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Headquarters  
Southern Naval Command  
Kochi – 682004

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28 Dec 10

**VETERAN SAILORS FORUM , KOCHI CHARTER****MINUTES OF THE 3<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL BODY MEETING – 27 NOV 10****Introduction**

1. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual General Body Meeting (AGM) of the Veteran Sailors' Forum (VSF), Kochi Charter, was held on 27 Nov 10 at the Sailors' Institute, Naval Base Kochi. This was the second meeting held in the year 2010. The meeting was chaired by RAdm SY Shrikhande, Chief of Staff, HQ SNC. This particular event assumed greater significance, as it was held during the Navy Week, 2010 Celebrations. On this occasion, a lunch was hosted by the Chief of Staff for the Veterans, on completion of the AGM. The following were present during the proceedings:-

(a) RAdm SY Shrikhande	Chief of Staff, HQ SNC
(b) Cmde MR Ajay Kumar, VSM	CO, Venduruthy
(c) Cmde MVS Kumar, VSM	PDESA, IHQ MOD (Navy)
(d) Cmde OP Kaura	CSO (P & A)
(e) Surg Cmde Girish Gupta, NM	CO, Sanjivani
(f) Cmde Jaison Thomas	Regional Director, ECHS
(g) Capt SR Sridhar	C WEL O, President VSF, Kochi Charter
(h) Capt Sushant Dam	CO, Dronacharya
(j) Capt J S Sekhon	CJA
(k) Capt MC Joshi	CAPO
(l) Capt KLV Prabhakaram	Secretary, VSF (Officiating)
(m) Cdr XPD Rockey	CRTO / Cd Canteen Officer
(n) Cdr P Vidyanta	SSO (A)
(p) Cdr P Vijayakumar	Regional Manager, INCS(K)
(q) Surg Cdr Saumit Roy	Joint Director (Med), ECHS
(r) Cdr S Shiva Kumar	Jt Director, ECHS Station Hqtrs
(s) Cdr AK Sahoo	EXO, Venduruthy
(t) Cdr Utpal Dutta	EXO, Garuda
(u) Cdr Arvind Nagar	EXO, Dronacharya
(v) Cdr M Kazi	Rep, VSF Ezhimala Regional Charter
(w) Cdr KV Ramana	Treasurer, VSF Kochi Charter

**(x) Members of the Navy Foundation (Kochi Charter):-**

- (i) Vice Admiral Raman Prem Suthan, PVSM, AVSM, VSM (Retd)  
President, Navy Foundation Kochi Charter

- |       |                           |  |
|-------|---------------------------|--|
| (ii)  | Cmde JP Abraham (Retd)    | Member, Navy Foundation Kochi Charter    |
| (iii) | Capt Rajan George (Retd)  | Secretary, Navy Foundation Kochi Charter |
| (iv)  | Cdr Kamal Krishnan (Retd) | Member, Navy Foundation Kochi Charter    |
| (v)   | Cdr M Ravindran (Retd)    | Member, Navy Foundation Kochi Charter    |
| (vi)  | Lt Cdr PKN Pillai (Retd)  | Member, Navy Foundation Kochi Charter    |
- (y) 64 Veteran Members including one honorary member who is wife of a late veteran and a teacher in Navy Children School, Kochi.
- (z) Fifteen serving senior sailors and ladies(hosts).

**Opening Address by Chief of Staff, HQ SNC.**

2. In his opening address, RAdm SY Shrikhande, the Chief of Staff welcomed VAdm RP Suthan (Retd), President Navy Foundation Kochi Charter, Officers, and all the Veterans present. At the outset, he expressed satisfaction at the growth of VSF, Kochi Charter. He informed the gathering that the strength of the Charter is growing steadily and he requested all the Veterans present to spread the word around and encourage the other Veteran Sailors to become members of this useful forum. He said that VSF has been established by the Indian Navy with the cardinal objective of providing focused attention to ex-sailors/widows/dependents of ex-sailors on welfare related issues, viz. for ensuring uninterrupted children's education, timely/orderly receipt of post retirement benefits, rehabilitation, deputation for vocational training/courses, receipt of entitlements from Central and State Government etc.

