

67th Issue

September 2024



AFA NEWS

AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION



EAGLE'S EYE



Group Captain Prasanth Balakrishnan Nair, Group Captain Ajit Krishnan, Group Captain Angad Pratap and Group Captain Shubanshu Shukla, have been chosen as the astronaut-candidates for the first human spaceflight mission.

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EAGLE'S EYE-67

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AFA NEWS

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44TH AFA RAISING DAY AND 43RD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING CELEBRATED

Event commenced early in the morning of 15 September 2024 with the wreath laying ceremony at National War Memorial by President AFA.

Subsequently AGM was held at AF Auditorium. Presentations by DAV on Sparsh issues and AFGIS on proposed medical insurance were well received by Veterans.

CAS appreciations 2024 were awarded to Air Cmde AK Patra (Karnataka) HFL DS Bindra (North Zone), HFO S Singh (UP) and Late JWO K Mohandas. Air Cmde PK Pinto (Ex President Goa), Gp Capt SS Phatak (Ex President Maharashtra branch) and Wg Cdr TJ Reddy (Ex President AP & TS branch) were also felicitated by CAS for their dedication and commitment to noble cause to provide selfless service to the veterans community.

DISCLAIMER: THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THE ARTICLES PUBLISHED IN THIS MAGAZINE ARE OF THE AUTHORS ONLY AND AFA BEARS NO RESPONSIBILITY TO THEIR AUTHENTICITY AND ACCURACY.

President's Page



Dear Veterans,

As I write this page for AFA news magazine Eagles Eye Sep 24, there is a new leadership in the wings. Chief of Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Vivek Ram Chaudhari, PVSM AVSM VM ADC shall take over the assignment of Honorary President AFA with effect from 01 October 24 .

It is very heartening to note that Indian Air Force, an organization, to which we all owe a lot, is continuously and steadily striving to become highly modernized and capable aerospace power.

It is encouraging to note that IAF blueprint is progressing very well for an entire overhaul of the Air Defence network, acquisition of frontline combat aircraft with state of the art precision weapons, transport aircraft, UAVs, and all other enabling technologies to meet these newer challenges.

IAF role in disaster management and relief and rescue operations as performed by its highly trained crew during Goa wild fires, Kedarnath valley landslide, Sikkim Flash Floods, Manipur landslides, Flood relief in Kangra (HP) and Wayanad land slide has won hearts of all Indians.

Of late migration and correction of pensioners data to Sparsh has been an area of concern to a very large number of Veterans. MoD and service HQs are well aware of the issue and all efforts are being made to resolve the grievances of the veterans. However, it will take some more time to stabilize the new pension disbursement system. DAV and AFA are jointly committed to help veterans in resolving their pensionary issues.

Air Force Association today is a highly vibrant organization which stands committed to resolve dominant issues of medical, pensions and providing financial assistance to needy ones amongst our fraternity. It is successfully achieving its objectives of welfare of retired community because of total dedication and involvement of all its volunteer members.

Content being presented in AFA news magazine is also improving. You will find the articles more interesting and informative. Good job is being done by AFA editorial team in collection and compilation of news and other information including collation of branch activities and good work being done by AFA branches PAN India

As I sign off from my present job at AFA I want to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt thanks to Air Marshal Jaggi, Sr VP AFA HO; all the branch Presidents and their supporting teams of volunteers, for selflessly supporting the causes of retired community of Air Veterans.

I have full confidence that AFA will continue to thrive under the new leadership and reach even greater heights. While I look forward to the next chapter of my journey, I will always cherish the memories and the relationships I have built here. Thank you for your unwavering support and I wish my retired fraternity nothing but success in the future.

My best wishes to all the members and their families.

Jai Hind

Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhaduria
PVSM AVSM VM (Retd)





Sr Vice President's Page

My Dear members,

President AFA, Air Chief Marshal Rakesh Kumar Singh Bhadauria PVSM AVSM VM will be completing his eventful tenure at AFA, by the time Sep 24 edition of this news magazine is released. We at AFA will be missing his valuable guidance. On behalf of our fraternity of Air

Veterans I wish to thank him for his valuable directions and services rendered by him.

In this magazine, five distinguished Indians, who are the only ones to have been awarded all Padmas and Bharat Ratna, have been introduced to our readers. Life Stories of Late AVM Harjinder Singh, Param Vir Chakra Fg offr Nirmal Jeet Singh Sekhon as included here, are very inspiring. Do's and don'ts to safe guard yourself from cybercrimes, legal rights of ours as senior citizens, etc are presented inside.

Also summarized inside are reports of various exercises namely Exercise Tarang Shakti (Largest ever Multinational Exercise by IAF at Suler and Jodhpur) ;Ex Pitch Black at Australia; Exercise Red Flag at Atlanta and also Exercise Gagan Shakti-24 at the Pokhran Air to Ground Range, near Jaisalmer engaged in by IAF to maintain and upgrade its operational capabilities. Synopsis on many other events / happenings in IAF namely selection of four astronauts from IAF for Mission Gaganyaan, Use of highways as Emergency Landing Fields, Initiative of AFA to honor CENTENARIANS, 75 years of NDA , and many more informative write ups have been included to enhance awareness and relive few nostalgic memories of our moments in active service.

I am glad to inform that good progress is being made in upkeep of our Senior Citizens' Home. Occupancy has improved. This has been possible through valuable support extended by Air Hqs and 7 BRD.

I also want to thank outgoing Presidents Air Cmde PK Pinto (Goa), Gp Capt SS Phatak (Maharashtra) and Wg Cdr TJ Reddy (Andhra Pradesh and Telangana) who have voluntarily worked for many years for welfare of retired community of Air Veterans in their branches and supported AFA causes and objectives. Let me take this opportunity to welcome AVM Sunil Nanodkar (Goa), Gp Capt SV Phatak Maharastra ; and Gp Capt PR Prasad (AP&Telengana) who have taken over the mantle from these outgoing Presidents.

During the Bi Annual Presidents meeting (BPM -22) it was decided that for greater bonhomie, visits of reps from branches to AFA HO and vice versa should be encouraged. I am happy to report that reps of six branches have visited AFA Central / DAV / IAFBA during the last one year. Self and VP also visited veterans fraternity at Gurgaon, Noida, Kanpur, West Bengal, Gujarat and Hyderabad. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my veterans' fraternity members at these branches for their warm hospitality and welcome accorded to us.

With best wishes to all our readers.

Jai Hind

**Air Marshal Jagjeet Singh
PVSM VSM (Retd)**

Editor's Page



Today we have 98584 members and 7498 spouse members only. Air Warriors who are retiring soon or have recently retired are requested to take up AFA membership. A write up as to why all Air Warriors should become AFA members on their retirement is included inside. Apart from covering news and events of IAF, ECHS, Sparsh, write ups on some social issues such as BETI BACHAO BETI PADHAO and HAR MANUKH LAGAYE EK RUKH, Climate change, Digi Locker and Digi Yatra, are presented. AFA prestigious annual event - 39th annual ACM PC Lal Memorial lecture with Professor Himanshu Rai, Director IIM Indore delivering key note address was a huge success. Report on the same is also included inside.

In keeping with modern times and keeping pace with emerging technologies to go DIGITAL and paperless IAF has adapted Digi Locker to Secure/view/Exchange Documents. AFA is also increasingly using social media platforms and internet to reach its members. Apart from despatch of magazine by post to old magazine subscribers individually by post, Magazine is also sent to all branches by Email. Branches in turn send the same to members (subscribers / non subscribers) on WhatsApp and Email. All members are requested to notify their mobile numbers and Mail ID to their respective branch so as to get a digital copy delivered on mail / WhatsApp.

The Magazine is also available on AFA website <https://afa-india.org>; AFA facebook page **Airforce Association India**; AFA Twitter page **@AirForceAssoc1**;

Many members, who are comfortable reading magazine on their phones / laptops / social media have approached us to stop despatch of postal copy to them thus saving expenditure and effort.

Happy Reading

Jai Hind

Gp Capt Vijay Kumar Kapur
VSM (Retd.)

DID YOU KNOW?

- Birds don't urinate.
- Horses and cows sleep while standing up.
- The bat is the only mammal that can fly. The leg bones of a bat are so thin that no bat can walk.
- Even when a snake has its eyes closed, it can still see through its eyelids.
- A cockroach can survive for about a week without its head before dying of starvation.
- A snail can sleep for 3 years.
- A cow gives nearly 2,00,000 glasses of milk in her lifetime.
- The leech has 32 brains.
- Sharks are the only animals that never get sick. They are immune to every type of disease including cancer.



NEW APPOINTMENTS : IAF



Air Marshal Nagesh Kapoor AVSM VM AOC-in-C TC

Air Marshal Nagesh Kapoor AVSM VM has taken over as AOC-in-C TC on 01 May 24. He was commissioned on 06 December 1986. He is alumnus of NDA, DSSC, and NDC with more than 3400 hrs of fighter flying. His senior level appointments include Defence Attaché, Pakistan, ACAS Operations (Strategy) at Air HQ, AD Commander at SWAC, SASO HQ CAC and AOP Air HQs.



Air Marshal Vijay Kumar Garg AVSM VSM AOC-in-C MC

Air Marshal Vijay Kumar Garg AVSM VSM has taken over as AOC -in -C MC on 01 June 2024. He was commissioned on 19 August 1986. He is an alumnus of REC Bhopal, IIT Madras and NDC. He has also been a Cat 'A' Flight Engineer on IL-76 aircraft having flown more than 2000 hours. His senior level appointments include ACAS Engineering (Maintenance and Planning), ACAS Engineering (Transport and Helicopter), SMSO SWAC, DG (Systems) at Air HQ and SMSO at HQ MC.



Air Marshal Ashutosh Dixit AVSM VM VSM AOC-in-C CAC

Air Marshal Ashutosh Dixit AVSM VM VSM has taken over as AOC-in-C on 01 September 2024. He was commissioned on 06 December 1986. He is an alumnus of NDA, DSSC (Bangladesh) and NDC. He is a Test Pilot and a Qualified Flying Instructor with more than 3300 hours of flying experience and has actively participated in Op-Safed Sagar and Op-Rakshak. His previous important appointments include DASR, AD Cdr SAC, ACAS (projects), ACAS (Plans) and DCAS.



Air Marshal Tejinder Singh AVSM VM DEPUTY CHIEF OF THE AIR STAFF

Air Marshal Tejinder Singh AVSM VM has taken over as DCAS on 01 Sep 24. Commissioned on 13 June 1987, he is an alumnus of NDA, DSSC and NDC. He is a Category 'A' QFI with over 4500 hours of flying. His important senior level appointments include AOC J&K, Air Commodore (Aerospace Safety), Assistant Chief of Air Staff Operations (Offensive), ACAS Ops (Strategy) at Air HQ and SASO EAC.



Air Marshal Sunil Kashinath Vidhate AVSM YSM VM AOP

Air Marshal Sunil Kashinath Vidhate AVSM YSM VM has taken over as AOP on 01 May 24. He was commissioned on 13 June 1987. He is an alumnus of NDA, DSSC and NDC (Thailand). He has 2500 hours of flying experience. He is a 'Pilot Attack instructor', 'Fighter Strike Leader'. His senior level appointments include ACAS (Training), AD Cdr of three operational commands and SASO SAC.

DIGI YATRA:

Digi Yatra uses facial recognition technology to make entry & security clearance at the airport terminus as seamless, hassle-free, and paperless process. Digi Yatra is a decentralized mobile-based ID storage platform where air travelers can save their IDs and travel documents. An individual can create Digi Yatra ID in a central system by providing details such as Name, Email ID, Mobile Number and Details of Identity (Voter Id, Driving License, Aadhaar etc). Digi Yatra is available at all major airports in India. To get Digi Yatra, you can download the Digi Yatra app from the Play Store.

ONLY PARAM VIR CHAKRA OF IAF BRAVEST OF BRAVE: FLYING OFFICER NIRMAL JIT SINGH SEKHON

Flying Officer Nirmal Jit Singh Sekhon (17 Jul 1943 - 14 Dec 1971), son of Honorary Flight Lieutenant Tarlochan Singh Sekhon was born in the village of Rurka in Ludhiana District, Punjab. He was commissioned into the flying branch of the Indian Air Force on 04 Jun 1967.

On 14 December 1971, Srinagar airfield was bombed and strafed by six **Pakistani Sabre** aircraft. In spite of immense risk to life for attempting to take off during the air attack, Flying Officer Nirmal Jit Singh Sekhon of 18 Squadron, who was a Gnat pilot, took off and immediately engaged a pair of the attacking Sabres. He secured hits on one aircraft and damaged another. By this

time four more Pak Sabre aircraft came to the rescue of their aircraft, which was locked in an air-combat with Indian Gnat. In the ensuing combat his aircraft was shot down by one of the Sabres. The sublime heroism, supreme gallantry and determination displayed by Flying Officer Sekhon in the face of certain death set new heights in Air Force traditions, for which he was awarded the **Param Vir Chakra (Posthumous)**.



Dayalbagh Educational Institute (DEI) Technical

College commemorated the 79th birth anniversary of Flying Officer Nirmal Jit Singh Sekhon, Param Vir Chakra (PVC), their most distinguished alumnus by presenting a citation to the Indian Air Force Heritage

UNIQUE ACT OF PHILANTHROPY



Veteran Gp Capt SM Puri VM and Mrs Sonia Puri have donated Rs **TWO CRORES** to Air Force Association for "**Gp Capt SM Puri VM and Mrs Sonia Puri Benevolent Fund**".

Gp Capt SM Puri was commissioned on 29 Oct 1966 in the Transport stream of the Flying Branch. He has undergone Higher Command Course at MHOW with Army and has held important appointments of CO 12 Sqn, Stn Cdr AF Stn Suler, Jt Director Ops (T & H)

and has 10000 hours of accident free flying. Mrs Sonia Puri's role, the joint donor, is especially commendable wherein she has joined hands with her husband for this magnanimous and humongous donation and agreed to part with this large sum for noble cause.

The amount has been invested with IAFBA and the interest thereon is being used for the following welfare activities:-

- (a) Grant for **IVF treatment** to childless couple
- (b) Scholarships for **UG professional courses**

During the past two years Rs 7.20 Lacs have been distributed for IVF treatment and Rs 5.75 Lacs for scholarships. As a special case, civilian employee of Senior Citizens' Home was given a grant of Rs. 1.5 Lakh for IVF treatment.

The donors can be contacted at
Mob No. **9810264835** and email ID
smpuri483@hotmail.com

Software Development Institute (SDI) of IAF inks an MoU with PESCE, ("People's Education Society College of Engineering Mandya - Karnataka) to collaborate on developing new products and processes, leveraging their combined expertise to address emerging technological needs and challenges.



AN ORGANISED MEMORABLE TRIP OF AFA MEMBERS AND FAMILIES TO BANGLADESH : GP CAPT KK KUNDU

AFA WB Branch has spread its wings beyond the borders when some of its members along with families undertook an excursion to Bangladesh.

