

Vol XIV Issue-I (Bi-Annual) | March 2020

The Rimcollian

(Newsletter of the Old Boys Association of Rashtriya Indian Military College, Dehradun)

TALES OF GALLANTRY



RIMCOLLIAN AWARD WINNERS ON REPUBLIC DAY 2020

Heartiest congratulations to the Rimcollians who have been awarded Presidential medals.

AVSM

AVM SN Deshpande
Maj Gen Sanjay Singh
Maj Gen Atul Rawat

SM (Gallantry)

Capt Sidharth Das

SM (Distinguished)

Lt Col Biswas Nambiar

NM

Cmde Sandeep Verma

VSM

Gp Capt Deepak Ahluwalia
Col Anuj Kalia
Col Punar Preet Singh Maan

REPUBLIC DAY PARADE 2020



Parade Second In Command
Major General, Alok Kacker

Republic Day Parade 2020 presented a moment of pride for the fraternity with Maj Gen Alok Kacker being the second in command of the parade and Col Anup Tiwari leading the President's Body Guard on January 26, 2020 at Rajpath, New Delhi.

contents

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editor's note



**Air Marshal PP Reddy (retd)
PVSM, VM**

Dear Rimcollians,

At the outset, I wish all Rimcollians and their dear ones a very happy year ahead. It is a time to drop the burden of the past and to live in the present. I am sure the New Year will bring glad tidings for all of us. On the occasion, we have published the ROBA calendar, both wall and desktop. The theme continues to be the Gallantry Award Winners and War Heroes. This time we are covering 1965 and 1971 Wars and I must compliment Professor Sidharth Mishra and Col Shailender Arya for doing the research, compilation and layout under severe time constraints. These calendars are historical and qualify as a collectors' item. Get your copy through ROBA office before they run out. We have also reproduced the tales of gallantry in this newsletter.

In this issue, we are introducing two new sections, Rimcolliana and Potpourri. Rimcolliana is for spouses and family members of Rimcollians to share their views, anecdotes and experiences, which I am sure, will generate great interest among the readers. I am grateful to Mrs Falguni Chakravarty for penning the maiden article. The other section, Potpourri (a mixture or medley of things), will add colour and fragrance to the content. I request all Rimcollians to encourage their kith and kin to contribute to the Rimcolliana section.

The Achievers' Gallery has, I personally think, been a great success in bringing us closer to the Rimcollians who have succeeded against all odds and whatever life had to throw at them. I think these stories are great motivators for all of us. I must thank Mr Chiranjit Banerjee for convincing the heroes of these stories to come out with their experiences. He is also the one who came up with the idea of 'Rimcolliana'.

The story "Two Stories" by Brig S Vijaykumar is very touching and brings out the steely determination of our bravehearts to overcome all obstacles as also the fortitude of their Ladies. The article on ROBA and ROBA Trust by Flt Lt Ajit Singh is a must read for all Rimcollians, as it brings out their genesis and progress from humble beginnings to great organisations, assisting our Alma Mater in achieving excellence.

The magazine continues to grow - in size definitely and probably in quality of content. I urge all of you to contribute generously both in kind through articles and in cash by subscribing. The money goes to ROBA, as the Editorial Team is voluntary and honorary. I also invite those with literary talent and publishing skills to come forward and join the team.

Ich Dien

15 February 2020

**Air Marshal PP Reddy (retd)
PVSM, VM**



Students taking a lesson or two in gallantry from RIMC calendars at Life Valley International School, Kottayam. Calendars gifted to the school by Cmde NAJ Joseph

MESSAGE FROM **PRESIDENT**



President ROBA

Air Chief Marshal BS Dhanoa (Retd)
PVSM, AVSM, YSM VM



Dear Rimcollians,

Best wishes for a great New Year for all Rimcollians and their families, with the hope that the year 2020 brings good fortune to the Rimcollian fraternity and our alma mater. The past year has gone by with many good memories to cherish and some sad news of some of our dear old boys who passed away! The young RIMCOs have made us proud by notching top four of the five all India rankings in the NDA Entrance Examination, a no mean feat which has not been achieved by any other institution in this country!

The Centenary Celebrations are around the corner and may I once again urge all Rimcollians to become part of this historical celebration. Let's dedicate this mega event towards this prestigious institution. Your generous contribution to ROBA Trust would augment the funding towards hiring of masters, coaches, staff to make up deficiency of strength to help build a strong future generation. It is imperative that we join hands in contributing to our alma mater in support to our aim "Cradle of Excellence". I wish all Rimcollians and their families the very best and a very Happy Reunion 2020.

Jai Hind!

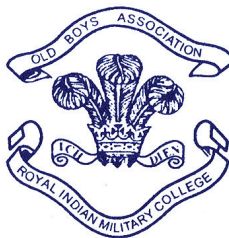
GOD BLESS RIMCOLLIANS

Air Chief Mshl BS Dhanoa (Retd)
PVSM, AVSM, YSM, VM
Hony President, ROBA

FROM ROBA SECRETARY'S DESK

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Rimcollian Old Boys Association

Rashtriya Indian Military College,
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Dear Rimcollians,

1. Greetings to all Rimcollians and their families. With the onset of New Year the countdown for Centenary Celebrations is on in full swing. May I remind all esteemed members, of the massive and daunting task at hand to make this milestone event a grand success and in line with the stature and traditions of this Cradle of Excellence. The onerous task of raising finances needs no emphasis to carry out a function of this magnitude; a once in a life-time event. The ball has been set rolling to kick start the final preparations that have been envisaged and collecting subscriptions for the same assumes prime importance in this regard.
2. The spirit of old boys is commendable and is praiseworthy in inspiring all members to scale greater heights. Our Alumni have always been a great source of inspiration and support for us and the young RIMCO's. They have been setting fine standards for us to emulate; their successes, a great source of inspiration and motivation for all of us.
3. I take this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude to the editorial committee led by Air Marshal PP Reddy for such a relentless pursuit towards Excellence in publishing of the Rimcollians Newsletter.

Looking forward to a very warm Reunion in March 2020, the final one before the Centennial Celebrations. I urge you to join us in celebrating this yearly extravaganza which we all like forward too.

May the tribe grow & tribesman shine.

Warm regards,

Yours sincerely,
Deepak Ahluwalia

"ICH-DIEN"



2020

WHERE GALLANTRY IS TRADITION TALES FROM 1965 & 1971 WARS

Dehradun is home to Rimcollians - the alumni of Rashtriya Indian Military College. Founded on 13 March' 1922, this school has provided leaders par excellence. Its founder, Prince of Wales, later King Edward, had said, "It is the first few blows on the anvil of the life that give the human weapon the set and temper that carry him through life's battles." As the college moves towards celebrating the centenary of its worthy existence in 2022, we unveil the third instalment of tales recalling our contribution to the nation and the society.



Gen Vishwa Nath Sharma, former Chief of Army Staff and Chairman, ROBA Trust, laying wreath at the Martyrs' Memorial on the RIMC campus during the Founder's Day

EDITOR'S NOTE

In chronicling our illustrious history, we have chosen this year, the post-Independence wars of 1965 and 1971 as theme, where Rimcollians conducted themselves with great glory at various levels of leadership.

More from 1971, Sri Lanka and Kargil operations would appear in the subsequent years. The content is largely based on the inputs from reliable sources and government records. Quality of some pictures may not be upto the mark because of the poor state/non-availability of original records. Hope you enjoy these glimpses into the glorious achievements of our alumni in defence of our nation.

—Air Marshal PP Reddy (Retd)

CONCEPT/RESEARCH - SIDHARTH MISHRA ; RESEARCH ASSISTANCE: COL SHAILENDER ARYA; CMDE NAJ JOSEPH



POONCH SECTOR 1965



Frontline troops of the Indian Army fighting along LoC

Op Riddle. On 6 September 1965, Major Greesh Chandra Verma of 3 DOGRA was leading his company in an attack on a very strongly defended enemy post in the Poonch Sector. He led the assault in the face of heavy enemy fire at the head of his troops. After a fierce exchange of fire and hand grenades, the enemy was driven from the forward most trenches and bunkers. In the subsequent hand-to-hand fight on the very edge of the objective, Major Verma was wounded in the head but he refused to be evacuated. He breathed his last only after seeing the success signal being fired from his pistol by Sub Rattan Singh. A medal has been instituted at the Rashtriya Indian Military College to commemorate the service and martyrdom of Maj Verma.

THE HERO



MAJOR
GREESH CHANDRA
VERMA



VIR CHAKRA

Ich Dien - I Serve



AIR BATTLE 1965



A Pakistan Air Force Sabre Jet biting dust

Lahore Sector. The famous air battle between India and Pakistan during the 1965 war lessened in intensity after 7 September, with both air forces changing their doctrine from counter air operations to ground attack and concentrated their efforts on knocking out soft skin targets and supply lines. On 8 September 1965, Major Jitinder Kumar was in command of a company of 15 DOGRA in the Lahore Sector when his company position was attacked by enemy aircraft. With complete disregard for his personal safety, Major Jitinder Kumar took up a light machine gun and kept firing at one of the enemy Sabre jets flying low till he shot it down. Major Jitinder Kumar displayed exemplary courage in this encounter.

Ich Dien - I Serve

THE HERO



MAJOR
JITINDER KUMAR



VIR CHAKRA



BATTLE OF THATTI JAIMAL SINGH 1965



Indian soldiers outside Barkee police station after its fall. 19 Maratha Light Infantry was deployed in Hudiara-Barkee road during the 1965 war

Lahore Sector. Major Mohammad Ahmad Zaki was in command of the leading assaulting company of 19 Maratha Light Infantry near Thatti Jaimal Singh in the Sector. On 20 September 1965, his company came under heavy fire and he was injured in the shoulder and arm by a medium machine gun burst. Still he led a determined assault on the enemy. He was wounded again. Undaunted by his successive injuries, he drove home the assault in what was virtually hand-to-hand fighting. With a hand grenade he himself destroyed an enemy bunker containing a medium machine gun. He fell exhausted due to profuse bleeding but inspired his company to capture the objective. Major Zaki later went on to attain high positions in service and in civil life after retirement.

THE HERO



LT GENERAL
MA ZAKI



VIR CHAKRA

Ich Dien - I Serve



AIR BATTLE 1965



The legendary Patton tanks of Pakistan Army destroyed during 1965 war in raids by the Indian Air Force

Khem Karan. In 1965, Flt Lt Vinod Patney was serving in a Fighter Squadron and he flew 16 operational sorties within the short period. On 13th September 1965, he took part in a ground attack mission in the Kasur Khem Karan Sector and flew as No.3 in a four aircraft formation. During the attack, the formation met with heavy and determined ground fire from the enemy guns. One of our aircraft was shot down. Undeterred and undaunted by this, Flt Lt Patney pressed home five effective attacks on enemy targets and destroyed 3 Patton tanks. The courage and initiative displayed by Flight Lt Vinod Patney were in the best traditions of the Indian Air Force. Later as Air Marshal, Patney led Operation Safed Sagar during the Kargil operations.

THE HERO



AIR MARSHAL
VINOD PATNEY



VIR CHAKRA

Ich Dien - I Serve



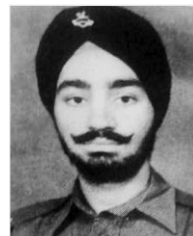
BATTLE OF DOGRAI 1965



Second Lieutenant RS Bedi being conferred Vir Chakra by President of India Dr Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan

Lahore Sector. On 17 Sep 1965, 2/LT Ravinder Singh Bedi of Scinde Horse was ordered to move with his tank troop through the built-up area of village Jhuggian in the Lahore Sector in Pakistan and engage enemy bunkers, recoilless guns and tanks in Dograi. His troop was able to destroy a number of enemy vehicles from a position west of Jhuggian; which was within the enemy fire range. Though his tank was hit by fire from a recoilless gun and he was seriously wounded, 2/LT Bedi continued to lead his tank troop and ultimately succeeded in knocking out the enemy's recoilless gun. He did not abandon his tank until it was on fire and the ammunition started exploding. The Battle of Dograi remains the bloodiest of battles fought by the Indian Army.

THE HERO



2/LT
RS BEDI



VIR CHAKRA

Ich Dien - I Serve



DESERT SECTOR 1971



General Gopal Gurunath Bewoor, inspecting guard of honour on the occasion of his retirement, in New Delhi on March 08, 1975.

Southern Command. In July 1969, Lt Gen GG Bewoor assumed the appointment of General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Southern Command. During the Indo-Pakistan War of 1971, the Indian military strategy was mainly defensive on the Western Front, while attacking in the Eastern Sector, culminating in the surrender of Dacca and the secession of East Pakistan into the newly formed Bangladesh. Bewoor's Southern Command was tasked with maintaining a secure front from Bikaner southwestwards to the Arabian Sea. For his command of operations in the Rajasthan Sector, Bewoor was awarded the Padma Bhushan, India's third highest civilian honour. He, later as Chief of Army Staff, ensured and witnessed safe explosion of India's first nuclear device at Pokhran in 1974.

Ich Dien - I Serve

THE HERO



GENERAL
GOPAL GURUNATH
BEWOOR



PADMA BHUSHAN



WESTERN FRONT 1971



The GOC-in-C of the Western Army Command, Lieutenant General KP Candeth (centre), discusses a war plan with other senior Indian military commanders.

Western Command. Lt Gen Kunhiraman Palat Candeth, during the India-Pakistan War of 1971 that led to East Pakistan breaking away to become Bangladesh, was the Western Army commander responsible for planning and overseeing operations in the strategically crucial regions of Jammu & Kashmir and Punjab, where the fiercest fighting took place. Gen Candeth was forever in operations, in 1961 he played a commanding role in liberation of Goa, Daman & Diu from Portuguese control, and was its Military Governor till 1963. He later served as the Deputy Chief of Army Staff based at GHQ in New Delhi in the midst of the second war with Pakistan in 1965 and later gallantly commanded the Western Command in 1971.

