

2014

# वीरानुभाव

**Glorious Past,  
Dynamic Present  
& Promising Future**



**NAVY WIVES  
WELFARE  
ASSOCIATION**

# GLORIOUS PAST, DYNAMIC PRESENT, PROMISING FUTURE

*As Steve Maraboli had once said: My past has not defined me, destroyed me, deterred me, or defeated me; it has only strengthened me. Our past becomes our guiding force to build our present and march towards the unknown and unforeseen future. The lessons learnt from the past equips us to tackle present challenges and endeavour to build a promising future. Our theme for this year's Veerangana celebrates the glorious past of Indian Navy, the present supremacy of Indian Navy which has evolved as well as expanded manifold and the future that would be the harbinger of great glory for our country and of course Indian Navy. Our cover page reflects the transition that Indian Navy has undergone and also projects the support system of our accomplished officers-their better halves who are the pillars of strength for the officers as well as NWWA(Navy Wives Welfare Association) and provide yeoman's service to make lives of all naval families a comforting, secure and a happy one.*

*The cover page depicts a grand old ship with its armaments in the backdrop to represent the glories that Indian Navy has attained since its inception over our territorial waters and beyond.*

*The ship in the foreground (No prizes for guessing!!) is our newest addition to the fleet INS Vikramaditya which is sure to strengthen our present prowess over the deep blues and also holds great promises of a triumphant future.*

*The deep blue ocean depicts the vast expanse of our territorial waters that our officers keep secure by toiling night and day 365 days every year without caring for their personal comfort.*

*The naval personnel depicted in the cover page represents our pride and strength of Indian Navy –our officers who are not only accomplished technocrats but also equally loving and caring family men.*

*The lady represents the 'good ladies' of our officers who not only look after the hearth& home but also extend a helping hand to all initiatives of NWWA so as to make lives of all residents within Naval bases and even for civilians a thriving and an enriching one.*

*"Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun and in the morning  
We salute them."*

*Long live our Veeranganas and our gallant men!!!*

*Paromita Ojha*

## Acknowledgement

We thank all our contributors, Sanchar teams of all regions for their unstinting support and timely inputs and **Ms. Shyamala Sarma.**

## LINK to NWWA WEBSITE

<http://www.irfc-nausena.nic.in/nwwa.php>



**Admiral DK Joshi**  
Chief of the Naval Staff



एडमिरल डी के जोशी

वेदं तस्य, रवे तस्य, वां तस्य, तस्य, वेदं तस्य, रवे वे

नौसेनाध्यक्ष

**Admiral DK Joshi**

PUSM, AVSM, YSM, NM, VSM, ADC

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### MESSAGE

The Brave Woman or Veerangana, brings to mind the images of legendary women of yore, who have been role models for Indians through the ages. In our context, Veeranganas the fraternity of Indian Naval Wives, silently and without expectations, carry on with the traditions of their dauntless and dedicated forerunners.

The entire edifice of naval community is built on the stable foundation provided by these modern-day, zestful and self-motivated Veeranganas. Their all-encompassing support for the 'home and hearth' is vital for undivided attention and dedication of the men in white to higher call of the nation. 'Veerangana', the annual magazine of Navy Wives Welfare Association, NWWA, is a written reflection of the spirit of naval wives, as they steadfastly stand on 'watch' of their families through the ups and down of everyday life. 'Veerangana' is also a brief glimpse of the initiatives, activities and contributions from the magnificent women who form such an important part of our vibrant community.

The theme of this edition of 'Veerangana' - 'Glorious Past, Dynamic Present, and Promising Future' traces the celebrated trajectory of NWWA over the years, while peeking into the future. The past anchors this remarkable organisation in its multifaceted endeavours, successes and accomplishments. Today, it caters to the needs and aspirations of nearly 33000 ladies from different walks of life and representing the myriad social background, cultures and regions of our country. In a rapidly changing socio-economic environment, the association has effectively evolved and adapted to help the naval community overcome the challenges and make the most of the opportunities of an optimistic future. As we look into the future, footprints of Veeranganas in the sands of time provide the inspiration to NWWA to continue with the glorious traditions handed down through generations.

As another edition of 'Veerangana' is released, I convey my compliments to the editorial team for their unrelenting dedication and hard work. I wish all Veeranganas and NWWA very best in all their future endeavours and assure our continued support.

Jai Hind. Shano Varuna.

(DK Joshi)  
Admiral  
Chief of the Naval Staff



**Mrs. Chitra Joshi**  
President NWWA

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President NWWA

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### **MESSAGE**

Yet another beginning of a new year and the release of our annual magazine gives me an opportunity to greet all naval families and wish them a year that brings them closer to the realization of their dreams and aspirations - both personal and professional. May you all enjoy "fair winds and following seas."

*Glorious past, dynamic present, promising future* is an apt theme for 'Veerangana' this year. In this context, NWWA has traversed a long distance. We have continually looked back to our past with pride as the work of our predecessors has made our journey smoother. Our present fraternity is leaving no stones unturned to uphold the rich traditions of the past and achieve more milestones in terms of more active involvement in social causes and also ensuring better quality of life in naval bases as well as in civil society. The enthusiasm and dedication towards social causes that I see in our future generations of naval wives gives me immense hope that our future would be equally, or even more promising.

I congratulate Team Sanchar (NR) along with editorial team of other commands for working cohesively and successfully bringing out yet another issue of much acclaimed 'Veerangana'.

In gratitude to the NWWA committee members and volunteers who work with passion throughout the year, making sure that we learn from the *glorious past, enjoy the dynamic present and strive for a promising tomorrow.*

Chitra Joshi  
President NWWA

**Navy Wives Welfare Association**

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**Mrs Minu Dhowan**

Vice President  
NWWA



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### MESSAGE

1. Life in the Navy as the wife of a naval officer, is a life full of challenges and a treasure trove of memories. I still remember the time when I was to be destined to marry my knight in shining armour. While I was overwhelmed by the excitement of my marriage, I was clueless about the Navy. All I knew was that my husband wore a white uniform and sailed the high seas. I knew that it would be different from life as a civilian but I had no idea that it would change me forever. Since then I have been a homemaker, a mother, a father at times and a home manager all in one. The demands on a naval wife of the 21<sup>st</sup> century are multifarious with many balancing a career and running a family. The Navy gives us so much every day and enriches our lives, I always feel that life is all about giving back and there is no better way to give back to the society than by contributing to the efforts of NWWA.
2. The fabric of the naval community is woven by the numerous organisations that NWWA is running to empower women and provide them with opportunities to grow within the Navy and each of these organisations is working with the singular aim of giving back to the society.
3. The noble work of NWWA needs volunteers; in today's fast paced world with its numerous challenges on the personal and professional front, young ladies are finding it increasingly difficult to contribute towards the social commitments of NWWA. I have always treasured the honesty, genuineness and commitment of the members of NWWA as they have devoted their valuable time and effort towards the service of the naval community. I would urge every naval wife to unreservedly contribute to the efforts of NWWA; even a seemingly insignificant contribution could make a difference.
4. I take this opportunity to complement the editorial team of 'Veerangana' for publishing another fine edition of the magazine.

(Minu Dhowan)  
President (Central Region)  
NWWA

Dated: 14 Nov 13





**Mrs Mona Sinha**  
President NWWA  
Western Region

As I pen my thoughts down, I look back at the year gone by that one has the privilege of being at the helm of NWWA (WR). With deep humility, have experienced the complete multitude of emotions that life has to offer - joy, satisfaction, fulfillment, sorrow and grief.

In a very eventful year, the ladies of the NWWA (WR) gave an excellent account of their dedication and commitment and were more than equal to the various tasks and challenges that confronted them as they continued to conduct various events under the aegis of NWWA. A defining trend observed through the various activity centres of NWWA (WR) has been the presence of very willing and happy volunteers and the very genial and cheerful work environment enabling our ladies to focus their efforts on actual community work instead of endless coffee mornings and cultural programmes.

The lasting and overbearing event that cast a pall of gloom over the entire naval fraternity was the recent Submarine tragedy. The incident brought to fore yet again the challenges of profession of arms that our gallant men serve with great honour and pride. As families of our brave men who made the supreme sacrifice in the call of duty grieved the loss of their dear ones, NWWA extended constant support in all possible ways to the bereaved families. Mrs Satvasheela Chavan, wife of Maharashtra Chief Minister, met with families of our Naveers, on 02 Sep 13 at NWWA KENDRA. Efforts are continuing to extend continuous support and welfare guidance to all concerned families by NWWA (WR). The quick release of NGIF, INBA and other financial support by NHQ and HQWNC was most remarkable. The PDNPF personally flew down from Delhi.

I draw great satisfaction and stand reassured that our close knit naval fraternity is one large family and like all families we share and participate in the joys and sorrows of our family members. May God give the bereaved families strength and fortitude to cope with their irreplaceable loss and draw solace and support within our naval family.

I would like to express my unqualified and whole hearted gratitude to the highly spirited and motivated ladies that make the NWWA succeed. I am positive that with the continued and whole hearted support of the ladies of WNC, the NWWA (WR) would continue to grow stronger and keep evolving itself to meet the needs and aspirations of our naval fraternity.



*Mona Sinha*



**Mrs Ragini Chopra**  
President NWWA  
Eastern Region

It gives me immense pleasure to convey my warm greetings to all members of the NWWA fraternity.

The relationship between the past, present and future shapes our understanding of the world around us. Whether it is the perceived consequences of past events, the urgency of present concerns, or the challenges of the future, learning, from our experiences and our interactions, is a continuous activity. In today's connected world, the present generation has the world at their fingertips in ways that were unimaginable just a generation ago. In this flat world, there is a huge expanse of new ideas and thoughts which offer endless participatory possibilities for all, and, learning, therefore, becomes a two-way process for the old as well as the young.

The theme of this year's edition of Veerangana- "Glorious Past, Dynamic Present & Promising Future" is, therefore, both profound and topical, since it aptly endeavors to trace our past, assess and imbibe the present and visualise the future. As an organisation, NWWA, too, has evolved and remains steadfast in its aim of improving the naval community by helping the naval wife to recognize her true potential, providing a platform for her talents, lending a shoulder to share her burdens and a voice to celebrate her achievements. We must, therefore, be justifiably proud of our glorious past, confident of managing the challenges of today and look forward to a promising future.

The focus of NWWA activities has all along been the empowerment and social upliftment of our members, as well as good health and overall development of our children. I am happy to state that these sincere efforts to bring about a change in the quality of lives of our families have shown discernible progress. My compliments go out to all who have devoted their valuable efforts in reaching out to improve the 'Human Happiness Index' of our community.

Over the past years, Veerangana has emerged as an interactive medium that wonderfully showcases the thoughts and ideas of the naval fraternity and allows us to reach out to a wider audience for our mutual growth and development. I congratulate the editorial team for bringing out this splendid edition.

A handwritten signature in black ink on a white rectangular background, reading "Ragini Chopra".  
A black pen and an open notebook with a dark cover are resting on a dark, textured surface.



## ***Mrs Payal Soni***

President NWWA  
Southern Region

It is that time of the year again, when we unveil yet another edition of the magazine Veerangana that showcases the naval life, the literary prowess and the creative acumen from our naval fraternity.

As we in the Navy, leave old shores to find a toe hold amidst new surroundings, meet new friends, develop fresh bonds, catch up with old friends ...apart from converting our newest dwelling into a home ....all in all.. with an ambition in our hearts and a silent prayer on our lips, all of us chart fresh courses and start new chapters continuously. Thus the theme for this edition of 'Veerangana', 'Glorious Past, Dynamic Present, Promising Future'..holds very dear to my heart. Navy as an institution has been rich in tradition and customs and I can see that regardless of the busy lives that we lead we have not done away with these customs but have nurtured and improvised with zest to hold and weave them into the present. I am sure in the years to come we will continue to be fervent in these endeavours.

It is with an immense sense of pride and satisfaction, above all, humility and a sense of belonging, that I pen these words, acutely aware of the ever increasing challenges faced by the naval wife and our roles in the myriad of professional, ethical and social changes that our Navy, as well as the entire nation is going through.

While extending my warmest greetings and best wishes to all of you, I congratulate each and every member of 'Team Veerangana' for putting together an excellent collection of articles, immensely enjoyable in all its facets covering almost every aspect of a naval wife.





# EDITOR'S NOTE



**Padmini Nair**  
Editor  
Northern region

*“Yesterday is history,  
tomorrow is a mystery,  
today is a GIFT of God ,  
which is why we call it Present”*

*Bil Keane*

At the very outset let me wish all NWWA members, their families and readers a very happy , peaceful and fruitful New Year ahead. May all your wishes come true and may all your endeavours be successful.

This year VEERANGANA is dedicated to a GLORIOUS PAST, a DYNAMIC PRESENT AND a PROMISING FUTURE. Articles have been selected to bring out colours and flavours of the years gone by, the present day, and a promising future written by our very own galaxy of writers and poets.

We have attempted to do full justice to the theme. We have also included a small section on the tragedy which occurred this year in our lives; and we would like to silently dedicate a moment to the loved ones we have lost. We wish God gives the families the strength to bear with the loss and the means to fulfill their dreams and wishes.

I would like to thank the Editorial Team who have toiled and spared precious personal time to help bring out this magazine within the stipulated time limit.

Wishing all of you a happy reading. We look forward to getting bouquets & brick bats from our readers.

*Padmini*



जयश्री प्रसाद

# सम्पादिका की कलम से...

समय के कदमों की आहट नहीं होती। नए साल की दस्तक और सामने खड़ा था वीरांगना पत्रिका का प्रकाशन। 'गौरवपूर्ण अतीत, गतिशील वर्तमान और उदीयमान भविष्य' विषय चुना गया पत्रिका 2014 वीरांगना के लिए। 'कल आज और कल' विषय ही इतना रोचक है कि जिंदगी का खाका खुद व खुद शब्दों के माध्यम से जीवन का सारांश बन जाए। जिंदगी के विभिन्न सोपानों पर "इकट्ठा एहसासों के बादल" ने जिंदगी के कई संवेदनाओं का मंथन किया होगा और वो लेख, कविता, कहानी, आपबीती बनकर हमारे पत्रिका का विषय आकार बन गए। उन्हें थोड़ा तराशने का कार्य संचार के सदस्यों ने किया।

पारोमिता ओझा संचार सदस्य के सबसे काबिल और युवा सम्पादिका हैं। उनके कार्य की जितनी भी सराहना की जाए बहुत कम है और उनकी डिग्री की फेहरिस्त बहुत लंबी है। एक छोटा-सा परिचय पारोमिता MA (English), MHRM, M.Phil (English), PGCTE, (PGDTE) (PHD), हमारी अन्य सदस्या पदमिनी नायर जो हमें हर कदम पर अपना कार्य पूरा करने में सहयोग दिया। मैं अपना आभार श्रीमती चित्रा जोशी के लिए भी प्रकट करूंगी जिन्होंने हर कदम पर अपना कीमती समय और सुझाव देकर हमारा मनोबल बढ़ाया।

ये संस्करण पूरी तरह आप लोगों को समर्पित है। आपकी जिंदगी के हर हिस्से को हमारा सम्मान और सलाम। इतिहास को सम्मानित करें। वर्तमान को गतिशील रखें और भविष्य को सुरक्षित बनाएं।

के. बेलिना, मंजुषा लाल, मनिषा श्रीवास्तव और शुचि महाजन ने इस संस्करण की नींव रखी थी और हमने उसे आकार दिया। द्वारका प्रसाद माहेश्वरी की कुछ पंक्तियां इस संदर्भ में प्रस्तुत है :-

इतने उंचे उठो कि जितना उठा गगन है  
 नए हाथ से वर्तमान का रूप संवारों  
 नई तूलिका से चित्रों का रंग उभारो  
 नए राग को नूतन स्वर दो, भाषा को नूतन अक्षर दो  
 युग की नई मूर्ति स्थापना में  
 इतने मौलिक बनो कि जितना स्वयं सृजन है।  
 लो अतीत से उतना ही जितना पोषक है  
 जीर्णशी का मोह मृत्यु का ही द्योतक है  
 तोड़ो बंधन रुके न चिंतन— गति जीवन का सत्य चिरंतन  
 धारा के शाश्वत प्रवाह में— इतने गतिमय बनो कि जितना परिवर्तन है।

*Taishree*

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# Rendezvous with Minu Dhowan

PAROMITA OJHA

It was a crisp November morning with light breeze blowing and a chill in the air, and soon we three from Team Sanchar (NR) Mrs. Padmini Nair, Mrs. Jaishree Prasad and I reached our destination- the elegant home of Mrs. Minu Dhowan. As we were quickly ushered in, we were mesmerized to witness the plush interiors, every nook and corner of the house reflected the refined taste of its dwellers. Soon, we were face to face with the lady of the house who welcomed us graciously. A few lines that we had read a long time ago recurred in our mind:

*There are three things admirable for a woman to be, at any age! Whether you are four or forty-four or nineteen! It's always wonderful to be elegant, it's always fashionable to have grace, and it's always glamorous to be brave!*

Our host definitely had all the three traits in abundant measure. Her poise, grace and calm dignity enthralled us completely for the next one hour that we spent conversing with her.