The emotional appeal for those who had to leave their home and hearth under trying circumstances cannot be easily described by words. There are others who grew up hearing stories from their parents about the "DESHER BARI" (ancestral house). Lastly there are those who don't have any nostalgia but simply went there to "know thy neighbour"! Thus the group consisted of very senior people above eighty and senior citizens in their mid sixties. The enthusiasm was something to be seen to be believed. The response was so overwhelming that we had to close the registration after a while.

In all 41 veterans including spouses made their journey on 13 Mar 2024. MWO Amul Kumar Sengupta (400775-Air Signaller) is the eldest member who was part of this group. He is 87 years old. We headed for Petra Pole, a land border which is one of the biggest in terms of number of immigrants. Crossing the border on foot was a thrilling experience. A member of our Governing Body, who is working in the immigration department in his second career, facilitated the Admin part. We were received by our Tour Manager on the other side of the border. The journey thereafter was by a Volvo

bus for the next seven days. We covered Jessore, Dhaka and **Kushthia** during our visit. The high point of the tour was a cruise on the river to Chandpur, the confluence of **Padma** and **Meghna**. On the way to **Dhaka** we crossed the **Padma Setu**, an engineering marvel for which Bangladeshis are justifiably proud.

On 17th Mar 2024 we visited the residence of **Sheikh Mujibur Rahman** (popularly known by the honoric prefix **Bangabandhu**) at Dhanmondi. This day happens to be the birthday of Bangabandhu and is celebrated as Children's day in Bangladesh. We also visited the memorials and buildings associated with the cultural icons like **Michael Madhusudan Dutta**, **Rabindranath Tagore**, **Kazi Nazrul Islam** and **Lalan Fakir**. A surprise awaited us when we saw a chowk at Kushthia which has been dedicated to **Fg Offr Nirmal Jit Singh Sekhon PVC**. His picture has been etched on a replica of Gnat. We paid our respect there.

Right from the beginning of our tour, emphasis had been on people to people contact and we had plenty of opportunities to peep into the life of common people, local artisans and businessmen. The visit culminated with an interaction with the print and visual media of Bangladesh. The event was widely covered by the local press!

INDIAN AIR FORCE CONVOY AMBUSHED IN POONCH KILLING CPL VICKY PAHADE

Corporal **Vicky Pahade** was killed while four other IAF air warriors were injured when a small convoy of IAF personnel came under heavy fire at 1800 hrs on 04 May 2024 in the Surankot area of Poonch. The convoy was on its way to **Shahsitar** from **Jarawali**.

The slain air warrior hailed from Madhya Pradesh's Chhindwara district and was a resident of **Nonia-Karbal** village. Cpl Pahade (33) had joined the Indian Air Force (IAF) in 2011. He is survived by his wife **Rina**, five-year-old son **Hardik**, mother and three sisters.

A huge crowd of mourners had gathered on 06 May 2024 to bid final farewell to Corporal Vicky Pahade, in his hometown. His body arrived at **Chhindwara** airstrip in a helicopter. The last rites were carried out with full military

honours after a ceremonial guard of honour with **Chief Minister Mohan Yadav**, senior officers, air veterans and air warriors and other leaders in attendance. His 5-year-old son **Hardik** lit the pyre in the presence of his three sisters as well as senior IAF and district officials. The IAF soldier's sister, **Geeta Pahade**, who is a sub-inspector, said she was proud of her brother.

Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari in his condolence message stated that "all personnel of the Air Force salute the brave heart Corporal Vicky Pahade, who made the supreme sacrifice in Poonch Sector, in the service of the nation. Our deepest condolences to the bereaved family. We stand firmly by your side in this hour of grief".

LONG LIVE THE KING



Sqn Ldr Dalip Singh Majithia with Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari and former Chiefs.

Just a few months back on 14 Apr 2024 we lost the oldest living pilot of the Indian Air Force, **Sqn Ldr Dalip Singh Majithia**. Here is a small run-down on the legend.

Sqn Ldr Dalip Singh Majithia was born on 27 Jul 1920 at **Shimla**. Following the footsteps of his uncle Sh. Surjeet Singh Majithia, he joined the Indian Air Force volunteer reserve in 1940 during World War –II.

His father, **Sh Kirpal Singh Majithia** was a prominent figure in Punjab during the British rule as was his grandfather Sh Sundar Singh Majithia who was associated with the Chief Khalsa Diwan and was one of the founder members of Khalsa College Amritsar.

He initially learnt the basic nuances of flying on a Gypsy Moth aircraft at Karachi Flying Club. In August 1940, he joined the 4th Pilot's Course at the Initial Training School (ITA) in Walton, Lahore, and three months later he was awarded the best pilot trophy and was posted to the No. 1 Flying Training School in Ambala to continue advanced flying training.

Sqn Ldr Dalip Singh Majithia served the Indian Air Force for a brief period of seven years from 1940 to 1947. During these seven years he served in

No.1 Coastal Defence Flight based at **St Thomas Mount in Madras**, 151 Operational Training Unit at Risalpur, 6 Sqn, Flight Commander No.3 Squadron. He was also the Flight Commander of 4 Squadron which was then stationed at Burma. Unfortunately he had to take a break from active flying due to long illness. During this time he was posted to Air HQ. Later he was posted to Melbourne, Australia as the IAF's Liaison Officer to the **Joint Chief of Staff in Australia**.

It was here that he met his future wife Joan Sanders Majithia who was a code breaker in the **Women's Royal Australian Navy Service** during the Second World War. On 18 February, 1947, Squadron Leader Dalip Singh Majithia married Joan Sanders at his family home in Gorakhpur where the family had considerable land holdings and business interests. They were blessed with two daughters, **Kiran** and **Mira**.

After completing his tenure in **Australia**, he retired from the Indian Air Force on 18th March 1947, and settled down at his family's estate at **Sardarnagar**, near Gorakhpur, in Uttar Pradesh.

In 1949, he made history of sorts when he conducted the first landing of an aircraft in Kathmandu, Nepal, on an unprepared piece of land, a site which today boasts of the country's International Airport.

The oldest living pilot of the Indian Air Force, Squadron Leader Dalip Singh Majithia, passed away at the age of 103 at his farm in Uttarakhand on 14 April 24. Like her husband, Mrs Joan Sanders also lived to be 100 years and passed away in 2021.

May his soul rest in peace!

Sir,

You shall be remembered by many generations of the Indian Air Force.

EXERCISE RED FLAG

It is a two-week advanced aerial combat training exercise held several times a year by the United States Air Force (USAF) and its allied countries to integrate aircrew in a multinational environment. The exercise focuses on honing the skills and tactics required in aerial combat scenarios. Indian Air Force (IAF) contingent participated in the Exercise Red Flag 2024 conducted at Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska of the United States Air Force from 04 Jun to 14 Jun 24.



INDIAN ARMY AND INDIAN AIR FORCE SWIFTLY COORDINATE AND COLLABORATE TO SAVE REMOTELY STATIONED SOLDIER'S LIFE.



IAF superior coordination with Army in order to rescue injured Jawan in forward area.

In an **unfortunate incident** which took place on 09 Apr 24, an Indian Army soldier stationed in the challenging terrain of Ladakh, suffered severe injuries. Unfortunately his left hand got amputated while operating a machine at a unit located in the forward area.

Some other soldiers who were present in the near vicinity acted swiftly, tied a band on his arm to stem the bleeding, put the severed limb in an ice bag, and rushed him to **Military Garrison Hospital** at Leh.

The doctors who attended to him came to the conclusion that the patient required specialized surgery and needs to be

immediately transferred to RR hospital at Delhi. Within an hour of the demand for air effort by the Indian Army, a Transport Aircraft, IAF C-130J carried out a night landing at Leh Airfield, equipped with night vision equipment to move the effected soldier for surgery to Delhi in a **"dark night airlift"**.

The soldier, along with the amputated part of his hand, preserved in a cold container, then was airlifted to Delhi.

Upon arrival at **AHRR**, the soldier underwent a highly complex nine hour surgery for the re-implantation of his left hand, including the amputated thumb and index finger. The operation was successful.

A commendable job was done by all involved which included the fellow soldiers present at site when the incident took place, quick reaction by IAF for providing necessary airlift and immediate surgery at RR.

Congratulations to all the men in uniform for conducting this exemplary and efficiently coordinated operation to save a fellow soldier.

"GOOD SHOW". WE ARE PROUD OF YOU ALL.



CAS Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari, laid a wreath along with senior dignitaries, families of brave hearts, veterans and serving IAF officers, at the AF Station Sarsawa War Memorial.

IAF commemorates 'Operation Safed Sagar'

To commemorate the silver jubilee of the victory in the 1999 Kargil war, the Indian Air Force celebrated **'Kargil Vijay Diwas Rajat Jayanti'** at Air Force Station Sarsawa from 12 Jul to 26 Jul 24. **Air Chief Marshal V R Chaudhari** laid a wreath at the Station War Memorial as a tribute to all air warriors who laid down their lives in service of the nation. Overall, IAF flew around 5,000 strike missions, 350 reconnaissance/ ELINT missions, and around 800 escort flights and 2000 helicopter sorties during Operations Safed Sagar. On May 28, 1999, **Sqn Ldr R Pundir, Flt Lt S Muhilan, Sgt PVNR Prasad and Sgt R K Sahu** of 152 HU were tasked to fly as 'Nubra' formation for a live strike against enemy positions at Tololing. After successfully pressing home the attack, their helicopter was hit by an enemy Stinger Missile during the break away, leading to the loss of four Air Warriors. For this act of exceptional courage, all four of them were awarded **Vayu Sena Medal (Gallantry)**, posthumously.

CAS Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari, laid a wreath along with senior dignitaries, families of brave hearts, veterans and serving IAF officers, at the AF Station Sarsawa War Memorial.

MISSION GAGANYAAN

ISRO has been in the news for quite some time ever since **Chandrayaan - 3** made a successful landing on the moon on 23 Aug 2023.

We did make an attempt earlier also in 2019 when **Chandrayaan-II** was launched on 22 Jul 19. We were almost there but unfortunately in the final phase of landing on 06 Sep 2019, **Chandrayaan-II** lost control with the mission control. Going by the famous proverb "Try, try again", India went ahead to launch CH-III on 14 Jul 23. And we did achieve it on 23 Aug 23. India became the 4th country in the world to successfully land on the moon. The **ISRO Chief Sh. S Somnath** proudly said, "**India on the moon**". Now that we have come this far, there is no looking back. Next on the cards is **Gaganyaan**.

Now what is Gaganyaan? It is an Indian Orbital Spacecraft intended to be formative spacecraft of the Indian Human Spaceflight Programme. It derives its name from "**GAGANA**", a Sanskrit word meaning "celestial" and "**YANA**", a craft vehicle.

The Gaganyaan mission will demonstrate India's human spaceflight capability by launching astronauts to an orbit 400 kilometers above the Earth for a 3-day mission.

After that, astronauts will be brought back to Earth safely with a landing in Indian sea waters.

The spacecraft will have 2 to 3 astronauts. Four astronauts have already been named. All four astronauts were selected from a team of 60 ace pilots from the Indian Air Force. They are all alumnus of **National Defence Academy** and all are TEST PILOTS. They are **Group Captain P Balakrishnan** (Born: Thiruvazhiyad, Kerala on

August 26, 1976); **Group Captain Ajit Krishnan** (Born: Chennai, Tamil Nadu on April 19, 1982); **Group Captain Angad Pratap** (Born: Prayagraj on July 17, 1982); and **Group Captain S Shukla** (Born: Lucknow, UP on October 10, 1985).

Training. The selected astronauts underwent thirteen months of training at the Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Centre in Russia. They were trained to sustain in the outer space and radiation zone. They were also trained on survival tactics if the module landed back in a snow-covered landscape, desert or sea. They also received training to survive in zero gravity.

On their return to India, they started training at the **Human Space Flight Centre** in **Bengaluru**. They were trained in engineering, the design of the space vehicle, propulsion, and aerodynamics, besides the basics of rocket and spacecraft. They also underwent physical training, yoga, aero medical, and fight training in Bengaluru.

A special syllabus was made for their training which was approved by India's first astronaut **Wing Commander (Retd) Rakesh Sharma**, and **Air Commodore (Retd) Ravish Malhotra**.

There have been four astronauts so far of Indian origin but **Wg Cdr Rakesh Sharma** is the only one who is an Indian national. He went into space on **Soyuz T-11** in 1984. The other three astronauts of Indian Origin are **Kalpna Chawla**, **Sunita Williams**, and **Raja Chari** who have flown as **NASA astronauts**.

All the best buddies.
The Indian Air Force is proud of you.
Soon the Nation is going to be proud of you.

ECHS REFERRAL POLICY UPDATE

ASPECT	OLD POLICY	NEW POLICY
Validity of Referrals/ Hospitalization	Earlier valid for 30 days.	Valid for three months. (90 days)
Number of Consultations	Limited to three consultations (03) per referrals.	Up to six consultations (06) are allowed within the three-month validity period.
Special Provisions for senior Beneficiaries	Applied to beneficiaries aged 75 years and above.	Now applied to beneficiaries aged 70 years and above.
Referral for Government Hospitals	Referral required for consultations and procedures.	No referral is required for consultations, investigations or procedures.



IAF USHERS IN DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION WITH DIGILOCKER INTEGRATION

Indian Air Force (IAF) has embarked on a transformative digital journey by integrating with the **DigiLocker** platform, a flagship initiative under the Digital India programme, on April 26, 2024 to leverage DigiLocker's secure and accessible document repository services.

With the authorization of DigiLocker Integration, IAF departments and divisions will be able to seamlessly upload digital records, certificates, and vital documents to the national DigiLocker repository, ensuring secure storage and easy accessibility.

With this facility, IAF Personal will have direct access to their crucial documents, such as the Certificate of Service (CoS) and Service Book Officers (SBO), through their personal DigiLocker wallets, enabling convenient retrieval and verification. DigiLocker integration will streamline various processes within the IAF, including the Agniveer Vayu recruitment, where candidate's academic document verification will

be conducted digitally, enhancing transparency and credibility.

With over **308 million** registered users and a staggering **7.76 billion** issued documents, DigiLocker is rapidly emerging as a national standard for digital document exchange platform.

Now that the IAF has already embarked on this journey, the veterans can also be a part of this by opening a DigiLocker account by logging onto its website or mobile app. – DigiLocker <https://www.digilocker.gov.in>

You can use this facility to secure your personal documents such as Aadhaar, driving license, vehicle registration, educational certificates, PAN, NPS statement etc., which are fetched from the respective government departments for safekeeping and for use at anytime and anyplace and avoid carrying these documents on person at all times.