THE HERO



LT GENERAL
KUNHIRAMAN
PALAT CANDETH

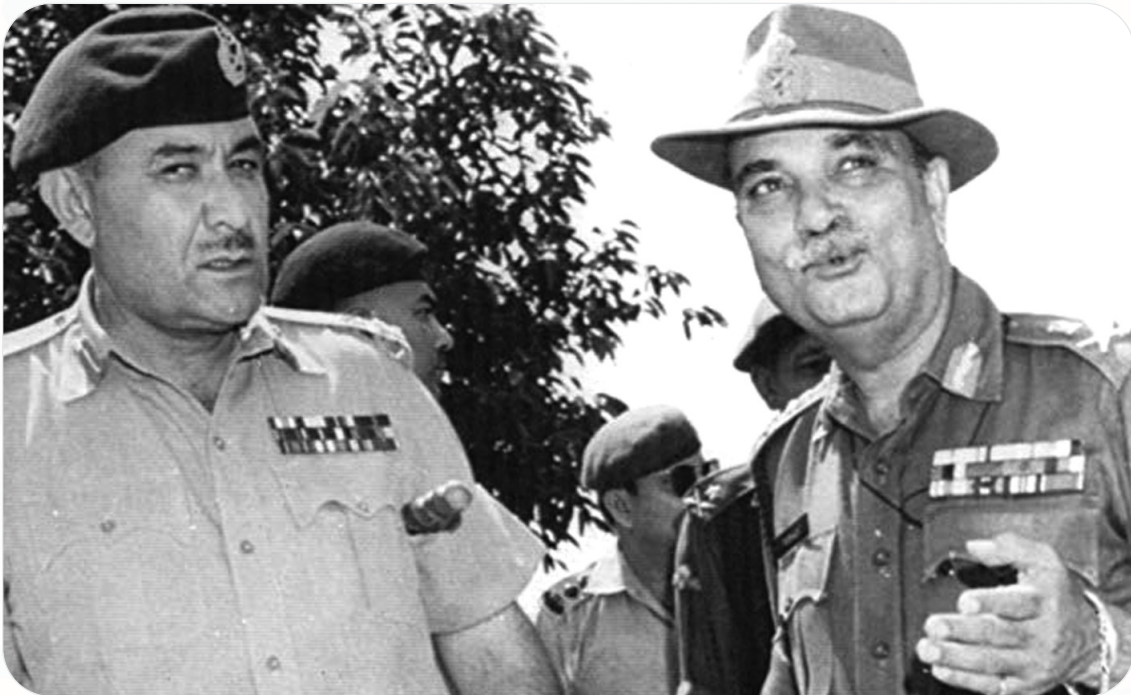


PADMA BHUSHAN

Ich Dien - I Serve



SAFEGUARDING VICTORY



Lt General PS Bhagat with Lt General Hameed Khan of Pakistan discussing the redrawing of the Line of Control.

Central Command. Victoria Cross winner during World War II as a Lieutenant, Premindra Singh Bhagat was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant General on 19 May 1967, and subsequently took over as the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief (GOC-in-C) of the Central Command on 4 August 1970 and headed the Central Army during the 1971 war. In June 1972, he became the first GOC-in-C of the re-established Northern Command, in Udhampur, Jammu and Kashmir. Post War he played a vital role in safe keeping of Pakistani officers and soldiers taken as PoWs, which helped in negotiating the release of Banglabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the founder of Bangladesh. He later helped in redefining the Line of Control with Pakistan.

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THE HERO



LT GENERAL
PREMINDRA
SINGH BHAGAT



VICTORIA CROSS



BATTLE OF KUMARKHALI 1971



Indian troops enter Kushtia district of East Pakistan (Bangladesh) after battle of Kumarkhali

Eastern Sector. Major Amlan Pratap Datta was commanding a company of 2/9 GORKHA RIFLES which launched an attack in an area in the Eastern Sector. During the advance, two of his platoons were channelised to the right flank. Due to heavy enemy fire radio contact was lost. He, however, moved forward with his company headquarters and the third platoon. When the advance of the company was losing its momentum due to enemy small arms fire, Major Amlan Pratap Datta, in true Gorkhali tradition, charged the enemy position. This encouraged the men under his command and they charged with renewed vigour. This action forced the enemy to run away and facilitated entry of Indian troops in strategically important Kushtia district.

THE HERO



BRIGADIER
AMLAN PRATAP
DATTA



VIR CHAKRA

Ich Dien - I Serve



EASTERN SECTOR 1971



Pakistan's Lt Gen AAK Niazi at the signing of the Instrument of Surrender with commander of allied forces (India and Mukti Bahini, the Bangladesh rebels) Lt Gen Jagjit Singh Aurora in Dacca's Suhrawardy Udyan on December 16, 1971. Photo: Daily Star

Tripura. Major Chandra Kant was in command of a company of 4 GUARDS tasked to put a post behind an enemy position in the Eastern Sector. Under his able leadership, the company established it before the enemy could withdraw. The enemy finding its route of withdrawal cut reacted violently and launched intense shelling and assault by tanks. Undeterred Major Chandra Kant went from trench to trench encouraging his men to hold on to the position till the area was cleared of the enemy. Many years later *Daily Star*, Bangladesh's leading newspaper acknowledged his role, in an article titled "*Thank you for being our friend in need*". After hanging his spurs Major Chandra Kant has taken to recording military history.

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THE HERO



MAJOR
CHANDRA KANT



VIR CHAKRA



NAVAL OFFENSIVE 1971



A Pakistan naval ship demolished in attack by the Indian Navy

Khulna. During the operations against Pakistan in December 1971, Lt Cdr Jayanta Kumar Roy Choudhury was the commanding officer of an Indian Naval ship. He was given the task of attacking enemy held ports in Bangladesh. Despite the shore defences and the danger from enemy aircraft, he carried out his mission with extreme devotion to duty and by his action disrupted all sea traffic in the port of Mongla. On 10 December, his ship was part of the force which attacked Khulna, a river port at the edge of Sunderban deltas, the home to Royal Bengal Tigers. His ship came under very heavy enemy air and shore gun attacks and he was wounded but he continued his offensive, which finally resulted in the capture of Khulna port.

THE HERO



LT CDR
JAYANTA KUMAR ROY
CHOUHURY



VIR CHAKRA

Ich Dien - I Serve



DOMINATING THE SEA 1971



INS Vikrant during the 1971 operations carried a unique complement of Sea Hawks, Breguet Alize and Chetak

INS Vikrant. During the operations against Pakistan in December 1971, Commander Rajinder Singh Grewal was the commander in charge of all flying operations from INS Vikrant, the only aircraft carrier of the Indian Navy. The surface winds in Bay of Bengal during these operations was such that it made the take off and landing from the aircraft carrier very difficult. Commander Grewal, however, continued to fly fighter-bombers and anti-submarine aircraft from this ship regularly. It was largely due to his efforts that the two aircraft damaged by the enemy fire were recovered inspite of extremely hazardous wind conditions. Throughout, Commander Grewal displayed gallantry, leadership and professional skill of a high order.

Ich Dien - I Serve

THE HERO



(AVIATORS ONBOARD INS
VIKRANT) COMMANDER
RAJINDER SINGH GREWAL



VIR CHAKRA

UK Rimcollian Get-Together

— MR MARCUS PRADHAN

Indian Gymkhana Club, Osterley, West London, 14 Sep 2019



Standing left to right. Ajay Mehta (70-75 P), Guralp Singh Sekhon (71-76 C), Ravi Gulati (68-72 S), Pankaj Sewal (68-73 R), Air Mshl PP Reddy (68-72 S), Capt Vippan Chhibbar (68-72 C), Saurabh Batta (91-95 P), Jeetesh Singh (95-98 P), Virat Mehta (98-02 P), Marcus Pradhan (00-03 P), Amit Jain (87-92 S), Gopal Mahadev (79-83 C). Missed photo opportunity - Sumeet Sharma (91-95 P)

Almost twenty years after I joined the College as a first term, I realised that I had forgotten how much our lives revolved around storytelling. Stories told by seniors in dorm preps, by course mates in the canteen and by old boys when they visited us during the Founder's Day celebrations. Rimcollians are ardent storytellers - whether it was one's experience of narrow escapes whilst cutting bounds, or just one of the terror seniors of their times brandishing a hockey stick. With this in mind, Rimcollians in this part of the world longed to catch up and share some of those stories.

One of busy life's greatest privilege is to be spontaneous and free, and the UK Chapter of Rimcollians were long due to

meet and catch up on the happenings of family, old friends and life in general. The last few get-togethers were meticulously planned by Mr Deepak Narwal, who would ask me to ensure that I round up all the old boys somehow or the other. Only this time, we lost a few of our very senior Rimcollians, Lord & Lady Slim, and Rev Johnston - the Wavell boys who made sure they attended the get-togethers. Apart from Jeetesh Sir's incessant scotches and images of impromptu pints with visiting old boys on the Whatsapp Group, we had not met properly for a good few years. It was only when Mr Gulati and his course-mates, Mr Sewal, Mr Reddy & Mr Vippan Chhibbar were to land on the shores, we had to pull up our socks to realise this

get-together as soon as possible. After scuttling for a suitable venue between Punjabi restaurants, posh Battersea joints and an RAF Club, we settled for the Indian Gymkhana Club following a recommendation by Mr Priyank Nandan. Although the junior-most in the country, I will be dropping the 'sirs' for this article.

Having had the gatherings dominated by the Shivajians and Chandraguptians of the UK, the first to arrive was a visiting Ranjitian from San Francisco, Mr Pankaj Sewal. He made his way straight to the Club from Heathrow following work in Europe. Mr Guralp Singh Sekhon, ex-Chandragupta (a localite) kindly arrived early to rid him of his luggage and start with the stories. I joined right in time to join the conversation on ragras and



bruises of one's time, and how tough College life was in 'those' days. One by one, faces with broad gleaming smiles appeared at the bar, each with their own story to tell, to catch up with long-lost seniors and juniors. Ravi Gulati (Shivaji) & Mrs Gulati arrived with his course mates, who spearheaded the momentum for the gathering - PP Reddy (Shivaji) & Mrs Reddy, Vippan Chhibbar (Chandragupta) & Mrs Chhibbar. Soon after, Gopal Mahadev (Chandragupta), Ajay Mehta (Pratap) and Amit Jain (Shivaji) arrived, and were followed by my grand CG (cadet guardian) Virat Mehta (Pratap) and Saurabh Batta (Pratap).

After starting with the pints, a text message arrived from Jeetesh Singh (Pratap). He was bemused with the (lack of) signage and the fact that he got lost in the car park, whilst the rest of the old boys were almost on their second pint. Sumeet Sharma (Pratap) joined us all the way from Switzerland. Following introductions and the din of laughter and countless stories, our attention was drawn by Mr Vippan Chhibbar, who took



out a large bag of College mementos - Rimcollian Caps, magazines and ties. Everyone rushed to get one and were strictly instructed to put these on for the group photographs. I was handed a big box of sweets from Kumar's for all of us

which was a saviour - as yours truly had unfortunately missed out the dessert order even after thorough scrutiny by Jeetesh Singh. As the food arrived, Vippan Chhibbar took a head count to check how many from each Section had

made it to the get-together. Scores were Pratap:6, Ranjit:1, Shivaji:3, Chandragupta: 3.

Pratap had this time outdone the rest and Chandragupta being the best Section was drowned by cheers from the Pratap Section table. As lunch continued, conversations stretched from hockey sticks while reducing for boxing, to Brexit, to preparations for the Centenary Celebrations and hedge funds. We shared stories of old masters, coffee pudding, NDA, the parade ground and Moti Mahal; and how Jeetesh Singh made it

straight to the seniors X-country route. All were reminded to prepare ourselves for the 2022 celebrations and to make sure we attended the event at our alma mater.

The long awaited event finally came to a close. Those of us left behind made our way to the car park. One of us had noticed the grape vines at the entrance of the Club. A staff member kindly provided us with a pair of scissors and we helped ourselves to the red grapes for dessert (after the sweets from Kumar's of course!). We all said our goodbyes and

now look forward to meeting in time for the school reunion next year, especially those of us who might not be able to join the rest of the brethren at the College quadrangle. Unfortunately, we missed other UK Rimcollian regulars - Sarabpal Butalia, Indrajit Singh, Harinder Singh Trehan, Vivek Sood, Saranjit Arora, Deepak Narwal and Rahul Ghosh who were not able to make it this time and sent their apologies.

The Rimcollian spirit still stays strong in this part of the world. Signing out until the next time with more updates. ■

The Reunion At Pune

— NEWSLETTER TEAM

It was a pleasant Sunday afternoon when the Pune Rimcollians assembled at the Artillery Officers' Mess on 22 September 2019. Maj Gen Adosh Kumar, who was recently posted-in, kindly hosted the lunch. We had a fairly good gathering of 42 officers and 20 ladies, with the special feature being the presence of many young Divisional Officers posted at the NDA.

Among the veterans and distinguished Rimcollians, we were fortunate to have Capt HA Mohite (1936-42, Kitcheners), Cmde RS Huja (1949-52, Ranjit) and Maj Gen PD Sherlekar (1946-49, Pratap). Among the other senior Rimcollians present were Rear Adm PD Sharma, Maj Gen Yash Malhotra, Lt Col PF Kewalramani, Col DH Parab and Col AK Bakshi. We missed Lt Col JD Desai, Cdr KS Karandikar, Maj Gen Inder Luthra, Gp Capt AG Bewoor, Maj Gens AR Raikar and Rajan Aney. They were unable to attend due to prior commitments. It was nice of Mrs Gita Parab, Mrs Nandini Bewoor and Mrs Adosh to have graced the occasion. We were glad that Dr Virender Sharma and his Rimcollian son, Nitesh, could attend. Dr Virender was an English teacher in RIMC during the 1980-90s before he joined as Registrar in NDA. Presently he is Registrar, FLAME University in Pune.



The Rimcollians and the ladies at Pune

While interacting with the veterans, we learnt from Cmde Huja that his two brothers as well as both sons were settled in the US. Mrs Huja had not been keeping well for some time and had to miss the function. We were surprised when Cmde Huja informed us that he had admitted his elder son Inderdeep Singh to RIMC. However, when Cmde Huja received his posting as the Assistant

Naval Attaché in UK, the family decided to withdraw him from school and take him along. It happened to be Cmde Huja's last function, since he suddenly passed away on 27 September 2019.

While lunch was being laid, important achievements of our cadets in school and NDA as well as those of the Old Boys were covered by Col Vijay Gidh. It was very heartening to learn about

many Rimcollians being nominated to attend the prestigious NDC, HC, HDMC and the Staff Course. RIMC cadets are performing exceedingly well in NDA, particularly among the passing out course. Our cadets are excelling in Squash, both in School and NDA. Once again, RIMC was among the Top 10 Boarding Schools for Boys in India in almost all ratings.

The highlights of RIMC Centenary

Celebrations in March 2022 were briefed and the necessity of all non-members contributing to ROBA, ROBA Trust and Centenary Fund were stressed upon. Maj MS Bedi had kindly ensured that few copies of the latest Rimcollian Newsletter were available and non-members were motivated to become Life Members for the same.

