

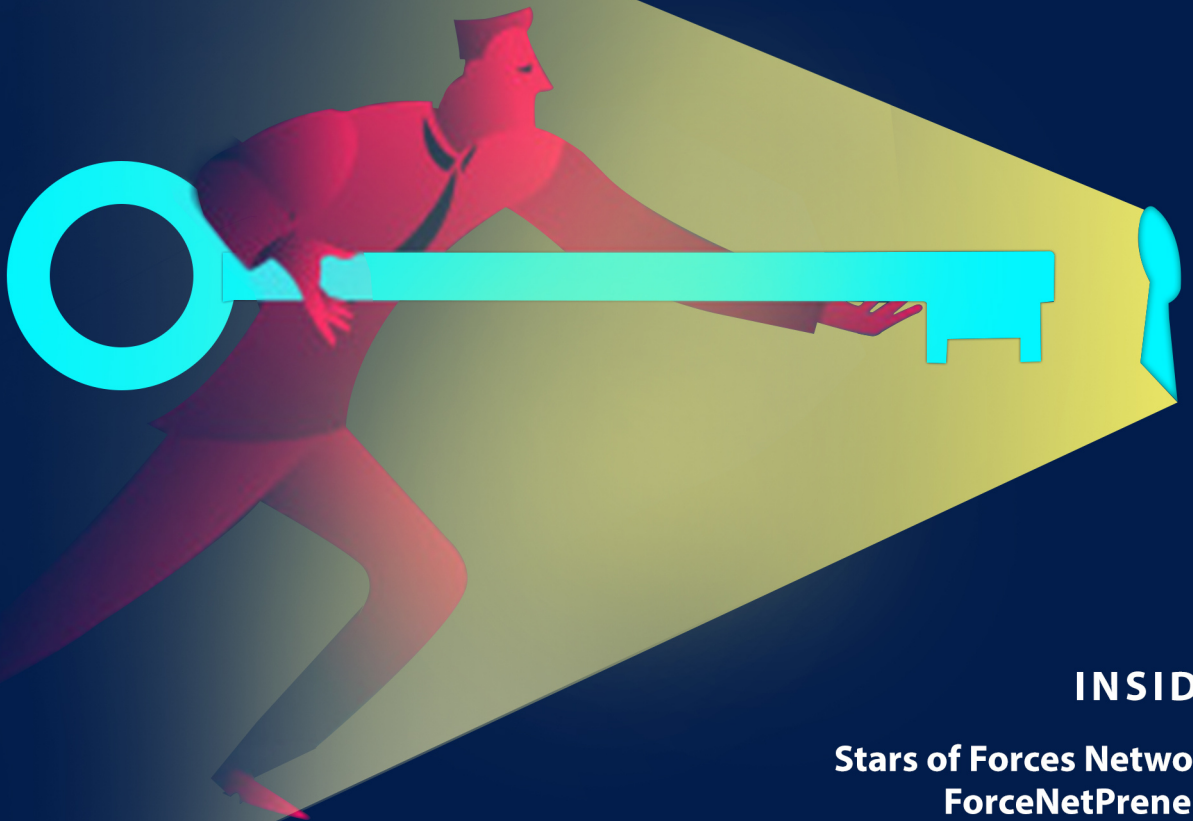
January 2021, Volume III Issue 1

FORCENET E-ZINE

Magazine of the military veterans in the corporate

RESOLUTION

A FIRM DECISION TO DO, OR NOT DO SOMETHING



INSIDE

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ForceNetPreneur
Expatriate Interview
Women Power
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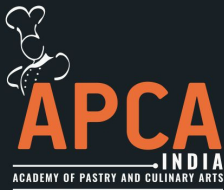
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People need
revelation, and then
they need resolution.
- Damian Lewis

**RESOLUTIONS REQUIRE
ONLY WORDS. RESULTS
TAKE ACTION.**

TONY ROBBINS

From the Editor

Dear Reader,

At the very outset, let me wish you and your family a very Happy New Year 2021. May you find abundance of happiness, enjoy a very good health, and all your dreams come true.

We have finally said a goodbye to a preferably forgetful year, and the World is expectantly looking forward to a new cheer. While new challenges are still being thrown at us, but surely these will also be overcome soon with a collective resolve and effort.

The advent of a new year gives us a reason to plan our future goals. It is also the time when we also reflect to realize where we fell short in the year gone by. It is definitely an essential aspect, as it helps us to re-evaluate our strengths and weaknesses, without which the progress would be difficult.

It is customary to term it as 'making resolutions'. By definition it means 'a firm decision to do, or not to do a thing'. Typically, most of us pay more focus to the first part, and ignore the second half. It was the year which has gone by, which taught us to be careful of the second part too. Much emphasis was laid on what not to do, and in lighter vein it was about not being 'positive'. If we look back, we literally had 365 days completely to ourselves, which could have been used to bring tremendous change in our personal self. We could work upon many aspects of our being, be it in social, physical, professional or spiritual field. However, the moot point is, how many of us, actually did? Though this was forced upon us by undesirable circumstances, but we will never get an opportunity like this. And, if we have actually achieved nothing, then it calls for a serious introspection. I recently heard Shiv Khera say, "I will not let this crisis define me. I will rather use it to refine me", an apt summary of what was expected of us in the 365 days gone by. Nevertheless, it is also the best mantra for the time that is ahead of us now. Remember, providence plays an equal part in life, when you resolve.

Wanting to make a resolution is a good thing and is highly encouraged. It gives you something to look forward to and keep working towards. Even if they aren't followed through completely, making a resolution shows that you have the belief and hope in your ability to change habits and become a better you. One key thing to remember when making and keeping a resolution is that it takes 21 days to form a habit. They take time, remember that it's not a sprint but a marathon. These simple steps when followed, will ensure to get you on the right track to keeping to your resolutions - start small, write it down, make changes to your behaviour, define SMART goals, track your progress, reward small achievements, make it public, and above all remember that you are human. So, just go for it. May you have a wonderful time ahead.

Until next time, take care. And, cheers to Forces Network - the Network that Works!!!

Regards,
Lt Col Ranvir Singh

Stars 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.

BY BIDISHA PANDEY

Commander Arun Jyoti is an alumnus of the prestigious National Defence Academy (Khadakwasla), Naval College of Engineering (INS Shivaji) and Defence Services Staff College (Wellington). Post his pre-mature retirement from the Navy, he took over briefly as General Manager (Special Projects) at the Hi-Tech Robotic Systemz, followed by a two year plus stint at Shyam Indus Power Solutions Pvt. Ltd. as their first Chief Operating Officer. Later, Cdr Arun also worked with Honeywell (India) as Director Government Relations and led from the front to grow the function exponentially. He has now joined the Smiths Group, headquartered in London, as Vice President (India), Corporate Affairs in Oct 2020.



Joining the Indian Navy

Cdr Arun Jyoti admits that joining the Indian Navy was not his first career choice. He was a happy biology 'only' student who aspired to become a doctor and, in 1988, had been accepted into medical school when he also got the opportunity to join the National Defence Academy. His father was instrumental in his final decision to join the NDA and later, he underwent the Electrical Engineering course at Naval College of Engineering, INS Shivaji. He recollects his most memorable tenures in the Navy to be those onboard his first submarine, the INS Sindhughosh, and at Naval Shipyards at Visakhapatnam, Mumbai. Here he planned, retrofitted and repaired (Planning, Electrical & Weapon Systems) both operational and refit-due ships and submarines using conventional and innovative techniques including generation of in-house quality procedures to meet mission specifications. Eventually, Cdr Arun decided to change tracks for new career opportunities.

Second Innings

Cdr Arun Jyoti retired in Dec 2014 but started preparing for exit in 2010! He conceptualised the transition process diligently, analysed all that needed to be done and planned accordingly. He networked extensively with officers who had successfully

transitioned to the corporate sector to arrive at his conclusions. As far as academia was concerned, Cdr Arun already had four degrees including two Graduate and two Postgraduate qualifications, and therefore, he was clear about not going for any further formal higher education. He picked three mentors who guided him throughout his journey, and who stand with him even today, to whom he is eternally thankful. Cdr Arun attended the pre-release course at MDI Gurgaon during his last year of service. The course not only gave him quality time to achieve the last mile change of track but also allowed him to contemplate and write. He matured his blog, www.winnertakesitall.blogspot.in, where he started penning down his life experiences and also wrote extensively on LinkedIn.



Military to Corporate Transition

When asked about the difficulties he faced after switching to corporate sector, Cdr Arun said, that being a manager at Naval shipyards at Visakhapatnam and Mumbai, he already had the experience of managing civilian workforce and therefore adjusting to the corporate structure was comparatively smooth. He firmly believes that a leader must see himself as human first and the rest falls in place. People outside do respect military officers for their service to the Nation, and all one needs is to align himself with the organisation and to continue the learning streak.

The Corporate Experience

Cdr Arun Jyoti joined Hi Tech Robotics Systemz, immediately after his retirement, as General Manager Special Projects. During this short span of time, he travelled throughout the country and led the Strategy and Business Development. It was a

short engagement for a few months. Then, he took over as the first Chief Operating Officer at Shyam Indus Power Solutions Pvt Ltd (an ACB India Group Company) and was responsible for the operational and over all administration of the organisation across India. He streamlined and automated processes to increase the efficiency of the organisation including SAP Go Live with IBM.

After a two year plus growth vectored stint at SIPS, Cdr Arun wanted to take a sabbatical to write a book but was offered the position of Director Government Relations (India) by Honeywell. At Honeywell, he was responsible for the company's engagement with Government, where he delivered all round seamless business continuity during the lockdown due to the pandemic. He worked with businesses and Corporate functions to develop regulatory and legislative policy positions and initiatives to foster growth and defend against negative outcomes, developed specific plans and strategies for communicating with government officials regarding activities, businesses, initiatives, and direct sales to government customers. The function saw exponential growth during this phase and Honeywell's businesses fared well even during pandemic. He was instrumental in many revenue wins for Honeywell including the first ever 52 MUSD Defence Banking Offsets receipt from MoD ahead of multiple other companies. Then, in Oct 2020, he joined the Smiths Group as their first Vice President Corporate Affairs for India.



Life in the Corporate

Cdr Arun describes his current profile at Smiths Group to be an extremely agile one which requires him to manage business critical situations across India, handle geopolitical and regulatory functions - to ensure business continuity - and all-round growth. The Corporate Affairs function is the glue that can bind various divisions of the group. The company ensures a healthy work-life balance and encourages ownership and passion in its employees. High on integrity and respect, the customer focussed approach helps attain innovative business results and sectoral growth

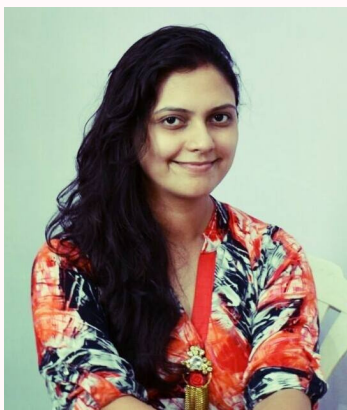
opportunities. There is a deep focus on a One Smiths value proposition to the customers. The role also entails value proposition and strategy formulation.