FOUR MORE BANKS TO OPEN SPARSH SERVICE CENTRES

Defence Accounts Department (DAD), Ministry of Defence has signed Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with four Nationalized Banks viz Bank of India, Canara Bank, Central Bank of India and Utkarsh Small Finance Bank in New Delhi. The main aim of the MoU is to get 1128 Branches of these Banks on Board to act as **SPARSH [System for Pension Administration (Raksha)]** Service Centres.

The MoU will provide last-mile connectivity to pensioners, especially in remote areas where they do not have technical wherewithal to log on to SPARSH.

These Service Centers will become an interface for pensioners for SPARSH, providing an effective medium to update their profile; register grievances; digital annual identification;

data verification, besides fetching detailed information regarding their monthly pension. The access to these centers would be provided free of cost, with nominal service charges being borne by the **Defence Accounts Department (DAD)**.

With these MoUs, SPARSH Services would now be available at over 26,000 branches of a total of 15 banks across the country. This is in addition to 199 dedicated service centers of DAD and more than 3.75 lakh Common Service Centers across the country.

Sparsh Websites: To locate Sparsh service centers and other FAQs on Sparsh, Veterans can visit pensioner bank or login at websites like: - <https://www.sparsh.defencepension.gov.in>

TOUCH THE SPACE WITH GLORY

Two Gaganyatris, **Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla** (prime astronaut) and **Group Captain Prasanth Balakrishnan Nair** (backup astronaut) have been selected for the Axiom-4 mission to the **International Space Station**. Axiom Mission 4 (Ax-4) is fourth private

spaceflight organized by Axiom Space in collaboration with NASA and ISRO. It aims to transport a crew to the International Space Station (ISS) for a 14-day mission and will be beneficial for the **Indian Human Space Program**.

NATIONAL HIGHWAYS AS EMERGENCY RUNWAYS



It is a known fact that the aircraft, whether Military/Air Force or Civil are supposed to land on the airstrips or runways especially made for this purpose.

But then there could be occasions where an aircraft has to make emergency landing e.g. in case of engine failure, bird hit to the aircraft etc. or the designated runway may be blocked due to an accident involving another aircraft or damage to the runway due to various reasons. To cater for such exigencies highways strips or road runways have been made. This is not a new concept as the first highway strip was constructed towards the end of the World War-II in Germany.

A highway strip, road runway or road base is a section of highway, motorway or other form of public road which is specially built to act as a runway for aircraft. Over and above the emergency landing situations covered earlier, one of the main reasons is to cater for war

damages to the military airstrips as these strips are the most vulnerable targets during a war.

The Road Transport Ministry, in coordination with the Indian Air Force, has created road patches built with runway specifications and without dividers so that both sides of the road can be used for operations. Such stretches have been named **Emergency Landing Facility (ELF)**. The Indian Air Force (IAF) has identified 28 such ELFs on highways across the country. Five such ELFs are in Assam, four in West Bengal, three in Andhra Pradesh, three in Gujarat, three in Rajasthan, two in Bihar, two in Haryana, two in Jammu and Kashmir, two in Tamil Nadu, and one each in Punjab and Uttar Pradesh.

India has already tested its (ELF) runway strips on a stretch of the Yamuna Expressway in Uttar Pradesh, on National Highway 16 near Addanki in Bapatla district (**Andhra Pradesh**) and at Barmer (**Rajasthan**), where a stretch of the highway was used for landing by a **C-130** with the Honorable Defence Minister and Road Transport minister as passengers along with other dignitaries.

ELF Highway airstrips will enhance flexibility of air operations during contingencies and are going to act as invaluable assets during **Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster relief**.

NEWS ECHS: AIIMS Raipur and AIIMS Bhopal allow ex-servicemen to avail health benefits at their facility in a capless and cashless manner”.

- Following modifications have been made on ECHS App
 - Change of Registered Mobile Number:* Beneficiary requests will be auto-approved upon submission. OIC approval will not be required.
 - Change of Parent PC:* Beneficiary requests will be auto-approved upon submission. Parent OIC and New Parent OIC approval will not be required.
 - Non-Parent PC Referral:* No referral approval will be required from the parent polyclinic OIC if the beneficiary has visited a non-parent Polyclinic. Referral approval will be given directly by the Non-Parent PC OIC.
- GST number of chemist shop not mandatory for Chemist Bill for purchase of NA medicines for reimbursement. (Auth. B. 49769 /AG /ECHS dated 17 May 24.)
- ECHS smart card is valid all over India. You may visit any polyclinic in India with the ECHS card.

AFA INITIATIVE: FELICITATION OF CENTENARIAN VETERANS BY IAF



Air Force Association has been following the tradition of celebrating the birth anniversary of its **Octogenarian** and **Nonagenarian** members at an annual function PAN India. All the branches of AFA have been doing this in their respective areas of responsibilities in an organized function for the veteran members reaching these milestones.

AFA had been contemplating of adding Centenarians also in this but then there are certain constraints e.g. non-availability of contact details like address/e-mail/mobile number, physical health of the veterans etc. As not too many air veterans reach this stage (100 years) it was opined to involve DAV as they would be better equipped with the data of such veterans as they would be drawing pension.

Accordingly this idea to start felicitation of Veteran CENTANARIAN members was mooted in January 2024 in a formal meeting by President AFA to the CAS. AFA proposal was accepted by the CAS and all Commands HQs were advised to arrange a felicitation ceremony for CENTANARIAN Veterans. AFA head office

also approached all Commands HQ to involve the veterans at nearest AFA branch / chapter whenever such a function is organized.

AFA is happy to share with all the veterans that our proposal to felicitate Centenarians by Indian Air Force units across India has been implemented. On 24 Apr 24 Air Marshal Vibhas Pande PVSM AVSM VSM (Retd), the then AOC-in-C Maintenance Command, and Mrs. Ruchira Pandey, the then President AFFWA (Regional) along with Air Cmde Kamal Bagga, AOC 25 ED and Air Cmde Ashutosh Vaidya, AOC 11 BRD felicitated Sqn Ldr Lahuji Balwant Wagh (Retd) on his 100th birthday at his residence in Govind Nagar, Nashik and wished him a happy birthday.

Air Marshal Vibhas Pande emphasized the IAF's tradition of honouring their veterans stating, "It is a tradition in the Indian Air Force to honour our octogenarian, nonagenarian and centenarian veterans. It is an honour for all of us that we could be part of Sqn Ldr Lahuji Wagh's 100th birthday celebration".

Squadron Leader Lahuji Wagh, **Mention-in-Despatch** was born in a farming family in Ranwad, Niphad taluka, and joined the then Royal Indian Air Force in 1942 as an Airman after completing his matriculation. He was commissioned in 1963.

A humble request to all the readers: If you come across any air veteran who is about to reach this milestone of turning 100 or has already crossed that milestone, please forward the details of such veterans to AFA HO or any of its Branches.

COMBINED GRADUATION PARADE (CGP)

It was held at the Air Force Academy at Dundigal on 15 June 24 to mark the culmination of the training of 235 flight cadets (including 22 women officers) of flying and ground duty branches of the Indian Air Force. Nine officers from the Indian Navy, nine from the Indian Coast Guard, and one officer from the friendly foreign countries were also awarded 'wings' on completion of flying training.

This is also the first CGP where 25 cadets, who had joined the National Defence Academy four years ago for ground duty branches, were commissioned as officers. Five of these officers have been commissioned in the administration branch, three in the logistics branch and 17 in the technical branch of the Air Force.

Addressing the CGP, Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari said that modern warfare is a dynamic and ever-evolving landscape. It is no longer solely a physical domain. It is increasingly influenced by complex data networks and advanced cyber technologies. As leaders, you all need to adapt, innovate and leverage technology effectively. He further said that as you embark on this extraordinary journey, let the core values of the Indian Air Force i.e. **MISSION, INTEGRITY AND EXCELLENCE** — be your guiding beacon.

EXPANSION PLANS FOR NCC

The main aim of National Cadets Corps (NCC) is to create an organized, trained and motivated youth force. NCC cadets are imparted training which not only grooms them to become good citizens of the country, but is also beneficial for them if they wish to join the Armed Forces.

Honourable Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh Jee has approved a proposal for expansion of the National Cadet Corps with the addition of three lakh vacancies.

From just 20,000 cadets in 1948, the NCC will now have a sanctioned strength of 20 lakh cadets on its roles making it the largest

uniformed youth organisation of the world.

Expansion plan also envisages employment of ex-servicemen as NCC instructors thus leveraging their skills and vast experience. This noble initiative will ensure quality training to the NCC cadets and would generate employment opportunities for the veterans.

With NCC being offered as an **elective subject** as per the National Education Policy 2020, the expansion of NCC will be a step towards meeting the aspirations of the youth towards playing a pivotal role as future leaders.

DGR BENEFITS EXTENDED TO CADETS INVALIDATED ON MEDICAL GROUNDS DURING TRAINING

Cadets undergoing military training at various Armed Forces Academies are treated as officers only after they successfully complete the training and get commissioned. There have been a few instances where cadets were invalidated on medical grounds during training itself due to causes attributable to or aggravated by training.

Honourable Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh Jee has approved a proposal for **extension of benefits of various schemes run by DGR to cadets** who are invalidated during military training on medical grounds. This will enable those cadets who have been boarded out on medical grounds to access the DGR schemes and ensure a brighter future for themselves.

IAF Fire Fighting Operations

MI 17 V5 helicopter of IAF was deployed for extinguishing the raging FOREST FIRES in summer this year, in Nainital district, Uttarakhand.

The helicopter uses a "Bambi Bucket" which is essentially a lightweight fully collapsible, portable container that releases water from

underneath a helicopter to drop water on fire sites. The water is discharged in a solid column of water, resulting in a more accurate and effective water dump, less evaporation on the descent, and greater impact force. It is available in capacities ranging from 270 litres to 9840 litres and is being used by more than 1000 helicopter operators in 115 countries.

WEAPON SYSTEMS SCHOOL (WSS) INAUGURATED AT BEGUMPET

The Indian Air Force (IAF) took a pivotal step towards bolstering its combat capabilities with the inauguration by CAS of the Weapon Systems School (WSS) at Begumpet on 01 Jul 24. This School shall serve as a vital training ground for officers entrusted with operating ground based and specialist weapon systems of newly formed Weapon Systems Branch (WSB) in 2022. In his inaugural address, the Chief emphasized that by bringing operators of diverse weapon systems under WSB, the IAF shall streamline operations and foster a more

cohesive approach to its offensive capabilities.

The new branch (WSB) will have four streams; **Flying Stream** to operate the weapons and systems in airborne platforms like the Sukhoi-30 MKI and C-130J; **Remote Stream** to operate remotely piloted aircraft; **Mission Commanders and Operators** for surface to air and surface-to-surface weapon systems, and **Intelligence Stream** for handling space-based intelligence and imagery.



39th AIR CHIEF MARSHAL PC LAL MEMORIAL LECTURE



Prof Himanshu Rai with Chief of the Air Staff, former Chiefs, Mrs and Mr Robey Lal (Daughter-in-law and son of Late ACM Lal)

Air Chief Marshal Pratap Chandra Lal, DFC (06 Dec 1916 – 13 Aug 1982) was Vice Chief of the Air Staff during the Indo-Pak War of 1965. From 1966 to 1969, he served as the Managing Director and later Chairman of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited. He was Chief of the Air Staff (CAS) during the 1971 Indo-Pak War. Post retirement, he was CMD Indian Airlines Corporation. All these appointments bear testimony to his professional abilities.

Apart from **Distinguished Flying Cross** (WW-2), he was recipient of **Padma Bhushan** and **Padma Vibhushan** awards also.

To honour and uphold his legacy, AFA holds ACM PC Lal Memorial lecture annually at Air Force Auditorium, Subroto Park, New Delhi.

On 05 Apr 24 Professor Himanshu Rai, Director

IIM Indore was invited to deliver the lecture. Professor Rai delivered his talk on **“Unlocking Global Potential: Shaping the Future of Bharat.”** On arrival Professor Rai was received by President, Sr VP and VP of AFA. He briefly interacted with former Chiefs before moving to the podium to deliver his talk.

Prof Rai made an enlightening and entertaining presentation. The audience appreciated how Prof Rai brought in words / thoughts and examples from Ancient Indian Scriptures to keep his talk simple yet highly informative, thus engaging apt attention of fully packed auditorium for an hour.

Mrs and Mr Robey Lal (Daughter-in-law and son of Late ACM Lal) were also present. Function was attended by a large number of veterans from Delhi and NCR. Students from Air Force Schools (TAFS, AFGJI and Bal Bharti) were also present.

Air Chief Marshal VR Choudhary Chief of the Air Staff, former Air Chiefs, PSOs from Air Hqs, AOC-in-C WAC and other senior officers from various units of Delhi area also attended.

The function was well organized and it was well appreciated by one and all. The talk was followed by high tea for the audience (around 700 people) who attended the function. A large number of selfies / photos were taken by veterans with Prof Rai.

PLAQUE IN MEMORY OF FLIGHT LIEUTENANT LATE PRADYOT DASTIDAR



Dastidar had displayed extraordinary bravery in destruction of the Peshawar air base by IAF in the Indo-Pak

bomber stream.

Then, as the anti-aircraft guns were firing and shells were exploding all around him, he spun back to see his bomb. After spotting the target that indicated the bomb, he relayed the bombing index to the stream's leader. He didn't leave the area around the airfield until he was certain the stream's leader had grasped the bombing index. Eventually, the Peshawar air base was destroyed, and all Indian aircraft returned safely.

In this and seven other missions, Flt Lt Dastidar displayed courage and skill of a high order. He was awarded Vir Chakra by then President S Radhakrishnan.

He retired on October 23, 1978, due to ill health. Since he was from Mumbai and his father was serving in the Central Railway in Mumbai, the railway employees installed a plaque in his memory on **platform No 06 at Dadar Railway station.**

War of 1965.

Comissioned in IAF on December 24, 1957, Flt Lt Dastidar of No 5 Squadron was detailed as the navigator of a target marking aircraft to lead a massive attack on the heavily defended Peshawar airfield on September 15, 1965.

Only when he flew directly overhead, could he see the airfield due to the poor visibility. The anti-aircraft guns fired up a hefty barrage as soon as he dropped a flare to see the target. He maintained a steady pace despite the shells and tracers, marking the target for the pursuing

EX-TARANG SHAKTI: LARGEST MULTINATIONAL EXERCISE BY IAF WITH 30 COUNTRIES



IAF recently hosted the largest Multinational Exercise Tarang Shakti 24 -with 30 countries in two phases. Phase-I of the exercise involving IAF along with Air Force contingents from Germany , France ,

Spain and UK was conducted at AF Station Sulur from 06th August 24 to 14 August 24 .

During Phase-I of exercise, 24 aircraft from the four countries, involving 700 personnel, undertook 205 sorties. IAF Chief and Spanish Chief flew sorties in Russian origin SU 30 Mk1 while the German and French Chief flew the indigenous LCA.