3. During the address, the Chief of Staff announced the opening of the Regional charter at Ezhimala. He said that VSF, Ezhimala has been opened to reach out to the Veterans staying in the northern districts of Kasargod, Kannur, Wyanad, Kozhikkode, Malappuram and Palakkad districts besides the border districts of South Karnataka. He also informed the gathering that efforts are underway to open one more regional centre at Changanachery in Southern Kerala.

4. He extended Greetings to the entire Veteran fraternity on the occasion of the Navy Week celebrations on behalf of the FOC-in-C (South) and expressed his deep appreciation to the response and feedback the Navy has been receiving from the retired fraternity. He said that the Navy becomes richer in experience and knowledge through these feedbacks. He appraised the gathering that all the points received from the members have been examined by various staff officers at HQSNC and they would be addressed proactively. He then requested President, VSF to begin the proceedings for the AGM.

**ITEM 1 – PRESENTATION BY PDESA**

5. Cmde MVS Kumar, VSM, Principal Director, Ex-Servicemen Affairs (PDESA), gave a presentation to the Forum, covering the following issues:-

(a) Evolution, Role and Functions of DESA.

- (b) Purpose of establishment of Navy Foundation and VSF.
- (c) Current policies on Pension related issues
- (d) Updates on NGIF & INBA
- (e) Initiatives taken/in the pipe line of DESA for resettlement of Veterans
- (f) New initiatives for Naval Widows
- (g) Indian Naval Placement Agency
- (h) Naval Regimental System
- (j) Vocational Training Centres
- (k) Way Ahead for DESA

### **ITEM 2 – PRESENTATION BY REGIONAL DIRECTOR, ECHS**

6. Cmde Jaison Thomas, Regional Director, ECHS delivered a talk on the current policies of ECHS. An update was given by him on various procedures for putting up ECHS claims and he also brought out useful statistics on the utility of the ECHS facilities by the retired personnel and their dependents. He apprised the gathering on the facilities of ECHS at Kochi. On this occasion, an information brochure on ECHS was distributed to all the Veterans. A brief question and answer session followed after the talk by the Regional Director, ECHS.

### **ITEM 3- UPDATE ON OLD AGENDA POINTS**

7. The Secretary, VSF, gave an update on the old agenda points. The points discussed are appended below:-

- (a) **INBA Merit Scholarships.** The Rates of Merit Scholarship in respect of retired Naval Personnel need to be enhanced. (a Point forwarded by Mr KP Ashokan, Reg No. 24 ) . Secretary, VSF apprised the members that the INBA Council in its meeting held on 28 Oct 10 has enhanced the scholarship as follows:-
  - (i) Boarders - from Rs 10,000 to Rs 15,000/- P.A.
  - (ii) Day Scholars - from Rs 5,000 to Rs 10,000/- P.A.
- (b) **Ten Day Preparatory Training - for SSB.** A ten day preparatory training may be provided to the children of Ex-sailors desirous of applying for armed forces. (Point forwarded by Mr KP Soman, Reg No. 60). Secretary, VSF informed the members that the Indian Navy has facilitated training of wards of Naval personnel and widows' children at concessional rates through M/s Cavalier India. He also flashed the address and contact number of the training centers of M./S Cavalier India situated at Kochi and Thiruvanthapuram. The following was flashed for the benefit of the Veterans:-

SI	Details	Rate
(a)	Fee for the wards of	Rs 5000/-

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	Ex-servicemen	
(b)	Fees for wards of widows	Rs 1500/-
(c)	Boys Hostel	Rs 75/- per day
(d)	Girls Hostel	Rs 175/- per day
(e)	PABT	Rs 500/-

(c) **Transport for Aged Veterans.** During the first AGM a point had come up for conveyance facility from the Main Gate of the Naval Base to Sanjivani for Old Veterans. The secretary conveyed that a battery Operated Vehicle was now available and is already being utilised for conveying aged veterans extensively.