Hobbies and Interests

Being a passionate blogger and writer, Cdr Arun wishes to publish his work, a collation of all his articles from the blog and a few additional stories, as a book soon. Cdr Arun is also a keen driver, golfer, podcaster and loves to travel, read out and share his stories with the community.

Advice to Fellow Officers

Cdr Arun believes that there is no set model for one to achieve success in the corporate domain. However, if one has the appetite to learn, adapt, the ability to adjust rapidly to every level and the flexibility to take on any challenge, then sky is the limit!



Bidisha Pandey is a blogger who believes every individual has a story and a lot can be learned from every story. More stories and interviews by her can be read on her blog site www.sassyweekender.com



ADVERTORIAL - From SCRIPBOX

How to Plan for Your Child's Education, as Defence Services Personnel

Our families form perhaps the most important reason why we save and then invest. As a defence services personal, your families make quite a few sacrifices to support you. It is thus only natural that you would want to support their dreams and aspirations as much as you can.

Your child's education is something that a lot of your savings and investments will be geared towards. The fact that you can look forward to a pension post-retirement makes the decision-making process a bit simpler. You can allocate far more of your savings towards educating your children than you would have if you also had to save for the entire retirement corpus. No matter what your child wants to study, you would want to support them to the best of your ability.

What then do you need to keep in mind at the very outset?

1. Education inflation is higher than general inflation.

Our research has shown that education inflation trends towards double digits and 12% is a good assumption for the same. This will have a direct bearing on how much, and for how long, you have to save and where to invest. Today, a typical IIT charges almost Rs 3 Lakhs annually in fees. Studying abroad, especially in the US, for undergraduate courses can set you back by multiple crores. While education inflation outside India may be potentially lower, the costs even then would be quite significant.

2. You have to balance your current expenditure on your child's education with what you plan for college.

If you are among those that have sent or are planning to send your child to a good boarding school, then you must have a fair idea of the costs involved. While it is definitely a good investment towards your child's future, this can potentially affect how much you can save for your child's higher education.

3. You will have to start early.

Considering point 1, the earlier you start planning, saving, and investing for your child's higher education, the lesser will be the savings burden and the more likely you will be able to meet your goals.

An SIP (Systematic investment plan) of Rs 10,000 in equity funds giving about 11% per annum for 10 years is likely to yield about Rs 22 Lakhs. If the same SIP were for a period of 15 years you are looking at a final sum of Rs. 45 Lakhs. Even if the SIP amount were Rs 8000 for 15 years, you would still end up with Rs 10 Lakhs more than if you saved and invested for 10 years.

So What's the Action Plan?

SIPs and a portfolio of good equity mutual funds can make the seemingly tall order of saving multiple lakhs for your child's higher education a readily achievable reality. Here's how to begin:

- Consider multiple higher education options and list down the fees today. If they are in India, consider inflation of 12% and assess the costs in the year your child is likely to go to college. If they are outside India you can consider the dollar-denominated inflation values. A good thumb rule is about 2% inflation for education outside India. You can use multiple calculators, such as this one for the same.
- Once you have a rough estimate of the amount that will be required, consider the time you have to save up for it. An ideal starting point is 15 years before your child will need to go to college. Even 10 years is a decent time frame.
- Depending on the amount required, start an SIP in good equity mutual funds. A portfolio of 2-3 schemes which allow you to invest across market capitalisations is best suited to deliver the inflation-beating growth you will need to reach your goal. Make sure that the SIP you are planning for is going to be enough. So if you need 20-22 Lakhs, in 10 years, a Rs 10,000 monthly SIP will do the job for the most part.

Student Loans

In the event you believe the amount required may be more than you can save for, try and save as much as possible and combine it with an education loan that your child can then pay off once they are employed. The more you can contribute, the lesser will be the loan burden.

For education abroad, your child will quite likely need a student loan, in addition to what you can save and invest for as saving up the required total corpus is a challenging task for most. Consider your own finances and do speak to a registered investment advisor or a qualified financial planner for this.

Keep in Mind

You will need to balance your own needs post-retirement as well as your other financial goals while saving and investing for your child's higher education. While you will have the benefit of your pension, do not aim for something that will leave you absolutely dependent on the pension. You will need to have a good retirement corpus if you do not want to sacrifice your lifestyle.

Discuss this goal just like other financial goals with your family and take professional advice should you feel the need to do so.

Follow us on



ForceNetPreneurs

In this series we plan to showcase a few entrepreneur members of Forces Network who have achieved a reasonable degree of success in their business ventures. The aim being to celebrate their success as also to learn from them with a view to motivating more amongst our community to take up entrepreneurship as a full time vocation. Finally – we do need job creators in greater numbers than job seekers.

BY UDAY K SHRIWAS

Lt Col Sandesh Sharma was commissioned into Corps of Signals in Dec 1987. A BTech in Electronics and Communication Engineering, he is also an alumnus of the prestigious Defence Services Staff College. During his Army career he took part in OP Rakshak, OP Vijay and OP Parakram. In addition to serving as a signal officer in various capacities in different units, he also served as GSO-1 of a formation. He was the first Army officer on deputation to Ministry of External Affairs. He took PMR in Jul 2009. Thereafter, he has been a Master Trainer with Franklin Covey and has been conducting training programs for professionals in the corporate world for over 10 years. He is a well-established PMP trainer and an Executive Coach. Presently, he is the Co-founder of his entrepreneurial venture VISAJ Training & Consulting. He can be contacted at colsandesh@gmail.com



Uday: Please tell us something about your Army career and the journey so far.

Sandesh: I was commissioned into Corps of Signals in Dec 1987. My journey in the Army was very enriching and also unique. All units I served in had different organizational structure and equipment profile than the previous ones. I had experience of serving in a Composite Signal Regt in Deserts to an Inf Div Sig Regt in Plains, an EW unit in the valley followed by a Mountain Div Sig Regt and then in an AREN Sig Regt. This experience made me more proficient as well as adaptable, a tenet, I feel is essential for every professional. Along the way I did my BTech in Electronics & Communication Engineering in 1995 and Defence Services Staff College in 2000. I also had an exposure of being GSO1 of a formation.

In 2006, I was fortunate to be the first Indian Army Officer on deputation to Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). There I was assigned the top priority project of the Foreign Secretary of setting up an international level Crisis Mitigation Centre along with associated processes. I designed and established the Crisis Mitigation Centre “Situation Room” in the South Block in 2007. Thereafter, I led Crisis Mitigation operations in the MEA for 8 crisis situations including Mumbai terror attack 26/11, Civil unrest in Libya 2011 (in which for the first time in the history of our country we evacuated over 15000 Indians from a foreign land in crisis) and Iraq crisis in 2014. I had the honour of working very closely with three Foreign Secretaries. I was also fortunate

to get international exposure of visiting and executing projects in 36 countries including USA, UK, France, Germany, Russia, China and Switzerland. This was professionally a very satisfying tenure as my contribution was appreciated by the former Minister of External Affairs, Dr Pranab Mukherjee, Foreign Secretary as well as the COAS. USA, UK, France, Germany, Russia, China and Switzerland. This was professionally a very satisfying tenure as my contribution was appreciated by the former Minister of External Affairs, Dr Pranab Mukherjee, Foreign Secretary as well as the COAS.

I took PMR from the Army in Jul 2009 however, the then Foreign Secretary offered me to continue in the MEA and hired me as a Senior Consultant. I continued till Aug 2014 before leaving the MEA after a long innings of eight and a half years.

Thereafter, in 2014 I joined one of the world's leading Training & Consulting Company, Franklin Covey India & South Asia as a Principal Consultant. For next 5 years I trained professionals across all industries at all levels.

Uday: Please give us more details about what you are presently engaged in.

Sandesh: I am the co-founder of VISAJ Training & Consulting. My Partner, Col Vijay Dhawan and I are Master Facilitators having trained professionals across all industries for over 10 years. We have training & coaching interventions in 7 categories namely Programs for Senior leaders, Managers, Sales professionals, Project Management, various skills and Outbound training events for team building. I am also an Executive Coach, so we do offer one on one coaching interventions to professionals.

Uday: What was the impetus for you to get into entrepreneurship as a PMP Trainer?

Sandesh: To be honest I never planned to get into Learning & Development. I did attain my PMP certification with an aim to get a suitable opportunity in the corporate world, however with MEA hiring me as a Senior Consultant immediately after my PMR, I never needed to pick up a job in the corporate world.

While in MEA I trained the IFS officers on crisis mitigation and associated human aspects. Those trainings were very well received and I trained over 350 IFS officers.

In early 2010, the owner of one of the leading PMP training companies offered me to start training PMP batches under his banner as a freelance trainer and I started inducting PMP batches. In the last 10 years I have trained over 1100 PMP aspirants and 688 out of them have become certified PMPs.

Uday: What are the challenges you faced in this journey as a Trainer? And, how did you overcome those challenges?

Sandesh: There were many challenges. I would not claim that I have overcome them yet, its 'work in progress'.

First and the biggest challenge is "Acceptability". Will I be accepted by the corporate

professionals as a facilitator/trainer especially with zero corporate experience? To be accepted in an environment one has to bring in the “Familiarity”. Use of common language symbolises “Familiarity”. Being from the forces we are in the habit of using our jargons which are not understood by the corporate professionals. I needed to talk in their language and use their terminologies to convey my message effectively. I remember spending almost three months studying about the organisations and terminologies prevalent in the corporate world before my first day as a trainer. The more you talk in their language, the more acceptable you become.

Second major challenge is “*Visibility*”. How would the environment know about me and my strengths as a facilitator? To be regarded as one of the best, you must get associated with one of the best. For this, I joined Franklin Covey India & South Asia in 2014. For almost the next 5 years I worked very hard. Prepared well for the trainings approximately at a ratio of 1:10, which meant for one day training I prepared for 10 days. I trained professionals across all industries at all levels on a daily basis. Each day spent on the floor conducting a workshop improved me as a trainer and the environment started knowing about me, making me more visible.

Another challenge is “*Effectiveness*”. How will I be able to deliver value to the participants by giving solutions to their problems? Effectiveness of the training depends on whether the facilitator is able to give solutions to the challenges faced by the participants or not. Thus it is important for a facilitator to understand the participants, their profiles, company culture and the prevailing working environment. To achieve this, I would go through LinkedIn profile of all the participants’ one or two days prior to the training program to understand them well. In addition, I would also go through the company website to understand company’s vision, the culture, values and the performance so that I could suggest solutions to their real challenges during the training.