The French contingent comprised of Rafale fighter jets, A400M transports, A300 MRTT mid-air refuellers and 160 personnel. Five German Euro fighters and an A400M transport aircraft were involved, with the lead German unit being the Tactical Air Force Wing 71 "Richthofen". The Spanish Air Force participated with its Euro fighters.

Phase-II was conducted at AF Station Jodhpur from 29 August to 14 Sep 2024, eight countries - Australia, Greece, Japan, Singapore, Sri Lanka, UAE and the US - sent aircraft plus observers. 30 aircraft, including 25 fighters involving 800 personnel, carried out over 800 sorties. Japan fielded three F-2 fighters while US deployed six A-10 Thunderbolt Close Air Support (CAS) aircraft, three F-16s in addition to force multipliers. Australia sent three EA-18G Growler aircraft and around 120 personnel.

Including IAF's deployments in the exercise, around 100 aircraft took to the Jodhpur skies in the Phase-II. The night skies above Jodhpur reverberated with the thunderous sound of powerful aircraft during the second phase of Exercise Tarang Shakti 2024 when around 100

aircraft took to the Jodhpur skies in the Phase-II. The night-time sorties showcased the skill of the participating forces, demonstrating their remarkable interoperability. The night missions highlighted the capability and readiness of the forces to operate effectively in any environment, day or night.

There were also 38 observers from 16 countries. An air domain awareness symposium was held on Wednesday with 52 participants from 27 countries. It was appreciated by the Chiefs of forces of the participating countries.

Vice Chiefs of Indian Army , Navy and Air Force created history by flying together in the indigenously manufactured LCA . Joint participation in the exercise demonstrated the growing focus on cross domain cooperation with land, sea and Air Forces working together to face modern challenges together.

The event showcased a display by Agniveer Vayu Women Air Warrior Drill Team (AWDT) and demonstration from LCA Tejas, LCH Prachand Sarang and SKAT teams.

ACM Chaudhari announced that Tarang Shakti would be made a **biennial feature**.

Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh termed Multinational Exercise 'Tarang Shakti' as an effort to strengthen cooperation, coordination and trust with the partner countries. Stating that Exercise Tarang Shakti underscores the growing stature of Indian armed forces, Shri Rajnath Singh said the "resolve of making India AtmaNirbhar in Defence is demonstrated by Ex Tarang Shakti." He said the country has transformed from being only an importer of arms and equipment to a nation which today exports arms and equipment to about 90 countries.

Defence minister also inaugurated India Defence Aviation Exposition **IDAX-24 (12 -14 Sep 24.)** IDAX-24 showcased indigenous skills and indomitable spirit of Indian Aviation Industries to a wide spectrum of decision-makers and end users from Global Air Forces participating in Tarang Shakti 2024.

WORLD IS A BIG MIRROR

Once a dog ran into a museum where all the walls, the ceiling, the door and even the floor were made of mirror. Seeing this the dog froze in surprise in the middle of the hall, a whole pack of dogs surrounded the dog from all sides, from above and below. When the dog bared his teeth, all the reflections responded to it in the same way.

Next day in the morning, the museum security guards found the miserable dog, lifeless and surrounded by a million reflections of lifeless dogs. The world doesn't bring good or evil on its own. Everything that is happening around us is the reflection of our own thoughts, feelings, wishes and actions. "The World is a big mirror. Strike a good pose! Smile from deep within".



BETI BACHAO BETI PADHAO & EACH ONE TEACH ONE



The above two slogans have become all time favourites. They have their origin taking place on two totally different occasions and at two different places.

Sex selective abortion of female fratricide by use of **ULTRASOUND TECHNOLOGY** had led to a sharp drop in the ratio of girls born in contrast to boy infants in some states in India.

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao. Child sex ratio is defined as number of female children per 1000 male children. This ratio declined from 927 in 2011 to 919 in 2011 with Arunachal Pradesh leading the figure at 972 and Haryana being the tail ender with the ratio as low as 834.

To address the issue of declining sex ratio Prime Minister of India launched **Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP)** initiative on 22nd January 2015 at Panipat, Haryana.

This initiative aims at saving the girl child on one hand and educating her on the second. There are multiple objectives behind this viz empowerment of girls and women, prevention of child marriage and dowry deaths etc. All this will eventually lead to reduced physical and mental torture.

This initiative has been widely advertised as you find this slogan written on the rear side of all trucks, tempos, buses and even printed on letter pads. The initiative has been very fruitful as the awareness and commitment levels have tremendously improved.

Another objective of the scheme is the prevention of child marriage and the safety of girl children from related physical and mental harassment along with domestic violence. To encourage financial security for the girl child a savings scheme known as the **Sukanya Samridhi Account (SSA)** has also been unveiled under the BBBP scheme. Family can open an SSA in any Indian Bank or Post office in the name of the girl child if they have a girl child below 10 years of age. The account remains exempted under the Act 1961 u/s 80C and will remain completely tax-free. Interest rate is 8.1% and withdrawal is only allowed for the girl child when girl child attains age of 18 years. The maximum deposit limit is Rs. **1.50 lakh per annum.**

The Beti Bachao Beti Padhao initiative is very fruitful as level of awareness among the people is increasing. The success of this scheme has added tremendously to the economic growth of the country. This is due to the fact that India cannot afford to have a large part of its population remain neglected. Child sex ratio also has improved in various states, including Haryana, Gujarat and Uttarakhand.

The **Economic Survey 2019** has now proposed a change in the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) scheme to be labeled as BADLAV (Beti Aapki Dhan Lakshmi Aur Vijay Lakshmi).

The second slogan **“Each one Teach one” (EOTO)** was originated in the United States. It is an African proverb as during the time of slavery, the Africans were denied education. The aim was that when someone learned to read or write, it became his or her responsibility to teach someone else. It really gave rich dividends world over.

In India, a development organisation called EOTO Charitable Foundation was founded in the year 1983 with the goal of giving opportunity to the disadvantaged children in both rural and urban areas. There are many more such organisations working in the same direction.

WE in our own family of Air Force Association have one member, **Mrs Anita Tawade** resident of Air Force Association Senior Citizens' Home who has recently started contributing towards the above slogans with a very humble beginning by sponsoring education (School fee, books, stationary, uniform and other allied expenses) of two girls; both children of domestic helps and both being brought up by single parent. It has brought lot of cheers on the faces of both the mothers and both the girls. Mrs Tawade is willing to sponsor more similar cases. She can be reached at **Mobile-9911682794**. More volunteers from the AFA family may add to the humble beginning.

Another problem at hand is the changing climate. We all experienced temperature in the range of 50° C this summer. A humble contribution by each one by planting trees will surely bring some relief in the years to come. So the next slogan should be **“HAR MANUKH LAGAYE EK RUKH”.**

VETERANS: BE CYBER SAFE BY AVM (DR) DEVESH VATSA VSM (Retd)



We fall prey to un-solicited invites/calls because we are human beings and have our weaknesses. Scammers try to exploit this human weakness (greed, urgency, fear, intimidation etc.) on one pretext or the other using various tactics / tools /

platforms / media and succeed.

Even if the success rate is low, sheer population size makes it a profitable business for them. The main motive of all these scams is to commit financial fraud and steal Personally Identifiable Information (PII)/ Sensitive Information (SI).

SOME OF THE RECENT TRENDS/TACTICS USED BY SCAMMERS ARE GIVEN BELOW:-

(a) **Dot Scams:** Cyber criminals posing as DoT officials claim that your Aadhaar has been misused and ask money to set things right.

(b) **Honey Trap Scam:** Scammers create fake profiles on social media or dating sites, gaining your trust before asking for sensitive details or cash under the garb of false pretences. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is being used to Deepfake, wherein contents audio and video being shown are fake i.e. artificially generated.

(c) **Income Tax Refund Scam:** Fraudulent messages are sent to individuals making them believe that a genuine Income Tax Refund message has been received from the Income Tax Department and individuals are cheated.

(d) **ORGANIZED ECONOMIC SCAMS:** This is cocktail of intimidation, blackmail, extortion, and digital arrest wherein cyber-criminals pose as police or other law enforcing agencies to scare/trap individuals into some fake crime.

(e) **MATRIMONY SCAM:** These scams typically occur on online dating platforms, matrimonial websites, or social media and involve posting of Fake Profiles, Emotional manipulation; financial requests, frauds by marriage Bureau etc.

BEST PRACTICES TO AVOID SCAMS:

(a) **Don't fear threatening calls or e-mails:**

Ask question for their authenticity and ask to

share the verbal information via e-mail. E-mail is proof documentary evidence.

(b) **Avoid financial Transaction:** Never send money or financial information to someone you haven't met in person, regardless of the circumstances.

(c) **Verify Identities:** Independently verify the identity of any person or organization contacting you before engaging in any financial transactions. Make video call to confirm the person's identity.

(d) **Avoid Immediate Actions:** Do not rush into making financial decisions or transactions, especially if pressurized.

(e) **Use Secure Payment Methods:** Use secure and traceable payment methods such as credit cards rather than wire transfers, QR Codes or gift cards.

(f) **Verify Emergency Situations:** Independently verify any claims of emergencies or urgent situations before sending money.

(g) **Avoid Upfront Payment for Promised Services:** Be wary of paying for services upfront, especially if the deal seems too good to be true.

(h) **Shop on Reputable Sites:** Only make purchases from reputable and secure websites.

(j) **Protect Personal Information:** Do not share personal information such as Aadhaar Card, PAN Card, Bank Account Details, Credit Card Numbers etc. unless necessary and to trusted entities only.

HELP PREVENT CYBER CRIME: Veterans are requested to report cyber frauds to agencies below so as to put some check to cyber crimes against innocent citizens:-

(a) Complaints can be reported through helpline number 1930.

(b) Or on National Cybercrime Reporting Portal (<https://cybercrime.gov.in>)

(c) Or on Sanchar Saathi [HTTPS:// sanchar Saathi.gov.in](https://sancharSaathi.gov.in)

Author can be contacted at Mob No.

9418444888 Mail ID devesh.vatsa@dsci.in.



GUKESH DOMMARAJU



Gukesh Dommaraju is an Indian chess grandmaster, a chess prodigy. He is the third-youngest Grandmaster in history, the third-youngest to reach chess rating of 2700, the youngest winner of the FIDE ("Federation International des Echecs – also known as the World Chess Federation.)

CANDIDATE'S TOURNAMENT: Gukesh won the 2024 CANDIDATE'S Tournament. This tournament is held to decide the challenger to challenge the reigning world chess champion. Gukesh has now won CANDIDATE'S tournament and earned the right to challenge the reigning world champion DING LIREN in the world title clash scheduled to begin in late November this year.

He is the second Indian after Vishwanathan Anand to do so.

Gukesh was born into a Telugu family on 29 May 2006 in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. His parents hail from the Godavari delta region of Andhra Pradesh. His father, Dr. Rajinikanth, is an ear, nose and throat surgeon, and his mother, Dr. Padma, is a microbiologist. He learned to play chess at the age of seven.

*We are proud of you Gukesh. All the Best for your future endeavors.
You have the support of 140 Crore Indians.*

VETERAN SGT DUPED OF RS 41 LAC

A 64 year old veteran from Kerala received a WhatsApp message on 25 April 2024, from a stranger who promised him huge profits for investing in online trading. Not realizing that this could be a case of cyber fraud, the veteran transferred Rs. 41,34,112 to multiple bank accounts in several installments in April and May 24. The stranger sent him online links showing huge profits for every investment. However, the veteran was not able to withdraw the amount when he wanted to, after which he asked the investor to return his investments.

He realised that he had been cheated when he was asked to invest more money to get his money back. He accordingly reported the case to Police. City cybercrime police have registered a case against the fraudsters for cheating under

section 66 of the Information Technology Act. Further investigations are on.

CAUTION

- Don't get lured by such offers.
- Must consult your family & friends before making such investments.
- Never click on an unknown link.
- Never share your OTP with anyone.
- Keep your Credit / Debit Cards under safe custody.
- Share such experience with others so that it acts as a caution for others.

- *Earth revolves around the Sun at a rate of about 67,000 miles per hour (107,000 km/hr or nearly 30 km/Second. At the same time, Earth rotates around its own axis at about 1,000 miles per hour (444 meters/Second or 1,600 km/hr).*
- *The Sun is over 4.5 billion years old. Temperature on the surface of the Sun is 5,973°C and temperature at CORE of SUN is 15,000,000°C.*

AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION (HEAD/BRANCH OFFICE)