The arrangements for the function were excellent. The menu for the lunch

- which included Scotch Eggs and Topsy Pudding - was delicious and reminded everyone of the excellent food we had in school. Finally there was a loud cheer for RIMC and the customary group photograph. Like all good things have to come to an end, we departed with some fine memories of the wonderful time spent and looking forward to the next meet planned in Pune in March 2020. ■

Rimcollians Meet At Nagrota

— MAJ R SAI ANVESH

A Rimcollian get together was organised on 06 Dec 2019 in the backdrop of Trikuta ranges at Nagrota Garrison. The event could see the light of the day due to the industrious effort of the Chief of Staff, HQ 16 Corps, Maj Gen DS Gill who was

the driving force and Brig Ajay Ramdev who organised the event. Officers from garrisons of Udampur, Jammu, Ratnuchak, Akhnoor, Jauriyan and Poonch attended, totalling 28 ofrs and eight ladies. It included two cadets viz

Cadet Aryan Singh & Cadet Hridayansh Sharma. Mr Anshumali Sharma, KAS & Mr Gokul Mahajan, IDES, civil servants working with the Government of J & K also attended.

The sumptuous dinner with



The get-together at Nagrota

ROVING EYE

traditional scotch eggs and coffee pudding spoke of the culinary skills of the chef, and possibly the training he received for this evening. It was until way

past midnight that the good old days were reminisced. It talks volumes about the Rimcollian spirit and rich traditions of the Rajwada Camp, as people from far

off locations could grace the occasion even under the prevailing security situation to make it a grand success. The list of attendees: -

Name	Section	Year
Maj Gen D S Gill	Chandragupta	73-78
Col RPM Panghal	Chandragupta	76-80
Brig Ajay Ramdev	Pratap	80-85
Gp Capt S Arunachalam	Ranjit	82-87
Brig Vishal Agarwal	Ranjit	80-86
Col S Mukhopadhyay	Chandragupta	90-95
Col PS Sidhu	Ranjit	91-96
Col Munendra Gupta	Chandragupta	82-82
Col Upmanyu Singh Rathore	Ranjit	85-90
Col RK Anand, SM	Shivaji	94-98
Lt Col Arnab Sarkar	Shivaji	91-95
Mr Anshumali Sharma	Shivaji	95-99
Lt Col Sandeep Shankar	Ranjit	95-00
Lt Col Vivek Shahi	Pratap	96-01
Maj Abhishek Pathak	Pratap	98-02
Maj R Sai Anvesh	Chandragupta	00-04
Maj RP Singh	Pratap	01-05
Mr Gokul Mahajan	Shivaji	04-11
Capt Abhinav Sinha	Shivaji	05-10
Capt Ashutosh Banathia	Shivaji	08-12
Lt (IN) Akhilesh Gupta	Shivaji	08-12
Ft Lt Nishant Rana	Shivaji	08-12
Capt Shiv Shakti	Ranjit	09-13
Capt Taral Chanchani	Ranjit	09-14
Capt Ayush Rawat	Pratap	10-15
Lt Abhishek Khajuria	Pratap	09-14
Cadet Aryan Singh	Ranjit	12-17
Cadet Hridayansh Sharma	Ranjit	12-17

THE WORLD REALLY IS YOUR OYSTER, JUST HAVE FAITH AND GO WITH THE FLOW

— MR GAGAN KHURANA; SHIVAJI; 1983-87

When Mr Chiranjit Banerjee (famously known as CB or CB sir) asked me yet again to write about my life journey or learnings for the Achievers Gallery section of The Rimcollian I was so surprised that I immediately said yes. I, thus, broke my long-standing dictum learnt in RIMC, to always say no first and come up with the excuse later. I was not expecting to hear back from CB at all, having convinced him merely six months ago that my life was not of any notable achievement and that he should look at getting the younger Rimcollians in the tech and finance world (and there are many that I know of) to share their journeys. Yet here we are, and this tells me one of two things - either CB (even with his considerable charm) could not convince at least two genuine high-achievers to spend time to write their inspirational stories for The Rimcollian. Or, that I am now in an alternate reality where I am considered as someone who has achieved something notable on my own steam; that this perhaps is not true will become abundantly clear as you read further along. So here goes.

I (and many others) have always considered myself a person with potential but not the will to achieve anything great in life. As Mr. V.G. Nene, my Section Master from Shivaji, wrote with great perception in my end of term report, words to the effect that I had the wherewithal but was generally lacking the spark to get a good fire going. These words hold true today. I wish I could share a truly motivational story wherein by sheer hard work I overcame adversity and made the world a better place but that is not the story I can share if I am to remain totally truthful (always hard for



Rimcollians of my generation - 1980s vintage). Now I would be amiss if I did not clarify that I have also had my share of successes and failures along with happy and adverse times, but these have generally been orchestrated or resolved by powers greater than I and without much contribution from my side at all. The only inspiration that my life story provides is that no matter how twisted the path of life, in the end - with just a sufficient amount of luck - everything turns out okay. That this is so, is the reason we must all be always grateful to the Gods that are or may be and most definitely to fate; for keeping us in the lucky territory and out of catastrophic harm's way.

I have developed almost all of my life's philosophy on the hard anvil of my time at RIMC. This was mostly

because of the high quality of school masters we had at that time. They had the nous to be excellent life guides even though most were mediocre academic teachers. In addition, to survive in a military school with all its rigours, one had to develop a thick skin, become less idealistic and have a grounded approach to life. Some of the most important tenets which I imbibed at school are as follows:

- Take life one day at a time; trying to look too far into the future brings uncertainty. One of my favourite dictums. Though I was one of the most dedicated and zealous counters of DLTGH, it was mostly to look back at days elapsed rather than days left. I felt the happiest when it was the mid-term because the end of term brought so much impatience, since the end was in



Gagan Khurana: 2nd from left

sight. This philosophy stood me in excellent stead when I was sent for six months to RC Peak - a remote post in the Pir Panjals, two days walking distance from the nearest road head - by my CO. The sojourn was initially expected to be only 30 days but it kept getting extended. Since I was only counting days elapsed and not days left, I kept getting happier as more days elapsed knowing that I had to be recalled someday to the balmy climes of Nagrota.

- Sometimes the story and the perception becomes more important than the truth. I vividly remember a Saturday in my 5th or 6th term when I was on a special leave out to visit my Orthodontist and decided to treat myself to an extra special lunch at the Kwality Restaurant followed by a movie at Capri. It was raining heavily when I came out from the movie. As I was pedalling back to school my bike went

into a pothole on the Bindal Bridge. I was all banged and bruised, but most importantly my special leave out pass signed by Mr Nene went missing never to be found again. I got back to school and got into trouble for cutting bounds. The sad part was that Mr Nene was unable to confirm my side of the story, having signed the special pass a few weeks back and having forgotten about it. The funny thing was that I had gone cutting bounds the week earlier and made up a story about visiting my Orthodontist without any repercussions at all. This life lesson helped me a lot when I was applying for my MBA and I had to write about my life, as unremarkable as it was. I was very lucky to be accepted by a good Business School that saw something good in the stories narrated via my application essays.

- Friends are equally important as family (sometimes even more). I had

maybe three good friends at school and each one of them has had a huge impact on my life. It takes only one person to change the course of your life and these three (so-called) friends have been more than enough to guide my life's path wherever it has taken me and to make my life eminently interesting. After I resigned my commission with the Army, I got into consumer goods distribution. I quickly realised that some businesses are not all glamour and high-life and I started to contemplate my next step. As I was contemplating what to do next, one of my three good friends turns up and in true Mafiosi style makes me an offer that I cannot refuse. The offer was to move to Silicon Valley with him but with a 2-3 year hiatus in Mexico first. Why Mexico? One may ask and the answer is because there were no Indians (the bhatura eating kind) there and we could supposedly clean up selling motorcycles. I was so bored in India by then that it did

not take much for me to pack my bags and move to Mexico. And what a good decision that was. I learnt a lot selling motorcycles in Mexico with my friend, both about business and life. Time passed and we moved on our different respective paths. As I was contemplating doing my MBA, being sure that I would join the programme of my liking in the US, my friend number two strongly (actually very forcefully) suggested that I join a new MBA program in Berlin because it was offering me a full scholarship and a stipend. I accepted this advice to the acute consternation of another Rimcollian coursemate who insisted that I was making the biggest mistake by not doing my MBA in the US. I am thankful to friend number two for his advice and assured insistence which

allowed me to find a good job with zero debt by moving to Berlin. Lesson being, share the story of your gains and pains with your true friends (they are mostly those who did front rolls with you) and more importantly listen to their advice, as mostly it would be the right kind. Friend two if you are reading, let us speak more often than once a year as is the case now.

Therefore, these are some lessons which I have picked on the way as I have moved through life. I must add, that I am a bit sceptical of life lessons shared by successful people. This is so, because the true power of a lesson would be clear if outcomes could be assured ex-ante and not force-fitted and justified post-facto. Since all the biographies and self-help books have

not led to a surge in billionaire creation, we can safely assume that no one knows what is going on and we are just marionettes controlled by fate (paraphrasing Babu Moshai's dying friend).

(Mr Gagan Khurana was in RIMC from 1983 to 1987. Post NDA and IMA he joined the Army and served as a Captain from 1991 to 1996, and thereafter moved to Mexico as an entrepreneur from 1996 to 2003. He continued to work there as a Commercial Director of Yamaha from 2003 to 2005, and later as Expert Lead for McKinsey till 2012 for Mexico and Germany. Afterwards he moved to Geneva with World Economic Forum as Head of Country Operations, and later founded Maxiterra in Geneva in 2015) ■

SUCCESS IS MANDATORY

— MR LOVE TANDON; RANJIT; 1972-76

Things looked very bright in mid-1972 when I joined RIMC and cleared a test given to some of us for an immediate promotion to the next class. It was not so on a cold winter morning in December 1976 when the medical appeal board decided against my joining the NDA. The rank within top 25 in UPSC and the maximum distinctions in RIMC could not take me to the Services. My friends had already left for their homes. I was confused. Educational institutions were already six months into their sessions. Time was lost. Then the RIMC training kicked in. Face the situation and enjoy it. I joined Regional Engineering College in Kurukshetra six months later.

I unlearned a number of things. Seniors were not "Sir". You could relax while walking. Fearlessness was for others to adopt. You could formulate your own daily routine. The world was an uncontrolled grey. You leave RIMC but the RIMC does not leave you. Discipline, capacity for hard work, perseverance, fearlessness, fun, respect



and empathy for others remain with you. Work is embedded in life and is not separate. You are not fit for a nine-to-five job, but you complete any job on time.

Five years later after completing Engineering with Honours, IRMA - Institute of Rural Management Anand, Gujarat offered management education to help hidden rural India. The examination for IIM was easy but I did not go for the interview bearing the displeasure of my father who later accepted happily. Rural Management was the best experience to understand, experience and train to contribute to the people who needed you.

I opted to work in rural areas in the red corridor of Andhra but it did not work out. I joined NDDB - National Dairy Development Board, to work in Dairy Cooperative in remote Kala Paani or Port Blair in Andaman Nicobar Islands with a brief to establish and grow dairy cooperatives to grow cash income of farmers. Working as Manager and then as Managing Director, I daily left home at 3 am and returned near midnight. I visited every village meeting farmers and forming dairy cooperatives right up to the border of Jarawa country (feared isolated tribe in North Andaman who attacked anyone who came near). Milk for consumers was rationed through monthly cards. Cream was removed from any excess milk and heated for a few hours to extract ghee. In between I went home, married and returned immediately to produce ghee from milk cream the first night of our supposed honeymoon. My wife endured tea made with Complan for about a month as the milk card could be made only in the beginning of the month. The crazy hours continued. She still does not know why she continued with me after marriage.

The cooperatives and volumes grew ten-fold within the year. I was 24 years old and tried to look older by growing a beard. Success creates enemies and trouble came in waves. The food adulteration inspectors, neighbours to the dairy plant complaining of milk

stench, auditors for the second time the same year in spite of excellent audit, cattle feed storage space permission withdrawn by the government in the peak of rains, breakout of the fatal Foot and Mouth Disease of milk cattle and complaints to my head office in Calcutta with pictures of the dairy by local newspaper during cleaning time when the milk plant was at its ugliest. We came out stronger every time. Each time it was the RIMC training that helped. Face it and enjoy it. I went to the office of the newspaper and had a chat for four hours resulting in glowing front-page coverage. I continued to gather the farmers to create a Board of Directors to be run by them outside the government control. This was also the Amul model.

The government withdrew permission to promote dairy in the islands due to the possible impact on fragile ecology in the islands. I returned to NDDB before creating a Board for the cooperative. It was a year of fantastic learning on a roller coaster in the beginning of my career with an independent charge. What more could I ask for? With no immediate openings in rural sector, I helped the cattle feed plants to optimise the cattle feed mix. NDDB was being computerised and I jumped into it. I trained myself on the new skill and established and operationalized the Computer Centre on time. It was a good place to be in with both farmers and computers divisions pulling me. However, with pulls in opposite directions, I struggled for air.

Unknown to me, a friend had sent my bio-data to Grindlays Bank for their IT department in response to an advertisement. A year of interviews and selection process later, I was in Bombay in the IT department of the Bank establishing the Credit Card Division. Andhra Bank was already in business. Grindlays had to move fast. We learnt fast and went to market within a year. The business assumptions on volumes fell over and we ran out of capacity. Running operations was tricky. With no mid-level systems in the market we

went to work to create and set-up systems that could scale immediately. RIMC stubbornness or perseverance can be helpful. Success is mandatory.

Soon I was managing the entire IT support of the Bank and assisting with operations. The Bank decided to modernise and replace its software and systems. I was to lead the technology. Before implementation, the rehearsals for each branch happened at night and changes in the day. The process repeated till creases were ironed out. It was like changing parts of a moving machine. This was a situation ideally suited to a sleepless Rimcollian mind. We thrive.

The parent company, ANZ Bank offered to move me with family to Australia. Australia is a lovely country but perhaps not so good for the parents who like familiarity. They encouraged, but what was my duty? I decided to stay. I also loved the chaos in my country. Suddenly, all hell broke loose. The Bank was purchased by Standard Chartered Bank. The entire organisation structure was dismantled and downsized. All had to apply afresh and go through the selection process starting from the top. The ANZ offer came again amidst this uncertainty. RIMC also makes you stubborn. The reasons had not changed. I refused. I got a higher Group level position, managing India through two country managers of both the Banks in addition to Nepal and Mauritius. It was a major chunk of the Global business.

This was a time of challenges. The Banks and systems had to be merged and downsized, operating standards to be maintained and the Bank protected from potential sabotage. RIMC go-getter attitude and management learning proved to be advantageous. Technology was the easy part. Emotional upheaval was severe. Support to people with empathy, faith and transparency helped achieve the objectives. My responsibilities increased to higher Group Management roles through another promotion. This pointed to an overseas move later.