Uday: What was the vision behind starting your venture, and how it has grown?

Sandesh: Learning & development space is highly competitive one with many global players vying to create a difference. VISAJ is still in its nascent years. We both (Partners) strive to create a space for VISAJ as a trustworthy and professional organisation which will contribute to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of its clients. We have been quite successful in doing it so far. The testimony to this fact is that we can proudly claim to have some of the biggest names of the corporate world as our clients. Reliance Industries Ltd, Maruti Suzuki India Ltd, Sharp, Halonix, Marsh India are a few to name. It is just the beginning; we have a long way to go.

Uday: How has been your experience of coaching so many students for PMP certifications?

Sandesh: It started in Jul 2010 with a batch of 18 participants and till date I have trained over 1100 aspirants across many organisations. It has been a very interesting journey. Initially it gave me satisfaction of doing something I love but soon it became a passion.

I was an unknown trainer in this domain, but within few months I started conducting workshops every month as my old participants would recommend their friends and colleagues to attend my workshops. Soon I was rated as one of the best PMP trainers in the country and one of the top four consulting MNCs hired me for conducting PMP workshops regularly for their employees.

A PMP aspirant is a nervous starter as there are so many myths about the degree of difficulty about the exam. As a PMP trainer, my first task is to clear these myths and make him mentally strong. This is achieved by giving the aspirants a clear step wise path to the goal. Thereafter, it is the coverage of the syllabus in detail using common life examples as they are easy to assimilate. Understanding of the syllabus starts building confidence. I incorporate tools to remain connected with my participants after the workshop and provide them much needed support till their exam. This is somewhat rarely heard of in the corporate world. I try to handhold them in their difficult times by clearing their doubts even after the workshop. I also celebrate their success with the same zeal. I am in touch with most of my previous participants even from the very first batch I conducted in Jul 2010.

This year due to the new normal we needed to go online for the PMP workshops from April 2020. I designed the schedule for the workshop with an aim to provide maximum benefits to the participants. I trained 10 batches this year and most of the participants in these batches were members of the defence forces, Forces Network in particular. In these last five months, 56 participants have become certified PMPs. I am sure many more will attain the coveted PMP certification before the end of 2020.

Uday: What has been the most satisfying aspect in this Journey as a PMP trainer?

Sandesh: "The success of my participants" without a doubt. There have been many who took training from some other agency and failed to qualify in their first attempt,

but later attended my training and became PMPs. For a facilitator like me there cannot be any other thing which is more satisfying. I do celebrate the success of each of my participants without fail in my own unique manner.

You feel happy when you achieve your goals but it's a completely different feeling when you play a small role in ensuring others achieve their goals. I am glad God has given me this opportunity.



Uday: So, what advice would you like to give to the fellow ForceNet members who want to take up PMP certification?

Sandesh: My first advice is "*It is Doable*". This is an exam which requires focus and regular effort. You can crack the exam within three months with a focused approach. There are two key principles to crack the PMP exam:

- Clear Understanding of the Subject. PMP is a professional certification of immense value. The exam is considered to be one of the toughest, if not the toughest. Passing such exam requires clear understanding of the syllabus. Your focus during the PMP training should only be to understand the syllabus and clarify all your doubts from the facilitator. Preferably attend Live workshops as you can seek clarifications from the facilitator, a feature not available in any pre-recorded workshops. More understanding you obtain during the training, your journey post the workshop to your exam becomes that much smooth.
- Focus and Maintenance of Momentum. Make sure that you study at least 2 hours every day for next 6 to 8 weeks post the workshop. Try and be regular in studying everyday even if you have time to read only one page. The subject can become more difficult in case you have a break in between. Purchase few practice question papers and solve them during the last three weeks. Attempt one question paper, analyse and identify your weak topics, read them again before you try the next practice exam.

Forces Network members are most welcome to contact me for any support regarding PMP certification. I can be reached at +919868870386 or colsandesh@gmail.com.

Uday: What are your future plans going forward?

Sandesh: Establish VISAJ Training & Consulting as a trustworthy and professional organisation which will enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of its clients. We are surely planning to go global for the online PMP workshops in near future.



Uday: There must have been great lessons during this tremendous entrepreneurial journey. Can you share a few from your experience?

Sandesh: I would suggest the following to the budding entrepreneurs from Forces Network:

- Pursue Your Passion. First step to starting any venture is to introspect and identify your passion. Just because a particular line of business has worked for someone it is not necessary that it will also work for you.
- Create Your USP. It's important that you create your differentiators vis a vis your competitors and leverage them to create your space in the market.
- Have Confidence on Your Capabilities. There will be challenges on the way. Have trust on your capabilities and move ahead. Your passion will give you much needed energy during these times.

Uday: Sir, thank you so much for enlightening us with your experiences.



***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, and is now the Relationship Leader with Yes Bank Ltd.*

Expatriate Interview

In this series we plan to showcase the achievements of the members of Forces Network who have settled abroad and carved a niche for themselves through hard work, grit and determination. The aim is to bring to fore the mechanics of such transitions, and thereby quell the apprehensions of the larger community in the Network. Learning from each other would help us exploit our true potential in any part of the World. And, it could be beneficial for our families too.

BY UDAY K SHRIWAS

Lt Col Ajay Serohi, got commissioned into the Corps of EME and did his attachment with 13 Raj Rif. During his 23 years in the Army, he served with units in Infantry, AAD, Arty and Armd, with most tenures in the Northern and Eastern sectors, and also at Army HQ. Ajay is an electronics engineer with specialization in RADAR systems and holds two master degrees in National defense strategy besides being only the second Indian Army officer ever to graduate with a Master's in Management from graduate school of business at Stanford University. He is PMI certified and after a short stint in a budding startup in the U.S.A, is currently a product manager, leveraging his expertise in supply chain logistics to manage some critical initiatives at TESLA.



Uday: What were the highlights of your tenure in the Indian Army ?

Ajay: I have had the most fulfilling and diverse experience in my 23 years in the Indian Army in several domains such as counter terrorism, Military Secretary's Branch, Operations & Maintenance, Logistics, Inventory and Supply Chain Management. While my formative years inculcated in me the spirit of Leadership in challenging situations in the combat zone, (with 13 Rajputana Rifles), my subsequent years instilled the essence of sincerity, hard work and perseverance. Commissioned into the Corps of EME, I had the privilege of working with some of the finest in units in Infantry, Armoured, AAD and Artillery as the OC Workshop. I tenanted the coveted appointment of ADC to a GOC followed by the Governor of Gujarat for a short duration. After completing my Degree engineering and Advance Course in RADAR systems, I had the opportunity of working with Raytheon on a critical project for the Army. On completion of DSSC 62nd course, I was posted as AQMG of an Infantry Brigade in the North East. Thereafter, I tenanted the coveted post of the Additional Military Secretary (AMS) of EME where I tried my best to optimally balance the organizational requirements with personal aspirations to improve officers' satisfaction and happiness index. My tenure at Military Secretary's Branch was a an important lesson in humility, when for three years, I worked and sometimes fought to make the system sympathetic and alive to the myriad personal problems - Kids with Cancer, kids with special needs and many such issues- of officers, when sometimes all they needed was a hearing and an assurance. My last tenure in the base camp wherein I

initiated some of the most innovative logistic efforts to supply critical electronic cards for the communication equipment won me much appreciation as well as the GOC-in-C Commendation Card. Moreover I was also involved in the design and deployment of a 635 km OFC network to provide real time encrypted military communications in high altitude areas. This particular project is of critical importance to the Indian Defense Network for battlefield surveillance and battlefield visibility. It was in Ladakh that I found my calling in doing something for the environment and therefore started the 'Green Shoots initiative', promoting farming and eco-tourism for furthering the locals' self-sustainability. Over these years of my life and across the experiences in the Army, what matters to me is that I always uphold and defend the spirit of freedom, Human Values and dignity of the human body, mind and soul.

Uday: Did you have any concrete plans as to what exactly you wished to do post retirement? How did you prepare yourself for the second innings?

Ajay: I have always believed in the cliché 'If you don't move and adapt you will soon be extinct'. As a second-generation officer, we always were in a microcosm of the Army values and ethos in our house. I remember my parents, instilling in us the importance of balance in nature and the criticality of taking the right steps towards sustainability - although the terminology dawned on me much later. It was after my experience and success with the initiative of 'Green Shoots' in Ladakh, that I knew, if ever I joined the corporate world, I had to be part of a mission to make the planet more sustainable and I believe Tesla fit into that dream pretty well. Although, at the time of hanging my uniform, the only concrete plan was to join Stanford University and I had not planned for the industry or the company. I had my aim of joining the University set in stone (there were days when I would actually dream myself wearing their shirt) and gave me the motivation to prepare at 45 years of age in high altitude - guess the low oxygen helped fire my neurons. I think the important point here is that if one believes in a cause and has the aim set, then no dream is impossible. I also believe that our training and experience in the Forces makes us agile enough to adapt to any situation and excel in the most meagre resources. I first researched the Universities in the U.S. and Canada and thereafter took my decision to apply based on a number of factors that were critical in my case. I had applied in seven Universities and got acceptance in six of these. However, I joined Stanford and have never regretted the decision. My preparation for GMAT was limited to the erratic hours of electricity and internet where I was posted in Ladakh. I complemented the preparation by enrolling in a month-long coaching at Jamboree during my Annual Leave. I also took some guidance and help from alumni in writing my essay and the other important parts of the application. The biggest challenge was to keep oneself sharp at high altitude at 45 years of age, and in this meditation as well Pranayama helped me a lot.

Uday: What was the impetus for you to leave the uniformed service and then immigrate to the US?

Ajay: My reasons for leaving the Army stemmed from personal as well as professional requirements. On the personal front, I wanted to spend more time with the family and dedicate more time towards the higher education path of my daughters in the U.S. On

the Professional level, I have served for 23 years and didn't see any further avenues of my own growth in the Army. Moreover I was not adding any value to the organization and thus decided to take the call for making the transition. I also want to take my experience of leadership and logistics in the Army to do well in the corporate. The trigger for the transition came about in the last tenure in Ladakh wherein I developed some health issue which would have only worsened at High Altitude.



Uday: What were the challenges faced in your transition from the uniformed to corporate life? How did you overcome those challenges?

