was the last we met – purely by chance.

He was appreciative of my career graph as a civilized civilian. My spontaneous response was that the navy did groom me to some extent and the growth came later due to role models like him. He just laughed it away.

Earlier, I had seen him from the eyes of a young officer doing sea time on board good old INS Mysore. [Mysore carried the flag for JETEX in place of Vikrant in 1962, due to her sudden docking].



When we met in 1969, he remembered my first camera – an Agfa Isoly III of early sixties, and discussed the one I was carrying – a Yashika 635. As an amateur photographer, I was amazed at his in depth knowledge about cameras and photography. As an aviator [INAS 310] one did occasionally interact with him on board Vikrant, and one felt privileged that the Admiral knew me by my name. He – quite effortlessly, created a sense of belonging among people who came in touch with him.

The firm foundations of the present day Blue Water Navy have been laid by visionaries like him and this is not an easily forgotten fact.

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Remembering Admiral Adhar Kumar Chatterji

Vice Admiral Avinash Bhatia (Retd)

We are celebrating the centenary year of our former Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral AK Chatterji, who held the high office from 4th March 1966 to 28th February 1970. I had written a humble tribute to him in the 2002 issue of Quarterdeck. Here I am recalling some of his major contributions to the development and

growth of our Service.

Naval Plan Paper I: As Director of Naval Plans in 1948-49, he prepared the first Plan Paper of our Service. He had envisioned a three-dimensional, Blue Water profile for the Indian Navy. He had accordingly proposed the force



A meeting in the office of Admiral Gorshkov, Moscow

levels, commensurate to that profile to be built up progressively in the coming decades. Since then that visionary Plan Paper, continued to be the guide for growth of our Navy right into the 1990s. A most unique and interesting feature of that plan included a comprehensive discussion and examination on the suitability of Karwar as a full-fledged naval base, which came up four to five decades later.

Project AK: Our Navy's role came into focus when our missile boats attacked Karachi harbour during December 1971. Called AK boats, these were inducted into the Indian Navy that very year. The boats were so named as a tribute to Admiral AK Chatterji and the project was appropriately designated as Project AK.

Naval Scientific Orientation Course: In his opinion our young officers required a wider perspective on science and technology before doing Long Gunnery and AS Warfare Courses. As Deputy Chief of Naval Staff, he oversaw introduction of Naval Scientific Orientation Courses to be conducted at Institute of Armament Technology, Girinagar, Pune. The first course, conducted in 1962, formed a sound knowledge base for the officers prior to Long Courses.

Andaman and Nicobar Command: Following the set-backs in our conflict with



Discussion during the visit to Moscow

China in 1962, he was tasked to study the naval aspects to strengthen our defences. In his report he had recommended enhancement of infrastructure and force levels for the Eastern sea-board. That report set the ball rolling for establishment of a tri-service Command in the Andaman and Nicobar island territories.

Creation of MCPO Ranks: He often raised the issue of disparity in ranks of senior sailors vis-a-vis the Army and the Air Force. We had no ranks equivalent to JCOs and Warrant Officers. After much debate, MCPO ranks were instituted in the Indian Navy on 1st January 1969.

Summer Working Dress (No 8/8A): A major change in summer working dress was the introduction trousers as an option to shorts. For information of young readers, naval officers and sailors those days used to wear shorts with summer working dress.

Inter-Branch Harmony: High on his agenda was to improve inter-branch relations. To give non-X officers a bigger role in day-to-day running of the Service, he introduced harbour watch-keeping for officers of all branches except the Medical Branch. It was a well-intentioned move but met with protests from technical officers saying that their hands were already full when ships are in harbour. So it did not work.



Combined Navy List: In the same spirit, he introduced a combined Navy List where all officers except Medical and Education were listed together. This move did not enthuse many in the Service and was soon discontinued.

Select Lists for Promotion: A watershed reform in officers' promotion system was instituted by introduction of batch-wise consideration and select-lists. Earlier, Promotion Boards used to meet half-yearly and considered all officers in 'zone of promotion'; for example, for Lt Commanders (X) the zone used to be two to eight years' seniority. Some fortunate officers used to overtake their colleagues one year or more senior, leaving many promising officers superseded. In some cases officers were promoted to acting higher rank 'while holding appointment' but not promoted to substantive rank subsequently and even brought down to substantive rank on transfer. This system caused much anxiety and resentment among officers. Admiral Chatterji was convinced that the matter ought to be studied comprehensively and assigned the task to a Committee. Based on its recommendation, the system of select lists was

instituted. The system has been refined over time but its basic structure remained what was given by him.

Submarine Pay: We had signed the contract for the first lot of submarines from then USSR and the crews had commenced training at Vladivostok in the mid-1960s. To man the next lot of boats, we required more volunteers but the response was not satisfactory. NHQ had taken up a fully justified case for the Submarine Pay but the file was just doing the usual rounds in South Block. Admiral Chatterji sought an urgent meeting with Shri YB Chavan, the then Raksha Mantri in the chair. I remember the meeting took place on a Sunday when the proposal was cleared without further delay.

I have highlighted only some of the important milestones of his era and may add that Admiral Chatterji ensured that these decisions were implemented as he had envisioned them. He applied his mind at practically every aspect of management of the Service and tried to improve it. He was indeed an inspiring role model for officers of our generation.

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Prime Minister Indira Gandhi with Admiral Chatterji, Mrs Gorshkova and Admiral Gorshkov



Admiral Chatterji inspecting Divisions at INS Kunjali in 1966. The Sailors are in square rig.



Admiral AK Chatterji Centenary Commemoration

The birth centenary of Admiral Adhar Kumar Chatterji was commemorated in a function organised at the India International Center on 22 November 2014. The function was attended by serving and retired naval officers, family members and friends. Whilst the function was nostalgic for some, it offered others a opportunity to catch up on old times. For the young serving naval officers it was an opportunity to be better acquainted with the life and times of the first four-star Chief, as well as a look into the Indian Navy's past.

Talks by Admiral RK Dhowan, the Chief of the Naval Staff and Admiral Arun Prakash (Retd) ex-CNS, family reminisces by his grandsons (Mr Mohit and Dheeraj Mukharjee), and an audio visual presentation about the life of Late Admiral AK Chatterji (compiled by Ms Anusuya Mathur based on a script by Mrs Asha Rani Mathur, the Granddaughter and daughter respectively of late V Adm Daya Shankar - a close friend of Adm Chatterji) were the highlights of the event.

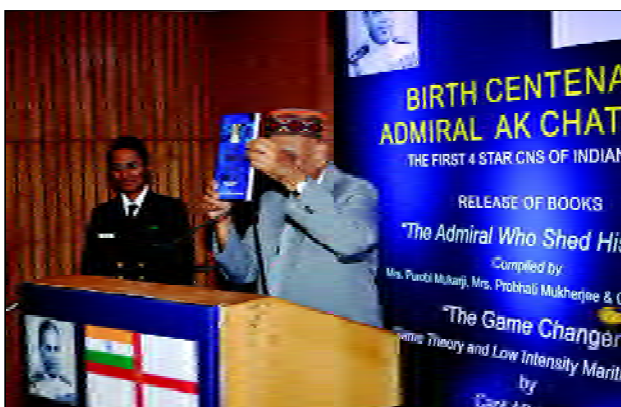
Two books were also released during the event. The first 'The Admiral Who Shed His Vice' is an anecdotal biography of Admiral Chatterji compiled by his daughters Mrs Purobi Mukharji and Mrs Probhati Mukherjee along with Captain Arun Pratap Golaya. The second book, titled 'The Game Changer', has been authored by Captain AP Golaya, under the Admiral AK Chatterji Fellowship under the aegis of the National Maritime Foundation. It examines the application of Game Theory to Low Intensity Maritime Operations. Adm RK Dhowan, the Chief of the Naval Staff and Admiral RH Tahiliani, (Retd) the ex-CNS and former Governor of Sikkim released the two books.

Photographs (many of them of historical value) culled from personal albums were digitised and blown up for display at the foyer. Their display not only added to the nostalgic environment but also gave many 'old timers' a wonderful time as they relived the past and related anecdotes to each other.





Glimpses of Admiral AK Chatterji Centenary Commemoration





Godavari – a walk down memory lane

Commander Vishal Rawal

The story of Godavari is akin to the story of India. In all her three avatars she has epitomized resurgence and self-reliance. Let's take a walk down memory lane...

The earliest Godavari was HMIS Godavari (U-52), a *sloop* (warship between a corvette and frigate in size) of the Black Swan Class was commissioned into the Royal Indian Navy on 28 Jun 1943. On partition the ship was transferred to Pakistan and renamed as HMPS Sind.

HMS BEDALE/ ORP ŒLAZAK INS GODAVARI (1942-1976)



The second Godavari was a Hunt Class Destroyer. Initially laid down in 1940 for the Royal Navy as HMS Bedale, she was commissioned into the Polish Navy in 1942, as ORP Œlazak (L-26). Subsequently, HMS Bedale was leased to the Indian Navy in 1952. Post undergoing a refit at Birkenhead, she was commissioned as INS Godavari (D-92) on 27 April 1953. She served as a training ship until 23 March 1976.

INS GODAVARI (1983-Present)

The present avatar of Godavari came about

from the realization amongst naval planners that self-reliance in design and shipbuilding was essential to build a strong navy. The Leander Frigate Project of the 1960-70s, resulted in not only the construction of six 'Giri Class frigates' (in collaboration with the UK) at Mazagon Dock Ltd., but also in boosting indigenous naval design and shipbuilding capability. As the project was nearing completion, the Directorate of Naval Design at NHQ evolved a design for a new generation frigate. MDL was once again entrusted with the construction of this indigenous frigate, which would essentially retain the steam propulsion of the 'Giris'. However, she was not to be merely, 'a Leander in new skin', but much faster and with far superior firepower. She would also be one of the first frigates in the world, to carry two Sea King helicopters (well known as the 'Flying Frigates', because of their integral firepower and sensor suite). Fortuitously, the acquisition of the frigate's weapon and sensor suite (a mix of Russian and western) coincided with the initiation of the Project. Thus, the stage was set for India's first indigenously designed and built frigate - 'INS Godavari'.

Godavari's keel was laid on 03 Nov 78 by Admiral J Cursetji, CNS, and she was launched on 15 May 80 by Smt Mohini Singh, w/o Shri CPN Singh, Raksha Rajya Mantri. 10 Dec 1983 was truly a 'red letter day' for the Indian Navy, when INS Godavari was commissioned by the then Defence Minister, Shri R Venkataraman.

Like her illustrious namesakes, the history of INS Godavari (F-20) has been replete with achievements and glory. Over the past three decades, she has 'shown the flag far and wide', probably having travelled more than any other



IN ship. She has participated in numerous operations, across the expanse of the Indian Ocean. For a decade and a half since commissioning, she was the symbol of India's growing military might and self-reliance in shipbuilding.



*The Saga begins...
Commissioning Ceremony – 10 Dec 1983*

In order to come up with an appropriate motto for the ship, a competition was conducted on-board. A young Engine Room Artificer came up with the motto '**Jagruk, Sajag, Nirbhay**' or '**Alert, Aware, Fearless**', which holds the ship and her crew in good stead even today.

Over the past three decades, Godavari has shown the Indian Flag across the expanse of the Globe.



Distinguished Visitors

Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi and family spent a few days on-board in 1985.



*'Operation Cactus' – MV Progress Light
surrenders to Godavari*

In 1988, India successfully thwarted a coup d'état against Maldivian President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom. Godavari and Betwa intercepted and arrested the mercenaries, who tried to flee Male on-board the Merchant Vessel Progress Light.



"Your little misadventure is over"

Captain SV Gopalachari, CO Godavari, with mercenary leader Abdullah Luthufi. On the day Godavari was scheduled to depart Male, after handing over the mercenaries and their hostages, President Gayoom made an impromptu visit to the ship. In an address to



the ship's company, he paid rich tributes to the Indian Armed Forces and expressed his nation's gratitude for their timely assistance. The President wrote in the ship's Visitors Book, ***"It was with a sense of pleasure and honour that I visited INS Godavari at Male today."***

Over the past three decades, Godavari has successfully deployed in numerous operations, including **'Op Jupiter' – 1988** (insertion of IMSF commandoes into Sri Lanka); **'Op**

Shield' and 'Op Bolster' - 1994 (de-induction of Indian Army from Somalia) and **'Patrol of Gulf' – 2009, 2011** (anti-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden)

Even today, 31 years on, Godavari is a frontline ship of the Western Fleet. In this recent photograph placed below, INS Jyoti (Fleet Tanker) can be seen fuelling the latest (INS Vikramaditya) and the oldest (INS Godavari) ships of the Western Fleet, whilst INS Viraat maintains vigil.

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PS: *INS Godavari is probably the only ship in the world that has produced a Chief of the Naval Staff from each of her avatars. Captain HMS Chaudhari, the commissioning Commanding Officer of HMPS Sind, later rose to become the first CNS of the Pakistan Navy. The commissioning Commanding Officer of the second Godavari was Cdr SN Kohli, who took over the reins of the IN just after the 1971 war. Admiral Sureesh Mehta, (Retd.) commanded the present Godavari from 1989-91.*



'Alert, Aware, Fearless' perseveres in the van of the Fleet



My select memories of commissioning-INS Godavari

Rear Admiral Keki Pestonji (Retd.)

Godavari was born in an era where the cell phone was unheard of, computers were unwieldy mainframes and the only thing that sat on your laptop was your lunchbox.

And yet, in the depths of Mumbai's Mazagon Docks, something ahead of its time was underway. The India Navy was preparing to commission the first and largest in her class, completely indigenously designed and built, Frigate. With just trunk calls, signals and real time travel (no AutoCAD, video conferencing or even email!) this first Frigate in an ambitious 'Project 16', was the proud outcome of India's growing capabilities in defence production and a truly international collaboration.



On 10th December 1983, INS GODAVARI, pennant No: F 20 was commissioned under my command. The chief guest for the occasion was Shri R. Venkataraman, then the Defence Minister later to become the President of India. At 3850 tons displacement, Godavari was a national-international mix of design, machinery, radar and armament. We had Dutch Radars, Russian (USSR) surface-to-surface, and surface-to-air missile systems, two British

Seaking helicopters stowed in side-by-side hangars and a helo deck capable of handling one chopper at a time. The ship was fitted with the latest and wholly indigenous Composite Communication System (CCS), built by Bharat Electronics and an indigenous APSOH Sonar system. Godavari was the first Indian ship to be fitted with the Selenia IPN10 Combat Data System as also an INMARSAT communications system. We also had a 'smart' SHFDF system coupled with jammers named INS 3. The last was still under development in both India and Italy and had several behavioural quirks.



In Sep/Oct of that year, I had been specifically instructed by the then CNS, Admiral OS Dawson, to make "setting to work" for each weapon/system my top priority. To accomplish this task, foreign/indigenous guaranty experts of each system needed to be present onboard. So, in the first three months of my commission, I had Indians, Russians, British, Dutch, American, German, Italian and Danish guaranty personnel, all living and working together on the ship. I testify to the fact that this alliance worked seamlessly, peacefully and effectively. There were no untoward incidents to report except



for minor stomach upsets from too much curry.

After commissioning, Godavari joined the Western Fleet only for administrative and recreational purposes. Our sailing programmes were completely made by HQ WNC, based on the trial schedule projected by MDL. However, in early 1984, the Indian Navy was holding a President's Review in which Godavari participated. Other than this major activity, we put to sea to carry out trials of the various individual systems. By June 1984, we had successfully completed individual "setting to work" trials of all machinery, communication, radar and individual weapon systems. Being first of its class, we had to carry out full power and actual firing trials to test the structural efficiency of the entire ship. To this end, we completed firing of surface-to-surface missiles from all four of our missile hangars as also firing of the surface-to-air missiles and other active weapon systems. All trials were successful.

The ship was not fitted with a traverse system on the helo deck. This meant that the helicopters on board had to be manhandled in and out of their hangars to the take-off and landing point on the helo deck. We soon discovered that manhandling of the Seaking helicopter-a 10 ton behemoth -in any sea state more than one was extremely hazardous. We therefore embarked one Chetak helicopter and a Seaking only when required for trials. Unfortunately, the traverse system ordered from a British Company did not materialize for the whole period of my command.

The trials of the radar and gun /missile systems were scheduled subsequent to the full power machinery trials as also the turning trials. I particularly mention the turning trials because applying full rudder at full speed made the ship

heel over by about 30-35 degrees! The initial feeling and experience of heeling over at such large angles was a bit unsettling. But I am happy to note that my very capable XO, Commander Rajan Bhandari had taken every precaution to ensure all equipment/stores deck side were stowed away in a seaman-like manner. We had no breakages or losses throughout the duration of these trials. The citadel and pre-wetting trials were also fascinatingly interesting. We had to track air oxygen content and headache incidence in the former, with clouds of sea water enveloping us and a wet deck overflowing into the scuppers in the latter.



Having completed most of our important trials of the weapon systems, hull structure, main engine, electrical and electronic systems, we joined the Western Fleet in Sep 1984. Just three months later, we participated in a massive Inter Services exercise, Trishakti. Godavari was nominated as the Escort Force Commander and our amphibious brigade was embarked on board for landing at Port Blair. During this time with the fleet, we carried out many replenishment-at-sea exercises. INS Rajput (under the command of Captain Premvir Das) and Godavari were often given fuelling stations on either side of the replenishing ship and we would normally complete our fuelling



simultaneously. We would then race to our screening stations! I will admit Rajput won the race on most occasions.

A Parsi goes for High Tea – a memorable incident

During Operation Trishakti, as Escort Force Commander, I took off in our Chetak helicopter to survey the troops carrying out landing operations. That's when I suddenly remembered my old friend Captain (Retd) Vijay Prasada was the Manager of the TCI Hotel at Port Blair. I immediately requested the pilot to head to TCI and hover over its front lawn. Lo and behold! There was Vijay and his lovely wife Sheila having high tea, wondering what the commotion overhead was about. And before they could figure it out, I was being winched down from the helicopter onto the chair beside them. A pleasant afternoon was spent with friends, cucumber sandwiches and good tea. When we were done, I radioed for the chopper to return, got promptly winched up and returned to ship!

The Constable Anecdote

Just prior to commissioning, MDL (the ship builders) informed me that I could buy some art for the captain's cabin. During this time, I happened to come across a large, b&w photograph of the original Godavari, a Hunt class destroyer of World War II vintage, taken when she was at anchor in Bombay Harbour, off the Gateway of India. It reminded me of the famous Seascapes painted by the English artist, Constable - considered among the most popular and valuable contributors to British Art. Armed with this photograph and a vivid imagination, I went over to Pundole Art Gallery to commission the work. Pundole gave me the address of a reclusive, small-time Parsee

artist. Amazingly, his name was Constable!

Before long, Mr. Constable along with all his paraphernalia was invited onboard when Godavari was at anchor off Middle Ground for about two weeks. Over approximately three or four mornings, he set about painting the old Godavari from within the new. At the end of this period, he produced very fine oil on canvas. This painting was put up in my cabin.



Months later, the First Sea Lord of the Royal Navy visited. He immediately noticed the painting and recognized the name of the artist on it. Needless to say, he was gob smacked, terribly impressed and very confused. How on earth did the work of the most famous 18th century British artist get here! As much as I enjoyed his dilemma, I had to eventually break it to him that this was Constable indeed, but of the Indian kind. I told him about the Parsi community and how we take on the professions of our fathers/grandfathers as surnames. Much mirth and laughter ensued and the Sea Lord left with a good story to tell.

I commanded Godavari for almost two years and they were the best two years of my naval career. The challenge of commissioning the very first 'made in India' frigate was



considerable. There were no precedents set, no well-thumbed manuals to follow. This was a class of ship that had never been sailed before. There were many unknowns, several unexpected outcomes that required quick and creative decision making. It was tough yet

immensely fulfilling. As Godavari's commissioning Commanding Officer, I felt a pioneer of sorts. Indeed privileged and honoured to make her fighting fit to be part of the Naval Fleet for decades to come.

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Godavari tales and snippets

Commodore R Bhandari (Retd)

The First Commission

Fitness First – Inter Divisional Volleyball at Sea

Godavari, the first Indian designed and Indian built frigate, with capability to carry two Sea King helicopters had many other firsts to her credit. One of these, a game which later spread throughout the fleet, was playing volleyball at sea.

The trigger was a discussion during an officers' meeting. "We have this long series of post commissioning sea and weapon trials coming up Commander, how do you plan to keep the men occupied", exclaimed Captain Keki Pestonji, eyebrows raised in his classic fashion! So we responded with the usual general drills, dog watch entertainment programmes, ship knowledge quizzes, inter-divisional tug of war etc. It was then we realized that we had oodles of unused space. The helicopters were yet to be embarked and the hangar, helo deck and SOFMA compartment could be put to use. First idea, use the SOFMA compartment as a gym, was rejected as it was unventilated. Badminton in the hangar was easy, but only limited people could play at a time, plus no space for spectators. Deck hockey was ruled out, the sticks would damage

the epoxy coating of the helo deck. Eureka – let's play volleyball! The equipment was minimal, space was available and the sport required no special training.

Thus was born what later became a popular sport throughout the fleet. Whenever we were out at sea for trials, inter divisional volleyball matches at 1630 hrs were the high point of the day. The net would be strung up between two awning stanchions on the helo deck, and the court neatly marked out in chalk. The volleyball was encased in an open mesh of nylon fibre and attached to the centre of the net by a length of casting gun line to ensure full freedom of movement without risk of being lost overboard. Teams were drawn up and league-cum-knock out matches scheduled.

At 1630 hrs, helo deck would report readiness to the Bridge to start the match of the day and make a formal "Request nil wind on deck". The manoeuvre would be executed, after due regard to navigational safety and half an hour of lusty play and cheering would follow. We even had a well fought exhibition match between the Russian guarantee specialists and the gunnery department, which the average six foot tall Russians won. I believe they had been secretly training for it in their hotel!



And so Godavari claimed another first, the birth of playing volleyball at sea in the Western Fleet.

Amphex 1984 – Carrying three Helicopters

During the second half of 1984, we were deployed to the East Coast to take part in Amphex slated between Vizag and Port Blair. Since we had not yet been cleared to operate Seakings, we had a single Chetak embarked. At Vizag, Admiral Ramdas inquired how we could best add power to the Task Force, aside from our formidable armament of 4xP20 and OSA-M battery. Taking out our ships drawings, we concluded that the hangars were large enough to accommodate two Chetaks each in port and starboard hangars. If we kept one on deck in lashed down condition, we could theoretically carry up to five Chetaks. In view of the need of free deck space for urgent recovery, it was decided to embark only three. Two in the port hangar parked nose to tail, and one in starboard. So we sailed from Vizag with three Chetaks on board, once again a first for any fleet ship, other than the Carrier. The first day out went well, with a series of exercises in launching, recovering, rotor folding and hanging the helos. Proudly, we reported success to the Task Force Commander and were assigned our duties commensurate with our augmented fire power and reach capability. The Chetaks were to represent one Seaking 42B and two Chetaks with surveillance and ASW capability.

It was early in the morning watch of the second day that we were struck by a major hitch. Flight Commander reported that the port hangar shutter was stuck in a half down position. Our capability was reduced to a single Chetak! All efforts to raise the shutter manually had failed. The Cdr (E) examined the sketchy on board document for the hangar shutter and declared that it was a Dockyard assistance job! Loath

to report reduced capability to the Task Force Cdr, I sent for the Chief Shipwright. Inspection of the shutter mechanism, joint by joint, led us to the top of the hangar. Fortunately the weather was mild. I donned a safety harness, secured it to a strong point and had the Chief Shipwright hold my legs firmly as I lay down along the top of the shutter housing, with my torso over the side. Three bolts were unscrewed and a four inch diameter cover plate removed. As I stuck my hand in, I discovered the culprit! A grub screw had worked loose. The greasy item was extracted, cleaned and carefully replaced. Within minutes the hangar shutter was fully operational and we were back to full capability. We remained underway and continued our assignment with the task force throughout the time it took to get the hangar functional.

It is absolutely true that at sea, your best assistants are your brain and right and left hands. It is the will power and ingenuity that gets us through.

Clearance for Operating Seakings

Godavari had been designed to embark and operate two Seakings. Trials had to be conducted to clear us for the same, first at anchor in harbour and then at sea. After commissioning, we were assigned a Chetak till the Seaking landing trials could be cleared. Here we had two hurdles. The first was the lack of a landing grid that could be engaged by harpoon and the helo winched down in adverse weather. The second was that the traverse gear was yet to be made and installed by SOFMA. It was more complex than what had been fitted in Vindhyagiri/Taragiri, as the helo, after landing and rotor/tail folding, had to traverse a precise curved path to enter the designated hangar. Manoeuvring five to eight tons of helicopter manually in restricted space would be a formidable task.



A pre-flight inspection by the Kunjali team required some adjustment of deck fittings and safety nets, which was quickly done by Mazdocks. Thereafter, harbour trials were scheduled on a calm and bright day. All of us were excited and looking forward to the event that, once successful, would mark another page in Godavari's history. Prior to the trials, Lt Vijay Choudhury (ASWO) had done detailed modelling on a graph sheet with exact scale cut-outs of the helo and the deck plus hangar. It should work, but needed precise movements.

We anchored off Sunk Rock and a while later; the helo approached us, hovered off the quarter and slowly and carefully landed. All of us on the helo deck were exhilarated at this first achievement. The main challenge was yet to come. To facilitate the movement of the helo, Kunjali had sent a mechanical handler, which engaged with the main undercarriage enabling fore and aft movement, while a manual arm attached to the tail wheel would assist steering. The rotors and tail folded we set to the manoeuvre, watched anxiously by the crew of the Seaking. Over the next few minutes, failure stared us in the face. The handler's off centre thrust was resulting in a zig zag forward movement, and efforts at straightening it out through tail wheel steering were resulting in the helo moving ever closer to the deck edge. At one stage, I saw the Seaking pilot biting his nails in anxiety, fearfully visualizing his aircraft sliding over the starboard side! The list to starboard due eight tons of off centre line weight was aggravating the situation. Through some effort with chocks and muscle power, we recovered the helo back to the center line and it took off, after much abusive language from the aircrew.

Our disappointment was evident. So back we went to our modelling exercise. Analysis led to innovation! Out of box thinking resulted in a

fresh plan which required the helo to land on the centre line but at an angle to our fore and aft line. We recalculated the exact number of degrees of angular offset and marked boxes on the helo deck with white paint. As long as the helo landed with the main undercarriage settled inside the boxes, we should be able to manually manoeuvre it into the hangar.

HQ WNC gave us a fresh trial schedule. By now Captain Inder Bedi had taken over command and I too had received my transfer orders to DSSC, Wellington. This was to be my last involvement in post-commissioning trials. We put to sea and positioned ourselves off Khanderi Island. The helo from Kunjali soon landed fore and aft on the center line. We had a chat with the aircrew, explained our plan to them over coffee and they agreed to give it a try. After a brief hover, it landed at the required angle to the fore and aft line, folded rotors and tail, and was slowly and smoothly manoeuvred into the hangar. Amidst loud cheers and faces smiling from ear to ear, the helo was brought back on deck and duly took off for base. Trials successful, Godavari would henceforth carry the helos she was designed for! SOFMA could be installed as convenient.

Snippet 1:

We wanted a motto for ourselves, despite the general practice that only capital ships, e.g. carriers/ cruisers had recognised mottoes. We could have our internal 'motto' or slogan. A competition was held and a young ERA came up with the motto 'Jagruk, Sajag, Nirbhay'. This was unanimously adopted and epitomized the spirit of Godavari for all years to come.

Snippet 2:

Godavari initiated a practice of a daily muster of the full ship's company, rather than



departmental both watches. At this muster a non-denominational prayer in Hindi was read out by an officer or senior sailor, each line repeated in chorus by the mustered men. The prayer had the ship's name woven into it. The men eagerly looked forward to the event, to the extent that when we missed a couple of days due to the exercise schedule, the MC ERA came up to me and said that it must be held because the machinery always behaved itself on the day that we had the prayers!

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May 1991 to November 1992

Once operational and part of the Fleet, most of our activities were confidential and few tales can be written for sharing with posterity. Suffice it to say that the commission was exciting and enjoyable.

Two unclassified events that can be recounted are set out under.

Capture of Smuggling Dhow MV Subhan Allah.

In December 1991 we were out at sea for trials of the newly installed towed array sonar. The task required us to move at various speeds in varying depths of water. It was the last night of trials, and we were off Ratnagiri.

A little while after sunrise, Lt Ramesh Andotra, NO called me on the intercom that there was a trawler size vessel which was steering an erratic course and seemed to be moving up and down around a fixed position. I ordered him to start circling the vessel and have the guns manned. As I came up to the Bridge, we were circling the dhow at a distance of $\frac{1}{2}$ a cable and he had slowed down after attempting a short burst of speed. She was no ordinary

dhow. Two state-of-the-art navigational radar antennas were mounted on the top of the wheelhouse and just abaft the wheelhouse we could see the upper part of a large SATCOM terminal. Navigational equipment wise she was certainly over equipped for a trading or fishing craft! Between the mast and the poop deck, there was a line with a few sorry looking dried fish hanging. There was no evidence of nets or fishing gear.

A few calls were made on the loud hailer in English and Hindi along with a little friendly persuasion of training and elevating the 57 mm and port 30 mm mountings. The dhow promptly stopped and three scruffy looking men stood on her deck. A small boarding party under Lt Bhushan Vaidya was mustered and sent to examine her. The boarding officer soon reported that she had a crew of seven men, no arms or ammunition, the chart had a few crosses marked on the Indian coast south of Ratnagiri, and there were a large number of heavy bricks in the hold wrapped in gunny sacking. The bricks were investigated and, as suspected, turned out to be silver ingots of about 20 kg each, neatly wrapped with a carrying handle for ease of shifting. We counted the ingots and estimated the total to be nine tons, about Rs 7.0 crores value at the prevailing prices. Signalling the incident to FO C-in-C, West, we were directed to return to Bombay with the silver and the dhow for handing over to Indian Customs. We transferred the cargo and some of the crew to the hangar, placed the appropriate number of sentries and directed Lt Vaidya to take the dhow to Bombay. Our entry into the dockyard was watched by many curious eyes from other ships, F 20 being closely followed astern by a dhow with fancy Navajids. The rest of the day went in various formalities of filing and signing reports and handing over the silver and the



vessel to the Indian Customs. Subsequent paperwork went on for almost another two years, but some of the officers and sailors finally received various amounts of cash award for the seizure.

A signal sent by Ganga to Godavari on that day sums up the incident well:

*From: Ganga
To: Godavari*

You put to sea for trials they said
The pleasure of Sunday cast aside
For no matter how the trials went
We sure did hear of your advent
And did we see your draught right
For you seem silver laden all top sides

Three G's operational simultaneously

In January 1992, all three G's were operational and part of the Fleet. Godavari was scheduled to enter Medium Repairs by March and we three G's were keen to commemorate this brief period of togetherness. A few requests were made to then FOCWF, RAdmAR Tandon, who agreed that we should put up a suitable proposal. Consequently, we four ships were detached during the next WFXP to carry out RAS independently.



The accompanying photograph has Deepak in the centre, Godavari carrying out jackstay transfer on her port, Gomati receiving fuel to starboard and Ganga fuelling astern. A historic moment of four course mates of 31st NDA in command simultaneously and exercising together.

Deepak: Captain KV Subramaniam, YSM
Godavari: Captain R Bhandari, YSM
Ganga: Captain R Chopra
Gomati: Captain KSK Prasad

Two signals exchanged on the occasion are set out below:

From: Godavari
To: Deepak, Ganga, Gomati

The day has come
Quite simply rare
Four tied together
Not one or pair
Three decades past have seen us by
Friendship lives will never die
31 SOPA now's your chancy
To station us at whim or fancy

From: Gomati
To: Godavari

Our triumvirate on this fine morn
Deepak almost like jewel in the crown
Good friends around
LSHSD abounds
Blessed it is to be so surround
And to be together is very heaven.

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Godavari – the legend

Vice Admiral SKK Krishnan (Retd.)

As far as Indian warship building history goes, Godavari has been a legend. It was the first time when Indian ingenuity came to the forefront. Now a days the world recognizes Indians for their ingenuity. However, when Godavari was on the design board, only the RN took a keen note what the Indians were up to. The Indian designers were coming up with, what RN referred to as a “stretched” Leander. Having built four Leanders as per the initial design obtained from Yarrow and thereafter modified the last two to incorporate many changes the Indian designers had come up with a unique proposition.

They conceived an entirely new hull form by applying the fundamental principles of similitude, developing a new form based on the existing proven hull. It was by no means a mere stretching of the Leander. What turned out was an entirely new ship with an enormous weapon system configuration, which has not significantly changed in the past thirty years. When the legendary Russian Admiral Gorshkov, was proudly welcomed on one of our indigenously built Leander’s, he had apparently asked, “It is all nice; but where are the weapons”. That scene entirely changed with the advent of Godavari. Here was a ship armed to the teeth and capable of accommodating two helicopters, a concept that has been the Indian Navy’s forte ever since. There were much doubts and criticism, when she was being built. Everyone felt that the free board was too high. The sail area, they said, would make close manoeuvring during entering leaving harbour difficult. There were doubts about the top speed, as the ship was almost a thousand tons larger than the Lenader, but had the same propulsion system.

I was on board when she first went to sea for

Contractor’s sea trial. Then Captain PP Sivamani took her out during the trial period. She ran like a sewing machine. We were under a tight schedule for the trials. We had ventured out in the month of May and had to complete the entire set of trials before the onset of monsoons. Normally problems are expected during these initial trials, but Godavari had no such issues. We did the eight hours full power run on the first attempt and the speed exceeded all expectations. Captain Sivamani was all praise for how she handled at close quarter manoeuvring. We went out to sea fourteen times for trials. By the second time, he was comfortable with eye-ball navigation and secured her alongside just using the engines, putting aside all fears of sail area, high free board, etc.

Within a few months of the trials she was got ready for commissioning. The first CO was then Captain Keki Pestonji. He took her out during the final machinery trials. A very demanding professional, he made sure that all agencies concerned gave their best for the ship and the results were there for everyone to see. The commissioning date was fixed for December 1983. We in the warship overseeing team were concerned that the ship was not fully ready as yet. We were a bunch of young commanders holding the fort, as the Warship Production Superintendent had been transferred and no one had been appointed. We took up the case with NHQ strongly, much to the discomfiture of a few. Eventually, the ship was commissioned on the prescribed date, but not taken over till inspections were complete.

This was not a blot on the shipbuilder MDL. Mr. SS Dhotiwalla, the Director ship building, led from the front and ensured strict adherence to the ship building schedule. Thanks to his



leadership and drive, Godavari holds the record of the quickest built frigate ever. Despite being the first of class, with far too many changes from the earlier Leander's, she was built in a span of five and half years. That was possible only because all involved worked with commitment and the shipyard had greater freedom those days.

I was intimately involved with the ship for three years during construction and gained considerable experience, especially by observing keen professionals like Mr. Dhotiwala, Captain Mohan Ram etc. It was that experience of a life time that made me leave

the Navy prematurely and come back to MDL for the end of my professional career. Looking back, I realize that Godavari was the turning point in my life. When I finally left the warship overseeing team, staff of MDL gave me a memento; a small wooden replica of Godavari's life buoy. It remained my most prized memento ever.

Most of all Godavari was a lucky ship. She acquitted herself well wherever she went and successive Captains became flag officers in the Navy. In the true sense of the term, Godavari is indeed a Legend.

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My two Godavaris

Commodore Gilbert Menezes (Retd.)

