

FORCENET

E-ZINE

Magazine for military veterans in the corporate
September 2022, Volume IV, Issue 09



Bouncing Back



**FORCES
NETWORK**

THE NETWORK THAT WORKS

FOCUS | PASSION | IMPACT

SCAN ME



FORCENET

From the Editor

“My great concern is not whether you have failed, but whether you are content with your failure” – Abraham Lincoln

Dear Readers,

This month we decided to announce an exciting theme “Bouncing Back”. We also agreed in our Editorial team that we would encourage participation of content from our members this time. Firstly, the response was overwhelming. While we were expecting stories mostly related to careers we were in for a complete surprise. The wide range of stories ranging from fighting poverty, bitter marital discord, recovering from life threatening injuries and even bouncing back in Love life! Even the interview of Star of Forces Network is on the theme. These stories make very engaging reading. While reading them I ran through emotions like pity, respect, awe, inspiration, exhilaration an even more. No wonder they say that the sweetest stories are those which tell the saddest tales. What makes these stories even sweeter is that in each case the protagonist bounced back, emerged stronger and stood taller having braved through all the adversity, ill luck, prejudice, accidents that life threw at them. This truly resonates with The Spirit Of Forces Network (TSOFN).

We at the Forces Network also like to share our learnings within the community so that we can all learn as a community and NOT at each one’s expense the same lessons in life. **What was striking in these stories?** Firstly, these are real, raw stories these could have happened to you, me or anyone. Else. Secondly, what stood out was the fact that the protagonist refused to accept status quo or what was on offer and decided to chart their own life’s course. Thirdly, perseverance and grit. While all the stories have a happy ending it did not come easy the actors of these stories truly had to go through a lot but they never gave up even when the odds were heavily stacked up against them. Lastly, what comes across in each story is the Self Belief that each one showed some against societal norms, against medical advice, against poverty and some against mathematical probabilities. However in each the protagonist triumphed in the end.

We would urge our members to imbibe these life lessons from these stories. That would not only make them more successful in their lives but also more resilient and strong as a person.

Happy reading – this is not an issue to be skipped.



Jai Hind

Bouncingly,
Capt Rajesh Nair



Worried about the news of **recession**,
market volatility etc?

Financial Planning,
Retirement Planning,
Corporate Bonds & FDs
Central and State Govt Bonds,
Insurance - Life & General,
Wealth Creation,
Tax Planning, Mutual Funds
and much more...

Have a look at the history
when markets experienced
sharp bounce-backs!



By the Faujis. For the Faujis.

Hum Fauji Financial Services Private Limited

Visit at : 2nd Floor, Bimal Plaza, Sector 11, Dwarka, New Delhi - 110075
+91-9999053522 , +91-9999838923 (SMS & WhatsApp)
www.humfauji.in

EXCLUSIVE
INVITE



studio pepperfry

Hazratganj, Lucknow

Saluting The Defence Forces

Contact Now

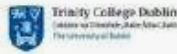
For Best Deals | Pre and Post Order Assistance
For All Items Bought Through Us Pan India!

studio pepperfry

Sapru Marg, Hazratganj, Lucknow

☎ 9305216506

STUDY IN IRELAND



- World-class education ... Steeped in history
- Education is in the DNA of Ireland
- Second highest exporter of software after India
- Ireland has third highest GDP per capita in the world, - after Luxembourg and Switzerland
- Universities with high world-rankings

We are specialists for Critical Skill Work Visa after studies

We provide help for admissions to study Medicine in Europe



HEPTA CONTINO INC



A STUDENT RECRUITER TO IRELAND WITH A DIFFERENCE

www.heptacontino.com

Email: heptainformation@gmail.com

Phones: +353 8949 14324, +91 72176 26824

We support our students to select courses based on their education and experience and give them support to integrate with European countries

ISAC CERTIFIED Privacy and Data Protection Officer (CPDPO)



The ISAC Certified Privacy and Data Protection officer (CPDPO) program is designed to equip participants, both students and professionals aspiring to start a career in data privacy and data protection. This program helps the participants to take the role of Data protection officer.

Leads to
National
Security
Database
Empanelment

Program Outcomes

- Skills to assume positions in Data Privacy and Data protection based on experience and Knowledge (Officer/ Junior Officer/ Manager/ Privacy professional/ Data Protection Officer/ Grievance officer)
- Ability to understand privacy and data protection for a global environment Data Privacy and Data Protection impact assessment
- Provide methods for protecting privacy using General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Principles
- Ability to Identify local and global laws and regulations that pertain to data protection
- Identify strategies for managing compliance issues related to Privacy
- Knowledge and skill to implement data privacy, security and protection in practice

Batch Starts on
1st Oct 2022

Program Content | 4 Weeks

Week 1

- Definition of Privacy
- Privacy Evolution and the current status
- Privacy Qualifier to find out a privacy requirement for an organization
- Various Privacy frameworks (Eg: Indian DP Bill, HIPAA and other contemporary regulations) in the industry and the comparison
- Privacy Impact Assessment

Week 2

- Establishment of Privacy Policy
- Privacy controls and implementation
- Ensuring Privacy Compliance
- Privacy Audit & Real-world Privacy cases
- Privacy Exam

Eligibility: Students in final year graduation, graduates and industry professionals

Week 3

- Definition of Data Protection (DP)
- DP Qualifier to find out a Data protection requirement for an organization
- Data life cycle stages and security
- Data protection in various environment
- Intellectual Property Protection

Week 4

- Contractual Data Management Security
- Cloud Data Security
- Data Discovery & Labelling
- Database Migration Security
- Physical Security
- Real world data breaches and consequences
- Data Protection Exam

Enroll Now!



www.isacindia.org

+91 8800-880757

+91 8882-560-560



RAXA ACADEMY

Centre of Excellence for Higher Learning in Security & Safety

RAXA Academy an ISO 29993:2017 and ISO 45001:2018 certified training institution of Raxa Security Services Ltd, which in turn is an ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 18788:2015 certified, GMR Group company. The Academy is spread across 100 acres amidst sprawling meadows, the best-in-class training and administrative infrastructure and has been designed aesthetically with modern amenities to cater to the needs of multitudes of trainees seeking an invigorating and rejuvenating training experience here. We offer the following courses in September 2022. Do register on the website provided for us to get back to you. <https://www.raxatechnosecuritysolutions.in/>

Advanced Security Management Course is designed to cover the security management, security risk assessment, physical and electronic security as well as the emerging technology in security management, cyber security, health & safety and crisis, emergency & incident management, Intelligence, Investigation and legal aspects of security.

Intended outcomes

- Understand concept of Security Risk Management
- Update knowledge on Physical Security
- Acquiring skills in Security Management
- Knowledge about Security Technology Systems Fundamentals
- Understanding Security Intelligence Management and Security Investigation Management.
- Attaining awareness on Emergency and Crisis Management & Conflict Management
- Exposure to Cyber Security
- Knowing the legal aspects related to security.
- Skills to Conduct of a Security Survey /Audit and Discussion of Case Study on Security
- Understanding Managing health and safety at the Workplace

REGISTER HERE

Advanced Security Management Course - ASMC	
September, 2022	12 th to 24 th

IOSH Managing Safely® is one of the most popular health and safety certificates in the world. It's designed to bring the delegates up to speed on their health and safety responsibilities and help them develop the practical skills to manage risk on a day-to-day basis.

Imagine an organization, where its staff understands their health and safety roles. Where each department knows exactly the nature of responsibilities it has towards the other teams. In cases of an emergency, the company is prepared to tackle any challenges that come its way using the most effective techniques. This level of safety competence will lead to international recognition for the individual as well as the organization to which they belong. Being an Approved Training Provider of IOSH (Training Provider # 4644), Raxa Academy is happy to offer the 22 hours flexible and highly interactive training package for individuals and corporates.

IOSH Managing Safely – IOSH MS		
Month	Batch 1	Batch 2
September, 2022	05 th to 13 th	19 th to 27 th

REGISTER HERE



Approved
training
provider
4644

Finvision Financial Services



Finvision Financial Services

Finvision Financial Services is one of the fastest growing investment firm across India and as on date we are managing multi crore investments of 1000+ fraternity investors and generating the best returns.

Our Core Services



Financial Planning



Tax Planning and Filing



Retirement Planning



Capital gain Bonds & Corporate Bonds



Mutual Fund and Smart SIP



Insurance



PMS and AIF Investment



Equity including Unlisted stocks



S-15, Manish Global Mall, Sec 22, Dwarka, New Delhi - 110077



+91-7508055826
+91- 9654341212



www.finvision.in

CAREER GUIDANCE & UN >>> SEMINAR

AT

NEW DELHI

ON

9TH OCTOBER

CONTACT US FOR

- THE UNITED NATIONS
PLACEMENT GUIDANCE
- ASIS CERTIFICATION
MENTORING
- PROJECT
MANAGEMENT
CERTIFICATIONS



571 D NIMBUWALA,
GARHI CANTT, DEHRADUN



WWW.THEWINNINGEDGE.NET | +91 8279908864, 7999356350



AUTHORIZED TRAINING PARTNER OF PMI®



SPECIAL 30% DISCOUNT FOR VETERANS

SIX DAYS OF **LIVE** PMP®



ONLINE BOOTCAMP



GAUTHAM SUDAKAR

PMP®, PMI-ACP®
PMI Approved PMP® Trainer & Mentor at EDUHUBSPOT



- PMI® Approved **35** Contact Hours
- PMP® Exam Simulator
- 1170+** Practice Questions
- 67+** Chapter Videos & Podcasts
- 1200+** Chapter Slides
- 210+** Real PMP® Questions by PMI®



DELIVERABLES

Sat 10 Sep

DAY 1

Sun 11 Sep

DAY 1

Sat 17 Sep

DAY 1

Sun 18 Sep

DAY 1

Sat 24 Sep

DAY 1

Sun 25 Sep

DAY 1

5.30PM - 1AM(IST)



~~Rs. 30,000~~

Rs. 21,000

To Avail Your 30% Discount
Email to Soumya Ghatak @



SOUMYA.GHATAK@EDUHUBSPOT.COM



EduHubSpot



WWW.EDUHUBSPOT.COM



+1(833)338-7768



services@eduhubspot.com

74065 81681
www.nyatigroup.com



KUCH FARZ HAMARA BHI SWABHIMAN

Kuch Farz Hamara Bhi

SWABHIMAN

An **EXCLUSIVE HOUSING INITIATIVE** for **DEFENCE PERSONNEL** by Nyati


PREFERENTIAL PRICING


NO FLOOR RISE


ASSURED 24 MONTHS RENTAL*

INTRODUCING



ONGOING PROJECTS IN PUNE

EVOLVE
MAGARPATTA

ELYSIA
KHARADI

ELAN
WAGHOLI

EXUBERANCE
UNDRI

ERA
DHANORI

 6th FLOOR, NYATI UNITREE, NEAR GUNJAN THEATRE, NAGAR ROAD, YERAWADA, PUNE - 411006, INDIA.



Disclaimer: The information on this advertisement is provided "as is" without any warranties, express or implied, including but not limited to the implied warranties for a particular purpose, or non-infringement. Nyati Group makes no representation or warranty that the information contained on this site will be timely or error free. Nyati Group has not reviewed all the sites that may be linked to its site and does not endorse and is not responsible for the content of a 3rd site pages or any other sites linked to these sites. Your linking to each site is at your own risk.

MOUNTAINS CALLING PEACE FOR YOUR BODY AND SOUL



PRICE
**2.5
crore**
ONWARDS

**The
Dak
Bungalow**

Expertise of an
ex Armed Forces Officer and MDI Alumni

CAPT VIPUL CHOUDHARY

MDI, GURGAON CLASS OF 2008

OLIVE GREEN
CONSULTANT

7840080900 | vchoudhary@olivegreenrealty.com

LUTYENS HABITAT

LEASING WORKSPACES & HOMES FOR 15 YEARS

How COVID-19 has Transformed the Corporate Real Estate Ecosystem:

- 25% Workforce to permanently Work From Home
- Resulting in Reduced Office Space Requirement
- Resulting to Higher Vacancy/ Availability of Office Spaces
- Resulting in Reduction in Rental Rates to the tune of 20%
- Resulting In New Interior Concepts With Floating Desk

SO, SHOULDN'T YOU SHIFT POST COVID?

&

Save Upto 40% Rent!!

Use the Covid-19 slowdown to your Advantage

Maj Dhir Singh

☎ 9999007829

✉ dhir@lutyenshabitat.com

LUTYENS HABITAT

LUTYENS HABITAT PVT. LTD.

Sector 27, Golf Course Road,
Gurugram, NCR.



FAUJI WEALTH

Spreading Financial Literacy



Increasing Tax Liability due to not Harvesting Tax.

TAKE A SECOND OPINION ON YOUR INVESTMENT!

Broker keeps getting full Brokerage even when investor gets below par Returns.

Most Mutual Funds investors are losing out on higher interest from mutual funds!.



9354266573
01143029558



www.faujiwealth.in
support@faujiwealth.in



Vardhman Bahnof
Plaza, Sector 12,
Dwarka, New Delhi

GALAXY ASSOCIATES

Special care for special people in our life



Senior Citizens Red Carpet Health Insurance Plan

- For Seniors of Age 60 to 75 years with Insurance **cover up to ₹25 Lakhs**
- Policy issued without **pre-medical screening**
- Covers Pre-existing diseases from the **second year** itself
- **Free health check-up** for every claim free year
- **Cover for Out-Patient** medical consultations at network hospitals

 *Reach out to understand the benefits in detail.*

Registered & Corporate Office: No. 1, New Tank Street, Valluvar Kottam High Road, Nungambakkam, Chennai - 600034
• CIN No: U66010TN2005PLC056649 • IRDAI Registration No: 129. SHAI/2020-21/CANOPY/SCRCHI(IRDA/NL-HLT/SHAI/P-H/V.II/172/14-15)/ENG/001
• Insurance is the subject matter of solicitation • For more details on risk factors, terms and conditions please read the sales brochure carefully before concluding a sale • IRDAI clarifies to public that IRDAI or its officials do not involve in activities like sale of any kind of insurance or financial products nor invest premiums • IRDAI does not announce any bonus • Public receiving such phone calls are requested to lodge a police complaint along with details of phone call and number.

Col.R Srinivas (Retd)
Director-Galaxy Associates | Business Partner With Start Health
Insurance and TATA AIA Life
M: 7400160159



CUSTOMISED & GROUP TOURS PLANNERS

INTERNATIONAL

DUBAI TOUR PACKAGES
SINGAPORE & MALAYSIA TOUR PACKAGES
THAILAND TOUR PACKAGES
EUROPE TOUR PACKAGES
THAILAND TOUR PACKAGES
BALI TOUR PACKAGES
VIETNAM & CAMBODIA TOUR PACKAGES
CRUISE PACKAGES & MANY MORE

DOMESTIC

ANDAMAN & NICOBAR
GOA
MANALI
GUJARAT
UTTARAKHAND
HIMACHAL
JAMMU & KASHMIR INCL LADAKH
RAJASTHAN ETC

OUR SERVICES

TOUR PACKAGES
HOTEL RESERVATIONS
FLIGHT RESERVATIONS
VISA APPLICATION ASSISTANCE
TRAVEL INSURANCE
CRUISE RESERVATION

Colonels Travelz & Explorers # <https://www.thecolonelstravelz.com/>

Ashok Kumar Jamwal: # +91 9312543774

Ajay Jamwal: # +91 9717080910

Email: ashokjamwal0407@gmail.com; ajcolonelstravelz@gmail.com; colonelstravelz@gmail.com

Confused about your career? Which stream/career to choose? What to become in life?

Presenting
CAREER COUNSELLING & MENTORING
For STD IX/X/XI/XII/Graduates

- **PSYCHOMETRIC ASSESSMENT**
- **17 PAGE ASSESSMENT REPORT**
- **STREAM DISCOVERY**
- **SCHOLARSHIP GUIDANCE**
- **UNIVERSITY CHOICE**
- **ENTRANCE EXAMS**
- **CAREER PATHWAY OUTLINE**
- **CAREER COUNSELING APP WITH PERSONALIZED DASHBOARD**
- **INFO ABOUT 550 PLUS CAREERS**
- **NOTIFICATION OF ALL SCHOLARSHIPS & ENTRANCE EXAMS**



Dr. DELIN MATHEW

PhD (Education), M.Ed., MSc Psychology
Career Counselor, Child Psychologist
Positive Parenting Coach & Author

www.dbtc.co.in

9449053600 /9797424845

OFFICERS COLONY

EXCLUSIVE TWIN BUNGALOWS NEAR NIBM



A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY TO LIVE LIFE KING SIZE NATURALLY!

The neighbourhood boasts of having the largest population of Defence Officers in Pune.



- 60 Residences spanning 5 Acres !
- An eco-friendly & pet-friendly Project.
- CCTV security with smart app entry/exit access
- Private open spaces, large living rooms, walk-in wardrobes.
- State of-the art, spacious club house & party lawn.
- Dream home in a self owned Plot.
- Power back-up for the project from DG set.
- Fully equipped gymnasium with sauna, steam and massage rooms.
- Indoor games room with pool table, table tennis, cards table.
- 30 feet internal roads with footpath, tree plantations & children play area.

Duplex Twin-Bungalows (G+1) with open Space Lawn + Two Car Parking		
Twin-Bungalows	Carpet (Sq. Ft.)	Terrace (Sq.Ft.)
3.5 RHK L	1600	700
3.5 RHK XL	1700	800
4.5 RHK	2000	900

Contact :
Wg cdr M Thirumaran
Call : 8600102771
Ph. : 020 - 40036012

Contents

From the Editor	2
Star of Forces Network: Lt Col Nitin Mehta	20 - 26
General Humour : Col Amit Dalvi.....	26
Moment In Time	27 - 29
Stars on the Horizon: Mr. Harman Chahal.....	30 - 38
Bouncing Back Stories :	
Gp Capt Nikhil Verma.....	40 - 43
Capt Gaurie Mahajan.....	44 - 45
Col Virender Yadav SM.....	46
Col Navdeep Singh Sangha.....	47 - 53
Lt Cdr Varun Kumar Dhand.....	54 - 57
Brig Krishna Raj Nambiar.....	58 - 62
Brig Raja Bhattacharjee.....	63 - 64
Lt Cdr SA Vishwanath.....	65 - 66
Paraplegic Rehabilitation Center.....	67 - 77
Disease and medicine in world history: Surg Lt Cdr (Dr) Sukesh Trikha....	79 - 84
तन्हा राही: Capt Gaurie Mahajan.....	85
The Dervish's Sword: Col Arun Hariharan.....	86 - 92
Matrimonial :	93

[A NOTE FOR THE READERS](#)

This is an interactive e-magazine, with active links on many pages, including the advertisements, which can be used by just tapping/clicking on them.

