

Dte of Ex-Servicemen Affairs
 Naval Headquarters
 Ministry of Defence
 Room No 004
 Talkatora Stadium Annex
 New Delhi 110004

DX/900/Samanvay – 01/2024

22 Apr 24

MINUTES OF 'SAMANVAY' HELD ON 22 MAR 24 AT VISAKHAPATNAM

1. VAdm Gurcharan Singh, AVSM, NM, Controller Personnel Services and ex-officio Chairman presided over 'Samanyav' held on 22 Mar 24 at Visakhapatnam. The following were present: -

Ser	Name	Desig
(a)	RAdm Rajat Kapoor, AVSM	CSO (P&A), WNC
(b)	RAdm M Murali Mohan Raju, NM	CSO (P&A), ENC
(c)	Cmde Sundeep K Verma	Cmde (PA)
(d)	Cmde AP Shaji Kutti	Cmde (NPF)
(e)	Cmde Viju Samuel	CSO (P&A), SNC
(f)	Cmde CP Sanga	Cmde (ESM Affairs) and Secy, 'Samanyav'
(g)	Cmde Happy Mohan, VSM	Station Commander
(h)	Cmde A Muthuraman	Cd Wel O, ENC
(j)	Cmde Varun Singh	JAG (N)
(k)	Capt NR Chakravarthy	RM, INCS Visakhapatnam
(l)	Capt T Ranjith Sundaran	Secy, VSF Kochi
(m)	Capt TG Kumar	Secy, VSF Kolkata
(n)	Capt R K Saini	Secy, VSF Mumbai
(p)	Capt Ajay Mandal	Jt Secy, NF(Desig)
(q)	Cdr Vijay Kumar	MS, INCCB
(r)	Cdr Sarup Banerjee	Secy, VSF Vizag
(s)	Cdr Sanjay Solawat	CRSO (A&N)
(t)	Cdr T Dutta	Jt Secy NF and 'Samanyav' and Secy, VSF
(u)	Cdr N Kattaboomman	Secy, VSF Chennai
(v)	Lt Cdr Manoj Gupta	Secy, NF Visakhapatnam
(w)	Lt Cdr V Ravi Jaddu	Secy, VSF Ezhimala
(x)	Lt Cdr Akash Anand	Lt Cdr, ECHS
(y)	Lt Cdr Arjun Anand V	Secy, VSF Karwar
(z)	Lt Cdr Bhaskara K Rao	Secy, VSF Porbandar
(aa)	Lt Manish Kumar Mishra	Secy, VSF Chilka
(ab)	Lt Sharmila Urs	Secy, VSF Goa
(ac)	GP Pathak, PO(GW)	Rep, VSF Jabalpur