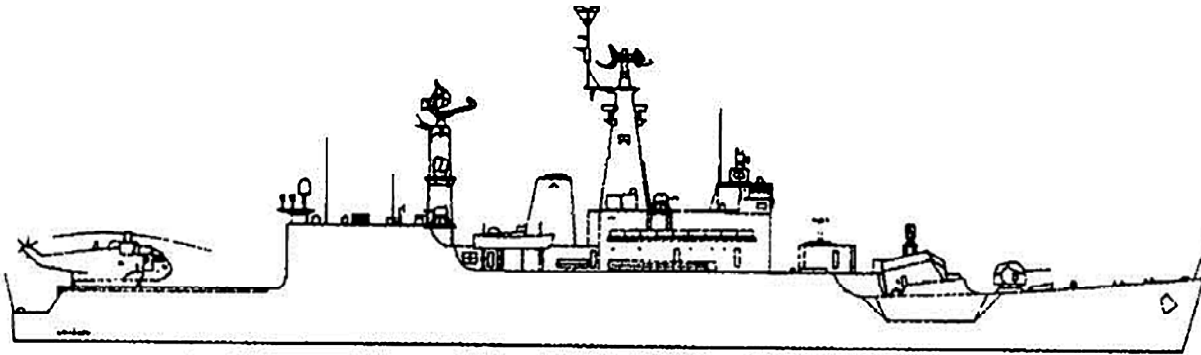
It seems like so long ago, but I remember the month and year well- July 1966, when I received my first appointment as a brand new Watchkeeping Officer to the Destroyer GODAVARI, based at Cochin. I had been hoping that I would get an appointment to a ship of the Western Fleet, based at Bombay, where all the Bachelor action was. But that was not to be. So while my other coursemates were posted on the spanking new Frigates of the Western Fleet like TRISHUL, TALWAR, BEAS and BETWA, I had to pack my bags and join my ship at Cochin.

Now, GODAVARI was a HUNT class Destroyer, built hurriedly during WW2 and the lead ship of the 22 DS with her sisters GANGA and GOMATI. Since they were no longer front line ships of the Navy in the mid sixties, they were commanded by officers of the rank of Commander/Lt Commander. I don't think they could be really classified as Destroyers, due

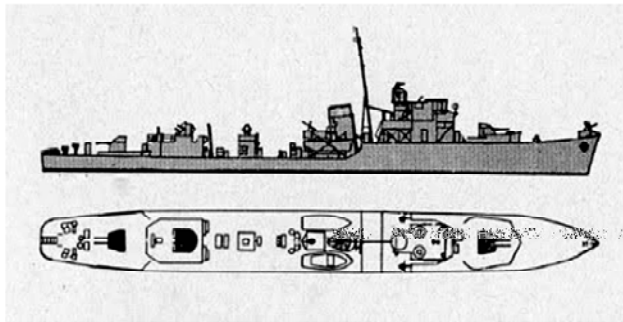
to their lightweight construction. Besides, a Pom Pom had been fitted in the X turret position, and the ships had no torpedo tubes like standard WW 2 Destroyers. The ship was mainly used for day runs, having a go on the target being towed by the venerable tug HATHI and I don't think we ventured farther than the Laccadive Islands when we spent a few nights at sea.

From a habitation point of view, I can tell that the living conditions on the ship were atrocious. The ship was infested with rats and the cabins were below deck, with practically no ventilation. No air conditioning in those days. To make it worse, I was sharing a cabin with another officer who used to return from ashore, all sweaty, after a game of Squash and not wash his socks for days.

Add to this the fact that I was the only bachelor executive officer on board. This meant that the



The Godavari Class Frigate—Godavari



married officers invariably handed over the keys and responsibilities of the deck to my capable hands, after night rounds, and vanished home to their wives. Lastly, being the juniormost officer on board, I was burdened with nearly all the non-public funds, including the Officers' Mess, Wines, and Canteen. I recall that without free rations in those days, we used to pay about Rs 4/- per day for messing, so it was a herculian task to provide wholesome meals for that meagre amount.

So it was a godsend when I read the IG calling for volunteers for the fledgling Submarine Arm in 1967. Good escape from the GODAVARI, and the prospects of new adventures abroad. I must confess that I had not seen a submarine up close until then, except for the old T or A classes of the RN who exercised once in a while with us. On volunteering, I was immediately transferred to Bombay for Russian language classes prior to deputation abroad

to the then Soviet Union.

Twenty years passed in a flash, in the Submarine Arm. I had commissioned three submarines and commanded one before being promoted to the rank of Captain and appointed SM 9 at Bombay. It was time to get exposed to the Surface Navy again. So I was quite thrilled to be appointed to command TARAGIRI in 1986. The only setback was the ship was under refit and I would be sitting ashore for another six months. It was then, in 1986, when I had my encounter with my second Godavari.

The Hunt Class Destroyer—Godavari

Exercise BRASSTACKS was conceived in 1986 by the three Chiefs of the Armed Forces, spearheaded by General K Sunderji. It was the largest exercise in scale and dimension to take place, and did cause a huge amount of tension with Pakistan because of its aggressive nature and proximity to them. The workup phase of BRASSTACKS was being carried out, when GODAVARI's Captain fell ill. One morning, I was summoned to Headquarters Western Naval Command and without further ado, appointed in temporary Command of GODAVARI for three months. The same night, I found myself standing on the



deck of the ship, leaving harbour. I must confess that it was quite an overwhelming experience because, for starters, I knew nothing about the ship, and her sensors and weapons, and had not served on a surface ship for 20 years. Over the next two weeks, slowly but surely, and assisted by the very fine ship's officers, I found my sea legs, and the deployment was completed without anything going amiss.

A short while later, we were participating in the rapid fire phases of BRASSTACKS, which

culminated in a very large Amphibious Assault on the West Coast, together with elements of the Army and Air Force. GODAVARI performed flawlessly throughout, and was put through the entire range of her operational capabilities.

My three months on board ended, and I was back on TARAGIRI which was readying for sea again. The old GODAVARI flew the Indian flag proudly until 1973. It is sad that the new GODAVARI's days at sea will shortly come to an end.

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INS Godavari – GODSAL – appraisal

Commander Madan Lal Shembi (Retd.)

More than one article has been written on salvage of first ship but these missed the technical details.

As then nominated Damage Control Officer, following is the factual details.

Early 1975, after four years of deputation with Royal Malaysian Navy at Singapore, I was just settling down in my new appointment as Officer-in-charge, Machinery Trials Unit, when I was called to meet CEO, then Captain G C Thadani. I was informed about grounding of ship off Maldives. I was to take a Hello Flight the same day.

Returning back to Dockyard, I obtained a copy of the ship's hull drawing and met MFAB then Captain Mohan Ram and briefed him about the known damages. A shoal had pierced into "A" Magazine below the ME's mess-deck. Magazine alone was flooded and hull fuel tanks beyond were in-tact. Captain Mohan Ram categorically told me that when floated ship will

heavily go down by the bows by six to eight feet but will steady back with bows dipping about two feet. There was no risk of ship listing heavily to any side.

With this assurance from an expert, I boarded the ship. Then Captain Nadkarni (later CNS) as Commanding Officer INS Delhi was the Boss!

For self-assessment I lowered myself into the Magazine to clearly see through very clear waters a large shoal protruding about six feet

I must submit that there was very little concern on the part of the ship's staff. No attempt had been made to lighten the forward part of the ship. To start with the process of lightening the forward part of the ship was started. Most reluctant person was the Ward Room Mess Secretary who would not shift his wine store. He had to be reminded of the authority of the DCO under the Regs. Navy.



Having lightened the ship to an extent, an attempt was made to pull the ship back under its own power. It must be stated that EO was most unhappy to give *Full Astern*. Once again I had to assert. Knowing Hunt Class Destroyers inside out I had to take charge of Machinery and order *Full Astern*. I had served on-board sister ship Gomati way back.

This Attempt Failed

By then CNS flew down to Cochin and GODSAL team was called to meet him. It was his desire that he did not wish to see any part of INDIAN Steel in foreign waters. At the end of the meeting we were provided with a mobile crane that was lashed on-board a LST. This ship was put alongside the grounded ship and

unloading of heavy items with the help of the Crane began. Most parts of "A" Gun were dismantled and off-loaded along with other machinery items. Ship came free of the shoal, was pulled back by a motor boat.

As the ship was pulled back, she followed the exact behaviour as explained by Captain Mohan Ram in his briefing to me. Ship steadied on even keel with bows dipping over two feet.

Divers now went to work to wrap a blanket around the gash and ship was towed back to Cochin **by the Stern**.

I was awarded NM for this operation.

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Memories of the original Godavari

Lieutenant Commander John Eric Gomes (Retd.)

Now as a senior citizen I may have forgotten many incidents, but very briefly, the following few clearly stand out as memories of my stint as XO, ship based in Cochin under Vice Admiral V A Kamath as FOC SOUTH.

COCK OF THE FLEET- For which we had to go to Vizag. This was a prestigious rowing boat competition where all the IN ships took part. We had only one week to select our crew and practice like mad we did, morning and evening daily as we were determined to win. I took part as one of the rowers to motivate my men, every night cursing myself for the decision with aching arms and body! On the final day, with the Boson as captain, we won the Cock and I still feel my arms aching even now when I think of the close finish when we gave it our all.

TOWING OF SS SANJEVANI- This Salgaonkar trans-shipper was drifting

somewhere between Goa and Cochin. We had to locate her and tow her to Goa. On locating the ship, there seemed to be absolute non-cooperation, or was it a strike or the lethargy of the crew? This meant I had to go over in a boat, board the Sanjevani and make all arrangements for tow after getting the signature of the captain on our format which he was reluctant at first to sign. Besides engine failure, the rudder was jammed to starboard. After securing the tow rope, keeping one good seaman with walkie-talkie on her fore-castle, comparatively tiny though powerful Godavari (this class of destroyers were the versatile workhorses of World War II, like the Dakota in the Air Force) as seen from the quarterdeck up to the towering Sanjevani bow, we started the tow. This was nerve wracking for the captain and me, especially at night since Sanjevani was taking charge and swinging to starboard and



we had to nudge her taking care that the tow rope does not snap, sometimes going a full circle to get back on course! Ultimately we handed her over safely to the owners. I am the proud owner of a commendation certificate signed by FOCSOUTH.

MY FIRST BORN BABY- Sanctioned leave for wife's delivery was cancelled due FOCSOUTH sea inspection. Admiral Kamath boarded for inspection and took us out to sea to put us through the ringer. Sea ATP manoeuvres, lowering boat for man overboard (thrown lifebuoy), firing at target towed by tug INS Hathi etc. (I remember when I was a trainee on INS Trishul and a British Admiral boarded for inspection during our commonwealth exercises, he asked our captain how many cross wires were there in the ships radar aerial- that is how well we must know our ship). After

anchoring in harbour, I learnt to my relief we got a "Bravo Zulu". I had just gone to my cabin to rest when on the ships broadcast XO to report to Admiral on the Bridge! The Admiral said if I want to go to Goa, there is a Dakota leaving from Garuda for Bombay in 10 minutes time. He is holding it up for a stop en-route to Dabolim if I can be ready in 5 minutes in uniform in his boat which was at the gangway. I said "Yes Sir!" I remember the haste bagging a few clothes, ID card and whatever little cash I had. At Dabolim a staff car was waiting and I had a chore to perform enroute at the Army establishment to deliver some stuff and obtain a receipt which I was to hand over to the driver. My wife was as surprised as I to be at the CMM hospital at Panjim where she was recuperating after delivering a bonny baby boy.

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Growing with Godavari

Commander Ajay Tiwary (Retd.)

During my service from 1985 to 2009, my journey as an officer on warships started on Godavari and also ended there in 2006. From midshipman in 1985 to Ex O till 2006, my sea going career in the Navy ran parallel with Godavari, with only one difference; while she underwent her MLU (Mid Life Update) within her service, mine was soon after coming out of service in 2009.

Midshipman's majestic warship

The midshipman reporting on board on the evening of 31 Dec 1984 started with ringing in the New Year on the ship's bell at South Breakwater. In the next few days, I was an

extremely proud midshipman of Godavari, which at that time was the latest indigenously built warship, with state-of-the-art EW system INS 3, the first in the Fleet, a modern Bridge with the sophisticated Magnavox GPS receiver (a real big box!!) and two huge helicopter hangars with a modern RAST system to roll out the bulky Seakings. However, the ultimate symbol of 'the latest design' was a separate JOM (junior officers' mess) with a TV. The ship had 28 TVs and the crew could watch ship's VCR run movies from their respective messes, which was again the Navy's first, if my memory serves right.

After a short AMP in Jan 85, we sailed for



Trishakti. INS 3 pick-ups of IAF sorties became the Fleet's pride. The Fleet's surveillance capabilities had got a shot in the arms with her joining. She became the chosen picket, miles ahead of the Fleet and in the Arabian Sea, the timely ESM pick-ups started to deter the Atlantiques and Fokkers from closing in.

Once during R&R at Port Blair anchorage (wonder if such opportunities still exist!!), Keki Pestonji (the CO) decided to enjoy yachting on a sunny morning and we midshipman were told to have the 'Chinna Godavari' (enterprise class) rigged up. A future Harrier pilot and the only yachtsman of some calibre amongst us, Rohit goofed up and with the delay in lowering the boat (wonder how the midshipmen were responsible for it at that time! In later days Ex Os ensured these tasks personally), all five midshipmen ended up lowering and hoisting Chinna Godavari, all by themselves with no other support. The evolution completed around pipe down time, subsequent to which we had dinner, our second meal of that day after breakfast.

Having been Rajan Bhandari's (Ex O) doggie was an unusual learning opportunity for me, since standing beside him during SSDs (while entering/leaving various harbours and seamanship evolutions) was actually an on job education programme. Plus it saved me from the 'unstructured' training programme inside the Bridge, conducted by CO or NO. The time tested training methods on board prepared us well for our boards; the unfortunate part was that anticipating the Midshipmen's Board, we were disembarked to a rusty Trishul and then a lethargic Amba (both in comparison to our impression of own Godavari – all in lighter vein), while she prepared to go on a long cruise to New York, to participate in the Statue of Liberty Bicentennial Parade.

JDSR's eye from NHQ

As a JDSR at NHQ, the G class MLU file was one of the thickest in our cupboard. Those days, this terminology MLU had become very popular and we at NHQ saw 'future MLU' of ships as a solution to all the current operational problems of ships. 'Planned in MLU' was the one stop answer to various miseries coming from the Fleet. Godavari was the first one where the equipment update had already started, without a formal MLU declared. So her NR in 2001–2003 saw AMDR and Barak fitted, IPN-10 upgraded and the old famous INS 3 replaced with SEWIS 5. The old motor cutter and motor whaler were replaced with the modern RIBs.

Ex O's Lady

Navy had kept me in Mumbai for a longer part of my career and I was unprepared to get back to Mumbai as Ex O Godavari. Nonetheless, in the first walk around her, reminiscences of the various anecdotes of midshipman's days flew by. With her upgraded capabilities, she had once again regained her significance in the Fleet in the early air warning, anti missile defence and AIO capability. Though many other warships had joined the Fleet, her good endurance and extended surveillance/reach through the two Seakings, had made her amongst the most preferred ships for OSDs. This Ex O's tenure, took us thousands of miles across – from South China Sea to the Red Sea, clocking the 'maximum number of days at sea', after the Fleet tanker.

There was just one issue – for the navy men, the older the ships, the lesser glamorous they become, irrespective of the demonstrated performances. This idea needed to be shaken up – and that we did – in a rather explosive way, when in the Fleet Regatta in Dec 2004,



she had six of her seven boats qualifying for finals, with Viraat being the closer second with five boats qualified for finals. That we landed up overall fourth after the finals is a different story. An impact had already been made in the Fleet, not to take the men of this old lady lightly. That inspiration led the crew to achieve high positions in the next fleet competitions from Jan to March, prior to Fleet evening (that we did not get as many trophies, is again a different story!!). Closing to 20 years of her service at that time, she flew the naval ensign at Aquaba, Djibouti, Manila and Jakarta and patrolled from South China Sea to Comoros, besides participating in Malabar, Indra and other exercises with foreign navies.

Mindful of Rajan Bhandari educating me, on-job training of junior officers remained my passion, albeit giving back to the next generation, what one had imbibed.

The journey with Godavari to the seas as well as in the Navy and the growth along with her is an inseparable chapter of my naval life. And here in the civil street, after my MLU in 2009, I have also been fortunate enough like Godavari, to be once again upgraded with my hitherto unknown capabilities and exploit my potential to the betterment of others' causes – an opportunity that never existed in the Navy.

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Gift from the Commanding officer

Commodore BR Sen(Retd)

Our Captain on board INS Vindhyagiri was really a hard taskmaster and a martinet; he spared none when it came to professional competence. For long, being the senior most, he reigned as the Flag Captain or SOPA.

On some occasions however, he chose to pamper us, the ship's company as also the officers. Captain NN Anand would arrange a truck to park alongside the jetty where our ship would be berthed in Bombay and have a gift from his farm (in the suburbs) handed over to each as they went ashore for liberty. For the in-living, the gift would invariably be delivered

to the galley for consumption.

It thus became a familiar sight in the dockyard, especially at the Lion and Tiger gates, with sailors carrying a watermelon or a papaya or a cabbage or a cauliflower, which they declared proudly to the security staff at the gate. Vindhyagiri personnel could easily be identified by others who were envious, if one had a vegetable or fruit in display. This gesture on the part of the CO kept the men really very happy, so were the better halves of the out-living officers.

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A Runner's blues

Sureon Commodore KI Mathai

The rasping unmusical liturgy of my mobile phone alarm jarred me rudely out of the realm of a pleasant but irretrievable dream. I glanced at the wall clock. It was four in the morning. Jerry, my pooch was already up and stretching. It was time for his walk. Slipping on my shoes I leashed him and we headed out. The road was slushy wet from the night's rain. A pack of snarling dogs resented our territorial incursion mandating a hurried detour. We had named him Geronimo for his obstinate and disproportionate aggression as a rescued street pup. Well past his first birthday, his temperament had not mellowed. He would take his time to do his business. It was well past 4-30 when I reached back to prepare for my morning run.

I was out by 4-45, the normal time for my regular 8 km morning jog. Today was different. I had scheduled a long run in preparation for the marathon. So, pre-hydrated with three glasses of lime juice and with generous dabs of Vaseline over skin friction zones, I set out. Running is arguably the most basic of sports and the most natural form of exercise. Must it with a bit of light weight high repetition weight pulling at the local gymnasium and you have a comprehensive workout? It started drizzling again. The dogs had disappeared. A careful of bemused late night revellers smirked audibly as they drove past. Lone runners are vulnerable. The meditative relaxation of a long lonely run however has unique cognitive, spiritual offsets.

When I reached, Marine drive was in the process of its early morning transformation. The dregs and puke of a debauched night life and drag racing bikers with a criminal bent were receding to their lairs. In half an hour the sea

side promenade would bustle with the devout, the decent and the immaculately respectable, responsible citizenry of Mumbai. There were few regular lone runners and some running groups with their water points and pacers. A few of them sized me up and nodded as I passed in camaraderie.

The drizzle abated. My creaking knees were smoother now and breaking sweat was clearing away the clogged recesses of my mind. This, for me, is the essence of running. The heightened perceptions and clarity of thought you achieved as you jogged alone, high in your comfort aerobic zone. Regular aerobic exercise is the only promoter of neurogenesis. The process of neurogenesis or regeneration of brain cells, coupled with rationalization of neural circuitry, with augmented focused circuit rewiring helps you to maximize your neurological potential. Cutting out the medical gobbledygook, meditation, yoga or relaxation running help you to think sharp and to think straight.

I passed the Jaslok hospital. It would be a downhill stretch soon to Mahalaxmi. Running downhill is potentially more injury prone than an uphill trudge. Toned quadriceps muscles support the knee in a 'check' movement as you run down a slope. Running uphill is more strenuous on the cardio respiratory system. It is prudent to caution that regular running is no guarantee against a cardiac event. Many of us with a genetic predilection and modern lifestyles have partially clogged arteries supplying our heart muscle. Regular aerobic exercises reduce but do not abolish the risk of a heart attack. I quote my cardiology colleague friend Group Captain Madan when I state that it is better to be fat and fit than to be thin and lethargic.



The Haji Ali monument is in the sea to my left as I run down Mahalakshmi road. When you run a full marathon this stretch zaps your reserves on the return leg, before you hit the killer climb to Jaslok hospital again and then run on to Marine drive. Most marathoners would agree that the real marathon starts after around 30 km. This is the time every lacuna in training taunts you and makes survival a stronger instinct than a desire for a better timing.



The fear that road running ruins your knees is not based on factual evidence. Those with swollen knees or with previous significant knee injuries should opt for a non-weight bearing, lower impact sports like swimming or even cycling. Studies comparing the knees of regular runners with those of individuals with a sedentary life style show no propensity toward knee problems in the former group. Run light, with low impact and make sure your knees are just a little bend when you land, take the odd calcium tablet if you are over 50 and your knees will last you a lifetime. A bevy of sporty cyclists swooped past. There are few cycling or jogging tracks in India and motorists are not careful, polite or considerate. A treadmill in the aft confines of a gymnasium is a softer option for the faint of heart. The running action on a tread mill is unnatural and the carbon footprint unjustified for those of us who have access to safe jogging zones.

I was jogging only part of the regular Mumbai marathon route today. The Standard Chartered Bank organizes the Mumbai marathon in mid-January every year. The full marathon course starts at the CST station, winds down to Bandra

across the Sea Bridge and then loops around back to Worli and back to the CST. The Mumbai marathon is the most prestigious of Indian marathons. It is well organized, internationally accredited and has ironed out many of the faculties and infrastructure glitches of the initial few races. Elite marathoners, with a dominant contingent from Africa start about an hour and a half after the others. They surge past us when we are early on the return stretch to timings of around two hours and ten minutes. Those of us who run for relaxation and are otherwise tied down in professions are ecstatic about 'sub 4' timing. There are quite a few achievers in corporate and professional circles who are passionate about marathon running. We run for the joy of running, savouring its many benefits in mental and physical agility and resilience. I have hypothesised in Neuroscience circles that the repetitive, rhythmic action of running gets taken over after a while, by cyclical pattern generators which are lower in the neurological hierarchy of our nervous systems. The resultant disinhibit of our higher sense is the key to the clarity of thought a runner achieves when he is the zone. The phenomenon of higher mental



and spiritual disengagement is also the science behind Tibetan prayer wheels, rosaries meditative breathing and chants.

Today I planned to turn back from Worli. Worli was teeming with fitness buffs. There were walkers and joggers and trainees from a nearby karate school going through their routines. My water bottle was half empty. Dehydration and loss of energy reserves are killers over a long stretch. If you have enough water to drink and nibble a few chocolates, you can run to your potential. A few of long runs are essential for an amateur preparing for a full marathon. I maintain a certain level of fitness round the year with about 50 km of running every week and a bit of light weight training at the gymnasium. Around four months before a marathon you need to squeeze a few 25 odd kilometre runs. I nodded to a mixed running group as they went past. They were regulars and we recognized each other. In India as opposed to most countries in the west, it is

inappropriate to say hello to strangers on the jogging trail.

The run back was pleasant. The drizzle had abated and the sunbeams were peeping through. It would be a pleasant day. Outpatient attendance in my office on Saturdays usually crossed a hundred. My muscles were sore, but my thought processes were clear. Running and fitness worked for me and it probably would for most of us. When one considers the limited infrastructure requirements and the flexibility of time, a runner enjoys, running can be considered a poor man's sport. The dividends however are rich. Setting aside our colonial hangover with cricket and the corporate obsession for golf, I recommend regular relaxation running for professionals who are past the age for competitive high intensity team games like football. It was seven thirty. Time to get to work!

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A Medical Diary

Mrs. Anjali Majumdar

Neither of my sons was born in a military hospital, the first in 1962 in a nursing home in Bombay run by Nuns; the second in Coimbatore, scarcely 15 months later (to our utter dismay).

Leaving the elder boy at home in Coimbatore with my husband serving in INS Hansa - I set off alone in an autorickshaw in the dark for the Kuppusamy Naidu Hospital, but not before telling Jaya, the young servant girl inherited from Lieutenant S P Kakar, to serve my husband his dinner.

When he arrived at the hospital the next morning he saw his new born son lying curled

in a small aluminum basin on the labour room awaiting his first bath.

Anxious to get back to his brother at home - I had stopped feeling him as soon as I found myself pregnant - I persuaded my husband to take me home on the fourth morning without waiting for my doctor's clearance. Her annoyance at this imperious behaviour was made plain when I reported to her for my discharge certificate a couple of days last in March 1964.

On to Bombay where I, my husband, now a Lieutenant Commander, two sons and the faithful Jaya arrived in 1966 via naval air stations



in Goa and Cochin after weathering the usual ailments of the young along the way.

The one notable episode was Surgeon Ahuja puffing away at a cigarette and studying an open surgical text book while poking around the flesh and sinews in my right wrist. No, it was not a suicide attempt; only a furious attempt to quieten some MES labourer working nosily outside while my sons were having their afternoon nap. My anger and a glass pane in the door did for me. I still have a faint scar to show for it.

That was just before we left Cochin for Bombay where the younger boy attempts to jump a low hedge and breaks an arm. The best civilian orthopaedic surgeon botched the simple repair job at the first attempt.

But it was his brother, all of seven, who really provided a life or death emergency: septicaemia caused by a burst appendix. Three operations over two weeks by Dr. Arthur D'Sa and his life was saved thanks also to the devoted nurses at Breach Candy Hospital where he lay for five weeks.

After this scare my husband's jaundice, treated in the naval hospital, was a minor hiccup though severely debilitating. Not long after that I became a former naval wife in 1972.

Now comes a big bouquet to the dedicated eye surgeons at the CMH Pune for the meticulous attention paid to the removal of my two cataracts, all for free (while the late Cdr R N Gulati told us he paid Rs 18,000 to a well-known Pune eye surgeon for his).

What about dentistry? Pune's best known dentist does only cavities (at Rs. 1500 a filling) while his son expertly, handles root canals at Rs. 20,000 a tooth! Is it any wonder that these procedure are now greatly in vogue? I recently declined to have one done, thank you very much. I do try to floss as often as possible to emulate both my sons who do so daily – which brings me full circle and a splendid place to stopping medical diary, except for a last piece of mind boggings kulduggery.

A dentist, alas a former naval one, now in a Pune hospital, was more intent on having me admitted – and thereby helping to meet his quota of beds filled – that on the simple extraction of a tooth. And this at a cost of Rs. 2,000, excluding the consultation fee of Rs. 800.

I foiled him – but readers please beware of dentists.

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Brahmaputra tales

Commodore Lalit Kapur (Retd.)

In early 1983, I was on board INS Brahmaputra as the Navigating Officer. It was our 8th day of the 10 day passage to Mauritius. We were well clear of shipping lanes and did not expect to encounter any traffic or fishing till late the next evening, when we would make landfall at Port Louis. The newly installed Magnavox, SATNAV had taken much of the uncertainty out of navigation and both the Captain and Officers of the Watch were more than fascinated with this new toy. I was dreaming about the morning star-sight in my cabin when a messenger knocked and asked to come to the Bridge post haste. I looked at my watch. It was not yet 0430h nautical twilight was still an hour away, the ship was moving smoothly without any hint of emergency and I wondered at the nature of the emergency that had led to the OOW interrupting my dreams. More so, as this OOW was a smart and keen Sub Lieutenant, whom I had strongly recommended for his watch-keeping ticket only a few days ago and the Captain had approved the recommendation.

On reaching the Bridge, I found the OOW extremely worried. "Sir, I was at the SATNAV to record a position for the log and must have done something wrong, because the display has been zeroised". Sure enough, the display showed our position as the intersection of the Equator and the Greenwich Meridian, moving along on a South Westerly course at 10 knots. "Sir, do something before the Captain comes up. The next satellite pass is not due till after the Captain comes to the Bridge and he'll take away my ticket because I didn't handle the SATNAV correctly. I know you will find a solution".

This trust could not be betrayed. Unlike the current GPS, the TRANSIT system Magnavox

relied on, was based on measurement of Doppler shift during predictable and periodic satellite passes. Two critical elements it needed were a reasonably accurate last known position and time. The last position recorded in the ship's log was over four hours old. It was easy to calculate a DR and enter it into the SATNAV receiver. Accurate time was obtained from the ship's chronometer and entered. It was now a matter of verifying the DR position entered and then waiting for the satellite pass to update.

The morning star-sight became critical. Handling the sextant with extra care, I took the sight, plotted a fix and entered the position so obtained into the SATNAV. I had just finished when the Captain came up and asked where we were. As luck would have it, the satellite pass had just commenced and we had to wait two minutes before the SATNAV updated its position. I showed the Captain the plot of a perfect cocked hat less than half a mile across – and identified the stars used to obtain it. "Hmm, that's all very well, what does the SATNAV say", said he. Luckily, we had been able to distract him long enough and the SATNAV had updated itself. My position matched what the Magnavox displayed to within a mile. "I'd much rather believe in my position, Sir", said I. "Agreed", said the Captain benevolently, while the OOW heaved a quiet sigh of relief. The satisfaction of a good star-sight was outweighed by the OOW's silent thanks.

A few hours later, the Commander (E) brought the SCO up to the Bridge. A routine request by one of his sailors for extension of leave had been received through COMCEN (B) the previous day and the Cdr (E) had made a reply



granting extension, only to find that the SCO would not send it. "Sir, this is a routine message, we can send it on reaching Mauritius, we should not break radio silence for this", said the SCO. The Cdr (E) was adamant – delay would inconvenience his sailor. As always, the Captain had to have the final word. "What's all this poppycock about breaking HF silence" said he. "Isn't COMCEN (B) breaking radio silence every minute while transmitting the

broadcast? If he's not worried, why should I be?" I stepped out to the Bridge Wing to give vent to my mirth while the SCO, totally thunderstruck, tried without success to explain that COMCEN (B) was a static entity and had no fear about giving away its position to enemy authorities. The extension signal was made immediately, as desired by Cdr (E).

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Story of lucky man

Commander Noel Lobo (Retd)

"But then how will you entertain your husband in the evenings?"

All husbands surely remember the stories divulged to them by their wives across the years together. Me too; but that little gem of a query posed to her by her stepfather their revealed to me only a few months ago.

Her stepfather's surprising question had followed on his overhearing a discussion between his wife and her daughter about giving up her music lessons at Loreto Convent, Darjeeling. As the reader may have guessed, the unwilling musician became my wife, unknown known though this was at the time to anyone, including me. But that was six years later.

Now that the game is up I can reveal in plain speak the young woman's reason for wanting to give up her music; and also her reply to her stepfather's question as to how then would she entertain her husband: a most unexpected question for he normally stayed aloof from his two stepchildren.

Passing grade six in the pianoforte examination of the Royal School of Music means several hours of daily practice, something she could ill afford, what with her senior Cambridge finals the following year. So something had to give, and that was the piano.

"How then will you entertain your husband in the evenings?"

"I will talk",

True to her word, she has done so these past 53 years. We were married in my last week in the flagship, INS Mysore. I was bound for INS Hansa in Coimbatore.

"Coimbatore? Where's that?"

She followed a few days later bearing an electric stove and two plates and knives and a cookery book in order to give us our first supper together. I must have bought a packet of spaghetti from Spencer's and some tomatoes and onions. But I have jumped the gun: when she told her mother that we were



engaged, her laconic response was, "Engagements can always be broken".

But the young woman stood fast and we were married in January 1962. As she went down the stairs all alone to catch the dawn flight from Bombay to Coimbatore, her stepfather called down his benediction: "It's been a good day; now let it be a good night". She was only 21; I was 32.

Other charming blessings bestowed on her in the years that followed include these: "You have married an old man" (This from a friend who became an Admiral but who died in service

from an unknown ailment; and "You will never manage in Bombay with two children on a Naval pay" (This from a cousin's wife whose husband later lost his job heading a pharmaceutical company, and worse still in some ignominy.)

To end on a cheerful note! When I told our family doctor and confidante that my wife never stops talking from the moment she had brewed our morning mug of Lopchu tea, he responded, "You are a lucky man".

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Epsom salt

Commodore SM Sundaram (Retd)

It really happened!

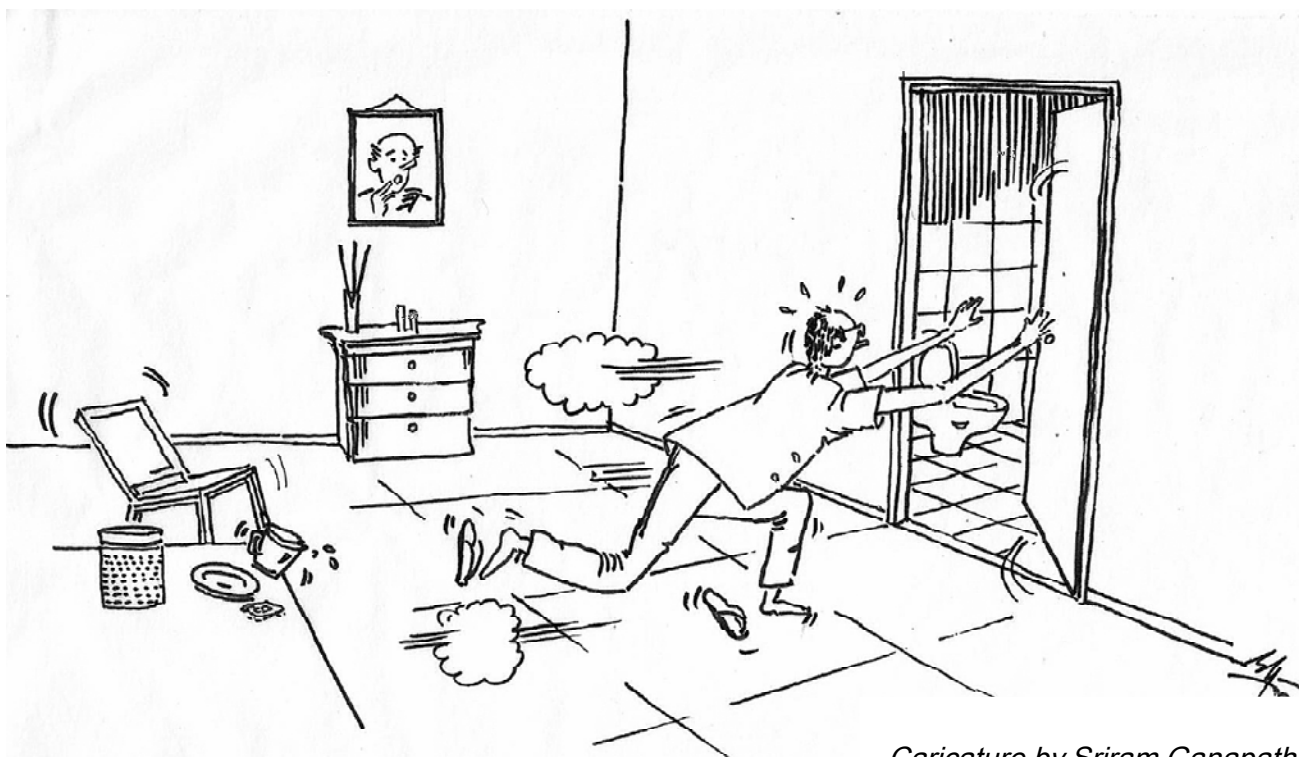
I had cracks on the sole of my feet. One of my friends recommended that, if I soaked my feet in warm water mixed with Epsom salt every day for half an hour, the cracks will disappear. This Good Samaritan also brought Epsom salt in a white opaque plastic cover and gave it to my wife who left it next to the sofa in the drawing room and went about her chores. Our ever efficient servant maid, Lakshmi, found this bag during her cleaning spree. She mumbled why the sugar has been left like that in the drawing room, took it promptly and emptied it into the sugar container in the kitchen.

That day my co-brother-in-law (COBIL-my wife's sister's husband) and sister-in-law came to visit us. My co-brother-in-law was offered coffee and our cook prepared coffee for my COBIL and added sugar from the sugar container and served to him. He took one sip

and found the taste bitter.

He told my sister-in-law about the bitter taste. She said that probably the sugar was less and added two more spoons. Even after that he found the taste funny and mentioned it to his wife. She told him that the coffee powder may be a little old and asked him to drink it up without any further fuss. She told him sternly that it is bad manners to complain about beverage served with love. He gulped it and turned his face the other side to prevent his wife noticing contortions on his face.