Excerpts from the insightful conversation:

### ***How did your tryst with naval life begin?***

Till I got married, I had no inkling about naval life nor did my parents know what naval life was all about. I hail from a typical Punjabi household where arranged marriages were the usual norm. My father was very impressed with my would-be husband and arranged for a meeting at a common place. Since I was a very shy girl in that brief interaction time I could not even manage to sneak a proper glance at my future husband. Once married, I experienced a different way of life altogether, it took me time to understand



the naval way of life and start interacting with the naval community. I would say my husband was a pillar of strength for me at that time as he helped me in my transition from a coy bride to a confident naval wife. All these years I have looked up to him as my friend, philosopher as well as a guide and our journey together has been a very endearing one.

***As a young naval wife how did you visualize the journey ahead?***

When I got married I had no idea about defence life so I decided to take things as they came. I got married at the age of 22 and at that age and time girls were expected to adjust and be accommodating. Since I was groomed to be adjusting since childhood, I could adapt myself with ease to naval life. My husband had forewarned me that there would be periods of long separations and I would be expected to handle the family front single-handedly so I was mentally prepared for my life as a naval spouse.

***Did you do anything unique to groom yourself for the role of a naval wife?***

I did nothing unique to groom myself. Before I got married I had a much protected life with no parties and no late nights. So in the initial days of our marriage I was shy and reticent but my husband became my guide and patiently clarified all my doubts, helped me overcome all my inhibitions and encouraged me to speak my mind. I gained confidence and brushed up my inter-communicational skills as in Navy we are expected to interact with people from diverse backgrounds and cultures. I would say I came to my own only after marriage and we kind of grew up together. My parents-in-law had also helped me a lot in those initial years when I had spent a lot of time with them since my husband was sailing a lot those days.

***Do you remember your maiden appearance in a naval social gathering? Any humorous incident you would like to share with us?***

My maiden appearance was very embarrassing. In those days all young officers were posted for long courses, so my husband was posted to Kochi for his long course. Once, we went to the club for dinner, everybody present there thought we were siblings since we resembled each other so much. It

is generally believed that spouses generally tend to look alike after maybe 20-22 years of married life but for us it was right from the beginning. As a young wife I committed a lot of blunders with ranks as it was very confusing for me initially. I remember while trying to make polite conversation with an Admiral who was posted in Mumbai I ended up asking him to as to where he was posted? Well, those mistakes were a learning experience and I learnt through each one of them.

***In your opinion, what is the most difficult part of being a naval wife and a mother?***

Both of them are challenging in their own ways. It is never an easy task to guide the children, handle children's education and the home at the same time, that too single-handedly, as your husband is rarely at base. It is not always easy to explain their father's absence for long durations. To be a naval spouse is equally challenging and as one grows seniority wise in the services it is challenging to perform your duties perfectly since so many people are looking up to you. You have to strive really hard to meet their expectations as there is no space for committing mistakes.

***How did you explain to your kids about their father's venture into the seas for prolonged period of time?***

Kids are very adaptable, so when they were young they understood that their father was away due to work commitments, their father also called up whenever he could as those days the channels of communication were not so advanced. They adjusted to his absence quite well.

My children left home early and went abroad for studies, so they could not see much of naval life, they have missed out living in naval community, it was a heart-breaking decision for us to send them out of India for higher studies but it was worth it, they are doing well and are well settled in Australia and Canada respectively.

***Tell us something more about your family and social life?***

Right now I barely get time as multiple social engagements are always lined up; the pace is so hectic that at times it gets a little too much to handle.

Since, we are from Delhi there are lots of friends and relatives here so we try to catch up whenever we can. Whenever we are home, we look forward to talking to our three children who are settled abroad and we also plan about our future.

***How has your spouse enriched your life?***

As I mentioned earlier, I was not a confident girl when I married but with infinite patience, love and care my husband has taught me to face situations head-on. I have evolved as a more mature, understanding and compassionate human being due to his support.

***Why and when did you actively start participating in NWWA activities?***

Mrs Kumud Kohli appointed me as the 'Entertainment' member while we were posted in Delhi. I was very apprehensive then as I didn't know much about handling these kind of responsibilities, but now when I look back, I am glad that she chose me, as I learnt how to manage people and resources so well. That experience was an eye-opener for me. Later in Visakhapatnam, when my husband was the Fleet Commander, as his wife I looked after the NWWA activities and then as Wife of COS, I took up 'Welfare' activities on insistence of Mrs Beena Suthan, President NWWA (ER). It was such an enriching experience interacting with so many ladies

especially sailors' wives, as they are the support system of Navy. I got a very good response from them. I am now also involved with various welfare activities of NWWA. I feel NWWA is doing so much for the community by offering so many facilities, so the married officers should encourage their wives to be part of this vibrant association. Navy looks after us so well, it is also our responsibility to give back something to the society by helping out whenever we can in various NWWA endeavours. We look forward to more young wives joining NWWA, as young minds would bring fresh insights.

***Tell us about the best part of your work as Vice-President NWWA?***

As part of Welfare initiative, I look forward to interaction with the wives of sailors. It is quite challenging to cater to their requirements considering the limitations that we have. I also love to interact with different kinds of people, within service and outside as it is always a learning experience when you deal with such diversity.

***Which project of NWWA has been closest to your heart?***

All Welfare activities have been really close to my heart and I really enjoyed being part of TARSH, as it is a creative arena and I am a creative person.

The concept was floated by Mrs. Madhulika Verma and I would like to thank her profusely for introducing us to this beautiful art and also to different kinds of fabric. I have tried my hand at block printing and discovered that I really could design saris too.

How did you maintain your work-life balance?

It was very difficult. As I mentioned earlier I hail from Delhi and my mother is also settled here so it was quite a herculean task to give her time, manage my social engagements, take care of home etc. However over the years, I think I have learnt the art of time-management and prioritising assignments quite well. So, till date I have successfully managed to maintain my work-life balance.

***How do you spend your much needed leisure time amidst your hectic schedule?***

I rarely get time but whatever time I get I like to





unleash my creative side – I write poetries, I paint on canvas and pottery alike and also de-stress myself by cooking meals.

***You are considered to be a style icon by many, what is your style mantra?***

I don't have any style mantra, I wear whatever I like, I generally like things 'out-of-the-box', I avoid run-of-the-mill kind of clothes. My penchant for unique things reflects in my clothes and even in my presentation of food. I do follow fashion trends but not blindly, I wear whatever suits me. While presenting food also I look into the tiniest detail and ensure that even the décor of the dinner table is set as per the cuisine I am serving and this attention to detail has induced me to collect a lot of artefacts over the years.

***Any personal ambitions yet unattained?***

Being a Naval officer's wife I have been fortunate to visit a lot of countries and interact with the wives of officers from different parts of the world. In the course of these interactions I collected a lot of local recipes and my passion for cooking developed from there. I like to eat in road-side eateries when abroad as you get to sample authentic cuisines in these eateries only. I used to keep taking photographs of the food and noted down the exotic names of these dishes. These experiences have fuelled my dream of

opening a restaurant serving high-end food in Delhi. I am looking forward to fulfilling this dream post my husband's retirement. In fact a long time ago I had helped a friend of mine in setting up a restaurant in Delhi, we had started from scratch- we had planned the menu, done up the interiors etc. Unfortunately, I couldn't carry it on for a long time as due transfer we had to move out from Delhi. My husband at that time had supported me completely and I know he will stand by me in future endeavours also. I am, also looking forward to be a grandmother soon and I am already emotionally attached to my unborn grandchild.

***What advice would you give to naval wives today who look up to you as their inspiration?***

I would suggest them to be true to 'self', there is no need to put up a façade to impress others. People love and appreciate you when you are yourself. Do not worry about trivial things, do what you love the most and be part of this beautiful association NWWA as it will transform and enrich your life completely. We left her home invigorated and mesmerized by her zeal to live life to its fullest. We were reminded of Ulysses and his heart-felt vow:

*I cannot rest from travel: I will drink,  
Life to the lees - Alfred Tennyson*

# Conversation with Uma Nadella

SANCHAR TEAM (NR)

**How did your journey in naval way of life begin?**

My exposure to Naval Life began on reaching Delhi to join him at IIT Delhi. Initially, I stayed in the SP Marg Mess (the present day Battle Honors Mess) and kept myself busy by doing a couple of courses which used to take me to the famed Connaught Place. Since accommodation had to be hired in those days, our Sunday routine would be to go house hunting. Finally, we settled into our house in Munirka.

**As a new entrant did you have any idea of what challenges lay ahead?**

As a young wife, I only knew I had to pack my bags and move every 2 years and set up a new home at a new place. Frankly, I took life as it came and by

God's grace it was all good.

**How did you prepare yourself for the role of a Naval wife?**

I did not do anything unique. But the Naval fraternity helped me to play my role as a naval wife. In the absence of Internet and "Welcome Young Lady" it was my husband, friends and Senior Ladies from whom I picked up the nuances of naval life.

**Was your first appearance in a Naval social gathering smooth or a tricky one?**

My very first maiden appearance was to a Dinner Night at Visakhapatnam. But my most memorable experience was my first time aboard INS Ganga. Being from a non-Defence background it was a totally different experience. That's when I learnt that balancing on the gangway in a Sari and heels could be a tricky affair. But it only became trickier, because the Ship even seemed to rock even when at Harbour!!

**In your opinion, do you feel it is challenging being a naval wife and a mother at the same time?**

It may not be difficult but it may be slightly challenging at times. Especially when my children were young and he was away at sea, it was hard to manage the homefront. I had to single handedly do everything from running the house, to take the ailing kids to hospital, attending all school meetings and even managing the groceries. My children were still small when my husband went away for a course for 6 months, but being in an establishment like INS Valsura





helped, because there was a whole base to support you. Whether in times of need or for a joyous occasion your neighbors become family members that makes the sailing smooth.

***How has your husband helped you in evolving as a naval spouse?***

I must say I have transformed from a young shy girl to a confident Naval wife. With him being away, I have transformed to being (it has taught me to be) an independent woman from being a very pampered and sheltered daughter. Also due to his transfers it has made me more adaptable and flexible. Not to forget that this journey has given me a lot of friends helped me learn about different cultures and see new places. The different experiences that I have encountered being a Naval wife has certainly enriched my life and is a journey that will always be a memorable one.

***Why and when did you actively start participating in NWWA activities?***

Though in a small way, I started participating in NWWA activities from my husband's tenure in INS Gomati. But I actively started participating when we reached INS Valsura. From organizing coffee mornings to participating in NWWA nights, from planning outreach activities to environmental campaigns, I've done it all.

***Do you feel that NWWA can enrich lives of Naval wives in more ways than it does already? Tell us about your experiences.***

NWWA already has a wide range of activities and initiatives to help the Naval Community. NWWA should identify talent among the ladies and utilize their expertise for the benefit and betterment of the community. As I've mentioned earlier that I got actively involved in NWWA activities on reaching INS Valsura, so it actually gave me exposure to the wide gamut of activities that NWWA has. It gave me an opportunity to bond with all the ladies and make good friends. But I would say it offered me a platform to explore and contribute to the various activities in both my stints. There were a few challenges that I had to overcome, like being a moderator in so many different activities. Different activities mean different people and hence different opinions. The challenge was to arrive at a conclusion that would bring everyone on the same page and yet meet the

objective that we started out with.

***Which initiatives of NWWA have been closest to your heart?***

I would like to touch upon 2 projects that have been closest to me during this journey. Firstly Prerna acted as an eye opener. Because it is one thing to beware of and be sensitive about cancer, but is a heart wrenching task to be dealing with the patients and their pain. It is the stark reality that comes to fore and makes our difficulties look much smaller. Another initiative of NWWA in which I was actively involved was Balpathshala. Because I strongly believe that education should be every child's right as it helps in shaping their future as well as taking steps towards a brighter India.

***How do you enjoy your leisure time?***

It is imperative that in today's fast paced life everyone finds little time for themselves in doing what they enjoy. I personally enjoy reading and gardening. I take keen interest in my flower garden and vegetable garden.

***How/where do you see yourself in the coming years?***

I see myself missing the Navy life for sure. But I also see us settling down in Hyderabad and am looking forward to setting up my new home there. Also I look forward to giving more time to my family commitments in Hyderabad. I see myself engaging in spiritual activities and intend giving more time to leisure activities as well. I would like to work towards education for the under privileged children, since I feel I can leverage my experience of being a teacher here. I would like to work towards this in the coming days.

***Your suggestions to young Naval wives who look up to you for inspiration?***

I believe that all the wives should make the most of being a part of the Navy. It is indeed a great privilege and pride to be a Naval wife and be a part of the Naval life. I think though the Navy life is different but it is one of the best because of the bonding, the facilities and the kind of environment it offers to all of us. I believe the Naval community has a lot to teach all of us through its journey and we should also give back to it in whatever way possible.

# A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME...

KIRAN PANDIT

*“...would smell just as sweet”, said Shakespeare.  
Then why are we so confused about our identity?*



## **VIZAG 1991**

This conversation took place at an anniversary party onboard INS Rajput, between the then FOC-in-C's wife, a lady famous for her strong feminist views, and the young wife of one of the ship's officers.

Senior Lady (SL): What is your name?

**Young Wife (YW):** I am Mrs.Deshpande, and my husband is the Navigating Officer on this ship.

**SL:** I did not ask for your husband's name, or what he does- I asked for yours! I hope that you're aware that you have an identity of your own!

Though her views appeared blasphemy then, now I tend to agree with that senior lady, whose thinking was in any case ahead of her times. But the fact still remains that your presence onboard a ship or in any Naval environment, is courtesy your husband's appointment , so your identity is inextricably linked with his.

## MUMBAI 2005

The following exchange occurred during the Fling Fleet Evening at the WNC Mess between a young wife (YW) who worked for an MNC, and myself.

**Me:** Hi Sonia!, how are you? I haven't seen you for ages. I hope you're well? Or were you out on chhutthi?

**YW:** No I'm working, and I get back late, so I don't attend parties. I took leave for this one since Boman Irani is coming and he's my favourite actor.

**Me:** So you socialize over the weekends, I suppose?

**YW:** No, I'm, so exhausted by the end of the week that I just want to stay in bed and relax.

**Me:** You mean you haven't met your husband's colleagues or their wives yet?

**YW:** No, he hasn't met mine either. In any case, attending parties is an official requirement for him, not for me- I'm not in the Navy!

**Me:** .....!!! (too dumbstruck to

speak)

If I hadn't been so astounded, I would have liked to ask that young lady why she lived in NOFRA, ate RIK, got herself treated at INHS Asvini and used INCS facilities, if she wasn't in the Navy?

Yeh Kahaan Aa Gaye Ham, Yoon Hii Saath Saath Chalte

Don't you think the pendulum has swung too far?

Here's another snippet of conversation that I overheard between two pregnant, young naval wives at a NWWA Coffee Morning- a hilarious example of what can happen if you delink your identity from your husband.

**YW1:** Hi, I'm Sukanya. We're obviously in the same boat!

**YW2:** I'm Gunjan, and I'm seasick!!

**YW1:** You know, this is our second child, and after the complications I had with the first, I'm only going ahead with this one because of that new young gynaecologist at Asvini- he's so good, and sooooo handsome too, hai naa?

**YW2:** (tongue in cheek, with a

straight face) Absolutely. And I'm also having my second child because of him!

To the undying embarrassment of YW1, she later found out that YW2 was the wife of the aforementioned gynaecologist!

So I guess, as in most things, the safest bet is the middle path, which is why I'm signing off as... Kiran Pandit.

P.S. All names (except mine) have been changed for obvious reasons!