I had crossed 40 years of age and had earlier promised myself to get out of a formal job by the age of 45. This had meant early marriage and early children - a daughter, my only child. Disaster struck. I had a massive heart attack. It kept me in hospital for a month and half and out of action for another six months. RIMC physical training and its continuation later had built enough blood vessels for me to survive but the medicines played havoc. Six months was a long gap in the world then when I returned to work.

A year later, I moved into JP Morgan Chase in Mumbai to establish their Knowledge and Business Processing Centre and manage the India Technology operations. I was tired of travelling the world and here travel was not expected to be much. RIMC had created a habit, reinforced later, to push ourselves to the maximum. I scaled up to establish larger centres in Mumbai and more in Bangalore. Travelling started again and the heart trouble returned. I remember driving to the hospital on my own to get myself admitted. Opting for stents in arteries, something that could not be done earlier, I came out of the hospital quickly. It was a fast race to the top compared to my contemporaries. There is a saying that you can only drive so fast so far. But what is a Rimcollian who accepts this? We have to prove it wrong. My heart was in as

good a shape as possible. My age was about 45 now and the new phase could begin.

A consulting firm contacted me and I associated with them as their Senior Consultant on assignment basis advising on and helping with the problems faced by senior management. The assignments being overseas I decided to spend half the time at home. I helped Danamon Bank in Indonesia on program management and customer service. In the meantime my daughter decided to marry an officer in the Indian Army and I took a break to be with her.

Manpower Corporation in Thailand had to close their business due to a new law implemented suddenly. They contacted me for help and I travelled between India and Bangkok reformulating their entire business in about eight months. I continued with them for a while and left, refusing the offer of employment.

I got a call from TAPMI - TA Pai Management Institute, Manipal to take a course for their management students. I started apprehensively with a guest lecture and became a visiting professor for their Management Course. The energy of youngsters and their worldview was an attraction. I also became a visiting professor at Great Lakes Institute of Management in Chennai. A few years later I was also with NMIMS Institute of Management

Studies in Mumbai for their courses in Business Strategy and Corporate Social Responsibility. I joined Somaiyya Institute of Management Studies in Mumbai as visiting professor for Business Strategy. In the meantime, I moved away from TAPMI and Great Lakes Chennai. Staying only in Mumbai was most convenient.

In the meanwhile, I also associated with an NGO to train rural entrepreneurs in villages in management concepts of running a business. This was later conducted as part of National Rural Livelihood Mission through the NGO. This was most satisfying for the soul when I saw participants in the course coming straight out of adult literacy classes, excelling and improving their business using the concepts they had learnt.

Ten years after my daughter married, I have a grandchild - a grandson. About a year and a half old now, the pleasure of being with him is enormous. I have put everything on hold till he goes to play school. My son, rather son-in-law and daughter have always been after me and my wife to move in with them. The space for a person with 60 years may be limited in the world. It may be time for change again and skill up to utilise all that I have learnt and experienced in the past 60 years. RIMC go-getter attitude will help again. Face it and enjoy. We Rimcollians never get old. ■

PROMOTIONS & NOMINATIONS

Heartiest congratulations to Rimcollians for approval to the rank of Colonel in October 2019.

Lt Col Vignesh Belliappa
Lt Col Manish Lanjekar
Lt Col Harshvardhan Singh
Lt Col Varun Gidh
Lt Col Tejas B Candade
Lt Col DPS Rathore
Lt Col SC Ray
Lt Col Raja Wangdi Sherpa

Lt Col Basant Sewada, SM*
Lt Col Nitin Tyagi

Heartiest congratulations to Rimcollians nominated for the prestigious NDC Course commencing January 2020.

Brig Mohit Gandhi, 119 Pratap
Brig I S Panjra, 119 Ranjit
Brig Neeraj Gosain, 115 Shivaji (nominated to attend at Bangladesh)
Brig Vishal Agarwal, 120 Ranjit
Brig DS Bisht, 122 Pratap

Heartiest congratulations to Rimcollians empanelled for the rank of Brigadier.

Col RD Sharma, 123 Shivaji
Col Sanjeev Kumar, Shivaji

Many congratulations to the two Rimcollians nominated to attend Staff College in friendly foreign countries;

Maj Gaurav Hridaya, 4/9 GR, at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, USA.
Maj Dikshant Mahajan, 17 Dogra, at Canberra, Australia.

REVIVAL OF AN OLD RIMCOLLIAN SPORT

— SQN LDR **KUMAR GAURAV**

Squash, one of the fastest sports in the world has been entrenched in Rimcollians since the earliest days of not only RIMC but also the sport itself. So much so that the first ever Men's British Open Squash Championships were held in 1930 and RIMC already had a court way back in 1923. The RIMC squash court dates its origin back to 1923 when his highness Sir Agha Khan donated a court to the RIMC on 31 Jan 1923. It is truly an officer sport with presence in almost every cantonment in our country and proximity to the Officers' Messes. However, there has been a sharp decline in officers playing sports across Armed Forces due to various commitments, as well as recruitment of sportsmen as JCOs through sports

quota in all three Services. Unfortunately, it is rare to find an officer in any of the Services teams today across all disciplines.

Performance of NDA & RIMC Teams over the Past Year. The NDA and the RIMC teams have made great inroads in Indian Squash Circuit over the past two and a half years. The NDA team has been participating in almost all national level tournaments and has been a force to reckon with. The NDA team has been a good ambassador of the Armed Forces, reminiscent of the old days of domination of Squash court by officers. The cadets are beginning to rattle top-level players in long rallies. Cadet Sgt Vaibhav Chauhan, a Rimcollian, has been unsettling Top 10 players in the Men's Category barely

months after graduating from U-19. He beat Hav Jamal Sahib, a Top 10 player of Services team 3-1 in a National level tournament. Needless to mention, almost all cadets of the NDA team are Rimcollians. BCC Kunal Singh has been rock solid and with hard work, perseverance and unflinching dedication. He too has been shaking top seeded players. He has been waking up at 0400 Hr and practises in the NDA courts despite being a BCC, something which has been unheard of in recent memory.

Cadet Nishkal Dwivedi (Class IIIA) of RIMC Squash team has been creating ripples in the National circuit. He was runner up in the All India Open Squash Tournament at Haridwar in September 2019 where he lost 3-2 in a very



World Squash Day celebrated at NDA on 12 Oct 19



NDA and RIMC Squash team with Lt Gen S T Upasani and Mr Ritwik Bhattacharya at Junior National Squash Championship Chennai

closely contested match. He has been a good find and has been creating fear in the minds of his opponents. Even top players in U-15 are wary of him as he is fast, fit and takes good volleys. Not to mention the strength and stamina which is unmatched at his age just by virtue of undergoing the RIMC routine.

NDA also hosted the Inter Services Squash Championship from 17-21 May 2019 primarily due to excellent infrastructure. It was a great learning experience for NDA cadets who got valuable match practice even though they were not allowed to participate by SSCB due to administrative reasons.

Training Camps and Development at Grassroots Level. NDA hosted a five day National level coaching camp from 06-10 February 2019 which was attended by top Juniors in the country. They included India No 2, Rahul Baitha and good players from JSW Squash Academy, Mumbai, START Academy, Khopoli and some young squash players from Pune.

A three-day training camp was also conducted at RIMC by JWO Sandeep Jangra and JWO Ashish Keskar in

February 2019. This served as an opportunity to inaugurate the state of art International Standards ASB Court, one of its kind in all of Armed Forces. The behind the scenes efforts by Wg Cdr C Hari, Project Officer, RIMC to renovate the court to such standards, that too through MES, is praiseworthy.

Squash Competition from 09-24 July 2019 for probably the first time in its history with 216 cadets participating. Rimcollians excelled in the event. The finals between Juliet and Echo Squadrons were an all Rimcollian affair, since six of the eight players were Rimcollians.

Sub Junior/Junior National Squash Championships. The event held this year at Chennai from 16-22 October 2019 was a Rimcollian affair with NDA sending a contingent of 21 cadets and RIMC a team of eight cadets. Cadet Ajay Singh (A/139) reached Top 20 in India in U-19 category in the recently held Sub Junior/Junior Nationals Squash Championships. Cadet Nishkal Dwivedi of Class IIIA stood 11th in India in U-15 category despite being just 14 years

of age. The teams were hosted by the senior most Rimcollian in the area, Lt Gen ST Upasani, GOC DB Area for a tete-a-tete with Rimcos and Rimcollians. A special mention must be made of the contribution by Mr Ritwik Bhattacharya, a Rimcollian, and the flag bearer of Indian Squash globally. He has been mentoring the IAF, NDA and RIMC teams gratis on most occasions. Mr Ritwik has been the brainchild for the revival of the sport in the Armed Forces and we hope to see another Rimcollian as a National and World Champion soon.

I am reminded of the famous words of Nelson Mandela - "Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to inspire. It has the power to unite people in a way that little else does. It speaks to youth in a language they understand."

STOP PRESS: Cadet Nishkal Dwivedi, a Rimcollian has recently won the Under-15 National Squash Championship. Many congratulations to the emerging star from RIMC. ■

A SOLO CLIMB TO MOUNT ACONCAGUA

— COL **SARFRAZ SINGH**, SHIVAJI, 1991-96

This is a story of a solo climb in one corner of the world. Having scaled Mount Kilimanjaro and Mount Elbrus, the highest peaks of Africa and Europe during my first UN tenure at Congo (DRC) in 2006, I decided to climb the next in the list of ‘Seven Summits’ ,Mount Aconcagua, the highest peak of South America. The peak is located in the Andes mountain ranges, Argentina.

During this time, I was with a United Nations Mission in Congo DRC, and had some dollars to spare. The journey started from Goma (DRC) to Kigali (Rwanda) Virunga National Park (Rwanda) by road, after which I flew across the Atlantic Ocean to finally reach the beautiful city of Mendoza in Argentina. The route taken was through Kigali-Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) - Johannesburg (South Africa) -Sao Paulo (Brazil) - Buenos Aires (Argentina) - Mendoza. Firstly, the Aconcagua park entrance permit was taken from the



Mendoza tourism office after paying some of my secret dollars. This permit included helicopter rescue and medical services in case of emergency!

The climb commenced on 07 Feb 2015 from Penitents (Road Head Camp)

a ski destination, located 182 Km from the Mendoza city, near Chile border. It is called Penitents due to the rocky mountain surrounding the town that resembles priests doing penitence. I took the Horcocones Valley route and negotiated various camps over a period of 12 days before finally making it to the summit. The Road Head Camp was at Penitents (9000 ft), the Intermediate Camp at Confluencia (11000 ft), the Base Camp at Plaza de Mulas (14000 ft), Camp 1 at Plaza Canada (16000 ft), Camp 2 at Nido-De-Condorez (18000 ft) and the Higher Camp, Camp 3 at Plaza Colera (20000 ft).

Acclimatization planning being essential for the success of the expedition, experience gained back home in the Himalayas helped me to plan it well. My decision to go solo was a blessing in disguise as it helped me to achieve a high level of acclimatization



Highest Peak of South America

before the summit. As no porters were employed, one had to carry more than 50 kgs of load from Base Camp to the higher camps. To achieve this, I trekked to all camps more than twice in order to ferry load from one camp to another. It included tents, ration, mountaineering gear and personal equipment.

The progress to the higher camps was smooth and as per plan. The final ascent was planned on 18 Feb 15. However, after getting the latest weather report, I had to advance it to 17 Feb 15 because a strong snowstorm was forecasted for 18 Feb. A large number of climbers (72) started their summit attempt on 17 Feb since it was the last window available in the season. The climb to the summit started at 0200 Hr from Camp-III (Summit Camp). After seven hours of continuous climbing, it appeared that the summit was near as lot of climbers were on their way back, but it was disheartening to know that none of them could scale the peak due to inclement weather and strong winds. The two km long traverse before the final climb to the top was treacherous as the wind speed touched 50-60 km/h. It took another two hours to cross this dangerous stretch. When I finally rested for few minutes near a big cave, I realised that my water, energy drinks and juice were all frozen and I did not have a drop to drink.

The final ascent was steep and strenuous. I continued my climb inspite of all odds for another three hours before the mighty Aconcagua gave audience at 1500 Hr on 17 Feb 2015. It was a proud moment standing on roof of South America and unfurling the National flag. After spending an hour on the summit, I commenced my return journey to Camp-III (Plaza Colera) and reached the location by 1930 Hr. While it was a long tiring day with more than 16 hours of continuous walk above 20000 ft, it was an extremely memorable and a special day to celebrate. A total of 24 climbers out of 72 made it to the summit on 17 Feb 15. The successful climbers were from America, Russia and Europe. I was the only solo climber who made it to the top that day.



On Summit of Aconcagua with Indian Army & National Flag

After a hard day on the mountain, a sound sleep was necessary but the weather Gods had different plans for the climbers camping at 20000 ft. The summit camp was hit by a snow storm at 2130 Hr on 17 Feb 15. The wind speed exceeded 75 km/h. The winds were blowing away the tents and it was difficult even for the high quality tents like Mountain Hardware, North Face and Red Fox to survive the deadly storm. I struggled hard for almost two hours trying to save my tent from the storm but my efforts went in vain as the tent poles broke from the middle. I was trapped inside the tent and another gust of strong wind threw me some distance away along with the tent. With great difficulty, I tore the tent with my commando knife and managed to come out of the tent but could not repair the tent. The time was 2300 Hr with temperature falling below minus 25 degree centigrade. It was next to impossible to stay the entire night without a tent. A Russian mountaineer named Vladimir who had pitched his tent a little distance away came to my rescue. He offered me shelter in his small tent which had three other Russian climbers. The night was uncomfortable and scary. I saw for the first time Russians praying to the weather Gods in unison.

The morning of 18 Feb 15 surprised everybody. There were eight tents (including mine) which were blown away by the storm. The balance existing tents at the camp were badly damaged by the strong winds. My personal gear to include snow boots, goggles, mittens and rucksack along with my passport, money and credit cards were all blown away with my tent. I was left standing on the summit camp without shoes and without proper clothing gear. The only choice left for me was to at least search and locate my rucksack which had my passport and other important documents. The chances to find my gear was very little as I had emptied my rucksack while changing clothes prior to the storm. The summit camp was full of snow with limited visibility. However, I still continued the search. It went in vain as I could not locate a single item. The last and the only option was to descend towards the big "Chille Valley" which I did after slipping couple of times on the rocky and hard snow surfaces. After descending about 60 odd meters, to my surprise, I found a vertical cliff in the centre of the valley with my rucksack fluttering like a bird on the pinnacle of the cliff. I was in for a new challenge i.e to climb this vertical cliff without ropes and technical equipment well before the rucksack is further blown away by the strong winds.