My wife came to the drawing room later and looked for the Epsom salt packet. She asked our servant maid as to what happened to the plastic bag next to the sofa. The servant proudly announced that it has already been put in the sugar container. Hell broke loose. Immediate phone call was to our family doctor to find out what happens if coffee mixed with Epsom salt



Caricature by Sriram Ganapathi

is consumed. He assured that there was nothing to worry about except the person who has consumed will visit the wash room frequently till the salt is wiped out of the system. My wife called up my sister-in-law and apologised for the mix up and enquired about

the frequency of visits of my COBIL to the loo. The phone calls continued every hour that day. We all heaved a sigh of relief only the next day when we got confirmation that his bowls have settled down.

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Memories and Musings

Commander Noel Lobo (Retd.)

Reading Admiral Arun Prakash's narrative in Quarterdeck 2013 of the ferrying of our first Sea Harriers from Yeovilton to Dabolim brought to mind the arrival in India of the first two Alize's in 1962.

The civilian ferry pilots landed at the civil airport in Coimbatore instead of the Air Force Station at Sullur where a few of us from INS Hansa were waiting.

About three years before this, I remember being summoned as a Staff Officer (Air Electrical) at NHQ by the Director of Air Staff Duties, Captain Carver, R. N. who handed me some sheets of data about the two anti submarine Naval Aircraft the Navy had been offered: the British Gannet and the French Alize.

He asked me for a comparison. It did not take



me long to tabulate the superiority of the French aircraft in spite of my meagre knowledge of electrics and electronics. The comparison by my air engineering colleague presumably showed the same result for we got the Alize (which does say something for the integrity of Captain Carver).

Some other memories follow. The resignation of Vice Admiral Shekar Sinha reminded me of Captain J.C. (Jackson) Puri, the aviator C.O. of INS Vikrant, who likewise resigned on being superseded.

While on the subject of resignations, I wonder how many of us know that the only acceptable reason for resigning was a wish to stand for Parliament. This was done by Cdr Behl who lost his deposit but gained a wife in Nutan.

Before any reader reminds me, yes there was a spate of resignations by officers whose foreign wives declined to change their nationality: the Law brothers, Balbir and Ramesh, came to mind as do Madan Atal and

V.P. Duggal and R.N Ghosh, both from my team.

These last two names will tell readers that I am of an age which will perhaps allow me to indulge in a spot of ranting. For instance why do we not use a hyphen when writing Vice-Admiral (ditto Rear-) and likewise Lieutenant-Commander! Why do we not call ourselves Veterans instead of the cumbersome ex-servicemen?

To end on a lighter note, here is the story of the Royal Navy's Wrens protesting at the proposed name-remember they wore the name of their ship on their cap ribbons-of the new carrier to follow on HMS Indomitable and HMS Indefatigable. They demurred somewhat at the name HMS Impenetrable. No prizes are offered for the reason.

P.S. The story was told to my wife by the wife of a naval pilot who had been a Wren.

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My Stint as Flag Lieutenant

Admiral RH Tahiliani (Retd.)

In May 1956, I was summoned by the then Chief of the Naval Staff, Vice Admiral S H Carlill. He was the last British Navy Officer to be the Indian Naval Chief. He wanted to know if I would be happy to be his Flag Lieutenant. I said to him, "Sir, what about my flying?" He said, "In Cochin you are flying Sealands and Fireflies. You have already qualified on Jet aircraft, I will speak to the Air Chief, Subroto Mukherjee and you can go and do your continuity flying at Palam along with other Air Force pilots."

I used to go and worry Wing Commander Naik, who was the Staff Officer to the Air Chief. After humouring me 3-4 times, he came clean. He said, "The Air Chief says give Lt Tahiliani flying in Palam but the Deputy Chief of Air Staff says "over my dead body". So you can forget about flying in Palam".

I must have been a fairly inefficient Flag Lieutenant. So CNS said to me, "the Chief of Naval Aviation wants you to go and do a Flying Instructor's course". I was jumping with joy. I



accepted whole-heartedly and my short stint as Flag Lt to our Naval Chief ended. I was deputed for the Flying Instructor's course in Tambaram, near Chennai. On completion of the Flying Instructor's course, I was sent to Air Force Flying School in Jodhpur as an Instructor. It was a rewarding experience. After a year in Jodhpur I was sent to Hakimpet where young pilots were taught how to fly jet aircrafts and also do gunnery practices where they were taught how to drop bombs and rockets on enemy targets.

A few years later I came back to the Navy as Director of Naval Air Staff. I was going through

some old files where my predecessor had done some career planning. According to that I was to stay as Flag Lieutenant till Vice Admiral Carlill left India in March 1958 and go to Cochin as Lieutenant Commander (Flying). With this career pattern, I would have retired as a Commodore at best. My flying career really took off after my Flying Instructor's course etc. which enabled me to climb the Naval Aviation ladder as a prelude to becoming a test pilot. I did my commands of INS Betwa, INS Trishul and the 15th Frigate Squadron, INS Vikrant.

The moral of the story is that even getting a sack from the job of Flag Lieutenant can sometimes be good for one's career.

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Golfers' Golden Jubilee - (2014)

Mrs K Rawal

The Golden Jubilee Celebration of the GOLF (1964 Batch) took place on 6th 7th and 8th Dec 2014. It was attended by nine officers and eight ladies. Frantic planning had been going on for months. Cmde Patwardhan was the kingpin who made it materialise with his resources and meticulous planning and it turned out to be an exhilarating experience. He had looked into every detail to make everyone as comfortable as possible. The tall, the short, the thin, the broad; the heavy weights and the feather weights were all in high spirits and totally rejuvenated to be together after decades.

We were given an overwhelming reception on 6th Dec. As we gathered together under one roof- 'The Queeny' in Goa, we exchanged greetings and discussed various matters in the hotel lobby. In the evening we visited the

Bogmolo Beach and then moved to Claudi's for a sumptuous dinner and drinks etc. It was great fun to see the men folk behave like school boys in the company of their course-mates as they remembered the days - 50 years back, when they had come from diverse backgrounds and regions, with dreams in their eyes, to join the INDIAN NAVY. The ladies as usual discussed about their families, culture, cuisines etc. and shared ways and means to tackle old age problems just as they had done 40 odd years back when they had helped one another to settle in life, adjust to the naval environment, bring up kids and imbibe the service culture.

On 7th morning, after breakfast, we moved for a drive around Vasco and lunch at INS Hansa. We were taken aback by the scenic beauty of the place with the Bogmolo Hotel and Beach



in the background. It reminded us of the service parties we used to attend there. Cmde Vishnoi was nominated the official photographer and he made sure that he captured every scene and spot in his iPad.

The same evening after a short siesta we gathered together at the Roof Top Restaurant for our Anniversary Dinner and of course the 'cake-cutting'. It was great fun, Cmde Bhagwat graced the occasion with a speech of introduction, taking everyone 50 years back in time, thereafter each one narrated an anecdote or experience of his training period. After a lot of leg pulling and humour we retired to our rooms.

The next day, 8th Dec we set out for sightseeing and shopping followed by lunch. We specially visited the Haunted Church on a hill top from where you can get a bird's eye view of the whole town. Our visit to Goa Harbour and the drive through the town was a treat. Then after a good afternoon nap we set out for Panjim to purchase some excellent wines and visit the Casino. The experience at the Casino was awesome; snacks and drinks were in plenty, the spread was lavish and some of us were lucky in gambling too.

The next day after breakfast and long photography sessions it was time to say goodbye, so we parted with a desire to meet again in the future. As a group we are grateful to all those who made it a point to attend, and really missed those who could not make it. Hope to meet everyone next time!

P.S. General Observation: The ladies have maintained their old charm and the men their naughty habits. No offence meant please!!

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Anglo-Indians in the Navy

Captain Ravinder Kumar Mehta (Retd.)

Anglo-Indians were the only micro minority community ever defined in a constitution. Article 366 of the Indian Constitution states that Anglo-Indian is a person whose father or any male ancestors is or was of European descent domiciled in India and who is born and permanently settled within the Indian Territory. The British Parliament described them as English educated and entirely European in their habits and feelings, dress and language. The mother tongue was English with Catholic or

Anglican Religion.

No wonder, it was a deliberate colonial policy to encourage British males to marry Indian women to create the first Anglo-Indian. The East India Company paid 15 Silver Rupees for each child born to an Indian mother. These children were amalgamated into the growing Anglo-Indians community, forming a defensive structure for the British Raj. This was a deliberate act of self-preservation by



the English. The British favoured and trusted them with key jobs with the Railways, Post & Telegraphs, Police and Customs, education, export and import, shipping, tea, coffee and tobacco plantation, the coal and gold fields. They became teachers, nurses, priests, doctors and stenographers. Without Anglo-Indian support, the British Rule may have collapsed.

However, India also benefited enormously from the Anglo-Indians. They proved their mettle through dint of sheer hard work and competence. They built a strong reputation in the Armed Forces. Many joined the Navy and provided yeoman service.

Although of varying professional competence they excelled in human relations and fairness to all. It was a pleasure to serve under an Anglo-Indian Commanding Officer. It will be worthwhile recalling some of the Anglo-Indian Officers of the bygone era.

Admiral Ronnie Periera – by far the most loved and respected CNS the Navy has produced. He was indeed a legend.

Admiral Stan Dawson: A distinguished Naval Chief and High Commissioner to New Zealand.

Vice Admiral J.T.G. Periera: A much admired and affable Admiral who spent a lifetime at the Naval Dockyard and made an invaluable contribution to it.

Vice Admiral Chippie Samson – A highly regarded leader. He was the first Naval Commandant of the National Defence Academy and Flag Officer Commanding Indian Fleet.

Vice Admiral Dick Schunker – A tough and a no-nonsense operational Western Fleet Commander who later rose to be the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Naval

Command and the Vice Chief of Naval Staff.

Captain Macready – A soft spoken and competent officer who was considered the best ship handler of his time.

The list is endless – Commodore Cameron, Commodore Valladares, Commodore Jack Shea, Captain Tellis, Commanders Atkinson, Slater, Sopher, Mullerworth.

Some of them attained great fame.

Eleven won the Victoria Cross in the First World War.

They fought in World War II at Dunkirk and the Battle of Britain. Guy Gibson of the Dam Busters fame was an Anglo-Indian so were - Actress Vivien Leigh, actor Ben Kingsley, writer Rudyard Kipling, Singers Cliff Richard and Tony Brent, track and field star Sebastian Coe, hockey Wizard Leslie Claudius, Cricketer Roger Binny, billiards world champion Wilson Jones and so on. But where are they now?

Most of them have passed away but some migrated to countries like Australia, Canada, England, USA and New Zealand because of an identity dilemma after the British left India. They found new lives and merged into the main stream of their adopted country.

The Anglo-Indian identity as we understand is disappearing in India. Few exceptions are keeping the flag flying in this minuscule minority.

One of them is Derek O'Brien who is a Member of Parliament and a leading member of Mamta Banerjee's cabinet. He is extremely proud to be an Indian and is highly regarded in West Bengal.

Sadly there are very few Anglo Indians left to join the Navy. But they were a force to reckon with during their heydays.

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Trail Talk Humour

Commodore Ranjan Roy (Retd.)

Celebrate aging when you approach the 70s and want to check out the heart!

Yesterday—on a sunny day—I went to hike, on the Appalachian Trail.

I wanted to get the feel for a decade; I was denied the privilege of doing this trail with my family! And I wanted to give an inspirational talk about the trail, as the Trail Angel.

This trail is marked, and mapped. The trail length is 2,180 miles (3,500 kilometers); it runs from the Georgia to Tennessee border in the south, all the way to Maine in the north, through 14 states. I believe part of the trail was made during the great depression, the project kept people busy. The trail is treaded by the venturesome men, women, and dogs of all ages!

Finally, it was my day at the perfect sunrise.

Initially, I parked the car at the Millers Gap and Valley roads intersecting T, it was the only parking site at the south end, about 30 km from my house, past the 'First Mountain'. Here, the trail crosses the two roads.

I ate a banana and watermelon for water, going vegetarian for now, and saved the sole chicken leg drumstick for later, sticking out of my shirt pocket like a sore thumb, and attracting the bugs whenever I stopped.

I collected a bottle of water from a waiting van; asked stupid questions about the trail, and notified that I was the first-time trail-walker,

"Follow the white poles." Trail Angel pointed at a pole in a distant field. It was marked with a

six inch white vertical line.

Lines became numbers in my mind, later, how many and at what distance.

I entered the trail, only half a meter wide through the farm field, and the encountered four boys running to receive the water bottles.

Then, I followed a hiker couple with their dog Sheila. They walked quicker than I; they stopped at a stream and wood bridge, I caught up. We spoke, took a breath. They were on the trail for 99 days, started at Georgia, and the next day, were to receive a package provisions at Duncannon, shipped and timed for the advancing hiker team. The dog had a harness and saddle bags, she carried her own meal. The man had backpack weighed in at ~30 pounds. I had only a bottle of water and chicken drumstick combined at less than a pound, but felt heavier.

To increase distance from Sheila the bitch—in lighter vein—I increased my pace to keep up with the boys! I was feeling young; but, lost them, saw them vanishing, voices trailed off to whisper. Little did I realize that I became a guide for other people from behind: they came up, and enquired if I saw the boys. Apparently two dozen Amish from Lancaster were hiking, must have been their way to celebrate Memorial Day, like mine. There were no traditional bearded men; I saw the boys, girls, ladies, a couple of couples in 20s, and a hawkish grandma in the late 50s trailing behind.

And I walked and climbed, aimless but with determination, slipping on the dry leaves, nearly tripping on rock, learning the trail rocks, and becoming a smart walker.



I went north along the Harrisburg Duncannon Susquehanna section of Appalachian Range, 'Second Mountain' (Blue Mountain), did ~6 km with due respect to my age, slowly climbed for ~2 hours to the Pipe Line clearing about 30 meters wide, at the view points on both sides of the ridge at thousand feet.

The clock was at the high noon, I felt tired from the heat and sweat.

The car parked at a lonely spot was the drag.

I chickened out, figured that I was not going to make it all the way.

Turned back, descending to the earth, eating the reserve chicken leg, tasting good!

I returned back to the car at 1 PM, took only an hour for the quick descent. Passed a eight to ten feet long black snake Samba blocking the trail, so I went around. The sucker was listening to my feet tapping and froze on my way with the head up. It had its meal and was lazy. Also, I took pictures of a wild flower orchid, next snap was of a T-rex family dinosaur wood; imagination ran wild.

Got into the car, drank Pepsi, turned the car around, and went to the northern section of the trail by a village Duncannon, and parked at the three river junction, Shermansdale/Juniata/Susquehanna.

The soda can had given energy boost and morale.

I went back up the trail, this time to the south, by ~2 PM, climbed ~250 meters (m) to Hawk-Rock viewpoint at 350m above the mean sea level (msl), saw a crowd, dozen people.

Until 5 PM, I climbed and moved south beyond the hikers, and I was a lonely person on the

ridge. Took a breather, explored the other landmarks to the south, kept walking or jogging well after the last hiker was gone.

At one point I looked up and saw the sun oblique at 45 degree to the west; mirage and bear made me think. I did not want to face a brown bear, the thought of negotiating a bear trail crossing my trail made me pause.

I turned around past the highest point, about a mile from the pipeline.

Returning to the highest landmark and walking aimlessly at the blue lines: a sign for the shelter, another sign directing me to shelters 5-7 miles; there was one on the near side of mountain at 0.1 mile to Cove Point, it was not for me, the steep descent, and the back climbing to my car brought me back to re-retracing my trail.

Others walked and climbed this section of the trail in ~4-6 hour from one end to the other.

I checked out my heart and muscles at nearly twice the pace during the 7 to 8 hours of forward and backward trailing propeller.

All was well; ate a bowl of soup at Doyle Hotel for the hikers.

Learnt a few tricks of the trade.

Reached home, while getting out of my car I felt the first spasm on the right calf, next the second notice on my left calf. I straightened them up, short walks, and the pains were gone.

Slept six hours flat out.

Body is sore but the spirits are high.

I was the oldest person on the trail, all were young, between the age 10 and 40, except six above the age 50.



I was advised to take pictures and mail them; came across a lone flower, appeared to be orchid, took two snaps. Next morning back in the office, my colleague who live near the Pipe Line, but to the west, confirmed it was 'ladies slipper orchid'. Found a tree stump, cluster looked like dinosaur T-Rex with two baby dinosaurs in the shade, took three snaps. Saw big carpenter ant colony, two steps across; pee and step on so they won't bite!

Overall, I covered approximately ten thousand plus long steps, lost count, passed -100 plus

trail signs (single white line on tree to keep going, double white lines to turn, and blue line for shelter and direction). I attempted about 10-12 miles (~16-20 km), did more.

After-thought: I have no blisters on feet.

They are ready for the next trail this weekend.

To Shivaji Trail from INS Shivaji .

Angre to Agra!

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Three Memorable Days in Asvini

Lieutenant Gitesh Ranjan Biswas (Retd.)

Non-stop spewing accompanied with severe stomach upset landed me in INHS Asvini's Officers' Ward on an inauspicious morning recently. Diagnosed as Gastroenteritis, it was a simple case of food-poisoning as a consequence of eating sweets from a local Halwai shop, which proved to be stale and turbid.

However, as the long night dawned, it brought the welcome sign of an early recovery, partial mobility and a feeling of wellness on the second day itself.

Initially, I was accommodated in the 'acute room' with which I was already familiar during my earlier hospitalisation less than a month ago. There were three other patients – two retired Lieutenant Colonels and the third, father of a serving Colonel. All of them happened to be bed-patients. While one Lt Colonel enjoyed partial mobility but had suffered total loss of speech was kept under oxygen throughout day and night, needing frequent attention from the duty nursing staff, the second Lt Colonel, was

hospitalised a day or two before my previous discharge and appeared to be a psychic case with related disorder. He doubted the correctness of the name of his peer as written in the admission chart even after an emphatic clarification from Mrs Singh.

On the contrary, about the third patient, the less said the better. He kept the night duty nursing staff literally on their toes, as waking up at 2 AM, he would repeat his non-stop howling chorus of 'baadi jabo' (I want to go home). He preferred to lie athwart, resting his head on the side railings ignoring nursing staff's imploring and ultimately had to be properly placed fore and aft for the sake of orderliness. He would only calm down when his busy son or his elderly wife visited him during lunch hours. Pitifully, such is invariably the fate of retired service personnel during their last days.

Hats-off to the two ladies who practically sat by the side of their ailing husbands' beds from mid-morning till late in the evening, even though they had to commute some distance to visit them.



Their patience and forbearance are beyond praise. Whereas, my wife visited me only once to fetch change of clothes for me since my hospitalisation at 4.30 am on that unlucky day.

However, when I was found fit to be discharged on the third day the Ward MO-in-Charge was heard to instruct the duty nursing officer thus, 'is bande ko upar bhejo' which some what jolted me. But the kind-hearted nursing officer perhaps took pity on my advanced age and shifted me instead to the adjacent room, where some beds were still unoccupied. Anyway, out of curiosity I made a brief survey of the rooms upstairs and found them to be practically empty. Looking back, probably it was after all not a bad idea to occupy one of the empty rooms, which would have given me a unique opportunity to live a solitary life for a while.

Interestingly, patients in the adjacent room were mostly fit and mobile but they were rather inclined to recline in their respective beds to spend their leisure time. Seeing me moving freely and mostly sitting on a chair rather than lying on my bed they did not hesitate to ask me for small services like lifting their beds to a comfortable position and sometimes looking for the nursing staff when they were busy elsewhere. Anyway, I was glad to offer them those small services and felt happy for them.

One of the patients in the new room happened to be a serving Air Engineer. Since I also served in the Air Electrical branch of the naval aviation for over 26 years it was sweet music to my partially-deaf ears when told that every



Special Duty List Officer retires as a Commander with a hefty pay packet. Unfortunately, I was not lucky enough to cross the then exiting stiff selection barrier for promotion to the next rank.

Although clearly indicated in the admission chart, fellow patients often failed to guess my real age. Perhaps it is no exaggeration to frankly admit that at 84.7 years and suffering from various maladies like hypertension, COPD, mild dyspepsia and last but not the least prostate cancer, I am able to maintain a presentable exterior with a crease-free countenance. When fellow patients became curious to know my secret, with a silent smile, I quoted the popular saying that 'to get something one has to give something'.

Regular spiritual practice, followed by simplified yoga, half an hour of morning walk around our large housing complex and finally joining the Sherwood Estate laughter club for a 20 minute work-out completed my morning routine. No wonder it is well said that 'Laughter is the best Medicine' particularly for elderly citizens.



Interestingly, hearty laughter is a complete workout for the body and mind. It is tension free, a positive entertainment and creates a sense of camaraderie among the participants apart from imparting a 'feel good factor'. There is no age bar nor any gender bias, and is particularly suitable and beneficial for the elderly citizens to keep them happy and healthy.

At last it was time to take leave of fellow patients, even though our acquaintance was rather short-lived. In the morning of my discharge and before paying the mandatory hospital stoppage @ Rs. 6 for 3 days, it was my good luck to be acquainted with the temporary officiating Ward MO-in-charge, who

appeared to be kind-hearted and patient-friendly. It was a new experience to see the Commanding Officer taking daily rounds of the wards, trailed by a large entourage. It is certainly conducive for the patients to get well faster to see the CO passing by with most patients on their beds, and everything made to look spic-and-span and ship-shape, prior to his rounds.

INHS ASVINI is considered to be the most modern and patient-friendly service hospital. How nice it would be if all Naval Hospitals could establish someday their own laughter clubs for its palliative and healing effects?

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An Indian Naval Unit Participating in 1965 War

Rear Admiral S Ramsagar (Retd.)

During the 1965 operations, the Indian Naval Air Squadrons of INS Vikrant were utilised for the defence of Mumbai and the off-shore vital installations. Since Vikrant was under refit she was unable to embark her squadrons. The squadrons were fully operational, yet the government decided not to use them for any other operational roles except the defence of Mumbai port and the off-shore installations. Operating from Santa Cruz airport these squadrons did the assigned role exceedingly well.

At the start of the war, only one Alize aircraft was at Cochin, which was undergoing major maintenance schedule in Naval Aircraft Repair Organization (NARO). NARO, immediately got to work to get the aircraft ready in the shortest time.

Just prior to the start of the war, I took some leave to go to Chennai in the newly purchased second hand Morris Minor car by road. While passing Coimbatore I heard on the Radio that the war had started and all defence personnel were to return to their units. I immediately turned back to Cochin and reported back on duty. Cdr (Air) RAJ Anderson detailed me to get the Alize aircraft air tested and get ready to fly the plane in defence of Cochin harbour and the surrounding area.

My crew for these sorties were to be Lt Cdr Dilip Choudhury, who was recalled from the Long 'C' Course and was to fly as my Navigator and Lt DN Rao to be radar operator.

At this juncture NHQ ordered the lone Alize to Delhi for special briefing. Cdr (Air) briefed us



that we were to take-off immediately to proceed to New Delhi and after some time a Dakota aircraft with just four naval support crew will follow for maintaining the aircraft for the classified mission.

On arrival at Santa Cruz, while the aircraft was being refuelled, we three reported to Cdr Arindham Ghose our CO. The CO started planning our next operational sortie in defence of Bombay High when Dilip Choudhury informed him that we are proceeding immediately to New Delhi. He was rather surprised at this. On our request he consulted Cdr (Air), INS Garuda. Though our CO was very perturbed, being a good CO, without any further discussions he permitted us to proceed to Palam Airfield, New Delhi.

On the way to Palam, we had to use the only million inch maps we had. Luckily for us, we were given by Garuda a secret frequency and the airfield tower, took charge of us and flew us along a circuitous route. Finally, the beacon leading to Palam was activated and that helped us to land on Palam runway.

Next day, we reported to Air Headquarters. There, we also met the NHQ representative Lt Cdr Grewal, who was there for the briefing by the Air Marshall. We then came to know the purpose of our trip to Delhi was to utilize the Alize aircrafts to detect the enemy radar stations on the western sector utilizing the French ARRAR passive detection equipment fitted in the anti-submarine Alize aircraft.

With this equipment it was possible for the Alize to obtain the bearings of any radar transmission at a distance twice the detection range of the Radar transmitter without their knowledge.

During the briefing at Air Headquarters I was asked whether I would be able to locate the

enemy radar stations accurately. I informed him that our Alize, can not only locate the radar transmitters, but also fly below the radars transmitting beam without being detected till we hit its ground wave. Then we could make a dash directly on to the top of the station and either drop 500 pound bombs or illuminate the target at night with flares, for the Canberras to spot and attack the radar stations.

At this stage, Lt Cdr Grewal interjected and said that the Alize aircraft was a very valuable naval aircraft. Further, she is incapable of defending herself against fighters therefore she should not be used to attack enemy installations over Pakistan's territory. At this juncture, even Lt Cdr Dilip Choudhury also joined Lt Cdr Grewal and agreed with the naval representative. This was mainly due to his brother-in-law the army Major briefing him the night before that no one recognizes a naval aircraft and all the guns, including our own army air artillery units are free to fire at any unrecognised aircraft seen flying.

Based on the NHQ's directives, I was to fly along the borders over our areas establishing the positions from where we shall take bearings of the radar Stations and get good cross bearings to plot the locations of the radar stations. This we were to do from Agra.

We immediately took off from Palam Airfield, after doing my own flight checks. We landed in the Agra air station which cleared us only after we authenticated ourselves on the secret frequency given to us. We were then taken to the well-fortified underground command post. The local commander directed us to take off the same afternoon and fly along the border commencing from South of Jodhpur going up north and land back with the radar locations. We took-off and set course towards south-west



and after 30 minutes, I could make out that Dilip was looking rather perturbed. When I asked him the problem he pointed out that his CRUEZE was not properly locked on to Agra and the landmarks we saw on land was nowhere indicated clearly on the million inch map. After turning due west based on DR we could not identify any visible landmarks on our map. Dilip slowly told me that we would have already crossed into Pakistan territory by now. So, there was no other go but to turn back to Agra.

On the way back a new factor was encountered; all over north India there was total Blackout and even those large towns which should be visible to us for plotting were also in total darkness. This made it clear to us that though I was well qualified for night flying it would be impossible to do a night sortie for plotting radar stations. We came back for a night landing with the help of the air controllers directing us on to a totally dark Agra airfield. As I made the blind approach, suddenly the runway lights came on and as I landed and passed each light it was being extinguished by airmen shutting off the gooseneck flares by a bucket like covers.

I left it to Dilip, the aircraft captain to explain to the local commander our predicament. The AOC understood the problem and called Squadron Leader Green the Hunter squadrons CO and the local hero, to fly next day in a Hunter with Dilip Choudhury, all along the planned route at the speed of the Alize aircraft. Squadron Leader Green agreed. We all slept that night, in the officers' mess.

Unexpectedly, Agra airfield was attacked that night by Star fighter aircraft and 500 pound bombs were dropped by the enemy aircraft on a fast low level strike. They did not make any second run on the airfield. The bombs due to

the low level run bounced off the runway and ran on to the overrun area of the airport. The bombs then exploded near some service quarters and one hit the hospital that was on their way.

Though the sirens went off well in time due to our lack of information on the location of air raid trenches, we moved out into the open area. All the time worried about safety of our Alize aircraft left in the open dispersal without any protection.

Next day Dilip had to fly the Hunter with Squadron Leader Green. When we were recalled in the morning, we found that Dilip had managed to convince the AOC to do the sortie in our own Alize under fighter cover and establish the positions. We flew that day, with Gnats standing by on immediate alert. We plotted our positions using not only our map reading ability but also with the assistance from own radar stations indicating our positions as and when we locked on the correct bearings of the enemy radar stations. After establishing the location of the nearest Lahore's radar transmitters, we had to fly up north towards Pathankot. Our own defence teams launched the Gnats against us thinking that the enemy was attacking Pathankot. At this time, AOC had to inform all stations, on plain language that the fighters should first recognise the friendly naval aircraft before engaging the enemy planes. As it happened two Gnats came on each side of my wings and waved us on and then peeled-off. On completion of this sortie we landed back at Jodhpur, from where we were to do our next sortie to detect the Sargodha and other radar stations.

Thereafter, we flew throughout the war and established the locations of all the radar stations Lahore, Sargodha, and re-confirmed that the radar station Badin had been rectified



by the Pakistan and needed to be re-attacked which was done.

Then, even after the signing of the Tashkent agreement by our Prime Minister Shastriji, we flew for further 15 days and re-established all the radar stations for helping the Air Force to

strike them, if the war by any chance was restarted. During these sorties a protest came from Pakistan that one Indian aircraft had violated the ceasefire and our government handled the cover up very well.

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The Submarine Calls a Journeyman's Account

Commodore Arun Jyoti (Retd.)

Submarines have been an integral part of my life. My first brush with the submariners was during the Mumbai riots of 1992, wherein, I and my venerable Course-mate *Late Lieutenant Pravin Rana* got waylaid by Mumbai Police whilst on our way back to Lonavala from Mumbai on a heady night and due to the non-recognition of a temporary Identity Card. The first encounter with the three submariners held by the Mumbai Police in the Colaba Police Station and the grand entry of a submariner officer *Lieutenant Debasish Saha* to rescue his submarine mates, got etched forever in my cranium's crevices. He finally rescued his sailors and along with them me and Rana. The submarines became my passion and all through my Naval Engineering College days and the follow-up phase of specialization into Electronics and Communication at Jamnagar, my focus kept on diverting back to the submarines. Finally, the opportunity came for me to join submarines and I plunged into the Pressure Chamber to clear my aptitude for the submarines. The first Pressure Chamber Dive to 30 meters was followed by a quick descent to 100 meters. It all felt exciting and soon I was shortlisted for the submarine School at Visakhapatnam.

The six months at the submarine School flew by and in no time I was appointed to the oldest Kilo Class submarine *Sindhughosh*. Fresh from a well-earned leave, I reported on-board *Sindhughosh* with my other submarine School mates and by virtue of seniority, I was the senior most officer under training on-board the submarine. The majestic boat was under a long refit activity and four of us reported on-board whilst she was being rejuvenated at the dry-docks. To my utter surprise, I found the first of the three submariners whom I had met at Mumbai, on the dry dock jetty. Holding a cigarette, he was standing with his one leg on the jetty's bollard. He turned out to be *Master Chief Petty Officer-II VPS Chauhan (MCPO)*, the submarine's Coxswain. He met me with great warmth as I introduced myself and was taken aback when I reminisced the Mumbai events!! He then candidly admitted that the other two submariners whom I had met on that fateful night at Mumbai were also on-board this submarine. I happily stepped on-board after saluting the National Flag.

MCPO took us straight to the Executive Officer of the submarine and soon we were trying to trace the pipes and cables inside the



submarine as the Executive Officer started our acclimatisation and training in the right earnest. The Executive Officer's first advice was to be mentally agile and physically fit when on submarines and to give the best energy to the boat. In the course of the first day, I also met *Leading Seaman Satyadev* and *LEMP Gaikwad*, the other two accomplices of MCPO at Mumbai.

The destiny had its hidden plans and two days after my reporting on-board the Kilo, the venerable Electrical Officer of the submarine fell sick and was admitted to the Naval Hospital for a surgery. The circumstances of the submarine were tough and it is indeed a herculean task to rejuvenate the individual systems and then to integrate them into well oiled machinery which can withstand the rigors of the dark depths of the seas. Due to a shortage of the Electrical Officers in the submarine Fleet, the Executive Officer decided to take the matters into his hands and appointed me as his able Deputy Electrical Officer. Thus, within two days of joining the boat, I was amongst the thickest of the action along with my primary job- which was to learn about the systems and engineering of the submarine. I got onto the tasks of managing the Electrical Department and started putting in mid night hours to maintain my Training Journal. The days were hot and tough and the nights became longer, but that is what the life on-board a submarine is all about.

Soon, we commenced our sorties into the sea after clearing the harbour checks in one go. I was extremely happy to clear the harbour checks of the Electrical Department without wearing the mandatory Dolphin Badge as my sea qualifying board was not yet over. The Executive Officer stood firmly behind me and ensured that I carried out the duties of a *Head*

of Department without being a qualified submariner. We used to close up on the submarine at 0630h each day and the evenings stretched to 2300h on most days. Finally, the day came when we fired the first torpedo from the submarine and she was declared fully operational to meet the designed commitments. I had also earned my Dolphin Badge in between this phase and my Qualifying Exam went like a well rehearsed song. Each of my Qualifying Board Members had seen me operating on-board the Kilo and gave me a Thumbs Up report. My three submarine mates were very thrilled when I offered the mandatory *Rum Punch* to the submarine's crew. The punch line of the MCPO was always a simple rhetoric- "*Sahab, Pandoobi (submarine) bhi sunati hai!!*". This literally translates into- *THE SUBMARINE TOO LISTENS!!*

Finally, one day, the night fell on the Bay of Bengal. It was 2000h and Sindhughosh was snorting. The diesels were humming and the generators were rotating seamlessly to charge the juices of the submarine's batteries for a deployment. Suddenly, I heard the Executive Officer's voice on the microphone system and he wanted me to come to the Control Room. I had finished a "*Watch Under Observation*" with the submarine's Senior Engineer *Lieutenant AB Mukherjee*. I reached the Control Room and found the MCPO sitting on the submarine's planes (Planes control the diving and surfacing of the submarine) along-with Satyadev. The Executive Officer was on the Officer of the Watch chair and the Commanding Officer was sitting on his big Chair. The Executive Officer told me to sit on the OOW's Chair and carry out the evolutions as per the CO's orders. I sat down on the Chair and the CO, *Commander BK Patnaik* ordered stopping of the snorting and diving of the submarine. MCPO turned back and shook his head in affirmative and I gave



out the crisp order to *Stop Diesels and Dive the Boat*. As I went through the motions of the orders, I could feel the 3000 Tonnes Kilo respond to my inner self. Soon, the Depth Gauges started moving as the engines stopped and the batteries took over the power control of the submarine. The big main motor which LEMP Gaikwad operated three compartments behind the Control Room hummed and Sindhughosh glided down with ease as my successive orders and actions followed and MCPO on the planes executed them with finesse. I settled the submarine to the Periscope Depth. The CO took a deep periscope sweep and soon I took the boat down for my first independent deep dive.

At deep depth, a glass of chilled sea water served by the submarine's Steward *LSTD Bheem Prasad* went down my throat and the DIVED WATCH KEEPING CERTIFICATE was granted to me by the venerable Commanding Officer. This certificate still remains an integral part of my Navy Memorabilia collection and will

be cherished till my last breath. The MCPO shook my hand and saluted me for a dive well executed.

The time is again ripe. I am into a school again, albeit into a B-School and without a uniform. The learning phase is about to be over and the deep dive beckons. The old adage—'The submarine Listens' is playing loud and clear in my mind. I am ready for the call and will again execute the mission with my best energies and intent. My Executive Officer, Rear Admiral Soonil Bhokare is now the FOSM, MCPO has peacefully retired, Satyadev is a successful entrepreneur and Gaikwad is sailing on the high seas with the Merchant Navy.

The call to the Control Room beckons as the clock ticks by and given a chance I shall dive again with perfection and finesse. The chilled sea water's salty taste has rekindled the taste buds- I am alive folks.....

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'Snotties' on Board the Flag Ship

Commodore Vijay Thapar (Retd.)

Reminiscing about our six months stay during the first half of 1968, on board the erstwhile Cruiser INS Mysore (which was also the Flag Ship of the Flag Officer Commanding, Western Fleet), as Midshipmen, brings back some nostalgic flashback moments. Midshipmen were also traditionally called 'Snotties', by the Commanding Officers on board ships, just as the colloquial words for Dental Officers were 'Toothies', Supply Officers were 'Pursers', Shipwrights were 'Chippies', etc. Most of these

'Admiralty *Slangs*' were supposedly picked up by the senior officers who had had their initial training at the Royal Naval College, Dartmouth (UK). As we were given to understand by our 'Sub of the Gunroom' (SOG), in the by-gone days the young 'Snotties' serving on board ships, operating in the Northern Sea, in the absence of carrying a handkerchief, would "snot" (blow their running nose) on the sleeve of their uniform. A small white cloth patch was stitched onto the cuff of the sleeve to prevent it



from getting soiled and this became the Midshipman's 'Badge of Rank'.