## COME-MEET-TEA

"Bye Dad, I'm off to the NWWA Committee Meeting". I called out in passing, as I rushed off to make it to the meeting on time- yes, we value punctuality, not just in the Navy but in NWWA too! My father-in-law waved goodbye with a "see you later, enjoy yourself!" Enjoy myself? What did he mean? Did he think I was going for a



party? I later discovered that to him ,it meant exactly what it said- "Committee"- as he patiently and succinctly explained, in words of one syllable-'come', 'meet' and have 'tea'! Simple ,no? Sorry Dad, and others like him, which includes most people- but contrary to popular belief, we do manage to get some work done in between coming and meeting and having tea!

As a member of the NWWA committee, let me give you some 'inside gyan'!

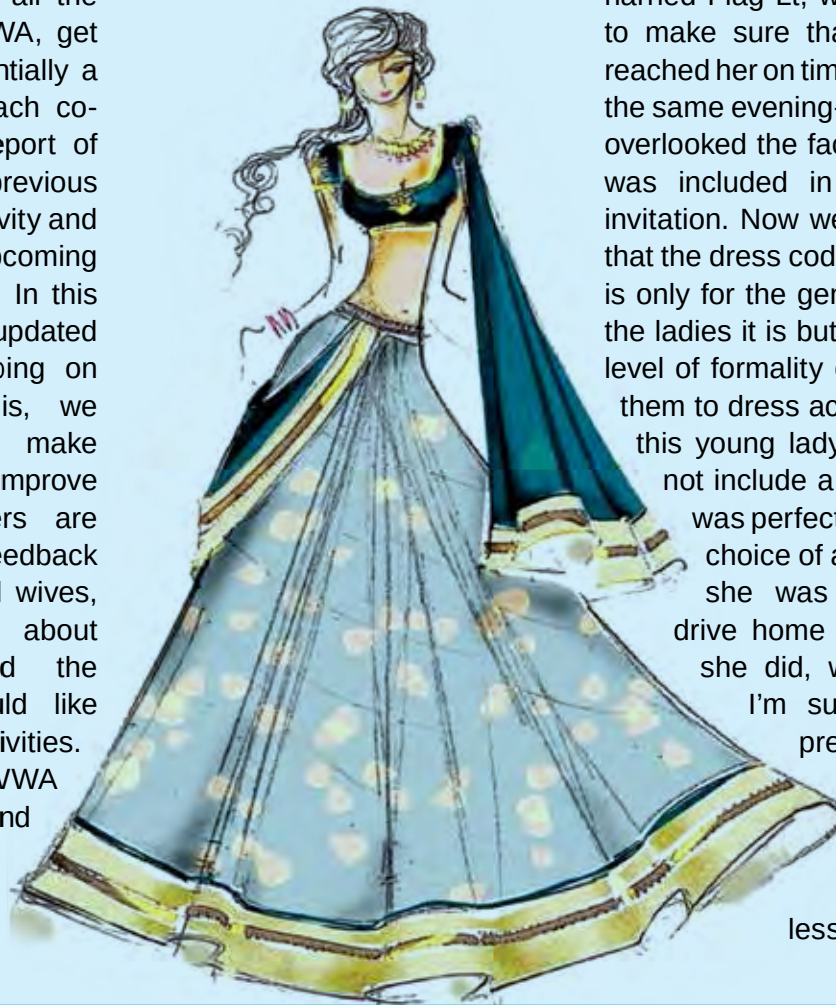
The NWWA Committee Meeting is held once a month, usually in the first week of each month, at the NWWA Kendra, wherein the NWWA Committee, comprising the President, the Vice president, the Secretary , the Treasurer and the Co-ordinators of all the Welfare activities of NWWA, get together for what is essentially a brainstorming session. Each co-ordinator presents her report of the happenings of the previous month in her sphere of activity and outlines the plans for upcoming events in the next month. In this way, all of us remain updated on everything that is going on in NWWA. Besides this, we also provide inputs or make suggestions on ways to improve our functioning. Members are also informed about feedback received from other naval wives, outside the committee, about their requirements and the changes that they would like to see in NWWA's activities. Organisation of major NWWA events is also discussed and specific responsibilities are delegated to all the members.

So, while you're right- we

do come, we do meet and yes, we do have tea- a NWWA committee meeting is always followed by delicious refreshments- it is also a lot of hard work, you'll agree, for a very noble cause- the welfare of the naval community.

And while we dedicate our time and our effort to this noble cause, Dad, as per your instructions, I did enjoy myself, as I do in every meeting, because being with your friends catching up with them, and exchanging news about your personal lives is always fun ,isn't it?

## DRESSED TO THE NINES - OR SIXES?



Traditionally, all guests invited for a social gathering are sent an invitation card in their names. So it was no surprise that one such card arrived at an Admiral's residence, to invite his young daughter, home on vacation from college, to a get together at the Mess. The surprise came when she arrived at the venue, smartly turned out, in her father's 6B's! Remember, this was in the era before women had joined the armed forces. Today the presence of a lady in uniform would not cause even a raised eyebrow, but back then, her grand entry in full regalia caused quite a furore! Her explanation? And you have to admit it was pretty logical, was that the invitation card, with her name on it, read dress: 6B's! Obviously, an oversight by a harried Flag Lt, who, in his haste to make sure that the invitation reached her on time- the event was the same evening- had completely overlooked the fact that no officer was included in that particular invitation. Now we all understand that the dress code in an invitation is only for the gentlemen, and for the ladies it is but a pointer to the level of formality of the event, for them to dress accordingly. Since

this young lady's invitation did not include a gentleman, she was perfectly justified in her choice of attire. Of course, she was only trying to drive home a point , which she did, with a hammer!

I'm sure none of us present that day, including the unfortunate Flag Lt, will ever forget this lesson!

# The Rising GDP

LIGY REJITH



Having spent the majority of our lives married into the naval fraternity, the penchant to use acronyms has become second nature, with no acronym too large or too small to catch us by surprise. Whilst the hubbies continue to use standard acronyms which by now sound all too familiar, creating new acronyms is best left to us, the better halves.

One such acronym coined is called 'GDP'. Far from being related to finances (which we see pretty less off), it stands for the "Glorious Past", "Dynamic Present", and "Promising Future", (GDP), that the Navy stands for. Our "Glorious Past" of the Russian ships, our "Dynamic Present" of Indian built ships and our "Promising Future" of Aircraft Carriers is something every faithful naval wife would have heard scores of times. This metamorphic rise has its own set of advantages for a naval wife and the feminine perspective is right

behind these men who man the seas.

This paradigm shift from the past to the present has resulted in a quantum leap in the 'days at sea'. Whilst our sea farers secretly enjoy it but grunt and groan when at home to achieve the 'sympathy factor', this increase in our days of freedom has resulted in a high dependence on Maggie Meals, Pizzas and Burgers. With the children loving it, who are we 'home makers' to raise a hue and cry.

Gone are the days when washing a white uniform was a taxing and daunting task to be achieved by mere hands. With the advent of automatic washing machines, what was a dreaded chore is now just a button away. The future is even more promising with 'disposables on the anvil', if the submariners have their way.

There was a time when our hubbies used to proudly cut the umbilical

chord as they sailed off, leaving mundane chores like house shifting, ration collection and the works to us, poor damsels. Whilst there has been no re-allocation in duties, Airtel and Vodaphone have ensured that periodic grunts and groans from our end can reach their worthy ears. The future is even more promising if satellite communication has its way.

Sailings in the past were so boring, if I may say. The tired hubby used to reach home only with the standard bag of clothes to wash before the next sailing. Now, with them gallivanting all across the Globe on missions ranging from rescue operations and diplomacy to anti piracy patrols, another bag of 'travel goodies' bought is part of the standard kit brought home. Woe bemoans any naval sea farer who tries to dilute this drill as 'purchase lists' are freely circulated on 'FB' for qualitative and quantitative comparison.

With such an exciting life at hand, the naval wife can only wish for much more in the naval quest for this memorable transition from the "Glorious Past" to a "Dynamic Present" and even a more "Promising Future". The rising 'GDP' is here to stay.....but as Ms Pepsi says...." Yeh Dil Mange More...!!!!





# A SNEAK PEEK

## into the heart of a submariner's wife

PAROMITA OJHA



*You are not defined by your past. You are prepared by your past.*

*-Unknown*

Well, today after 6 years of marriage that had its ample share of turbulence and calm, I decided to take a furtive look at the times spent with my submariner, some very memorable and some catastrophic, yet each day a learning experience and a mélange of precious memories.

Flashback: a girl with dreams to fly and live life 'queen size' working with a reputed airline interacts with a handsome young man on a popular social networking site mistaking him for a past batch mate. God in his heaven contrived to set the ball rolling and that casual acquaintance changed to something deeper. God must have laughed his heart out & ensured

she never fell short of adventure with her paramour and so the couple underwent a brief spell of break-up followed by a semi-secretive marriage due parental opposition.

After much conundrum once she joined her submariner in Visakhapatnam, she was immediately dropped in a flat in Naval Park and her gallant knight went off sailing, squashing her dreams of setting up home together. The very same night the wife was greeted by a bat since there was no window frame installed in one of the bedrooms and later by a rat scampering away in full glory within the house. Imagine her plight, to view at such

close quarters such unwelcome guests with no hope of rescue as the flat opposite and immediately below were vacant, nor any superheroes like 'Spiderman/Batman' dropped by. The wife with trepidation decided to let the visitors continue their nocturnal mission solely in the bedroom by locking it from outside and slept in the hall reciting the lines which seemed to mock at her plight now 'God is in his heaven, and all is well with the world'. Well, God definitely was in Heaven but all was surely not well in her world at least.

The doorbell rang one fine morning, and the wife was in for a rude shock, when she opened the door to an unkempt, bearded

stranger with a strange smell all over him. With some effort she recognized her 16 day old husband who no sooner walked inside the house, immediately walked out, much to the chagrin of the wife who had spent hours trying to do-up the house making the best use of the limited resources available nearby and also a daring trip to the city hitherto unknown to her, maneuvering the slippery sulphur and other industrial waste smeared roads in and around Naval dockyard infamous for oil spills. She ran after her husband calling him back who returned dazedly refusing to believe this was the house he had left her in fifteen days back. The house eventually turned into a retreat of solace and comfort for the man and the wife i.e. me and my husband, with the tapestry of our married life enriched by our friends from the naval fraternity, the ward-room get together and constant witty reminders from the seniors and juniors alike in INS Sindhuraj, INS Sindhurakshak, INS Vagli that my husband is 'one of his kind' in the arm (no submariner remotely thinks of marriage in dolphin training time) as he did in true 'filmi' style not caring that he was yet to attain his 'Dolphins', charging in to 'secure' me (and his life), when the 'ballast tank' of our love life was overflowing with my tears due to ASW(anti-submarine warfare) strategy of the parents. After 6 eventful years I've learnt to cope with the unannounced late night calls from bachelors demanding coffee and snacks, the winged, creepy and crawly visitors abounding in NORA and also ghost stories from maids, the familiar strange smell (of diesel,

oil, grime, grease and passion) my husband carried home when he returned from his sailings or after his daily visit to his self-proclaimed 'first love'- his boat. I also mastered the acrobatic skills

Meeting in Visakhapatnam and now be part of Sanchar team (NR). Today, I feel proud to share my bildungsroman with all, as it is in Naval bases that I learnt to cherish the bounty that life has offered



required to squeeze into the hatch and climb down the greasy ladders of the boat. I cherish the salutes given by men in uniform while I was in the gangway (has an old world charm of its own). I treasure the helping hand extended by women folk of naval fraternity and the opportunity given by NWWA to anchor a NWWA General Body

to me and God willing, I am not willing to let go off it anytime soon. Thank you hubby, for sharing a slice of 'dolphin life' with me.

"Agar firdaus bar roo-e zameen ast, Hameen ast-o hameen ast-o hameen ast"-("IF THERE IS PARADISE ON FACE OF THE EARTH, IT IS THIS, IT IS THIS, IT IS THIS!!!)



# A LESSON IN LEADERSHIP

## *THE NAVAL WAY OF LIFE*

CAPT SUSHEEL MENON

Last year, I celebrated with my wife and daughter the happy event marking my two decades in the Navy. My wife has been by my side for 18 of those years. It has been a great, exciting, happy and sometimes exasperating journey.

The Navy has been a great teacher, a wonderful master and a gracious host. I still recall my first day in uniform, on a hot summer day on the parade ground of the NDA Wing at Ghorpuri in 1988. I would like to believe that in the intervening journey of more than two decades, I have changed, evolved and grown into a better person, a better officer and a better human being.

If I am asked to narrate what this fine service has instilled in me, I would have to say- wonderment, passion and belief over the years, I would unhesitatingly admit that even today I am most amazed at where and how, in the most unlikely of places and within the most unlikely people, one finds leadership.

My initial years in training led me to believe, naively, that leadership



was measured by the weight of brass on the shoulder or the tonnage under the captain's chair. I could not have been more wrong. The Navy taught me, very early on, that leadership is a function of inner spirit, strength of character, capacity for compassion, and richness of the soul. Professional grooming and rank are embellishments that accentuate leadership—but not define it.

I say this with great confidence from the inadvertent lesson in leadership I learnt from one of the gunnery rates on the cadet training ship I was on. Let's call

him Kabil Singh. Kabil was the average Joe-'work hard, play harder'. His rank in the Navy expected no leadership, only obedience. Kabil was more than happy to do the expected and nothing more. That changed one day when, probably as a punishment for an unfinished task, the Gunnery Officer of the ship placed three of us in his custody with the terse instruction that we were now his 'wards' till we finished our training.

The natural expectation was that Kabil would employ us rather well over the ship's side, scrubbing the deck, wiping the mast and such. Well he did that, but the way he did it earned our gratitude, respect and friendship. He finally had someone below him in hierarchy and status, but what surprised us was the manner in which he responded to us. He took us aside and said: "Cadet saab, don't worry, we are in same team." That was the start of a wonderful relationship where I learnt every day to admire this man more. He led because he was made the leader, but we followed because



he made us want to follow him. He tasked us in the hot sun but also got us cold water from the galley. He worked us beyond meal times but got our meals heated before we ate. He gave us extra morning watches but collected our uniforms from the dhobi. He made us redo a bad paint job but hid us away to let us study in peace. He complained often about our inefficiency but would not let anyone else task us. Many years have passed since I parted company with Kabil, but his lessons in leadership, compassion and spirit have stayed with me. He hoped to leave the Navy with some

moderate savings and return to his fields, his first love. That must have happened many years ago. The Navy has been kind and has given me many opportunities to lead. I have, on each occasion, tried to do so remembering Kabil and his inadvertent lessons in leadership, remembering to look for leaders within my team. I have never been disappointed. Both my wife and daughter share my belief that leaders must lead surely and with steady steps, but they must in turn teach their followers to lead. They must have the courage to tell their team: "Owe

me ALL your loyalty because my rank makes me your leader, but owe me ONLY that respect which I earn."

I have strived to keep this lesson in leadership close to my heart and adhere to it sincerely. But no lesson is complete if it does not reach your home and hearth. I was born a Leo and the stars foretold that I would be reluctant to let go the reins. But the Navy has softened the edge; today, I recognise the wonderful leadership qualities that my wife and daughter have imbibed over the years. It's the Navy's legacy to our family.



# All in a day's work

REKHA DIXIT

Seventeen years ago, when I joined the naval fraternity as a young lieutenant's wife, both of us had dreams. His were of a glorious naval career packed with sailing stormy seas, firing fabulous guns and anchoring on distant shores; my dreams were of an action-packed journalistic career which would take me into the thick of riots, into courtrooms trying out cross-border terrorists and right into the heart of Naxal land, attempting to piece out the existence of a people living constantly between bullets. When we married, we added another set of dreams, those of a regular marital life, complete with children.

I was by no means a trailblazer when I entered NOFRA, at the age of 23, with a career already

tucked under my arm. There have been many eminent wives before me who've had more illustrious careers. However, I was definitely an oddity, especially with the choice of my career. It came with its own complement of odd hours, night shifts and always an uncertainty about when I'd be off for the day. So there was my husband, doing his gruelling one-in-threes when not sailing away for days without barely a word exchanged (those were pre mobile years). And here was I, a cub reporter in a national daily who could never foretell what the day ahead had for me. If there was a building collapse one day, there



was the transporters' strike on another, a student suicide one day and the outbreak of an epidemic on another. There were days when I'd be grateful that chasing deadlines kept me busy when the husband was away. There were also days when one of us would be free, but the other so tied up that the evening's plans had to be shelved with an understanding shrug.