For the ease of providing a feedback, such links have been provided at the end of the articles too.

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed within this e-magazine are the personal opinions of the authors and interviewees. The facts and opinions appearing in the articles thus do not reflect the views of Forces Network, and Forces Network does not assume any responsibility or liability for the same.

Star of Forces Network

A Forces Network Star is a member of the Forces Network who has gone on to achieve glory in the his/her corporate/civilian avatar. The aim of this series is not just to celebrate our successes from the veteran community, which unfortunately we do not do enough, but also to inspire others. The ultimate goal is to set up a virtuous self-sustaining cycle of inspiration leading to more successes in turn inspiring many more.

IN INTERACTION WITH RAJESH NAIR

Lt Col Nitin Mehta is born and brought up in the Army. An alumni of NDA, Khadakwasla, he was commissioned in the Corps of EME on 10 Jun 1995. He is a B Tech - Mechanical, and has also done Advance course in Aviation. A Biker, post taking PMR he ventured into Media. He has given modelling a different look and is currently into full time acting and modelling. Currently he is engaged with doing Three Telugu and One Tamil movie. He can be followed on instagram at [@niitinmehtaofficial](https://www.instagram.com/niitinmehtaofficial)



Rajesh: Please tell us something about your background prior to joining the Army, and your subsequent Army career?

Nitin: My father served The Indian Army for 37 long years. I was born and brought up in the Army atmosphere. From my early years I wanted to join the Indian army and finally after completing my school I was fortunate enough to get selected for the National Defence Academy NDA Khadakwasla, Pune. I served the Indian Army for 21 years and loved every moment of it. The Army has taught me everything in life and because of the training and ethics in Army, I am where I am today. I have loved and enjoyed every moment of those 21 Years of my life.

I was commissioned in the Indian Army on 10 June 1995 and have enjoyed and learnt every single day till my last day in uniform ie May 2016. I am a Bachelor of Technology Mechanical and then I specialized in Aviation, particularly maintenance and repair of Helicopters. I had the privilege of serving across the length and breath of our country at various levels . I would say that it helped me to grow as a person too. Everyday has been a great experience. Every work has its challenges but I would say the comradely and brotherhood in the Army helps you to overcome the challenges. I was a technical guy and am proud that I was known for my Technical Acumen. This gives me immense satisfaction that whatever I did I gave my 100% to it .



Post Commissioning

Rajesh: Please give us more details about what you are presently engaged in?

Nitin: After my modelling stint for 3-4 years in which I did number of shoots for big brands like Tanishq, Spicejet, Air Vistara, Kalyan Jewelers, Reid & Taylor and walking the ramp for some of the biggest designers in Lakme Fashion Week and India Fashion Week, I worked hard to upgrade myself and got into acting.

At present I am into South Indian films . Have acted as Antagonist in AKHANDA - Telugu block buster released on 02 DEC 2021. I am presently shooting for Three Telugu and one Tamil movie as antagonist. and am looking forward to more such projects .



Part of Movies

Rajesh: What was the impetus for you to leave the uniformed service and then get into the corporate?

Nitin: I hung my boots from Allahabad on 20 May 2016. Well, I had met with an accident in 2008 due to which I was downgraded medically, and due to my injury I was not able to give my 100% to work. In 2014 I developed a liking to ride motorcycle, so I thought that I should take a premature retirement and start my own venture in Biking. I had no plans to become a model and an actor then. I was planning to start some biking venture after my retirement and in the mean time I started growing my

beard. Some one spotted me at the airport with salt-n-pepper beard look and approached me with a role in a movie. That thing did not happen but it just opened a small window in me that let me try out this. and then I spoke to few friends who told me that a portfolio shoot is required to start with, as I had no clue about this field. I just wanted to give a shot, there should be no regrets in life.



Biking my Passion

Rajesh: From Uniform to Glamour how did you planned the transition what were the challenges which you had to overcome to bounce back?

Nitin: It was very hard initially for me when I got into modelling. It was a total 180 degree phase shift, from disciplined life with punctuality as priority into a field where things were totally opposite. Moreover I was rubbing shoulders with young people who were 20-25 years younger to me. it was really tough. Sometimes I used to feel lonely during the shoots and the show due to the huge differences, but I needed to change myself as per the work culture. And as you all know our training in army teaches us to adapt in all kind of situations and that helped me.

There were loads and loads of challenges. I had no clue about this field, how to get work, what remunerations are given, huge age gap, difference in thinking process. People never believed I was a model, they used to think if I was some designer. It was tough to break my own barriers and then break the walls on the other side too and come on the same level. There were physical challenges as well, as a model is required to have standard body measurements so that all the designers can utilise your services to showcase their collection. And me being medically downgraded had to put in extra efforts with my limitations and reach their standards. It has been very very tough and a lot of hard work, sweat and blood has gone into **Bouncing Back**.



The Bouncing Back : From Uniform to being a model

Rajesh: Handling Glamour and swag, how difficult is it?

Nitin: I don't think it is difficult. you need to be true to yourself and everything is taken care of. I have just taken a baby step, there are thousands of stairs yet to climb ahead of me. I would rather focus on them rather than on other thing.

Rajesh: The defence teaches us a lot what has been your biggest take away?

Nitin: Well, Army has taught me everything. My take –

**DISCIPLINE
HARDWORK
DEDICATION and
PERSEVERANCE**

in whatever you do, be it your work, fitness or anything. I always tell these to people , keep these four things always, and you will always be Happy in life.



A still from one of my movie

Rajesh: What are your future plans and do you have any special Goals? And how are you preparing for achieving them?

Nitin: As I said earlier, I have just taken a baby step, I have thousands of steps in front of me. I am looking forward to working in more movies, would definitely work hard to get into bollywood too, and yes SKY IS ALSO NOT A LIMIT. I want to work every single day of my life till I breath last.

Rajesh: Do you have any other hobbies or interests, which you pursue passionately? And how?

Nitin: I was into Biking and have ridden from Delhi to Goa, and done some solo rides in Punjab and U P, but due to my commitments am not able to pursue it, I would love to get back into it.

Rajesh: We all have had great mentors and coaches in our Lives? Would you like to talk about them from your Journey in the Army and in Corporate?

Nitin: My mentor, my coach has been **MY LIFE**. I am a very positive and self motivated person. I just strive to make myself better than yesterday. I have never felt to have a coach or a mentor or any person whom I idolise because Life of every one is different. Circumstances, backgrounds, financial status, geographical locations are all different, but only one thing in common that we are **ALIVE**. so we have to take control of our lives ourselves and nobody can help you with that. it is **YOU vs YOU** everytime .



My Teacher - My Life

Rajesh: Your views on the role played by Family, Friends and Well-Wishers in the Transition and in future assignments?

Nitin: My family and friends have been very very supportive. They have given me immense Love, respect and freedom to do what I am doing and I am very grateful to them for always being my pillars.



*My Parents - My Strength
Different Moods*



Rajesh: Your mantra for those who are planning to pursue career in the media or modelling world.

Nitin: Its all about your choices in life. you have one life so don't leave any stone unturned. Should do what gives you happiness without hurting others. I would say Dream Big, wake up and catch those dreams. the day you stop dreaming and working for it, you are dead. It's a cruel world and you are on your own. But I am a strong believer that we who have worn the uniform are always prepared for the worst and are very well trained to adapt in any kind of situation. When we can lead men into the battlefield where lives are at stake, other side in the civil street can be a cake walk , just be truthful to yourself and you will touch the sky.

My take -- DISCIPLINE , DEDICATION , HARDWORK and PERSEVERANCE



Capt Rajesh Nair is from the 75th Course, OTA, and was commissioned into 14 Maratha Light Infantry. Post Army service, he has worked in the field of administration for more than a decade, having worked with companies like Wipro, Mahindra Automobile, Tata Communications and Credence Global Solutions.

Please provide your invaluable opinion/feedback on this Interview, by clicking/tapping [HERE](#) - Editor

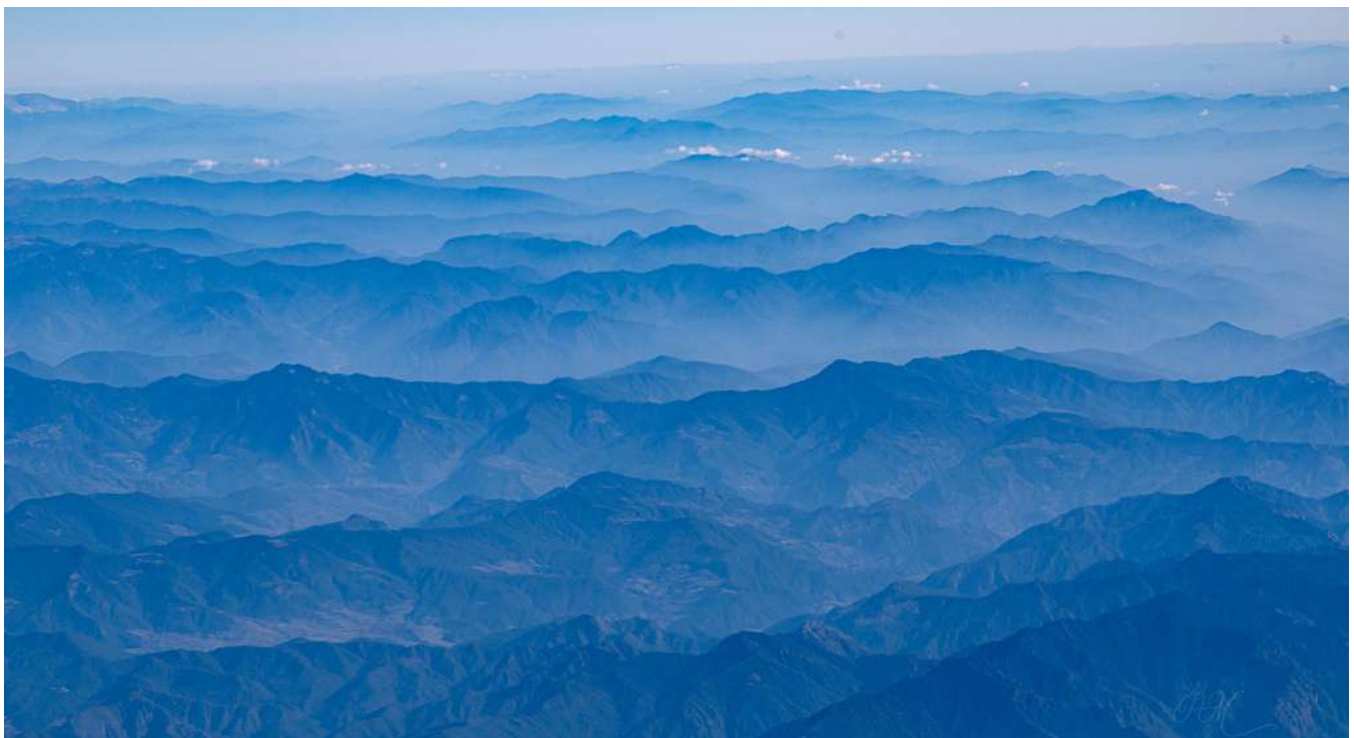


Moment In Time

We have started with a Photography section “**Moment in Time**” to provide an outlet for creative side of our esteemed members. The rules for submission are as under:-

1. Forces Network members, spouses and their wards can submit images for publication.
2. No Nudity or Porn.
3. No mention of Mil establishments or unit identity or tac numbers or tail numbers.
4. It's a photography section so no images of various get togethers and social functions will be published.
5. The longer side of image should be 2048 pixels.
6. Maximum 5 images will be published every month. The images must be submitted by 20th of every month.
7. Mention your Instagram ID.
8. **While submitting the following details be submitted along with the suitable Title:-**
 - a. Aperture
 - b. Shutter speed
 - c. ISO
 - d. Camera used
 - e. Lens
 - f. Focal length.
 - g. In case of a mobile click, the same may please be mentioned.

All Photos may please be sent to forcesnetworkz@gmail.com by 20th of every month.



Layers...f11, 1/200, iso 100 Nikon D850, 24 mm

By Col Jeetender Sharma



*Toys for Boys...f8, 1/100, iso 100 nikon d850, 11mm
By Col Jeetender Sharma*



*on a Full moon Night...F8,1/400,iso 200, nikon D850, 400mm
By Col Jeetender Sharma*



iPhone 13 By Col BS Rai



iPhone 13 By Col BS Rai

Stars On The Horizon

Children of Defence Officers have the capability to excel in various fields, owing to their extensive exposure resulting from frequent transfers and change of stations. They possess very high adaptability skills, and immense potential as individuals. In this series we plan to showcase the achievements of such children of the members of Forces Network who are on the path to carve a niche for themselves through hard work, grit and determination, so as to provide adequate motivation to the others.

IN INTERACTION WITH UDAY K SHRIWAS

Mr. Harman Chahal, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of SARAGARHI SECURITY SOLUTIONS LLP is son of Col. MS Chahal (Veteran). Graduated in Hospitality Management from the esteemed Manukau Institute Of Technology, University of Auckland and started his career with the Spotless (Integrated Facility Services) headquartered in Australia. He has also worked with Supremo Hospitality Solutions in Auckland, Millennium and Copthorne a real estate and hospitality group having hotels around the world. He got back to India and started his own venture SARAGARHI SECURITY SOLUTIONS LLP. offering Security and Facilities services to more than 400 clients across five states.



Uday: Please tell us about your childhood and the life you spent in an Army environment. What's the best thing that Army life teaches you?

Harman: As I lookback towards the memories of my childhood, being a Fauji kid took me to the places and gave me such a fruitful exposure which lots of the kids in the civil miss onto. After every two years I had to relocate to a new station of posting with my father which also meant going to new school, having new friends and teachers. Having the opportunity to move to new places after every two years use to be very interesting and thrilling for me. Being a Fauji kid, we are taught about who are the real heroes of the nation and not the Bollywood stars but the men in uniform are the real super heroes who have sacrificed their life in the line of duty for protecting the motherland. Thus, taught me the value of sacrifice. Also, as there are so many changes and lots of changes in the Army life are not even predictable so I learnt that nothing is permanent in our life which made me very adaptable to changes. The best thing I learnt from the Army is that regardless of the seniority of ranks, each member of the unit is treated as a family member thus there is a true spirit of unity which in return makes a best team. It was my fortune that I was brought up in one of the most decorated, renowned and chivalrous battalion that finds its history written as part of the world Army's called XXXVI SIKH (Saragarhi Battalion) now called as (4 Sikh).



With my Parents

Uday: What has been your childhood dream and any specific moments from your early childhood which left an imprint?

Harman: As a child I was extremely motivated to learn about the shooting skills after seeing my father Imparting training to the jawans of the unit. The little soldier in me forced me to lift up the Air Gun and pick up the art of shooting. Seeing my interest my father further motivated me and I started practicing at the indoor shooting range in Mamun cantonment where my father was commanding the unit 4 Sikh. The natural talent combined with the go inside me very soon made me a shooter of repute at the very young age of 14 years. As luck would have it I kept on winning the medals starting from the district level (Jalandhar), state level (Punjab), equating the national records for the juniors at the Pre Nationals and thereafter represented Nationals.

It was indeed a matter of pleasure for a young teenager to have competed with shooters of international fame like Abhinav Bindra (Olympian). I would like to highlight here that all these achievements came to me during the very first year of my getting into shooting, very soon the students at the school started considering me as a iconic figure. This definitely gave a lot of boost to my personal well being and made me an achiever at very tender age. I started having very high aims of becoming an Olympian one day. As a 14 year old young boy I achieved the level of scoring 96 % marks in 10 Meter Air Rifle and I was just 4 % short of scoring 100 % to be an Olympian. As a child I only learnt one thing that once "Once an achiever, is always an achiever".



Shooting as a passion



Winning Laurels in the sport

Uday: As you started your college life what's been your approach (preparation and research) to get closer to your dreams?

Harman: After having finished with my schooling, destiny took a turn and I found myself as a student of Hospitality Management at Manukau Institute of Technology (MIT), Auckland, New Zealand. As a Fauji Brat, having lots of enthusiasm and high level of confidence, I was soon made the class representative (students voice) of my class, having students from over more than 10 nationalities with this I got lots of opportunities to further hone my skills in leadership qualities, verbal expression, high intellect and to be on the forefront of all possible affairs concerning and impacting the students. With this I found myself as an international man always surrounded by friends from different nationalities. With so much of limelight bestowed upon me I was left with no choice but to strive and thrive for the best. The time spent in the international environment taught me lessons for the life time. I must say that while back home in India I was given finest of the values by my mother while my father taught me how to face the world. These teachings remained with me as a strong foundation on which my education in New Zealand further added wisdom, shaping me into a human being what I am today. As the dreams started getting bigger and bigger, the life turned into more and more challenging.

Uday: How did you prepare for your career in the college of your choosing?

Harman: The MIT Manukau Institute of Technology, New Zealand had many professional courses/ degrees to offer. However, I always preferred an attire of a gentleman and loved the profession that gives one a highly respectful environment. Accordingly, I chose Hospitality Management with specialization in Human Resources and Events Management as my degree course. I excelled in my course and achieved the certification for overall best student of the year award.

During my course I had the opportunity to work for international brands like Spotless Group a Australian company which has been engaged in providing event management services to organize sports events and corporate functions. Working in various departments of the Spotless Group taught me leadership skills, strategic Human Resource planning, brand development and the core principles of operations. My course curriculum prepared me to become a dynamic management professional who can lead teams and execute operations in the most challenging conditions.

