

FORCENET

E-ZINE

Magazine for military veterans in the corporate
July 2023, Volume V, Issue 07



MY



Capt Tribhuvan Singh Bisht
Star of Forces Network

Sub Lt Shayak Mazumder
ForceNetPreneur

Ms Pavani Singh
Stars on the Horizon

Maj CT Sadanandan
Author of the Month

Lt Col Iqbal Singh
Cyber Security Primer Series

A Marvel of Science
Col Parmesh KR Mehrishi



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FORCENET

From the Editor

Hello Friends,

For a veteran change of career is imminent. Gone are the days when individuals could expect to spend their entire working lives in a single job, career or industry. The winds of change are blowing, and we find ourselves confronted with the question, "Who moved my career?" And that is exactly what our theme of this month's Issue - **"Who Moved My Career?"**. Many of us are worried and keep on asking "Who moved my Career"? The answer is **"NO ONE is moving your Career"**.

Change is inevitable, however, it is crucial to recognize that the responsibility for our careers ultimately lies with us and us alone. Rather than bemoaning the shifting tides, we must embrace the opportunity to take control and steer our professional paths towards new and exciting horizons.

Technological advancements, economic fluctuations, and shifting market demands have reshaped industries and created opportunities. In a dynamic job market, adaptability is the key. The ability to learn new skills and embrace change has become paramount in today's age. Embracing lifelong learning allows us to remain relevant and adaptable, equipping us with the tools to embrace new opportunities as they arise. For all the transitioning veterans, they have the chance to pursue multiple passions, cultivate diverse skill sets, and engage in meaningful work that aligns with one's values. Each transition presents an opportunity for growth, as we step outside our comfort zones and embrace the unknown.

Navigating career transitions can be a daunting task, but we do not have to face it alone. It is essential to foster a supportive environment where individuals feel empowered to explore new possibilities, an environment which has been the founding basis of **Forces Network**. Forces Network provides resources, mentorship programs, learning programs and opportunities to assist individuals in their career journeys. Together we collectively need to embrace the power of change.

While the shifting sands of the modern job market may cause anxiety and uncertainty, it is important to recognize that career transitions offer boundless opportunities for growth, and personal fulfilment. We must proactively embrace change, develop new skills and take charge of our professional trajectories. By adapting and embracing the Technology through Continuous Learning, we can confidently navigate the ever-evolving world of work and shape our careers to align with our passions and aspirations. Remember, it is not a matter of "Who moved my career?" but rather **"How can I move my own career?"**



Yours,



Capt Rajesh Nair

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Guava	Guava pulp, Sugar, Liquid glucose, Acid regulator (E330), Class II preservative (E224)	Energy- 350 K cal	17.5%
		Protein-1.4 g	2.8%
		Fat- 0 g	0%
		Fibre-3.16 g	2.9%
		Total carbohydrates-85 g	-
Mango	Mango pulp, Sugar, Liquid glucose, Acid regulator (E330), Stabilizing agent (E440), Class II preservative (E224)	Vitamin C-13 mg	17.9%
		Energy- 360 K cal	18%
		Protein-0.8 g	1.6%
		Fat- 0 g	0%
		Fibre-5.6 g	5.2%
Apple	Fruit pulp, sugar, liquid glucose, acid regulator (E330), stabilizing agent (E440), class II preservative (E224)	Total carbohydrates-96.5 g	-
		Vitamin C-25 mg	34.4%
		Energy-293.4 K cal	14.4%
		Protein- 1.15 g	2.3%
		Fat 0 g	0%
	Total carbohydrates-72.2 g	-	
	Total sugars-47 mg	-	
	Vitamin C-14 mg	19.17%	



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A NOTE FOR THE READERS

This is an interactive e-magazine with active links on many pages, including the advertisements, which can be used by just tapping or clicking on them. For ease of providing feedback, such links have been provided at the end of the articles too.

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed within this e-magazine are the personal opinions of the authors and interviewees. Thus, the information and viewpoints presented in the articles do not represent those of Forces Network, and neither does Forces Network accept any duty or responsibility for them.

Expatriate Interview

In this series, we plan to showcase the achievements of the members of the 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.

IN INTERACTION WITH IQBAL SINGH

Capt Tribhuvan Singh Bisht was commissioned into the 193 Field Regiment on September 2, 2002, from OTA Chennai IMA. After serving in the CI role with his parent unit, he got posted to the 213 Rocket Regiment. It was after completing five years with the Indian Armed Forces that he opted to take his release in 2007. In his corporate tenure, he has worked in different roles with Infosys BPM Limited. Currently, he is leading the HR Department for the company in the APAC region.



IQ: Please Let us know something about your background prior to joining the Armed Forces, and your subsequent Forces career?

Tribhuvan: Firstly, let me take the opportunity to thank the ForceNet team for this privilege to share my experiences with the veteran corporate community.

I am from Chamoli Garhwal, Uttarakhand. I come from a family that served the

uniform, as my father served in the Delhi Police before he moved to DRDO as a security officer. I was born in Delhi and raised in Ahmednagar, where I completed schooling and college. After graduating with a bachelor's degree in computer science, I pursued my MBA in Systems Management from Pune University. While occupied with studies and sports, I was always fascinated by the Armed Forces, as I experienced military culture through family, friends, and acquaintance. The two people who inspired me the most to join the military are my elder brother and my sister-in-law, who were serving in the Armed Forces at that time. They even prepared me for my SSB interview and continue to be my guiding light even today.



Army Days

IQ: Tell us about your military career. What were the experiences that defined you and what were important life lessons that the military taught you?

Tribhuvan: I was a short-service commissioned officer and had the honour to serve with the Regiment of Artillery for five years. During my service, I encountered inspiring leaders, experienced rigorous training, and had many adventures through my stint in counter-insurgency operations at Siachen Glacier and other postings such as GPO, OP officer, and adjutant. These provided me with many valuable life lessons about integrity, discipline, diversity, accountability, and the value of commitment and perseverance. These learnings enabled me to face and overcome challenges. I strongly believe that the Army prepares every individual to navigate through an alien environment, just as it helped me with my second inning in the corporate world. My Army career has been truly transformative, and it has established a strong set of core military values and a passion for learning that has continued to be part of me up until today.

IQ: What was the impetus for you to leave the uniformed service so early in your military career?

Tribhuvan: I was extremely passionate and loved every moment with the Armed Forces. However, the impetus for me to leave the military was because I wanted to explore different career options that were then available to me. Having a bachelor's degree in computer science and an MBA Degree in Systems Management, I wanted to learn new skills, take on new challenges, discover new opportunities and pursue different interests that I would not have been able to explore within the Military environment.

Nevertheless, I am extremely thankful to the almighty for giving me the privilege to serve the nation along with the best and the bravest in the Armed forces.



With Leadership Team

IQ: How was your Transition journey from the military to the civilian world? Any lessons that you may like to share with the military personnel contemplating a switch to the civil?

Tribhuvan: When I decided to leave the Armed Forces, I opted for the DGR resettlement course with MDI Gurgaon. While I had an MBA degree from my pre-military days, the six-month course immensely helped me brush up and update my knowledge and acted as a stepping stone into the corporate world. From MDI, I joined a supply chain organisation at Pataudi and later another opportunity came in the form of Infosys BPO Ltd., which was referred to me by a coursemate. I relocated to Bengaluru and took on newer and larger roles over a period of time.

As a veteran making the transition to civilian life, it is crucial to maintain patience and embrace personal growth during this transition. It is important to approach the future with an open mind, considering the various possibilities that lie ahead. I would strongly recommend veterans leverage their networks and available resources, such as DGR, higher education programs, and certifications, to facilitate a successful transition. These resources can offer valuable guidance and education. It is normal to not have everything figured out right away. For example, we hardly use MS Excel in our daily affairs in the army, whereas in the corporate world it is an essential skill. Another example is the culture of addressing everyone, including the CEO, by their first name in a corporate setup, which is a big culture change for anyone from a defence background. However, it's our agility as Military people that prepares us to embrace such changes. No one knows better than a military man how to navigate even without a compass and map.

Overall, transitioning from the Military to the civilian world was both challenging and rewarding. It was a tricky process to go from the disciplined and structured life of the Military to the chaos that the civilian world offers. Moving from a hierarchal organisation to a flatter structure took some time for me to adjust.



Receiving Award

IQ: Please give us details about what you are presently engaged in your professional role and where are you based out of?

Tribhuvan: I am currently based in the Philippines and have been here for eight years. My current role is leading the Human Resources (HR) Department for a few locations of Infosys BPM in the APAC region. We support close to 5,000 employees across different countries. My role is to provide strategic leadership and direction to the HR department, ensuring the effective management of the organization's human capital. This spans across managing the complete employee life cycle 'from hire to retire', such as recruitment and selection, employee relations, performance management, compensation and benefits, training and development, employee separation and HR compliance.

Complexities in the HR function increase many folds as each country has its own set of as labour laws, recruitment challenges, statutory and compliance requirements, payroll timelines, taxations, grievance handling and discipline management processes, etc., and it is important to have strong processes and governance in place.

Fostering a positive work culture, attracting, and retaining top talent, and driving organizational growth and success through effective HR strategies and practices are the key measurables of my role.



With Global Leaders

IQ: What would be the top 3 things that transitioning military personnel need to unlearn as well as learn while seeking a successful corporate career?

Tribhuvan: Transitioning military personnel need to be flexible and have a different perspective on a new organisation with a different culture altogether. While building professional networking ties is an important aspect of the corporate world, three things that can help in transition are:

- **Unlearn hierarchy and authority-based decision-making:** Military setup demands chains of command and authority, which results in hierarchical and authority-based decisions. However, in the corporate world, it is important to collaborate effectively with colleagues at all levels of the organization. Strategic direction and actionable goals need input from both your team and the stakeholder groups. As a leader, one needs to learn to consciously build an inclusive and collaborative work environment within the team.
- **Unlearn the expectation of a linear career path:** While in the military there is a clear and structured career progression based on rank and seniority, in the corporate world one can have a more dynamic and diverse career landscape. Transitioning military personnel need to be open to exploring different roles, industries, and opportunities that may give them growth vertically, horizontally, or maybe diagonally. One would unconsciously limit their progression opportunities if they rigidly stuck to growing only in a linear channel.
- **Unlearn rigidity in SOPs and work towards building adaptability and agility.** Military procedures accustom one to Standard operating procedures which are indeed required to drive consistency and discipline. While structure and efficiency are valued in the corporate world as well, one cannot deny the need for adaptability. There is a need to consciously shift the mindset to think outside the box, be comfortable with ambiguity, embrace flexibility, and be open to changing circumstances.



Coursemates - Reunion

IQ: What are the challenges in relocating to another country and starting all over again? How did you overcome them? Any advice to others?

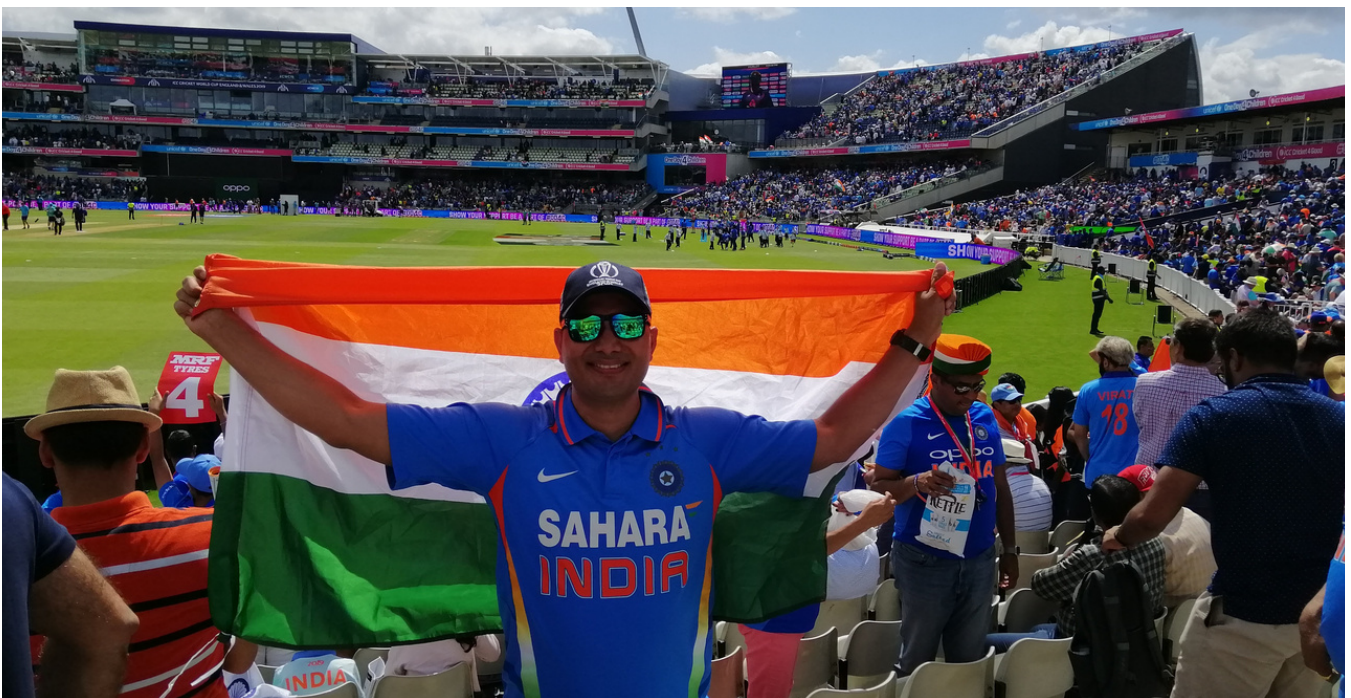
Tribhuvan: Relocating to a new country presents significant challenges in navigating unfamiliar territory, including the local culture, language, cuisine, and regulations. This transition can be both emotionally and practically demanding, requiring a transitory period of adjustment and adaptation.

During my early days in the Philippines, I was lucky to find a group of like-minded folks from home who enjoyed sports as much as me and since then we have built a strong bond over a period of time. We bond over sports every weekend, socialize and function as each other's support system in a foreign country.