Ajay: The biggest challenge was access to the internet and electricity in my location for preparations for GMAT and the application. Most officers stationed in remote locations would face such a dilemma. In my case I made the best of the limited hours by preparing from the books (GMAT) and using the precious internet time to research for colleges or their application downloads. Thereafter using the offline time to ideate and prepare the SOPs. Another challenge faced by us is the conversion of our experiences into a good corporate equivalent on the resume. I scanned on LinkedIn or internet for the resumes as well as the requirements for the roles that I was interested in applying for. Thereafter I listed all my major achievements in the Army and converted into equivalent corporate jargon in the one liner templates of "what, How and So What". I guess one of the biggest dilemmas is to plan the closures and consolidate all assets into the simplest manageable form - major exercise was to identify all the assets such as the car, additional house etc and then convert whatever possible into liquid assets in order to take stock of the finances. The liquid assets along with the post retirement money formed the yardstick metric for the loan in dollars that I could afford to borrow. Thankfully in my case the housing and the other basic requirements like the furniture, fridge and Kitchen oven etc were taken care of by Stanford University just like in Staff College and therefore the house is ready to

move in as we arrive. However, I assume that the housing would be another challenge in case of Universities not having a dedicated accommodation. In such cases it is best to liaise with the administrative officer or the alumni or the Army officers network to tie up the accommodation. The workplace is very different from what we are used to in the Army and one needs to be careful in understanding that the environment is not as protective. At Tesla as well as most other companies, one is expected to speak one's mind and participate in ideation even if it means countering the ideas of your Boss - Coming straight out of the Army the thought of countering the Boss might be a slight challenge to adjust to. I had this issue for the first 3~4 months but fortunately for me, I told my Boss one-on-one and she was supportive in giving me opportunities to speak my mind in most meetings. Thereafter it became a muscle memory.



Uday: How was your experience at Stanford University? Would you recommend the course to other Armed Forces officers preparing for transition?

Ajay: I have been on the literary road for quite some time dotted with milestones of engineering, advance course in RADARs and a couple of Masters in defense strategy, however nothing prepares you for the corridors of learning at Stanford University. Situated in the heart of innovation and technology in the silicon valley, sprawled in the splendor of the Californian palms and sun, the campus stretches over 13 square miles and houses some of the best schools in the world with its Graduate school of Business (GSB) being at the top spot over many years. At GSB I had the privilege of being only the second ever Indian Army officer to have graduated till now. Stanford follows an experiential teaching methodology with the case study as its basis, wherein the classes are taught by the Titans in the Industry and some of the most famous Nobel Laureates. Some of the most important skills that an officer needs during the transition is the knowledge of the Business concepts, business jargon and the soft skills. Stanford provided the right environment and the platform for me to make the transition in three degrees - geography, Industry and the role. There were some exceptional courses such as Touchy Feely, Paths to Power and acting with power that prepare you for the world in the corporate and hone the soft skills required in the corporate. I have been in touch with a lot of officers who are either preparing for

Stanford or are in the planning stage and the biggest concern they have is of the costs and that of taking the big plunge. Through this magazine I would like to reassure on both accounts that the course is worth every dollar as well as the risk. I would highly recommend officers to prepare for this wonderful one-year course and can guide them through the process.

Another point that I would like to drive home is that the common concern or fear is that one needs a particular background or certain inherent knowledge to get into a particular sector or Industry. This might be true for officers who start young or those who may be wanting to enter the industry with a particular skill set or in some companies in India wherein we are attached to rubber stamped Degrees. However, the biggest revelation in my personal transition as well as from the other Indian service officers (good about 20 officers on the West coast in the US) has been that companies in the U.S give more credence to the leadership and management expertise and basic logical reasoning that we as veterans bring with us. In my own case, I had no background in computers, but I am tenanted in the role of product manager in the IT Applications engineering department and have a number of developers as well as systems engineers working in the team. I was not interviewed for technical skills rather I was asked some basic reasoning questions and was asked to give solutions in certain painted situations apart from making a presentation.

Uday: Please share the major highlights of your corporate journey so far?

Ajay: My corporate journey is young, but in these three years I seem to have lived a lifetime in the velocity of projects at Tesla and the diverse departments that I have worked cross functionally. In my current role as the Staff product manager, I own and lead the development of software products in IT application engineering that support the business processes of sales, marketing, supply chain management as well as the core IT infrastructure improvements. Some of the highlights in the corporate world have been in successfully leading the initiative to develop the digital twin for the supply of material from the Gigafactory in the U.S. to that in Shanghai, leading the development of software for the world's largest virtual plant (a community GRID initiative in the Southern Australia to provide sustainable and cheap electricity to the remote communities) - https://www.tesla.com/en_AU/videos/savpp?redirect=no, and streamlining as well as digitizing the financial operations to discover efficiencies in automation. Through this wonderful journey, at Tesla, I have made many friends, represented the Indian Army spirit and ethos in several functions of the American Veterans community both at Tesla as well as the Bay Area and am proud to be a part of the mission at Tesla - "to accelerate the world's transition to sustainable energy".

Uday: What does a regular day in the life of a Staff Product Manager at TESLA look like?

Ajay: I would like to segregate my regular days into the 'end of quarter' and the 'rest of quarter' periods since in the current company most software projects are on a quarter cycle. On a normal day in the 'rest of quarter', I get up early and devote an hour to my Pranayama and stretching exercise. I then address all the pending emails or decisions from the previous day and devote 30 minutes to prioritizing as well as

listing out the agenda for the day. I work with a lot of cross functional teams and therefore most of the day is spent in meeting the teams, communications and the change management. Once a week I also hold meetings with my team to either ideate or just chill out. These are very informal gatherings to get to know each other or identify any issues that can be nipped in the bud. There are a lot of other Veteran events or professional club activities during the working hours that I am a part of, and I actively contribute to these gatherings. However, the day changes completely if there is a big software release at the end of quarter or any other company milestone, wherein one loses the sense of the day and sometimes the day may well merge into the next one. My current company's culture is just like the Army wherein our executives and even the CEO pitches the tent and has soup with the team at 1 AM in the night in case of deliveries of cars or sleeps at the Factory premises whenever there is a production ramp up. In general, I would say that the work culture in most American companies and especially so in Tesla is very conducive to entrepreneurial leadership and innovative zeal, that encourages integrity and quality rather than quantity of effort. The culture is very inclusive of all Nationalities and acceptance of failures is appreciated by the leadership.



Uday: What were the major challenges you and your family faced during different country moves and especially after moving to the United States?

Ajay: The biggest challenge in making the transition on all three degrees of axis (geography, Industry and the role) is firstly being 100% convinced yourself and cementing the decision with your wife and kids. Fortunately, in the services, our wives are the pillar of support and the kids are used to frequent moves, which I shall call the change management. However, there were challenges of letting go the nostalgia of a household of stuff and packing only the essentials in our eight suitcases to the U.S., planning the finances and getting the necessary documentation for the VISAs. We all had to adjust to the new cultural nuances and the fast-paced life of having to do

everything ourselves since any services and help cost a lot of money. Moreover, there is always the anxiety of not getting any job since there are no dedicated campus placements unlike Indian universities. However, in hindsight I can assure that I have yet to see any Indian Army officer without a job or having to move back to India. I have grown up daughters and my elder daughter was transitioning into the tenth grade. In the U.S. 9th till 11th grade is very important for the college considerations. The children had to adjust to the curricula and the methods of teaching in the schools here. Initially she had to put in some extra hours but in the long run she graduated with good marks and would now join a great college in the west coast. Initial couple of years are slightly tough since one has to adjust to a new way of life but ultimately, the quality of living and the opportunities in all spheres of life grow on oneself and we consider ourselves lucky to be in the U.S.

Uday: How do you find your journey so far post migrating to the US? Any regrets?

Ajay: I have loved every moment and milestone of the Journey. The education opened my eyes to the latest ventures in the Tech world and the work experience has laid the solid foundation to building a strong structure for the professional edifice. I have made some great friends and my cultural bandwidth has increased to a global diaspora. My daughters accepted their new environment with ease and I am happy that the elder daughter has been accepted at one of the prestigious colleges. I have no regrets thus far and am looking forward to some exciting times.

Uday: What would be your advice to officers who wish to specifically move to the United States post retirement?

Ajay: Although I have spent only three years in the U.S. and am still in the early stages of settling down but having seen both the good part of 2018 and the tough 2020, I can surely give out my pearls of experience to officers willing to move to the U.S. As I have said earlier, the most important criteria in deciding to move, is the AIM of the transition. For officers early in their service, it might be purely professional accomplishments or settling down in the U.S. whereas officers with grown up children, may be seeking better education avenues along with their own career moves. The decision to move involves not only a mental conviction in oneself but also the attitudinal change since one would need to learn the ropes in the company to earn respect and position. Moreover, one has to overcome the pain of leaving friends or family and especially aged parents and this decision I believe is the toughest to make. In both the cases the transition springboard or the platform would best be an educational degree (a Masters or a one year MBA) that can provide for a 3 year OPT (Optional Practical Training is temporary employment that is directly related to an F-1 student's major area of study) required for working in the U.S.

Once the decision is cast to stone, It would be best to research the colleges that the officer would like to apply for and the attributes could be as varied as the industry specialization, costs, duration of study, family support and accommodation, duration of study, internship etc. Thereafter comes the important step of preparation for the GMAT as well as the Essay (which is different for each college). Most officers are

concerned about the finance aspect, and let me assure you that most colleges are supported by the International loan company Prodigy Finance (<https://prodigyfinance.com/>). During the course of study, it is best to network extensively with the alumni, Army network or any other networks since most interviews for jobs are landed through a referral. Any officer interested in more details can contact me for guidance.



Uday: Do you have any other hobbies or interests, which you pursue passionately? and how?

Ajay: Whilst as a student in Stanford, I played Soccer for the GSB team. I have also picked up the hobby of pottery and after many deformed shapes have finally got some semblance of shapes in my own pots and cups. Reading has always been a passion and continues to be so. Another fresh start is in trekking and exploring the numerous trails in beautiful California. The trails are 10-15 miles and hug along the Pacific coasts or pass through the mighty Redwood forest and are a delight for a Naturalist.

Uday: There must have been great lessons during this tremendous journey after hanging the uniform. Can you share a few from your experience?

Ajay: In my journey of three years since hanging the uniform, some of the lessons that stand out and would speak to most of us are:

- It's good to take a chance in life for one's passion. When we move ahead in life and have liabilities then one is generally scared to make big moves. However, I have come to realise that a well planned and thought out move or a change is mostly a success.
- Hard work will never go unnoticed. In my transition from the Army to the corporate in the US, I had to start at the base level since I had no US experience. However, it made me learn the tricks of the trade and with initial hard work I made it to a respectable level.
- Prioritize and then Re-Prioritize. Time is always at a premium and especially so in the U.S. since there is no help and one has to take care of all the administrative, household aspects in addition to the work. It therefore is a good habit to have a routine and a prioritization matrix of the tasks for the day.