The first of the voices which echoes in my mind is the 'adventure' (or 'mis-adventure'!!) of two of the *Snotties* when the Fleet, comprising of the Cruiser Mysore and the Hunt Class Destroyers Rajput and Rana, under the Command of Flag Officer Commanding, Western Fleet, had proceeded on a cruise to South East Asian Countries;

Cambodia, Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia. On the last evening of our stay at Bangkok, *two of these Snotties*, on finishing their 'watches on board' decided to step ashore and *have a good time*. The next morning before the ships were to cast off and set sail, the SOG asked the 'Course Senior' if all the Midshipmen were on board and that they had closed up at their respective 'leaving harbour' positions, to which he got an affirmative reply. The approach to Bangkok Port is through a 9.5 nm 'Bar Channel'. The Fleet ships were clearing the Channel, when the Ship's Commander sighted astern, in a *long tailed speed boat ('hangyao')* two individuals frantically waving to draw attention of the shipmates. As the boat closed in, the two individuals turned out to be *the two*



Snotties. The Fleet Commander and the Captain were visibly angrywhat followed was certainly a misadventure - the SOG, the 'Course Senior' and the two *Snotties* had to face the wrath of the Ship's Commander!!

Equally alive in my mind is the hilarious mystery of the "Missing Snotty"the day when all the *Snotties* were asked to muster on the ship's quarterdeck for address by the SOG. Sure enough,

one of our clan was missing. In spite of repeated announcements and a couple of us looking out for the missing Snotty, there was no trace of him. This left the SOG fuming!! The mystery of the missing Snotty was finally solved – he was ultimately traced, blissfully fast asleep, perched on top the wooden lockers in the Midshipmen's Mess.....What still bewildering is, how on earth did he manage to pull himself up and squeeze himself, prostrate, in the little gap between the top of the lockers and the deck-headUnbelievable feat!!

Another interesting tradition was related to the *FiFi* doll in the Midshipmen's Gunroom. The *FiFi* doll (*FiFi* is a baby's/young girl's name in French) was the most prized possession in the



Midshipmen's Gunroom. As per the tradition, the senior batch of Snotties, who were onboard the other Fleet ships, would attempt to sneak into our Gunroom, silently late at night, in order to lay their hands on FiFi and return with her onto their ship. Once FiFi was taken in their custody, they would negotiate a 'ransom amount' of "couple of beer crates" to grant her freedom and return her to us. This made it incumbent for one of us to sleep in the Gunroom to safeguard the FiFi. A few attempts in this regard, by the senior Snotties, remained futile!!

Next incident that comes to my mindthe First Lieutenant of the ship decided to get all the ship's boats painted black, without informing the Ship's Commander or the Captain (he was probably being a little more innovative and of the view that it would be easier to maintain their 'clean look' in this colour). The ship was at anchorage, near Middle Ground. The Captain's boat manned by Snotties went alongside the 'boat pontoon' to embark the Commanding Officer and bring him back to the ship. When the Captain arrived at the pontoon he did not step into the boat. (He obviously did not recognize his black coloured boat, initially). After some time one of the Snotties in the boat went near him and asked him if he was waiting for someone, before embarking the boat. The Captain was totally taken aback when he was

told that the black coloured boat was indeed of INS Mysore. Needless to mention, what transpired between the Captain and the First Lieutenant, when the Commanding Officer got back to the ship!!

The last of the flashbacks of my tenure onboard this ship holds a special place in my heart. As our six months stay on the ship was coming to an end and it was time to move to other smaller fleet ships, the SOG asked us to assemble in the Gunroom. He mentioned that as officers, each one of us should be aware of 'our drinking capacity' and never to cross that threshold. He accordingly divided us into two batches....on the first night, each one of us in the first batch was to take drinks to his fill and his 'buddy' from the other batch would keep a track of the number of drinks/pegs which he could hold without 'getting high' and later 'totally drunk'. Thereafter, the 'buddy' was to take him to the bathroom, soak his head under water and finally lead him to his mess to sleep. Next morning the 'buddy' was to inform the individual his capacity or limit 'to be able to hold his drinks'. The same drill was followed the next evening for the other batch.....the lesson being *know your drinking capacity and take one peg less!!*

Bravo to the 'Sub of the Gunroom.'

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WORDS OF WISDOM



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It isn't the mountains ahead that wear you out, its the grain of sand in your shoe.



You've removed most of the roads blocks to success when you've learned the difference between motion and direction.

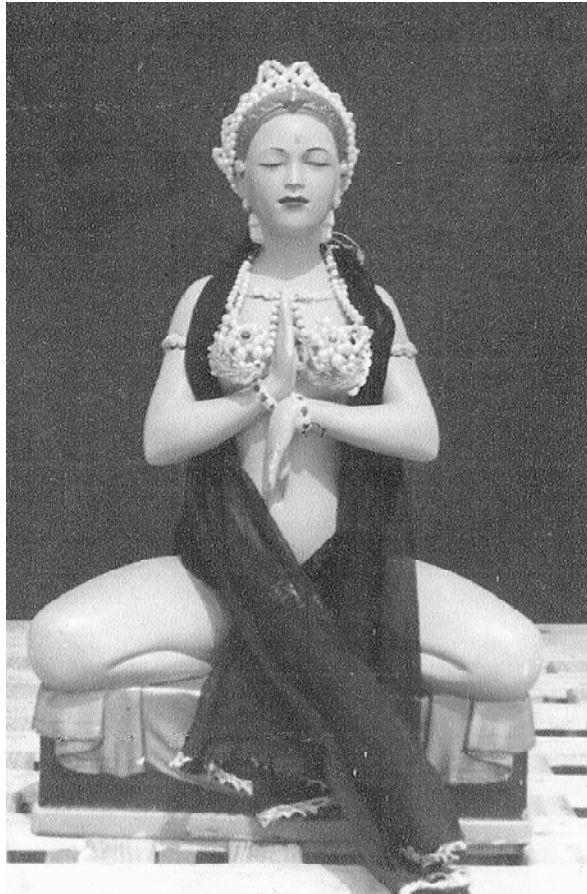




The Abduction of Mam'Sellefifi

Commodore Subrata Bose (Retd.)

In January 1957, we of the 9th Course had been transferred to INS Delhi to complete the second term of six months after completing the first six months on board INS Tir. This was the first time that INS Delhi had full batch of midshipmen, and a new gunroom was therefore started. Earlier batches used to complete their second tenure as midshipmen, in small batches on board ships of the Fleet. Tir had been a training ship for quite a few years and her Gunroom had quite a collection of mementos like ceremonial lifebuoys and crests "liberated" from other ships, foreign as well as Indian, by some earlier enterprising midshipmen. However, the piece de resistance was FIFI, a plaster of Paris statuette of a Thai dancer, about 8" high, ensconced in a glass cabinet. She had been presented to Tir's gunroom a few years earlier during the ship's visit to Bangkok. Comparatively, Delhi's gunroom was quite bare. One morning, Midshipman AK Sood and Midshipman S Bose (self) decided to put their heads together to rectify this discrepancy and came up with a plan to abduct FIFI from Tir's gunroom the same night.



INS Delhi was then the flagship of Rear Admiral RD Katari, the first Indian to become the Flag Officer Commanding, Indian Fleet (FOCIF). The ship was soon to sail on a flag- showing visit to the Indian ports of Cochin, Madras, Visakhapatnam, and Calcutta. We decided to abduct FIFI and bring her on board IN Delhi before the ship sailed from Bombay.

In those days there was only the one break water which is now called the Inner Break water and most of the Fleet ships used to be in Naval Anchorage off Middle Ground. Tir, however, was berthed port side to on the inner side of the break water with her gangway slightly forward of her quarterdeck.

I was then carrying out the duties of Coxswain of the Officers' Fast Motor Boat (FMB). Sood and I decided to execute the plan around 0030 hrs, because that was the time for the last boat for officers returning on board. Also, by midnight, the last lot of liberty men of INS Tir would have returned on board and the OOD and the Mid OD would have turned in.

Accordingly, one midnight, the Officers' FMB left Delhi for the boat pool with Midshipmen



Bose and Sood and arrived there fifteen minutes later. Sood, dressed in plain clothes (in those days officers and midshipmen went on liberty in plain clothes whilst sailors wore uniform), disembarked and proceeded to INS Tir, walked on board confidently and made his way to the gunroom, found nobody there, picked up the glass cabinet with FIFI, walked up to the quarterdeck and waited near the ensign staff. At 0030 hrs, I embarked the two or three waiting officers in the FMB and cast off from the Boat Pool without switching on the navigation lights. The FMB headed for Tir's stern, throttled down, and gently came under Tir's ensign staff where Sood was waiting with FIFI in her glass cabinet. I stood on the bows and in a loud whisper asked Sood to hand FIFI down. The distance was however too much and therefore I asked Sood to throw FIFI to me. Sood did so and I made a safe catch. Sood then climbed over the guard rails and hanging on to Tir's stern rope jumped on to the bows of the FMB. As soon as he did so, I proceeded to take the FMB back to Delhi, switching on the navigation lights a little distance away from Tir.

By breakfast next morning, word had spread that FIFI was on board. Around 1000hrs the Captain (Captain BA Samson) accompanied by the Commander (Cdr ML Barua) came to the Gunroom to greet FIFI and congratulate the midshipmen for bringing her on board. Just before lunch, word came down to the Gunroom that FOCIF desired to visit FIFI. When he came down to the gunroom, a case of beer followed him. We requested him to donate towards a FIFI Fund which he gladly did.

Delhi sailed with FIFI on board and was a great hit at every port visited. The FOCIF and the Captain would bring their guests to the Gunroom to see her. The guests of course had to pay a price to see her. By the time Delhi returned to Bombay, there was a substantial amount in the FIFI Fund.

I do not recollect as to what happened to FIFI after we were commissioned and left Delhi. But I did learn later that FIFI had gone back to Tir's gunroom.

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Rescue of 'Galate'

Commander Shishir Dixit

In March 2010 a crew of six Seychellois fishermen was taken hostage along with their fishing boat named 'Galate'. Earlier in the year, the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Seychelles People's Defence Forces had designated a High Level Committee on piracy to plan and execute various anti-piracy measures. The case was handed over to this Committee which included the Chief of

Defence Forces and was chaired by one Cabinet Minister.

The attack happened in the early hours of 29 Mar 2010 and came to the notice of Seychelles Coast Guard at 0200h on 30 Mar 2010. Intelligence inputs indicated that nine Somali pirates had hijacked the 'Galate' by using an Iranian Dhow as the mother ship. The Iranian



Dhow along with her 21 men crew was captured a few days earlier. The six Seychellois fishermen were shifted to the Dhow and the 'Galate' was taken under tow. With assistance of International Anti-Piracy Forces operating in the area, the Seychelles Coast Guard (SCG) was able to locate and place the Dhow with 'Galate' under tow, approximately 200 nautical miles North West of the capital town – Port Victoria.

The President gave clear directives to the High Level Committee that the Seychellois fishermen must be rescued before the captured vessels move closer to pirate stronghold area in Somalian waters. Patrol Ship Topaz, the Flag Ship of SCG was immediately dispatched for the rescue mission. While Topaz was underway to the designated area, the High Level Committee was trying to understand features of the strange seagoing vessel called Dhow and was seeking ways and means to disable it. Fortunately, another Dhow was anchored within Seychelles territorial waters for undertaking repairs on its main engines. It was commandeered by a semi-literate Captain who hailed from the rural coastal belt of Gujarat in India. He had 25 crew members who were also almost illiterate and hailed from the same region. The Captain, when contacted, was very forthcoming, in giving all information about Dhows in general, including main construction features, general nature of cargo, capacity and operational capabilities, likely crew composition etc. However, communication with him and other crew members became quite a challenge since they spoke only in local dialects and were not aware of commonly used terms and terminologies of seamanship and marine engineering. The Indian Naval Technical Advisor had to garner all his linguistic skills as

well as knowledge of basic seamanship and marine engineering to understand and convey the information to the High Level Committee.

The Captain had an antique radio set which he used for communication with seafarers who operated Dhows in the Western Indian Ocean Region. Soon, he was able to deduce the vintage and type of construction of the Iranian Dhow. The information facilitated preparation of a detailed schematic diagram which indicated layout of the Iranian Dhow clearly demarcating living quarters, cargo spaces and machinery spaces.

This information was given to the Commanding Officer of Topaz and the methodology of engaging and disabling the Iranian Dhow with minimum collateral damage was formulated. Initially, Topaz used all communication means to warn the pirates who were in command of the Iranian Dhow without any positive response. Thereafter, Topaz fired several warning shots. However, the pirates responded in a threatening manner by returning fire and moving at maximum permissible speed towards Somalia. Topaz then tried to disable the Dhow by firing at the propeller, but this action was not able to restrict the escaping Dhow. Further consultations followed and thereafter, it was decided to aim the guns at the main engines – location of main engines was explained using the schematic layout diagram. This time the firing resulted in damage to the main engines and fire in the engine room accompanied by thick black smoke. The pirates now panicked, lost Command and Control and jumped into the sea. They were followed closely by the 21 Iranian crew members and six Seychellois fishermen. Topaz rescued all personnel and arrested the nine Pirates. Only one Iranian crew member and one Pirate sustained injuries.



This operation was one of the first successful operations in recent history of International Community's fight against piracy in the Western Indian Ocean wherein a small Island Nation courageously decided to challenge the pirates who had successfully commandeered a boat and held 27 hostages. The operation was also unique in the sense that different stakeholders in the International Community's fight against piracy had set aside personal differences and had teamed up in support of the Island Nation. Proactive contribution of the

Dhow's semi-literate crew, who were from rural Indian background, however, ensured that the operation was an overwhelming success and that there were no casualties.

The Dhow's Captain and the crew went on to collate and share valuable information about operations of Dhows in the Western Indian Ocean Region and methodology used by the Somali pirates to capture and use them as mother ships.

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NDA 1964-65

Commodore Ravi Sharma (Retd.)

At my age, every year rings in a new golden jubilee and this year it is of my appointment to NDA Kharakvasla as a Divisional Officer. On arrival in the last week of December 1963, I was told to proceed to 'J' (Juliet) Squadron where I reported to the Squadron Commander, Maj Shyam Rattan. We found a common link as he was the brother of then LCDR Anmol Rattan who was the Engineer Officer on board Ranjit where I did my small ship time as a Midshipman in 1959. My co-Divisional Officers were Flt Lt RS Rana who as a fighter pilot was proud of his nickname 'Speedy' and wished to be called just that, and Capt Surjit Kumar of J&K Rifles. Our Battalion Cdr was Wing Cdr 'Barney' Fernandes, a very fine officer and a gentleman.

Being turfed out of 'Bombay' just short of New Year was a rude shock and before unpacking, I rode my favourite steed, the Lambretta scooter on 31 December for the New Year's Eve party

at a friend's house in Bombay. After the merry-making and a little shut-eye, it was back to K'vasla on 01 Jan 1964 to begin my NDA assignment in earnest.

I was a bachelor and staying at the Officers' Mess. Life for bachelors at the NDA was odd. A typical day started at about 0630 when one watched cadets at their outdoor training like PT, Drill or Equestrian. From then on, one was fully occupied catching up with paperwork, interviews and cadets' reports, an odd lecture, watching cadets at games, etc., till about 1800 when a total hush descended on the one horse village! The married folks went home happily but the bachelors, with no TV yet and entertainment spots far off in Poona (I know, I know it is Pune now!) were at a loose end which was in sharp contrast with our busy schedule in the daytime. Inevitably, we fetched up at the bar where drinks and sing-song sessions took us well into the night.



We had many colourful personalities to keep us engaged though. There was Maj Shyam Rattan who in terms of total service, was a colleague of the Commandant, Maj Gen Ranbir Bakshi. He had an enormous number of yarns to tell. My favourite was the one about Monaco where he was posted during WW II. According to him the Principality was so small that when he slept at night, his head was in Monaco and his feet in France! He could also come up with some absurd ones like the time he took a lift with a spectacled friend on a scooter; when it started raining, the driver coolly switched on wipers on his glasses and carried on driving unaffectedly!

When Maj Shyam Rattan was blessed with a third daughter in a row, all of us congratulated him but were aghast when Speedy went up to him and smilingly offered his 'heartfelt condolences'. When we tried to interrupt him, he shut us up and said that was how 'we Punjabis' view the occasion! To his credit, Maj Shyam Rattan took it all very sportingly without taking offence.

Then there was this lovable person, Dmitri 'Dimmy' Jorlov, who used to teach Russian when I was a cadet. He was now too old to teach but fit enough to look after the Golf Club. He along with my friend, Subodh 'Guppy' Gupta, insisted on my taking up golf which I had dismissed till then as an old man's game. I am indeed grateful to them as I continue to play and enjoy the game till this day. Once when I developed a stiff neck after a round of golf, I mentioned it to Dimmy. He chided me and said, "Never! You cannot get a crick in the neck



if it is proper golf that you are playing."

Dimmy's other interest was the bar. Those were days of prohibition in Maharashtra. So invariably we used to see Dimmy in the evening searching for someone to stand him a drink with his standard line, "Water is the best drink in life but I can't afford the best. So give me the second best, a rum!"

A very likeable Social Studies teacher who shall remain unnamed, was also a proficient tennis player. That probably gave him a good appetite. Once when he was staying in the Mess, he kept asking the waiter for chapatis after chapatis. The waiter got fed up and when the teacher landed up for his next meal, the waiter brought 50 chapatis and plonked them on the table. The former was wild with rage and asked the waiter if he thought he was a pig. He finally dismissed the waiter saying, "Now take one away".

Another Battalion Cdr was Lt Col BD Malhoutra, a proper 'Saheb' with impeccable manners and a British accent. Once he was incharge of a cadets' camp for which a route



march was to start at 0300. All of us were lined up when Col Malhoutra started inspecting the cadets in total darkness. He stopped in front of one and asked his name. The reply, "Cadet Bewtra, sir".

"Spell it" said the Colonel.

"B-E-W-T-R-A."

The Colonel screamed at the top of his voice with some choice abuses in Punjabi ending up with something like, "You Angrez da puttar, can't you spell your name simply as BATRA for that's what you are instead of the anglicised Bewtra?" All of us quietly sniggered wondering why the Colonel had a 'U' in his Malhoutra!

The loneliness of bachelors resulted in a few love affairs in the NDA. My colleague Surjit got hitched to a lady doctor posted in K'vasla MH and another Divisional Officer and course-mate Rameshwar 'Billoo' Ratra married Roop, daughter of Maj K Rai Singh, the well-known test cricketer who was then OIC Army Training

Team. For the rest of us, there were only occasional 'Socials' where we were lucky if we could find a lady willing to give us the pleasure of a dance. Maggie Fernandes, the very pretty wife of our Battalion Commander, was one who used to sportingly oblige us.

Which brings me back to Wing Cdr Fernandes. I remember a lecture given by him on 'Leadership'. A quote he used from "Hamlet" will always be etched in my memory:

"This above all: to thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day',
Thou canst not then be false to any man."

Well into my third term, life was getting a bit monotonous at K'vasla. Providentially, I was called up to Delhi for an interview with the Commandant NDC, Vice Admiral Chatterji, who 'wondered' if I would be his Flag Lt. I did not allow him to wonder further and left the NDA end-May 65 for New Delhi.

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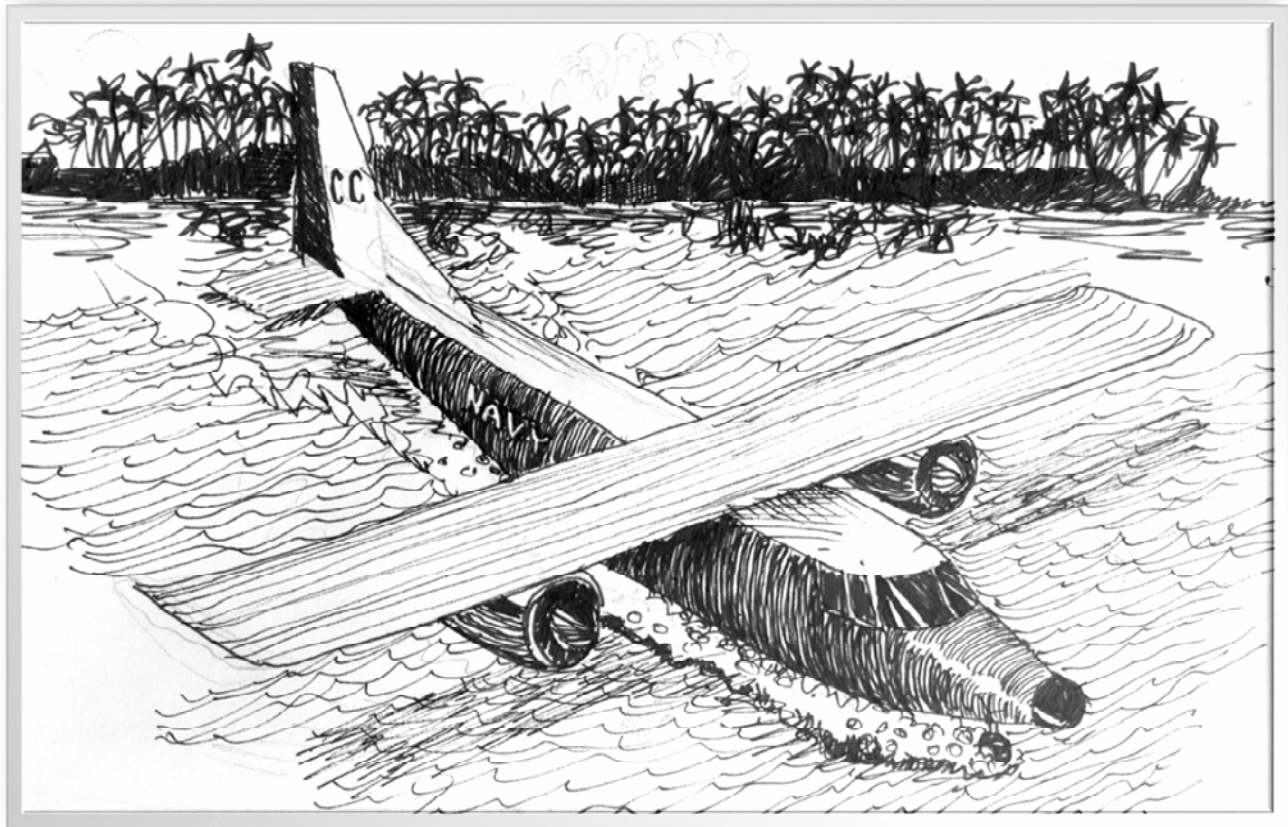
Mayday-Mayday-Mayday

Commander Rajinder Dutta (Retd.)

Most pilots have faced an emergent situation calling prompt and correct response. I, then a Lt, with Lt Shubhranshu (co-pilot) and Lt Cdr NI Arif (O), faced one such situation on 09 Dec 87, during Check Test Flight on Islander IN-132 at INS Garuda, Cochin.

After ATC/Met briefing at 0730 hrs, we took-off 0810 hrs, turned downwind climbing to 3000 feet, requested sector South. At 3000 feet the feathering and unfeathering of port engine was executed as per CTF schedule. This involved

switching off Port engine and checking climb on starboard engine. After this, slow climbing turn to port was executed towards airfield. The Port-engine was relit and power checked at various throttle settings. Parameters normal, warning lights off, Starboard engine was feathered (switched off) for a single engine climb check on port engine. As port throttle was being opened, a sudden yaw was felt to left with engine noise dying down. Lo! The port engine FAILED. The starboard engine was in



switched off condition. No panic yet. I handed over controls to my co-pilot, aircraft trimmed 65 knots, heading towards Airfield. I attempted to relight Starboard engine. The propeller cranked intermittently, but no pick up. I piped up Mayday call, with intentions 'dead stick landing'. Altimeter was winding down passing 2500 ft. Attempt was made to restart Port engine. No joy. Attempt to unfeather Starboard engine was also unsuccessful. At 1500 feet it was appreciated that aircraft was below glide path, approach thick with Palm trees. Ditching appeared inevitable. I asked co-pilot to turn right towards back waters, as I once again attempted relight in vain. Co-pilot piped "Approaching 500 feet, Ab toh le-lo Sir". I took over the controls and piped on R/T, "Mayday, Mayday, Mayday...IN 132 both engines failed, ditching 2nm South East". ATC acknowledged, "132 your homing 348".

Aircraft glided along the channel towards Cochin sailing club. Crew rehearsed the emergency and escape drill. As altimeter was winding it appeared time compression was taking place. Aircraft was round off into landing attitude, just missing the fishing stakes. Speed washing off, controls held firmly, "Prepare for escape, touching down now". Aircraft sliced through water, nose plunged down steep, as tail hit the- water. Due sudden instantaneous deceleration, cabin map reading light hit the windscreen shattering it. Water started gushing in the dark cabin. I held my breath and attempted to unbuckle seat belt, which got stuck. Both crew safely escaped out through their emergency windows. Me stuck in panic...water was soon filling the cockpit. My endurance was at threshold with total Red Out, craving one breath, struggling for one molecule of Oxygen.... "Does THE END happen this



way?".....I entered 'twilight zone' connecting the 'Tunnel of Death', body almost limp....

To return from 'Tunnel of Death', one requires a 'Hand of God'....An unknown force had swung my left elbow onto left window. Surprisingly, the glass window got dislodged. (Hand of God)... Incidentally, left window isn't incorporated with emergency exit, its only on co-pilot's window. Still holding my breath, keeping 'Tunnel of Death' at bay, struggled to loosen my belt, made way through the window and took long deep 'breath of LIFE' on surfacing. The aircraft was submerged with fin sticking out. Shubhranshu and Arif, who were sitting atop the cabin, were delighted. I was inside Cockpit for 2+ minutes. Still in shock we shook hands and tried smiling. Lot of fishing boats enveloped us to help. No sign of SAR Helicopter. Aircraft started sinking nose down, as water filled up in fuselage. We swam towards a ferry and came alongside south of Cochin. Boat crew were kind, locals gathered. They had seen our blue-bird disappearing into channel. In our drenched overalls we walked into a Govt. school to ring up Ops Room Garuda. When Arif contacted Base Ops, he retorted, "Arif, Don't disturb, Live emergency", and hung up. Called again and Base Ops informed that we were survivors of the ill-fated aircraft and conveyed position. The Ops Room heaved sigh of relief, since the two SAR helicopters launched at the Mayday call had not sighted the ditched Islander. There was no way they could have. ATC had obtained aircraft's homing 348, and without converting into bearing, launched SAR helicopters on bearing 348 from airport 2 NM, the area of Cochin harbour mouth, exactly reciprocal to ditching point. There was greater panic in ATC than

cockpit. Ops Room on obtaining our position realized the folly of ATC. Immediately helos were diverted. We were winched up by Cdr Chandana and Lt Sihota and brought to ATC.

We were warmly welcomed by Cdr Dhillon, (Squadron Cdr) and Cdr G Sharma, Cdr (Air) as helicopter landed in front of ATC. The PMO soon conducted post flight medicals and cleared us. Cdr Dhillon got Mrs Shahida Arif picked up, all waiting for us at the squadron besides the entire 550 Squadron. The sparkle in her eyes glittered as she invited us to hot steaming lunch at Katari Baugh.

The aircraft was recovered from the channel and brought to South jetty. The Board of Inquiry, by Cdr SJ Sarma from Goa, grilled the crew next one week to ascertain cause of failure of both engines. Lt IS Deen, technical member put engine parts together to come to logical conclusion. The technical inspection of engines revealed that Port air-induction hose had collapsed in flight leading to failure of port engine and starter developed fault leading to non-relight of Starboard engine. This was probably first successful ditching of Islander, where in the crew having survived, tested ditching characteristics of aircraft realistically.

A couple of days later during an evening stroll to AED hangar, I patted on cowling of my Mother Islander – 132, my eyes become moist, for She had ferried many of us, thousands of hours, on innumerable occasions, carrying us in her womb, and now lay helpless injured forever. She seemed to convey her melancholy Best wishes as I uttered my Final Good-Bye.....

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Looking After Soviet Naval Chief Admiral Groshkov

Mrs. Veryam Kaur Trewn

I was serving as the Senior House Keeper in Palmbeach Hotel located in Marina beach Visakhapatnam. That was the leading hotel in that area during those days. One day local naval authorities informed my hotel Managing Director that Naval Commander-in-Chief of Soviet Socialist Republic Navy Admiral Groshkov was arriving to stay in my hotel.

The Soviet naval chief was allocated a deluxe suite facing Bay of Bengal. Two more adjoining suites were allocated to the Soviet Naval Commanders-in-Chief of Pacific Ocean and Mediterranean Sea. By chance an American lady was already staying in a double room in the quadrangle. She was single but carried a pet Siamese cat with her. She was paying extra for its care and upkeep in the hotel.

I particularly made sure that each early morning fresh seasonal flowers and fresh coconut water were provided to the Soviet dignitaries. Admiral Groshkov used to have a breakfast meeting in his suite with senior members of his team next day evening.

As per protocol the C-in-C, Eastern Naval Command called on him. In the evening Admiral Groshkov had to proceed to Headquarters Eastern Naval Command in Visakhapatnam naval base for a reception. The naval base was located at a half an hour distance away. I had also to attend the reception proceeding separately with my naval husband. After the Chief Guest and his retinue had left the hotel premises precisely at 1900h, the two Soviet Naval Chiefs of Pacific Ocean and Mediterranean Sea boarded their cars and started moving away from hotel outer reception stand. The third car flying flag of Soviet naval chief arrived on the reception stand first. Since I was responsible for looking after the Soviet Naval Chief in hotel I was there to see him off. It was customary that the chief guest sits on the

left of rear seat alone. This would facilitate identification and ceremonial salutation at the receiving end. Just when the car of the chief guest was set to start Admiral Groshkov arrived close to the car. I was following to see him off. Soviet Chief entered the car and sat on the back side right hand seat. He then asked the driver to stop car engine and waved asking me to be seated on left side rear seat. I had to go with my husband in another car but the Admiral suddenly wanted to have a lady to accompany him. Left with no choice under this sudden emerging situation the driver opened the door and I got seated on the left rear seat not realizing what could happen to protocol. Soon the caravan started moving towards the naval base. The Commander-in-Chief of Eastern Naval Command was personally present at the reception stand of naval base along with his senior command officers. As Admiral Groshkov's car stopped along the reception stand the young naval ADC of Commander-in-Chief Eastern Naval Command started opening the left rear door of the chief guest car while all officers including the Eastern Command naval staff promptly raised their right hand and put it in saluting position. In this position the naval band started playing loudly the appropriate tune in honour of the Soviet Naval Chief. As the door opened, to everyone's surprise, I came out unmindful of what was going wrong. The naval Lieutenant realizing what had happened greeted me and entered the car assisting Chief Guest to get out of the car. Meanwhile the saluting host Admiral who had lowered his saluting hand again raised his saluting hand realizing his mistake. All went well after Groshkov saluted back but the humorous anecdote was referred by him repeatedly to the host officers by him during the party!

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Kota House: A Saga of 50 Years

Commander JK Sharma (Retd)

The majority of naval fraternity may not be aware that, it was a very ambitious and significant forethought, on the part of Naval Headquarters that this majestic building Kota House, was taken over from the Ministry of Defence.

The building is beautifully located among the cluster of spacious boulevards and bungalows, a harmony of contrast with unique mark of distinction called 'Luytens' Bungalow Zone'. Here we can see British Raj architecture displayed in abundance. The Viceroy's palace (Rashtrapati Bhawan), the South and North Blocks were constructed in 1929. Land was allocated to rulers of Princely states to construct their residence in the capital.

Kota, an erstwhile princely state was located in the eastern part of the Province of Rajasthan.

Maharao Umed Singh of Kota constructed Kota House in Delhi in 1938 in imperial Art –Deco-style.

During World War II the British Govt- acquired Kota House from Maharao Bhim Singh and used it as a base hospital for united Services. The building was reverted to state of Kota at the end of war. After the merger of Princely states the building was handed over to the State of Rajasthan.

The Government got the possession of Kota House from the State of Rajasthan through the Ministry of Works, Housing and Development at a total cost of Rs. 12,77,700.00 only. It was handed over to Ministry of Defence in November 1962 for use as an Armed Forces

Hostel jointly by Army and Navy. Yet the Navy pursued the case vigorously to take over Kota House for exclusive use as Naval Officers' Mess.

Finally, during Admiral OS Dawson's tenure as the Chief of the Naval Staff, the Army handed over the building to the Navy in Oct 1983. Thus the first Naval Officers' Mess Annexe (NOMA) was established in Delhi. Ever since, it has been a wonderful haven for the naval fraternity. The original building has been renovated a couple of times, with the sole aim to restore the building to its original grandeur and preserve its old art and heritage deco-style, while improving its services and functionality.

Many veterans must be having some reminiscences connected with this institute. During 1974 a large number of folding chairs and furniture items were to be purchased for the Sailors' Institute at INS Circars, Visakhapatnam. Late Vice Admiral KL Kulkarni the then FOC-in-C, East took keen interest in such welfare endeavours. He even provided some references to contact big manufacturers in Delhi for bargaining. We arrived in New Delhi and settled down at Kota House. Suddenly I





found the list of references provided by the Admiral was missing. I was trying very desperately to locate the same, fortunately the persons, with whom we were required to interact reached at Kota House searching for us. They were somehow aware of our visit, and were very sure to find us in Kota House.

Here one can stay. There are about three dozen suites. A few of them are eloquently ornate designed for VIPs/VVIPs. Many facilities such as CSD canteen, Bar, Restaurant, Cyber Café, Beauty Parlour, Men's saloon, Tailor's shop,

Souvenir Shop, Snooker Den, Golf practice area etc. are available. Children movies are also screened. Interested Veterans can be granted membership without compromising the sanctity of the Naval Officers' Mess Annexe, as the veterans visit only on rare occasions.

Kota House will always be a unique place to meet for the naval fraternity.

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Indira Gandhi's Scary Moment on Vikrant

Captain Raj Mohindra, (Retd)

In 1969 Mrs Indira Gandhi spent a day at sea with the Indian Navy. She embarked on board INS Vikrant, flying the flag of the late Vice Admiral S.M. Nanda, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Naval Command. The late Captain Chandy Kuruvilla was the Flag Captain.

With Admiral Nanda's penchant for planning, every facet of Mrs Gandhi's visit was gone into minutely. He advised the PMO that Mrs Gandhi ought to be accompanied by a chaperon. This suggestion was duly accepted and the late Mrs Nandini Satpathy, Minister attached to the Prime Minister, was deputed to accompany her. I was Staff Officer

to the C-in-C and was liaising with Mr R.K. Dhawan, PA to the PM, for administrative details.

Mrs Gandhi was accommodated in the Captain's night cabin and Mrs Satpathy in the adjoining day cabin. Chandy Kuruvilla had taken every care for the visit, including tight security arrangements in consultation with the PMO.

In the middle of the night, there was a loud shriek from the Captain's cabin. This was followed by an even louder shriek from the day cabin! The security outside the cabin was baffled and dumbstruck. The Admiral and the





Captain were informed forthwith of the mysterious shrieks.

At this moment, Mrs Satpathy peeped through the curtains of the Captain's cabin and informed the security that a rat had entered Mrs Gandhi's cabin. She said that the Prime Minister was mortally scared of rats! Meanwhile, Mrs Gandhi came out and sat on a chair in the day cabin, looking distinctly distraught. Hell was let loose and no one knew what to do. By now, Chandy Kuruvilla descended on the scene followed by Admiral Nanda. Chandy took prompt charge of the situation. He yelled at the First Lieutenant to get hold of the ship's rat catchers immediately to catch the rat forthwith! Chandy quickly restored the chaotic situation. He assured Mrs Satpathy that four specially trained, and qualified professional rat catchers had been charged with the responsibility of catching the offending creature.

