



QUARTERDECK

96



1971



Admiral R J Zlatoper C-inC U S Pacific Fleet being received on board
INS Viraat



Rescuing victims of the cyclone



INS Khanjar visits Tokyo

OUR FLEETS IN PEACETIME ACTION



Guard of Honour for India's Ambassadress in Phillipines



INS Nashak on patrol

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Please send in anecdotes, articles, memoirs, photographs, trophies, presentation cups or plates, scrolls, mementoes — anything that you feel can make history come alive : anything you judge will



help us re-live your days. Every such contribution, however small, is invaluable. We are looking up to you, and we know that in the spirit of Delhi, you will not let us down — just as you expect us not to let you down.

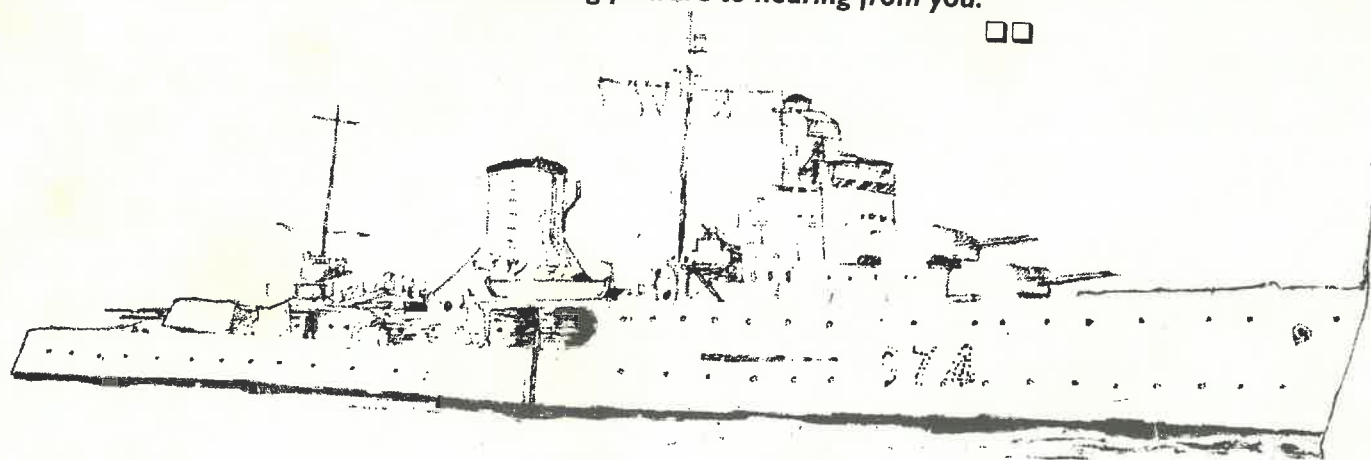
Even if you are too modest to send in such a contribution, please do not forget to get in touch with us giving your present address, a brief on yourself (including present nationality), and, if possible, photographs of you — then and now.

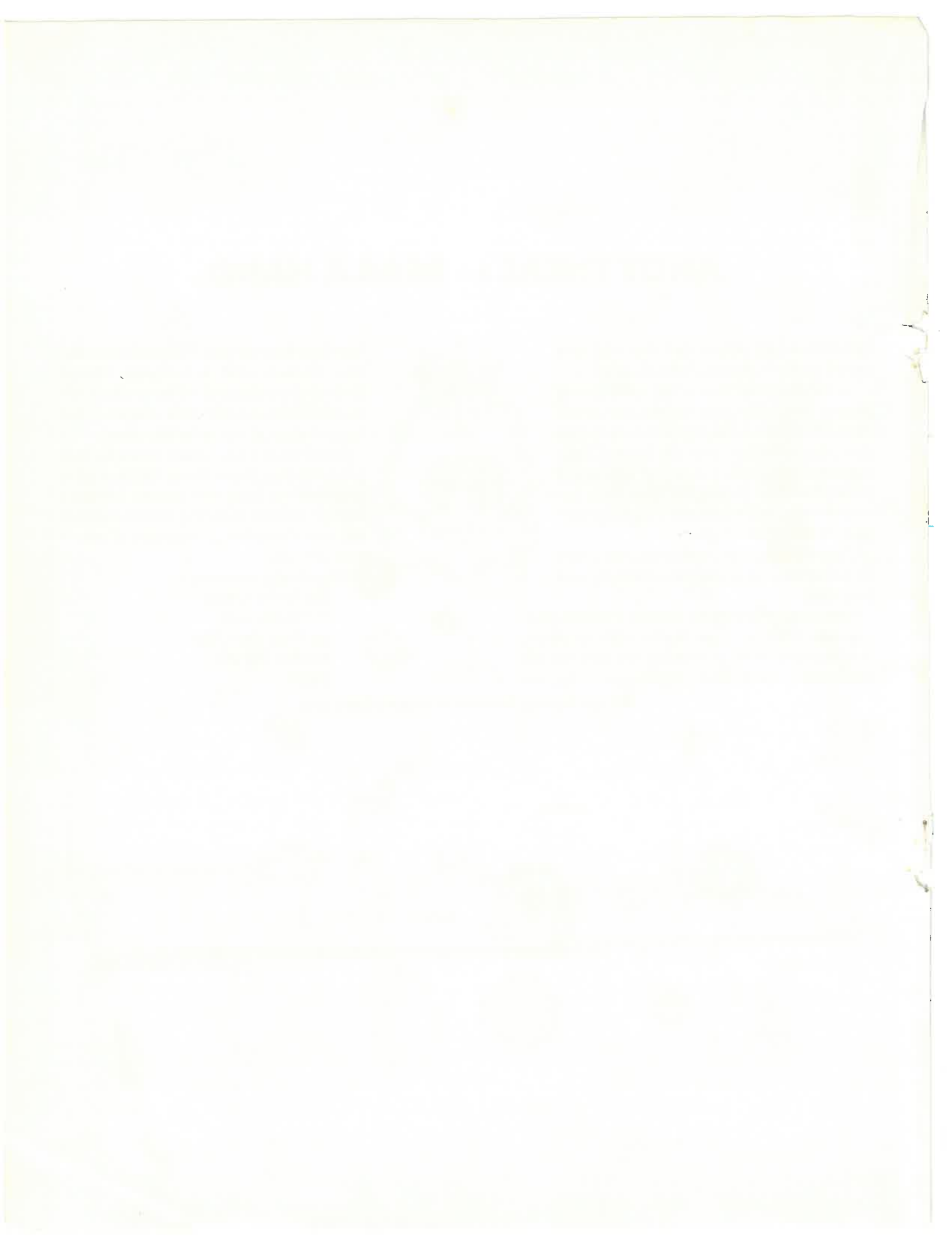
The contact address is :

The Senior Officer
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Bombay 400 001
INDIA

We are looking forward to hearing from you.

□□





IN THIS ISSUE

QUARTERDECK

Vol 9

Editorial Board

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★★★★★★

Front cover: *Mahavir Chakra* Heroes — Design
concept by LCdr K S Subramanian,
O i/c DTTT, Bombay

Facing Page: *The Business Edge* — Our Fleets
in peacetime action !

Back Cover: The big bang !



EDITORIAL

The world's Press and audio-visual media have been full of the commemoration of the golden anniversary of World War II. The World celebrated 50 years of peace. Never mind that those years have been punctuated with two score or more of vicious local wars and that the carnage and the mutilation surge on. Parades and speeches resounded round the globe; every where but in India, whose half million soldier casualties seem to have faded from the public conscience. Not even the Armed Forces sought to bring their memory to today's generation of servicemen and women. The plight of many WWII veterans is pathetic, and it never fails to amaze that while politicians grant pensions to so called freedom fighters, the guardians of our freedom have faded from mind. 1996 marks 25 years since independent India's last declared war. This issue of QD seeks to bring alive some of the spirit of that time. We asked you to tell us of your experiences, and despite some initial reserve, many of you have responded with very personal stories. The test of a free society is the willingness of its citizens to place themselves in harm's way in order to preserve their liberty and preserve it for future generations. Vijay Jerath highlights that truism in the most light hearted way in his piece entitled My Bugs. There have been other tales of valor, ingenuity and the willingness to go that extra mile. Many of you have remarked on the esprit de corps and the close ties forged under the stress of imminent danger that survive to the present day. "War happens inside a man and that is why you and your sons from the war will be forever strangers", said Eric Savereid. "If by the miracle of art and genius, in later years some can open their hearts and the right words come, then perhaps we shall all know a little of what it was like – and we shall know then that all the present writers and speakers hardly touched the story." Thank you for sharing your stories with us.

This year we have tried to make QD more topical. Subhash Chopra's unravelling of the Bosnian maze is masterly. We are grateful for his abridging and updating of an article he wrote for the USI Journal. Willi Sinha has written on his Public Interest Litigation on saving the Yamuna waters. It is important that concerned citizens act to save our common heritage, and we are proud to carry his article. Prakash Vasudeva has probed the spirit of man, in an exploration of a different kind. We apologise to the many contributors whose articles we have had to "pull" due to constraints of space.

Even with so many new aspects finding room in this issue, we still carry our regular 'nostalgia' features; somewhat abridged. We hope you enjoy QD 96, and that many more of you will write in to us. It is heart warming to have your praise, but QD is only as good as you let us make it. Please remember our deadline : 31 July '96. We look forward to hearing from you.

You will have noticed changes in our Editorial team. Cdr Rajneesh and RAdm Arun Prakash have left on retirement and transfer respectively, while Kavita Sharma no longer does the printing for us. Pradeep Dhupia is now our man at DESA, while RAdm Sampath Pillai lends support in his wonderfully laid back fashion, making all alarms seem so unnecessary ! Capt Ganesh Mahadevan and Cdr Rajan Bhatnagar are our stalwarts of old. We welcome Cmde 'Magoo' Nehra, and are heartened by the great interest and commitment he has lavished on QD. It has been a pleasure working with the team.

Have a wonderful year.



LETTERS

I enjoyed reading the tributes to INS Shivaji, the *alma mater* of the naval engineers, in QD 95. However, the "printer's devil" appears to have been at his impish best. Surely, a naval engineer is known as a plumber even if he may work on the plumber's block.

In my article on Calcutta, the Kali temple is 350 years old and not 3500 as mentioned, and the artist is Ganesh Pyne, not Pyare.

Cmde Subrata Bose

Type W2C(R), Block 4, Flat 7
Golf Green Urban Complex, Phase IV B,
Uday Shanker Sarani, Calcutta 700 045

We thought, as you did, that naval engineers were plumbers. Not so. Every 'plumber' we checked with assured us he was a plumber — Editor

I got my copy of QD 95 from NA, Canberra, but no subscriber copy. Most of the articles were good, but 5 pages to the Cranes of Sangti. Goodness Gracious Moi... The review of the Indian Mutiny by VAdm Govil was interesting. I was the first Naval Liaison officer to be sent to the Kalyan military camp where the mutineers were held.

Here is some nostalgia: two pictures circa 1950. I would love to hear from those still around.

Cdr Fred Menzies

6 Binya Court, Dandenong 3175,
Melbourne, Victoria,
Australia



A function at the DSOI New Delhi — 1950

I picked up a copy of QD 95 in India House, London. I could not put it down till I reached the last line, making our trip from London to Paris seem like an hour's hop. It made very nostalgic reading, bringing back old scenes. You are doing an admirable service by giving many sea dogs a well rounded picture of what the Navy is all about, and has been over the years. And that too in such a polished fashion. Bravo Zulu.

Mukund B Kunte

137 Uttarakhand
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi 110067

The UK is warming up to VE Day in May; VJ follows in August with a march down Whitehall on 19 Aug, "National Commemoration Day", and we hope to collect a group of WAC(I) to march. Elderly or not, I shall probably be limping there, though none of us in the old uniforms.


If only India would publicise it in all the big cities. Col John Slim "hopes to have at least 10,000 of his Burma Star Association on parade". What interest will the three Service reps from Indian High Commission create? Veterans must be remembered after all the battles fought.

Ms Pauline Thomas (WAC(I)/WRIN)

Flat 33, Servite House,
171 Vennar Road,
London SE26 5HX



Commissioning Party INS Mysore — 1957



LETTERS

I thoroughly enjoyed Vol 8 of Quarterdeck, which Dick Schunker was kind enough to loan me. My compliments on getting it exactly right. Quarterdeck, at least to a land lubber like me, breathes life into the history of the Navy we love.

People will carp — and that too is part of the Service — but I look forward to Vol 9.

General Sunith Rodrigues

81 Defence Colony
Alto De Parvorim
Bardez, Goa 403 521

In my biodata pertaining to the article on the DSSC (QD 95), you have called me the first editor of QD. I write to set the record straight. That privilege belongs to Capt CU Bhasker, who brought out the first edition in 1987 virtually single handedly. I began in 1988 to help him, but he remained the editor for three years, until the pressure of work at the IDSA forced him to reluctantly quit. Many were the times when I was faced with a sticky situation and was able to benefit from his advice. Moreover, he always found time to write a serious book review for QD, apart from taking a deep interest in it every step of the way. If readers have enjoyed QD over the years, they owe it to him.

Mrs Tappi Koppikar

Mirandella
PO Rajpur
Dehradun, 248 009

I attended the 50th anniversary celebrations (of INS Shivaji) on 15 Feb 95. Our plummers do these things well. Babasaheb Purandare's son-et-lumiere on the Battle of Khanderi was spectacular. It crowned the day. My congratulations to the Commanding Officer and officers and senior sailors of that great establishment. The Navy is proud of you. I certainly am.

QD is emerging as a welcome link between native and expatriate IN and RIN officers spread around the world. It is nice to read about them, and from them. We in India appreciate their continued

interest in their old Service.

I would also like to record my debt and gratitude to Roy Fenderlinden and Chandy Kuruvila. I remember Roy for his sense of justice and fair play — virtues at a great premium today. Chandy was the legendary leader for a whole generation of officers, a rare man in so many ways.

VAdm MP Awati

"Pavan"

Vinchurni, PO Nirgudi,
Nr. Phaltan 415523
Dist. Satara, Maharashtra

At the risk of giving the Editorial Board swollen heads, Bravo Zulu. You are getting the mix right. Congratulations for consigning the "printers devils" to the deep blue sea. Somebody has however, taken liberties with Admiral Chatterji's name (Page 29). I see that the familiar blue is back. What a pleasing combination — royal blue and silver.

Once again, QD was a joy to read, but with more substance, it took me awhile to read with pleasure, nostalgia and sadness too (when reading the obituaries). It makes us oldies realise that we are now in the front pews. QD's old and new, are making the rounds of the Defence Colony. Re. the article "Master of the Saw", Eric Lopes was the godfather of the daughter of the late LCdr Charles, now married into the Army, and living in the Colony.

VAdm MR Schunker

"Anchorage"

87 Defence Colony
Alto Parvorim
Bardez, Goa 403521

I have enjoyed reading the QD, and do think you do a wonderful job. However, a few pinpricks — Roy Fenderlinden did not migrate in 1955. He was in Delhi in Dec 65 when I left for Madras, so I would say it was more likely 1966. Balance, prior to coming to India was on loan to the New Zealand navy. He took over as FOCIF as a Rear Admiral. I do not know if he went up in rank later. I served



LETTERS

in Ranjit under him. Perhaps proof reading could be pepped up before one is blitzed.

This year I hit the 80 mark — catching up with the oldies.

Cmde Harold Claudius
2 First Avenue
Harrington Road
Madras 600031

Cmde Claudius died in early June 95 (see Obituaries). He was a regular correspondent, and we will greatly miss his eagle eye for our slips. His last letter to us was dated 21 May. We feature the anecdotes he sent us, elsewhere in the issue — Editor.

I write this after going through the excellent issue of QD 95, could not put it down till I had read it from first to last — including the beautiful photo on

the back cover — a study in aerodynamics.

But frankly, QD is too sweet. It needs some spice too.

RAdm PN Gour
Q 262 Jal Vayu Vihar
Sector 21, NOIDA 201301

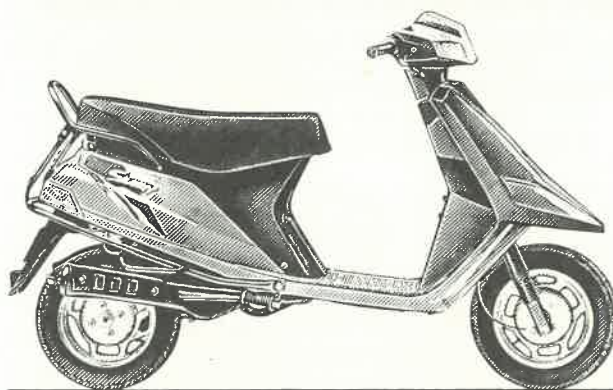
What do readers think? Should we start a "Grouse" column? — Editor

A very much expanded QD with many splendid reminiscences. Congratulations.

Cdr Noel Lobo
623, KP Towers II
Fatima Nagar
Pune 411 013

□□

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SHIPBUILDERS TO THE NATION



Architect of Victory — Admiral S M Nanda Interviewed

QD: You were Chief of Naval Staff and the architect of the Navy's strategies during the war of 1971. What were your priorities?

SMN: The situation in East Pakistan had been brewing for over six months before the war started on 3rd December. During this period a large number of refugees had crossed over to India and the atrocities of the Pakistani Army on the local population had become intolerable. It was obvious that this sort of situation could not continue and in the event of the situation getting out of control Pakistan could wage a war as a last act of desperation. Since independence, the Navy had few opportunities to show its mettle. During the 1965 war, our ships were tied up alongside, and we faced much anger from members of the public. Therefore, when the situation was hotting up I had made up my mind that the Navy must take an active part in the event of a conflict. I had several meetings with my staff and C's-in-C to chalk out a plan of action. My strategy was really very simple. In the East we had to blockade, while in the West I had plans to be on the offensive. The C's-in-C agreed with the plans to blockade the East, but they had serious reservations on carrying the attack to Karachi.

QD: What were your plans for the aircraft carrier Vikrant?

SMN: Vikrant had a crack in its boiler and therefore, was not fit for flying operations. She had been laid up in dry dock in 1965 too. It was essential for the future of naval aviation that the usefulness of the carrier in the event of conflict be highlighted. After several discussions it was decided that the carrier should steam on two boilers and proceed to Cochin. As things hotted up I ordered the carrier out of Cochin to the East coast off Madras. Admiral Krishnan and I held an on the spot assessment of the material state of the boiler. Eventually a decision was taken to clear the ship for flying sorties, while the C-in-C and I were on board. The exercise went off well and there was tremendous jubilation onboard. Thus after a lapse of several months the carrier was back into the business of flying.

QD: Submariners argue that they were not allowed to attack without visual sighting of their targets?

SMN: If you attack neutral merchant shipping in international waters you lose a lot of goodwill and invite condemnation. So the submariners were told to engage only after visual sighting.

QD: In effect you put paid to their ability to attack and they faced grave danger of giving themselves away.

SMN: That is true. Ships and submarines were in communication and we passed on whatever intelligence we could gather of ships in the vicinity. If a foreign ship were attacked it would have invited a terrible backlash. One had to be cautious not to widen the scope of hostilities. What happened during the World War II... ?

QD: America came in only after she was attacked by Japan?

SMN: Precisely. Our war was not at a level that we could take on any country. We had a problem with Pakistan and we would deal with Pakistan. Nobody else. If for the sake of sinking a ship one invited a repercussion that affected the whole country, is that a calculated policy or sheer bravado? In the long run, it would not pay to enlarge the nature and scope of the war. We would have to fight other countries with whom we had no quarrel.

QD: How did you conceive the missile attack on Karachi?

SMN: The strategy was to attack. We had to go on the offensive and we thought long and hard. Do we use the Fleet? C-in-C West pointed out that Pakistan had two airfields near Karachi from where they could fly sorties. There were also 16 inch guns at the entrance to Karachi harbour. They also had their main fleet there, and with air support, they would be a formidable force. The missile boats were then an unknown and untried option. But we decided to use them in an offensive role. The main problem was how to get them within range for a successful firing and back, without loss of either the ships or of precious lives. If they went under their own steam they didn't have the fuel to get back. So we had to think of towing them. Their bollards were useless and could not stand the strain, so we decided to put a wire strop around the entire hull and secure it with rope. When the boats were close to their target, the ropes would be cut and they would be on their own. The boats were then based on the Kathiawar coast, at Diu, Okha and Veraval, to give the impression



they were for harbour defence. A ship remained with each of these boats and they were instructed to R/V at the appointed hour before going into the attack. There was a question of getting picked up by the enemy radar and some ship coming out to investigate. How many ships will come out was the question? Knowing how we have all been trained, only one ship was likely to come out to investigate and we had the advantage of possessing missiles..

It was also planned to keep the Fleet out of the range of Pak aircraft during the day and have the ships advance towards Karachi before sunset. While the fleet ships moved closer and drew their attention, the missile boats would slip through. That is exactly what happened. But frankly, I did expect the Western Fleet to attack somewhere. Maybe not Karachi, but Gwadar, or Pasni on the Makaran coast. To what purpose? After all, in the '65 war, Pakistani ships bombarded Dwarka. All they killed was a cow, but the objective was to raise the morale of ships' companies and demoralise the other side. I didn't want the Fleet to take unnecessary risks without achieving something.

I was keen that when war was declared, our ships should be out of Bombay. By now we anticipated that the war could come at anytime. So Dawson and I went down to Bombay. I had heard there was some disagreement between C-in-C and the Fleet Commander, and I felt it didn't augur well for us. So I addressed the Fleet CO's, and I said, "Look, the situation is poised on a knife's edge. War can break out at any moment, and I want all ships out of harbour immediately. I don't want to hear of any one's problems. Just get out. If you wait for war before you move out, enemy submarines will be waiting for you just outside. The Fleet has to be away. The Eastern Command has already ensured that and here I see ships still in harbour." (The Eastern Fleet was already in the Andamans, while we kept the Vizag communication circuits loaded to give the impression the Fleet was operating just off Vizag. There was total silence from the Andamans.)

"Second, my plans are to go on the offensive. I want each and every CO to know this. In the event of war, we are going to attack Karachi. If anyone has any reservations, I would like him to come and see me or DNO in the Mess. I will have nothing against you. I will merely remove you from your command. We have to have complete faith in our mission."

I must say the boys were really pepped up, very good. I said don't waste any time. I want the ships out at sea.

QD: Admiral Kohli's book says that for a few days from 6 Dec 71 operational command was directly with NHQ.

SMN: I can't recall the exact command and control order for each task force. I must check it out with the official records. Be that as it may, perhaps C-in-C West wished to attack Karachi with large ships, whereas the main attack was to be by missile boats. The Fleet had a different role to play and we did direct them to bombard Gwadar and Pasni on the Makran coast and avoid coming within strike range from air.

QD: Is it true that Khukri was carrying out some equipment trials? Why during the war?

SMN: All nonsense. We had picked up a transmission from a submarine operating in the area, which we passed on to Khukri and Kirpan to investigate. Positions were given. They were on that mission when Khukri was torpedoed around 9 p.m. Reports I got from survivors later, indicated that the chaps had taken off their head sets and were listening to the AIR news broadcast on the SRE. The ship was also carrying out the search on a steady course. Now these two things are not acceptable on an operational sortie. I do accept that if you have been carrying out a search for a long time, you do get tired, but the fact that you are on a straight course in an area where you have been told there is an enemy submarine is suicidal and unacceptable. This was a serious lapse on the part of the ship.

QD: Tell us about the East. Obviously there was a great contrast of style between East and West.

SMN: Yes, there was. Krishnan was a much more aggressive personality. When we had the great controversy over Vikrant, I was still determined to task the ship a war time role, and had to make a couple of trips to Bombay to get her out of Dockyard hands, and out of Bombay. Krish was more than willing to be at my side. He and I went onboard the ship off Madras. We discussed ways and means of using the Vikrant despite the limitation of speed. As confidence built up, we even flew a couple of sorties off her deck. As the first sortie flew off, there was a huge hurrah from the ship's company. The pilots and air maintenance crew were jubilant. When all the aircraft were safely recovered, I said, now go to the Andamans. That is how the carrier took off. I knew from my study of



the charts that waters near the Bangladesh coast were shallow, and a submarine could not operate from there. Vikrant would be safe from submarine attack if she operated from there. One has to take some calculated risks. One cannot say if things go wrong, I'll lose my job. If you don't take risks, you get no results. I was lucky that the risk I took paid off and Vikrant and its air squadrons played a pivotal role in the Bay of Bengal.

QD: Can you give us a "balance sheet" of the war?

SMN: I must admit that there are always some shortcomings. In hindsight everyone feels we could have done more. Coming to the assets, our blockade on the east was total and after two attacks on Karachi we were also effectively blockading west Pakistan. I recall, attaches from various countries coming to ask our permission for their ships to sail in these waters. When the Seventh Fleet headed for the Bay of Bengal, the PM sent for me and asked what we proposed to do. I said Ma'am do you think America wants to declare war on us? If they attack our ships it will be an act of war. The Americans are playing a psychological war on us. We don't have to do anything. I have told my COs if they come across the Seventh

Fleet, their ships are dry, so invite them over for a drink. We have no enmity with the Americans. When we meet a friendly warship at sea, we exchange greetings. But I believe that they are here to evacuate the Pak Army out of Bangladesh. This is something we can prevent. With their deep drafts they cannot enter Chittagong. This is a show of strength and we only have to stand firm.

The British Attache came in one day to say RN ships were being turned back from Cape Town to "evacuate British subjects" from Bangladesh. I said, HM's Govt. is free to do what they wish, but if you take my advice as a friend, don't waste your time coming in. The war will be over by the time the ships arrive, and your nationals will be evacuated by then. You are putting pressure on us, and I would advise you not to do it.

So you see, the war put many pressures on the Navy but it also put us on the world map. It certainly put us on the consciousness of our countrymen and we were all proud to be part of the Navy.

□□

Clausewitz's dictum is oft quoted: "War is the continuation of politics by other means". It is instructive to reverse the quotation: "Politics is the continuation of war by other means". Politics is a form of war, a theatre of power and will. But it is informed also by a horror of war — hence the resort to other means. When politics break down, the alternative is war.

— Aloka Roy in *India Today*

THE 'MUL-MUL' FROM DACCA

Prior to the 1971 war, Vikrant was operating off the east coast. For most of us who sailed from Bombay on a rainy July morning, it was yet another monsoon deployment to Madras and we were looking forward to the traditional mixed hockey match with a girls high school and the special attention one received in the Madras Gymkhana.

We soon realised that this time around it was going to be purely business and no pleasure. We went through a hectic work up which never seemed to end.

Then in September the CNS, Adm SM Nanda came onboard to assess for himself our operational readiness. While walking around the ship he also came to the engine room. B Singh POME was on watch in the Boiler Room. CNS asked him whether he had heard from his family back in Bombay. B Singh had a big grin on his face and said "Yes Sir". CNS wanted to know whether his wife was worried about his prolonged deployment on the east coast, especially because, as the rest of the world knew by then, something was about to happen around East Pakistan. B Singh said, "Meri family tho bahuth khush hai, Saab. Likhthi hai, vapas aate waqt, Dacca se Mul-Mul le ke aana". (My wife is very happy Sir. She writes, bring me the mul-mul of Dacca when you return.)

CNS practically insisted that B Singh should be made a ChME then and there.

Cdr Puncchi



1971

Soldier Talk — An Interview With Field Marshal S H F J Manekshaw

QD: During the time of the 71 war, there were personalities in the War room, such as Adm Nanda and Adm Dawson. Can you recall anything about them in the period leading upto the war, or during the war, which you still remember, or which strikes you as something interesting.

M: I can tell you before the war started. I can't remember the date now — some time in April or something like that. There was a cabinet meeting to which I was summoned. Mrs Gandhi was terribly angry and terribly upset because refugees were pouring into West Bengal, into Assam and into Tripura.

"Look at this — so many are coming in — here is a telegram from the Chief Minister of Assam, a telegram from what are you doing about it?" she said to me.

I said "Nothing. What has it got to do with me?"

She said "Can't you do something? Why don't you do something?"

"What do you want me to do?"

"I want you to march in".

I said "That means war" and she said "I don't mind if it is war".

So I sat down and I said "Have you read the Bible?"

Sardar Swaran Singh said "What has the Bible got to do with it?"

"In the first book, the first chapter, the first paragraph of the Bible, God said, 'Let there be light and there was light' — so you feel that 'Let there be war and there is war'. Are you ready? I certainly am not ready."

Then I said "I will tell you what is happening. It is now end of April. In a few days time, 15–20 days time, the monsoon will break, and in East Pakistan when it rains the rivers become like oceans. If you stand on one side you can't see the other. I would be confined to the roads. The airforce would not be able to support me, and the Pakistanis would thrash me — that's one".

"Secondly, my armoured division is in the Babina area; another division, I can't remember which, is in the Secunderabad area. We are now harvesting. I will require every vehicle, every truck, all the road space, all the railway

space to move my soldiers and you will not be able to move your crops", and I turned to Mr Fakrudin-Ali Ahmed, the Agriculture Minister, and said "if there is a famine in India they will blame you. I won't be there to take the blame".

Then I turned around and said "My armoured division which is supposed to be my strike force has got twelve tanks which are operational out of the whole lot".

YB Chavan asked "Sam, why only twelve?"

I said "Sir, because you are the Finance Minister. I have been asking, pleading for months. You said you have got no money, that's why".

Then I said "Prime Minister, if in 1962, your father had asked me as the Army Chief and not Gen Thapar and your father had said 'Throw the Chinese out', I would have turned around and told him 'Look, these are the problems'. Now I am telling you what the problems are. If you still want me to go ahead, Prime Minister, I guarantee you 100 per cent defeat. Now, you give me your orders".

Then Jagjivan Ram said "Sam, Maan jau na".

I said "I have given my professional view, now the Government must take a decision".

The Prime Minister didn't say anything. She was red in the face and said, "*Achcha, cabinet char baje milenge*".

Everybody walked out. I being the junior-most was the last to leave and I smiled at her.

"Chief, sit down".

So I said "Prime Minister, before you open your mouth, do you want me to send in my resignation on the grounds of mental health, or physical?"

She said, "Oh, sit down Sam. Everything you told me, is it true?"

"Yes. Look, its my job to fight. It is my job to fight to win. Are you ready? I certainly am not ready. Have you internally got everything ready? Internationally have you got everything ready? I don't think so. I know what you want, but I must do it in my own time and I guarantee you 100 per cent success. But, I want to make it quite clear. There must be one commander. I don't mind, I will work under the BSF, under CRPF, under anybody you like. But



I will not have a Soviet telling me what to do and I must have one political master who will give me instructions. I don't want the refugee ministry, home ministry, defence ministry all telling me. Now, make up your mind".

She said, "Alright Sam, nobody will interfere, you will be in command".

"Thank you, I guarantee you accomplishment".

So there is a very thin line between becoming a Field Marshal and being dismissed! It could have happened! So that was one incident I can tell you about and you can put it in your own words.

QD: What about the other two Chiefs. When did they come in?

M: They were not in on the initial meeting, then I had to brief them, I had to tell them about it. It must tell you, quite bluntly, I got the most excellent co-operation from Charles, I didn't get it from Pratap. Pratap had a chip on his shoulder, thought he was an intellectual, etc. But, from his subordinates, I got one hundred per cent cooperation, and the three boys, Dawson, Inder Gill and this air force chap, they worked one hundred per cent and told me the truth every morning. I must say that I didn't get cooperation from Pratap. He couldn't say no — but I didn't get the cooperation. From Charles, I got hundred per cent cooperation. Charles himself was full of fun and full of life. His number two was Jal Cursetji, who told me everything, everything relating to work. So also with Dawson. I got one hundred per cent cooperation. The Navy did a good job of work when they sent the missile boats into Karachi and I remember Charles saying to me "You've got your bloody secret weapon (the Navy), you have got your secret weapon — use the damned thing".

QD: Well then, where did you see the Navy in the scheme of things.

M: We used to meet. I was the Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee, I used to discuss everything with them. What I wanted, what I was going to do. Charles would tell me what he could do and couldn't do, etc., and so would Dawson. In fact those three boys in the ops room, they briefed me more about their capabilities than I got from the head-boys—very good indeed. Absolutely first-class.

What else can I tell you. Oh yes, one other thing. The

Prime Minister, I told her, "Have you prepared the world for this?" You must go abroad. Then I said "I must go to the Soviet Union to get some spares, weapons, etc, which we need".

So, I went off and I got whatever I wanted, though the Soviets were very difficult about giving it. But I got on quite well with the Marshal. I remember I asked him for some tanks. Then he said "If we had them wouldn't we give them to you?" Then our ambassador, Dhar, he was talking to me in Punjabi and saying "*Bahut bada aadmi hai, sambhal ke bat karo*".

I turned around and said "Marshal, am I to understand that all this talk that you have out-stripped America in production is just so much mythology or you don't want to give the tanks to me?" I told him directly in front of everybody.

He turned around and said "This is a political matter. If Madam Gandhi were to write to Comrade Kosygin and say you want so many tanks, you'll get three times that number". So I said "Is that the word of a Soviet Marshal and Defence Minister?" And I took out a letter which I had from Mrs Gandhi and handed it over and said "Marshal I thought I had enough personality to get things on my own, and I didn't think I would have to depend on a woman." I got my stuff.

QD: From whatever you say it is apparent Mrs Gandhi did seem to be a woman with a sense of humour.

M: She had a wonderful sense of humour.

QD: Then why couldn't she take your joke at the end, after the war.

M: It wasn't her fault. She never did doubt me. I have got a letter from her on the subject. It wasn't her. The Defence Minister Jagjeevan Ram, I don't think he liked me.

I was in England when Jagjeevan Ram had this question asked in Parliament. I wrote to her from there. I said, "Prime Minister, I did not say this". I told her the whole story — what had happened.

I said that this little girl who is from some damn thing, she had come to my room, she had eaten my cake and she talked about everything to get the news and she asked me "Why didn't you go to Pakistan?"

I said Mr Jinnah had asked me, but I told him that I was



born in India, I married an Indian girl, what will I do? I am no longer commanding a battalion or something that I go.

Then she said what would have happened if you had gone to Pakistan?

I bent her over and smacked her bottom and said "I would have thrashed you, I would have won and thrashed you". That is what I said but she wrote what she wanted.

Then Jagjeevan Ram asked that question, yes. Then when I came back I asked the Prime Minister, "Look, why didn't you defend me?" She said you know my sons are angry with me "Why did you let down Sam?"!

"But how many people can I defend, Sam, in Parliament?"

QD: In reality, what was your planned time frame, how long did you expect it would take to end the war?"

M: Exactly, as it happened. I got it day by day, hour by hour what I would do and how I would do it. The Prime Minister used to keep on asking me "Sam how long will you take to finish this?"

"Prime Minister, the country is as large as France, it will take me a month, a month and a half".

Then when I finished it in 13 days, she told me "Sam you said it would take longer".

"Yes, Prime Minister, I knew you politicians, if I had said 13 days and I had taken 15 days, you would have wanted to know why"!

QD: Was there any time that you were worried Sir, at any time?

M: There was, there was one day, everything went against us. Your Khukri was sunk, the Air Force lost a lot of planes on the ground, my advance was halted. Gen Jagjit Singh rang me up and said this has happened etc, and I remember going to see the Prime Minister in the morning. I'd go every morning to see her, we'd have coffee together and I'd tell her what had happened - then we'd come out and the whole bloody junta would be there. I'd say bye-bye and get into the car.

That morning I went and she came out, had some coffee and I said "Prime Minister — sorry, I have bad news for you. A ship has been sunk, we have lost so many planes and our advance has been halted".

She said, "Are you worried Sam?"

I said "Yes, I am worried".

Then she said, "OK Sam, but don't let anybody know".

"No, I will not let anyone know".

Then we went out, waved to everybody and I came back.

At about 11'O clock in the morning, everything went according to plan, my advance started. She was in a meeting, I had a direct line and rang up and said "nothing to worry about — everything is going beautifully".

"Thank you", and she put the phone down.

Within five minutes she rang up, "Come over Sam, come over quickly. I want to see you".

I asked her what's the problem.

"I was so worried" she said.

I said, "You think I wasn't terribly worried. But don't worry now, everything is going beautifully". We had a good equation, she and I.

QD: What about after the war?

M: I had taken an oath when I took over, that I would accept nothing from the Government and I told the Prime Minister about this, and also that I am going to command my Army without any interference. Government's policy decisions — Yes. Nothing else

I am going to command my army and you cannot bribe me by saying you will make me an ambassador or you will make me this or that I will not accept it. Now, after the war, they wanted me to go.... "Any embassy you like. Take any embassy you want".

I said, "Thank you very much. Remember my oath". They said, "Why don't you go as a Governor? Why don't you go to Bombay? The Parsis will love it". I said, "I don't want to be a 'Laa Sahab', and my wife will never be a lady, thank you."

As I said to myself, I am commanding over a million men. What the hell, when I joined them what did I want? I wanted to become the adjutant of my battalion.

QD: Are you planning to write your memoirs?

M: No.

QD: Why don't you do that?

M: I will tell you why. If a Field Marshal writes, he must write the truth.

QD: Yes Sir. Why don't you?

M: I was very fortunate. I was the first Indian to be posted to the Military Operations Directorate. It was a British preserve. I was there during the partition. I know exactly what had happened I was there before the partition. If I were to write, I must write the truth and if I wrote the truth, there would be hell to play, an uproar in Parliament, etc. My daughters always say "Father, you are a criminal. You should write. Put it on tape. Don't publish



it now. We'll publish it after you have gone". I said, "Hell what does it matter?"

QD: During the Simla Agreement, you did not have any part to play?

M: They didn't take me because they felt they would be rubbing the Pakistanis noses into the ground, if they took Gen Manekshaw.

We had 93,000 prisoners, we had their land, we had everything but they, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Benazir Bhutto made us fools. Our press went hay-wire because of Benazir Bhutto, who was seventeen years old, very pretty, very nice, etc., they went bl..dy stupid over her.

QD: How about your team — your PSOs during the war?

M: My PSOs, I used to see them everyday. Now, I had a different way of treating my PSOs. As soon as I took over as Chief, I found that when I came to the office, the bl..dy 'In-tray' was full of files — 'For your orders, for your orders'. Bl..dy absurd, I hadn't come to become a 'Babu'. I sent for the stenographer and had typed on each file, "If you can't take a decision at your level, I will find somebody else who can". Sent all the files back. When I got them in, I said, "You are Lt Generals. Take the d..n decisions, but keep me informed". Then the Deputy Chief came along and asked, "Can I go home?" I said "Why are are asking me, you bu..er, Can you go home, you go wherever you d..n well like — you don't have to come and ask me". Imagine a Lt Gen coming and asking me, at 4.30 pm, "Can I go home", "Go if you bl..dy well want to — don't come and ask me — you must know your d..n position". During the war, I kept my PSOs fully informed.

QD: Anybody who was outstanding or who gave you the kind of support you expected.

M: My PSOs were all very loyal to me. But the men who I thought were outstanding — First, during the planning stage, KK Singh, who was my DMO; then, Inder Gill and my Director of Military Intelligence. I had this one thing with them, I said "You must never lie to me, no matter what happens. D..n it, if you have done anything wrong come and tell me and I will put it right. But if you lie to me, you will loose your credibility". But they never did. They were very very good. There was no fear.

I remember, when I — this is a lovely story — I had gone out. Inder Gill was holding the fort and took a decision. I came back late very tired, 9.30 or 10 o'clock at night and Inder said, "Sir I have done this". "Bl..dy fool", I said — I was tired any angry, "d..n it, I can't leave the bl..dy office for a little while or the operation room and you bu..er it up. Go away and do the d..n thing or put it right". I went home and said to myself, "My fault — I go away. The fellow took a decision, and I blow up". I sent him, I can't remember how many, bottles of whiskey and rang him up and said, "Inder, sorry for losing my temper with you", he was holding the phone, "I shall come back to the office at 11 'O clock. You go home and drink with your wife — make love to her". Now I sent the whiskey with my ADC. Inder, a nice chap, with a sense of humour, he went off. Next morning, he comes to me and says "Sir, I have taken another wrong decision". I said "You bu..er, you think you are going to get any more whiskey!" — that was our relationship! □□

(QD thanks Capt Anil Chopra for conducting this interview)

WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH A DRUNKEN SAILOR?

"What shall we do with a drunken sailor"? asked the popular song we roared out as youngsters. And the answer suggested was "Put him in a long boat and let him bail her".

The problem facing the authorities of INS Venduruthy at high noon of a working day in 1973 was more complicated: What shall we do with a trigger happy and aggressive sentry? Whatever the reasons, this DSC sentry had gone berserk. Having inflicted a couple of casualties in the Regulating Office, he established himself on the traffic island at the junction of two major roads, firing happily, swearing to nobody in particular. The XO, Cdr AC Mammen summoned the Gunnery School to deal with the problem; whereupon LCdr Lokendra Kumar accompanied by two GI's arrived on the scene. Armed with nothing but his Parade Commander's baton, he marched head-on towards the sentry, halted and facing him at 50 yards distance, clicked his heels and bawled "Sentry,.... SAAV-DHAN". The sentry reacted instantly, and assumed the classic 'Attention' position — his rifle dropping to his side. "BHOOMI SHASTRA", yelled the intrepid LK, and our man responded, grounding his rifle. The two GI's, on approach course from different points, fell on him and duly took him into custody.

Cmde VK Sharma



Twenty Five Years On — From One Who Lived Through An Extraordinary Year

VAdm M P Awati

Do coming events cast their shadows before them?

Looking back at the events of that momentous and memorable year, Nineteen Hundred and Seventy One, in hindsight, one becomes aware that even as early as January of that year the shadows were discernible. The month opened uneasily and closed with high drama in the air which foreboded ill for the subcontinent. There were enough real and imagined slights between the subcontinental neighbours without the need for a highjacking in the air to complicate the relationship further. Then in March followed the fateful general elections in Pakistan decreed by the military junta. The military dictator General Yahya Khan was soon to regret permitting such 'levity'. Shaikh Mujib-ur-Rahman, the Bengali patriot and leader of the Awami League won with an overwhelming majority. He staked his claim to the Prime Ministership of Pakistan. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was not going to have any nonsense like a Bengali Prime Minister. In league with the army strongman he thwarted Mujib's rightful claim. Mujib was arrested and charged with treason; the East Pakistanis were up in arms. The Pak army overwhelmingly Punjabi and Pathan cracked down on their Bengali compatriots in the east with such ferocity that thousands were killed, and eventually millions fled across the border into India. Nine million refugees came, had to be sheltered and fed, a task which was clearly beyond the resources of the Government of India. On 25 Mar 1971 a Government of Bangladesh (as East Pakistan eventually became) in exile was proclaimed. This gave a political dimension to the crisis and further exacerbated the relations between India and Pakistan. Indira Gandhi made her first crucial decision of that year. The Bengali refugees would have to return to their homes; necessary political conditions would have to be created. World opinion had by April swung round to India's view. The US, however had a problem. It was

engaged in sensitive negotiations with Pakistan to solicit its good offices for an opening with China. The stakes were high for President Nixon and his envoy, Henry Kissinger, strategic considerations demanded a soft pedalling of Pakistani action against its own people in the east. Naturally therefore the US understanding of India's position in the developing situation was coloured by its compulsions. Kissinger now made his famous sortie into China via the Pakistan mountain resort of Murree where he was supposed to be resting and recuperating. Yahya's assistance would be suitably rewarded by Nixon in due course. Indira Gandhi visited Washington and told President Nixon in no uncertain terms what needed doing. India would do it alone, if necessary. Nixon warned her of the consequences to India. She riposted by signing a friendship treaty with the Soviet Union on 09 August 1971. It would remain in force for 20 years. A show down with Pakistan had become inevitable. A story went round that the Prime Minister had urged the Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee, General Sam Manekshaw to move the army into East Pakistan. Sam had told her that he would move but only when he was good and ready. The Prime Minister had wisely left the three Service Chiefs to implement her decision. India was indeed fortunate to have Sam Manekshaw, 'Charles' Nanda and Pratap Lal as the Chiefs of the three services. They assured the closest possible inter-service cooperation in planning and in the conduct of operations, since 1947. Firm political direction and competent military leadership would win the day for India.

In Vishakhapatnam, where I had been the Commanding Officer of INS Kamorta and Captain 'P' 31 PVS, since July 1970, we were lucky to have the almost legendary Nilakantha Krishnan as our boss. Krish was the man destiny had chosen to lead the Navy in the Bay. It was destiny too which had put Mohan Singh Grewal, 'Guru' to his many admirers, as Krishnan's Chief of Staff. Guru's common sense and his moderation, were to become the much needed foil to Krishnan's great energy which would often burst into impetuosity, his antipathy to anyone he categorised a fool or lacking in energy. Woe betide such a person especially if he were commanding a ship.

Working with the extraordinary Commander-in-Chief



and his exceptionally talented Chief of Staff, to chalk out contingency plans for the yet to be constituted Eastern Fleet, I was amazed at the former's perception and strategic understanding. He argued cogently that the only worthwhile station for Pakistan's Ghazi would be off Vishakhapatnam. The ports restricted approaches and its only and extremely narrow entrance would allow the submarine a fair chance of picking off naval targets or even permit a blocking operation. Cochin suffered similar handicaps, but the approaches to Cochin were shallow and fraught with strong tides. Besides Vizag would be the main base for the Naval war in the Bay. Ghazi's task would be

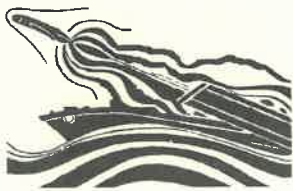
to bottle the Eastern Fleet by mining its entrance and approaches. So what did Krish plan? He planned to 'banish' his fleet to the Andaman Islands and maintain it for as long as necessary by supply ships. In the event the fleet was maintained by Magar, Guldar, and the requisitioned merchant tanker Desh Deep, for a whole month during November/December, first in Port Blair and then in Port Cornwallis, which the C-in-C used as the jumping off point for his offensive against East Pakistan. The Eastern Fleet was formally constituted only in October 1971, it was a masterful stroke delivered by someone who understood the flexibility of naval operations. The enemy was out of reach even as the Ghazi attempted to blockade it in Vishakhapatnam.

RAdm S H Sarma hoisted his flag in INS Vikrant as the first Flag Officer Commanding Eastern Fleet in Oct 71. The Vikrant had been assigned to the Eastern Fleet. Indeed, how best to employ the Vikky had exercised the mind of the Naval Staff. She had, for some time been a crock with a dicey boiler. So rather than keep her in Bombay and be a sitting duck to an aerial attack, she was shunted off to the east to be used by Krishnan as best he could. And did he! She became the core of his offensive strategy against East Pakistan. He restricted the speed and told her Captain to exploit the prevailing wind conditions to launch his Hawks and Alizes to the best advantage. In a masterful display of seamanship and shiphandling Capt Swaraj Prakash did just that and earned a well deserved MVC. His 'Chief', the



In the Andamans awaiting the signal

talented Roy Chowdhary was scarcely out of the engine room or his boiler suit during those critical two weeks. He received the VrC for his untiring zeal and devotion. It was an uplifting experience for those of us who watched the old lady pick up her skirts and run at the urging of her skipper and the ministrations of her 'Chief'. It was an astounding performance for which the ship was awarded her latest battle honours 'East Pakistan — 1971'. With their hands full of their own problems Vikrant's engineers had the time and the energy to attend to a whole crop of technical and maintenance problems of other ships when the Fleet was tucked away in remote Andamans. But for their ingenuity the Kamorta may well have been left out of the play because of a dicey 400 KW generator. The defect arose suddenly because of some broken rubber ferrules on the exhaust valves. There were no spares of this carbon rubber item. We were in a panic. Vicky's Senior Engineer procured some ferrules of the correct size made out of the hard rubber soles of a pair of mountaineering boots he found with one of his officers. They lasted for exactly eighteen days, long enough for the Kamorta to present herself in the action to come. We Indians are past masters at making do, with Heath-Robinson jobs. The Soviets when they heard how their offshore patrol ships had been exploited by the Indian Navy were aghast and I am sure secretly appreciative. Legend has it they rewrote their manuals on the exploitation of their 'Baikas'. The Soviet Navy was learning a thing



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or two about their own ships from the Indian Navy.

As it happened Krishnan's hunch about the Ghazi proved to be absolutely correct. That submarine came to Vizag to bottle up a now empty harbour, around 02 Dec 1971. The old Rajput sailed out early every morning on a patrol of the approaches, plastering the waters with conventional depth charges. No one knows what really happened because none of the Ghazi's crew survived to tell the tale. On the morning of 04 Dec 1971 the Ghazi blew up underwater. The conjecture is that she mined herself in a ham handed effort to stop up the entrance to Vizag harbour. In the midst of the action off Cox's Bazaar, the Fleet received a cryptic message from the C-in-C that a prize awaited us on our own doorstep. The Ghazi became the first casualty of the naval war. Late that evening the Western Fleet aided by two of my Petyas temporarily detached to the west, was to mount the devastating attack on Karachi, which set the harbour on fire with a missile attack and sank the Badr and some smaller units of the Pak Navy off Karachi. That service was to equalise the score by sinking the Khukri off Diu Head on 07 Dec 1971.

The battering of Cox's Bazaar, Chittagong and other harbours of East Pakistan by 300 and 310 Squadrons from the Vikrant continued apace. A blockade of the East Pak coast had been proclaimed on 04 Dec. On 06 Dec India recognized the Government of Bangladesh, which must have pushed the Mukti Bahini to greater effort behind enemy lines. I was detached in the Kamorta on two occasions to escort prizes to Calcutta. Later the transport of more than 92,000 Pak POW's from Chittagong to Calcutta added the final touch to the operations of the Eastern Fleet. The blockade of the coast was so complete that the escaping senior personnel of Pak Services and Government had to steal close to shore along the Arakan Coast towards their sanctuaries, to escape our radar surveillance.

The rapid progress of the Indian forces in the east and the west had alarmed Pakistan's main backer in the west, the United States of America. Fears were being expressed



Post-war 'Bara Khana' in the East

of Pakistan being over run by India. In the Eastern Fleet our apprehensions were confirmed by an intelligence report from the C-in-C alerting the fleet to an impending incursion into the Bay by a U.S. Carrier Task Group centered around the nuclear driven fleet carrier USS Enterprise. There was speculation and much humour on how we should or would receive these guests from the US Pacific fleet, uninvited though they may have been. We would perhaps make a Logreq to the Yanks for coke and candy and return the compliments with a series of curry lunches. Unfortunately such friendly possibilities were nullified by the capitulation of Pak forces in the east at 1600 hrs on 16 Dec 1971. On the following day at 2000 hrs the Government of India announced a unilateral cease fire in the west. The war had ended with a famous victory for Indian arms in which the Indian Navy, for the first time since 1947 played an important role. On 20 Dec 71 Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the one person who had started the chain reaction by his rejection of Mujib-ur-Rahman in March, took over as the President of Pakistan from a disgraced General Yahya Khan. A scarce six years later Bhutto was to fall to another military coup. Thus do people who live by the sword die by it. That though is another story in the history of the new, truncated Pakistan.

Before I conclude this brief memoir of events 25 years ago, I wish to pay a tribute to our air crews led by two intrepid warriors, 'Gigi' Gupta of 300 and Ramsagar of 310. They led sortie after sortie against well defended targets at Cox's Bazaar and Chittagong. They reconnoitred the



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seas around the fleet and they helped to round up merchantmen attempting to run a blockade. They were both decorated. Gupta with the MVC and Ramsagar with the MVC. I recall Ramsagar's Alize returning to 'mother' with bullet holes in its wings and fuselage. The air boys were surely the Indian Navy's magnificent men in their flying machines. My second tribute belongs unquestionably to the Commander-in-Chief Eastern Naval Command, the Late Vice Admiral Neelakantha Krishnan, PVM, DSC, Padma Bhushan. He had inspired the Command from the moment he assumed it on 01 Mar 1971. After that his one aim was to gear the Command for the difficult days ahead which he anticipated very clearly as the temperature in Indo-Pak relations climbed with each passing day. His efforts to strengthen the defences of his main base, his clear vision of how the adversary would deploy, his submarine potential, his plans to tuck away the fleet in far away Andamans, as a counter, ready to be unleashed at the appropriate moment, the detailed planning and careful execution of provisioning that fleet, 800 miles from the main base, the working up of the ships as a fleet under his hooded eye, long before the Eastern Fleet was constituted, his humour and his energy, all belong to a personality of a great seaman and leader. Krish had his eccentricities, some of them at least, deliberately cultivated, but his patriotism and leadership shone through them.

War by the Book

VAdm V E C Barboza

The role, having completed the mission, altered course for Calcutta. I was sitting at the rest along with the Army. In simple terms, the War Book is a sort of check-list of administrative actions the Government must take when war is apprehended, and when it actually occurs. Its Ministries, Department (and the armed forces) have separate War Books, derived from the Master one, covering internal measures as well as action in concert with each other.