Branch	Tele/Fax	Address & E-mail of Branch	Nearest AF Unit
AFA HEAD OFFICE	011-23015762 9560276648	Air Force Station Race Course Camp, New Delhi-110003 afaheadoffice@gmail.com	AFND
AP & TELANGANA	Gp Capt PR Prasad (Retd) 9868818850, 040-27757020 / 27753500 Extn-283	C/O AF Station Begumpet, Bowenpally, Secunderabad – 500011 afa.andhra@gmail.com	AFS Begumpet
BIHAR	Sqn Ldr Bhuvneshwar Singh(Retd) 9470794717 / 8757461121	C/o Mother India Academy, Ganga Nagar, Ashiana Digha Road, Patna - 800025, afa.bihar@gmail.com	
GOA	AVM Sunil Nanodkar AVSMVM VSM(Retd) 70429 63355 Staff - 8698958101	Plot no. 217, Defence Colony (near NEXA workshop) Alto Porvorim, Bardez, Goa - 403521, afa.goaa@gmail.com	
GUJARAT	Air Mshl PK Desai PVSM AVSM VSM (Retd) 9898574245,9979049967 Tel No. 0124-2572999	C/O 2 AFSR, Old SMSO Office, Air Force Campus, Opp - Sagar Bhawan, Sector - 9, GandhiNagar - 382009, afa.gujarat@gmail.com	
HARYANA	AVM Sanjay Agarwal VSM (Retd) 8447527662	C/O 54 ASP, AF Stn Gurgaon, Gurgaon - 122001, afa.haryana@gmail.com	AF Stn Gurgaon
JAMMU & KASHMIR	Air Cmde Ravinder Sharma VSM(Retd) 9717421545 rash1301@rediffmail.com	Air Force Station Satwari, Jammu Cantt - 180003, Afajammu23@gmail.com	AF Stn Satwari
JHARKHAND	Air Cmde AK Adhikari VSM(Retd) 9430702001 / 9199269331	H1 - 204, Harmu Housing Colony, Ranchi - 834002, afa.jharkhand@gmail.com	
KARNATAKA	Air Mshl HB Rajaram PVSM AVSM VSM(Retd) 8884860001	HQ Training Command, JC Nagar Post, Mekhri Circle, Hebbal, Bangalore – 560006 afakarnataka@gmail.com afabengaluru@gmail.com	HQ Training Command
KERALA	Wg Cdr ARS Iye(Retd) 9495662337	C/O HQ SAC (U), AF Akkulam, Thiruvananthapuram - 695031, afa.kerala@gmail.com	HQ SAC (U), AF
LUCKNOW	Air Mshl Amit Tiwari PVSM AVSM VM Mob No. 8800868325	25 Shaym Nagar Picnic Spot Road, Khuram Nagar Lucknow - 226022 secretaryafalucknow@gmail.com	
MADHYA PRADESH	AVM PK Shrivastava VSM (Retd) 7022530889	C/O 2 MP Air NCC, 21 B Professors' Colony, Near Jain Mandir, Bhopal - 462022, afabhopal2022@gmail.com	C/O 2 MP Air NCC
MAHARASHTRA	Gp Capt SV Phatak(Retd) 020 - 26442344 (R), 020 – 26840442Extn - 7867, 9921603611	C/O Advance HQ SWAC, IAF Pune – 411001 afamaha24@gmail.com	Adv HQ SWAC, IAF
NOIDA	Gp Capt Seraj Mehdi(Retd) 9718671355 / 9458787574 gp.capt.mehdi@gmail.com	JVSAS Complex, Sector -21, Jalvayu Vihar, Noida - 201301 (UP), afa.noida@gmail.com	28 WG, C/o AFA Hindan
NORTHERN ZONE	Air Mshl Sukhchain Singh AVSM VSM(Retd) 9560668228	12 Wg AF C/O Air Force Station Chandigarh -160003 afa.nzb@gmail.com	12 WG, AF
NORTH EASTERN ZONE	AVM Sanjib Bordoloi AVSM(Retd) 8800977022	C/O RJ Junior College Dispur - Basistha Road, Guwahati - 781028, afa.nezone@gmail.com	Air Force Stn Guwahati
ODISHA	Gp Capt J Brahma(Retd) Ph.: 0674 - 2434233, 09861113414	AFA Odisha FLAT 806, Tower 2, ROYAL Lagoon Aptt. Nandan Kanan Road, Raghunathpur, Bhubaneswar, Odisha- 751024 airforceassociation.orissa@gmail.com	
RAJASTHAN	Wg Cdr MC Mehta (Retd) Ph.: 0291-2671971 (O) Extn - 2520, 0291-2430038 (R) 9829508038	Station Medicare Centre, Air Force Station, Jodhpur - 342011, afa.rajasthan@gmail.com	32 WG, AF
TAMIL NADU	Air Mshl S Varthaman(Retd) PVSM AVSM VM VSM, Ph.: 044-22392546, 9962911952	C/O 413 Air Force Station Tambaram, Chennai - 600046, afatamilnadu@gmail.com , Ph.:044-22290396	Air Force Stn Tambaram
UTTAR PRADESH	Gp Capt RK Yadav VSM(Retd) 9198646495	Main Guard Room Building, Air Force Stn, Chakeri, Kanpur - 208008, afa.kanpur@gmail.com	Air Force Stn Chakeri
UTTARAKHAND	Air Cmde Amul Kapoor VM(Retd) amul.kapoor@gmail.com , 9412992335	B-242, Lane 50, Sector-4, Cariappa Marg, Defence Colony, Dehradun - 248012, afaukindia@gmail.com	
WEST BENGAL	Gp Capt KK Kundu (Retd) Ph.: 033 - 24750066, 8135853023	Integrated Mess Complex, 1st Floor, Air Force Camp Ballygunge Circular Road, Kolkata - 700019, afawbb@gmail.com	Adv HQ EAC, IAF
AUSTRALIA	Gp Capt VK Vidyadhar (Retd) Mob- 02-97864649	178 Eagleview Road, Minto, NSW 2566, Australia. vvitya42@gmail.com	



OFFICE BEARERS OF AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION

President:	Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhadauria PVSM AVSM VM (Retd)	
Sr Vice President:	Air Marshal Jagjeet Singh PVSM VSM (Retd)	9910948444
Vice President:	Air Vice Marshal Amit Tyagi VSM (Retd)	8800998272
AFA Branches President:	(For details kindly see page 21)	
Secretary:	Gp Capt A Kapur (Retd)	7982805764
Treasurer:	Gp Capt V Sareen (Retd)	8800630014
Jt Secretary	HFL NK Chhabra	9560276648

<u>NOMINATED MEMBERS</u>		<u>ELECTED MEMBERS</u>	
Gp Capt SM Puri VM (Retd)	: 9810264835	Gp Capt RK Padhi (Retd)	: 9405827717
Gp Capt Ashok Sethi (Retd)	: 9810044033	Gp Capt Sanjay Sirohi (Retd)	: 9478547317
Mrs Mamta Arora	: 9810320120	Wg Cdr HK Nagpal (Retd)	: 9810018578
HFO RJ Singh(Retd)	: 9650784077	HFO SC Yadav (Retd)	: 9354206963
Sgt Shyam Mourya (Retd)	: 8826115016	MWO Yashpal (Retd)	: 9935398606
Mrs Indra B Jhala	: 9313347609		

OTHER INCUMBENTS: AFA HEAD OFFICE

CEO, Senior Citizens' Home	Air Cmde Gulshan Rai VSM (Retd)	8130678881
EO, Senior Citizens' Home	Sqn Ldr Mange Ram (Retd)	7290003424
Manager Senior Citizens' Home	HFO Lal Chand (Retd)	8130270263
Editor, Eagle's Eye	Gp Capt VK Kapur VSM (Retd)	9910643258
Web Administrator	Wg Cdr Bharat Bhushan (Retd)	9810182974
Legal Advisers	Gp Capt KS Bhati (Retd)	9811168948
	Air Cmde I J Singh (Retd)	9810324738
	Wg Cdr Ajit Kakkar (Retd)	9958006409

MARSHAL OF THE AIR FORCE & MRS. ARJAN SINGH TRUST

Manager Trust	Gp Capt V Sareen (Retd)	8800630014
WO I/C Trust	WO NK Pandey	9329860244

GOVERNING COUNCIL MEETING (15 JULY 24): AFA mandates to hold two meetings of Governing Council Members every year. For the Financial Year 2023-24, the first meeting was held on 15 Jul 24. It was duly attended by all the Governing Council members under the chairmanship of President AFA, Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhaduaria PVSM AVSM VM (Retd). The President mentioned that his tenure as President AFA shall end on 30 September 2024. He thanked all the members for their active participation towards achievement of AFA objectives.

CYBER FRAUD: A Retd officer in Pune was swindled of Rs 45 lakh by cyber criminals-posing as executives of a phone company and later as Mumbai police officers. The fraudsters had allegedly threatened the former IAF officer with being arrested in human trafficking and pp money laundering cases.

THERE ARE LIMITS TO SELF INDULGENCE, NONE TO SELF RESTRAINT - MAHATMA GANDHI



HIGHLIGHTS EXERCISE GAGAN SHAKTI

Military exercises are conducted to explore the effects of warfare or to test tactics and strategies without actual combat. They also ensure the combat readiness of garrisoned or deployable forces prior to deployment from a home base. Towards the same objective Indian Air Force conducted **Exercise Gagan Shakti**.

The main aim of this exercise was to evaluate the integrated war-fighting strategies and tactics in collaboration with the Indian Army and the Indian Navy and also to showcase jointness and integration in future wars. This exercise was undertaken by IAF from 01 April 2024 to 10 April 24. It aimed to showcase its air dominance over the entire extended area of the **Indian Ocean Region (IOR)** and to check its readiness for threats of conflicts on two fronts.

To conduct this exercise, the IAF mobilized more than 1,100 combat, transport and rotary wing (helicopter) aircraft. A large number of personnel were also mobilized from their peace time locations to their operational sites.

All terrain operations were conducted with specific focus on key areas like aerial combat, air to surface combat, paratrooper assault and medical evacuation.

Last such drill was carried out in 2018, where the IAF conducted over 11,000 sorties to gear up for a hypothetical two-front conflict scenario.

The Indian Army helped the Air Force get ready for the exercise, working with the Indian Railways to help move air force personnel and their ammunition across India to their ops locations. This huge operation is all about making sure that the IAF's plans for moving troops and supplies by train — the **Operational Rail Mobilization Plan (ORMP)** — works as it should in actual operations. Meanwhile, the Navy got its ships ready to take part in the drills.

Rafale fighter jets, the Prachand helicopters and the S-400 air defence system were put into action during this exercise for the first time. At the same time, the IAF also marked the last participation of the MiG-21 fighter aircraft.

The efficiency of **Emergency Landing Facilities (ELF)** in Kashmir valley and on Lucknow - Agra expressway in UP was also checked during the exercise.

IAF deployed IL-76 aircraft housing an Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS), as well as an anti-missile system. Overall this was a very successful exercise with too many takeaway.

DONATION LIST (23 FEB 24 - 15 AUG 24)

Date of Donation	Rank	Name	Amount
22-02-2024	WG CDR	YOGESH SACHDEV	10,000.00
23-02-2024	JWO	GURPRASHAD BHATIA	50,000.00
23-02-2024		MRS ASHA DAHIYA	5,00,000.00
19-03-2024	AIR CMDE	SS BHATTI	40,000.00
19-03-2024	WG CDR	CS GREWAL	30,000.00
19-03-2024	WG CDR	HK RAI	21,000.00
19-03-2024		MR BIKRAMJIT SINGH	10,000.00
22-03-2024	JWO	JAYA PRAKASH	5,000.00
26-03-2024	GP CAPT	KAMAL KUMAR JOTWANI	10,000.00
04-04-2024	Sgt	NARINDER SINGH	5,000.00
15-04-2024	Wg Cdr	SC PANDEY	5,00,000.00
02-05-2024	WO	M BALAKRISHNAN	10,000.00
17-05-2024	Wg Cdr	SUNDER	10,000.00
05-06-2024	Sqn Ldr	RK AGRAWAL	51,000.00
10-06-2024	Wg Cdr	KS JAIJEE	30,000.00
09-08-2024		SMT SAVITA KHOSLA	21,000.00



OBITUARY LIST

SI No	Ser No.	Rank	Name	Contact No.	SI No	Ser No.	Rank	Name	Contact No.
1	10535	Sqn Ldr	VN James	9901966090	41	740919	Sgt	PK Chaudhury	8732961376
2	705875	Sgt	SK Sharma	9990829890	42	8933	Air Cmde	PK Das	9900515615
3	668735	JWO	SN Bhagat	9162708932	43	264012	Cpl	G Balasubramaniam	9186649829
4	12791	Air Cmde	V Govind Raj	9840979735	44	17609	Sqn Ldr	MS Baby	9820712436
5	655065	Sgt	Sundarraaj JB	8122724857	45	740434	Sgt	S Srinivasan	9958797927
6	610585	MWO	Ramayan Rai	9810056194	46	6051	Air Mshl	K Rai	9910278870
7	14654	Flt Lt	M Raj Carvalho	Not available	47	616904	Sgt	Michael Gearge	7356356119
8	19865	Gp Capt	Sanjay Dhankhar	9640047000	48	637114	HFO	Muneshwar	9545420352
9	8384	AVM	AV Pethia	9761777959	49	701217	WO	OP Yadav	9621387335
10	8964	Wg Cdr	S Bhatia	9316133207	50	214516	Sgt	AG Cecil Rozario	9840136146
11	282670	MWO	S Ram	9350571955	51	6758	Sqn Ldr	PK Purushe	9892398899
12	606296	Sgt	Moideenkutty KP	8714145445	52	212564	Sgt	TA Singara Rayan	Not available
13	12759	Air Cmde	RK Bhalla	9099055635	53	769394	WO	MK Dhudasia	9913366025
14	674138	JWO	I Dev	9880370496	54	645719	Sgt	KC Vargheese	8807832006
15	219061	HFO	S Shahabudeen	9790895686	55	239440	WO	VV George	Not available
16	637209	HFO	Ganesh Kr Garg	9953598901	56	288005	Cpl	GD Rajapurkar	Not available
17	239674	JWO	K Durai Raj	9382780536	57	647086	Sgt	GK Das	9933181621
18	683963	JWO	D Rajarajan	9080683308	58	750160	WO	MK Sahoo	9972857701
19	243829	MWO	RC Kapoor	Not available	59	9928	Gp Capt	GK Nigam	2765588
20	294325	MWO	RD Pal	Not available	60	5675	Gp Capt	OK Chhabra	9818108252
21	609888	HFL	SC Apata	9900721131	61	223594	Sgt	KK Pillai	7011710593
22	683302	Sgt	Jai Bhagwan	9991056840	62	255104	HFO	R Krishnan	Not available
23	735406	Sgt	D Mazumdar	9433243535	63	17689	Gp Capt	SK Sharma	8506088862
24	641503	MWO	Bir Many Prasad	9818434578	64	9550	Wg Cdr	B Singh	9888599070
25	10040	Wg Cdr	B Banerjee	9871140376	65	669571	JWO	SK Patnaik	7894870599
26	225522	JWO	Chandrasekharan	9562816389	66	230457	HFO	SK Awasthi	Not available
27	278214	Cpl	VS Pillai	9567362757	67	269201	MWO	RB Singh	Not available
28	240761	MWO	ML Yadav	9450509233	68	737332	Sgt	K Venkeswarulu	Not available
29	4319	Wg Cdr	MV Padhmanabhan	Not available	69	638806	WO	Sukhram	Not available
30	268184	Sgt	S Duriswamy	9840627045	70	238193	Sgt	MV Balan	9447642187
31	667336	MWO	Ramchandra BK	9823634192	71	736271	Sgt	S Muthu Kumar	Not available
32	4731	Wg Cdr	CK Bali	Not available	72	8865	Wg Cdr	Karnail Singh	9910046252
33	9507	Wg Cdr	SN Deshpande	9420612278	73	13972	Gp Capt	P Gurumohan	9849746948
34	621174	JWO	Gopal Jee Lal	0265-26335422	74	616189	HFO	KK Kesavan Kutty	9656992243
35	616566	Sgt	Md Noorul Huda		75	606294	Sgt	Md Kutty PV	
36		Cpl	Rao	9437095578	76	736791	Sgt	KN Singh	8506040501
37		MWO	Phatak	9205463076	77	4805	Air Mshl	D Keelor	8130410501
38	4009	Air Mshl	ML Sethi	011-41553621	78		Wg Cdr	US Prabhakar	9849804322
39	4494	Air Mshl	MS Bawa	8826747082	79	5120	Air Mshl	RS Bedi	9599904601
40	662548	MWO	H Chandra	9430946985					

IF YOU CRY BECAUSE THE SUN HAS GONE OUT OF YOUR LIFE, YOUR TEARS WILL PREVENT YOU FROM SEEING THE STARS – NOBLE LAUREATE RABINDRANATH TAGORE.



LIGHT COMBAT AIRCRAFT.... A GREAT EFFORT TOWARDS ATMANIRBHARTA BY AIR CMDE KI RAVI, AVSM VSM (Retd)



Today we have two operational squadrons in the Indian Air Force and we are hungry for more.