Uday: It is evident that you decided to follow a certain path in your career? Any reasons?

Harman: As I had worked with various organizations as an intern and then working as a full time hospitality professional with the Millennium Hotels Group a top brand in real estate and hospitality. The working roles I had been into were all about customer services, manpower management and operations. My qualifications, certifications and experience made me think about entrepreneurship and creating my own brand. I being a customer service professional took up the idea of rendering Facilities and Security Services to corporate, industrial and business houses at a pan India presence. Also, I worked on the skill development and have been able to upskill thousands of unskilled youth from rural areas by offering them professional training for various job roles as per their qualification's in the Facilities and Security domain. Working for self and developing the skills of the youth in return creating youth empowerment for the nation gives me immense happiness and satisfaction.

Uday: Would you like to talk about mentors and teachers who have guided you through your journey? And why do you think mentors and teachers are important in our life?

Harman: Yes definitely, I always felt blessed to have great teachers who inspired me, guided me and ultimately showed me the way towards success making me a successful person. As I look back though all teachers were great in their own manner but would like to mention about few who have been with unique qualities of shaping my life. Mrs Richa Ma'am was my class teacher at Army Public School, Chandimandir. She really inspired me and assisted me to be the best ready to face all challenges. As I took my journey to New Zealand Mrs Sandi Eickhoff, Mr. George Win and Mrs Birgit Ehlers Hopes were my teachers who hold eminence and prominence in my life. They are all great human beings, great teachers, people with very high intellectual levels and vision. I was lucky enough to be a raw material in their hands and today I say it with pride that they shaped me very well into a professional. I sincerely feel that if you are blessed with the good gurus to show you the way in life you will definitely one day rise to the occasion to prove it to the world your metal.

Uday: How was your experience there at your college (university)? Would you like to provide us with more insights about your alma mater (s) as you look back to the colleges, universities you attended?

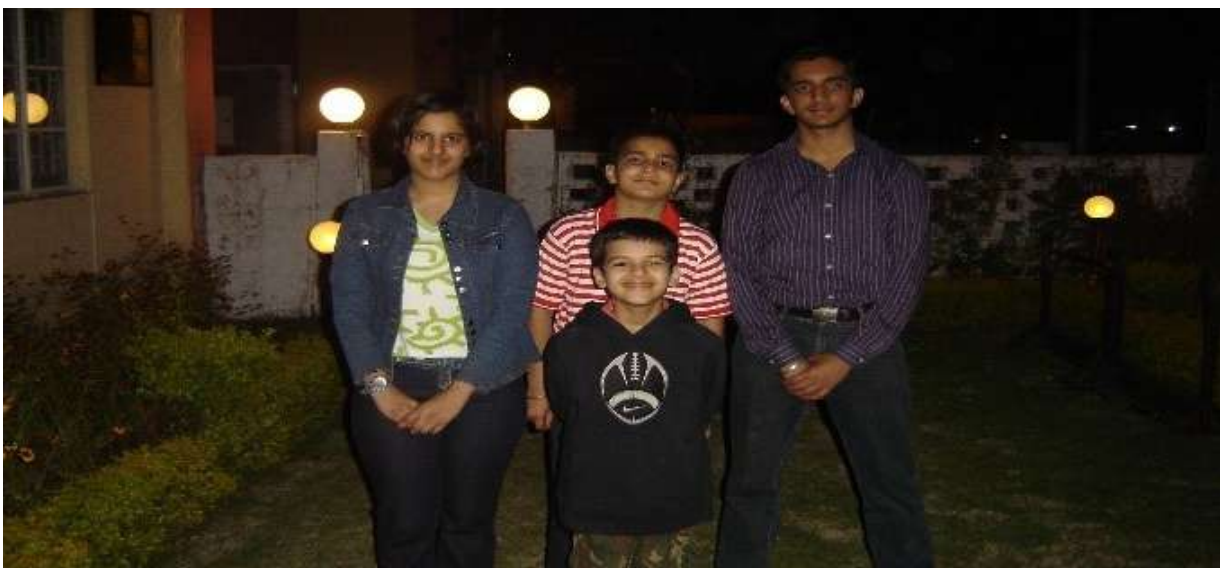
Harman: As I said earlier that I went to Manukau Institute of Technology MIT University of Auckland, New Zealand. I was pleased to be in an open international environment without any restrictions in life and horizons touching the pinnacle beyond all boundaries. It was an experience great indeed in its own manifestation. This international environment taught me how to be the best amongst my peers and developed me into a leader. Though the university was extremely big and I use to feel like a drop in the ocean, however, in my own peer group and environment I was a student with the meaning.

Uday: What is your larger goal in life? and how are you preparing for it?

Harman: As you know that I am a young entrepreneur having my business spread over five states presently. I intend taking the business slowly and steadily at pan India presence, subsequently take my business globally. While I say this it is understood that the journey would be tough and one needs to be equally strong with the decent macro level strategies. The most important thing I understand is the time management, vision, will power with determination and above all relentless hard work each day.

Uday: Any special memories of your time spent with your Army Cantonment Friends?

Harman: I have very special memories of Mamun Cantonment the place where I picked up most of the sports and games and made many friends. I remember we use to be waiting for the Sundays and holidays to play soccer and cricket matches with the friends. Also, we group of army brats use to go for adventure hiking in the thick forests of the cantonment which use to be a thrilling experience.



My Friends at Mamun Cantonment

Uday: There is a huge potential, especially in Fauji kids. What would be your message for them?

Harman: Fauji kids are brought up in a very special environment where they see and imbibe leadership from the very young age. Frequent changes in their living environment make them flexible and adaptable to the varying circumstances. These qualities make them versatile and strong from within. My message to the young Fauji kids is you all have very special potential hidden inside you which is unique kindly focus yourself on your goals, work hard relentlessly, don't give up, the world is not so simple and you need to overcome all hurdles with sheer grit and passion for success.

Uday: Would you like to share any experience which helped you immensely in journey to become a better person?

Harman: Having finished with my studies at the university, I worked for couple of organization in New Zealand that gave me the opportunity to hone my skills, polish my personality and develop as an independent young professional. My job offered me the experience to identify right man for the right job. I also learnt the significance and value of each and every member of the team who is extremely important to run the show. Understanding the value of every trade in any establishment made me much more grounded professional and added humbleness to my personal domain.

Uday: Any subjects/ social goals which you are passionate about and people need to be sensitised about them?

Harman: It has always been my dream to give employment to as many as possible people so that I become the reason to add little happiness to their life. To be the reason to fill many hungry stomachs every day. I have been a strong follower of Sir Rattan Tata and he has been my role model. I would only like to put across one simple thing that if you want to enjoy the real happiness inside you, one must learn how to give to others. Giving to others gives you much more happiness than taking from others. People who have understood and followed this concept have really enjoyed their journey called "life".

Uday: Would you like to tell about your achievements in your professional world?

Harman: Having got back from New Zealand to India in 2018, I was bubbling with energy and was looking forward for an opening for myself. I got some good offers for picking up jobs in the Hotel industry but nothing could convince me than being an entrepreneur. My passion pushed me into the odds of standing alone with the dreams in my bag and the bag on my back to face the world. I found myself to be in the club of entrepreneurs all by myself.

With this I started my journey and slowly started building up my company brick by brick and turning into a business enterprise that is having hundreds of employees on its rolls. In this journey I thank my parents who have always been extremely supportive

and guided me from time to time. I also express my gratitude to my staff who have tirelessly worked during the last few years and contributed selflessly towards the company growth. During this short journey of the company we met many challenges and accepted them willingly and turned the tables with our relentless efforts. Covid 19 was one big challenge where the company did not fall prey to losing business rather sprang into action and accepted more glaring challenges of providing Facility and Security Services to the Punjab Government Covid Isolation centres. The challenges were enormous yet with the professional approach the company succeeded. As a young entrepreneur I can only say that my biggest achievement has been that I draw a very strong support from my clients, the faith of my subordinates and good wishes of the people who know me on my social and professional front.



With My Team

Uday: Anything that you would like to add as a learning from your vast experience of having met teachers and students from different countries and varied cultures? Any interactions (engagements) which have remained with you and why?

Harman: You know I had the opportunity of studying with students from more than 10 nationalities and lived in the hostel which had students from almost every corner of the world. By virtue of being with the people of different nationalities, traditions and cultures, it gave me immense exposure to know about their food habits, living styles, social behaviour and personal conduct. I was blessed to have many friends from different nationalities who would share different types of cuisines. Thus, making life more interesting and cherishing. At the university I had Mrs Sandi Eickhoff who was always inspiring and motivated me to do well in my studies and internships. Mr. George Win my lecturer use to share his personal professional experiences which in turn always helped me to perform better at my workplaces. His teachings and experience have added lots of wisdom to my personal growth and development. My house mate and best friend Mr. Thomas Martin who is from Germany made life long memories with his impeccable friendship. I found him to be a great human being and a person with outstanding values.



With Friends from New Zealand

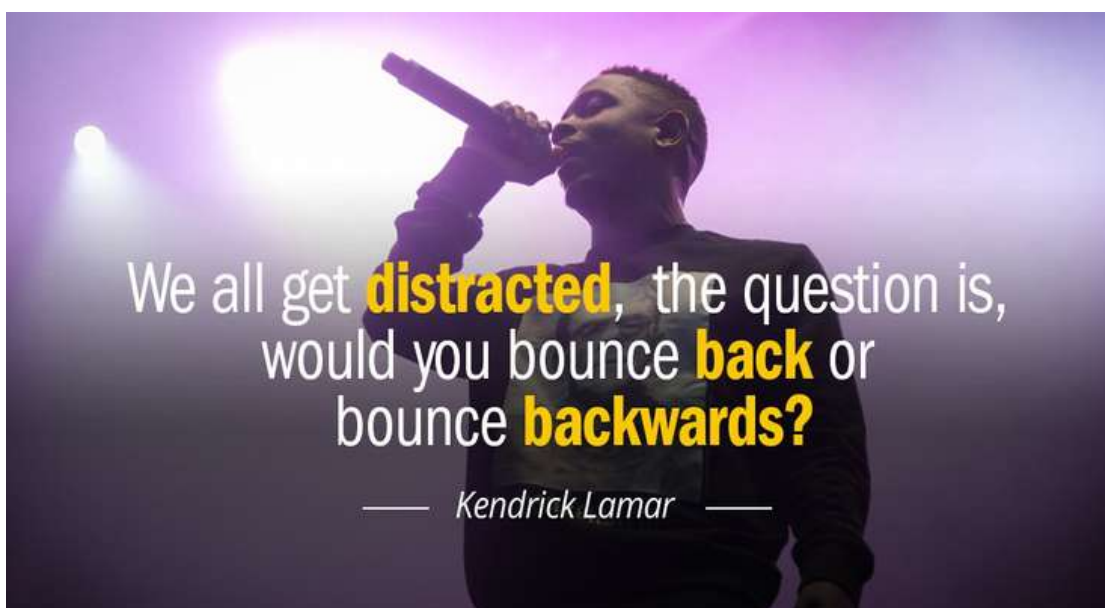
Uday: As an entrepreneur what keeps you going? What are the top 5 qualities that can help every individual to excel in any walk or life?

Harman: As a young entrepreneur I am always loaded with lots of day-to-day work which I have to delegate to my team and thus take out time to pursue the future goals of the company. When you have so many missions, ambitions and milestones to travel in life then its only the strong grit and determination that makes you sail. For an individual to excel in life he/ she must have a very clear aim in life. Secondly, one must have the clear knowledge of reaching up till the goal. Thirdly, one must have a strong willpower and determination to thrive for the aim. Fourthly, have achievable short term, mid term and long term goals culminating into achieving the terminal aim. Lastly but not the least the relentless, continuous and sustained efforts to achieve the desired the aim. Learn to find happiness in small little things that keeps you inspired for moving ahead in life.



***Capt Uday K Shriwas** was commissioned into the Corps of Signals, and served in various theaters during his service for five years, including in a newly raised RR Battalion. Thereafter he has worked with many renowned Companies, like Kingfisher Airlines, IFB Home Appliances, JK Cement, and Yes Bank Ltd. He enjoys working in the field of Marketing, Business Development, Strategy. He also has keen interest in the field of Personal Branding. He is presently working as Regional Head - Honour First (Defence Vertical) IDFC FIRST Bank*

Please provide your invaluable opinion/feedback on this Interview, by clicking/tapping [HERE](#) - Editor



BOUNCING BACK

In this Edition we showcase actual stories of bouncing back by our members. Each one of the Members have written how Bouncing back happened in their life. Readers can take inspiration from their actual stories. Many of us have successfully bounced back from career setbacks, failures in personal lives, overcome a deadly disease and many other adversities in life. We wish to inspire many others by sharing such stories.



YES YOU CAN!!

This is the story of the journey of a 13 year old, fatherless boy, his quest for education and zeal to achieve something in life. From distributing pamphlets, to washing utensils for free meals, recovering from facial paralysis, contemplating running away from home, to completing his engineering studies and getting commissioned into IAF.

The First Jolt. Sometimes life throws up challenges, when you are least prepared and at times despite all the planning and preparations, one stumbles at the vagaries of life. It is said, earth has to be tilled, before seeds can be planted. I feel in my life the earth was “tilled” three times, first quite early in life in Jul 1982, when five days after entering teens, I lost my father. Though the shock and trauma had numbed the family, soon the first realisation for survival dawned on us. Mother, Me and Sister (10yrs). My mother, being barely educated, was offered a Class IV job on compassionate grounds at Rs 272 pm. With no financial support or alternate source of income, the fight for survival had just begun.

Brush with Brute Reality. In 1985, 3-4 times a week in the evening, after school, I took up my first job of distributing pamphlets in front of the then functional Appu Ghar Amusement Park in Connaught Place, New Delhi. The salary was one free meal. However, besides food, some money in the purse was also needed. I switched to become a week-end courier delivery boy, earning a handsome pay of Rs 50 per day plus food! I was juggling my academics, hopping DTC buses and lugging the packets from Nehru Place to the emerging west Delhi suburb of Punjabi Bagh and far off Gurgaon (Gurugram now).

Somewhere, while jumping across various offices in Delhi, I came to know of a magic machine, then an enigma, called a Computer. My curiosity and hesitant questions to the snobby office staff gradually led me to the world of electronics and engineering. Not satisfied with the answers at one office, I would search for an office having a computer and pose questions to the next owner. Answers from one would make a question for the next. Soon, I was enjoying this cat and mouse game. Courier delivery was no longer a demeaning or laborious work for me as I got introduced to Bachelor of Engineering as a career option after class 12th.

Foolhardy Decision or Pursuing My Dream? Admittedly, being an average student, I was unable to clear any engineering entrance exam and joined a Bachelor of Science program in a local degree college. Over the next two years the financial condition at home gradually stabilised. Along with college, I was working as a delivery assistant at a local newspaper.

However, the passion to study technical subjects continues to burn in my heart. In 1990, despite stiff resistance from the family, I quit the BSc program in its third year and took admission in BE (Electronics & Communication Engg) in a private engineering college down south, almost 1800 km away from home. I had managed to save enough to pay for the fee for the first year of the engineering program. But was naive not to plan for the journey after that. Was it a foolhardy decision in pursuit of my passion, only time was to tell?

Though engineering education had opened a new vista of learning for me, very soon the harsh reality of daily survival was staring in my eyes. 1991 to 1994 were the toughest years for me as a student. Almost no money for day to day living, food, messing, books, next academic year fees along with the shame of approaching my mother for support and guilt of leaving a BSc program mid-way over BTech. I was under constant stress, alone, on the verge of getting into depression, did think of running away and was very much confused. This was the time when life was “tilled” the second time.

Friends in Need, are the Friends Indeed. Two of my closest friends (we had a sobriquet “Troika” in college and all would clear IAF-SSB later) came to my support by counselling and guiding me to the local Dist Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Rotary Club and to a Principal of a Diploma College, in search of some part time job. I got a job for Rs 1100 pm as a junior Office Assistant. Money was sufficient to cover studies and hostel expenses. For food, my saviour was a local pav-bhaji shop owner. For the next 3 years, every evening, I would wash the utensils, in return get Rs 300-400 pm and leftover food for dinner. Life was tough, but was coming back on track. I could catch-up with my academics and maintain a decent result.



*A journey from (left) dt 05 Mar 1994, a week before the facial paralysis to (right) 06 Jun 1996, Graduation Day at AFTC, in the line-up to receive the merit medal from the RO.
[Photos: Author's private collection]*

Though initially I had no plans of joining the armed forces, in fact I was not even aware of what is a career as an officer in the armed forces. But in late 1993 while in the final year of BE, buoyed by the selection of my two closest friends in IAF, I too appeared and was selected from SSB-Dehradun. It was indeed one of the happiest moments in life. Reward of hard-work and resilience. A morale booster for me and my family. For the first time, the future looked rosy and there was a hope. Just a few more months to go!!

There is Nothing Certain, but the Uncertain: 12 Mar 1994, two weeks before the start of 4th year BE final exams, I woke up in my hostel bed with a partial paralysis on the right side of my face. Unable to close my eyelid, pout my lips, blow air and droop around the corner of my lips. Panic, fear and uncertainty struck me like a ton of bricks. Life was "tilled" the third time. Numerous unanswerable questions were swirling in mind-What now? What should I do? How to break the news to my mother? Will I ever be cured? Will I be able to join IAF? I was very alone and afraid.

I was diagnosed with Bell's Palsy. A temporary facial paralysis due to pinching of certain nerves inside the ear canal. I was advised by the doctor that it's temporary, however, the recovery timeline could be from a few weeks to months or may be years. I would cling to these words as the last thread of hope. Determined to recover, I kept assuring myself that after so many challenges in life, I can't let SSB selection and college results slip out of my fingers. My friends rallied around me, boosting my morale, regularly taking me to the hospital, staying through the OPD physio-therapy, supporting me with my final exam preparations and being my stress-busters. Besides them, my grandmother's prayer hymn "Tere Charno Mein Pyare Ae Pita, Mujhe Aisa Dridah Vishwaas Hai" (loosely meaning, O Beloved Father, in your Lotus Feet I have Firm Faith), was on my lips. Being conscious of not letting anyone in college know of my physical condition, I would surreptitiously hide my face with a towel while going the college and manage to pass with a 1st division.