My strong arms and shoulders came to my rescue and I did manage to climb the cliff after couple of failed attempts and was lucky to recover my bag. My joy had no boundaries. Infact I felt happier than I was on the day prior on the summit of Mt Aconcagua.

I decided to move back to the summit camp. On my return I found two more essential items and these were my shoes and my mobile phone. As I could never locate my camera, I thanked my stars that at least I took few pics on the summit with my mobile. The summit camp was soon vacated by all the climbers and everyone rushed down towards the Base Camp in heavy snow and poor visibility. The weather was bad for next few days and it took another two days to reach the Road Head Camp at Penitents. It was indeed a proud moment to have



successfully climbed a 7000 metres peak without porters, guide, group or buddy. I later learnt that I became the first Indian to climb Mt Aconcagua solo.

It is often said in the 'Mountaineering World' that no mountain is easy until you climb and reach back safely. Mt Aconcagua is a tough mountain, though less technical compared to the other 7000 metres peaks in Himalayas but it is

equally or even more dangerous due to high wind-chill factor and frequent wind/snow storms at higher camps. It is referred as 'Killer Mountain' or 'Mountain of Death' by the locals, as large number of fatal casualties occur every year. During this season five mountaineers were killed between Jan to Feb while scaling the peak. Most of them had suffered from extreme exhaustion and hypothermia. Inspire of high casualty rate, this majestic mountain continues to draw large number of climbers from across the globe as it is in the list of 'Seven Summits' (Highest peak of each continent) which every mountaineer desires to climb. ■

Col Sarfraz Singh is an Everester and presently the Commandant of the National Institute of Mountaineering and Allied Sports.

THE ARMY IN KERALA FLOODS

— LT COL **JOE VARGHESE**, CHANDRAGUPTA | 1995-2000



A makeshift bridge being constructed at Cannanore District



In Aug 2018, Kerala experienced its worst floods since 1924. This disaster was unprecedented, in both fury and destruction for more than a century. The count finally stood at approx. 450 dead, 15 missing and more than 15 lakh people displaced in 5000 relief camps. God's Own Country had just felt his wrath. I was a part of the Army team that was involved in the rescue and relief and this is a first-hand account of how the disaster unfolded

and how the civil administration along with the Services and other agencies responded.

Rains wreaked havoc in two distinct periods. On the 7&8 August 2018 there were heavy rains in and around north Kerala. The first column was requisitioned on 8th August at Iritty, a town close to Cannanore. A column from Defence Security Corps (DSC) Centre Cannanore moved at short notice for rescue

operations with limited equipment but motivated troops.

Slowly it dawned on the Civil Administration there was a catastrophe in the making and on 9th August five additional columns, including one from Coimbatore, moved into Kozhikode, Cannanore & Mallapuram districts. The teams immediately swung into action for rescue and maintenance of essential roads and bridges. In two days the teams

constructed more than 20 bridges from locally sourced material. The teams were also instrumental in many rescue missions in cut off areas. By 11th August it seemed like the worst had passed and the Home Minister visited the state and sanctioned ₹100 crores as an interim relief. The state was now in recovery mode & the Army had also switched from rescue to relief mode.

However, there were warnings due to unprecedented precipitation in the Western Ghats. Almost all 40 reservoirs in the state had been filled to their capacity. The Idukki reservoir which rarely releases precious water stored for farming and generating electricity was frantically opening the gates of Cheruthoni dam, one of the three of dams of the massive Idukki Reservoir. All this at a time when the Onam festive season was just around the corner.

In the intervening night of 13th and 14th August and through the day, Kerala received approximately 300% more than the normally expected rain fall. One by one all the districts started flooding. It started with the higher districts like Idukki but in no time engulfed the whole state. Soon the districts of Thrissur, Ernakulam, Pathan anthitta and Alleppey were submerged. The State Government declared “Red Alert” in 12 of the 14 districts. Kerala was now trending on world news, grappling with a once in a century disaster. The Additional Chief Secretary (Revenue) was now in charge of the Flood Relief Operations. He frantically requisitioned more than 20 columns from the Army. Simultaneously The Indian Navy launched “Operation Madad”. The Air Force was flying in rescue and relief material from across the country. Within hours a Joint Operations Centre was



Entire Towns were flooded

established at the Kerala Secretariat. The headquarters of Naval and Air Force Southern Commands located in Kochi and Trivandrum was a blessing.

A very positive role was played by Air Marshal B Suresh, a Rimcollian and the then AOC-in-C Southern Air Command, whose pro-activeness made all the difference. The Army’s HQ Karnataka & Kerala Sub Area moved its Forward Tactical Headquarters to Trivandrum to oversee operations. The Kochi Airport had to be shutdown as it lay along the natural alignment of river Periyar. The Chief Minister held review meetings twice a day with all stakeholders including all Secretaries, representatives of Armed Forces, NDRF, police etc. followed by a quick dissemination of news through a Press Conference. Press Conferences were necessary to keep the state informed, dispel rumours and project a picture of the administration being in control of the situation. Even the Navy, Coast Guard and NDRF initially seemed ill-equipped for the quantum of relief effort required. The Civil Administration requested for fisherman volunteers who immediately came forward in large numbers. Large trucks were placed for boats at short notice. By 16th Aug it was evident then the

largest amount of evacuation was being done through these boats on normal roads as water levels in most of the affected towns had crossed eight feet. Fisherman ventured to places the NDRF could not as they were used to rough seas and deep waters. They were later felicitated by the Govt and numerous NGOs.

The Army for its part flew in more than 20 Engineer columns with Boats Universal Assault Type (BsAUT). The BsAUT designed for totally different requirement was now the most convenient equipment as it was light and could operate in places with minimum depth along with its OBMs (On Board Motors). Kerala has a very high density of population and plenty of tree cover where the manoeuvrability of these BsAUT was exploited. The seamless induction happened due to coordination by Southern Command and IHQ and most teams were on standby based on Met reports. The state also saw a large number of volunteers including Service Personnel on leave manning ad hoc ATCs and coordinating with the Civil Administration. In one incident, 40 tonnes of relief material were unloaded by college students in a short period of time when the Civil Administration could not employ porters. ■



Daily Review Meeting of all Agencies chaired by CM



CM thanking the Author on the last day of Ops

TWO STORIES

— Brig **S VIJAYKUMAR (RETD)**; RANJIT; 1952-57

FIRST STORY — Capt Jojo Sengupta

Capt JK Sengupta, popularly known as Jojo, was a brilliant all-rounder who excelled in academics and sports. He went on to win Gold Medals for topping the merit list in all the premier institutions - RIMC, NDA and IMA. His 100 m Freestyle record in Swimming remained unbeaten for a long time in all the three institutions. Commissioned into 16 Light Cavalry, he was attending the Gunnery Instructors Course at Ahmednagar when the 1965 War with Pakistan broke out, so he riled to be taken off the Course to be with his troops on the Battlefield in Chhamb Sector. While directing the shoots, he successfully brought down several Pakistani tanks before his own tank was hit, severely injuring him. Even after



intense treatment in Specialized Hospitals in India & UK, he was rendered virtually blind. The stars had been harsh on him but not accepting a defeat so easily, he goes on to give back to society what he would find himself deprived of, by dedicating himself selflessly to the cause of the disabled, especially the blind. Despite shortage of funds for such a socially neglected cause, his soldierly attitude, ruthless perseverance and hard work brings him to raise 'Prerana' a cross disability educational centre for children with disabilities which seeks to provide holistic learning through a well-designed curriculum. He married Rita in 1977 and soon they were blessed with twin daughters, one of whom was Sreerupa. ■

SECOND STORY — Maj Gopal Mitra, SM, 15 Mahar

Major Gopal Mitra, SM, commissioned into 15 Mahar, serves extensively in Counter Insurgency operations both in North East India and in Kashmir, culminating in active operations during the Kargil War in 1999. Severely injured while leading a search and destroy operation in the Kupwara district of Kashmir, suffers total visual impairment with 60 stitches across his face & several reconstructive surgeries over two years in the hospital. For his gallantry & dedicated services he was awarded the Sena Medal.



But that seemed to be the end of the road for such a promising youngster. However, it was not to be. Mitra chose to overcome these insurmountable odds and handicaps through steely resolve, grit and determination. Maj Mitra trained himself in Software & Computer skills in various institutions which

enabled him to see better with his mind's eye. He then went on to achieve greater

glory when he set a record at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai by becoming the first blind student to top a post graduate course.

He followed it up by successfully completing M.Sc. in Development Management at the prestigious London School of Economics (LSE) with outstanding grades. He is now an ardent campaigner of disability rights providing technical support to inclusive education programmes in India & several other Asian Countries. His work in the region helps facilitate access to education of children with disabilities in regular schools.

He is now working in the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund as Programme Specialist for disability. He is the first Indian with disabilities to occupy this key UNICEF post. He married a charming

young lady who is equally devoted to the cause of the visually handicapped.

What is the relationship between the Two Stories?

Jojo Sengupta and Gopal Mitra are both valiant soldiers of whom the country and the Army is proud of. Both were blinded during active operations and both dedicated their lives to serving and educating handicapped children, who otherwise would be begging on the

streets. Both married charming young girls & brought up a happy family. What is remarkable is that these girls are well educated and married not out of any compulsion but of their own choice. But what inspires awe is that both of them married after their husbands were rendered blind and handicapped. Society needs to draw inspiration from the fact that these two ladies are epitomes of happiness & contentment in a world where, ironically, many wives find themselves

deprived of a so-called happy family, which leaves you wondering as to who the more fortunate ones are.

How am I connected to the two, you may ask? Jojo Sengupta and I grew up together in RIMC & onwards. Gopal Mitra was commissioned into 15 Mahar, the Battalion that I so proudly commanded. Both the relationships are insurmountable.

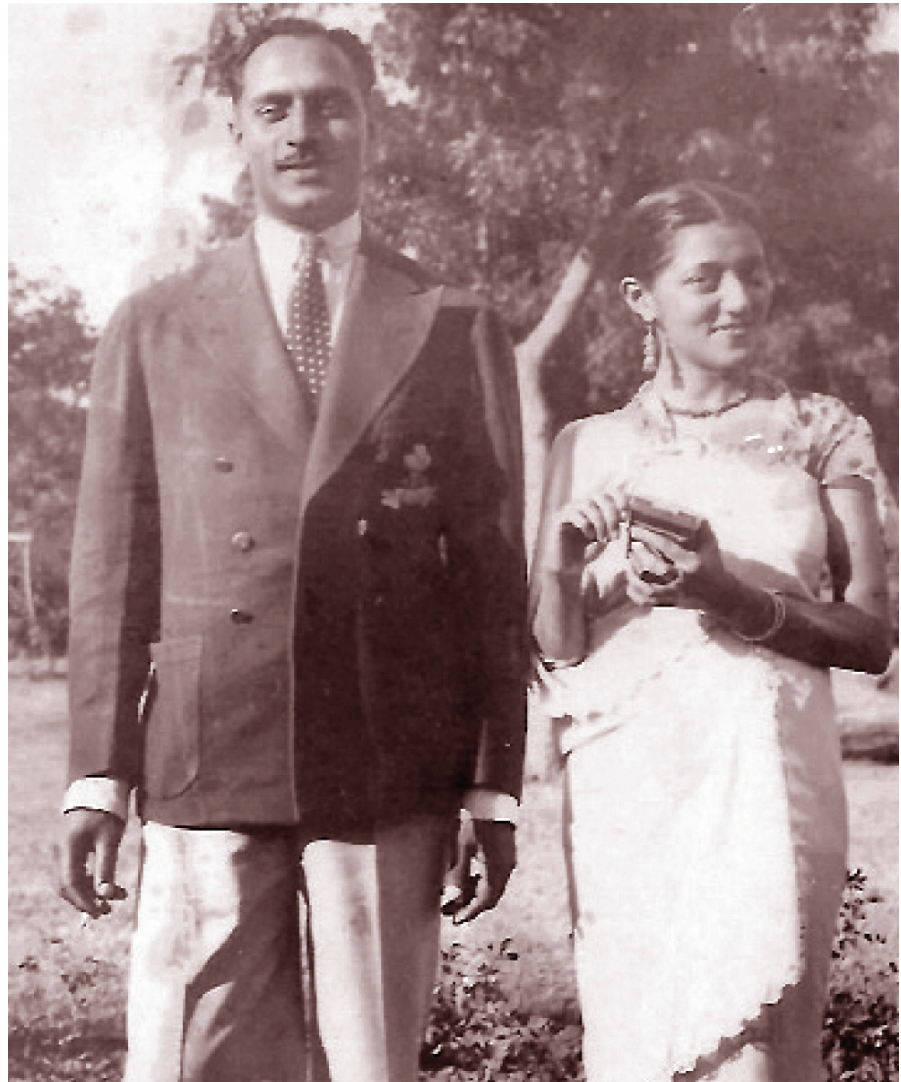
And finally, Gopal Mitra is the son-in-law of Jojo Sengupta. His daughter Sreerupa is married to Gopal Mitra. ■

TIMMY, OUR FAMILY & RIMC

— Flt Lt **AJIT SINGH (RETD)**; Shivaji; 1958 - 62

The photograph of Gen KS Thimayya has been on what is the equivalent of a mantelpiece in the house where my late in-laws had lived for years. Timmy, sporting a Rimcollian blazer is with a lady in the photograph. What is remarkable is that it was and continues to be the only non-family photo in the house! Knowing well whose photograph it was and having run out of a topic of conversation of interest to my mother in-law, Bali Anant Singh, I asked her if she recognized who were the persons in the photograph and why she had that photograph. Very airily, dismissing me for asking such a silly question with a wave of her hand, 'Timmy and Nina' she said. She went on to tell me that her husband, my father in-law, Brigadier Anant Singh and Timmy had served together in Quetta and formed a very close bond with each other which was later to include Jogi Dhillon - Lt Gen JS Dhillon, another Rimcollian, who trained together with my father in-law in Thomason College, Roorkee after their commission and before joining their respective Sappers units.

The Partition happened in 1947. My father-in-law married in 1948 in Delhi where he was posted. The wedding was attended by Gen KS Thimayya, or Timmy, as everyone in my family called him. There was little accommodation and Timmy was on a quick visit to Delhi from



Gen KS Thimayya with Mrs Nina Thimayya

Kashmir where he was then serving. Even on a hurried visit, he came to their rescue and arranged for the newly-wedded couple to live for a while in some place which my mother-in-law told me but I forget where that was. It is such little things that endeared the General a little more to the couple. Out of her fondness for Timmy, she had a lot of very fine things to say about the man - he loved Nina who was a very sweet woman, very bashful and caring. Timmy was the soul of every party, the best dancer and always in demand.