It transpired next day that a rat had stuck his neck out of the Punkah Louvre in Mrs Gandhi's cabin to have a good peep at the Prime Minister

of India!

The following evening there was the usual Mess Night, which traditionally becomes a hilarious event after the Toast to the President has been drunk. Chandy gave a scintillating speech, laced with humour. He apologised profusely to the Prime Minister for the unwanted intrusion the previous night. He assured her that a Board of Enquiry had come to the unmistakable conclusion that it was not a Vikrant rat but a Mysore rat. Madam Prime Minister, Chandy added with charming nonchalance, the moment it was established that it was a Mysore rat, we promptly killed it!

Mrs Gandhi had a very hearty laugh!

Author's Note: Chandy Kuruvilla was alluding to INS Mysore, the cruiser which was participating in the exercises and also to Mr S. Nijalingappa, the dissident Congressman from Mysore who was leading a fierce revolt against Mrs Gandhi at that time which ultimately led to the split in the Congress Party in 1969.

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Going the American Way with the P-8I

Lieutenant Commander Tarun Sharma

"If it is not Boeing, I am not going"

"One of you is there" was the information of a coursemates' phone call that ruffled my already occupied mind busy planning for a forthcoming SSD mission. Oddly enough, two of us share the same name and the same aircraft, thankfully at different air-squadrons. Next couple of days went by in a normal manner as day-to-day activities kept me busy. Then, as discussions were on in the briefing room and I was called later to explain a particular procedure in the Senior Pilot office, the on-going talk took a turn

as he also said that it may be one of us in the so called 'coveted' P-8I list. As he assured it most certainly from the 'hotter' squadron on the West coast, some semblance of respite came to my mind.

I planned on a month-long leave and after coming back had requested for tidying up my abode as I was sure that I was not moving anywhere for the next year or so. Choreographed as it was, the day MES bestowed us with the manpower for revamping the house, same afternoon was the confirmation received for my name to be in



the list. Everyone swarmed around me for congratulating on being hand-picked (though it felt as if being tooth-picked). Forlorn and dejected my better half took a while to sink-in this news, as the stint at Port Blair had kept her away from civilisation for a long time and the thought of being at Arakkonam for the rest of her life was devastating in all regards.

Well, as it had to happen, being in the first batch has its own peculiarities. The first hurdle was to get a Ty-duty approval, in time from Port Blair to arrive at Arakkonam (in time) to draw advance (in time) to take off for Delhi for pre-deputation formalities. Next was to push the deputation file at New Delhi (wish it had its own propulsion much like the P-8I). The experience at IHQ taught me a lot about patience, walking long distances in hot sun and the 'sarkari' procedure not to forget, hearing "*Aap kal aajayeeye abhi saahab nahin hain*" etc. The numerous trips to and fro INS India made me realise that India indeed is a vast country. As luck would have it, we reached the US four days later than the stipulated date. The first week went by coming to terms with sleep cycle, its meaning and importance which kicked in for the first time in my life. Frankly, I had never woken up in middle of the night and stayed awake for rest of the time. So much so, that by the time I reached my class my body would have decided to sleep again.

With my already frail and slithered English I was to cope up with the swanky instructor's day in and day out. Much to everybody's surprise I was the leader in the aspect of learning the nuances of the American accent. As my counterparts stuck to the Indian version of English, I went on to gel myself into the American way. Surely enough, they went into splits seeing me interacting with the Americans. Trotting along the tough training regime set-in by the Boeing team and being the only non-acoustic guy amongst four others with a combined ASW experience of close to

7000 hrs is a challenge in itself. As it goes, when you are in it, you are in it and have to chug along the flow. Then, the biggest challenge of them all endowed upon me as we were to fly the first sortie for five hours plus. Being from the 'Gentleman aircraft', Dornier flying four hours only had been the mandate of the last four years or so. But all apprehensions about flying for long hours sorted themselves out with so much to do in the aircraft, each time I glanced at my watch, an hour just flew by.

If the time seemed to be going faster, than it should be in two situations, either when you are enjoying or when you don't know what's going on. Most certainly, in my case it was the second option. Coming back to India, a long list of cases for procurement and other associated jobs were waiting for us with baited breadth. Navigating through all this, I found time to run back to Port Blair and report back (in a record time of three and a half days). All that I have been through in the one year plus (as the crew of this aircraft) has been exciting to say the least. With the induction of "The Game-Changer" as it has been referred to quite aptly, the Indian Navy is all set to ride supreme in the IOR and beyond. A rainbow of capabilities and lethal armament set the P-8I as the fore-runner among its contemporaries.

Being a part of the IFTU P-8I has been an eye-opening experience, I have realised that a new induction is just like a cry baby! But on the flip side this opportunity has helped me to learn the gamut of setting-up a squadron from the scratch. The old saying of "Turn the page and run the Navy" is no good when after turning the page you realise there is nothing (to copy). A mixed bag of flying, staff-work and planning for the future is indeed a great challenge which we try to keep up with every day.

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Encounters with an Admiral

Commodore Prem Kumar (Retd.)

Winter was setting in the capital..... it was the month of November..... as I was applying the frozen butter on the warm toast the newspaper in front of me mentioned the procurement of an AShM from BAe, UK. When I read the article....I could feel the adrenaline rising....it was like as if the after burners had been pressed into service...it became crystal clear that my organisation had been overlooked to be present during the negotiation after having been entrusted at that point of time to inspect all the missiles in our inventory .

After reaching the office, I had a discussion with DNAI (Cmde Kumar) and drafted a Note, which after some corrections, he signed for onward transmission to DCNS in a CC folder. The next day presented me with most eventful day of my career; it went like this :

DNAI's P A rushed into my office shouting, "Sir! DCNS on line wants to speak to you." I walked to his cabin and took the receiver and said:

"Good morning , Sir. Cdr Prem here"

"As your Director is away on deputation.....are you officiating?"

"Yes, sir"

"Did you make out the Note on AShM ?"

"Yes,sir"

"Come immediately to my office. I want to see you right now".

(Gunnery Officers are good in modulating their voice to sound rough at will)

I covered the eight km stretch on my Rajdoot, in quick time and was immediately ushered into the DCNS' office. He was sitting with the CC

folder in front him. He asked me the reason for writing 'understand from this morning newspaper that the Navy.....'.

I told him that we had been kept deliberately out of the purview of the negotiation by certain vested interests, and wanted to recover the lost ground by exercising our responsibilities in the meetings that were to follow with the supplier.

After discussing technical aspects enumerated in the Note, which was based on our experience with the ongoing Italian contract and in the formulation of the contract, he appeared mellowed down, but did not seem to like the tone conveyed in the Note. It was at this point the DNO (Cmde Bandoola) walked in holding a chart . The gunnery personality now took over and DCNS said:

"Do you know who you are talking to?"

"Yes Sir, to my DCNS."

"NO!"

"To a very Senior Naval Officer ".

"NO!"

At this moment, DNO prompted, by saying (softly) "a professional...."

I said, "Talking to a professional officer."

"Yeah! And if you find fault in my decision making I will resign from the Navy".

I stretched my left hand and pointed at the three strips on my sleeve and said: "Sir! I am only a Commander.... If you find anything irrelevant in the Note, I shall resign from the Navy. "At this juncture, the DNO abutted and said the CNS wanted to discuss the Moore Island issue with DCNS before conveying views to MoD.



As DCNS got up to leave, he said “Beta! You go back to your office now....we will thrash this issue out later.” What followed in the following months were totally in the interest of the Navy as many issues got clarified with the supplier. The attempt to sell obsolete items was neutralised and many indigenously developed ordnance (Aden 30mm; 68mm Sneb rocket/launcher; 500 lb bomb; power cartridges, etc.) were inducted, saving a lot of FFE.

Later, DCNS was given a farewell as he was moving to Kochi to take over as C-in-C South. Just as I was wishing him a happy tenure, he

held my hand firmly (and with his characteristic smile) said, “Beta, now you will not have anyone to fight with you here.” surprising/confusing all standing around him.

When seniors admire and inspire professional values in youngsters, it becomes a joy to work. I was fortunate to have had many encounters with Senior Officers on professional issues. At times, I wonder if one comes across such Admirals! Such seniors! Such situations these days!

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Be Smart, Not Extra-Smart

Commander VK Mohan (Retd.)

Going down memory lane, I find that extra smartness does not always pay, since at times we may be out-smarted. This may be supported by an incident while we were undergoing Sub Lieutenants erstwhile Supply and Secretariat course at INS Hamla in 1956.

Warning out of meals in the Wardroom was not permitted to Sub Lieutenants except on weekends and holidays. However, most of us were keen to have two bottles of fresh milk per head every day in lieu of normal breakfast. Accordingly, we decided to discuss our so called bright idea with the Mess Secretary while having a drink at the bar. Since, he was also a Sub Lieutenant, one course senior to us we did not have to encounter much of difficulty.

Soon thereafter, the Subs concerned instructed their Bearers to prepare buttermilk and bring that along with snacks from the wet canteen to the class room during stand-easy break. While doing so, it did not dawn on any one of us that

considerable amount of milk was saved while preparing buttermilk of the same quantity.

So, we had to pay for our ignorance when the Bearers took full advantage of the new system. They out-smarted us by smuggling extra milk in bottles through the families' gate for sale outside. One day, the DSC sentry caught one of the Bearers taking the milk bottles out of the gate, thereby letting the cat out of the bag. Consequently, we had no option but to start taking our own normal breakfast in the Wardroom.

Eventually, having done the post mortem of the entire incident, we realized our blunder and wished that we had discussed our idea at least with an officer's wife. Nevertheless we learnt our lesson that 'it is good to be smart but not good to be extra-smart'.

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Crash of Air India Aircraft — Emperor Ashoka

Commander Sanjiv Kulkarni (Retd.)

The recent search for the missing Malaysian Flight MH 370 is continuing, with no end in sight. The initial search area for the missing aircraft had changed drastically from one location to another, from one sea to another and the naval ships and aircraft from about 25 nations were in search of the aircraft for several days.

This reminded me of an incident almost 36 years ago, in which I was personally involved and spent many days and nights at sea working non-stop. A massive Search & Rescue Operation was launched by the Indian Navy in 1978 to locate an Air India aircraft that had crashed into the sea off west coast of India.

Air India Flight 855 was a scheduled passenger flight from Mumbai to Dubai that crashed in the evening on 01 Jan 1978 about two miles off the coast of Bandra, Mumbai, India. The aircraft crashed in less than two minutes after take-off. The crash was believed to have been caused by the captain having become disoriented after the failure of one of the flight instruments in the cockpit. There were no survivors among the 190 passengers and 23 crew members. The aircraft involved was a Boeing 747-237B, registration VT-EBD, named the “Emperor Ashoka”. It was the first Boeing 747 delivered to Air India in April 1971.

I was a Lieutenant at that time and was serving as the Executive Officer on board Indian Naval Ship, INS Karwar, a Minesweeper. A minesweeper is a specialized vessel that is used to locate and destroy mines laid on sea bed or in shallow waters. Our ship was based in Mumbai.

In the evening of 01 Jan 1978 at about nine pm, the ship received an urgent signal from the Command Headquarters in Mumbai. “Prepare

for sailing immediately” the Captain announced. Our ship sailed out to sea within less than 30 minutes and we were heading out of Mumbai harbour. The next message stated that an Air India aircraft had crashed at sea off Bandra soon after take-off from Sahar International airport, Mumbai.

The Indian Navy launched a massive Search and Rescue Operation and all available ships, helicopters and aircrafts were deployed in a very short time. Our ship INS Karwar was a part of this operation.

We reached the indicated search area and commenced the search. It was absolutely pitch dark and nothing was seen or sighted during the night even with the ship’s powerful search lights.

The dawn, however, brought a very different scenario. There were a number of objects floating on the water all around us for as far as we could see. There were pieces of plastic, lifejackets, papers, photographs, broken parts of all shapes and sizes, many other things and above all we could see a number of dead bodies - mostly bloated and burnt bodies. Some of these bodies were complete while many were dismembered. We could see hands, legs floating on the water along with some limbless bodies. It was a very ghastly sight.

We were immediately on the task. We commenced picking up all the wreckage, dead bodies and limbs and everything that was floating on the water. Similarly all the other naval ships in the vicinity were seen picking up all the debris and dead bodies floating on the water.

In addition to picking up the floating objects, search for the sunken aircraft was ongoing. The technology in those days was not advanced as



it is today. Looking for an aircraft gone down in the sea is like looking for a needle in a hay stack.

After this initial picking up of the debris and dead bodies from the sea, our ship was tasked to lay out the “wire sweep” to locate the aircraft. In this type of sweep, the ship streams a very thick and long wire astern (behind). The wire is paid out from one side of the ship and taken back on board from the other side. Thus the wire forms a huge “U” shape loop behind the ship and being a heavy wire, it almost sinks to the sea bed. This is also called as “Bottom Sweep”.

This wire is virtually “sweeping” the sea bed and any obstruction can get caught in the wire. This sweep is very effective in shallow waters in locating objects lying on the sea bed. Thus this was the correct type of sweep to be deployed to locate the sunken aircraft. By now the search area had been narrowed down considerably after a lot of inputs.

As soon as the ship had deployed this sweep, to our surprise the sweep wire snatched (there was a pull) indicating that the wire was caught in an object on the sea bed. The ship was immediately stopped. We marked the location on the chart and reported the same to the higher authorities. By this time we were almost certain that we had located the sunken aircraft!

The next step was to physically check the location for the sunken aircraft. This was possible only by sending the divers. A small boat was lowered in the water and four to five divers along with their diving gear were sent to look for the aircraft. The sweep wire extended to almost a quarter of a mile behind the ship. By the time the divers reached behind the ship to the location, our ship had “drifted” (moved) due to heavy currents in the area. The divers were told to return to the ship. After the divers were on board, the ship once again commenced the

search with the sweep streamed behind.

The ship had to take a “U” turn to retrace the track once again. With a large wire streamed behind, the turning circle of the ship is large and it takes several minutes to complete the turn and be back on the same track. The ship completed the turn and settled on the track and headed for the same spot where the wire had snatched just a few minutes ago. All of us were anxious and eager to locate the aircraft. The Captain had even readied a message to the higher authorities saying “aircraft located in such and such position”.

However, destiny was something different. As we were approaching the exact location, a fishing craft was seen coming ahead of us and proceeding almost to the very same location for its routine fishing activity. We sounded the ship’s horn continuously and flashed our light at the boat asking it to move out of the way. But this fishing boat just did not move.

As we approached closer, we saw the fishing boat had stopped completely instead of getting out of our way! By now our ship with the huge sweep streamed behind was very close to this fishing boat. Thus in order to avoid a collision, our ship altered the course. We were waiting for this fishing boat to move out of the way so that we could commence our approach to locate the aircraft. However, to our utter dismay and horror the fishing boat cast its nets and stayed put in the exact same location that the ship’s sweep had earlier snatched!

Next day the headline in all the newspapers was “Fisherman finds the sunken aircraft”.

The naval divers subsequently located the “Black Box” and a number of dead bodies in the aircraft and removed them. But that is another story.

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Confronting Dogs – Experiences of a Human Underdog

Commodore BR Sen (Retd)

I am an ardent dog-lover and dogs are also generally fond of me! I firmly believe what Madame de Stael, a French social worker (the 18th century) prophesied- “the more I see of men, the more I like dogs.” My closeness and appreciation of the canine community can be appreciated by my belief in Mark Twain’s words, “Heaven goes by favour, if it went by merit, you would stay out and your dog would go in.” At home I grew up with an extremely lovable and disciplined dog, and later as a Commander I acquired a Spitz from a fellow naval officer. So my association with the canine family has been long, but that doesn’t deter me from sharing a few experiences on the subject, for the stray ones despise me and pursue me with great contempt and I found if I arm myself with a protective stick, they invariably get fiercer and aggressive.

I took to brisk-walking and jogging intensely and religiously after the Medical Specialist Vivek Hande in Port Blair warned me during annual medical of being a borderline case of hypertension. As I went perspiring around Delanipur and New and Old Dweep Vihar areas, stray dogs stalked me all the time but every time I escaped providentially. Later in Kolkata the strays hardly spared me and thereafter in Vasco, Goa. In Goa, the menace was maximum as dog-bite cases were reported on a regular basis, their chief target-the defenceless children and ladies. During meetings at Headquarters Goa Naval Area, discussions on dog menace took a lot of our time. On many occasions during monthly staff meetings, it would invariably be the first point on the agenda and confabulations to combat

the problem lingered on and on. Workable solutions seldom emerged other than sterilizing or re-locating the canines. Shooting at them or harming the animals could easily land some of us in jails, kind courtesy the NGOs. I recall many bright and original ideas had emerged during the brain-storming sessions. Someone proposed that the creatures be exported to Korea as we stood to gain in foreign exchange from export of this commodity which is a delicacy there. Another’s imagination ran wild and suggested “we could emulate the Koreans in their eating preferences; the secret of rapid development of South Koreans after all could be attributed to their divergent habits of gastronomy!”

In one other meeting, there was another dazzling idea-manufacture 10ft x 6ft x 6ft dog cages and place these at crucial zones in the naval units (near galleys) and married accommodation areas. The strategy was to lure the dogs into the cages with some bait thereafter take the creatures far away to re-settle them. This idea was concurred as being quite harmless and dog-cages were constructed almost overnight and placed in positions. That none should underestimate the IQ of dogs is borne by the fact that not a single foot-fall (paw-fall) was known to have been registered since their placement, as uniformed staff (dogs bodies) waited patiently. After six months the dog-cage theory died a natural death. Relocation of the dogs too did not work out as they invariably found their way back or other canines soon filled the void.

We were dog-tired discussing dogs as the



dogs pursued their missions doggedly! Another peculiar rendezvous with these creatures posed grave embarrassment during VIP visits. We found that moment a VIP was to arrive at an event specially a parade, the four legged would appear from nowhere and head confidently towards the dais. Naturally a huge commotion would take place with Provost personnel chasing the intruders out and the infiltrators ducking those in pursuit. We were petrified to even visualize as to what would be the repercussions for us hosts if a dog managed to masticate the ankle of a VIP. Their very appearance at a solemn ceremony was bad enough!

In a naval station, before the dogs are allowed to multiply in vast numbers and reduce the naval personnel to a minority, with support from the entire community, the menace can be controlled. We should have a good galley waste

management system, imposition of a ban on feeding stray dogs, institute birth control measures (sterilisation) and seal ingress routes of these animals into naval areas. Jocularly I would like to state that if adequate measures are not taken to arrest their growth, who knows one day the navy may have to appoint Command Dog Control Officer armed with requisite staff and Unit Dog Management Officers. The navy has been endeavouring to create plastic free zones, there may also be a need to create "dog free zones" sans any publicity or else the clan of dog-lovers may go to court. Finally, the dog-lovers may please pardon me for my **dogmatic** views and though my expressions may be doggerel to them, I feel in the navy, aforesaid measures may have to be pursued **doggedly**.

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Lascar War Memorial, Kolkata

Commodore Bibhu Mohanti (Retd.)

(A World War I Monument)

A Lascar (Lashkar) was a sailor or militiaman from the Indian subcontinent, employed on European ships from the 16th century until the beginning of the 20th century. The word comes from the Persian Lashkar, meaning military camp or army and al-askar, the Arabic word for a guard or soldier.

The English East India Company (EIC) had factories and forts across South Asia and held a monopoly on the lucrative maritime trade between Britain and the East. During this period, over 220 EIC ships sailed from Britain to the east returning manned by predominantly Asian and Africans crew. 138 Lascars arrived in British ports in 1760, rising to 1403 in addition Lascars worked on EIC ships travelling around the Indian Ocean, to China and Australia. By 1855, 12000 Lascars arrived annually in Britain. Throughout the early 19th century, Lascars from the Indian subcontinent arrived in Britain at the rate of 1,000 every year which increased to a rate of 10,000 to 12,000 per year throughout the late 19th century. Lascars served on troop ship during the Britains colonial wars including the Boer wars. In 1891, there were 24,037 Lascars employed on British merchant ships.

Lascar War Memorial in Kolkata co-located in the Naval area in Southern end of Maida on a plot of 2.5 acres was under the Army since its inception but forgotten for reasons unknown. Its surprising that Marine House which looks after merchant men located near this memorial too had not bothered about it. When it was built in 1924, the area was green all around. One could access the place from the Hooghly river side



being at a stone's throw distance. Subsequently a fence was put on both sides which with passage of time had been destroyed.

I assumed command of INS Netaji Subash and Naval Officer-in-Charge, Calcutta in April 1993. I became curious to know why the memorial was in the state of neglect adjacent to Navy House. It is also most surprising that such a monument does not figure in the assets of any organization. Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) which has a list had no knowledge of this monument which had been unveiled in 1924. But CWGC (UK) has a list of men (Lascars) who died at sea in World War I and 896 Lascars in whose honour the memorial



was built in Calcutta (names not known) must be in the role of honour of CWGC.

When Vidya Sagar Setu (second Hooghly bridge) construction started, Hooghly river front area contiguous to the Naval area became a no man's land. Calcutta Police Authority allowed trucks to be parked along the river side next to Lascar War Memorial. Calcutta Police Commissioner paid no heed to my request till I had the trucks removed in February 1994 by using my own force. Later this area was converted into a verdant space. However, it was not clear on whose records 2.50 acres of land Lascar War Memorial stood. I got records of the area from DEO and found it belonged to the Army, then on my request the GOC-in-C Eastern Army Command transferred this land to the Navy. Thereafter I took a decision to adopt the memorial in February 1994 during 40th Anniversary of INS Netaji Subash.

Little was known about who built the memorial till Mr James Keir, son of William Ingram Keir, the architect told the story about the monument on his usual visit to Calcutta in an interview to a reporter of The Statesman. James told that in 1920 William Ingram Keir, the architect started the construction of this historical monument on the banks of Hooghly river. At a meeting of those interested in the shipping in the port of Calcutta and in the welfare of the Lascar community, they took the step to commemorate those Lascars and others of the seagoing population who lost their lives during the Great War (1914-18) through enemy action and a Committee was appointed to collect subscription and to consider the nature and design of such a monument in the port of Calcutta. At least 5000 persons were consulted in this matter and their views were in favour of a memorial column or obelisk on the banks of river Hooghly visible to all ships



passing up and down the river. Mr William Keir took two years to build the memorial.

The memorial was unveiled on 06 Feb 1924 with a lot of fanfare by the Governor of Bengal Lord Lytton. A ceremonial guard belonging to Royal Naval Ship HMS South Hampton was paraded. Many Lascars on parade were a part of this ceremony too. This report exists in the news paper.

Lascar monument till 1994 was in ruins and shrubs and wild plants had grown around it due to neglect. The surface was cracked and the dome was damaged due to vagaries of weather which had taken a toll for seven decades. On a closer look at the memorial I was struck with its historical relevance to the World War I at sea. I tasked the MES to find a suitable contractor to undertake the repairs and complete it by early December 1994. Arboriculture around the memorial was also planned out. Philips (India) was approached to help in illuminating the memorial. After seven decades of neglect Lascar War Memorial got a new lease of life. During Navy week celebrations when all the gentry, Armed Forces



officers and diplomatic corps of Calcutta were present in the Navy House, the Governor of West Bengal on 07th December 1994 switched on the illumination of Lascar War Memorial and the naval band was in attendance. On 3rd September (Merchant Navy Day) in 1995 for the first time wreaths were laid at Lascar War Memorial by personnel of Merchant Navy and Indian Navy which is an annual feature.

Mr. James Keir (Jimmy), son of Mr. W I Keir, now 75 years old left Kolkata in 1962 and now lives in Hongkong. On his annual visit to Kolkata he always paid a visit to this memorial built by his father but was sad to see the unkempt monument, his lament was palpable. Later he saw it back to its pristine glory, and enquired about it. He was told I had retired in 1997. He got my address and started to exchange e-mails with me on the memorial. Jimmy decided to come to Kolkata on his annual visit



and asked me to come over. On 4th November 2012, he and I met for the first time at the Lascar War Memorial at a function organized by the Navy and members of Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) Kolkata Chapter. Jimmy handed me over the original photo of 1924 and the Statesman news items of 1920 and 1924.

In Centennial year of the World War I, Lascar War Memorial completed 90 years of its existence on 6th February 2014 which had been built to honour 896 Lascars who died at sea during the Great War. Lascar War Memorial is now an important heritage site of Kolkata and is in the list of Monuments (WWI) documented in the book 'The Last Post'.

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Memorial for “The Fallen Lifesavers” at Sydney

Surgeon Vice Admiral VS Dixit (Retd.)

From time to time and in the recent past, there have been requests for establishing a “Memorial” for martyred personnel of Armed Forces of our country, who laid down their lives in the line of duty, whether during conflicts, hostilities or border clashes. Recently there was a news report that “Princes Park” on Copernicus Marg has been shortlisted/selected for the memorial. Reasons for the undue delay in deciding to establish a memorial are not understood.

War memorials are not to please the Armed Forces but to remember the contribution of the brave soldiers and instill pride among the fellow citizens.

It was a very pleasant feeling to attend unveiling of a memorial for “the fallen lifesavers” at Coogee beach in Sydney, Australia on 27 Apr 2014. The Memorial was built as a tribute to those Australian lifesavers and soldiers who lost their lives at war and did not return home.

We had gone to Sydney in mid-March to be with our elder son and family. He stays in Coogee and works in University located in Randwick, a suburb of Sydney. I noticed that an area at the southern end of Goldstein Reserve, Coogee Beach was cordoned off and landscaping was undertaken. A small poster, indicating the scope of work mentioned that a memorial for “the fallen lifesavers” is being constructed. After a few days, it was announced that memorial will be unveiled on 27 April 2014. It is pertinent to state that “ANZAC (Australian and New Zealand Army Corps) Day” is a national day of remembrance on 25 Apr every year in Australia and New Zealand. ANZAC force had landed at Gallipoli in the Ottoman Empire on 25 April 1914 during World War I



Official opening of the Fallen Lifesavers Memorial at Coogee. Picture: Craig Wilson Source: News Limited

along with armies of other countries including India. The force was defeated and there were large scale casualties. Now the country commemorates those who served and died in all wars, conflicts, and peacekeeping operations and the contribution and suffering of all those who have served.

It was a wet morning. The drizzle did not diminish the enthusiastic participation of several hundred including young children. The function started off with surf boats beaching up and flags delivered to members of various surf lifesaving clubs. Members then marched the flags to the southern end of Coogee beach to the site of “Fallen Lifesavers Memorial”.

The function commenced with Mrs Marcia Ella-Duncan, Chairperson, La Perouse Local Aboriginal Land Council welcoming the crowd. It is a tradition that members of the Aboriginal community are given due importance and every function starts with welcome address by local chief. HE Prof Marie Bashir AV CVO, Governor, New South Wales unveiled the statue. Others present on the occasion were, Premier of New



(L-R) Governor of NSW Marie Bashir, Randwick Mayor Scott Nash and NSW Premier Mike Baird at the official opening of the Fallen Lifesavers Memorial at Coogee.
Picture: Craig Wilson

South Wales, Federal Member for Wentworth, Mr Alan Somerville, statue's creator, Mayor of Randwick, President, *Surf Life Saving Australia* and President of Coogee Randwick Returned and Services League. Speakers mentioned that "National Fallen Lifesavers Memorial" recognised the significant contribution Australian surf lifesavers had made to nation's history. Hon Malcom Turnbull MP, Federal Member for Wentworth, while addressing the crowd, conveyed greetings and compliments from Hon Tony Albott, Prime



Statue's creator Alan Somerville with a member of Coogee Surf Lifesaving Club Picture: Craig Wilson

Minister of Australia, who himself was a member of life saver club during his young days. The memorial features a large sandstone and grass terraced seating area overlooking Coogee beach and the statue.

The bronze statue of Fallen Lifesavers and "Digger (a military slang term for soldiers from Australia and New Zealand)", sculpted by Australian artist Alan Somerville, depicts a Digger in his iconic hat and a lifesaver with the traditional belt and reel that was formerly used as a rescue device. The sculpture reflects the common bond of camaraderie that is unique to the two organisations - the Australian servicemen and women and the Australian surf lifesaver. It is a tribute to those who lost their lives at war and did not return home. The design concept revolved on the story of a brave and spirited "life saver" who decided to go to war for his country. It portrays the honourable contract he made with himself to become a "soldier". The life saver and soldier, for whom honour, valour, courage and hope are common, personify selflessness, dignity and willingness to help others. The monument carries the message that this is one and the same man, the man who defended the beaches, is the man





who defended the nation. "He never takes his eyes off the sea".

Mr Alan Somerville is a renowned sculptor whose other public works include the two bronze soldiers (New Zealand soldier and an Australian digger) on the Anzac Bridge and the three bronze sculptures at the Australian War

Memorial.

All in all it was a solemn occasion in which the young and the old participated enthusiastically in large numbers. On enquiry it was told it took less than two years from conception to execution of the project! It was an event to remember.

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Me and the Mexican Wave!

Vice Admiral Ganesh Mahadevan (Retd.)

This has been World Cup Football year, and our TV screens have been swaying to Mexican Waves from screaming fans – the metachronal rhythm achieved in a packed football stadium when successive groups of spectators briefly stand, yell as they raise their arms, and then sit down.

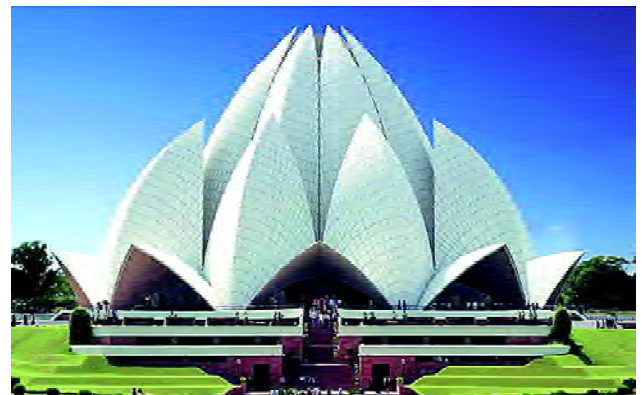
The first time I came across this phrase was in 1987 in a semi-rural area of Delhi, when conducting a foreign VIP delegation.

The Commander-in-Chief of the Soviet Navy Admiral of the Fleet Vladimir Nikolayevich Chernavin was on an official visit to India with his wife. I was part of the Liaison Team designated to conduct the delegation around during his visit.

One of the events arranged in New Delhi for Mrs Chernavina, was a visit to the newly constructed Lotus Temple - the Baha'i House of Worship, in the village of Bahapur, not far from where Nehru Place, the computer and electronics market, is now located.

The Lotus Temple is an imposing monument, inspired by the lotus flower. The surface of the House of Worship is made of white marble from Penteli mountain in Greece. Along with its

nine surrounding ponds and the gardens, the Lotus Temple grounds comprise 26 acres.



However, as is the case with many projects in India, while the temple was ready and had been thrown open to the public, the surrounding area was still a huge field of rubble, contractors' sheds and a labour colony of hovels and makeshift tents. The last mile of the approach road was still a dirt track.

The visit began early in the morning at the crack of dawn, so as to be able to take in other sights of Delhi like the Red Fort, Qutub Minar and the Rashtrapati Bhavan rose garden by lunch time.

As we approached the temple I spotted two long rows of squatting women, evidently



construction workers, lining the road on either side.

As we came closer to this guard of honour, the ladies began to stand one by one, letting their lehngas flow, and get back into the squatting position as soon as the cars passed. We were passing a wave of orange, yellow and red.

It of course quickly dawned on me as to what was going on. The poor women had found the only reasonably thorn free piece of land, the dirt road, to engage in their morning communion with nature.

Mrs Chernavina, ever so curious about this wondrous land wanted to know what this ceremony was all about. I found myself groping for words.



The wife of the Soviet Defence Counsellor Mrs Golovanova, who had been living in Delhi for a few years, came to my rescue. "It is the traditional Indian version of the Mexican Wave, to welcome distinguished guests!"

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Golden Age Leaf

Going on 90.....and Going Strong

Captain NS Rawat (Retd.)

After 24 years in uniform, 16 in 'Civvy Street' and approaching 60, I eventually convinced my wife that I was now officially entitled to retire and get back to some serious golf. Although reluctant at first, she finally gave in when arguments on this issue routinely got out of hand. It was thus with much joy that we vacated official accommodation in Kachch, Gujarat, in April 2013, and re-located to our permanent residence at Pune.

Aware that our Management Committee had been putting their collective heart and soul into making our Society a model colony, we excitedly settled down into our permanent home. With regular golf and no further pressure to seek yet another employment, things were



finally looking up. However, this bliss turned short-lived when my wife learnt that not only was the Secretary of our idyllic society a remarkable 88 year old ex-naval officer, but that he had



been working on the Committee since 2007 slaving away without a break — even on weekends. We were soon backing to “why-can’t-you-continue-to-work” tactical battle. And yet, tempting as it may be, the intent of this piece is not to dwell upon my own experiences as ‘collateral damage’, but recount the story of Commodore *Pyarelal Singh Chauhan*, VSM, (Retd). I do hope his story will inspire those who, like me thought that retirement meant putting legs up and enjoying the life in comfort, as a Pensioner!

Pyarelal was born in district *Hoshiarpur*, Punjab, to which his parents had moved from their ancestral home in Rajasthan. Extremely intelligent and industrious young lad, he was determined to make light of the indifferent fiscal circumstances that his forebears had brought the family to, thanks to their propensity of being bad gamblers but good drinkers!

So come 1943 and we find him enrolling for a diploma course in BITS, Pilani. The Second World War was in progress and BITS, Pilani was formally selected as a feeder-institution for the Technical Branch of the Indian Navy. Young *Pyarelal* put his name down for the Indian Navy without realising that the Navy was looking to BITS, Pilani to provide highly-trained Artificers rather than General-List ‘Officers’. However, a mere misperception at the point-of-entry was hardly going to keep him from rising to full-fledged membership of the officer-corps. Thus, after three years’ training at Mechanical Training establishment, then INS *Dalhousie* in Mumbai, and few short years as a much sought-after engineering Artificer, he earned his commission in 1952.

Over the next 26 years, he tenanted a number of important billets, both at sea and ashore. He served as the SEO of *Cauvery* and *Khukri* and

was the commissioning Engineer Officer of *Beas*. Between 1964 and 1966, he served as the Engineer Officer of all three ships of the 11th Destroyer Squadron, namely, *Rana*, *Rajput* and *Ranjit*. His later sea-going appointments were as Commander (E) of *Mysore* and *Trishul*. Apart from a four year stint at NHQ, his shore-tenures included Manager of the ‘Leander Boiler Erection Project’ (where his outstanding work was recognised through the award of VSM) and Naval Dockyard as the Industrial Manager (now called GM [R]). In 1975, he moved on deputation (and later permanent absorption) to Goa Shipyard where he oversaw the shipyard’s transformation from a small subsidiary of Mazagon Dock Ltd, to an independent shipbuilder, widely regarded as being amongst the most productive of the Public Sector Shipyards of the country. In 1985, Commodore Chauhan superannuated with 40 years of uniformed service and a vast amount of expertise spanning technical, industrial, managerial, administrative and human-resource. Having re-located to a flat in Mumbai’s western suburb of Versova, he volunteered to be the Secretary and threw himself into his job with all the vigour of a twenty-year-old, but with all the experience that his splendid career had provided him. Over the next 16 years, he turned the society into the pride of its residents and envy of other societies in Versova-Andheri suburban belt.

In 2006, Cmde Chauhan finally decided to re-locate to Pune. No sooner had he settled down that Major General *Vijay Madhok* — another hugely accomplished officer (1st Course JSW) — then President of the Management Committee of Society, roped Cmde Chauhan in, to guide the Society in the crucial stages of its inception. After a year in *ad hoc* Committee, Commodore Chauhan was again persuaded to stand for the Managing Committee elections,



which he won comfortably on the basis of his excellent performance as a member of the *ad hoc* Committee. Over the past seven years, Cmde Chauhan has continued to guide the affairs of the Society as Honorary Secretary despite approaching the ripe old age of 90. He is fitter than most people thirty years younger than him. What is the secret of his success? Work, Hard Work, Honest Hard Work!