The LCA Mk1 version was initially delivered in its Initial Operational Clearance (IOC)

configuration and then later in its Final Operational Clearance (FOC) configuration. Deliveries continue from the stables of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited even today.

As is with any aeronautical aircraft programme across the world, we too have moved to the development of a newer version, or rather an Upgrade called the LCA Mk 1A and Mk 2 which are presently undergoing trials of prototype version. These advanced versions will have: -

- Greater Maintainability resulting in lesser operational down time.
- An improved Electronic Warfare Suite.
- Enhancement to Autopilot and Fly-by-wire systems permitting greater flexibility.
- Higher and efficient safety systems for both pilot and ground safety.
- Significant enhancements to weapon systems in addition to the existing fleet of weapons.

As we are aware, the IAF is well short of the total number of squadrons required for a two front situation. This has resulted in the IAF giving go ahead to DRDO for the LCA Mk 2 aircraft (**now it will be Medium Combat Aircraft**). This design has already completed its critical design review and is on the production drawing board for its prototype.

- The Mk 2 will have a more enhanced thrust engine to cater for additional loads.
- An entirely new indigenous electronic warfare suite from Indian DRDO stables.
- A new aircraft design with full Delta wing and Canards.
- New Integrated Health and Monitoring systems for better Prognostic Maintenance.
- New class of weapons both indigenous and

imported to help provide the desired firepower.

In terms of technology we should be proud that this aircraft will finally see our own AESA radar, the Uttam developed by DRDO. It will also have key Electronic Warfare Systems most of which would be developed by DRDO, including the SDR (Software Defined Radio). The aircraft would be compatible to accommodate most of the weapon systems, especially the indigenous ones and with a take-off weight in the region of 17500 kgs; the MCA is expected to be a formidable weapon comparable to its global competitors.

Significant work has been done on improving the maintainability of the aircraft in terms of its MTBF, MTTR and MMH/FH. This is an ongoing improvement which would develop over time and future upgrades. What is critical is the OPTRS timings required by the User for configuration changes during operations and this has to be time tested to enable a high sortie generation. A 75% serviceability of the fleet is expected.

What seems to be the bottleneck as on date is non availability of indigenous aero engine. We all must have read in open regime about the apprehension in terms of availability of the promised GE F 414 INS6 engines from the USA. The smooth logistics for initial supplies followed by setting up of overhaul facilities at HAL is going to be the KRA for this programme. At the same time Indian authorities need to work out alternative measures for the same.

In the years to come, with the new Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft under discussion, I am sure we would do extremely well to overcome the cords attached with import and provide a sound and professional eco system in the Combat Aircraft Field.

{The author had been part of the LCA Programme for five years in both Project Monitoring and Design and Development of the LCA Mk 1 and the LCA Mk 2 respectively. The purpose was to keep the article non-technical as far as possible and provide an overview.}



AVM HARJINDER SINGH EARNS WINGS AT THE AGE OF FORTY ONE



Born in Hoshiarpur (Punjab) in 1909, **Harjinder Singh** completed his engineering studies at the Maclagan Engineering College, Lahore (Punjab Engineering College, PEC, Chandigarh, today).

Given his engineering background, Harjinder Singh could have joined at a higher level in the IAF but he chose to join at the lowest rank in the newly formed service. He worked his way up to become the first Indian IAF Corporal, the first Indian Sergeant, and the first Indian Warrant Officer. He was commissioned as an officer in 1942 after his return from the first Burma air operations where, as a Warrant Officer-in-charge of the ground crew, he earned immense praise from the **late Wing Commander K K Majumdar**, who was then commanding No 1 IAF Squadron.

While commanding one of the most important and largest IAF stations in 1948, the 1 Base Repair Depot at Kanpur, where most of the

operational and trainer aircraft used by the IAF were maintained, Harjinder Singh devoted every minute of his time, after attending to his office duties, to complete his training as a full-fledged service pilot. On 15 April 1950 Harjinder Singh, then a 41 year old Group Captain, lined up along with young officers roughly half his age and received his 'Wings' from the then **Commander-in-Chief of the IAF, Air Marshal (later Air Chief Marshal) Ronald Ivelaw-Chapman**.

The commissioning and wing-presentation parade was held at the No 1 Air Force Academy, which was based at Ambala. Later Harjinder Singh sahib was appointed as Air Officer Commanding Maintenance Command in 1955 when that Command was formed. On promotion to the rank of Air Vice Marshal, he was designated as the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Maintenance Command after the command was upgraded.

A unique personality, he is unparalleled in his professional achievements as an engineer, a pilot and aircraft designer. An aircraft designed by AVM Harjinder Singh during his tenure as CO 1BRD known as Kanpur-1 was gifted by AVM Harjinder Singh to PEC in 1967. Today, it is housed at the IAF Heritage Centre in Chandigarh.

HUMOUR IN AVIATION

After every flight, UPS pilots fill out a form, called a "gripe sheet" which tells the mechanics about the problems with the aircraft. The mechanics correct the problems; document their repairs on the form, then the pilots review the gripe sheets before the next flight.

Never let it be said that ground crew lack a sense of humor. Here are actual maintenance complaints submitted by UPS pilots ("P") and solutions recorded ("S") by maintenance engineers:

- P: Left inside main tyre almost needs replacement.
- S: Almost replaced left inside main tyre
- P: Test flight OK, except auto-land very rough
- S: Auto-land not installed on this aircraft.
- P: Something loose in cockpit
- S: Something tightened in cockpit

- P: Dead bugs on windshield
- S: Live bugs on back-order
- P: Autopilot in altitude-hold mode produces a 200 feet per minute descent
- S: Cannot reproduce problem on ground
- P: Evidence of leak on right main landing gear
- S: Evidence removed
- P: DME volume unbelievably loud
- S: DME volume set to more believable level
- P: Friction locks cause throttle levers to stick
- S: That's what friction locks are for
- P: IFF inoperative in OFF mode
- S: IFF always inoperative in OFF mode
- P: Suspected crack in windshield
- S: Suspect you're right
- P: Number 3 engine missing
- S: Engine found on right wing after brief search



LEGAL RIGHTS OF SENIOR CITIZENS



The Senior and Super Senior Citizens by virtue of their age and physical state are entitled to certain legal rights which are enshrined in the Constitution of India. Due to ignorance and non familiarity of these provisions, it is observed that the

Senior Citizens often find themselves at the receiving end in their ripe age. Despite of necessary legal provisions, large number of Senior Citizens face financial, medical and most importantly emotional trauma. Some of the legal rights of Senior Citizens which are enshrined in the Constitution of India are enumerated in the succeeding paragraphs.

National Policy on Older Persons 1999 (NPOP). The policy aims to promote health, safety, social security and well being of Senior Citizens in India and strengthen their legitimate place in the society and help them to lead a dignified life.

Article 41. As per this article, the State shall, within the limits of its economic capacity and development, make effective provision for securing the right to work, to education and to public assistance in cases of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement.

Article 46. This article deals with promotion of educational and economic interests of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other weaker sections to protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation.

The Hindu Adaption and Maintenance Act 1956 Section 20. The provision of maintenance of parents under the Hindu personal law indicates that the children both son and daughter (including daughter in law) are obligated to provide maintenance if parents are unable to maintain themselves by any means. Under provisions of this section, the parents are to apply for seeking maintenance under the provision of the Code of Criminal Procedures, 1973 to a First Class Magistrate. Similarly the Muslim and Christian personal law provides relief to the Senior Citizens. In case if neither of the personal law provides remedy, the Senior Citizen can apply under Section 125 CrPc.

Section 125(d) CrPc. Order for maintenance of wife, children and parents. Under this section, the Court can issue an order for payment of interim maintenance during the

pendency of proceedings and such orders shall be disposed of within sixty days from the date of service of notice on the opposite side.

Maintenance & Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act 2007

(a) Maintenance includes provision for food, clothing, residence, medical attendance and treatment. The Tribunal can also order children/relative to pay monthly allowance as maintenance; maximum amount being Rs. 10,000/- per month.

(b) **Section 27.** No Civil Court shall have jurisdiction in respect of any matter to which any provision of this Act applies and no injunction shall be granted by any Civil Court in respect of anything which is done or intended to be done by or under this Act.

Some Dos and Don'ts. Having learnt the Legal Provisions to give a dignified life in the ripe age of the Senior Citizen, there are certain important points to be actioned to ensure smoother life of the Senior Citizens. Some of the Dos and Don'ts are as follows:-

(a) **Dos.**

(i) Execute a registered Will during your good years of life which clearly brings out your wishes.

(ii) Appoint a custodian of Will who will share the details of the Will on demise of the executors.

(iii) Keep the Will securely and choose relatively young persons as the witness of the Will.

(b) **Don't.** Do not transfer property or gift the property both movable as well as immovable during your life time.

The above information has been shared to educate the veterans on their legal rights. However, the veterans are advised to contact the AFA HO and / or their respective Branch for assistance whenever in distress. We have legal advisors also available. They can also be approached for rendering legal advice if required.

Air Mshl Shashikar Chaudhary PVSM AVSM VSM (Retd) was commissioned on 30 Aug 1984 in IAF. He superannuated as AOC-in-C MC in May 2022. Mob-9818188424, mail Id- Shashikarchoudhary@gmail.com



WHY SHOULD I BECOME AFA MEMBER

BY GP CAPT ASHUTOSH KAPUR (RET'D) SECRETARY AFA HO



Very often we are encountered by the following questions from the serving and retired Air Veterans.

- (a) Why should I take membership of AFA?
- (b) What will be the gains and benefits to me or my family from it?

A small write up which follows will give you an insight into the AFA & its activities.

It is a welfare organization for the Air Veterans and their families. It was established in the year 1980 and has been duly recognized by the MoD. We have approximately one lakh members and 6770 spouse members.

Some of the welfare activities are listed below:-

- (a) Scholarships for wards of Air Warriors, NCs (E), DSC personnel & Veterans.
- (b) Accommodation for its members at Senior Citizens' Home at Tughlakabad.
- (c) Publication of its biannual magazine AFA News (Eagles Eye).
- (d) Ex-gratia payment of Rs. 7,500/- to the spouse / NoK on demise of veteran member.
- (e) Shagun for the wedding of daughters of spouse members.
- (f) Help and support its members to fight against cancer, other serious diseases by providing grants and financial support in the wake of natural calamities
- (g) Financial support of up to Rs. one lakh to serving / retired air warriors / NCs(E) and DSC personnel for IVF treatment.

In addition to the above, the members get support from Marshal of the Air Force & Mrs. Arjan Singh Trust in the form of grants and financial assistance through various welfare schemes for needy Air Veterans, widows and dependent family members. Some of them are listed below:-

- (a) Medical treatment for veterans & dependents.
- (b) Grant for Higher Education of children.
- (c) Shagun for the Marriage of daughters of widows and Air Veterans not getting pension.
- (d) Financial assistance to Air veterans in financial distress or for meeting any other contingency as deemed fit by the Trust.
- (e) Various Scholarships for students.
- (f) One-time sports achievements awards to sportsmen at National / Junior National / State & Zonal level.

In addition to all above AFA gives you an opportunity to remain connected to IAF, "The Glorious Service" which provided lifelong support to you and your family by its vast network spread all over the country and abroad with its 22 branches and 41 chapters. Eligibility criteria and procedure to take membership is given below:-

- (a) All retired Officers, Airmen & NCs (E) of IAF and Spouses of deceased Air Veterans can take membership
- (b) Membership form can be downloaded from AFA website (www.afa-india.org) for offline and online submission.

(c) For offline membership, completed form can be submitted / sent by post to AFA HO or to the nearest branch.

(d) Life Membership Fee:-

	Officers		Other Ranks			Widows
Rank	Air Cmde & above	Gp Capt & below	Hony Offrs / MWO/WO/JWO	Sgt & Below	NCs(E)	Widows of Non-AFA Member *
Amount	Rs.5,000/-	Rs.4,000/-	Rs.2,500/-	Rs.2,000/-	Rs.1,000/-	Rs.700/-

Note: Free of cost if husband was already a member of AFA. Free of cost for widows of those air warriors who passed away while still in service.

(e) For any quires, please contact us at phone no. 011-23015762, Mob-7011732270 E-mail-afaheadoffice@gmail.com and website- www.afa-india.org.

Amount of money disbursed by AFA and MAFT of MshI Arjan Singh Trust in the last three financial years is tabulated below. Approximately **Three Hundred Air Warriors, NCs(E), DSC personnel, Veterans & Widows** benefited from the above schemes.

AFA	Scholarship	Grants	Shagun	IVF
2021-22	9,56,000.00	7,20,000.00	--	--
2022-23	13,56,000.00	2,87,000.00	64,000.00	4,20,000.00
2023-24	13,40,500.00	1,63,000.00	--	3,00,000.00
Total	36,52,500.00	11,70,000.00	64,000.00	7,20,000.00

Trust	Scholarship	Grants	Shagun
2021-22	8,87,000.00	12,30,375.00	84,000.00
2022-23	7,35,000.00	13,05,883.00	1,15,00.00
2023-24	10,53,000.00	14,09,982.00	52,000.00
Total	26,75,000.00	39,46,240.00	2,51,000.00

In addition, Rs.30, 31,500/- was disbursed towards Ex-gratia, Rs.6, 40,930/- was spent during the honoring ceremony of OCTO and NONA members.

In the recent past we have been approached by two veterans who had NOT taken up membership of AFA but are in distress now. In one case the veteran's son, who was NOT DEPENDENT, because of age, was suffering from Bone Cancer and in the second case veteran was boarded out on medical ground without any pensionary benefits. Both veterans had not taken up AFA membership. In both the cases a sympathetic view was being taken to help out the individuals financially. However, it has been decided that in future any veteran will be eligible for the welfare scheme only if he had taken membership of AFA within one year of his/her retirement.

There could be reasons like ignorance, poor awareness, proceeding abroad immediate on retirement etc. when a veteran fails to take membership. He/she can still take membership at a later date but shall become eligible for availing benefits of these schemes only after he / she has been a member of AFA for at least TWO Years.

The readers are urged to educate more and more retiring air warriors and veterans to take up MEMBERSHIP by paying ONE TIME NOMINAL FEE and continue to be part of this glorious organisation.

Indian Sweets carry Positive Psychology Messages. It's all about Perspective

1. Jalebi: Your Shape doesn't matter, your nature does. No matter how messed up you look or life is, keeping a sweet tone will always help
2. Rasgulla: No matter how much you are squeezed by circumstances, only sweetness should come out and just remember you will return to your original self as soon as the pressure diminishes!! So Be Resilient even when squeezed

BRANCH ACTIVITIES

North Zone: AGM and GCM was held on 30 Sep 23 and 25 May 24 respectively. Issues related to SPARSH, ECHS, OROP and E-PPO and other specific problems faced by veterans were discussed and deliberated upon.