More about RIMC connection. When Amita, my wife accepted my proposal, I was invited to meet her parents. As concerned parents of the bride typically do, I was asked some questions related to my family, education and what I was doing. The replies were all accepted especially because I had two retired uncles who had served in the Army and I

had three cousins serving in the Air Force. What did not sit well is that I had retired prematurely from the Air Force. All matters of my being a 'suitable boy' were instantly settled as soon as I mentioned RIMC. Spurred by this revelation, some eminent Rimcollians were invited to the wedding and I continued to see them often at many get-togethers hosted by my parents-in-law which amongst others included Lt. Gen JS Dhillon, Lt. Gen Dubey, Maj Gen Bipin Wadhwa - all Sappers like my father-in-law and Lt. Gen MS Wadalia. Alas, they are no more.

Col Dilip Parab of my vintage was the Commandant when I visited the RIMC with my wife and daughter in 1994. One can imagine how it is when we meet our friends and so it was in meeting Col Parab. There were many little things that I saw needed care and correction which I felt free to mention

to the Commandant who heard me quietly but invited me to his office. He asked the clerk dealing with accounts and Adm Officer to join us. (Adm officer was Lt Gen Manvendra Singh whose last posting was Commandant, IMA). The money that was private to the RIMC as Regimental Fund was less than Rs 4.0 lakhs and the small interest it earned allowed very little for the Commandant to do. The Commandant also told me of the crying need of some cadets who needed some financial assistance. On return, I was relating the trip to the Doon and the RIMC to my father-in-law who with alacrity sent Rs. 1.0 lakh from a family trust, The Ahluwalia Baradari Trust, to form the corpus for award of a scholarship. Happily, the scholarship continues even today. What follows is another story - the genesis of the ROBA Trust and the formalization of ROBA. ■

ALUMNI AFFAIRS

ROBA TRUST AND ROBA

— Flt Lt **AJIT SINGH (RETD)**; Shivaji; 1958 - 62

FIRST THE TRUST AND REGIMENTAL FUNDS

There is an oft-asked question why we have two different organisations; ROBA and ROBA Trust. And, why do we not merge the two and why is there a difference?

In 1994 when Col Dilip Parab was the Commandant and I was visiting the school, the funds available to the RIMC as its Regimental Funds were about Rs. 4 lakhs. The question that arose in my mind was, 'why, this was the state after nearly 72 years of RIMC's existence? I was aghast and determined that we could not let that state of penury to continue! Then, under the tutelage of Gen VN Sharma, we embarked on a journey which is elaborated in the next

few paragraphs. I write from memory as no formal record has been maintained and while mainly correct, the next few paragraphs may include some insignificant points where I may be marginally in error which will not alter the narrative or its content or meaning.

When Col DH Parab handed over to Col Arun Mangain, the availability of the Regimental funds had increased to Rs. 18 lakhs in a year!! How? There was now a consciousness that the RIMC needed money so that the RIMC could do more for the cadets - the most precious assets of the RIMC for which it exists. It was realized that the way

forward was by a) setting up a trust and b) persuading the powers that be to provide RIMC with Regimental Funds.

In 1995, the setting up of ROBA Trust was expedited as Mr. Catchpole was ready to donate Rs. 15 lakhs but only on the condition that the RIMC have an 'educational trust' for furthering education of the cadets. He made an additional sum available to build an abode for him to live in his last years. Alas, when the Catchpole Guest House was ready, Mr. Catchpole regrettably had gone to meet his maker.

After consulting some Foundations, we were advised that it was only to an educational trust that a corporate

company would donate and not just to a society of Rimcollians, however well-meaning the Rimcollians may be. Knowing the limited ability of those in Services with salaries as in 1995, we knew that we had to go out to those that would donate. Hence, we had to set up a Trust with its aims and objectives clearly enunciated as an educational trust which would find resonance with those whom we may approach for donations. In hindsight, I am happy that we listened to our experienced well-wishers because we were able to receive the munificence of some business houses.

Soon after we had the Trust in place, we reached KCMET and TATA Trusts to contribute. I am happy that we succeeded. The funds that were made available were a shot in the arm for a fledging entity like ROBA Trust which also buoyed our spirits and convinced us that we were on the right track as the faith reposed in us by Mr. Catchpole was justified.

Now, the catchwords were, “money is power to do things” and “power is having money to do”. Lest anyone have the wrong notion or idea or impression of what we mean, power here relates to what the Rimcollians together can do for their alma mater.

We found allies in Gen Grewal, the then Adjutant General and Gen S Padmanabhan, the COAS. Regimental Funds began to flow in. A single mind-boggling cheque of Rs. 50 lakhs was handed over to the Commandant at one time by Gen Grewal at a Reunion. After that, the rest as they say is history.

Col Dilip Parab was persuaded to hike the cost of College Prospectus from a very meagre sum that barely covered the cost of printing. The contribution of the Prospectus proceeds to the Regimental Funds is now a lot more substantial.

After that sentiment and mindset about ROBA Trust changed and Brig Patnaik as the Sub Area Cdr, Dehradun, sent in Station Canteen profits to augment the RIMC Regimental Funds. This corpus is now approaching the Rs. 4 crore mark that allows us to send an



we were advised that it was only to an educational trust that a corporate company would donate and not just to a society of Rimcollians, however well-meaning the Rimcollians may be. Knowing the limited ability of those in Services with salaries as in 1995, we knew that we had to go out to those that would donate

average of Rs. 2 lakhs every month (Rs. 24 lakhs annualized) to the RIMC which we hope soon to grow to Rs. 36 lakhs annually.

ROBA

I have explained the circumstances why and how we set up the Trust. Till now i.e. 1995, when the Trust was set up, ROBA was an informal body but its objectives since its inception under Gen KS Thimayya as the President and then Col GG Bewoor, as the Secretary have

remained unchanged and continue to guide us. Unchanged, because we all collectively consider the aims as non-negotiable.

There was a need for formalizing this body and I got the ‘go ahead’ from Lt. General Vinay Shankar, the then President, ROBA. The requirement of what the RIMC wanted and what the Trust did not have as its objectives was the welfare of other staff who are as important as the teaching faculty. Thus, while framing the objectives of ROBA, the welfare of the staff as an objective was an aim that we wanted included besides other items. The word, welfare in the MOA of ROBA and its connotation allowed us to apply for approval u/s 80 that any contribution to ROBA is exempt up to 50% for purposes of Income Tax. Therefore, there has been a thought put in this!

In setting up ROBA, over a period of time, we were able to bring in the funds lying in an informal way in more than one account which were about Rs. 3 lakhs as against a sum close to Rs. 1 crore plus that we now have.

After the creation of ROBA as a Society, we are now able to organize Reunion and other functions, better account for moneys collected. It must also be understood that the Centenary is not too far. The preparations for which have taken some nascent steps and Rs. 60 lakhs collected from Rimcollians who have booked attendance in 2022. How could this have been done without a formal organization? And, how could we have attempted sponsorship without a formal body. Over a period of time the number of questions that were asked is down to a few a month as against the verbiage of the past.

ROBA has also taken the responsibility of bringing out bi-annual issues of the magazine ‘Rimcollian’ and ROBA Calendar. In the last few years, during the Reunion, it has contributed a handsome amount to the welfare of the staff who work so hard to make it a dazzling affair with better organization and increasing attendance. ■

VIEW FROM THE OTHER SIDE - MUSINGS OF A RIMCOLLIAN WIFE

— **MRS FALGUNI CHAKRAVARTY**

(The author is the wife of Lt Gen Aniruddha Chakravarty, AVSM, VSM (Retd), 1968 - 1972, 93rd course RIMC, Pratap)



The journey begins: Capt Aniruddha & Mrs Falguni Chakravarty, soon after their wedding

Ma'am, I will be going to RIMC. It's the best school in the country!"

My ears perked up at the sound of a familiar name in the most unlikely of surroundings.

I was chatting with these 12-year-olds, my Class VII students of DPS, Marutikunj, Gurgaon and was enquiring about their future plans when Sahil, a bright-eyed, sprightly little boy raised his hand and piped in from one of the rear benches.

"RIMC? You mean.....?" I trailed

off... "Yes, Ma'am. It's Rashtriya Indian Military College, RIMC, in Dehra Dun, and I'm appearing for the entrance exam next month. I have to get through Ma'am and I'm preparing very hard - it's very tough to clear, you know!", said Sahil solemnly, confidence writ all over his little chest! I nodded gravely as I enquired, "But why RIMC? What's so special about this school?" "Ma'am, you know, it's no ordinary school, it's an elite military school where you enter as a boy and come out as a gentleman!"

I looked fondly at the little boy and

prayed his perseverance and confidence take him to the hallowed precincts of this great institution. That was way back in 2004 and even today, Sahil's words ring in my ears as I look up at my husband, my hero of 38 years!

Well, it all began one hot July afternoon in 1981 over lunch in Kwalitiy, Kolkata, when I just couldn't take my eyes off this 25-year-old dashing, handsome young demi-god, sporting a thick moustache, puffing out rings of smoke as he (nervously) tried to make small talk with me. It was an

A resolute Sahil Sahoo cracked the entrance exam and joined the Class of 2005-2009, in Shivaji Section. He is now a young Major in The Grenadiers.

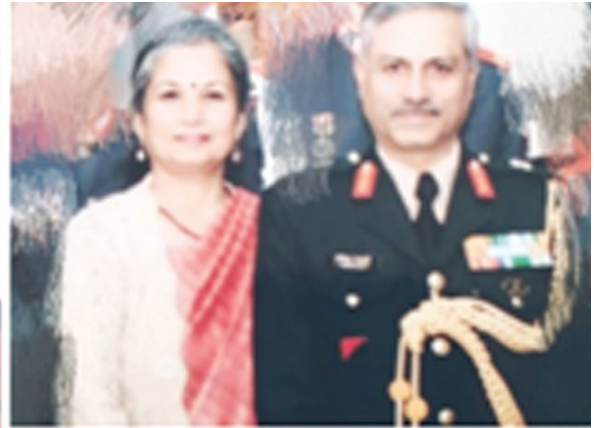
‘arranged match’ and we were sizing each other up in our first meeting. For a 21-year-old from Tamil Nadu who had never ever seen a Defence Officer from such close quarters, leave alone speak to one, his intense gaze was enough to make my legs turn into jelly! But I couldn’t allow that, could I? He seemed nervous for sure, because he just wouldn’t talk! So, I took the initiative and, “Where did you do your schooling?” was my first (silly) question.”RIMC, Dehra Dun”, he answered in a deep, rich baritone as he went back to smoking his fourth cigarette! Well, his school surely did not groom him to speak to girls, I chuckled silently! Little did I know that his school would soon be a name to reckon with, for many years to come!

Being married to a Rimcollian is like being married to the institution and everything that comes along with it - a fact which I learnt within three months of tying the knot. It was March 1982, the grand Diamond Jubilee celebrations and my first ever experience of a Rimcollian event where I was left to fend for myself by my (now) not-so-chivalrous husband. The transformation from a doting husband to a “I-don’t know-who-you-are” happened even as I gingerly stepped on to the lush green expanse in front of me and turning to give him my hand to be escorted into the heritage Tudor Style Mess, I found that he hadvoosh..... vanished! Yes, just vanished into this crowd of crew-cut, young, boisterous men who were hugging and screaming and shouting in excitement, as they were re-united. They looked and sounded more like banshees, especially to a prim and proper convent educated girl.

“Some school!” I thought to myself angrily, rolling my eyes heavenwards as I huffed off in despair.

My first lesson and there’s no mistaking that- your husband is a macho Rimcollian first, mushy husband later.

For all the four days and three nights thereafter, I don’t recollect ever seeing or hearing from my man till it was time to board the train back. What I do recollect



Inter services bonding in the family - The Chakrvarty girls are both married to Naval officers. Cdr Aruanav & Mrs Diya Purkayastha and Lt Cdr Soumitra & Shreya Kulkarni

is fretting and fuming in the guestroom, attending breakfasts, lunches, dinners, boxing matches and cultural programs all by myself and exchanging notes with similar distressed damsels.

Lesson No# 2 came to me in the form of boiled eggs wrapped oh-so-scrumptiously in a thick coat of minced meat and bread crumbs and fried a crispy golden brown - they call it Scotch Eggs you see, and every Rimcollian wife learns very early in life to treat this with utmost respect. So, at a Rimcollian reunion, you will have them for breakfast, for lunch, for anything in-between, for dinner, with a repeat performance for the next three days to follow while you fervently try and ignore those vile threats from your tummy!

It is the first few blows on the anvil of life that give the human weapon the set and temper that carry him through life’s battles”. His Royal Highness, Prince Edward VIII the Prince of Wales

addressed the first batch of thirty-seven cadets on the inauguration of RIMC (then Prince of Wales Royal Indian Military College) on 13th March, 1922, with these epic words, which is the core of RIMC ethos.

The blows came in gusts and spurts from all angles possible and very early in his career as a military officer. But my man whose integrity and honesty could never be questioned, put into practice everything that his alma mater had trained and prepared him for. As he faced every challenge thrown at him, I watched and marvelled silently at the impeccable character gently unfolding in front of me. Not one to take nonsense of any kind, he rose up to every occasion with grit and determination, protecting his honour and bringing pride to his Institution and his Regiment.

From the icy slopes of the most challenging post on the Siachen glacier, to commanding his Battalion, his Brigade and his Division, he always led



The class of 72 with their desirable halves

from the front and he led through example. His indomitable courage in the face of enemy firing, his fortitude and professional acumen, clear vision, sharp intellect and his ability to inspire, motivate and hold his team together, undoubtedly trace their foundations to his appointment as Section Commander, Pratap Section while in school and as SCC 'L Sqn' in NDA.

The lives of the troops under his command were very dear to him and whenever the need arose, he even confronted his bosses, thereby risking future promotions, just to protect them. Needless to say, he was greatly loved and respected by the men and officers under him.

Now, as we approach our sunset years, I look back with nostalgia at all those years gone by, each challenge

throwing open yet another facet of my man's strengths, the seeds of which were sown one cold January morning in 1968. The camaraderie and brotherhood that had developed over the next four years has now spread its warmth to envelop all the lady wives of his Class of 72 who behave like a bunch of banshees themselves at every reunion, attacking those Scotch Eggs with gusto, cheering loudly for their husband's Section at every boxing match, listening in rapt attention to the oft repeated stories of bravado and team spirit of Class 5 and letting their hair down on the dance floor at every given opportunity.