No one, including my own army parents, expected my career to last; mum never gave up suggesting that I qualify myself for a career with a longer shelf life by acquiring a B.Ed. degree. I refused.

This was my dream; I'd make it work somehow. Everyone thought the career would be short-lived, folding up in the face of some eventuality like posting or children.

That I am a senior journalist with a leading newsmagazine today, with an unbroken career track, is because we as a couple knew the importance of fulfilling each other's dreams. I shifted to lesser paying jobs when I wasn't able to get a transfer every time my husband moved. He, on the other hand, took babysitting leave when there was no one else to mind them while I was on an out-of-city tour. His mother, too, moved in with us, in a granny-as-nanny arrangement.

Around that time, the number of

naval wives who were seeking careers beyond the cosseted walls of naval bases was increasing, and gradually, I began seeing a shift in community attitudes towards such women. There was a time when my husband and I would panic about reaching a party on time. I have on many occasions carried my sari to office, quickly changed out of jeans and T-shirt and tried to sneak out of the back door before a last-minute assignment was slapped on me, then the



rookie in the reporting bureau. Some years ago, at an official party, I saw a young working wife quietly sneak into a party that was already underway. But she was noticed, and there was an indulgent twinkle in the eyes of the commanding officer, who actually appreciated her effort at making it somehow, rather than frowning upon the protocol-shattering late entry.

Military life today is no different

from the changed civil society, where career wives are the norm, not exception. The naval set up is evolving to changing social mores, but steeped in tradition, this change is slow. The wife-bonding activities which earlier kept women occupied and socially connected while their husbands were busy chasing careers, too, have to change their focus. I see this happening to some extent, but I believe that more effort needs to be put in this direction. Else, the disconnect between NWWA and career naval wives will only increase. We've managed

to have career-women in emerging from naval bases. Now, NWWA needs to evolve more strategies that will entice such women back into its fold, and not see these as interactions as duty. Won't NWWA rise to a different level when its meetings are buzzing with the active participation of wives who are also lawyers, corporate executives, professors, architects, super speciality surgeons, advertising copy writers and journalists?

For my part, though I have never managed to attend a single coffee morning, my identity as a naval wife is a very important facet of my overall personality, one that I always wear as a badge of pride during my interactions in the civilian world.

# Down Memory Lane

VIKRAMJEET KAUR

It just takes a few seconds to recall and re-live the special moments in one's life. It seems like just yesterday that in my family for the first time, a girl was going to marry a Naval officer, that too at a 'short notice' of fifteen days. I remember the day I got engaged, my father asked me to fetch the atlas. I promptly brought out one. He then located 'Cochin' and measured the distance on the map. He hugged me with tears rolling down his cheeks and I could just hear, 'itni door chali jaogi'.....

I reached Cochin and it was the first time in my life that I saw the sea. In those days the means of communication were very limited. Letter writing was the 'in thing'. Each one of us used to have at least two -three letter pads in our possession. I wrote to my parents, giving all the minutest of details – the welcome party, the food, the language, the people etc... slowly I started getting used to some Naval terminologies such as 8As, No 2s, Ty duties, B type house, D form etc.

In our times husbands were the first scape goats and their friends thereafter. In any case choicest of recipes is now just a click away. It wasn't so about twenty five years back when one had to trust mother's recipes or the mentors' (senior ladies in the unit or the neighbours). The exchange of recipes, starting from learning how to make dosa, idli, coconut chutney, dhokla, upma or sharing

how to make aloo parantha or chana bhatura has not only left a permanent mark in the mind but has also been instrumental in establishing lifelong friendships.

Managing finances was the greatest task, small expenses kept one on the toes. Entries of expenditure details of that era in the diaries of that time are really amusing!! Tiny amount such as Rs 05.00 for eggs, Rs 3.00 for bread etc from Madhu's shop will certainly make no sense to the young ladies today.

In a nutshell, the collection of recipes from each other, sharing a learning experience in culinary skills, how to keep 'the whites' white, how to stitch simple dresses for the tiny tots were at its best in the early years of marriage and still are well preserved, As the role switched over from wife to mother,



time management skills were the highlight of this stage – handling baby, attending unit parties, outing on the beaches, preparing baby food, 'homework'.... OMG the list of 'to do things' became longer and longer.

Time flies and slowly the day came when the children left home, now coping with the new routine and the new challenges!! The young girl who had left home in her early twenties now has her heart full of fond memories of each and every day spent with enthusiasm, participation, learning and josh which is an apt synonym of the INDIAN NAVY!

The platform that is provided to naval ladies gives them wings to fly and touch the sky. The bonding, the feeling of togetherness and above all the pleasure that we experience in little things we do together is amazing. Whether it is coffee evening or coffee morning practices, deciding a theme, dressing up and now the latest craze to get clicked!! It is fun and joy of doing things together. The very feeling of being part of NWWA gives immense pleasure and satisfaction. Confidence, caring and sharing attitude and abundance of joy, these are few skills and values that every lady cherishes for life. There is so much to do and so much still to learn!! For a Naval wife learning never stops. The days are shorter because there is so much to accomplish, so much to look forward to!!

# Once a fauji kid, always a fauji kid...

HARSHITA BHALLA



It is with great pride, I say that I'm a fauji kid and anything associated with the defence forces just makes me smile. I long said good-bye to my childhood but not to its memories. They are still as fresh as morning dew and as warm as a mother's hug. Dad was in the army and we had the privilege of staying in places all over India. Siliguri, Raiwala, Jhansi, Devlali and Srinagar are the ones embedded in my mind as I was old enough to enjoy and remember the places. Sitting in a glider as 11 years old or horse-riding in Devlali, or skiing in Gulmarg could be possible only because I belonged to a military background, thanks to my father. Besides the facilities that came as a part and parcel of being associated with the defence, the feeling of oneness as a community was unparalleled.

Having a parent in the armed forces, whether it is army, navy or air-force is definitely a boon to kids. They are exposed to different cultures right from the

beginning and thanks to frequent transfers, they learn to adapt to new places, new schools and end up having a best-friend during each transfer! People send their children to grooming classes but a child from a defence background doesn't need one because he/she subconsciously imbibes qualities like courtesy, politeness, discipline and etiquettes by just watching their parents and other officers. Their demeanor makes them stand apart from others only due to the fauji environment. There is a strong sense of patriotism in these kids and most of the time they either end up joining the defence forces or marrying someone from the same.

The transition from being a fauji kid to a fauji wife was not only natural, but also quite predictable as I didn't know any other lifestyle than this! The fauji connect continued when I married a naval officer and life is pretty much the same as in the army. Now, the million dollar question: which

is better: Army or Navy? Well, since I've been on both sides of the fence, there actually is no difference. Wait! There is, just one: the accommodation, where Army takes the cake. As naval wives, we never dream of an A-type house for at least two years and are quite happy as long as there is a roof on top, walls on all sides and no water or maid problem! Navy not only makes its officers strong but also their better-halves. When the husbands are away on duty, the wives rise up to the occasion to meet the challenges of running the home, getting behind the kids for homework, exams and food! Well, there is no time to complain as perks like clubs, gyms, sport facilities keep them in good spirits!!

Time has flown by and now when I look back at my growing years, I can't help but feel lucky to be a part of armed forces. Maybe somewhere down the line, my girls too would feel proud to be fauji kids!

# A WAY OF LIFE

PADMINI NAIR



As we turn to run the last lap, it is with a sense of poignant nostalgia that one looks back and remember many incidents in the Navy so vividly. They say “the Navy is not a Profession but a Way of Life”. One cannot but agree completely with this statement.

When my marriage proposal was mooted, the very thought of the Navy conjured up images of a life with a seafarer who will be away from home for months, images of his grand arrival with lots of gifts and images of a life filled with adventure.

It started off well enough sitting as a pillion on an old motorcycle, which ran more on will power and held firmly together by years of rust. The motorcycle served very well, till one fateful night, (or was it dawn?) when, after a ship’s marriage reception dinner, I sat on the pavement at Dadar in all my jewellery and finery, whilst my gallant seafarer attempted to coax the bike to start. The thought did cross my mind as to whether the ship’s machinery was also looked after in a similar fashion. This unpatriotic thought was

quickly banished.

Fine dining took on a new meaning. The pomp and grandeur of the Ward Room, the silver and the music gave an impression of a royal banquet, till then visualized only in English movies; of course, in many cases quickly forgotten after the solemn toast. I realized that dishes in civvy street had similar names but tasted rather differently.

House hunting was a term I earlier related to searching for a new home. The Navy taught me that home has a new definition. It could be the transit accommodation, a one bedroom flat, or even temporarily somebody else’s house. Home meant where your husband and children stayed, it had nothing to do with number of rooms, floor area or furniture.

I quickly learnt that all festivals are to be enjoyed. Holi, Diwali, Onam, Eid and Christmas were celebrated with the same fervor. Neighbors and friends were people from different regions and religions, and states, speaking different mother tongues; what was common was English, Hindi and, of course, the

Naval language.

School was a place, where you met teachers who were also colleagues and who had the same experience, and therefore understood the trials and tribulations of our children. They understood how traumatic it was when the child had to change school and friends during a transfer.

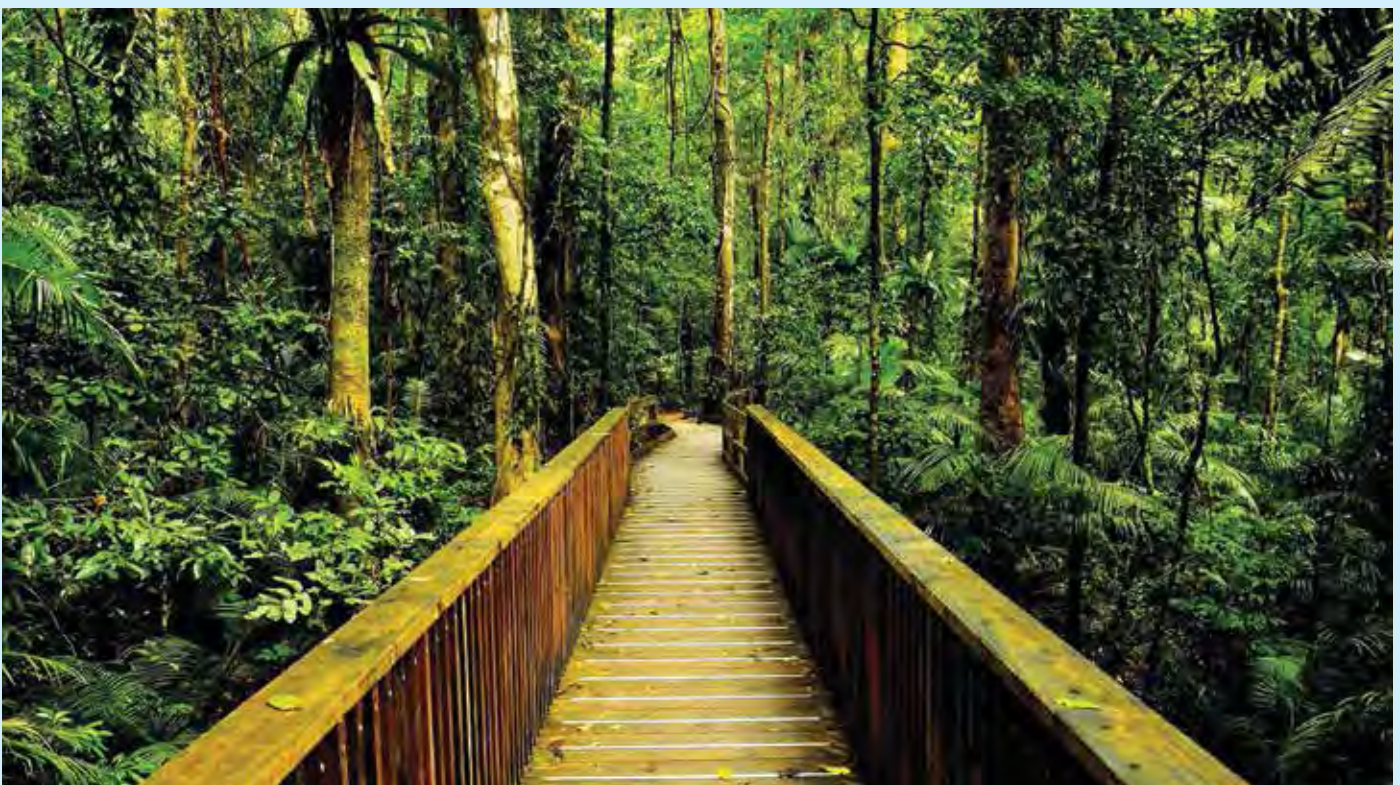
Hospitals were places of comfort where the doctors looked after you rather too considerately. In my experience of being a mother to two children, the stark comparison between what a Naval hospital could offer vis-à-vis a private clinic, was truly revealing. Doctors were friendly souls who were colleagues and who themselves felt your pain.

I became an expert in packing. My hubby, with years of experience, always managed to go on temporary duty or a very important 'national' assignment when packing had to be done. Yet the agony and pain of packing disappeared rather quickly with the pleasure of seeing a new place and meeting new friends. A new place, new friends certainly, but, similar environment, the school, the canteen the wardroom, the library, the shopping centre, the NWWA office.

Yet, as one sits at home and hears on television

of 'Breaking News'; of people who could not form part of the Navy, one feels sad to see the Navy being pilloried about with such ease and alacrity. The institution takes a beating, even sometimes in the hands of people who should be looking after the Navy. Then, it dawns – they have closed their minds and not allowed the Navy to mould them. They have lost an opportunity of a lifetime. They have locked themselves out, when fortune came knocking  
Do you grow in the Navy or does the Navy grow on you? Debatable and difficult to answer. Perhaps a bit of both. It does, however, pose a big problem. How do you retire from the Naval life. As the oft repeated cliché goes "You can take Me out of the Navy, You cannot take the Navy out of Me".

It is time to sign off, but there is a lurking fear. What will I do when the Naval umbrella is lifted from my head? What will I do when I will be far away from all that I hold today as 'near and dear'. A sense of desolation and despondency creeps in. But, no, in a corner of my heart, a flame flickers and tells me, the Navy has taught me how to lead a life, the Navy has taught me a 'Way of Life' and that lesson will stand me in good stead throughout my remaining years.



# The Tryst of a Lifetime

MEGHANA JOSHI

It was my first tryst with anything associated with the Navy and I was swept off my feet – not in the romantic kind of way (though it may well have played the role of a catalyst) but by the chivalry and genuine concern shown towards us by a group of gentlemen whom we barely knew.

It was late on a cold December evening and we had just finished watching an open air classical music concert – part of the many cultural fests that Pune would play host to – especially in the winter months when the weather was pleasant. We were a large group of college friends who would enthusiastically frequent such events, spurred by a common interest in dance and music. Although unthinkable in today's day and age, those were safer times and we would roam around on our two-wheelers as we pleased. At this particular concert, one of my friends had announced

that her cousin, a young naval officer would also be attending with his batch mates. We really didn't give it much thought at that time; little knowing that this evening was to completely change the course of my life and that of my best friend.

The program culminated in a musical crescendo and it was past 11pm. We exited the gates and moved towards where we had parked our scooters, still on a high from the wonderful performance. We were about to ride away when we saw my friend's cousin and his companions approaching and gesturing us to wait. They said that they would ride their bikes alongside and escort us to our homes. We politely declined their offer saying that we would be quite alright but they would have none of it. They were as good as their word and it was only after they had dropped each of us 12 girls to our respective doorsteps that they went their way.

It was a simple gesture really but yet it bowled us over, and out of a genuine desire to keep in touch with our new and gallant friends, it sowed the seeds of an enduring friendship, which over the course of letters and phone calls, eventually turned into a bond of a lifetime.

It's been 17 years now and I feel just as swept off my feet with pride as I walk beside my husband – smart and dignified in his Navy whites – a gentleman to the core. If I had to sum up in just a sentence what I liked most about being associated with the armed forces, it is the



charm of the old world chivalry that it extends towards women – not condescending in any manner but as an acknowledgement of their quiet but brave role in holding home and hearth together through difficult times. It is a tribute to her indomitable strength, her irrepressible spirit, her infinite reserves of love and her unending capacity for hope and optimism. I am sure that it must have been these very sentiments from which was born the tradition of offering a salute to every woman who graces the gangway of a ship.

If only the services way of life could be emulated by the civilian world - where upholding the honour of a woman would become a tradition and not an exception – ingrained in the very fabric of its ethos and inculcated in young impressionable minds. I would like to hold on to this thought and in true spirit of optimism make a wish that this aspiration sees the light of day.