- Constantly Upskill. Technology is in a constant flux and the mantra is to constantly upskill. At higher levels a functional knowledge suffices, whereas at more specific subject matter roles, one would need to deep dive. Moreover, it is best to be in touch with where the world is moving to and this is best gained by being in touch with the research academia.
- Have Fun and Make Friends. I would say this is the most critical lesson and I listed this last so that this is the last thought that stays with the reader. In the U.S. most jobs are through a referral and the Hiring managers are interested in the holistic applicant rather than just their resumes. It is best therefore to improve one's network by connecting with or through the friend circle bringing out the cultural and Fun best in oneself. I got my referral for an interview through one of the VPs whom I met in my Wine Class.



Uday: What are your future plans going forward?

Ajay: In the near future (say 5 Years) I would like to transition to supply chain management taking more responsibilities in the expertise of developing the digital twin of the supply chain in a tech company. I am also planning on gravitating towards the core automation sector wherein the manufacturing or the core business processes are automated in the AR/ VR technology. In the long term, I have my dreams set on starting something on my own in the agri supply chain sector.

Uday: Sir, thanks a ton, for sharing wonderful bites from your exciting journey of professional career and 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, and is now the Relationship Leader with Yes Bank Ltd.*

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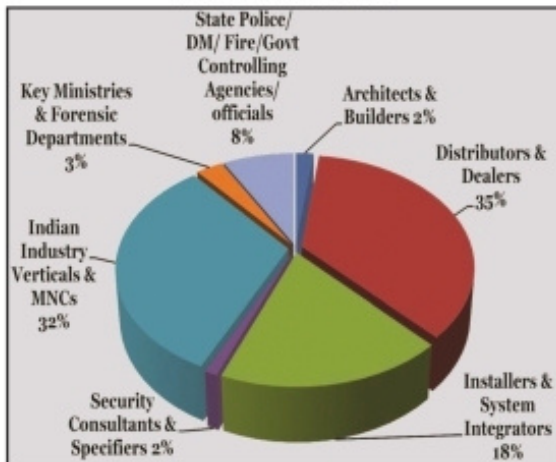
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Women Power

Spouses of Defence Officers have immense potential as individuals. While many of them have already established themselves as successful independent entities, a very large number still has to recognise and exploit their inherent hidden capabilities and worth. In this series we plan to showcase the achievements of such spouses of the members of Forces Network who have carved a niche for themselves through hard work, grit and determination, so as to provide adequate motivation to the others.

BY RANVIR SINGH

Meenakshi Sharma is a fauji wife from the Army and mother of a teenage son. Professionally, she is a management graduate with over fourteen years of experience in International higher education marketing. She has developed and led teams to build and promote strong international higher education brands in India and other South Asian countries. Over the years she has worked with top US Universities like New York University and Duke University and is currently working with Claremont Graduate University. Passionate about reading, baking and travelling, she is an ardent follower of Nicherin Buddhism and deeply believes in the humanistic philosophy. She firmly believes that it is only through international education and exchange of culture and ideas that we can build a peaceful society and make this world a better place to live in.



Ranvir: Please tell us about yourself and what you do, and how you started ?

Meenakshi: I am a management graduate with over fourteen years of professional experience in project management, business development, brand management, outreach and strategy building in international organizations. With education in the core having worked across various industries like Hindustan Times, British Council, New York University and currently with Sannam S4, I have accumulated wealth of knowledge and skills in the field of education. I have travelled extensively to the countries in Asia Pacific, Middle East, Europe and the USA.

A week after my last MBA exam I got married to an Army officer. While I was prepared to move from posting to posting with him and look for something in local station to satisfy my intellectual curiosity, but destiny had different plans for me. Soon after my marriage, he went for a practice camp and thereafter moved to a field area. I stayed back with my in-laws, it was then that my husband and mother-in-law encouraged me to kick start my career. I started applying and was soon hired as the Marketing and Promotions Manager in one of the leading media company. Since then, there has been no looking back. and I owe it to the constant support of my husband.

Ranvir: Did you have this passion even before marriage, or was it something that got ignited after marriage?

Meenakshi: My parents strongly believed in good education and gave me the freedom to choose what I want to study. I have always been on top of my class and was the Student President of placement cell in my college. I have been a very enterprising student throughout my student life. Once my marriage was arranged with a serving army officer, I had given up the hope of a full-time career however with the strong support, encouragement and understanding of my husband and in-laws I could establish a flourishing career.

Ranvir: Would you like to share the details of your services, and your marketing strategy?

Meenakshi: Currently, I work with a leading multinational organization Sannam S4. It works with the world's leading corporates, globally ambitious small and medium-sized companies, education institutions, non-profit, trade bodies, and government agencies. We enable these organisations to successfully explore, enter and expand into dynamic, high-growth markets throughout the world. I work in the education sector and lead in developing marketing, student recruitment and partnership strategy of Claremont Graduate University, California, United States. In the past, I have worked with Universities like King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, Saudi Arabia, Duke University and New York University. For the last eight years I managed the marketing, outreach and admissions of New York University in South Asia.



Ranvir: What is the most favourite part of your job?

Meenakshi: My work allows me to travel around the world and meet with the best of the people from education industry. I have widely travelled the world visiting more than ten countries in four different continents. I work with people of different backgrounds, cultures, languages and tastes and this brings a new learning every day. I also enjoy working with young students, parents, educationists and help them understand the value of international education and how can they prepare/help/support well for the application to leading US Universities.

Ranvir: What would be your tips for the children who wish to apply to the US Universities?

Meenakshi: Application to any foreign University is not difficult but time consuming. If you follow these simple steps and allow enough time you can put together a great application:

- Chose the Country and Select More Than One Option in Universities: Even if you are sure which university is your most favourite but it is advisable to keep your options open and select more than one university. You can also reach out the organisations like EdUSA (US), UKERI (UK), DAAD (Germany) for more information on the various Universities in these countries. Their services are free of charge.
- Research Well: All the information related to admission, degree and courses is given on the website. Read it well before you decide to shortlist the University.
- Go Through the Application Requirements Page Thoroughly: Once you short list the program in the University of your choice, read the admission requirement page carefully. It would have all the details that you need to send in the application for e.g. documents/transcripts/test scores etc. All this information should be on your finger tips.
- Contact the University Office: Majority of top ranked university would have a country office. You can reach out to the country representative directly to get the most authentic and university specific information. If there is no university office in the country you can register for the webinars for international students on the university's website. Attend the Univesrity's information sessions to clear your doubts and be sure you have understood the information correctly that you have gathered through the website.
- Enquire About the Financial Support: It is important for you to understand the financial support/scholarship offered by various universities and how can you apply for it.
- Go Through the Application Forms Diligently: In countries like US you can apply to multiple universities through a common form called "The Common Application form". If the Universities that you have selected are listed on the Common app please read the form very carefully to understand all that you need to fill. Prepare all the information that needs to be added in the form.
- Keep a Close Check on the Deadlines: The deadlines in foreign Universities are water tight please make sure you have your work planned according to the deadline.
- Fill Up Your Application in a Professional Manner: Applying to the best Universities in the US is like a job application. Please make sure you do not fill it casually and do not forget to use email ids that look professional. If you do not have one create a new.
- Write Interesting Essays: Start writing your essays months in advance to achieve the best results. Create many drafts and make sure that the essay should reflect your character as a person. You can choose the topics given on the application forms.

- Express Your Interest in the University: While researching the website read about the things that you liked most about the University and how you make a good fit to this place. Express your interest and also what you are going to get on the table for them.
- Review Before Hitting Submit: Review your application carefully before hitting the submit button to ensure you have added all the information correctly. Once submitted you can not make any amends.



Ranvir: Do you have any success story of any student, coming from a defence background?

Meenakshi: During the course of my career, I have come across many students with parents serving in the defence forces. Given the nature of the defence job of moving and settling in new places every few years, I noticed there is lack of right knowledge among the wards and families. Majority of them, academically sound but without a strong profile would visit my office in the month of September to understand the whole procedure and secure admission. The admission to the US universities is a process that needs to be started as early as a year before. If your ward is looking for an admission to undergrad program they should start working on their profiles from class IX onwards as the majority of the Universities would like to see your profile over the period of four years. Below are the few elements top US universities would like to see in the application of the prospective student:

- Academic excellence
- Passionate, sustained and meaningful extracurricular activities
- Intellectual curiosity
- Leadership Skills
- Community Service

Academic excellence alone will not help you secure a seat in the best Universities. Please allow your self enough time to build a strong profile. I would like to share a story about a student from a defence background who managed to secure the admission in one of the top US University. His father was serving in the Air Force, he reached out to me through a school counsellor. The student was an outstanding student studying in Army School, holding the position of a Head Boy, passionate

about Physics, and had earned accolades for his school on different occasions. He got in touch with me months before his application deadline and regularly attended the information sessions, workshops and diligently worked on his application. He secured his well written recommendations timely, worked hard for his essays and gave enough time to his application.

With this focus and hard work, he managed to get in NYU's campus in Abu Dhabi with 100% financial support. As a part of the program, he got an opportunity to travel to nine different study abroad sites of NYU and study in different countries.



Ranvir: Any other challenges have you faced so far, on the way to establishing yourself? And, how did you overcome these challenges?

Meenakshi: One needs to be determined, focused and persistent to grow in life. Juggling different roles at the same time while giving your best in each role is not easy.

To overcome the challenge of the demand of each role that I played, I established a strong support system at home. It saved me from being overwhelmed by my responsibilities and allowed me to be stay completely focused on my work, travel and also be able to spend quality time with my family and loved ones.

Planning my work and household responsibilities helped me build emotionally strong, progressive, close-knit family and a successful career all at the same time.



Ranvir: What advice do you have, especially for spouses of defence officers, who desire or aspire to be similarly independent?

Meenakshi: My message to all the wonderful ladies married to defence officers is “Know that you are not ordinary. You have already proved it by marrying the toughest job holders.” My only advice to the spouses is to embrace the choices you have made whether it is being a housewife or a working professional. If at any point you think to change your decision and would like to start a career, all you need is the strong determination and meticulous planning and trust me you can achieve whatever you set your eyes on.

Ranvir: Thank you, Meenakshi. It was wonderful interacting with you and understanding the gamut of applying to the educational institutions in the US, and surely our readers will benefit from your experience in this field.

Meenakshi: It has also been my endeavour to be of assistance to the members of our defence fraternity, and I can be reached anytime for assistance in this regard.



Lt Col Ranvir Singh, a product of Rashtriya Military School and and an alumnus of National Defence Academy, was commissioned into 2nd Battalion The Bihar Regiment in June 1988. After hanging his boots in Jan 2009, he has contributed immensely as a Corporate Warrior for last 10 years to recognised organisations like IL&FS Technologies Ltd, National Institute of Bank Management of RBI, and MMTC-PAMP India Pvt Ltd. Apart from being a Security & Safety specialist and an Administration expert, he has a keen interest in the field of ever evolving Information Technology, and a flair for writing. He can be reached at ranvirsm@gmail.com

Gratitude

A Milestone @ 57

BY SYED SHAHID RAZA

I took premature release in 2008 after completing 22 years of active service in Engineering branch in Indian Navy. In my last year of service, I enrolled myself for management certification programme from Management Development Institute, Gurgaon (AFP 9). While doing the MDI course , I met a few seniors from service during guest lectures organised by our batch and came to know about “PMP certification”. Courses prior to our batch had the luxury of getting at least two jobs during placement period . But in our course Lord Murphy brought in recession of 2008 and very few SSC officers got placement during our MDI tenure.