MADHYA PRADESH: To disseminate information amongst members e-mail and WhatsApp groups have been formed and information on relevant issues is being shared with members through digital media. A handy booklet has been prepared with the help of Zila Sainik Board for all ESMs and their dependents. The same was circulated through WhatsApp group. Data purification, correctness of address, email and contact number are being done on regular basis.

Jharkhand Branch: Apart from other routine activities it undertook the undermentioned unique initiatives:-

Vidyarthi Samman Samaroh An event was held on 14 Jul 24 at Gulab Vatica, Mecon Colony, Ranchi to felicitate and award the children who stood first in both the groups in board examination 2024.

Collection and despatch of Mango seeds on 20 June 24 and 25 July 24 to one NGO, (Gram Samridhi Foundation) who have taken a noble and social project to plant 10 lakh trees through the rural population in the country.

ANDHRA PRADESH & TELANGANA BRANCH: Governing Council meeting was held on 30 Jun 2024. Wg Cdr TJ Reddy, VSM (Retd) handed over the duties of Branch President to Gp Capt PR Prasad (Retd), as approved by AFA President, in the presence of Council members and VP AFA, AVM Amit Tyagi, VSM (Retd). Wg Cdr Reddy briefly recounted the growth of the branch from its inception in Dec 1980. He was associated with the branch (in different positions as Secretary, Vice President and President) from the day of his retirement in Aug 1985 till handing over. After the meeting, VP AFA, AVM Tyagi, accompanied the members and visited the proposed site of Senior Citizens' Home near Shamshabad to examine pros and cons.

West Bengal Branch : Veterans camp for Air Veterans was inaugurated by Air Marshal Jagjeet

Singh, PVSM, VSM, (Retd) Senior Vice President AFA HO at Barrackpore on 04 Aug 24 in presence of 560 veterans. During the Camp, Air Chief Marshal Arup Raha, PVSM, AVSM, VM (Retd); Air Marshal PK Ghosh, AVSM and Gp Capt Devam Vats VM interacted with the veterans and families. The representatives from PCDA led by Ms Sandita Aditya and Air HQ led by Gp Capt Preeti Bahuguna attended the Veterans queries who visited from the adjoining districts.

CELEBRATION OF BARSHOBARAN. A unique celebration having various cultural events in addition to conducting official functions like AGM and AFA Raising Day. Barshobaran (welcoming the New Year) was celebrated with much fanfare at the Buddha Park At AF Camp Ballygunge on 14 April 24 (Poila Baishakh). AVM AR Shendye VM, AOC Adv HQ EAC was the chief guest. The theme was Bangaliana. The members joined the event in their traditional best and presented a rich cultural extravaganza with recitation, songs, instrumental music and dance etc.

Tamil Naidu Branch : Spouse of Veteran Octogenarian Cpl G Vincent, 248363, MLC no. 89723 (D.O.B. 11 Dec 1943) visited TN branch office and intimated that since her husband is not physically mobile, it shall be a great gesture if AFA can honour the veteran at their place. Accordingly, TN Branch volunteers visited the residence of the Octogenarian and handed over the AFA TN memento and flowers, wishing him good health and speedy recovery. The veteran and his family were over overwhelmed by such a gesture.

Exceptional support to air veteran Air Cmde V Govindraj: While holidaying with course mates in Rajasthan, the veteran had a heart attack and breathed his last on 05 March 24. The shattered spouse, Dr. Latha got in touch with AFA, TN Branch immediately. President, TN Branch, in liaison with SWAC made arrangement for the transfer of mortal remains of the Air Cmde from Jodhpur to Chennai in the shortest possible time and the least inconvenience to the veteran's family. Subsequently, his long pending pension issue was also resolved.

Restoration of pension for veteran Cpl SD Vinayagam, 618104, ACH/GD after 32 years was



also achieved with lot of efforts and constant follow up with appropriate authorities from Branch.

Karnataka Branch: *Air Veterans' SPARSH Sahayata Shibir and Documents Verification Mela:* Two Air Veterans' SPARSH Sahayata Shibir and Documents Verification Melas were conducted by AFA (Karnataka Branch) at PC Lal Auditorium HQ TC IAF on 19 & 20 Jan 23 and 2 AFSB Mysore on 10 & 11 Feb 23 to resolve various problems being faced by Air Veterans related to SPARSH and service documents. 320 Air Veterans and families attended the events. Problems found in 255 pensioners' documents and 220 applications were forwarded to SPARSH and DAV on the same day for resolution.

Get together of all members and families was organised on 27 July 24. Air Force Association Merit Scholarship sponsored by AFA (K) was also given to one student each of Class X and Class XII of Air Force School Hebbal. Guest speakers were also invited for the above said function for delivering a lecture on various issues (viz. Representative from SPARSH and Doctors from CHAFB). During this function, two Air Veterans, who have risen to IAS Cadre were also honored.

Haryana Branch: A function for felicitation of Octogenarians and Nonagenarians was held. Total 02 Nonagenarians and 11 were felicitated. Senior Vice President Air Mshl Jagjeet Singh (Retd) and President Haryana Branch handed over the mementos to the veterans. Visit to National War Memorial was organized for members and their spouses on 03 Mar 24. 70 members along with their spouses attended the get together. Ambala chapter also organized a get together where in 60 members actively participated.

UP Branch : Celebrated the Republic day function. GCM were also held on 29 Mar 24 and 02 Jul 24

Bihar Branch: A Picnic was organised along with veterans and their families. AGM and Holi Milan celebrations were also held.

Ghaziabad Chapter. : 25 Anniversary Celebration of Kargil Vijay Diwas was organized at Sai Vatika Kad Hera Colony (near Hindon Air Force Base). Prabhat Pheri was also taken out.

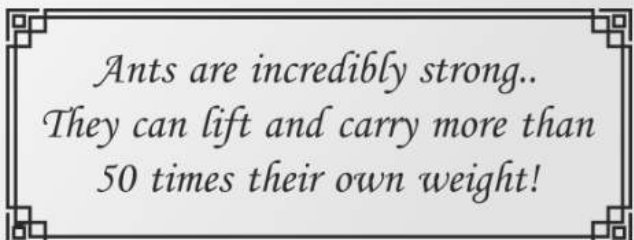
People gathered at Sai Vatika and raised Slogan of "Zindabad" for the soldiers.

Rajasthan Branch: On 27 Mar 24, a function was held at AFA Jodhpur to honour 08 Octogenarian members. During the function welcome to new AOC of 32 Wg, AF was also extended. Branch is rendering all out help to veterans to resolve their various issues pertaining to pensions, medical etc.

NOIDA (BRANCH): Like Previous years, this branch continues to facilitate issue of Life Certificates to Veterans, not only at this office but also by visiting the Residence of Super Seniors & sick Veterans. Life Certificate was issued and arranged for Wg Cdr Poornanand who was admitted in ICU. This was specially appreciated by his son Captain Shaswat (IN) & AOC Hindan. Branch President visited the office of PCDA Prayagraj and met Wg Cdr Shashi Ranjan to resolve issues of mismatching of documents of Veterans at Sparsh Portal. AFA, Noida has taken up the initiative of starting a JAL PIAU at Sector-25 Jalvayu Vihar gate No. -1 for providing drinking water to thirsty pedestrians and workers around Sector 25.

Maharashtra Branch: Activities namely helping Air Veterans and Veer Naris in resolving their pension and other financial problems; Attending Funerals of Air Veterans, Octa-Nonagenarian function, Executive Committee members meeting, AFA Day Celebration followed by AGM, Achievers function, Donation of medical equipment to AFMC Pune were conducted by the branch.

Goa Branch: Branch President visits senior veteran Wg Cdr C Baretto (Retd) age 102 years. His father had the good fortune of looking after Mahatma Gandhi as his personal doctor. Wg Cdr Baretto himself looked after the medical needs of the Governor of Goa.



MITIGATING THE IMPACT OF GLOBAL WARMING

We all have been seeing and hearing about the climatic changes which are taking place such as rising temperatures, unprecedented rains and the associated flood like situations, rising sea water levels etc.

These all needs to be countered so that the ecological balance is maintained. Some steps have been taken in this direction; i.e. planting more and more trees, making use of alternate sources of energy etc.

Towards the same the Indian Govt. chalked out National Solar Mission way back in 2010. The progress was slow initially but now it has gained full momentum. It is an initiative by the Govt. of India and the State Governments to promote solar power in India. Some of the advantages are listed below.

(a) Many of you would have noticed solar panels coming up on the roofs of personal houses. The Govt is giving subsidy for the same. You can generate your own electricity which you can either use it yourself or provide it to the National Grid. In both cases you save money. Solar energy is renewable. It never runs out. It is a neat and clean system. It is reliable. It amounts to saving in electricity bills.

(b) As brought out above Solar energy is available in abundance, it is sustainable, and renewable, making it an ideal source of energy for India. In the recent years, India has made concerted efforts to promote the use of solar energy by developing Solar Parks and installing Solar plants in the nation, with the aim of reducing its dependence on traditional sources of energy and mitigating the impact of climate change. India is propelling itself to achieve 500 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2030.

(c) At the National level Bhadla Solar Park is one such solar power plant located at Bhadla, a remote area in the phalodi tehsil of Phalodi district, in the Thar Desert of Rajasthan. This place has been selected as a suitable site for solar power generation due to its high solar irradiance, low population density and availability of government-owned land. It covers an area of 56 square kilometers and has total installed capacity of 2,245 megawatts (MW), making it the largest solar park in the world as of 2023. The park contributes to India's renewable energy goals and helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions by an estimated 4 million tons per year. This solar park is the part of the India's National Solar Mission, which aims to install 100 gigawatts (GW) of solar power. This will also help India meet its commitments under the Paris Agreement to reduce its carbon emission intensity by 33-35% by 2030. The park has created about 10,000 direct and indirect jobs during construction and operation. It has also improved the quality and reliability of electricity supply in the region.

Those of you who are staying in individual houses, may consider this option. It will involve one time investment but will cut out on your monthly electrical bills. This will also help the nation in cutting out on the use of natural resources which are otherwise used for generating power. The IAF has also started making use of this. Some of the Air Force Stations have installed solar panels in the Technical Area as well as domestic area. Air Force Association Senior Citizens' Home located at Tughlakabad in New Delhi, has installed such panels. They are saving an approximate amount of Rs. 40,000 per month against their monthly electricity bill of Rs. 1.6 lacs.

- Don't walk in front of me... I may not follow, don't walk behind me... I may not lead, Walk beside me... just be my friend.
- Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery, today is a gift of God, which is why we call it the PRESENT.
- For every minute you are angry you lose sixty seconds of happiness.
- I'm not upset that you lied to me, I'm upset that from now on I can't believe you.
- The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.

SQN LDR WAS A BIG MAN THEN!

**The Ajay Vikram Singh Committee (AVSC)
gave us many more Generals. Alas! The Major lost his glory!**



Air Force Station Pune, being the nearest IAF operational base for Bollywood, was a popular location for shooting films based on Air Force life. An anecdote from the 1970s goes as follows.

The director had a genuine doubt. He asked one of my squadron seniors, "A squadron is commanded by a Wing

Commander, and the Wing is commanded by an Air Cmde. Then what do Sqn Ldrs command? The Sqn Ldr smiled and replied, "Well, we command respect"

Until the turn of the century, a Major, and likewise his equivalent, a Sqn Ldr was a big man. Among junior officers in the Air Force, Pilot Officers and Flying Officers were not required to 'Sir' and salute Flight Lieutenants. Therefore, attaining the rank of Sqn Ldr was a big change as one began receiving salutes from a whole lot of squadron boys. Thereon, one remained a Sqn Ldr for many years before consideration for the select rank of Wg Cdr.

The steeply enhanced inductions post 1962 war began showing adverse effects on promotions in late 1970s. A much-needed policy informally called 'Deep Selection' was introduced to ensure that officers did not stagnate while waiting in the queue for promotions. With few vacancies for Wing Commanders, many professionally acclaimed officers missed promotions. By now, having nearly completed the mandatory 20 years' service for pension, many of them decided to prematurely retire as Squadron Leaders.

A big change, however, took place around the year 2004.

The military wished to get at par with the civil

police and paramilitary forces, whose rank structures had gone up manifold. It was proposed to make armed forces younger by promoting officers early to take up higher responsibilities. The Ajay Vikram Singh Committee recommended a change in service terms and conditions, to now promote all officers much earlier and by time to the rank of Wg Cdr. And all those who later missed the select promotion to Gp Capt would now become Group Captains by the time scale. So, all permanent commissioned officers staying on for pensionable service now retire at least as Wg Cdr / Group Captains. With roughly half as much service as the old timer Squadron Leaders, today, the short service officers also go out as Wing Commanders.

However, there has been an extremely adverse impact on those veterans who retired as Squadron Leaders after significant contribution to the Air Force for over 20 years. The downward shift of the rank structure scale finds them standing alongside today's officers who have put in under 10 years of commissioned service.

The old timer Sqn Ldr's service seniority should correspond to that of today's Wg Cdr or Gp Capt. However, with pensions determined on the basis of rank held at the time of retirement, his pension is substantially lower than that of a Wing Commander.

One comes across only a few of these old time veterans today. Every time I greet one with a smart salute, I am reminded of my most admired Flight Commanders. Sad, that "*The rank of Sqn Ldr has lost its grandeur!*"

- Air Marshal Pramod Athawale

Author can be contacted at : -

8527232055

1. Hot water will turn into ice faster than cold water. 2. The most common name in the world is Mohammed. 3. Camels have three eyelids to protect themselves from the blowing desert sand. 4. It is impossible to lick your elbow. 5. If you sneeze too hard, you can fracture a rib. If you try to suppress a sneeze, you can rupture a blood vessel in your head or neck and die.



BOOK REVIEW

SUBHASH CHANDRA BOSE - EK KHOJ BY WO SURESH CHAND NAGAR (RETD.) WEAPON FITTER



The Hindi book "**SUBHASH CHANDRA BOSE - EK KHOJ**" is a biographical account of revolutionary patriot Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose. It details his whole life from Childhood to his ultimate demise in an unfortunate plane crash. His political life and subsequent efforts to form Azad Hind Fauj are given in a detailed manner. The book is an effort to highlight the spirit of this brave son of India who lived a true life of a soldier and inspired millions after independence. It is interesting to note that Late Veteran Air Commodore R S Benegal, MVC (participated in 1962 and 1971 war) was one of his "Tokyo Boys" who was sent to Japan to train as a fighter pilot for the Azad Hind Fauj.