My 17 year old tryst with the Navy continues to gather more memories, but the very first one remains by far my favourite!





# The Transition Saga

SUNAINA PRAVEEN (LT CDR RETD)

**1** 300 hrs- on a working day, on the phone is a housewife, "Aaj station reception hai, you have to come. Tomorrow is an anniversary, buy an appropriate gift, we have to go and wish them. Also, tomorrow morning you have to attend the inauguration of the sports event at six and you have to reach on your own. Lastly I am coming home in the next ten minutes; keep a set of casuals ready, I have to go to 'Aashiyana' for lunch. By the way did you call my mom today to tell her why I haven't?"

Sounds familiar does it not? Almost every second day a similar scene is played in my house and I try to fit in everything in my already packed schedule. But, as I am now a housewife, I have to magically fit in everybody's requirements, be it my husband's, daughter's, in-laws, parents, or even my maid. And I thought I had retired, and was going to take a break. Donning the uniform is the dream of many young girls in our country, and I had the proud opportunity to adorn one for ten years. Joining the Indian Navy has been one of the finest choices I made in my life.

And the decision to quit has been thought over a certain time period. I had to figure out what I wanted to do in life and being a full time mother and wife seemed satisfying and rewarding. But the cross over wasn't as easy as I had expected.

As a working woman I categorized my requirements according to priority and time availability; like Wednesdays for park time with my daughter, Saturdays an outing day; Sundays for linen, cleaning etc; it seemed to cover all needs and most importantly no one questioned me about any of my decisions, to do or not do something. Instead they supported me as I had less time during the week. But suddenly as I shifted to the other side of the fence, I was being asked questions and justification was being sought. My presence was suddenly needed for every small

event or even decisions to be taken at home or at my in-laws, parents and absence was never acceptable. My daughter, who is now four, needs me for every little thing that earlier she did independently. What happened to all those considerations towards me when earlier I had not even given my 50 %!

On the contrary I was short of time. The house never let me rest. From waking up deciding what to cook, till I put out the lights at night, I had a fully packed day, sometimes chores spilling over on to the next day. Suddenly every corner needed dusting, daily food had to have variety, people needed to be invited over, my presence was desired at every social event, and expectations by all had increased. My trips to the parlor increased as looking good at all times, became a requisite as a wife and mother. Husband needed clothes to be laid out, daughter needed attention all day, guests seem to have lot of free time to visit, my in-laws needed a phone call every day, and the list and cribs go on.

Here I would like to acknowledge the contribution of my parents, especially

my mother who brought up my daughter from day one, till she was three. She also played the role of the housewife as she dealt with the maid, MES, rations, gardener and many more. Now that I have to handle them all, I really appreciate it all the more.

All things said, I think there is no job as satisfying (though demanding) in the world, as that of a mother and a wife; and I am loving every minute of it. Here I would also like to acknowledge the support of my husband who supported my decision to remain a housewife and let go of the double income group status.. It is not easy to transform from a multitasking working woman to a multitasking housewife. My transition though quick, has taken effort from all concerned and has taught me to appreciate smaller but beautiful things in life.





# Report on the panel discussion on the navy's ethos and the challenges faced in contemporary times

COMPILED BY NITINDER DUTT, COORDINATOR SANCHAR, EZHIMALA

For quite some time now, senior echelons of the Indian Navy and NWWA have been reflecting upon a few issues that are central to the well-being of the Indian Naval community at large. These issues are centred upon the Navy's very ethos and the challenges that this ethos faces in contemporary times. As part of this process of institutional introspection, an initiative was launched under the aegis of the President, NWWA (Northern Region), to identify, articulate and debate these challenges. In recognition of the fact a panel-discussion was held at the INA on Thursday, the 26th of September 2013. The composition of the Panel was chosen so as to adequately reflect the heterogeneous nature of the officer-community of the INA, with representatives from every rank — from three-Star to one-stripe.

For quite some time now, senior echelons of the Indian Navy and NWWA have been reflecting upon a few issues that are central to the well-being of the Indian Naval community at large. These issues are centred upon the Navy's very ethos and the challenges that this ethos faces in contemporary times. As part of this process of institutional introspection, an initiative was launched under the aegis of the President, NWWA (Northern Region), to identify, articulate and debate these challenges. The composition of the Panel was chosen so as to adequately reflect

the heterogeneous nature of the officer-community of the INA, with representatives from every rank — from three-Star to one-stripe.

(a) One representative Flag Officer (Vice Admiral Pradeep Chauhan, AVSM & Bar, VSM, Commandant, Indian Naval Academy).

(b) One representative Cmde/Captain (Captain B Swaminathan, Director General, Indian Naval Academy Project).

(c) One representative Commander/Lieutenant Commander (Surg Cdr Anand Neelkanthan, Executive Officer, INHS Navjivani).

(d) One representative Lieutenant Commander/Lieutenant (Lt Cdr Ashwin Maratt, Divisional Officer, Eagle Squadron).

(e) One representative Serving/Retired Lady-officer (Cdr Nidhee Sharma, IN [Retd]).

(f) One representative of NWWA (Mrs Nitinder Dutt, Coordinator, Sanchar).

A substantial number of comments and suggestions were received and several recommendations have been made as a result, as may be seen from the following tabulation.

Ser	Issue	Major Comments, Suggestions and Recommendations
1.	<p>What is the optimum method of disseminating the abiding values of the Navy and its ethos, especially in respect of customs that affect the day-to-day life of the community?</p> <p><b>Related Issues</b></p> <p>What is the contemporary relevance and the image-branding of books such as “Welcome Young Lady”? There appears to be a minority who feel that they are being vouchsafed/ spoken down to/ patronised /condescended-to. If this is truly the case, what are the more acceptable ways by which the ethos of the Navy’s officer-corps could be disseminated?</p> <p>The role of NWWA in sustaining the Navy’s ethos and sensitising Naval officers, their spouses, and their children against ‘selling’ or ‘bartering’ their various perquisites — such as canteen-goods, subsidised liquor, etc., so as to curry favour with civilians whom they perceive as being socially and financially better-off than themselves.</p>	<p>(a) The community’s degree of comfort with any given method of dissemination (‘e-mail’, for example) is nowhere as homogenous as is sometimes made out. Dissemination, therefore, must be done along an “all-of-the-above” trajectory, incorporating, inter-alia, interactive workshops by Flag and Senior Officers (and most especially by experienced spouses within NWWA), ‘just-in-time’ circulars/reminders exploiting both, ‘e-mail’ and ‘snail-mail’, well-crafted handbooks, etc.</p> <p>(b) The transfer-generated turbulence inherent in any naval station mandates that workshop-based dissemination be repeated at intervals not exceeding six months.</p> <p>(c) An extremely well-crafted handbook addressing such issues should be collated and handed over to ladies at a Station level. It could also be circulated via e-mail as an Adobe booklet (Navy-wide NWWA Groups), thus saving on the cost of paper, while enabling much faster dissemination, leading to a common degree of understanding amongst the community.</p> <p>(d) When such information is uploaded/ e-mailed, an ‘SMS alert’ could be sent to the mobile phone number of individuals.</p> <p>(e) All training establishments have (or ought to have) a ‘Faculty Development Programme’ of one or another kind. This offers an excellent platform for such dissemination.</p> <p>(f) Insofar as the officers themselves are concerned, this information must necessarily be formally taught, reinforced, and, where necessary, examined, at the various stages of their training. This is especially true of the INA.</p> <p>(g) A comprehensively-updated, well-written and well-crafted edition of “Welcome Young Lady”, which is sensitive to the realities and aspirations of contemporary Indian society with current inputs and which has detailed photographs or drawings that serve to provide visual details and designed to ‘educate’ more than merely ‘illustrate’, is likely to be valued.</p> <p>(h) A well-indexed e-version of “Welcome Young Lady” should additionally be placed on the main Indian Navy website.</p>



Ser	Issue	Major Comments, Suggestions and Recommendations
2.	<p>Creating / enhancing belongingness and effectively addressing the occasionally-encountered urban /metro attitude (whether voiced or not) that asserts, “My spouse is in the Navy — I am not!”</p>	<p>(a) ‘Belongingness’ is a two-way street. While senior echelons often bemoan a perceived lack of belongingness amongst junior members of the community, they are either unaware of the gross indifference (and occasional hostility) that prevails in the middle-levels of the naval administration, or, are unable to sufficiently motivate their subordinate echelons to change their attitude. This change in attitude needs to be especially evident within those echelons that directly interact with the community — the administrative set-up, the MES, the Provost staff, the Security staff, the Mess staff, etc. Many corporates manage this with ease, while the attitude of naval administrators tends to alienate new members rather than making them feel comfortable with the Service. It is doubtful whether things have reached such a pass as indicated by the comment (“My spouse is in the Navy — I am not!”) but, they certainly could. There is a clear need for a mutual attitudinal shift and the initiative must come from the middle and lower contact-points within the Navy. For this, the Navy must examine — and wherever applicable, must imbibe — best-practices prevailing in specific companies, firms and organisations of the corporate sector.</p> <p>(b) NWWA has a huge mentoring role to play in ensuring societal and institutional comfort amongst its newer members and, as such, may need to reinvent itself and its image. Once again, this will have to be through a strictly ‘top-down’ diktat, so that the very considerable talents of NWWA do not remain either unutilised or frittered away on socially/ societally irrelevant banalities. Like the officer corps of the Navy, NWWA, too, must create a carefully structured, intensive programme that will create an abiding feeling of institutional worth and meaningful belongingness. ‘Bonding’ is no trivial matter and NWWA must not shy away from a professional approach to the issue.</p>



Ser	Issue	Major Comments, Suggestions and Recommendations
3.	<p>Brand-positioning and organising official Naval social-gatherings, in order to attain the principal aim of community-bonding.</p> <p><b>Related Issues</b></p> <p>Does the contemporary naval community lack societal discipline in terms of attending official social-gatherings?</p> <p>Making official Naval social-gatherings attractive to the working-wife.</p>	<p>(a) Naval parties are unattractive precisely because they are often too time-intensive, unplanned, and plain boring. The problem of poor or reluctant attendance cannot be seen in isolation and is, in some ways, a manifestation of the lack of belongingness, and in others, a cause of this very same lack of belongingness. In almost every Naval party or reception that is held nowadays, there is a severe but wholly unnecessary seniority-based stratification. In any such party, there are almost as many 'sub-parties' as there are ranks represented at any such get-together, each maintaining only minimal social contact with the other.</p> <p>(b) A Naval reception or dinner should be a crisp and enjoyable affair and its duration should not exceed 2-2½ hours.</p> <p>(c) A set of high-quality and well-run crèches (different age-groups have clearly different social-security needs) would enable young mothers to attend such receptions with greater comfort.</p> <p>(d) Flag / Senior officers and their wives are inherently and institutionally intimidating as it is. They must not congregate together at a mixed-ranks social-gathering as this makes the group even more intimidating and prevents any but the bravest juniors from approaching them. For this reason, the responsibility to circulate, mingle, converse, and, put juniors at their ease, is squarely that of the senior echelons.</p>
4.	<p>Managing domestic-help (and, in Stations such as Ezhimala, managing without it [!]).</p> <p><b>Related Issues</b></p> <p>Identification of community-based support-structures to deal with reduced / minimal / expensive domestic-help.</p>	<p>(a) This is a major contemporary societal issue and should not be brushed aside. NWWA has a huge role to play here and must periodically and frequently sensitise its members to the following:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) The changing socio-economic conditions in urban centres of the country, wherein several working spouses have larger disposable incomes, even while others are homemakers and cannot supplement the officer's own salary with additional earnings of their own. The impact of these factors upon the charges for domestic help must be discussed.</li> <li>ii) The need for the NWWA Committee to interact more proactively with the uniformed administration, so as to standardise rates of each chore done by domestic helpers.</li> <li>iii) The resultant impact upon societal discipline when domestic-help is re-hired despite having been 'black-listed'.</li> <li>iv) The security risks inherent in hiring domestic helpers whose antecedents have not been verified and must emphasise the need to cooperate with the Station Security and Provost staff.</li> </ul> <p>(b) The uniformed administration must not turn a Nelsonian Eye to the problems peculiar to remote stations such as Ezhimala, where the prevailing high literacy rates make domestic help difficult to get, expensive, and, hard to retain. The administration must be empathetic in providing mitigating measures such as 'pick-up-and-drop' transport to and from the establishment's perimeter gates, etc.</p>



Ser	Issue	Major Comments, Suggestions and Recommendations
5.	<p>Strengthening positive perceptions and removing misperceptions in respect of NWWA</p> <p><b>Related Issue</b></p> <p>Ensuring that newly married young officers encourage their wives to participate in NWWA activities, rather than actively discouraging them from doing so</p>	<p>(a) NWWA must, in the first instance, recognise that some perceptions are founded upon fact and, as such, the apex levels of NWWA must issue clear and unambiguous policy guidance, not only on the image that NWWA must project, but also on the image that it must not allow to prevail.</p> <p>(b) NWWA must launch and sustain a proactive and imaginative information-dissemination campaign targeted at young officers, so as to sensitise them to the excellent and noble work that its various organisational structures undertake.</p> <p>(c) It must take great pains to come across as a voluntary organisation and be sensitive to the realities of contemporary urban life where an increasing number of spouses have jobs outside the home, including those who work on-line, from home.</p>
6.	<p>Role of NWWA in improving the degree of respect that children and spouses have for the Navy.</p>	<p>NWWA must proactively interact with the uniformed administration to devise structures and activities that will be specifically targeted at its members and the children of the community and that will highlight the enormously important and noble work that the Navy does, on a day-to-day basis. Well-crafted films and interestingly-delivered presentations, organised visits to ships, aircraft, submarines, dockyards, etc., are some options that need to be explored. The “Big Picture” presentation-series, delivered personally by the Commandant INA, is a good example of this.</p>
7.	<p>Role of NWWA in sustaining and strengthening societal-discipline and gracious, polite, courteous, mannerly and officer-like conduct amongst the officer community (including children).</p> <p><b>Related Issue</b></p> <p>Role of NWWA in bridging of the seniority-divide in a purely social milieu, without it leading to a corresponding breakdown of the vertical hierarchy that is essential to naval functioning in the work-place.</p>	<p>(a) This has much to do with retaining the ethos and values of the Navy and the comments, suggestions and recommendations made at Ser 1 above are relevant in this regard as well.</p> <p>(b) In recognition of the changing socio-economic backgrounds from which today’s officer-community is drawn, NWWA needs to organise and conduct a well-planned campaign of panel discussions, cleverly-made films (there are many available on the Internet), expert-talks, role-play workshops, etc., designed specifically to promote social etiquette and gentlemanly/ ladylike behaviour.</p> <p>(c) Where children are concerned, the centrality of the role played by the school is absolute. NWWA needs to proactively interact with school administrators (especially those of the Naval KGs, NCSs, and KVs) to devise imaginatively-structured and functionally-attractive programmes for the children.</p> <p>(d) NWWA also has a big role to play in encouraging frequent parent-teacher interaction, while simultaneously curbing the propensity of officers and their spouses to interfere with the school administration merely on the strength of their rank or station.</p>





Ser	Issue	Major Comments, Suggestions and Recommendations
8.	Role of NWWA in creating and sustaining a leadership and management programme specifically aimed at spouses of officers taking up assignments as Flag Officers, Commanding Officers, Directors, Officers-in-Charge, and, within the context of the INA, as Divisional Officers, Mentor Officers, Women's Counsellors, Squadron Commanders, Flo-tilla Commanders, etc.	<p>(a) This would be a very good initiative were it to be jointly undertaken and endorsed by NWWA in close coordination with the uniformed administration.</p> <p>(b) Insofar as Flag Officers and their spouses are concerned, the full-fledged resumption of the erstwhile FLAME Flag Officers Leadership and Management Enterprise, which was run under the aegis of the COP and was a hugely successful endeavour in both the years of its currency (2005 and 2006), is very strongly recommended.</p> <p>(c) For all other officers and spouses, NWWA should take the initiative and engage in proactive dialogue with the uniformed administration, so as to organise a comprehensive capsule on the lines of that conducted by Great Britain's RAF, or the Command Spouse Leadership Course (CSLC), which was conceived by the 'Senior Navy Spouses' of the US Navy, at Newport, Rhode Island. Much guidance is available on the Internet and could be readily accessed by both, NWWA and the administration.</p>
	In recognition of the increasing number of lady-officers in the Navy and the high probability of many of them marrying civilians, is there a case for need for NWWA (which began its existence as FOWA, then changed to NOWA and finally to NWWA) to rename itself (as NaSWA, perhaps)?	Although the number of lady-officers is still quite small and the number that has civilian spouses is even smaller, a gradual increase (if not an 'exponential' one) in such cases is, indeed, inevitable. On the one hand, therefore, NWWA does have time in which to wrestle with the issue of its nomenclature. On the other, it is not an issue that will simply go away and, as a result, it must necessarily be addressed.