Ser	Name	Desig
<u>NF and VSF Representatives (Retd)</u>		
(a)	VAdm BK Verma, AVSM	Pres, NF Bhopal
(b)	VAdm MP Muralidharan, AVSM*, NM	Pres, NF Kerala
(c)	VAdm AG Thapliyal, AVSM*	Pres, NF Dehradun
(d)	VAdm VK Namballa, AVSM, NM	Pres, NF Visakhapatnam
(e)	VAdm RK Pattanaik, PVSM, AVSM, YSM	Pres, NF Odisha
(f)	VAdm Jaywant Korde, PVSM, AVSM, VSM	Pres, NF Pune
(g)	VAdm KO Thakare, AVSM, NM	Pres, NF Nagpur
(h)	RAdm PS Byce, AVSM	Pres, NF Jaipur
(j)	RAdm Sushil Ramsay, YSM	Pres, NF Delhi
(k)	RAdm NK Mishra, NM	Pres, NF Bangalore
(l)	RAdm Philipose G Pynumootil, AVSM, NM	Pres, NF Goa
(m)	RAdm V Mohan Doss, AVSM, VSM	Pres, NF Coimbatore
(n)	Cmde VK Gautam, NM	Pres, NF Chandigarh
(p)	Cmde Ashok Bhal, VSM	VP, NF Lucknow
(q)	Cmde Pravin Rajpal	Secy, NF Hyderabad
(r)	Cmde Suprobo K De, NM	Pres, NF Kolkata
(s)	Cdr LM Krishnan	VP, NF Chennai
(t)	Cdr Vijay Kumar Vadhera	Pres, NF Mumbai
(u)	AP Singh, Hon. SLt	VSF Delhi
(v)	Pravin Chandra Choudhary, Hon. SLt	VSF Goa
(w)	Rajendra Prasad Pandey, Hon. SLt	VSF Dehradun
(x)	NS Nagmaini, Hon. SLt	VSF Visakhapatnam
(y)	V Durai Raju, POR(Tel)	VSF Chennai
(z)	Bidyadar Nayak, POR(Spl)	VSF Chilka
(aa)	Rahul Dev Mahata, PO WTR	VSF Kolkata
(ab)	Pradeep Kumar, PO (GW)	VSF Jabalpur
(ac)	A Patel, POME	VSF Mumbai
(ad)	Smiju KA, PO	VSF Kochi
(ae)	Shaju MP, PO	VSF Ezhimala
(af)	V Vincent, LS	VSF Karwar
(ag)	R Gohil Tarunkant, LME	VSF Porbandar

Welcome Address by Chairman

2. VAdm Gurcharan Singh, CPS and ex-officio Chairman 'Samanvay' extended a warm welcome to all members present for the second edition of 'Samanvay' and thanked

the out-station members and representatives for their presence at Visakhapatnam. He reiterated that the *IN* has two separate organisations for the naval veterans, the Navy Foundation (NF) and the Veteran Sailors' Forum (VSF). He stated that the objectives of both organisations were similar and both had serving naval officers as their Governing Heads. He brought out that even though DESA acted as the common link between these organisations and exchanged all information with/ between them, a need was felt to institutionalise a common meeting ground for NF and VSF, so that both organisations can share best practices between them. Accordingly, 'Samanvay' was established on 25 Aug last year with an intent to provide a platform for interaction between NF and VSF and the maiden 'Samanvay' was conducted on 02 Oct 23 at Kolkata.

3. With this as the backdrop, he updated members on initiatives and processes that are currently in progress in the *IN*. He stated that the *IN* has institutionalised a standard procedure for the farewell of sailors being released, called the 'Aabhar' Ceremony, to acknowledge their contribution to the *IN* while in uniform. This ceremony was being organised at the Unit or Area level and the 'Retirement Kit', along with the *IN* Crest, was handed over to the retiring sailors in the presence of his family over High Tea/ dinner. He also informed the gathering that the process of re-organising the NRS/ CRSO organisation was under examination at NHQ, and the RSUs and RCUs were being re-worked to enable timely assistance to veterans within their Areas of Responsibility.

4. He concluded by reiterating that the scope of the interaction be limited to sharing best practices and discussing Service-related common issues only and commenced the proceedings.

Agenda Points

5. Cmde (ESM Affairs), as Secy 'Samanvay', continued with the proceedings and a total of eight agenda points were discussed. Details of deliberations and decisions arrived at, in respect of the agenda points, are placed at ***Appendix 'A'***.

Discussions: 'Samanvay'

6. During discussions, the Chairman informed the members regarding various initiatives undertaken by *IN* for welfare of the veterans and best practices as enumerated below: -

(a) **Change of Address**. VSF Members stated that the process of change of address is long and cumbersome as it involves approaching NAVPEN through the local ZSB. The Chairman brought out that the procedure for change of address has been liberalised last year wherein there is no limit to the number of times a retired sailor can change the permanent address vis-a-vis only two times allowed earlier. He also brought out that the documentary proof submitted by the retired sailor was being processed by NAVPEN without any further verification, post receipt from the

concerned ZSB. The Chairman brought out that the policy is in line with the other Services and directed that status quo be maintained.