The aroma of freshly brewed filter coffee wafts in from the kitchen where my man is busy putting it all

together. From a distance I notice the little bald patch on his head, the salt and pepper moustache, the intense eyes that have witnessed so much glory and fame, the tenderness of a father who simply adores his two beautiful daughters.... and my heart skips a beat.

As he walks out majestically from the kitchen door holding two steaming cups of coffee, I envisage my hero passing out smartly through the hallowed portals of the most elite military school of the country, an Institution par excellence, as a humble, distinguished officer and a true GENTLEMAN! ■

PS: I understand that in keeping with the moving times, today, senior cadets of RIMC do invite girls from the neighbouring boarding schools to their Annual Socials!

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QUICK FLIP



Simrandeep Singh, CEO, SMVDSB receiving award.

Today with Simran Deep

Mr. Simrandeep Singh, CEO, SMVDSB receiving award from the President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind at New Delhi, for Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine having been adjudged the Best Swachh Iconic Place in the country.

Mr Simrandeep Singh, IAS, a Rimcollian, receives a prestigious award from the President of India.



Mrs Rita Singh, wife of Maj Gen Sanjay Singh, was awarded CBSE Principal award by HRD Minister on 12 Sep 19. Mrs Rita Singh is the Principal of Indirapuram Public School, Ghaziabad and Director, Indirapuram Group of Institutions.



A proud Maj Gen Sanjay Singh at the award ceremony



The first landing of Naval LCA, Tejas, was successfully conducted on INS Vikramaditya in January 2020. A Rimcollian and a test pilot, Capt (IN) Shivnath Dahiya has been closely associated with this project during its development over the last nine years



Capt (IN) Shivnath Dahiya, in September 2019 had earlier conducted the first simulated ski jump takeoff of the LCA Tejas from INS Hansa in Goa which set the stage for the first-ever landing on the INS Vikramaditya.



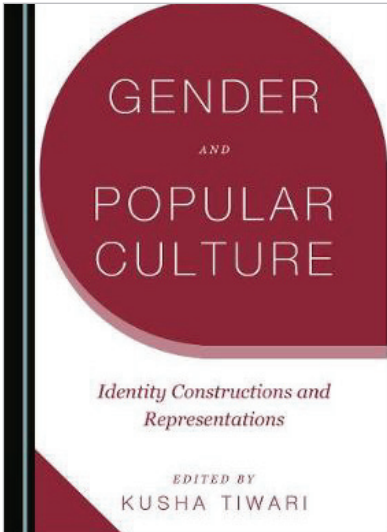
EasternCommand_IA @east... · 1h · #AssumptionOfComd

Lt Gen Nav K Khanduri assumed the charge of GOC, #TrishaktiCorps on 13 Sep 2019 with a solemn wreath laying ceremony at Sukna War Memorial, West Bengal and paid tribute to the fallen soldiers @adgpi @SpokespersonMoD



18 129

A Rimcollian hands over to another Rimcollian. Lt Gen Nav Khanduri takes over the command of a Corps in North East India from another Rimcollian, Lt Gen CP Mohanty. Lt Gen CP Mohanty has since taken over as the GOC-in-C Southern Command of the Indian Army.



Prof Sidharth Mishra has recently won many accolades for his incisive writings. His essay on Gender and Popular Culture finds place in an anthology titled 'Gender and Popular Culture: Identity Constructions and Representations' (edited by Kusha Tiwari) by Cambridge Scholars Publishing, UK, a credible feat.

He also edited and published a book "Delhi Political: 1947-2003" which provides an interesting insight into post-Independence history of Delhi. It is a unique work of oral history, being based on interviews with 40-odd political leaders who mattered, and contributed, to the politics of the national capital during the period under review.

Note from Commandant RIMC: We had a strength of more than 500 family members attending the PTM and we thought it was an apt occasion to honour the legend who has given 50 years to the RIMC. It also sent a good message to Parents and Cadets about our bonding. We had organised this for Mr RC Chaturvedi during Soccer Cup in 2018 and Mr LN Thakur on the Teachers Day in 2019. Our small expression of respect and affection for what they have made us to be.



Felicitation of Mr SP Bhatia during the Parents Teachers Meeting on 07 Oct 2019.



The Indian Air Force Rafale fighter jets will fly with the tail-sign 'BS', named after the recently retired Air Chief, ACM BS Dhanoa, a Rimcollian. The tail number initials are given by the Operations Branch of the Indian Air Force as every type of aircraft in the IAF has unique alphabets followed by serial number. This is an apt recognition of his service towards modernising the Air Force.



VSM Awardees: Air Vice Marshal KS Reddy, VSM, Air Cmde Rajive, VSM and Wing Cdr S A Jakhlu VSM, on Air Force Day 2019 at the Hindon Air Base.

धोती-कुर्ता-पाड़ी बांधकर पैदल ही ऑफिस आए आईजी, जवान ने सैल्यूट मारा तो बोले-पहचान गए

इयूटी ऑफ के दौरान धोती-कुर्ता व पाड़ी पहनें, ताकि हमारी संस्कृति लुप्त न हो: नेहरा

भास्कर न्यूज़ | कर्नाल

हरियाणा दिवस विशेष

हरियाणवी ड्रेस पहनकर संस्कृति का संदेश दिया

कर्नाल के आईजी योगेंद्र नेहरा हरियाणा दिवस पर खास अंदाज में दिखाई दिए। आम आदमी बनकर वह ऑफिस गए। उन्होंने अपनी लालवर्ती लगी गाड़ी को ऑफिस से कुछ दूरी पर रूकवाया। ड्राइवर और गनमैन को साथ चलने से मना कर दिया और पैदल ही ऑफिस की तरफ चल पड़े। मुख्य गेट पर खड़े पुलिस जवान ने आईजी को धोती-कुर्ता और पाड़ी में पहचानकर तुरंत सैल्यूट लगाई। आईजी भी हंस्ते बोले कि पहचान गया। इसी अंदाज में आईजी ने ऑफिस का राउंड लिया। पहले तो दफ्तरी में बैठे जवान आईजी को पहचान नहीं पाए, जब वह दीवार से अपने दफ्तर की तरफ आने लगे तो पुलिस जवान अलर्ट हो गए और सैल्यूट लगाते गए। आईजी ने कहा कि



कर्नाल. आईजी नेहरा को सैल्यूट करता पुलिस अधिकारी।

आईजी योगेंद्र नेहरा ने कहा कि मैं पूरे पुलिस महकमे को संदेश देना चाहता हूँ कि किसी भी विशेष दिवस या इयूटी ऑफ के बाद वह कुर्ता-धोती, खंडका जरूर बांधे। इससे हमारी नई पीढ़ी अवगत रहेगी। इसलिए हरियाणा दिवस पर हरियाणवी ड्रेस पहनकर अपने कल्चर का संदेश दिया है।

बड़े ऑफिस पहुंचे। उनके साथ एक गनमैन, ड्राइवर भी था। आईजी ने स्पेसद धोती- कुर्ता, खंडका (पाड़ी) बांध रखा था। ऑफिस में बैठे पुलिस कर्मचारियों को पता चल गया कि यह धोती कुर्ते में घूमने वाला कोई ताऊ नहीं है, बल्कि अपने आईजी साहब हैं। इसके बाद पुलिस जवान



Mr Yogendra Nehra, IPS, IG Police at Karnal and a Rimcollian, dressing up in traditional attire to promote Indian culture. Incidentally, this gesture received lots of media coverage in local newspapers!



Pema Khandu @PemaKhanduBJP

Proud of 31-member expedition team from @DirangNimas for successfully scaling Mt Kangto-6, an unclimbed 6062M peak on the Kangto Massif. Congratulations to the team and to Director NIMAS Col Sarfaraz for the Institute to have added another feather in the cap!



YAS Ministry and 2 others

5:41 PM · 05/10/19 · Twitter for iPhone

64 Retweets 522 Likes

Col Sarfraz Singh, a Rimcollian being congratulated for scaling Mount Kangto-6, a hithero unscaled peak in the North East India. Presently, he is on another cycling expedition through Myanmar and Thailand to Singapore.



A mini Rimcollian get-together. LtoR: Mr Zia, Maj Gen Ashok Luthra, Mrs Luthra Maj Gen HS Mangat, Air Marshal Vinod Patney & Mrs Smita (Zia) Makhija. It may be mentioned that Gen Mangat was one of the earliest Old Boy AOs of RIMC!

The Knight Frank India donated Rs 25 Lakhs to the ROBA Trust on 12 Jan 2020 at New Delhi. Kudos to Gp Capt Deepak Ahluwalia, the energetic ROBA Secretary and other Rimcollians at Delhi for having organised the same.

MIGRATION OF E-GROUP

Due to a policy change and restrictions on content sharing and archival / access of previous messages by Yahoogroups, the Rimcollian e-group is being progressively migrated from Yahoo to Google Groups. This shall enable to continue the Rimcollian e-group, albeit with a different service provider, and more importantly, to retain the data archive of nearly last 20 years.

Rimcollians may join the new Google group by sending an email at the-rimcollian@googlegroups.com with your full name, mobile phone with country code, RIMC Number, Section and Years in RIMC.

RIMCOLLIANS AT NDA

Our cadets once again came out with flying colours and made us proud in the awards announced at NDA in November 2019.

Awards at NDA

PRESIDENT'S SILVER MEDAL

BCC Kushagra Mishra

PRESIDENT'S BRONZE MEDAL

BCC NK Vishwakarma

BEST SPORTSMAN

BCC Kushagra Mishra

BEST IN PT

BCA Watandeepp Siddhu

BLAZER in PT

BCA Watandeepp Siddhu

BLAZER IN CROSS-COUNTRY

BCA Watandeepp Siddhu

Best Naval Cadet

BCC NK Vishwakarma

BEST AIR FORCE CADET

BCC Kushagra Mishra

2 **Garhwal Post** | www.garhwalpost.in | Dehradun, 3 Dec, 2019 | Dehradun

Rimcollians shine at NDA

By OUR STAFF REPORTER

DEHRADUN, 2 Dec: Cadets of the Rashtriya Indian Military College, continue to outdo others in the training academies of the Armed Forces across India. Most of the top honours and awards are usually bagged by the former cadets of RIMC in all Armed Forces training institutions, upholding the true tradition the institution.

The 137th Course of the National Defence Academy (NDA), Khadakwasla, graduated from the academy on 28 November. Battalion Cadet Captain Kushagra Mishra, a Rimcollian, won the President's Silver Medal for standing second in the overall order of merit. Battalion Cadet Captain Kushagra Mishra also clinched the award of the 'Best Sportsman' for the term at NDA.

BCC Kushagra did not stop at this, he was also adjudged 'The Best Air Force Cadet' at



NDA during the 'Passing out Parade'.

The prestigious President's Bronze Medal for standing third in the overall order of merit was also bagged by another Rimcollian, Battalion Cadet Captain Nishant Vishwakarma.

Nishant has also been declared 'the Best Cadet of the BTEch stream'. Interestingly, BCC Nishant Vishwakarma was also adjudged 'The Best Naval Cadet of the Academy'.

Another meritorious Rimcollian Cadet, Battalion

Commander (Academic) Watandeepp Siddhu broke glass ceilings and was adjudged 'The Best in Physical Training and in the Cross Country at the Academy' and was awarded the prestigious 'Blazer' in both the disciplines.

BCA Devesh Rathour, who also hails from Uttarakhand, has been adjudged the 'Outstanding Leader'. It may be recalled that while joining the NDA, these boys had secured 7 of the top 10 positions in All India Rankings, including the first.

Some other important awards such as 'The Cadet Best in Sailing' and prestigious colours like 'Blue' and 'Half Blue' have also been dominated by RIMCOLLIANS.

Col Vivek Sharma, Commandant, RIMC, expressed his happiness at the cadets bringing lots of laurels to the school and said, 'But nothing less is expected from them. The performance of these boys is a source of inspiration to all the young cadets at RIMC as they look up to make their career in the Armed Forces. It is a recognition of the well rounded grooming which is done by the faculty at RIMC and this does fill their heart with tremendous pride.'

Rimcollian achievements as covered by the local media of Doon Valley

In addition to the overall awards, Rimcollians also received Blues in Squash and PT, Half

Blues in PT and Riding, 12 Merit Cards and the award for Best in Sailing. ■



Rimcollian awardees in PT at NDA. Incidentally, the SM and CHM in picture were at RIMC prior to coming to NDA and they continue to mentor our boys.

THE NDA POP, NOVEMBER 2019

— Col VIJAY GIDH, VSM (RETD)

It is always a pleasure attending the bi-annual Passing Out Parade (POP) at the National Defence Academy (NDA), particularly if the medal winners happen to be Rimcollians. It was an agreeable Saturday morning when hundreds of spectators including parents of the passing out course gathered at Khetarpal Parade Ground to witness the Parade on 30 November 2019.

Defence Minister Shri Rajnath Singh was the Reviewing Officer (RO) for the parade. A total of 284 cadets graduated from the Academy as they passed through the portals of the Khetarpal Parade Ground. There were 188 Army cadets, 38 Naval cadets, 37 Air Force and 20 cadets from friendly foreign countries. The foreign cadets were from Bhutan, Tajikistan, the Maldives, Vietnam, Mauritius, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and Myanmar. The parade marks the culmination of their three-year-long gruelling training during which they also receive academic degrees of Jawaharlal Nehru University.

Addressing the passing out cadets, Rajnath Singh said, “India has always believed in maintaining peaceful and friendly ties with other countries. We neither have any extra-territorial ambitions nor have we ever interfered in affairs of other countries. But if someone messes with us, we will teach them a lesson. If someone runs terror camps on their soil or conspires to attack India, then we will give them a befitting reply.”

BCC Kushagra Mishra (2012-16, Shivaji) was awarded the President’s Silver Medal for standing second in the overall order of merit, while BCC Nishant Kumar Vishwakarma (Chandragupta) won the President’s Bronze Medal for standing third. Mike Squadron bagged the prestigious Chief



BCC Kushagra Mishra receiving President’s Silver Medal from RM. He was also awarded Gold Medal for being the Best Air Force Cadet

of Staff Banner for being the Champion Squadron. The parade was attended by many serving and retired military leaders including former Chief of Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal PV Naik and Southern Army Commander Lt Gen SK Saini.