My advice to others is to take their time, focus on connecting to the local community, and be patient. It takes time to adjust to living in a new country.

There are local WhatsApp and Facebook expat community groups everywhere that provide tremendous help to an individual to feel at home in a new country. Getting in touch with the local Indian expat community will go a long way toward helping you acclimatize to the new culture. Building a like-minded social circle will help you settle into your new home.

Also, engaging with the local community can be extremely helpful in settling into the new environment, as it allows you to develop relationships with people who understand the local culture and regulations. Seek out cultural events and social activities and develop friendships with people who can help you adjust easily to your new home.



Cricket at Birmingham

IQ: If you were to live your second career journey again, would you do anything differently? What and why?

Tribhuvan: I'm really enjoying my current role in Human resources, as it gives me a feeling of fulfillment by making a difference in people's lives by assisting them to build a long-lasting career. However, being a sports enthusiast, if I were to live my second career journey again, I would have attempted to get into the field of sports. Sports have been one of my greatest passions. When I am not working, you will find me watching, reading, or playing sports. Performance Coaching and Professional Cricket Umpiring are roles I would have wanted to take part in. The Indian sports setup does not have an established structured approach towards getting certifications in this field and for this reason, networking and developing relationships with people already in the field are important.

IQ: How has your corporate journey been so far? Are you satisfied?

Tribhuvan: My transition journey of sixteen years from the Military to the corporate world has been transformative. It has been quite a ride, as my transition provided me with a valuable platform to contribute the skills and values I acquired during my Military service to my current work. Throughout the years, I have grown both personally and professionally, adapting to the different challenges and dynamics of the corporate environment.

While it has not been devoid of challenges, I have discovered fulfillment in the work I do, the professional relationships I have built, the friendships that have developed, and the opportunities for growth and development that have come my way. I perceive satisfaction as a continuous journey, and I continue to seek fresh avenues for learning, advancement, and making a meaningful impact on the lives of others.

IQ: What is your future going forward? Do you intend to come back to India or continue overseas?

Tribhuvan: As an Indian expat in the Philippines, currently leading the HR organisation in the APAC region, I have enjoyed my experience living and working overseas, as this role has provided me with opportunities for professional growth, exposure to diverse cultures, and expanding my global perspective.

At present, I am committed to my role and responsibilities here in the Philippines. I find the work environment and the challenges associated with it fulfilling and rewarding. I intend to continue contributing to the success of the organization and making a positive impact in my current position. While I am dedicated to my current role, I remain open to exploring new possibilities and opportunities that may arise, whether they are in the Philippines, other countries, or even back in India. Eventually, my decision to either return to India or continue working overseas will depend on several factors, including career prospects, personal circumstances, and the alignment of opportunities with my long-term goals and aspirations.

IQ: So, what advice would you like to give to the fellow ForceNet members who want to take up similar corporate profile?

Tribhuvan: Fellow ForceNet members aspiring to pursue a corporate profile may want to consider the following, in my opinion:

- Your military background equips you with valuable skills. Highlight these strengths on your resume and during interviews. Tailor your resume and interview preparation to clearly articulate how your military skills and experiences align with the requirements of the corporate environment, such as leading teams, managing projects, handling complex challenges, and achieving goals within tight deadlines.
- It is important to research and familiarize yourself with the corporate world and the industry or roles you are interested in. Gain insights into the skills, qualifications, and competencies sought, which will enable you to narrow the job search, develop the necessary skills, and articulate your value to potential employers.
- Leverage your military network and utilize the resources available to you, such as transition assistance programs, career counseling, and networking events. Reach out to fellow ForceNet members and seek out mentors who have successfully transitioned from the military to a corporate career. Their guidance can help you navigate the corporate horizon and provide valuable advice.



With N R Narayana Murthy

- Consider pursuing additional certifications or training programs that can enhance your qualifications. Stay updated on industry trends and advancements, especially in domain-specific roles, to bridge the skill gap and remain competitive in the corporate setup. Investing in self-development will always yield results.
- Stay open-minded to adapt to different organizational cultures and embrace change, as the corporate environment may operate differently from the military. As conditioned during your Army years, leverage your ability to be flexible, collaborative and solution-oriented.

IQ: Tell us more about your family? How important is family support in switching careers as well as moving abroad? You may like to illustrate with examples from your life.

Tribhuvan: I come from a very close-knit family, full of values and beliefs. I am the youngest of four siblings and have enjoyed the privilege of living a carefree life for most of my growing years. My role models are my parents, who, despite limited means, ensured that all four of us got the best of provisions and education.



With My Parents

My decision to switch careers from military to corporate was not easy and full of uncertainties, but the support from my family strengthened my conviction to take the leap of faith. Later in my career, when I had the opportunity to take on a larger role and move abroad, they gave me their blessings and provided unwavering support.

I can only imagine how difficult it would be to make these kinds of decisions without a firm family support system. I am blessed to have incredible support from my family, and this became a key factor in helping me settle down in a new place far from home.



Lt Col Iqbal Singh is the Founder of Forces Network. Iqbal is an infantry officer who is working as a senior tech executive at a Big Tech company. Iqbal, apart from two technology degrees, has a slew of industry certifications spanning across IT service management, Cloud, AI/ML and Project Management. He is a keen technology enthusiast who firmly believes in breaking barriers to learning technology and making it accessible as well as easy. He has mentored thousands of veterans and guided them on to successful corporate careers.

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

A Little Help...
...and you are there...



General Humour

General Humour

A SMART CAREER MOVE

ForceNetPreneur

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

IN INTERACTION WITH IQBAL SINGH

Sub Lt Shayak Mazumder started his career in the Indian Navy, went on to run 3 hotels and 1 restaurant on the beaches of Goa, did an MBA from Singapore and Paris at INSEAD, became the MD of a global MNC where he headed a vertical across 21 countries, started his own startup in Singapore, expanded it to the US and recently launched a new company in India. He has built deep tech startups in Artificial Intelligence and open source enterprise platforms, done sales across four countries and headed supply chain and operations across the globe. He has hands on expertise in strategy, operations, enterprise sales and technology (including deep tech).



IQ: Tell us something about your background prior to joining the Armed Forces? What made you join the Indian Navy?

Shayak: I'm a quintessential small town boy. I grew up in the idyllic planned town Kalyani in West Bengal. My parents were school-teachers and until the sixth pay commission, they were rather poorly remunerated. Nevertheless, my childhood was special. I had many guardian angels. I spent my formative years under the guidance of an European couple, a fierce Armenian gentleman and a living British lady who ran a hostel nearby. Since parents were at work in day, they took me in as their grandchild and I made many friends at the hostel. Mrs Gaulston was a renowned social worker having been the right hand of Mother Teresa in Kolkata. I learnt many lessons in my childhood, growing up like a wildflower in the hostel, surrounded by children from all walks of life, with missionaries on one side and Bihari litti chokha on the other.

My maternal grandmother was a warrior herself. She came from Bangladesh in a bullock cart with four daughters during the 71 war. She lost her husband very early due to some illness. My mother was quite a beauty and also a talented actress. She had topped the district in her tenth and twelfth and was chosen to be a doctor, but decided to study literature to be a teacher. She went on to complete her master's degree in English literature and started teaching in a local girls school. It was thanks to my mother that we had a whole library at home. My love for books, debating, acting, knowledge and public speaking all come from my mother. She created and led the dramatics club in Kalyani and literally forced me on the stage as the child lead when I was barely five years old with a duck in my hand! I never ever realised that stage fright was a real thing.

My father grew up in rural Bengal as the ninth child of a wealthy landowner or zamindar. My grandfather was a fierce-looking man, 6'4" tall, with dark glasses and hair like a toilet brush. He was a famous freedom fighter and received a coveted silver plate from Indira Gandhi for his bravery. He was also a famously ethical man who kicked out the local magistrate due to corruption. My father grew up when communism was taking root in Bengal. He left home after finishing school because he didn't agree with my grandfather's politics and wanted to serve the people through communism.



My mom (Sonali Mazumder) and me - She was a major influence in my life

He ended up in Kalyani, where he put up with his uncle and went to college at Kalyani University. This was where he got deep into politics. Bengal was literally being lit on fire as the transition from the Congress to the Communists was in progress, and people were being brutally killed. My father rose up the ranks of CPIM, helping local people and sometimes hiding to save his life. This went on for almost ten years until he met my mother, who joined as a student at the same college where my dad's headquarters were. Once they got married, he left politics to focus on his teaching career, grooming a generation of young people.

In all this, my father left a very promising career as a talented chemist, dropping out of his PhD in the last year. He was so fiercely ethical that he refused to charge any money to students who forced him to give them private tuition. Even though we really needed the money, my dad eschewed the idea of fleecing poor students for money and believed in the right to a free education. I learned a lot about ethics, beliefs, caring for people and some science from my dad. Thanks to him, we had shelves full of Lenin, Tolstoy, and Marx, and other shelves full of research books on chemistry and physics. As a child, I grew up reading all these books and my mom's books on literature as well as a well-stocked library of Bengali and international authors.

My upbringing was a mix of social service and ethics from my dad, community building and cultural activities from my mom, a certain disregard for material things and money despite a history of hardships, lots of books and a great sense of doing something for the country. Despite not being one of the more physically active boys in my class, I passed my NDA exams easily. I had also passed my IIT exams at the same time. The choice was fairly easy, though. I wanted to join the armed forces to do something for the country.

IQ: Please share more details about your Forces career. What are the Top 5 Learnings you had from your Indian Navy Career?

Shayak: I don't think I've ever had a better teacher than the Indian Navy. I had grown up in a small town in India without any exposure to the rest of India, let alone the rest of the world. My worldview and understanding of people were purely academic. The Navy was where rubber met the road. I was exposed to the vagaries of the human psyche for the first time, completely shorn of the protective cover that my parents used to provide.

My first lesson was that people from various states, religions, walks of life, urban and rural were extremely different and you could identify them by their differences. They tend to form clubs, cliques, groups, etc. to celebrate their similarities. The Jats, the Malayalis, the Marathi folks, etc. all had their own groups, as did the RIMCOs, SAMCOs, etc. These groups gave them power cutting across seniority and various departments which at times created an undue advantage for them.

My second lesson was that despite their differences, people find similarities and create amazing things together. When it came to fighting other courses, all members of my course bonded together. When it came to having fun, people from Bihar, Punjab, Orissa and Kerala didn't feel the difference. The armed forces are the greatest leveler in this respect, as they teach you the differences between people and, at the same time, how people can transcend those differences and bond together when the cause is big enough. My third lesson was to stand on my own two feet. When I joined the Navy, I had been mollycoddled by my mom when I was growing up, so I never had to do anything for myself. This changed very quickly. I had to learn how to fend for myself, darn my socks, polish my shoes, brasso my tabs, etc. I had to learn how to find food when you're a first-termer and you're being punished. I had to learn how to take care of my uniforms and live comfortably out of a suitcase. I think the Navy prepared me better for life than anything I could've expected. The lessons were hard and brutal at times, but necessary.

My fourth lesson was the iron that the Navy inserted into my soul. It was both good and bad. When the Navy didn't allow me to leave to attend my grandmother's funeral, I cried myself to sleep, but I woke up as a person who would someday deny others the same. Right from the time I was a cadet, I was somewhat of a standout. This isn't a good thing in the Navy. I've always given the example of a hedge versus a forest to help people understand the distance between the armed forces and civil society. If you stand out in the Navy, you'll be pruned to size. However, all this made me a fighter. I cannot thank the Navy enough for turning me from a soft, academic, culturally minded young man to a hard-crust man who can brave most things life throws at him. I've been put in the most difficult of circumstances where I've run out of money, gone bankrupt, fought through people and other issues, survived and succeeded. Not once, but multiple times. This sort of bloody-mindedness comes either from a very difficult childhood or from the armed forces.

The fifth and biggest lesson of all is that the system always wins. This one is tough and people who took advantage of it always managed to get the upper hand. This is where intelligent and ethical people find it difficult in the armed forces. You'd expect it to be straightforward and all about serving the country. It's actually mired in politics, one-upmanship and groupism. While I couldn't handle this and kept fighting it (very naively), it's the reality and I should've accepted it had I made up my mind to be in the Navy. The system is way more powerful than any individual; ask Admiral Vishnu Bhagwat. Even if you got to the rank of Admiral, it didn't matter; the system was paramount. The armed forces, more than even the judiciary, abhor change. We learned our lessons from the colonial British and we don't want to forget them. Officers' areas will always be out of bounds for sailors; rank is more important than experience, etc. We reinforce these as traditions, rules, regulations, etc. We regiment people and force groupthink. It works well when we are expected to be at war. The problem is that we haven't ever been at war. Not even our senior officers can remember what real war is like. So, the lessons and traditions become warped with time and tend to suit those that find them to their advantage. Rejecting change keeps ethical and intelligent people out of decision-making, ensuring that the system gets more warped with time. If there's been a single biggest proof of this, it's the Armed Forces Tribunal. The incredibly poor win rate of the Armed Forces in the AFT is damning proof that the Armed Forces need to change. However, I'm not sure that the lesson is being passed on properly. Instead, we choose to blame the poor JAG officers.

IQ: What was the reasons for you to leave the uniformed service?

Shayak: I had become very disillusioned with the service during my training period and wanted to leave desperately. It was my dad who forced me to stay. It was a good thing he did it. Once I realised that I couldn't leave, I made up my mind to be a part of the whole. It was difficult for me to obey orders without thinking about the consequences. However, I learned to subdue my analytical mind. Even when I could find no reason for what we call traditions in the Navy, I started to work harder and focus on what made sense to me. During sea training, I decided to be in the middle, quite literally. I didn't want to stand out any more. I would do poorly in my exams on purpose to ensure that I wouldn't stand out. I wasn't very good at sports or other physical activities, given my short stature and lack of exposure to sports as a child. This ensured that I passed out of training without much incident and became an officer. I carried the same lessons forward and did the bare minimum during my first sea posting. This probably would've been the way my career would've unfolded for the next twenty years.

Fortunately, this isn't how it turned out. I was posted in Mumbai and given a seemingly unimportant role. The only difference was that it was mostly unsupervised with an entire department reporting to me. I ended up clearing two years of backlog in record time and this came to the attention of the commanding officer of the base. He then elevated me to a different role, where more and more work started coming my way. I realised that I enjoyed work, that I didn't really enjoy being mediocre to avoid standing out and that I wanted to do it to the best of my abilities.