His typical day begins at 4 AM, when hour-long early-morning round of the Society premises is undertaken to identify tasks that need attending to during the day. This time is also used to discuss security-related tasks with the Security Supervisor and to check on any untoward happenings during the night. Cmde Chauhan is in the Society Office promptly by 9 AM and, except for an hour's lunch-break, he attends office till the closing time which routinely extends up to 6 PM. The much loved afternoon siesta that most of us take as birth right is taboo for Cmde Chauhan, who considers it unhealthy and an entirely avoidable waste of time.

The Society, with 288 flats and nearly 1,500 residents, certainly has its share of challenges — by way of house-keeping, security, roads, drainage, etc. and the constant demands of maintenance of elevators, generators, pumps, and what have you. Cmde Chauhan handles all these as well. He also handles the innumerable inter-personal issues within residents with maturity and a transparent honesty-of-purpose — a trait much admired by residents. Always ready to take on additional tasks when necessary, he is admired for his happy demeanour, sincerity and devotion. He is nearly six feet tall and retains an enviably athletic frame, but in terms of personality, he is

a towering giant and an invaluable asset to our society.

He not only plans and coordinates regular social events for the Society but also ensures his presence at all the Dos. Extremely lucky in Tombola, he is cheered enthusiastically whenever he wins the round — which is fairly frequent! Despite full day at office, Cmde Chauhan makes it a point to join the evening “*chaupaal*” of senior citizens at the Society's garden. He jocularly calls the meeting-venue ‘The *Kabristan*’, since most of the attendees are over 70 years of age. A stickler for an early-to-bed-and-early-to-rise routine, he still adheres to the Navy's “pipe-down” time of 2200 hrs. He enjoys an occasional tippie and claims that it provides him with sound sleep (something with which many of us will agree wholeheartedly).

It is a pleasure to watch Cmde Chauhan conduct the AGMs of the Society with requisite firmness — which is necessary as otherwise, these meetings tend to get ‘out of hand’. He always conducts the meeting while standing at the podium and takes umbrage if requested to conduct the same from his chair in view of his age. Similarly, he insists that he will conduct the proceedings without a mike as he has a commanding voice.

I never knew Cmde Chauhan while serving the Navy and only knew that he is the father of Vice Admiral Pradeep Chauhan (fondly known as *Billoo*). I consider it a great honour to have met him now and to have seen him work with uncommon diligence to make our Society a cynosure of all eyes.

Here is wishing him a long, healthy and fruitful life.

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Down Memory Lane

Commander Sati Taneja (Retd)

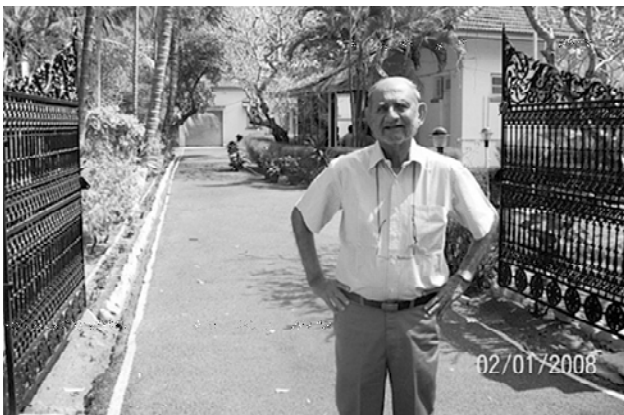
In October 2013 I had planned to visit my daughter and family in Bangalore and from there we were to drive to Cochin (Kochi). There is a Mahindra Club resort at Cherai beach (Vypin Island) that they were keen to visit as my grandchildren aged 10 and 6 would have lots to keep them engaged. The plan thereafter was to shift to the naval base and visit the Navy. I was particularly keen to visit Dronacharya which I had not yet seen. I had been the Oi/c of the Naval Battery in 1966/67 and had not been back to Cochin since. Unfortunately this plan fell through for me due to a bout of flu. My daughter and family stuck to the programme and stayed at the MES Inspection Bungalow courtesy the Navy and also got to visit a naval ship much to the delight of my grandkids.

I was of course extremely disappointed at not making the trip with them and so in January 2014 when I planned to visit my daughter I added on a visit to Cochin on my own, this time by train arriving at five in the morning. I tried to recall the station and its environs but 46 years is a long time and memories get blurred. The 70 ft. road leading to Willingdon Island was of course totally changed with high rise buildings

on either side, yet there was some feeling of familiarity. This got reinforced after crossing the new bridge and turning into Katari Bagh, though even here it was far more crowded but dare I say, still beautiful.

The first morning was spent visiting the Training Schools in the base. The respect and warmth with which I was received and taken around was heart-warming. I was impressed at the changes in the schools that I saw. The equipment and simulators I saw impressed me. After the absorbing but tiring morning (I was then nearing 80) with the Navy I asked the driver of my hired car to drive around Willingdon Island. The old Malabar Hotel was now the Taj Malabar; all poshed up with quite a few foreign tourists sunbathing at the poolside but its beautiful location was as impressive as before. The Casino restaurant was now a five star hotel, but the port area was more familiar with the many offices and warehouses looking much the same as I remembered them.

The next morning I visited Dronacharya and tried to recall the route from Katari Bagh to Fort Cochin, without success. The driver later told me that he had taken a different, slightly longer route, to avoid the morning traffic which clogged the narrow roads. Visiting Dronacharya was the highlight of my visit. I had looked forward to this and I was not disappointed. My stay at the Naval Battery in 1966/67 had been most enjoyable and I was professionally absorbed having taken up the challenge thrown at me by the late Cmde Tiwari (L), SLO to COMCHIN, to get the Flyplane 5 gunnery system working and to fire the 4.5 inch gun in remote control, something that had been hanging fire (pun intended) for quite some time. I am happy to



(In front of my old house)

say that this was done just three weeks before I left the Battery for the Staff Course at DSSC Wellington. I was therefore thrilled to see the 4.5 turret that was still there on the 'hard' but no longer part of an Operational system and ofcourse overshadowed by the many other modern gunnery/missile systems in the School. The Mess is beautiful, overlooking the beach and the Arabian Sea beyond but the most nostalgic part of the visit was to see that the old Battery House was exactly as it was 46 years ago, including the layout of the flower beds. This was a house that both I and my wife loved.

After Dronacharya I drove around Fort Cochin visiting the Command Museum enroute. The fishing nets were very much there but around them it was all changed, with a tourist beach, any number of stalls, shops selling typical tourist wares including many spice shops that I certainly don't remember being there then. I walked a bit around Mottancherry, the Jewish area-the synagogue, fort etc. all crowded with tourists. I had ofcourse seen all these areas when I lived in Fort Cochin but then there were no tourists or if there were I certainly didn't see them or was aware of them.

My last day in Kochi started with a call on the Flag Officer Sea Training. I had been associated with the setting up of the Acceptance Trials Organisation, and the Trials that were to follow just before leaving the Navy, and so spent an interesting time chatting with him and being brought up to date on the present set up. The next stop was Garuda, the highlights of which were witnessing a simulated UAV flight, and better still being taken up for a 'flight' in the Seaking flight simulator and being given the controls for a few seconds during which I promptly crashed the helicopter. This was a really exciting experience and the officer demonstrating it was so enthusiastic that I was



(The 4.5 inch turret on the 'Hard')

about 30 minutes late for my next appointment which was at the Cochin Shipyard to take a look at the new Vikrant under construction. This too was tiring because I opted to walk up to the flight deck and was lucky not to trip over or get entangled with the many wires and other obstructions lying around the steps and deck. I drove around Ernakulam after CSL but was disappointed with the Cochin Marine Drive, though my driver assured me it was better in the evening.

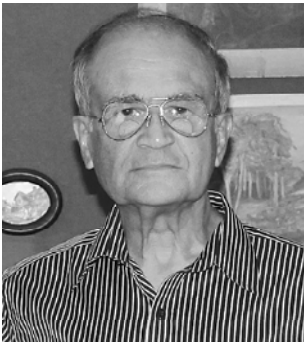
That evening I walked around Katari Bagh for the last time and later when I sat on the lawns of the Naval Officers' Institute with a drink overlooking the Channel, I reflected back on the three hectic days I had spent here. The Navy had changed so much, as might be expected, but I was happy at being able to relate to its modernization, the new equipment and most of all to the smart young officers who took the trouble to show me around with great enthusiasm. When I apologized for taking up so much of their time they all, without fail, said that it was an honour to show me around. It meant a lot to me and I am grateful to the Navy for the respect shown to a veteran. It says a lot for our Navy today and makes me proud to have been a part of it almost half a century ago.

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Do We Still have such Senior Officers?

Commander RR Tyagi (Retd.)



I was posted at NAQAS (erstwhile NAIS) in 1985. In those days EDP course was the gateway for entering into computer field but one had to pass the aptitude test.

Since I was keen to get into this field I worked hard and passed the test. The CCAI however, told that since I cannot be spared for three months, I cannot do the course. Someone gave me the idea that if I could forgo my two months leave of the year and one month leave of next year, may be CCAI would agree. So as a last resort, again I went to CCAI and indicated that I wanted to go for the EDP course and was willing to forgo the leave of this year as well as next year. Fortunately, he agreed, but took it in writing from me. I went for the course and did very well as I got an Instructor grading.

When I came back after three months, CCAI had changed and Cmde JN Misra had taken over. Being new to him I got the customary compliment call from CCAI. I went and smartly saluted at the entrance and sought permission to enter. I heard... come in please.. (to be honest I was used to only authoritative come in.. so the word Please.. was more like a pleasant surprise). I entered inside and CCAI said sit down Please... This was too much of surprise for me, as in my nearly 10 year of service by then, no senior officer had ever asked me to sit down and it got in me that it was the norm in the Navy. He started asking me about my background. He had a paper in his hand and was making notes in it. (He used to keep personal record of every officer who

served under him). This was a totally new experience for me. He asked me that being from NDA, why did I join engineering? I told him that I never wanted to join the Engineering branch but during Cadets time, when branches were allotted on the last day I was given Engineering, despite crying and not wanting to go for Engineering, no one listened. Appreciating my plight, light heartedly he said that but you have done very well in all your courses including your last EDP course! It did dawn on me that though I had passed 10 years in the Navy, it was the first time someone was caring for the feeling. All along we were told we have to be gentleman first and officer later but this was first time I had realised my senior officer was first a gentleman and officer later. That day I learnt the meaning of the gentleman first and officer later and more importantly that one should really know his subordinates and treat him with courtesy.

After few days I was called by Cmde Misra and as I sat down in front, he took out a file and told me that we needed to make reply to a letter in that file today itself. Promptly I took the file and went through the letter which was to be replied. I did go through the file, but not with much interest and made a reply on a full sheet of paper. In the afternoon, I went to his office and PA told me that he was waiting for the reply letter. I gave my draft reply and the file when CCAI called me in and asked to sit down. He was a left hander and took the red pen and started correcting the letter. In between he looked up and asked, "suppose we convey like this, will it be better?" Suddenly it struck me that yes that was better way of saying so I promptly said 'yes Sir'. After correcting few more lines again he asked, "Suppose we provide this statistics, will it do any harm?" and again it struck to me



that why did I not think all this, any way I said "yes sir no harm." After few minutes he corrected the entire letter and told me that he has corrected the draft and I should send this letter under my signature. When I looked at the corrected paper, it was full of corrections in red. I came out feeling sheepish, ashamed and I was furious on myself. Here was a Superior Officer who had every right to shout at me and there was nothing of this sort. He did not belittle me or made any sarcastic remark. I took a vow that I shall learn letter writing, work hard and improve myself at any cost. That day I realised that Navy had such Senior Officers also and that I would emulate only them.

One day Cmde Misra called for me and asked what have I learnt in the EDP course? I told him that I have learnt COBOL programming and System Analysis and Design. He said that NAIS is getting an Scanning Electron Microscope which can magnify 3,00,000 times and it is computerised and that I should get down to making use of it for Failure Analysis by it. He also said that in SNC there was computer and I should do something on the computers which should help Aviation. He

even allowed me to go in the afternoon for computer work. Somehow his word had become my command and I did carryout failure analysis by SCM and produced two modules on Aircraft Defect Summary and Seaking Modifications (after learning GBasic since there was no COBOLE compiler). Incidentally Cmde Misra just ignored that piece of paper on which I had given in writing to forgo my leave and allowed me leave when my father expired.

I had the fortune of serving with him again at NHQ. He assigned me the job of DD (P&T) and categorically told me that "If horse A wants to go to place B we must find ways and means of doing this, subject to service being not jeopardised". I can count numerous examples where he was much different than the normal senior officers. I say this, in all humility that I learnt many good lessons of the life in a short span under him than any other senior officer in my entire 27 years with the Navy. Today looking back I owe my development totally to him. I just hope, we still have Senior Officers like him!

rrtyagi@hotmail.com

"There's sort of a magic boundary line. Something has its moment, and then it's gone; it becomes thrift-store trash. But then, once enough time has passed, people say: 'Oh, yeah! I remember those.' It used to take about 20 years, but everything is so sped up now that our sense of nostalgia has been sped up, too, so it doesn't take as long-- I'd say about 10 years."

- Travis Smith



Obituary

Ser no.	P.No.	Rank	Name	NoK	Date of demise	Address
1.	00142-Y	CDR	RN Gulati	Smt Poonam Gulati	03 Oct 13	Smt Poonam Gulati B-1, Hermes House 1989 Convent Street Pune – 411001 Tele : 020-26353104
2.	40116-Y	CDR	P Sanny	Mrs Shirin Sanny	26 Dec 13	Mrs Shirin Sanny The Anchorage No.6, 11 th main Friends Colony Srinivagilu Vivek Nagar Bengaluru – 560047 Contact No. 080-25531190
3.	03798-F	CDR	SL Narayan	Mrs Usha Narayan		Mrs Usha Narayan 166-D, NOFRA-I Airport Road, Dabolim Vasco-da-Gama Goa - 403801
4.	86303-T	LCDR	DB James	Mrs Ruth Daniel James		18 Jan 14 Mrs Ruth Daniel James House No. 235, ESI Colony Sector-30A Chandigarh – 160030 Tele: 09501205728
5.	R 0128-Y	CDR	Bernard C Cockburn	Mrs Lorna Cockburn	10 Apr 14	Mrs Lorna Cockburn 14, Byrne Avenue, Elwood Victoria 3184 Australia Tele; +61395311987
6.	40058-R	CAPT	Kulikumar Kamalkant Lohana	Mrs. Lata Lohana	12 Apr 14	Mrs. Lata Lohana 69, Rakshak Society Aundh Camp Pune – 411027 Tele: 09372639446
7.	02489-F	CDR	Prathi Veera Raghav Rao	Mrs Sudha Rao	08 Apr 14	Mrs Sudha Rao 4-6-499/1, Esamia Bazar Near Haridwar Hotel Koti Hyderabad – 500027 Mob: 09394795349
8.	85023-H	Lt	A J John	Mrs Annamma John	15 Apr 14	Mrs Annamma John Arunapurathu house Vazhamangalam PO Kallisery Chengannur Kerala – 689125 Tele; 0479-2452830
9.	81555-A	Lt	VK John	Mrs Chinnamma John	22 Apr 14	Mrs Chinnamma John Vekkel House Vaikom PO, Dist Kottayam Kerala – 686141 Tele: 04289 – 232517 Mob: 09870327052
10.	86315-W	Cdr	NI Rajagopalan	Smt Shyamala Devi	02 May 14	Smt Shyamala Devi No.48/4, Indira



						Arcade Kamaraj Nagar, 3 rd Street Choolaimedu Chennai – 600094 Mob: 09841090872
11.	60017-A	Cmde	JML Bansal	Smt Shanta Bansal	17 Apr 14	Smt Shanta bansal 26 Navjiwan Vihar New Delhi – 110017 Mob: 09911555337
12.	R0103-N	Cdr	George De Gama	Ms. Debbie Wilkin	24 May 14	Ms. Debbie Wilkins 28 Shelvock Crescent KOONDOOLA WA 6064 Tele: +61861610105 + 61431153371
13.	50639-	Cmde	KLN Prasad	Mrs Uma Prasad	20 Jun 14	Mrs Uma Prasad C/o Sughosh Prasad Flat No B-122GK Habitat Royale Malkajgiri Mandal, Yaprak Secunderabad – 500087 Mob: 09885749116
14.	60018-B	Cmde	RN Pareek	Mrs Prudence M Pareek	10 Jun 14	Mrs Prudence M Pareek 25-B, Sarajini Nagar Lucknow – 2260080522 - 2436778 Mob: 09839512396
15.	00638-Z	Cmde	Arun Kumar Kapur	Mrs Aruna Kapur	07 Jul 14	Mrs Aruna Kapur F 1202, Jalvayu Vihar Pawai, Mumbai Mob: 09867758647 : 09967453123
16.	00740-F	Cdr	Ambalathingal Chacko Jose	Mrs Gladys Jose	18 Jul 14	Mrs Gladys Jose 6A Sky Line Legacy ESI Road Ernakulam North Kochi – 682018 Tele: 0484-2393473
17.	89087-W	Cdr	Provokar Maji	Mrs Dipali Maji	22 Jul 14	Mrs Dipali Maji Flat No. 401C-114, Mohammadpur Near RK Puram New Delhi – 110066 Tele: 8860178447
18.	00660-Z	VAdm	OP Bansal	Mrs Renu Bansal	27 Jul 14	Mrs Renu Bansal 453, Jal Vayu Vihar Towers NGF Layout Indra Nagar Post Office Bengaluru – 560038 Mob: 09611302282
19.	75031-Z	Surg R Adm	K Suchdeva	Mrs Ranjit Kaur Suchdeva	03 Jul 14	Mrs Ranjit Kaur Suchdeva G-28, Sector- 25 Jal Vayu Vihar NOIDA Uttar Pradesh Mob: 9350782204



20.	40099-H	Lt Cdr	VK Gupta	Mrs Kiran Gupta	02 Aug 14	Mrs Kiran Gupta J-72, Sector 25 NOIDA Uttar Pradesh Mob: 09540261550
21.	00306-W	Cmde	SR Iyengar	Mrs Vijaya Iyengar	6 Aug 14	Mrs Vijaya Iyengar 22 Puttalingaiah Road Padmanabha Nagar Bangaluru – 560070 Tele; 080 26692057
22.	00952-N	Cdr	GS Yadav	Mrs Usha Yadav	22 Aug 14	Mrs Usha Yadav L-66, Sector 25 Jalvayu Vihar NOIDA Uttar Pradesh – 201301 Mob: 9312257534
23.		Cmde	VG Murugesan	Mrs Angela Martin	20 Aug 14	Mrs Angela Martin 23 Dawes Close Clevedon North Somerset BS21 5 HAUK Mob: 00447852996419
24.	40854-B	Capt	Pradeep Baokar	Mrs Arti Baiokar	06 Sep 14	Mrs Arti Baiokar 13 Wing B & C Supriya Garden Nargas Road, Aundh Pune – 411007 Mob: 09503375400
25.	00275-Z	Cdr	Narinder Pratap Singh	Mrs Surjeet Kaur	21 Sep 14	Mrs Surjeet kaur Kothi No. 456 Sector –71 Mohali Punjab Mob: 09814317800
26.	00676-K	Cdr	Ashok Kumar Mehta	Mrs Rita Mehta	25 Sep 14	Mrs Rita Mehta A-28, First Floor Nizamudin East New Delhi – 110013 Mob: 09958839996
27.	89718-B	Lt Cdr	ND Nair	Mrs Pramila Nair	27 Sep 14	Mrs Prmila Nair Prasundhara Anappara, Kunnamangalam PO K o z h i k o d e – 6 7 3 5 7 1 Mob: 09969334600
28.	00322-A	Cdr	RVK Rajan	Mrs Maya Rajan	20 Sep 14	Mrs Maya Rajan B 65 Sainikpuri Sainikpuri PO Secunderabad- 500094
29.	00062-R	Cmde	RP Khanna	Cmde HS Chopra	06 Oct 14	Cmde HS Chopra A/15-33, Vasant Vihar New Delhi - 110057
30.	40004-T	CMDE	IK Malhotra	Smt Saroj Malhotra	03 Nov 14	Smt Saroj Malhotra C-80 Greater kailash-1 New Delhi – 110048 Mob: 09643974641
31.	40159-W	R Adm	Rajendra Singh Chaudhry	Smt Indu Chaudhry	02 Nov 14	Mrs Indu Chaudhry C'2/ 2274 Opp. DPS Vasant Kunj Vasant Kunj New Delhi – 110070 Mob: 09818308419



32.	00728-B	Cmde	Anthony Barla	Smt Evelyn Barla	30 Oct 14	Smt Evelyn Barla A-2, Sharda Moyee Enclave 14 Peace Road, Lalpur Ranchi Mob: 09619664347
33.	50005-Y	VAdm	AK Bhatia	Mrs Amita	Mar14	Mrs Amita C-146 Defence Colony New Delhi Tele 011-24336750
34.	51098-F	Cdr	Sushil Bhola	Mrs Neetu Bhola	15 Nov 14	Mrs Neetu Bhola A-320 Ground Floor Surya nagar PO Chander Nagar Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh – 201011 Mob: 09811211146
35.	60044-N	Cmde	Loveji Sarabji Mehta	Smt Nisha Mehta	21 Nov 14	Smt Nisha Mehta D-1, Radhika Empire Jagtap Nagar Wanowarie Pune – 411-40 Mob: 09899980271
36.	00969-A	Lt Cdr	Mahinder Singh	Mrs Ravinder kaur	09 Nov 14	Mrs Ravinder Kaur G 301, Ivory Towers Sector 70 Mohali Punjab – 160051 Tele: 08146578899
37.	50203-Y	R Adm	Basudev Bose	Mrs Uma Bose	07 Dec 14	Mrs Uma Bose Jal Vayu Residency Flat No. 544 Kolkata – 700008 Mob: 09831066329
38.	60278-W	Cdr	Sitarama Balaji Iyengar	Smt Jyoti Iyengar	16 Dec 14	Smt Jyoti Iyengar No 8, 31 st A Main Road Sector – 2, HSR Layout Bengaluru - 560102
39.	60072-A	Cmde	Rameshwar Nath Khanna	Smt Sarita Khanna	04 Nov 14	Smt Sarita Khanna 23 AVON Classics Opposite Tata Special Steel Borivali (East) Mumbai – 700066
40.	00021-Y	VAdm	RKS Gandhi	Mrs Delna	23 Dec 14	Mrs Delna 6-A, Dolphin Apartments Pilot Bunder Road Colaba Mumbai – 400005 Tele: 022-22150813
41.	134757	Cdr	Sudarshan Singh Soin	Mrs Jogender Soin	16 Dec 14	Mrs Jogender Soin D-7, (Ground Floor) Jangpura Extn New Delhi – 11001 Mob: 09910130291
42.	60157-W	Lt	Madhusudan Sahu	Smt Shanti Lata Sahu	01 Jan 15	Smt Shanti Lata Sahu 204, Duplex Manorama Estate Rasulgarh Bhubaneswar – 751010 Mob: 08093624080



Rustom Khushro Shapoorjee Gandhi – 1925-2015– a personal tribute

Admiral L Ramdas (Retd.) and Mrs. Lalita Ramdas

We have known and loved this man over several decades.....

Ramu from 1951 when he was a young, impressionable naval cadet – aged 18 – just out of the JSW [Joint Services Wing – and precursor of the NDA], and sent off for his pre-UK orientation and learning to become an officer with then Lt R K S Gandhi as his Training Officer. This was a Training officer specially selected by our first Naval Chief – Admiral Ram Dass Katari - to whip the first batch of aspiring naval officers into shape before being shipped off to the old England to put them through the mill.

The bonds forged in those years in Kochi with the First Course of the JSW, endured and were sustained over the years. For Rusi – this bunch of callow youths that he had helped shape and groom, really made him feel proud and he would always point to them as building blocks and role models of the growing new Indian Navy. And he took pride and joy in following their progress through the service and beyond.

And for me Lolly – as a young girl growing up in the Navy of the fifties – he was the dashing and debonair epitome of the swashbuckling image of a navy man – and as we transited into teenage-hood, most of us were half in love with him! I started by calling him Uncle Rusi – and Auntie Bubbles – until the time in the sixties when I married one of his first course boys – Ramu Ramdas, I was sternly told by Lt Cdr L Ramdas that I should address them properly – no more Aunties and Uncles! And I continued with this awkward form of address until a day

came when the Gandhis told me I should simply call them Rusi and Bubbles – period!

Rusi retired as C-in-C, Western Naval Command in the rank of Vice Admiral. His talents were fully recognised and utilised by the government as the Governor of Himachal Pradesh. He also served as Chairman, Shipping Corporation of India, and a member of the Minorities Commission.

Over the years we have been in close touch regardless of whether we served in the same place or not – for the most part the exigencies of service conspired to keep us in different places. It was finally after our retirement – and moving to Bhaimala – Alibag – that we were able to spend a lot of quality time together.

In retirement or out of it – Rustom was flamboyant, a great raconteur, host, angler and retained a keen interest in all current affairs, political developments and in our various involvements in a range of social movements and environmental concerns. While too many people in the Navy really did not know much about or react to the award of the Magsaysay award to Admiral Ramdas for his efforts in promoting peace in our neighbourhood – especially through people to people contacts with Pakistan – it was Rusi who celebrated with us and made sure he told all in his circle.

Similarly when Mrs. Ramdas was elected to become the Chairperson of Greenpeace International – the first Asian woman to be so selected – Rusi made no bones about his disappointment that few in the naval fraternity



had felicitated her on this extraordinary recognition.

To our mind - the last six years or so were special as no other. These were the tough years when his beloved Bubbles began to develop the degenerative condition which ultimately took her away. Personal adversity brought out unknown depths of character – Rusi's love, care and concern for Bubbles were beyond belief – and served as an inspiration to many of us – not to mention how much of a steadfast rock he must have been for Bubbles as she gradually lost the battle .

And when on Diwali 2011, Rusi was struck down by a stroke, little did any of us realise just how cruel a blow this was going to be. To leave him paralysed on one side was still something he could cope with. But the stroke he suffered left him unable to speak. A terrible tragedy, indeed for a man who was such an entertaining conversationalist and who loved nothing better than a stimulating and honest debate on a range of subjects. For three years and two months almost to the day – Rusi struggled on like the courageous warrior he always was. For those of us who watched him from Oct 2011 till Dec 24, 2014 - deal with the frustration of knowing and understanding all that was going on and not being able to communicate in turn what was going on in his mind and heart – this was the toughest period in all the years we have known him. And it also served to raise his stature even more in our eyes – because he bore all of this with a dignity, an ability to laugh at our stories – try to join in the songs and naval ditties he loved and which he always loved Lolly to sing for him. From the time my hair went silvery white, Rusi had a new name for me – Blondie. And that's how he always spoke to me – referred to me – addressed me in his famous Postcards.

And in these final few years – it appeared that he waited for me to visit and sing songs, exchange banter, touch the I pad and exclaim with delight as he appreciated the photographs we would show him.

It was our privilege and good fortune to have been by his bedside as he slipped away that evening – to watch him as he left his beloved Dolphin dressed in his favourite red pyjamas and legendary red socks on this his final journey. This tribute would not be complete without a tribute to the faithful band of staff who loved, cared, nurtured and were with him night and day in those years; the doctors and INHS Asvini who took the concept of care far beyond the boundaries of duty; and his children and grandchildren who came from their work and dwellings overseas to be with him – and let him know that he was loved and admired!

This old sea dog –who loved the sea and the service above all else - had put down in his will that he wished for a traditional sea burial – so that his beloved fish could have a damn good feast as his farewell gift. We were privileged to be with the close family who put out to sea – accompanied by the C-in-C – Vice Admiral Anil Chopra – to bid our final goodbye with all the ceremonial that would have gladdened his heart – at a location which we are told will be marked on the charts as Rusi Point.

Men like you will live on forever in the hearts and minds of those you touched in your long journey.

We do not mourn but celebrate you, your life and your legacy.

Till we meet again Rusi.

Iramdas@gmail.com



Remembering India's 'Three War Captain'

Commodore Ranjit B Rai (Retd.)

Vice Admiral RKS Gandhi took part in Operation Vijay called Op *Chutney* to re-take Goa in 1961, as also in the 1965 and 1971 wars while in command of INS *Betwa* which he commissioned in the UK, *Khukri* (F14) and INS *Mysore* (Flag Captain), respectively. He was a rare three war Captain. Known as 'Rusi' to friends, he was a flamboyant personality who invariably sported red socks when in civvies, and was an admired naval officer of the 'old school.'

He did his basic courses in UK at the Royal Naval College, Eton Hall in 1943-45 and served in the Atlantic and Mediterranean, and on HMS *Suffolk* in the Indian Ocean on convoy duty searching for German raiders, and ended the war on HMS *Wakeful*.

Rustom Khushro Shapoorjee Gandhi breathed his last in Mumbai on 23rd December, 2014. His request for burial was carried out at sea by the Western Naval Command, he had headed. His wife Khorshed he married in 1949 was the daughter of Sir Pheroze Kharegat, pre-deceased him in 2011. Known as 'Bubbles', she was an avid reader, a generous hostess and an affectionate senior naval officer's wife. They are survived by their son Sandy a law professor in UK, and daughters Delna and Yasmin Hilton head of Shell in India.

Gandhi, was son of Khushro Gandhi born in Jabalpur on 1st July 1924. After graduation from St Joseph's Nainital in 1941 and a year at the Allahabad University he joined the Royal Indian Navy.

In 1946 he served under the command of Lt N Krishnan DSO (later Vice Admiral) on board

INS *Shamsher* whilst on passage to Bombay during the 1946 mutiny. On learning of the mutiny, Gandhi suggested to his captain that the ship needed to go and bomb the Royal Bombay Yacht Club.

Krishnan cleverly kept *Shamsher* away from Bombay by fabricating a signal to *Shamsher* ordering it to search a (supposed) ditched aircraft 80 miles from Bombay and asked Gandhi to supervise the operation! Those were the beginnings of Information Warfare (IW) in the Navy.



Young Lieutenant Gandhi was the Flag Lt to Vice-Admiral Sir Geoffrey Miles, the last Commander-in-Chief of the Royal Indian Navy and then as ADC to the Viceroy and later Governor General Lord Louis Mountbatten of Burma (later Admiral of the Fleet) immediately after Independence. He was the only Indian ADC during the latter's tenure in India. Gandhi prided his photograph in Parliament standing next to Pandit Nehru and Mountbatten when Nehru delivered the '*Tryst with Destiny*' speech on the midnight 14th August, 1947 and established a long lasting friendship with the Mountbatten family. He escorted Lady Edwina to many of the refugee camps at Partition and was reckoned by 'Dickie' Mountbatten to be an officer of the highest calibre. The other Co-ADCs, Martin Gilliat, Freddy Burnaby-Atkins and Jim Scott were amongst his closest English friends. Thereafter, he served as Staff Officer Operations to Flag Officer Commanding Indian



Fleet, Rear-Admiral St. John Tyrwhitt and Rear-Admiral Ramdas Katari, later the first Indian CNS.

But for his Parsi fair complexion as against the British ruddy white complexion, he could easily have been mistaken for a Royal Navy officer, perfectly turned out, perfect in diction and master of the kind of dripping sarcasm which often achieved more results than any other form of admonishment. That was quintessence RKSG.

Lord Mountbatten once described 'Rusi' as *India's Nelson* after he learnt how he handled INS *Betwa* in the Goa operation in 1961. Commander Gandhi had become the first Captain of the Indian Navy to take part in battle and cripple the Portuguese destroyer "*NRP Alfonso de Albuquerque*", off Marmagao harbour in 1961 by superior gun FPS 4.5 inch action and by manoeuvring *Betwa* in the restricted Goa harbour when *Albuquerque* tried to hide behind merchant ships.

Operation Vijay to retake Goa was Indian Navy's first test in battle and like Lord Nelson at Trafalgar who looked through his blind eye and said he saw no signal and carried on firing, Gandhi convinces that he never saw the White Flag claimed to have been put up by Captain Antonio da Cunha Aragao in command of the Portuguese *Albuquerque* who grounded the ship ashore under fire and abandoned her when he was wounded under gunfire. Gandhi went to meet Captain da Cunha in hospital, who handed over his cabin key to him in surrender. When Aragao told him he had surrendered after the first shot, Gandhi replied, "Sorry Ole Captain I think your white flag got entangled in the yardarms and we could not see it". Gandhi sent messages to inform the family of Captain Aragao he was in good care.

Betwa won the Fleet regatta and the ship was known as the '*Cock of the Fleet*'. The result hinged on the last officers race and this writer in Mysore's officers whaler team saw a ruddy





Ghandhi shout to his team, *'If you lose do not come back on board!'* They won by a whisker.

In the 1971 war Captain RKS Ghandhi was awarded Vr C in command of INS Mysore as the Flag Captain in the Western Fleet in 1971, for his heroic actions in the Western Sector along the Makran coast.

Ghandhi was the first Indian naval officer to do a course at Naval War College (NWC), Rhode Island in USA. He was the Chief Instructor (Navy) at the Defence Services Staff College.

He commanded the Eastern and Western Fleets. He was the Chief of Personnel and the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Naval Command. He was hopeful with his unblemished record that he may become the Chief of the Naval Staff in 1979, but Vice Admiral Ronny Periera was a month senior in the Navy list. He retired on 31st March, 1979, aged 55. Ghandhi was awarded the Param Vishisht Seva Medal for meritorious service of the highest order,

Upon retirement from the Navy, Vice Admiral Ghandhi enjoyed a short stint as technical consultant for the movie, *"Sea Wolves,"* on the express recommendation of Lord Louis Mountbatten to Mr. Ewan Lloyd, the Director. He even played a cameo role as the Governor



of Goa in it, and thoroughly enjoyed this part of his life, spending much time at Martin's Beach Hut in Goa, sipping pink-gins with famous cast members, Gregory Peck, David Niven, Trevor Howard, Roger Moore and his friend Ken Griffiths.

Ghandhi was appointed as Chairman of the Shipping Corporation of India (1981-86) and he attended to the task with zeal and contributed to bring about discipline and pride in the ships by visiting them regularly.

He served as Governor of Himachal Pradesh in Raj Bhawan in Shimla built in 1815 and was formerly known as Barnes Court. He was a Member of the National Commission for Minorities from 1993 to 1996.

Admiral Ghandhi retired to his home in Bombay near Navy Nagar, occupying himself with his hobby of fishing and always keeping up to date with his friends from all over the world. He suffered a very serious stroke in 2011, but fought this with his usual courage and determination.

To conclude this tribute, the signal the Eastern Fleet Commander Ghandhi made to Rear Admiral D S Paintal depicts it all, *"I hand you a fine worked up Eastern fleettry Chief Cook Barua's lobster thermidor ...it is the best."*

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Vice Admiral RKS Ghandhi – Remembered

Commander Arun Saigal (Retd)

Vice Admiral RKS (Rusi) Ghandhi who passed away on 23 December 2014 in Mumbai at the ripe old age of 90 was a very charismatic and affectionate senior officer whom we young officers adored for his impeccable manners, deportment and style. Having been trained and brought up in the best traditions of the British Royal Navy and having served with legends like Lord Mountbatten, he had great qualities of fair play and leadership which endeared him to all who came into contact with him.

Soon after the 1971 war I was relieved from Kirpan to take up command of the Seaward Defence Boat *Sarayu*. Bombay loved its Navy for the glory it had covered itself with. We were the toast of the town and were invited to many felicitations and parties. At one such Bollywood felicitation ceremony in suburban Bombay I recall getting into conversation at the bar, with the tall and handsome Amitabh Bachhan while we both waited to replenish our glasses of scotch. My pretty friend Komilla who was trying to break into films was by my side. Soon the dapper 'Rusi' in his immaculately tailored suit and trademark red socks also came by. He introduced himself to Amitabh and Komilla and then asked me what I did for a living. It was probably the scotch and the desire to show-off to my date that I puffed out my chest and responded: 'same as you Sir – I also command a warship!' 'Which one?' he asked 'Sarayu Sir,' 'Well said, We are fellow Commanding Officers!' 'I am having a formal party tomorrow. Come and have a drink with me at 1930 hrs. Dress: 6As. But you have to come by your own ship. Mysore's starboard aft gangway will be lowered for you. Send me a message when you cast off from the Boat Pool.'