### Conclusion:

'A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step', is an old saying, correctly attributed to the Chinese philosopher, Laozi (c 604 BCE – c 531 BCE). The inspiration underpinning the conduct of this panel-discussion travelled all the way from New Delhi to Ezhimala and can certainly be said to be a step towards a much-needed process of introspection and change. The resultant changes may reasonably be expected to be far-reaching. On the one hand are 'objective changes' such as the initiation or refinement of relevant policy-directives, the scheduling of relevant programmes and events, etc. On the other, are subjective changes such as a positive and productive alteration of the mind-set and attitude of the general naval community in its day-to-day functioning so as to strongly amalgamate and reflect the noble ethos of the Indian Navy.



# “We’ve gathered here today...”

CMDE SALEEM MANWER

*The lighter side of transfers and farewell parties (which never fail to evoke bitter-sweet memories and remain an intrinsic part of Life in the Navy)*

Allow me to begin with a disclaimer. This is a work of fiction, though ‘inspired’ by life and personal experiences. It, therefore, bears no resemblance to anyone dead or alive or ... well, under transfer.

We walked, my wife and I, in complete silence from the parking lot to the foyer of the Officers’ Institute, where a party was being held to bid farewell to us. Our just-turned-teen daughter and younger son ambled behind us with conspicuous lack of enthusiasm. Nothing was particularly wrong except that the event marked our third transfer in four years. That it happened just as we were about to be allotted an A-type accommodation did not help matters any. Incidentally, I have always suspected that a copy of the accommodation allotment order is

secretly marked to our appointers. How else do you explain most transfers either just prior to or immediately on allotment of an A-type accommodation? Gotcha! Nevertheless, we entered the party area with appropriate plastic smiles pasted on our faces. With consummate ease, we executed the customary splitting manoeuvre at the entrance, heading separately for the carefully created gender-based groups. The ladies did a quick scan of each other’s dresses for fashion tips or faux pas, as the case may be. The men, on their part, couldn’t care less if the person in front of them was dressed in a tuxedo or chicken furs. They focused all their attention on the bar, instead. I looked around to confirm the presence of all the usual suspects. Generally hopeless at associating names

with faces, I assign my own private set of ‘names’ to everyone I meet - a habit I have developed since childhood to overcome my failing. So, there they were, all of them - Bristling Moustache, Big Nose, Shifty Eyes, Madame Nosey (in perpetual quest for news of others’ business), Lady Cheerful (whose exuberance could light up the local neighbourhood brighter than the last Diwali), Cribber Singh (his actual name was CBR Singh, inevitably tagged thus since he could find a fault faster than it could be created). I was, of course, the Great Sulk, at least for the evening. Mildly bored, and generally tired, I exchanged perfunctory hellos with a few colleagues and moved on from the din, hoping to find solace in seclusion. Or so I thought. “Congratulations! Loooovely place you are going to!” Really, I thought



sardonically, you can have it if you want. I turned around, with mounting dread in my heart, to face the source of this chirpy voice spreading good cheer. Lady Cheerful, naturally! The 'oooo' in 'loooovely' had lasted some 15 seconds. I smiled noncommittally. "You know," she continued with that mega-watt smile, oblivious to my reaction or the lack of it, "I am soooo (another 15 seconds) sentimental, every time I attend someone's farewell party, I get teary-eyed". I was kind of teary-eyed myself, albeit for an entirely different reason. Despite a violently protesting jaw, I smiled some more with, what I hoped was, gratitude in my eyes for her kind words. I responded with something that was eminently inane and forgettable. Hallelujah! I was saved further embarrassment by a tray, containing an assortment of drinks, thrust under my nose by a steward whose expression suggested he couldn't care a fig whether I drank or drowned. I all but hugged my saviour and grabbed a drink, using the excuse to unobtrusively move away.

"Oye," boomed Cribber to the accompaniment of a resounding slap on my back, "this transporter you have hired is not at all trustworthy, friend. A crook, if you ask me." Had I not been busy choking on my drink I would have told him I did not intend to. "And, by the way, there is no accommodation available at your next station for the next six months, let me tell you," he continued, livening up my day just a wee bit more. "Lousy arrangements, I tell you," he commented on the party in his inimitable style and, without

waiting for my reaction, directed his focus on a steward passing by. "Oye, what happened to the ice I asked for half an hour back? And the soda? I tell you..." I slipped away quietly, as he directed his toxic tirade at the hapless soul.

To escape any further reminders of my misery by well-meaning people, I clutched my drink and sought shelter in the lee of the nearest watering hole. The spirit did little to lift my spirits. Three transfers

in four years! Why, I could recall even the minutest detail of my last farewell party. Not too difficult, in any case, since these occasions are generally more identical than a pair of Siamese twins. So, there hanging on to the edge of the bar table, I went into flashback mode recalling the last party, some fourteen months back, as vivid as distinct frames of a movie reel.

Cut to the last farewell party...

The occasion was festooned with all the usual ingredients – attendees in two distinct gender-based groups, standard brands of drinks, 'small' eats in rather small portions, forced smiles, casual conversation, the works. The routine progressed on predictable lines with mind-numbing banality till someone thumped a table rather hard, with scant regard for the frailty of MES furniture, to draw the collective attention of the gathering. It was time for the speech. The table-thumping,



as always, evoked interesting reaction from the gathering, ranging from relief to boredom to panic (for those short of self-assigned drinking targets). Some people moved forward, some retreated and melted into the drapes, most shuffled to dutifully orient themselves to the general direction of the speaker. The ladies grabbed the opportunity to perch themselves on thoughtfully positioned sofas along the wall and rested their pencil-heel tormented feet.

With a furtive glance at a chit discreetly passed on by his Staff Officer, the boss faced the audience and politely cleared his throat. "We've gathered here today to bid farewell...", he enlightened those of us who might be under a mistaken impression about the real purpose of the party. The audience's smiles dropped in dread of a long speech. Now, farewell speeches are, generally,



more predictable than a Bollywood script. This was no different. As my boss waxed eloquent about me and my work, I gradually got acquainted with several very pleasant facets of my life that I was not even remotely aware of till then. He charitably shared happy excerpts from my declassified ACR with the audience. My reaction, meanwhile, vacillated between surprise, complete disbelief and fervent hope that some of what he said had actually gone into my report.

My boss concluded with the customary salutation to my wife's role and contribution as the 'sheet anchor' with due veneration (while addressing the wrong lady all along till he was discreetly re-aligned in the right direction by the ever-efficient Staff Officer). Unflustered, he summoned me to the centre-stage and offered the unit crest with a hearty 'hope it will find the pride of place in your house'. Sure, I thought ruefully as I accepted it, in the old trunk at the rear end of the garage, along with the rest. That's what they are relegated to by the good lady, without any pity, remorse or consideration for those unique creations. It was almost tragic; the manner in which the sole proof of my toil was superseded by expensive crystal, onyx, Lladros and such like. I wonder if that was the genesis of the term crestfallen.

I suddenly realised that the collective bored gaze of the gathering bored into me - an indicator that a speech was expected of me to provide a legitimate and expeditious closure to the evening. Having suffered enough such speeches, I entirely commiserated with the audience and did a hop-skip-and-jump through my 'thank you' note, finishing in record time. I was especially careful to avoid the part where one magnanimously throws an open invitation to all and sundry to visit them at Tirunelveli or Agartala or wherever it is they are off to. Nothing wrong with the gesture. It is just that it leaves people wondering as to why such an amiable person never offered them even a glass of water while they were next door neighbours for years. So, I quickly concluded, thanked all and was looking around to gather my brooding brood when some sadistic soul gleefully mentioned the 'jolly good fellow' routine. I froze in abject terror as I found myself being hoisted aloft by a huffing and puffing jolly group. My fervent



pleas and protests fell on deaf ears, and so did I shortly thereafter - fell to the ground, that is, during the third 'bump'.

The painful episode snapped me out of my reverie, as I returned to the present and looked around, partially disoriented. Bristling Moustache leaned across and whispered, "Welcome back to planet Earth." I grimaced at the ironic statement since that's exactly where I had landed during the last party. I opened my mouth to offer an explanation when Shifty Eyes shushed us. Déjà vu hit me full force as I watched my current boss taking his place at the imaginary podium in the centre of the room.

It was speech time, once again! He cleared his throat politely and spoke.

"We've gathered here today..."

He paused for dramatic effect and scanned the faces around him for the profound impact made by, what he obviously considered, an unprecedented opening in the history of farewell speeches.

One could feel, rather than hear, a collective sigh of resignation from the audience at large, as it braced itself for the inevitable.

Me? I lapsed into another merciful flashback from one of the many, many transfers...

# Plebiscite

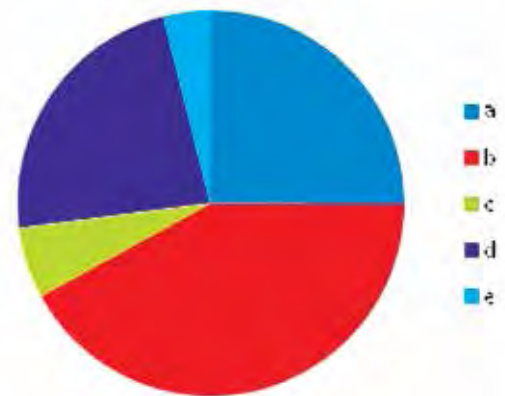
## Survey Results – Officers

This survey was carried out by Team Sanchar for VEERANGANA – 2014 for all four commands. The respondents were chosen randomly.

Additional option 'e' (No response) has been added as most of the respondents had opted for that. The RED figure in the brackets denotes the number of respondents choosing that option.

### 1. NWWA

- a) Helps your wife in moulding her to be a supportive partner. (89)
- b) Provides an opportunity to indulge in genuine welfare and educational activities (149)
- c) Educates her too much for you to handle (21)
- d) Is an outlet for your spouse where she can make friends and be occupied (82)
- e) No Response (14)



### 2. What is your first reaction when your spouse tells you that she is joining NWWA? Do you

- a) Show interest in what she is going to do in NWWA (86)
- b) Remain indifferent whether she joins or not (60)
- c) Offer encouraging words and leave it for her to decide (166)
- d) Advise her against joining NWWA (23)
- e) No response (11)



### 3. Women go to Coffee-Mornings because

- a) They get good food and have a nice time (29)
- b) They get a chance to showcase their talents (149)
- c) Their friends are going (112)
- d) The senior wives have told and they are scared to refuse (43)
- e) No response (19)



**4. Would you forbid your spouse from joining NWWA because**

- a) She will come to know too much which you don't want her to know (37)
- b) Your spouse will be harassed by senior wives for responsibilities given (73)
- c) Your colleagues/seniors discourage you (20)
- d) She will waste time in singing and dancing rather than taking care of kids at home (80)
- e) None of the above (105)



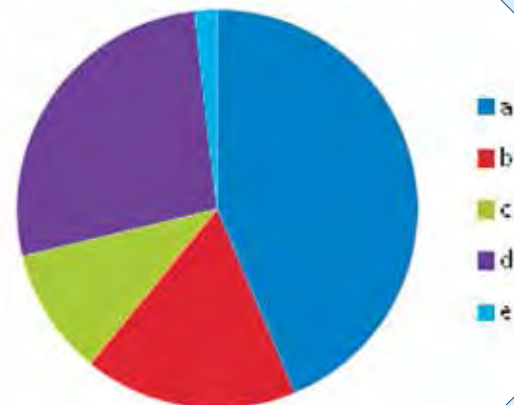
**5. You wish your spouse to join NWWA because**

- a) She will interact with other ladies and feel more at home (98)
- b) It will help you in your career progression (37)
- c) It will educate her about the life in Navy (102)
- d) It will boost her self-confidence and interpersonal skills (99)
- e) No response (24)



**6. What do you think about the vocational classes and various initiatives undertaken by NWWA?**

- a) They help build a better community (144)
- b) These activities are only hyped and do not provide much guidance or assistance (57)
- c) They encourage women entrepreneurship (34)
- d) Builds self-confidence and boosts morale of women (89)
- e) No response (06)



**7. What does the activity 'Sparsh' involve?**

- a) Playschool for children (23)
- b) Reaches out to people outside the community (86)
- c) School for special children (101)
- d) Cares for senior citizens. (84)
- e) No response (54)



**8. Which activity of NWWA have you heard about from your spouse? You may write more than one.**

For this question 70% respondents did not write anything. Among the ones written, Sankalp scored highest points, followed by Little Angels and vocational classes etc

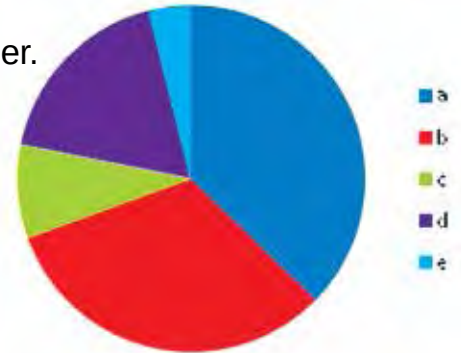
## Survey Results – Sailors

This survey was carried out by Team Sanchar for VEERANGANA – 2014 for all four commands. The respondents were chosen randomly.

Additional option 'e' (No response) has been added as most of the respondents had opted for that. The RED figure in the brackets denotes the number of respondents choosing that option.

### 1. NWWA

- a) Helps your wife in moulding her to be a supportive partner. (133)
- b) Provides an opportunity to indulge in genuine welfare and educational activities (115)
- c) Educates her too much for you to handle (31)
- d) Is an outlet for your spouse where she can make friends and be occupied (64)
- e) No response(14)



### 2. What is your first reaction when your spouse tells you that she is joining NWWA? Do you

- a) Show interest in what she is going to do in NWWA (98)
- b) Remain indifferent whether she joins or not (71)
- c) Offer encouraging words and leave it for her to decide (138)
- d) Advise her against joining NWWA (38)
- e) No response(26)



### 3. Women go to Coffee-Mornings because

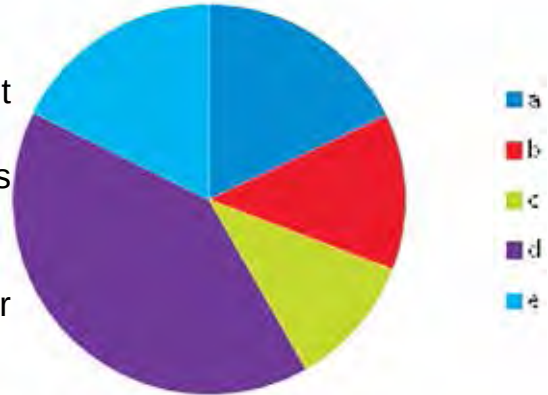
- a) They get good food and have a nice time (33)
- b) They get a chance to showcase their talents (169)
- c) Their friends are going (83)
- d) The senior wives have told and they are scared to refuse (47)
- e) No response(39)





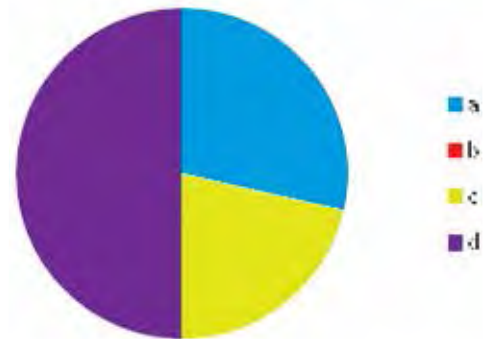
**4. Would you forbid your spouse from joining NWWA because**

- a) She will come to know too much which you don't want her to know (64)
- b) Your spouse will be harassed by senior wives for responsibilities given (46)
- c) Your colleagues/seniors discourage you (39)
- d) She will waste time in singing & dancing rather than taking care of kids at home (145)
- e) No response (63)