As it turned out, I ended up handling 18 different roles at one point in time and doing them satisfactorily. However, over the years, I came to realise that hard work wasn't leading to anything substantial. Given my nature to question things, I was aggravating senior officers who weren't used to being questioned. More importantly, my family issues started to increase and after a few years, I was again at a crossroads. I had to decide whether a career in the armed forces was going to work out and if it was worth sacrificing my ethics and family. Despite repeated applications, the Navy didn't want to let go of an officer. I wouldn't want to get into the dreadful details of the last few months. Suffice it to say, I bear enough mental scars to last me a lifetime. While I remain proud of the fact that I served the country in the armed forces, I'm also happy that I managed to leave and carve a life for myself outside the Navy. I didn't do justice to my career in the Navy, but I think, in the bigger picture, it was probably better that I carried the lessons from the Navy across to do bigger things in life.

IQ: If I have to ask you about that moment when your heart said that it is time and I want to start my own venture, please give us more about it ?

Shayak: After the Navy, I didn't want to do a job for a while. Unlike most people leaving the armed forces, I didn't get to do a PRC. I had done a distance learning MBA and a course in graphics design, but I couldn't imagine getting a well-paid job through these. Furthermore, I didn't have anything at hand and I felt the best way out would be to start my own business.

Given my mental state and lack of options, I ended up in Goa where I had built some connections during my posting there in 2010. One of them used to run hotels by the beach in Goa. I ended up leasing a small property from him. I didn't exactly have any money. So, I ended up borrowing 9 lakhs from my dad, who was very upset with me for leaving the Navy and wasn't speaking to me those days. He did give the money, though, without a question. That's my dad, always doing what he thought was right.

This was a hotel in a very dilapidated state, consisting of nine cottages in desperate need of repairs, a very low-end clientele who barely paid anything, and an infested with druggists and prostitutes. Incredibly, my naval training came into play! I learned how to paint very well in the Navy because you pay for ship sides and decks every time you come to harbour and you paint the interiors before inspection every year. So, I bought some paint and painted the whole place to make it look better. I took a couple of workers to the top of Fort Aguada, where good grass used to grow and we cut a lot of grass, brought it back on cycles and thatched up the roof. I bought some clean bed sheets, etc., with the remaining money. I used an old fishing net laced with small LED lights to hang over the entire place. All in all, it started looking a lot better in just a few days. I added a music system and gave it the feel of a hamlet.

Once I got around to making the place habitable, I started thinking about how to create the right image and attract the right kind of crowd. I wanted families and groups of young men and women from all over India to come and feel welcome and

safe. I wanted to prevent the local druggists and prostitutes from entering. I hired my first staff and set about building my own website. The course I had taken on graphics design came in handy, and I created a fairly decent website myself. I also enrolled in all the online travel agencies like Agoda and Booking.com. In less than a month, we had turned the place around. I used to stay up till midnight and sometimes come late at night to kick out the local goons. I partnered with the local casinos and nightclubs to get special passes for my hotel guests. I even teamed up with the local boat crew to create special island tours for my guests. Given my passion for travel, I knew the most beautiful, hidden gems of Goa. I used to plan beautiful customized trips for the guests every morning depending on their preferences.

This was definitely one of the happiest times of my life. I was financially independent, making a good amount of money and helping people find happiness. My family was back on track and my parents came to accept my decision. However, I wanted to do a lot more in life and at the end of two years of successfully running three hotels and a restaurant, I decided it was time to move on.

IQ: After your first entrepreneurial venture, all of a sudden you decided to go for a full time MBA abroad. How and why did that happen? In hindsight, did the MBA really help you in your subsequent business ventures?

Shayak: After two years of running my business, I wanted to learn more about business itself. I had come to two important realisations. First, I wanted to learn the fundamentals of business because, while I was making money in my current business, it wasn't really going to take me to the top echelons of business. I had to traverse a different path to reach that end. I had to get myself out of the comfort zone I was in and test myself thoroughly. I saw an ad for the GMAT in the newspaper and decided that I wanted to do an MBA to learn more about business. However, I didn't want to do just any MBA. I wanted to do an MBA internationally to get exposure because the Navy and business had taught me a lot about India. I wanted to do the MBA only at the best university or college because I needed academic rigor given that I never really went to college and had joined the Navy straight after school. All this meant that I had to qualify for one of the five most selective institutions on earth. Luckily, I got a 750 in my GMAT and qualified for the first couple of rounds at most of the Top B schools. However, I didn't want to end up in a US B school because I had heard that the mindset in US B schools is focused on the US alone. Only INSEAD, which has an informal interview process through alumni interviews, was a B school that I had applied to and qualified for that also fit the requirements.

My time at INSEAD was remarkable to the extent that it changed the whole trajectory of my life. People typically do an MBA for one of three reasons: networking, branding or academics. I was doing it for all three. Having never attended college, this was a dream come true for me where I got the chance to rub shoulders with other students from across 90 countries from all walks of life. There were people who had started a

magazine in the middle of a raging war in Ukraine, an American who had started his own PE firm in China, and a German who led grassroots finance in Ghana. There were, of course, the brilliant consultants, technology professionals, and bankers. They came from top colleges and universities, and most were fairly well off. Initially, it was an uphill journey for me. I didn't have the educational background, the practical knowledge, the money, etc. that other students brought to the table. I also felt very overwhelmed by the intellectual prowess in the classrooms, where every student was way above average. I stayed in a small cabin in Singapore while my classmates lived in condos.

However, after I got over the initial month of orientation, I realised that the only thing I could do was to work harder than the rest. I simply pored into books late at night, spent long hours with my friends in the college and imbibed their experience in various fields. I tried to do as many practical courses as possible to learn and I hounded the best professors to give me a practical opportunity with them. By the end of the one-year course, I had finished four practical courses with four of my favourite professors. As I look back on my MBA, I realise that I was intuitively preparing myself for the decades to come. I didn't have a base to start from. So, I created a base of economics, finance, operations and marketing. I tried learning from the practical courses as I did from my classmates. For most people, their MBA is a theoretical exercise. For me, it was a living, breathing learning period where I was metamorphosing into someone else altogether. I went into the course as a naval officer and I came out as a globally aware, multicultural executive.



INSEAD Graduation Day

IQ: Tell us about the journey from a job in Paris to starting up again ? What were the several ventures you undertook along the way?

Shayak: I was rejected by 150 different companies in a row at INSEAD. Not one of them decided to give me even an interview. This was after meticulously preparing a CV and cover letter, researching every company and their executives, reaching out to senior executives from INSEAD already working in these companies, etc. Nothing made a difference. I simply did not have the background that they needed, coming from an armed forces and small business background. These companies wanted to hire executives who had worked for large companies in the past. Finally, I decided to start looking for jobs at startups. Luckily for me, the CEO of the Africa Internet Group decided to take a bet on me. He wanted to start a new vertical called crossborder commerce, which was a very hot topic in 2015. Who better to hire to start something no one knew about than someone who didn't know anything to begin with?

My time at Rocket Internet (the parent company of the Africa Internet Group) was short-lived. I spent about a year there. But this was a great year of transformation. I was changing everything in my life, from India to Paris, from operating a small business to a large global corporation, from hospitality to technology. At the time, it didn't seem much and I plunged into it with my typical energy and lack of concern for consequences. After all, that's something we faujis know very well. However, now that I look back on it, there are so many things that I had no idea about and was not very worried about either! I faced racism, language barriers, difficult office conditions, etc. in France. I struck out with the group CEO in my first month in Paris! Without any knowledge of protocol, I simply barged into his office to discuss my plans to expand the business into multiple countries. Now that I look back on it, I don't think it was the right thing to do. Nevertheless, I believed deeply in the plan and I went about executing it despite the group CEO saying no. Less than a year later, when I was leaving, I had created the first draft of the business, which was already worth almost a billion dollars in gross value. It spanned 21 countries and was growing faster than local businesses in any of these countries. None of this was easy. In the process, I had to learn supply chain management and figure out how to create supply chains from China to Asia, Africa, or Africa or LATAM and vice versa. I had to figure out how to throw away the existing supply chain where they were importing in containers and create new processes for individual shipments direct to consumers, cutting across borders, customs, trade restrictions, etc. Although I couldn't convince Rocket to implement all of my ideas, I was learning faster than I could even absorb. In every country I went to, I convinced the country managers and got them to create a crack team by showing them how much growth could happen. I figured out how payments would work in Africa and how merchants in China could be paid. We onboarded thousands of merchants and successfully made them international businesses in a very short time by implementing a templated methodology. All this without an official budget.

At the end of one year, the success of crossborder had driven local investors to get scared about their KPIs. This was a bigger concern for Rocket than growing their revenues. As such, I was asked to stop the global business. I took it as my cue that my time at Rocket had come to an end. I spent a week introspecting. I had a European blue card (similar to a green card in the US), was in good standing and could start looking for a job in Europe. However, I had tasted blood. I was convinced that I could help Indian businesses go global by using the same methodologies that I was using at Rocket. Once again, when I look back at myself in 2017, I realise how much I was underestimating the difficulty of what I was about to do. This has been a typical trend in my entire career. I tend to learn just enough about something to decide I will do it, then plunge both feet in to find out the real depth of the waters and then find a way to survive. I don't think I would've been able to do as many things as I've done had this not been the case. From the editor of a national newspaper in school to the Navy to running hotels in Goa to an MBA in Singapore and Paris to a top job in Europe to returning back to a dormitory in Hyderabad to start my own business, the journey has been incredibly tumultuous.

In 2017, I started Eunimart. This was my first real white-collar business. I thought I knew how to run a business based on my previous experience and I thought I knew how to create a technology platform based on my experience at Rocket. Both were wrong. India isn't Europe, a snacky business doesn't have the capital and reach of Rocket, and I had no standing in India. Most critically, I didn't know how to hire the right people and knew nothing about technology myself. Long story short, I ended up making all possible mistakes and still survived. I hired the wrong people, gave them the wrong roles, let them take advantage of the business for their personal gains, focused more on operations than tech, didn't know how to build the tech and ended up building several versions of it, all of which were deficient at some level. I also ran out of money a couple of times in 2018 and 2020. Somehow, despite all this, we ended up taking hundreds of businesses from India to multiple countries, creating partnerships across the globe, and creating a semi-successful supply chain management system that was being used by about thirty large companies, including IKEA. Finally, time caught up with my shenanigans and COVID happened. My business fell apart and customers started dropping off. We didn't have the cash reserves to survive. I managed to make a hasty pivot to the Middle East, where we found success. This emboldened me to try even farther and I set my sights on the US.

In June 2021, when the US wasn't letting Indians enter their country yet, I managed to take a flight to Mexico. I spent 17 days in Mexico before flying to Los Angeles. I settled in LA, established a new company there and raised new capital for the business in a few months. Some very senior people, like the founding country manager of Amazon Australia, the head of global SMB at PayPal, the head of architecture at Walmart, and the CEO of Macy's, ended up investing in the company. I hired a few staffers in the US and kept my team in India to continue with the technology. This time, the ambition was bigger than ever before. We would create the world's first open-source technology

platform for commerce powered by AI, so that anyone could come and build anything they wanted. We wanted to democratise both commerce and technology by creating a plug-and-play platform that had 80+ applications covering sales, marketing, finance, supply chain and operations across b2b, retail, e-commerce, and cross-border sales. It also had an app store where developers could build their own apps using our ready libraries and host them for others to use. This had a ready integration platform that was preintegrated into almost a hundred different technology platforms, ranging from marketplaces, shipping and supply chain platforms, ERP systems, accounting and marketing systems, etc. This titanic task took eighty developers over twelve months. By the time it was ready, we had run out of funds again.

By the middle of 2022, two-thirds of the money that was promised to us hadn't come as the global markets deteriorated. Every time a crisis has hit me, I've internalised the lessons and course corrections. When I ran out of money in 2018, I decided to cut out staff who were overpaid and weren't pulling their weight and I became very careful about culture and hiring. When COVID hit us in 2020, I learned enterprise sales, focused on profitable customers and cut out all parts of the business that were ideas. In 2022, when we started running out of money, I decided to cut the team in half, focus only on enterprises, and take the platform to market.



The Eunimart team in 2019

IQ: Tell us about how you got involved in the ONDC(Open Network for Digital Commerce) initiative? What have been your contributions to the ONDC program?

Shayak: We had done a lot of things over the years at Eunimart and learned deep lessons in technology, sales, marketing and fundraising. Three systemic memories were not trivial. For example, we knew that spending on marketing before sales was wrong and that focusing on one core customer segment was paramount. We also knew how to create tech and deep tech and had learned that tech was our real asset. So, we ended up not focusing on marketing and operations when money ran out by the end of 2022. In the middle of all this, there was one thing that was missing. For any core technology company to succeed, it needs to hold on to the coattails of a massive paradigm shift. The reason is that tech companies that build existing tech are simply software companies and not product companies. Creating incremental improvements isn't enough for major companies to shift from their existing tech to a new one. That means the only way to convince the clients would be left to sales or need. The problem is that the need isn't felt by most large companies unless there's a real change happening in the industry because they are so comfortable in their positions that they can ride out small changes. Large tech companies will always outpace small startups when it comes to sales depth and existing relationships with clients. Hence the need for a paradigm shift to create large tech companies. Google and Amazon were the products of the internet; Salesforce and Zoho were the products of cloud computing; Microsoft and Apple were the products of personal computing; and Netflix, Uber and Facebook were the products of the sharing economy. Unfortunately, there hasn't been a major epochal change in technology in the last decade.