When India was transformed from a colony to a sovereign, independent republic, the War Book of the colonial era had to be replaced by one conforming with her new status, responsibilities and governmental structure. So a

fresh 'Union War Book' was produced and, as staff officer (Plans) in NHQ during 1950-52, I was involved in preparing the new Indian Naval War Book. In January 1971, when I took up the appointment of Director of Naval Plans in NHQ, I noticed that these two volumes had remained almost unchanged during the intervening twenty years. However, later in the year, the Government directed that all War Books be reviewed and amended or replaced wherever necessary. The Naval War Book hardly needed any change, but my staff regarded it as format (which followed that of the Union War Book) as unwieldy. They devised a managerially more effective one and we issued a fresh Naval War Book using it.

Simultaneously, I addressed a note to the Ministry of Defence observing that our actions during the period when war was apprehended - called the "Precautionary Stage" - needed more careful consideration. I pointed out that once war was upon us, several special laws and regulations to deal with this national emergency could be brought into force, the cardinal one being the Defence of India Act. But, during the "Precautionary Stage", only the normal peace-time laws and regulations obtained, and a potential aggressor could take advantage of this less restrictive ambience to more easily and thoroughly prepare the field for a surprise attack. I gave examples of our vulnerability in this context and proposed that we examine ways to subtly, discreetly, yet firmly interpret and execute our peace-time laws in a manner sufficient to thwart the design of the potential aggressor during the "Precautionary Stage". The note reached the Defence Secretary (the wise and experienced Shri K. B. Lal, I.C.S.) and he promptly called a meeting of Secretaries of the Government to discuss the problem. The Service Chiefs attended the meeting and, to my surprise, I was invited to it. He explained the issues with his inimitable lucidity and wit, and the Secretaries responded positively to his proposals. In the days that followed we witnessed heartening examples of shrewd, imaginative, bold proposals (and later, action), to achieve what we desired. And the atmosphere of cooperation was never better.

When Pakistan attacked us without warning, the Prime Minister immediately introduced the Defence of India Bill



in Parliament. We expected it to be passed in a few minutes, but that did not quite happen. Members of the opposition pointed out that on previous occasions when the Act was passed to cover a war, it remained in force for several years after hostilities had ended and peace restored, and was even misused during this period. They wanted an assurance that this would not be repeated. An undertaking was given and the Bill was then passed unanimously. The delay in passing it in no way affected our prosecution of the war. But, most remarkably, it demonstrated the well-founded character and quality of our democracy.

The Fine Line

VAdm M K Roy

*"Tweedle Dum, Tweedle Dee,
Fate may thy saviour be."*

Mujibnagar was the headquarters for the Bangladesh Government in exile. They initially operated from Theatre Road in Calcutta. Colonel M A G Osmany, a retired army officer, who was regarded as the father of the East Bengal Regiment was appointed the Commander-in-Chief of the Bangladesh Forces on 14 August 71. Thousands of young men in East Bengal thirsting for revenge, after witnessing the rape of their mothers and sisters answered his call for volunteers to confront the Pakistan army of occupation.

The Border Security Force (BSF) were hard pressed to monitor the porous border which was both a security hazard as also a life line for survival for East Pakistan citizens. The Eastern Army was reinforced to assist the civil and para-military forces in maintaining a modicum of vigil over border crossings. The shooting down of three Pakistan Sabre jets over Indian Territory and the capture of their pilots further escalated the worsening situation, with ten million refugees being deliberately dumped on India's fragile economy. Border violations were frequent and artillery duels not uncommon.

This deteriorating environment on the Eastern Border strengthened Adm Nanda's resolve to see for himself the

security aspects affecting India's riverine borders. An aerial recce was therefore planned in late October 71 starting from Basirhat in West Bengal and proceeding northwards along the river Ichamati to Bangaon and thence skirting Bhagmathi river to Plassey, the historical battlefield where Robert Clive had sealed the fate of India. Perhaps this historic field may have again acquired the same notoriety if the present operation had turned sour.

An army helicopter was assigned for the recce with Lt Gen Arora accompanying CNS. Commander Sammy Samant and I were the other members perhaps more to ensure that the Alouette did not stray across the Pakistan border as the selected route was only about 5 to 10 kms off the international border. All members of the party, other than the two pilots, were in civilian dress to avoid undue attention.



The helo kept below 200 feet and at times landed enroute so that the Commanders could have a quick word with locals and see for themselves the fluid situation on the ground.

The helo, having completed the mission, altered course for Calcutta. I was sitting at the rear along with the Army Commander and saw oil leaking from a pipe leading to the tail rotor. I immediately drew the attention of the pilot who noticing the oil gauge rapidly unwinding, force landed the aircraft on the nearest available dry ground before the chopper lost total power.

Villagers rushed out to see the weird 'whirly bird'. As the only Bengali speaking member of the recce party, I jumped out, not so much to prevent the rushing villagers from being hit by the still turning rotors, but to confirm that the helo had indeed landed on Indian territory. Visions of screaming headlines such as 'Indian Naval Chief captured



in East Pakistan' would have dwarfed Indira Gandhi's world wide appeals to persuade Islamabad to stop the genocide and take back her citizens.

On confirmation that we were on the right side of the border, the villagers were assured that we were high government officials that had been sent by 'Indira didi' to ascertain the quantum of flood relief. The other members then came out of the aircraft. The village headman quickly organized a security cordon to safeguard the aircraft until the replacement spares arrived from base.

Adm Nanda and Lt Gen Arora proceeded towards the main highway which was about 5 kms from the landing spot. Meanwhile the Pradhan procured two bicycles which came as somewhat of a surprise to the top brass, who having spent more than a decade as senior officers with staff cars and Flag Lts, had been denied activity of even opening a car door, let alone cycling and using public transport. Cdr Samant saved the day by cycling away and returning with two cycle rickshaws.

The CNS and the Army Commander climbed into separate rickshaws and we would not have been surprised to see their 'personal flags' being hoisted. But as is well known, 'Charles Nanda remained a very humane and down to earth leader with the common touch.

The motley procession of two 'flag rickshaws', with brass hats in line astern, reached the highway and flagged down a district bus. We had just enough money to negotiate four tickets (standing room only) to the next Block Development Office (BDO) which would hopefully offer the services of a jeep and a telephone. Introducing ourselves as senior government officials from Delhi, we telephoned Fort William in Calcutta who were by then in a panic, as communication with the helo was lost near the East Pakistan border. Delhi had already been informed and the Prime Minister's office alerted. In some ways, their anxiety was not just for the safety of the top brass but also of the recriminations that would follow the

unscheduled and unarmed, low level sortie, too near the Pakistan border, which had violated not only VVIP safety norms but in hindsight, contravened prudence in a volatile environment. But wars are not won by 'Queensbury Rules' or Staff College solutions.

Lt Gen Arora hijacked the BDO's jeep and took the wheel, literally pushing the old *dhoti* clad driver to the adjacent seat. And so we set off towards the river crossing to reach Krishnanagar. The driver kept muttering in Bengali, that his faithful jeep would not survive the aggressive handling of a "Panjabi" driver. And true to his predictions, the jeep broke down after a few kilometers. Now it was the turn of the driver to regain his seat, while the four of us pushed the jeep for another furlong till we were able to stop a lorry carrying huge bales of cotton bound for Patna.

We managed to persuade the Hindi speaking driver to give us a lift to the next town. Adm Nanda sat on top of one cotton bale and Gen Arora on the other. Samant got standing room at a lower level and the Bengali Captain squeezed in between the cleaner and the driver in order to ensure that they did not overshoot their destination.





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The driver, on confirmation that we had been the occupants of the crashed aircraft which was attracting crowds from neighbouring villages, abruptly stopped the lorry. He then took out a can of water from under the seat and insisted that the gentlemen on top of the mountains of cotton bales drink it, 'cholera or no cholera', as the sun was beating down on them. Thereafter he drove at a breakneck speed which was far more alarming than the forced landing. We were unceremoniously off-loaded as the approach to the town, as the route to the river through the town was too narrow for the lorry. Back to cycle rickshaws, but this time with two in each rickshaw. We reached the river at about 1430. Our progress was hampered by several pairs of cycles with plants tied between them carrying corpses, mostly of women dressed in their wedding saris to be consigned to the river. We were told that they were mostly cholera cases and there was neither the time nor the means to cremate or bury the scores of victims.

His first-hand view of the human tragedy steeled Adm Nanda's resolve to inflict maximum damage on the enemy war machine. In a way this resolve translated itself in the spectacular missile attacks on Karachi and the blockade in the Bay resulting in the capture of Adm Shariff, the former Pakistan Fleet Commander and the surrender of 92,000 soldiers.

On reaching the river, we located a large sized sail boat with the old maji (boatman) having lunch. On being asked if he could take us across for which he would be handsomely rewarded, he replied that his oarsman had gone to a funeral. So we volunteered to be his oarsmen, which offer he could hardly refuse in spite of his misgivings as by then we had commandeered the boat. The three officers with the CNS as stroke crossed the wide river, which was in spate as also filled with floating bodies, which soon made us regain our 'sea legs' after having been on the road for nearly five hours.

On the Krishnanagar side of the river, a resplendent convoy of army jeeps, outriders and military police watched the huffing and puffing oarsmen who brought the craft alongside rather professionally, keeping afloat the honour of the Navy. They informed the Army Commander that Delhi was relieved at our 'rescue' as they felt that CNS and

the Army Commander were both up to some 'risky' misadventure.

We were bundled in the 'lead jeep' with Gen Arora again at the wheel and escorted by pilot jeeps and outriders. We speeded off to reach Fort William fairly late. The reception in Calcutta was one of relief as the 'recce' on civilian clothes had been kept completely under wraps which assisted in the manufacture of wild rumours. We left the Army commander to do the explaining and disappeared for a hot bath in time for a reception by NOIC Calcutta where the naval community were expectantly waiting to hear from CNS of his hair-raising escapade. They were not disappointed.

Diving for Mukti

Cdr George Martin

was appointed as the first Asst. Director (Diving) at Naval Headquarters in September, 1970. Building up the Infant Diving Cadre was my top priority. It was an uphill task. Getting government sanction was difficult but separation from the TIAS Branch proved more daunting. I am happy that a beginning was made then which in due course fructified after the 1971 war.

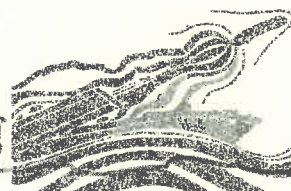
The military crackdown which followed the turmoil of riots in East Pakistan, forced exodus of over nine million refugees into West Bengal. Among these there were students who were ready to fight with help from India. Training camps were set up along the border and nearly fifty thousand Mukti Bahini were trained by our Army in guerrilla warfare and inducted into East Bengal. The sole aim of the Mukti Bahini operations was to create conditions for a political settlement satisfying Bengali aspirations and enabling the refugees to return as India could ill afford to look after them.

In April, 1971, four Pak submariners of Bengali origin defected and sought the Indian Navy's help in their freedom struggle. A Naval Commando Camp was set up at Plassey, close to the border along the banks of river Bhagirathi, under my charge. For logistics we were dependent on the Army. DNI planned and coordinated with the Army at headquarters level and Cdr. MN. Samant, at command level.



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In due course more than 300 volunteers joined the camp. Highly motivated and eager to learn, they were put through rigorous training. Physical exercise, endurance swimming, unarmed combat, small arms firing, handling high explosives and night navigation formed the basic training. Selected volunteers were then put through advanced training with live mines under realistic conditions, as in Operation Awkward.

Unlike the student volunteers, the four submariners were very ambitious. They declared the camp as their Naval Headquarters. There was a tussle for the post of CNS. Finally, pending liberation, they agreed on a compromise. Thus, I had the rare privilege of becoming the first CNS of Bangladesh, albeit Acting, Temporary and Unpaid.

Rice, dal and a pinch of salt, the standard refugee ration, was our daily fare. Everyone was losing weight. Extra rations were then sanctioned. But Hallal vs Jhatka became an issue between the trainee commandoes and the camp

staff. As a compromise, the commandoes were provided with live stock while the staff settled for fresh meat.

At the peak of the monsoons the river Bhagirati was in spate. The camp was shifted within the precinct of the IB at Blassey for about a month during which period our routine was partly disrupted. When the floods receded we shifted back to the original site and resumed training.

Just before the Naval Commandos were ready for operations, Adm Nanda, CNS visited our camp along with Gen Arora, GOC-in-C Eastern Command. It was to our credit that at the end of the inspection, Gen Arora paid a rich compliment declaring that the Naval camp was the best among all the Mukti Bahini camps under his command.

During mid August, selected naval commandoes armed with small arms, high explosives and mines were launched to carry out attacks on designated targets viz gun boats, ships in harbour, bridges, power stations etc. with the sole aim of denying the necessary infrastructure to the enemy.

It was gratifying to know that they invariably returned with a high rate of success with hardly any loss of lives. Of course they enjoyed full support from the local population. Some did encounter the Razakaars (Mohajirs) who supported the Pak Army, but managed to neutralise them in unarmed combat. The operations continued till about end October.

Of the 11 Samir Das and V P Kapil, highly motivated and committed, were available to join the camp during the first few months. Samir, unfortunately, died in a road accident while launching commandoes off Chittagong. It was a great loss. Almost simultaneously, Kapil fell ill and was assigned staff duties under Cdr Samant at Calcutta. To share my burden, I sought the services of Lt B S Thakur. Though his marriage was fixed, he willingly postponed it. He was a great asset to the camp.

Due to censorship, I was not in touch with my family. There were rumours in my hometown, Mangalore, that I was either killed or missing. Prayers were offered for my soul or safe return as the case may be. Just to reassure my wife, I was flown to New Delhi for a short visit. She had





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become very thin but all the more attractive.

On my return to the camp we continued commando raids but with less resistance from the enemy. It appeared that their days were numbered. However we did have our share of problems from enemy agents. They tried to infiltrate our camp as Mukti Bahini volunteers. They were invariably nabbed and handed over to the Army for interrogation.

By November the Naval Mukti Bahini had denied the enemy almost every facility necessary for any meaningful operation. A handful of Naval commandoes had inflicted more damage to enemy targets which were not accessible to the land borne Mukti Bahini. It was time to wind up our camp and induct the commandoes to operate on their own. By end November, the camp was wound up and we returned to Calcutta.

On 3rd December, Pakistan declared war on India. It appeared to be a desperate act. At Calcutta, preparations were on for landing a Gorkha Infantry Battalion off Cox's Bazaar. Cdrs R P Bhalla and V F Rebello requisitioned the services of my team of four, for recce prior to the landing. We boarded Vishva Vijay along with the Gorkhas. We had the first casualty while boarding, when an AMC Major stumbled on the gangway and fell into water. I picked him up from a depth of 40 feet and tried to revive him, but it was too late.

On 14th December, my team was shifted to INS Brahmaputra. At night we were landed ashore. Suitable landing place was surveyed and the necessary information was conveyed through the landing officer. Landing was scheduled at dawn. At the time fixed, to our surprise we found the landing craft Gharial and Guldar approaching very much south of the beach surveyed. By the time they reached the correct location, the tide had changed. Still it was not too late. However when the Gorkhas began to land, being short in stature and heavily equipped, they began to drown one after the other. Landing was halted temporarily until we recovered all the five who had drowned. We managed to revive two. A rope was then passed from the craft to shore and thereafter the soldiers landed safely holding on to the rope.

After the landing, when Gharial withdrew, she sprung a leak. Under water inspection revealed that her stern post was damaged due to her sitting on her stern anchor. The leak was arrested by shoring.

When the war ended, Pak Army Commander Gen. Niazi sought 24 hours's time to surrender. The request was conceded. This period was however used by Pakistan to spirit away bullion and hard currency to West Pakistan. They burnt currency notes, mined the Chittagong harbour approaches and dumped weapons and coins into rivers. They also planned to eliminate nearly 240 high ranking Bangladeshi specialists. Fortunately due to prior intelligence, the intended victims went into hiding.

After the surrender, one of my tasks was to defuse some of the Chinese mines. We also recovered weapons and coins dumped in the river. I picked up four bags of coins from the river only to be dumped back as these Pak coins were no longer legal tender.

After nearly seven months, on successful completion of all the tasks assigned to us, I dispersed my team. I then left Chittagong in an SCI vessel, escorting the Pak POWs to Calcutta.

Though twenty-five years have elapsed since the 1971 War, the memories of my experiences with the Mukti venture are still fresh. I am happy that I was able to channelise my potential into acquiring expertise in and under water which enabled me to contribute towards a worth while cause.

First Encounter

RAdm P K Chakravorty

"Six hearts. Six Notrumps. Suddenlly there was a thunder struck silence in the card-room. I was literally struck dumb trying to fathom the reason behind such sudden upsurge in courage of my bridge partner, Lieutenant J V Natu. Sure enough we lost the rubber; but before that we managed to create enough nervousness in our rivals to win the next rubber easily. That is the way of 'Nat', a couldn't-care-less attitude and willingness to enjoy fun in life.

We were neighbours in INS Shivaji and many evenings



were spent in discussing pros and cons of heightened tension between Pakistan and India over unchecked human exodus from erstwhile East Pakistan. The inevitable had to happen, and Pakistan declared war on India. All of us were put on special security duties on a watch system; the Base went into "darken ship" and the practice firing range was humming with activity. My wife was expecting our first baby and I had to work out various options for her safe delivery. Then one day we were told that 'Nat' has to proceed to an unknown destination in East Pakistan as part of a Naval contingent; and my name was on the wait list, with instruction to stand by for further orders.

At the end of a prolonged and hazardous journey through jungle and riverine terrain, Nat found himself right in the middle of the main thrust area very close to Chalna, a major port of war activities of the Pak armed forces in the East. The risk to life was omnipresent; the Naval Detachment had instructions not to communicate with the rear Link under any circumstance other than dire emergency. Dry ration in limited quantity was provided for subsistence, since they could not run the risk of contacting the local village folks. The object of the mission was to disrupt the water transport system carrying troops and stores for Pak forces. Locally made Limpet mines proved a grand success and lit the panic fuse in the Pak defence.

On the tenth day, the Naval Detachment was celebrating the previous night success of sinking an enemy ammo barge close to the water front in a concealed drift boat, when suddenly the distant drone of approaching aircraft shook them. Even before they could rush for the nearest wooded cover a little distance away, there appeared a squadron of IAF Gnats, in low altitude attack formation. Rat-a-tat. The tracer bullets came from the muzzles of the Gnats and ripped through every thing in its path. Bits of the boat went flying all over; some one was groaning in pain and others went limp with spattered blood covering the bodies. Nat was almost at the point of death with gushing wounds all over the body from splinters. As he looked up, he saw the second wave of approaching Gnats. There was no time to think, no time to count the dead and the living.

Run, run boy; and dive into the turbulent water of the river.

Limpet mine. Six Notrumps. The mind is semiconscious and body drifting down the river. A back flip and gentle movement of hands; the minutes turned into hours and finally hands touched the hard soil. Nat reached the far side of the river bank and literally crawled to safety struggling for life. Through hazy vision he located a village near by. Body refusing to obey the command of the mind. With determined efforts he dragged his feet towards the village and collapsed. Before losing consciousness he was aware that he had reached the door step of the first village hut.

The message travelled quickly to the Khulna Garrison and soon he was picket up the Pak Army. A hurried make shift operation by a Major from their Army Medical Corp., and three days of unconsciousness found Nat convalescing from his massive injuries behind the prison bars of Khulna Central Prison. Next day he was joined by two Indian Army Officers as POWs.

We heard the news of their capture over the BBC news service after three days. A few more joined the trio in the next few days. Pak Intelligence built up psychological pressure on them through long hours of questioning and propaganda. Days passed by and finally one day, after almost two and half months, the Indian army marched into Khulna, demolishing enemy resistance and released the prisoners.

Nat was flown to the Barrackpore M H Calcutta for an emergency operation to stop his wounds from going septic. Three hours of operating time and ten bottles of blood later, the struggling doctors removed nine pieces of embedded splinters from his body. My wife, who was in Calcutta after her delivery, especially visited the hospital to meet Nat. At first sight she could hardly recognise the skeleton lying in the hospital bed, till a glimmer of a smile appeared on the face. Dear Nat had returned to life. I met Nat after a year; by then he had fully recovered his good health and buoyant spirit. Nat sought voluntary retirement from the Navy a few years back to start his own little business in Pune. Till today he carries the remaining three bits of splinters in his body, a reminder of that ghastly encounter.



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'Plumming' the Vikrant

VAdm B.R. Chowdhury

In December 1970 I was appointed as the Engineer Officer of Vikrant. I loved Vikrant but I loathed the idea of completing my last seetime in the dry dock, in dockyard hands because that was the fate of the ship when I joined. The main task in hand was to change the Boiler drums which had developed a crack and were declared unsafe for operation. Of the four boilers, one was totally damaged and dismantled. The remaining three had developed extensive cracks (confirmed by Radiography by BARC) but could still be steamed under controlled conditions in an emergency. The deployment of Vikrant in case of hostilities became a matter of serious concern. The majority of the Naval Staff were willing to accept the high powered technical committee recommendation not to commit Vikrant to battle. Bombay being too close to West Pakistan, a possible alternative advocated was to keep Vikrant at Cochin. However, the Chief of the Naval Staff (Adm S M

Nanda) and the Flag Officer, Commanding in Chief, Eastern Naval Command (late VAdm N. Krishnan), were reluctant to accept the idea of hiding Vikrant.

In order to steam Vikrant to Cochin, the steam system and machinery modifications had to be executed. Having accomplished all these changes and initial trials, Vikrant sailed for Cochin sometime in May 1971. The news that the carrier was not a lame duck and the C-in-C (East) always willing to take a calculated risk, prompted Naval Headquarters (prodged by the CNS) to assign Vikrant to the Eastern Command. Meanwhile, Captain Swaraj Prakash (later VAdm) took over command of Vikrant with the mandate to put the carrier through all stringent flying trials before her role in the ensuing battle could be decided. The Vikrant's flying trials off Madras were a unqualified success. Adm Krishnan flying his flag on board sent the 'green signal' to Naval Headquarters declaring Vikrant operationally ready to participate in any future conflict. The Chief of the Naval Staff visited Vikrant and congratulated the ship wishing her God speed and pleasant hunting at sea.

The period between August and December 1971 was



Vikrant's Engineering Department





mostly spent at sea off Port Blair, Port Cornwallis, Madras and Vizag. Since leaving Bombay in May 1971, the ship's maintenance was done entirely by the ship's staff. Morale was high. With no family ashore to look after and therefore no distraction, all departments happily worked day and night as necessary to prepare the ship for war. I recollect that five days before we sailed from Port Cornwallis for Chittagong, the officers and sailors had time to indulge in swimming and other beach activities having ensured that Vikrant was ready for war. This was possible because of the unique leadership and interdependence which spontaneously developed under a competent, wise and humane command and the heads of the department. How nice to see that leadership silently and naturally going down to the ranks in one strong chain. All these manifested in the ship in the form of excellent watch keeping, as if some silent dictat had been given to every man to do his duty.

In the early dawn on 4th December 1971, Vikrant was about ninety nautical miles off Chittagong when the first sortie of Hawks and Alizes was launched to bomb Chittagong. It was a perfect forty five second interval launch just like thousands of such sorties the ship had done before. The atmosphere on board was generally relaxed despite the realisation of the possible presence of an enemy submarine in the area, and the U.S. 7th fleet about 500 nautical miles south of Vikrant. An hour later, the aircraft started returning to "mother" and everybody on board was delighted to hear the broadcast 'No Casualty'. I was on the Bridge with the Captain when I noticed the FDED (Cmde S Soota) rushing towards the after Lift. I at once noticed that after the main sortie was received on board, somebody had operated the after Lift and it had got stuck as one of the keeps would not retract. We still had two Hawks in the air. It was an emergency. Realising that hydraulic retraction after eliminating the fault will be time consuming (the aircraft had less than 5 minutes fuel left), we decided to use a 16 pound hammer to blunt the note of the stuck keep. We fought the rest of the war with eleven keeps.

There were numerous such close calls during the next ten days but all of them were safely handled by an

experienced and alert ship's crew. I will narrate one such incident where we averted the total flooding of the forward machinery space which would have crippled the ship in enemy waters. One of the ship's turbo generators was suffering from low vacuum and we knew the reason. The condenser needed cleaning. In peace time one would not dream of opening the condenser at sea while steaming. The inlet and outlet valves (eight per condenser) are about 20 ft. below the sea level and the pipes are about 12"/14" diameter. All the valves were remote operated by rod gearing. Again, I was on the Bridge when the Senior Engineer (VAdm Bharat Bhushan) telephoned me to come to the forward machinery space. I was a bit surprised because Bharat Bhushan never asked for my help to tackle any emergency. (He was also an Ex-Vikranti senior watch keeper). On coming down the ladder, I noticed that water was rushing above Bilge plate level and two persons were frantically standing on the top plate of the TG suction filter wedged between a pipe above and the filter top below. I realised what had happened. Obviously one of the valves was not fully shut and the force of water was pushing the plate which was loosened for cleaning the filter before opening the condenser door. The 1000 Ton pump in the machinery space saved us that day because never before I have seen this pump tested under such operational emergency situation, without which we would have lost the forward machinery space with terrible consequences. I was proud of my men, who during the past six months prior to hostilities meticulously serviced all on board equipment.

After twelve days Vikrant returned to Paradip to take fuel and other essential stores. We took this opportunity to completely strip and rebuild the Catapult including cable gear. Such was the competence and confidence of the ship's crew.

After 14 days the historic surrender of Pakistan's armed forces in Bangladesh took place and that meant our task to enforce a naval blockade was successfully completed. I flew over Chittagong in one of ship's helicopter to see what havoc our aircraft had caused to the port. It was incredible. Ships were still burning, the 'Karnaphuli' river was still dark with furnace fuel oil.

I saw thousands of Burkha clad ladies loitering in the



streets of Chittagong. When questioned I was informed that nobody could come out of the house during the past ten months for fear of molestation by Pakistan's Army personnel. Now that they were free from such menace, they could once more move around in their own town.

We sailed back to Bombay with brief halts at Madras and Cochin without boiler explosion! I believe that the urge to become operational to meet the challenge of fighting a war motivated us. Vikrant became the most decorated unit in this war — two MVCs, eight VrCs and scores of Nau Sena Medals.

The Eastern Fleet

VAdm S H Sarma

The role of the Eastern Fleet was spelt out in line with the oldest and most traditional role of any navy, viz. blockade and contraband control, with long term effects on enemy maritime capability. Our task was to prevent the ingress of any vital supplies to East Pakistan, to prevent any personnel and troops leaving the country, to destroy enemy naval and air potential, and port facilities, and in a nutshell, make the enemy's navy and merchant ships impotent, or confined to the harbour.

The distance from Paradip on our East coast to Cox's Bazaar is some 800 miles, a very large sea area to be covered by the small number of ships that would be available to the Eastern Fleet. This is where the foresight and sagacity of the then CNS, Adm S M Nanda came into play. He placed our aircraft carrier Vikrant as the flag ship of the Eastern Fleet. This ship was the Queen of our fleet and her strike and reconnaissance aircraft were able to adequately carry out the tasks assigned to us.

Since our intelligence had information that 16 Sabre jets of the Pak airforce were waiting at Dhaka airport, with the specific task of attacking the Vikrant, I received orders both from NHQ and the C-in-C, VAdm N Krishnan, that I was not to approach the enemy coast to less than 100 miles. Now, since our Sea Hawk's range was just about that, and they were our strike aircraft, carrying out these orders would have been the equivalent of a boxer staying

in his own corner and hitting out, encountering nothing. I discussed this with the Captain of the Vikrant and we decided to operate at about 55 miles from the enemy coast, in the central area of the semicircular coast of the northern Bay of Bengal. This gave us the flexibility of attacking in any direction we wished. We redispersed our escorts closer and tighter, and operated. As a result instead of the original five air sorties we were to launch against the enemy, some in co-ordination with the IAF, we carried out 93 sorties during the war.

The Eastern Fleet was more a task force than a fleet, assembled for a specific task, a short time before we expected hostilities to erupt. It consisted of the Vikrant, Brahmaputra, Beas, Kamorta, Kavarati, Rajput, Magar, Gharial, Guldar and Deshdeep a requisitioned tanker. The port facilities at Port Blair for fuel, water and machinery repair were meagre. We improvised by carrying a number of ships machinery spares and some dockyard personnel to attend to emergency needs for the expected duration. This was indeed a very useful measure.

It is relevant to record that the fleet left Visakhapatnam in early Nov 71, and did not return to Base till after the end of the war. I myself transferred ashore to Chittagong on 18 Dec 71, for a month, with a view to repair the damage that our aircraft had inflicted on the Chittagong Port, as per Government orders.

As there was no fuelling facility at Port Blair, the Magar (LST) was to bring fuel from Visakhapatnam for her. The Vikrant had to anchor in the outer harbour at Port Blair and the Magar could only go alongside the aircraft carrier, with the port water barge acting as fender. Bad weather however put paid to this arrangement. While we exercised, rested and waited for 'D' day, the Vikrant was getting progressively short of fuel.

We were lying at anchor at Port Cornwallis. One morning, on a sudden impulse I ordered a helicopter from Vikrant to take me to Port Blair. About 0700 hrs, as we were approaching the harbour, I saw the Andaman Administration department LCT of second world war vintage. I requested the authorities to sail the LCT to Port Cornwallis, in the hope that she might make a good pontoon on Vikrant enabling the Magar to go alongside and transfer fuel. Capt Prakash (later VAdm and C-in-C East),



East), after careful inspection, came in beaming to report that the LCT would be a good catamaran between Vikrant and Magar.

As events proved, this was the last replenishment for the carrier before going into action, and the most crucial. The last four days of operations, enabled by this extra fuel, enabled our Hawks and Alizes to inflict the maximum damage on the enemy ships and bases.

Was it Providence that guided me to fly to Port Blair that morning to spot the LCT entering harbour?

On 01 Dec 1971, I received orders to sail Northward with the fleet. It was a good omen. It was on my birthday.

At 1100 hrs on 4 Dec the Vikrant flew her first sortie against the enemy. Serious damage to the airfield at Cox's Bazaar and the large concentration of military vehicles near by, was claimed. Cox's Bazaar airfield was not one of the strongest built. Nevertheless, the twenty feet wide craters, half filled with water would render it unusable for a long time to come.

Judging that the Pakistanis would anticipate our next attack at dusk, I felt it would do us no harm in carrying out an attack against Chittagong the same afternoon. During this sortie the pilots reported damaging the airfields, sinking two gun boats and damaging six Pak merchant ships in the outer harbour, two of them heavily. They encountered heavy A/A fire, and one aircraft received a bullet hit in the cockpit but all aircraft returned to the carrier safely.

It was during this interval, I think, between the raids on Cox's Bazaar and Chittagong, that Kamorta picked up a submarine contact; about 100 miles south-west of Chittagong. She was immediately detached to carry out an attack, later the Brahmaputra and Beas joining the hunt. The search and attack was carried out for over ninety minutes. During this time Kamorta reported holding firm contact. The Beas reported the submarine attempting to surface, and her own 4.5 inch gun shells exploding on the conning tower of the submarine. Both the Commanding Officer of the Brahmaputra and Beas, experienced officers, reported torpedo tracks passing by their ships. They were lucky not to be hit. Several sailors of the Brahmaputra later confirmed sighting the torpedo track.

The Vikrant had been ordered by me to get clear of the submarine area, as this was no place for an aircraft carrier

to be in. So I was able to keep track of events only from the reports of ships taking part in the action. After some ninety minutes, all ships, including the Vikrant heard the transmissions "*Bachao* (save me) *Bachao*." Thereafter submarine contact was lost. All this was naturally being reported to the C-in-C at Visakhapatnam.

In the navy, we are very conservative about claiming submarine 'Kills'. Only human flotsam or some such definite evidence makes us claim a kill. My distinct impression at the time, supported by statements of senior officers and sailors was that we were in definite contact with a submarine and that we lost contact when she was finally disabled and sank to the bottom. The position was close to the line of soundings on the chart at the limit of the continental shelf, beyond which sea depth increased steeply, and it is possible that the submarine went down into these deeper waters. My impression was strengthened by the fact that on the afternoon of 7 Dec, when our forces were some distance away from this position, five ships of about 1000 tons each, were all clustered round the position, as if they were attempting a search and rescue operation. The ships, on being intercepted by us, tried to run, but fell into line after Vikrant's Sea Hawks menaced them. One ship, making off at high speed towards Malaysia, closed us only after receiving a strafing attack from the Sea Hawk.

This was a nice rich haul, and forming them in line ahead I ordered INS Beas to escort them to Calcutta. Later analysis indicated that the other three submarines of Pakistan were not deployed in the Bay of Bengal. So it remains a conjecture as to which country this Submarine belonged to, what her role was (only passive watching and reporting) and whether the words '*Bachao, Bachao*' intercepted by Vikrant and other ships, were uttered by Pakistani personnel, who could possibly have been carried in the submarine for liaison and interpreter duties and who in their final hour, lapsed into their mother tongue. To many of us, this remains a continuing mystery.

At the time, we had not received the report about the sinking of the Pakistani submarine Ghazi, however speed and distance and other considerations indicated that this could not be the Ghazi we had attacked.

On the 10th December, we received intelligence that



the US 7th Fleet was entering the Bay of Bengal through the Malacca Straits.

The general impression at the time was that the US government had sent this fleet to the Bay of Bengal for possible evacuation of the Pakistan army from East Pakistan. I had different views. With the type of intelligence bound to have been available to the USA from satellite and other sources, the fleet had arrived too late on the scene to change or affect the course of events in East Pakistan. I was convinced that the US Government would not lightly enter into hostilities with India, from which their ally would gain little. These and other thoughts as to what my orders from NHQ would be, were playing in my mind, with this mighty fleet no more than just two hours flying time from our fleet. Our submarine INS Khanderi was on patrol southward of our area of operations, under direct orders from C-in-C at Visakhapatnam. Anything was possible in war. I had not personally talked to our pilots, but some thoughts like sending in all our strike aircraft at one go, with the Enterprise as their prime target was a possibility. Not all of them would have got through, but the few that did might do a repeat of the Kamikaze attacks on the British battle cruisers Prince of Wales and Repulse. No ship is unsinkable. I was full of confidence that if we asked for volunteers from our pilots, it would have been difficult to keep any one back. These and other thoughts constantly recurred to me. I discussed them with no one.

At this time the Captain of Beas asked me over the voice net what our action should be, if we encountered units of the 7th Fleet. Masking my thoughts, I replied "wish them Bangla Desh Time".

Fortunately the US 7th fleet did not interfere with our operations, and withdrew.

This was the first occasion, in 1971, when our Navy took a serious and significant part in the war against Pakistan. The Eastern Fleet certainly lived up to the tasks set to it. Our initial orders envisaged some five sorties from the Vikrant. We ended by carrying out 93 of them. The damage we inflicted on enemy ports and ships far exceeded expectations. Defence correspondents everywhere extolled the effective blockade, contraband control and bombardments carried out by us.

The Crucial Difference

Capt C M Vyas

The reaction of officers under duress in war situations are very revealing of their calibre. Rising to higher rank is one thing, and doing the right thing in war is quite another.

The Eastern Fleet sailed from Madras in the third week of November, 1971 for Port Blair. This was the move to take the Vikrant away from any submarine threat, as it was appreciated that PNS Ghazi could inflict damage on Vikrant while entering or leaving harbour. Vikrant also carried out her work up off Vizag along with her supporting units from the Eastern Fleet. So the passage between Madras and Vizag always had the possibility of a submarine attack.

At Port Blair the Vikrant was expected to anchor in the inner harbour in complete safety. This was not possible as no tug was available to assist her to manoeuvre in very restricted waters. So she took up anchorage in the outer harbour.

After two days of this situation, I drafted a top secret signal requesting FOC-IN-C East to simulate presence of the Vikrant off Vizag, by detailing a ship to retransmit Vikrant's messages, available with Vizag signal centre from the last work up off Vizag. After waiting for more than three hours, at about midnight he approved the signal. This led to the Rajput coming out to sea off Vizag, with the resultant bagging of Ghazi. This signal gave us so much confidence that we allowed the Vikrant to execute flying exercises off Port Blair just before we sailed to take up battle stations. The Ghazi was sunk off Vizag on the night of 4/5 December, 1971.

Vikrant now did a disappearing act, and after 7 days in Port Cornwallis, we decided to carry out flying exercises off Port Blair with minimum escorts. Kamorta was left behind in Port Cornwallis to carry out self repairs. Then we received instructions to take up battle stations and commence operations. As we had maintained wireless silence since we left Madras, I winched down to each of the ships at Port Cornwallis from a helicopter to hand over orders.



The Captain of the Kamorta who personally unhooked me looked agonised. His first question was "Am I sailing with you all?" I asked, "Does your material state indicate that you can take part in the Operation?"

He pleaded that he had not joined the Navy to come up to this point and not take part in operations. I asked him whether his ship would be able to take part in operations for 24 hours without a break down when action began?

He had a meeting with his officers in my presence and he motivated them so much that they all assured him that they would sail the ship and stay in the operational area with the Vikrant as long as possible. I got an assurance from him that he would at least be in company of the Vikrant when aircraft were flown off for the air strike on Chittagong. On getting this assurance, I handed him the order for sailing. Relieved, he smiled and gave me a hug and stood taller than I saw him when I had landed on the Kamorta.

When the Fleet reached the point from where we were to launch air strikes on Chittagong, almost every escort of Vikrant got a sonar contact of a possible submarine. This being the primary threat, the escorts were detached to help each other to handle this threat. The Vikrant and the Kavarati which did not have a sonar dome, continued toward the launching point and into more shallow water to escape from the submarine threat. The Vikrant had no screen as a carrier is supposed to have, just one life guard ship which could also provide anti-aircraft protection. We can plan well, in proper DSSC style, but the kind of situation that develops, is a very different matter. The Admiral issued orders to the Vikrant to launch the air strike on Chittagong and I carried the message to the Flag Captain. He immediately gathered together his heads of department and discussed the matter at hand.

Each officer advised the Flag Captain against carrying out air strikes. They all said in almost one voice that no anti-submarine or anti-aircraft protection was available and such operations were never undertaken, as per the book. I heard all this as I stood in the corner of the bridge. The success or failure of the Eastern Fleet was at stake. I could not have disagreed with the advice given, except that in war only leadership of highest quality ensures success. A leader is supposed to face such a situation.

After a thoughtful silence the Flag Captain said, "Like

bloody hell. I did not join the Navy to come to this point—and turn back without attacking. Launch the strike."

Those were the sweetest words I ever heard. Here was leadership of very exceptional quality. I was thrilled. I almost floated down to report to the Admiral. Even today I feel the joy of having had the privilege and being associated with such a class of leadership.

The Brahmaputra was anchored about 28 NM South - South West of Chittagong awaiting return of the Vikrant and her escorts after fueling.

It was being debated as to what we should do when surrender at Dacca was in the process of being signed. The Admiral accepted the advice of Brahmaputra's CO and ordered that I should visit Chittagong in the Ship's motor cutter. I was to take charge of PNS Bhaktiyar, the Pakistan Naval Establishment. I should seek the assistance of the Mukti Bahini in this task. This became necessary because the captain of Brahmaputra declined to take the ship to Chittagong for fear of getting damaged by river mines left by the Pakistan Navy as a last desperate act in that area. I left the ship with two Coxswains, an ERA II, one LME, two telegraphists, 12 seamen with rifles, and the Squadron Navigator from Brahmaputra. We carried a portable battery operated W/T set, a magnetic boat compass, a chart of the area and that of Chittagong harbour. We left the ship on 17 Dec 1971, with the flood tide to help us make good speed. As the compass was not swung and no data was available, we used the Sun's bearing as a guide and set course. We also carried a large National Flag.

After about four hours of sailing we sighted the coast, and some fishermen. We raised the National Flag and were cheered and greeted by these fisherman. They even paddled with us, cheering and waving. This helped us to locate the entrance to the Karnaphuli river. As we entered the river to go up to Chittagong harbour, we continuously raised the National Flag to attract attention. We all felt very proud to sail with the tricolour flying. This attracted the people on both sides of the river. As we sailed up, more people from the surrounding area started collecting at the bank and walked and waved to us. We were happy but at the same time apprehensive. After about half an hour we started looking for a place to land. The crowds on the northern side grew. After about 20 minutes or so we



sighted a tall building and a nice jetty. I ordered the Coxswain to go alongside the Jetty. Seeing our intention the crowd which were walking along gathered around the Jetty. From the tall building in the back ground a soldier appeared and raised his rifle and started waving it. We realised that our Army friends were already there. What a relief that was.

I went along with few of them into the naval establishment which was right across the road. The Indian Army jawan who had taken a security position at the gate, guided me to the office where their Brigadier had set up office about an hour earlier.

As I was ushered in, I was greeted "Arey bhai Vyas, what are you doing here?" "The same as you," was my reply. "Nice to meet you Brigadier Anand Swaroop," and I shook his hand. This was inter service co-operation at its best and what luck that we had known each other earlier and now met in the enemy territory.

As the Army had taken charge of Officers and Sailors of the Pakistani naval establishment, I was offered their custody, which I declined and requested advice on what assistance the Army would want from the Navy. His request was to arrange transportation of POW's by sea from this area. He held about 14,000 POW's.

I took a car from the Naval Establishment and decided to tour Chittagong port to see what damage had been caused by our air strikes.

I picked up the Chairman of the Chittagong port to accompany us. At least five godowns were completely damaged and the remaining six partially. Godown No.4 had a huge quantity of ammunition, which caused a big explosion whose debris was scattered over a large area. Many craft and ships were lying damaged along the jetty, up the river.

I informed the Admiral about the situation, and spent the night in the five star 'Agrabad' hotel which was completely deserted. We sailed back in the motor cutter to catch the ebb tide for the return journey.

Coming to Chittagong was comparably very easy but to locate a single ship at anchor, with her bows facing us in a fast tidal way, was extremely difficult. Our horizon was just about four miles. We had to sight the ship with that horizon and little sailing time. If we missed it, we would

have quite literally, been all at sea. We were lucky as the course which we steered took us straight to the ship. On board, each member of the team was warmly hugged and embraced by the members of the ship's company. They had actually lined up on the upper deck to cheer us with loud applause.

The warm greetings made us very keenly aware of the danger from mines we had gone through. The ship, which was designed to with-stand the damage, did not dare to go to Chittagong. What chance did the motor cutter and 20 of us have against it?

Anybody in uniform can be asked to face danger. In this case it was lack of daring of the Commanding Officer and the inexperience of the Admiral which failed to capitalise on a glorious opportunity. If the Brahmaputra had sailed into Chittagong harbour with the band playing and National Flag flying, it would have made international news of the same magnitude as the surrender at Dacca. Our arrival in the motor cutter remained un-noticed even by our own service and its Admirals, though it was very much appreciated by the Mukti Bahini and locals. This is the true untold story.

The Vikrant rejoined us after replenishment on the day which co-incidentally saw the surrender of the Pakistan Army. The Admiral was now ordered to proceed to Chittagong port to make it operational. We therefore flew down to Chittagong air field where we were received by the Officers of the Brigade group with whom I had already established contact during my visit. We all were accommodated in the Naval Establishment while Brigadier and his staff shifted to the Army mess. As we did not have manpower, the Brigadier very kindly provided us with logistic support and manpower as required. Here again a presence of warship would have helped matters a lot and added dignity to the Admiral, who was senior in rank.

There were nearly 15,000 POW's in camps set up by the Army. These were mostly dependents of the Pakistan Navy and Army personnel, apart from service and civilian employees who were from West Pakistan.

Our merchant ships were received in the port. Each one of them had to improvise and fit themselves out to provide basic civic amenities and facilities like sleeping place, bath rooms and WCs for large numbers. As a large number of women were involved we had to take special care,



particularly as they observed purdah.

It was decided to transport 2000 persons per ship. After the experience of the first ship we increased the number to 2500.

There were no POW's left by the time we were ordered to return to Vizag on 6th Jan, 1972. We flew down to Dacca in an Air Force Helicopter.

This is not the complete story. There was the time we made the Vikrant zigzag behind an escort. Ships went to replenishment with fuel generally less than 25% mandated. We anchored our tanker in the enemy territory to top up the ship which enabled us to undertake landing operations at Cox's Bazaar. The fleet remained on battle stations continuously whether the Vikrant had escorts or not. We performed the sea burial of a Thai national even while we were constantly flying air strikes and bombardments. We sank Thai tugs flying the Pakistani flag. We also sent four hourly reports in plain language to get the publicity edge and reaction to the coming of the US 7th fleet. I have only highlighted details of the reactions of key players under the stress of war for which I may of course be faulted as not being diplomatic, but the truth must come out.

Memorable Days

Capt R P Khanna

I was the commanding officer of INS Hoogly, now INS Netaji Subhash from Dec 68 to Aug 73. These were memorable years in my service career.

In early 1971 OSA class missile boats arrived from the erstwhile Soviet Union carried on board merchant ships. It was for the first time in the history of Calcutta Port Trust that a 240 ton vessel was off loaded at the docks using two cranes. This difficult task was accomplished by Commander Subramaniam the Senior Officer of the Warship Overseeing Team and his dedicated staff. It may be recalled that these boats were in the forefront of sinking two Pakistani naval ships and setting Karachi harbour ablaze on 4 Dec 71. Coincidentally, these very boats were named at a colourful ceremony by my wife at Calcutta in early 1971.

The 1971 Indo-Pak War brought much responsibility on

my shoulders. During the hostilities the number of officers under my command increased to about 150. The development in the emerging Bangladesh imposed a very heavy burden on all of us. With careful planning, the welding of a happy team and close liaison with the Port Trust and local Army authorities, the security of the port of Calcutta and the Hooghly river was achieved. We planned and executed some very unorthodox operations which one would never dream of in peace time.

It was a proud moment for me when the Coast Battery at Haldia was commissioned in a record time of six weeks before the break out of hostilities in Dec 71.

The tasks assigned to me included the enforcement of blockade. This was done by boarding all ships passing outside Calcutta. One of the boarding parties, of one officer and seven sailors, boarded a Pakistani merchant ship with about 400 soldiers. The soldiers reacted and tried to overpower our men. This led to the boarding party opening fire resulting in some casualties. Thanks to our dedicated sailors the situation was expeditiously brought under control.

We were given the task of transporting about 20,000 POWs from Chittagong to Calcutta by sea. The usual reluctance of the ship owners to spare their ships which were in harbour was sorted out by my friend Captain Vancheswar, the Principal Officer Merchantile Department; (who incidently was with me as a cadet on the Dufferin in 1943) by telling the representatives that if they did not cooperate, the Naval Officer-in-Charge had the powers to requisition any ship. Immediately there were volunteers. The ships sailed for Chittagong. The masters of ships did a remarkable job by bringing about 2,500 POWs in the holds of each ship.

An interesting incident took place when the Pakistani Forces surrendered. Adm Krishnan was at sea on board the Vikrant, Adm Nanda the CNS rang me up and ordered me to represent the Indian Navy at the surrender ceremony at Dhaka. I, therefore went to the airport to fly to Dhaka in the Air Force planes transporting Lt Gen Arora, the GOC-in-C, his staff and the airforce officers. Just before our departure Adm Krishnan who had got the news about the surrender ceremony, flew in a helicopter from Vikrant to Vishakhapatnam and from there in his own aircraft to



The camera shifts

Calcutta. Seeing me at the airport he asked me to stay back in Calcutta as he wanted a senior officer present to deal with any important matter which may arise. I submitted to the Admiral that as the war was over, there was not likely to be any problem. In any case, we were returning to Calcutta in a few hours. He did not agree. Then I told the Admiral jokingly, Sir, in my 25 years of service, I have never refused a senior officer's order but today I am going to do so. Adm Krishnan in his usual jovial manner said, "If that be so, R P you will accompany me." This was typical of Krish's leadership in which he always excelled.

Fly Navy

RAdm S K Gupta

It was the day we had all been waiting for. At last, the long expected hostilities between India and Pakistan had been declared on 3rd December 1971. The Aircraft Carrier Vikrant was soon to depart in the quiet of the night from

the Andamans to strike at Cox's Bazar and Chittagong airfields at dawn on the 4th morning.

It had been hard work for the ship and the air squadrons to ready themselves. The previous 6 months had the ship essentially working up off Madras nursing to readiness the air squadrons, and themselves, as the Carrier had been non-operational for a year. During this time the White Tiger Squadron had been allowed to run down to a ridiculous state when only one aircraft was generally available for the 15-20 pilots borne and keen to get off the ground. My own monthly flying average was one hour. The pilots were mostly raw having only just converted to type (Seahawks) requiring at

least 20 hours/month of operational flying mostly in formation.

In early June, with Vikrant moving to the East Coast from Bombay on 3 boilers out of 4 (this was to remain so during the entire operation) and speed restricted to 16 kts. This would require precision flying during the approach and arrest, as also the launch with full weapon load. Six seahawks were readied by obtaining all essential spares from all available sources, including a few newly manufactured exhaust units for aircraft in the U.K.

There was some anxiety in the squadron for none of the pilots including the Squadron Commander was rated (instrument ratings having expired, for lack of flying practice) and the weather en-route to Madras was monsoonic.

For 12 weeks, until early September operating from Madras, very little flying was achieved. This had an adverse effect on morale all around. Flying was confined to a pair of Seahawks carrying out mere rollers. It was a confidence building period between pilots and the ship. The first 'hook-on' then took place in September. The die was cast.



Soon 5 Seahawks with the most experienced pilots available in the squadron were on board the Carrier. One a/c had been made a "Christmas tree" after an accident, being robbed of spares to service the other five Seahawks. However, by end of September, additional 'old' and experienced pilots, replaced the inexperienced ones, after the usual familiarisation sorties. There seemed no other alternative at this late stage, when the clouds of war were already rolling on. By early October, limited flying had begun to take place from Vikrant, and soon fresh lots of essential spares like exhaust units specially manufactured by Rolls Royce (at considerable price, no doubt) had begun to arrive. By *Diwali*, the Seahawks strength grew to 18 - 20 aircraft, and the 'old and bold' pilots had fitted in well.

The work-up had been completed by mid November, with excellent co-ordination between the mother ship and her two air squadrons and the S A R helicopter flight. Hence, the timing could not have been better, when hostilities were declared on 3rd December.

Thus, on the 4th December pre-planned (and often rehearsed) attacks on Cox Bazar and Chittagong airfields had been delayed a few hours, because of frequent 'sighting' of submarines by our consort ships. The 10 aircraft strike force took off at 10 am and 3 pm respectively on 4th December. Soon, with daily sorties employing 500

lb bombs, Rocket Projectiles (R/Ps) and 20 mm cannon guns became a part of the daily routine. With experienced and keen air crew and our zealous ship mates, the entire operations were conducted with no serious accident, and no casualties on our side. This should speak volumes for the professional competence of all concerned.

The pilots were often given targets in congested areas where an error in delivering the weapons would have meant causing death and destruction to an innocent civil population (including a hospital), and damage to buildings and refineries. One is happy and proud of the fact that the pilots kept their cool and adhered strictly to assigned and recognised targets. No wonder then, when I availed of the opportunity with my friend Ravi Dhir to witness the damage our strikes had caused, it proved the precision of our attacks.

The White Tigers successfully attacked airfield installations in Cox Bazar and Chittagong, and assigned targets in Khulna, Chalna, Do Hazari, Railway Headquarters building in Chittagong, shipping and gun emplacements.

The Alize squadron were allotted a role of Recce during day, and bombing of runways at night, both of which were accomplished in a quiet and efficient manner characteristic of the 'Cobras'.

All in all, the Seahawk squadron made hay, carrying out air strikes with impunity during daylight hours with no air opposition (we were to learn later that the IAF had neutralised all air opposition).

Hostilities terminated with the surrender of Pakistan forces in Bengal. However, it was not until January 1972, that the squadrons were disembarked to their home ports to a memorable and colourful welcome, both in Cochin and in Goa. A similar welcome took place in Bombay for Vikrant. It had been very satisfying and worth the while, even if one had left home prepared for 4 - 6 weeks in early June, and only returned 7 months later, much



Bomb attack



the gainer in experience. The 'White Tigers', the 'Cobras' and the Indian Navy had at last tasted blood in battle.