(b) **Issue of Service Book (Sailors Released Prior 1990)**. The members brought out that pre-1990 retirees were issued with Certificate of Service (IN-271) instead of the Service and Release Certificate being issued to present retirees. These IN-271s are now damaged due to wear and tear and queried if the Service and Release Certificate could be provisioned for these veterans. The Secretary clarified to the members that the sailors retiring post Dec 2005 were being issued with Service and Release Certificate alongwith IN-271. In case of Fair Wear and Tear of existing IN 271, individuals can approach NAVPEN for re-issue of the same which will be facilitated by NAVPEN.

Action: - NAVPEN

(c) **Veterans Day at Sea**. Members requested for a 'Veterans Day at Sea'. The Chairman informed the gathering that 'Families Day at Sea' was stopped in-between due to COVID and other operational requirements of the *IN* and has re-commenced post COVID. He directed that the conduct of a 'Veterans Day at Sea' be examined at NHQ and outcome informed during the next *Samanvay* meeting.

Action: - NHQ/ DESA (in consultation with DNO)

(d) **Enhancement of Demise Grant**. Members indicated that *IN* should follow the Army model of payment of Assured Decent Last Rights Scheme (ADLRS) to be paid through the Dependent CSD. The Secretary brought out that the Demise Grant paid by the *IN* had been recently revised from Rs 30,000/- to Rs 40,000/- and is the maximum financial support being provided amongst the Services. The Chairman directed that status quo be maintained on the subject.

(e) **Delay in Transfer of Pension to Dependent**. Members informed the Chairman regarding inordinate delay in commencement of Family Pension to the NoK on demise of the veteran. The Chairman informed the gathering that the delay is generally in cases where the records of NoK are not available/ updated/ mismatch or where the Joint Account is not held with the NoK. He requested the members to ensure that their records are updated and the same reflected in the PPO and Pension Account to obviate any delays in disbursement of Family Pension.

(f) **Unique Disability Identity Card**. Members requested if an Identity Card for PwDs could be issued by the Services in line with the Unique Disability Id (UDID) being issued by the Government. The Chairman stated that the point be examined at NHQ and outcome informed during the next *Samanvay*.

Action: - DGMS(N)

Closing Remarks

7. The Chairman during his closing remarks thanked everyone for their pro-active participation and highlighting of issues. He assured all present that the issues discussed

..... during the meeting would be examined and brought to their logical conclusion. He further stated that the conduct of *Samanvay* should continue to bring forth interesting ideas for progress and betterment of the naval veteran community.

8. There being no other points for discussion, the meeting was adjourned. These minutes are issued with the approval of Chairman.



(CP Sanga)
Commodore
Cmde (ESM Affairs)

Appendix : - Discussions on Agenda Points

Distribution : - Normal

Appendix 'A'
 (Refers to Para 5)

DISCUSSIONS ON AGENDA POINTS – 'SAMANVAY'

Agenda I - ESM Handshake Portal

1. **Issue.** NF Chapters and VSF Charters should accord wider publicity and proactively request their members to register on the ESM Handshake Portal to grow the community and enhance interaction between the naval veterans.
2. **Discussions.** Secy, Samanvay informed the members that ESM Handshake Portal was launched by the CNS in May 22 with an aim to strengthen veterans connect with the Service and also amongst themselves. He brought out that the portal has various features that include networking between serving and retired personnel, search for colleagues/ shipmates, featured chat rooms to seek/ render advise/ monitor discussions/ activities and broadcast latest policy letters affecting veterans and families. He further stated that the portal has been revamped recently and is being upgraded continuously based on the feedback from veterans on a regular basis. The Chairman brought out that the portal was primarily formed based on the inputs/ requirements projected by veterans.
3. **Decision.** Chairman requested all present to encourage veterans to join the portal and directed that the point be closed.