Captain RKS Ghandhi who had won a Vrc in

command of INS Mysore as the Flag Captain of the Western Fleet in 1971 was inviting two months young Lieutenant Arun Saigal to his ship! My companions at the bar were surprised and happy for me. The next day the rest of 322 SDB Squadron pitched-in to get my ship presentable. My crew was rehearsed in coming alongside boat drills. Some extra men and uniforms were also loaned to us for the evening.

At the appointed hour Sarayu cast off for the five minutes run to the Breakwater where the flagship was berthed. Captain Ghandhi honoured me by being present himself at the top of the Mysore gangway to receive me. He personally introduced me to his guests – who's-who of Bombay.

In 1977 as a Communications specialist I was a member of the commissioning crew of INS Dunagiri with Captain Sukhmal (Tony) Jain in command. I had occasion to observe Vice Admiral Ghandhi twice at close quarters. He was the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Naval Command. Our ship had been nominated to host Prime Minister Morarji Desai for a day at sea. During the full dress rehearsal the Admiral boarded the ship. We were surprised when a sumptuous lunch was served to us. The previous day he had ordered that the best food be placed on board for the Officers because he said he knew that on the day of the VIP visit we would not get time to have a decent snack even!

On the fateful New Year's day of Jan 1978, Emperor Ashoka, (Air India Flight 855) crashed into the sea off Juhu soon after take-off from Santa Cruz Airport. Despite being brought in for a maintenance period, Dunagiri flashed boilers and sailed with a skeleton crew to the scene to take charge of search and rescue operations. Being dark and not knowing the



exact point of the Jumbo crash hampered the search for the plane and its survivors. It became very tiring and frustrating. The C-in-C always sent encouraging messages. I recall one of his personal signals to the Captain: "For man with the Golden Touch: Find plane!" While in command of a Petya Captain Jain had seized a gold laden smuggler's vessel in 1971. And now with systematic planning he did locate the wreck of the ill-fated plane. Air India was grateful to the navy for its untiring efforts. Much later on behalf of Air India, the C-in-C held an evening 'Thank you' reception at the Fleet Club for the sailors and officers of all the ships which had participated in the operation. The Commanding Officers were told to quickly put up for his commendation the names of all those

who had worked hard and performed beyond the call of duty. I understand he waived red tape and passed instructions that there was no bar on the number of personnel to be awarded the C-in-C's Commendation and that a mere paragraph stating the role played would be sufficient justification, no long winded citations were to be sent. I know of it first-hand. Dunagiri's Communications Department was commended for its role in providing Command and Control for the Search Force and I was myself commended for my role in the Operation.

The Admiral himself was a man with a golden heart!!

May his soul RIP!

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Unique Inspection by Vice Admiral RKS Gandhi

Commander MS Bali (Retd.)

The attached photograph of Vice Admiral Gandhi, then Flag Officer Commanding Western Fleet was taken during a unique inspection of INS Mysore which he had ordered during 1975-76. This inspection was in addition to the routine shore and sea inspections.

A Party was required to be organised on board to welcome a dethroned king of an unknown territory, called Bongo Bongo, and the king was given a political asylum in our country (on board Mysore, of course). This is one of the stills from that show on board, besides other entertainments prepared for the deposed king. I, as a young Lieutenant, was the interpreter for the king of Bongo Bongo, as the king did not understand any other language, other than the



Vice Admiral Gandhi welcomed the king on board with a lavish treat.

Bongo Bongoise, which in fact, was my additional speciality.

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A tribute to Commodore GM Shea

Commodore R.R. Tandon (Retd.)

I first met Commodore GM Shea then Commander GM Shea (popularly known in the Navy as Jack Shea) in 1960 when I was appointed to INS Khukri for obtaining my watch keeping ticket as a young S/Lt. My first and everlasting impression was of a calm, composed, dedicated and highly professional naval officer. Gradually the more I saw of his cool temperament, ship handling and man management skills I became a staunch admirer of his.

He inspired confidence in his officers and men and made sure that each and every member of the ship's crew performed well. He gave us total freedom in carrying out our duties. Such was his confidence in his juniors that after just 15 days' sea time he permitted me to keep independent watches at sea and in harbour without a watch keeping ticket, since I had not yet completed the mandatory period. If I ever made a mistake in OOW manoeuvres during fleet exercises and the Fleet Commander asked for the name of the OOW on R/T, he would tell the Yeoman to say Cdr Jack Shea.

I recall that in 1961 he awarded me my watchkeeping ticket and shortly thereafter I was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant under his command. The most memorable event during this period was when our ship INS Khukri was sailed from Port Blair with despatch to find INS Konkan which was drifting in the Bay of Bengal having lost all power whilst on passage. The sea state at that time was 6 and except for CO and me the entire crew was sea sick. Somehow we found INS Konkan and the Captain managed to take her in tow in the appalling weather conditions and finally bring

her safely to Visakhapatnam harbour. He had won accolades for this rescue mission.

His staff work was par excellence and his drafting of letters and correcting our drafts was something which stood me in good stead throughout my service.

Soon thereafter I was transferred to Calcutta as XO (designate) of INS Abhay which was under construction. I had the privilege of serving under Cmde Shea again in 1962-63 for a short period at NHQ where he was posted as DDOP(X). Here I learnt many a thing from him of the functioning of NHQ.

I had the honour and privilege of serving under him a third time when I was the Squadron Navigating Officer of the 11th Destroyer Squadron (Rajput, Ranjit and Rana) after completing my Long ND. By then he had been promoted to the rank of Captain and he had relieved Captain D K Kharbari as D 11 in 1967. His faith in having trained us was of such a magnitude that he let me carry out formation anchoring of the squadron at night in Singapore harbour without him being on the Bridge of the Rajput since he was suffering from an acute stomach upset. This was the ultimate example of the professional approach and confidence of Cmde Jack Shea in his officers' abilities.

In his passing away at the age of 90 the Indian Navy has lost one of its stalwarts. However, his memories shall always linger on with all those like me who had the privilege of serving under him. May God rest his soul in peace and grant solace and strength to his family to bear this irreparable loss of a great human being and a very fine naval officer and above all a true gentleman.

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My Role Model

(Late Commodore Lovji Sorabji Mehta)

Rear Admiral Sushil Ramsay (Retd.)

It was forty seven years ago in January 1968, our Batch of eight landed in INS Hamla for professional training. It was noon time, and we had barely off-loaded our black steel trunks and holdalls from the Three-tonner which had brought us from INS Delhi at old Cruiser Graving Docks (after a very brief spell of sea-training) to INS Hamla. We were pretty excited to be at our Alma Mater!

A Lambretta arrived and an officer in crisp white cotton No 8s disembarked and drew our attention. At first sight, our entire Batch was at awe with the smart turn out. He introduced himself as Lieutenant Commander Mehta, Senior Training Officer and informed us that he was there, because our Training Officer (Officers), Lieutenant Commander KGJ Vaz, on leave will be back shortly, until then in case of any difficulty he could be approached. He appeared to mean business, no nonsense man, yet approachable.

As the grind began with morning PT, he was there before anyone else, he was there every day commanding Daily Divisions. He had booming Word of Command that brought the entire Ship's Company to rapt attention. As the class room instructions began, very often he would pop-up from nowhere to catch us stealing a quick-smoke! Hamla observed no summer routine and that made things extremely difficult for us to keep awake after hearty lunch. We would barely reach the class room when one of us would say, *Lamby aagaya!* Incidentally, our Course Officer too had a Lamby! Tired legs, lunch still in the abdomen, it is time for compulsory evening games. Lo and behold! Lamby already there, no scope for shaming!



Many years later, I landed in Hamla as the Training Officer (Officers) and Senior Training Officer. There was only one role model before me to emulate and that of *Lieutenant Commander LS Mehta!* I tried my very best, even though perhaps at that stage I was much younger to my role model, I always wondered how did he manage time between his devotion to train and taking care of family commitments. Of course, without the rock-solid support of Mrs Nisha Mehta all this would not have been possible.

Now the scene rolls over to mid-1982! Whilst doing Staff Course at the Defence Services Staff College, Wellington I had received my appointment letter to INS Angre, as Commander (S) with Commodore LS Mehta as Commanding Officer INS Angre and Commodore Naval Barracks. As I took over, I



realised that this was an enormously high pressure zone with chances of the situation slipping out of control were ten times more than anywhere else. If I was able to settle down well in the job and was able to be effective, the entire credit goes to late Commodore Loveji Mehta for supporting me to hilt.

Thereafter, we did not have a chance to meet elsewhere; except for some odd visits to Pune. It was a rare chance to host Commodore Loveji Mehta and Mrs Nisha Mehta at our place few months ago. It was a testimony of their

popularity that so many veterans of our vintage joined in. It was not just our house, there were another three-four of our friends who took them around post lunch to their houses. This was a reflection of respect and regard for a true gentleman.

Loveji Sir, you will always be revered, remembered for what you were and what you have inspired us to be. *May God Bless your kind Soul and you rest in everlasting Peace!*

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Commodore Inder Kumar Malhotra

Vice Admiral IC Rao (Retd.)

Commodore Inder Kumar Malhotra joined the Navy in 1949, with a degree in Electrical and Mechanical Engineering from Banaras Hindu University. Being from Lahore he was a proud student at BHU and insisted on wearing a suit and tie to classes. That foretold his élan in the Navy where he insisted on the highest standards in efficiency and conduct.

He was the commissioning Senior Engineer of INS Mysore with the most powerful Engines the Indian Navy has had until the arrival of Vikrant. However, in 1956, 80,000 HP was a lot to manage in a Second World War vintage cruiser of the Nigeria class. As Cdr (E) of Vikrant too his penchant for pride of the professional competence of himself and his team of Engineers was envied.

His best years in the Navy were at Naval Headquarters as the Director of the Leander Project and the Director of Marine Engineering. His vision and skill in project management saw

the Leander Type Training Centre at INS Shivaji become the envy of the Commonwealth Navies. His cadre management and close liaison with the Personnel Branch ensured that the Engineering Branch grew in numbers and in responsibility. Inder as he was called by successive Chiefs of Naval Staff was consulted frequently on engineering matters and accompanied them on several important missions. Commodore IK Malhotra retired in 1974 as a naval officer who flew his Commodore's pennant with the greatest pride.

Throughout his career he was supported by Saroj who is one of the most gracious ladies one has ever met, and his darling daughters Gargi and Gowrie.

We owe a lot to Commodore IK Malhotra and he will be remembered by all who served in the formative years of the Indian Navy.

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Tribute — Commander Ashok Mehta

Commander Rajinder Datta (Retd.)



1971 War Team on Vikrant

On Aircraft : Tarzan, RT. **Standing (L to R) :** Gulab, Mike, Sarthy (Dy ALO), Soda, Boogus, Gigi, Capt. Swaraj Prakash (CO Vikrant), Ash, Gary (Cdr Air), Phydo, Bhides, Shoni. **Kneeling :** Gurnam (AEO), Tiger, Pasha, Daffy, Tedda, GS Kanda (Dy AEO).
(Not in picture - R Shahdarpuri, our ALO)

We were seven rookie Sub Lieutenants who joined 550 squadron, INS Garuda in Cochin in Jan 81, the same day Daffy Sir, as he was popularly known, Squadron Cdr 550, called us over for drinks at his Thevra home. Passing away of Daffy Sir on 25th Sep '14 was sad indeed. I feel the best tributes that can be offered to Daffy Sir are by remembering him in his words. I was in 312 in Hansa in 1983. Daffy Sir was the EX O. He once called me to his office, being his pupil in 550 Squadron. He offered me a cup of tea. His table was neat and clean, no files, no cluttering just his Cdr's baton on the table. It was known about him that his requestmen and defaulters used to finish in no time. "All requests granted and all defaulters' maximum punishment. Carry on RO".

The next Hansa incident comes to mind, when he was appointed Cdr (Air) Hansa from being EX O Hansa. The same day I was sitting in PMO Surgeon Cdr Kanta Sharma's office. In walks our dashing Daffy Sir in his dark Raybans, spinning his baton. He put the baton on her table top, and asked her, "Kanta, have

you noticed some change in me today?" Kanta as a matter of fact said, "No, Sir". With a smile he glanced at me, then towards Kanta, twirling his moustache said, "Look yesterday I was EX O, today I am Cdr (Air)" and pointed at the baton. Neatly painted over the Nelson ring was a small Golden wing (Baton of Cdr (Air) had been designed ingenuously). That was Daffy Sir's inimitable style. I am certain his Soul is already blessed in the Heavens above. Remembering him in his words and deeds is the greatest tribute that we can pay him.

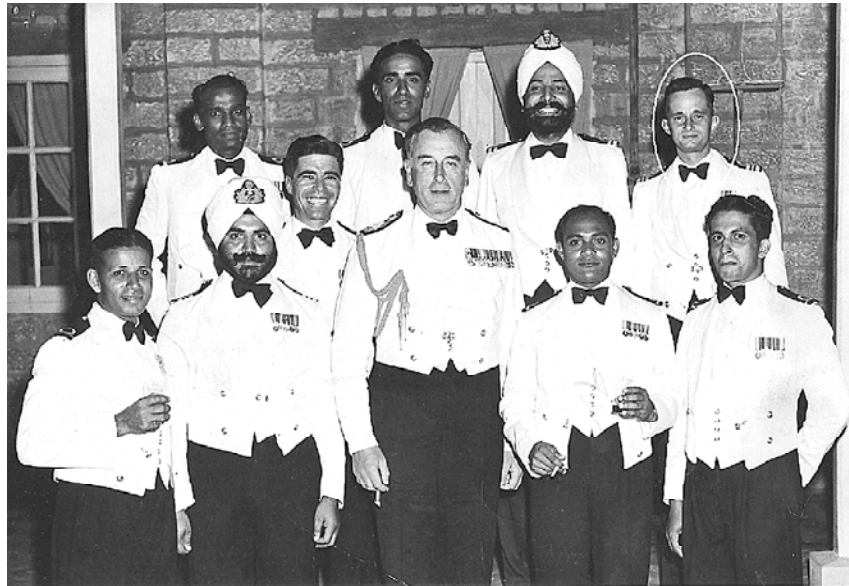
Cdr Ashok Mehta was a humble person, who treated a Peon/clerk of his Squadron with respect. He considered his Squadron as a large happy family. We rookies were inspired by his leadership style and he smilingly mentored us into the naval way of life. In him we've lost a friend, philosopher and guide. RIP, Daffy Sir. A perfect Naval Salute with the sounding of the last post bugle, on your journey to the Heavens.

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Commander Maxwell V Milford

Dr David V. Milford



Maxwell ('Max') Milford was born in Sholapur on 1st August 1923 and died on 21st June 2013.

Max joined the Indian Air Force in 1944 and did his first solo flight after only eight hours of instructions. He was later selected for a temporary commission as Sub Lieutenant in the Indian Navy on 10th February 1945. He served as Squadron Communication Officer on HMIS Khyber for 19 months and on board HMIS Baroda, Dhanush, Sutlej, Jumna and Rana each for short periods.

He was promoted to Lieutenant on 26th January 1950 and was serving on board INS Ranjit when it participated in the Coronation Review at Spithead on June 15th 1953.

He also served on board INS Godavari and Kistna for short periods. After time at sea he was placed at the Signal School INS Venduruthy, Kochi from November 1956 until January 1960 and Officer Commanding,

Wireless Experimental Centre INS India, Delhi from January 1960 until May 1962.

He returned to naval duties as commanding officer on board INS Konkan from May 1962 until December 1963. He returned to INS India in December 1963 and was seconded to Army Headquarters, New Delhi during which time he was active in establishing communication centres across the northern border areas. He retired from service on 31st May 1966 and immigrated to the United Kingdom in September 1966.

He retained fond memories of his time in the Indian Navy and took the opportunity to inspect visiting Indian Naval ships whenever possible, and particularly enjoyed touring INS Vikrant when she visited the UK.

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Remembering a lost friend

Commander Kannan Ramdas (Retd.)

It was a bright day in November 1976, when Sub Lt TPS Ahluwalia and I were preparing for the day ahead at Diving School, Cochin. It was the 4th day of the course. TP Singh as he was popularly known was looking forward to meeting his brother, a Cadet in the Merchant Navy, whose ship was due at Cochin that evening. He requested me to charge the air bottles of his diving set, a routine done at the end of the day's dive.

TP Singh was a guy who had boundless energy for things which interested him. As my shipmate on INS Brahmaputra, he was focused on becoming a Diver. He badgered me into coming with him for running, swimming and preparing for the selection tests for the Ship's Diving Course. His enthusiasm was infectious that I soon became totally involved in the training. Normal watch keeping duties on board did not excite him. He confided in me that in his previous ship INS Vikrant he preferred to lie low below the radar of Senior Officers. He used to say that as long as NAVPAY knew where to send his pay, he was happy. Finally TP Singh and I qualified for selection for the Ship's Diving Course. The diving course has a tough routine and it is especially hard on

officers not keeping an energetic lifestyle.

On the day in question, we completed the usual run around the base and came to the Thevara Bridge for the jump and swim to the Boat Pen. All of us jumped in and swam for the Boat Pen. I was still a straggler when it came to swimming and was at the rear of the pack. After some time the Gemini craft came rushing towards me and the Course Officer told me to get in. I came to know that TP Singh was missing. An intensive search of all areas around the Boat Pen and Diving School was done but to no avail. It was suspected that he could be trapped in the water hyacinth, a scourge in the Cochin channel, which had collected around the Oil Barge berthed at the Boat Pen. Unfortunately it took two hours before the Oil Barge could be moved out and the Clearance Divers' class could begin diving. TP Singh's body was recovered at the place where the Oil Barge was berthed.

I was saddened by the passing away of a dear friend at the threshold of his career. When I think back, I feel that it is people like TP Singh's who made the Navy a vibrant workplace.

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It Happened to Us

Commander R Dutta (Retd.)

It was a bright late afternoon in the mid '80s as we took off from Palam, in our F-27 beauty to convey our DGCG and his entourage to Bombay. I was then on deputation to the Indian Coast Guard. Lt Sujoy Ganguly (popularly known as 'Gangs') was our Flight Observer

(navigator). Having undergone the rigours of the Seaking sonar/radar operations, he found solace in captaining the Fokker. A young CG co-pilot, fresh from the flying club, rattled out the checklist during the smooth climb. The flight at level 160 was uneventful as the Sun very



slowly glided down through the distant clouds on the horizon, engulfing the Western Sky with its pinkish charm. This was one of the flights to a very familiar and favourite destination of ours.

As we approached Bombay, the serene dusk transformed into slow darkness as the weather turned cloudy with a few cumulus thrown around, besides a couple of distant Cumulo-Nimbus clouds (CBs) South-East of Bombay. The Bombay Area Control cleared us for descent and handed us over to Bombay Radar, who identified us on its scope and cleared us down to 3500 ft and directed us to report over the outer marker. We were soon in clouds and I got onto instruments with the cockpit lights dimmed. The radar picture was cluttered up. Flying on instruments with ADF (Automatic Direction Finder) tuned and needle 12 O'clock, waiting for the needle to unlock. Gangs supplemented the co-pilot's efforts in looking out visually through the thick clouds to identify any landmarks. The wait seemed endless. R/T call to the Radar Controller revealed that he had lost us on his scope. Gangs chipped in with his mental DR, "Dats we have crossed the OM". Just then we broke clouds in the Ghats East of Bombay, as the outline of the towering hills was

visual in the backdrop of Bombay loom to our starboard. "OOOUFFF", we could have well been sitting on top of the hills but for our good luck. Both throttles to max continuous power and I immediately commenced climbing and executed a turn onto starboard keeping clear of the dark protrusions in the backdrop of Bombay loom visually. The subsequent ILS Let down and Landing had been smooth, as the airfield had witnessed a passing shower. The reception party with the COMCG, West had been eagerly waiting to receive the DGCG as the aircraft taxied in after having revised its door opening time.

What later emerged was that the ADF needle had locked onto a distant CB, as we homed onto it and got out of the not-so-alert radar controller's scope. After seeing off the VIP, our fuming Gangs went to the Radar Controller to ease off his pent up emotions. Nonetheless this flight did turn us a lot wiser.

PS- This article is a humble tribute to my very Jovial and humorous Observer/Navigator, Late Cdr Sujoy Ganguly, who left us for his heavenly abode in Oct 2013, due cardiac arrest.

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"The safety, honour and welfare of your country come first, always and every time. The honour, welfare and comfort of the men you command come next, your own ease, comfort and safety come last, always and every time."

- C-in-C, Sir Philip Chetwode



Tributes to Friends/Colleagues

Surgeon Vice Admiral VS Dixit (Retd.)

It is extremely painful when young colleagues pass away before their prime. Two of my young friends and colleagues, Surgeon Captain IK Indrajit and Surgeon Cdr Ramesh Rao, passed away in the year 2014. Both were excellent Doctors and more importantly Gentlemen and excellent Officers.

Surgeon Captain IK Indrajit

If my memory serves me right, I met Indrajit sometime in 1991 when I was posted as ACOMO at HQ ENC. He was on board INS Nilgiri. As was the practice, he came to meet the Command Medical Officer and met me too. What impressed me the most was his genial and soft spoken nature! He told me that he hails from Chennai and is a graduate of Armed Forces Medical College. He was the 2nd MO on board and we, in the HQ, were very happy that we have a spare MO for temporary duties. Medical Officers have always been in shortage as the operational and administrative requirements outstrip the posted strength.

I vividly remember Indrajit, Harish Mani and S Chaudhury (posted on Dunagiri). They came and told me that they are willing to go on any ty duties if the ships are in harbour and can be spared from local duties. Those days, due to requirement of Medical Officer at INS Adyar for operational commitments on Tamil Nadu coast, aviation commitments at NAS, Ramnad, commissioning of INS Rajali and deployments of ships for SAR etc. we needed to depute MOs at very short notice. Indrajit was always there, smiling and willing, to proceed on ty duty. He was still young in service for us to judge his potential but we knew he had a very bright future.

Many years later, I was in Chennai on a personal visit and went to see him in Apollo hospital. By then he had qualified as a Specialist in Radio Diagnosis and was on study leave in Apollo hospital to undergo training in CT Scans. I cannot forget his bright face when he saw me and offered assistance if needed. I kept meeting him periodically in Asvini when I was posted in NHQ.

I moved from INHS Sanjivani to Asvini in July 2002 as Executive Officer. Indrajit was posted in Radiology Department as Classified Specialist. Modernization project of Asvini was in full swing. Sophisticated equipments were arriving and installation had to be coordinated with various agencies. Department of Radiology is one where equipment are the mainstay for diagnostic and therapeutic procedures. Indrajit coordinated the entire gamut of operations under the guidance of then Surgeon Cdr John D'Souza. Indrajit's contribution to the department was enormous. His involvement in supervising the various fitments, be it the chairs, carpets, curtains or sound system in Asvini Auditorium was praiseworthy. This is a first-hand account as I was very much in Asvini. These extra commitments did not deter him from his professional duties. He was there for patients to give them his best.

From Asvini, he was posted at Army Hospital (R & R) at Delhi. He got an opportunity to work on highly sophisticated diagnostic and therapeutic equipment. I am given to understand that his presence in the department changed the working culture. Earlier patients had to wait for appointments for diagnostic tests and therapeutic procedures for days if not

weeks. The story, which I cannot disbelieve, goes to say that a senior specialist called Indrajit asking for an appointment of CT scan for a patient who had to be evaluated on an urgent basis. The specialist explained the background and asked Indrajit when can the patient be called? Indrajit told him “**now**”. No delay that was his commitment to patient care. He was there for everybody at all times. His professional capability was superlative, which coupled with sincerity, dedication and sympathetic attitude won him the gratitude of thousands of patients and their relatives.



When he was posted in Delhi, he wanted to go on premature retirement because of immense problems at home, mainly illnesses of his parents and in laws. His request was not acceded to. He moved to CH (AF), Bangalore on compassionate posting where I kept meeting him occasionally. After about three years he was posted to INHS Kalyani where he was one of the key officers who coordinated the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the hospital. I was in Mumbai in Feb 2013 when I got to know of his admission on transfer from INHS Kalyani. There was a suspicion of haematological malignancy for which he was being evaluated. He went through harrowing times and there was remission. I met him again in Oct 2013. He

had regained health. I was happy to see him well mainly because he would contribute to patient care in particular.

I was abroad when I got to know that he was seriously ill and had been moved to Army Hospital (R&R) for advanced management. Alas, it was not to be and he succumbed to the disease on 30 Apr 2014. He was 51 years old.

Indrajit had achieved a lot professionally. He had become a Senior Advisor, Professor, Inspector for Medical Council of India & National Board and University Examiner for Post Graduate examinations. His best was yet to come. He was a friend and well-wisher of all and had no enemies. We lost a great human being. May his soul rest in peace!

Surgeon Cdr Ramesh Rao



Ramesh was another outstanding human being. I first met him in July 2002. He was a graded specialist in Pathology in INHS Asvini. What impressed me the most was his pleasant disposition coupled with willingness to undertake any task entrusted to him! I did not meet him often as he was the youngest in the Department. But chance encounters always



elicited a huge respectful smile. I think he was posted out of Asvini thereafter. I did hear about his contribution in upgrading the laboratory facilities in the hospitals.

I visited Mumbai in Oct 2013. I had gone to the Department for some tests and was happy to see him there. He was the same youngster with a genial disposition. I had to return to Bangalore without the reports as it would take a few more days. I interacted with him on mail and got the

reports. I sent him New Year greetings to which he responded. It was devastating to hear of his sudden demise on 09 Jan 2014. He had gone to the Gymnasium and collapsed soon after return home. Though he was promptly moved to Asvini, he could not be revived despite energetic management. He was 41 years old. Another young and promising life was lost. May his soul rest in peace!

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A Tragic and Untimely Loss-Vice Admiral O P Bansal

Commodore BR Sen (Retd.)

I have been on Vice Admiral Bansal's friends list, so today when I was checking my mail my heart sank when I saw this Facebook message "help Om Bansal to celebrate his birthday on 30 Sep". How cruel and insensitive I imagined! It came as a rude shock to me when I learnt of the tragic and untimely demise of the flamboyant Admiral on 27 Jul 2014 at Bangalore, where he had gone to spend time with his granddaughter. He was only 68. I came to know that he suffered very bravely the dreaded disease and was under treatment for some years. I have gathered that during the past several months, he endured all the pain cheerfully and savoured every moment with his usual courage and flamboyance after he came to know about the ailment. He did not need much hospitalization and lead a near normal life until the very end.

I had the opportunity and privilege to serve under the Admiral on two occasions, but in 1977 once I became his shipmate on board INS Udaygiri, even by any chance if I ran into him, everytime he exuded warmth that is due to a shipmate regardless of the huge difference in seniority. As XO on board the Leander, he



inspired us young Watch-keeping Lieutenants with his leadership style and easily took upon himself all the blame for our commissions and omissions when it came to the notice of the Commanding Officer, Captain Chaman Sachdeva.



Whilst holidaying in Port Blair in 1998 with my family, I received a call late one evening in my cabin's land line. "ACOP (HRD), Rear Admiral Bansal speaking" his baritone voice unmistakable, "BR, you didn't quite imagine I will catch you in the island, did you?" I almost missed a heart-beat, now what have I done for which the almighty has called at this unearthly hour, I thought, am I being banished to some god-forsaken place?" Losing no time, he said, "BR be prepared to return to Andamans on a permanent posting, you see I have been having a tough time as I cannot find anyone who will take over Jarawa. I had hardly any choice sensing his mood, but the tenure in the islands became most rejuvenating, Admiral Bansal also joined, but much later as the FORTAN.

As a young officer whilst he was my XO, we raided Lt Cdr Bansal's house at Colaba many times at odd hours, but the Admiral didn't mind at all and always pleaded us to stay on for dinner. Mrs Bansal, kind-hearted, demure and charming, floored us with her hospitality and delectable dishes she prepared painlessly. Our

visits to their residence continued when they occupied the Fortress House at Port Blair, but on these later occasions we did not dare to venture uninvited. Very fond memories of our association will always remain. During his last tenure before retiring, as the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Naval Command, we are aware of his untiring efforts and foresight in improving infrastructure of the Command, its operational readiness and his hand in improving the quality of life of officers, men and civilians.

Admiral Bansal's persona for those who knew him closely was like a coconut, tough from outside but soft from inside. He shielded and supported his officers and men with all his might. He had a truly large heart and was an epitome of a dynamic leader. Our hearts reach out to Mrs Renu Bansal, her son and daughter in these days of grief. May his soul rest in peace! Amen.

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"Death is not the enemy of life, but its friend, for it is the knowledge that our lives are limited which makes them so precious. It is the truth that time is but lent to us which makes us, at our best, look upon our years as trust handed into our temporary keeping."

- Joshua Loth Liebman

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Bali holiday

Commodore S.M.Sundaram(Retd)

I was very sceptical when my daughters proposed that we go to Bali in Indonesia on a holiday during the summer. Their contention was that we have seen enough of West, why not go East this time I reluctantly agreed. We flew out of Chennai on a Malaysian Airlines flight on 8th May 2014. With a short stop at Kuala Lumpur, for change-over of aircraft, we reached Bali around 12 noon on the 9th. Visa was on arrival, we completed the airport formalities in half an hour and set course for our hotel, Westin at Nusa Dua.

The two lane road from airport to Nusa Dua was clean and well maintained. As we left the airport the surroundings were flush green. The traffic on the road was very disciplined. Within a Kilometre from the airport, on the side of a four road junction, we were surprised to see a life size statue of Krishna and Arjuna on a Chariot, depicting a scene from the famous Hindu epic Mahabharata, prominently displayed.

Westin hotel, where we stayed, was on sea shore. It was on the tip of Bali Island. The sea shore was a stretch of about 4Km. Bali Development Authority has developed that area for tourism. There are eight to nine hotels in that stretch, few five-star and some four star hotels. Along the beach line there is a well cemented walk path, close to the beach, from one end to the other. It is a wonderful place for a morning walk. At one end of the walkway, there is a very large circular flush green lawn well-manicured and extremely well maintained. There are a number of floral plants on the peripheral of the lawn. That area is christened - Garden of Good Hope. In the middle of the lawn is a ten feet tall concrete pedestal. On the



top of the Pedestal is a black stone statue of Krishna and Arjuna. The pedestal is covered on all the four sides with glass and inside the covered area is a copy of Bhagwat Gita. It is a very quiet and silent place for people to sit and mediate. The hotel had two swimming pools – one for the children and another for adults. We all swam to our heart's content during our stay.

Indian culture has seeped deep into Bali. 85 %

of the population in Bali are Hindus. There are three well known Hindu temples in Bali; these are Pura Besakih, Pura Luhur Uluwatu and Pura Tanah Lot. There are a few other small temples also in the town dedicated to Shiva, Brahma and Vishnu, but none of them have the rituals as we have in the temples in India. They are more of heritage value now. Most of the Hindus have a small private temple in front of their houses. Twice in a year the Hindus have a ceremony during which they go to the temple and tie three threads round their wrists (White, black and red). They keep this tied for a period of 15 days during which they observe penance. This is the only ritual they follow.

In one of the temples in Pura Uluwatu, every evening they have a dance drama show from Ramayana. In a semi-circular open air amphitheatre close to the temple this play is enacted. It begins with Rama chasing the golden deer during the Banavas. Ravana, kidnapping Sita when she crosses the Lakshmana Rekha, Jadayu (they call Jadaya "Garuda") wings being chopped off when he tries to prevent Ravana from carrying her to Lanka, Hanuman reaching Lanka and shows the ring of Rama to her and informs her that Rama will soon come and rescue her and finally Rama with Vanarasena reaches Lanka and



rescues Sita. A very well enacted play in Indonesian style.

In Nusa Dua there is a Bali Collection Centre where all art and craft items made in Indonesia are displayed. There is a shopping centre called Galera in the centre of the town which houses a duty free shopping hall, where all art and craft items made in Indonesia can be purchased duty free. The foreigners have to produce passports to gain entry into the duty free shop. There is also another shopping centre in a place called Kuta. In all these shopping area one has to bargain hard.

There is a art village in a place called Ubud. In this village there are Batik printing factory, silver and gold ornaments making unit and a shop which exhibits locally wood carved items. There is also a coffee promotion unit in Ubud, where the most expensive coffee in the world is displayed. The coffee is called Yuwak coffee. The Robasta coffee seeds are passed through the digestive system of an animal called Yuwak which looks like a small fox. When the seeds are pushed out of the digestive system of Yuwak, the top kernel is broken and the soft seeds are pulverised into making coffee powder. While other coffee powders are displayed in a open shelf, the Yuwak coffee





powder is kept in a locked glass case. In that unit you can taste all coffee free, but will have to pay for Yuwak coffee.

There is also a water sport area in Nusa Dua where water sports like parasailing, snorkelling, scuba diving, glass bottom boat ride and Banana boat rides are attractions. There is an International standard golf course in Nusa Dua—Bali National Golf Course an expensive but a

very fine Golf course.

If one is looking for a quiet holiday – not much of sightseeing – Bali is the place. We of course, enjoyed the holiday. A lot of walking, plenty of swimming and a bit of sea sports. What impressed me most is the cleanliness and upkeep of the city which makes Bali a fine place to spend a holiday.

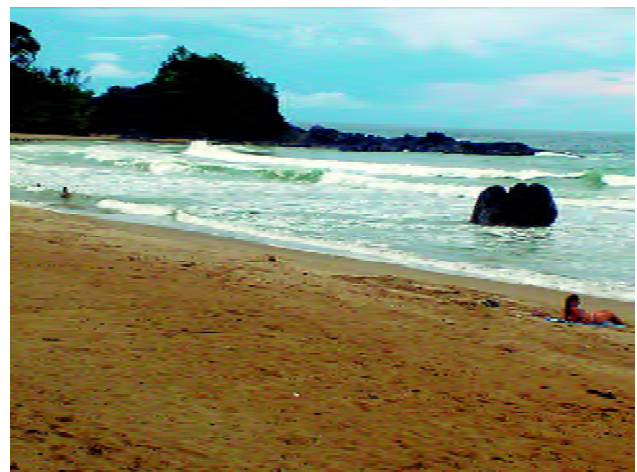
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Leatherback Turtles of Grande Riviera, Trinidad

Commander DD Loomba (Retd.)

Turtles are found in many countries around the world, including Orissa coast in India however, Leatherback Turtles found in Grand Riviera Bay on the North coast of Trinidad in the Caribbean Sea and Saline Bay, Matura on the East coast of Trinidad in the Atlantic Ocean are unique and therefore a centre of attraction for Tourists visiting this part of the Caribbean. Seeing Leatherback Turtles is virtually like getting a chance to travel back to a time before Dinosaurs and witness a struggle for survival that has been going on for over nearly 220 million years. They are called “Leviathan of the Deep”, “the Gentle Sea Monsters.” It’s truly amazing when you stand beside them and even touch one of these ancient mariners measuring up to six feet, weighing up to 2000 lbs when in a trance like stare they lay their eggs on the beaches of Grand Riviera and Matura in Trinidad. During peak season some Beaches report upto 300 nesting Leatherbacks in a single night. It is estimated that approximately 20% of the worlds Leatherback sea Turtle population is of Trinidadian ancestry.

Leatherback Turtles are more evolutionarily advanced than all other Sea Turtles alive today. They don’t have vestigial claws on their flippers and their shells are covered in a thick layer of fat and skin which helps them insulate in Arctic waters. Along their backs run vertically aligned ridges that help streamline these reptilian super tankers, who dive deeper than most whales to depths of over 2000 feet. These living Dinosaurs can stay under water upto an hour and eat their body weight in jelly fish each





day which is a good thing because warming seas have resulted in huge jellyfish swarms that endanger popular bathing beaches around the world.