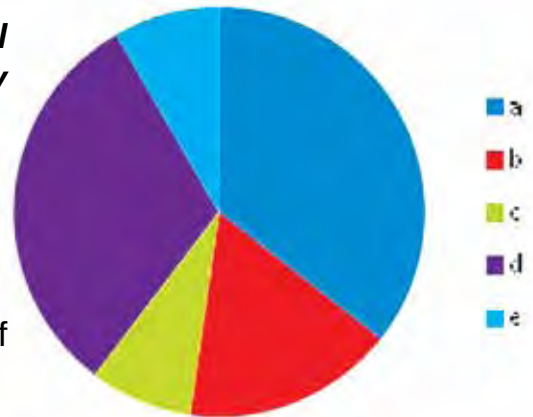
**5. You wish your spouse to join NWWA because**

- a) She will interact with other ladies and feel more at home (62)
- b) It will help you in your career progression (33)
- c) It will educate her about the life in Navy (82)
- d) It will boost her self-confidence and interpersonal skills (150)
- e) No response (29)



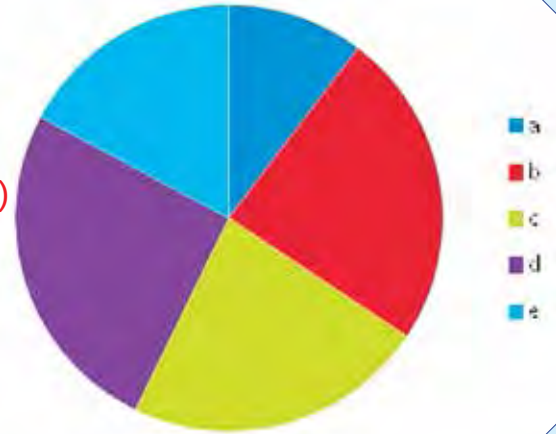
**6. What do you think about the vocational classes and various initiatives undertaken by NWWA?**

- a) They help build a better community (132)
- b) These activities are only hyped and do not provide much guidance or assistance (62)
- c) They encourage women entrepreneurship (30)
- d) Builds self-confidence and boosts morale of women (116)
- e) No response (31)



### 7. What does the activity 'Sparsh' involve?

- a) Playschool for children (38)
- b) Reaches out to people outside the community (88)
- c) School for special children (84)
- d) Cares for senior citizens.(94)
- e) No response(63)



8. Which activity of NWWA have you heard about from your spouse? You may write more than one.

For this question 80% respondents did not write anything. Among the ones written- Coffee morning scored highest points followed by Picnics, Cooking competition, etc

### INTERPRETATION OF DATA COLLECTED

NWWA is a voluntary organization where the naval spouses try to give back to the community in whatever way possible in making the lives of all our community members within bases and also outside comfortable and an enriching one. Working for NWWA initiatives is completely voluntary and the aim is to contribute towards the betterment of our lives as a whole. There is no compulsion on the time given by volunteers to NWWA as NWWA fully supports and understands that one's primary duty would be towards one's family.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The VEERANGANA team thanks those who have taken time out to answer our survey questions. We would also like to thank Imran Khan EAP=II for helping us in compiling the data received.

### DISCLAIMER

We have taken a random survey of Navy personnel in the various regions. This is not conclusive in any way. We find that NWWA is an unknown entity for many in the service, and steps needs to be taken by us to amend this perspective.

# नवा का बदलता स्वरूप

अन्जनी श्रीवास्तव

नवा—नेवी महिला कल्याण संगठन एक गैर सरकारी संस्था है। ये एक स्वयंसेवी संस्था है, नवा का संचालन नौसैनिक पत्नियों के द्वारा किया जाता है।

नवा का शुभारंभ, वर्ष 1948 में मुंबई में नौसैनिक अधिकारी पत्नियों के द्वारा नोवा यानि नेवी महिला अधिकारी संस्था के रूप में हुआ। वर्ष 1985 में नवा का जन्म हुआ और इसमें सभी वर्ग की बहनों को सम्मिलित कर लिया गया।

नवा क्रैस्ट की रचना वर्ष 1992 में कुछ नवा की बहनों ने मिलकर की। इसके बीचों—बीच एक एंकर है जो नेवी को दर्शाता है व चारों ओर चार महिलाएं हाथ पकड़कर खड़ी हैं जो कि चार कमान पूर्व, पश्चिम, उत्तर व दक्षिण कमानों को दर्शाती हैं।

नवा का उद्देश्य है कि हम अपनी बहनों को सशक्त बनाएं और उन्हें उनकी योग्यता से परिचित कराएं। नवा बहनों के लिए विभिन्न कोर्सेस संचालित करती है। जैसे कि ब्यूटिशियन, कम्प्यूटर, सिलाई, कढ़ाई, पेंटिंग, ब्लॉक प्रिंटिंग इत्यादि।

नवा संगठन में नौसेना प्रमुख की पत्नी 'नवा अध्यक्षा' का कार्यभार संभालती है व वाइस चीफ की पत्नी उपाध्यक्षा का कार्य संभालती हैं। कमानों में कमांडर—इन—चीफ की पत्नी 'अध्यक्षा' कहलाती हैं।

नवा का संचालन नवा केन्द्र से होता है। यहां अध्यक्षा बहनों से मुलाकात करती हैं।

नवा की विभिन्न शाखाएं हैं जो कि हमारी बहनों मिलकर चलाती हैं। वेलफेयर या प्रगति यह नवा का मुख्य अंग हैं। यहां बहनों को भिन्न कोर्स कराए जाते हैं। बहनों के मनोरंजन के लिए मिलन, चर्चाएं, खेल दिवस, पिकनिक व पाकशास्त्र प्रतियोगिताएँ आयोजित की जाती हैं।

लिटिल एंजल जो कि बच्चों के लिए सभी कमानों में चलाए जा रहे हैं। ढाई से साढ़े तीन वर्ष के बच्चों को

खेल के माध्यम से भिन्न तरह की चीजों से परिचित कराया जाता है।

नवा ब्लॉक प्रिंटिंग बहनों को प्रशिक्षित कराती है व यही बहनें सीखने के बाद नवा के इस क्षेत्र में कार्य करने लगती हैं।

संकल्प हमारे उन बच्चों के लिए है जो कि हमारे लिए विशेष है। हम इन बच्चों को हर तरह की सुविधा प्रदान कराते हैं जैसे स्पीच थैरेपी, फिजियोथेरेपी व साइन लेंग्वेज। इन बच्चों में अलग—अलग प्रतिभाएं होती हैं उनकी इन प्रतिभाओं को बढ़ावा दिया है व उन्हें इस क्षेत्र में शिक्षा दी जाती है।

संचार नवा का वह अंग है जो कि हमारी बहनों की साहित्यिक प्रतिभा को प्रोत्साहित करता है। नवा की त्रैमासिक पत्रिकाएं छपती हैं व वर्ष में एक बार नवा की वार्षिक पत्रिका वीरांगना प्रकाशित की जाती है। इसमें लेख, कविताएं, कहानियां केवल परिवारों के द्वारा भेजे हुए छापे जाते हैं।

स्पर्श नवा का एक महत्वपूर्ण अंग है, यहां हम नेवी से बाहर के लोगों की मदद करने की कोशिश करते हैं। हम अनाथ बच्चों, वृद्ध व जरूरतमंदों की जरूरतों को





पूरा करने की कोशिश करते हैं। नवा ने बदलते समय के साथ लड़कियों की शिक्षा की ओर भी कदम बढ़ाया है।

प्रेरणा वह शाखा है जो कि आर्मी व एअरफोर्स के साथ मिलकर कैंसर के मरीजों की देखभाल करती है, हमारे बहनों भी इसमें आर एण्ड आर अस्पताल में हाथ बटाँ रही हैं। हम मरीजों को भावनात्मक सहारा देने की कोशिश करते हैं।

उद्योगिका हमारी एक ऐसी कोशिश है जहां हम बहनों को सिलाई सिखाकर डिजाइनर कपड़े बनाने की शिक्षा दे रहे हैं ताकि बहनों अपने पैरों पर खड़ी हो सकें। और साथ ही साथ यहां नेवी की सभी बहनों अपने सलवार कुरते व अन्य कपड़े सिलने के लिए यहां देकर बहनों को आत्मनिर्भर बनाने में मदद करें।

हम बहनों को स्वास्थ्य संबंधी जानकारी भी समय-समय पर आरोग्य ग्रुप के माध्यम से देते हैं। आरोग्य बहनों के लिए विभिन्न विषयों जैसे की एड्स, ब्रेस्ट कैंसर, सर्विकल कैंसर, स्ट्रेस इत्यादि पर चर्चा करके इन सभी से परिचित कराया जाता है साथ ही साथ बचाव के बारे में भी जानकारी दी जाती है।

सहारा हमारा एक ऐसा अंग है जो कि उन बहनों की मदद करने की कोशिश करता है जिन्होंने किन्हीं कारणों से अपने पति को सर्विस में अक्समात खो दिया हो। यहां बहनों को पेंशन, बच्चों की छात्रवृत्ति, नौकरी इत्यादि के बारे में अवगत कराते हैं। साथ ही साथ उन्हें भावनात्मक सहारा भी देने की कोशिश की जाती है।

सखी का अर्थ है सहेली नवा उन बच्चों को सखी की तरह मदद करती हैं जब वे किसी घरेलू परेशानी में होती हैं। यहां हम बहनों की परेशानियों को सुलझाने की कोशिश करते हैं और उनकी सारी बातें गोपनीय रखी जाती हैं हम बहनों की कानूनी मदद करने में असमर्थ हैं ऐसे अवसर पर केस नेवी को सौंप दिया जाता है।

हम सभी की सुविधा के लिए समुद्री नवा शॉप है। यहां हमें तोहफे के लिए सामान मिलता है। विभिन्न कमानों से आए हुए सामान की बिक्री होती है। यह 'बगैर नफा नुकसान' के तौर पर चलती है।

अनुभवी जिसमें हम अपनी उन बहनों से मुलाकात करते हैं जो रिटायरमेंट के बाद भी नेवी से थे। इसमें वर्ष में एक बार नेवी हाउस में भोजन का आयोजन किया जाता है। हम समय-समय पर यदि किसी को मेडिकल असिस्टेंस की जरूरत हो तो मदद की जाती है।

## मेरा नवा

### मनीषा पाण्डे

आसमान की खुली वादियां लिए,  
और प्यार के नगमें लिए,

लेकर खुशियां अपार  
आई है ये नवा. . .

झीलों का ठहराव लिए  
ठण्डी हवा का बहाव लिए  
मेरे हाथों की लकीरों की तरह  
खुशियां लिए बेशुमार,  
आई है ये नवा. . . .

जुगनुओं की झिलमिलाहट लिए  
सितारों की जगमगाहट लिए  
रातों को आसमान में  
चमकते तारे की तरह  
लेकर हजारों सितारे  
आई है ये नवा. . .

सागर की गहराई लिए  
आसमान की उंचाई लिए  
गले में पहनी मोतियों की  
हार की तरह

बनकर मेरा श्रृंगार  
आई है ये नवा. . .

शहद की मिठास लिए  
बच्चों की उल्लास लिए  
बच्चों की वो प्यारी-सी  
आवाज बनकर,

आयी है ये नवा. . .

इंद्रधनुष की रंगत लिए

सुरों की संगत लिए

जहां मिली जीने की वजह हमें  
नाउम्मीदों में उम्मीद की रोशनी लिए  
कुदरत की खुबसूरती लिए हजार,  
आई है ये नवा. . .

# आत्मबल मेरा सफर

शीला चौहान

जैसे ही हर लड़की की इच्छा होती है, मनचाहा पति पाने की मेरी भी थी। मेरे पापा व भाई आर्मी में थे। स्कूल टाईम से ही मेरी खेलों में रुचि थी। हमेशा दिल में कुछ कर गुजरने की इच्छा रहती थी और फिर 1985 में मेरी शादी भारतीय नौसैनिक पोहप सिंह से हो गई। हम राजपूतों में आज भी औरतों को पर्दे में रहना पड़ता है, मेरी खेलने की इच्छा दम तोड़ने लगीं, यहां मेरे पति ने मेरा साथ दिया। उन्होंने कहा तुम चिंता मत करो, मैं तुम्हें अपने साथ गोवा ले जाऊंगा और तुम्हें दुनिया की हर वो खुशी दूंगा जिसकी तुम हकदार हो। मेरे पति उस वक्त गोवा में टी-61 जहाज पर कार्यरत थे। इसके बाद इन्होंने मुझे गोवा ले जाकर पूरा गोवा घुमाया तथा अपना जहाज दिखाया। उस वक्त पहली बार जहाज देखकर मुझे अच्छा लगा कि भारतीय नौसैनिकों को इतनी सुविधाएं दी गई हैं कि यदि वो 6 महीने भी हम से दूर रहते हैं, तो हमें उनके खाने-पीने की चिंता नहीं होती। वही पति के कहने पर मैंने नवा के साथ जुड़कर टाइपिंग, सिलाई-कढ़ाई,



पेंटिंग, फूल बनाना, ब्यूटीशियन, कम्प्यूटर आदि के कोर्स किए। मेरे पति मुझे खेल दिवस पर भी लेकर जाते जहां मैं इनाम जीतकर उनकी खुशी को दुगना कर देती। बच्चों की परवरिश के साथ खेलों के लिए समय निकालना बड़ा मुश्किल था। मगर जब हमारा तबादला चिल्का हुआ, तब मेरे पति ने मेरा साहस बढ़ाया। मेरे पति मास्टर चीफ जी. आई.पोहप सिंह हमेशा मेरे दोस्त बनकर रहे हैं। नामुमकिन था एक घरेलू पत्नी से अंतर्राष्ट्रीय खिलाड़ी बनना। मुझे आज भी याद है जब 1997 में ये चिल्का में ट्रेनी को

ट्रेनिंग देते थे जब क्रॉस कंट्री होती थी। तब ये मुझे भी ट्रेनी के साथ दौड़ाते थे और मैं उन लोगों को दौड़ में पीछे छोड़ने की कोशिश करती थी। पति के द्वारा कराई गई उसी मेहनत के बल पर मैंने 1998 में रन-फॉर-पीस ग्यारह किलोमीटर की मैराथन जीतकर नेवी वाइक्स का नाम रोशन किया। दौड़ने के साथ-साथ मैंने तैराकी और साइकिल चलाना सीखकर जिससे आगे चलकर शिवाजी में सहारा साइकिल रेस 36 किलोमीटर में प्रथम स्थान प्राप्त किया। भा. नौ पो. शिवाजी, हमारे लिए सबसे

यादगार जगह रही। वहां ये मस्केटरी टीम के कोच थे। इन्हें हमारे लिए ज्यादा वक्त नहीं मिल पाता था लेकिन फिर भी मैं जब मेरी 2006 में 42.195 किलोमीटर स्टण्डर्ड चाटर्ड मैराथन की प्रैक्टिस चल रही थी, तो ये मुझे घर से रेंज तक कई चक्कर लगाने को बोलते थे। उसी अभ्यास के फलस्वरूप मैंने 2006 में द्वितीय तथा 2007 में प्रथम आकर भारतीय नौसेना का नाम रोशन किया। शिवाजी में ही मेरे पति ने मुझे वाटर-स्कींग सिखाई। यह जानकर आप लोगों को खुशी होगी कि उस वक्त नेवी में वाटर-स्कींग सीखकर एडमिरल बख्शी साहब से सर्टिफिकेट पाने वाली मैं एकमात्र महिला थी। ये अपनी मस्केटरी टीम को भी सख्त अभ्यास कराते थे जिसके फलस्वरूप 2003-2007 तक ये अपनी टीम को प्रथम स्थान पर लाए और भारतीय नौसेना का नाम रोशन किया। मुझे गर्व है कि अपने पति पर। आज इनके सिखाए हुए लड़के अंतर्राष्ट्रीय मेडल जीतकर विश्व में भारतीय नौसेना का नाम रोशन कर रहे हैं।

आज 48 पार करने के बाद भी मैं और मेरे पति सुबह-शाम दौड़-भाग, व्यायाम और योगा करके एक घण्टे बैडमिंटन खेलते हैं। रात के भोजन के बाद बच्चों के साथ कैरम खेलते हैं। एक पति के साथ-साथ वो एक अच्छे पिता भी हैं। आज हमारी बेटी बड़ी हो चुकी हैं।