After MDI and release from service, I was lucky to get a break in a Mumbai based company and was initiated into the rigmarole of corporate life. Changing three jobs in the period 2009 to 2018 (Pharmaceutical process manufacturing company, Operation and maintenance of District cooling facility- Cyber Hub Gurgaon, a project role of construction of Asia’s largest Malt and manufacturing facility at Kotputli), a need was always felt to enhance my skill level but the demands of my job prevented me from putting in efforts towards it. I was looking for better job options in June 2018 and visited Directorate of Ex-servicemen, DESA, in New Delhi. The officer-in-charge introduced me to this wonderful platform “Forces Network “.

One of the mails in network pertained to PMP and the administrator mentioned “Col Sandesh Sharma”. I contacted Col Sandesh and he mentioned his next batch will commence in about 25 days’ time and advised me to remain in touch.

Same day one of the other mails mentioned about a job opportunity in an Oil and Gas project in Oman. The originator mentioned the living condition to be akin to concentration camp of Nazis Germany. I took my chances and applied for the job. I landed up in Muscat exactly ten days after applying for the job.

What was described as a Nazi camp was actually a five star facility for 7000 plus Omani/Expats in mid-desert, 400 Kms from Muscat, working together to make Oman’s largest oil and gas project (PDO Yibal Khuff Project) in which our company was major construction contractor. It was a great learning opportunity for me to see how the mega projects are planned, executed and monitored. My part of the ship was administration, camp management, catering, security, transport, HR, and all essential services of arranging potable water, STP plant, RO Plant etc. I was also involved as team leader for improving time on task campaign for expat employees through which I learnt a lot about the work flow, daily reporting, WBS, WBS dictionary and PMIS reporting etc . Working hours were from 5.30 AM to 12.30 PM and again 3.30 PM to 6.30 PM on a daily basis, and extreme temperatures of +55 degree in summer to 2

degree in winter, frequent sandstorms during March to September period (akin to scene filmed in the Tom Cruise movie - Mission Impossible The Ghost Protocol) etc were the challenges. Being a trained mountaineer from HMI Darjeeling, I enjoyed every moment of it. One of the major lessons learnt is emphasis on adherence to safety standards and hygiene standards in the camp not only for Managers/staff but for the expat workforce. The project completed 46 Million LTI Safe man hours till 30 Sep 20. The camp infrastructure, mostly made from fireproof porta cabins, ablution blocks, Dining hall, HACCP certified Kitchens, Masjid, Multipurpose hall, football ground, Gymnasium and recreation halls all were of world class standard and were inspected on weekly basis by PDO HSE team. I realised that the hygiene factor as emphasised in Herzberg theory contributing to higher productivity needs to be replicated/implemented in our country too by major companies. My contract with company expired on 30 Sep 20.

I was following Forces Network mail throughout my stay in Oman. From there, I got to know about Covid virtual batches in PMP by Colonel Sandesh Sharma, and I joined a batch in June 2020, and had planned to take the exam on my return to India in mid Oct 2020. Unfortunately, our Camp came under Covid attack with more than 200 active cases and about 4500 personnel were quarantined in their rooms for one month as per very strict health protocol of Oman. Being Admin in-charge, I had to utilise all my VUCA skills and leadership ability to make a dedicated team of volunteers who took part in temperature screening, room delivery of packed meals thrice a day, roving patrols, transporting critically ill patients to Nizwa hospital. 80 rooms with attached toilets were converted to isolation rooms and the Multipurpose hall was converted to COVID hospital. Full two months of July and August were devoted to Covid management and bringing normalcy in the camp. Both PDO and my company recognised the sterling effort put in by my team and conferred on each member "SHUKRAN" award signed by top management of company. I happened to be in 55 Plus age category, so as per company policy I returned home on 10 Oct 2020, carrying very pleasant memories of Oman. It was courtesy Forces Network that I got the opportunity to experience such world class work culture/infrastructure which was the focal touch point for all so called hygiene factors for 7000 plus Omani and expat workforce from 23 countries.

Once back in Gurgaon, I utilised my 14 days quarantine period to read PMBOK and workshop notes by Colonel Sandesh. Now the success story of Col Sandesh factory started trickling in our WhatsApp Group. Once in every two days, one youngster announcing his mega success in PMP exam accompanied with his lesson learnt stories. The resources shared in group and discussion within group made me confident to appear for the exam on 13th Nov 2020. However, after four hours, "FAILED" was staring at me.

Introspection revealed that I had got carried away by the success stories of youngsters and had not given the examination its due weightage. For next seven days I did not even look at PMP notes or resources in frustration.

Then, on 22 Nov 2020, I received the daily good morning message from Col Sandesh, which said, *“An entire sea of water can’t sink a ship unless it gets inside the ship. Similarly the negativity of the world can’t put you down unless you allow it to get into you”*. The message motivated me to realise failures are the first attempts to learning and END - 'effort never dies'.

I was bold enough to admit my failure openly in our Whatsapp group. I however found that I was not alone, and then five of us joined together on this path to conquer PMP. We shared our learning almost on a daily basis with each other and overcame our anxieties and insecurity. My wife supported me through out by taking full control of the home front, so that I could devote time for exam preparation. Quick revision of relevant PMBOK chapters was of much help along with flash cards shared by one of the colleagues.

I re-appeared for the exam on 18 Dec 2020 and finally got my coveted PMP badge. So far three of our group members, all above 54, have qualified for PMP certification and I am sure the other two will also qualify by 30 Dec 2020.

At 57, I am not very sure what wonders this PMP badge will do to my stalled career as no job opportunities are available to senior veterans, but yes it has provided me a framework for doing jobs in a more structured and a methodical manner. Had I obtained this badge in 2009, my career would have shaped up in an entirely different manner. I owe my success to Forces Network, Col Sandesh Sharma, my wife and committed colleagues of PMP workshop. I think most of the veterans who leave service after 20 years must utilise the Forces Network platform to up skill themselves which will help them to play active part in second innings

In the last three months, through Forces network platform, I have also done ABCT Part I and II, and intend obtaining Cloud Computing Azure 900 certification and KPMG lean Six Sigma, Green Belt certification. We are indeed very fortunate to have a network of committed professionals who are working selflessly towards professional advancement of our veterans' fraternity. Three Cheers to Forces Network...the Network that works.



Cdr Syed Shahid Raza joined Indian Navy Engineering Branch on 10 Feb 1986. While in Navy, he specialised in Marine Gas Turbines and Diesel Engines. He has done Post Graduation from IIT Delhi. He took premature release from service in Oct 2008. After MDI AFP programme, he has done corporate tenure with M/s Bectochem Engineering & Consultants, Mumbai, International Coil Ltd, Gurgaon, ETA Engineering Pvt Ltd for their Logistic business, Barmalt Malting India Pvt Ltd, Gurgaon and Galfar Engineering & Construction SAOG, Muscat. He is a lead auditor of ISO 9000 QMS, OSHMS ISO 45000 and FSMS ISO 22000.

Book Review

The New Rules of War: by Sean McFate

BY SURESH CHANDRA

About the Author: Dr Sean McFate is a foreign policy expert, an author, and a novelist. He started his career as a paratrooper and officer in the US Army's 82nd Airborne Division. Graduated from elite training programs, such as Jungle Warfare School in Panama, he was also a Jump Master. Consequent to his military service he became a private military contractor and paramilitary. Among his many experiences, he dealt with African warlords, raised armies for US interest, rode with armed groups in the Sahara, conducted strategic reconnaissance for the extractive industry, transacted various arms deals in Eastern Europe, and helped prevent an impending genocide in the Rwanda region.

He is an international business professional, a consultant to the US military, US intelligence community and United Nations. He writes extensively for leading newspapers and magazines and appears on various talks of repute. He is a Senior Fellow at the Atlantic Council, a Washington DC think tank, and a professor of strategy at the National Defense University and Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service. Additionally, he serves as an Advisor to Oxford University's Centre for Technology and Global Affairs.

McFate holds a BA from Brown University, MPP from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, and a Ph.D. in international relations from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). He was also a Fellow at Oxford. McFate lives in Washington, DC.

(Source: <https://www.seanmcfate.com/biography>)

The Book Review

"War is both timeless and ever changing. While the basic nature of war is constant, the means and methods we use evolve continuously", says the Marine Corps Warfighting Doctrine. Weapons, tactics, technology, leadership, objectives do change, but our desire to go into battle does not. The world is being shaped by "Durable Disorder" due to various factors like rise of China, resurgence of Russia, global terrorism, international crime, climate change, dwindling natural resources, and civil wars. This turmoil forces us to ask the critical question - what will be the nature of future wars? Sean McFate, the author, drawing from 'knowledge pool' of military geniuses like Carl von Clausewitz, Sun Tzu and his own experiences in various battlefields tries to carve out the new rules of war as it applies to the American context. The book is full of examples from the Roman conquest, World War II, Vietnam, Afghanistan, and others. He addresses the differences between conventional and future war, the misconception that technology is our saviour, the leverage of psychological and 'shadow' warfare, and much more.

Some of the rules/principles are ancient, some are new, but he feels these “new rules of war” will shape the future wars and the armed forces leadership needs to adapt else terrorists, rogue states, and others who do not fight conventionally call the shots and succeed.

The book has been called “The Freakonomics of Modern Warfare” and was named a “Book of the Year” by The Economist (2019), The Times (UK), and The Evening Standard. It has been included on West Point’s “Commandant’s Reading List”. The Economist called it a “fascinating and disturbing book”.

The book commences with an unsettling question: “*Why has the US forgotten how to win wars?*”, in-fact the question applies to “The West” in general. The last time we (the US/the West) won decisively was 1945. Ever since then, every major war has been a stalemate or quagmire. The simple answer to this as per the author is that “warfare has moved on, but we have not.” The author feels that the reason for this poor US/West performance in various conflicts, is that the “war futurists”, the people who visualise wars of future and drive present strategic decisions are invariably incorrect in their appreciation. As per Lawrence Freedman, an eminent war scholar after studying modern conflicts found that predictions about future war were almost always incorrect.