Submarines in the 1971 War

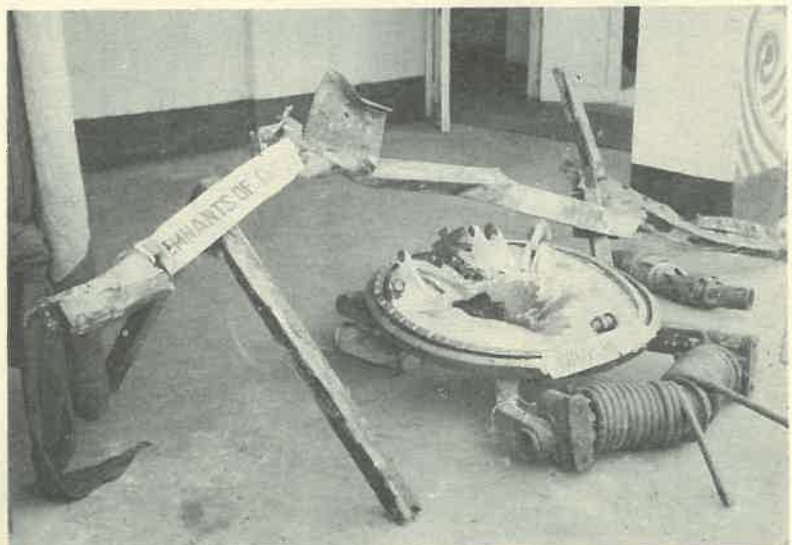
Cmde K S Subramanian

Those were heady days for us submariners in 1971. The submarine base and headquarters INS VIRBAHU had been commissioned at Visakhapatnam on 19 May 1971 under my command. Earlier the 8th submarine squadron comprising the four submarines Kalvari, Khanderi, Karanj and Kursura had been formed with myself as the Captain (Submarines) of the squadron under the FOC-in-C Eastern Naval Command. By November things had rapidly changed from warm to hot in what was then East Pakistan and since the international community appeared to be singularly apathetic to the genocide, repine and atrocities being committed by the West Pakistanis, we were being sucked into the conflict. Confrontation with Pakistan seemed imminent. Unlike earlier conflicts and confrontations with our bellicose neighbour, this time the main theatre of conflict was in East Pakistan separated from the dominant West Pakistan by the last mass of India. The sea being the only means of communication between the two halves of Pakistan, maritime power was going to play a key role in the resolution of this conflict. While the final outcome of the war would, as always, be settled in the battle fields on land, maritime power and supremacy was obviously going to ensure that the adversary was brought to his knees before the land battle clinched the outcome. For once in our independent history the Silent Service was going to play a deciding role in a war. So we were all keyed up, while planning for the eventuality of war at sea in our theatre.

One of the very first steps in such planning is of course an appreciation of the situation prevailing involving an assessment of the adversary's available forces, their capabilities and their likely deployment and how best to counter these while retaining freedom of action for ourselves. I was therefore

asked by my C-in-C the late VAdm N Krishnan to produce an appreciation of Pakistan's likely submarine deployment and the course of action for us to counter such deployment.

It was appreciated by us that the primary offensive arm of the Pakistan Navy was (and indeed still is) its submarines. At this particular period its submarine strength comprised the long range ocean-going patrol submarine Ghazi which, though somewhat long in the tooth had been modernised, and three modern submarines of the French Daphne class with considerably less radius of action but more silent, with better sensors and weapons and therefore more potent within that radius. It was therefore most likely that these three would be confined to operating only in the Arabian Sea and would not be able to operate in our theatre (Bay of Bengal) without being refuelled and provisioned en route - an unlikely proposition. Their primary targets would most probably be the surface ships of the Indian Western Fleet but attacks on Indian merchant ships would also be carried out whenever the opportunity came. But sinking Indian surface warships would be their priority so that they would have something to crow about. The Ghazi however was not so limited by range and would therefore be most likely to be operating in our theatre. Her target would also be Indian surface warships. But if Pakistan was aware that our only aircraft carrier Vikrant



What was left of Ghazi



was deployed with our Eastern Fleet for operations against East Pakistan, she would be the target for the Ghazi. It was more than likely that Pakistan would indeed be aware of such deployment from the intelligence she would be getting from the surveillance being carried out by her foreign friends, who tended more to the tilt than the upright. The Ghazi's mode of operation would most probably be minelaying rather than a direct attack on the Vikrant and the most likely place for such minelaying would be off Visakhapatnam before the water became too deep for effective minelaying against surface ships. There were three reasons for this deduction. Firstly, it would obviously be easier to get the target near its base rather than hunt for it over a wide area. Secondly, such minelaying would also be effective against other shipping. Thirdly, even after such minelaying the Ghazi would still have freedom to patrol and hunt. Such indeed proved to be the case. The Ghazi however missed her encounter with the Vikrant as the latter had sailed out of Visakhapatnam in anticipation of such a deployment of the submarine. All the surveillance information that Pakistan was getting proved in the end to be of no avail as far as the Ghazi's target was concerned.

But what we did not anticipate was that the Ghazi would in fact be in position off Visakhapatnam even before the war was declared. She found her retribution for this act by being blown up by her own mines in front of the places of worship of three different religions at the entrance to Visakhapatnam harbour. I shall not easily forget the sight of the bloated bodies of the unfortunate crew of the ill-fated submarine brought up by our team of intrepid divers under LCdr Sajjan Kumar, whom I accompanied to the spot where we spent many hours on this gruesome task. The charts and documents they recovered from the wreck of the submarine proved the accuracy of our appreciation and confirmed that the Ghazi had sailed from Pakistan for this mission a week before war was even declared.

Of the four submarines of our own 8th Submarine Squadron, the Kalvari had nearly completed the first four years of her service and was long overdue for a major refit and change of batteries. The Khanderi (Cdr R J Millan) though a year younger, had also nearly completed her first cycle of operational life and was therefore not fully operational. Only the Karanj (Cdr V S Shekhawat) and the

Kursura (Cdr A Auditto) were fully operational and were deployed in the Arabian Sea. The Khanderi could however carry out limited operational patrolling in our own theatre. When I was called to Bombay to advise the FOC-in-C West (VAdm S N Kohli) on the deployment of the Karanj and Khursura, I found that there were serious restrictions on their freedom to operate and attack due to non-operational considerations. Therefore at the end of the war, while they both carried out their patrols successfully and undetected, they could not carry out any attacks or fire their weapons in anger. We could not therefore realise the full potential of the submarines which, unless they are given full freedom to attack, cannot show or realise their full potency and worth. They did not have the opportunity to attack even Pakistan warships, (which of course was permitted) since the Pakistan surface warships did not venture out to sea. Such is the tale of our submarines in the 1971 war. They conclusively proved their freedom to operate freely even in the proximity of enemy territory while being frustrated in not being permitted to attack shipping. Their ability to control the sea had, however, been demonstrated. The Submarine Arm can, therefore, be rightfully proud of its role in the 1971 war.

Life Beneath The Waves

RAdm Arun Auditto

It was mid 1971. The clouds of war were gathering over the horizon. Relations with Pakistan were festering over the influx of refugees from erstwhile East Pakistan.

Four submarines of the 8th submarine squadron inducted into service between December '67 and December '69 were to face their first challenge. Unfortunately the first submarine INS Kalvari was in the midst of a major refit and would not be available. The second submarine INS Khanderi was overdue a refit and was operating under severe constraints. She was deployed in the Bay of Bengal away from the anticipated 'hot - bed' - the continental shelf off the Pakistan and West Coast of India. INS Karanj was just completing extensive repairs consequent to a collision with a destroyer during exercises.



I was commanding INS Kursura which in November '71 was the only fully operational submarine. We had just completed working up all the ASW ships of the Fleet from August '70 onwards. Now she was at immediate readiness for deployment.

It was only a matter of time before Pakistan would resort to preemptive attack. It was therefore decided by the CNS that Kursura be deployed in an anticipatory move dictated by the fact that it would take about a week to take up war station. She was to patrol along the Makaran Coast. This would enable her to take up war stations immediately on the outbreak of hostilities. There were indications that elements of the Pakistan Fleet would be operating from Gwadar.

I had proposed that we be given a mandate to cut the 'umbilical cord' of Pakistan viz the oil supply line from the Gulf. As most of the tankers were non-Pakistani it would be necessary to declare a 'war zone' in the areas of conflict and notify all ships to clear the area in 72 hours. After the warning period the first tanker transversing this zone would be sunk. There would be no need to sink anymore as I was sure no foreign vessels would venture in. This strategy was not approved and I was given clear instructions to identify merchant vessels by surfacing and if necessary sending a boarding party. Only Pakistani merchant vessels could be attacked. This would have been suicidal as we would be in imminent danger after such an exposure.

(Ten years later the British applied just such a ploy which sent the Argentinian Fleet scurrying to their nearest harbour, never to come out again. This was consequent to the sinking of the cruiser *Belgarno* by a Royal Naval Submarine inside the declared war zone.)

One fine morning Kursura was sailed for her war patrol. The crew was told that we would dive off Bombay and remain dived throughout till we returned to the same point possibly in 3 to 4 weeks. They would not be seeing the light of day during this period.

We would be observing radio silence throughout after our last PCS before diving off Bombay. We would however intercept all High Speed broadcasts and messages transmitted on a specific frequency to us.

Once outside our air cover zone, we transmitted by snorting at night and proceeding deep during the day.

As all our activities like charging batteries, ventilation and garbage disposal had to be carried out at night to avoid leaving tell tale signs of our presence, I thought of reversing night and day routine. We therefore advanced our clocks by 12 hours. This meant that our working hours would be between 8 pm and 8 am next day (IST).

I thought, that as there was only artificial lighting we would quickly adapt to the reversal. It didn't take long to realise how wrong I was. The human metabolism found the change unacceptable. Having lunch at 2 am only resulted in a loss of appetite - other functions including sleep suffered a 'similar fate'. It took all of ten days for systems to somewhat normalise.

Food was a problem only because our gastric juices do not respond so favourably to tinned food. So our valiant cook dished up delicacies like *rasam* and *sambar*. To prevent the submarine smelling of this permanently, cooking was done while the submarine was ventilating i.e. during snorting. We had also taken as an experiment, for the first time, precooked frozen boneless mutton. This was edible after tossing up with onions and tomatoes, (as long as these lasted). The treat of course was *Kabuli chana* just recently introduced in the ration scale. This was a welcome change till it was discovered that they had worms. I promptly got on the broadcast and pronounced that we had no longer any vegetarians aboard.

Occupational therapy and entertainment was absolutely essential to counter the extreme boredom. Without this everyone would be going about their duties like 'Robots'. No meaningful physical exercise was possible although a sort of 'gym' was functioning in the 'aft-end' - weight lifting, dumb bells etc.

Belles were what the men wanted, and the nearest substitute was to watch Hindi movies. The days of cassettes and VCRs had not dawned. All we had was a 16 mm. projector. Six movies at eight reels per movie was a sizeable extra in such cramped conditions. But that was it. Everyone saw each movie numerous times, and I believe enjoyed them, over and over again.

We were a little luckier with the music as my electrical



officer Lt. SP Sharma had recorded a vast number of tapes prior to leaving Bombay. The crew was very grateful indeed for this.

Quiz time, and indoor games like carrom board and cards with competitions and prizes, sing-songs, and "Shairee" rounded off the extra curricular activities.

We did manage to keep spirits up. A prevailing sense of humour, the unmatched camaraderie and mutual understanding succeeded in keeping everyone in a happy state of mind in spite of the tribulations and discomfort. They perhaps forgot for a while that they would get only one bucket of water each day and that the A/C would be on only when snorting so as to conserve on battery amps.

Concerns for the families and the pressures of being in a war scenario and in enemy waters must indeed have been in everyone's mind. However, no one complained - no one even got sick.

My tribute must surely go out to the indomitable spirit of the Submariners, their uncompromising professionalism and the unfailing camaraderie that has and will keep the Arm going in a manner which makes me, and I hope everyone, proud of them.

Meanwhile back home, I gathered later, people were very concerned about our well-being not hearing a word from us for three long, worrying weeks.

With the outbreak of hostilities on 4th of December we had already been dived on patrol for over 3 weeks, and orders came to hand over to Karanj. An R/V clear of enemy waters, was ordered. It would have been safe to surface and Karanj would certainly be doing a surface transit to cut down on time. I had however told the crew that we would only finally surface off Bombay. Consequently we proceeded dived and as worked out by my Navigator Lt K S Rai, we spotted Karanj at the exact R/V time of 0800 hrs. on our starboard bow.

They of course did not know where we were, so we somewhat mischievously, surprised them by surfacing very close to them. After briefing Karanj and transfer of our report we again dived and a few days later surfaced off Bombay.

At it happened by the time we were got ready for a "turn-around" the short war was over.

What Did You Do In The War, Daddy?

Capt Anil Chopra

Well, now that almost a quarter-century has elapsed since our stirring deeds, I can disclose the part played by one incredibly heroic band that winter of 71—a feat that was responsible for sparing the nation and its armed forces a blow they could scarcely have recovered from. Having verified that the events of those years have been declassified, I am delighted to make you privy to the "Saga of the Intrepid Shovellers".

(Do forgive the proclivities of a DSSC faculty member, but one must begin with the 'setting', so to speak.)

In 'Swarg', I and 249 clones wore the 'nom-de-plume' of 'first-termers' at that fine institution, that Garden of Martial Eden, that Glorious Haunt of the Ghost of the Marquis de Sade—I refer, of course to the National Defence Academy. Adm Ronnie Pereira, then 'Commodore', was the Deputy Commandant of this great temple of martial learning, chafing at his distance from blue-water as the war-clouds gathered.

On the other side of the divide, in *Nark*, Yahya and his cohorts had evolved a back-up operation, to be launched should their efforts on the Eastern Front come to nought. Codenamed "OP CADET-MARO", this grand piece of strategy aimed to deliver a death-blow to the very foundations of the Indian military edifice.

You may have guessed, the aim of the aforesaid operation was to eliminate the core of the future officer cadre of the Indian Armed Forces by an aerial attack on the cadets while they were arranged so precisely, so invitingly and so repeatedly in three long lines. It was the custom at the Academy to rehearse 'ad infinitum/nauseum' an event aptly termed the 'Passing-out Parade' (POP). The only ones who would escape this fighter-pilot's strafing dream, would be the ones who may have 'passed-out' during these practices. Had the plan succeeded, we may even have had occasion to give thanks for another 'Passover'.

However, Yahya's evil designs were not to be satisfied. When he unleashed the Dogs of War that fateful winter (timed so subtly as to coincide with the POP at the NDA), little did he realise that his nefarious plan would be



vanquished on account of a Commodore who had the instincts of an infanteer.

Ronnie Pereira, whose demeanour would have shaken even Patton, was not one to allow Yahya to do a 'Rommel' on him. Having shrewdly outguessed his opponent, he put into effect his master-stroke, "OP TRENCH-KHODO". The aim of this brilliant response was to remove earth from the environs of Khadakvasla, in such quantities as to make the NDA campus resemble the landscape obtaining in France after the Battles of the Somme, Ypres and the Marne.

Two thousand trenches were to be dug—one-man trenches, mind you—circling the parade ground, the mess and the battalion areas. At the slightest whiff of enemy attack, the future officer cadre, not being in a position to fight for God, King and Country, were to vanish, with dignity, into these excavations, thereby presenting an arid target-zone for the bristling front-guns of the marauders.

As you may have appreciated (oops—thats' DSSC again), the course of action required but two ingredients—servicing the sirens and digging the 2000 trenches. It was the second task which assumed Herculean proportions. Two-hundred tons of earth had to be moved, in all of five days. A tall order indeed.

It called for men with dauntless patriotism, unflinching valour, and indomitable singularity of purpose.

The destiny of the nation teetered on the abyss. Not only

was the planned enterprise worthy of medals but also of 'Oscars' like those given to the gentleman who built the 'Bridge across the River Kwai'.

In its hour of need, however, I am proud to relate, India found its saviours.

You may have guessed again. Yes, it was us 'first-termers'. We volunteered. Banish any thought that we were 'press-ganged', as indeed has been rumoured.

Yearning for glory and completely unmindful of personal discomfort, our intrepid band of 250 dug those trenches—all 2000 of them—in just five days. We were 'cheered-on' (to use a mild word) by the second to sixth termers who were very grateful that we took on their share of the task with such alacrity. No doubt it would have been more difficult for us had it not been for the

'encouragement' (mild euphemism again) we received from our seniors.

Ronnie Pereira and his 'Shovellers' had done it. Satellite picture indicated to Yahya the absolute futility of launching his much vaunted operation. 'OP CADET-MARO' was called off—in spite of the reverses the enemy suffered all-around.

The future core of the Indian military machine was salvaged. The Nation lived on.

Such were the exploits of the Brave and the Silent.

YAHYA'S SECRET WEAPON

Adm RH Tahiliani

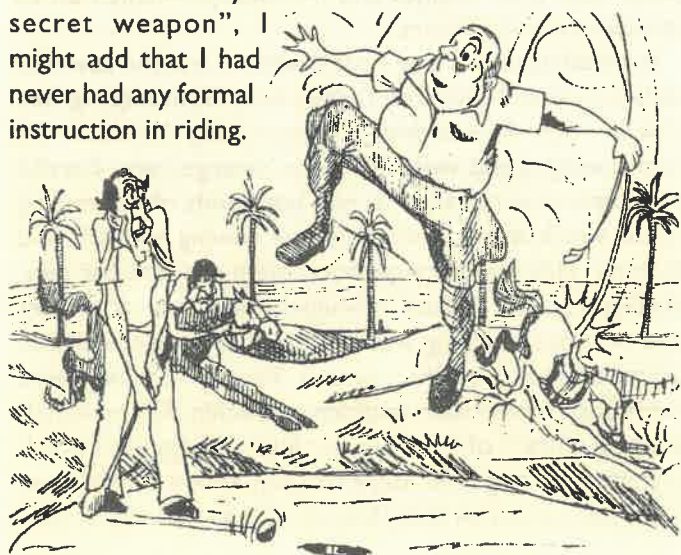
The evening of 27 November 1971 saw four horsemen riding around the perimeter of the Navy Nagar Golf Course in Bombay. In the lead was the then RAdm E C Kuruvilla, the Western Fleet Commander and a proficient horseman. I was one of the other three 'makee learner' riders. War with Pakistan was imminent and the gunners of an artillery regiment deployed on the golf course were carrying out 40 mm practice shoots. This noise wasn't exactly to the liking of our mounts and my horse decided to do a neat collapsing act with his hind quarters giving way first. I fell clear of my mount, got up, coaxed my horse to



do likewise, patted him and mounted again. A couple of minutes later my horse proceeded to repeat the collapsing act. This time however my right leg got trapped between the horse and the ground. The metal rim of the saddle crushed both my tibia and fibula. I found myself sitting on the ground with my right leg stretched out and the foot at right angles to the leg. I realised that there was some serious problem of communication between the leg and the foot.

Rusi Gandhi, the Flag Captain, who had been engaged in the gentler sport of golf, volunteered to pick me up and rush me to Asvini. I had the good sense to decline his offer and wait for the ambulance. Unknown to me then, late LCdr AK Roy who had witnessed the fall, ran to the house of the then Surg Cdr Ahuja, a senior surgeon in Asvini and requested him to come to the golf course to attend to me. Roy then ran back to tell me that the surgeon was on his way. When the ambulance arrived, I asked the Petty Officer SBA to wait for Ahuja's arrival before tinkering with my leg. Ahuja came and handled the injury with the skillful touch of a surgeon, put on splints and took me to the hospital. The rest is history known to all my friends. Six weeks in hospital, six more weeks sick leave and then at work in NHQ with the leg still in plaster and hobbling along with crutches, looking like a veteran of the then recently concluded war with Pakistan.

A victim of "Yahya's secret weapon", I might add that I had never had any formal instruction in riding.



As a child in our village I used to ride the dhobi's donkey. Later, I graduated to a revenue official's pony. During a brief stint in Delhi in 1956, I had joined the Army HQ's equitation club and acquired some confidence in riding without much knowledge about horses. One had heard that if one gets thrown off a horse, one should mount again. However, I was to learn only after breaking my leg that if a horse does a collapsing act then one must not remount without investigating the cause first. Enthusiasm is a poor substitute for knowledge and half baked knowledge can be dangerous.

We Grounded Them With Nails

Cdr S Mohan

Everyone knows that we encountered no opposition from the Pakistani Air Force, when our ships attacked Karachi on Dec 4th 1971. But how many know the devilishly simple design we contrived for immobilising the Pak planes?

I was in the Naval Dockyard Bombay, in those days. The war clouds were gathering for quite a long time. One fine day we were herded into the Machine Shop, and asked to manufacture some funny looking nails that, we were sure, had no naval application. In fact, thousands of them were to be made, and at short notice. When we asked questions, all we were told was that these things were required for some 'hush-hush' operation, and were called "tetra-pods". Anyway, ours was not to question why but to get on with the job, and so we did make the tetra-pods by the thousands, and then forget all about them.

After the glorious war ended, and people started covering themselves with PVSMs and VSMs, the senior officers of the Dockyard got their share of medals too. It was then that the story about the tetra-pods came to light. You see, whichever way they fall, three legs of the tetra-pod rest on the ground like a tripod stand, while the fourth one sticks out vertically upwards.

What we had made in the dockyard were sharp nails in the shape of tetra-pods. On the night of 4th December, our air boys flew over Karachi, and scattered those nails (liberally dipped in Araldite) all over their runways. Can



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you imagine what would have been the outcome? When the Pak planes tried to take off, their tyres burst mysteriously, one after another, and these nails were stuck so fast to the ground that they could not even be swept off easily.

Towing the Boats

VAdm G M Hiranandani

As often happens, exciting developments have rather mundane origins. A case in point is that of "towing the missile boats" which, later during the 1971 Indo-Pak war, created so much havoc in Karachi.

The problem started when it was considered inadvisable for the missile boats to come to India on their own. They were therefore loaded on board merchant ships. The next problem was that Calcutta was the only port which had a crane of sufficient capacity to offload the missile boats. Ships of the Training Squadron were therefore deployed from Bombay to tow one boat at a time from Calcutta to Bombay.

INS Kistna under the command of Cdr R A J Anderson, was one of the first ships to undertake this towing operation. As per well established seamanship practice, there should be a catenary of cable between the towed ship and the towing ship. This catenary provides the 'elasticity' for absorbing the strain on the tow caused by the ships pitching in rough weather. The missile boats had rather fragile hulls and small anchors. They did not have the weight of cable to provide an effective catenary. In any case, to avoid putting the entire strain of the tow on the towing bollard (which in any case was too fragile to have taken the strain), a bridle had been fitted around the entire hull and attached to a ring to which the tow line could be shackled and lowered overboard. To provide the catenary, the towing ship provided a length of cable between her quarter-deck and the missile boat's tow line attached to the bridle ring. This arrangement worked quite well for Kistna from Calcutta to Madras.

INS Tir, which I was commanding at that time, had been nominated to tow the next boat after Kistna. Tir had rounded Sri Lanka and was on her way northwards to

Visakhapatnam, when she came upon Kistna and the missile boat, stopped at sea south of Madras. It transpired that the tow had parted and that both Kistna and the missile boat were fully extended trying to retrieve the tow. It was clear that some better arrangement would have to be devised by Tir for towing her boat during the long passage in rough seas.

Large size nylon ropes had just then become available in the Calcutta civilian market for use by merchant ships as berthing hawsers. They were, however, extremely expensive costing well over Rs one lakh each. Tir obtained approval from C-in-C West and purchased two six inch nylon hawsers for towing two boats together to Visakhapatnam, each by its own nylon rope.

The nylon tow from Sandheads to Visakhapatnam was uneventful and trouble free despite inclement weather. The nylon floated on water and was therefore easily grappled by the men on the missile boat's foxle. As speed was slowly and steadily increased, the nylon rope stretched and became bar taut like a steel wire rope. LCdr S K Chand, Tir's XO, was able to provide Cdr B B Yadav and his missile boat crews with hot meals and even medical supplies by sliding them along the tow ropes to and fro. Soon a telephone line was passed the same way for round the clock two-way communication. Every morning at 0800 hrs Cdr Yadav would come up on the line and say "Allah be praised for another incident free night". Both missile boats kept their engines and machinery switched off to conserve running hours.

In Visakhapatnam, one boat detached and the tow was to be continued with Cdr Yadav's boat. Both ships agreed that it would be worthwhile determining the maximum safe towing speed with this nylon arrangement. Careful precautions were taken to pad both ends of the towing nylon which might chafe with the towing fairleads and bullring. This was because once the nylon was bar taut, chafing instantly caused individual nylon strands to part and continued chafing would part all the strands. These precautions proved their worth. Ten to 12 knots were made good from Visakhapatnam to Cochin. All non-watch keeping officers of Tir were put into an organised watch system on the quarter-deck to keep an eye on the tow. This was not to their liking but it paid rich dividends as they



were able to take timely action to avoid chafing of the rope.

As a result of the steady confidence now built up in towing by nylon, it was agreed that we should try and do better but safely. With the confident seamanship and alertness of both towing ship and towed missile boat crews, it became possible to achieve a towing speed of 16 knots. This speed was nearly the maximum that good old Tir's reciprocating steam engines could do. With repeated drills and good seamanship the boat could be taken in tow and slipped in minutes. The engine room crews of both ships became eager to determine if we could safely achieve even higher speeds, because by now the tactical possibilities of using nylons to tow missile boats during combat were becoming increasingly apparent. On the last night before entering Bombay, Tir doing full power, towed the missile boat at 17 knots without any adverse effects on the shaft locking arrangements of the missile boat.

After securing alongside, Tir handed over to the C-in-C, a two foot length of six inch nylon rope with the formal report on the towing speed achieved and recommending that, not only all remaining boats to be towed from Calcutta, but that the towing of missile boats be now accepted as a practical proposition during war.

Later that year, the missile boats led by Cdr Yadav were to achieve spectacular results in their missile attacks on Karachi. During these hostilities, all ships of the Western Fleet were provided with nylon towing hawsers for towing lame ducks out of harms way.

In the years after the 1971 war, taking ships in tow using nylon hawsers became a standard seamanship exercise, with ships competing for lowest timings to connect the tow, get under way and achieve stipulated speeds over the ground.

Prelude To Angaar

VAdm V L Koppikar

You could have cut the tension in the MOR with a knife that fateful night of 3/4 Dec 71, when three of our missile boats were speeding towards their first attack on Karachi harbour. There was pindrop silence, broken only by frequent calls from the CNS to the C-in-C West for the

latest SITREP. I was in a far corner, my presence in that august gathering owing to the fact that I was the Chief Staff Officer of the Missile Boat Squadron. As the minutes ticked agonisingly by, I kept going over each step of the firing drill in my mind, praying nothing would go wrong. And then—at last—'Angaar' was flashed over the wireless—the codeword signifying the success of the mission. Amid the scenes of jubilation that followed, my thoughts strayed back over the eventful years leading up to this climatic moment.

It was the summer of '70, and war clouds were already gathering over the subcontinent when we of the 25th Missile Boat Squadron came home after a year's intensive training in Vladivostok. We were all keen as mustard and longing to prove our mettle; everyone knew that in the coming round, the Navy would play a crucial part—and in any offensive action the missile boats were sure to be way up front.

But there was still much to be done. The boats were nowhere in sight and meanwhile we set about preparing for their arrival. Space in the WNC was at a premium and jealously guarded. Bit by bit things began to fall into place. As luck would have it, our Squadron Commander designate, Cmde B N Thapar, was unexpectedly appointed Chief of Staff in WNC; all of a sudden, our problems started to receive prompt attention at the highest level. An old residential bungalow opposite the US Club in Colaba was allotted to us, as also barrack accommodation in nearby Trata, which then became Trata II. We quickly set up an office and a small training wing in the bungalow, and soon the place was buzzing with serious activity, incongruously punctuated by the persistent melody of a koel singing its heart out in the garden. It was from this unlikely domestic setting that we plotted and planned the destruction of the enemy. Firstly, the basic question of the complement per boat had to be answered. The Soviet user-maintainer concept was at variance with our own manning practices and branch and rank structure. We strove for the right balance between different categories of sailors, ultimately arriving at the magic number of four officers and 31 sailors per boat, with the TDLR component held in the Sqn HQ. It was a tight complement, with no slack for unforeseen situations. Naturally, the decision



raised a clamour, but we held firm and soon everyone learned to accept it.

Another essential task was the compilation of training documents, charts and circuit diagrams—mostly from memory. No exploitation manuals were forthcoming from the USSR, while our own classified notebooks, where we had laboriously taken down detailed information, had yet to fetch up via the diplomatic route. We drew up teams discipline-wise to prepare precis and diagrams on every aspect of ship-borne operations. Concurrently, dogwatch instructions were held to initiate newcomers and 'refresh' the old hands. In the absence of the boats or even a training model, this became quite tedious but paid dividends later.

At long last the boats began arriving at Calcutta, shipped as cargo on board merchant ships. Incidentally, Calcutta was chosen as Bombay had no crane capable of lifting the boats, which weighed 85 tons apiece in lightened condition. They were then towed to Bombay to save on precious engine hours. Their safe arrival was the occasion for much rejoicing.

The problem of safe berthing for the boats had yet to be overcome. After scouring every nook and corner of the harbour, we finally monopolised the better part of the Wet Basin in the Naval Dockyard, much to the ire of the bigger ships. The boats were often secured alongside in threes and fours, each with its shore generator causing a great deal of noise and pollution. Every time a boat had to be moved out, it turned out to be a major exercise for the ACY—it was like patiently shuffling a deck of giant cards until he came up with the right one. The story goes that he actually requested NHQ to count his tenure as afloat time!

The inevitable teething problems the boats faced made heavy demands on the Dockyard. Apart from defect rectification, some major and minor modifications were needed, all to be repeated eight times over. The Dockyard rose manfully to the occasion, despite the absence of technical documents from the Soviets.

In course of time a Squadron Maintenance Unit (SMU) was set up to take on first and second line repairs. The SMU and the handful of Soviet Guarantee Specialists sometimes worked round the clock to keep us fighting fit. We had by then discovered the magical power of Indian

rum as a fitting substitute for Vodka, and used the knowledge to good effect on our Soviet friends.

As always, the human problems were more complex. One such concerned the allocation of cabins on board. Other than the CO's cabin there were only two more, a single and a double. Naturally, the ExO was given the single one, while the EO and MGO were to double up. Over a period quite a few EOs had become senior to the ExOs and thus did not take kindly to this arrangement. The controversy reached the ears of the CSO(Tech), Cmde JTG Pereira, who made no secret of his displeasure. Once again we stuck to our guns and the crisis blew over. Cmde Pereira was the first to step on board each boat as it returned from its historic mission, and congratulate every single member of the crew.

The problems of any new acquisitions having been sorted out, I began to concentrate on my primary role of training and the operational readiness of the boats. By now the monsoon had unleashed its fury and it was no picnic to sail out in those tiny vessels. But sail they did, taking a heavy beating in those rough seas, making the crews sick as dogs. Every outing was fully utilised to carry out manoeuvres and co-ordinated missile attacks. As time passed, the crews began to perform by instinct, and teamwork grew smooth and flawless. The boats rarely used wireless at sea, the COs having perfected the art of communicating by a combination of previously worked-out secret codes and some astute mind reading.

The boats progressed in stages from carrying drill missiles to fuelled missiles with dummy warheads and finally to fully operational missiles. As the year drew to a close, a certain number of boats were kept ready at all times, fully armed and at short notice for sea. All at once, things began to look menacingly real. I used to have recurrent nightmares of a freak accident in which half of Bombay and its environs were wiped out.

At about this time, I was summoned by RAdm Kuruvilla, the Western Fleet Commander. He was seated in his ramshackle room of the old Fleet Office, fly swatter in hand, taking mighty swipes at any unwary offender within range, but otherwise cool and collected as always. The meeting was brief and one-sided. He wanted the boats to practise being towed at high speeds by his ships (16 knots,



if I remember correctly), the whole evolution of buttoning up and disconnecting the tow to be accomplished in record time. I was aghast—the Soviet manuals advised towing only in emergencies, and then at slow speeds. I tried to protest but, not surprisingly, was firmly overruled.

From then on, the missile boats became little appendages to the fleet ships, spending days on end in the open seas, surviving on supplies from the towing ships. At night the tow was disconnected and the boats allowed to drift until dawn. It was a sad blow to our pride and independence, but events would prove what a brilliant tactic it was.

For it was in this unconventional manner that the missile boats entered the war of 1971 and drew first blood on that unforgettable night of 3/4 Dec. Once freed of their shackles in the approaches to Karachi, they charged full tilt towards the enemy shore and let loose their deadly weapons, causing shock, disbelief and utter panic among the ships anchored there. The rest, as they say, is history.

Tailpiece. Moments after 'Angaar', I was ordered by the C-in-C, VAdm S N Kohli, to produce as soon as possible a list of six or seven names per boat to be considered for gallantry awards. The Navy wanted its heroes; and it wanted them fast. "But how can we possibly single out anyone in such an attack?" asked the bewildered COs. "Each one only did what he was meant to do." My own reaction had been identical. We were a team, every man a link in an immutable chain forged long ago in the frozen wastes of Vladivostok. How, indeed, could anyone be singled out?

Nevertheless, the Navy did eventually have its heroes.

The Agni Astra

Cmde BB Yadav

It was like the *agni astra*, the divine weapon, which struck terror in the hearts of the ungodly. The arrowhead formation moved stealthily and rapidly in the dark, towards its objective. The seas were calm—the calm before a storm? Then the missiles struck with all their fury, at a hapless enemy, who could never imagine that the heavily guarded port could be attacked on the surface.

By mid 1971, one could see the gathering clouds of impending war. The eight missile boats of the 25th Missile Boat Squadron had just been able to beat the monsoon on their trek from Calcutta to Bombay. Newly acquired, they provided the necessary teeth to the Navy on the Western sector. Potent no doubt, yet the boats due to their small size, were essentially a defensive weapon. We did not want a repeat of the 1965 Pak foray on the Saurashtra coast, even though it had no tactical significance, to recur. After deploying a few on defensive operations the thought came: Was it possible to undertake offensive missions? The risks were many, but no war is won without such endeavours. The range from Bombay precluded a direct run on our own power to the target and back, out of the enemy's air strike range at high speed. Sustained sailing at near maximum speed for prolonged periods ran the risk of total breakdown. The missile boats could obviously not be armed with all types of weapons, and were vulnerable to air attacks, especially with liquid fuel missiles stowed in a hanger on the upper deck. If the deficiency of fuel and endurance had to be overcome, the only way was to tow them to a forward launch position, and recover them after the attack. The towing pendant provided by the Soviets was heavy and cumbersome, and could not be detached quickly in an emergency at sea. The communication and navigational facilities on board were extremely rudimentary, unable to meet the demands of an independent offensive mission at sea. Unlike other ships, the boats needed fuel of high purity. The brown-water boats had to be deployed in a blue-water role.

Despite the many factors which complicated such a role, there were intense debates and discussions within the squadron, and a view emerged, that if planned with meticulous care, it was possible to undertake offensive missions and strike at surface war ships and other strategic targets close to shore at Karachi. Accordingly, a plan was developed and forwarded to C-in-C West, our operational authority, who in turn forwarded it to Naval Headquarters. With minor modifications, NHQ approved the deployment, and operational orders were issued, sealed and kept in readiness to be opened in case of hostilities.

Simultaneously, intense preparations commenced within the squadron. Machinery and missile systems were



checked; drills and attack procedures were practiced, and training carried out at all levels. Logistics were minutely examined; fuel, ammunition, on-board spares, lub oil, etc. were adequately provisioned for. The knowledge of the crew, freshly trained in the USSR was tested and fine tuned professionally. Interface with the Fleet was exercised; towing, communications and IFF procedures were discussed finalised and practised. Minute tactical details covering all types of contingency at sea were exercised, and preparations made to the last foreseeable detail. Numerous exercises were carried out with the Fleet, culminating in a practice missile firing, when the entire Fleet and top brass saw the awesome power and accuracy of the P15 missile at over the horizon range.

In the initial planning stage, Trishul was delegated to support the mission. Later priorities of Fleet operations dictated a change, and Kadmatt was allocated in her place. This necessitated a fresh work up with the ship and modification to tactical procedures. When I finally sailed on Nipat to R/V Nirghat and Veer, which had been on forward deployment, it was Kiltan and Katchal which actually took part in the operations. Such last minute changes are perhaps inevitable, and were taken in our stride.

On the evening of 4 Dec, the attacking force comprising Nipat, Nirghat and Veer, and supported by Kiltan and Katchal, made their way towards Karachi. We were in an arrowhead formation, with Nipat in front, Nirghat and Veer five miles on starboard and port quarter respectively, with Kiltan following at some distance. We were approx-

imately 40 miles from Karachi when Nirghat reported a firm contact on her port bow. This was evaluated as an enemy war ship and Nirghat was ordered to engage. Two missiles were fired by Nirghat at 20 and 17 miles and both hit the target, later confirmed as the PNS Khaibar. Requesting Kiltan to assist Nirghat, we continued toward Karachi.

By this time, two more firm contacts were painting on Nipat's radar at about 25 miles. Both the contacts, later confirmed to be the PNS Shahjehan and the Venus Challenger, were attacked by launching single missiles and scoring hits. Karachi was by now painting clearly on radar at about 32 miles. Veer who was astern by about eight miles reported a contact fine on her starboard bow, and was ordered to engage. She too scored a hit. This was the minesweeper Muhafiz. As the attack unfolded, distances between the missile boats had opened up, precluding them from rejoining Nipat. After ordering them to proceed independently and r/v Poshak, Nipat continued towards Karachi, and at about 14 miles fired one more missile at the entrance to the port. The fourth missile, unfortunately misfired, but a moment later we saw the horizon light up as though a huge explosion had taken place. Nipat reversed her course and made her way back, trying to keep out of air attack range before daylight. Operation Trident was a complete success.

Though nearly 25 years have passed, the one thing that comes vividly to mind is the fantastic esprit d'corps in the squadron, particularly among the youngsters. The entire

crew, the squadron staff, the personnel manning the technical positions and the supporting staff, were all-welded together as one team. Thinking back, perhaps the prolonged and hard conditions of Vladivostok, contributed to the bonding process. The professionalism and dedication shown by each and every member of the team, including personnel of the technical position, who fine tuned the missiles and worked without a break, deserves a special mention.

The missile boats earned their fame in the 1971 war, and were deservedly named the Killer Squadron.





My Bugs

Cmde Vijay Jerath

The 8th of December, 1971. It is sunset, and we are heading Eastward again at 25 knots, after a brief interlude of gunnery practice with Talwar and Trishul. Ships are darkened, and so is the promise of the night, which is transiting through the twilight zone to engulf us in its welcome cloak.

"No. I, check the guns and load them for automatic fire".

"Sir, one shell was stuck, but the crew have managed to rectify the fault. Now the guns are fully loaded and ready for immediate fire".

Thank God. What next? Will it happen in threes? Missiles have already been checked. I am sitting alone on the Open Bridge; the steering is in auto-mode. The crew have been ordered to remain below decks at Defence Stations. Some have been allowed to relax in the mess decks, as the night promises to be long and eventful. The initiative is with me.

Why did the light on the steering panel go off suddenly? Engines are humming sweetly, and the wake astern beautifully pluming skyward.

"Sir, we have a total power breakdown. The main switchboard has some problem, it is being looked into".

"Switch to hand steering."

We must conserve the batteries, as these can be used to fire the missiles in an emergency. What do I tell the OTC on board Trishul? It would be a long explanation, and any way, the expertise lies on this ship.

"Make a signal to the OTC—Our Radar is temporarily off. Request pass on all target coordinates".

What if the power does not come on when we approach Karachi and the targets? No problem, I will request the OTC to station one of the consorts directly astern, and use its radar info to attack. After all, at Vladivostok, on the training Boat, Bunny and I had practiced all the conceivable, and even more inconceivable breakdowns.

Ha, ha. Remember the Training Officer, who ran in alarm to the Boat CO? The CO came up to the Bridge, quietly looked at the antics that Bunny and I were up to, smiled, and left. He told the Training Officer to leave us alone, as we knew what we were doing. So, now you know what to do, Smart A...

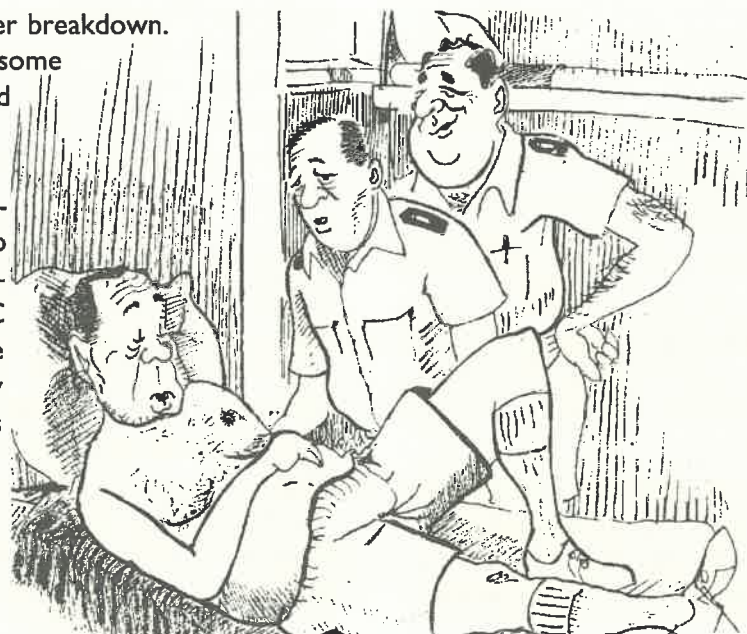
Put your mind through all that there is about the Boat and the Missiles. Karachi will not escape another night.

Why am I here? What am I doing? Should I have delivered a fiery lecture to my crew, before we left Bombay? Exercises? B.S. I gave a choice to anyone to leave, if they had a weak heart. But then, I knew that they trusted me. They were as keyed up as me to prove their worth. OK, but is it not madness to go charging across the ocean for days, and right into the enemy's harbour to attack? What am I fighting for? A cause? India? What is India? Merely a place of my birth, or is it the people? Are all of

them saints! Are there not those who are crooks, cut-throats, and worse?—But then, they are all mine, the Good, the Bad, and the Ugly. They are "my bugs".

"My bugs"? Ah, yes... The year is 1959. We are midshipmen on board INS Delhi. We stay in the chest flats.

This is a small space, full of small cupboards, hopefully, one for each Mid. There is only passing room between the chests. Mids sleep ei-





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ther on top of the heap, or in the passage in between, depending on who gets there first to occupy the best space every night. It is a rat race.

One evening there was an official party. When Keki and I returned, we found Kailash sleeping, negative tops, on top of one of the chest heaps. To our horrific delight, we found a bed bug crawling happily on his naked chest. Having waited for a moment to see if the bug would take a mouthful of Kailash's blood, we took pity, and decided to grab the bug away from the living flesh of a bare chest. Suddenly, Kailash woke up, quite annoyed, and asked us what we were up to. We told him that we were really concerned about him, and showed him the live bug in our hands that we had picked off his chest. He was livid.

"You have no business fiddling with my bug. If it wants to suck my blood, then it is our mutual business. Now you keep out of this. Give me back my bug. He took the bug and put it back on his chest, and promptly went back to sleep.

And here I was approaching Karachi. 'Yes, all Indians, regardless of caste, creed, good or evil, were "my bugs". My crew and I would fight for them.'

Nipat

Cdr AA Chatterjee

Serving in the 25th Missile Boat Squadron during the 1971 war was an honour and a privilege. Living on board with four live missiles on board had become a way of life for the 'Killers' since October. Nirbhik scored a bulls eye on the BPT in a PMF in October 1971 and ever since then morale was cocky and us missile boat guys could do no wrong. Along with it went the responsibility of not letting the side down. It was not uncommon for VAdm Kohli, the C-in-C at that time, to come on board during off working hours and enquire if all was well.

Nipat undocked after a normal refit and dry docking on 30 Nov, fuelled the same day and embarked missiles on 01 Dec. In the interests of missile safety K25 had put an end to the unofficial competition of missile loading timings.

Belting of 30 mm ammunition was done on 2nd Dec and we were once again fully operational. The Captain, then LCdr Bahadur Kavina, went home. Later the K25 came on board and told us to inform the CO that we would be sailing that night. I went across to inform the Captain. The moment I conveyed K-25's message he clapped his hands in glee and said, "Now we will have some fun. Let him come." At that moment I did not understand what he meant.

At about 8 pm Anil Sharma, Secretary to the COS came on board. We had been school mates and were good friends. Finding the Captain not on board he handed over some paper to me, took my signatures and bade me to deliver it to the Captain. I read orders for Operation Trident—orders for attack on Karachi. Nipat was to be the leader with K-25 embarked. I immediately handed the orders over to my Ex.O., Sampath Gopal. He read them, sealed them in an envelope and directed me to proceed to Captain's house post haste.

Preparation for sea and action had begun. The ExO decided to begin painting the ship as per the approved camouflage paint scheme. He forbade Chicken Sen, the Missile Officer, from opening the hangar doors for the preparation for action since it interfered with the frenzied painting of the camouflage scheme. "My camouflage painting prior to the attack is more important than your preparation for action".

During the preparation, it was discovered that 30 mm ammunition had been loaded incorrectly. Reloading the ammunition belt correctly was a lengthy process. Luck, however, was on our side. The height of tide was just right and the deck was level with the jetty. The entire ammunition belt was pulled out, piled up on the jetty and put back. The operation went off effortlessly.

We cast off in the dark night and worked our way out of the harbour in the early hours of 03 Dec. The Naval Signal Station spoilt all the fun by flashing 'What ship' at us. After clearing the harbour we were taken in tow by Tir and towed upto Okha. On the night of 03 Dec after the task force had anchored off Okha, Chicken Sen's transistor gave us news of the Pak air raids on India and the



subsequent declaration of war. The Captain mustered the ships company and brought them up to date with all the information. As he finished full throated cries of '*Bharat mata ki jai*' rent the air.

On late afternoon of 04 Dec we set off for Karachi. The K-25 and Captain were not amused when I suggested that we had a chance to do something unheard of for the missile boats—go on a foreign cruise. As the Assistant Missile Officer I had no assigned action stations. Lookout on the open bridge was the task given to me. I learnt later that my course mates on the other two boats, Indrajit Roy and Ashok Dewan, had been given the same task. In the dark night the task force was doing high speeds. The bow and stern wakes churned up green phosphorence which was quite fascinating. With all the ships darkened and no company on the upper bridge it was also quite scary. Things did not get any better when pre-launch checks were started and I was still on the upper bridge. After some time the hangar doors were opened and I had not been called down. Ignorance of the missile firing circuit and its various interlocks might have helped. The order "attacking missiles" did not improve matters. All but one firing interlock had been made and I was still on the open bridge. My thoughts at that time are unprintable and unforgettable. I nevertheless kept reminding the old man via the bridge door that I was up on top. After many such frantic reminders he turned around, reassured me and told me not to worry. When I looked up to resume my look out I saw a big bright orange ball. I kept gazing at it, wondering what it was.

Many missiles have been fired since then and now we all know what bright orange balls of fire are. But at that time it was the first live missile fired by the Indian Navy. I was totally confused. Was it an aircraft? If it was, then it was going away from us. Amidst these thoughts, K-25 (Cdr Babru Bhan Yadav) and Captain came up to the open bridge, looked around, spotted the orange ball and said, "There it is". "What is it?", I asked them. Captain's reply, "Look, damn it, look; history is being made" did not make me any wiser. "Yes", I said, "but what is it?" The exasperated reply was, "Oh come on Chats, Nirghat has

fired one".

The three of us then saw the missile home on to the target, alter its course and altitude, and finally hit the target. In spite of the distance over the horizon the bright flash followed by a smoke cloud could be seen very clearly. I was then called down into the safety of the enclosed bridge and we fired a missile. I was immediately ordered back on top. This time I had company. Practically the entire ships company had come up on top to witness the progress of our missile. The missile homed on, changed its course and altitude and scored a hit which was cheered lustily. This was followed by Nirghat and Nipat firing one missile each at their original respective targets—both were bulls eyes.

Nipat then closed Manora Point and fired a missile in the general direction of Karachi. Then she turned back and put on maximum speed of over 30 knots. After about half an hour the screaming whine of the engines were reduced to a dull throb. Two of the three engines had stopped and speed reduced to six knots. After a tense wait the engines were set right and the high speed resumed. I spent the rest of the night at the aft gun sight along with the crew. Petty Officer Alam Singh Rawat recalls that throughout the night I stood and dozed at the aft gun sight. Every now and then I would wake up and urge the other two to stay awake.

At daybreak we were heading back for the r/v. It was cold and on top, the ships crew was in an assortment of woollies. Chicken Sen's transistor was the only link with the outside world. As the news bulletin began everybody gathered around to listen in. The Bangladesh war was first priority, so on the morning of 05 Dec the exploits of Vikrant were on the bulletin first. Then, "In an attack on Karachi the Indian Navy sank..." the rest was lost in the midst of loud cheering. The next bulletin was heard in silence and we heard names of the ship sunk.

With a type letter designation of 'K' the Missile Boat Squadron had already been nicknamed the Killer Squadron. Taking a cue word 'KILLERS' was painted freehand in red paint on either side of the bridge. This tradition continued for quite a few years.

The three missile boats had been instructed to enter



Bombay during daylight hours. Before reaching Bombay on 06 Dec K-25 ordered us to change into proper uniforms. The plea that there was a war on did not move him. His hunch was right. We were received ceremoniously on the Cruiser Wharf. And what a ceremony it was. The Navy Band was playing 'Deshon ka Sartaj Bharat' and the C-in-C was there in person to welcome us.

Once secured alongside, the excitement was over and hard realities had to be faced. Pockets were empty. Pay was yet to be collected. It was about 5 PM and at the best, the Dharini Supply Officer could be persuaded to pay us at earliest opportunity. Instead his response was: "You are an operational man and your requirement is an operational demand. It shall be done just now". In fifteen minutes flat I received my pay and returned on board quite dazed with the whole episode. That was not all. At the edge of Cruiser Wharf where Nipat was berthed was a battery of two AA guns commanded by a Petty Officer. An air raid alert had been sounded earlier. I requested the Petty Officer to alert the Quatermaster in case the air raid sirens went off again. His reply was magnificent, "Sir, you have done your duty, I will certainly do mine".

Torpedoed

LCdr S K Sharma

(As told to him by a survivor)

INS Khukri was on normal patrol duty on that chilly night of December, 1971. The sea was calm, as I watched night draw its blackout curtain, across the ocean and a bright crescent moon come out behind a puff of cloud. The only sound to be heard, was that of waves splashing against the bow and the everlasting monotonous humming of ship's machinery. My duty as a look out was to keep scanning the horizon and report to bridge on anything abnormal. Two miles abaft the port beam, moonlight highlighted the magnificent black silhouette of our own sister ship. It looked as still as a painting. INS Kripan, was our only companion on miles and miles of dull water.

"Action Stations, Action Stations.....Hands to Action

Stations.....Close all port holes and hatches. Assume NBCD State One, Condition Zulu." The metallic voice of speakers and high pitched menacing siren echoed all over the ship. I jumped and ran for the flag deck, where I was to man the Hispano AA Gun. The deck was more or less a bedlam of moving bodies now; everybody scrambling for their quarters. My loaders had already pumped a neat row of cartridges into the magazine. As I plugged my ears with the gunners headgear, I watched the graceful movement of our underwater mounting to the starboard. At that hour of night, the threat obviously was from down below. I wore my gloves, knelt to catch the pistol grip and looked through the gun sight. On the cross wire lay our sister, INS Kripan. Through the powerful magnification of the sight she looked menacing but beautiful. I trained my Spano right, left and then aimed high in the sky. The lubrication was perfect. Satisfied with the pre-action checks, I crossed my heart and waited.

For the next two hours, the echo on Sonar played hide and seek with the ship. Finally it was designated false alarm. "Relax action stations" was sounded. Securing my gun, fore and aft of the ship, I reverted to my look out duty. This had been happening again and again since the hostilities broke out. The ship's company was tired and weary. Sleep was out of question. I was sticky with sweat and my beard had grown like an uneven bush. Shaving was dispensed with due to scarcity of water on board.

My reverie broke with a sudden thump on the port side. The whole ship shook as if punched by a powerful blow. The binoculars flew from my hands and I dived for the guard rails to steady myself. My first reaction was that someone had triggered the main mounting accidentally. There was a complete power failure and the speed fell off drastically. The ship rolled to an impossible angle. I realised we had been hit.

Immediately after that I saw a luminous line threading through the water towards our ship. I ran to the voice pipe and yelled, "Torpedo to Port". There was no time to manoeuvre. Everybody on the bridge held their breath. Five seconds later there was a bang, and to me it sounded like end of the world. First came the crash of impact and



metal plates giving way under pressure. It was followed instantly by a single explosion and then a roar that rocked the ocean. One fourth of the midships section disintegrated and the ship reeled under the impact.

The boats shook clear of their davits and were broken to pieces. Fire extinguishers were wrenched from their brackets and started hissing foam. Broken glass littered every deck. That explosion killed one fourth of the ship's company. The rest struggled to reach the weather deck, and many were crushed in the narrow hatches.