8. The Secretary, VSF then initiated a discussion on the new points. The points discussed are appended in the succeeding paragraphs.

#### **ITEM 4- POLICY ON PENSION**

9. A point was received with regard to Government's present decision regarding granting pension to Naval service personnel who had completed service 10 years and above but less than 15 years. (Point forwarded by Mr KP Ashokan, Reg No. 24, CT Jacob, Reg. 107, Mr KP Soman, Reg. No. 60) Secretary, VSF apprised the gathering the following:-

(a) All 'Armed Forces Personnel' are governed by GOI, MoD rule on the subject which states that, "The minimum period of qualifying service actually rendered & required for earning service pension is 15 years."

(b) A case taken up with Armed Forces Tribunal (AFT) has been disposed off by upholding the stated GOI, MoD Rule in vogue.

10. In addition, PDESA reiterated that pension rules related to naval personnel are governed by "Pension (Navy) regulation – 1964", which is an Act of Parliament. He clarified that the act clearly states minimum length of service for "service pension" as 15 years, which cannot be superseded by any other rule. He further stated that in certain cases, one year could be condoned at the discretion of Defence Minister Appellate Committee.

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#### **ITEM 5 - ECHS FACILITIES TO PERSONNEL WHO HAVE COMPLETED 10 YEARS OF SERVICE**

11. At least medical facilities / ECHS facilities should be extended to ex-sailors who have completed ten years of service. (Point forwarded by Mr KP Ashokan, Reg No. 24, CT Jacob, Reg. 107 , Mr KP Soman Reg. No. 60) . PDESA, clarified that the issue of ECHS facility for non pensioners had been taken up many times in the past, but the same was turned down by the Government. He further added that notwithstanding the present stand of the Government, Service Headquarters would continue to highlight the issue with the concerned agencies for effecting a positive action by the Ministry.

**ITEM 6 - ANOMALY IN RECRUITMENT IN  
POSTAL/SORTING ASSISTANT VACANCIES IN  
TAMIL NADU POSTAL CIRCLE**

12. Discrepancy in the advertisement of the recruitment for Postal/Sorting Assistant vacancies in Tamil Nadu postal circle. The required education qualification is 10+2. At present, only 10th passed (SSLC) ex-servicemen cannot apply for the post. As per the Govt.of India directives, ex-sailors once passed out from the Boys Training Establishment were accorded equivalent qualification of Higher Secondary vide Government of India cabinet Sectt.(Adm reforms) Office memo.6/2/73-Estt(d) dated 09 Nov 73. However, no Government order exists for the INS Chilka passed out sailors with regard to awarding 10+2 qualification to them. (Point forwarded by Mr Ashok Kumar T, Reg. No. 131). In response to the point, PDESA stated the following:-

(a) A certificate, which states that INS Chilka training is equal to 10 + 2, could be issued by local VSF charters.

(b) A Board of Officers has also been constituted at NHQ to study the concept of "Community College" with IGNOU for award of Graduation degree to all serving naval personnel.

**Action**:- Members' case to be followed up by Secretary, VSF

**ITEM 7 - INCS RECRUITMENT**

13. Vacancy /Recruitment in INCS is published only in the Command Daily Orders. Ex-servicemen desirous to seek an employment in INCS do not get to know these vacancies. (Point forwarded by Mr MVR Nair, Reg No. 45). Secretary, VSF informed the gathering that:-

(a) Recruitment recently held was only for contract appointments and two Ex-servicemen were empanelled.

(b) Earmarking ESM reservation in INCS may not be possible since they do not come under Defence Civilian Category.

(c) It was not financially viable to advertise for contract appointments in local media.