ONDC was the first time I came across a major paradigm shift in technology. This also coincided with the emergence of AI as a mainstream technology. The trouble was that it isn't cheap to build core AI, while it's easy to use existing AI to build new tools. This is also why Indian companies barely ever do real innovation. Nevertheless, ONDC was something we could easily adopt. More importantly, it was right up our alley. It was literally tailor-made for Eunimart. We had been working towards aggregating



Speaking at an event organised by THUB in Hyderabad in 2019

commerce since January 2017. We had graduated from building a multichannel platform to an omnichannel platform to a supply chain platform to creating the world's first open source platform for commerce where people could build their own marketplaces or omnichannel platforms and connect with many other platforms. ONDC was literally doing the exact same thing but in a way that could only be done by a government organisation. By creating a protocol, ONDC is ensuring that every technology app and platform adheres to a common set of standards, making the whole industry interoperable and reducing or eliminating the need for one-on-one integrations. ONDC is in the news for also unbundling the tech stack. To put it simply, in any domain such as healthcare, education, retail, mobility, agriculture, finance, etc. where there is demand and supply, there are buyers and sellers. There are also service providers. As such, ONDC separates all these participants into different applications connected through a gateway. Similar to how we can call Airtel from Vodafone, access any website through a browser, or send an email from any email service provider to any other email service provider, people will be able to search on any buyer app and sellers will be able to sell from any seller app, all connected through a gateway. This means you could search for a product on Paytm and sellers from all platforms in India from all apps will show up. Similarly, sellers can be on one single seller app and get access to every buyer on every buyer app in the country.

There are primarily three types of players on ONDC. First, there are strategic companies like SIDBI, NPCI, etc. that provide their frameworks to ONDC. Second, there are operational companies like Paytm and Phonepe that actively go to market and acquire buyers or sellers. Third, there are enablers or technology companies like Eunimart that have all the various technologies that are needed by anyone looking to build their own platforms on ONDC. Eunimart provides something called ONDC in a Box. It consists of the following three line items:

- All five kinds of applications needed for ONDC: buyer app, seller app, logistics buyer app, issue and grievance management app, reconciliation and settlement provider app.
- Ready and easy plug-and-play modules that can be plugged into existing apps to convert them into ONDC-compliant apps. To this extent, we have converted the existing apps into SDKs and PWAs.



Guest lecturer at IIM Nagpur

The most important thing we are working on right now is artificial intelligence. We are converting the ONDC protocol into conversational commerce through our own Large Language Model so that buyers and sellers can buy or sell using voice or text input in their local language or using image inputs. An AI bot helps people do everything by understanding and carrying out their requests through any chat bot that includes WhatsApp. There's a WhatsApp builder where admins of apps can login and even create their own workflows and train the logic themselves.

IQ: What are the top 3 things you look for in an employee while hiring for your startup?

Shayak:

- Role fit. This means that either they know something that makes them a good fit for the role or they have shown promise in something that pertains to the role's fitment.
- Culture fit. This means that they have the intent to work in a startup environment under extremely diverse work requirements, take ownership of their work and go to whatever extreme is needed to grow the business.
- Attitude. This is the most important criterion. I look for self-learning, continuous improvement, willingness to accept mistakes, willingness to try new things, and not being afraid to make mistakes. People who are equal measures theoretical and practical, big on ideas and innovation but bigger on implementing them successfully.



Receiving an award from the Australian High Commissioner

IQ: With the wisdom of hindsight what would be the one thing you would like to change in any of your business ventures and why?

Shayak: The only thing I'd probably change is to figure out customer demand and money before I start building something. In Eunimart, I assumed demand without realising the regulatory changes needed or the fact that large companies only change when they are forced to change. As such, without figuring out demand, creating a business is like learning to fly while falling from an airplane. It's not very pleasurable and while the lessons we learn are important, we may not survive to make the changes needed.

IQ: For your entrepreneurial journey please share some of the biggest moments of highs and moments of lows?

Shayak: Being funded for the first time, closing my first big customer and creating the first big product have been big highs, followed by big awards, etc. On the other hand, running out of money, people duping us or investors becoming predatory are the biggest lows.

IQ: What are your future plans going forward?

Shayak: I'm always looking to create real value and help people. The reason I started my entrepreneurial journey wasn't to make a lot of money. As such, my future plans are to ensure that the current technology platform scales to the extent that most enterprises in India can onboard ONDC within a week or so. As a result of that, we will be able to enable small businesses from all over India and end customers to achieve success in their lives.

Once I'm done with the business, I intend to take a break to travel the world and write a book. It's also been a long-term goal to become a teacher and hopefully I'll be able to become a visiting lecturer at some reputed colleges, teaching young students entrepreneurship.



Presenting to the INSEAD GEMBA class in 2018, they were studying Eunimart as a case study.

IQ: What has been the role of your family in your professional journey?

Shayak: If my dad hadn't loaned me Rs. 9.5 lakh in 2012, I wouldn't have been able to start my first business. He was also the inspiration for joining the armed forces. My mom has been the only person who's supported me no matter what I've tried, always with a smile. It's incredibly helpful when the chips are down and the whole world is questioning you to have someone who trusts and supports you no matter what. My brother worked with me on my first business and helped me set it up initially.

Most importantly, my wife has been my long-term business partner. She's the rock in my life. Through all the tribulations in the Navy, she stood by me and fought for my rights. When I started my first business, she would come every week to help me run it. Later, when I went for my MBA, I didn't have any money, and my wife, my mother-in-law and my dad pooled in the money to help me attend INSEAD. While I was in Singapore, my wife kept working in Mumbai. Most critically, through the last seven years of trials and failures at Eunimart, she's been my business partner. Through twelve houses in the last ten years, one of which was the conference room in my office in 2020, when we stayed in the office to save money on rent (no one was using the office anyway), through four countries (Singapore, France, India and USA), two bankruptcies and through innumerable people coming and leaving the company, she has been the one constant.

I'm eternally grateful to my family. No one can lead the life that I've led without the family that I have.



AT INSEAD Graduation with my wife and business partner, Archana, and my parents.

IQ: So, what advice would you like to give to the fellow Forces Network members who want to take up entrepreneurship?

Shayak: It's simple. Almost nothing is impossible and most things can be done if we think first principles. We are all at different points in the risk-reward curve. It's important to understand the limitations and opportunities and then go for them.



Presenting revolutionary new technologies to the Minister of State for Rural Development



Lt Col Iqbal Singh is the Founder of Forces Network. Iqbal is an infantry officer who is working as a senior tech executive at a Big Tech company. Iqbal, apart from two technology degrees, has a slew of industry certifications spanning across IT service management, Cloud, AI/ML and Project Management. He is a keen technology enthusiast who firmly believes in breaking barriers to learning technology and making it accessible as well as easy. He has mentored thousands of veterans and guided them on to successful corporate careers.

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Galaxy Associate



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Stars On The Horizon

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

IN INTERACTION WITH UDAY SHRIWAS

Ms. Pavani Singh has grown up with her father, an Army Officer and her mother, a teacher. She is a law student who has recently finished school and moved to college. Pavani has made her first debut as an author. Her book is a compilation of poems that vary from themes like love and grief to friendship and time. She expects to continue lending her poems and stories to the world and allowing people to find comfort and peace in her books. In her free time, she is fond of reading or spending her afternoons painting away while sipping coffee.



Uday: What inspired you to start writing?

Pavani: I remember my mother buying me storybooks at a young age, and I found them the most captivating. I would read fairy tales and moral stories, and by my teenage years, I had diverted my interests to much more complex genres like fiction and poetry. I honed a strong imagination early on and allowed myself to convey it in the stories I told my grandma and mother. I remember my first book being about my travels in Europe in sixth grade. My mother had bought me new stationery and reminded me to write every day on the tour. By the seventh grade, I had filled up notebooks with long stories and partly accurate punctuation. My major inspiration to write was to find my words as an outlet of comfort for a soul, to find my expressions in a hint of peace and love. Despite my failed efforts to publish my first prose in eighth grade, I led myself to publish by the end of my school this year.

Uday: You have written poems on varied human emotions. Why did you choose these areas to write poems about? Any more details that you can share?

Pavani: I began composing poems three years ago to curate my expressions, feelings, and thoughts into a story of experience and convey understanding. I could never truly constrict myself to writing in the single direction of the heart. Instead, I would write about everything I could feel and know. When I sat down to compile "**The Peace You Speak of So Humbly Exists**" I could not fathom limiting my poems to a particular theme when the readers would miss out on so much of my experiences and learnings. I added all the poems I could find beautiful. The book consists of poetry not only about human emotions alone but also universal truths about the earth, man and his existence. Theme like friendship & time are vital for all to not give up learning about.

Uday: How has been the Army way of life an influence in your poetry?

Pavani: The Army background is surely a gateway to unique experiences and learning. From changing cities and schools to adopting new friends and customs, you become adaptable to change and, with it, welcoming to the lessons it brings along. Such a childhood environment helped me grow into a person with qualities of empathy, respect, sociability, loyalty, and unity etched in me. I find such influence reflected in my poetry for all ages. With my grandfather and relatives in the army, I found vast encouragement to develop my reading skills from an early age. Easy access to resources like libraries and magazines permits one to foster one's knowledge beyond the known. In a most cultured society, the army teaches children to understand the various aspects of empathy. It particularly instills a sense of patriotism, the rawest form of love. It is this focus on the build of a person that leads to one's maximum development. I am grateful for having had an upbringing like this, one that not everybody is granted.

Uday: How do you gather ideas for writing a Poem?

Pavani: I do not rummage through my mind for ideas to pen down poems. I feel poetry is what knocks on my door, and I invite it in for a cup of tea. I bring an artistic lens to life and view everything in its detail. I can sum up the world in its pictures of the tiniest movements and breaths. Such an eye helps me revel in the depths of everything I see and feel. That is where I hoard themes for my poems, where I string words on the paper with all the love I can pour.

Uday: Children at your age read poems or stories, what motivated you to break the stereotypes?

Pavani: With high school and nearing career choices, you hardly find time to spend on your interests. Your day is spent studying for school textbooks and classes. Everyone requires an escape or relief in their daily lives, so we discover it in entertainment like books, music, movies, sports, and the like. Once I would find myself free after hours of breaks, I would write down my thoughts in poems and adorn them with metaphors and exaggerations. It was to release my bones through words and expressions. Since I was young, I wished to have readers of my work; to have my words studded with ink in books a reader would love. After I completed school, I found myself with ample time before I was to begin college to bring my dream to reality. So I compiled my years of poems and found them in a book that sleeps on my bookshelf today.



Uday: We have mentors and coaches who inspire us. Would you like to talk about them who left an impression on you as you grew?

Pavani: I did not find anyone, in particular, to inspire or motivate me to write and present it to the world. I believe it was I who pushed my heart into building a firm stance on my abilities and skills. I learned I could write when I was young, but believing in its power and accuracy came with years of self-affirmation and progress. It was sure a long way to achieve the fineness I knit my words together with today, and I find a longer one ahead. When one grows up with a military background, they are taught most firmly about themselves and logic. Such a way of growing frees one from the binds of self-esteem, vocality, and rigidity. The exposure I received to poems, songs, codes of conduct, etc. in the army expanded my spectrum of emotions and understanding, for which I am thoroughly grateful. However, the power that writing contains to act as the most powerful outlet of our hearts and minds inspired me to continue with it. And I envision myself never letting go of it.

Uday: Tell us more about your family?

Pavani: I have grown up in a beautiful family. My father, an army officer; my mother, a teacher; and my younger brother have all provided me with a supportive and loving environment. My late dog, Dollar, too, did not resist pouring out his heart to us at every opportunity he saw. Not only has my family taught me kindness, acceptance and togetherness, but they have also grown me into a confident, considerate and honest woman. With them, I also paint my grandparents, aunts and uncles, and my cousins when I speak of family. Despite them having resided in different cities, I have always found solace and love in their welcoming arms. I will forever wish to put a smile on their face.

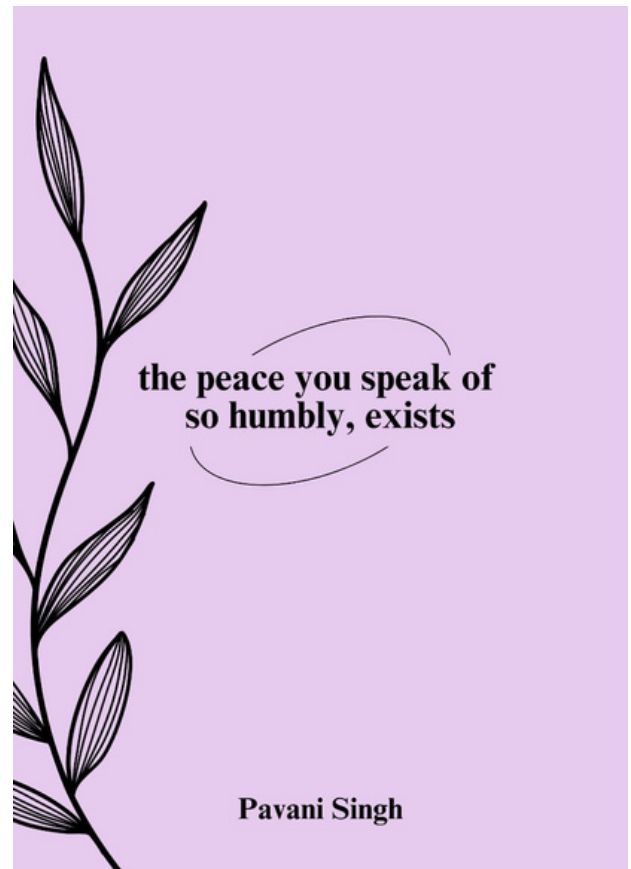


Uday: We all face challenges in our endeavours and we overcome them to reach our Goals? Tell us About the challenges you faced and how has been your experience?

Pavani: Publishing your work and giving it away to the eyes of strangers for judgement is difficult. The most challenging hurdle was having enough faith and belief in your work to deem it worthy. It is difficult to stay confident in your mind and know that you are worth every test life throws your way. But the universe and you will guide you to continue the path you began. The test of conscience filters out all wrong actions and pushes us to continue. When publishing 'The Peace You Speak of So Humbly Exists,' I could only view beauty and kindness in its pages, and so I could not regret it. Since it was my first publication, I found the process of writing a book for publication new and strange. I did not know where to begin, especially since I did not know anyone with experience. But 'Will Leads The Way.' I landed myself an accessible, easy, and cooperative publishing house that allowed me to self-publish. It took me time to finish the book, but each day was worth it all. Each day was a lesson. I am sure to memorialise.

Uday: What is the motto of your life and why? Also do let our readers know about your hobbies too?