I saw INS Kripan manoeuvring vigorously like an eel. She successfully managed to avoid two torpedoes fired at her. Then she steamed away with both engines full ahead; her personal triumph tinged with sorrow and bitterness at leaving her own sister.

Another torpedo struck the bows of our already stricken ship. It split her Fox'le wide open, tore her plating and fanned it out like petals of a flower. One of the FFO (Furnace Fuel Oil) tanks burst, and spilled oil all around. Miraculously it didn't catch fire. INS Khukri was an old ship, seventeen years old and she took the outrage as a lady of breeding should. At the noise and jar of a third explosion a delicate shudder went through her. Water gushed in through the bows. Brought face to face with the fury of this mortal attack she gradually and disdainfully, tilted to port. Then she began to settle down.

With the orders "Abandon Ship", I jumped, only to find myself neck deep in oil. Filling my lungs with air, I dived deep in to the sea. I swam under the sticky layer of oil for next thirty feet and when my lungs were about to explode, I surfaced. That's where I saw death in all its ugliness for the first time. Exhausted sailors unable to swim through oil were crying for their lives.

The mast of the ship was tilting more and more, at a faster rate now. I saw someone still standing on the bridge. It was Captain Mulla. The brass of his cap reflected the fitful moonlight. Keeping alive Naval tradition, he had decided to go down with the ship and the men he loved. He was a brave man.

By now the two life rafts had been opened and sailors had been pouring into them. I swam for one of them. In both

the rafts were only about fifty men. That meant, just one eighth of the ship's strength had survived the nightmare so far. From the over crowded raft we watched the last moments of INS Khukri. Only bridge and mast were visible now. Then suddenly it was gone. A wide circle of oil slick and floating debris marked her grave.

The silence when it was over was appalling. Nobody spoke for the next few hours and the rafts drifted helplessly. The men around me were beyond recognition. One of us had swallowed mouthfuls of corrosive fuel oil and was coughing up his guts. A few others were screaming with pain of deep burns and broken limbs.

With the dawn came a distant drone, which changed into steady beat of a chopper's blades. A huge IAF helicopter swung over us. The pilot waved as it circled over us. By afternoon we were safe on board rescue ship INS Balsar. Three hours later at 1600 hrs action stations were sounded. With a terrific rage I stood up, clambered through the hatches and dashed for the Hispano gun.

A Tribute

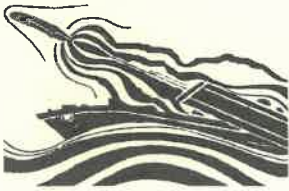
Cmde S K Bhalla

*Shahidon Ki Chitaon Par
Lagengé Har Varsh Mele
Vatan Par Marnevalon Ka
Yehi Baki Nishan Hai*

*(People will gather at the Martyr's memorial each year.
This is the true tribute to those who lay down their lives in
honour of the motherland.)*

My story commences when the morale of the Western Command was high, after the successful missile attacks on the ships of the Pakistan Navy as well as Karachi harbour. Khukri and Kirpan were returning to Bombay on completion of patrol for defect rectification and logistic support. Captain N Bhalla, Industrial Manager and I were on the breakwater awaiting their arrival, to ascertain the extent of help required.

Captain Mulla was a close friend and we were eager to



1971

pump him for news, and also to provide support. Khukri secured around 1130 hours. There was an air of great excitement on board the ship. The CO escorted us to his cabin and jubilantly told us he had been involved in an anti-submarine action the night before. He had attacked the contact and was very sure the submarine had been sunk. He had taped the whole attack. He played the audio-cassette to us, over a cup of tea.

The tape commenced with the usual search pinging. Soon it changed to the "search and contact" mode with classic search and attack drill being followed. At one point, the CO orders the attack with six A/S mortars. There is a poignant pause while the shells sink to the set depth. Then six distinct explosions of the shells bursting under water, one after another. Pause again, and a big underwater explosion is recorded. After this, the contact sound is lost and pinging returned to the 'search' mode.

Both Bhallas were thrilled, being the first outside the ship, to listen to the recording and we demanded a celebration. Captain Mulla agreed a celebration was indeed called for, and in true Lucknavi style said, "Let these operations be over and we shall celebrated with 'mujra' on the Fox'le".

In that mood of exhilaration, we also remembered to formulate a work package for Khukri and Kirpan. Over the next few days the Dockyard agencies bent backward in providing the ships with every support. They were to sail on further patrol duties on the afternoon of 09 Dec. I believe that the last act of Capt Mulla was to see the Industrial Manager and myself to thank us for our help and to remind us of the coming celebration on his return.

At 8 o'clock on the morning of 10 Dec, there was a pall of gloom in the assembled Dockyard officers. I thought it was on account of the death of one of our workers who had fallen down a ship's hatch and sustained critical head injuries. I soon got the shocking news that the Khukri had been sunk in a torpedo attack the previous night, and that Kirpan had managed to save itself by timely action. There were very few survivors. Captain Mulla had been lost with the ship. Much later I learned from one of the survivors who had been on duty on the Bridge that Khukri had been

hit by three torpedoes and sank very rapidly. The Captain ordered 'Abandon Ship', and then settled himself in his chair, lit a cigarette and prepared to go down with his ship's company trapped inside the ship.

I was very upset at the death of a good friend and a man of great personal honour. Viru Mulla was a warrior and died a warrior's death. He and I believe that he had drawn first blood through sinking or damage to the lurking submarine. He had the satisfaction of personal fulfillment in bringing honour to the service he loved.

The Distaff View

Salga Jacob

I was christened into the Navy through a baptism by war so to speak. Who else would have the unique opportunity, to march to the clarion call of war towards the altar, and lose a brand new husband to the order 'report back forthwith' immediately after the knot was tied. That was in '65. By 1971 I was the veteran naval wife, or so I thought.

My husband's long stint on operational Vikrant under five different Captains - not that the two stripes were seen or heard by them - made him eligible for a recall any time.

So it came as no surprise when Lt Jacob, Navigator Tir (qualified) was recalled on temporary duty to the dark nether world of the ADR of Vikrant somewhere in the east in July 1971. Rumbblings of war must have been in the air, and the posting stretched on to six months without a question; the mystery became clear to me only when the news of the war broke out.

The first real feeling of war came with the windows and doors being covered with black papers. Such preparations had a sense of excitement initially. Those bar-less windows of Bombay flats, were in any case closed in peace time, for child-security, the blackening only brought in an aura of mystery.

Rehearsals for the air-raid warning sirens used to be conducted off and on, where you switched off all lights and observed silence. So when the actual one was sounded none of us were any wiser, until through the silence, the



thumping of feet, shoutings and hushings made such a ruckus that I am sure the enemy would have got their target right, had they bothered to listen.

At an urgent call from my neighbours, I collected both the babies, fumbled my way through the darkness to converge on the ground below, expecting the bomb to strike any second. Sheer fear kept us all numb. As for the planes that flew over us (three of them), we would like to think they were the enemy ones, who missed their target due to our perfectly practised air-raid rehearsals.

But harsh reality struck me hard, when within hours, I learned that my husband's coursemate and friend Lt Sirohi and his pilot Ashok Roy were believed to have been shot down some where and lost.

As if there wasn't enough panic at home, my son who was attending a nursery in the city, went missing not once but twice, the second time from home itself. News of disappearance, kidnappings and the horrors that follow which remained in print for me till then, became horrifyingly real. The fact that even strangers pitched in to help and hunt for him, along with neighbours and friends somehow quite touchingly reassured me that I was among 'family'.

Bombay was abuzz with news of war. If whisperings of Pak submarines prowling the sea depths, put fear into everyone it was soon wiped out, with the resounding bombardment of Karachi. The euphoria was short lived. Strong rumours were afloat that one of our own ships was torpedoed.

The next day two officers came knocking at my door; initially I couldn't comprehend what they were saying - slowly it sank in. They wanted a lady with them when they informed Mrs Sampath Kumar staying directly below us, that her husband was 'one of the missing' from Khukri. So it was true after all, the shaft thudding very close to home.

I sought my neighbour's company for moral support. I can never forget the scene when the news was broken to her mother who opened the door. The lady just rolled on the floor, rambling, incoherent, and uncontrolled, questioning the Gods above, who had made her a widow at a young age, now meting out the same fate to her daughter.

Stomach churning and helpless, we remained silent spectators. More frightening was the state of shock Mrs Kumar went into. She literally remained a statue, no emotion, not even a tear.

Two other officers wives known to me were also in the same state. In the following days, Mrs Mulla, the Captain's wife—visited every such household of sailor and officer alike, to pacify them, keeping her own loss to herself.

In the ensuing days, Mrs Kumar started her rounds of astrologers, who for a fee would spin yards of visions, of her husband being safe in a cocoon or in a land surrounded by water, etc. She would go about her normal chores including the daily visit to the temples with the red *kumkum bindi* on. Seeing her blind faith, we too believed, he would be found. Providence has His own ways of pacifying. It was years later that I learned that like the others missing, he too had never returned.

If there were letters during this time, they were shrouded in mystery, no dates or addresses; even subjects missing from sentences; the only reason that made it worth waiting for, was the generous use of endearments that dotted the letter. Discretion has its reward.

With Khukri going down, the little morale left too disappeared. Down the Chatter Channel came the news that the US Seventh Fleet was moving towards the Bay of Bengal. I didn't have the foggiest idea what it meant except that it boded ill. Mercifully, ceasefire was declared soon.

One of the windfalls any war brings in, is, the unity among its nationals and the support they give to the Services. So it was that in Bombay, the 'box' in theatres were as good as free, excise and sales taxes were slashed from textiles, restaurants charged next to nothing, all for a flash of one's service identity card.

Even the flag day collection which used to attract only coins earlier, got stuffed with hundred rupee notes - the biggest denomination one got to see in those days. The ladies who went around with those collection-tins felt they should have gone with steel trunks. Any amount was there for the asking.

So, war has its fairer side. But by the time my husband came back in January, Bombay was back to business. After



a tumultuous welcome in Madras, Vikrant returned to Bombay to be received by the wives anxiously waiting to see the war-weary husbands. Lo, and behold, I spotted mine, jolly and round with a palor suspiciously close to a pale pink. There was no logistic failure for sure!

'God Bless This Ship'

Mrs Cissy Oommen

In my small modern house in Kottayam there is an electric wall clock, quaint and ancient in comparison with the present day clocks. This I cherish since it was a wedding gift from the officers of INS Shakti in 1955. In my cupboard is the Vir Chakra which I received on behalf of my late husband. I am thankful that these objects, which to me are precious mementoes of my husband's life and career, were not stolen by the thief who broke into my house and manhandled me. On the gate post of my house is the name Khukri, a strange name for Kerala where many pronounce it and think of it as Cookery. These are a few of the things that remind me of the Navy, apart from the irreparable loss of my beloved husband.

My memories of the Navy are mostly of Bombay and INS Shivaji in Lonavala. My husband's priority in both places was work and duty. When a very senior officer of the Engineering branch visited Shivaji soon after our marriage he told me, "You don't know how lucky you are, your husband is worth his weight in gold".

1957—I was fortunate enough to be with my husband (at our own expense) in Cowes, Isle of Wight where INS Khukri was commissioned. The small group of officers there became a well-knit family — SH Sharma (Captain) Curly Nair (XO), SC Bose (EO), Aroujo (LO), AK George (SO) and my husband (Senior Engineer). Apart from me only Lalitha Nair and Baisaki Bose were there, our friendship continuing to this day. At the commissioning ceremony the usual prayer, 'May God bless this ship and all who sail in her' must have been said. May be my husband was the only one who went back to serve in her again, this time as EO with Captain Mulla in command, when Khukri

was torpedoed and sunk in the Arabian Sea.

What should a wife feel, when rumours abound about the worst happening to your loved one's ship, the fate of the survivors uncertain — and then you see the Fleet Commander with his wife coming to your house? I cannot describe it, and I pray that none of you reading this will ever have to face such a nightmare.

We were living in Revathi, Ninth Floor, Naval Officers' Flats in Colaba when war was declared. Khukri was back in harbour on the 6th of December 71 giving us a few precious hours to share. Together we watched the Bombay sky being lit up that evening with a spectacular display of Tracers from Ack Ack guns, to the accompaniment of howling sirens. Later my husband opened a bottle of Scotch (King of Kings) which we were saving for X'mas, saying 'Lets have a taste of it now'. A doctor friend of ours, staying with us when the war broke out told me later that my husband was asking him all about the process of death by drowning—Premonition?

He left for the Dockyard as usual on 8th morning, but telephoned in the afternoon to say they were sailing out. I had a strange and inexplicable feeling of uneasiness and impending disaster as I put the phone back. Lolly Ramdas, my friend and neighbour, in whose house I had received the call noticed my stupor and she wondered aloud what had happened to me. A short time later I was watching from my bedroom window INS Khukri sailing towards her doom and disappearing over the horizon to be lost forever.

Friends and relatives who rallied around with help, kindness and support are so many. May God bless them. I remember how one day I accidentally caused a commotion — As I shut my car door, my thumb was jammed in between, my nail hanging loose. I walked across to Cdr Bose's flat for help, to find it locked and proceeded to Toothy Paul's flat not realising the trail of blood I was leaving behind. Paul took one look at my bleeding finger, rushed me to Dr. Koshy and to INHS Asvini with him. By the time we returned with the bandaged thumb the whole place was surrounded by the Naval Police and others. Bose on returning to his flat found the blood trail and had reported the 'suspected crime'.



The Navy helped me to start a Cooking Gas Agency in Kottayam which keeps me occupied, and perhaps a little amused at the quirks of human fate and behaviour. Today as my old clock silently ticks away, I realise that we don't really get over the tragedies that overtake us, but we do learn to accept them as the years go by.

Sing-bad the Sailor

Capt M S Joshi

Betwa was on patrol between Madras and Vizag just after the declaration of cease fire. However, the tempers at sea were still quite high. It was one of those rare calm afternoons on the Bay.

Betwa was under the command of the then Cdr R K Chaudhari. I was a Sub Lieutenant and looking after SCO's duties. After a grueling tenure of almost one year with the Captain, I had managed to gain his confidence. I was therefore allotted the prize responsibility of being the 'Action OOW' also.

But this afternoon I was not on watch, merely having a casual *dekho*. The Captain who was well known for his explosive temper and dislike for unseamanlike behaviour, was for once the picture of serenity. He was reading the usual ATP in his chair on the bridge. When I wandered to the starboard wing, I sighted smoke on the horizon. Within minutes there was some odd flashing from this over-the-horizon intruder. We had a very smart Yeoman called Unni but he also could not fathom the erratic signaling. Eventually the OOW reported to the Captain about this ship on the horizon. The Captain momentarily glanced at the ship and approved the suggestion that we challenge the ship.

Yeoman Unni sent out the usual alpha-alpha on the signaling lamp. Prompt came the reply "USS Enterprise". Thinking that this merchie was being funny, I told Unni to ask again "what ship, where bound". Pronto came the reply "USS Enterprise bound for Bay of Bengal". Now I was in a quandary. I was certain that this apparently plain looking merchant ship on the horizon was being overly

smart. I was also worried that if I report this to the Captain, our afternoon's solitude would be over. Any way while I was fighting with my conscience the Captain asked me for the result of our little light exchange. Unni, very scared by now, showed the result to him on the signal pad. But the Captain was also lulled by our solitude that afternoon. "Must be a mad fellow, behaving like that with a warship". "Ask him the name of the Master" was his next order which was executed smartly. But even more smartly came the answer "Sing-bad the Sailor" followed by the bomb-shell, "Ask your Captain to report to the flag ship for leaving my screen without permission." Unni decidedly looked terrified and I bid adieu to that lovely afternoon and took the signal the Captain who by now was quite suspicious of all that was going on. Then came the inevitable. The Captain shot out of his chair and bellowed 'Action Stations', "I will teach this merchie a lesson today". Off went the WHANG... WHANG... WHANG... "Hands to Action Stations. Prepare for surface action". Many a lovely dream was ruined by the action alarm that afternoon. Out poured the Executive Officer wanting to know what was happening. When he saw the tall figure of the Captain glowering menacingly at that distant enemy he also kept quiet and was softly briefed by me. Up went the speed and tempo associated with action stations. Intercept course kept bringing us close to that rude merchie. After a few minutes the range and the aspect had changed sufficiently to allow visual recognition. I murmured to the ExO that this merchie looked like the Magar. Sure enough in a few more seconds the Captain who was continuously watching the ship through binoculars turned around with a broad grin to confirm the fact. Suddenly all the tension on the bridge vanished. Because it was a known fact that Cdr Singhal who was commanding the old Magar was the Captain's course mate.

Now from action stations the emphasis changed to teaching a lesson to old Singhal not to meddle his fat tub with a sleek frigate. The course was once again altered to a parallel course intended to come alongside Magar as if for RAS. The gunnery officer was called and explained the strategy of firing all guns outwards as soon as both ships



were abreast. There came Betwa the warship charging after unwieldy Magar. When the ships were abreast, the Captain who was himself a Gunnery Officer looked for four tremendous volleys. But heard only three and a report to say "aft turret left gun misfired". On a normal day this would have been unpardonable. But on that afternoon all was forgotten and forgiven in this friendly encounter at sea.

Worm's Eye To Bird's Eye

Adm L Ramdas

Almost a quarter century has lapsed since 1971. It is significant that I am reflecting on those times from my comfortable and beautiful surroundings in Bhaimala, near Alibag, in Raigad Dist of Maharashtra. This home and small farm where we presently live was actually made possible by the award of the Vir Chakra for Gallantry during those very operations - one of the unexpected benefits of my parents migration to Matungam in Bombay in 1923 and my birth in Maharashtra. It is appropriate and yet ironic that I find myself drifting back in time to 1971 - because the linkages of the present to that past can be seen in many interesting ways. Today, I am involved in totally peaceful activities of horticulture, vermiculture, and learning about local culture, on land that was given me for acts of war. Most importantly it has provided ample opportunities for thought and reflection on many issues. And it is based on these that I would like to share some reflections and memories of 1971 with friends and colleagues through the pages of the Quarter Deck.

I have always believed that in the final analysis it is the human factor that determines the outcomes of any enterprise. This applies especially in the case of wars and the conduct of military campaigns the world over; and 1971 was no different. The saga of the human spirit - energy, endeavour, improvisation, ingenuity, courage, loyalty and the will to win every one of these qualities found expression in hundreds of small and big ways in these operations. I have selected a few examples which, to my mind, exemplify the sterling quality and calibre of our people, and of those who form the backbone of our Navy - the officers

and the sailors.

We were operating off Madras in company with Vikrant and Brahmaputra and during one of our routine dusk action stations, our main armament went 'berserk'. On examination we found that the famous GRU (Gyro Roll Unit), more affectionately known as the GURUJI, had toppled and the system stabilisation went 'kaput'. We needed an alongside berth to fix it and so we made an unscheduled entry into Madras, whilst concurrently requesting Bombay to fly out likely spares that we may need. Not only did Bombay send us some spares but they had also flown out a couple of weapon specialists. In the meantime Chief EAR S N Singh 'Saab' had traced the fault to a small silver piece in the dashpot which had ruptured and needed replacement. Unfortunately this crucial spare was not available either on board or any where else. (Readers might also be interested to know that the 'Brits' had already turned off the tap as far as the spares were concerned). Morale of the ships company started flagging fearing that we may have to miss the operations due to this failure.

Suddenly S N Singh had a brainwave. He decided to use the silver foil from a 'Gold Flake' cigarette packet and stuck it into the dashpot of GURUJI. Lo and behold the entire system sprang back to life and settled down magnificently, much to the amazement and acclaim of both of our visiting weapon specialists. This bit of genius and innovativeness not only put the system right, but it held without any problem during the entire operations when we had to use the main armament extensively. Needless to say that Chief EAR S N Singh became an instant hero.

One thing that came home most forcefully was that there was no substitute to self reliance as far as critical weaponry and spares are concerned. This was to influence my own attitude and strong support for indigenous production and the DRDO in the later years. Amongst the three services, the Navy has always been the foremost supporter of indigenisation, and of people like Dr Abdul Kalam and his fine band of scientists and technologists.

As 1971 wore on and seeing the way things were developing politically, it was becoming increasingly clear that a show down with Pakistan was inevitable. At about this time one or two colleagues actually suggested that I



may like to change my steward as he happened to belong to a "certain minority community". I was horrified and rejected this idea outright. My steward, M. Ali, not only served me throughout the operations with the utmost loyalty, care and affection but continues to be one of my very trusted friends and a shining example of a model Indian citizen. Ali Baba as I called him affectionately, was always there with a cup of cheer, no matter what time of day or night. During the operations one hardly had time to leave the bridge. Ali and others from the ships company refused to sleep or go down until I did. It was this total affection and dedication that helped to see me through many a difficult night. Ali Baba retired as a Petty Officer in 1979 and runs a Shoe Shop of his own in Navy Nagar, Bombay.

This incident left a deep impression on my mind, and is particularly disturbing when seen in the context of the goings on in the country today. The Services have always been the most secular of organisations, and I would add that the Navy is perhaps a leader in this regard. It has no doubt something to do with the environmental compulsions—the saying "we sink or swim together" says it all.

Every war brings with it tales of heroism and gallantry - and so it was in 1971 too. Courage, compassion and gallantry at its best came from Veeru Mulla who was commanding the Khukri and was Capt F14, during the war. As narrated by a young sailor who was one of the survivors, he owed his life entirely to the gallantry of his Captain who, just a few moments before the ship went down, seeing this sailor without a lifebelt, took his own off and gave it to him saying '*Bachey yeh le, aur Ja*'. Captain Veeru Mulla went down with the Khukri, as did many others like Cdr Oommen the Engineer Officer, Jack Suri the No.1, Lt. Kundanmal and my ex steward from the Naval Academy Ldg Std Verghese and so also 70 more brave men who were lost in that incident. These were precious lives which were sacrificed for upholding the honour and integrity of this land. Veeru will always remain as a shining example for future generations of officers and men.

Keeping the sailors happy and their morale high on board, necessarily entails an efficient system of caring for the families, especially when ships are away from the home

port for nearly eight months, July 1971 to Feb 1972, as was the case with Beas. Inevitably this is an area for the Naval wives, their Organisations and Fleet Office Staff. The wives of the crew of INS Beas, with Lolly as team leader, played a wonderful role in keeping the closest links with the families - especially of the sailors who had homes in Navy Nagar, Colaba. With rumours and false propaganda emanating from several sources, it was all too easy for families without authentic sources of information, to panic or work themselves into a state of depression and anxiety. The sinking of Khukri added a new dimension, driving the entire situation that much closer to home. For us in the Navy, this was perhaps the first time that we faced the loss of a warship with such large casualties. No one believed it could actually happen to us - but it did. For Lolly and the children, living already under the tensions of the ship being away, a direct involvement with tragedy at the human level came through Cissy Oomen who lived across the landing from us on the ninth floor of 'Revati' and whose Engineer husband George, also went down with the Khukri. So it was 'action stations' round the clock, with every one from the girls, to our faithful Annie Ma, and Lolly taking it in turns through many traumatic days and nights, to help Cissy come to terms with her grief and loss. Many a night was spent together in a haze of rum, cigarettes and black coffee - the only way that Cissy would accept Lolly's insistence on spending nights with her. To their credit neither became an alcoholic. Talking of profiles in human courage - we have continued to keep in touch and watch as Cissy rebuilt her life in Kottayam, ran a successful gas agency, and eventually mustered up courage to dedicate the Cochin War Memorial at our invitation.

But all the work and efforts played their role—and the families remained steadfast even when Pak Radio announced the sinking of the Beas. I believe this announcement came soon after the loss of the Khukri. On returning home from deployment in the east, and getting to know all these details made me even more convinced that we need to do something on a more institutionalised basis regarding family support. Indeed you may say that was the genesis as it were of the '*Kalyan Chakra*' or Family Support Service, which a further twenty years down the road, we accepted as a necessity and brought into the Naval System of



'Personnel Services' management. As with any other new idea, there were differing views, but I am happy to say that after some considerable debate it was finally accepted by the Service. I was happy to see that this scheme has taken firm roots in most of our Naval establishment during the past few years.

Any Navy, any service, exists by definition to be able to prove its mettle in an actual theatre of war - which is when all the years of training, exercising and planning are finally tested and challenged. And it was perhaps in 1971, for the first time in our post-independence history, that the Indian Navy was really tested at sea. Professionalism certainly peaked in most areas of naval warfare which resulted in us inflicting some telling blows on the adversary, whilst accepting some losses on our side as well.

From my 'worms-eye' view as a young commander in command, everything had gone off wonderfully, and we were thrilled with the thought that we had even turned away the mighty Seventh Fleet from entering the Bay of Bengal.

On the whole, as small cogs in the wheel, we felt justifiably proud about our achievements at sea. We did our jobs on hand and were not particularly concerned with what was going on in the corridors of power in New Delhi or for that matter even in the Command HQ's.

The Robins On Your Dresser

VAdm S P Govil

I watched the 71 war sitting in Naval Headquarters, carrying out the duties of one of the four War Room Commanders. One got an excellent overview of the deeds and sometimes misdeeds of our war heroes. Since the gallantry awards were being announced almost every third day, I with one or two others were burning midnight oil to write citations for our heroes, to keep up with the award lists.

It was on a late Wednesday afternoon (we had make and mend on Wednesday those days), after the war, in the second half of December 1971, that I with the family were relaxing in the comfort of our home, free from war room duties. We had even been bold enough to invite some

friends for dinner including LCdr Manu Sharma (the Ex O and survivor of INS Khukri) to come and share pork chops with us, something that he loved.

It was at this time that our phone rang, with DNI on the line. After some pleasantries he asked me if I knew a gentleman called Shamshudin Alam Choudhry. I jogged my memory and told him that the only person I could recollect by that name was Shamshu Choudhry, a Bengali Pakistani who was at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich with us in 1955 and who had done Subs courses with us in the U.K. I could sense the excitement in DNI's voice when he said that I had scored a bull's eye. He went on to say that Shamshu with some of his colleagues and their families was in Delhi having escaped from Pakistan through Afghanistan and Iran, and now transitting through India to the newly independent Bangladesh. They had had a harrowing experience. DNI asked me if I would look after them for the evening, give them dinner and the comfort of our home, to which I readily agreed. There were six families with children, and all them would be with us in about an hour time.

As my wife and I were busy sorting out the logistics for the evening, we worried about Manu Sharma and his pork chops, and the influx of these good Bengali muslims. It was no less than a war time operation to get dinner ready for twenty odd people in just over an hour, but manage, we did.

It was great meeting Shamshu, his colleagues and their families after a gap of 16 years and learn of their escapades. My dear wife was busy making beds and comforting some of the ladies and children who were exhausted and keeping an eye on the kitchen.

After making a considerable dent in my alcohol holdings, dinner was brought to the table, when we noticed most of the male members attacking the pork chops, relishing them and complimenting my wife for the excellent preperation. The rest of us for whom the chops had been cooked made do with whatever else had been cooked. It was nearly midnight by the time our guests left, but it turned out to be an excellent evening. We heard no more of our friends after that evening other than that they had reached Dacca safely.

Many years later, in August 1983, when I was the Chief of



Staff of the Western Naval Command, we received a message from the Naval Headquarters that the CNS Bangladesh Navy, Rear Adm MA Khan who was concurrently the Deputy Chief Martial Law Administrator and Minister for Railways was transiting through Bombay on his way from Colombo to Dacca. Even though this visit of his was as a Railway Minister and he would be met by the Maharashtra State officials, I was asked by my C-in-C to be present at the airport to receive Rear Adm and Mrs Khan.

Waiting at the bottom of the ladder, I saw them come out of the aircraft and greeted them with a smart salute. From then on I could sense that the two of them were staring at me and talking in whispered tones in Bengali. After exchanging pleasantries, I escorted them to the State Govt car and was about to bid good-bye when all of a sudden they asked me to travel with them in their car. They insisted that I sat with them in the rear. As the car moved they continued to talk in Bengali, but this time I gathered that they were talking about me.

A little while later, Mrs Khan asked me if I was a Commander in 1971 and whether I was posted in Delhi, to which I replied in the affirmative. She then spoke loudly in English and said to the Adm "See I told you so". It was then that the mystery was resolved. Adm and Mrs Khan,

then Lt Commander and Mrs Khan had been our guests in our home on that fateful day in 1971. She could remember every detail about our home - particularly the bedroom where she had rested for those few hours. The pictures on the wall, the lace mat and in particular the two robins on our dressing table, were etched vividly in her mind. "I knew I was finally safe when Mrs Govil tucked me up in bed" she said.

From then on the Khans did not want to know any one else. That evening at the dinner hosted by them at the Taj Mahal hotel we were made to feel as if we were their Chief Guests. They showed us great courtesy, sometimes a little embarrassing for us, as my C-in-C, the Chief Secretary and their ladies were at the same table. They made it known that in their hour of difficulty, we had given them comfort and made them feel wanted.

On their return to Dacca, the Admiral wrote us an exceedingly nice and warm letter which I still have. We heard no more about them for a few years until one day we read in the papers that he had passed away after a massive heart attack. God bless his soul.

□□

AN INVITATION TO....

One forenoon the Pakistani General who was doing the Imperial Defence College course with me in 1967 told me that Admiral AR Khan, their Defence Minister was in London and had asked me to lunch with him that day at his hotel. Akram Khan was a friend of long standing. We were cadets together in the merchant training ship Dufferin in Bombay in the late 30's and later term mates and brother 'G' officers in the pre-partition RIN. We had lost touch after 1947.

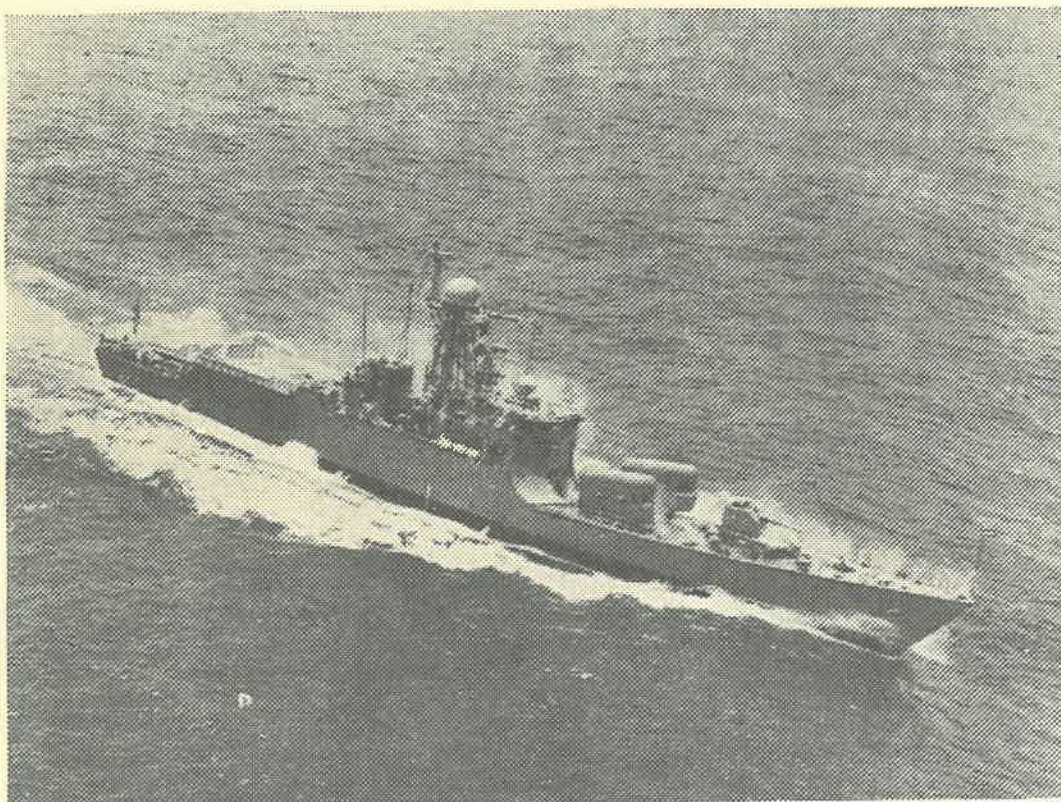
The lunch with Akram was a small family affair with just his daughter, who was studying in England, and his one time Flag Lt then doing the Staff Course at Greenwich. Over a very pleasant lunch we recalled our old days together and our subsequent careers. For my part I congratulated him on his rapid rise in the Pakistan Navy followed by his elevation as the political head of the armed forces of Pakistan. It was during this conversation that Akram, who had a great sense of humour, reminded me with a twinkle in his eyes of an incident in Bombay, during the 1965 conflict between our two countries. I could hardly expect him to have knowledge of it. Admiral Khan was at that time Pak Naval Chief and I was Captain of our carrier Vikrant.

Vikrant was about to start a major refit in Bombay when trouble arose with Pakistan. We hurriedly boxed up all machinery that had been opened up, raised steam and proceeded to Trombay to embark ammunition. One morning that the ship was at Trombay, the Naval ADC to the Governor of Bombay telephoned my wife conveying an invitation from Dr and Mrs Cherian to both of us to join them for a quiet lunch. They happened to be old family friends of my wife and were most kind to us while in Bombay. My wife told the ADC that while she could attend, I was on board my ship and could not be contacted. The ADC said he would do the needful. He subsequently made out a signal to me on board conveying the invitation and informing me that my wife had already accepted. I of course had to regretfully decline, but the signal from the Naval ADC was put out in plain language on the harbour broadcast by the main signal office ashore without a thought to wartime security.

Two years later the late Admiral Khan had the pleasure of pulling my leg by recalling this signal which their HQ had intercepted, needless to say to my considerable embarrassment.

VAdm VA Kamath

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THE RANI OF NANCOWRY

Cdr H S Rawat

During World War I, the German battleship Emden prowled the waters of the Bay of Bengal, striking terror in Madras, whose eminent citizens hastily headed for the hills of the Nilgiri. In the village of Champin in Nancowry harbour, one small woman single handed routed the prowler by the simple expedient of running up the Union Jack on the tallest pole on the island. The German Captain Mullen interpreted that to mean that there was a British garrison and battery hidden in the jungles, and beat a hasty retreat, never to return. The little lady

was decorated by the British crown for her bravery and quick thinking. She, and later her daughter held sway over Nancowry as Chief Captains. She was 'Rani' Lachmi Ishlon of Nancowry.

Paying tribute to her ingenuity, Commanding Officers of visiting ships and other dignitaries called on her while visiting Nancowry. Many will remember her charm and dignity. Rani Lachmi Ishlon died in 1954 and her daughter Rani Lachmi reigned thereafter, until her death in 1988. These grand dames of Nancowry were cultured and elegant women. They were also very fond of gin, and visiting officers learned to present them with a bottle or two, though Rani Lachmi stopped drinking in her old age.

Rani Lachmi Ishlon maintained valuable documents which would have been a historian's delight. Sadly, the Japanese destroyed them during their occupation of the islands in World War II.

After their surrender in October 1945, the Rani restarted with a visitors book. Today this is a veritable 'who's who' of the Indian Navy.

The first entry in the visitor's book was on 4

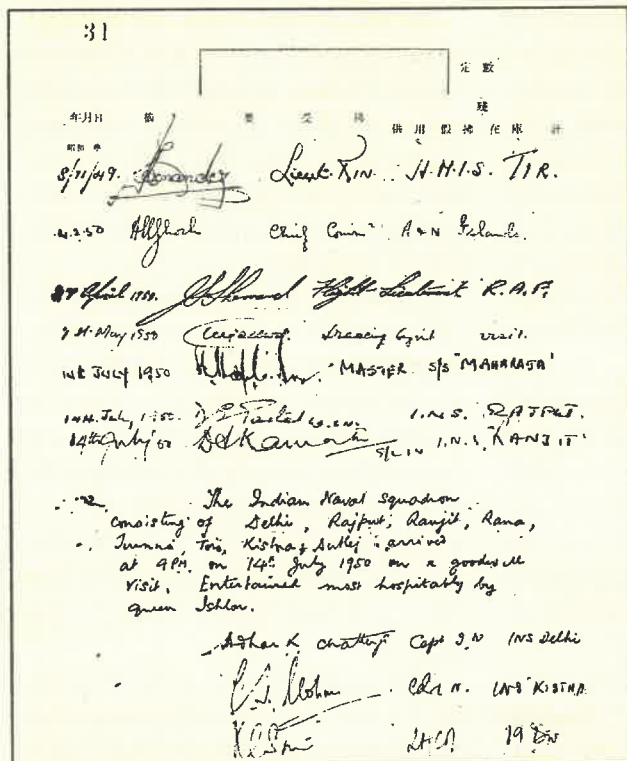
Dec 1945, by Major A C Morell of the 1st Battalion 7 Rajput Regiment. He wrote:

"Queen Ishlon of Nancowry and Captain Ram Krishan, the village Headman, today entertained the officers of the Detachment in Ram Krishan's hut in Malacca. There was singing and dancing by the villagers. Ram Krishan and the Rani gave presents of shells and wooden figures to the officers. In return I have given Ram Krishan the following articles for himself—one mosquito net, one field service cap olive green with a Rajput Regiment badge, one blanket and one bag of rice.

"Ram Krishan has been most helpful and hospitable towards us. Should any future visitors read this and who may take photographs of the island and its inhabitants, I would be most grateful if they would send copies of any photographs to me at the address given below. Films are quite unobtainable and therefore I have been unable to take any pictures."

The first Naval Officer to sign the Visitor's Book was VAdm J H Godfrey, Flag Officer Commanding, Royal Indian Navy (FOCRIN) on 10 Jan 1946, when he visited the harbour on board HMIS White Boar. Present with him was Lieut Jal Cursetji (later Chief of the Naval Staff).

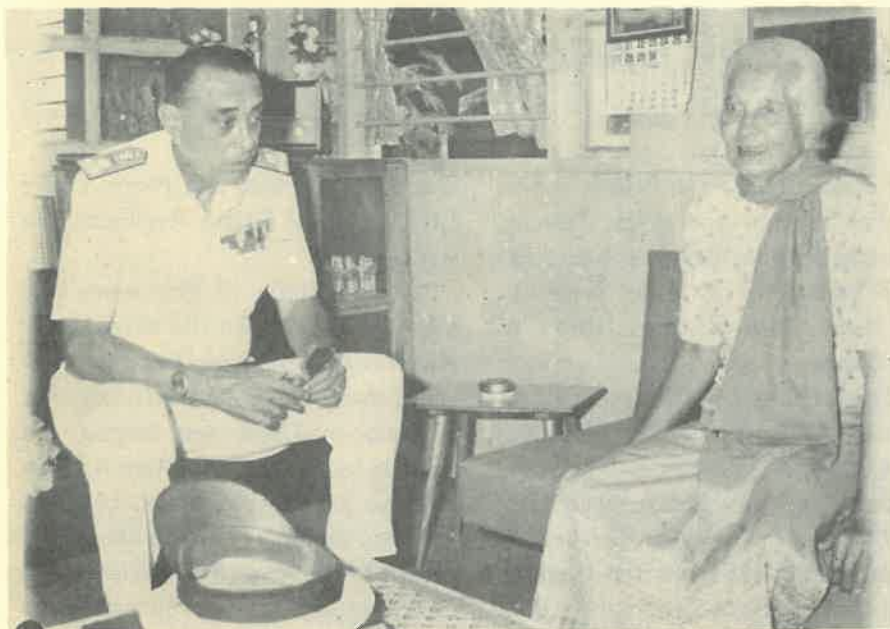
HMIS Rajputana visited Nancowrie in November 1946. Names are often difficult to decipher. Some of them are: R D Katari (LCdr RIN), T S Dhindsa (SLt RIN), M Hasan (Lt RIN),



A page from the Rani's Diary

Cdr HS Rawat was commissioned into the Navy in April 1974. He is a specialist in Navigation and Direction. He commanded INS Cheetah during the first ever IN operation with the United Nations in Somalia. He is now commanding INS Kardip.

THOSE WERE THE DAYS



Ronnie with the late Rani Lachmi of Nancowry — 1981

S H Sarma (Lt RIN), J S Mehra (Lt RIN), H D Kapadia (Lt (F) RIN), Kirpal Singh (Lt RIN) and O S Dawson (SLt RIN) on HMIS Kumaon). Admiral Palliser, C-in-C East Indies Station and his wife Lady Margaret Palliser visited Nancowry on HMS Glasgow in July 47. Other visitors in 1947–48 were M H Kutty (Lt RIN), R S Malia (Lt RIN), H P Madan (Lt (E) RIN), all from HMIS Sutlej.

In 1950, the Indian Naval Squadron consisting of IN Ships Delhi, Rajput, Rana, Tir, Kistna and Sutlej arrived on a goodwill visit and were entertained by Rani Ishlon. Among a flurry of signatures is that of Capt A K Chatterjee (IN) Commanding Officer INS Delhi.

Other interesting visitors in the next decade are: K Nanavati (LCdr, INS Rajput) and Surg Lieut J R Jamwal both in July 1950. S G Karmarkar, V A Kamath, Captains INS Delhi and INS Tir in Feb 52 in the company of S Jain and S C Chopra, Midshipmen.

F A Ballance (R Adm), Flag Officer

Flotilla called in Feb 54. Nancowry seems the happy hunting ground of cadet training ship Tir, while Delhi and Mysore, the cruisers called in regularly, as signatures of N Krishnan (Cdr INS Delhi) in company of B N Kavina (Mid, INS Delhi), and Ajit Chakraverti (R Adm), S N Kohli (Captain), S D Sharma (Lt), S Prakash (Cdr) of Mysore, testify. Lt A V Bharath of INS Kistna and Cdr R K S Gandhi of INS Betwa called in the 1960's.

INS Dharini, under command of O P Mehta, and INS Akshay record that they were soundly thrashed in football and volleyball by island teams, a tradition that has continued down the years, as the Nicobarese excel in both games. Even today they are a force to reckon with.

R Adm B A Samson (FOCIF) visited the islands with his ships Mysore, Trishul, Talwar and Kirpan, on completion of commonwealth Naval Exercises in Feb 64.

The Book records the arrival of the advance party of the Naval Garrison in

Champin village on 25 Feb 1964. They shifted to Kamorta to the site of the present INS Kardip on 1 Apr 1969. The tribals with their traditional fear of uniformed personnel were gradually won over, and the navy today maintains its close links with the Nicobarese. M P Awati (Cdr) visiting in Aug '64 wrote "It is a great honour to play host to Rani Lakshmi. Her kindness has left a great impression on us." The Rani had kept abreast of world affairs and day to day problems of the young, and continued to charm visitors with her elegance of wit and person. Her warmth and hospitality to visitors high and low is remembered by all. Traditional gifts from her, were bags of coconuts, tortoise shell, mother of pearl, ambergris, wooden figures and sea plants.

The list of visitors are too many to name individually. Adm A K Chatterji visited the Rani as Chief of Naval Staff and many of his successors followed the tradition set by him. Later visitors will also remember INS Kardip which was commissioned on 28 Sep 1975 by Cdr C R Menon.

Kardip is situated on one of the most picturesque hills of Kamorta Island. Its unobstructed view over Trinkat and the Nancowry islands, as well as the eastern entrance of the harbour, are invaluable practically and aesthetically. The establishment has been laid out with care and foresight. Today families of some officers and sailors also live there and have been a great morale booster.

Rani Lachmi passed away in 1988. She continues to live in the memories of countless men of the Navy who recall visiting her island home in one of the loveliest natural harbours anywhere in the world.

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FIFTY YEARS AFTER

Second Officer Pauline Thomas (WAC (I) 810)

Reader, if my memory is shadowy then be tolerant. It was an honour to be invited to join the 1995 lunch of the Navy Foundation and a pleasure to meet "retired" officers at Kotah House. Kotah House—the birthplace of my joining the R.I.N... I was on holiday, Mr and Mrs J G Taylor of La Martinere, Lucknow, were now in Naval uniform and living there. Meg gave me a pep talk about serving in the War, not teaching, and arranged for Capt S N Thomson to interview me for the WRINS. Many women were in Ciphers in South Block. Lady James, her husband a senior in Tata's, was travelling around India to recruit women "to release a man" and join the WACID. A few months later I was in G Block hutments in a small room with a WRIN officer and a "rating" working on recruitment rules, regulations, etc. It was the Ratings section, ruled by "Sujji" Thomson, to whom I give credit for our early organisation. When the men got fed up, for their hours were long, they would grumble, "are we here to look after our ratings or work for the WRINS?" WAC(I)'s signed up for Local or General Service, and our shortage of accommodation improved when Sikandra Road (Officers) and Feroze Shah (other ranks) hostels were ready. I first lived in a tent, put up in part of the present National Museum, so the teasing was "How are the Asian Antiquities?" for the three wings.

Once a week was drill outside Rashtrapati Bhawan. On one occasion our petty officer was absent and to his embarrassment a young nervous Lieutenant faced this group of women Name: Ajit Chakraborty. As an in-

structor in INS Talwar, Then lieutenant Nanda met WRINS, and recalls that after a lecture a courageous one stood up and told him not a word had been understood. He confessed it would be amazing if it was otherwise.

Our first group for naval instruction went to INS Feroze (Bombay) and we were housed in Admiral's House. Where are you Ala Ditta? I was in self-inflicted disgrace atleast twice. Out late socialising with a couple of young RN officers, dozing during the lecture, wakened when a piece of chalk hit me, to the amusement of the others. Worse, when our group was taken round a Dutch ship, an invitation to have a drink, was promptly accepted and when our popular Instructor joined us he was furious that we had been offered good, neat Dutch gin. Innocent, ignorant me! When it came to marching off smartly, those on either side of me assisted my wobbly legs not to let the side down.

In reading "Quater-deck" names strike memories. WRINS and RIN were getting to know one another. Saturdays could find a group dancing at the D.G. Club or the Chelmsford. Chippy S. and Robin B. do you remember how we handled the "gatecrasher" Reggie S. joining us and then becoming the life and soul of the party? Krishnan could tell tales and keep one laughing. Dancing

with him on one occasion he announced he had asked Queen Elizabeth for a dance... "after all my rank was higher than her husband's". One was inclined to believe him.

Today in the UK there is a WAC(I) Association. In October we have our Annual Lunch at the Victory Services Club, London and welcome friends and husbands. Our Association is also a member of the Indian Army Association and are encouraged to swell our numbers by attending the Wreath Laying Ceremony at St. Paul's Cathedral at a date near November 11th. Optional—a good lunch at a nearby pub. On the floor, beside Army memorial tablets, is a brass plaque "WAC(I)", there thanks to the influence of Lady Carlisle Monckton. The old guard, like myself, is ageing, but at gatherings, conversation still flows about active service in the three wings during WW II (till 1945-46).

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Women officers both, a half century apart



A VOICE FROM THE PAST

Lt Norman Cardoza

Norman Cardoza was commissioned in 1944. He did his training at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, and later at HMS Ceres at Wetherby, Yorkshire. He served on the HMS Liverpool, Lord Mountbatten's flag ship. He was then an instructor at Venduruthy. In June 1952, he was posted to INS Tir. His last letter home, written a day before his death, speaks of the fun he had during Tir's cruise to the Far East. Norman Cardoza died on 23 July 1952 in South Galathea Bay in the Great Nicobar, in a whaler accident. He could have saved himself but stayed to help his stricken sailors and was carried out to sea. On



an appeal from his brother Cecil, Adm R L Pereira, then CNS had a memorial erected on the site of his grave in 1980. Norman had decided to stay on in India despite the fact of his parents having their home in Karachi and his three brothers having cast their lot with the Pakistan Army and Air Force. The Cardozas were originally from Jodhpur where their father lived. Cecil Cardoza would love to hear from any of Norman's mates. He lives at 5 Hawthorne Close, Petts Wood, Kent BR5 1LS, England. Cecil Cardoza has shared this letter from Norman, written on 10 Sep 1949, with QD. — Editor

M

San Remo
10th Sept. 49

My dearest Mum & Dad,

Trust you received my short letter written just before we left Malta. We sailed on the 6th morning in company with Euryalus, another cruiser. For three days, we took part in various exercises. We were in a convoy for the first two, composed of over a dozen warships, and were "attacked" by aircraft. They did come in very low, wave hopping so to speak. The first night, we anchored in St. Paul's Bay in Malta, carrying out a night shoot immediately before. Star shell was used, on explosion, an orange flare floats slowly down illuminating the target. On the 8th, we became an enemy cruiser and attacked the convoy. I was in the office working and couldn't follow what was happening, but I've no doubt we sank every ship. That night, we had to shadow the convoy. For this, as for the night shoot, we had to darken ship. Every door & scuttle was closed and the ship became as hot as hell. But it was wonderful out on deck. We were racing along in glorious moonlight. Could have put the latter to some purpose if allowed ample opportunity.

The second night out of Malta, I was one of the five invited to dinner by the Admiral. The others were the Capt, Flag Lt, Adm's Secy, an Army Capt and a Sub. We were all at ease right from the start. The Admiral is definitely very handsome but does look a bit aged at close quarters. Quite a large part of the conversation was confined to India—for my benefit. He told me of his difficulties with Kashmir and also Jodhpur, while I told him

of our connection with the place.

Apparently the old HH died in the middle of the delicate proceedings and the present one was being a bit difficult, as Jinnah had made some pretty generous promises for joining Pakistan. So Mountbatten sent for Ju and as the latter came in his eyes were full of tears and he said "My father's dying words were that you were his best friend and that I should always take your advice. What should I do?" That saved the day. Kashmir was a bit different. Mountbatten had told the ruler that he should join one of the Dominions and to make up his mind soon, in any case before the Partition. He wavered, tried to stay independent and all the trouble started. Later he asked to see Mountbatten and then attempted to explain why he never took the advice. He said, "Without doing anything, look at the trouble there is. What would have happened if I had done something?"

The Admiral was very friendly throughout. He has a number of beautiful presents from India.



The Memorial at Galathea Bay, Great Nicobar

The most interesting is one invented and presented by the present Ju HH. It is a large heavy looking pencil. Then one removes the lead and its container, turns a ring at the end to open a chamber in the centre into which a .22 round slips, pull the ring outwards to cock it, and you have a handy little weapon. He first went to Ju in '21 with the Prince of Wales and played his first game of polo there. We didn't stay very late as there was work for him to do in connection with the exercises.

We arrived in San Remo yesterday morning. It is a delightful little bay, with houses fringing the shore right round, then thinning into the hills immediately behind. We are anchored in the bay with another destroyer. This morning two minesweepers joined us. They've gone alongside, the lucky blokes. I was on duty yesterday, so didn't go ashore. Most of the fellows did and I've heard all the yarns of the Casino, etc. All the officers have been made members of a tennis club and also given free passes to the casino. I shall take advantage of both, but more of the former. In fact we are going down this afternoon. We shall be here till the 15th, when we push off to Villefranco for another 6 days there. We finally return to Malta on Oct 12th.

Our three destroyers join us for exercises about Oct 8th. If they leave immediately after, I shall take passage out in one of them. Otherwise, I'll get a normal passage out...

Yours lovingly,
Norman

□□

TWELVE HENS AND I

Mrs Bubbles Ghandhi

Of all the houses I lived in during my thirty years as a naval wife "Iscoyd" in Wellington was the house I loved the most. It was large enough for family and friends, but not too big to manage without a "retinue". It was just what a home should be.

On the hill above the house were the servants quarters, marked by the M.E.S. in eighteen inch high letters — "Iscoyd Sts. Qtrs. 1-13". As well as these were several spacious rooms adjoining the "cookhouse", which had a covered passage leading to the pantry in the main house.

With so much space we felt we ought to make some use of it, and at that time wine making and poultry keeping seemed to be the "in" thing. We tried our hand at both, and strange as it may seem, people actually drank the wine. But the big thing was to be poultry, which everyone thought was a good idea. The vet, who was treating one of our dogs, was most enthusiastic, and volunteered help whenever needed.

We picked up some government issue pamphlets from somewhere, perused them carefully, and then consulted our friend the vet. The rival merits of White Leghorns and Rhode Island Reds was discussed, with the decision in favour of the latter, there must have been some reason for

this, but it now eludes my memory.

The vet was to buy us a dozen female chicks and keep them in his care till they had reached a certain size and been inoculated against Ranikhet disease. In the meantime we were to get a room ready for them and the largest of these adjoining the kitchen was selected.

Our hens were to be reared by the "deep litter" method, (as I think it was called). This meant that they never left their room to potter and peck around the garden. In this way they would not pick up nasty parasites; and though deprived to some extent of sunlight, this would be compensated for as their feed would be irradiated with vitamin D.