New Foundation from the Rock Bottom. After college final exams, I came back home. I never had the courage to break the news to my family. My mother came to know about this after more than 10 yrs, over a casual conversation. All physical signs of facial paralysis were almost gone though medication continued for a couple of more weeks. With excellent medical support and blessings of God, I got fully recovered. In due time cleared my IAF medicals, passed my BE with a good score and was commissioned on 28 Nov 1994. A new foundation of life from the rock bottom was starting. Besides working in IAF, got a chance to be one of the first two AE officers in IAF history to work on deputation with Govt of Bangladesh as 1st IAF Training Team (IAFTT) for establishing the faculty of Aeronautical Engineering at Military Institute of Science & Technology (MIST), Dhaka. Besides classroom teaching, IAFTT establish many specialised labs, technical library by sourcing books from across the world, guided student research and led the MIST teams to the International Inter-University Lunar Robot Design Contest, at NASA and Aero Design, Built, Fly -International , Inter-University, UAV Design Competition, USA.



MIST Lunabotics team and faculty advisers. Photo: Courtesy



MIST - IAFTT: SAE-Aero Design Team author Standing Rear Row, 2nd from right

As IAFTT member, I went on to become perhaps one of the first two IAF officers ever(?) to be commended by the CAS, BAF.

After an exceptional 26 years in the blue uniform, the second innings began from Jun 2020. I am looking forward to working with the college students and young professionals through my nascent program-Vyaktitva, for soft skills, life skills and mentoring for career. Journey has just begun, miles to go before I sleep.

“Do not judge me by my success, judge me by how many times I fell down and got back up again”- Nelson Mandela.



Gp Capt Nikhil Verma, (Retired), was commissioned on 28 Nov 1994 in the AE branch of IAF. He is an alumnus of IIT Kanpur. Currently He is working with college youth through his program Vyaktitva on soft skills, life skills, and mentoring for corporate and defence careers.

BOUNCING BACK

Life can be so unpredictable. All our lives we keep planning our course of action for future, without realizing that life may have planned something else for us.

I, born as the youngest of three daughters to my middle-class parents, had big dreams in my eyes since my childhood. Just like any other small town middle-class family, in our family too, girls were encouraged to take up teaching/ banking as a career. I too was convinced with all melodrama by my parents to do B.Ed. and be secured by picking up the most comfortable and suitable jobs of that era- "TEACHING". I did B.Ed. but I knew that I was carved out of a different mould and was meant to step into different shoes- the shoes of a FAUJI. I worked hard to achieve my goal and despite all the much expected resistance from my parents and even from the neighbors, the day arrived when I could finally spread my wings and leave the nest to be a part of the most prestigious organization- **INDIAN ARMY**.

I felt that I had finally achieved the biggest dream, I ever had and was too happy to be in the OGs, as commissioned officer. I was at cloud nine. While in uniform, I met the man, I was destined to tie knots with. I felt God was too kind to shower his blessings on me in form of the best job and best life partner. Least did I know that life had something else in store for me.

I realized the change in the man of my life, within the very first year of our marriage. I was no longer the charm of his life. Our marriage was just like Mission Accomplished for him. And he was on a new mission now. I tried hard to resolve the issues and bring him on the right path, but nothing worked. Instead he turned hostile towards me. After 3 years of a struggled married life, I was given the final solution by my Mom-in-law. Leave Indian Army as an officer and just be an Army wife. It was the hardest choice to make but I valued my man over career. I felt I couldn't lose the man of my life because of a job that guaranteed frequent separation from each other. Finally with an eternal regret, I hung my uniform to be the Army Wife, with a hope that my marital life will now be on track. But as said earlier, Life is Unpredictable.

I realized after leaving my job that it was not just the job but respect, love, financial independence as well, that I lost. He was controlling, abusive husband but like a well-groomed Dumbo, I still continued being with him, trying to please him, taking care of him as a wife, mother, companion, friend but he had no intentions of giving me his love and attention. Finally despite everything I left for him, one day he left me and both my daughters for someone else. I had no more stamina left in me to bear his atrocities and beg him to come back. My society- fearing parents did not welcome me back home. They were too scared to face the world with a to-be divorced daughter. Now I was neither an Army Officer nor an Army wife. I was just an unemployed,

unsupported, homeless, emotionally shattered woman, who had responsibility of two daughters, four and ten years of age, on her head. Few close friends helped me financially and I could pay for my monthly expenses.

I started job hunt through various portals, friends, brother officers but a gap of seven years in my career was too big for anyone to accommodate me. I spent sleepless nights worrying constantly about my own life and my daughters' upbringing. Tears could now flow easily in front of anyone, without even asking me. Looking at my daughters' innocent faces, I used to feel terrible. They were insecure, equally shattered and hurt emotionally. As there were no job offers, I started thinking of craziest things like staying in some officer's servant quarter and working as house help. But kehte hain na ki "*Jiska koi nahi hota, uska bhagwan hota hai*".

One day I found an advertisement from a Nationalized Bank, calling Ex-defense officers for Security Officers' job role. The max age limit was 35 years with 5 years relaxation. *Guess what?* I was dot 40. In those darkest days of my life, God sent this job opportunity as the silver ray. I took both the daughters along and went to Bangalore for interview. With God's blessings, I got through and joined the bank in Middle Management-II position. I was given Hyderabad as place of joining. The Fauji in me, took the challenge and shifted from Lucknow to Hyderabad with my little daughters without any support from anybody. New place, new organization and new life. My experiences taught me unforgettable lessons. I learnt that sometimes life can be a battle, in which you are the only soldier, having weapons of your will power, faith and the sense of responsibility for those who depend on you and you can still win if you remain unwavered. The force behind me was God and my two lifelines, my daughters.

Continuous stress of 15 years lead to multiple health issues but I vowed to never give up. Seven years back, I started from scratch and stood on my own feet again with lots of inhibitions. Today after all the struggle, I am an independent, self-sufficient woman, with a respectable life. Many, who know my story, call me Superwoman, an inspiration for them and I proudly cherish these words of appreciation. My daughters have grown up beautifully and are studying in reputed educational institutions, progressing and enjoying their lives that an Army Officer's ward should enjoy.

Today I can proudly say that I failed but **I BOUNCED BACK.**



Capt Gaurie Mahajan is a Ex Signal Officer from WSES-10. She is currently based out of Mumbai as Sr Manager security, with a nationalised bank. Other than job, She has enacted the role of Queen in Saka for a documentary film "Colours of India-Jaisalmer" for NatGeo and did a small role in a Malayalam movie. She is also the winner of the sub-title "Mrs. Intellectual" in the contest "Mrs. India Worldwide 2016". She has also have won prizes in story-writing, nara pratiyogita in Rajbhasha and intra-bank competitions.

BOUNCE BACK

Bounce Back..as if it took me back in times

Let me first thank my late father (who always said - worse could have happened - It too shall pass), my brothers (younger, stood taller than elder), my wife (truly a better half) & my few friends (circumstances identified the limited two-three friends only).

So it all began with a quest of entrepreneurship desire which was facilitated by DGR who helped me get a management of Toll Plaza. The minute my name came for interview, I was surrounded by friends (touts) who said they shall help get me one and once I get, I shall be paid Rs xxxxx and rest they shall manage. I fell prey to such friends and conceded that it shall be great, if I am allotted one by their help.

I was allotted and once again the shark/sharks suggested that I take an XXXX amount and sit on sidelines. I am made of different mettle and decided to put all my post release savings into BG (Bank Guarantee) and take the risk of running it myself. I set up a camp to recruit only ESM for operations. Like a new raising unit all the SMART ones landed who could guide me to MAKE HANDSOME MONEY, if I went their way which I resisted initially but temptation took the better of me and I followed their advice or say malpractices. You guessed it right, such income only comes to lucky ones or the smart ones who can grease all palms. I used to sit on Plaza from 6 AM to 6 AM (whole day & night), my family life went for toss, I was receiving threats from people who said I got this Toll Management because of their connections. I made some money but thankfully my wife complained to my father who knew all (but did not comment/advice) that I am under stress.

He took over the situation and asked me to withdraw but by the time I did, I had faltered and lost my BG (Bank Guarantee)... my whole saving..PF..DSOP..Encashment of Leave..etc etc..penalty by EPF (defaulted). He asked me to leave that station and go for Tari Par. I took up job with a limited salary, reorganized my life, limited my expenses to nearly frugal & moved on. Leaving the station insulated me from bad memories, bad company and gave me time to ponder.

From a manager I rose to the position of DGM and retired at a package of thirty lacs per annum plus gratuity and PF after putting in 13 years in the organization. I continued on contract post superannuation. My journey started with age of 45 years (post 25 years army service) & at 62 years , I look back at the bounce back with relief . I thank besides all whom I thanked at beginning - The Almighty for steering me.



Col Virender Yadav, SM commissioned into the Kumaon Regt in 1981 & took premature retirement after 25 years of army service. An alumnus of DSSC, Wellington & had actively participated in OP Vijay (Kargil) by virtue of being posted with the Division. Has been working with Manipal Group as Head HR for 13 years since joining in 2009. On superannuation in 2020, after 60 years continue to work as Head Administration in Manipal Group on contract.

THE DAY THE CLOCK STOPPED

The clock stopped ticking for me on the 06 Oct 1993.

It was 0300 h in the morning at our Paltan Officers Mess. The CO, self and two other officers were ready to move by road from Lucknow to Allahabad. We were heading for our Div HQ where we were scheduled to give a Presentation on LIC Ops to officers of the Division. Since we were three officers in addition to the CO, one of us would have to accompany him. It was not a popular choice and so the axe fell on Lt Joby Joseph, the junior most. We set off in two Jongas, Maj Stephen Jetto and I, following the CO's vehicle.

The next I knew, I was writhing in horrific pain, my eyes open all of a sudden as though from ages old slumber. I realized I was on a bed with bandages all over my body, my left leg strapped up on traction with a heavy weight pulling it down. My head had been shaved off completely. I was greeted by a nurse who told me I was in the ICU of Command Hospital Lucknow.

It turned out that our Jonga had met with a terrible accident about 30 kms short of Allahabad. We had lost Maj Stephen Jetto and the driver Rfn Kunwar Singh. I was seriously injured, having suffered head injury with severe hematoma. There was a smashed left femur with multiple other injuries.

Try as I might, I could not recall the sequence of events. My head injury had caused my mind to suffer a total black out. I couldn't remember a thing back then and that eventful day's slate is still opaque, a good 29 years later.

I was just 26 years old, having been married barely a year and a half. It fell on my wife Navpreet, my parents, my parents-in-law and my sisters to gradually begin to recount the road misfortune to me. I learnt that the mishap occurred at 0620h because that is the hour my watch stopped ticking. I was told that Maj Stephen Jetto died on the spot and Rfn Kunwar Singh collapsed before reaching the MH Allahabad. I was evacuated to that same hospital but since it is a relatively small set-up with lack of medical specialists, a Neurosurgeon was brought in from the civil hospital who gave me a 10% chance of survival and advised immediate evacuation by air to Lucknow. I was promptly airlifted in a Chopper and flown to the Command Hospital Lucknow.



In ICU with Navpreet

They prepared me for a head surgery on assessment at Lucknow but providence came knocking. My parents happened to time their arrival just as my stretcher was readying to roll to the operation theatre. Noting my mother's anxiety, the Unit doctor granted her wish to see me once. I am told she tried to touch my forehead but was warned off. She next called out to me in my respectable enough nickname 'Ruby'. It seems she was turning away from my unresponsive form when she changed her mind and whispered my rarely used and slightly embarrassing pet name 'Bhaloo'! Some nerves sparked in my mind's recesses and there was the tiniest of flickers on my face. The medical team reacted instantaneously. The scheduled surgery was aborted and the Neurosurgeon Lt Col Sarv Swarup made a decision to retract to a conservative treatment protocol. I was brought back to the ICU.

Now began my struggle for survival. I lay there helplessly, with multiple injuries swathed in bandages all over. My left femur was shattered into two, the leg on traction with a weight of 10 kgs to prevent it from shortening. The blood clotting in my brain made it too unstable for the Neurosurgeon to perform any surgical procedure on my leg. This prolonged my agony for I was forced to lie on my bed in one position. I couldn't turn sides as my leg was strapped. The bed sores began to erupt. I would rate this as the worst part of the entire episode.

At the end of one month in the ICU on the DI List, the Neurosurgeon finally cleared me for the shift to the Base Hospital Lucknow in order to undergo the leg surgery. On the 09 Nov 1993, I received a steel rod implant inside my left femur that was nailed to the knee. To prevent any infection, I was bombarded with 60 antibiotic injections in 10 days which translated into 6 injections per day, 01 every four hours. Such a nightmare that was!

The surgery was performed by Lt Col Kamal Kishore Goel, who for me is by far, the best Orthopedic Surgeon in the whole wide world. I remember him coming into my room post-surgery, "Sangha, I have done my bit with one of my life's best surgeries. It is up to you now to renew and recover."

Meanwhile my relatives, near and dear ones kept me motivated and pumped up even though my mental disorientation alarmed them on days. I had lost sense of time, I pictured myself in my new place of posting, I would keep enquiring after my grandmother's welfare who had been gone a couple of months. It was an edgy and brittle time.

My biggest support during this period was my wife Navpreet and my paltan officer Girijesh Pande. Without these two, I don't think I would have survived and fought back.

Once the surgeries and repairs were done, it was time for some serious self-work.

From Stage 1 (Bed ridden) I moved to Stage 2 (Wheel Chair). I was now in the officers' ward and in a much better environment. After about a month of my surgery, the Orthopedic Surgeon gave me the good news that I would be off the wheel chair and on to Stage 3 (Crutches). Every day I was made to practice walking on crutches in readiness for my discharge from the hospital. A week of this and finally it was time to go home after more than two months. I climbed into the good old Officers 1 Ton along with my wife Navpreet and Girijesh Pande. On reaching home I was greeted by our pet dog Blackie, whose joy knew no bounds on seeing me.



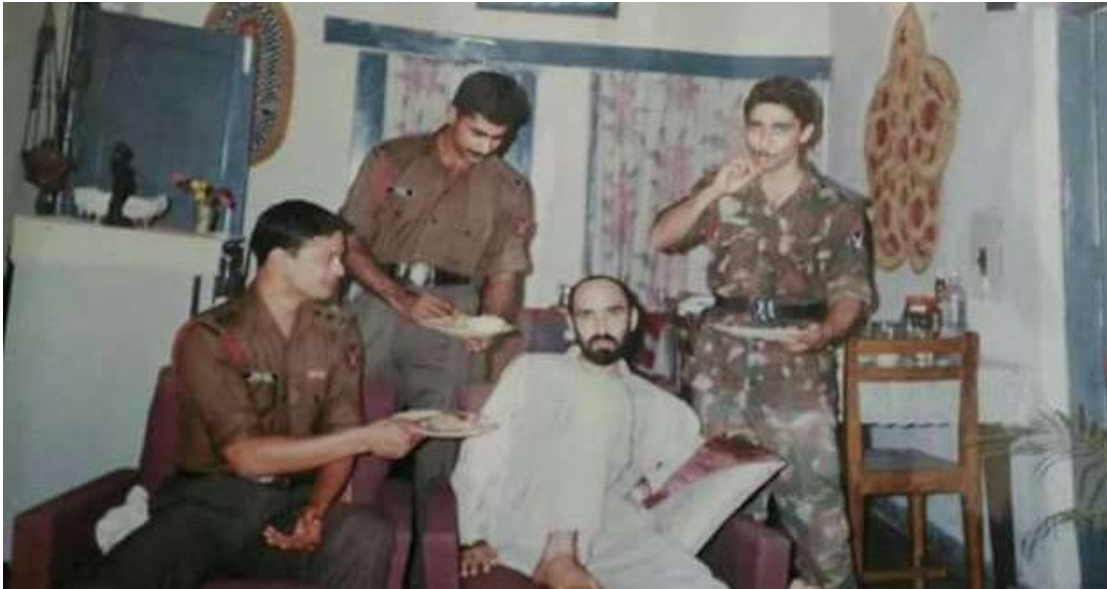
Homecoming after the Surgery



With my Pets

I remained on sick leave for two months during which I would go for physiotherapy every day. I had to fight to bend my ramrod straight leg. The physiotherapist would measure and note the angle every day after the exercise. This went on for one year without a break. It was also what paved the road to my recovery.

I moved to Stage 4 (Walking Stick). My sick leave got over and I rejoined the paltan. A table was placed for me in the Adj't's office where I would do some office work and at 1200 h everyday wind up, go home, change and report for physiotherapy.



With Paltan Officers

Some more work and it was eventually time for Stage 5 (Walking Free Without Support). That one year of consistent physiotherapy helped me bend my leg to about 90 degrees and I was ready to walk without support. It was the moment I had been waiting and working towards.



At home with Girijesh

By now, my health was out of danger but the mental and physical trauma would continue. I had become very weak. The heavy dose of anti-seizure sedatives, physiotherapy and efforts to bend my leg further, continued. I would suffer frequent bouts of dizziness and had to be constantly under supervision. At times, one felt very frustrated at having to depend on someone for everything. Never in my life had I felt so helpless!

Meanwhile, it was time for the Paltan to move to its field location. On account of my medical condition, I was posted out to a peace station. I had recovered fairly well by then and had started going for walks and doing some light exercises. It had been a long wait and I was itching to get back to my running.

In 1998 my Paltan finished its field tenure and reached Miran Sahib near Jammu. I joined back and took over as the company commander. Despite my medical problems, I successfully commanded my company in Op Vijay and then volunteered to go with my Paltan to field in Rajouri Sector. It is said that **THERE IS NOTHING STRONGER THAN THE HEART OF A VOLUNTEER**. I had a very successful tenure as a company commander in Rajouri Sector.