Pavani: 'Sunshine all year makes a desert' is my motto. I came across an English translation of an Urdu poem with this theme many years ago and found it comforting to the core. It is so essential for us to undergo all that we suffer and endure to find light at the end of the tunnel. Each second of grief is a lesson in teaching; each second of heartbreak is a stronger heart in making. To embrace all moments of life is to bring acceptance and peace to your heart. To be accepting is to allow yourself a life of depth and comfort. To be stuck in the desire for joy at all times is to banish yourself from growth and development. So it is important we turn kind and gracefully allow in what life gives.



My Book Cover

When I find myself with time, I mostly read or write. I love painting, swimming, and listening to music. I also enjoy visiting art galleries, museums and monuments.

Uday: What is your message to all those kids who plan to write a book but never really take up the effort to do so?

Pavani: I understand it must be challenging to go out of your comfort zone and publish a book. But the world strives for art. And your words are the art that takes up space in the world just as much as your favourite book does in your heart. Building faith in your work is difficult, but it is your will that will push you to discover wider boundaries within yourself. Your work does not require any validation or appreciation as long as you find it beautiful and worthy. It is solely your love for your work that makes you confident in it. Complete the book; do not let it be an idle idea. Push yourself and publish it. It is always good enough. Undertake the experiences of published authors to gain an understanding of the process. Grow yourself into confidence and hard work.

Uday: How do one get to read your book?

Pavani: The book can be purchased from below link:

Amazon: <https://www.amazon.in/dp/B0C4TV7H2Y>,

Flipkart: https://www.flipkart.com/peace-you-speak-so-humbly-exists/p/itm6e55f665d0995?pid=97988902657_77&affid=editornoti,
<https://notionpress.com/read/the-peace-you-speak-of-so-humbly-exists>.



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

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Author of the Month

CT Sadanandan

IN INTERACTION WITH RAJESH NAIR

Major CT Sadanandan (aka CTS) was commissioned from the IMA in Dec 1984. He served the nation with 1 Maratha LI in IPKF Sri Lanka operations, on the Northern Borders and with 52 Special Action Group (NSG). He made a career transition in 1995 and started working in the corporate world. Over the past close to three decades of his corporate career, he has held progressive managerial and global leadership positions in diverse roles and responsibilities with reputed organizations such as Tata Communications, HSBC, Mastek and the Bahwan Group in Oman. Currently, he is pursuing advisory and consulting engagements in the domains of CSR, Workplace & People practices and Crisis and Continuity Management, through CTS (Competence, Transformation and Success) Consultants, based in Mumbai. Consultants, based in Mumbai.



Rajesh: What inspired you to start writing?

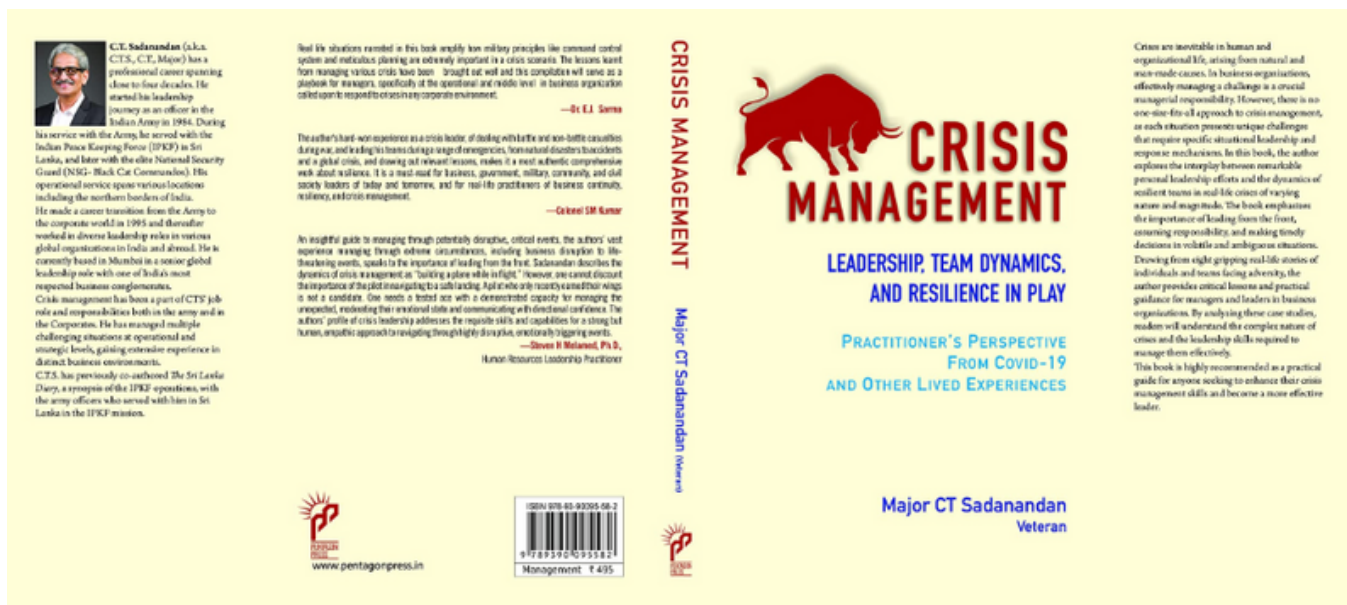
CTS: In 2015, I was assigned the task of compiling the history of my parent unit (1 Maratha LI)'s operations in Sri Lanka. This was a difficult task, but I thoroughly enjoyed it and the publisher appreciated my focus and drafting skills. This became motivation for me to start thinking about writing more books based on my experiences. When the pandemic COVID-19 stuck and brought the entire human life face-to-face with an enormous safety challenge, I was assigned the responsibility to put together a global response plan for my organization. This was again an astounding challenge. However, whatever plans we made did work out well in terms of ensuring safety for our employees and the continuity of our business. My colleagues who worked with me asked how it was possible to accept and respond to such an enormous task. This inspired me to reflect on the same and put down the thoughts in the form of a script.



In Sri Lanka - IPKF Ops

Rajesh: Why Crisis management? Could you please share the details of the book's content?

CTS: Crises are part of everyday life – both in the personal and professional spheres. Nobody likes crises, yet one has to be prepared to respond and succeed. From the business organization’s perspective, there are various kinds of crises that can have a debilitating impact on business operations; hence, crisis management is an important managerial responsibility. There are many theories and frameworks that advocate how to manage organizational crises; however, practically, it is experienced that when a crisis strikes, such theories and frameworks may not really be of much help as the nature of the crisis, the contributing factors, the operational environment, the impact and therefore, the response plan would hugely vary from situation to situation. However, what remains constant in all these situations is leadership, team dynamics and resilience, which will help surmount the crisis successfully. I haven’t seen much written about these; hence, I thought of putting down my learning based on many lived experiences wherein I was either part of the crisis-impacted team or the manager responsible for responding to the crisis. Please see the book cover page which gives a synopsis of the content.



The Book Cover

Rajesh: How do you gather ideas for writing a book?

CTS: Writing a book on management is a deliberate and structured process. First, you need to think through the idea and convert it into a broad plot with various sections and chapters that one would want to include. Thereafter, start putting down your thoughts under each of these sections. As you progress in writing, you will experience that these chapters and sections will take shape and probably undergo a complete change from what was initially planned. It is an iterative process. I think the foundational idea needs to be one’s own. Expanding that into narrative can be done with deep thinking, reflecting, reading where accuracy of concepts is required and discussing with experts or practitioners.

Rajesh: What is the importance of the book. Who would be your target audience?

CTS: I reckon this book is an excellent practical guide for managing operational crises that can have a strategic impact as it is based on hard-won practical learning. The targeted audience is middle- and senior-level management practitioners with crisis management responsibilities. This can also be a good guidebook for management students. For senior leadership, this will be a good reference for building crisis response capability and resilience in the organization. This book can also be useful for role plays in capacity-building training sessions for teams and individuals.

Rajesh: What are the barriers or blocks you face while writing and how do you overcome them?

CTS: As mentioned earlier, writing a book of this nature is a deliberate process; it is not imagination that works here. What you script needs to be valid and relevant, and bringing it together from your experiences and learning is a time-consuming process. One does feel exhausted in the process and there will be occasions when you face barriers and blocks and are not able to write at all! I have overcome these by just leaving the process aside until I am mentally engaged and motivated to sit down and write again and this just happens one fine day!



Book Release-1 during Smart Office India Summit in Mumbai

Rajesh: Are you having any plans to write more book in continuation to the current one?

CTS: This hardback book is actually an improved version of the e-book published in 2020 on Amazon Kindle (which has now been unpublished), so there is no plan to write a sequel to this book.

Rajesh: You released the E-Book almost 3years back, how Is this different?

CTS: The e-book was a very short and comprehensive version, with just 80 pages. While the content was more or less the same, focusing on leadership, team dynamics and resilience, it was not elaborated well enough to establish the importance of managing crises in business organizations. In this hardbound version, these aspects are discussed in separate sections and elucidated with practical examples and a synthesised summary.



Receiving the CSR award in Delhi from the Hon'ble Minister, Mr. Nitin Gadkari

Rajesh: Getting live experience In your book was something unique; how does it help the readers?

CTS: I have scripted this book with simple language without much jargon, with the purpose that readers can easily assimilate and relate to these lived experiences. Lessons learned from each of these lived experiences have been enumerated which can be used as a reference for practice and for training teams to build capabilities. In the author's note, I have alluded to the fact that readers will have many such experiences that they have gone through and my intention is that they also script them down for the benefit of others.

Rajesh: What is your message to all those people who plan to write a book but never really take up the effort to do so?

CTS: It is a very satisfying engagement, so if you have a story, do not hesitate and go ahead to share it with people!



BOOK RELEASE

Book name : Crisis Management: Leadership, Team Dynamics, and Resilience in Play

Publishers : Pentagon Press LLP (14 May 2023)

Available on: Amazon

Price : Rs.395/- (purchase price)

Link : https://www.amazon.in/Crisis-Management-Leadership-Dynamics-Resilience/dp/9390095581/ref=sr_1_1?

[crid=2ONLXGIUHV9W3&keywords=crisis+management+sadanandan&qid=1687074838&prefix=crisis+management+%2Caps%2C450&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.in/Crisis-Management-Leadership-Dynamics-Resilience/dp/9390095581/ref=sr_1_1?crid=2ONLXGIUHV9W3&keywords=crisis+management+sadanandan&qid=1687074838&prefix=crisis+management+%2Caps%2C450&sr=8-1)

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**Danseuse- Nikon Coolpix P900, Aperture - 4.5, SS - 1/250, ISO - 1250, FL - 33mm
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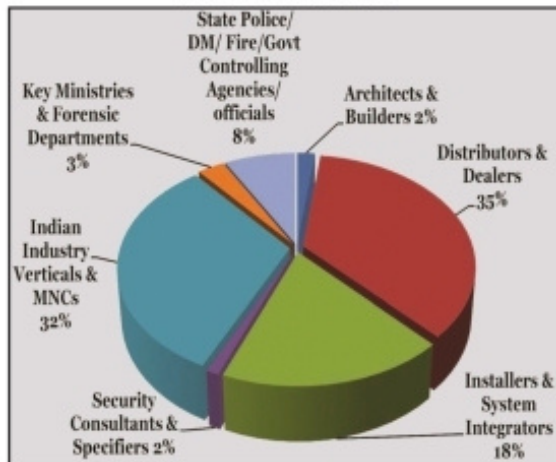
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Book Review

Sultan (A Memoir)

BY WASIM AKRAM AND GIDEON HAIGH

About The Author:

Wasim Akram is a Pakistani cricket commentator, coach, former cricketer and captain of the Pakistan national cricket team. Akram is widely regarded as one of the greatest fast bowlers of all time, and several critics regard him as the greatest left-arm fast bowler in cricket history. He is often revered as The Sultan of Swing. In October 2013, as captain, he led Pakistan to the finals of the 1999 Cricket World Cup, where they lost to Australia by eight wickets. He holds the world record for most wickets in List A cricket

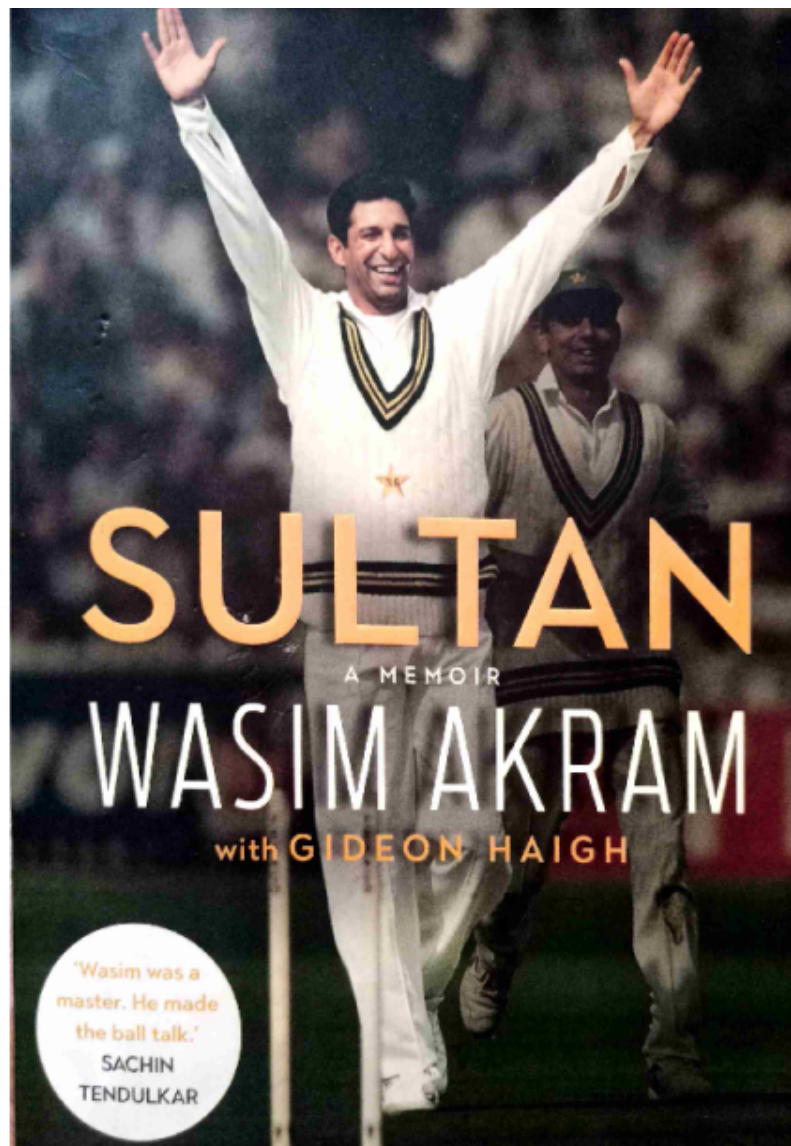


Gideon Clifford Jeffrey Davidson Haigh is an English-born Australian journalist and non-fiction author who writes about sport (especially cricket), business and crime in Australia. He was born in London, raised in Geelong, and lives in Melbourne. Haigh has authored 19 books and edited seven more. He has won the annual Jack Pollard Trophy for the best Australian cricket book six times. He has also published several books on business-related topics.