14. Cmde MR Ajay Kumar, CO, Venduruthy informed the gathering that efforts would be made henceforth for such posts to be advertised in the local media/newspapers. <sup>6...</sup>

**Action:-** Regional Manager, INCS

### **ITEM 8 - LIQUOR ENTITELMENT – INCS**

15. A query was received with regard to current policy on entitlement of liquor purchase by Ex-Servicemen (ESM) at INCS/CSD in terms of number of bottles. The point also called for enhancement of quota. (Point forwarded by CT Jacob, Reg. No. 107). Secretary, VSF informed that the allotment of quota of liquor is decided by DDGCS, New Delhi and INCS has no role in its curtailment. PDESA, further stated that the rationale for fixing liquor quota is decided by various factors like health of ESM, representation from NGOs and social bodies, perception of planning commission etc. Commanding Officer, INS Venduruthy answering to the query stated that other factors viz. loss of VAT to State Govt., misuse of liquor facilities by few ESM have contributed for imposition of curtailment on liquor quota by the Government. He further stated that majority of tri-services ESM view, enhancement of quota of liquor is not in their favour.

### **ITEM 9 - IMPROVEMENTS IN INCS**

16. The standard of Wet canteen run for civilians at INCS(K) should be improved. Other facilities at INCS (K) like separate counter for ex sailors also need to be provided. (Point forwarded by, VS George, Reg. No.11). Secretary, VSF conveyed that Regional Manager INCS is already in the process of improving the standard of Wet Canteen at INCS. He further stated that a separate counter for Senior Citizens already exists at INCS. CO, Venduruthy apprised the gathering about the improvements planned at INCS with its expansion. He stated that a Board has been constituted for renovation of the INCS . He said that the Board's recommendations are being studied and INCS would soon receive a face lift with improved facilities.

**Action:-** Regional Manager, INCS

### **ITEM 10 - PURCHASE OF 2 WHEELER - INCS**

17. Mr VS George (Reg. No.11) requested that a provision be made for purchase of Two(2) wheelers through INCS/CSD at Kochi. Secretary, VSF stated that the Kerala Government has recently allowed sale of Two/three wheelers through CSD. CO, Venduruthy informed the gathering that he was personally making efforts with the state Government officials to ensure that this facility fructifies at the earliest.

**Action:-** Regional Manager, INCS

### **ITEM 11 - ADMISSIONS IN NAVY CHILDREN'S SCHOOL (K)**

18. Due priority be given to wards of retired Naval personnel during admissions at Navy Children's School, (NCS) by giving next priority to serving Indian Naval Personnel. (Point forwarded by, Mr B Unnikrishnan, Reg. No.96). President VSF, who is also the Vice Chairman of NCS (K) apprised the gathering with regard to priority for admission of wards of ex-naval personnel by stating that :-

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- (a) Wards of retired Naval personnel fall under Category 3 after:-
- (i) Category 1 - Serving Naval Personnel
  - (ii) Category 2 – Army, CG & IAF personnel serving with Navy.
- (b) Generally, no ward of retired naval personnel is denied admission.

### **ITEM 12 - ISSUE OF BUS PASSES**

19. Mr. B Uniikrishnan ( Reg. No.96) requested for issue of Bus Passes to School going wards of Retired Naval Personnel so that children of ex-naval personnel can also the avail the bus facilities presently being provided for wards of serving naval personnel. Secretary, VSF informed that this provision is not feasible in accordance with the existing Government rules on the subject.

### **ITEM 13 - FUNERAL EXPENSES**

20. The funeral expense of Rs.10000/- available to all ex-servicemen must be handed over to the bereaved family on the same day of the funeral. This could be handed over to the NOK by the ceremonial team attending the funeral. (Point forwarded by Mr KM Soman,(Reg. No.60). PDESA informed the gathering that the death grant is disbursed by INBA and the grant has been enhanced to Rs 20,000. He further stated that a new set up viz. Naval Regimental System (NRS) is being conceptualised which would address all the issues related to extension of effective welfare to widows. He apprised the gathering that the Navy is in the process of coming out with detailed orders on the subject which would address all issues of the bereaved family not only at the time of funeral but also for sorting out the issues post death of an Officer / Sailor. He also added that the final details on implementation/establishment of NRS are being worked out at IHQ MOD (N)/DESA.