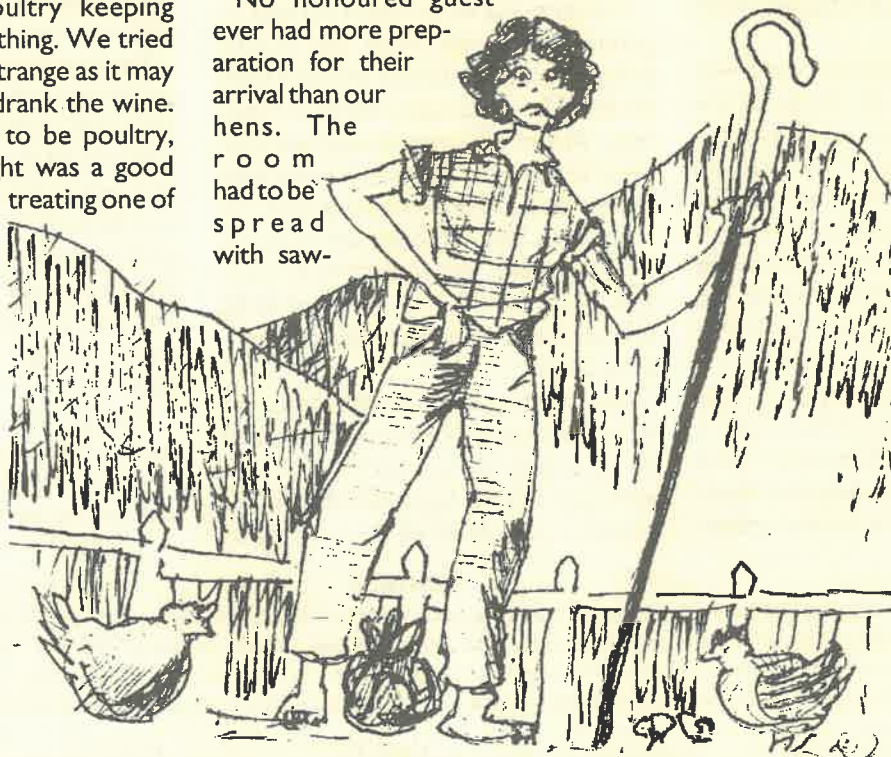
No honoured guest ever had more preparation for their arrival than our hens. The room had to be spread with saw-

dust to a depth of 4 to 6 inches, which was a lot of sawdust and involved many trips to Lower Coonoor, returning up the hill with a heavily laden car. Then we bought a large sack of Shaw Wallace poultry feed marked "Grower" for growing birds and two flat earthenware dishes, one for feed and one for water.

In the mean time the vet rang up to say that he would have to replace seven chicks, and start all over again, with their inoculation etc., as they had turned out to be male. This did not actually surprise me as I had been somewhat sceptical in the first place about anyone's ability to tell the sex of a day old chick.

Eventually the great day dawned and we collected our dozen pullets and let them loose in their new home. They made a bee-line for their dish of feed and did nothing but guzzle all day, and for all we knew at night too. The sack of feed was emptying much faster than anticipated, when, fortunately, the vet called to see how his former charges were getting on.

He told us that they would get ill if they were allowed to eat all the time,



Bubbles lent her special brand of grace and elegance to the high profile appointments held by her husband VAdm R K S Ghandhi both within and outside the Navy. Those who know her, greatly appreciate her spontaneous charm. Her sense of humour, especially when the joke was on herself will be readily recognised in this article

THOSE WERE THE DAYS

and told us to get a "dispenser". This could be filled once a day and would drip the grain slowly into its saucer-like feeding tray. This we duly acquired at not inconsiderable expense. The lack of sleeping accommodation for the birds was also pointed out. This did surprise me, and I wondered if I would have to request the M.E.S. for "one cot newar—hens for the use of". But no, it appeared that for a good nights sleep a bird must perch, be it wild or domesticated. What we needed therefore was something for them to perch on. Luckily on our next fishing expedition we found on elegantly shaped and sizable piece of driftwood. It came home on the roof of our Fiat and was a great success with the hens, so we presumed they were now getting a good nights rest.

Then came the day when their feed had to be changed from "Grower" to "Layer," and after that we began to look for some results.

Our man Jeeves, whose name was Joseph and who was in charge of the hens, began looking around every morning in search of eggs. One day he appeared with a puzzled look on his face and a strange object on a plate. It was a grubby white thing, the size and shape of an egg, but it had no shell. Yet again I rang the vet, who probably wished he had never started us on poultry. He replied crisply "That menas they lack calcium in their diet". I gathered that when free-range hens root around for worms they also ingest small quantities of grit which, some-

how, got metamorphosed into egg-shell. No grit no shell. The remedy was broken-up oyster shell, also sold in bags by Shaw Wallace. At that stage we were relieved to learn that it was oyster shell and not pearls that had to be fed to them.

After that addition to their diet we got proper eggs with shells, but even these were a bit of a disappointment as the yolks were very very pale. "But are they not getting any green vegetables?" asked the vet, when appealed to. This again was something I had not been told. "No problem, we have masses of rhubarb—it is growing almost wild, so they can have rhubarb leaves" I said. A strangled gasp was followed by a pregnant pause, and the words came tumbling out "No, no, rhubarb is poison for poultry. The outer leaves of cabbage and cauliflower should be given to them."

In due course we got plenty of eggs—proper ones with shells and golden yolks. We ate half-boiled, new laid eggs, for breakfast, and savoured their freshness. In the pleasure of our achievement we ignored the fact that our eggs were costing us eleven rupees each. As time went on, the cost, we thought, would be less, but somehow it never was. Much later we learned that to be economically viable one needed a hundred birds.

The months passed quickly, and soon the time to leave Wellington drew near, which meant we would have to part with our twelve hens, which we had become quite fond of. At any rate as

one can be of such unprepossessing and uninspiring creatures.

There were no volunteers to take them over. Our friendly vet, whose speciality was, in fact, birds had been transferred. His place had been taken by a lady whose speciality was bovine caesareans, and she did not want them either.

Eventually, our odd-job boy, who lived somewhere in Iscoyd Sts. Qts. 1–13, said he would keep them. In retrospect I am shocked to realise how gullible I was. Our cook would go to the bazaar and return with a chicken for which I paid, and into the pot it would go. The plan was engineered by the Lord and master, who knew that I would not be able to eat our own birds, but would happily tuck into one that had been bought. Who shared the profits, I do not know, but in those days I still believed everything my husband told me. Now I know better.

The hen-house was cleared out. The perch was broken up, and as we had no gas there in those days, was used to feed the kitchen fire, and all the sawdust and chicken droppings were swept out. According to the experts it would make excellent manure, and indeed it did. Our roses bloomed as never before and our sweetpeas were a riot of colour, and grew in unbelievable profusion.

Though we left no hens for our successors, we did leave them a beautiful garden, which in great measure, was due to my twelve poor hens.

□□

"I" TROUBLE

Larry Scherwitz, a University of California psychologist, taped the conversation of nearly 600 men, a third of whom were suffering from heart disease, the rest being healthy. Listening to the tapes, he counted how often each man used the words 'I', 'me' and 'mine'. Comparing his results with the frequency of heart disease, Scherwitz found that men who used the first person pronoun most often had the highest risk of heart trouble. By following his subjects for several years he found that the more a man habitually talked about himself, the greater the chance he would have a coronary.

Counting the times a person said "I" was an ingenious way to quantify self absorption, and to me there's something very fitting in the fact that the less you open your heart to others, the more your heart suffers. The antidote, Scherwitz concluded, was to be more giving. "Listen with regard when others talk. Give your time and energy to others; let others have their way; do things for reasons other than furthering your own needs". In those words he goes well beyond quantifiable data to issues of love and compassion, which appeal to our intuitive sense that an open, loving person should age well.

— Deepak Chopra in "Ageless Body. Timeless Mind"

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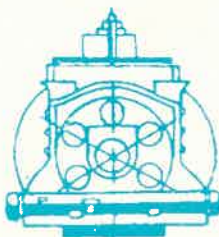
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MEDICAL ETHICS

RAdm K R Nair

In the summer of 1948 HMIS Delhi visited the ports of littoral East Africa and the islands of the Indian Ocean. The first warship of independent India to call at these ports, she received a great welcome. In Mauritius, with more than half the population of Indian ancestry, they declared a holiday for the entire country during the time we lay in Port Louis. Crowds came out in boats just to salute the Indian tricolour on our jackstaff. The social engagements were indeed heavy. We had at times to deal with conflicting demands and so it required care and effort to ensure that the correct number of officers and men attended the many functions ashore. Captain Brown commanding the Delhi entrusted me with the job.

The Mayor of Port Louis was a patriotic gentleman. It was rumoured that he was not exactly pro-India. Apparently he complained to the Indian High Commissioner that his invitation to the officers of the Delhi for a champagne party had not been acknowledged. The fact was that he had only casually told the Captain that he would like to throw such a party but had not specified any time or date. Captain Brown quickly cleared up the misunderstanding. He sent for me one afternoon. His instructions were precise. "The Mayor of Port Louis has invited us for a pre-lunch champagne party tomorrow. Organise a good team of about twenty officers who can drink him dry and still stay on their feet". With the talent avail-

able on board that should not be difficult I thought as I hurried off to consult my peers of the Shadow Cabinet, a fraternal group of Lieutenant Commanders who prided themselves as being the backbone of the cruiser's organisation. We made out the list. Suregon LCdr Mohan Dave, our doctor was a natural choice. He was an engaging personality. He had received his medical training in Guys Hospital, London and was never tired of reminding us how lucky we were to have him as MO. He had operated on a seaman for appendicitis on board HMIS Kistna during a raging Atlantic gale. He confided that he found a perfectly healthy appendix but removed it all the same as a prophylactic measure, in the best tradition of his Alma Mater.

At breakfast next morning the doctor took upon himself the conditioning of the team. "All of you of the first eleven" he said, "take plenty of butter with your

toast. Come to the sickbay at 1100 and I shall give you something to ensure that you do not see double, even with champagne up to the gills". He made us swallow a big spoon of olive oil each and then do some calisthenics to spread the oil on the stomach walls. "Now you can take on not only one Mayor, but the entire fraternity including the Lord Mayor of my home town, London. Now, go forth and conquer".

The Mayor and his officers received us at the Town Hall with elaborate ceremony. We were ushered into an ante-chamber and offered the choicest of scotch. Charles Nanda, our First Lieutenant who could see a fraud a mile away, spread the caution around not to touch the stuff but wait for the champagne. We toyed with our whiskey, made polite conversation and waited. At the stroke of twelve, double mahogany doors at one end of the room swung open disclosing a magnificent banquet hall. On a long table covered with snow-white damask and decorated with ferns and orchids stood rows of champagne glasses. Action was joined immediately. Toasts were proposed from either side while the steady popping of champagne corks confirmed that we had set a brisk pace. About one hour of this, and the champagne served started to become less chilled and finally not chilled at all. There were gestures and whispers between our host and his staff. The mayor then suggested that we ad-



Adm KR (Jerry) Nair retired from the Navy years ago, after having been C-in-C East in 1970. His friends remember with appreciation, his dry self deprecating humour and quick wit. In this article, he recounts an occasion, "where I had struck a blow for the honour of our Navy, in my humble way." "True," he says he has "seen a bit of fighting in Burma and the Atlantic, and have dodged Hitler's bombs in war time Britain. But since Independence, I have seen no action".

THOSE WERE THE DAYS

journal for a group photograph. Jai Mehra, our Navigator started to propose another toast, but the Captain noticing the empty glasses, led the way out for the photograph. Our mission was accomplished. We had drunk him dry. It was a peculiar sensation remaining stone cold sober with almost a bottle of the best Veuve Clicquot sloshing about inside.

To the credit of the Mayor he took it all in good spirit and did not betray the least rancour. In fact from a doubtful friend he had been converted into an ardent admirer of the Navy.

Retribution was swift. It caught up with us that night. Champagne is not

called 'bubbly' for nothing. It bubbled and frothed inside bringing that horrible taste and stench of olive oil into the mouth. I for one, could not even lie down much less catch some sleep. After a vain attempt to rest I came out of the cabin and in the alleyway met young Gilbert, the Captain's Secretary and Lieut George. The misery on their normally jovial faces told the tale. "Olive oil" I queried. They nodded. We decided to seek out the doctor. He would surely have some remedy some antidote.

Doc Dave lay stretched out on his bunk. He had managed to remove his shoes, but otherwise he was in the

ceremonial uniform he had worn to the Mayor's party. A few not too gentle prods in the ribs and he opened one bleary eye. I shook him until he sat up. "Doc, this olive oil. Haven't you any remedy?" we asked. "Olive oil, what olive oil?" he said querulously. "The vile stuff you made us take. Doesn't it upset you?" In solemn tones came the reply "Doctors do not take their own prescription. Against medical ethics. At Guys they told us---". His voice trailed off. He sank back in bed eyes closed. His brand new epaulettes with the red and gold of a suregon of the Navy glinted in the feeble light. They were from Gieves of his beloved London.

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CATCH OF THE CENTURY

This incident is slightly fishy and has never been recorded to the best of my knowledge, as World War II was still being fought.

Bombay had a major explosion in early 1944 when a ship blew up in Prince's Dock. This was the big bang that shook Bombay to the core.

At that time I was first lieutenant of Nilam one of the four Persian gun boats which were captured in an earlier action. George Tinley was my C.O. We were under sailing orders and left that evening for our anti-submarine patrol, off Bombay. We had a grand stand view of Bombay under a dense pall of smoke. In the morning there were lots of burnt out oil drums that had drifted out to sea during the night. On completion of our patrol, we anchored off the Gateway of India.

A little later the Nilam was once again due to go on patrol. On the appointed evening we were ready to proceed. As the cable officer, I started to, or rather tried to weigh anchor. Nothing budged and the bridge was informed of a foul anchor. By dint of effort some cable came in link by link. It was tough going, but you can imagine our surprise when a sunken dhow broke surface. Nothing that we could do



A dhow, similar to one that sank

would shake it loose, a dhow after all would be 150 – 160 feet long, if not more. We gently lowered our catch of the century and awaited dockyard assistance the following morning. A dockyard launch using the chain cable ultimately broke the ship free of its prize catch. Undaunted, the Nilam proceeded to sea to take up her delayed duties.

A remarkable occurrence, unlikely to be repeated in any form. This ill fated dhow could have been sailing in the danger zone at the time of the explosion. Some dhows did suffer damage through burning debris, even though they were some distance away from the dock. One can but wonder if there are any remnants of the wreck buried in the silt even after 50 odd years, or did it continue its drift to seaward, after being freed from Nilam's cable?

The Navy did render yeoman service at the site of the explosion, perhaps one of our old salts could high-light the services rendered in assisting the Bombay Port Trust and Fire Services. Gold bars were found in far away places.

Cmde HR Claudius

WORLD WAR II AND AFTER

Cmde L N C Jesudasan

News media in 1995 was full of nostalgia for World War II. Often forgotten in all the hype is the fact that officers and men from India served in ships of the Royal Navy and Merchant Marine, often in very dangerous waters. Cmde Jesudasan was among a small number of officers who served almost the entire period of the war. Here is his brief account of those times. Cmde Jesudasan marched in the VJ Day parade in Aug 95 in London, representing the Indian Navy

The outbreak of World War II, saw me on board the Cargo Ship SS Jumna as an Executive Apprentice. The ship had just arrived at the port of Sourabaya in the then Dutch West Indies island of Java. This was a neutral port as the Netherlands had not declared war on Germany.

At Sourabaya, there were both British and German cargo ships, all of them being painted black for camouflage. Crews from both nations were seen in the streets of Sourabaya but each went their own way. On completion of loading, we were ordered to proceed to Singapore and report to the Naval Authorities there who were to issue necessary routing instructions as also provide us with Confidential Books and codes. On arrival at Singapore, our 2nd Officer LCdr Noel Langley R N (Retd) promptly reported for duties with the Royal Navy and I took over as uncertified Third Officer with Third Officer's wages.

The voyage to Bombay was uneventful and whilst our cargo was being discharged, I visited the office of Registrar of Reserves of the Royal Indian Navy and offered my services to the Navy.

Whilst they were prepared to take me in as Midshipman in the Royal Indian Naval Reserves, Captain Blackwood of the Jumna, refused to let me sign-off, saying our Head Office was at London and only on arrival there could I leave the ship. When I reported this to the RIN Authorities, they asked me to remain with the Merchant Navy for the time being.

On our safe arrival at London, my indenture period was complete and I was signed off the vessel. I was now faced with making a choice — my old Second Officer friend Robert Notley, had obtained the Master's Certificate and joined SS Jumna as Captain. He wanted me to sail with him. On the other hand, it was a golden opportunity, to join the King Edward VIII Nautical College and obtain the 2nd Mates Certificate. It was fortunate that I opted for the latter course, as SS Jumna which carried transports to Alexandria was bombed in the Mediterranean by German bombers and sank without a single survivor.

After six weeks at the Nautical College, I asked the Principal's permission to sit for the Board of Trade Examination. He asked me how I thought I could get through the examination, when other candidates took the examination only after six months. However, he did not dampen my enthusiasm, and gave me the toughest question papers to work on. When I tackled these to his satisfaction, he let me appear along with 7 others, and believe it or not, I was the only one who got through the examination, which surely speaks highly of the training I had on board the Training Ship Dufferin.

However, my problems did not end there. Ships of Nourse were all East of Suez and despite efforts by Captain Coombs of the Navigators and Engineer Officers Union, I could not join any British Vessel as the Master's were reluctant to take on an Indian Officer. I met Judge Ameer Ali, who was recruit-

ing Indians for service with British Forces at India House, and he got very enthusiastic seeing that I could be granted a King's Commission and phoned up the British Admiralty. They asked me to apply but told me I would have to wait a couple of months for selection. I had also told Judge Ameer Ali that the Royal Indian Navy were prepared to take me in and he rang up a Colonel Bull at the India Office to tell him my name was registered at Bombay. He sent a confirmatory cable to India and I was appointed as Sub Lieutenant in the Royal Indian Naval Reserve and sent to India. I was given the Commission, and with this I went to M/S Gieves of Bond Street, who were prepared to give me all and every type of Naval Uniform on the understanding that I would pay £5/- per month on instalment basis, on the £50/- worth of blue and white uniforms I took home with me. Though I did not have so much as one day's naval training, I was wearing Naval Uniform as per the regulations. Every fortnight, I would visit Col Bull to see when I could be sent to India. He said that necessary transport was yet to be fixed and on every visit, he gave me £15/- as advance against pay.

I was commissioned on 2nd September 1940, and boarded SS City of Simla along with other servicemen and their families bound for India, only in November at Liverpool. We were in a convoy of 20 other ships and 19 of us were sunk off the coast of Ireland during two nights by German U-Boats. On the second night, SS City of Simla was torpedoed at two in the morning. The whole of the night there had been

THOSE WERE THE DAYS

frequent alarms and we were asked to collect at the lounge and other public places. During one of these occasions, I suddenly observed that the ship had taken a list and I walked out on deck and found the vessel stopped. I realised that the ship had been torpedoed and was sinking. Since, I was in Naval uniform, I proceeded to meet the Master of the ship and asked for directions. He told me that his first concern was to lower the life-boats and get the women and children into the boats. On the boat deck, I saw the Second Officer flashing a revolver. I then came on deck and saw life-boats alongside with rope ladder over the side. I carried children on my shoulders and got them into the boat. When the life boat was full, I was told to go in that boat and pull off from the ship.

By about five in the morning, a small coal vessel came alongside and took us on board. The Master wanted to take the City of Simla in tow which I told him was not practicable for a small vessel of his size. He was kind enough to suggest that I go to his cabin and to have a good drink from the bottle of scotch he had in the wardrobe. Of the 650 passengers aboard the City of Simla, nearly 100 were picked up by this collier. I myself was fully clad, but I found many of the other passengers with little clothing on. So I surrendered my burbery, coat and sweater to others. After a day at sea, the collier arrived at Gourrock at the entrance to the River Clyde. I met a Naval Officer in uniform who wanted to know whether I wished to go to London. I told him that I had no one in the U K and was told to book myself in at Bay Hotel next door and tell them that the Naval Welfare Officer had sent me, and to go and see him the next day at the Naval Headquarters at Gourrock. I was told that I was on one month's "survivors leave" and was given sufficient money and accommodation and board with a Scottish family, who were

indeed most hospitable. At the Naval Headquarters, another Naval Officer befriended me and looked after me during my stay there.

The month went by, and I now joined MV Britannia as a passenger at Glasgow. She did independent sailing, keeping well to the north and going close to Canada before arriving at Freetown for bunkers. From here, the vessel rounded the Cape of Good Hope and reached Bombay after a voyage of 42 days. On arrival at Bombay, I was given a week's leave to see my parents and family. I completed the short courses at H M S Dalhousie (six weeks) and was put on board HMIS Sonavati as Navigating Officer for patrolling off Bombay. By then the monsoon had broken and I did the grave-yard watch from mid-night to four in the morning. Other than the Captain, LCdr Maxwell B Hall of the RIN., I was the only officer who was a seaman. The other officers were from the Voluntary Reserve.

We did five days patrolling with two days in harbour. The patrol area was 30 miles off Bombay and every day we used to meet the minesweeper at the outboard. I was the Correspondance Officer as well, and used to get all letters ready on the first day itself. When I told my Captain that there were no letters for delivery to the minesweeper, he would go down and type a letter himself, and flash the same to me, which meant that I had to get the steel life-boat ready and lowered, with half-trained seamen in monsoon rough weather, take charge of the boat, and pull to the minesweeper. Its Captain who was keen to get back, would not slow down and we would pull ahead of the sweeps, and get alongside and deliver the letter.

By the time the monsoon ended, I was sent to stand-by HMIS Travancore, a minesweeping/anti submarine trawler, the first Indian war vessel, which was under construction at Garden Reach

Workshops at Calcutta.

We were told to go to Cochin, and whilst rounding Ceylon, a Wapiti plane flew over us and interrogated us. When we disclosed our identity, he wanted to know what we were doing there and didn't we know that there was a battle going on. (No one had seen fit to tell us). It was at this battle that HMS Hermes was sunk off Ceylon.

At Cochin, we started patrolling, four days at sea and two days at port. At that time a General Message was received asking for volunteers to undertake "dangerous duties". I volunteered and proceeded to Jamnagar. We had to sail in dhows and operate in the Arabian Sea, off Ras al Had, looking for submarines. We would flash a message to RAF planes based at Gwadar and Ras al Had and they would come and attack the submarine.

Early 1943 was a critical period, as by then Germans had come close to the Suez and the Japanese were in the Indian Ocean. All the oil had to come from the Persian Gulf, as the Allies had lost all oil from the Dutch West Indies/Borneo. I for one feel that if the Germans had bottled all the oil coming out of the Persian Gulf, they might indeed have won the war.

Scheme N.A. was with-drawn in May 1943 but just before that I was lucky to spot an Arab dhow reported to be carrying contraband cargo and managed to catch it, with R.A.F. aircraft flying above us. Commodore Nott who was in the headquarters ship Blincoe came and towed this vessel away, and this operation earned me a commendation from the Flag Officer Commanding Royal Indian Navy for "excellent work in respect operations in connection with the detention of dhows."

I was now deputed to HMIS Akbar—a Seamen's training establishment located near Thana where we initially lived in tents. Captain W A Jefford was the Commanding Officer—he became

THOSE WERE THE DAYS

the first C-in-C to command the Pakistan Navy). At HMIS Akbar we were churning out a batch of seamen every six months. Many of these came from villages and had not even worn a pair of shoes. At the start of the war, sailors in the RIN were either Punjabi Musalmans, (who were considered ideal for manning the guns) and Ratnagiri seamen (who were good at deck work). But by the end of the war, there came a vast change in the composition of seamen and officers.

There were said to be three types of officers in the Navy during the war. They were the Regular service officers who were trained at Dartmouth, the Naval Reserve officers who were from the Merchant Service and then we had the Volunteer Reserve Officers comprising of civilians. It was said that the Naval Reserve Officers were sailors but not gentlemen, the Volunteer Reserve Officers were gentlemen but not sailors and the Regular Officers were neither gentlemen nor sailors.

The unkindest cut so far as I was concerned came when the British Officers left and the Reserve Officers were taken into the regular Navy. Many of the Volunteer Officers who joined in 1942-43 were given seniority based on their age - and that seniority included periods when they were not in the service at all. Though I had been commissioned in September 1940, all these officers with adjusted seniority according to age superceded me.

□□

APRIL FOOL

INS TIR, training ship was commanded by Commander Kirpal Singh with Lt Chand as the Navigating Officer. Other Officers appointed on board were GO Lt Singal, Bosun Mr Chandaran and Schoolie Lt Shriramulu. Our training officer was Lt HML Saxena, universally called "Bhaisahib" in the Navy. For six months they tried to hammer the rudiments of naval subjects into our heads at the same time keeping up with our pranks. We were quite a handful.

We were on passage from Cochin to Bombay. It was middle watch. I raised the Mangalore light and quickly read up the "Pilot", on what it had to say about the light house, the town of Mangalore and its coast line, while Lt Singal, the OOW dozed on the Captains chair. Suddenly he stirred and growled, "What light is it cadet?" "Mangalore Light Sir", I replied. "What is Mangalore famous for?", was his next question. "Tiles? Manganese or? Coconuts? I tried, but in vain. None of the answers met with the GO's approval. Finally he said "My wife comes from Mangalore, you fool." He was obviously missing her and needed only slight prompting to begin typing a letter to her in the signalman's office on the Bridge. It was then that the telephone rang and the much awaited cue came.

"Quarterdeck reports that a cadet has fallen over board on the starboard side", I reported to the OOW feigning anxiety and concern. He leapt out of the Signal office shouting engine and wheel orders. "Starboard 30" - "Stop both engines" - "Half ahead

"Port — Midships", "Put on 20-inch projector lights and begin a visual search".

"Wheel jammed in Stbd 30 position Sir" replied a voice from the wheel house. "Steer by main engines" — "No response from the engine room on telegraph" squeaked the wheel house. "Use the telephone". "No reply from the engine room", repeated the wheel house. "Try the engine room cadet". "No reply Sir" I replied. There was an air of helplessness. I approached the OOW. "May I inform the Captain?" In two great leaps the Captain was on the Bridge and took in the situation. The ship was in endless tight Starboard turn, the 20-inch projector lights were swinging and of all the people the Schoolie had come up to take star sights in the middle of the night. The Captain understood. In a steely voice he spoke into the voice pipe, "Midships". "Wheel amidships Sir" came back the wheel house. "Half ahead both engines." "Doing half ahead sir" came a smart report from the wheel house. "Send for the training officer." The training officer came running up to the Bridge. "Muster all cadets and make a report" said the Captain. "Cadets mustered and all correct" replied the TO and he continued, "I must admit Sir, this was a crack from the cadets". For a moment the Captain was in two minds but just then the chief steward changed it all. He came bustling up to the Captain with a plate in hand and reported. "Your omelette Sir". The Captain could not control his grin any more. Suddenly, the atmosphere relaxed on the Bridge as he nodded to the OOW and said "I am going down Guns, but watch out, its 1st April today".

RAAdm PD Sharma

DOWN THE SALWEEN

Capt N S Tyabji

My affair with the wilderness areas of the sub-continent, of which Burma formed a part till its political separation from India in 1937, has bordered on the passionate with the major advantage of enjoying absolute freedom to do as I liked with my holiday and free time generally. It all really started when I was 17 with an over whelming attraction for the mystique surrounding the great jungles of the basins of the Irrawaddy, the Sittang and the Salween rivers, all flowing north to south and draining into the Bay of Bengal just south of Rangoon and the Gulf of Martaban respectively.

It was during the 'winter months' of 1931 that I set out on a longish solo trek from Thaton, a small town 120 miles due south of Rangoon and across the Pegu Yomas to the small township of Paun on the eastern bank of the Salween. From Paun I planned to 'raft' down the

Salween to Martaban at the head of the Gulf of Martaban—keeping fingers crossed.

Having covered the first 120 miles or so through the jungle in seven days, spending each night at one of the Mon villages which dotted these forests, I managed to repeat the performance on the last night, before Paun, as well. I reached the stockaded village just before sun-down in thundering rain, and on sounding the wooden rattle on the heavy log gate I was astonished at the alacrity of the response in that heavy downpour, by no less a person than the village Headman himself accompanied by his son, both carrying their heavy hunting dahs. After a swift look through a small aperture in the gate and finding me alone they quickly let me in to take a closer look. I doubt if they were greatly impressed by what they saw - a tiny rain-soaked figure under a large

scout hat carrying a bulging rucksack, pleading somewhat desperately for sanctuary for the night in a string of Mon and Burmese phrases memorised for just such an emergency. The son was obviously reluctant but the father, fortunately, was more accomodating and ordering his son to bring me something to eat, escorted me over to the village Common Hall, built on stilts where I was to spend the night. The meal soon arrived; it consisted of boiled rice with a bowl of Hinjo - vegetable soup garnished with dried prawns; and bidding me a good night's rest, the duo returned to their own spacious house for the night. I was soon fast asleep and, up again at four the next morning whilst still dark, I found the village humming with activity with the men preparing for a day's foray into the forest for hunting and collecting seasonal forest produce to be later sold or bartered for essential



Capt Tyabji joined the Navy during the War. Since his retirement he has been actively involved in environmental and animal welfare projects. He was honoured by the Duke of Edinburgh at a function in Hyderabad last year, for his valuable contributions in the World Wildlife Fund for Nature. The Tyabjis live in Hyderabad.

THOSE WERE THE DAYS



Receiving a memento from the Duke of Edinburgh in Hyderabad

supplies. After a few bowls of hot green tea and thanking my hosts for their hospitality I set out for Papun reaching the township at an easy amble round about sunset. It just happened that the DC, a young Englishman, was camping in the town and it was soon arranged that I should spend the next 4 days at the local school which happened to be closed for the holidays.

I had already decided to make the journey to Moulmein on one of the huge complexes of bamboo rafts, which were put together at bamboo collecting centres further up the river, for the very practical purpose of getting the large consignments of bamboo to Moulmein for onward despatch by rail to Rangoon and other markets. Each of these complexes was made up of anywhere between 30 or 40 individual rafts, each measuring approximately 100' x 30' x 4' (depth). The rafts were linked to each other by a length of rope on each side with sufficient slack to allow for effective reticulation whilst taking bends along the river's course. Each such raft constituted an independent unit in charge of an experienced waterman invariably assisted by his family. The leading raft would be under command of the most experienced raftsman available with deep knowledge of the river in all its phases and

moods.

Each raft carried a bamboo hut for the family which, in our case, included 4 children between 4 and 12 years of age. Also a dug-out canoe and basic household pots and pans, enough to cope with an over-all complement of ten, including a crew of four hired men which included me as well, since that was part of the deal. I was most

fortunate in being able to get a berth on the leading raft on payment of Rs. 1/- per day including meals and on the absolute understanding that I would be considered a member of the hired crew and expected to carry out all chores which formed part of their responsibilities. Which in effect amounted to running and maintenance of the raft as directed. The lashing required regular checking since any un-noticed slack could lead to a disaster. This required periodic dives into the river and very often when there was nothing else on hand we would spend long periods gambolling along.

We moved on the ebb for something like 4 to 6 hours per day and would be moored up well before sun-set since there could be no movement on the river during the dark hours. Bringing the huge floating structure, which in our case was made up of 30 odd rafts (stretching over a length of almost half-a-mile) to a halt, required great skill and raftsman's part of the leader and I never tired of watching this nightly performance with considerable care and admiration for the instincts and skills of

these raftsmen.

If everything was done by sunset and if there was some light left the five of us including the 'master' would form up into a circle for the game of 'chinlon' played with a cane 'ball' approx 6" in diameter. The game itself, though simple enough in its rules, required considerable skill in keeping the 'ball' in the air without letting it touch ground using all parts of the body excluding the hand. The Burmese, Malays and Thais are experts at the game and it is enthralling to watch a good match which these days is played across a net. I enjoyed it all thoroughly and the sheer joy of physical exertion in doing things which needed doing, soon led to a growing self-confidence and sense of pride, in being treated as an equal by the rest of the crew.

The last meal of the day would be taken just before sun-down after the behemoth had been safely moored and the day's work done. The family and the crew would sit round the large pot of boiling rice whilst the 'lady of the raft' slopped large helpings of rice into our tin plates and we helped ourselves to steaming portions of Hinjo into our coconut shell bowls. The menu would normally include deep-fried river fish or lobster on a bamboo spit which was held in one hand and dealt with suitably with the other. We never went hungry and I, personally quite looked forward to the simple but delicious repasts.



THOSE WERE THE DAYS

After the meal was done with I would pull out my pipe (yes, regrettably, I had started rather young) and sitting on the edge of the raft would deliberately fill and light my first bowl of the day - quite, quite wonderful. With my legs dangling in the water I would settle down to watch the nightly drama along the river bank as the dwellers of the deep forest, in pre-ordained sequence, emerged from the thick forest cover and walked gingerly down to the water's edge for their almost ritual drink. I had been fortunate in sighting tiger and leopard on successive nights but deer, bear, wild boar and a host of smaller animals like the jackal and jungle cat, provided a nightly feast of sights and sounds which, to this day, form a part of a golden thread of cherished memories. This feast of choreographed movement at the water's edge took place each night

either under the bright light of the moon or the glimmer of star-light and the mere thought that it could have been going on in this fashion for the past few thousand years was awe-inspiring.

It had been a memorable journey down one of Burma's great rivers. It was with a very heavy heart indeed that I finally bid good-bye to my raft family on disembarking at Martaban for the train journey back to Rangoon. I had spent almost 60 days in one of the really wild regions of Burma. During this period I had kept copious notes on the bird-life of the area, which I later sent to the Bombay Natural History Society for firm identification. This trip, more than most others, had enriched me beyond measure, in opening my eyes to aspects of the natural environment on which I was able to build later for my own benefit.

Well, much water must have flown down the course of the Salween during the 66 years linking that journey with the present, as I sit at my machine hammering out this story which is still fresh in my memory. I have been fortunate in being able to walk through some of the most spectacular jungles of Burma, along the river valleys and the foothills of the Arakan and Pegu Yomas and beyond. My interest in ornithology has now broadened into the more crucially critical area of Habitat Management and Environmental Conservation, providing a mixed bag of successes and failures, joy and tears, pluses and minuses all ending up perhaps with a deeply-felt sense of remorse at the thought of opportunities missed—but that's life!

□□

BUTTS

HMS 'Ramdas' was a patrol ship. On one occasion when it was being victualled at Aden, a rather small goat was amongst the fresh meat on hoof. Small ships used to carry live stock, as they had no refrigeration systems. The crew thought it was too small for the pot and decided to keep it as a ship's mascot.

I joined the ship as No. 1 when Billy was fully grown. Billy had been well cared for and was a fine specimen which could have done the Welsh Fusiliers proud on a ceremonial occasion.

Billy knew his shipmates and enjoyed the delicacy of a cigarette butt with great relish. He would take a lit cigarette like a fire eater. He would often stand on hind legs and filch a cigarette with great dexterity, quite remarkable!

Then the big day arrived when the NOIC had decided to inspect the ship. Everything was spruced up for the occasion including Billy. Now we all know that nanny goats are known for their butting. After divisions, the inspection started off with the NOIC and the CO in the van. I was following them as we entered a mess deck, Billy was there looking as good as gold, but as we moved on, it suddenly had an idea that NOIC's stern was a good target. On the move towards his target, he was quickly and silently snuffled, neither the CO nor the NOIC were aware of the little drama being played behind their backs.

Next morning Billy was on the defaulters list. It was decided that this goat, otherwise known as Ramdas, be put ashore forthwith. Full marks to the sailors, a comfortable and safe berth was found ashore, but Billy must have missed his butts.

Cmde HR Claudius

In Fond Remembrance

*Do not stand at his grave and weep,
He is not there, he does not sleep.*

*He is a thousand winds that blow,
He is the diamond glint on snow,
He is the gentle Autumn rain,
He is sunlight on ripened grain.*

*When you waken in the morning hush,
He is the swift uplifting rush
Of quiet birds in circling flight;
He is the soft stars that shine at night.*

*Do not stand at his grave and cry,
He is not there, He did not die.*

QD sadly records the passing of :

Cdr K N Bahl
Mrs Prem Baswan
Cmde A K Bhattacharji
Radm A Chakraverty
Cmde H R Claudius
Mr J T M Gibson
Capt O N Handa
Cdr F C Hytten
LCdr R D Joshi

Cmde S P Kakkar
Surg Capt J T Marshall
Cmde H A Menezes
LCdr D K Nandi
LCdr C I Roberts
Cdr N N Seth
Adm B S Soman
Mrs Valladares
Cdr J N Vats

On behalf of all readers, we convey heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families.

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J T M Gibson OBE, Padma Shri

Capt WM Howard RN

I was the British Naval Advisor in the mid eighties, long after Jack had retired from formal teaching. His fame was known to us even before our arrival, as it was customary for the incumbent naval advisor, to brief his successor to bring out in his heavy baggage, a handsome supply of beer-making kits for Mr Gibson, as well as some pipe tobacco, for in those days there was none of the self-imposed rationing that made Jack's latter day smoking a furtive joke. Naturally one enquired as to who this great man was who was so cosseted by the navy and why?

And thus the story was unfolded again of a man who had lived in India since 1937 and who had spent his life in the service of others, across a broad educational front in the classroom, on the mountain tops or sports field or with a beer in random mixed company on his busy veranda, taking in and earning the lifelong love and respect of future politicians, service chiefs, top notch mountaineers and countless good honest, salt-of-the-earth human beings like you and me.

He was so loved and respected as a guru of lifemanship, because of his unflinching selflessness and his sometimes impossibly high ideals, which most of us strove to follow at least some of the time, taking a breather now and then secretly to pursue our mortal leanings, even though we knew they fell short of his role model. His mores stand out as a beacon to all fair-minded and inquisitive human beings.

Has he left his mark? Yes, in his books and in the minds of those he

taught, but the incoming tide quickly levels all but the rockiest marks on the beach; and so few of us are made of such stuff. Few men achieve so much on so little; and remain so untarnished by office and so humble and approachable in their daily round.

Will he be missed? Yes, deeply so, until his admirers die off one by one.

Will there be others like Jack? We can only hope and pray so, for the good of mankind, and in greater abundance too; for without such pinnacle men, such rock-hard examples of what single-mindedness, high ideals and selflessness can achieve, what being a real man means, what love of one's fellow men means, what hope has this grubby world?

□□

Adm B S Soman

Cmde M M L Saxena

He lived his life by verse 47, chapter 2 of the *Gita*; with courage, devoid of emotions or attachments, without fear or favour and with unquestioned devotion to a just cause.

Admiral Soman was born on 30th March 1913. His father was a freedom fighter and a Gandhian of modest means and high values. Bhaskar inherited and retained these in full measure. He joined the Dufferin when he was 14 and The Royal Indian Marines in 1931. He served on many ships in the Atlantic, Persial Gulf and the Red Sea during the Second World War.

Soman displayed great pride in his Indian identity during the early years of his service when most of the ships were manned by British officers. He was the first Indian officer to be ap-

pointed as a Flag Lt to a British Admiral. On one occasion the Admiral and the Flag Lt were invited to the Royal Bombay Yatch Club. On arrival, however, Lt Soman was denied entry. The following morning he resigned from the job. On another occasion when he was the second in command of a minesweeper the ship called at a South African port. Indian ratings were not allowed liberty; officers were invited. Soman, the only Indian officer on board, refused to step ashore and accepted being hauled up for insubordination.

Despite their wrath, the British accepted him professionally as excellent and he was among the first few Indian officers to be promoted Captain. At the dawn of independence he held the office of the Chief of Personnel. Subsequently, he commanded all the stations which today are designated Commands and the Indian Fleet before occupying the highest office of Chief of the Naval Staff.

It was a privilege for me to serve Admiral Soman as his Flag Lt. Knowing him from close quarters was an education by itself. To him the good of the service was paramount and towards that goal he did cross swords with senior politicians. With Nehru, prior to Goa operations, to convince him that the formula of limited force does not work in combat; with YB Chavan and Shastri that in '65 the barrier imposed on the Navy was totally unjustified and should be lifted. Yet when he was over-ruled, he stoically bore the innuendo and criticism without complaint to others. He stressed on the government that what we were being offered by the British was obsolete and inadequate ships and submarines and therefore we must look towards the Soviet Union for Naval

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hardware. The proposal was accepted and India today is rated as a major maritime power. For this the credit goes to him.

His energy was everlasting and he spent nearly all his time for the Navy's in-house management. He read all signals, all files and made notes for pending actions in a blue book that he kept securely. There was nothing that he didn't know. Staff showing slippage in action were ticked off privately but in no uncertain terms. Those who had completed their home work were given more. He preferred 'I don't know' for an answer than a tall story. I once had a glimpse of the securely kept 'Blue Book' and was aghast to see the variety in the huge check-off list that it contained; problems big and small, refits, budgets, acquisitions, training, welfare measures, housing, hospitals and many others including who said what to whom at which party.

If he was tough, he was equally humane and kind; ever blending welfare with discipline. Every Tuesday evening he and Mrs Soman visited Asvini or MH Delhi to meet naval personnel and their families and noted their problems. Quite often they strolled through the Holiday Camp (now Navy Nagar) in Bombay or Sailors' quarters at Delhi's Diplomatic Enclave to see things for themselves. If there was a bereavement in an officer's or sailor's family the Somans personally called at their house.

At their home, Thursday Cocktails were a regular affair and they personally made sure that young officers were looked after and made to feel at home. In receptions they went round and had something to say to every one. Problems of junior officers and young wives were carefully listened to

and entered in the Blue Book on returning home. A British author has written this about Admiral Soman: "Ever concerned with the welfare of his sailors, Soman accommodated many in his own house when they found themselves stranded after repatriation from Pakistan."

That great man left us this year, leaving much to be learnt from him. Towards the dusk of his life he fought his battles alone; never making his problems known or accepting social sympathy. What else could you call a man like him, but Brave and Proper. □□

Cdr K N Bahl

— *Courtesy Statesman, Delhi*

Commander Kailash Nath Bahl, who died last month, was indeed a versatile character. He initially joined the Royal Navy, where he had occasion to serve on the same ship as Prince Philip (the Prince never forgot it, and whenever he visited India he made it a point to meet Bahl).

Cdr Bahl was deeply interested in the maritime craft of ancient India, of which he had done considerable research. For several years, he used to hold an annual exhibition of ancient Indian naval craft at FICCI.

After retirement from the Navy, Bahl threw himself headlong in any movement connected with human and public spirited issues. He was an active member of Citizens for Democracy, PUCL, Hindustani Andolan, Amnesty International, and Sampooran Kranti Manch. He participated in a six month long Satyagraha against political corruption, organized by the Citizens' Action Committee for clean politics,

at Gandhiji's samadhi. Bahl was also associated with the Wild Life Preservation Society.

A tennis enthusiast, he could be seen at Wimbledon every year without fail, eating strawberries and cream. A confirmed bachelor, Bahl looked much younger than his age. □□

Cmde A K Bhattacharya

VAdm AC Bhatia

Ashok Bhattacharya joined the Navy as a cadet in 1948. He was sent to the UK for initial training with the Royal Navy, at Dartmouth and on the HMS Devonshire. He served with the Home Fleet as a midshipman, before he was commissioned into the Supply and Secretariat branch in Jan 1951. He returned to India on completion of Sub's courses in 1952 as Assistant Supply Officer, Venduruthy. This was followed by appointments on Sutlej and Rajput. I was his Deputy on Vikrant in 1970.

For several reasons, 70 was an exceptionally busy year for Vikrant. Our department had its hands full with day-to-day commitments. 'Bhatta' was not happy that we were not paying attention to long term tasks such as the review of stores. Accepting that his juniors did not have the time, he took on the task himself, and the ship surveyed truckloads of stores. It was a fine lesson in dedication and professionalism.

Ashok was a most meticulous and competent professional. He ensured that financial regulations, procedures and related canons were observed in letter and spirit. He applied the same strict standards to himself. He was

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always courteous and considerate; a gentleman in every way, with a fine sense of propriety and integrity.

He was Director(Employment) with the Directorate General Resettlement prior to his retirement. He was the first incumbent in that job, and broke new ground in his creation of opportunities for self employment. The Ex-Servicemen's Air-link Transport Service (EATS), was a living tribute to his innovative thinking.

He lived in Delhi on his retirement, and pursued his two hobbies — riding and golf, with pleasure. His son Shoumo and daughter Manushi are both dedicated doctors, and their accomplishments gave him immense satisfaction. He once told me of the advice he gave his son - "If you want to do well as a doctor, join an organisation where medicine is the line function. You will not get satisfaction by being, say, a medical officer with a textile mill, no matter how good the pay or perks." There was much wisdom in his advice.

We extend heartfelt condolences to his wife Jayshree, and the family.

□□

Cmde H R Claudius

RAdm S S Venkateswaran

With the passing away recently of Commodore Claudius, the Indian Navy has lost one of the gentleman officers of yesteryear.

Papa Claudius, as he was fondly called, was an outstanding sailor and an affectionate person, soft spoken and smiling, always.

I had the privilege of knowing him from 1950 when six of us from our batch were posted to the mine sweeping squadron — Rajputana, senior ship, commanded by Papa, Rohilkhand, by Khushru Sanjana and my ship, Konkan by Vallab Sonpar — all LCdrs then. We did a lot of sailing between Bombay, Cochin, Trincomalee, Vizag and Calcutta. I still recall Papa's night orders — short and sweet — "on, straight on".

Papa's first and last love was sailing and he spent his post retirement days at Madras, sailing, sailing and sailing.

May the departed soul rest in peace.

□□

Cdr Frank Hytten

Cdr Fred Menzies



The Indian Ex-Services Association lost a stalwart. Commander Frank C Hytten was involved in a car accident

on 17th May 95 in Queensland while returning home to Victoria after visiting his son. He was admitted to the Royal Brisbane Hospital and died on 2nd June 95 without regaining consciousness. He was 77 years old.

He was the Secretary of the Association for 10 years and rendered yeoman service. His tragic and untimely death came as a shock to his many friends.

On behalf of all our members, I extend to his wife Celine, his sons Earling and Frank and their families our heartfelt condolences.

□□

Surg Capt J T Marshall

— Courtesy, Times of India

Born into a family of doctors, he served in the Army/Navy as a doctor, specialising in the field of Dermatology. For his distinguished service he was awarded the AVSM. Post retirement saw him deeply involved in establishing the now famous "Suman Halli" near Bangalore an exclusive home for the care, treatment and rehabilitation of leprosy patients. This won him the undying gratitude of a large number of people afflicted with the disease. He served in South Yemen as a Consultant for leprosy. With advancing age, he decided to call it a day and made a home in London in 1984. On 14 Oct 94 he passed away at the Mayday Hospital in London after a long and painful fight against cancer of the pancreas.

□□

YOU'RE AN OLD AVIATOR

Lt S Vartak

"You're an old Aviator, Admiral" the young SLt said, "And your fuselage is exceedingly fat, Yet you fly thro' the air with the greatest of ease, Pray what is the reason for that?"

"The cause of this strange aeronautical grace," said the Admiral, relating his powers, "Was the arduous practice in the cockpit I would oft trace, and learning the checks for hours."

"I see" said the Sub, "but answer me this, I have seen you doing the circuits, Yet you never come down with your undercart up, like me and the other dimwits".

"You see", said the Admiral with a smirk, "it's habit, good training and sense To look around the cockpit at instruments, lights; Relax, at ease, never sit tense."

"Watch me trim the flaps and the mixture as well, the airspeed and the angle of glide. Its so much simpler to land on wheels, than prang on the belly or side".

"Watch the chap in the tower and the hut", the Admiral next said, "For his instructions, lights, lamps and flags, pay regard to his foibles and whims Come in gently — no zigs and no zags".

"And before taking off, get your maps, sign the book, the form 700 as well; Get briefed, check the weather, the runway in use, safety first ever for you never can tell."

"I taxi quite slowly with caution and care, and watch other aircraft about".

"They have the last word, without doubt. I look after helmet, and mask, my dinghy and chute Its true they are not my possession. But friends who are corpses Have proved more than once, to maltreat them's the craziest obsession".

"I never take chances when I'm flying low, and when clouds and high hills are about; I use my R/T for all that its worth, and keep my fingers from trouble well out".

"Emulate me, young man, if determined you'd be, to grow old and get covered with rings; Always bearing in mind your chest, not your back, should be used for displaying your wings".

Lt S Vartak is a young pilot in INAS 550

CRABS

Cdr Manjit Singh

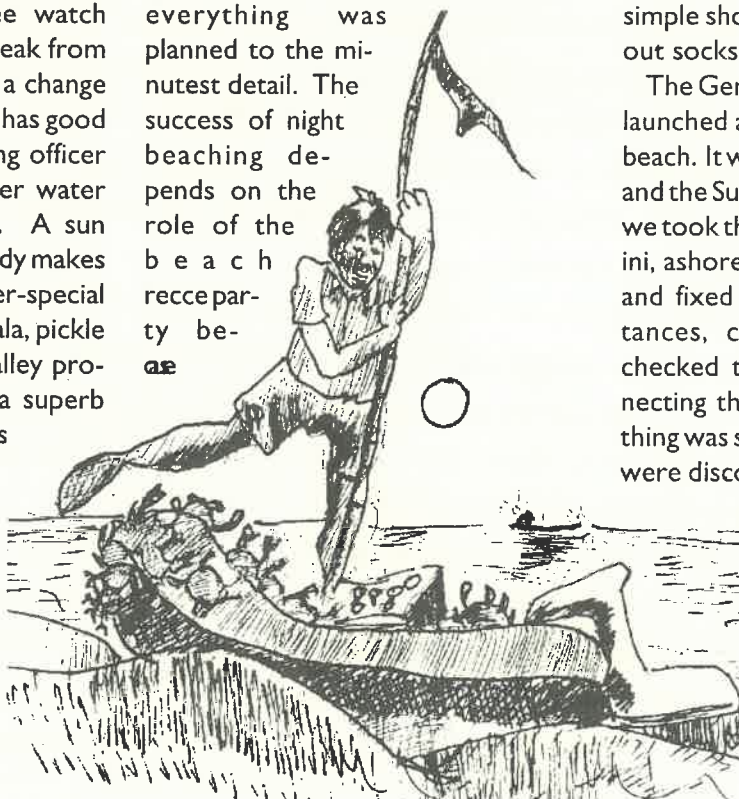
Those who have served onboard landing craft know the importance of a beach recce. The beach recce party has a very important role to play prior to beaching by the craft. The success of safe beaching can depend on the beach recce party. During peace time too, this party is religiously sent for beach survey as part of the overall workup.

Onboard the landing craft there are many volunteers, especially from among the youngsters, for this party. The reasons are obvious. It gives the hard-pressed under trainee watch keeping officer a pleasant break from mundane watches. He gets a change to swim with divers and if he has good rapport with the ship's diving officer he can even indulge in under water swimming with diving gear. A sun tanned and well exercised body makes him feel like 007. The super-special sized parathas, the peas masala, pickle and onion salad from the galley provide all that is needed for a superb beach picnic. Leisure is thus conveniently mixed with business.

While serving onboard one of the LSTs I was a regular volunteer for the recce. It gave me ample opportunity to swim in clear waters, see and feel the scenic beauty of many beaches and ofcourse be excused

from watch keeping duty as well. Beaching exercises were planned off Kakinada on the East coast. The landing area was well known and we carried out a couple of beaching practices during the day. This time, in addition to day beaching, the task was also to practice night beaching. The day exercise went off smoothly and now it was our turn to prepare for a night beaching around 1900 hrs.

This was our first night beaching under the new command and with a fairly new ships' company. Therefore, everything was planned to the minutest detail. The success of night beaching depends on the role of the beach recce party be-



they rig up the light transits to facilitate the correct running in of the ship.

It was planned that the party would go to the beach in the evening and rig up the required poles and lights. The party would remain on the beach and would be recovered after the beaching. The poles, batteries, Aldis lamp, bulb holders with cable, and hot packed stuff from the ship's galley were collected. We went over the list time and again to ensure that we did not miss any item. We did not pay much attention to our own clothing wearing simple shorts, T-shirt and shoes without socks.

The Gemini with all the material was launched and we headed towards the beach. It was pleasant with light breeze and the Sun going down. On the beach we took the items, including the Gemini, ashore and got to work. We dug and fixed the poles at required distances, connected the bulbs and checked their serviceability by connecting them to the battery. Everything was serviceable and connections were disconnected to avoid discharging the battery. The first (i.e. the business) part of the activity was over and now it was time for leisure. Time was now ours to swim, play and gambol in the waves.

As it grew dark, we all moved onto the beach and

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THE NEW NAVY

settled down for snacks. After a while, we felt pinches here and there which disturbed our composure. There were small sharp pins poking from beneath the sand. Gradually these sharp objects covered into crooked arms and finally, full sized crabs came into view. There was an army of crabs surfacing on the beach and they all appeared to be charging towards us — 'the new creatures' on their beach. Initially it amused us to poke and play with them but as they grew more numerous we found it difficult to avoid them. The beach was now full of them and only the Gemini became a safe haven. The crabs attempted to climb onto the Gemini from all directions. We made every effort to ward off the adventurers. In this struggle no one remembered to put back the battery connection, and it was the ship's siren which reminded us of our duty.