INTRODUCTION

"Wasim Akram"- When one hears this name in world cricket, it brings shivers down the spine of any batsman. Sultan of the reverse swing is not only a gentleman cricketer but also an admirable personality across the cricketing world. Culture, music, sports and art go beyond boundaries. We can limit people's boundaries, but we can't bind people's minds. That is why celebrities from different walks of life are worshipped across boundaries. Wasim was a tough competitor who chose a tough path to become tough in life. Wasim Akram is one of the great personalities who gets a lot of love and respect in India. I still remember Wasim's words after the famous Chennai Test win against India, where he told the media that he and his team got the best standing ovation from the public to date. This reflects Wasim's expressive and candid personality.



About the book:

Talent Recognised

Before reading this book, I thought Wasim's talent was recognised by Imran Khan, but it was Javed Miandad who first spotted Wasim's talent. The spell on Javed Miandad had changed the life of Wasim Akram.

Imran's Impact

While reading the book, it was quite evident to see the impact of Imran Khan on the personality of Wasim Akram. Imran was always a source of inspiration for Wasim and he idolized Imran. Wasim, under Imran's captaincy, got wings and he was motivated to bowl fast, ferocious spells to the batsmen. Imran taught Akram how to prepare the ball for a reverse swing, how to disguise his hand and how to optimally deliver the ball fast and full. Imran got him to lock his wrist and secure the ball with his third and fourth fingers, so that seam came out stable. He refined his run-up, worked on his variations, and taught him to bowl at the death in one-day internationals.

Words like "Now I wanted to be like Imran, but in my own way". This is testimony to Wasim's admission of the impact of Imran on his personality.

There is always a professional cricketing conversation happening between both of them, which indeed helped Wasim start the bowling with a shorter run-up. Imran had nurtured the natural talent, and the world had seen one of the fearless and ruthless trios (Imran, Wasim and Waqar) of swing bowling. Wasim was also conferred with Pakistan's second-highest civilian honor, Hilal-e-Imtiaz, by the Imran Khan Government.

Sultan of Reverse Swing

Wasim was introduced to the great Khan Mohammed, who delivered Pakistan's first ball in Test cricket. Mohammed pressed Wasim to reach up higher with his right arm and to uncoil his left arm from its cocked position. The longer he stayed sideways, the more he discovered the ball would swing. Master Blaster Sachin Tendulkar also said, "Wasim was a master; he made the ball talk."

Dirty Dressing Room

There is always a shitty dressing room culture which is responsible for the destruction of Pakistan cricket. Despite having diverse talent on the team, individual ego clashes ruined the team. There was a divide in the Pakistani team at the time between those who spoke English and those who did not. Javed Miandad, as captain, devised a system for the distribution of match fees and bonuses whereby most of the pool was scooped up by senior players. This led to dissatisfaction among the team players which affected the morale and unity of the team.

Teammates were always insecure and selfish about their place in the team and they hatched conspiracy theories that proved to be the perfect recipe for disaster. The blue-eyed boys of Captain were given preference over performance. Apart from dirty dressing room culture, politics always oppressed the PCB (Pakistan Cricket Board) and made it a scapegoat. Wasim himself played under 13 captains, 10 national coaches and 9 PCB chairmanships. This is evidence that clearly explains how affairs at PCB are shabbily handled.

Fiery Fast Twins

Waqar and Wasim were good teammates without being especially close. Both loved bowling together and admired one another. Both were competitors and had to perform to fight for their place on the national team.

Love for County Cricket

County cricket changed Wasim's attitude. Everyone was expected to hold a bat. Wasim also benefited from the freedom that county cricket offered his bowling. Wasim enjoyed playing County cricket because of the open atmosphere which he has not had in the Pakistan cricket team.

Wasim and India

Wasim was captain of the Pakistan team when he toured India in 1999 where he played the famous Chennai, Kotla test match. Both teams won one match each and the test series was drawn. Wasim revealed in his book that he was taking his wife, Huma to Singapore for treatment. His wife had cardiac arrest in an air ambulance, and the flight was diverted to Chennai for a medical emergency. Indian authorities waived visa requirements and hospital waived all medical bills. Huma died after a few days at the age of 42.

Importance of Huma (the late wife) and Shaniera (the present wife)

Huma helped Wasim get out of the drug menace when he had developed a dependence on cocaine. Wasim had undergone a rehabilitation program which helped him start his job as a bowling coach. Huma had been practicing some relaxation techniques on Wasim which she learned in psychology. She got him to think about breathing. She got him to think about his and the opposition's body language. Huma counseled Wasim to regard his fellow cricketers as colleagues, not as friends, when they refused to play under his captaincy.

It was Shaniera who motivated Wasim to tell his story of how Ahmed Pura Pendu had become the so-called Sultan of Swing.

Big Confessions

In a series of confessions, Wasim confessed the following on different occasions:

- (i) He confessed how vulnerable the system that was running Pakistan cricket was. He didn't even spare Pakistani society for this.
- (ii) When Wasim got demoted from captaincy, he confessed that he had little interest left in the team. It is for this simple reason that teammates with whom he played for years and regarded as friends suddenly refused to play under his captaincy.
- (iii) Wasim never formally retired from International cricket. He had expressed his thoughts after playing 18 years of a long international career for his country which was now futile. This also indicates that PCB has not given him a chance to play his farewell match.
- (iv) Wasim had paid a price for playing for Pakistan where he didn't have time for family. He confessed to being neither a good husband to Huma nor a good father to Tahmoor and Akbar.

Things in Common

Wasim likes simple things, straightforward people and common courtesies. This is the one thing that I found common between me and him. I want to meet him one day and convey this personally. Maybe this is the reason he turned down or didn't get the offer to be the head coach of the Pakistan Cricket Team. Anything hostile gives Wasim huge motivation. This was the same for me. If you are up against the odds, it doubly motivates you to perform to the extreme.

Wasim has the courage to speak and that may be why he is not liked by the top administrators who are running Pakistan cricket. He has to suffer in his life due to his bold and never-give-up attitude. But Wasim has his own fan base around the world. Wasim not only belongs to Pakistan; he is a mentor, a public figure and a global citizen.

SUMMARY

Reading 'Sultan' gave me insight into the personal and professional aspects of GOAT Wasim Akram. Wasim was a middle-class guy, mediocre in his studies, and belonged to a very humble background. He has risen in international cricket not because of patronage but due to his abilities. Imran Khan was everywhere in his biography and to this day, Wasim talks to him for any advice. Great bonhomie and a great relationship developed between two fellow cricketers. He has the courage to name his fellow cricketers involved in wrongdoing with him and with his team. Wasim has never shied away from teaching young cricketers the skills of reverse swing, irrespective of citizenship. He was criticized by Pakistan cricketers for teaching Indian bowlers lessons in fast bowling which he never defended and, on the contrary, launched a stringent attack on their thinking. I really feel sad thinking that Wasim was not given the treatment he deserved by the PCB and fellow cricketers after reading this book. The book explained the emotional journey of Wasim with his lovable wife late Huma who had always lifted him up in every situation.

As an Indian, I was looking for much more content on the so-called India-Pakistan rivalry and Wasim's personal experiences with the country and Indian cricketers. I myself feel Wasim as a person is a great soul and it does not matter to me whether he is from Pakistan. Wasim belongs to the world and he still has a lot to contribute to the cricket fraternity. I feel the ICC and BCCI must give him a chance to make a fierce brigade of fast bowlers worldwide so that he can rewind the world to the era of Lillee, Marshalls, Walsh, Akram, McGrath, Ambrose and Waqar and the list is unending.

RECOMMENDATION AND RATING

The book's vocabulary is very simple and easy to read. This book is the journey of a young man who had done hard work in the nets and got handholding from time to time. Readers who are passionate about cricket must read and will enjoy Wasim's fascinating cricketing journey.

Wasim did justice to cover his personal and professional journeys side by side in the book. He has opened Pandora's box by directly naming ex-Pak cricketers who spoiled dressing room culture for various reasons.

Wasim had explained very little about Indo-Pak cricket relations. Maybe he has played very little cricket with India due to political tensions. But I was expecting more from him mentioning he mentioned his relationship with India and Indian cricketers and the differences between today's and past cricketing generations on both sides.

My rating for this book is 3 stars. I enjoyed reading the book and it goes with the flow.



Lt Cdr Varun Kumar Dhand retd from Indian Navy with 11 years of service in Executive cadre. He had left Indian Navy in 2018. Presently, he is working as Deputy Manager (Security) in State Bank of India, Mumbai. He is passionate of reading books, running marathons, writing book reviews, write and debate on different topics of national importance. Readers can share their feedback of book review at dhand1984@gmail.com

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Tech Corner

Cyber Security Primer Series – Part 8 (Concluding Article)

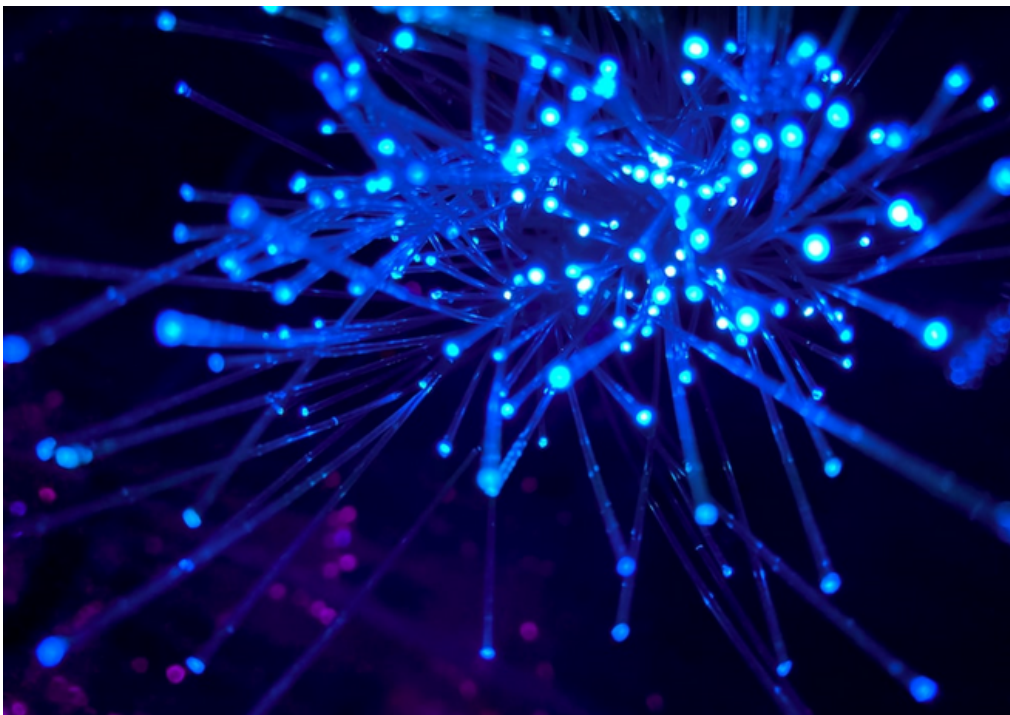
Introduction to the Role of a Network Security Engineer

BY IQBAL SINGH

Introduction

As military personnel embark on their transition to the corporate world, one promising career path to consider is that of a Network Security Engineer. With the ever-increasing reliance on technology and the growing threat of cyberattacks, the demand for skilled professionals in network security has soared. This article aims to introduce transitioning military personnel to the role of a Network Security Engineer, providing insights into their responsibilities, required skills and qualifications, necessary certifications, a glimpse into a day in the life of a Network Security Engineer, and future prospects. Additionally, we will outline a detailed pathway for upskilling in this field.

This article will introduce you to the role of a Network Security Engineer, including what they do, the skills and qualifications required, the certifications that are helpful, and a day in the life of a Network Security Engineer. We will also discuss the future prospects for Network Security Engineers and provide a pathway to upskilling for transitioning military personnel.



PIC BY JJ YING AT UNSPLASH

A Network Security Engineer – a dynamic and exciting career option

What Does a Network Security Engineer Do?

In the era of the digital world, a network security engineer is one of the vital members of any significant or mid-sized organization. He is a professional involved in positioning, configuration, provisioning, and administration of several different pieces of network and security-related hardware and software. Network Security engineers are usually involved in the security aspect of the networking system. Safeguarding the organization's network in line with business goals or objective is quintessential for network engineers.

Network security is well-defined as the method of safeguarding a computer network infrastructure against any kind of network interruption. As security pressures become more and more refined, the necessity for businesses to adjust has become crucial. The establishments required to know the risks that are out there and should device robust safety way out to manage risk.

When it comes to cyber threats, there is a long list which a Network Security Engineer has to look into. Following are the some of the common cyber threats which can challenge the Network Security:

- **Viruses:** A computer virus is just like a biological virus. It contaminates your system, takeovers certain documents and does unapproved activities.
- **Trojan Horses:** A Trojan horse will mask itself as a bland application but essentially has a malicious purpose.
- **Phishing:** It is an email that appears like it was directed from a genuine business, however it is intended to steal individually recognizable data.
- **Spyware and Adware:** This is a Software which enters your system and obtains personal data without the person's approval. It then gives the data to somebody else, yet again, without the individual's approval.
- **Denial-of-Service Attacks:** An attack that attacks a network with multiple appeals until it crashes.
- **Zero-day Attacks:** This is an attack that happens on the similar day the attacker learns of a susceptibility. These are tricky because there's no time for the system to take cautionary steps.