Promotion to Acting Major

My life had moved ahead eight whole years since the accident and it seemed just about time to get back to SHAPE 1 medical category. I went for my review to the Command Hospital Udhampur. The Neuro upgraded me and everything seemed to go right until I met the Ortho. He dug in his heels and refused to budge, saying that with a steel rod in my leg and a leg that is one cm short, there was no way I could be upgraded. I became adamant and determined not to return without the upgradation. I told the doctor I would demonstrate my fitness! I ran, did pushups, sit ups, haunches, I did it all. Once done I smiled at him, *"Sir, I've finished!"*

He looked me over, did not utter a word and wrote on my medical documents, *"Fit in SHAPE1"*.

At long last, I was back in the Paltan, as a shape 1, fit officer.

The seasons continued to turn. I had recovered fully except for some occasional bouts of dizziness and that intermittent pain in the leg that kept reminding me to take it easy. I had gone back to my running. But it was only in 2012, after about 19 years of my accident that I graduated to running Half Marathons. My first three were in Pune, Mumbai and Hyderabad where I ran alongside Pawan Batra, my immediate junior. Thereafter, there was no stopping or looking back. I ran the Pune, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Satara, Kolhapur, Hampi, Goa, Jammu, Kasauli events. By 2017 I had also added Cycling towards the Duathlons.



Lokmat; Kolhapur; Hyderabad Half Marathon; Kolhapur Duathlon



My Collection.

So far, I have done 106 half marathons/10 k/duathlons and the tally keeps growing.

With a 10% chance of survival, there wasn't much to hold on to. My enemy was invisible and I didn't know how to fight. Who even knew what I was up against at that point? I traveled a long winding road with determination, will and the never-give-up attitude.

I survived against odds. I validated my deep-seated belief that **EVERYTHING IS A STATE OF MIND** and I guess that was what pulled me through.

The clock that stopped ticking at 0620h on the 06 Oct 1993 has run around countless faces since and is back to life and living.



Col Navdeep Singh Sangha was commissioned into 15 Garhwal Rifles on 19 Dec 1987. Alumnus of National Defence Academy 71 st Course, Echo Sqn, the officer served for 32 years in various staff and command appointments and varied terrain. He is presently on re-employment in Stn HQ Kasauli. He belongs to Mohali, is married and has two daughters. Wife Mrs Navpreet Sangha is presently a home maker, elder daughter Miss Nirmolika Sangha is working with Wells Fargo in Bengaluru and younger daughter Lt Niyamat Sangha, AOC is presently posted in Kapurthala.

BOUNCING BACK IN LOVE LIFE

INTRODUCTION

Life is a struggle and in struggle one gets success or failure depending upon their Karma's performed in life. I would start my story by saying that neither I have bounced back from career setbacks nor I had faced any failure in personal lives. My story is of self-belief and determination in love life where despite being rejected from my wife on proposing her on several occasions, I ended up being happily married to her. I had self belief in me that one day I will win her heart. Presently, we both are proud parents of two sons Vardaan (09 yrs) and Samarth (05 yrs) and we both are working professionals living a sustainable life in the city of Mumbai.

CHAPTER 1: JAB WE MET

The story started way back in 2006 when I had accidentally got Shveta's (my wife) contact number from a common friend. Shveta and I had studied together till 10th Class in 2002. There were no feelings among us when we had studied together. After a gap of 04 years, I had called her but I had not disclosed my name initially. Then I started giving her hints to guess my name, when I gave her hint "I was the fastest runner in the class". She immediately guessed my name 'Varun', I thought at least she remembers me through athletics. I had just completed my graduation in 2006 and was in search of a job whereas Shveta was still pursuing her studies. We started talking to each other. Luckily, I had a mobile where I had to make separate budget to recharge my mobile. I was still dependent on my parents. I was in a phase of becoming self reliant in my life and also support my parents by having some job. We both met in a planned way in Ludhiana (Jalandhar Bye Pass) where we spent half an hour. Everyone is familiar with 'Love at First Sight' but ever heard of 'Marriage at First Sight'? This feeling arose in my heart and my mind when I saw Shveta, I don't know from where it came but this feeling was divine, though I did not disclose this to her. We had a quick chat regarding each other's life. This was the starting point from where we both stayed in contact.

I started my preparations for immigration to Australia with the documentation work along with IELTS requirement was completed. We both kept on talking to each other. I asked her to meet me once before I leave for Australia, as I didn't knew if we will be ever meeting in future. We met for a whole day when I had gone to meet her in Patiala University. We exchanged thoughts on our past life, what we are doing presently, who all are there in family etc. One small incident I remember, when I told Shveta I want to meet you while you are dressed up in Salwar Kameez (Punjabi Ethnic dress) because Shveta's image and dressing sense was more of Tom Boy. She came dressed up in Salwar Kameez, I didn't expect her to oblige to my request. This particular incident had made impact on my mind and I started thinking positively towards building relationship. Shveta was bold, self reliant girl and zeal of confidence reflected in her personality every time I met her.

CHAPTER 2: LOVE (FOR GIRL AND FAUJ) STARTED SIMULTANEOUSLY

One day, I received SSB call letter from Indian Navy, my mother asked me that all arrangements for applying of visa are complete still you want to go for SSB interview? I casually told my mother. "let me go and have fun in Bangalore", but in my mind, I was very clear that this was the first and last chance to get into armed forces. I cracked SSB in my first attempt and when my chest number was called there was no surprise for me. I always knew in my heart along with sky rocketing confidence that I will go through in a batch of 79 people. Clearing SSB became my life's turning moment, I had passionately dreamt of joining this profession as way of my life. I informed my parents that I have cracked SSB. They were surprised to know that I had made up my mind to join Indian Navy. I informed Shveta about me going to Naval Academy, Goa to join Indian Navy, she gave her best wishes for my future.

I had met Shveta after 6 months training. During conversation, I proposed Shveta for first time to become my life partner, she got shocked and rejected my proposal after deliberate thinking. I had no choice but to tell her my inner heart feelings since I didn't get time to meet Shveta (as I had joined Navy). I had seen in her eyes that she was not confident in her heart while rejecting my proposal. It further motivated me to follow it up and make more time investment in the relationship. Meanwhile, Shveta tried to ignore me after the marriage proposal by not attending my calls. I looked up to Shveta's friends to patch the things up. Later I came to know that these friends even tried to convince Shveta to seriously consider the marriage proposal.

Back to normal talking terms, we got to know about each other's life in more detail. We both continued to meet up during my leave break from Fauj and effectively we both were friends for more than 1.5 yrs. Slowly our friendship was transformed into relationship when we talked more about each other with intense emotions, Shveta had tough time in her family. All the conditions brought Shveta closer to me and trust level was very high. Shveta had conversation with her father about marriage prospects and her father asked her whether anyone is there in her life. Shveta replied with two names and one name was mine. Shveta narrated this incident to me and I found it very encouraging that a talk had taken place.

CHAPTER 3: FAMILY DRAMA BEGINS

Marriage is not the event which is happening between two individuals, it is a relationship which is built on trust and respect between two families. I informed first my brother-in-law about my relationship with Shveta so that he can set a stage for our parents to meet. Shveta's parents came to meet my parents and had a fruitful discussion. I was still in training, it was tough for me to take leave. Another meeting was scheduled where my family (Mother, Father, Brother-in-Law, Sister and Brother) visited Shveta's house. We thought it will be smooth sailing from here but destiny has decided differently. My families had gone thinking to go and fix a date for engagement ceremony but Shveta's father took a stand that till the time the boy

doesn't come, he will not do any commitment. This irked my family and they took all these events as their humiliation. Blame game started among two families, their egos played spoilsport and the relationship was buried. We were now in a mode of doing fire fighting and trying to do damage control. This damage control and repair work activity lasted for a year. We even tried quitting this relationship for the sake of everyone's peace. I asked Shveta whether she wants to go ahead with this relationship then with deliberate thinking she answered YES. My parents also started asking me to move on and they started matrimonial search for me. I told Shveta that my parents started looking for matrimonial so better we plan and execute our decision to get married.

We took decision to get married without consent of our parents. There were two reasons to go for such extreme decision. Firstly, either family was not interested despite convincing them for over a year. Secondly, Shveta had got great opportunity to work with Infosys. Shveta was in her final year of Master's and she cracked the job opportunity with Infosys. This was a watershed moment for her in which total 15 girls were selected from across India for Instructional Designer Role. Instead of support Shveta got hostility from her parents to join the job. She was advised to continue further studies or get married. She was in thick soup, she started thinking that she was denied opportunities that came in her way many times. She started thinking seriously about the relationship with me but was in fear of doing revolt against her parents. I supported Shveta in joining Infosys for her bright future and told her it's 'Now or Never' situation both in relationship and career.

CHAPTER 4: LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION

Since decision was taken to go ahead with marriage without consent. I started planning to bring Shveta from Chandigarh to Visakhapatnam. I was posted onboard INS Rajput in Visakhapatnam and I was doing my watch keeping phase (training). When I told my situation to seniors, they showed empathetic attitude towards me and luckily there were two seniors who were in same situation. They helped to plan, offering advice to tackle every situation. I started saving money for shopping with the help of senior and his wife. I purchased Mangal Sutra, Sarees, Suits for Shveta & Sherwani for me. I got my wedding invitation card printed. I had extended marriage invitation to all ship officers. Before going to Chandigarh, I had told my course mate to look after the marriage arrangements which he did with full justice. It was 11 July 2010 night, I reached Delhi by flight and I was travelling by road from Delhi to Chandigarh. It was raining cats and dogs, the whole day and night. I got a taxi booked through a friend. The taxi driver was ignorant of helping a couple to run away for marriage. I reached Chandigarh on time and was waiting for Shveta. I had sigh of relief when I saw her. I was quick to respond by putting Shveta and her luggage in the car. We both had to catch evening 1600hrs flight from Delhi. The whole journey from Chandigarh to Delhi I was praying to God that before Shveta's parents gets to know we eloped, we both should take flight to Visakhapatnam. We were taken to a senior's house to

change into bridal get up and proceeded to Mandir to perform marriage rituals. We got rousing welcome from my course-mates and my ship-mates. We got married with south Indian rituals on 12 July 2010. The Executive Officer (Second-in-Command) did 'Kanyadaan' for Shveta. We missed our families. We never dreamt in life to get married without parents' consent.

After the marriage my coursemates & shipmates had thrown dinner for us. We spent a beautiful evening with them. Next day, we registered our marriage in family court and then informed our parents. I was due for my transfer to Port Blair. Before packing from Vishakhapatnam I had thrown a party to my course-mates & shipmates as thanks giving gesture for helping both of us in troubled times. There was now damage control happening from our parents' side for the sake of saving their fake image in society, they proposed to do a marriage ceremony. It was decided that 17 Aug 10 we will have our marriage rituals done.

Struggling to marry even once, we got married twice.

I am proud that I had heard my inner conscience and had gone ahead in marrying Shveta. I had told Shveta if I was not able to marry her and one day I would find her along with other person then I can't bear that pain in life. We both had broken the shackles of conservative mindset of society which is divided on basis of caste, creed and religion. **Long Live Life.....Long Live Love and Humanity.**



Married on 12 July 2010



Married on 17 Aug 2010



Lt Cdr Varun Kumar Dhand retd from Indian Navy with 11 years of service in Executive cadre. He had left Indian Navy in 2018. Presently, he is working as Deputy Manager (Security) in State Bank of India, Mumbai. He is passionate of reading books, running marathons, write and debate on different topics of national importance.

A PILOT AT KARGIL CLIMBS AGAIN

“Only those who walk on the edge of death know the immeasurable pleasure of Life!”

The Prelude: Those were the heady days of July 1999, Operation Vijay; also known to the countrymen as the historic ‘Kargil War’ was coming to a close. Indian forces were on the final Victory lap having retaken most of the infiltrated peaks and having driven the enemy back to his side of tactical unviability and operational disadvantage. Intensive flying was on in an operational environment at well beyond 14000 ft.

How critical was the battlefield Altitude? Unknown to many in the country, the Kargil war was gallantly fought out by our hardy troops at such heights of Karakorum Range that could any day be challenging the top peaks in European Alps.

A Sortie is launched: As the Light Army Chopper took off on a shadowy morning from the valley floor Drass Helipad, the captain steadily set collective lever at 0.8 collective, raising the rotorcraft up along the mountainside deftly sensed by the climbing needle of the pressure Altimeter. Soon, the valley lit up - the Sun broke through the Laser La crest from Kargil side and welcome morning sunlight flooded the Drass valley like the opening of a restless dam.

The Cockpit Gyros steadily banked the horizon indicator in response as the captain smoothly guided the chopper around the Lofty, bare and jagged Karakoram ridgeline; soon the *Eagles Nest* of a Helipad loomed ahead. Perched on edge of scraggy rocks at fourteen thousand feet was the now famous *Gun Hill* Helipad. Located near the immensely famous Tiger Hill, it was a precision landing operational War helipad set along the rocky slopes. The Lama Helicopter better known as Cheetah in Army is a sporty lightweight master of maneuver in the rarified air of the lofty ranges and its instrument panel now indicated ‘All OK’.

It had never been so bright and clear at the lofty heights of Tiger Hill. What a wonderful day! so thought the captain, now on his nth mission in the Ops having flown well into the Kargil war. His chopper was steadily on its way to yet another operational Helipad at about 14000 ft AMSL (Above mean sea level).



The Young Pilot

The Unthinkable: On that sunny day, as the rotorcraft edged close to the helipad, the hallowed 'H' appeared to close in. No issues, it was business as usual for the mountain flyer. One helipad length to go, approaching 'short finals' in aviation jargon, suddenly the H began to Flatten out and change in perspective – and he knew the chopper was sinking! And sinking right on to the rocks below. As the H disappeared, adrenals perched on top of his Kidneys squirted three full sharp shots into the Vena Cava driving Adrenaline right into the vein onto his heart.

Medically speaking, adrenaline also known as epinephrine is a stress response hormone that is released right into the IVC or inferior vena cava – the major vein in the shortest route to the heart. This squirt was however the mother of all Adrenaline pumps!

Action Stations: Captain realized the inevitable and took on quick reflex evasive action, kicking full stretch on the left rudder he swung the sinking aircraft away to avoid the jagged rocks below. Being an experienced Glacier Pilot, the captain on the previous circuit had, by sheer practice located a small near level patch 50ft below, Just In Case... But then it would be a small reprieve, ahead of the patch, ominously, was a sheer 2000 feet cliff drop.

TURN!! TURN!! His brain screamed in the fractions of second that went by. Swing left - hard left, and the lumbering machine started to turn all in a massive collage of slow motion like the Titanic.

In classic recall, such life changing images recur in dreams over and over again like it does to men when "Last Movement" rings in the depth of the human mind.

The unthinkable happens – the chopper swings left but its tail rotors hit the jutting rock and snaps bringing the chopper into perilous downturn! Yet again the captain manages to guide the faltering machine on the promised patch – the gentle slope located earlier. As the captain maneuvers an escape, she nose dives! Last ditch – just before the massive crunch on the patch he pulls back on the stick and takes the impact on the tail. **CRASSHH!**

There was no fire.. – Pilot brought the Fuel shut off lever down! ; Crash land! Tumble... Crack Crack. The horrible sound of Rotors breaking up – The LAMA somersaults forward to the edge of the precipice. The mind shouts – Hey Unbuckle and roll out! and he gets out of the rolling wreckage.. by then thankfully the remains of the LAMA stops just short of the edge of the drop.

The Infantry manning the post on top come to the rescue. Soldiers rush in climbing down the slope. Then after the mishap stricken Captain and co- Pilot are taken to a side. Both are safe but the Pilot is injured in both legs as his side of chopper took the impact.

Soon another evacuation chopper lands, the stretcher carry the injured captain, flown away to Operational medical Hospital at Gumri, Zojila and then shifted by larger MI 17 heptr to base hospital at Srinagar. X-Ray, medicos and diagnosis to bring in the result. Right foot fracture below ankle and left knee serious damage. Patient would take long to recover. Immobile as of now!

Now for the many in OGS- they know the Srinagar BH well. The Base Hospital is a big medical care and transit center, set in the idyllic valley of Kashmir's capital and it is a reserve nestled in a Chinar canopy.

Meanwhile in the Inquiry: Absolved - Every crashed aircraft, be it operational or non-operational, opens up a C of I. The presiding officer goes into all details and presents the case practically. The verdict in this case was clear and the finding opinion of the competent authorities decreed no blame on the captain due operationally mitigating circumstances. The captain not only was able to save the crew and passengers by deft handling at 14000 ft attitude among jagged peaks, he stood vindicated on his positive actions.

Back to Prognosis: Confined to a wheel chair with both legs injured there did not seem to be much military hope for the captain. No great escapes with left leg in a splint fortified with Plaster of Paris and right foot in an ankle frame support- but there was Pride in the eyes. That summed up the captain for who had now been shifted to base hospital Delhi and put in a ward that was an old barrack once. Officers ward is a misnomer of sorts..

For a soldier, surprisingly or not so surprisingly recovery starts soon enough. The healing process starts in the mind before it percolates down to the metatarsals and toes. In a span of two weeks, he was off the wheel chair and on to crutches, and walking slowly then. The medics were happy to note the recovery but certainly they felt he would have to go out with a permanent medical downgrade. This would not pose any restriction in his career, after all he sustained injury in battle zone during operations.

But my friend said Dr Haldar, the Orthopedic - "No more flying for you.... Shape 2 (Appendages 2) Grade two Permanent medial category".

Now the captain had a choice, stay put - be an Appendages SHAPE A2 permanent with a battle injury tag with no bar on promotions, tax free pension later, OR request for two weeks extension in hospital, wait for more improvement and move out walk with ease again and voluntarily opt for SHAPE 1- Only then would he FLY AGAIN!! But that would be very hard but it's in the core of an officer.

And then the NDA prayer rings true - "... Oh Lord Guide us to choose the Harder right instead of the easier wrong". Two weeks of painful recovery, weight control, right ankle to right step- move into the medical state of being Ambulant with support was the state of the time. Still room for improvement was there.

Base hospital ward had a long verandah. Walking the route with eyes fixed at the far end that seemed to be miles away, Captain moves out of his comfort zone and takes a precious step, one at a time. The first day he manages five steps - another attempt next day brings 12. Slow in steady the tortoise took himself to the end of the corridor all 112 steps in a span of a dozen odd days; Breasted the tape and popped up again to Dr. Haldar.