I jumped out of the fort and moved to make the connections. The site of the battery was creepy. The battery was half submerged in the water and crabs were merrily moving over it. They were even trying and testing the negative and positive terminals. The transit lights were switched on and this was confirmed by the ship's siren. In my wisdom I decided to stay near the rear transit pole. I stood in the water for some time but the crabs and small fishes did not allow me this

comfort. I climbed on to the battery and tried to stand on one leg alternately. But the great crabs continued their investigation and attack. My well co-ordinated and synchronised movement of hands and legs and occasional shivering of the body at that time would have made me the envy of any classical dancer.

The ship's anchor lights were still on which meant that she had not yet started. My silent prayer for the ship to come at the earliest was answered very soon and I saw the anchor lights going off, and steaming and navigation lights coming on. I could see and hear her dark huge body moving towards me. I could see the ship dead on transit and she became clearer with each moment. At the same time, the activity and fire power on my foot and leg had increased. Thanks to the excitement and increasing attack by the warriors, I tried to inch up the pole. But this evolution turned out to be a misadventure. The pole could not take my weight and started to come down slowly.

The view from the bridge was different. A moment before, the action OOW had checked all bearings, course, engine state and was sure of running right on the transit. But a moment later, the transit started opening. The OOW was confused at this opening of the transit without any

emergency or deviation in the course, tide and engine orders. The thought of rudder failure, engine failure, compass failure etc. flashed through his mind. He was planning to make bold alteration of course to regain transit track. But the Captain was one jump ahead of the OOW and ordered that the present course and speed be maintained. The ship was committed for a perfect beaching. The bowdoors opened, the ramp was lowered and we got our instructions to hurry up and bring in all the items. We had never completed this evolution with such swiftness. Once inside, we were prepared to receive a salvo from the old man. But, the Captain was young at heart and sharp of eye. He could read swollen legs and feet. Our condition generated a lot of sympathy and we were even permitted a small shot of brandy.

I was in no position to undertake a watch on the return sailing to Vizag that night, but did not have the courage to say so to the senior watchkeeper. Surprisingly, he showed a lot of sympathy, and very generously switched watches. I was touched by his warm sentiments, but failed to notice the smile he hid so quickly. On arrival at Vizag, I found it was a Sunday routine, and I was OOD. That my friends was the cruellest cut of all!

□□

The Family Fool ?

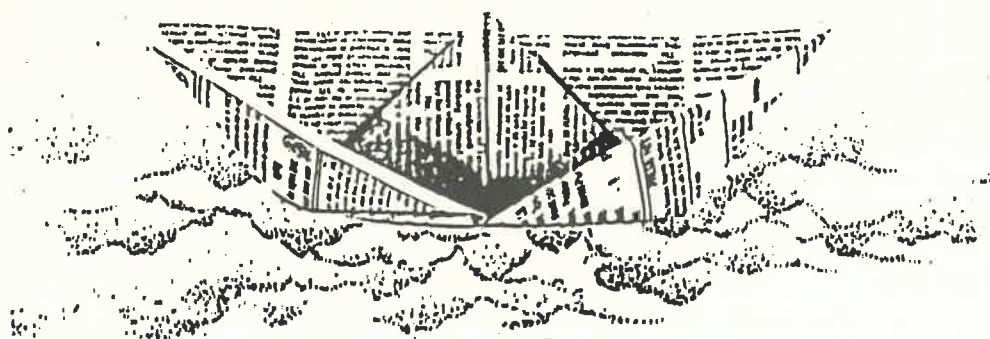
Long ago the adage used to be "Catch 'em young and treat them rough to make good Officer material".

A little chap faced the interview Board with a lot of big brass sitting at the long table. The beetle browed Amiral with a stern look said to the boy, "I thought only the fool of the family was sent to sea."

The wee aspirant piped up most respectfully "It might have been so in your days Sir, but not in mine."

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GETTING TO KNOW YOU — ADMIRAL V P SHEKHAWAT

Chief of the Naval Staff

Any one who knows Vijay Shekhawat must be aware of his literary inclinations, from the way his conversation is peppered with quotes. QD was allowed a priveleged peep into his personal book of favourite verse. We hope this interview gives you an insight into the man who leads the Navy today.

QD: You are a man of the deserts. How did you land up joining the Navy?

VPS: Well, first, I was not born in the desert, nor brought up in it. I was certainly born close to it. And being from an Army family in the old undivided India, I went everywhere; in the mountains and forest areas, (and remember the population was less than half of what it is now), we travelled from Kashmir to way down south, from Peshawar to Dacca — all India was my area. As a matter of interest, when I called on the President, he said to me, "Shekhawat, this is a name from the desert. You should be riding the ship of the desert instead of being at sea." I replied, "Well Sir, I can do that too. And unless the Prime Minister gives me some more money for running the real ships, that is all I will be doing". Later, I told this to the PM on Navy Day. He didn't find it very amusing.

QD: What made you join the Navy? Why not the Army?

VPS: I have often pondered about it. Ofcourse, when I joined the Navy, my father's military colleagues were very upset, and asked — why isn't he going to the paltan. One or two even wrote letters to me. I never could understand why the sea, which I imagined I had never seen, had such

The Road Less Travelled

— Robert Frost

*Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveller, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;*

*Then took the other, just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear,
Though as for that, the passing there
Had worn them really about the same*

*And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black
Oh, I kept the first for another day.
Yet knowing how way leads to way,
I doubted if I should, ever come back.*

*I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence;
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I...
I took the one less travelled by,
And that has made all the difference.*

New Delhi
9 September 75

a fascination for me. I was able to think it was the books one had read in school, which were mainly about the sea, desert islands, pirates, strange things, you know, Robinson Crusoe and so on. Then one day, as a Sub Lieutenant I was standing at the Gateway of India, watching the passenger boats that ply in the harbour. We were waiting for our sailing boat to be brought in by the

tindal, who used to paddle them to the Gateway. Well, one of these passenger boats came and tied up near the steps. I was watching it bobbing on the water, and my subconscious mind worked back and I was able to recall an almost identical sight which I probably saw as a child of four, coming from Ahmednagar where my father was posted. Obviously that one exposure and glimpse of the sea at that very tender age, must have set up a chain of association and involvement, which was further strengthened by the reading of books. You know how one thing leads to another, knowing how "way leads on to way," (Robert Frost in The Road Less Travelled). So I think from the time that one was conscious of wanting to do anything, which I would put at about 10 years, there was nothing else I wanted to do but go to sea. I did not know the Navy. It was merely a desire to go to sea. But that is how I landed up in the IN.

QD: Was early life in the Navy very different to what you were used to in the Army?

VPS: I suppose it must have been different. I take life in segments. At each stage, life was interesting. Army life was interesting, with horses, cavalry, mules, mountains, picnics in the wilderness. Then another phase start-



ed; and one did not look back on the previous phase. The new phase was also interesting. You know the sea... and it was pretty rough out then. It is different now, more comfortable for cadets, with proper mess decks and bunks, and so on. We used to stretch out on the decks of the old Tir. In some ways, it brought us closer to the elements, and one learnt more about the sea and the weather and the flying fish from that kind of life.

QD: Do you think that air conditioned ships are removing people from a closeness to the sea?

VPS: They are, but I have told the DGND that for our further cadet training ships, there must be an open bridge, above the enclosed bridge, so that the cadets keep watch on an open bridge through all kinds of weather; rain or shine, and get to know what the elements are all about. Many countries maintain sailing ships for exactly this reason, that they must understand the sea, its moods and its power; to have an association which is not simply a job. We were very fortunate to have a deep involvement and a close understanding of all the elements which make for a seafarers life, and all bridges were open bridges at that time. Then of course, I went into submarines, where you are right next to the sea.

QD: Why submarines? You were literally plumbing the depths?

VPS: I suppose it was a continuing search for something interesting. Nothing else. Having spent years in surface ships, submarines....infact long before submarines were contemplated, I was in the UK commissioning Talwar, and I heard there was

thought of a submarine arm. I had a letter written to say that as and when it was raised, I was a volunteer. It was infact raised nearly four years later and I returned to the UK for submarine training.

QD: What would you consider your most interesting moment in submarines?

VPS: There are several one can think of, but an intriguing one happened during the 1971 ops. We were on patrol in a "certain area", when I had an unusual experience. We were down at about 100 meters depth, and it was the middle of the day. The Officer of the Watch called to say the submarine was coming up. I rushed to the Control room and found that the sub had already come up to 50 metres and was still going up on a completely even keel, which is significant, because to change depth, you alter the bow up or bow down, and here she was, coming straight up like a balloon. No corrective action worked, and she was coming like a cork to the surface, in the matter of a few seconds. And she remained on the surface despite all corrective action. I couldn't fathom what the problem might be. Any way, we got out of the area on the surface, and when we cleared the area, she dived perfectly normally again. By now I had begun to guess at the cause, and I studied the subject when we returned from patrol, and more particularly at a fisheries exhibition in Cochin. I learnt that there are these up-welling phenomena which are seasonal; when cold water moves in deep below the surface, and when it strikes a coastal area, particularly a sharply shelving type, it rises up. Since it is of a high-

er density than the surface water, its momentum brings up a lot of nutrients from the ocean floor. It brings up fish and plankton, marine organisms and, in this case the odd submarine. It certainly brought me up that afternoon.

But I was at sea because I found it interesting and fascinating. I had already done a lot of reading of marine phenomena. In Sep 65, the "Scientific American", which is a very fine scientific publication, had devoted an entire issue to the oceans. Nothing but the oceans and I read it a year or two later. I was amazed to learn that in the planetary circulation of water, there are patches of water that have not moved in 1000 years. A number of phenomena of that kind were described. So, though we were not formally taught, (we were young, the submarine arm was young.), we were picking up knowledge and background, and I had an idea of knowledge from my own interest in the oceans.

QD: Anything funny or emotional that you would like to share?

VPS: A day without something funny would be difficult to get through. Little things amuse you, nothing profound, things that help the days go by. I recall a long ocean voyage on Karanj in late '69. There is nothing much to do on a long voyage, the nearest land is a few hundred miles away — we were in the South Atlantic — in the evening, sailors are allowed on the fin for a smoke or some gossip. One day they were talking about their watches. Each claimed his was the best. Then I heard one chap say "Mine is the best since it does not change even by a second". I asked "what watch is



this? And what is so special about it?" He laughed and said, "Sa'ab voh to chalti hi nahi". (Sir, it does not work.)

QD: Is there a picture in your mind's eye? A piece of poetry that you recall when you go to sea?

VPS: As a matter of fact, yes. When I commanded Karanj, I promoted a magazine called Periscope. It has had only 3-4 issues in the past 24 years. Ravi Ganesh was my XO, and he and I worked on it. For an inside cover, we put a picture of a submarine leaving Vizag harbour, heading for the horizon, and there were some lines from Tagore that I put with it "It will be dark when we return, and I will tell you all that I have seen." Another piece was from my time in a British submarine in 1963. It was pouring, a cold grey November day in Plymouth, (where coincidentally, the new Krishna is to be commissioned in a few days time) the sub being recommissioned was the HMS Alaric named after some mythological figure. It was a very simple ceremony, with a priest reading out a few psalms. I have those words written down — "They that go down to the sea in ships" — I cannot recall them after over 30 years, but I am fond of scribbling down lines that catch my fancy and I can always retrieve them. The pleasure of recalling these things is that apart from the rhythm of the verse, and the beauty of the language, it recreates an imaginary world in colourful detail — a kind of private wealth that you can recall at any moment.

QD: Tell us of your family life.

VPS: Binu and I have been married for nearly 35 years and we have two boys. The younger one is a pi-

They that go down to the sea

*They that go down to the sea in ships,
and occupy their business in great waters;*

*These men see the works of the Lord,
and his wonders in the deep.*

*For at his word, the stormy wind
arise, which lifteth up the waves thereof;*

*They are carried up to the Heavens
and down again to the deep*

*Their soul melteth away because of
the trouble*

*They rock too and fro, and stagger like
a drunken man; and are at their wits end*

*So when they cry unto the Lord in
their trouble, he delivereth them out of
their distress*

*For he maketh the storm to cease, so
that the waters thereof are still.*

*Then they are glad, because they are
at rest*

*And so He bringeth them unto the
haven where they would be.*

*O that men would praise the Lord
for His goodness and declare the won-
ders that He doeth for the children of
men.*

*Who is wise will ponder these things
And they shall understand the loving
kindness of the Lord.*

lot in the Navy, so the family tradition in the military continues. He decided to take up flying when he met some Air Force guys at squash. (Incidentally, he plays squash for the Navy). Well my father did not tell me what to do. He let me do what interested me. So I let him do what was interesting to him. He came in because he thought it interesting, not because it was a good profession or career, or because I was in it.

Our older boy is currently a stu-

dent again. He has gone back to University after almost 10 years in the computer field. Binu and I both belong to families that value family life. In continuation of the trend from

*One ship drives east and another
drives west*

*With the self same winds that blow
'Tis the set of the sail, and not the
gales*

Which tells us the way to go.

*Like the winds of the sea are the
ways of fate*

*As we voyage along through life
'Tis the set of the soul that decides
its goal*

And not the calm or the strife.

—Ella Wheeler Wilcox

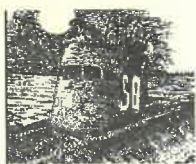
Quoted by Gouri Saxena in *The Pioneer* (19 Dec 93) interviewing me.

those times, when all our social life centred on the large, extended family and intimate friends, one learned to value family time. I was lucky enough to realise early that children grow up all too fast, and it was not worth while to spend time with them, merely to bring them up, but also for the pleasure of enjoying them before they grow up and go away. When I look back now, I think my instincts whether in choosing the sea as a career, or the sports and other opportunities taken, or family time, the passage of time has proved I was not wrong. It is a satisfying thought.

QD: What kind of father were you?

VPS: You must expect me to say a good one!

QD: I mean, were you involved with your children, or were you a leave-it-to-mama type?



VPS: I would say, as with my own father, I may have appeared very detached. I realised as I matured that it was not so. His was a philosophy of allowing freedom and space for individual personalities to grow. I understood this better as my own children grew. He would not let me over discipline them. "You will curb their initiative", he said. I may have disagreed with certain aspects of it, but I supported the philosophy behind it. You have a limited period of time to care for your children, thereafter, it is their internal strength that carry them through life. So while I was always available to my sons, I insisted they do their own studies, establish their own regime and disciplines, within a certain framework that I prescribed. I told them to do the best they could. Their school mark sheets would not matter in their future lives, but their other qualities, the intangibles of their personality, which would come with wider interests certainly would. Seeing how they have shaped, I dare say I was not wrong.

QD: Did you look up to some one? A mentor? A person you tried to emulate? Not some one seen at a distance, and admired, but some one you saw warts and all, and still admired. Is there some one like that in your life?

VPS: I would say an influence of that sort only started in the Academy, when we were cadets. We were very fortunate — and you have already published a tribute from Cdr Punchhi — to Cdr John Atkinson. He was my Squadron Commander. We joined the Academy at the same time. He took over the Squadron, and I was a first term cadet. He had

a very deep involvement, both he and his wife Barbara, in the training of cadets. Not just the formal aspects of it, but with less formal aspects that we try in the Navy; taking us on picnics, dropping in our cabins and trying to understand each individual cadet. He was particularly interested in a few of us, who perhaps appealed in some way to him. I have been in correspondence with him ever since. His last letter referred to the QD, saying how flattered he was, and what ever achievements of the squadron were due to us and not him. That this was the kind of thing one usually read in an obituary.

Because he was a Naval Officer and we were Naval cadets there was a bonding aspect. He was fond of sports and of partying; he was friendly, he had experience in the war time Navy. So with our own eager looking forward to going to sea, and him representing the Service to which we wished to belong, there were many positive factors. He was responsible also for giving me the impetus to join the Submarine Arm. When he heard I was considering it as an option, he said "get in on the ground floor". The arm was starting up, we were the pioneers and I was already thinking in that direction. His advice helped me make the decision. John Atkinson played a very important role not merely for me, but for many of us who were there at that time.

QD: Is there that kind of involvement in today's Service? Is there a mentor system in the Navy?

VPS: I am not able to say if it is still there. Many things have changed. The Service is larger, it is more complex, there is a lot of reading to do,

simply to keep abreast of your profession. The emphasis on some of the aspects which enabled a kind of deeper interaction, like sports and other outdoor activity have declined, I am sorry to say. Not because there is less emphasis on it, but there is less motivation, less desire to participate. Since I have been very keen on sports all my life, and still am, I have given a lot of thought to it. I would say it goes back to schools and parental pressure on children to study. Play is regarded as disadvantageous. Playing facilities have de-

*I meant to do my work today
But a brown bird sang in the apple tree
And a butterfly flitted across the field
and all the leaves were calling me.
And the wind went sighing over the land
Teasing the grasses to and fro,
And a rainbow held out its shining hand....
So what could I do but laugh and go?*

clined in schools, even in Naval Bases. Take Bombay. When I was a Sub Lieutenant, Bombay had twice the number of playing fields than it has today, for a Navy that is ten times the size it was then.

QD: What about the value systems? Are they being passed on, or is there much more cynicism in the environment today?

VPS: There is no formal passing on of value systems, though we are setting up a process of some kind of formal input at various training stages on basic values. We have set up the Centre for Leadership and Behavioral Sciences (C-LABS) in Co-



chin. The informal aspect really depends on the quality of individuals as it always has and it is not possible to structure that. As far as cynicism is concerned, there is a lot of it in our society as a whole. When young lads

*You have no enemies, you say?
Alas my friends, the boast is poor
He who has mingled in the fray
Of duty, that the brave endure,
Must have made foes. If you have
none.
Small is the work that you have
done.
You've hit no traitor on the hip,
You've dashed no cup from perjured
lip
You've never truned the wrong to
right
You've been a coward in the fight.
— Charles Mackay*

come into the system they are not cynical. They do however have the seeds of cynicism in them already, from their experiences in their own home environment, and the various small and big towns they come from, the educational institutions they have been in. They do regard the Services with considerable idealism. No doubt of that. I speak from experience as a formal Divisional Officer and Deputy Commandant of NDA, and from my deep interest in young people, their mental process and aspirations, so long as they are in the training system and for some years after, the idealism is retained. I imagine what happens thereafter is that from a generally equal status as under-trainees, now begin individual career directions based on individual abilities, choices, marriage and home background. Some are successful, some are not; and this is where the strength of the individual personality which can to

some extent be shaped by training, but not totally altered, comes into play. When people encounter disappointments, which are in any profession, they often find it easier to blame the organisation, which is large and impersonal, rather than look within. That is not to say the organisation is always correct. But, by and large it is run with as much efficiency and objectivity as is possible in human affairs. Where there are genuine problems, they are always addressed. Many individuals, even some senior ones, do not accept this. Personal perception and infirmity finds it easier to blame the organisation instead of finding the deficiency is oneself.

QD: Every officer wishes to get an operational posting. Is there a perception in the Navy that a training assignment is a second grade job? That the best don't go into training?

VPS: First it is not the individual's choice. They are assigned. We always have to keep our operational

*No man is an island, entire of itself;
Every man is part of the continent, a
piece of the main.
If a clod be washed away by the sea,
Europe is the less,
As well as if a promontory were,
As well as if a manor were of thy
friends,
Or of thine own were.
Any man's death diminishes me,
Because I am involved in mankind
And therefore, send not to know for
whom the bell tolls. It tolls for thee.*

billets manned with people of suitable qualifications and ability, not only because we have to maintain our front line ships in a high state of readiness, but they are complex pieces of equipment. They are expen-

sive. They must function efficiently. Any kind of damage to them is both expensive and disabling. So it would be right to say that we always send our top quality people to operational billets. But that does not mean we do not value training, or that at all times it is the next best that is sent for training. After all, officers move and you maintain a reasonable strength of high quality people in both cadres. Also for reasons of operational training and exposure and career growth, you send people to operational assignments, who may not be exactly top bracket. In other words, you maintain a team in each area, and the overall strength of the team is greater than that of any individual, and enables you to fulfil the task in the best way possible.

QD: Did you come to the top slot with certain thoughts, a direction you wanted to give to the Navy?

VPS: I assumed the post with just three weeks notice. I was on leave for one of those weeks. You cannot formulate anything new in the remaining time. This does not mean the thinking process only starts from that time. I suggest, in the Navy our planning process is a continuing one, and by the time one is senior — a CinC or Vice Chief, you are closely

*Give each thine ear but few thy voice
—Polonius' advice to his son
8 August 93
5 Motilal Nehru Marg, New Delhi*

involved in determining the direction of the Navy. So when a change takes place at the top, it is a change of a person. It is not the change of an institution or of an institutional direction. If that were the case there is something very wrong with the



system, and we know there is nothing wrong there. Generally, you continue in a direction you have already participated in formulating at the next below rung, or even below that, because, in the Navy, there is a continuous sounding-out process; letting things evolve from the ship level to the command, in a tier system. It is a fair system. So when you come

*You're a brave man, they tell me.
I'm not.
Courage has never been my quality,
Only, I thought it disproportionate
So to degrade myself, as others did
How sharply our children will be
ashamed
Taking atlast their vengeance for
these horrors,
Remembering how in the strangeness
of time
Common integrity could look like
courage*

into the top slot, it is a question of doing better as you see it, what has been going on already in the pipeline. It may involve a little shift of emphasis, because there are so many things that should be done, whether it is new ship acquisition, new housing, and so on. When you take stock you may conclude it is necessary to shift emphasis because this is not feasible for now, this can be deferred

and so on all within a certain clear direction. Marginal adjustments adapt to the prevailing financial environment — if you get the requisite finance, you can do all you wish.

QD: What would you like to tell our readers about your stewardship of the Navy?

VPS: First I would like to tell them that we are first citizens of this nation, and then military men. We came in as citizens and we go out as ordinary citizens. So it is well to remember, that the well being of the country demands that we understand its problems and priorities, and function within those restraints.

Second, that we are conscious of our own needs. First, our operational and maritime needs, next of the needs of our personnel. However, we still have to remember how many disadvantaged citizens we still have in our country. Leaving aside the affluence of the few in our cities that we notice, is the poverty of the many, not seen by us. Therefore, when people say, why can't you thump the table to get this or that, I request my friends and colleagues to understand and recognise the limitation within which our entire system functions.

Then I would like to tell them that many ex-servicemen feel that the Ser-

Sometimes what we call a success is simply a shortsighted view of a long term failure.

—Henry Soholoski, referring to the US response to N. Korean withdrawal from NPT "Defence News" July 5 - 11, 93

vice does not look after their needs, and in many ways, the Chiefs are responsible for that. The Chiefs hardly need to be reminded that they are but a step away from being ex-servicemen themselves. So perhaps it is a misconception to feel they do not wish to take care of ex-servicemen needs. If their aspirations are not met, the shortage of resources of the Government, and in some cases I would say, the will on the part of the Government to fulfil what we think are their obligations towards ex-servicemen, are not as strong as they should be.

Finally, we try to run the Service to see that our naval strength and operational capability is always safeguarded for the future; that the resource constraints do not undermine the healthy growth of the future Navy; we sometimes sacrifice some needs of today, ensuring that tomorrow's Navy maybe more viable, more modern, more capable. I think we have fairly well succeeded in that.

□□

**Extract from Captain's Standing Orders
H.M.S. "Andromeda," 1788**

The Order requesting and directing the First Lieutenant or Commanding Officer to see all strangers out of his Majesty's ship under my Command at gunfire, is by no means meant to restrain the Officers and men from having either Black or White women on board through the night as long as the discipline is unhurt by the indulgence.

— Contributed by Cmde Hardev Singh

REVIVING THE YAMUNA

Cdr S D Sinha

As a cadet of the Prince of Wales Royal Indian Military College, I visited the Yamuna for the first time in the spring of 1946, during the mid-term break of my second term in the college. We had gone by a tonga on a picnic from my father's Connaught Circus flat, which had been allocated temporarily to him as a member of the Central Assembly, as the Indian Parliament was then called. Prior to the communal riots of that year, this capital of British India still had a small population, which prided itself on the history of the city built-up around the river Yamuna.

The clear blue waters of the river were rich in plankton and fish, and a few golden-breasted "Surkhaab's" still sported on the river banks in preparation for their long flight back to Siberia. Fishing in the river required a licence in those days, but a servant quickly improvised for us to poach with a long wooden stick and line and a hook bought from a local fisherman. Net fishing was not allowed, but local fishermen hauled in a rich harvest from the reservoir above the barrage for the big Jama Masjid market.

Later as a member of the Indian Navy yatching team, I returned here in 1964 to sail in the National Regatta with Gulu Wadhwani (who retired as a Rear Admiral) as my crew. The three Service Chiefs and much of Delhi's senior gentry, as well as mem-

bers of the diplomatic corps, had turned up to enjoy the salubrious climate of an early spring day in Delhi. The waters of the river were crystal clear. One of my happy memories of the Inter-Services semi-finals race was a capsize in which I gulped some of the pristine waters of the river, righted the boat and went on to win the race. It was truly an enjoyable afternoon.

Back in Delhi in 1971, as a staff officer at Naval Headquarters, I became a Life Member of the Defence Services Sailing Club at Okhla. There were sailing races every week-end, under ideal conditions through-out the year, except during the monsoons. The waters were clean and we started to train school children of Delhi in the art of sailing using the 'Cadet' class boats. It was only in the mid 1980's that we suddenly realised that the pollution levels of the river were becoming very high. Whereas, earlier we were worried about drowning of a student if he or she capsized, now we found that one could become very sick by merely falling into the Yamuna waters. By 1990 the pollution levels had become unbearable and waters had begun to stink. A visiting Chief of Naval Staff was requested by me to take up the matter with the then Lt. Governor of Delhi. Though he was senior in rank to the Lt. Governor, it is regrettable that the Chief did not even receive an acknowledgement of

his letter. I brought up the matter concerning pollution in the Yamuna at numerous seminars and meetings in the capital, but it was all to no avail. Finally in 1992, I filed a case in the Supreme Court of India requesting Their Lordships to order the resumption of fair flows in the rivers Ganga and Yamuna and the banning of any untreated sewage deposits in these rivers. Later an application was also filed seeking clean water for the domestic use of the citizens of Delhi.

After nearly two and a half years of hearings Their Lordships ordered the concerned states of Haryana and U.P. to release sufficient waters into the Yamuna for the domestic use of the citizens of Delhi. By then a Memorandum of Understanding had also been signed on sharing of Yamuna waters by the upper riparian states of Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, U.P., Delhi and Rajasthan. The Hon'ble Supreme Court is still seized of the matter pertaining to the question of optimum flows in the rivers Ganga and Yamuna throughout the year. It is likely now that the other riparian states of these rivers namely Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Bengal would also be impleaded in this case.

In the meanwhile, alongwith several other activists from a number of NGOs (non-governmental organisations), I had formed the *Paani Morcha* which is a trust for the promotion of better

Willie to his friends, Cdr S D Sinha belongs to the second course NDA. He specialised in Communications and sought premature retirement from the Navy in 1976. Since then he has been involved in many projects and introduced a Public Interest Litigation in the Supreme Court against the Union Government on the state of the rivers of this country. His article describes merely the first successful step on the way.

ENVIRONMENT

management of our water resources. A team of this organisation carried out a survey last year of the rivers Ganga and Yamuna between Okhla and Etawah on the Yamuna and between Narora and Kanpur on the Ganga. During the lean seasons (November to June), it was found that the Yamuna becomes virtually a dead-river (i.e. without any dissolved oxygen) at Okhla and at Agra, and the Ganga becomes a mere drain at Kanpur. By the time they arrive at the Narora barrage, nearly ninety nine percent of the Ganga waters are diverted for irrigation. Thereafter the small stream, which the Ganga becomes, receives chemical effluents from several industrial towns, which kill the bacteriophage contained in its waters. It is this element of the Ganga that make it a venerable river, as bacteriophage kills all other bacteria entering the river. Such mis-management of our river waters whereby a river's valuable qualities are destroyed, is not only foolish, it is downright callous.

The various facts found during the above-mentioned survey were sent to the Central and the state governments concerned, and were also put before the Hon'ble Supreme Court. It was submitted to this Hon'ble Court that the citizens of all riparian districts had been given an inalienable right by the Constitution of India to clean drinking water from their rivers vide Article 21 — the Rights to Life. It has been submitted before the Hon'ble Court that it was the responsibility of the governments concerned to ensure that there was sufficient flow in the rivers Ganga and Yamuna in order to maintain their self cleansing properties, and also to have sufficient volume of clean water so as to dilute the

impurities flowing in them to the extent that would still permit their waters to be clean enough for bathing and for withdrawals by municipalities for due treatment, prior to distribution to urban colonies for drinking and domestic use by their citizens.

These holy rivers are also used by millions of pilgrims for bathing and for the performance of holy rites, such as 'aachman', which includes drinking of a few drops in the process. Therefore it was also considered to be obligatory for the governments concerned to ensure that the waters of the rivers did not pose a health hazard on pilgrims bathing in them and performing holy rites laid down by their religion. The bio-diversity of the rivers had also not been maintained and millions of fish had died in both the rivers. The revival of their bio-diversity and the restoration of employment of fishermen to original levels was also prayed for. In the last two decades fishing in some 700 fishing villages on the Yamuna had been disrupted and lakhs of people had been deprived of their employment in the Ganga basin. Optimum flows in the rivers would restore conditions for their employment.

As regards the Ganga, it was particularly mentioned that its waters have a special quality which kills bacteria and which must be protected. This is the only river in the world which has bacteriophage, a micro-organism that lives on bacteria and multiplies on consuming the killed bacteria. Thus, even a small amount of Ganga water put in a bowl of any other water which may be rich in bacteria would eventually purify the water of the bowl by killing all its bacteria. Experiments to this effect had been carried out by

British biologists in the early years of this century. By depriving the river Ganga of sufficient flow, as is being done at present, whereby 99% of its waters are being diverted for irrigation purposes, the very small quantity which is allowed to flow gets heavily contaminated by the chemical effluents from industrial townships downstream of Narora, and its important essence the bacteriophage, is destroyed.

After several hearings including those of two contempt petitions filed by the Delhi govt. and myself against Haryana and U.P. officials for contravening court orders, adequate supply of water is now being made available to the Delhi authorities for treatment and distribution in Delhi. In the forthcoming hearings at the Supreme Court, it is hoped that the question of optimum flow for both the rivers Ganga and Yamuna would also be taken up, with all the riparian states of these two rivers including Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, and Bengal (who have not been involved so far) also now being impleaded. So far the State of Haryana has contended that such petition would be barred by Article 262 of our Constitution from being heard by any court as the matter ought to be treated as an interstate dispute, which should be adjudicated by a tribunal appointed for the purpose. However, the learned senior counsel Shri K K Venugopal, who has been assisting me, free of charge, had most cogently argued that the petition filed by me was not an interstate dispute, but one which concerned the rights of citizens to clean drinking water.

Shri K K Venugopal had also established before the Hon'ble Court that

ENVIRONMENT

a higher priority had to be given to drinking water, and water for domestic purposes, than for any other purpose including irrigation. The Hon'ble Justices Mr Justice Kuldeep Singh and Mr Justice B L Hamsaria had virtually accepted our contention, when they passed a landmark order on the 24th January 1995 whereby the rights of the citizens of Delhi to the waters of the river Yamuna were accepted and their Lordships ordered that the waters allocated to Delhi through the MOU (Memorandum Of Understanding) dated, 12th May 1994, entered into by the upper riparian states, be made available immediately to the Delhi authorities for use of the citizens of

Delhi. In a later judgement of the 31st March 1995 they also ordered that the Haryana and UP governments should make available the lean season allocation of 258 cusecs of water for the consumption of the citizens of Delhi.

As regards pollution, the Hon'ble Supreme Court has also accepted that the Ganga Action Plan has been a failure and needed major modifications. In this regard the *Paani Morcha* has proposed the adoption of a modified wetland technology for the treatment of sewage, which is more likely to succeed as it does not suffer from the infirmities of the conventional capital intensive mechanical sewage treatment plants. However, the final or-

ders are yet to be passed in this regard.

The Hon'ble Supreme Court has solved several matters of public concern which the Executive of our state has, for various political reasons or due to lack of will, failed to tackle in a manner beneficial to the people. It is hoped that in this case also their Lordships would look after the interests of the country and its people, and the great rivers of our land would be allowed to maintain an optimum flow, which is so essential for their integrity and continued usefulness to the people of our land.

□□



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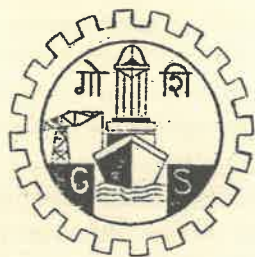
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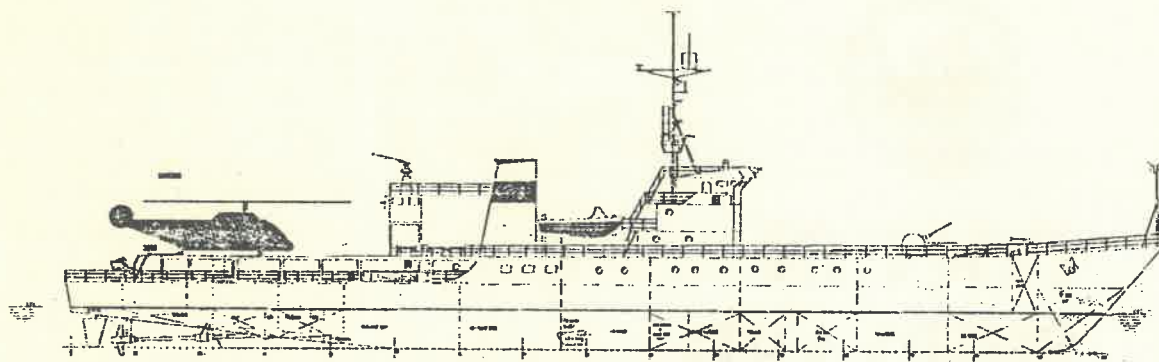


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A SUCCESS STORY

A V Bharath

Straight as an arrow runs the Krishnarajasagar Road from Mysore to the Brindavan gardens. In the outskirts of the city it crosses an industrial belt. Here, prominent even amidst local giants like Vikrant Tyres, Falcon Tyres, Bhoruka Aluminium, and Shimoga Steel, rises the four storey building of Kingsley Exports. Atop the building the proud Kingsley logo is visible for a considerable distance. It is the symbol of success of an intrepid ex-sailor of the Indian Navy.

He was born on 5 Jul 55 in a village called Deroli Ahir near Mahendragarh in Haryana. He was the eldest child of Ram Swaroop, a landed agriculturist, and Sada Kaur. Later there were more sons and daughters.

His childhood followed the usual pattern, education in local schools, matriculation from Government High School, Nangal Katha. A few months in college at Mahendragarh was interrupted by the customary visit to the recruitment centre at Charki Dadri to join 'fauj'. He opted for the Navy as "the general belief was that it was the better Service". He was the only recruit from his village.

In Sep 71 he reported to Circars for training at the Boys Training Establishment. After the basic training he was assigned to the Communication Branch in 72 and sent to Signal School for further training. He passed out in May 73 as the best all round

trainee and best VS Operator. He joined Amba as a VSII. After a year at sea he joined Circars on the training staff. Two years later, during which time he became VSI, he was nominated out of turn for Leading Signalman's course. He topped the course and served on Trishul in 76, and in Sep 77 he was transferred to the Naval NCC Unit at Mysore. He remained there till 1980. By then he had become a Leading Signalman.



Om Prakash, Ex-Leading Signalman

After a short stint in India from '80 to '81, he returned to the NCC Unit, Mysore. In 82 he gave his 'unwillingness certificate' and was duly released in May 83.

His stint at NCC Mysore in '77 was to prove the turning point in his career. He put to good use his stay in the university town. He first passed the higher education test and then the senior typewriting examination. He also acquired a diploma in the German language from Mysore University. For four years he studied pri-

vately to appear for the B.A. degree examination of Punjab University. He graduated in '80. He followed it by joining the three year LLB course of Mysore University and passed out in 84. He also wrote the examinations for banking clerical services of four banks. He received joining instructions from all four and joined the State Bank of India in Mysore in 1984 as a clerk.

Meanwhile he tried his hand at running a dairy. It was not successful and he gave it up in '82. Operating from the rented room where he lived, he made a tentative start in retailing readymade garments. He bought them from Delhi, Ludhiana, and Bombay on a small scale and sold them locally. Sales picked up sufficiently for him to rent a shop and thus in Aug 82 Kingsley Garments was inaugurated. Soon the shop had to be expanded. Since expanding the business demanded all his attention, he resigned his bank job in 87. The same year he ventured into the manufacture of school uniforms. This was virgin territory and he could establish himself quickly. He obtained orders from schools in Mysore. He rented separate accommodation, bought a sewing machine, hired four more, and set about meeting the orders. Work increased and soon he was importing special sewing machines from Japan. Business spread to neighbouring districts, as well as

Since retiring from the Navy Cdr Bharath has led a quiet life in Mysore where he has time to indulge in long walks and to write for various newspapers and magazines. He is a regular contributor to QD.

SECOND INNINGS

Coorg and Ooty. By 1989 Kingsley Garments was well established and employed about fifty tailors. Besides school uniforms it was now manufacturing industrial uniforms for the units in Mysore and Nanjagud. The turnover reached forty lakh rupees a year.

But he was not satisfied. He assessed that the future was in exports. He did not know anything about the how of the business. He got down to learning the ropes. He started methodically in 1988, and a couple of years later completed the preliminaries like registration with the Reserve Bank of India, obtaining the importer/exporter code number from the Director General of Foreign Trade, registration with the Apparel Export Promotion Council etc.

In 1990 he was ready to set up the export manufacturing unit. He bought land allotted by the Karnataka Industries Area Development Board in the industrial area. Civil works started on the strength of a small loan of twenty five lakh rupees from the Karnataka State Finance Corporation. He imported an additional sixty machines from Japan and set up a total of eighty five machines in the new building. Kingsley Exports was born. Manufacture of garments for export commenced in '92. For a start it was mostly job work for other exporters of Bangalore and Bombay. Simultaneously he kept trying for export orders. His efforts bore fruit when the first enquiry came in Oct 92. By Dec 92 the enquiry crystallised into an order for 85 lakh rupees worth of jackets for the USA. He executed this order in six months. Meanwhile he had received further orders from the same source for different outer

garments. Orders multiplied rapidly and came from France, Germany, and Canada, besides the USA. To meet the orders, initially he had to farm job work to others. At the same time he expanded his capacity by buying more machines. He added more floors to the existing building. He began importing fabric also from Hong Kong, Taiwan, Korea, China and Japan.

Today he is equipped to manufacture any garment. He has a total of five hundred machines including allied machines for cutting, fusing, collar making, button stitching, pocket stitching etc., and a computerised pattern making machine. He is proud that his venture is modern and sophisticated. He employs a thousand persons, has total assets worth six crore rupees against liabilities of one and half crore rupees, and a turn over of ten crore rupees a year.

Two similar units of his are to become operational in Bangalore by 96. He is also planning in the near future a unit of three thousand machines with employment potential of about eight thousand persons under a single roof. It would probably be the biggest of its kind in the world.

In Apr 77 he had married Kamla Yadav, a girl from a neighbouring village. It was an arranged marriage. He has two sons Vivek (15) and Vinay (12). His wife died in 86. He has taken the personal loss in his stride. His first son lives with him, studies in the pre-University class and helps in the factory. His second son is in St Jude's Public School Kotagiri in the VII standard. He says he is too busy to think of another

marriage. He enjoys life. He loves to zoom around in his latest acquisition—a Maruti Esteem. He rushes off frequently on business trips to the USA, Europe, and the Far East.

His parents visit him often. He visits his village once in a while. He is considering putting up a unit in Haryana.

He has shown entrepreneurial skills of a high order. In the process he has given livelihood to many semi-literate women from poorer backgrounds. He is earning foreign exchange for the country. He is happy to employ ex-servicemen. He is appreciative of his time in the Navy. He believes that his naval training helped him greatly. "It is the Navy which gave me the discipline and integrity needed to succeed against all odds, and put Mysore on the world map of readymade garments", he asserts simply.

The boy from Deroli Ahir has come a long way. But the road ahead stretches further. He is seized with restlessness. He is busy planning. His dreams are many — a model residential school, a hotel, a poultry farm. Diversification is the buzzword.

Such is the stuff this Haryanvi Mysorean is made of. I give you Om Prakash, ex-Leading Signaller, No 097415Z, of the Indian Navy.

□□

Kingsley Exports



THREE DIMENSIONS OF MAN

Cdr P Vasudeva

Though cast in a different mould the subject that I have chosen is of great relevance and vital significance, especially when the moral and ethical values are fast eroding and man is becoming self centred, bereft of social feelings, and is only concerned with his own profit and pleasure. In the world we are living in, human life has lost its value and man is killing man mercilessly as we witness in Bosnia and elsewhere. It is in this context that the spiritual dimension of man assumes an added significance.

There are three dimensions to man's growth—physical, mental and spiritual. Physical growth we all understand and recognise. The body grows and gains its stature through physical nourishment. This is a palpable experience needing no proof. The mental personality of man similarly grows through mental food, consisting of experience and knowledge mostly of the external world and to a slight extent of the inner world as well. There is, however, a third dimension to man's growth which points to a profound focus of values within man, his essential divine nature, the manifestation of which constitutes the goal of human life. What food do we feed it with?

In the last fifty years, the mighty

human mind has made tremendous strides in communication, nuclear science, television, space exploration, satellite technology and jet aviation, which have eroded national and linguistic barriers. All these point to an unprecedented and irreversible pro-

In defence of the accused, lawyer John Prentice closed with this story:

God in his everlasting council asked Justice, Truth and Mercy if He should create man.

Justice replied, "Do not make him because he will tread on all your laws, disciplines and principles."

Truth replied, "Do not make him. He will be ugly and forever pursue lies and falsehoods."

Mercy said, "I know man will be wretched, but I will take charge of him and walk him through dark alleys until I bring him to you in the end."

— Extracted from Khushwant Singh's
Saturday column in the HT

cess which is inexorably influencing the people inhabiting our planet. This typhoon of change is pushing us willy-nilly into a global civilization. These and other developments in politics and economics have transformed the world into a global society in which spiritual growth will have more relevance.

What is spiritual growth? Spiritual growth enables man to break through self-centeredness and send out tendrils of love and concern for all fellow beings. Ethics and morality are

by-products of spiritual evolution which find expression in fellow feeling, forbearance, love, sympathy and genuine concern for all beings. A spiritually evolved person is possessed of strength of character. He does not work for personal gain or profit and believes that he works best when he works for others. The Christian command "Love thy neighbour as thyself" is his motto and all his actions are motivated by a spirit of service and welfare of others. He is ever ready to give and not merely to take or grab. He is kind and helpful and when he helps somebody who is needy, he does not expect gratitude, but thanks whom he has helped, for giving him an opportunity to help. A spiritually developed man is the focus of all the aforesaid qualities.

To quote Will Durant "what thinks in man is not he, but the social community of which he is a part". If a man lives constantly in good environment and contributes his best for the welfare of the community, his good traits are strengthened and bad ones attenuated.

Swami Vivekananda defines education as manifestation of the perfection already in man. All knowledge, perfection, purity, goodness and strength are potentially within man, and edu-

Prakash Vasudeva joined the Navy as a SLt RINVR in the erstwhile Supply Branch in 1942. Inspired by the experience of working with Cmde Nott, he applied for a transfer to the Executive Branch in 1948. Cdr Vasudeva then served on board IN ships Jumna, Angre and Delhi. A graduate of the DSSC Wellington, he has served with the Armistice Commission in Indo-China in 1954. He has commanded INS Hoogly and has been President of the Services Selection board, Jubbalpur. He sought premature retirement in 1962 and now practices law at the Delhi High Court.

cation is the process of making them manifest. Education is also the training of the will. That is why Swami Vivekananda insisted on value based education for character building and man-making a major factor in spiritual growth.

Without spiritual growth, man is egotistic, self-centered, selfish and oblivious of the essential unity of the human race. Though the world has produced a galaxy of intellectual giants, a number of them have remained moral pigmies. The conflicts, confrontations, violence, hatred and intolerance that afflict the world today are largely due to the absence of

spiritual consciousness in man and unless there is a radical change in man's outlook, the only possible relationship between man and man, will be, in the words of Bertrand Russel, 'that between two billiard balls', namely collision. The same idea is echoed by the poet Wordsworth in the following verse:

"Unless he erects himself above himself, How poor a thing is man."

In the emerging global society, man will need to develop a higher consciousness of the whole world being one family and a vision of the essential unity of the human race. *Vasudaiva kutumbakam*. Unless man evolves and

radiates love, fellow feeling, sympathy and human concern in inter-human relationships and there is a shift in world's ethos towards welfare of the many and happiness of the most "*bahujan hitay, bahujan sukhay*", it will be difficult to sustain a global society. Besides, with the enormous knowledge and powers that science and modern technology have placed in the hands of man, 'we are in the middle of a race,' says Bertrand Russel, 'between human skill as to means, and human folly as to ends' and unless 'men increase in wisdom as much as in knowledge, increase of knowledge will be increase of sorrow.'

□□

"PLEASE READ BY ATTENTION"

MY SELF INTRODUCTION

Rajput Singh, Ex-Indian Navy

Do read this piece carefully. We have not dared to apply the blue pencil to it, lest we take away from the flavour of this deeply philosophical piece of writing

I am the Ex-Defence Person of the Indian Navy, son of sage and Freedom Fighter (trying hardy for the defence of the humanity and for the freedom of the human soul), who came in this world on Aug 14, 1948 and taken birth in the FREE INDIA. To me it is the great grace of That Almighty GOD that my birth become in the same country as well as in the same state where the Super Souls, Hero of Ramayana and Mahabharata Lord Rama and Lord Krishna also taken the birth.

Now it is the luckiest and golden chance for the salvation for every one of us that we are in this world in the form of the human. But the human life is woven with the threads of well and woe. One's hopes are rarely fulfilled. Man proposes and GOD disposes. My life also have been to be the same of this principle. There are many events occurred in my life. But the most effective event occurred in my life is that I joined the INDIAN NAVY. This event left a deep impression on my

mind and brain and opened my Divine Eye.

During my passed Naval life of 13 years in the Indian Navy after much seeing, hearing, reading, thinking and understanding I found that the human life is adjactly just like the Naval life, who is voyaging in the ocean of the world by his human body which is just like a small ship, built by the combination action of GOD and the Nature, who are the builders of the ship. Operated by the human breath which

PHILOSOPHICAL

is just like the rotating propeller of the ships. Human five senses are adjectly just like the different types of the meters and indicators of the ship. Commanded by the human mind which is adjectly just like the intoxicative Captain of the ship and companion by the human brain which is adjectly just like the intellgent Executive officer of the ship. Lastly the human SOUL is adjectly just like the 'Gyro Compass' which guides the ship (human) at the accurate voyage coarse (direction of the ships destination) and by the guidance of the Gyro-Compass (human soul) only the ship (human) get the destination of the voyage, goal of the human life is the SALVATION.

In the said philosophy I am an ineffcient navigator, voyaging in the middle of terrerize rough pacific with the help of a tiny decayed leaking pulling boat, but due to the calimity the

sailing boat has been caught up by the mighty hurricane storm and it intricated in the middle of anticyclone, where the different types of enemies e.i whale, sharks and sword fish are wandering and waiting for my body blood and flesh taste and as wel as both the oars of the boat also broken, therefrom this most difficult misery and intricate condition, I want the extricate and for that I am trying hardy to cross the ocean of universal obstackls by pointing my mind, brain and action towards the actual accurate aim and that is the permanent, unchange and the supreme stage of this human life. In the Indian Navy I have been in the technical field of electrical engineering. So I am here-with writing a philosophical sentence:

'THE ENGINEER of the Engineers' — Please Think it over

In the universe there is only one who

is the most effecient and compleatly perfect ENGINEER by whom this world and all the Natural and the worldly things are framed and by the merciful grace of that ENGINEER only todays materialistic Engineers manu-facturing different types of new highly advanced scientific things effeciently, quickly and continously in their life due to His mercy only they are working in their life, therefore for us it is very necessary to gain the metaphysics of that ENGINEER whose every work is being controlled smoothly, systematically and continously in the world, therefore for us it is very essential to know that work (techenique of action) after doing and compleating by which man achieves the goal and destination is the salvation of this human life.

Rajput Singh

371 A.D.A.Coloney, Agra Road
ALIGARH(U.P.) 202001

INDIA

□□

The Hon'ble,
Mr. Bill Clinton, U.S.A. President
1120 Vermont Avenue, N.W.
Washington D.C., 20520-0001



EX-INDIAN NAVY
ALIGARH (U.P.) INDIA
16th December, 1993

Respected Sir,

At the occasion of the HAPPY CHRISTMAS and the HAPPY NEW YEAR 1994 I am Congratulating and presenting you the below Philosophical Poestries.

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"As the lighting (sunrise) cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west" Likewise the great Souls come to this world and for the humanity do they best.

- (1) Presenting you this letter through philosophical matter Therefore you it is better to name this matter greater The matter is the deep subject according the Holy word May this letter do the human welfare of whole the world
- (2) The connection of ocean is to all the countries land of the world Relation of Religion is to the humanity according the Holy Word All the countries of the world are connected by the vast ocean Writing you this letter for worldly welfare by human relation Please read, think and understand the sense of this kind letter Search for metaphysics of God and get that which is greater

God is great but greater is metaphysician who reveals God

I am also here with presenting you the below ACROSS Special philosophical 11 lines Poetry on your name which is written by starting your name and by the letters of your name, kindly look into :

Bill Clinton congratulation at the HAPPY CHRISTMAS as the U.S.A. president Inexhaustible and indulgent is one GOD of every one's life Cosmendant Liberal is really the great worker who do for the sake of the humanity best Love and Faith are only the seeds, follow by which in soul human get rest Coherence of the metaphysician helps human for achieving the life goal Learned and intelligent person try in life for realising GOD in the soul. Illuminated GOD is kind for every one and His mercy also can be seen. Runnery is religious place for preaching and that also have some mean. Temporality is just like the lowest intrapped in which lastly man cry. Omnipotent GOD is much kind to us and He do distressing ocean dry. Nothing is impossible in this world for the human if sincerely try.

"In the sight of Liberal this whole world is like vast easily"

Enclosed: Self introduction

And Letters

Your most Sincerely

Rajput Singh

(RAJPUT SINGH EX-INDIAN NAVY)
371 A.D.A. Colony Agra Road
Aligarh (U.P.) Pin-202001

Note: For the sake of GOD and for the humanity I am requesting for a chance for free preaching service to your country people and for that I am holding a valid passport No. P-991789

Office of the President-elect
and Vice President-elect

January 19, 1993

Rajput Singh
371 A.D.A. Colony, Agra Road
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(U.P.) Pin 202001
INDIA

Dear Friend:

I was so very pleased to receive your warm message of congratulations. I've been humbled and also thrilled by the tremendous outpouring of support and enthusiasm from around the world.

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Bill Clinton

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THE YUGOSLAV TRAGEDY

VAdm S C Chopra

The multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-religious character of former Yugoslavia almost completely matches the diversity within our society. Its traumatic break-up has not however, attracted as much media attention as it ought to. In sharp contrast, the Pakistani media, next to Kashmir, is obsessed with the goings on in Yugoslavia simply because a million and a half muslims are locked in a homicidal struggle with their Serbian and Croatian countrymen, almost till death do them part. The three-pronged suicidal civil-war has gone on for over 45 months, primarily in the republics of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Most intelligent observers are left wondering who is the aggressor and who the victim. The western media, by and large, have been quick to label the Serbs as the butchers and murderers who have unleashed death and misery on the poor hapless Croats and Bosnian Muslims. There is no doubt that the Serbs reacted extremely violently to the sudden break-up of their country and finding themselves strangers, if not foreigners, in their own land. Yet that is exactly what happened when Slovenia and Croatia declared their independence and secession from Yugoslavia in June, 1991, followed by Bosnia-Herzegovina in March, 1992. All this happened in the teeth of opposition by the Serbian population of these republics. Whilst Slovenia had hardly any Serbs living permanently within its territory, they formed one-

fourth of the population of Croatia and one-third of Bosnia. The break-away republics, encouraged by outside agencies, in particular President Kohl of Germany, ignored the protests raised by their Serbian populations, held hasty referendums which naturally favoured independence and went ahead with the disintegration of Yugoslavia, unmindful of the consequences that followed. After three quarters of a century the Balkans were once again ripped apart. A proper analysis of the ongoing conflict is not

possible without taking in a brief overview of the history of Yugoslavia.