I consider myself fortunate that I got an opportunity in 2014 to visit Grand Riviera, Trinidad to see Leatherback Turtles in the course of visiting my daughter who is based there along with her family. It was on a Saturday morning that we decided to drive to the Grand Riviera to witness Nesting. We loaded our Toyota Land cruiser 4x4 with a Ice box containing chilled Caribe Beer, soft drinks and snacks to munch on the way. My son-in-law, a veteran of many such trips was on the wheels, confident of a safe drive with his SUV as he was sure of negotiating bridges made of wooden planks and broken roads caused by heavy rains. Grand Riviera is one of the most appealing villages on the North coast of Trinidad where the rain forests of Trinidad's North Range tumble haphazardly on to deserted beaches lapped by blue waters. Nicknamed "Beyond Gods Back", Grand Riviera is the only community on the North coastline of Trinidad that has any kind of tourist infrastructure.

Our drive grew more picturesque as soon as we moved closer to the road swirling along the

coast. We could see guest houses overlooking the sea, small beaches with clear water and a odd fishing boat tied here and there, tourists relaxing in their swimming trunks and colourful bikinis enjoying the waves lapping the coastline. The occasional rocks jutting out of the sea as we drove, made our drive more beautiful. It was almost late afternoon when we reached the Mount Plaisir Hotel located on the Grand Reverie beach. This hotel constructed out of forest logs gives a very rustic look and has spurred a host of local residents to open guest houses, but the remote location has kept the development at a very low key, and the town remains one of the most unspoilt idyllic places you will find anywhere on the Island. Interactions between the visitors and the people have nothing of the money-oriented diplomacy of other resorts, and local people tend to be incredibly welcoming and helpful with a whiff of innocence.

Grand Riviera is named after the wide, fast flowing river which originates deep in the Northern Range and runs down to the sea at the eastern end of the town, it boasts of a superlative beach, a wide gentle curve of coarse yellow sand with a few unobtrusive buildings blending seamlessly in the otherwise unbroken jungle. Tall forested headlands border the sand to the east, where you can take a fresh water bath in the river, while a good kilometre away, the western end is sealed from the rest of the coast by rocky outcrops. Strong waves provide passable surfing or an invigorating swim and give the Leatherback turtles the extra push they need to haul themselves up the sand at egg laying time at night. This beach is a protected area between 1st March and 31st August and you need a permit to enter between dusk and dawn during this time of the year. However, we could visit the turtles nesting site without permit as nesting season was almost

at its fag end . Yet we were hopeful of watching some nesting by the Leatherback Turtles and some Turtle hatchlings.

By the time we reached Mount Plaisir Hotel, we were famished. After checking into the Hotel we went straight to our suites which had a front Patio overlooking the Beach. Easy chairs were spread out in the Patio to relax and enjoy the Sea view. However, there were no lights in the Patio or anywhere in the hotel overlooking the Beach to avoid distracting the Turtles in laying Eggs at night. After a quick wash we headed straight for the Restaurant. Since we were late for Lunch we ordered some Snacks which we enjoyed with some chilled Caribe Beer. As we walked on the beach- we realised the liveliest part of the beach centres around Mount Plaisir Estate, where the Bar is the favourite party spot and a lovely stall on the Beach sells fine Calabash Art locally made jewellery.

In order to explore both Village and beach we took a loop walk watching Flora and Fauna enroute especially rare birds and butterflies, natural waterfalls and streams, Orchids and rare Trees of Bamboos etc. We had to wait till it was dark to witness arrival of huge Leatherback Turtles to lay Eggs. As soon as it became dark we came out on the Beach to find large Leatherback Turtles crawling up from the Sea, digging the coarse yellow sand on the beach, making holes with their Flippers and laying Eggs laced with white fluid in a state of trance. As soon as the Turtles were finishing laying their Eggs they were covering the Nest with Sand using their Flippers and returning back to the Sea. The guide had warned us against using any light that would distract them from laying the Eggs and even disorient them to move towards the land rather than go back towards the Sea. Leatherback Turtles nest

every 2-3 years, returning upto six times a nesting season to deposit broods of between 80-100 Tennis Ball sized Eggs at a time of which only about 70% hatch between 60-70 days, just prior to dawn. Inexperienced female Turtles sometimes fail to lay their Eggs above high water mark, and nest sand can get compacted from too much foot traffic.



In order to protect the Eggs and Hatchlings there is a concerted effort by conservation groups like Nature Seekers. We met some volunteers camping on the sides of the Beach, keeping 24x7 vigil on the entire Nesting process, facilitating laying of Eggs at Night and chasing Vultures, Stray Dogs and collecting Hatchlings for eventually leaving them in the Sea after Sunset. The visiting researchers and volunteers stay in rotation for about two weeks in local homes, boosting the local economy and encouraging conservation effort. While we were walking on the Beach we were able to learn a lot about nesting. The volunteers encouraged us to collect the Hatchlings in flat plastic containers which we helped them in releasing into the Sea at Sunset. It was a very touching gesture specially for my grandsons aged three and six years to part with their collection of Hatchlings at Sunset as they were not ready to part with their collections as they had



developed emotional attachment with hatchlings collected by them with their tender hands. In fact they preferred to address them as Baby Turtles rather than Hatchlings. But we had to release the Hatchlings along with other Tourists assembled on Grand Riviera next evening with the help of volunteers, bidding the Babies adieu, wishing them safe journey into the vast ocean they were going to face that is becoming increasingly hazardous to their health, making it extremely difficult for them to survive until adulthood. Little do the Hatchlings, measuring upto the palm of a young teen-ager



know that only one out of 1000 would return to Trinidad's Beach again.

The visit to the Grand Riviera to witness Nesting by the Leatherback Turtles, getting to stay up into the wee hours of the Night, walking along a dark beach under stars filled Caribbean night sky and witnessing the 2-3 hours dramatic nesting ritual of the giant six feet long giant Leatherback Turtles had been an unusual experience for me and my Wife, and specially for our Grandsons, it was an unforgettable experience of a Life time.

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Napier's formula

Commander L Radhakrishnan (Retd.)

Naval Doctor

When our INS Viraat visited Chennai in 1998, we had Principals of the local colleges on board for cocktails along with other dignitaries. We were all in our 6Bs. Principal of one of the local colleges asked how to identify branch of officers by looking at their uniform. I told her that unlike Army in Navy we

don't have indication of the branch as part of the uniform. Meantime our Surgeon Lt walked past us. Immediately the same Principal asked why this officer has a thin red strip in his Lt's rank badge. I told her he is a Naval Doctor. She immediately said "O God Aajkal these doctors kya kya specialisation kartha hai"

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Shanghaied

Captain NV Sarathy (Retd.)

Shanghaied into acting in a Play

It was work as usual on a sunny afternoon in Port Blair in October 1995 where I was the FOPO (Fortress Operations and Plans Officer). I was summoned by the FORTAN (Fortress Commander) to his office. The PA had no clue as to the reason for the summons. Once I sat down the Admiral asked me if I have had acted on stage before. This was definitely a googly and I took a few minutes to respond. I told him that never in the Navy, but as a seven year old way back in my second standard, 35 years ago and that too in Tamil. With a smile he placed a bunch of stapled sheets in front of me and told me that it's a script of an English comedy and I have the leading part. The name of the play was FOPO's Dilemma. My face must have blanched. He told me not to get worried as I would be acting as myself (FOPO). My response was that I was not keen and my acting abilities were

next to nil. He asked me to take the script home and decide in a day or two. As I was leaving he threw another curved ball at me by saying whether my wife has any acting experience. Sheepishly I told him that I didn't know. He asked me if I can obtain her concurrence too. She had a small role, that too as my wife. My cup of misery was full, brimming and about to overflow.

I went home wondering which side of the bed I got up that morning. Over a cup of coffee discussed the dramatic happenings in FORTAN's office with my wife. She gave her decision very quickly. She would only act if I agreed to act. I was now pushed between a rock and a hard place. I decided to sleep on it and slept over it without going through the script for two days. In fact I had forgotten all about it. The third evening after working hours, I got a call from the Admiral asking me to come to his





residence with my wife to meet the rest of the cast and bring the script with me. I realised to my horror that I had to give my decision on the play and I hadn't even looked at the script. To top it all, it was in my office desk. Luckily my wife was in a good mood and I explained the faux pas. She quickly got ready. We left our 7/4 year old daughter/son with our neighbour and rushed to his residence via the office praying fervently that I would be able to wriggle out of acting in an English play.

My prayers were not answered that evening. May be the Almighty himself was off watch and did not consider my case. In the presence of the rest of the cast (one each army, naval officer and two officers' wives), the FORTAN explained about the play. There was no concurrence sought from my wife or me. It was like climbing on to the 10m diving board in the swimming pool and the only way down was to jump into the water and swim ashore. The exit of saying 'no' seems to have been blocked. Any way, while the going got tough, I got tough and got going. During the course of practice for the play, I realised that having got through Long TAS Course by understanding Robert J Urick's 'Principles of Underwater Sound', it wasn't all that difficult to act for 20 minutes. The play went off well. However, after that I never got a chance to act in a play. May be the Almighty came back

on watch and considered my request albeit two weeks late after all.

Chalo Shanghai

In January this year, the NFKC organised a trip to China of five days duration for some 40 odd veterans from their charter. The two cities to be visited were Shanghai and Beijing. There were a few RAC seats available. My course mate and I, from NFCC managed to get four for our spouses and us. The NFKC group emplaned from Cochin and the four of us from Chennai. All of us met at Colombo for our next leg to Shanghai via Hambantota in Sri Lanka. The day of our departure coincided with the Lok Sabha Election Day in Chennai. Luckily for us we were able to vote and still be in time for the flight. This was the first time all of us were exercising our franchise in Parliamentary Election. The flight from Colombo to Shanghai was uneventful and we reached Shanghai at 2300h an hour early as per the tour guide who had come to receive us at the Pudong airport. From sweltering Chennai we reached a cold Shanghai.

At Colombo met the main group and found that there were plenty of familiar faces. There were couple of Army veterans and this added colour to the group. Five service doctors in the group



gave us a feeling of 'All is well'. The average age of the group was 50. May be that's why the group turned out to be an obedient and a punctual one. Nowhere did we have to wait for late comers or missing persons. The next day and a half was jam packed with organised trips to various places in the sprawling mega polis. Shanghai the largest city in China and most populated is the commercial capital of China was full of tall buildings, a veritable concrete jungle. Shanghai is an unusual place. It's a hybrid of Eastern and Western business and its social traditions are found nowhere else in mainland China. Some of the places of interest visited were:

The Bund is Shanghai's waterfront on the west bank of Huangpu River. It was largely built in the late-19th and early-20th centuries to establish Shanghai as the British Empire's trading hub of the Far East. With the financial centre's move to the east bank of Huangpu River, the old Bund has become a new home for world-class hotels, restaurants and retailers.

The Shanghai Museum is a museum of ancient Chinese art and is considered one of China's first world-class modern museums. The museum was founded in 1952. The museum has a collection of over 120,000 pieces, including bronze, ceramics, calligraphy, furniture, jades, ancient coins, paintings, seals,



Veterans and Spouses facing Shanghai Museum

sculptures, minority art and foreign art.

Shanghai Maglev Train is the first commercially operated high-speed magnetic levitation line in the world and only the third Maglev line to be operated. The train line connects Shanghai Pudong International Airport and the outskirts of central Pudong where passengers could interchange to the Shanghai Metro to continue their trip to the city centre. The line runs from Longyang Road station in Pudong to Pudong International Airport. We took a ride and at full speed of 431km/h, the journey took seven minutes and 20 seconds to complete the distance of 30 km. Moving at 430km/h was thrilling.

For reasons unknown all our trips were limited to the modern Shanghai. The quaint old town was nowhere in the picture. All of us enjoyed the Chinese cuisine except for four vegetarians who had a difficult time during lunch. Breakfast wasn't a problem and so was the dinner which was eaten in different Indian restaurants. Though the visit was an enjoyable one, it was too whirlwind in nature. On completion of Shanghai stay, all of us boarded the high speed bullet train to Beijing on the third afternoon. After spending two days in Beijing and visiting Tiananmen Square, Forbidden City, Great Wall etc. we returned to India via Sri Lanka.

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Hyderabad Charter

Charter Meetings: Annual General Body Meeting with the Members of the Navy Foundation, Hyderabad Charter was conducted on 13th April 2014. Meetings were also conducted on 09th April 2013 and 29th September 2013. 120 Members have attended the Annual General Body Meeting along with their wives. During the Meeting, information received from MoD (Navy) and other naval organisations on various matters was disseminated to the Members. Quarterdeck 2014 Magazine was distributed. Balance Sheet for the Financial Year 2013-2014 was presented and the points raised by the Members were discussed and the Balance Sheets were passed.

Navy Cup Golf Tournament: Golf Cup Tournament consisting of eight teams from Army, Navy, Air Force Units at Hyderabad

including one Team from Navy Foundation, Hyderabad Charter was organised on 24th March 2013 and 22nd December 2013. On completion of the Tournament, Lunch was hosted for all the participants.

Navy Foundation Lunch: Director DMDE hosted a Lunch for all the Members of the Navy Foundation, Hyderabad Charter. 140 Members and their spouses attended the Lunch.

Demise of Commander Anup Kumar Haldar: On 26 June 2013, Commander AK Haldar expired due to illness connected to Cancer. Secretary of Navy Foundation, Hyderabad Charter visited the family of the above named officer within two hours and provided all possible help and assistance. This Charter will continue to provide necessary assistance to the family.

Bangalore Charter

2nd Admiral Pereira Memorial Lecture

The 2nd Admiral RL Pereira Memorial Lecture was conducted on 10 Jan 15 at Kalakshetra Auditorium, Bharat Electronics Ltd. Complex, Jalahalli, Bengaluru. The speaker, Commodore A Paulraj (Retd), Padma Bhushan, presently an Emeritus Professor at Stanford University, USA delivered the talk on '***Accelerating Technology Change and National Security***'. Admiral RK Dhowan, the Chief of the Naval Staff presided over the function and delivered the keynote address.

In his lecture, Professor Paulraj highlighted the existing asymmetry in the rate of advance of military vs civil technology and how the military needs to keep pace with the rapidly accelerating technology in the areas of biology, robotics, information, nano-technology and energy. He reiterated that technology will be the key to military preparedness for India in the coming years, especially in the current security environment which is rapidly degrading due to rise in asymmetric threats.

Octogenarians Honoured: The Navy



Foundation, Bangalore Charter honoured a number of Octogenarians during the year. They included Cdr NR Rao, Cdr TN Singhal, R Adm Vasanth, Capt S Prabhala, and R Adm RR Sood. Each member who achieved this milestone was presented with a specially designed Coffee Mug as a memento, and also planted a fruit tree sapling in an area specially designated as the "Veterans' Garden" in the Naval Officers' Mess, Bangalore.

Navy Week: On 01 Dec 2013, as a part of the Navy Week, Commodore DS Shekhawat, Station Commander, Bangalore, hosted a lunch for the Veterans at the Naval Officers' Mess, Bangalore. The event was attended by a large number of veterans with spouses. The Veteran community of Bangalore Charter greatly appreciated introduction of this tradition which was hitherto followed mostly at Command Headquarters.

Veterans' Get-togethers: A get-together of veterans and their spouses was held on 23 Feb 2014. The highlight of the day was special prizes for the ladies who dressed to celebrate the "Colours of Spring". In addition, there was "Early Bird Prize", "Guess the weight of the Cake", "Nostalgia Navy quiz" and Tambola. The event was attended by 120 Veterans and their spouses. Another evening get-together of veterans and their spouses was held on 23 May 2014. Officer-in-Charge ECHS Polyclinic and

few Specialists from the Command Hospital, Air Force Bangalore were invited to join the gathering. A lunch get-together of veterans and their spouses was held on 27 Jul 2014. The highlight of the day was special prizes for the ladies and gentlemen who dressed to celebrate the "Monsoon Magic". In addition, there was "Early Bird Prize", "Guess the weight of the Fruit Basket", "Short Navy quiz" and Tambola. Lt Col M S Ashok, a renowned and extremely successful financial expert gave a presentation on "Managing Personal Finances" for the benefit of the Veteran community. The event was well attended.

Obituary: The Charter mourned the passing on of the following members/Associate members:-

- (a) Rear Admiral K Sridharan, AVSM
- (b) Cdr MP Bhoopaiya
- (c) Cdr BKS Nair
- (d) Mrs Phyllis Pereira
- (e) Cdr P Somaraju, NM
- (f) Cdr P Sanny
- (g) Mrs Bunt Misra w/o Cmde Jai Misra
- (h) Mrs Saraswati w/o Late Cdr VV Narayanan
- (i) Cmde GM Shea
- (k) V Adm OP Bansal
- (l) Cmde SR Iyengar

"Golden Age Leaf"

Quarterdeck is very keen on introducing a special feature "**Golden Age Leaf**" to commemorate the life and achievements of our Veterans who have crossed the 85-years' milestone, through own writings, or seeking assistance of others in sketching their life in 80s.

Kerala Charter

The Kerala Charter continues to be very vibrant and active. Numerous activities were held during the past one year to provide ample opportunity for interaction among members, interaction with the serving fraternity and also the civilian community.

Navy Week 2013: The Southern Naval Command gave opportunity to our members to attend the grand Naval Band Concert held at the Le Meridian Hotel, the Naval Operational Demonstration held in the Ernakulam channel off the Rajendra Maidan and the At-Home hosted by the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief at the Navy House.

Annual Picnic: A boat cruise picnic was held on 02 Feb 2014 for the members of the foundation. It was a pleasant and enjoyable outing. The interaction between the members during the outing has contributed to strengthen

bonds of friendship and good relations among the members.

NFKC-RCI Golf Tournament: A Golf Tournament was conducted over two days at Naval Golf Club, Katari Bagh, Naval Base, Kochi. All the golf lovers had the opportunity to participate. Cdr K P A Rauf (Retd) arranged the sponsorship and coordinated the event.

NFKC Foreign Tour: The NFKC for the first time arranged a visit abroad to China for its members from 24th Apr to 29th Apr 2014. The group consisted of 22 members of NFKC, four members from Chennai Charter, two from Mumbai Charter, four from Army and three other families/friends. The places visited were Shanghai the commercial capital and Beijing the political capital of China. The tour was thoroughly enjoyed by all and was a great experience. The highlights were the visit and





walk along the Great Wall of China, the Tiananmen Square, the travel on the Magnetic levitation train (the only one in the world) at 430 km per hour and journey from Shanghai to Beijing by the Superfast Train at 300 km per hour.

AGM 2014: The Annual General Body Meeting-2014 of Navy Foundation, Kerala Charter was held on Sunday, 25th May 2014 at SNC Officers' Mess. The Meeting was chaired by V Adm. RP Suthan, (Retd). The meeting was followed by lunch. The Patron of Kerala Charter V Adm. Satish Soni, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Southern Naval

Command was the Chief Guest. During the AGM, V Adm. KN Sushil, (Retd) was elected as the new President and Cdr JJ Valavi as the new Secretary.

NFKC Outreach Programme: The Charter carried out outreach activities with the voluntary contributions from the members. Onam was celebrated at an orphanage and old age home with the inmates. The inmates were gifted with new clothes. Financial aid @Rs 2000/-per month is being given to the old age home for medicine and Rs 2000/-per month is being spent for purchase and supply of Baby food items for the Sisters of Charity Home at Kalloor. Cmde K N Mohandas is coordinating the outreach activities.

Independence Day: Independence Day 2014 was celebrated by the Charter members assembling at the Marine drive, Kochi. The group sang the National Anthem holding the national flag and thereafter went for a long walk on the marine drive walk-way. Good response of the members notwithstanding the inclement weather was encouraging. After the walk, the members came together and had a sumptuous breakfast.



Onam Celebration 2014: Onam celebration 2014 was on 21st Sep 2014. The Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Southern Naval Command was the Chief Guest. There was very good response from the members. Senior Officers of the Command were invited. A sumptuous Onam Sadya (Lunch) was arranged on the occasion.



Lucknow Charter

Come December – and it is time to celebrate the Navy Day.

The day is 4th December 1971, when Indian Navy's missile boats [basically meant for

coastal defense], were quietly positioned South of Karachi harbour. Their missiles sunk Pak Navy ships and set ablaze the oil dumps in their port. Pakistan did not know what had hit them!



In keeping with the tradition, the Navy Foundation Lucknow Charter celebrated this day on 04th December 2014 with pomp and dignity at Surya Officers' Institute with cocktails and dinner for its members and their spouse.

Surprisingly there were some serving officers too joined in the camaraderie, in keeping with the spirit de corps.

There was an impromptu sing-song session courtesy the hen crowd.

The Charter President, Surgeon Vice Admiral J C Sharma, in his speech praised the efforts of the Charter's office bearers for their untiring efforts to make the gathering memorable.





Mumbai Charter

09 Mar 14 - 11th Soman Memorial lecture was conducted in Asvini Auditorium. The Guest Speaker was Mr Alyque Padamsee who spoke on "Why is Bombay the New York of India". The humorous talk was enjoyed and well appreciated by all the veterans and their spouses. V Adm A R Karve, COS, HQWNC was the Chief Guest for the Event.



06 Apr 14- Veterans v/s Fleet Officers Golf tournament was held in US Club and was won by the serving naval officers.



25 May 2014- Foundation AGM was held in IMSC where R Adm RM Bhatia and Cdr Vijay Vadhera were re-elected as Vice-President and Hon Secy respectively for a further term of

three years. In addition, all the Sub-Committee members representing the suburbs were also re-elected for another term. Minutes of the AGM-2013 as also the Balance sheet for 2013 was adopted by the members.



25 May 2014- 5th Foundation Picnic was held in IMSC itself which was sponsored by M/S Pipava Shipyard. With a DJ in attendance, professional singers with their oldie songs, plenty of drinks/food, games conducted by the Event Manager followed by prize distribution, the picnic turned out to be a roaring success enjoyed by almost 250 Veterans, spouses as well as their children/grand children.





Delhi Charter

Admiral RD Katari, the first Indian to be Chief of the Naval Staff (22 Apr 1958 to 04 Jun 1962) is widely admired and much loved for the challenge he undertook at the young age of 47 years to integrate the best practices of Royal Navy and lay the foundation of modern Indian Navy. He is also remembered for his pioneering work and strategic vision in providing the fledgling Indian Navy a firm push towards self reliance and indigenization, and in formulating the blue print for the strong force the Indian Navy has become today. Admiral RD Katari settled in Secunderabad after his retirement (at the age of 51 years) and served as the Chairman of Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (APSRTC) from Dec 62 to May 64. Thereafter, he was appointed as India's Ambassador to Burma for five years.

The 24th Admiral RD Katari Memorial Lecture was conducted on 16 Jan 15 at Dr DS Kothari Auditorium, DRDO Bhawan, New Delhi. The speaker, Shri Shyam Saran, former Foreign Secretary and now Chairman, Research and Information System for Developing Countries and Chairman, National Security Advisory Board delivered the lecture titled '*A National Security Strategy for India and the Maritime*



Domain'.

Chief of the Naval staff Admiral RK Dhowan, presided over the function. The event was attended by Adm & Mrs RH Tahiliyani (Retd), Adm Sureesh Mehta (Retd), Mrs Lalita Ramdas daughter of Late Admiral RD Katari and Admiral L Ramdas also attended the event. In addition a large number of dignitaries from the Ministry of Defence, the academia, think tanks and the diplomatic corps were present during the event.





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Western Naval News

Immediate Support Vessels Squadron

The 81st Immediate Support Vessels Squadron comprising seven Immediate Support Vessels (ISVs) were commissioned on 30 Jan 2014. Built indigenously by M/S SHM Shipcare, these vessels would be operated by the Indian Navy and patrol the Offshore Oil Development Areas. The ships were commissioned at Naval Dockyard, Mumbai by Shri Sudhir Vasudeva, Chairman and Managing Director ONGC.



Resource Center for Children with Special Needs

Vice Admiral Shekhar Sinha, the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Naval Command, inaugurated the 'Resource Center' for children with special needs at Navy Children School, Mumbai on 05 Feb 2014. The center will assist the school in accommodating children with special needs in main stream education facilitating better future for such children.



Meeting on Coastal Security

A meeting on Coastal Security was held at Joint Operations Centre of Western Naval Command, Mumbai on 07 Feb 2014. The meeting was co-chaired by Vice Admiral Shekhar Sinha, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief Western Naval Command and Mr JS Saharia, Chief Secretary, Govt. of Maharashtra. Senior officials of State Govt, Navy, Coast Guard, Police, Customs, Shipping, Maharashtra Maritime Board and Fisheries etc attended the meeting.

National Helpline for the Veteran Naval Sailors

A new toll free number 1800-220-560 has been launched at Bureau of Sailors, Mumbai for Veteran Naval Sailors and their families to provide assistance and address the grievances. The Helpline has enabled the Naval Veterans and their families, including widows a single window to address issues concerning naval pension, counting of former service towards civil pension, cases with Benevolent Association Fund, terminal benefits, Ex-servicemen Contributory Health Scheme and re-employment post naval career.



Bombay Medical Congress

The 70th Annual Conference of the Bombay Medical Congress was held at INHS Asvini Auditorium on 08 and 09 Feb 2014. The conference is a unique annual event that provides a platform for both military and civilian doctors to exchange ideas and advances in the medical profession.

The conference was inaugurated by Vice Admiral Shekhar Sinha, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Naval Command and attended by a large number of senior medical officers of the Armed Forces as well as eminent physicians of Mumbai.

Blood Donation Camp and Blood Stem Cell mapping

A Blood Stem Cell Mapping and Blood Donation Camp was organised by the officers and sailors of the Western Fleet on 21 Mar 2014 at the Fleet Maintenance Unit, Mumbai. St George, KEM, Tata Memorial Hospital and Red Cross blood banks were invited for blood collection.

Rear Admiral AK Chawla, the Flag Officer Commanding, Western Fleet, felicitated the sailors and defence civilians for participation



in large numbers and reiterated the Navy's responsibility towards this noble cause.

Visit of the CNS

On his maiden visit to Western Naval Command, Mumbai, Admiral Rabinder Kumar Dhowan, Chief of the Naval Staff, inspected an impressive ceremonial parade conducted at INS Shikra on 19 May 2014.



He appreciated the Western Naval Command for maintaining a high tempo of operations including TROPEX – 2014, operationalisation of INS Vikramaditya and optimal exploitation of Rukmani-Navy's Communication satellite, which gives a tremendous boost and acts as a force multiplier to the 'Network Centric Operations (NCO)'.





Vice Admiral Anil Chopra Takes Over

Vice Admiral Anil Chopra, took over as the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief Western Naval Command, at an impressive ceremonial parade held at INS Shikra, Mumbai on 06 Jun 2014.



Prior to his taking over the Western Naval Command, he has held the appointments of Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Naval Command and the Director General Indian Coast Guard.



INS Kolkata Commissioned



The Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, commissioned INS Kolkata into the Indian Navy at a glittering ceremony held at the Naval Dockyard, Mumbai on 16 Aug 2014. Kolkata is the lead ship of the indigenously designed and constructed Kolkata-class guided missile destroyers, built by Mazagon Dock Limited, Mumbai. On his arrival, the Prime Minister was received by Admiral RK Dhowan, Chief of the Naval Staff and accorded a 100-man Guard of Honour, before embarking the ship for the commissioning ceremony. Among the VIPs present were His Excellency the Governor of Maharashtra, Shri K Sankaranarayanan, the Chief Minister of Maharashtra Shri Prithviraj





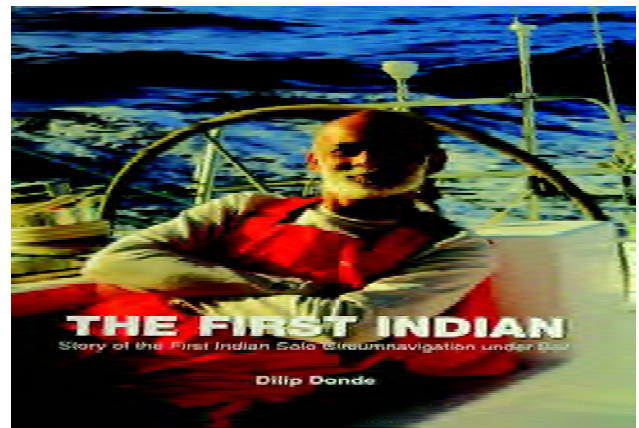
Chavan, the Defence Minister Shri Arun Jaitley, the National Security Adviser Shri Ajit Kumar Doval, Members of Parliament Shri Arvind Savant and Smt Poonam Mahajan, the Defence Secretary Shri RK Mathur, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Naval Command, Vice Admiral Anil Chopra and the Chairman and Managing Director of Mazagon Docks Limited, Rear Admiral RK Shrawat (Retd).

The Commanding Officer, Captain Tarun Sobti, read out the Commissioning Warrant, prior to the hoisting of 'Colours' (the national flag and naval ensign) for the first time in the life of the ship.



Book Release

His Excellency the Governor of Maharashtra, Shri K Sankaranarayanan, unveiled the book, *The First Indian – Story of the First Indian Solo Circumnavigation Under Sail*, at a ceremony organised at Western Naval Command Officers Mess, Colaba, Mumbai on 19 August 2014. The book is published by The Maritime History Society, Mumbai.



As he sailed *INSV Mhadei* into Mumbai harbour on 19 Aug 2010, Commander Dilip Dondé earned his place in India's maritime history by becoming the first Indian to complete a solo circumnavigation under sail in an Indian built boat. The book is a first hand account of this feat, which had never been attempted in the country and had been successfully completed by less than 200 people worldwide.



Centre for Defence and Strategic Studies, Australia

A ten member delegation from Centre for Defence & Strategic Studies (CDSS), Australia headed by Col Duncan Hayward visited Mumbai from 10 to 12 Apr 14. During the visit, Col Duncan Hayward, Head of delegation called on V Adm AR Karve, the Chief of Staff, Western Naval Command and also visited INS Viraat.



The Centre for Defence and Strategic Studies (CDSS) is the senior educational institution of the Australian Defence College, and is part of the Australian Defence College (ADC). Its campus is located at Weston Creek in South-West of Canberra. The principal activity of the CDSS is to conduct Defence and Strategic Studies Course (DSSC) in Australia, for senior military officers and Government officials.

Goa Naval Area

The traditional Goan Carnival, known as the 'King MOMO Carnival' was held during the month of February 2014.

A Naval Float depicting "Costal Security Initiatives of the Indian Navy (post 26/11)" was prepared by the Naval Aircraft Yard (Goa) and



provided the local populace an insight into the role played by various agencies in enhancing costal security in Goa.



Naval Aviation Museum, Goa. Numerous organisation and schools had organised group visits to the Museum. During the visit of Prime Minister of India to INS Vikramaditya, an interview with former Chief of the Naval Staff, Adm Arun Prakash (Retd) was telecast live from the museum by Headlines Today Channel.





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Eastern Naval News

Change of Command



V Adm Satish Soni, took over as the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Naval Command on 16 Jun 2014.

INS Sumitra Commissioning Ceremony



Admiral R K Dhowan, Chief of the Naval Staff commissioned INS Sumitra—the fourth indigenous NOPV into the Indian Navy at an impressive ceremony in Chennai on 04 Sep 2014.

INS Kamorta Commissioned



The first indigenously built stealth ASW Corvette – INS Kamorta was commissioned by Shri Arun Jaitley, Hon'ble Raksha Mantri at ND (V) on 31 Aug 2014.

INS Sumedha joins the Eastern Naval Command



INS *Sumedha*, arrived at Visakhapatnam on 23 Mar 2014, after being commissioned at the Goa Shipyard Limited on 07 Mar 2014.



Support Vessels Commissioned



Three Immediate Support Vessels constituting the 83rd Squadron were commissioned on 04 Jun 2014 by V Adm Anil Chopra, FOC-in-C, East at the ND (V).

Eastern Fleet Off-shore Deployment

INS Shivalik participated in Multi-national Exercises at Chingdao China. Apart from naval Ships from the host country, naval ships from Pakistan, Bangladesh, Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia and Brunei also participated in the Exercises.

RIMPAC

A total of 22 countries with 38 ships, four submarines, 200 aircraft and approximately 25,000 personnel participated in the exercise RIMPAC from 01 to 30 Jul 2014, being one of the world's largest international maritime warfare exercises. The Deployments of INS Shivalik and Sahyadri mark a new chapter in the reach and sustenance of units of ENC.

Indra with Russian Navy and Malabar with US and JMSDF Navy



Eastern Fleet ships comprising INS Shivalik, Ranvijay and Shakti participated in Exercise INDRA from 16-19 Jul 2014 with Russian Navy and MALABAR from 27-30 Jul 2014 with US Navy and Japanese Maritime Self Defence Force.

Komodo with Indonesian, US, Thailand and Brunei Navy

INS Sukanya participated in a Multi- National HADR Exercise code-named 'Komodo' at Batam Island, Indonesia from 28 Mar - 03 Apr 2014. Apart from Sukanya and three ships from the host country, one ship each from US, Thailand and Brunei also participated in the exercise.

SIMBEX 2014 with Singapore Navy

The 21st edition of the India-Singapore bilateral Naval Exercise was conducted from 22 – 28 May 2014 off Port Blair. INS Kuthar and Karmuk represented Indian Navy in SIMBEX 2014.



Fleet Awards Evening 'Fling 14'

The annual awards function of the Eastern Fleet, 'Fleet Evening 2014', commemorating the accomplishments of the Fleet over the past year was held at Naval Auditorium, *Samudrika* on 16 Apr 2014. The 'Best Ship' Trophy was awarded to INS *Shivalik*, while INS *Jalashwa* was adjudged the 'Most Spirited Ship'.



Chinese Navy Ships at Visakhapatnam

Two ships of the PLA Navy, *Zhenghe* and *Weifang*, with R Adm Han Xiaohu, Commander PLAN Training Ship Task Group, and R Adm Li Jianjun, Assistant Chief of Staff and Political Commissar of PLA Dalian Naval Academy, arrived Visakhapatnam on 17 May 2014, on a four-day maiden visit to the Command.



Naval Selection Board, Visakhapatnam

A Naval Selection Board (NSB) for the induction of trainees into the officer cadre of the Indian Navy was inaugurated on 28 Jul 2014 at Nava Shakti Nagar (erstwhile 9 IRSD), by V Adm Bimal Verma, Chief of Staff, Eastern Naval Command.





Gas Turbine Test Facility

V Adm NN Kumar, Chief of Materiel, IHQ MoD (N) inaugurated an indigenously designed Gas Turbine Test Facility at INS *Eksila*.



Medical Seminar



INHS Kalyani conducted a Continuing Medical Education (CME) Seminar on 'Radiation Medical Emergencies' on 22 May 2014 at *Samudrika* Naval Auditorium to mark her 52nd Anniversary. V Adm Anil Chopra, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Naval Command was the Chief Guest at the event.

Change of Eastern Fleet Command

Flag Officer Commanding Eastern Fleet R Adm Atul Kumar Jain, handed over the Command of the Eastern Fleet to R Adm Ajendra Bahadur Singh, at an impressive ceremony on board INS *Jalashwa* on 08 Oct 2014.



Naval KG, Dolphin Hill

Naval KG School at Dolphin Hill was inaugurated by V Adm Anil Chopra, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Naval Command on 02 Apr 2014.





NWWA News

Special Milan by NWWA (ER) was held in Samudrika on 17 Jun 2014 to welcome Mrs Payal Soni on taking over as President, NWWA (ER).



'Cuddles' – Day Care Center

A modern child day care facility 'Cuddles' has been established at Command and was inaugurated by Mrs Ragini Chopra, President, NWWA (ER) on 03 Jun 2014.



Widows' Hostel, 104 Area

Widows' Hostel at 104 Area was inaugurated by Mrs Ragini Chopra, President, NWW(ER) on 03 Jun 2014.



Inter-School Quiz Competition



'Jagriti Group' organised an inter-school Quiz Competition on 04 Sep 2014 under the aegis of NWWA (ER). V Adm Bimal Verma, Chief of Staff, Eastern Naval Command graced the occasion as Chief Guest.



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