Sir! I Can walk now, please declare me shape One.

Dr Haldar- *Why my dear? You have the cool option of A2 permanent, and the rest you know.*

Captain *-Sir, I need to fly again! Sir You gave me your QR for shape 1, with due respect, I am ambulant, am I not?*

And so Dr. Haldar relents and with secret pride took up his pen to declare the captain SHAPE 1. "*Congratulations young man!! - The nation needs you but don't over reach - your knee will give way*". The discharge interview with commandant of the hospital was very warm. The young captain was offered hot coffee and a warm hand shake.

An ample sick leave followed the discharge. Now Focused on recovery - captain turned to his native state and took on traditional healing course with oils and aushadhi; a whole month of complete rest was a challenge to his impatient mind - he calmed his restless physique only by assuaging himself that he shall get back in full swing.

Out again in the Big Big World: He came out Shape 1 alright. He can fly an aircraft if found Fit by the Flight commander and approved by the Head of the Arm- Army Aviation. But now the real challenge is to be able to run 5 Km with packs and weapon one day - the true test of being military Shape One.

Out in the military world again, the real-life battle commenced for whom the bells had not tolled.

From Jalandhar to Sansarpur - Soon he was at Jalandhar- the squadron permanent location. Up at 5:30 am and out on the PT grounds in speckless whites. The March and brisk walk begin in earnest; could he jog- a bit though. It was a five steps jog and walk - and repeat jog and walk - repeat. With eyes again fixed yet again this time at far end of the hockey field, this time the playing field was much bigger. So were the stakes! Winning the War within. Five steps went to ten and days on to weeks -the steady increase was supported by an off day per week to recuperate. Step on step the jogging began and two months of commitment saw him jogging away right around the hockey grounds in the ASC training grounds at Jalandhar- the famed hockey grounds of the services team. Where to hit 5 km run better than Jalandhar cantt to Sansarpur. For those who came in late the hallowed Village of SANSARPUR - is right next to the cant. A village that proudly rings with a hockey Olympian per village street. Gurmit singh Kular (Gold 1932), Udham singh (Gold 1952), Gurdev Singh, Darshan, Jagjit and final Balbir Singh kular .. and so on..

There was no better place to challenge oneself and recover from an injury. The war within was fought every day till the recovery was complete and Physical tests were cleared.

Flying Again: The flying dual checks soon followed and at the end of it the Captain was posed the question again- are you willing to fly again? Undoubtedly the answer was a firm Yes. Soon after regaining flying and the safety Badge from Aviation, he got an upgraded flying category to Green Pilot Instrument ratings.

Ten years later after successful unit command he returned as Col GS Aviation in an Operational region- and yet flew again.

The story continues...

THE DRAMA IN REAL LIFE IS AUTHORED BY BRIG KRISHNA RAJ (RETD), AS A PART OF HIS TRIBUTE TO ALL WHO LAID DOWN THEIR LIFE IN THE CALL OF DUTY AT THE HEIGHTS OF KARGIL DURING OP VIJAY.



***Brig Krishna Raj Nambiar** was commissioned in 1987 into the Artillery, he opted for Aviation training, whereby he had extensive operational tenures in Arunachal, Nagaland & Ladakh including Siachen Glacier. After DSSC he was Grade 1 Operations officer in Sikkim. As CO he commanded 193 Medium Regiment in Kashmir valley. He was DS at Senior command Wing Army War College where he had the opportunity to be the coordinator for 'Decision Making Management sessions' with IIM Indore. While in service he completed PGD HR and LLB. He is also UGC NET cleared for professor grade. He took premature release in 2017 after commanding two Brigades. In corporate he has served one tenure as a General Manager of an NGO and two tenures as Vice President. He is presently a senior leader at a Port in South India.*

Bouncing Back

It is, indeed, a privilege to share a few thoughts with the Forces Network- a Network I have been following closely; one that has always motivated me to look beyond the curve.

Therefore, the theme of the September issue caught my eye, and here I am, typing away after probably a decade.

Like all of us, my story is a 'Work-in-Progress', and so it will remain through the Journey on Earth.

Recounting personal aces and strengths in the career in the forces is always deprecated upon, but allow me to allude to a few of mine, if only to motivate you, dear Reader.

Like most of us, I joined the Forces with starry eyes, a willingness to contribute, and an ambition to rise! God was kind with my initial draw of skills and characteristics, and I possessed a fairly sharp intellect, a good dose of determination, good collaboration skills, and strong writing skills. Also, I had the capability of flowing like water, and not losing my path by hitting the rocks.

My career, therefore, in the Corps of EME was nothing short of trailblazing! It was a smorgasbord of **'been there, done that'**. I did extremely well in courses of instruction. I did the Staff College Course and the Higher Defence Management Course. I had the privilege of commanding an EME Battalion in a challenging Counter Insurgency environment. I was chosen to be the Colonel MS for my inter-personal skills, and I dare say I made a deep impact in the lives of around 3400 officers in my tenure. I rose to the rank of Brigadier and did appointments that were uniquely path breaking.

In any career, when a bullet train is on the tracks, it travels a fair distance before it comes to a crash. Future investigation reveals that the fish plates in the track were already removed a few hundred kilometres back, and the so 'called 'bullet train' was running at 300 kmph on tracks that were already dislodged! Similarly, I guess I met my career accident somewhere along the way and did not make the cut for the prestigious National Defence College and higher ranks.

Is that that big a roadblock? Is that even a cause to crib, cry, and thrash around? I would say no. My takeaway has always been that the Forces have taught us a lot. And we all have to stop, somewhere or the other. To me, the Big Question after the second 'non empanelled' letter was: which way ahead?

I had two options: continue in the system, and even opt for re-employment, or try to explore a path outside the Olive Greens.

My hypothesis is: we must remain active and contribute till at least seventy. Retirement at 56 or 58 is a no-no. With this in mind, I embarked on a long journey, trying to find a place for myself in the World outside.

Let me tell you, it is not easy to shed the comfort zone that the Forces provide. Secondly, post fifty, age is definitely against the prospective candidate. I did the Project Management Professional (PMP) certification, if only to signal to the world that the old dog could still study. I got my CV prepared professionally, so that it could be relatable to the world. I sent my CV to nearly three hundred places, with no response. It was as if I was calling out into a Void, a Black Hole of Nothingness that was waiting menacingly to obliterate me. I called up every contact, every friend I knew in the civvy street. In total, I spent nearly nine months looking for an opportunity, any opportunity. I received all of four call-backs, out of which two turned out to be red herrings and one was a last-minute flop.

Finally, I managed to find myself a contractual role as a Technology Consultant with Ernst and Young. Now that I look at it, it seems as if this was a role waiting for me- it resonates with my love for the IT world, my comfort with the laptop, my being ok with not having a dedicated office space, my sense of collaboration, being on first names basis with my colleagues and seniors, now much younger than me.

Through it all, I try to remain a lifelong learner. I don't know the future. But I know that I must strive. Every Day.

Does that qualify as a Bounce-Back? To me, it does. I took the signal from the system, that my years of contribution within the forces were done. I did not wait for the inevitable final years in service, where I would get perfunctory jobs and generally stagnate mentally.

I searched. I got lucky, so far.



At Ernst & Young (E&Y)

All our paths will be different. Yet, there will remain a few Boundary Pillars, so to speak. Fail Fast. Stay Hungry, stay Foolish. Never think you have all the answers. Do not hesitate to ask for help.

And. Last but not the least. **Remain Grateful.**



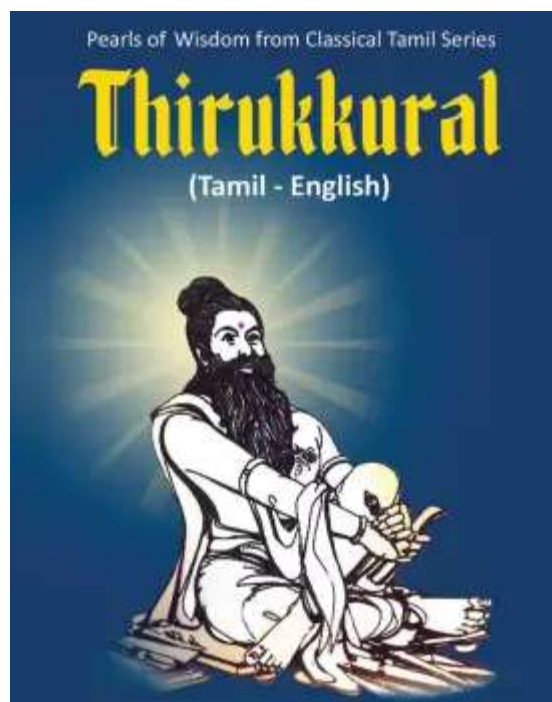
Brigadier Raja Bhattacharjee is a 1988 batch officer from the Corps of EME. He took premature retirement from the Army in May 2022 and is currently working as a contractual Technology Consultant with Ernst & Young.

Bouncing Back In Life

"Success is not final, Failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts."

- Winston Churchill

I believe the act of "Bouncing Back" would continue as long as I want to challenge the status-co. Every time I bounced I realized how my experience and most importantly the diverse experience of Navy had prepared me for this new challenge. I have heard people saying Navy is not a job it is a way of life which is indeed very true. Very often I have compared the Life lessons I learnt by virtue of being in Navy to the teachings of Bhagavat Gita or Thirukkural (which has always helped me to find solutions to extreme situations or complex problems).



The Short Wisdom Poems

Career transition is very common to Fauji's (at least for SS officers), and like many I was also advised a lot about learning/ unlearning, certificates, upskill, networking...etc are key to accustom to corporate world. These were never a concern for me (with good guidance and mentors I was ready for 2nd innings), as we all acclimatize seamlessly to any environment (that is how we all are trained - survival of the fittest). I was mentally prepared to adapt, adjust, learn, thrive (basically acclimatize) however was not ready to compromise on my values, moral, ethics and integrity. Values, Moral, Ethics, Integrity - Thus, my episodes of bouncing back started.

Five years into my corporate innings I have switched 2 jobs (First India's largest Shipping Agency, Second (one of) India's fastest growing Unicorn) and currently working with Asia's largest Waste Management Company - all 3 Indian Companies with different kind of business, and with every change I grew professionally (needless to say financially as well) but changed Industry. Yet I am not sure if this was the place I

want to continue for long (without making any compromise). Little late I realized, had I continued with my first corporate job, in 5 years I would have vertically grown in one Industry (which is ideal for anyone). That was the tough decision I had to take then and now. I am sure on one thing though - I will not compromise on my values, moral, ethics and integrity. I don't regret my decision as my experience now spans over three major business sectors.

When you have an understanding family, right mentors and true friends one can fearlessly fall to bounce and you will reach new height every time you bounce if you show strong resolve and dedication. Like always, I would keep the learnings / positives of the previous job, find reasons to upskill, work on myself to fit to the new industry and keep bouncing till I find the right balance (or till I learn the right balance).



***Lt Cdr SA Vishwanath** was born in Madurai and was commissioned into Executive Branch from Naval Academy, INS Mondovi in Jan'2008. He has a B.E (Electricals & Electronics) degree from Kalsar Coll of Engg, Anna University and DGMP from IIML, Noida. After an action-packed 10 years with Navy he has worked in corporate with companies like Samsara Shipping, Delhivery Pvt Ltd and is currently working as Sr GM for Re-Sustainability Ltd (formerly known as Ramky Enviro Engineers Ltd).*

Success is how
high you bounce
after you hit
bottom.

~General George Patton

Bouncing Back - PRC



It Is Not The Disability But The Ability That Counts

BRIEF ON PARAPLEGIC REHABILITATION CENTRE, KIRKEE (PUNE)

Introduction:

Paraplegic Rehabilitation Centre, Kirkee is a Centre for 100% disabled ex-servicemen of the Armed Forces. It is one of the largest Centres of its kind in the South East Asia and one of the best in the world.

Brief History

Spinal Cord Injuries. Spinal Cord Injury results in the following conditions:-

- Paraplegia. A condition where lower limbs are paralyzed waist downwards with total sensory loss in the limbs and loss of control over the bowel and bladder.
- Quadriplegia. A physical condition where all four limbs are paralyzed neck downwards with total sensory loss and no bladder and bowel control.
- Need for Rehabilitation. Disabled personnel following spinal cord injury suffer from one of the severest forms of physical and mental disability that can afflict a living person. After initial treatment while they become wheelchair borne, they still require extended rehabilitation to prevent the complications of urinary tract infection leading to kidney failure, bed sores and pneumonia. Due to sensory loss in their affected body parts, the residents need close and extensive monitoring and care in the form of medical, physical, psychological and financial rehabilitation. Within their disability and the support required to overcome the same, the residents need to be kept motivated to continue their daily chores, strive for self reliance and lead a dignified life

History: The Paraplegic Rehabilitation Centre (PRC) started functioning on 07th July 1974 with the first batch of 11 paraplegic ex-servicemen discharged from Military Hospital, Kirkee. Over a period of time the PRC has expanded to 117 beds (83 single & 34 married accommodations) out of the grants received from Government of India, Ministry of Defence. Since the inception 225 residents have been rehabilitated and at present the Centre has 74 residents.



Entrance at Khadki, Pune

BRIEF ON PARAPLEGIC REHABILITATION CENTRE, KIRKEE (PUNE)

Objective: To effectively render post medical extended care with the purpose of rehabilitating Paraplegics and Quadriplegics from the three Defence Services to lead a dignified life by mitigating the physical and mental disabilities. The tasks are primarily aimed at prevention complications in the human physiological systems of the wheelchair borne personnel and encourage them to lead a normal life while addressing their requirement of round the clock care with a Centre where such facilities are available.



Our International Sportsmen

Governance: The Paraplegic Rehabilitation Centre is a Public Charitable Trust duly registered under the Bombay Public Trust Act of 1950 vide its Registration No F/696/POONA. The Centre is also registered under Societies Act 1860 vide its Registration No MAH 877/POONA. The Centre is managed and run by a Committee appointed by the General Officer Commanding - in - Chief, Southern Command, Pune and Chief Patron which is headed by GOC Dakshin Maharashtra & Goa Sub Area as Ex-Officio Chairman and 10 other Ex Officio Members and two Honorary Members. The day to day administration is carried out by Medical Director who is also the Secretary of the Committee assisted by an Administrative Officer.

Training and Rehabilitation

Physical & Medical Care. Paraplegic Rehabilitation Centre as per the objective has been able to nurture and ensure a normal span of life for all its Paraplegics and Quadriplegic residents. This is achieved by keeping their health parameters continuously under check.

BRIEF ON PARAPLEGIC REHABILITATION CENTRE, KIRKEE (PUNE)



The Treatment Area Medical & Physiotherapy Room

Psychological Rehabilitation. Residents are encouraged to have a positive outlook on life. As the disability cannot be undone or improved, the psychological rehabilitation objective of the Centre is to focus the mind of the residents to magnify their residual 'ability'.

Financial Rehabilitation. The Centre has a vocational Training Workshop established by M/S Amphenol Interconnect India Pvt Ltd, Bhosari (Pune), who have installed new machines imported from France and trained the residents on them for assembling electronic connectors for the company. At present, 28 paraplegic residents and 10 spouses of residents are employed in the workshop with commensurate salary. Presently, 30 residents are employed with other establishments and self-employed at PRC.



RESIDENTS WORKING IN VOCATIONAL TRAINING SHELTERED WORKSHOP

BRIEF ON PARAPLEGIC REHABILITATION CENTRE, KIRKEE (PUNE)



SPOUSES OF RESIDENTS WORKING IN VOCATIONAL TRAINING WORKSHOP



UDCHALO CALL CENTRE EST AT PRC KIRKEE ON 08 SEP 2017



RESIDENTS PRACTICING MOUTH PAINTING

BRIEF ON PARAPLEGIC REHABILITATION CENTRE, KIRKEE (PUNE)

Sports and Achievements. All paraplegic and quadriplegic residents are encouraged to take part in outdoor/indoor games with an aim to keep them physically fit and mentally robust. The Centre has facilities for games on wheelchairs like Basket Ball, Table Tennis, Badminton, Throw Ball, Rugby and Archery. In addition, the Centre has a mini swimming pool which also provides the necessary Hydrotherapeutic treatment essential for residents to keep fit. The Centre has also got facilities for practicing wheelchair based races and field events like Discuss Throw, Shot Put and Javelin Throw. Residents from this Centre are participating in all sports events mentioned above and have won many Trophies & Medals at both National and International levels.



LNK A D PEREIRA WINNING 1ST INTERNATIONAL MEDAL (GOLD)



WINNER OF 6TH NATIONAL MEN'S WHEELCHAIR BASKET BALL CHAMPIONSHIP 2019



EX SWR PREM KUMAR ALE WON SILVER MEDAL, INTERNATIONAL PARA BADMINTON 2020

BRIEF ON PARAPLEGIC REHABILITATION CENTRE, KIRKEE (PUNE)

Finances: The Centre registered as an NGO is solely dependent on grants from the Service Headquarters, State Govts and Philanthropic Aid from individuals and corporate entities. At an average the Institute expends approximately Rs 3.50 lacs per resident per year to incl board and lodging, medical expenses, attendant allowances, maintenance of habitat etc. All annual budgets are scrutinized and ratified by the Centre's Governance Committee.

Income Tax Exemption to Donors: The status of the Centre being an NGO grants concession to all donors from paying income tax on the amount donated as per exemption provisions under Section 80G of the Income Tax Act of 1961 by the Commissioner of Income Tax Notice No Pune PN/CIT-V/TECH/80G/50/22/2010-11/1839 dated 16 Aug 2010.

Audit: The Centre funds and accounts are audited every quarterly by an internal Board of Officers and further by a firm of Chartered Accountants. Annual Audit report is submitted to Assistant Charity Commissioner, Pune Region, Kendriya Sainik Board and Ceremonials & Welfare Directorate, IHQ of MoD (Army), New Delhi.