In an interview with DODReads, McFate says “*War is getting sneaker. Victory goes to the cunning, not just the strong. We are Goliath in the age of David. However, the US used to be crafty, from the Revolutionary War to the Cold War. We need our old strategic mojo back. While we have the best military in the world (even our adversaries know it), Washington suffers from strategic atrophy. Without a sound strategy, awesome troops alone cannot achieve victory. The Number 1 Rule: **Improve Washington’s strategic IQ***”. This sets the tone of the book.

Durable Disorder. The 21st century, as per the author, is embroiled in perpetual chaos, with no easy ways to contain it. Whatever has been tried so far has failed. Nearly half of the 194 countries are experiencing some form of war. Studies reveal that most peace agreements fail in five years, and that *wars no longer end unless one side is obliterated*, like the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka or the Chechens in Grozny. Present day conflicts “*smoulder in perpetuity without a clear winner or loser.*” This growing entropy signifies the emergence of a new global system which the author calls “*durable disorder*” whose defining feature is persistent armed conflict, but not as we know it.

He goes on to say that durable disorder will ensure that traditional battles will be indecisive, meaning of winning will change and victory will be achieved not on the battlefield but elsewhere, conflicts will not start and stop, but will grind on in “forever wars”, terms like “war” and “peace” will lose their meaning, laws of war will fade away and UN will prove useless. Non-kinetic elements like information, refugees, ideology, and time will be weaponized and will prove more effective than kinetic weapons.

“In the coming decades, we will see wars without states, and countries will become prizes to be won by more powerful global actors. Many nation-states will exist in name only, as some practically already do. Wars will be fought mostly in the shadows by covert means, and plausible deniability will prove more effective than firepower in an information age.”



The first half of the 20th century was invariably dominated by large wars with long periods of relative peace in between. But today's conflict, though on a diminished scale, has become a permanent feature of the global landscape where the combatants are not always nation-states. He goes on to say:

“Conflicts breed like tribbles, and the international community is proved powerless to stop them. This growing entropy signifies the emergence of a new global system that I call “durable disorder,” which contains rather than solves problems. This condition will define the coming age. The world will not collapse into anarchy; however, the rules-based order we know will crumble and be replaced by something more organic and wild.”

Identification of problems/issues is crucial and McFate breaks it down to ten rules which are a combination of his observations of past practices and a list of best practices for dealing with the new face of warfare.

The rules are worth reading, because they offer a quick and challenging outline that vividly describes these problems. He discusses these rules within the bounds of “entropy” and “apathy” and his treatment of the rules is refreshing.

These are McFate's ten new rules of war:

- Conventional war is dead.
- Technology will not save us.
- There is no such thing as war or peace; both coexist, always.

- Hearts and Minds do not matter.
- The best weapons do not fire bullets.
- Mercenaries will return.
- New types of world powers will rule.
- There will be wars without States.
- Shadow wars will dominate.
- Victory is fungible.

“Generals always fight the last war”. When it comes to the future of war, nations turn to past successes and try to replicate the same. Modelling the future on past glories ensures failure, he says. Nothing is more unconventional today than conventional war and the days of armed conflict between nation-states are ending. This leads on to the phrase “conventional warfare is dead.” Strategic thinkers need to focus on the methods that adversaries use to overcome/bypass conventional strength.

Advanced military hardware is frightfully expensive and takes long to develop. McFate condemns this general over reliance on hi-tech, as examples of misguided priorities. He uses the hugely overpriced F-35 and aircraft carriers as examples. The F-35 took approximately \$1.5 trillion to develop - more than Russia’s GDP and an aircraft carrier costs \$13 billion a piece. His treatment of this topic is interesting to read.

Cyber is important, but not in ways people think. It gives us new ways of doing old things: sabotage, theft, propaganda, deceit, and espionage. None of this is new. Cyberwar’s real power in modern warfare is influence, not sabotage. Using the internet to change people’s minds is more powerful than blowing up a server, and there’s nothing new about propaganda...Weaponized information will be the WMD of the future, and victory will be won in the influence space.

Based on his extensive special forces experience, the author feels, that the age of the mercenary is upon us. Large-scale violence has been the monopoly of nation states since the 1648 Peace of Westphalia, but in recent decades there has been *alarming growth in the supply of for-hire military services* which takes one of the two forms:

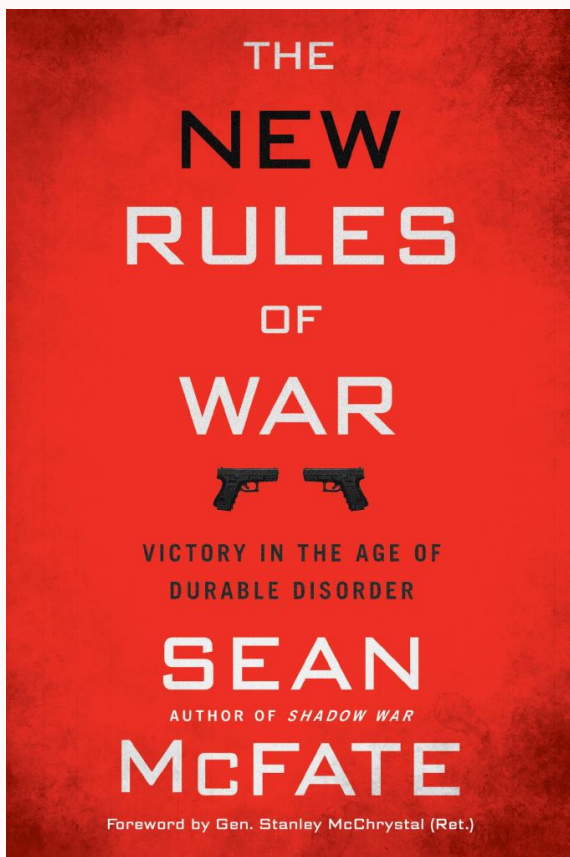
- Nation-states employ contractors to take on military operations - A response generally to public disapproval of using citizens in unpopular conflicts. US-hired contractors are all over the place in Iraq and Afghanistan in significant numbers.
- Use of military contractors by private entities - Corporations hire high-end private security not as guards, but special-ops-level former military personnel to provide security in dodgy third-world locations. There is nothing to prevent individuals from hiring private mercenaries to engage in private military actions. McFate cites one alarming incident in which a well-known actress attempted to hire a private security company to engage in a rescue mission in Darfur.

The first-world idea of the globe organised into nation-states is fast disappearing as large parts of the world are becoming stateless. We have areas of the globe where competing warlords, gangs and outside interests compete for spoils such as access to

natural resources or economically and/or militarily advantageous assets like ports. Today there are wars within states that ignore the official military. Billionaires could easily establish their own fiefdoms, states even, with a few well allocated companies of well-paid soldiers. There is nothing to stop a well-armed private force but another well-armed private force. Mexico is a prime example, in which cartels are been engaging in a years-long private conflicts. Syria is now a free-for-all, in which the state military is only one among many players.

“Generals always fight the last war”. When it comes to the future of war, nations turn to past successes and try to replicate the same. Modelling the future on past glories ensures failure, he says. Nothing is more unconventional today than conventional war and the days of armed conflict between nation-states are ending. This leads on to the phrase “conventional warfare is dead.” Strategic thinkers need to focus on the methods that adversaries use to overcome/bypass conventional strength.

“One can begin to see a medieval universe unfolding, in which nations, churches, and the wealthy each pursue global ambitions as world powers. They will all use force when necessary because it can be bought once again, as in the Middle Ages. The use of private force will expand in the decades to come, because nothing is in place to stop its growth, and in so doing, it will turn the super-rich into potential superpowers.”



Name of the Book: The New Rules of War - Victory in the Age of Durable Disorder

Author: Sean McFate

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Goodreads Score: 3.98/ 5.00 from 461 ratings

Author's Profile:

<https://www.seanmcfate.com/biography>



Information war is another area where adversaries have leapfrogged the deceptive capabilities of the West by investing and developing new cyberwar expertise. Controlling narrative to influence strategic decision-making is the key to influence

operations and adversaries have displayed better capabilities in this area. We cannot launch actual kinetic military attacks on Russian, Chinese, Iranian, or North Korean bot-warriors or troll farms where deniability is the key weapon they use.

In the last chapter McFate demonstrates the use of his “ten rules” in the context of the 2006 conflict in Lebanon which was again interesting to read. In the book author offers a nice collection of terminology to add to our lexicon. He points out the difference between shadow wars and insurgencies, and little green men vs little blue men, for example.

Most nation states remain obsessed with technology and the drive for decisive victory using conventional military force, in that sense, the book triggers a long pending discussion in modern strategic thinking of these conflict-ridden nation states. The book has its shortcomings, but these are not on account of the author’s appreciation/assessment of the current situation, but in his tone/tenor and writing style which at times appears polemical almost to the extent that it appears that he has an axe to grind with the American strategic think tank. His assessment of the shortcomings in strategic thinking more or less is spot on, but the prescriptive solutions that he provides clearly reflect his “special forces”, “under-cover / covert ops” thinking, and one can have plenty of differences with that. Correct or not, his take seems quite worthy of consideration at the highest levels of any government engaged in conflict. Overall, the book is fun to read even to a lay person with no background on military strategic thinking.

Some Quotes from the Book

“The last time the United States won a conflict decisively, the world’s electronics ran on vacuum tubes.”

“In the coming decades, we will see wars without states, and countries will become prizes to be won by more powerful global actors. Many nation-states will exist in name only, as some practically already do. Wars will be fought mostly in the shadows by covert means, and plausible deniability will prove more effective than firepower in an information age.”



Col Suresh Chandra was commissioned on 11 Jun 1988 in the 94 Field Regiment. He commanded 121 Light Regiment and superannuated from service on 30 Nov 2017. An MTech (CSE - IITD), he has been instrumental in the design and development of the ACCCS/Project Shakti. He was an instructor in School of Artillery and DS, JC Wing, Army War College. He has also served with the Wargaming Centre, SWC and was Col GS (Systems) Western Command. Post retirement he divides his time between mentoring underprivileged kids in Mathematics, Physics and Computer Science of Class XII level, and freelancing as a cyber security and data analytics expert. He is available at sureshchandra@protonmail.com

Stories

Milking the Bull

BY SAJAN MOIDEEN

It was 1992-93. I do not remember the exact year. I was one of those privileged, to be posted in a unit in the Capital. Days used to whiz past and the piddly 2nd Lieutenant was always into some work or the other when not getting ticked off by seniors for not having checked this, and/or not having ensured that.

That morning I was summoned to the CO's office. The task was clear. I was to procure plastic glasses which were hard yet disposable and get small plastic squeeze bottles which could take in the ketchups and sauces (similar to the ones which were given in Nirula's when you pack Pizza's). Sachets had not made an entry into the market for those later generations who are wondering what is this all about.