Yugoslavia lies in the soft but turbulent underbelly of Europe, also called the Balkans. The term "Balkanisation" very aptly describes the historical legacy of this part of the world. Originally inhabited by Illyrians and Thracians from ancient Greece, Slavs from Central Russia came to settle in the Balkans in large numbers in the 5th century. The name Yugoslavia was only given in 20th century by King Alexander the First, which literally means the land of



Subhash Chopra wrote the original article in the USI Journal and has abridged and updated it at our request. Subhash retired in 1990 as VCNS. He and Biba live in Delhi.

South Slavs. The modern day Serbs, Slovenes, Croats, Macedonians and Montenegrans all have a common Slav ancestry. Their religious persuasions, however, arose from the part of the Balkans they lived in. The western area came under the Roman Empire from 9th century onwards and adopted the Roman Catholic church, whilst the eastern part was captured by the Byzantine Empire which gave it the Orthodox Church. The latter has become the symbol of Serbian national consciousness, more so because the Patriarch of the church is chosen from the native stock. The western portion after the Roman Empire, was taken over by the Hungarians before becoming part of the Austro-Hungarian empire from the 12th to the 20th century, with only brief spells of self rule. The eastern part, mainly consisting of Serbia and Montenegro, obtained its independence from the Byzantine empire in the 12th century and retained its autonomy and self-rule till 1463 when it fell to the Ottoman Turks. Since the Turks came via the Dalmatian coast, the central part of the country namely Bosnia-Herzegovina, was captured first in 1386. With their arrival, Islam was introduced to Bosnia, where it is believed that only the rich and influential converted to Islam to retain their power and lands. Islam however, failed to make a dent into the Orthodox Christian community in Serbia, which fell to Turks almost eighty years later in 1463, after Constantinople was captured by the Turks in 1453. With the introduction of Islam, Bosnia-Herzegovina became ethnically the most diverse republic of Yugoslavia. The Turkish Pasha initially operated from Banja-Luka, where they built some of the finest Mosques in the

world which now stand utterly destroyed by the ongoing civil-war. After establishing the capital in Sarajevo, Bosnia remained as the Ottoman's outpost for waging war against the Austro-Hungarian empire and Venice for over two and a half centuries. Bihac one of the safe areas under current UN operations formed the western most limit of the Turkish control in Europe.

A dramatic series of events in the 20th century changed the face of Yugoslavia with great rapidity. During the First Balkan War in 1912 Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece temporarily set aside their differences and defeated the Ottomans much to the surprise of the rest of Europe. "After an illness lasting over 200 years, the sick man of Europe, the European Turkey, suddenly expired". Next year, in the Second Balkan War, Serbia and Greece defeated Bulgaria the protege of Austria. An year later on 28 June, 1914 Archduke Francis Ferdinand, heir-apparent to the Austro-Hungarian empire was assassinated by a young Serb in Sarajevo which triggered off the First World War. Austria attacked Serbia some four weeks later after being taunted by wily Kaiser Wilhem II, 'the Serbs must be wiped out and quickly too'. The Triple Entente of France, Russia and Great Britain entered the war on the side of Serbia against the Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria and Turkey. It was a cataclysmic war, out of the ashes of which emerged the unified Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, under Prince-Regent Alexander the First in 1918. He tried hard to weld the nation together, on behalf of his father King Peter I, by suppressing all political parties with religious or regional flavour. In 1927 he changed the name

of the country to Yugoslavia, proclaimed a royal dictatorship demanding that regional nationalism must give way to wider loyalties and Yugoslav patriotism. Unfortunately, despite his idealism and occasional strong arm measures, the task remained unfinished, when he was assassinated in Marseilles in 1934 by a Macedonian terrorist, along with the French foreign minister.

At the death of King Alexander, Yugoslavia consisted of six republics of Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia and Montenegro, along with two autonomous regions of Vojvodina and Kesovo within Serbia. The three officially recognised languages consisted of Serbo-Croatian, written in Cyrillic by Serbs and Latin by Croats, Slovene and Macedonian. The use of Arabic by Bosnian Muslims was confined to religious functions only. The literature of the country mainly conveyed the people's resistance against domination by outside powers, which each of the republics had to face throughout their history. Their folk songs, drama, poetry and literary traditions reflect the intrinsic togetherness of their original slavic ancestors, whilst recognising the dissimilarities of the current period. Love and marriage cutting across the religious barriers, multi-ethnic pretensions and universal patriotism became the predominant themes of all literary and educational works, much the same way as in India, and only a bit more European in essence. Prince Paul who became the Regent on behalf of young Prince Peter II was a relatively weak man, overwhelmed by the affairs of the state, strictly followed the neutral path both domestically and through the emerging power equations in Europe. With the galloping

rise of Nazi Germany in the west and Communist Russia in the east, he was to meet his nemesis soon enough. Unlike any other country in Europe, Yugoslavia was about to make its unique imprint on the fortunes of Nazi Germany. By early 1941 Hitler's rampaging armies had swallowed up most of Europe and were now secretly engaged in moving up 155 Divisions to their jump-off positions in Rumania, for the mid-May offensive against Soviet Russia. Suddenly Hitler demanded that neutral Yugoslavia sign the Anti-Comintern pact. Weak by nature and overawed by the timing of Hitler's demand, Prince Paul gave in and signed the pact on 25 March, 1941. Ink had hardly dried on this document, when he was overthrown two days later by the officers of Yugoslav Air Force, Peter II was declared of age and a new government under General Simovic was formed. Not to be cowed down by this blatant insult to the German Reich, Hitler ordered the German High Command to totally destroy Yugoslavia, both militarily and as a nation. The German High Command, though enraged by this mindless diversion from "Operation Barbarossa" the code name for invasion of Russia, were forced to divert some of the resources to the Yugoslav front. Belgrade was razed to the ground on the night of 6 April, 1941 by the Luftwaffe. The destruction of Dresden by allied bombers, recently remembered with much regret and penitence, would appear as a trivial blip in comparison. A few weeks more, and the Yugoslav army, hastily mobilised and badly led, was utterly devastated.

However, Germany was about to pay a heavy price for Hitler's personal vendetta against Yugoslavia. He was

reported to be in one of the wildest of rages of his entire career. The Yugoslav operation caused the 'vital delay' which resulted in the German armies being unable to reach Moscow before winter had got them in its grip. Many military historians consider this to be the greatest blunder committed by the Third Reich, which cost them the war. Yugoslavia thereafter, was swiftly carved up between the victors. Germany and Italy divided Slovenia between themselves, put up a puppet regime in Croatia and placed Serbia under German military occupation. Italy took Dalmatia for itself, Kosovo and Western Macedonia for Albania and set up a puppet regime in Montenegro. King Peter II with his entourage escaped to London, and armed rebellion started in Bosnia where the infamous Croatian puppet regime called 'Ustashi' began a massacre of Serbs, Jews and Gypsies so horrendous that it even surpassed German savagery against Polish Jews. In Serbia, a force led by Col Draza Miholovich called "Chetniks" started attacking German formations on a regular basis. It soon lost its popular support when ex-soldiers in it, turned from revolt to collaboration, after excessive German reprisals against their families. Meanwhile another powerful and effective force "the Partisan's" led by Josip Broz Tito, a Croat by birth, communist by choice and a guerrilla leader par excellence emerged. They were eventually to tie up nearly 25 Divisions of German army for the rest of the war in Yugoslavia. Stalin initially and Churchill later grudgingly, provided whatever help they could to Tito. But, with or without their help, the Partisans sent out a shock wave of fear throughout the German army. No other country in

occupied Europe can boast of achieving "so much with so little" against the Nazis. This is how Churchill described the Partisans in Parliament on 22 February, 1944 "Led with great skill, organised on guerilla principle; the Partisans were at once elusive and deadly. They were here, they were there, they were everywhere — 800,000 of them — they inflicted great losses and toil upon the enemy". In Marshal Tito, Partisans found an outstanding leader, glorious in their fight for freedom. At the end of the war Marshal Tito put together the brand new Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia consisting of the six republics which had been previously divided between the Axis powers in 1941.

Never on good terms with Stalin, Tito's Yugoslavia was turned out of Comintern in 1948. He later became one of the founding members of the non-aligned movement in preference to joining the COMECON and the Warsaw Treaty Organisation. A tough dictator, Tito was chosen President for life and led his nation with a special brand of liberal communism. He successfully accomplished the unifying tasks left unfinished by King Alexander in 1934. Despite being a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-religious country he laid stress on their common ancestry and heritage. From a backward medieval society he successfully carved out a modern industrial society, where people lived more freely, intermarried and moved beyond the confines of religious dogma. It is therefore all the more tragic that within a decade of his death in 1980, the country he worked hard to modernise and unify, broke up so swiftly. Modern mediamen are strangely averse to accept lessons of history, but the Serbs are convinced that current dramatic

turn of events in their homeland was engineered by inducements from external forces keen to avenge the humiliations of the past, rather than the political compulsions of a vacuum created by Tito's death.

The Federal Presidency of Yugoslavia, after Tito, rotated between the parts, with an elected representative from each republic holding office for one year. He concurrently became the ex-officio President of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, the only political party permitted. In the absence of a charismatic national leader, the year old honeymoon between the various republics did not last very long. Orchestration of sub-national loyalties in Slovenia and Croatia, openly aided and abetted by outside agencies, and triggered by reference held to elicit public opinion in favour of independence and secession from Yugoslavia, resulted in these two republics declaring independence by mid-1991, against the bitter opposition from their Serbian minorities. Whilst Serbs in Slovenia were only a miniscule entity, in Croatia they formed a sizeable, one-fourth of the population. Thus as the government in Zagreb proceeded towards independence, the local Serbs swiftly let it be known that they would relinquish their loyalty to Croatia by forming the Serbian Autonomous Region of Krajina (SARK). As the fierce civil war erupted between the two communities, President Kohl of Germany declared that people in Europe had to be free to choose their own future. The US Secretary of State Baker on a visit to Belgrade about the same time, however, agreed that US would not recognise the break-away republics. Six weeks later, US policy did a neat somersault when President Bush in a letter informed the Federal

Yugoslav President Mesic, a Croat, that he would not be averse to recognising Slovenia and Croatia provided their break-away was achieved peacefully, as if such a proposition was possible. All this went on while the civil war grew in intensity and savagery. The Yugoslav National Army (JNA) also participated in an effort to prevent the break-up of the nation and protect her internal borders, thus naturally coming up on the side of the Serbs who also were preventing the break-up of the country. President Tudjman demanded at various World forums that JNA be returned to barracks as it was fighting for Serboslovakia. He also encouraged the Croats in the JNA to desert en masse and join up with the newly raised Croatian militia. Concerned with growing violence, mass rapes, concentration camps and ethnic cleansing, the European Union (EU) and Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and NATO met frequently to devise ways and means of controlling the senseless killing of innocent civilians. They imposed an arms embargo, cut off economic aid and brokered many a ceasefire which was broken with equal frequency. The United Nations while supporting the European initiatives, warned Germany not to recognise Slovenia and Croatia in a hurry, which it did anyway on 15 December, 1991. SARK in the meanwhile consolidated its hold in the districts of Krajina and Western/Eastern Slavonia, both Serb majority areas, by the spring of 1992. The stage was now set for a prolonged communal warfare, when the UN Security Council decided to send in UN peace keeping force of 14,000 personnel in Croatia.

When the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), under an

Indian Commander started to arrive in Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia-Herzegovina, primarily because the Croats refused to have them in Zagreb, in May, 1992, another civil-war of equal intensity had already broken out in Bosnia. Following a similar pattern to Slovenia, Croatia and Macedonia the republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina had also held a referendum and declared independence in early March, 1992. Since Bosnia is the most diverse of the Yugoslav republics, its story needs to be covered separately. Before UNPROFOR could spread out in Croatia, the Serbs had already consolidated their hold on one-third of Croatian lands, where they had lived for over 1500 years, thus making the task of rolling them back difficult. Distribution of humanitarian relief, release of prisoners on either side, prevention of further bloodshed and opening of negotiations, was however successfully achieved. Since the mandate of UN forces did not include restoration of lost territories the Zagreb government remained extremely hostile to them and in March 1995 insisted that UNPROFOR leave Croatia as their mandate was over. The World community, however, persuaded them to extend the stay of the peacekeepers for another six months. Little did they know that the Croats in the intervening period had, with the open assistance of Germany and Austria, raised a spanking new army with tanks, gunships et al, despite the so-called arms embargo, and did not need the UN any more. As of going to the press, this new army trained by retired American generals, has already recaptured the so-called lost territories and started-off the largest movement of refugees in the war so far. Almost 200,000 Krajinian Serbs are on the



BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

If the performance of the brand new army of Croats is anything to go by then the war in Bosnia is still in its early days. Its 5th Corps, raised and funded by the Islamic countries, trained by retired American mercenaries including Generals John Galvin and Sewell, with Mesdames Bhutto of Pakistan and Chiller of Turkey emerging as senior cheer leaders, has got itself irretrievably stuck in Bihac. Their determined foray against the

move towards Serbia, leaving behind their homes and all worldly possessions. Krajinian Serbs believe, President Kohl has not only settled a historical score but raised the present day sceptre of 'USTASHI'. It is yet to be seen whether the Serbs have lost a battle or the war. The Anglo-Saxon press is strangely quiet on this unexpected turn of events. Certainly they did not expect the Croats to win so easily. The villain of the piece was to have been a Serb. How now to shift responsibility onto the Croats. The history of Balkans is replete with Croats having played ball with outsiders. Confident and combative they are already seen to be moving into Bosnia next, in support of Croats and Muslims there. The emerging scenario could backfire a bit, if the former Yugoslav army currently hamstrung with a variety of embargoes on the Former Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), decides to move in from the east in support of their fellow Bosnian Serbs. The next few weeks shall tell. It is clear, however, that war has not ended, it has only changed tack.

Serbs in the hills surrounding Sarajevo early this month brought about a deadly reprisal from the Serbs, who promptly cleared out Muslims from Srebrenica and Zepa in the east even though these had been declared as "safe areas" by the UN. All this goes on whilst the UN arms embargo is supposedly in place and its removal has become a major bone of contention between the US lawmakers and President Clinton.

Going back a little, the population diversity in Bosnia-Herzegovina can well be gauged from the last recorded census done in 1980. In a total population of 4.2 million, the Muslims were 38%, Serbs 32% and Croats 17%. President Alija Izetbegovich, leader of 1.6 million Muslims, therefore had even less reason to declare independence unilaterally, and the European community no reason at all to accord recognition within the month. In fact EU's very own Ambassador Badinter strongly recommended against recognition, as Bosnia did not meet the criteria set out by the EU for recognition of states. Be that as it may, the

ferocity and speed with which the Bosnian Serbs reacted, swiftly spread their control over 70% of Bosnia in one mad frenzy of killing, burning, sniping and rape in mindless anger. The western community was justifiably horrified, but very few sat back to analyse the causes leading to this irrational behaviour on the part of Serbs. Instead they spent more time setting up courts to investigate crimes against humanity. The civil-war in Bosnia has already gone on for three years and Bosnian Serbs in the Republic of Srpska are neither in a mood to compromise nor near capitulation despite the fact that arms transfers to Bosnian army through Islamic countries is no longer a closely held secret.

When the UN Security Council enlarged the mandate of UNPROFOR in September, 1992 to include Bosnia also, a new command was raised to handle its day-to-day problems. Since the contingents for this command came mostly from NATO countries, the involvement of NATO in peace-keeping tasks increased dramatically. They were required to maintain a "no fly zone" over Bosnia and enforce arms embargo against the warring factions. As has been evident to all for some time, both these activities were being conducted through extremely porous skies and borders. The Republican party in US took the view that Bosnian Muslims were being unfairly treated as neither NATO nor UN would equip/enable them to fight nor fight for them. The continued inability of Muslims to face up to Serbs has become a politically hot potato in Washington, whilst in Europe they are still to decide whether a brand new Muslim state is acceptable in Europe or not. A minority government is sought to be converted into a majority government by

the simplistic ploy of creating a federation between the Muslims and Croats in Bosnia, forgetting altogether that some of the bitterest battles were fought between them in Mostar and Pakrac not very long ago. Future friction may still arise now that Croats are temporarily on top of all their adversaries with the spanking new army.

It is necessary to recall that because of its religious and ethnic diversity and peculiar land ownership pattern, peace in Bosnia is still a mirage. A peace commission initially set up by the EU and later taken over by the UN has worked ceaselessly since March, 1992 producing one peace plan after another, which were indeed partition alternatives not acceptable to the warring factions. The general trend followed by the peace commission has been that Serbs should get around 50% of the land area even though in possession of 70% and the rest be divided or administered by the so-called Muslim-Croat Federation. The chinks in the Federation are already showing, as the Croatian army unhampered by any directive from EU or UN, has marched into Bosnia to teach the Serbs a lesson. If that be so then the turn of

the Muslims will not be far behind, as their army is still in the making and current hope lies in mercenaries from the Islamic world. The agony of Bosnia is well summed up by Henry Kissinger who said, "whereas Croatia and Slovenia had their own identity, Bosnia was a Yugoslavia in microcosm. It is a mystery why anyone should think that

Croats and Serbs, unwilling to stay together in larger Yugoslavia, could be induced to create a joint state in Bosnia-Herzegovina, together with Muslims they had hated for centuries."

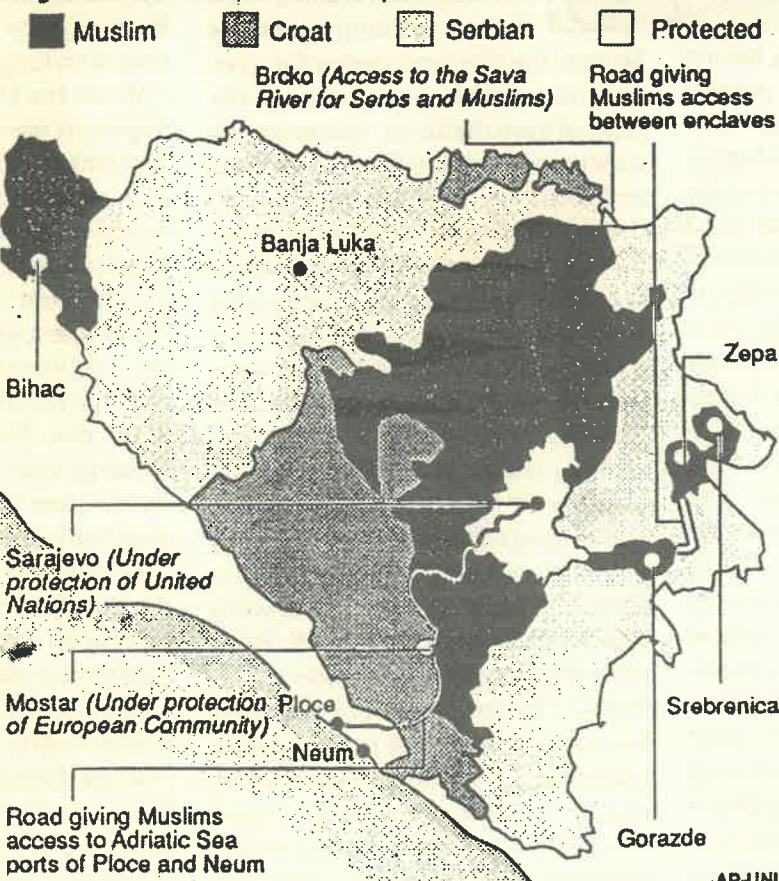
EPILOGUE

Yugoslavia was a friendly country. Under Nehru and Tito we had close economic and foreign policy aims. Yet its tragic breakup has left us not only speechless, but strangely unconcerned. One major lesson that stands out clearly is that a multi-ethnic and multi-religious country should never seek resolution of its domestic problems through world forums. Sometimes, when negotiations fail, it is preferable even to fight out the problem, rather than be embroiled by outside agencies, into an endless no-win dialogue. Finally, whilst self-determination is a good principle, carried to extremes it can lead a country to a disastrous and lawless future. The sword has always got the better of the pen, and anyone who neglects its use on humanitarian grounds can end up in bartering away sovereignty and territorial integrity to enemies within and without. Whilst maintaining respect for democratic principles there should be no doubt left in anyone's mind that the state shall fight anyone violating its borders or social complexities.

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Partition plan for Bosnia-Herzegovina

The international mediators in Geneva have presented this compromise plan to the three warring factions and have made an August 30 deadline for them to accept it.



NUCLEAR SHOCK-WAVES

Cdr Fred Menzies IN (Retd)

In typical French arrogance Jacques Chirac has decided to resume nuclear tests in our backyard and thumbed his nose to the World. Colonialism in the Pacific has passed its use-by date. The French claim that pieces of the Pacific are parts of metropolitan France is international chicanery.

France's proposed resumption of tests in the Pacific represents a setback for international disarmament and a cause for international outrage.

But, in the absence of an enforceable agreement for world peace and disarmament, the democratic West still needs a deterrent force. To ensure world stability, attempts at political settlement must be backed by an effective military force and beyond that, by a nuclear deterrent.

There is no doubt however, that China's nuclear tests carried out in May 95, pose far greater threats to regional security because of its totalitarian regime. Yet, the anti-nuclear

protesters seem to have overlooked them. China also shows no sign of improving its appalling human rights record. China's willingness to do business with Australia and the West and our eagerness to get into its newly reopened markets should not make us forget that, for the foreseeable future, China poses the most serious threat to Australia's national and regional defence.

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IN SEARCH OF A BETTER WORLD

Dean M Menzies

So a New Year dawns. We sing Auld Lang Syne to farewell 1995, and bring in 1996. Each year at this time, the Pope, the Queen and other figure heads appeal for reconciliation and peace in the world's trouble spots. Each year, though the location of the conflicts and the identity of the combatants may differ, the fighting continues with a logic of its own. We may assume it has always been this way, although there was a time, in Europe, when generals were gentlemen, slaughter began at an appointed hour, and killing would never have been permitted on Christmas Day. Last Christmas

involved a brutal assault on the senses, of President Yeltsin and his henchmen — indulging themselves at the expense of the Chechens.

Former Yugoslavia is in worse shape than the bits that stayed until the bitter end, as the latest Bosnian ceasefire runs into trouble in a way that has become routine. Those who believe that this horror, or those in Angola, Cambodia, Somalia and a number of other societies torn apart, is close to being over are deluding themselves. Most conflicts, a cynic would say, are never over, but merely subside into remission.

It would seem to be so with India and Pakistan, once joined by the Raj, now separated by religion, memories of war, the Kashmir dispute, spying charges, nuclear rivalry and whatever other problems one cares to mention. People laugh when, further to the east, mention is made of the tussle for the Spratly islands between China, Vietnam and other East Asian nations. Countries will fight over the merest scraps of territory if they perceive them to harbor a promise of gain. But what, one wonders, is the grisly conflict in Algeria all about? The fundamentalist fanaticism that is tearing

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apart this once sophisticated slice of North Africa is reflected in Egypt, whose moderate and secular Government is threatened by lunatics.

Should such militants come to power in either of these large and influential nations, expect undesirable ripples to spread from one quarter to another of the Mediterranean, a sea that has watched a dozen great civilisations rise and fall with the tide of history. Concerned outsiders are at the same time noting with alarm the surge of a new generation of terrorists, spear-headed by Iranian exploitation of young zealots who are encouraged to believe that paradise is but a suicidal act of terrorism away. It is easier to persuade people to take up arms than to settle their differences around a negotiating table, though that is where, if they are lucky, they will eventually wind up after many lives have been sacrificed. As a new century approaches, humanity is faced with the sobering thought that it is as ready to resort to force today as it was when the ancient scholars put chisel to stone for the recording of epic battles.

What hope is to be found for the future? Conflict resolution is an art that has been practised down the centuries. Many modern thinkers are trying, in their various ways, to turn it

into a science. A glance at human nature would suggest that there is no magic formula for neutralising the instincts and emotions that send nations to war with others or with themselves. The urges that ensure the preservation of the species also create the rivalry and competition that can culminate in conflict. Some philosophers might suggest that war is humanity's natural way of trying to preserve a competitive edge by eliminating the weak and ensuring the survival of the toughest and smartest for the overall benefit of mankind.

There must be a better way. Some people think it is to be found in education. Others think it is to be sensed in the emergence of a global village in communications, ideas and travel, one that erodes ignorance, suspicion and fear of those who are different. Still others believe that poverty is at the basic of conflict. But education of what kind? Many of the most war-mongering of nations have been those of impressive intellectual and cultural accomplishment, indicating that it is not the weight of learning that is important but the quality of its emphasis on human, or universal, values. Similarly, the world may be girdled with satellites, cables and unprecedentedly cheap travel, but it would be stretch-

ing the imagination to believe that if everyone watches CNN and drinks Coke, humanity will demystify itself and conclude that war is folly. Moreover, poverty may cause strife, but wealth creates envy and greed — no, the answer is not that simple.

Australia, one could argue, is a microcosm of a perplexing and argumentative world, with its multiplicity of clans, tribes, races, religions, regions and nations. We may not realise it, but Australian society in the mid-1990's is an example of a world that works. We get along together, even though we hail from 140 different countries. It would be idle to pretend that racism or other forms of intolerance did not exist in this melting pot. But it would also be foolish to ignore what we are achieving or, worse, to take it for granted. Preserving and nourishing our civil society, with its careful blend of checks and balances, requires perpetual vigilance. It would start with the notion that young people must be taught to care for others, to nurture love and to develop their spirituality as a way of creating attitudinal changes across an entire generation. Events around the world at the beginning of this new year remind us that peace is too important to be left to politicians and soldiers.



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THE RAGE OF ISLAM

Richard Schneider

The cover is stark. Across a picture of a hooded and masked face from which only a pair of eyes beneath bushy eyebrows peer out, the cover line reads — "Rage of Islam" Under it there is a sub-heading "Extremist threat from Pakistan to the Philippines"

This is the recent cover (9th March 95) of the weekly Far Eastern Economic Review, probably the most influential periodical in the Asia-Pacific region. The Review is not usually given to sensationalism and is highly regarded in business, diplomatic and most government circles. It is certainly required reading in every Australian embassy from Karachi to Jakarta. Even in capitals such as Singapore where it has had to battle bans and censorship, the local elite see it as an authoritative and independent voice.

The magazine's prelude spelt out clearly the main thrust of its story: "The recent arrest in Pakistan of a top terrorist wanted in the United States and linked to Muslim guerrillas in the Philippines spotlighted a rising tide of Islamic militancy. Asian countries with large Muslim populations, such as India, Indonesia and Malaysia, are watching warily. But it is Pakistan, as Ahmed Rashid reports, that holds the greatest dangers. Riven by violence, implicated in three civil wars, it could be pivotal for events in the region". It is unlikely that Ahmed Rashid, the magazine's Islamabad correspondent, can be dis-

missed as just another journalist doing a beat-up.

In summary, the Review report said Pakistan faced a critical juncture. It could retain a relatively moderate democratic polity or go the fundamentalist way, with non-Islamic minorities ending up as second-class travellers. Quite apart from militant Islam's internal impact on Pakistan's future, the Review noted, Western strategic concerns revolve around Pakistan's role in three civil wars, in Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Indian Kashmir.

Pakistan's religious parties and military are secretly backing different fundamentalist elements in these conflicts. The main concern says the Review, is the potential for spillover effects on India, with the world's second-largest Muslim population, and China, with its own uneasy Islamic minorities.

In South-East Asia, the Review noted, the Philippines has to deal with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front which has been waging a drawn-out holy war against Manila and the much smaller terrorist Abu Sayaff. Indonesia, with Muslims numbering around 90% of its 190 million population, may be the world's largest Islamic nation, but Islamic radicalism is relatively weak and Jakarta's political and military leaders are clearly determined to keep it so.

Militant Islamic groups have more influence in Malaysia, but Prime Minis-

ter Mahatir, so far, has maintained the balance in favour of pragmatism.

There is, however, a difficulty in discussing militant Islam in Asia which needs to be addressed. The problem is simply stated, but complex to deal with — how to talk about Islam, a world faith of hundreds of millions and the state religion of some 52 nations, without lapsing into generalisations and stereotypes. The point is that this may now come to be a problem for Asia, as it has been for the West.

Not surprisingly, even the most specifically targeted opposition to radical Islamic governments, terror groups and extremist religious leaders, has spawned its own variation of anti-Islamism, not only among Muslims, but among some Western analysts and intellectuals.

Nevertheless, acknowledging problems of historical prejudice, abuse of language and cultural conflict when the West comes to deal with Islam in all its variations, cannot be an excuse for failing to look clearly at what is happening internationally and, in this case, in the region that matters most to Australia.

Internationally, there has been a noticeable increase in recent denunciations of Islamic fundamentalism as the main threat to the West and its allies. In Feb 95 Nato's general secretary, Mr Willy Claes said Islamic militancy was the gravest threat to West-

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ern security since the end of the Cold War. Key Clinton administration officials have used similar language, although others have cautioned against the danger of replacing communism with Islam and the Soviet Union with Iran.

The House of Representatives Speaker of the US, Mr Newt Gingrich, has spoken of the need for a strategy to fight "Islamic totalitarianism". That "Isms" capital is widely seen to be Teheran.

As with the West's opposition to the Soviet Union, which Henry Kissinger once described as a militant ideology wedded to an imperialist na-

tionalism, the US and others oppose Iran for a mix of reasons — there is evidence that Tehran is pursuing a nuclear capability, that is a potential danger to neighbours in the region, and, as shown by its recent build-up of troops and missiles in the Straits of Hormuz, it wants to call the shots in the flow of Middle East oil. But it is the sponsorship of Islamic terrorist groups far beyond the Middle East which now concerns Western nations, particularly European ones such as France, the most.

Viewing these concerns from Asia, journalist Ahmed Rashid acknowledges that "on the face of it, there is

reason enough for such Western apprehensions" and concludes "European and American fears are aggravated by the fact that wherever Islamic fundamentalism takes hold, radicals agitate fiercely against Western values and political systems. Perhaps as a consequence, some Western academics predict a grand clash of civilisation..."

Putting aside the apocalyptic visions of Islam versus the West, Rashid's comments are revealing. For it will be interesting particularly for Australians, to see just how Asia responds to militant Islam differently than the West.

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WESTERN NAVAL COMMAND

NEWS ROUND UP

Projects and Facilities

Smt Ackama Alexander, wife of His Excellency Dr P C Alexander, the Governor of Maharashtra inaugurated the newly constructed building of Naval Public School at Navy Nagar on 05 Sep 95. Auspiciously enough, the inauguration also coincided with the celebration of Teachers' Day.



Mrs Ackama Alexander inaugurates Naval Public School

A new multi-dimensional, multi-functional complex named Tarang for our Sailors was inaugurated at New Navy Nagar, Colaba on 19 Jul 95 by V Adm KASZ Raju (Retd), the Captain Commandant of the Executive Branch. The function was attended by VAdm Vishnu Bhagwat, FOC-in-C Western Naval Command and other senior naval officers in the station.

Tarang is a unique integrated complex which provides exclusive utilities for the naval sailors and their families. With its thrust on educational and health care, various facilities available include ladies and gents health clubs, cultural centre for classical dance & music, vocational training centre, computer centre, library, canteen, restaurant and many others.

A new complex, the 'FMU and SS' was inaugurated at Naval Dockyard Bombay by VAdm AVR Narayana Rao, the then Chief of Material on 21 Jun 95 at an impressive ceremony. The project houses sophisticated equipment, machinery and systems and brings together all the eleven maintenance and support units under a single roof.

New Acquisitions

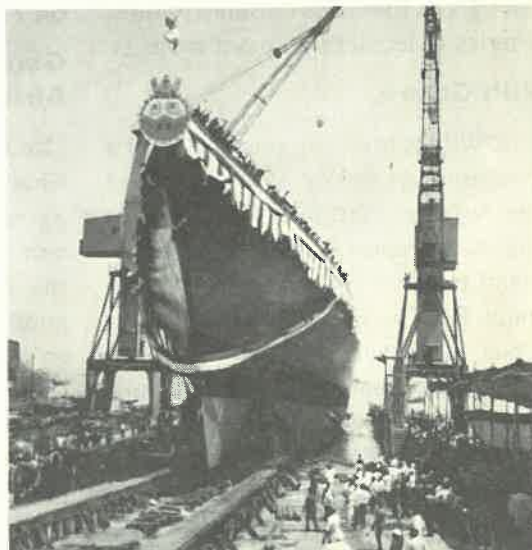
INS Bombay was launched by Mrs Binu Shekhawat at Mazagon Docks on 20 Mar 95. This is the third Destroyer under Project 15 after INS Delhi, launched in Feb 91 and INS Mysore, launched in Jun 93. The ship is approximately 163 mtrs long and 17 metres wide having a displacement of 6250 metric tons. The ship will be propelled by gas turbines and will be fitted with powerful and state of the art early warning sensors, weapon systems and electronic warfare equipment, besides carrying two large helicopters. When fully operational, these ships should add tremendous punch and consequently augment the deterrent value of the Indian Navy. The outstanding feature in building these ships has been the progressively higher levels of indigenisation achieved by MDL.

VAdm S K Chand, VCNS, Commissioned INS Nireekshak on 15 Sep 95 at Bombay. A 2160 ton diving support and submarine rescue vessel, she was built by MDL in 84-89 and chartered

by the Navy since May 89 as an interim submarine rescue vessel. Since then, she has been serving with both the Eastern and Western fleets. On 24 Mar 95, the Indian Navy purchased the vessel from MDL. While the Navy has commissioned a large number of ships in the past, this is the first time that the Navy has commissioned a ship which had been in operation with the Navy for over five years. The ship has undergone an extensive refit at MDL before her commissioning.

INS Vidyut entered Bombay harbour on 03 Feb 95 on her maiden voyage after commissioning at Goa on 16 Jan 95. The ship is a high speed missile vessel built by GSL. She is fitted with the most modern navigational aids, sensors and a lethal weapons package carrying SSMs, medium range guns and close in weapon systems.

INS Nashak, the ninth 1241 RE class missile boat was inducted in the Indian Navy on 29 Dec 94. The ship was



Launching of INS Bombay

NEWS FROM THE COMMANDS

commissioned by VAdm KASZ Raju, the then FOC-in-C. The old Nashak, her name-sake, along with seven other OSA class missile boats, was commissioned on 19 Mar 71. Immediately on commissioning, she saw action in the 1971 Indo Pak War. On 31 Dec 90, old Nashak's fine innings came to an end when she was decommissioned.

On The Training Front

The prestigious Defence Correspondents Course for the year 1995 which commenced at Mhow on 03 Jul 95 had a week long Naval attachment at Bombay as its concluding phase of training. The course having a strength of about 38 media persons drawn from print as well as electronic media was inaugurated by RAdm R N Ganesh, Chief of Staff of the Western Naval Command. The media persons were drawn from all over the country and included correspondents of Hindi, English and the vernacular press. The programme for the course included visits to an aircraft carrier, submarines, Mazagaon Docks Ltd, Naval Dockyard Bombay, Jawahar Lal Nehru Port Trust, Maritime Museum besides a series of lectures on naval subjects.

VIPs Galore

Our VIP visitors this year included a delegation of Senior Staff Course of the Nigerian National War College, the Saudi Arabian Armed Forces Command and Staff College team and Admiral RJ Zlatoper, Commander-in-Chief, US Pacific Fleet.

Brigadier General LG Sande, Commander Naval Forces, Tanzania visited WNC on 27 May 95, as also Mr Raj Dayal, Commissioner of police, Mauritius accompanied by a four member delegation.

Dr A P J Abdul Kalam, a scientist of

international fame, visited INS Sindhudhwaj in Feb 95.

Foreign Fleets on Visit

The Japanese Training Squadron consisting of TV Kashima(3508) and DD Setoyuki(131) under the overall command of RAdm Kataru Haseqawa visited Bombay from 17 to 21 Jun 95. The visit was part of their overseas training cruise for the 130 newly commissioned ensigns including 27 lady officers.

The South African naval tanker 'Drakens Berg' arrived at Bombay on 28 Mar 95 on a two day routine visit.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Lt. V.K. Saxena, Flight Commander of INS Shakti on his prize winning essay "Structural fatigue in helicopters, and its remedies". The competition was conducted by the Aeronautical Society of India and Paval Hans.

Vipul Saxena has to his credit 1300 hours of incident and accident free flying experience.

Malaysian Naval ships 'Indrasakti' and 'Mahawangsa' arrived at Bombay on 27 Mar 95 on a three day visit.

Gomti and Khukri Visit South Africa

On 2 Dec 94, IN ships Gomati and Khukri entered the port of Durban on a goodwill visit. This was the first ever visit to South Africa by IN ships after the fall of Apartheid. The maiden goodwill voyage was an eye opener to an average South African about the land of Mahatma Gandhi.

A great deal of publicity was given to the ships' visit. Much fervour about India had already been generated by Ms Aishwarya Rai's crowning as the Miss World, which preceded the ships' visit.

The ships received a very warm welcome in South Africa. They were met at sea by SAS Jan Smuts, a strike craft 200nm off Durban and the ships carried out various exercises, which were mutually beneficial to both the navies.

During the four days stay at Durban, the ships were thronged with visitors. Tens of thousands of people came to visit the ships on the very first day and the visiting hours had to be extended till late in the night. The distinguished guests who visited the ship included the Chief of South African Navy, Mayor and other dignitaries and also early settlers of Indian origin, who came on board with their kith and kin. Many of them kissed the ships' turrets in overwhelming emotion, at seeing an Indian warship in South Africa. People came from far and wide just to catch a glimpse of their Indian heritage.

A number of receptions were hosted by the ships, the Indian community and South African Navy, each of which was a grand affair. The ships' teams played friendly Volleyball, Football and Cricket matches. Conducted tours were organised to Phe Zulu Zulu dancing village, Crocodile Park, Natal sharks board and Temple of Under-standing.

On 09 Dec 94, the ships reached Simonstown which is a picturesque South African naval base snuggled at the base of Cape of Good Hope. The weather here was a dramatic change from pleasant Durban temperatures to the chilly winds blowing in from Antarctica. Guided tours were organised for the ship's companies to Cape Point (which has been described as the fairest Cape in the world), world of birds, mineral world, vineyard (which was a spirited affair), Siva Aalayam and Vishnu temples. We also

NEWS FROM THE COMMANDS

had the opportunity to see the Robin Island (where Mr Nelson Mandela was kept as a prisoner) albeit from far, when we visited Cape Town.

It was a very memorable experience for everyone on board the two ships. It was a call of friendship and cooperation of not only the navies but also the two great nations. We enriched our ties by exchanging values and traditions with them. It was an exciting voyage and with fond memories the ships departed the shores of South Africa on 14 Dec 94.

In The Sports Arena

The Indian Navy, gymnastic champions among the three services for over a decade, retained the title this year too at the Services Championships conducted at Hamla on 01 Sep 95. VAdm Vishnu Bhagwat, gave away the prizes to the winners and congratulated the Navy team for having retained the winner's trophy successfully.

A mass road run was organised by the Western Naval Command in commemoration of late Shri Dhyan Chand,

the wizard of Indian hockey. The run was flagged off by RAdm J C De Silva, Flag Officer Commanding Western Fleet on 29 Aug 95 at 0600 hrs from the Naval Dockyard, Bombay. Two thousand naval personnel participated in the run over a 10 km route from Lion Gate to Chowpatty and back. The first runner BS Badhuria completed the run in 31 minutes followed by P Raj and R Kumar.

Miscellaneous

The book titled 'War in the Indian Ocean' by VAdm Mihir K Roy (Retd), was released by VAdm Vishnu Bhagwat.

Mr K Subrahmanyam, former Director, Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses was the Chief Guest on the occasion. He stressed the need for optimum expansion of Indian Navy to ensure national security and free sea trade. VAdm Vishnu Bhagwat, speaking on the occasion said that this book was indeed a tribute to those defence personnel who executed the 1971 operations successfully in the midst of grave dangers and uncertainties.

Indian Naval Ships Ranvijay and

Subhadra and one Seaking helicopter rushed to carry out SAR of the crew of merchant ship MV Maratha Challenger which sank off Dabhol on the evening of 16 Jul 95. The vessel was on a passage from Okha to Cochin and had 15 crew members on board. Ten of them were rescued by the units deployed by the WNC.

VAdm Vishnu Bhagwat presented trophies to the Commanding Officers of the ships of Western Fleet for professional excellence in various disciplines at the TIFR Auditorium on 29 May 95. Gomati bagged the 'best ship trophy' for excelling in all combat and support disciplines. The trophy for 'maximum days at sea' was awarded to Ganga while Khukri won the "best spirited trophy". Capt B S R Murthy, Capt P R Kaushiva and Cdr Virendra Singh, Commanding Officers of Gomati, Ganga and Khukri respectively received the trophies. In all, 20 trophies were awarded for outstanding performances in the various fields such as aviation, communication, electronic warfare, gunnery, ASW, maintenance etc.

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EASTERN NAVAL COMMAND

Sri Lankan Refugees Operation

The operations in Palk Bay continue unhindered due to the ongoing ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka. In addition to maintaining appropriate vigil, the ENC ships transported a total of 30,000 refugees back to Sri Lanka till date.

Rescue Operations

Eastern shores being in the line of a majority of the tropical cyclones originating in the Bay of Bengal, ENC is often tasked with rescue operations. The ENC had risen to the occasion and rescued an ill-fated Army truck from Teesta River bed and salvaged a vessel off Sagar Island.

Another incident occurred at Konam reservoir where 28 personnel drowned due to capsizing of a country boat. The CCDT was rushed to the site and all the bodies were recovered and handed over to the concerned authorities.

The ENC again met the requirement of evacuating the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh who had to force land at Tuni due to a technical snag in his helicopter and brought him to Visakhapatnam safely.



Baby Syamala Gowri, Guinness world record holder

Joint Operations

The ENC participated in joint exercises with Indonesia and Singapore naval ships. This practice of joint exercises has benefited all concerned naval units. Professionalism and meticulous manoeuvres shown by the Indian naval ships were highly appreciated.

Springex 95 was conducted in Feb/ Mar 95 on the shores of Western Naval Command. The ENC ships and aviation elements took part and derived maximum benefits by way of learning to operate for a prolonged period away from the base port.

ENC ships also carried out a major exercise code named Summerex 95 on the Eastern sea board wherein a number of ships/aircraft and IAF units took part.

NEW SKATING RINK

A modern skating rink for children was inaugurated at Naval Park, inside the Naval Base, on 20 Apr 95 by Mrs Kanika Guha, wife of VAdm B Guha, then FOC-in-C. This is the second rink of its kind at Visakhapatnam. Baby Syamala Gowri, Guinness world record holder, gave a skating demonstration at the inaugural function. The Rink was named "Syamala Skating Rink" in recognition of the child's achievement. This was followed by a display by the children of Visakha-



Motor Cycle Expedition

patnam Skating Association and Raghavendra Skating Academy.

Krishna Tungabhadra Motor Cycle Expedition

On 22 Jul 95, 14 officers of the 48th Basic Submarine course, on five Motor-cycles and two scooters, were flagged off by the Flag Officer Submarines at 0700 hrs, to trace the path of Krishna-Tungabhadra rivers. The team consisted of Lt V Ramsali, Lt P Biswal, Lt S Subramanian, Lt R Malhotra, Lt S Hajela, Lt B S Kaushik, Lt r Rajes, SLt Chetan Chandegave, SLt A Kapre, SLt S Amur, SLt A Daima, SLt R Desikan, SLt SK Puranik and SLt RC Muni.

The group covered Vijaywada, Nagarjuna Sagar, Dornala, Kurnool Hampi, Sriringeri, Halebid, Belur, Hassan, Sravanbelagola and Bangalore in the space of 14 days. They were welcomed back by the Chief of Staff.

Family Clinics

The family clinic which was operating in a cramped area within the premises of INHS Kalyani was shifted to a more spacious building and also closer to the family quarters in Kalyani. The

NEWS FROM THE COMMANDS

step was very welcome as medical help was literally brought to the door steps of sailors' families. The honorarium for the doctors and staff of the family clinics were also substantially increased in the hope that the quality of medical attention improved in these clinics.

Naval Girls' Hostel

Many steps were taken to improve the facilities at the hostel. It is proving to be a useful and highly popular facility.

The proof of this is the fact that the hostel has a full capacity of 12 as compared to 6 during last year.

Maritime Reference Library

It was observed that the Maritime Reference Library in its earlier location near HQENC was not in a position to cater to the needs of the larger part of its clientele viz. the junior officers serving on board ships, and officers who came to ASTT for various tactical exercises. The library was therefore

shifted to ASTT and is now getting better utilised. The first ever *Rajya Bhasha* Rolling silver shield was presented to INS Netaji Subhash for their notable work in use of Hindi in official work. *Hindi Pakhwada* was celebrated with utmost involvement from 14-28 Sep 95. Many workshops, competitions and functions were organised. A Hindi brochure entitled *Poorvi Vani* was published for the first time, which contained very useful information on Hindi implementation.



SITTING DUCKS

The 'Sophie Marie' has already figured in the QD thanks to Fred Sopher's story on its demise.

However, much earlier, when still on the West Coast, the 'Sophie Marie' was detailed to take a course of young Intelligence Officers up the Coast, north of Karachi and land them on a beach as part of their training. The students then had to proceed inland, complete their assigned tasks and then return to the beach to be picked up by the ship's boats.

The ship carried two conventional life boats which were used to conduct this landing at high water. SLt Antia, the First Lieutenant, took the first life boat in, filled with aspiring Intelligence Officers, while I manned the second life boat, filled with a similar cargo. The ship anchored three to four cables off shore.

Antia went in under oars and dropped an anchor which did not hold and the boat was swept up on to the beach. I was possibly a trifle more circumspect and landed my contingent safely. The course then moved inland to gather local intelligence.

Here we had a stranded boat high and dry on a falling tide. The CO moved the ship in, as close as was deemed safe by him, while my life boat was used as the ship to shore link. We had no walkie talkies in those forgotten days. It was decided to pass a mine-sweeping wire ashore, using a grass line and then the wire, which with its length was quite some weight. With the line aboard the life boat we headed for the beach. The Chief Buffer, in his exuberance to do something useful, jumped into the sea with the line to wade ashore. Though fairly close inshore, he was out of his depth and could not swim.

A minor flap, the Chief was soon fished out of the drink. He was ordered not to leave the boat, just in case there was another mishap.

Meanwhile, the course was back on the beach and though it attempted to manhandle the boat, to no avail, they were very useful in bringing in the wire. With the wire secured and that bit of man power available, the boat was brought to the waters edge and soon floated in shallow water, with the waves gently lapping its sides. Over joyed, the course clambered on board along with the crew, while the CO conducted operations from the ship, started to winch in. As the boat moved into deeper water it slowly disappeared from view. The seams had opened up and the life boat, now submerged, kept its passengers afloat with its buoyancy tanks. To the on looker, the course looked like a formation of Donald Ducks heading for the great unknown in true Walt Disney style. Alongside, the course moved up the ladders with alacrity and away from the tricky sea. Alls well that ends well.

Cmde H R Claudius

SOUTHERN NAVAL COMMAND

Vice President Of India Visits Chilka

Shri KR Narayanan, Vice President of India and Smt Usha Narayanan visited INS Chilka from 04 Jan to 07 Jan 95. On arrival at INS Chilka on 04 Jan 95, the visiting dignitary was received by Rear Admiral P K Sinha, VSM, Admiral Superintendent, Naval Dockyard, Visakhapatnam and Captain K K Panda, Commanding Officer, INS Chilka. Speaking to the officers and men of INS Chilka at the end of cultural programme in the evening, the Vice President said that it had been a pleasure not only to witness the performance but to see the infinite variety and essential unity of India which were represented and symbolised here. He further said that the location of INS Chilka which trains the youth from all over India and fashions them into an attitude of one India, is an apt tribute to the rich maritime heritage of Orissa.

Commissioning Warrant Of First INS Sharda Handed Over

Traditionally naval ships never die, their souls live on. Names of naval ships and in most cases their crests pass on to the next generation. The present INS Sharda based at Cochin is actually the second Sharda. The first Sharda, a Yugoslavia built 86-ton Sea ward Defence Boat (INSDB-313) was commissioned on 05 Dec 59.

A ceremony was held on board the new Sharda on 23 Jun 94, where RAdm P P Shivamani (Retd) handed over the commissioning warrant of the first Sharda to VAdm Inderjit Bedi, C-in-C, Southern Naval Command. It was a pleasing coincidence as RAdm



Artistes of the cultural programme greet the Vice President

Sivamani, then a Lt and VAdm Bedi, then a SLt were the CO and ExO, respectively, of the first Sharda.

Workshop On Satellite Communication And Navigation

A two day seminar on Satellite Communication and Navigation was held at Valsura from 07-08 Nov 94. The workshop was inaugurated by Vice Admiral SK Chand, Vice Chief of the Naval Staff and was attended by more than 50 delegates from the three services, Department of Space, DRDO Laboratories and Public Sector Undertakings. The seminar offered an opportunity for exchange of information on indigenous capability/future plans with respect to satellite technology and a greater understanding of common requirements, capabilities and strengths. A compendium on Satellite Communication and Navigation was released on the occasion. The other luminaries present on the occasion

included Prof K Narayanan, Dir SATCOM, ISRO, Bangalore and Dr George Joseph, Dir Space Application Centre, Ahmedabad. Dr Joseph addressed the delegates and lucidly brought out the impact of satellites on national development and the society.

Prof. K Narayanan, Director SATCOM delivered the keynote address and traced the development of satellite technology in India and its future challenges in view of the tremendous technological advancements in the field. He stressed the need for creating indigenous designs through extensive research and development efforts and for quick, relevant and result oriented progress in this field.

Scientific Advisor To Raksha Mantri Visits INS Shivaji

Dr A P J Abdul Kalam, Scientific Advisor to the Raksha Mantri and Director General of the Defence Research and Development Organisation, was the

NEWS FROM THE COMMANDS

Chief Guest at the valedictory function of the 71 Basic Engineering Course and 7th Naval Engineering Course held on 19 May 95, at INS Shivaji.

While congratulating the graduates, during his valedictory address, Dr Abdul Kalam laid emphasis on self reliance in the development of technology in the country's defence environment. He deliberated on the importance of man behind the machine in the complex global technological environment, and reiterated that we in India, should start thinking on developing design technology rather than depend upon fabrication technology alone. The chief guest apprised the officers of the latest research and development activities in the field of the country's defence. He advised the officers to have 'a will to move things' which would go a long way in strengthening the nation.

The chief guest awarded the degree certificates to all the passing out officers.

Passing Out and Graduation Ceremonies At Mandovi

On completion of initial naval training 51 under trainee officers, comprising 21 NAC, 13 GSES and 17 Assistant Commandants, passed out of Naval Academy, INS Mandovi on 27 May 95. General S Roychowdhury, PVSM, ADC, the Chief of the Army Staff reviewed the Passing Out Parade.

On arrival at the Parade Ground, the Chief of the Army Staff was received by VAdm Inderjit Bedi and Cmde N Venugopal, CO Mandovi. The Chief of the Army Staff awarded the President's Gold Medal to Academy Cadet Captain S S Randhawa for having been adjudged as the best all round trainee of the term. Silver and Bronze Medals were awarded to Academy Cadet Adjutant V Kiran Kumar and Cadet H V Atre respectively for standing second and third in the order of merit, in academic and service subjects.

The Graduation Ceremony of the

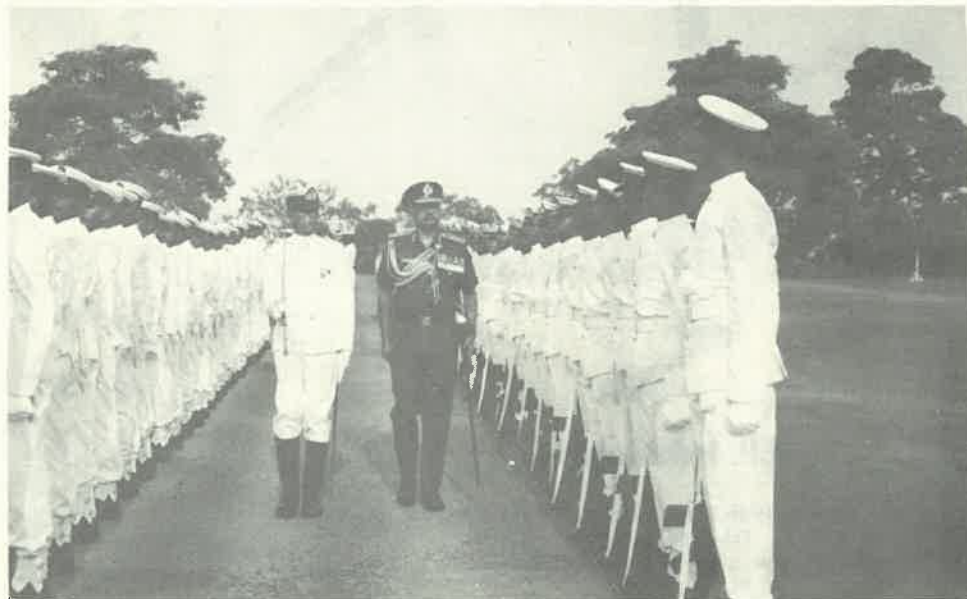
tenth batch of (10+2) Executive scheme of Indian Navy, affiliated to the Goa University for award of BSc (Special) Degree was held on 23 May 95 at Naval Academy, INS Mandovi. Dr SK Panikar, Officiating Vice Chancellor of Goa University was the Chief Guest on this occasion. Dr Panikar awarded provisional degree certificates and original marks lists to 21 graduating cadets. Before award of certificates the trainees of Naval Academy put up a colourful variety entertainment programme.