Conclusion

The Paraplegic Rehabilitation Centre, Kirkee has been able to ensure physical, psychological and financial rehabilitation to 100% disabled ex-servicemen in a most desirable manner with existing resources. The Centre is focused towards providing for meaningful lifelong rehabilitation of paraplegic and quadriplegic combatants once discharged from military service.

HOW TO REACH US

Address	-	The Medical Director, Paraplegic Rehabilitation Centre, Park Road, Kirkee, Range Hills (PO), Pune-411020, Maharashtra.
Website	-	http://para-rehab.org .
Email	-	prckirkee1974@gmail.com
Army Tele No	-	3191
Civil Telephone No	-	+91 -020-25820505
Mobile No of Medical Director	-	7798955052, 9403716081.
Whatsup Mobile No	-	9403716081.

BRIEF ON PARAPLEGIC REHABILITATION CENTRE, KIRKEE (PUNE)



PRC, KIRKEE RECEIPT OF UNIT CITATION FROM LT GEN P M HARIZ, PVSM, AVSM, SM, VSM, ADC, GOC-IN-C SOUTHERN COMD

Donations.

(a) Online.

Account Holder Name : Paraplegic Rehabilitation Centre
Bank Name : Punjab National Bank (PNB)
IFSC Code : PUNB0027800
Branch Details : Kirkee, Pune- 411 003
Account Number : 0278000100174484

(b) Offline. Write a Crossed Cheque/Demand Draft on the Name of "Paraplegic Rehabilitation Centre" and send it to below mentioned address:-

Medical Director
Paraplegic Rehabilitation Centre,
Park Road, Range Hills, Kirkee,
Pune-411020
Maharashtra, India

Bouncing Back - PRC

EX NAIK SURESH KUMAR KARKI

Naik Suresh Kumar Karki born and brought up in Beltar, Chudandigadhi Nagarpalika, Nepal. Alumnus of University of Pune where Naik (Retired) Suresh Kumar Karki did his Diploma in Industrial Administration Service Management. He joined the Indian Army on 21st September 1995. During a Battle against ULFA Militant in Assam (CI Operations – Op Rhino) he got injured on 07 July 2004. He was medically boarded out from Army Service on 11 November 2011.

He started playing Wheelchair Basket Ball in 2007 and Badminton in 2012 and has won many National and International Medals for our Country (India). Always motivated and tries to support, guide upcoming young talents financially as well as through his experience.



Twenty eight years on his feet and the latter 17 years on a wheelchair post a spinal cord injury, Naik Suresh Kumar Karki chose to continue his academic career but added a strong social element to his life. Despite his wheelchair, he loves sports, making new friends and live life king size.

He has lead team India and team Maharashtra as a Captain and successfully secure Bronze in five Nations Hanna Laboud Lebanon International wheelchair basketball tournament 2018 and Gold Medal in 6th National wheelchair basketball championship. Part of team India, he has secured Bronze in Bali Cup International Wheelchair Basketball Indonesia in 2017. Part of team India wheelchair basketball Asian selection trials Thailand 2018. Six times National Wheelchair Basketball champion from 2014 to 2019 with Maharashtra team. 2013 to 2016 Para Badminton National champion and 2017-19 Runners up. He has also participated in Para Badminton World Championship in London 2015, Asian Championship Para Badminton China 2015 and world championship Korea 2017 (Pre-Quarter finalist). He has won several International Medals (Silver in doubles and Bronze in singles) Indonesian Open International Para Badminton at Solo City (Indonesia) 2015 (Bronze in singles) in V Spanish Open International Para Badminton at Alcudia (Spain) 2015 and (Gold in doubles and Silver in Singles) 1st Uganda Para Badminton International Tournament 2017. In 2019, he last lead wheelchair basketball team as a Captain at Asian Ocean Zone and for Olympic Qualifiers Thailand.

Bouncing Back - PRC

EX LAC MRIDUL GHOSH

Ex Leading Aircraftman MRIDUL GHOSH is a differently abled retired air warrior of Indian Air Force. A mouth painting artist and a resident of PRC, born on 04th June 1988 at village Gurah of West Bengal state in a milkman family. While in 2nd yrs of B.Sc in Bangabasi Evening College, Kolkata and an apprentice of Gun and Shell Factory, Cossipore, Kolkata he left both and joined Indian Air Force in technical branch as an airman in the year 2006.

On active military duty he got spinal cord injury that is fracture of cervical C5, C6 vertebra on July 2010 which caused paralysis below the neck with no bladder and bowl control and lost touch, heat and cold sensation and made him bound to bed and wheelchair for life. Boarded out from IAF on November 2013 because of disability. Presently staying in Paraplegic Rehabilitation Centre (PRC) for Armed Forces, Kirkee, Pune for extended rehabilitation since Dec 2013.

After becoming paralyzed in both the limbs completed two computer course i.e COPA and DHN and completed Arts graduation and now pursuing MA (Sociology) with the help of writer. While staying in PRC started practicing mouth painting from July 2015 and became a member of Switzerland based mouth and foot painting artists association (MFPA/VDMFK) on Mar 2017 whose Indian head office is in Mumbai (@imfpa) and painted more than 150 paintings by acrylic medium on canvas and paper, put exhibitions, displays and won awards and recognition. Now

teaching the mouth painting art to his juniors who have similar disability. Registered name in The Guinness World Record book as participants of a World Record creating event. Public speaking, writing poems, listening music, reading books and gossiping are some of his hobbies.



Bouncing Back - PRC

Colonel (Dr) Ratan Kumar Mukherjee : Medical Director,



Colonel (Dr) Ratan Kumar Mukherjee is the Medical Director of Paraplegic Rehabilitation Centre for disabled soldiers at Khadki, Pune. Prior to joining the PRC, he has had a rich & meritorious service of 32 years with the Indian Armed Forces. The Officer did his schooling from & passed Higher Secondary School Certificate Exam from Higher Secondary School, Sector 7, Bhilai (Chattisgarh) where he was the School Captain. The officer is a MBBS graduate and an alumni of the prestigious Govt Medical College, Jabalpur. He did his Internship, House job & Registrarship in Dept of Medicine from Main Hospital, Sector IX, Bhilai. He did his Master Degree in Hospital Management.

He was commissioned in the Indian Army Medical Corps. Having served in a number of hospitals with a rich experience in High Altitude Snow Bound Area and Remote Border Area in Eastern, Northern & Western Sectors, he had four challenging command tenures during one of which he operated in the Kupwara valley (J & K) in conventional and insurgency environment. He has also had a Foreign Assignment in Bhutan as the Commanding Officer of Indo Bhutan Friendship Hospital, Thimphu. He retired from service on 31st Dec 2012 from Military Hospital, Kirkee, the 3rd largest Spinal Cord Injury Centre in South East Asia as Senior Registrar & Officer Commanding Troops.

After his dedicated service to the olive green, post retirement he continued to serve the nation with pride and elan & took over as the Medical Director of PRC, Khadki, Pune on 01 st Jan 2013. For the last nine & half years he is totally committed to looking after the disabled soldiers of the Armed Forces who sustained spinal cord injuries leading to Paraplegia & Quadriplegia while in line of duty. He has been selflessly providing them Medical care 24x7x365 days. Besides looking after their health, he has brought smiles to the faces of these disabled soldiers by providing them a purpose in life. He has been instrumental in motivating them to seek a second career in sports & bring laurels to the nation at the international platform. He is a constant source of support & inspiration to them to realize their dreams whether in sports and arts or academics. He has been relentlessly working as an interface between these national heroes and the rest of the world to raise funds to support their dreams and provide them a better standard of living, infrastructure, resources & medical facilities.

Besides dedicating his complete life to the Armed Forces, he has also inspired both his daughters to join the Indian Army while he continues his noble work of looking after the national heroes of PRC, Khadki, Pune. Last but not the least, besides the passion for his profession, he is a keen sportsman & a good singer.

SecurityLinkIndia

www.securitylinkindia.com ISO 9001-2015 CERTIFIED

(India's Leading Monthly Magazine & e-News Portal on Security, Safety & Fire)

PRINT & DIGITAL

India's Leading & Awarded Media Platform for Security (Physical, Homeland and Cyber) & Fire Safety

The Best Reach to the Indian Market

SecurityLinkIndia
(Print & Online)

✓ **Total Readership: 100000+**

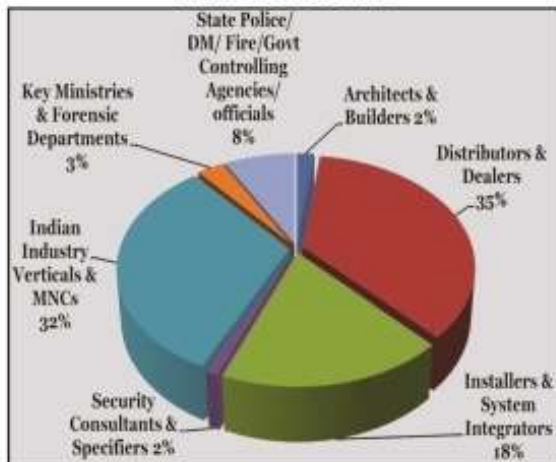
e-Newsportal: www.securitylinkindia.com

✓ **Average Monthly Traffic: 400000+**

✓ **Average Unique Visits: 60000+**

✓ **E-mail Blasts: 35000+**

READERS PROFILE



Offering
New Year Discount
on Advertisement &
Annual Subscription
Flat 30%

Exciting opportunity for the promotion of your products and services through advertisements and advertorials

Find us at:-

-  <https://www.facebook.com/SecurLinkIndia/>
-  <https://twitter.com/SecurityLinkIND>
-  <https://www.linkedin.com/in/securitylink-india/>

Recognized by



Online distribution through



Reach us at:

info@securitylinkindia.com; editor@securitylinkindia.com

Book Review

Disease and Medicine in World History

BY SUKESH TRIKHA

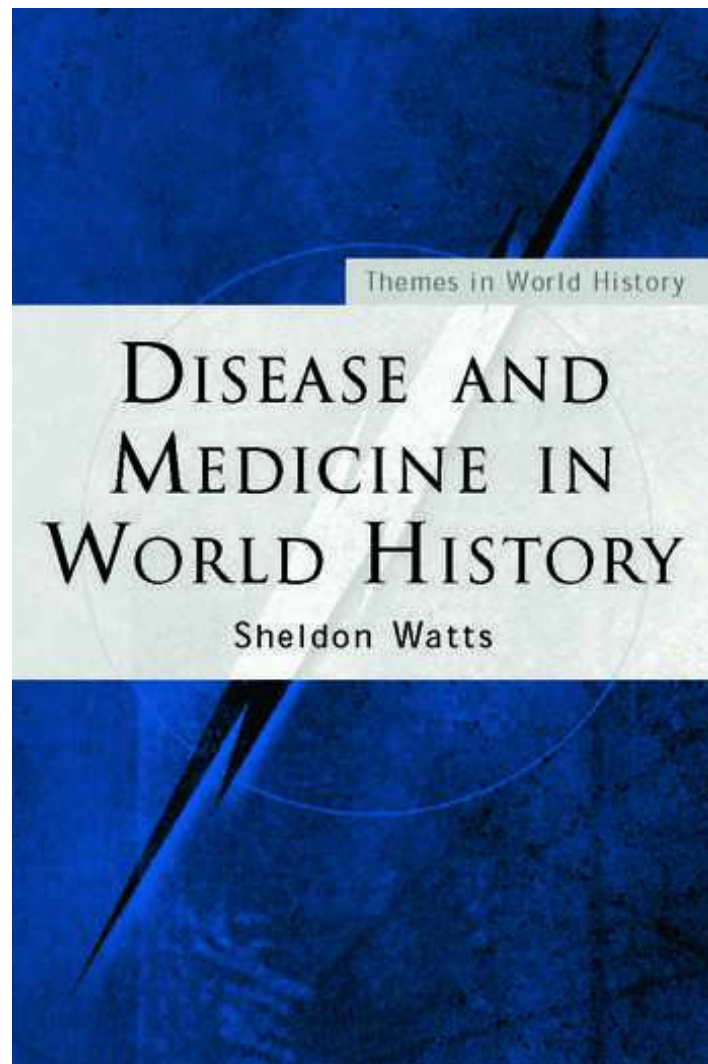
About The Author: *Sheldon J Watts was born March 15, 1934, in Duluth, MN. Son of Matthew Sheldon (a lawyer) and Val (a county treasurer) Watts. He married Susan Illingworth (a medical geographer) in August 15, 1964. He has done his Ph.D from University of Maryland, He had served in the U.S. Army, Artillery from 1958–59 and became first lieutenant Sheldon Watts has served as Senior Lecturer in History at the University of Ilorin, Nigeria and visiting Associate Professor of History at the American University in Cairo. Sheldon Watts is the author of 'Epidemics and history: Disease, Power and Imperialism (Yale, 1997)'.*

Disease and Medicine in World History is a concise introduction to diverse ideas about diseases and their treatment throughout the world. The author has drawn on case studies from ancient Egypt to present-day America, Asia and Europe. And this survey discusses concepts of sickness and forms of treatment in many cultures. The author also shows that many medical systems in the past were shaped as much by philosophers and meta physicians of that culture, as by trained doctors of that system.

The author through this book is trying to dispel the euro-centric perspectives and replaces them with global history, which consisted of a very large number of cultures, each of which was distinct and separate from others. Each culture develops a cluster of formal medical systems which co-existed with various forms of empirical medicine. Thus, disease history alerts us to the diversity of human experiences around the world and this study of history would also give background information on why there is such a huge disparity in the health status of different human groupings in the world today. The study also reveals that modern scientific medicine is a recent invention of the West which is based on seminal works of a few scientists (Louis Pasteur, Robert Koch, etc.), from little more than a century and a quarter ago and the central ideas to this new system are disease specificity and specific disease causal agent (which constituted the Germ Theory of Disease), where the key insights were derived from work done in the laboratory.

Furthermore, the author is describing that before the 1860s, there were hosts of other ways, each cultural grouping in the world, at different times in history, deployed while attempting to meet the challenges posed by diseases and the road to understanding the world history lies through the need for a pluralistic approach which can only be understood in terms of their own cultures, where the particular medical system had their logic and its integrity. Here, the author makes another important point regarding the changing nature of cultures over time in history, as disease types change over

time and thus, the use of the term 'traditional culture' which is recent in origin, with the colonial anthropologists using it for 'simple-minded people unchanged since time immemorial', to describe people encountered by them in New world, Africa and Asia.



The author examines extinct societies like Egypt under its pharaohs(3100-525 BCE) and New World just before 1492 CE. The biological aspects of human beings and their diseases, in these long-dead societies, are carefully being examined for their DNA and RNA (though limited biological sources available) through the mummified Egyptians and Peruvians. On the other hand, the cultural aspects of humans of those eras, are being examined through the written records(papyri) surviving and important hieroglyphic symbols. The Egyptian medical doctors had treated humans,using certain metaphors for various anatomical parts and were not interested in actual human anatomy, which can be observed by their contempt towards embalmers, who may have known the exactness of various parts. The author claims that these societies had no experience with acute epidemic diseases such as cholera (though the author mentions that months when the Nile was low, due to consumption of contaminated water lethal diarrheal diseases among very young), bubonic plague, measles and smallpox or with syphilis or leprosy (though later author comments on the lesions on Ramses V resembling the pustules of smallpox).

The author further divides the Egyptian era on the basis of medicine was more based on empirical experience and reason (Old Kingdom medicine, 3100-2181 BCE) than the late New Kingdom and Persian periods, and terms it from 'science to magic', as opposed to Ronald Ross's conviction that field of medicine had always moved from 'magic to science'. Various excavations have provided evidence of surgery (a set of 30 scalpels found from the 2300 BCE period), dentistry and orthopaedics as different branches.

The cultural groupings in pre-conquest America were fully literate and three major groupings are named Maya's, Aztec's and Inca's, but in the 1560s a Spanish Christian deliberately incinerated whole libraries of Mayan records, as considered pagan nonsense. The author describes that around 13,000 years ago, members of Clovis culture from Asia may have walked through Bering Straits to inhabit the New World and the key difference between New World cities and Old-World settlements was the almost complete absence of domesticated animals except for dogs, which can explain the New World inhabitants' death after the 1492s conquests of Europeans. The disease causation involves a whole complex of man/land and inter-personal relations and harmony between them (macrocosm) and at an individual physical level (microcosm) where the proper flow of bodily juices is needed to remain disease free.

The Greeks literature concerning health and disease came to be known as Hippocratic Corpus but this corpus did not agree on its basic questions. Apart from differences, the experts virtually depended on oratory skills to prove their point as dissection of humans was against Greek notions of human dignity and only animal dissection was allowed. But, in Ptolemaic Alexandria, vivisection of living convicts and slaves from the non-Greek population was done to understand anatomical learnings, but such records also perished in a Library fire caused by Julius Caesar in 44 BCE. The supernatural underlay Greek rationalism in medicine as in other fields. In the Greco-Roman system, a person could keep oneself in good health by maintaining a proper balance among the four humours at work in the body and this humoralism was intensely individualistic (Galen).

The Islamic world drew on the medical achievements of the ancient Greco-Roman world and subtly transformed them to fit its purpose, to make it the Great Tradition of Greco-Romano- Arabic medicine, which by the late eleventh century was again introduced into the West. Al- Razi, around 925 revived this tradition but was seen as a learned man trespassing into the domain occupied by empirics and was himself held in contempt by jurists and theologians, as they considered themselves alone to have the competence to trace the roots of all knowledge back to Allah and the Law came to be regarded as formal and fixed, no longer subject to personal judgement. Then with Ibn Sina and Ibn Ridwan, new canons and treatises were written around health and disease, where Ibn Ridwan fell back on the Hippocratic idea of epidemics causation by: a change in the quality of air, a change in the quality of water, a change

in the quality of food and a change in the quality of psychic events. Ibn Ridwan's explanation of foul fumes arising from putrefying organic matter indeed had parallels in ancient pharaonic Egypt which credited unexplained disease conditions to the same cause of foul fumes (origins of Miasma theory). From his writings, it is known that trade with India brought in an increasing cornucopia of exotic new drugs, which increased from 300 in the ninth century to nearly 3000 in the late eleventh century.