A robust security protocol needs to be followed by a network security engineer and their team for best precautionary measures from any threats. A network security engineer must have the multi-pronged background which includes the information security, technology networking attributes.

Primary Responsibilities

The primary responsibilities of a network security engineer include the following:

- Designing, implementing, and maintaining network security systems.
- Monitoring network traffic for potential security breaches.
- Conducting vulnerability assessments and penetration testing.
- Responding to and mitigating security incidents promptly.
- Collaborating with IT teams to ensure network security compliance.
- Continuously staying updated on the latest security threats and trends.

Skills Required by a Network Security Engineer

To excel as a Network Security Engineer the following skills and qualifications are crucial:

- Strong understanding of networking protocols and technologies.
- Proficiency in network security tools and technologies.
- In-depth knowledge of firewalls, intrusion detection systems, and other security devices.
- Familiarity with operating systems, such as Windows, Linux, and UNIX.
- The ability to identify cybersecurity threats and implement the best course of action to mitigate them
- Familiarity with the latest technology and concepts in cybersecurity, along with information on the latest malware and schemes
- Confidence in implementing and administering technical solutions, such as firewalls, routers, VPNs, and servers
- Knowledge of cybersecurity laws and what must be done to comply with those regulations, especially as they change and evolve
- Excellent problem-solving and analytical abilities.
- Effective communication and teamwork skills.
- Attention to detail and a meticulous approach to security.
- Communication skills for explaining issues and directing other employees

As with most cybersecurity or networking positions, a network security engineer must continuously stay on top of the latest trends, threats, and technology to ensure they remain effective. A strategy for continuing your education through formal and informal training is worthwhile for job security and advancement.

Certifications

Before you can make a career in the network security field, you need to learn the ropes of the game ie the tools and skills. For many veterans, pursuing a four-year bachelor's technology program is simply not an option due to time or financial constraints. Meanwhile, those who have completed a technology bachelor's degree years ago may feel like something is missing in their present-day knowledge. In either case, obtaining a certification in network security is an excellent pathway into this field.

By maintaining certification in your field, you can demonstrate your commitment to your network security career while providing employers with confidence in your ability to act using today's latest technology and concepts.

- Certified Information Systems Security Professional ([CISSP](#)).
- Certified Information Security Manager ([CISM](#)).
- Certified Ethical Hacker ([CEH](#)).
- Certified Network Defender ([CND](#)).
- Cybersecurity Network Engineer ([CNE](#)).
- [CompTIA Security+ Certification](#)

A Typical Day in the Life of a Network Security Engineer

While the scope of a network security engineer's is quite vast some of the common activities that fill up his day typically are as under:

- **Assess Network Security Needs:** Network security engineers must consider firewall setup, anti-spam, anti-virus, web content filtering, backups, password policy, anti-malware and anti-phishing. After conducting a thorough assessment of enterprise-class networks, network security engineers must suggest mitigation strategies and work alongside relevant parties to re-design the network if needed. Having an in-depth knowledge of web security gateways, perimeter security, network access control, endpoint security and perimeter IDS/IPS is important. And it also wouldn't hurt to be well-versed in routing protocols such as MPLS, HAIRPE/IP, QOS and WAN.
- **Come Up With Network Security Policies:** Network security engineers need to play a role in devising comprehensive network security policies. This will include ascertaining security issues that need to be addressed; identifying security strategies to deal with the risks; putting policies for allocating administrative tasks; keeping on top of audit logs for suspicious flag activity; and devising network password procedures.
- **Work on Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery Strategy:** Network security engineers must take a leading role in putting together business continuity/disaster recovery plans. This will include communicating with corporate stakeholders to keep business continuity/disaster recovery documentation up to date. Network security engineers should also conduct disaster recovery tests routinely, publish

- the results of these tests and make any changes necessary to address deficiencies. Network security engineers should also conduct yearly business impact assessments.
- **Test Solutions Before Implementation:** Before implementation, network security engineers need to know how to test new computers, software, and switch hardware and routers. Doing so will help to maintain the integrity of corporate networks.
- **Keep Abreast of Security System Logs:** It is critical to review security system logs, including firewall system logs and intrusion detection systems, and report any irregularities or issues relating to improper access patterns. Reviews of this nature should be conducted weekly.
- **Fix Problems On-site and Off-site:** Network security engineers need to be able to examine, troubleshoot and fix network irregularities both at the office and remotely. Network security engineers should have expertise in providing end users, application developers and operational personnel with network services support. They also need to be able to fix client business network issues through network management support, network installation and customization, and network administration.

Future Prospects for Network Security Engineers

Whatever the on-the-job challenges network security engineers face, the position is popular and what's more it also has bright future prospects. With the rise of continually evolving threats from hackers, one can see the adoption of IoT (Internet of things) also rising. As a network security engineer, IoT field also has a massive demand for this specialist. Employment of cyber security or information security analysts is projected to grow 31% from 2019 to 2029, much faster than the average for all occupations. Demand for cyber security analysts is expected to be very high, as these analysts will be needed to create innovative solutions to prevent hackers from stealing critical information or causing problems for computer networks.

Some key factors shaping the future prospects include:

- Growing demand for network security professionals across sectors and industries.
- Rapidly evolving cybersecurity landscape, creating new challenges and opportunities.
- Emphasis on data privacy and regulatory compliance, leading to increased job roles.
- Rising awareness of the importance of proactive security measures.
- Continuous advancements in technology, requiring skilled professionals to combat emerging threats.

Conclusion

The field of cyber security is already booming and these are in fact early days – stronger boom is in the offing. Ah, then there is the question will AI/ automation take away this job? While that threat exists for all kinds of jobs across the industries spectrum we recommend a few areas for growth and learning to stay on top of the changes anticipated in the network engineering field. For example you must learn more about cloud deployments, virtual machines, and containerization. In addition learning more scripting in Python, SQL, or other computer languages will help future proof your career. Last but not the least you need to stay on top of the latest cybersecurity threats as well as other major technology trends.



Lt Col Iqbal Singh (retd) is an infantry officer who started his career with the Garhwal Rifles in Dec 1987. He is currently a senior technology executive with a Big Tech firm based in Gurgaon. He is firmly of the belief that tech is an enabler and your friend. He is the founder of **Forces Network**, a network of military veterans in corporate. His message to comrades-in-arms has been: "Do NOT be afraid of tech but embrace it". In line with his thinking he relishes breaking stereotypes, crashing glass ceilings, and doing the seemingly impossible. He believes that there are no barriers; all the barriers exist only in one's mind. It was with that firm conviction that Iqbal started the now famous **ABCT (Any Body Can Tech)** Program in the Forces Network in 2019. Under this program, non-tech officers were taken to the cloud certification level. Over 40 participants got certified by Microsoft in cloud computing under this program. This launched the tech careers of many of these participants. Iqbal believes that cyber security as a career is set to boom. He is convinced that military personnel can easily transition to cyber security with some upskilling. Accordingly, he has authored a series of articles demystifying cyber security. The current article is the sixth to appear in the ForceNet E-Zine as part of the series.

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

Who
M^{oved}
My
Cheese?

Wisdom Bytes

Teena's Journey to Self-Discovery and Empowerment:

BY MEENA ARORA

A true story that serves as an inspiring testament to the healing power of neurolinguistic programming.

24-year-old Teena wasn't sure what she was doing, but if she had to survive, this was the only way. She had to leave her parents house and move to a working women's hostel.

Teena's life was burdened by immense stress as her parents relentlessly cursed her simply for being born a girl into their family. They considered her a curse, and she struggled to meet their expectations by striving to be the perfect child. Despite their oppressive attitude, Teena deeply loved her parents and younger brother and went to great lengths to please her parents and extended family. She excelled in her studies and achieved remarkable grades in engineering college.

Despite her excellent academic performance, her parents forbade her from pursuing a job. They wanted her to stay at home, make no friends and just live like a submissive, dependent girl. She was blamed for everything bad happening in the family and her father and brother too showed no mercy on her.

It is quite hard to believe that they are her real parents. As a coach or counselor, one comes across many such vices that may seem extinct or of old times, but they continue to exist and inflict pain and suffering.

Her mother's constant curses became suffocating, making it unbearable for Teena to continue living in the oppressive environment. Finally, she gathered the courage to leave her family's house, knowing the challenges she would face. She took a job to meet her expenses, but she was aware of the societal judgment that would still come from a young girl living independently. Simultaneously, her family persistently tried to arrange a marriage for her against her wishes, attempting to impose their decisions upon her. On two previous occasions, Teena even contemplated suicide, but her family dismissed her struggles as mere theatrics, never acknowledging her pain, efforts, or accomplishments.

As Teena moved into a working women's hostel, her family continued to call and threaten her, insisting that she return home. They even called, abused, and intimidated her friends and other ladies at the hostel. These interactions and her complete isolation triggered overwhelming anxiety, self-doubt and negative beliefs about the futility of life and whether it was worth living. She was having sleepless nights, constant headaches and shivering hands. It was then that she thought of seeking help from a professional counselor.

Teena walked into my office with shaky legs, shabby clothes, shattered self-respect and unkempt hair. She needed to be heard patiently, allowing her to pour out her pain without judgment or interruption. It was a profound and cathartic experience for Teena, as she realized that her voice mattered and that her emotions were valid. During the counseling sessions, Teena finally found a compassionate ear to share the deep wounds that had been suppressed for far too long.

Recognizing Teena's need for healing and transformation, I decided to incorporate neuro-linguistic programming techniques into the sessions. Through guided visualization exercises, Teena was gently led into an imaginary world teeming with hope, surrounded by a divine presence that radiated love and acceptance. In this safe haven of her imagination, Teena began to reconnect with her true self, rekindling the flames of her spirit that had been dampened by years of negativity.

This single session with NLP proved to be a pivotal turning point in Teena's life. It revitalized her sense of hope and imbued her with an overwhelming surge of positivity. The experience was transformative, as it instilled in her a newfound belief in her own strength and resilience. The shackles of self-doubt and familial expectations began to loosen their grip on her spirit.

Teena emerged from the session with a deep sense of gratitude, her heart brimming with sentiments. She embraced me tightly, tears streaming down her face, symbolizing the release of years of pent-up emotions. In that moment, Teena realized that this one session had granted her the power and internal fortitude to face life's challenges head-on.



IMAGE BY WOLFGANG ECKERT FROM PIXABAY

With her newfound strength, Teena resolved to live life on her own terms, even if adversity came her way. Neurolinguistic programming had helped her unearth a wellspring of inner strength that had been lying dormant within her.

Embracing her renewed sense of self, Teena embarked on a journey of self-discovery and empowerment. In further sessions, she was motivated to cultivate self-love and surround herself with people who would uplift and cherish her for who she truly was. Teena's story serves as an inspiring testament to the healing power of neurolinguistic programming.

Those who are already trained in NLP must be curious to know which NLP technique I executed with Teena. Well, I started with "Treasure Hunt" and smoothly combined it with "Future Pacing". But the magic happens only when the coach prepares the coachee extremely well for the transformation.

Would you like to become a coach or counselor? I shall soon be announcing the dates of my very popular "Success Mantra Coach and NLP Trainer Program". If you really want to help people seek strength and solace within, you are most welcome to join the batch. For further queries, please email me at careersmeena@gmail.com.

(FOR THE PURPOSE OF CONFIDENTIALITY, THE FACTS AND NAMES OF REAL PERSONS HAVE BEEN CHANGED IN THE STORY ABOVE)



Sqn Ldr Meena Arora is a Certified Life Coach, NLP (Neuro Linguistic Programming) Practitioner and Trainer, Author and Clinical Psychologist (Pursuing PGD in Rehabilitation Psychology, RCI Certified Course). She takes Personal Sessions (one-on-ones) and conducts workshops, group discussions and personal interviews in schools, colleges and corporates. She is also an active theater Artist and a Proficient Baker. She believes in following hobbies and a good physical fitness regime as the keys to good mental and psychological health.

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Leisure

IT PAYS TO BE....

BY VAISHNAVI SHARMA

As usual, Kanika Rajput was travelling from Sagar to Damoh on train. She travelled daily to go to her school where she was teaching. She had long black hair with golden highlights. She was wearing a pink and white striped saree. She was of average scale for weight and height. She was very kind and loving. She worked as a PGT at Vivekanand High Secondary School, Damoh.

When she boarded the train, she had a lower birth seat. Her neighbouring passengers were very energetic and mostly known to her as they also travelled frequently on the same route. They were playing cards when she reached. They greeted her with smiles on their face and signalled to sit on one of the vacant seats next to them. After the current game finished, they invited her to join them for the next game of cards. Manju, sitting in the corner seat, had white hair with black accents in her hair. She was wearing a plain green coloured kurta and she was carrying one suitcase.

She politely asked Kanika, 'Hello dear. I have the upper seat and I have knee problems. So could we exchange our seats?' Kanika replied, "Sure, but I am not travelling very long. Where are you going?" This showed Manju how kind Kanika was. Manju told her that she was going to Mumbai to meet her grandchildren.

Kanika said, "That's so nice aunty." Kanika found that Manju was thinking something and a bit disturbed. Kanika said, "Don't worry Aunty. Whosoever enters the compartment will surely understand your problems and will for sure exchange seats. I will also request the ticket collector to help you in case of any trouble."

As they were chatting, the climate outside could be seen changing and the black clouds were hovering. Cool breeze was flowing and one could see the clouds entering the compartment.

*"Isn't the time fine for some tea. Let's catch hold of some tea vendor",
said Kanika.*

Sandeep, who was sitting next to me said “I shall call one.” He was a fellow passenger in Kanika’s compartment. He used to travel up to the next station after Kanika’s. He used to work in a bank. He was very smartly dressed with a neck tie, a briefcase and a pen attached to his pocket, his hair was well combed. He was so well dressed because he had to meet some visiting executives today and was besides also responsible for the customers desk in his bank.