Governor Of Maharashtra Visits Shivaji

INS Shivaji had the proud privilege of welcoming Dr P C Alexander, Governor of Maharashtra on 15 Feb 95. On arrival, his excellency was accorded a warm welcome by VAdm Inderjit Bedi, and Cmde S K K Krishnan CO Shivaji. Dr Alexander took the salute at the Golden Jubilee parade. The Governor paid rich tributes to Chhatrapati Shivaji for his vision to build a strong Navy and said that India which is surrounded by sea on three sides and with a vast coastline of about 6000 kms needs a strong Navy. Complementing INS Shivaji for its contribution in providing professionally trained technical manpower for the Indian Navy, Dr PC Alexander said that the Navy and the national were proud of this institution.

The Governor also released a book on INS Shivaji titled "Full Ahead" and a special postal cover on INS Shivaji. Later, he joined the officers and Sailors of INS Shivaji in a *Barakhana*. The Governor was accompanied by his wife Mrs Ackama Alexander.

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General S Roychowdhury, PVSM, ADC, Chief of the Army Staff, reviewing the passing out parade

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A BIT OF THIS AND THAT

The sixth meeting of the Governing Council and the Annual General Body Meeting of the Navy Foundation was held in Bombay on 8 Feb 95 under the chairmanship of Adm V S Shekhawat. The meeting was attended by representatives of all Charters with the exception of Cochin, Chandigarh and Hyderabad. Fifty members of the Bombay charter were also present.

BANGALORE

Members and their ladies met on a number of occasions, recalling many interesting anecdotes that had happened during their Service careers. A Naval Quiz contest and a selection for the most 'mature couple' was also held. A luncheon get together with a cooking context was the highlight of the new year.

The year's activity was wound up with an AGM in which 60 members participated.

CALCUTTA

The Charter organised a picnic at Diamond Harbour and a get together over Dussera/Diwali last year. Both functions were well attended. Wreaths were laid on behalf of the Charter on the *Epitaph of the Unknown Soldier*, and for the GRSE personnel who were killed in the collapse of the gangway at Nazirgunj.

The next GCM and AGM of the Navy Foundation is scheduled to be held in Calcutta.

A letter from the Government enhancing the benefits on medical treat-

ment reimbursable from the Kendriya Sainik Board was circulated to all members.

COCHIN

One hundred and eighty one members and their dependents went out to sea for a day on board IN ships Tir, Jumuna and Sharda. Every one enjoyed the opportunity immensely. The Charter organised a few other get togethers as well. A wreath was laid at the Naval War Memorial on Foundation Day last year. The Charter has published an up-to-date Directory of all its members. The Charter have decided at an Extra General Meeting to pay a sum of Rs 5000/- to the next of kin of any officer currently a member at the time of his death from the Welfare Trust Fund.

COIMBATORE/NILGIRIS

It was proposed to extend membership of the Charter to members living at Pallakad.

GOA

Membership has gone up to 41 this year. LCdr J Rangel, one of the new members, will close 85 years on 17 April 95. Not being a pensioner, he does not qualify for the Octogenarian grant.

Of the two scholarships offered by the Charter, only one has been availed despite publicity.

HYDERABAD

The Charter presented a rolling trophy for the best Naval cadet in the

NCC from Andhra Pradesh. The trophy will be presented each year on NCC Day.

PUNE

Charter membership now stands at 120. The Charter has been approached by retired officers living in Nagpur to become out-station members. This has been approved by the Managing Committee.

The Charter has been very active. Major functions were Navy Day cocktails at the NDA and lunches hosted by Admiral and Mrs VS Shekhawat and VAdm and Mrs IS Bedi. The Charter condoled the passing of its members Admiral BS Soman, Cmde HA Menzies, Cdr JN Vats, LCdr(L) RD Joshi, and Mrs Valledares widow of the late Cmde VJ Valledares.

DELHI

The Delhi Charter continues to grow and now has a membership of nearly 300. A postponed AGM (due to the sad demise of Giani Zail Singh at the end of last year) was held on 21 Jan 95 to pass the accounts for the year 1993-94. On popular demand, a session was held in March with the Chairman, Pay Commission Cell (Navy), to apprise the members of recommendations being put up to the Fifth Pay Commission. An AGM on 6 May 95 followed by a social get together passed the accounts for the year 1994-95 and also a resolution to provide the members an option to pay a one time subscription of Rs 1,000.00, reduced by the amount paid by them during

preceding four years. This has been very well received by all members. A very useful and informative talk was delivered by Cmde B Bhasin (DNPF) on the subject of "medical benefits for retired personnel".

The fifth annual Adm R D Katari Memorial Lecture was organised on 9 Oct 95 at the India International Centre. VAdm K K Nayyar spoke on



RAdm D St J Cameron, Cochin

"India's security, economy and diplomacy", to a packed house. This annual lecture has come to be regarded as a prestigious event in Delhi's calendar. This was followed by a reception at the Navy House by CNS and Mrs Shekhawat for all members and their ladies, the event coinciding with the Commander's conference reception.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO OUR OCTOGENARIANS

Wishing you many happy years ahead:

Lt(SDC) Ali Abraham
RAdm C L Bhandari
RAdm D St J Cameron
Adm A K Chatterjee
RAdm M K Heble
RAdm K R Nair
Adm S M Nanda
LCdr J Rangel



Adm 'Charles' Nanda, Delhi — Eighty years young !



RAdm K R Nair, Madras



RAdm C L Bhandari, Delhi

WANNA DRINK ?

Jumpy

My name is Jumpy and I was an alcoholic for over 13 years — mercifully sober today, by God's grace and Alcoholics Anonymous(AA). Today I have a rather unusual vocation — I am a ragpicker of sorts . I pick up human beings from the scrap heap of life, and try to set them up on their feet again. People who were once capable, intelligent, and witty, but who now have become jaded, despondent, discards of society.

For most normal folks, drinking means conviviality and companionship. It means a release from care, boredom, and worry. It is a joyous intimacy with friends and a feeling that life is good. But with me, in those last days of heavy drinking, the old pleasures were gone. They were but memories. There was an insistent yearning to enjoy life as I once did, and a heart-breaking obsession that some new miracle of control would enable me to do it. There was always one more attempt — and one more failure.

I was a small-built, puny cadet, ever on the look out for fun. People considered me the life of a party. Parties, picnics, sing songs were great occasions for drinking. But I never walked off a bar stool. I was invariably carried off. I imagined this happened to every one who drank. I had a terrific time getting drunk, ensuring that each session ended only when I could drink no more.

I was married in 1971, the "war hero" who didn't go to sea in '71, but was feted and fussed over, during my wedding. My wife is a doctor and was posted in an Army hospital. At a party in the Army mess, for a retiring Brigadier, I had fallen flat on the dance floor before being carried away to my wife's room. My wife was shocked and upset. I was ashamed and remorseful, and mumbled apologies. But I was drinking again less than a month later.

The pattern of my drinking began to take definite shape over the next few years. I would look forward to naval parties and private dinners in anticipation of the drinks I could guzzle. I then embarrassed women and senior officers present.

In less than three years of married life, the romance had gone out of our lives. I took an overdose of sleeping pills. My wife pulled me out of the crisis, and in a violent rebound, tried to jump off a tall building.

The less people tolerated me, the more I withdrew from society, from life itself. Sometimes I sought out sordid places, hoping to find both companionship and approval. Momentarily I did — then would come oblivion, and the awful awakening to terror, frustration, and despair.

Ambition, the desire to excel, a temporary set-back, all bring about acute tension and discomfort that nothing seems to relieve except a

few drinks. A few drinks bring out the best in man. The tense, agitated person suddenly finds life bearable, if only temporarily. He resorts to alcohol more and more and a day comes when he is unable to stop himself. The alcoholic blames the whole world but never himself. His only steadfast friend is alcohol itself.

Fortunately, throughout my long drinking career my health did not get seriously affected. I attribute this entirely to my wife's care. Life without a drink became as unbearable as life with drinks. This was the perplexing vicious cycle which had affected my career, social life and my family life.

In May 1982, I came across an advertisement which arrested my attention. It was for a free help at the Alcoholics Anonymous. Even as I phoned, I was enlisted and I found myself in the midst of 400 people one night. Initially, I thought I had strayed into the wrong convention. I expected to see blearily-eyed, decrepit, half-dead, stinking drunks. In fact, I was the only one sweating and stinking of rum. I saw clean, well-dressed, cheerful folks with beaming faces which lit up while guffawing over one another's misfortunes. A man was celebrating 25 years of uninterrupted sobriety and when he narrated his story I began to cry. I was crying listening to someone else's travails. Those were tears of healing, and I felt as if the whole audience was gently

There is no bio-data with this article. Should anyone wish to contact Jumpy please write to him C/O The Director of Ex-Servicemen Affairs, Naval Headquarters, New Delhi 110 001.

FIRST PERSON

holding me to their hearts. The expression on the faces of the women, that indefinable something in the eyes of the men, the stimulating and electric atmosphere of the place, conspired to let me know that here was a haven at last. That was in 1982."

I have not felt the need to have even a drop in the past 13 years. Like the two million sober alcoholics in Alcoholics Anonymous, I too have had a brush with a power greater than myself, whom I choose to call God. Sobriety is so much more than just stopping drinking, although abstinence is the basis of sobriety. To be happy and sober, there has to be a profound personality change. When I asked God to admit me into the sunlight of His Spirit, I began a journey more glorious than I ever imagined. I am deeply grateful that He has granted me the strength to do His bidding and prepared me for any situation that comes my way today.

Does AA work? Well, out of every hundred people who come into AA,

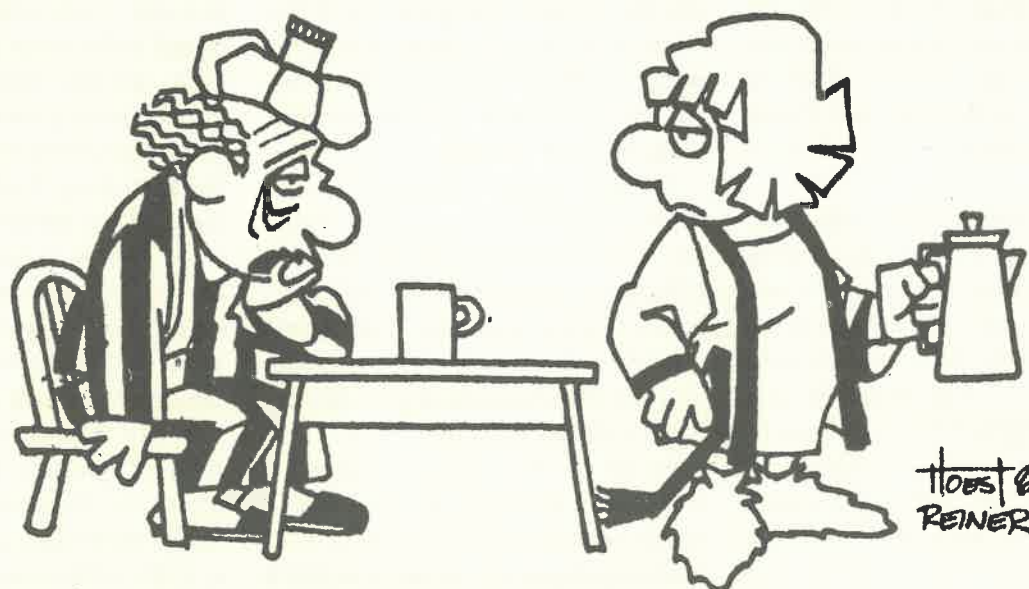
55 remain sober in their very first year. Some catch on, after a few more hard knocks from King Alcohol. If you think the figures are unimpressive, the success rate of medicine, psychiatry, and black magic, put together is only 14%.

There is a Gujarati goldsmith from Zaveri Bazaar who came into AA at the age of 60. Today he swears that the last 14 years in sobriety have been the best years of his life. There's a 16 years old I met in Philadelphia, who had three years of sobriety; she had done all her drinking and drugging and had hit rock bottom by age thirteen. There is a man who has been on the moon; he too is in AA. We alcoholics believe that we are not cured of alcoholism. We merely have a daily reprieve, contingent on our spiritual condition. The miracle happens when one alcoholic talks to another and narrates his own experience, passing on both strength and hope.

AA meetings are not dreary affairs, and we are not a glum lot. If newcomers could see no joy or fun in our way of living, they wouldn't want it. We alcoholics absolutely insist on enjoying life, and most of us have a zest for living that is refreshing. Today I am again energetic and jumpy, with AA filling the void left by alcohol. We all stay sober, just for today, for the rest of our lives.

Some of you must be wondering at the purpose of this article in the Quarterdeck magazine; I am simply trying to be of help. Somebody may be experiencing the 'Empty Nest Syndrome' — you know, the children have grown up and gone away, and you may be alone with just the bottle. Everyone who drinks is not and will not become an alcoholic — only 7% do. If anyone needs help, I will be there by your side. I do it because I love to and out of gratitude to that someone else who did it for me. God bless.

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**"WHAT GOOD IS SUFFERING LIKE THIS IF I
DON'T REMEMBER WHAT A GOOD TIME I HAD?"**

Greater China—The Next Superpower?—Edited by David Sham-baugh, Clarendon Paperbacks by Oxford University Press, Oxford. Priced at £14.99

This volume is a collection of eleven articles written by authors who are specialists in various aspects of Chinese and Oriental studies ranging from Economy, Geography, Chinese Society and Domestic Politics to Foreign Relations. The term "Greater China" refers to mainland China's links with Hong Kong, Taiwan, Macao and with the Chinese overseas.

The Editor states that in this post cold war world, with the emergence of new actors and patterns of relationships, one is witnessing the reshaping of familiar ties/binds and a world in transition from one epoch to another.

In this changed ambience, with its GDP ever on the rise, a leading trader with the largest foreign exchange reserves, state of the art technology, the world's largest consumer market and a formidable military establishment, the emergence of Greater China may be seen as a reality. If China can hold its act together as a national economic and political unit, some make it out to be the world's next superpower.

The introductory essay explores the concept of Greater China in all its facets. While it emphasizes the integrative aspects, it also cautions in regard to a variety of social, cultural, economic and political fissures which could as easily accelerate the disintegrative processes.

The next chapter explores the relationships amongst Hong Kong, Taiwan and PRC and concludes that there exists a disjunction between the

economic and political aspects of Greater China which creates its own pressures for integration as well as counter pressures for national identities. What shape future politics will take, will determine the dream of, or dismantling of Greater China.

The next few essays examine in totality the economic and political linkages between Hong Kong and Taiwan on the one hand, and PRC on the other, and how the law of comparative advantage has stimulated rapidly rising levels of trade. While the movement of capital and goods across the waters between Taiwan and PRC and Hong Kong and PRC increase integration, a political gulf continues to exist. In Taiwan this has led to a dramatic liberalisation of domestic politics. In Hong Kong, the rise of a middle class and the growth of civil society has spurred demand for an improved form of political participation. Along with rapid economic development and rising incomes have come demands for improved social services and a change in leisure pursuits consequent to the virtual disappearance of rural life in the New Territories. Although Macao makes its own economic contribution to Greater China, its dominance by Hong Kong and Taiwan will be unavoidable.

The last two chapters cover the effect of information technology and movement of people in and out of China, on the binding of Greater China, and the role played by the overseas Chinese.

In conclusion, the authors claim that as the post cold war world progresses towards the 21st Century the Greater China phenomenon will loom larger, the effects of which will most certainly be felt in the region and the

world at large. Whether Greater China will become the next superpower depends on a great many factors and only time will tell, but at this point it almost certainly can stake a claim to be the world's next potential superpower.

This volume is recommended reading for those whose interests lie in that part of the world and for China watchers.

Vice Admiral SP Govil

War in the Indian Ocean by VADM Mihir K Roy, PVSM, AVSM—Hardback 298 Pages Lancer Publications Rs 395.00

To review a book authored by one's Fleet Commander of yester-year is both tricky and a pleasure. Then again the review is being scribed for the prestigious "Quarterdeck" whose many readers know Vice Admiral M K Roy personally and have strong views and deep knowledge of the events and who feel that at times there is a gap between the written word and the actual fact. It is to the credit and courage of "Mickey Roy" that he has attempted a fair and full account of India's maritime heritage, and has updated it to include the saga of how the Indian Naval scene sails today. The book is well researched, with a mission to remove what the Admiral terms "sea blindness" from the Indian psyche and that is where it deserves wide readership. He has illuminated the Navy's role for civilian readers in clear terms.

"War in the Indian Ocean", was released by Admiral V S Shekhawat at an impressive ceremony, wherein the tradition of General McArthur's style

of dramatised events, Roy skillfully arranged a narration of the 1971 war by the participants, in a packed hall at the Nehru Memorial Library. It evoked a sense of patriotism and when the daughter of the late Capt MN Mulla who went down with the INS Khukri was asked to rise, she broke down and there were many damp eyes in the audience.

This book recounts all Indian Naval actions from the Junagadh operation commanded by then Capt R D Katari in 1947, the 1961 Goa operations in which then Cdr R K S Ghandhi on INS Betwa sank the Albuquerque, to the achievements in the 1971 war. These are all well chronicled. There is a special account of the tragic, and courageous, 1946 RIN mutiny, and researchers are now pointing to it as the one event that hastened India's Independence by one full year.

The book is, therefore, a most welcome addition to the small body of writing about the Indian Navy's exploits, travails and achievements. In the latter part of the book after covering the historical aspects, Roy has meshed his personal experiences with history, making the book a must for all interested Indians to learn about their Navy, even if the canvas he has attempted is an exceedingly large one. He has been critical of the Nehru-Krishna Menon era and not avoided comments on geo-politics while writing history.

Navies the world over are nicknamed the "silent service" but Roy goes public to rightly announce the

need for a strong Navy and seeks an audience of Indians to understand the *raison d'être* of naval power. His mission is truly to remove "sea blindness". Navies live and perform away from sight, and of late the Indian Navy has been called the "silenced service" because funds for its expansion and renewal have been stifled. This aspect is well covered in the book and Roy offers a blue print for the future.

Little has been written about the IN, save two official volumes commissioned by Naval Headquarters as historical commentary, and a handful of other books written under the strict rules of the Indian Officials Secrets Act. Therefore, Admiral Mihir Roy's "War in the Indian Ocean" with many hitherto unpublished historical facts bared in print, is a welcome arrival at the book stores and libraries in a time of liberalisation. Missile failures in the 1971 war, the orders and counter orders of the 1965 war, are now there to read about and mull over.

The narration, from the beginnings of the Indian Marine and the Indian Navy, to partition days when assets were divided between India and Pakistan, the Soviet connection and rise of the IN's fire power in the late 60s and 70s, are very well chronicled in a chatty manner.

Roy has unveiled the inside story of India's nuclear submarine programme. He describes how the programme progressed from inception to the present day. He lucidly explains how the IN got its nuclear powered Charlie class submarine, the INS Chakra on a

5 year loan from the USSR, and his personal involvement and with the visit to Murmansk with Ramana, hitherto secret. He does not utter a word on the cost of the Advanced Technology Vehicle (ATV) project or talk of the Subba Rao episode, though this is what many in the naval community would like to know, especially now that Capt Subba Rao has been absolved completely by the highest court in the land. The story of the return of INS Chakra, manned and run by the IN is bared.

The two chapters dedicated to the 1971 war and the story of the Mukhti Bahini are truly illuminating. Roy was the DNI (Director Naval Intelligence) during the 1971 war and as Admiral SM Nanda, the then Chief of the Naval Staff said at the launch of the book, he was privy to all the 'goings on'. Roy has bared the heroic tale of the Indian Navy's part in the 1971 War with deep personal knowledge and research, and it makes for engaging reading. If he has written little about the exploits of the Submarine arm of that time, if may be because, he has chosen to cover such a vast canvas, that there are bound to be gaps for those readers who have been personally involved. Admiral V S Shekhawat commented on this aspect and suggested the addition of a chapter in the next edition when the book is into repeat print.

Roy earns a Bravo Zulu for providing the future and present generations a compact readable naval history.

Cmde Ranjit Rai
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BEATING RETREAT

Bharti B Karpe

At the sunset of my husband's defence career, we both wanted to attend certain Navy Week functions to top up our memory bank. Watching "Beating Retreat" by the Indian Naval Band at the Gateway of India, Bombay, I nostalgically witnessed a service-man's career go by. The sequence of the music score, I felt, depicted his career from start to finish.

After a rigid training at the National Defence Academy in academics, cultural activity, sports and adventure, all of which inculcate team spirit, discipline, etiquette and respect for seniors, the emphasis on uniform and all that goes with it — smartness, neatness and a sense of responsibility — become ingrained in a cadet. He graduates with Fanfare during the POP (passing out parade), to the beat of the "Occasional" composed by S Rhodes. Head held high, he "Marches" into his service career to the score of K L King's "Trombone King".

The varied instruments of the band are like the varied duties the cadet learns to perform as he trains to become a commissioned officer. Each cadet is like the player in the band. Just

as the musician learns the care of his instruments and the intricacies of playing in tune with his colleagues to present harmonious melody, the cadet learns to be a disciplined and alert individual, an important cog in the defence wheel. He knows that however small the job he has to do, his obedient, sincere and accurate participation is as essential as his chief's command. With experience, he realises the importance of balance — one off key note and the result is noise — while one improper order brought disaster, especially during war. The war games exercised so regularly are tests of these very qualities.

For the officer, it's now a "Quick March" up each rung of the ladder of responsibility and office, to the beat of "Glorious Victory" by W M Kendall and the "Radio" by C F Johnson. In every discipline of life, the individual reaches his point of peak efficiency, and then the pace slows down. Every individual achieves his acme, some sooner, others later. So, according to his calibre, he reaches his best and then Lady Luck either picks him up or sets him gently down.

Then begins the "Slow March", to

the slow beat of "Paschimi Nishan", which also indicates to him he has reached the western horizon of his career and it is time to say good-bye to the "Sea Lord". Commander S A Anchees, the Director of Music of the Indian Navy has written the scores.

Then to the echo of the "Nocturnal Cry" which revives fond memories of the good old days, he thinks back on the camaraderie, the security and the facilities, the transfers, the uncertainties, the constant changes in homes and schools on the darker side of the coin, as he nears the end of the road.

As he ponders the decision on another career or a put-my-feet-up retirement, he "Delights" in the drummers call, a staccato of beats on drums and sticks (by P V Francis MCPO (MUS) II), to a new and a different life. Bidding farewell to the old life brings a tear or two as he thinks back on the refrain "Abide With Me", a hymn contributed by Monk, and the finale of his defence career is delineated by the "Retreat" by A C Green, and he marches off with the feeling of "Sare Jahan Se Achcha" by Iqbal, satisfied he has served the country with love, loyalty and selflessness.

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Bharati Karpe followed her husband Bhalu around stations in India and abroad for over two decades. She is a journalist who has had articles featured in magazines and newspapers, and we are delighted to have this thoughtful piece from her. The Karpes now live in Pune.

VAISHNODEVI

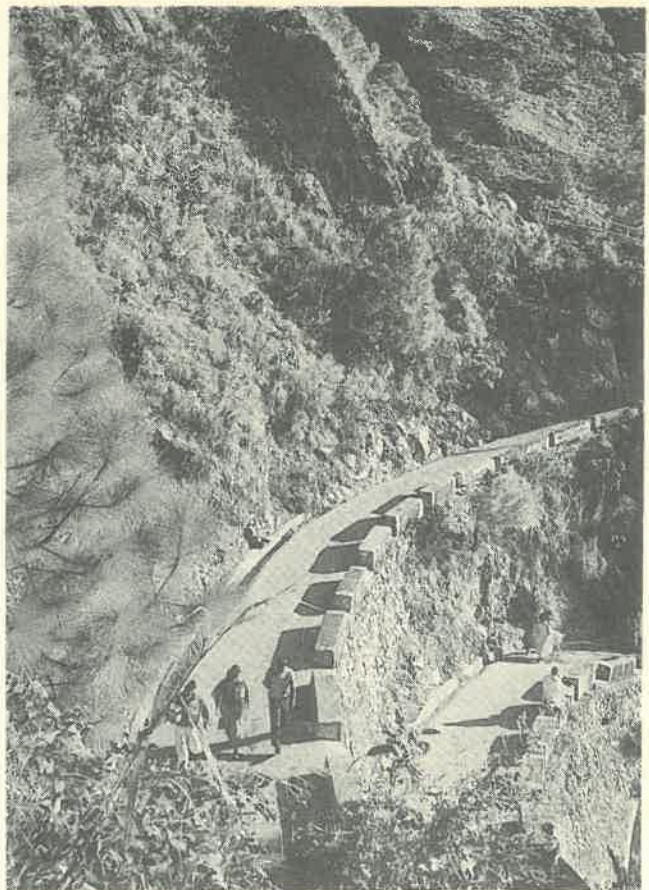
Chhaya Chatterjee

People, young and old, have talked about their memorable visits to Vaishnodevi year after year inspite of the difficult journey. My husband and I, therefore, decided to venture this visit before we got too old. The holy cave temple is situated at an altitude of 5200 feet on the slope of the Trikuta hills amidst gorgeous scenic beauty. The trek to the temple starts from the town of Katra at the foot of the Trikuta range. Jammu, 48 km. from Katra, is the nearest airport and rail-head. Buses and taxis ply regularly between these two places. A number of travel agencies also run conducted tours from Delhi and other cities to Katra in luxury coaches. Others prefer to drive to Katra in their own cars. Luxury coaches from Delhi normally reach Katra late in the afternoon after an overnight journey. We preferred to go by train to cut down the travelling time and also to have a night's rest.

After catching an evening train from Delhi, we reached Jammu early the next morning. From here, we reached Katra by road transport after one and half hours drive. Situated at an altitude of 2800 feet, this town is climatically very pleasant. There are several hotels and other types of accomodation available here, and also fairly neat eating places serving vegetarian dishes. We booked ourselves into a comfortable hotel for two nights. After this, we collected our 'Yatra Slip' from

the Registration counter at the Tourism Reception Centre near the Bus stand. This is a MUST, as without a valid pass, crossing the Banganga check post (one km up from Katra) is not permitted. With regard to the best time to commence the journey, we were advised by the Tourism centre and the local pilgrims to do this in the evening only, in order to avoid the day time heat up on the hills. We accordingly left our heavy luggage in our hotel, and carrying only light woolies with us and a change for bathing, we took a cab to go to Banganga, which is the last place up to which vehicular traffic is allowed. Here, as ex-defence personnel, we also obtained two passes from the Army post there. These passes entitle such pilgrims to enter the temple by a separate gate without having to wait in the general queue. Armed with both civilian and army passes, and imbued with an unusual feeling of enthusiasm, we commenced our journey at 1800 hours.

At Banganga, we had the choice of either hiring ponies (costing about Rs.100/- each one way), or a Dandi, which is a stretcher carried by four persons (costing about Rs 500/- each one way), or walking. We decided to rely on our feet assisted by two hired bamboo sticks. On the way from Katra to Banganga and at Banganga, there are several shops from where one can



View of the fully tiled pathway

Chhaya Chatterjee is well known for her sparkling personality and many talents, ranging from music to bonsai and now writing. Many will remember her mature counsel and help in time of need. She and her husband Cmde Bimal Chatterjee live in New Delhi.

THE LAST WORD

hire walking shoes, torches, sticks, raincoats etc., as required, at a nominal price. One can buy the Offerings at Katra or on the way to the temple or at the temple itself. Offerings to the Devi usually consist of a coconut, granules made of sugar, puffed rice and Kumkum tied with a red chunni and red strings. One may also offer Sarees, blouse pieces etc., if one so desires.

The climb from Banganga seemed to be quite gradual at the beginning. On the way, we met streams of pilgrims either going up or returning, all looking very jubilant and exchanging greetings by calling loudly : *Jai Mata di*. We also reciprocated enthusiastically, which mollified our fatigue substantially in our ascent of the hill.

After a two km. walk from Banganga, we reached Charan Paduka, where a small temple has been built over a sacred spot of foot-prints of the Devi. According to one legend, when Sati sacrificed herself being unable to withstand the insults meted out to her husband by her father Daksha, Siva carried her body and began gyrating. In this process, different parts of her body fell at different spots, all of which became places of pilgrimage. Her feet, according to this legend, had fallen here.

After another three km. walk from Charan Paduka, we reached a small beautiful plateau called Adhkawari, where Vaishnodevi meditated in a cave for nine months. It has become a place of pilgrimage. Here, there are a num-

ber of eating places, shops, a mini nursing home and a dispensary, all amenities for the pilgrims. There are also large dormitories at Adhkawari where one can rest or spend the night free of charge.

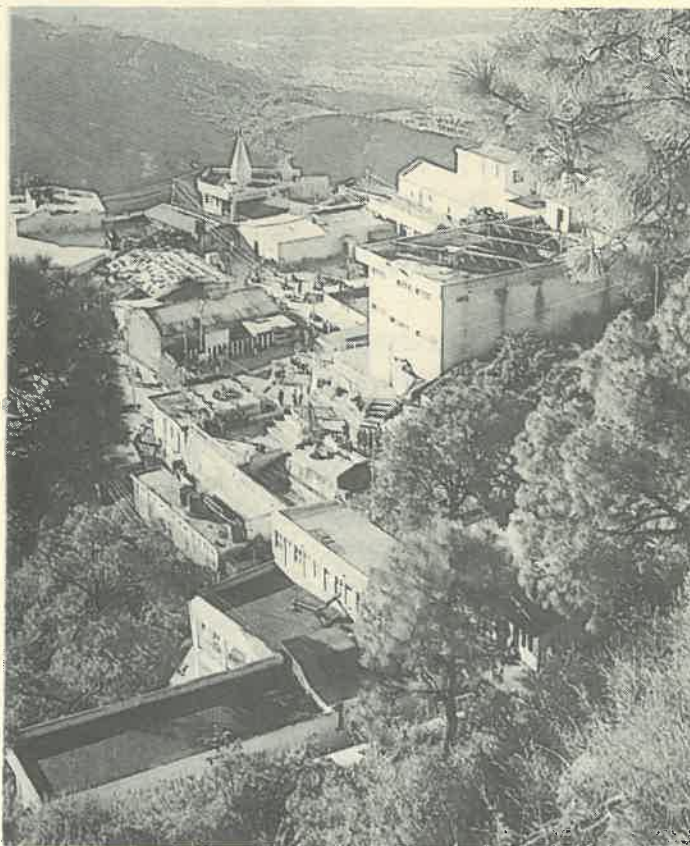
From Adhkawari, which has an altitude of 4800 feet, the climb became very steep right upto Sanjichhat, which is 3.5 km. away at an altitude of 6200

we resumed walking. From Sanjichhat, the road descends practically all the way of 3.5 km. till reaching Darbar, where Vaishnodevi temple is located.

Before entering the temple premises, our passes were again checked and stamped with a Batch number. This enables pilgrims to enter the temple in batches, when the numbers are announced. In our particular case,

we preferred to enter by the Army entrance, where there was practically no waiting. Due to bad weather conditions between Adhkawari and Sanjichhat, quite a few pilgrims had broken journey on the way, unlike us, and this had reduced crowding. By the time we reached the Darbar, it was as late as 0230 hours. We thus took nearly 8 ½ hours to cover the journey against five to six hours normally taken by younger people. Before entering the temple, I took a bath at the bathing ghat for women. Holy spring water has been channelled to taps in the bathing cubicles. There is a separate bathing enclosure for men.

In front of the Holy Cave, there is a platform where a couple of hundred people can assemble at one time. About a dozen persons in a batch are allowed to enter the cave at a time as their batch numbers are announced. In our case, we entered through the Army gate, and as we reached the 'Sanctum Sanctorum', we were dazzled by the sight of the Mother Goddess in her three Pindi Forms, collectively known as Vaishnodevi — Mahakali, Mahalaxmi



The view from Adhkawari

ber of eating places, shops, a mini nursing home and a dispensary, all amenities for the pilgrims. There are also large dormitories at Adhkawari where one can rest or spend the night free of charge. From Adhkawari, which has an altitude of 4800 feet, the climb became very steep right upto Sanjichhat, which is 3.5 km. away at an altitude of 6200 feet. In this stretch, we had to slow down considerably. To make things more difficult, we faced rains and stormy weather with chilly winds, soon after we left Adhkawari. Fortunately, there were a large number of rest sheds built all along the road, where we could take shelter. But we found it easier to cope up with the chilly wind by the natural warming process while

THE LAST WORD

and Maha Saraswati. Visiting this shrine was indeed a fantastic experience, which was enhanced by the fact that we negotiated the entire climb the hard way, i.e on foot, and without breaking journey inspite of rains and stormy weather on the way.

On completion of our Darshan, we had the option either to rest for the night at Darbar or to return to our hotel at Katra. We decided on the latter, but chose to take two ponies for the return journey. We left Darbar at about 0330 and reached Banganga at about 0545. We were back in our hotel by 0630, where we rested during major part of the day. We returned to Jammu by road transport on 13th afternoon, and were back home in Delhi by train the next morning, on conclusion of a most satisfying pilgrimage to Vaishnodevi.

There are several legends connected with Vaishnodevi, but as per the more popular legend, she lived about 1000 years ago as a great devotee of Vishnu and had taken a vow of celibacy. It was at a small temple, now known as 'Bhoomika Temple' on the outskirts of Katra, that she made her first appearance. A Tantrik demon called Bhairav, however, fell for her enchanting beau-

ty and was determined to marry her. Vaishnodevi, thereafter, escaped to the Trikuta hills. On the way up at Banganga, she felt thirsty and shot an arrow into the earth. A spring erupted from there, which is considered to be sacred by many devotees, who take a bath there before undertaking the journey to Vaishnodevi. She thereafter continued her ascent on the hills, and left her foot prints at Charan Paduka, while resting there.

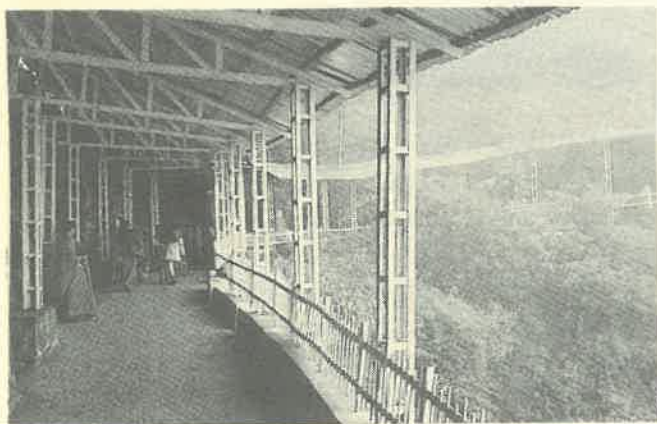
This part of the legend differs from the one described earlier. After this, she reached Adhkawari, where she meditated in a cave. But, Bhairon located her here too and even commenced the ceremony to marry her forcibly. Cornered, she forced an opening on the other side of the cave with her Trident and escaped. On arriving at the Holy Cave at Darbar, she discovered that Bhairon was still pursuing her. At this point, she assumed the form of Mahakali and chopped off Bhairon's head, which was thrown upwards into the hills by the force of the blow. The head fell at a place, where the Bhairav temple is now situated. As per the legend, the boulder at the mouth of the Holy Cave, is the petrified body of



The entire path is lit by sodium vapour lamps

Bhairon, who was pardoned by the Devi in his dying moments. After that she went inside the cave and is enshrined there ever since. Many pilgrims visit Bhairon temple after visiting Vaishnodevi.

The Vaishnodevi Shrine Board have done a superb job in providing necessary amenities to the pilgrims. The road, all the way from Banganga to Darbar, has been surfaced with corrugated concrete tiles, and is beautifully lit with Sodium vapour lamps. The road is also used by ponies, and kept clean round the clock by numerous sweepers. There are neat toilets, drinking water taps and rest sheds at regular intervals. Medical aid centres run by the Board provide medical treatment and medicines at Katra, Banganga, Adhkawari, Sanjichhat and Darbar. Hygienically prepared vegetarian meals are also provided at these places on a no-profit no-loss basis. Moreover, the Shrine Board have also constructed a canopy, several hundred meters long on the road right upto the temple, providing shelter to the pilgrims against sun and rain, as they approach the temple. □□

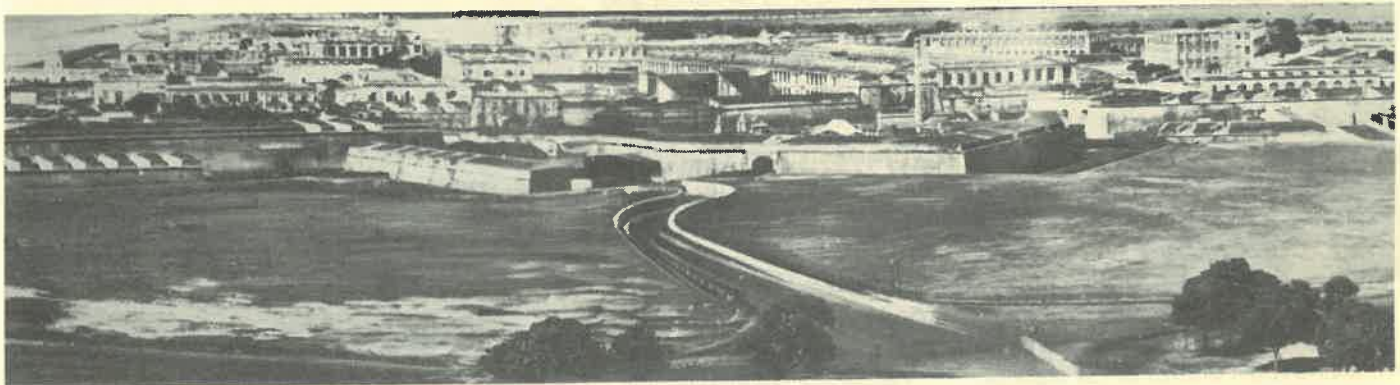


The fully canopied approach road to the temple



BACK OF THE BOOK

MADRAS



A panoramic view of the Madras coastal area — Circa 1881

Madras is the fourth largest city and the capital of Tamil Nadu state. It is a very good example of how pleasant Indian cities can be, given the civic sense and pride in one's environment that Madras denizens show. Madrasis are not only zealous guardians of the glorious traditions of Tamil culture, they manage the complexities of modern day living with elan and efficiency. The city has the advantage of a long beach front on the Bay of Bengal, which blows fresh air (and ideas?) into the city, while providing a popular relaxation spot in the evenings.

Francis Day, an ebullient and adventurous officer of the East India Company, while exploring the coast for a possible new settlement, chanced upon a small fishing hamlet, the Kuppam called Madraspatnam. His negotiations with the local Nayak, a descendant of the last of the Vijayanagar rulers, resulted in his obtaining the grant to lease the sandy spit of land that was to grow into the first real seat of British power in India. The grant obtained on 22 August 1639, was confirmed by the Raja of Chandragiri six years later on a plate of gold. A small fort was built in the settlement, and the area around it was named Chennapatnam. The fort was complete on 23 April 1640, St George's Day, and was named Fort St George.

Chennapatnam degenerated to being called Black Town until 1935, when it was officially renamed Georgetown.

The settlement of Fort St George was reputed to be "one of the most incommodious places in the world" which only attracted "dwarfish, crooked recruits", who joined the Company as factors or agents to serve in trading posts that were known as factories. Their life expectancy was not great and they considered themselves lucky if they survived two monsoons. Their rewards were however, substantial. Most of them carried on a business "on the side", and carried home vast fortunes, having started a craze for anything oriental.

Neighbouring villages were then acquired as grants or gifts. Triplicane was rented from the Sultan of Golconda in 1676, and Egmore, Puruswalkam and Tondiarpet taken on lease from the Emperor Aurangzeb in 1693.

A sketch of Fort St George by Fryer in 1673, shows just how vulnerable the settlement was at that time. There was a small rectangular fort facing the sea, with round gun placements at the corners. This enclosed the citadel, in the middle of which stood the Governor's house with its little cuppola. The side facing the country towards the west was stoutly protected with guard houses and a series of secret passages.

To the north of the Fort are two gates leading to rows of tiny buildings and marked, "Madras, the Indian town with flat houses."

Historically it was a period of great change. The star of English fortunes was on the ascendant. They were given a firman by the representative of the Sultan of Golconda, which announced in flowery terms that Madras would remain "rented forever under the English, so long as the Sun and Moon endure, and so they shall perpetually enjoy it." They must have watched with cynical amusement the treatment meted out to the much larger Portuguese colony at San Thome nearby, which was bludgeoned into submission by the combined forces of the Dutch, the French and the Muslims. The British kept out of the fight, but supplied "engineers, overseers and gun powder" to the winning side.

An early inhabitant of Madras was young Elihu Yale, the "notorious nabob", who became benefactor of Yale University, on the other side of the globe, near Boston. Yale's father was an adventurer too, which is how he came to be born in Boston in 1648.

It is often said that Yale was built on the backs of the poor weavers, printers and dyers of the Coromandel coast whose labours filled the coffers of Elihu Yale. The university that



BACK OF THE BOOK



Elihu Yale

bears his name ensured him the posthumous glory denied to him by the city that was associated with his prime activity — Madras, whose Governor he was. St Mary's

Church, the oldest Protestant church in India was built inside Fort St George, thanks to the handsome contributions made by Yale, who was married in it in 1690. The church then was a simple rectangular structure. A tower and steeple were added in the early 18th century. The Fort museum adjoining St Mary's evokes the history of the East India Company. Its high point is a Daniell collection of paintings and engravings of 18th Century India by Thomas Daniell and his nephew William.

It would seem that Yale's interests were myriad. He thought up a scheme to enclose part of the land behind the Fort by channelling the two rivers that mended into the sea. The Buckingham Canal runs north-south connecting the two rivers of Adyar and Cooum. Today we recognise the island area thus created as the Island Ground, that is part of the Army's establishment in Madras.

Down the long road which fronts the Marina beach, is the San Thome cathedral. It was originally built in 1504, but was rebuilt in 1893, and is the premier Roman Catholic church in the city. It is believed to have been built to commemorate the landing of the apostle Thomas on these shores.

Only a short distance from it is the ancient Pallava temple dedicated to Shiva. This is the Kapalishwarar Temple, with its magnificent Gopurams or doorways in the Dravidian style. They

are adorned with exquisitely carved figures of Gods and their consorts, all pointing the devotee to the omnipotence of the great Lord Shiva.

Down the Beach road too is the Parthasarathi Temple at Triplicane, dedicated to Krishna. This temple too dates back to the Pallavas, though it was renovated by the Vijayanagar kings of the 16th century.

Facing the sea are the magnificent buildings of the Madras University, including the University Senate. Madras University is one of the three oldest Universities in the country, dating back to 1858. Its academic excellence remains unchallenged even today. Nearby is the former home of the Chepauk nawab,



Madras University

today occupied by one of the usual dusty Government offices. The university buildings too, were once part of the Chepauk estate. The adjoining cricket grounds and stadium of the same name are the happy hunting grounds of cricket lovers around the country.

The sandy beaches of the Marina stretch for nearly 13 kms. At the southern end is Elliot beach reputed to have the 'whitest sands in the world.' Half way down, is a curious relic of the Raj — the Ice House. This round building is one of several built by the British around the country. It was used nearly 175 years ago to store enormous blocks of ice cut from North American lakes and sent to India in sailing ships. If you wanted ice that was how you got it in the days before refrigeration or air conditioning.

The Madras museum and Art Gallery are at Egmore. Both buildings are built in a curious mixture of styles, that are architecturally very interesting. The museum was established in 1851,



St. Mary's Church



BACK OF THE BOOK

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND — INS ADYAR

INS Adyar was first commissioned during World War II. At the outbreak of the War, the functions of Naval Officer-in-Charge, Madras were looked after by the Principal Officer, Mercantile Marine Department, Madras. The War Department felt the necessity to have a regular Naval organisation at Madras to look after the Defence needs and the nucleus of the present Navy Office started functioning from early 1940 with Captain R A Malhuish RIN as the first Naval Officer-in-Charge, Madras.

A local Defence Flotilla was formed the same year with a few patrol and mine sweeping vessels. This was followed by the formation of a local Naval Defence reserve which formed the nucleus of a big shore establishment which soon developed. Captain C J Nicoll, DSC RIN JP, took over as Naval Officer-in-Charge, Madras in early 1941 and the foundations for future expansion



Adyar today

sions were laid and executed by him. A separate Naval Barracks with accommodation for more than 1500 men and cabin accommodation for about 75 officers were built in 1942 at the Southern end of the harbour area.

In accordance with a decision of the Government to commission shore establishments as ships and the policy of naming the bases

after some important local, geographical, historical or territorial names, the naval establishment at Madras was commissioned as INS Adyar... after the Adyar River that runs through the southern parts of the City of Madras and joins the Bay of Bengal between Mylapore and Adyar.

On 19 Feb 1954, the establishment was commissioned as INS Adyar with a Resident Naval Officer under the administrative control of Naval Officer-in-Charge Visakhapatnam. The Resident Naval Officer was later redesignated as the Naval Officer-in-Charge Madras from 06 Jun 1968, under the control of the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Naval Command, Visakhapatnam and the Naval enclave in the port complex was inaugurated on 30 Oct 1981. The Navy Office and naval establishment INS Adyar started functioning from the new premises from that date.

Comde R Nath

Can readers confirm if the Naval establishment in Madras was originally named the INS Cooum? — Ed

and is the second oldest in India after Calcutta. It houses the most outstanding collection of Chola bronzes. It also has a wonderful collection of ancient manuscripts and old coins.

At the mouth of the Adyar River is the calm sanctuary of the Theosophical Society. Its renowned library has an invaluable collection of palm leaf manuscripts and rare books on philosophy and metaphysics. It is well worth a visit, especially to see the spread of the magnificent Banyan tree (second largest in India, the largest being in the Botanical gardens at Calcutta), which is said to date back some 300 years. Some years ago its main trunk was uprooted in a storm. A storm of different proportions blew up, as concerned citizens of Madras saw to it that the historic tree was replanted. Across the river is the splendid white ("choonam") palace of the Chettinaad family, and closer at hand is the music and dance centre made famous by Mrs Rukmini Arundale — the Kalakshetra.

The Raj Bhavan at Guindy used to mark the southern boundary of the city. Now it is merely an island of green amidst the continuing sprawl of the urban jungle. It has a collection of black buck and spotted deer that roam free within its walls. The Raj Bhavan like many old buildings is faced with white *choonam* (stucco) for which Madras was justly famous.

Madras is the home of the prolific South Indian film industry. Though the

vast "studios" are a thing of the past in these days of soaring land prices, signs of the industry's vitality are every where. Huge cut outs and hoardings assault the senses. The industry's influence on TN politics are apparent in the towering cut outs of an already larger-than-life succession of filmy Chief Ministers.

Madras is a culture vulture's delight. The many Sabha's provide platforms for musicians and dancers of every school and *gharana*, to perform before a discerning audience. Madras also has a thriving drama tradition, where elaborate sets and fantastic special effects delight the audience, already familiar with the story line. Even if you know no Tamil, you would thoroughly enjoy the performance.

Madras bookshops are an eye opener to visitors.



"Huge cut outs and hoardings assault the senses"



BACK OF THE BOOK

Higginbothams on Mount Road (now Anna Salai) is almost a place of pilgrimage for the book lover. The new Landmark, is very aptly named, with a bewildering selection of books and periodicals spread over a vast floor area. You could try the small but excellent bookshop at the Connemara Hotel, to name but one of the many little treasures around the city.

The city has been a textile centre from time immemorial, and the old traditions continue and flourish. No visit to Madras is complete without a

visit to one of its excellent silk and cotton emporia.

Close to the airport is St Thomas' Mount. The Saint is said to have fled there, trying to escape from his assassins who finally caught and butchered him on the summit of Little Mount. A small chapel marks the spot where he fell. There is also a stone tablet which chronicles the details.

Visitors to Madras think their visit incomplete without time spent at Mahabalipuram. The Snake Park and the Crocodile Farm en route are worth

stopping at, for animal lovers and those not revolted by reptiles.

Guide books tend to dismiss Madras as a non event in the travel itinerary of tourists, as compared with the marvels to be found else where in Tamil Nadu. It is a city slow to reveal its charms, but drawing the discerning visitor deeper into itself, until one finds oneself hopelessly enamoured of the city's many attractions.



HISTORY

Though Tamil Nadu is one of the most ancient regions in India, it is only from the 4th Century BC that something of its history comes to light. There are references in the early Sangam literature to the social, economic and religious life of the people, but there is not much on the political conditions that existed in the early centuries of the Christian era.

Tamil Nadu was variously ruled by the Cheras, Cholas and Pandyas prior to the Christian era. Karikalan Chola, the greatest of the earlier Cholas, ascended the throne at the beginning of this era. He took several measures for the welfare of his subjects and constructed a barrage across the Kaveri river. Prominent Chola cities were Thanjavur and Kumbakonam. The Cholas were followed by the Cheras, who were succeeded by the Pandyas. Madurai was the most important city under the latter.

The reign of the great temple builders — the Pallavas — began sometime during the second quarter of the 4th century AD. Dravidian architecture attained great heights during the Pallava period. Some of their major contributions include the beautiful monuments of Mamallapuram, the Kailasanathar temple at Kanchipuram, and the Kapalishwarar and Parthasarathy temples at Madras. The most famous Pallava King was the mighty warrior Rajasimha Narasimhavarman Pallava who repelled and attack by the Chaulukya King Pulakesin II, at whose hands Harshavardhana himself had faced defeat. The Pallavas continued to hold sway until the 10th century, when the Cholas under Vijayalaya and Aditya rose to assert themselves. The end of the 11th century once again saw the alternative rule of the Chalukyas, Cholas and Pandyas. Eventually, it was the Cholas who went on to rule for the next two centuries. The two great kings of this period were Raja Raja and Rajendra Chola under whose reign Sumatra, Java, Sri Lanka and Lakshadweep were conquered to become a part of their vast empire. The Muslim invasions followed the decline of the Cholas and led to the establishment of the Bahmani empire in the South during the 14th century. The other major power in the South at the time was the kingdom of Vijayanagara which absorbed the whole southern region including all the Chola strongholds by 1487. The Vijayanagara empire held sway until 1564 when it came to an end with a defeat at the hands of the Deccan Sultans in the battle of Talikota. The victorious Sultans systematically destroyed the beautiful city of Vijayanagara and the members of the vanquished family fled to far off places. The kingdom itself was split into several parts and given to the Nayaks to rule. Of these, the Nayaks of Madurai attained popularity. The other important Nayak citadel was Thanjavur, but it later fell to the Marathas. Tamil Nadu under the Nayaks was peaceful and prosperous. Culturally too, it blossomed as the rulers went about renovating and reconstructing some of the oldest temples in the state. Among some of their contributions is the Tirumalai Nayakkar Mahal of Madurai, the thousand-pillared hall of the Meenakshi temple, and the Srirangam temple in Tiruchchirappalli. But by the 18th century, the Muslims had become the most powerful force south of the rivers Krishna and Tungabhadra. The end of the Century saw the East India Company establish itself in the South. However, European forces in India had arrived long before that. In 1641 Fort St. George became the headquarters of the East India Company on the Coromandal coast. The settlement around it came to be known as Chennapattinam and was the beginning of modern Madras. By 1681, British factories were opened at Porto Novo and Cuddalore and in 1690 Fort St David was constructed near the latter by Elihu Yale, after his son David who died as a child. Petty quarrels among the local rulers helped the British gain administrative control of these territories which remained with the East India Company until the Revolt of 1857, after which they were governed by the British Crown.

But in the South, the seeds of revolt against British authority were sown long before the 1857 revolt, when, at the end of the 18th century, Veerapandiya Kattabomman of Tirunelveli rebelled against paying taxes to a foreign authority.

The turning point of India's freedom struggle came with the inception of the Indian National Congress in 1885. Among some of the greatest freedom fighters from Tamil Nadu were V.O. Chidambaram Pillai, Subramania Bharathi, Subramania Siva and Annie Besant who started the Home Rule Movement in 1915.

Independence saw C. Rajagopala-chari, one of the greatest sons of this state installed as the first Indian Governor-General of the country.



Museum



Light House



Chola Bronze

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San Thome
Cathedral



Nataraja



Kapaleeshwara temple



San Thome Beach