With the excavations of two large stone-built cities (Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro), each with 20/30,000 inhabitants, dating back to the time of the Old Kingdom in Egypt (around 3000 BCE), along the Indus River and its tributaries, came a surprise ancient civilization. The presence of Harappan toilets connected to sewerage may be related to the awareness of the deadly danger posed by faecal-infected water supplies as the causal agent of diarrheal diseases, but the storage of wheaten-grain in large quantities near city centres may have caused the breeding and maintenance of rats which eventually might have led to pneumonic or bubonic plague whipping out the entire city. The tridosha theory that disease is caused by an imbalance between three bodily forces (dosas): bile, phlegm and wind or their various combinations, evolved around the time of Buddha (600 BCE). And the triangle of holy curer, the sick one and the disease was the triangle where the curer will treat the disease as an act of charity, to heal the sick. Various compendiums described the diseases under Charaka and Sushruta. Among humankind, the immutable element was the soul (male) and the other element was the body (female) which is in constant flux.

The making of Chinese medicine was a dynamic, irregular process. Starting with magical thoughts about how to keep the spirits of ancestors happy (the era of Shang and the Zhou), followed by the Han periods (260 BCE- 220 CE) when yin-yang (male-female, light-dark) balance (Taoism) and wuxing (five phases) came fully into being. The Inner Classic revolutionized the thought which said that disease is not caused by demons or ancestors but the disease is caused by happenings in the natural world which can be studied and comprehended by mankind, using human reason. Confucianism was an ethical system, not a religion and with consciously self-imposed behaviour, the gentleman would keep his internal 'qi' in good order.

The author quotes Chinese scholar R Bin Wong saying that in and after the mid-fifteenth century, the practice of combining trading/mercantile activities with state-supported conquest and armed violence seems to have become a distinguishing characteristic of the Europeans. And along with trade these Europeans (post-1492 CE) brought disease to these new shores, as these whites were having acquired immunity, for example to a mild form of smallpox, but the Aztec majority population succumbed to it, which led to different inferences, namely, the natives are weak as compared to Europeans and secondly, these natives were cursed by the God, who intended they should disappear. The author sums this denuding process of the native population was achieved through three factors: European-imported diseases, European sadistic behaviours and the collapse of Native Americans' lived worlds.

As late as WW I, the manliness of the troops will see the armies through and those who fell sick were malingerers, but deaths from improperly treated wounds and sickness far outnumbered deaths from enemy bullets, sabre slashes or cannon. The disease like plague could only be brought under control by town magistrates in the 1450s by quarantines and cordon sanitaire in Europe and Egypt, not by doctors following humoralism. A disease like leprosy which brought leprosariums into function could be controlled by controlling false accusations of being a leper and issuance of guides of true marks of leprosy in 1363 CE. It is only around the early nineteenth century in Germany where its rulers supported 'Cameralism' and in state- supported professions as medicine, theory must ultimately ally itself with practice, that scientists like Muller, Ludwig, Henle (Henle- Koch's postulates), Virchow, in various universities across Germany, who worked on human physiology came into recognition (though Virchow held that poverty, malnutrition caused disease rather than germs).

On the other side, in Britain, Chadwick (lawyer) initiated a movement which carried away from the habitation, through the sewerage system, the life-threatening miasmatic substances which were supposed to be causing fevers and with the work of Dr Simon, instrumental in achieving effective influence for the local level agencies, to control epidemics. But, the same empire building its sanitary systems from the money collected by Indians, did exactly the opposite for the Indian population, wherein, colonial doctors serving the British in India termed cholera as a type of miasma which was carried by wind and cannot be controlled by quarantines and cordon sanitaire, because their trade was getting affected at Suez Canal, if they supported quarantines. Moreover, such health policies and fruits of 'development' in India yielded, life expectancy which was 24.59 in 1891, to 23.63 in 1901, to 22.59 in 1911 and to only 20.1 in 1921.

After the 1950s, people in Europe, the USA and Japan saw an epidemiologic transition, wherein there was a decline in deaths from infectious diseases which increased longevity but suffered from CVS diseases, diabetes, cancers and degenerative diseases of old age. Coupled with decreasing populations on account of reduced TFR, highly trained manpower from populations of the third world were seen as a resource base for the north. The countries of Latin America and Africa were shown the development models of the West and these countries allowed themselves in these developmental projects against loans, but with the worldwide recession in the 1980s, these countries were hit most as they were only producing for West primary products rather than food for their populations. To tide over this crisis, WB and IMF gave them a loan to bail out with conditions to give priority to existing projects and cutting back on social services like education and health, wherein, debt repayment from poor countries to the rich was \$178 billion a year less than \$61 billion went in other direction.

Such a well-researched survey was done by the author, but as George Rosen pointed out that all cultural groupings of the past considered cleanliness and godliness, maybe for religious reasons, which Sheldon has not acknowledged prominently. The other point in contention is the year of Soviet disintegration which is 1991, but the author for unknown reasons put as 1989 on two separate occasions in the book.

Title : Disease and Medicine in World History Author: SheldonWatts
Publisher : Routledge (2003)
ISBN : 0-415-27816-3 (hbk)
Cost Rs.3,494/-
Purchase Link: <https://www.amazon.in/Disease-Medicine-World-History-Themes/dp/0415278171>



Surg Lt Cdr (Dr) Sukesh Trikha, IN, Retd is an Ex Naval Medical Officer (10 years of active service in Indian Navy from Jan 1999 to Jan 2009). After Armed forces he has headed the Medical Services in Delhi's two Private/ Corporate Hospitals (Action Group and Fortis). Presently on the verge of completing full time PhD in Public Health from JNU.

Please provide your invaluable opinion/feedback on this Book Review, by clicking/tapping [HERE](#) - Author



Leisure

तन्हा राही

BY GAURIE MAHAJAN

इक सफर जिंदगी का, आगाज़ भी है अंजाम भी,
कहने को तो है इक सुबह, सोचो तो यह इक शाम भी,

मीलों लंबे वो रस्ते, खाली और सुनसान से,
जो साए दिखे राहों में, वो सब तो हैं अंजान से,

मंजिल पता न मकसद, बस चलते ही जाना है,
खुद ठोकर खाकर गिरना और खुद ही उठ जाना है,

ज़ख्मों पर मरहम रखकर सहलाने वाला न कोई,
सह सहकर दर्द न जाने कब तक अखियाँ ये रोई,

थक जाएंगे जब तन्हा चलते चलते राहों में,
न होगा कोई साथी, जो भर लेगा बाहों में,

खुद ही उठ कर चल देंगे, तन्हाई को गले लगाकर,
मिट जाएंगे हम इक दिन हर गम दिल में दफना कर।

- कप्तान गौरी महाजन

Leisure

THE DERVISH'S SWORD

BY ARUN HARIHARAN

The six and a half feet figure lay in front of me quite dead. He was indeed a legend in life-time and I'm sure will become part of folk-lore now that he was dead. Even in death he had a ghoulish look- kohl rimmed steely blue intense eyes looking blankly at the heavens and a menacing smile frozen on the dead visage. It was after three years of effort of my special forces unit- innumerable disappointments and also the sacrifice of quite a few comrades that we, Charlie-Company, Special Forces had finally got Al-Darwesh- the most dreaded militant in Kashmir valley and the leader of a small but deadly outfit known as Jihad-Ud-Dawa, known for its highly trained, motivated and fierce fighters- mostly Afghans.

Al-Darwesh's background itself was shrouded in mystery. No one knew his origins- though the military intelligence files mentioned that he was likely to be of either Chechen or Turkmen origin and that he had fought as a mujahideen against the Soviets in the 80s in Afghanistan. His real name too was unknown. He was simply known by the mentioned moniker which literally means "The Dervish". He supposedly got this name due to his austere lifestyle and alleged mythical powers as a Sufi. However, whatever that was could not save him finally from our crack sniper's bullet who took him out with a clean shot on the head.

Getting this larger than life figure, whom many in the Kashmir Valley worshiped as a Pir was no mean job. No one, practically no one was willing to snitch on him and even his name was mentioned in hushed tones. Practically he was considered to be something beyond human- someone who could not be destroyed. His famed weapon of choice- an old AK-47 (rumoured to be of his Afghanistan days) had a separate legend around it - it was referred to as 'Shams-ul-Pir' or the saint's sword.

The so called 'sword' too lay in front of me next to it's 'master'. If the man was impressive, then his rifle was no less. Yes, it was an old AK alright - but beautifully maintained considering its vintage and the lifestyle its master led. But what stood out was its wooden butt. The stock butt had been removed and had been replaced by a finely carved walnut wood butt with ornate carvings of religious couplets and symbols. As per the local legend Shams-ul-Pir too possessed spiritual qualities and if the firer thought of the target before pulling the trigger, the intended target would die.

The news of elimination of the dreaded terrorist was quickly conveyed to the Battalion HQ through the secure radio. The response was fast and crisp-collect all artifacts and we're sending an air lift. The chopper arrived and before any of the locals realized (not that there were any as the place where the operation took place was deep inside a forest) we were on our way to the Battalion HQ.

It was decided that the news of elimination of Al-Darwesh would not be leaked to the media or declared in any forum for it was realized that after his death, his legend would make him a martyr and his grave a shrine and a rallying point for other terrorists. Hence it was decided to quietly dispose of his body and those of others eliminated with him along with all weapons and material seized post the operation.

As Charlie-Company had done this hush-hush operation, it was decided that we should only securely and clandestinely do this disposal operation. The chopper took us again to a remote un-disclosed location and we quickly busied ourselves in burning the bodies and then disposing them in pits and sprinkling it with lime before filling up. The weapons and munitions too were dismantled and broken and then buried in deep pits. Only I could not get myself to destroy the so called Shams-ul-Pir. Not for anything else, it was really a work of art as also the legend surrounding it- more so it was a worthy souvenir of probably one of the most significant operations in Kashmir Valley. In the darkness, I wrapped it in a blanket and kept it aside- though I knew it was a reckless thing to do and was not allowed.

A year and two months went by and we were in the thick of things and Al-Darwesh was well behind us. Of course his sudden disappearance had significantly lowered the temperatures in the Valley. A few media leaks and rumours about Al-Darwesh joining the Taliban back in Afghanistan also ensured that his memory in people's imaginations slowly dimmed. Our target now was Babar Hamza, another hardcore terrorist who had been tormenting the security forces and locals alike. He had given us the slip a number of times and it was getting frustrating now.

It had been 3 hours into the ambush when the scout motioned indicating that there was some movement. I peered through my IR binoculars and could clearly make out shapes in the clearing. I motioned the squad to open up at my indication. Suddenly, Murphy's law kicked in and one of the scouts sneezed. The surprise was out....and the group dispersed and after firing a flare, the terrorists opened up with their guns. The gun battle continued in the pitch dark forests of Tral. The terrorists were well armed, trained, motivated and fought back strongly.

I decided to move in closer with two of my crack shots to try to identify and eliminate Babar, which was the only way to break the will of the group. By the wee hours of morning we were holed up behind a rock overlooking the thicket patiently waiting for the target to emerge our rifles cocked. I peered through the sight of my Tavor rifle for any sign of movement. As an SOP, we normally carried one more weapon in addition to our standard rifle. For some reason I had started carrying the old rifle, Shams-ul-Pir each time I went on an operation, more as a lucky talisman rather than an effective second weapon. You know we soldiers can be quite superstitious at times, especially in battle situations.

To our horror we realized that a group of terrorists had moved in on us to our left, without us knowing and then suddenly they brought down heavy fire. The situation seemed hopeless and The tables seemed turned with at least two of our boys down with gunshot wounds. We desperately fought back. The terrorists seemed to be aware of the predicament we were in and now were openly challenging us by firing at will. We needed a miracle now.

Talking of miracles, the opposite seemed to be happening as my Tavor suddenly jammed. I had no choice but to pick up the so called Shams-ul-Pir, the old AK 47. I now wished that better sense had prevailed and I had carried a better weapon as the second arm.

I picked up the old rifle and took aim through its primitive optical sight. Surprisingly, the vision was very clear though it was pitch dark- I could see a head and then the head turned -it was indeed Babar! I pulled the trigger and my quarry was down with a clear head shot!

In a span of six months, I was the officer with the maximum number of terrorist 'kills' in South Kashmir and most of the dreaded ones were dead- shot clean through the head by me. I quite became a hero in the Army circles. I always carried Shams-ul-Pir with me, it's butt concealed by a cloth cover along with my regular issue rifle and the Dervish's Sword never disappointed me. But my dark secret sometimes scared me.

It was a matter of time that I got my transfer as a faculty in the Indian Military Academy since the Army felt that I needed a break and also being such a highly decorated officer, I would be a motivating factor for the young cadets there. I left Kashmir with my belongings and yes with Shams-ul-Pir. Only I removed the firing pin of the old rifle and also separated the magazine before packing it securely in the bottom of one of the boxes. Won't need it now- at least for some time- I thought wryly.



Veer our only son was all of 15 years and he had come home for his vacations from his boarding school. It was after many years that we were living together as a family. A bright wintery Sunday saw us- me, him and my wife Ashima get up leisurely and looking forward to having breakfast together in the lawn. Veer was his usual hyperactive self. "Dad, let's go for Golf" he pestered. "Veer, stuff is not fully unpacked yet...the Golf set is lying in one of the trunks in the garage. I'll take it out later in the day, you can go tomorrow" I told him. But he was not one to be defeated yet and finally I gave him the bag of keys to go and check the boxes and get it out himself.

"Guys, let's have breakfast..it is getting cold" I heard Ashima call out as I stepped out into the lawn. Suddenly, I saw through my un-believing eyes, Veer come out of the garage carrying Shams-ul-Pir in his hands. He excitedly shouted looking at Ashima "Look Ma, what I found..." My heart skipped a beat and much to his chagrin, I snatched the rifle away from him violently. He gave me a surprised and hurt look. "Never touch this again" I told him sternly as I inspected the rifle to check if the firing pin was still out (which it was) and carefully locked it back in a trunk.

Ashima looked at me questioningly as we had breakfast "You don't have to be so rude to Veer....and what was that?". "Sorry, didn't mean to" I said looking at Veer's woebegone face. "It's just an old rifle, a battle souvenir. But still not a toy to be played with".

A souvenir it was and a souvenir I made it to be. I got the rifle mounted in a teak frame and displayed it in my living room as a war trophy, nicely polished and its ornamental butt covered with a patent leather cover to.



The 6th of May- it had been 3 years since the night we eliminated Al-Darwesh.

A few of my regimental buddies were in town and we decided to go out and celebrate the evening. Veer decided to stay at home as he had some of his school work to catch up with. Ashima and I left home at around 8 PM and after a good evening of partying returned home around midnight.

I unlocked the front door and stepped into the house. Ashima was busy taking off her sandals as I walked into the living room. The lights were very dim with only the 40 watt bulb of the corridor switched on. Veer was sitting on the sofa, looking down on the floor, abnormally still. I called out cheerfully as I walked up to him and tapped his shoulder.

“Hey Veer! Have you not slept yet? Hope you had dinner”

He got up and looked at me. He looked familiar but different- this couldn't be.

Veer had the Shams-ul-Pir in his hands. He had apparently taken it down from its mount.

I stepped back in shock. Before I realised, I tripped on a peg table and lay sprawled on the ground on my back and lay dazed as my head hit the floor.

Veer was on top of me with the rifle pointed at my head. In the meantime, Ashima entered the room and seeing the weird scene, she shouted “What are you doing Veer..are you mad? Put it down this instant..this isn't funny”. Veer looked up and smiled,

A menacing smile frozen on the dead visage.....



He then hit her across her face with the butt of the rifle. Ashima crumpled on the floor like a rag doll- her face bleeding profusely. The carvings on wooden butt glistened with her blood.

I instinctively jumped at Veer and caught hold of the barrel and tried to pull the rifle away from him. He was surprisingly stronger than I thought and held on to the grip firmly. The barrel was now poking into my stomach as I tried to wrench the weapon from him. I knew that the rifle neither had a firing pin nor a magazine attached to it yet something was very wrong.

He looked into my eyes and snarled in a strange voice "Intikam!"

He had a ghoulish look- kohl rimmed steely blue intense eyes looking blankly.....

The spectre which was once my son pulled the trigger. A volley of lead hit my stomach as it all went dark.

Disclaimer:

This story is a complete work of fiction and bears no resemblance to any person living or dead. All events, time lines and places too are a figment of the author's imagination.



Col Arun Hariharan a Corps of Engineers officer, took premature retirement in 2013. He is a senior corporate professional with a large telecom company and lives in Gurgaon. Arun is a voracious reader with a lot of interest in history, archaeology and occult. He is a published writer with his stories and poetry being published in print eight times so far as an author/co-author. He is also a book reviewer for the Hindu Businessline.

Please provide your invaluable opinion/feedback on this Article, by clicking/tapping [HERE](#) - Editor

The true measure of success
is how many times you can
bounce back from failure.

Stephen Richards

Matrimonials

Bride Desired

A suitable match is sought by Brig KJ Singh for his son. The son was born on 23 Nov 1992 and is 172 cm tall. His education qualification is B.Tech (Telecom Engg) and he is a holder of a Commercial Pilot License. He is now employed as a pilot with Indigo Airline at Kolkata. Father is retired and the family is presently settled in Chandigarh Tricity. His mother is a homemaker. He has one sister who is married and in USA. A girl is desired who is in Aviation Industry. The girl's family should be Sikh preferably and horoscopes can be matched. No dowry is wanted. I, Brig KJ Singh can be reached at +91-8826066720 and kbindigo1123@gmail.com(email address) for additional details.



The ability to bounce back after a setback is the single most important trait an entrepreneurial venture can possess.

— *Richard Branson* —



**LOOKING FORWARD FOR THE FORCES NETWORK GATHERINGS ACROSS
THE GLOBE;**

Incase you do, don't forget to share the photos along with Names

Do you desire to be a Member of this
awesome Group, which is not restricted by
National boundaries?

Forces Network is a 'Closed Group'. It is
open only to the Commissioned Officers of
the Indian Army, Air Force and Navy.

One can join only after being referred or
sponsored by an existing Member of the
Group.

For more information and details, visit:
<https://www.forces-network.com/>