To cheer the passing out cadets of the 137th NDA course, 24 veterans from the 37th NDA course attended the parade. The 37th course passed out of the academy in the Autumn Term of 1969, exactly 50 years ago, and fought the 1971 Indo-Pak War with less than one year of service. Many veterans of 37th Course later celebrated their Golden Jubilee in NDA from 10-12 December. Seven Rimcollians were amongst the same. The NDA had started a tradition some years back of appointing Sponsor Officers for the foreign cadets undergoing training in NDA. These Sponsor Officers were retired NDA Alumni settled in Pune and they performed the duties similar to Local Guardians. Since I had been allotted the three Mauritius cadets

undergoing training in the Academy, it was a pleasure meeting them once a month or inviting them home sometimes for a meal. While one cadet passed out last term and is undergoing training at IMA, it was nice meeting the parents of the second cadet this time. The parents were grateful to NDA for the excellent training and all round development of their son. The third cadet would be passing out next term.

On a personal note, it was nice to meet BCC Mishra and BCC Vishwakarma and their proud parents during the High Tea at the Salaria Square opposite the Sudan Block. While Kushagra hails from Meerut, Nishant is from Tikamgarh. They were good friends from their RIMC days and owed their success to their parents support and fine grooming from their cadet days. Nishant mentioned that his brothers wanted to join the NDA but were unable to do so; he was proud that he could fulfil their wishes. It was nice to meet Rimcollians Col Suhas Thakar and Col CS Lehl from the 37th NDA



BCC NK Vishwakarma receiving President's Bronze Medal from RM'. He was also awarded Gold Medal for being the Best Naval Cadet

Course. They too congratulated the medal winners. The audiences were later thrilled to witness a spectacular aerial display by the Sarang Helicopter Aerobatic Team of the Indian Air Force.

The passing out course consisted of 22 Rimcollian cadets, of which 15 were from the Army, six from the Navy and one from the Air Force. They belonged to the 180th RIMC course and it was heartening to learn about their achievements while at NDA. In addition to winning the Silver Medal, BCC Mishra also won the Gold Medal for being the Best Air Force Cadet and the Silver Medal for Best Sportsman of the Passing Out Course. BCC Vishwakarma also won the Gold Medal for being the Best Naval Cadet and was awarded the Commandant's Silver Medal for Standing First in the B-Tech Course. ACA B Liansanga was awarded the Gold Medal for being the Best Cadet in OLQ, while BCA Devesh Thakur won the Silver Medal for Displaying Exceptional Leadership/Bravery. BCA Watandeeep

The passing out course consisted of 22 Rimcollian cadets, of which 15 were from the Army, six from the Navy and one from the Air Force. They belonged to the 180th RIMC course and it was heartening to learn about their achievements while at NDA

Singh Sidhu won the Silver Medal for being the Best Cadet in PT. Sidhu had stood first in the Academy in the Inter Battalion X-Country Championship held during Autumn Term, 2019; and has the unique distinction of being awarded the prestigious Blazer in two disciplines: X-Country and PT. In recognition of his excellent performance, I later presented Sidhu with a copy of the Rimcollian Calendar 2019 on behalf of the Rimcollian fraternity. It may be recalled that while joining the NDA three years ago, these cadets of 180th Course had secured seven of the top 10 positions in All India Rankings, including the first. In addition, two Blues, two Half Blues and 14 Merit Cards have been awarded to Rimcollian cadets in various disciplines during the term.

The credit for the remarkable performance of our cadets in NDA goes to the Commandant and the Staff at RIMC for the good foundation laid while in School. ■

RIMCOLLIANS AT IMA

— Col **VIVEK SHARMA**, Commandant RIMC

Rimcollians at IMA have performed exceeding well, and walked away with most of the honours and awards at the end of the term in December 2019. The details of the arms allotted to the Rimcollian Gentleman Cadets in the Passing-Out Parade in December 2019

are as under:-

- Lt Vijay Choudhary- 18 Garhwal Rifles
- Lt Rohan Basnett- 4 Dogra
- Lt Paras Singh- 8 Grenadiers
- Lt Tarun Dhanik - 1 Sikh LI
- Lt Abhiraj Gautam- 22 Mahar
- Lt Om Bawiskar- 841 Light Regt
- Lt Ujjawal Gupta- 102 Medium Regt
- Lt Harshit Kaushik- 141 Field Regt
- Lt Dhruv Choudhary- 242 Field Regt
- Lt Prasanjeet Mehta- 281 Field Regt
- Lt Pavitra Ojha- 861 Missile Regt
- Lt Abhay Singh- 128 Rkt AD

NEWS FROM THE AIR FORCE ACADEMY



ACC Arunabha Chakroborty (called Choco among the Rimcollians) was the proud winner of the President's Plaque and Sword of honour for the passing out course at the AFA in December 2019. In addition, ACA Purunendu, a Rimcollian again, accomplished record performance till date in Ground Duty Officer merit and received Best In Ground Duty Officer. Both led the parade and made the RIMC proud.



IN MEMORIAM: CMDE R.S.HUJA, NM (RETD)

— Col **VIJAY GIDH, VSM (RETD)**

The Rimcollian fraternity was grieved to learn about the sad demise of Cmde RS Huja, NM at Pune on 27 September 2019. The funeral held at Golibar Maidan Crematorium, Pune was attended by a number of retired officers, relatives and well-wishers. Maj Gen PD Sherlekar laid a wreath on behalf of ROBA. The Samapti Akhand Path Saheb, Antim Ardas and Biradri Ekath was held at Gurudwara Guru Nanak Darbar, Pune Camp on 03 October 2019, followed by Guru ka Langar. It was attended by selected family members, retired officers and Rimcollians.

Rabinder Singh Huja was born at Bannu, NWFP, (now Pakistan) on 16 February 1937. Rabinder had two younger brothers, Birendra and Satendra. The family shifted to India and the father, Mr JS Huja was later the Chief Engineer of a sugar factory in Mawana, Meerut. Rabinder joined the Prince of Wales Royal Indian Military College on 01 February 1949, where he was allotted Cadet No 791 and Ranjit Section. During his junior terms, Rabinder was a well-behaved cadet who was good in games, particularly Cricket and Hockey. He was hardworking and good in studies but his weakness was his poor handwriting and English. His Section Master had mentioned in his dossier that Rabinder was a smart cadet, full of enthusiasm; by improving his English he can easily rank among the best cadets in due course. The Principal, Mr Hugh Catchpole was generally satisfied with his progress except in English; he advised him to read books of general interest so as to improve his language. During his senior terms, Rabinder was able to show all round development. He represented his Section in various Inter Section Competitions, where he was



awarded Section Colours in Swimming. He did well as a Section NCO and his Section Master was pleased with his progress. Rabinder passed out from PWRIMC in December 1952 and was selected to join the Joint Services Wing, NDA in Clement Town.

Cadet Rabinder joined the 9th Course JSW, NDA at Clement Town in Dehradun in January 1953. After completing their two years training in JSW, the Naval cadets of 9th Course were sent for training with the Royal

Navy at Royal Naval College, Dartmouth, UK. Meanwhile, the JSW closed down at Clement Town on 07 December 1954 and moved to its permanent location in Khadakvasla. The NDA then consisted of a total of 747 cadets, belonging to the 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th and 13th Course.

RS Huja was commissioned as a Sub Lt in the Marine Engineering branch in 1957. On completion of his training, his first appointment in India was as Senior Engineer of INS Kistna in 1961.



A pictorial depiction of Maratha Navy

During his 29 years of distinguished service in the Indian Navy, Cmde Huja held many prestigious appointments at sea and onshore. He was the Engineer Officer of INS Vikrant, Deputy Naval Adviser to the High Commission in UK and the Indian Embassy in Sweden, Principal of Naval College of Engineering, and Commanding Officer of INS Shivaji at Lonavla and General Manager at Naval Dockyard, Mumbai. Cmde Huja was a highly qualified Naval officer. He was nominated to attend the Long Defence Management Course at Secunderabad, and was a Chartered Engineer from UK. His qualifications were CEng, CMarEng, FIMarE, MIMarEST, MIMechE. He was awarded the gallantry award of Nao Sena Medal for active service in Bangladesh during the Indo-Pak War 1971.

Cmde Huja possessed good organisational capability. As CO of INS Shivaji, he carried out re-enactment of the Battle of Umbre at the actual site 10 miles south of Lonavla in 1983. This battle actually took place between the forces of Chhatrapati Shivaji and the Mughal army at Umbre in 1661. He also organised an international level

Commonwealth Engineer Officers Conference and later steered the 250th Anniversary of Naval Dockyard Mumbai in November 1985.

Cmde Huja retired from the Navy in January 1986 and joined the Mazagon Dock Ltd, Mumbai. He was the General Manager Offshore Projects, Corporate Planning and later as General Manager of Submarine Yard, he had the unique distinction of being in charge for completion of the first indigenous Submarine. In 1991 he joined a private company in Mumbai, M/S Dolphin Offshore as Vice President Ship Repair and Offshore Projects. He retired from active service in October 2009 at the age of 72 years and settled down in Pune.

Cmde Huja was a very spirited Rimcollian and would regularly attend the Reunions held in Pune every year with his wife Mrs Kanwaljit Kaur. We remember the inspiring talk given by Cmde Huja during the Reunion conducted at INS Shivaji in September 2018. The couple had two sons, Mr Inderdeep Singh and Dr Sarangdeep Singh, who are both based in USA. It was a pleasure interacting with Cmde Huja during the Reunion held recently

in Pune on 22 September 2019, which happened to be his last function. We learnt from him that their elder son Inderdeep had also joined RIMC. However, when he got posted as Deputy Naval Advisor to the High Commission in UK, the family decided to withdraw Inderdeep after six months and take him along to UK.

The couple were fond of travelling. They had travelled extensively in Europe and visited USA, Soviet Union, Africa and Far East. Cmde Huja developed an interest in social causes; he was Managing Trustee of Sarvodya International Trust, Maharashtra Chapter at Mumbai for 15 years, which promoted the ideals of Mahatma Gandhi and was Chairman and Managing Trustee of Smt Shantidevi Jaisingh Huja Education Trust at Pune. During the Ardas Ceremony held on 03 October 2019, we got an opportunity to meet Cmde Huja's two sons Inderdeep and Sarangdeep, as also his younger brother Birendra Singh, who had all arrived from the US. On behalf of the Rimcollian fraternity, we all pray for the departed soul and offer our condolences to the bereaved Huja family. Om Shanti. ■

THE LAST POST

NAME	YEARS	SECTION	DATE OF DEMISE
MR BK CHAUDHARY	1960-65	SHIVAJI	24 AUG 2019
MR DEVENDRA NATH TRIPATHI	1942-43	RAWLINSON	16 SEP 2019
CMDE RS HUJA	1949-52	RANJIT	27 SEP 2019
MAJ GEN KRIPAL SINGH KOHLI	1948-51	SHIVAJI	20 DEC 2019
CMDE PK MITRA	1952-56	RANJIT	02 JAN 2020
COL BIPLAB NANDI MAJUMDAR	1963-67	SHIVAJI	30 DEC 2019
BRIG DEEPAK SOOD		SHIVAJI	14 JAN 2020
CAPT (IN) VIJAY ANAND DATTATRI PARADKAR	29TH COURSE	RANJIT	30 JAN 2020



Major General Kripal Singh Kohli
9-7-1935 —20-12-2019



Late Mr BK Chaudhary



Late CMDE PK Mitra (40153-F)



GOOD BYE, JAI HIND & ICH DIEN

Col Vivek Sharma

After playing a glorious innings of three-and-half years as the Commandant, Col Vivek Sharma, Brigade of Guards, handed over the charge to Col Ajay Kumar, Rajputana Rifles on January 30, 2020. Col Sharma wrote a beautiful note on the occasion for the Rimcollian community. —Editor



(Left) Col Vivek Sharma receiving Col Ajay Kumar. (Below) Colonel Sharma signing the Visitors' Book

It is with deep sense of satisfaction and pride that I inform you about handing over the reins of RIMC after an amazing journey of more than three and half years at the helm. This wonderful inning has added many more years to our life. Indeed indebted to the fraternity for not just reposing the faith of being considered responsible for taking up the challenge of nurturing the future scholar leaders, but also standing firm with rock solid support in everything that we did. It was this 'fine teamwork of Team RIMC, our controlling Administrators, deep cooperation of partner parents, Our well wisher educationists/education inclined laureates, IPSC, Educational institutes and the unconditional blessings of ROBA fraternity that helped us steer the ship to greater heights through the thick and thin'. Exceptional records at our 'Cradle of Excellence' has been the natural outcome of this magical 'Teamwork and Hardwork @ fun'. Grateful to all for unflinching support and service.

I have handed over the onerous responsibility to 'Col Ajay Kumar' who is a thorough professional with his head and heart rightly poised as well as balanced.



With his rich experience, he is sure to fill the inadequacies of mine and take the college to even greater glories. His deep commitment to our college is already visible ... on our request, he arrived here a week earlier foregoing his precious time ... walking the talk. We wish him the very best as the Captain of Team RIMC.

'Shranya, Shreyansh and Upasana' join me in expressing our sincere

gratitude to each one. It is extremely hard to leave the college, especially with deep emotional connect with you all for past more than 3.5 years. It has been a dream run with the 'Dream Team & Family' of wonderful people. We leave our heart forever with deep satisfaction and carry along loads of beautiful & unforgettable memories.

'Thank you, Jai hind and Ich Dien' ■

RIMCOLLIAN TAKES OVER AS GOC-IN-C SOUTHERN COMMAND



LIEUTENANT GENERAL C P MOHANTY, an infantry officer with varied operational experience including in counter-insurgency environment, has assumed command of the Southern Army. In a wreath-laying ceremony at the National War Memorial in Pune, he paid tribute to fallen soldiers, followed by a traditional Guard of Honour at the headquarters of the Southern Command.

An alumnus of Rashtriya Indian Military College (RIMC), Dehradun, and National Defence Academy, Khadakwasla, the general is a June 1982-batch officer from the Rajput Regiment and is also the Colonel of the Regiment. During his military career, Gen Mohanty has had vast operational, logistics and administrative experience in varied command and staff appointments. He commanded his battalion in Jammu and Kashmir and Northeast, a Mountain Brigade along the Indo-China border and a Mountain Division in counter-insurgency

operations in Northeast. Later, he commanded a strategically important corps in the Eastern Theatre after the Doklam incident and also the Uttar Bharat Area at Bareilly.

Gen Mohanty has vast overseas experience of commanding a multinational brigade in the Republic of Congo, and also as the Military Adviser to the Government of Seychelles. He has held important staff appointments in an Armoured Brigade and Military Secretary Branch, besides being the Director General of Operational Logistics and Strategic Movement at Integrated Headquarters of Ministry of Defence (Army).

On the academic front, he has an MPhil and a management degree and has researched extensively on China, South Asia and northeast India, making him a domain expert of these regions. He is a graduate of Defence Services Staff College (DSSC), Wellington, and also an alumnus of National Defence College, Delhi.

Courtesy PTI



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