### **ITEM 13 - FACE TO FACE INTERACTION**

21. Mr Pariyaram Ramkumar (Reg. No.81) came up with a suggestion that Veteran Sailors' Forum should facilitate conduct of 'Face to Face Interaction' with students of schools for one hour once annually as part of life experience sharing activity under the aegis of Sarva Sikhsa Abhiyan (SSA) and Rashtriya Madhyamic Siksha Abhiyan (RMSA) education projects of the Government of Kerala. President VSF stated that Mr. Ramkumar is personally engaged in this noble work in schools of Kerala, and highlighted his selfless dedication.

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22. When Mr Parivaram Ramkumar stood up to introduce himself to the august gathering, there were cheers all round for the dress, attire and the pride displayed by him as an Ex-Sailor of the Indian Navy. The Chief of Staff, whilst replying his suggestion, complimented Mr Parivaram Ramkumar for his noble work and stated that his endeavours are highly laudable. He stated that the VSF Office bearers should take the

initiative and liaise with the schools. He further added that the Navy could facilitate such endeavours to the maximum extent possible.

**Action:-** Secretary, VSF

#### **ITEM 14 - PARTICIPATION IN SEMINARS**

23. Participation in the Maritime Security Seminars at University of Calicut jointly funded by the UGC and Indian Navy. (Point forwarded by Mr Pariyaram Ramkumar (Reg. No. 81). The Chief of Staff stated that the idea is welcome and uploading of such information on seminars on Websites of Indian Maritime Foundation, VSF etc would be considered. Mr KK Abbobakar brought out that UGC is also conducting similar seminars at various universities in which VSF members could take active part with the help of the Navy.

**Action:-** Secretary, VSF

#### **ITEM 15 - INSTITUTE FACILITIES TO VSF MEMBERS**

24. Institute facilities may be provided for the VSF members at least thrice in a year for events like Republic Day, Independence day and Navy day. (Point forwarded by Mr KM Jayachandran Reg No 130). The Chief of Staff stated that this request would be considered positively. CO, Vendurthy further stated that the Sailors' Institute is soon to receive a face lift with a lot of amenities including air-conditioning of the dining hall etc and it would soon be a place sought after for social gatherings. CSO (P&A) also assured release of necessary funds for the same.

**Action:-** CO, Vendurthy & President VSF

#### **ITEM 16 - OPENING OF GRIEVANCE CELL AT HQSNC**

25. A grievance cell needs to be operated by HQ SNC for the VSF members. (Point forwarded by Mr KM Jayachandran Reg No 130). President VSF stated that the office of the VSF Kochi Charter which is presently functioning from Command Welfare Office is already serving the purpose of a grievance cell. He further brought out that Dr CT George Ex-POA(Photo) has been assisting the VSF office and also the members of Kochi Charter with regard to timely correspondence and expeditious addressing of various grievances received at Charter's office.

#### **ITEM 17 - INFORMATION REGARDING VACANCIES RECEIVED AT CABS**

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26. A copy of all vacancies received by CABS rehabilitation centre may be intimated to HQ SNC to facilitate the newly retired sailors who are awaiting fresh appointments. (Point forwarded by KM Jayachandran Regd No 130). President, VSF informed that available information from CABS and DESA will be made accessible to members of the charter through its office as well as through emails and website as and when the site is made available.

**Action:-** Secretary, VSF



**ITEM 18- SWIMMING FACILITIES FOR NAVY CHILDREN SCHOOL(NCS)**

27. Mr Ashok Kumar raised the issue of lack of swimming facilities for students of NCS Kochi. He said that swimming should be made part of NCS curriculum. President VSF, who is also the Vice Chairman NCS said that swimming pool has been made available to the Children of NCS on available time slots for the swimming team of the school. However, he explained that it is impractical to introduce swimming for all the students of NCS on account of paucity of time slots and availability of only one pool in the entire station.

**ITEM 19 – REFUND OF CONTRIBUTION  
COLLECTED FOR ECHS FROM PRE 1996 PENSIONERS**

28. Mr AG George (Reg. No 144) said that ESM personnel who retired before the year 1996 and had volunteered for ECHS membership were charged some amount as ECHS contribution. However, later on ECHS contribution was suspended by a directive MOD and ECHS membership was made free. Hence the contribution charged to pre-96 ECHS members needs to be reimbursed. PDESA informed the members that any fund that is deposited with the government treasury is difficult to recover. He apprised the audience of the efforts taken by IHQ MOD (Navy) with the Government. He informed that the Government of India has turned down the request and, as it stands, no refund is admissible.