Action: - NF Chapters / VSF Charters

Agenda II - AFSAC

4. **Issue.** The present status of Armed Forces Secure Access Card (AFSAC) be intimated.
5. **Discussions.** Secy, Samanvay informed the members that AFSAC roll out for Service and DSC personnel along with limited access control has been completed at Mumbai. He stated that card issuance to all user categories and implementation of access control pan-Navy is being implemented in a progressive manner with the next phase scheduled at Delhi. The Chairman brought out that AFSAC roll out for veterans would be undertaken for all Armed Forces veterans through Kendriya Sainik Board (KSB) and is not envisaged as of now.

6. **Decision.** The Chairman directed that the point be closed.

Agenda III - Recognition of ESM Organisations

7. **Issue.** Since NF and VSF are the recognised and official ESM organisations, it is recommended that any other ESM organisation which has come up pan-India in an unauthorised manner be disbanded.

8. **Discussions.** Secy, Samanvay informed the members that *IN* only recognises NF and VSF as the organisations for naval veterans. MoD has recognised five veteran organisations namely, The Indian Ex-Servicemen League, The Disabled War Veterans, The Air Force Association, National Ex-Servicemen Coordination Committee and Akhil Bhartiya Poorva Sainik Seva Parishad. He brought out that the proposal to gain MoD recognition of NF and VSF had been discussed earlier and it had been decided to maintain status quo on the subject. The Chairman informed the members that whilst individuals/groups had the option to register for ESM organisations at various places, the *IN* recognises NF and VSF as the only official platforms for interaction and supports them including funding.

9. **Decision.** The Chairman directed that the point be closed.

Agenda IV

10. **Veterans' Day Parade.** Under the aegis of NFMC, 3rd Veterans Day Parade (VDP) was successfully held at Marine Drive, Mumbai on 07 Jan 24. The Parade was flagged off by Hon'ble Governor of Maharashtra, Shri Ramesh Bais in the presence of FOC-in-C (West) and other Flag Officers. It is suggested that future VDPs should be held pan-India, wherever feasible by the respective NF Chapter, with the Lead Service in that station, providing all logistic support.

11. **Discussions.** NF Mumbai Chapter briefed the gathering on the conduct of the Veterans Day Parade at Mumbai. He recommended that the same can be conducted concurrently pan-India by all NF Chapters and VSF Charters. The Secretary brought out that while the Marine Drive at Mumbai provided the perfect backdrop and locale for such a large-scale event, the same setting may not be available in some other NF and VSF locations. The Chairman stated that it was an initiative worthy of consideration and encouraged other NF and VSF to examine the feasibility and suitability of implementation of the proposal in their respective locations; and conduct the event, as considered suitable.

12. **Decision.** The Chairman directed that the point be closed.

Agenda V

13. **ESM Component in Common Service Centre (CSC).** Request indicate present status of State/ UT Govts for liaison with the CSC network and setting up of access facilities in ZSBs. The present status of CGDA providing necessary support/ training for integration with CSCs may also be indicated.

14. **Discussions.** Cmde (PA) informed members that CGDA has indicated that deployment of ESM component in CSC is not feasible. *IN* has established a Grievance Redressal Mechanism for SPARSH in NHQ and veterans can reach out through phone/ email to SMART team at DOP and NAVPEN for assistance or Contact SPARSH Help Desk at DPA. He further added that the Defence Pension Training Institute, Prayagraj regularly conducts training programme on '*Defence Pension Payment Procedure*' for RSB/ ZSB officers/ staff. Accordingly, officers/ staff from various RSB/ ZSB offices located across the country have attended the online training programme on a regular basis and it is an

ongoing process. The feasibility of setting-up dedicated helpdesks for veterans at CSCs, was recommended by President, NFC Mumbai.

15. **Decision.** The Chairman directed that the point be closed. However, the feasibility of setting-up separate counters for veterans at CSCs is to be pursued with KSB.

Agenda VI

16. **Additional Insurance Cover.** The present status of providing additional Insurance cover for veterans, post retirement, may be indicated.