He got up and went and fetched the tea vendor. He had a camper filled with tea across his shoulder and also carrying plastic cups in his other hand. The tea vendor Mukesh who was also regular on this route came and smilingly served to all sitting in the compartment. His tea is generally liked by passengers on this route.

All passengers kept chatting and joking, with rains outside made the climate more chilling. The lightning and heavy rains accompanied with jokes and songs, made the travellers forget about the time and their whereabouts.

Just then a lady passenger sitting on the top seat climbed down and asked, “Which is the next station?”.

On her asking, did the other passengers realise that they had missed out something. A fellow passenger had to get down at the last station.

Kanika said, “Damoh will come next.”

“Damoh? No, Damoh is gone and it is at that station that the tea vendor had come in when I called him”, clarified Sandeep.

Damoh exclaimed Kanika. “My Lord, my station is missed.”

She realised that she had already overdone her journey. She got fidgety because she had not thought of anything like this ever happening. After all she has been a frequent traveller on this route. She tried to calm herself down. She tried to figure out what she was to do next.

Before she could consolidate her thoughts, someone said, “Don’t worry, get down at the next station and come back. It’s not very late and you will still be on time.”

The train stopped at the next station which was around half an hour distance from her destination. But then she made a decision that she would get down there and call her brother to pick her up from there or return by the next train.

It was raining and over cast with clouds had made the day dark. One odd light at the station was also lit up. She got down, she saw no one there. It was like a haunted railway station. The fans were screeching and the lights were blinking. As the train was leaving, she saw a young man in his thirties looking at her in a surprised gaze. He had curly brown hair. He was dressed very simply. She was surprised to see someone at the station who was looking at her in a gaze which made her feel uncomfortable. His smile conveyed that he knew her very well. Kanika could see him approaching her. Since Kanika did not know her, she was also afraid of talking to him. Kanika got scared because she did not know why that stranger was walking towards her.

He came to Kanika and said, 'Hello Didi, do you remember me. I am Abhay Mishra.' Suddenly he took out his umbrella and opened on her. "Didi hold this or else you will get wet." said Abhay.

Kanika was a bit reluctant and said, "No, no, you please have it over yourself. You will get wet."

"Don't worry about me Didi. I will be fine. I have only to go home from here." said Abhay.

Seeing his stubborn behaviour Kanika took the umbrella. Abhay continued to talk for a while and suddenly he realised that he was talking and not helping his Didi who had alighted there. "By the way, Didi, what are you doing here?" asked Abhay.

Kanika replied, "I had to get down one station before but I missed it. I am trying to contact my brother to come and pick me up."

Abhay abruptly said, "Didi, with me here what's the need to contact bhaiyaji? Don't worry." Pointing towards the nearby bench he said, "You come and sit here on this bench. I will do something."

She was in the same shock to see a stranger helping her with so much concern. Abhay after checking from the mobile said, "Didi, the next train is in 40 minutes. You wait here only and I will go and get the ticket from the counter."

Without waiting to see her response, he turned back and ran towards the over bridge to go to the neighbouring platform for the tickets. He returned in 10 minutes or so and handed over the ticket to her. Kanika opened her purse and after seeing the ticket value she took out money to hand it over to Abhay. But he moved back a little and said, “Why didi, can’t I buy a ticket for you?”

She felt uneasy as she did not know him and he knew her very well and was going all out to help her. Kanika realised that the stranger would not take money from her. She kept the money back and thanked her. Abhay kept narrating stories about her father and his good deeds that he did for the people who approached him for any work. He also told her that his dad went out of his way to help people in need and with no two thoughts at even the odd hours of the day or night. Then came the announcement of the train’s arrival.

Abhay said, “Didi, the train is about to come on this very platform. You may sit in any compartment as the journey is only of half an hour or so.”

The train arrived on the platform and she boarded the compartment which came just in front of her. Abhay also climbed the compartment and ensured that she got the seat and thanking her said, “Didi, I am very happy that I could help you today. I have not forgotten the good deeds of Shambhuji. God has given me an opportunity to repay the debt that I owe to him.” Saying he deboarded the train.

The train started moving slowly and she waived to Abhay. She could see him standing at the platform waving and the train speeded for its next destination. She started thinking who Shambhuji was. Not her father at least. But then a positive thought came to her, “It pays. It pays to be good.”



Ms. Vaishnavi Sharma is a Class X student in Army Public School Saugor, MP. She is the daughter of an army officer who is currently stationed at Saugor. She has a flair for writing and she has done two creative writing courses Module 1 & 2 with British Council to enhance her writing skills.

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

Leisure

A Marvel of Science

BY PARMESH KR MEHRISHI

15 Laws of everyday Physics easily explained through a short Story. The applications are genuine & worthy of appreciation as to how Science has affected our lives & made Life so comfortable. Ideal for children who find Physics uninteresting.

Major Sandeep lifted his 6 feet, four-inch frame from the bed & slowly walked to the washroom. "Hell what a job, after a hectic briefing session last night, now this exciting flight to Siachen at 0600h". As he immersed his huge frame into the bathtub with a hot cup of coffee he felt light & relaxed. Little did he know that **Archimedes Principle** was in play as the upward thrust of water he felt in the tub was because of the water he had displaced. Unknown in the background, the hum of the air conditioner maintained a steady temperature of 22 degrees Celsius putting the Avogadro's Law to work as the room was under a steady temperature & pressure allowing an equal number of molecules of all gases in the room (Nitrogen / Oxygen / Argon/ traces of others) to help in cooling & maintaining the desired temperature.

Flipping a toast from the toaster for that burnt astringent taste he preferred with his second cup of coffee, he vaguely recollected that Ohm's Law was the reason for the current to be passing proportionally between the socket & plug as there was a potential difference across the two points. As the driver put the key into the car's ignition & gunned the engine of the customized Jeep. Tyres screeched as the vehicle overcame Inertia (**Newton's First Law of Motion**) and the driver patiently awaited the arrival of his boss. Sandeep always travelled light; a knapsack was all he ever carried. As he jumped into the rear seat, his driver gave him a customary salute & put the vehicle into gear & set it to motion accelerating on the highway to the Airport.

The force generated while speeding on the highway was phenomenal as the engine was tweaked for better performance & the overall mass of the Jeep kept lighter.

(Newton's Second Law of Motion)

Arrival at the Airport was chaotic as the early morning passengers were frenetically moving with their belongings in all directions. As the Jeep came to a halt, Major Sandeep felt something pull in him back in his seat from the direction of travel. **(Newton's Third Law of Motion)** For every action, there is an equal & opposite reaction. He laughed under his breath as this was also an important tactical lesson he always remembered while facing the enemy.

Meanwhile, the turboprop, twin-engine Fokker Friendship aircraft sputtered on the tarmac & the pilot gave last minute instructions to the mechanic to fix the problem as the force between the electrical charges to fire the high octane fuel had reduced due to doubling of distance between the charges **(Coulomb's Law)** due to a recent modification in the engine.

Sandeep wore a black jacket to ward off the early morning cold. As he stepped into the aircraft he kept on wearing the jacket as it would help him in absorbing & later radiating heat energy **(Stefan's Law)** during his mission & the HALO jump. The engine of the aircraft revved after a brief communication with the ATC & the pilot released the air brakes & checked the rudder. All external controls were based on hydraulics. Thus the pressure applied to the controls in the pilot's cabin was transmitted to every part of the hydraulic fluid without a loss **(Pascal's Law)**.

At the rear end of the aircraft hung two parachutes of varying dimensions from identical suspended springs fastened to hooks in the fuselage. The lighter one weighing 09 Kgs hung at half a distance from the heavier one weighing 18 Kgs. **(Hooke's Law)** Sandeep reminded himself to wear the lighter one used for free fall HALO jumps two hours into the journey.

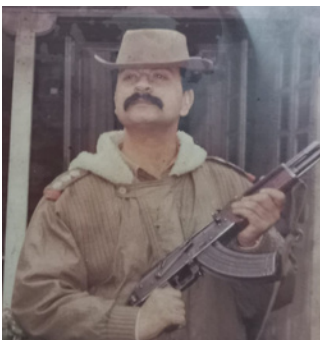
Now the aircraft was taxi tracking on the tarmac with a whine & ever increasing speed of the propellers, after a short run Sandeep felt a sudden lift **(Bernoulli's Principle)** & the aircraft was airborne as it climbed gently over the sleeping town. As the pilot gave the engines more gas & worked the speed to cover the distance quickly & the plane climbed to gain altitude the pressure in the cabin was maintained & volume of air (gases) kept under control to avoid discomfort **(Boyle's Law)**.

After two hours of flight, Sandeep was all strapped & ready for his jump, the NCO gave him a second round of checks & the red light with hooter went on, the cabin door opened & he felt a sudden blast of low pressure & temperature as the temperature in the cabin dropped to zero & further down (**Charle's Law**) on a thumbs up from the Jump Master he was out with his arms & legs spread-eagled into the early morning sky over Siachen.

As he jumped out he could see the Sun rising over the horizon & the Moon slowly fading away. He wondered how such beautiful phenomenon's of nature occurred & how an entire solar system lay suspended in space with each planet going around the Sun in a disciplined orbit (Kepler's Law) As he went down with amazing speed in a free fall he saw different colors because of the scattering of light from small particles suspended in the sky (**Tyndall Effect**).

As he hurtled down towards the target area, his oxygen cylinder was emptying at a fast rate diffusing the available oxygen gas (**Graham's Law**) into his lungs & avoiding a blackout due to oxygen starvation. He looked for the target area under the clear blue sky & gave a gentle tug to the lever opening his main parachute 4000 feet above the ground.

He was on a mission to kill, philosophically he thought to himself, the enemy I eliminate today will again be reborn somewhere. The first **law of thermodynamics** will always remain true as energy can never be created nor destroyed but only transferred from one form to the other (**Law of Conservation of Energy**).



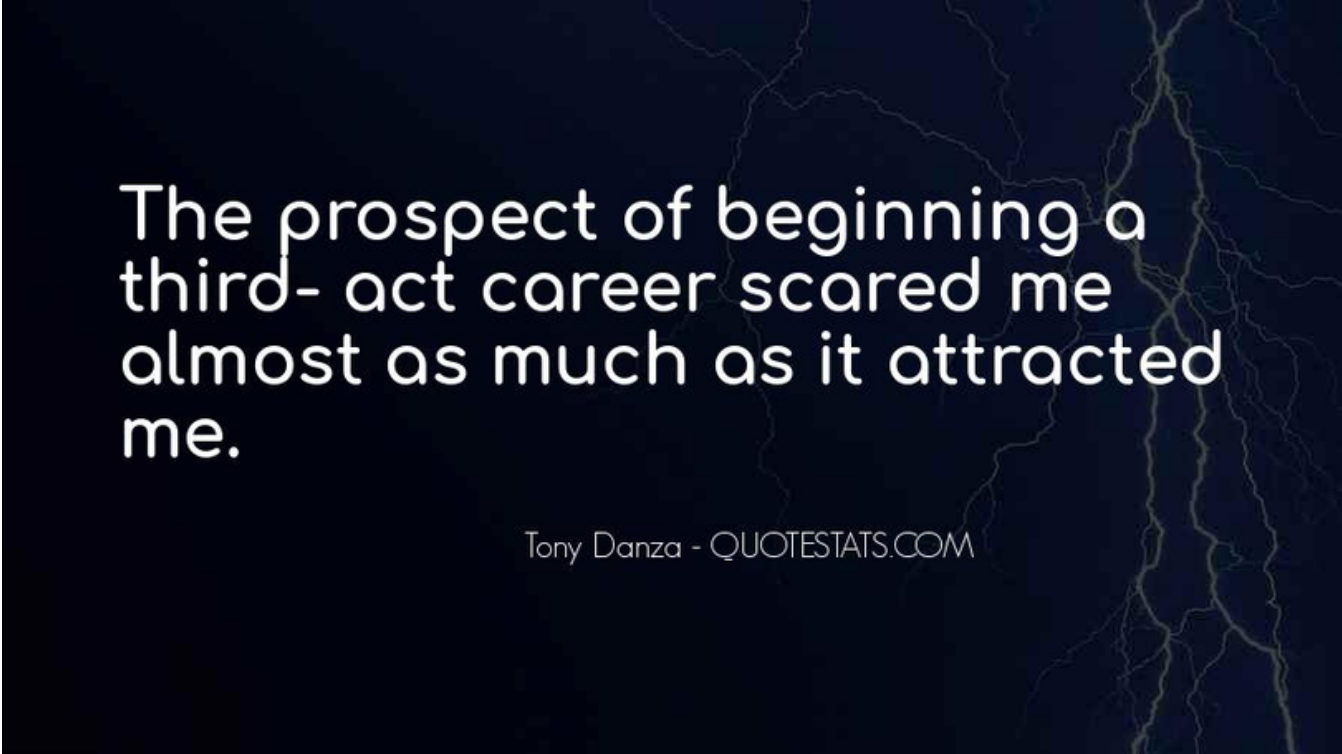
Col PK Royal- Mehrishi donned the uniform at a young age of 10 years as a cadet in a military school. An alumnus of NDA he is a perfect example of a scholar - soldier . He has seen active combat in J & K having served six tenures in various appts. An author with five books to his credit , a research study for AHQ, multiple thought provoking articles on matters military, he is on the think tank of Mission Victory India. He is also a Harvard Business School (Boston) alumni.

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

Matrimonials

Groom Desired

A suitable match is sought by Wing Commander Arup Kumar Roy (Retd) for his daughter. The daughter was born on 16 Oct 1997 and is 5'6" tall. Her education qualification is Masters(MA) in English and International business management-Logistics system from Canada. Father is retired. A boy is desired who is Bengali Defense officer. age between 26 - 28 yrs and minimum ht of 5'7" I, can be reached at arupkumarroy35@gmail.com for additional details.



The prospect of beginning a
third- act career scared me
almost as much as it attracted
me.

Tony Danza - QUOTESTATS.COM



Pune Forces Network Gathering

Standing L to R: Maj Rishi Raj, Col Kamat, Capt Uday , Col Sinha, Capt Nair, Lt Cdr Seema, Lt Col Tarun, Maj Chavan, Col Bharat

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