These items, I guess were to make a top-class hamper for one of the visiting dignitaries so that they could have a five-star breakfast (made in the Officers Mess) while they travelled in the train. The CO also gave me, a small paper cutting about an Apna Bazar 2000 which had an address in Nehru Place where all these items would be available. My task was simple. Go to Apna Bazar and select these items with care. They should not be too expensive either. And to give adequate respect to the task, I was allocated a Jeep, a luxury for a 2nd Lieutenant in Delhi.

I took the jeep, changed my dress to civvies, and went to the Apna Bazar office. I entered a posh office and was eager to look for the item laden shelves. There were none. I asked the beautiful girl at the desk, "Where do you get the small squeeze sauce bottles and hard plastic disposable glasses". She gave me a strange look, and then said, "You have come to the wrong place". I was annoyed by now. I took out the paper cutting from my pocket, threw it on her table and asked, "Are you not from Apna Bazar?". She said, "Yes I am". I now spoke sharply, "Then why won't you know where these items are placed". She looked straight in my eyes and said, "Please read the paper cutting. It is an advertisement for Apna Bazar to be built by year 2000. This is the Corporate Office". Immediately the air went out of my balloon. I muttered some apology and vamoosed from that office.

I could sense that girl was laughing at the poor illiterate. I could not go back and 'scold' the CO that this paper cutting was useless. Rather I had to get the items and show how resourceful I was. So, I went to Nirula's at Vasant Kunj. I asked for a packed Pizza. I also told them to pack extra sauces. They placed two more extra bottles. I told them I loved sauce, so put in some more. With a strange look the boy at the counter added a couple more. I had secured the sauce squeeze bottles. Triumphantly I went to the jeep and ate the pizza while I saved the sauce bottles. There was a good store

near to Nirula's. I was able to get those good quality plastic glasses from there. Though they were expensive, but I thought, "What the hell, we need to complete the task at hand. What's few rupees for the Regiment, when we have to look after the guest."

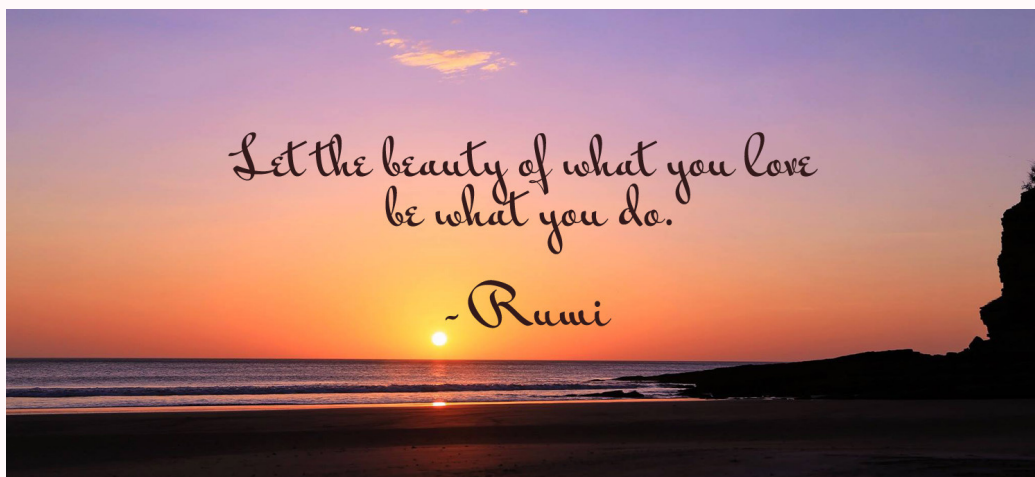
I marched back to the unit triumphantly, and reported to the Second-in-Command, who came to the mess and inspected the items. He was mighty pleased. He said- "Boy you have really done a good job. Finally, CO will praise you for this good work. Do not mention about the Apna Bazar fiasco. He may not like that his idea failed".

He then went to inform the CO, who came to inspect the bottles and glasses. The 2IC might have told him about the useless Apna Bazar paper cutting. He did not ask about that at all. Instead, he asked me, "Where did you get these sauce bottles from". I told him about my brilliant idea about the pizza. His eyebrows raised higher, and when he heard the cost of the plastic glasses, all hell broke loose. He scolded me for wasting Regiment's money on a pizza and for the costly glasses which were to be thrown away. He was also annoyed that I had kept the glasses one over the other which could have got scratches. He abused me of being a spendthrift fool. I heard some choicest of abuses that day which deflated my 2Lt to may be ½ of whatever I wore on my shoulder.

It was on that day that I realized that, to get praise from a CO is like 'Milking the Bull!'.



Col Sajjan Moideen is the Principal Consultant of Renergetics Consulting, and an experienced International Trainer, Consultant, and a certified Career Counselor. He was commissioned into the Corps of Army Air Defence in 1991 and is an alumnus of NDA, DSSC, and Army AD College. After a remarkable career of 22 years he stepped out in to the world outside. He has been regularly guiding officers transitioning out through Psychometric Based Career Counseling. He also writes a popular blog www.sajanspeaks.wordpress.com. He is reachable at www.renergetics.com/careercounselling and on LinkedIn at <https://in.linkedin.com/in/sajjanmoideen>



Straight From The Heart

BY ANKIT SUKHIJA

THE LAST SMOKE

Long ago as heard,
Fire and a Fool at the two ends
Unheard and unrealized as it went
Chose to be a fool to this end
On and on as I smoked.

Lit up every now and then
The trickling fire fascinated first
The rising smokes captivated thence
And the burning throat quenched the thirst
On and on as I smoked.

The joy turned to pleasure
The pleasure turned to habit
The habit turned to addiction
And addiction turned to weakness
On and on as I smoked.

Overriding all priorities
Surpassing all gravities
You took the control
Of submissive me
On and on as I smoked.

A stress reliever you called to be
A depressive bout you seemed to me
Smoky trails as I see
Realizing unrealized, it dawned on me
On and on as I smoked.

Resolved as an abandoner.

To relapses I retire
Cursing the human inside
A spark urging to stronger beside
On and on as I smoked.

No more smoke as I said
There I engrave the 17th date
Not the magic lies in Number
Not the secret unrevealed this day
But a stronger me rose today
a stronger me rose today
On and on, no I say...

THE WRINKLE

A sudden appearance as I see
Invokes some thoughts very deep
Unrealized Unnoticed to me
Have I grown so old to be?

An Unwilling olden me
Laugh and cry like a boy to be
Still a child it feels to be
Have I grown so old to be?

Those joys of life as I see
Some More life I ought to be
A Youth still thrives in me
Have I grown so old to be?

Though sense you make beneath
My age's secret you reveal to me
Milk and honey you will get in treat
Have I grown so old to be?

Forward focused I was trained to be
Back into past as I see
A long way it looks to be
In a rush it all flee
In a rush it all flee
Have I grown so old to be?

Matrimonials

Grooms Desired

A suitable match is sought by Col Sanjay Srivastava for his daughter. The daughter was born on 29 Jan 1994 and is 5' 4" tall. Her education qualification is Eco Hons and MBA. She is now employed with VPersist at Noida. Father is retired and the family is presently settled at Noida. Her mother is a homemaker. She has a brother who is doing BBA. A boy is desired who is well settled with a pleasing personality. The boy's family should be Hindu, caste no bar.

Col Sanjay Srivastava can be reached at +91-8288094004 and sansri_13church@hotmail.com for additional details.

A suitable match is sought by Col Sudhir Handa for his daughter. The daughter was born on 29 Jul 1991, and is 5' 4" tall. Her education qualification is BSc (Biotechnology), MBA and BEd. She had worked in the corporate sector but switched to teaching profession. She is now employed with a school as teacher. Father is serving on second leg of re-employment and would be settling at Zirakhpur. Her mother is a homemaker. She has one younger brother who is pursuing MBA. A well settled boy with a good job, preferably a defence officer is desired. It is a Punjabi Khatri family.

Col Sudhir Handa can be reached at +91-9858519335 and sarahanda91@gmail.com for additional details.

A suitable match is sought by Gp Capt Sunil Kumar Bist for his daughter. The daughter was born on 16 Sept 1995 and is 5' 6" in tall. Her education qualification is MCom, MBA. She is now employed with ICICI Bank as Business Banker at Chandigarh. Father is retired and the family is presently settled at Chandigarh. Her mother is serving, as TGT teacher in a renowned Convent School at Chandigarh. She has one sister who is pursuing her first year MBBS. A boy is desired from Army/Navy/Air Force Or class I Gazetted Officer from Central Government. The boy's family should be preferably Garhwali Rajput, but other religion/caste are also acceptable.

Gp Capt Sunil Kumar Bist can be reached at +91-9465195793 and sunilbist26@gmail.com for additional details.

A suitable match is sought by Col (Dr) N K Chhibber for his daughter. She was born in Sep 1993 and is 5' 6". She is a Manglik. She is employed with an E-commerce fashion giant. Father is retired and settled in Delhi. Her mother is a home maker with a teaching background. She has one sister who has finished her post graduation. A boy is desired from Fauji background who is also a Manglik.

Col (Dr) N K Chhibber can be reached at 9560371007 and nk_chhibber7@yahoo.com for additional details

A suitable match is sought by Col Virender Yadav for his daughter. The daughter was born on 7 Oct 1990 and is 5' 2" tall. Her educational qualification is Hotel Management but works with real estate company DAMAC at Dubai since last 7-8 years. A boy is desired who is well settled at Dubai/UAE/Merchant Navy Officer/defence forces. The boy family should be broad minded. The groom could be from any caste/religion.

Col Virender Yadav can be reached at +91-8003599902 or +91- 9351815719, and viren1960@gmail.com for other details.

A suitable match is sought by Maj Gen JS Sandhu for his daughter. She was born on 11 May 1994 and is 5' 2" tall. Her educational qualification is BA (Hon) from King's University College @ UWO, Canada. She is now finishing her Master's in Public Policy at the University of Toronto, Canada and is a Permanent Resident of Canada. She has interned with the Govt of Ontario as a Policy Analyst and is looking at subsequently working in a similar position. Father is presently serving. Her mother is a postgraduate in Psychology and Counselling and has been teaching. She has a younger brother who has just completed BCom Hons. A boy is desired who is working or settled in Canada, preferably from a similar service background. It is a Jat Sikh family, but open to any suitable Punjabi/Khatri match.

Maj Gen JS Sandhu can be reached at +91-9650888477 and jasleen213@gmail.com for additional details.

Brides Desired

A suitable match is sought by Brig D S Rawat for his son. The son was born on 24 Apr 1993 and is 5' 10" tall. His education qualification is BTech/MBA. He is now employed with Deloitte India as a Software Consultant at Gurgaon. Father is serving and the family is presently settled Baroda. His mother is a Homemaker. He has a younger sister who is BTech, and working with Robert Bosch. A girl is desired who is preferably working.

Brig DS Rawat can be reached at dips_rawat@yahoo.com for additional details.



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