**ITEM 20 – ECHS BILLS FROM NON-EMPANELLED HOSPITALS**

29. A point was raised by a member regarding claiming of ECHS bills from non-empanelled hospitals. PDESA highlighted that a veteran may resort to going to a non-empanelled hospital only during emergency when the ECHS member may not be able to follow the normal referral procedure. However, the nearest ECHS polyclinic is to be informed within 48 hours of admission and other formalities as per procedure are to be followed for claiming of bills. CO, Venduruthy apprised all concerned to contact the ECHS poly clinic for any such assistance / query.

**ITEM 20 – COUNTING OF SERVICE SENIORITY  
CIVILIAN POST**

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30. Mr Ram Kumar (Reg No 115) who is presently working as Charge-man at Naval Aircraft Yard (Kochi) joined the present position after completing ten years of service as per engagement requirements for a Direct Entry Diploma Holder (DEDH) sailor. However, in the present post, his previous 10 years of service has not been counted for the purpose of pension under "benefit pension scheme" and also not considered for protection/fixation of pay. He further requested that information may be disseminated as to the eligibility for benefit pension scheme and consideration for protection/fixation of pay as there may be many more such sailors in this category. CSO (P&A) assured the

member that his case would be taken up for consideration with the appropriate authorities. PDESA informed the gathering that DEDH sailors are now being recruited in the Coast Guard with their seniority fully protected.

### **ITEM 21 – DISTRIBUTION OF INFORMATION BROCHURES**

31. Information brochures on various courses available to ex-service men, Useful information on various policies and welfare schemes available for Veterans and general information on ECHS were distributed to all the members. A key chain as complimentary item to each Veteran Sailor was also distributed.

**Action:** - SO (Wel), SSO (CP)

### **ITEM 22 – ADDRESS BY PRESIDENT NAVY FOUNDATION KERALA CHARTER**

32. Vice Admiral Raman Prem Suthan, PVSM, AVSM, VSM (Retd) addressed the gathering. In his address he said that the formation of the Veteran Sailors Forum was long standing dream that has fructified. He appealed to all present to spread the message and get more members to join the forum. He emphasised on networking of the ex-naval personnel and explained the utility of networking especially when any member is in need of help. He said that the retired fraternity also needs to seriously think of “giving back” to the service and the nation for whatever good that the service has done to all the retired Naval personnel. He appreciated the efforts of people like Mr Pariyaram Ramkumar and urged one and all to emulate such endeavours . Finally, the Admiral assured the Chief of Staff, the executive council members of VSF and all the serving members present in the function that the retired fraternity would stand by and overwhelmingly support the Indian Navy in all its endeavours.

### **ITEM 23 - CLOSING ADDRESS BY CHIEF OF STAFF**

33. In his closing remarks, RAdm SY Shrikhande , Chief of Staff, HQ SNC thanked all the members for their participation and valuable contribution. He assured the members that the VSF, Kochi Charter would endeavour to reach out to the Veteran Community in achieving the objectives of the Veteran Sailors Forum. He once again, urged all members to spread the word around so that more and more Veterans could reap the benefits of the forum. The COS also said that the good work done by all ex Navy personnel during their active service has made the service strong, combat ready and even more caring towards the serving and retired communities. He added that during the next meeting at the end of 2011, HQ SNC would arrange a special tour of 11... some of the schools and barracks so that they would see the strides made in training and living conditions that they would be proud of. He thereafter requested everybody to join for Lunch which was specially arranged as part of the Navy Week Celebrations.

34. These minutes are being issued with the approval of the Chief of Staff, Headquarters, Southern Naval Command.

s/d

(Vijaya Lakshmi)  
Lt Commander  
Secretary, Veteran Sailors Forum(K)

**Distribution:-**

1. All Concerned
2. Members through email.