17. **Discussions.** Cmde (NPF) brought out that at present, all retiring naval officers and sailors (excluding SSC officers), are covered under Post Retirement Death Insurance Extension Scheme (PRDIES) for a sum of ₹60 lakh and ₹30 lakh against one time non-refundable premium of ₹3,15,250/- and ₹1,85,500/- respectively wef 01 Jan 24. Members requested if additional insurance cover could be provided to the veterans through a one-time deduction/ contribution. The Chairman informed the members that NGIF does not have the mandate to deduct money from veterans and hence providing additional cover to veterans is not possible under the scheme.

18. **Decision.** The Chairman directed that the point be closed.

Agenda VII

19. **Provision for Extended Medical Coverage by ECHS for Dependents with Disabilities in the Absence of Health Insurance by Private Insurance Companies in India.** Veterans having dependents over the age of 25 years and with disabilities face financial difficulties in providing medical care in absence of support from ECHS due to the monthly income limit of ₹9000/. The challenge of securing health insurance for PwDs, despite the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA)'s directives to insurance companies, remains a significant barrier. The stark reality is that many families find themselves without adequate health insurance coverage for such dependents. The Ayushman Bharat Yojana Scheme and Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY) offer up to ₹5 lakh coverage marking progress towards accessible healthcare. However, PwDs face a stark contrast, with Government health insurance schemes like *Niramaya* and *Swavlamban* schemes providing only up to ₹2 lakh coverage. This amount is insufficient for emergencies, highlighting a significant policy gap and the need for better support and coverage to ensure equitable healthcare access for PwDs.

20. **Discussions.** ECHS rep informed the members that the guiding criteria laid down by the Government for being a dependent is to have a monthly income less than ₹9000+ DR from all sources for availing medical treatment through ECHS. Thus, it may not be feasible to extend benefits to PwDs in case they do not meet the basic eligibility criteria of a dependent. Members requested for a waiver on the cap of monthly income. The Chairman informed the gathering that the case was discussed with the Central Organisation, ECHS who had intimated that since the monthly income ceiling was the guiding criteria for all three Services and other Ministries as well, it would not be possible to either alter or waive it off. ECHS rep informed the members that a case for revision of

the amount has been taken up as the criterion was in force wef 2014 and the issue is presently pending approval of the Government.

21. **Decision.** Chairman directed that status update, if any, be provided during the next 'Samanvay' and closed the point.

Action: - ECHS(N)

Agenda VIII

22. **Annual Medical Check Up.** Free Annual Medical check-up for veterans through their respective empanelled hospitals may be undertaken.

23. **Discussions.** ECHS rep informed the members that 'Annual Medical Check-up' for veterans through ECHS is under consideration at AG's Branch. At present, type of investigations to be included in the Medical Check-up under various age categories is under finalisation alongwith associated financial implications. He informed the gathering that post finalisation of the same, the consolidated case would be put up to MoD/ DESW for approval.

24. **Decision.** The Chairman directed that status update, if any, be provided during the next 'Samanvay' and closed the point.

Action: - ECHS(N)

Summary of Action Points – 'Samanvay'

25. The summary of Action Points of the 'Samanvay' meeting is as tabulated below: -

Ser	Action Points	Action by
(a)	Revision of monthly income (less than ₹9000+ DA) criterion for dependents	NHQ/ ECHS (N)
(b)	Status of Annual Medical Check-up through ECHS	NHQ/ ECHS (N)
(c)	Issue of Identity Card for PwDs by the Services in line with the UDID being issued by the Govt	NHQ/ DGMS(N)
(d)	Issue of Certificate of Service (IN-271) for veteran sailors (Released prior Dec 2005)	NAV PEN
(e)	Institutionalisation of 'Veterans Day at Sea'	NHQ/ DESA (in consultation with DNO)
(f)	Feasibility of setting-up dedicated counters for veterans at CSCs	NHQ/ DESA

Note. All concerned stakeholders are to forward update on the above-mentioned Action Points to NHQ/ DESA on quarterly basis.