For purchase of the book the author can be contacted at:-

Mobile number: 9818190298, 9873706595; Mail Id: sureshchandnagar@gmail.com and Publisher Mr. Davender Kumar can be contacted at:-

Mob -9212238373

Email: kkpdevinder@vsnl.net

REFLECTIONS OF SPONTANEOUS DEEP EXPRESSIONS



Reflections of Spontaneous Deep Expressions is a compilation of 84 English Poems on various subjects like Flight Safety, Women Empowerment, Philosophy of life, Terrorism, Mothers, Spirituality, Romance and Nature etc. by Gp Capt PK Agnihotri. Virtual release of book by the first and only Astronaut of India, Wg Cdr Rakesh Sharma Ashok Chakra, was solemnized in New Delhi. Author has won many laurels and awards viz. "International Man of the Year" by IBI, USA & Biographical Institute Cambridge UK earlier. This is author's third book. The author can be contacted at:-

Mob No.9891153445, 9625973445;

Mail Id pradiapagnihotri1952@gmail.com

*"Honey never spoils.
Pots of honey in ancient Egyptian
tombs that are thousands of years old
and still perfectly edible."*

AMAZING FACTS

- **Systematic, comprehensive, investigation and exploration of natural causes and effects is the full form of SCIENCE.**
- **Octopuses have three hearts. And their blood is blue!**
- **One cloud can weigh more than approx 50000 kg.**
- **Your nails grow faster in the summer. This is probably due to increased blood supply to the fingertips because of the heat.**
- **Scientists estimate that the nose can recognize a trillion different scents!**

AIR FORCE DAY PARADE 2024 AT CHENNAI: In keeping with the tradition of hosting Air Force Day celebrations in various parts of the country, IAF parade and air display on 92nd raising day will take place in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, on October 8. Previous two celebrations outside Delhi / NCR were held in Chandigarh and Prayagraj in 2022 and 2023, respectively.

BHARAT RATNA & PADMA AWARDS

Since the independence GOI felicitates the prominent Indian Citizens with the following civilian awards:

- (i) Bharat Ratna - 1st degree of honour.
- (ii) Padma Vibhushan - 2nd degree of honour.
- (iii) Padma Bhushan - 3rd degree of honour.
- (iv) Padma Shri - 4th degree of honour.

All these awards are very prestigious awards and are awarded with due diligence after taking a lot of factors into consideration. There are many recipients of these awards. Some of the Citizens have been bestowed with more than one of these awards. But it is a very rare distinction to get all four of them.

Till date the following five distinguished citizens only have been conferred with all the four awards.

1 Satyajit Ray (One of the greatest filmmakers of all times)

2 Bismillah Khan (extraordinary talent in playing shehnai)

3 Bhimsen Joshi (popular for the khayal form of singing and belonged to the Kirana Gharana, one of the best vocalists in the Hindustani classical genre)

4 Dr Bhupen Hazarika - singer, music director, playwright, actor, journalist, author, lyricist, politician and film-maker of the highest repute from Assam.

5 Dr MS Swaminathan (fondly known as the father of India's green revolution)



Satyajit Ray



Bismillah Khan



Bhimsen Joshi



Bhupen Hazarika



MS Swaminathan

The Nation is proud of them and their achievements.



The 3 monkeys in the digital age 😊

75 YEARS OF NATIONAL DEFENCE ACADEMY



History: At the end of the World War II, Field Marshal Claude Auchinleck, then Commander-in-Chief of Indian Army recommended the establishment of a Joint Services Military

Academy, with training modeled on the lines of United States Military Academy at West Point.

After the independence of India in August 1947, the Chiefs of Staff Committee implemented the recommendations of the Auchinleck report. The committee initiated an action plan in late 1947 to commission a permanent defence academy and began the search for a suitable site. It also decided to set up an interim training academy, known as the Joint Services Wing (JSW). JSW was commissioned on 01 January 1949 at the Armed Forces Academy (now known as the Indian Military Academy) in Dehradun.

Six years later on 16 January 1955 the 10th JSW program was transferred from Clement Town, Dehradun to NDA Khadakwasla.

Platinum Jubilee Celebrations: NDA launched a program of year-long commemorative activities to highlight its achievements in various spheres from 19 Jan 2023 to 16 Jan 2024 with unveiling of the 75-GYC Logo (Glorious Years Celebrations), symbolizing the Tri-services essence with three service colours and the theme "Forging Joint Military Leadership".

Some of the important commemorative activities included seminar on leadership, several hikes and excursions, sailing expedition, river rafting, cross-country flying on Super Dimona aircraft, car rally, sports meet and marathon.

On 29 May 23 Gen Anil Chauhan, PVSM, UYSM, AVSM, SM, VSM, ADC Chief of the

Defence Staff, released a melodious musical composition titled 'Bharat Maa Tujhe Salaam' which embodies the Academy's core values and the commitment of the Armed Forces to the Nation and highlights the Academy's role in shaping future leaders of the Indian Armed Forces (Song available on U tube). On 30 November 2023, Smt Droupadi Murmu, the Hon'ble President of India, released a First Day Cover, Stamp and a Rs 75 Commemorative Coin in the resplendent aura of the majestic Sudan Block as part of the ongoing celebration of 75 glorious years.

The culmination of 75 Glorious Years Celebration unfolded from 14 January 2024 to 16 January 2024 with Leadership Seminar by eminent military and civilian luminaries on the contemporary theme 'Forging Joint Military Leadership' at NDA and release of a Film on NDA with voice over by Sh Amitabh Bachchan (Film can be viewed on You Tube - NDA MOVIE @ 75 GYC).

A poignant Wreath Laying Ceremony was held on 16th January at the Hut of Remembrance, attended by alumni, including the Chief of Defence Staff and the two – Navy & Air force service chiefs paying homage at the historic symbol of sacrifice.

Since its inception, the NDA has trained more than 42000 cadets, including over 1,000 cadets from 32 'friendly foreign countries'. NDA has also marked a milestone moment with induction of 19 female cadets (10 for Army, six for Air Force and three for Navy) as part of the 148th course which will be graduating in May 2025

Awards: Three of its alumni have been honored with Param Vir Chakra, 12 with the Ashok Chakra, the nation's highest awards for gallantry in war and peace respectively. The other gallantry awards of the alumni include 32 Maha Vir Chakras, 45 Kirti Chakras, 163 Vir Chakras and 152 Shourya Chakras.

- In the middle of every difficulty lies opportunity – Albert Einstein.
- Just one small positive thought in the morning can change your whole day – Dalai Lama.
- If you judge people you have no time to love them – Mother Teresa
- The mind is everything. What you think you become – Buddha
- There is no substitute for hard work – Thomas Edison

MARSHAL OF THE INDIAN AIR FORCE ARJAN SINGH MEMORIAL HOCKEY TOURNAMENT



In memory of Legendary Late Marshal of the Air Force Arjan Singh, Air Force Sports Control Board has been organizing a hockey tournament at Raghbir Singh Bhola Hockey Stadium, 3BRD, Air Force Station Chandigarh since 2018.

Marshal of the Air Force Arjan Singh was awarded Padma Vibhushan for leading Indian Air Force during the 1965 Indo-Pak war. He was the first Chief of Air Staff to hold the rank of Air Chief Marshal (prior to him all CAS held the rank of Air Marshal). He is the only Marshal of the Indian Air Force. After retiring from the IAF, he served as a diplomat, politician and advisor to the Government of India. He served as India's Ambassador to Switzerland, the Holy See and Liechtenstein from 1971 to 1974 and as the High Commissioner of India to Kenya from 1974 to 1977. He was also the Lt Governor of Delhi.

This year's tournament was held during the period 25 Apr 24 to 30 Apr 24. Punjab and Sind Bank (PSB) won the 5th edition of the Marshal of the Air Force Arjan Singh Memorial Hockey Tournament in a tough match against Indian Air Force (IAF) with 12-11 goals in penalty shootout.

Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari, Chief of Air Staff, formally declared the tournament closed. Complementing the finalists and the prize winners on the occasion, ACM Chaudhari expressed his appreciation for the playing standards and the level of skill of all the participating teams.

A total of 12 teams, including two foreign teams (Bangladesh and Sri Lanka air force) Indian Army, Indian Navy, Indian Air Force, CISF, Punjab Police, Punjab and Sind Bank, Indian Railways, RCF Kapurthala, Chandigarh XI and State Bank of India participated in the tournament.

Junior Warrant Officer Lovdeep Singh of IAF was awarded the man of the match, while Rajinder Singh from Punjab and Sind bank was named the player of the tournament. During the closing ceremony, prominent hockey veterans, such as Dronacharya awardee AK Bansal and Arjuna awardees Prabhjot Singh, Rajpal Singh and Rani Rampal, were also felicitated for their contribution to the sport.

IAF CONDUCTS INVESTITURE CEREMONY AT NWM



Personnel serving in Armed Forces of India are eligible for many awards which are

awarded for extraordinary bravery and distinguished service during times of war and peace. There are wartime gallantry awards, peacetime gallantry awards, wartime distinguished service awards and peacetime distinguished Service awards.

These awards are also known as Presidential awards and are normally announced on 26 Jan every year. Depending on the type of the award, the medals for these awards along with a citation are given to the awardees either in the Rastrapati Bhawan or during a ceremony specially conducted by each of the three wings of the Armed Forces under their own arrangements during a special function conducted for this purpose. For the awards to be awarded by IAF under their own arrangements they were awarded every year on 08 Oct during

the AF Parade at Air Force Station Hindon. However, during the last two years the venue of Air Force Day Parade has been shifted to Stations outside Delhi. Accordingly, there was a requirement to rethink on the occasion and venue where these awards could be given.

This year, in the first of its kind, the award ceremony (which is also known as Investiture Ceremony) was held at National War Memorial on 26 Apr 2024. This was held near the Param Yodha Sthal, which is a part of the National War Memorial (NWM) complex in New Delhi. The ceremony began with the awardees paying homage to the fallen heroes of the country by laying a wreath at the Amar Chakra of the NWM.

This solemn ceremony was followed by the Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari, conferring Presidential awards to 51 air warriors. The recipients included three Yudh Seva Medal (Gp Capt Sameer Sharma, Wg Cdr Vinit Vijay Marwadkar and Wg Cdr Anurag Saxena), seven Vayu Sena Medal (Gallantry), 13 Vayu Sena Medal and 28 Vishisht Seva Medal awardees. The CAS complimented each of the awardees for their gallant actions and distinguished service in the truest traditions of the Indian Air Force.



PHOTO GALLERY



**PRESIDENT AFA WITH CAS & PROF. HIMANSHU RAI AT PC LAL
MEMORIAL LECTURE**



**AUDIENCE AT AIR FORCE AUDITORIUM
ATTENDING THE LECTURE**



TEAM AFA VISITS ECHS NOIDA



INSTALLATION OF JAL PIAAU BY AFA NOIDA



TEAM AFA DONATES AIR COOLERS TO ECHS NOIDA



TEAM AFA WITH CDS



REP OF AFA LUCKNOW VISIT AFA KANPUR



AVM AMIT TYAGI, VP AFA HO VISITS AFA HYDERABAD

PHOTO GALLERY



HO/TO BRANCH PRESIDENT OF AP & TS WG CDR TJ REDDY WITH GP CAPT RR PRASAD



PROPOSED SCH SITE AT HYDERABAD



AFA BIHAR BRANCH: HOLI MILAN CELEBRATIONS



AFA BIHAR BRANCH: PICNIC AT VAISHALI



AFA HARYANA BRANCH: VISIT TO NATIONAL WAR MEMORIAL



AFA HARYANA BRANCH: FELICITATION OF OCTOGENERIANS & NONAGENERAIANS



AFA JHARKHAND BRANCH: VIDYARTHI SAMMAN SAMAROH



AFA JHARKHAND BRANCH COMMITTEE MEMBERS ALONG WITH PRIZE WINNERS

PHOTO GALLERY



ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION - AFA THANJAVUR CHAPTER



AFA TN BRANCH: FELICITATION OF VETERANS AT THANJAVUR CHAPTER



AFA KAR BRANCH: SPARSH SAHAYATA SHIBIR



AFA KAR BRANCH: ORGANISING TEAM OF SAHAYATA SHIBIR



AFA WB BRANCH: VETERANS INTERACTIVE SESSION



AT INTERACTIVE SESSION. PRESIDENT AFA WB BRANCH, DG ADM, CHIEF PATRON AFA WB BRANCH, SR VP AFA, STN CDR BKP.



AFA UP BRANCH (KANPUR) WELCOME SPEECH BY PRESIDENT



AFA UP BRANCH : EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

PHOTO GALLERY



AFA RAJ BRANCH: HONOURING OCTOGENARIAN MEMBERS



AFA RAJ BRANCH: OCTOGENARIAN CEREMONY COMMITTEE



AFA GHAZIABAD CHAPTER: KARGIL VIJAY DIWAS CELEBRATION



AFA GHAZIABAD : INTERNATIONAL YOGA DIWAS CELEBRATIONS



AFA MP BRANCH: RAKHI CELEBRATIONS



NZ BRANCH: AGM AT CHANDIGARH



VETERANS DAY CELEBRATION AT AMRITSAR CHAPTER



PHOTO GALLERY



VETERAN MEET AT AFA KERALA BRANCH



AFA KERALA BRANCH GET TOGETHER



AFA MAHARASHTRA RECEIVING LAPTOP FROM SHRO SYSTEM



CDS AT ACM LM KATRE MEMORIAL LECTURE AT KARNATAKA BRANCH



AFA GOA PRESIDENT WITH WG CDR C BARETTO (102 YRS)



MWO TV GEORGE (RETD) HONoured BY IAF ON THE OCCASION OF HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY, AT HIS RESIDENCE



IAF SIGNED MOU WITH PUNJAB & SINDH BANK FOR DEFENCE SALARY PACKAGE ACCOUNTS



CAS RELEASING ID CARD FOR RETIRED AIRMEN

PHOTO GALLERY



VETERANS AT NWM FOR WREATH LAYING CEREMONY ON AFA RAISING DAY



WREATH LAYING CEREMONY AT NWM ON AFA RAISING DAY



SIGNING OF VISITORS BOOK BY PRESIDENT AFA AT NWM



TEAM AFA WITH PRESIDENT AT NWM ON AFA RAISING DAY



PRESENTATION OF ANNUAL REPORT BY VP ON AGM 2024



LAUNCH OF GROUP HEALTH INSURANCE SCHEME BY AFGIS / ALLIANCE AT AFA RAISING DAY



RELEASE OF IDENTITY CARD FOR AIR WARRIORS ON RETIREMENT



VETERANS OBSERVE TWO MINUTES SILENCE FOR DEPARTED SOULS AT AFA RAISING DAY





SR VICE PRESIDENT AFA ADDRESSING VETERANS AT AFA RAISING DAY



PRESIDENT AFA ADDRESSING VETERANS AT AFA RAISING DAY



CAS ADDRESSING AUDIENCE ON AFA RAISING DAY



AUDIENCE ON AFA RAISING DAY AT AF AUDITORIUM



TEAM AFA WITH PROF HIMANSHU RAI AT PC LAL MEMORIAL LECTURE



AIR CMDE PETER PINTO, GP CAPT SUHAS S PHATAK & WG CDR TJ REDDY ON AFA DAY