मेरी बड़ी बेटी रश्मि चौहान फारमेसिस्ट है। दूसरी बेटी टाइम्स ऑफ इंडिया में लॉजिस्टिक्स में काम करती है। तीसरी बेटी दिल्ली विश्वविद्यालय से बी-फार्मसी कर रही है और तथा चौथी बेटी एन.आई.आई.टी. से बी.एस. आई.टी. कर रही है। अभी मैं दिल्ली में नवा से जुड़ी हुई हूँ और उद्योगिका में फैशन डिजाइनिंग का कोर्स कर रही हूँ। मुझे गर्व है नवा का हिस्सा होने पर। अंत में, मैं आभार प्रकट करती हूँ अपने पति का जिन्होंने मेरे सपनों को साकार किया और धन्यवाद देना चाहती हूँ। भारतीय नौसेना को जिन्होंने मेरी प्रतिभा को पन्ने पर उतारकर पूरी नेवी में पहुंचाया।

# क्या रिश्ते बदल रहे हैं

शिखा सिंह

जब मैं छोटा था, शायद दुनिया बहुत बड़ी हुआ करती थी।  
मुझे याद है मेरे घर से 'स्कूल' तक का वो रास्ता, क्या क्या नहीं था वहां चाट के ठेले, जलेबी की दुकान, बर्पफ के गोले, सब कुछ अब वहां 'मोबाइल शॉप' 'विडियो पॉर्लर' हैं,  
पिफर भी सब सूना है शायद अब दुनिया सिमट रही है जब मैं छोटा था,  
शायद शामें बहुत लम्बी हुआ करती थीं. . . मैं हाथ में पतंग की डोर पकड़े, घरों उड़ा करता था,  
वो लम्बी 'साइकिल रेस' वे बचपन के खेल वो हर शाम थककर चूर हो जाना। अब शाम नहीं होती, दिन ढलता है और सीधे रात हो जाती है,  
शायद वक्त सिमट रहा है. . . जब मैं छोटा था,  
शायद दोस्ती, बहुत गहरी हुआ करती थी, दिन भर वो हुजूम बनाकर खेलना, वो दोस्तों के घर का खाना,  
वो लड़कियों की बातें, वो साथ रोना. . . अब भी मेरे कई दोस्त हैं पर दोस्ती बदल रही है।

(इंटरनेट के सौजन्य से)

# अहसास

आर्ची काम्बले



माता-पिता से प्राप्त संस्कारों और नेवी की संस्कृति में सामंजस्य बैठाते हुए नेवल पत्नी और माँ बनने के सफर के अपने अनुभव में मेरे पिताजी कल भी मेरे साथ थे और आज भी मेरे साथ हैं। आप लोग सोच रहे होंगे ये कैसी अजीब बात है। इस बात को समझने के लिये आपको मेरे साथ, मेरे अतीत के पन्नों को पलटकर देखना होगा।

मेरा एक साल का बेटा 'मिकी' अचानक जोर से बोल पड़ा माणिक... हम सब हैरान हो गये। मेरे पिताजी जिनका देहांत हो चुका था, वे ही मेरे बड़े भाई को माणिक कह कर बुलाते थे।

बात 2002, बारह जुलाई की है। रात के 11:15 बजे अचानक INS कल्याणी से मुझे एक फोन आया। मैडम आपके पिताजी नहीं रहे। मैं हतप्रभ सी रह गई। मेरी माँ जैसे बेजान सी हो गई थी। मेरे बड़े भाई जो कि आर्मी में कार्यरत है, उस वक्त 'करछम' में पोस्टेड थे। उन्होंने विशाखपट्टणम् आकर जैसे तैसे हमें संभाला। हर शाम दरवाजे पर माँ मेरी टकटकी लगाए बैठी रहती। उन्हें ऐसा लगता जैसे मेरे पिताजी अभी आएंगे। दिन, महीने गुजरते हुए एक साल गुजर गया। मैंने 2003 में शादी की।

मेरे पति उस वक्त कुकरी जहाज पर कार्यरत थे। जिंदगी में खुशी थी पर साथ में पिताजी का न रहने का गम भी था। देखते देखते एक साल गुजर गया। हम दो से तीन होने वाले थे। सभी ने मुझे बधाई दी। माँ ने कहा देखा... आर्ची तेरे पिताजी लौट आये हैं। मैंने माँ से कहा, मुझे यह भी मालूम नहीं कि लड़का है या लड़की। पर वह ज़िद पर अड़ी रही... बोली लड़का होगा देख लेना।

मैं जिन चीजों को खाना पसंद करती थी वो मैं खा नहीं पा रही थी बल्कि उन चीजों को खा रही थी जो मेरे पिताजी खाया करते थे। डाक्टर पिल्लै ने मुझे 'कम्प्लिट बैड रेस्ट' लेने के लिए कहा था। जिस की वजह से मुझे अपनी स्कूल की टीचर की नौकरी छोड़नी पड़ी। माँ, भाई, पति, सास सभी चाहते थे लड़का हो। अब मेरी जिंदगी में टेंशन शुरू हो गया। मैं सोचने लगी, अगर लड़की हुई तो इन सब के आशाओं पर पानी फिर जायेगा। हर पल टेंशन के कारण अचानक पॉंचवे महीने में बच्चे ने पेट में हरकत करना बंद कर दिया। मैं अकेले ही कल्याणी अस्पताल चल पड़ी। जहाँ मुझे सीधे लेबर रूम में लेकर गये। पेट में रूक रूक कर दर्द उठने लगा था। मुझे सलाइन चढ़ाया गया। बार बार बच्चे की हृदय धड़कन सुनी जा रही थी। सिस्टर ने मुझे आराम करने को कहा। अगले दिन बच्चे की स्वस्थ होने की बात डाक्टर ने बतायी। डाक्टर की बातों से मुझे पता चल गया था कि मैं लड़के को जन्म देने वाली हूँ। मैं खुशी से झूम उठी मुझे एहसास होने लगा कि वाकई मैं मेरे पिताजी वापस आ गये हैं। सातवें महीने में मैंने ठीक रात के आठ बजकर सात मिनट पर अपने बच्चे को जन्म दिया। मैं कितनी खुशानसीब हूँ कि मैंने एक ही जन्म में पिताजी को पिता और बेटे के रूप में देखा।

# केटरिंग स्कूल

## INS HAMLA

ओंकार पाठक

(वरिष्ठ प्रशिक्षक, आनररी सब लेफिटनेन्ट, केटरिंग स्कूल)



भारतीय नौसेना का एकमात्र खान पान सेवा विद्यालय अर्थात् आय.एन. केटरिंग स्कूल, आय,एन,एस हमला में स्थित है।

इसकी स्थापना सन् 1954 में हुई थी, तब से आज तक इस स्कूल का मुख्य उद्देश्य नौसेना के कुक्स, स्टीवर्डस की कार्य कौशलता बढ़ाना है।

केटरिंग स्कूल की क्रमशः दो निम्नलिखित शाखाएं हैं। भोजन वितरण शाखा अर्थात् स्टीवर्ड सेक्शन, जो कि केटरिंग स्कूल-1 से जाना जाता है।

भोजन उत्पादन शाखा अर्थात् कुक्स विभाग जिसके अन्तर्गत कुक (ओ) एवं कुक (एस) का प्रशिक्षण दिया जाता है, जिसे केटरिंग स्कूल-2 से जाना

जाता है।

उपरोक्त दोनों शाखाओं के अन्तर्गत प्रारंभिक तथा उन्नति उद्देश्य दिया जाता है।

चूँकि केटरिंग स्कूल की कार्य कुशलता सराहनीय होने के कारण यहाँ पर भारतीय नौसेना के अलावा भारतीय सेना, भारतीय वायु सेना, भारतीय तटरक्षक तथा विदेशी सैनिक को भी प्रशिक्षण हेतु भेजा जाता है।

यहां की प्रशिक्षण प्रणाली समयानुसार एवं आवश्यकतानुसार परिवर्तित होती रही है। पिछले तीन वर्ष के दौरान निम्नलिखित संशोधन किए गए हैं जो की अति सराहनीय हैं जैसे—

1. कुशल प्रशिक्षक के चुनाव में सख्ती
2. प्रशिक्षक के लिए TT(S) कोर्स अनिवार्य
3. OHP का निष्पादन तथा VPU का प्रयोग
4. सभी कोर्स के सिलेबस का आधुनिक आवश्यकतानुसार संशोधन किया गया।
5. सभी कमान्ड शिकायत एकत्रित कर उसका हल सूचक बदलाव किया गया।
6. स्टीवर्डस प्रशिक्षणार्थी के लिए अंग्रेजी वक्तव्य (english spoken) शिक्षा को सिलेबस में शामिल किया गया, जिससे प्रशिक्षणार्थियों की व्यक्तिगत विकास के साथ भारतीय नौसेना को विवेकशील भोजन वितरक (स्टीवर्डस) मुहैया।
7. प्रशिक्षकगण को IHM DADAR, RIZVI COLLEGE एवं KIMI जैसे विख्यात होटलों और संस्थानों में भ्रमण तथा संगलित किया गया, जिससे कि प्रशिक्षकगण के अनुभव में इजाफा हुआ तथा केटरिंग स्कूल के प्रशिक्षण में सकारात्मक प्रभाव पड़ा।
8. एकमात्र नौसेना खान-पान सेवा पुस्तिका "व्यन्जनिका" का संकलन – जिसके अन्तर्गत नौसेना के कुक्स तथा स्टीवर्डस की हौसला आफ्जाई के साथ साथ गलतियों को सुधारने का रिमाइन्डर तथा महत्त्वता हर यूनीट तथा दफ्तर तक पहुंचाई गई।
9. विभिन्न प्रकार के वर्कशॉप सिविल बेकर्स शोफ द्वारा कराए गए जैसे – बेकरी वर्कशॉप, कान्टीनेन्टल

वर्कशॉप, चॉकलेट वर्कशॉप तथा कारवींग वर्कशॉप जिनकी अनुभव तराशने में अहम भूमिका है।

10. PFT (Prepare for tomorrow) कल पढ़ाए जाने वाले विषय के बारे में पढ़कर आने के नियम लागू किए गये, इससे प्रशिक्षणार्थियों को विषय तथा पाठ ज्ञान अच्छी तरह होने लगे और प्रशिक्षण प्रणाली को एक बेहतर आधार मिल गया।

कन्फेक्शनरी लैब का निर्माण : –

घुलनशिल व्यंजन प्रिपेरेशन हेतु एक शीत कक्ष कन्फेक्शनरी लैब के रूप में निर्माण किया गया।



प्रशिक्षणार्थियों की सुविधा तथा विस्तृत जानकारी ग्रहण हेतु एक इंस्ट्रक्टर डेमोन्स्ट्रेशन गैली का निर्माण किया गया जिसके अन्तर्गत 25 से 30 प्रशिक्षणार्थियों को एक साथ रेसीपीस का डेमो दिखाया जा सकता है जिससे की पाक विद्या के छोटे छोटे नूस्खे समझने में आसानी होती है तथा परिपक्वता हासिल होती है। उपरोक्त संशोधनों के उपरान्त आय एन केटरिंग स्कूल शिखर की ओर अग्रसर है और उच्च कोटि का प्रशिक्षण प्रदान करने में सामर्थ्य है।

आशा है की आने वाले दिनों में वर्तमान आवश्यकतानुसार संशोधन होते रहेंगे जो की IN केटरिंग स्कूल को उंचाई तक पहुंचाने में मददगार साबित होंगे।



# जीवन मूल्य

## प्रगति

आज के नए युग पहले की बातें या विचारों का मूल्य घटता जा रहा है। पहले जो कहा जाता था, आजकल उसका मूल्य ही नहीं रहा है। माता-पिता जब पहले के जमाने में अपने बच्चों को कुछ सीख देते थे तो वह मान लेते थे, परंतु आजकल जब वही माता-पिता से प्राप्त जीवन मूल्य आज के संदर्भ में औचित्यहीन नहीं हैं। जो भी अच्छी बातें हैं वह तो सदा अच्छी तथा वैसे ही रहेंगी। आज के तकनीकी जमाने में अंतर यही है कि बस कुछ नई तकनीकों का आगमन हुआ है और बच्चे उनके पीछे पागल हो गए हैं।

मूल्य वो वही हैं, वह थोड़ा-सा बदलाव आया है। जब बच्चे छोटे होते हैं तो वह अपने माता पिता का हर कहा मानते हैं, परंतु जैसे-जैसे वह बड़े होते हैं वह पूरी तरह से बदल जाते हैं और उनका ढंग भी बदल जाता है। जीवन मूल्य हर समय हमारे अच्छे के लिए काम आते हैं। यदि हमें जीवन मूल्य का ज्ञान ही नहीं होगा तो सफलता प्राप्त कैसे होगी? इसलिए जीवन मूल्य व अच्छी बातों का ज्ञान होना भी अति आवश्यक है।

यदि हमें सफलता प्राप्त हो जाए और कोई मूल्य व अच्छे विचार न हो तो वह सफलता का कोई मूल्य नहीं है। किताबी ज्ञान से ही कोई ज्ञानी नहीं बन जाता है, ज्ञानी तो वह होते हैं जो जीवन मूल्य जानते हों। यह मूल्य हमें सबसे अच्छे से हमारे माता-पिता ही दे सकते हैं।

हम महान बल्लेबाज सचिन तेंदुलकर को ही देख लेते हैं। उनके विचार कितने उच्च हैं। वह अपने इस उच्च विचारों व जीवन मूल्य के ज्ञान श्रेय अपने पिताजी को ही देते हैं। वह कहते हैं कि वह आज जो भी व जिस भी स्तर पर हैं सिर्फ अपने पिता जी की वजह से हैं। वह यह भी कहते हैं कि हमें सदा अपने माता-पिता के द्वारा दिए गए ज्ञान का महत्व समझना चाहिए और



अपने जीवन में अपना लेना चाहिए। जीवन मूल्यों के बिना अधूरा है। सामाजिक जीवन में मूल्य ही नहीं होंगे तो जीवन व्यर्थ है। माता-पिता हमारे भले के लिए ही हमें ज्ञान देते हैं और वह ज्ञान हमारे अवश्य काम आते हैं। आजकल के बच्चों को तो ऐसा लगता है कि माता-पिता जो ज्ञान देते हैं, उनका कोई महत्व नहीं है। बच्चे यह क्यों नहीं सोचते की भविष्य में किताबी ज्ञान से अधिक महत्व अच्छे विचार होंगे। बच्चे माता-पिता की बातों को तो बस टुकरा ही देते हैं और अपने में मस्त रहते हैं। बच्चों को यह सोचना चाहिए कि जिनके माता-पिता नहीं होते उनका क्या हाल होता है। यह हम सब देख सकते हैं, क्योंकि जिनके माता-पिता नहीं होते, उनको कोई मूल्यों का ज्ञान नहीं होता और वो फिर चोरी-चक्कारी जैसे कामों को अपना निजी काम बना लेते हैं। वह तो ऐसा इसलिए करते हैं क्योंकि उन्हें सामाजिक ज्ञान नहीं होता है परंतु जिनके माता-पिता होते हैं और फिर भी वे बुरा काम करते हैं, तो फिर उन्हें सिर्फ भगवान ही बचा सकता है।

इसलिए माता-पिता के द्वारा प्राप्त किए गए जीवन मूल्यों को कभी भी औचित्यहीन नहीं कहना चाहिए। हमें हमेशा उनका आदर करना चाहिए। हमें हमेशा उनका आदर करना चाहिए। वे मूल्य ही आगे चलकर हमारे काम आएंगे।

# नौसैनिक चिकित्सा सेवा

विनीता वर्मा



उत्तरदायित्व थल सेना के कंधों पर आ गया। कुछ वर्षों के पश्चात कुछ तटीय संस्थाओं को भारतीय नौसेना को सौंप देने का निर्णय लिया गया। इस प्रकार 1951 में मिल्ट्री अस्पताल, कोलाबा (बंबई) भारतीय नौसेना को सौंप

(स्वर्णिम इतिहास प्रगतिशील वर्तमान उज्ज्वल भविष्य) ईस्ट इंडिया कम्पनी के शासन काल में स्थापित चिकित्सा विभाग समय-समय पर आवश्यकतानुसार आधुनिक उन्नत तकनीकों को अपनाते हुए एक ऐसी सशक्त सेवा का रूप ले चुका है जो भारतीय नौसेना की चिकित्सा संबंधी सभी आवश्यकताओं को पूर्ण करने में सक्षम है।

तीनों प्रेसिडेंसियों, मद्रास बम्बई तथा कलकत्ता की चिकित्सा सेवाओं को मिलाकर 1896 में इंडियन मेडिकल सर्विसेस (IMS) अर्थात् भारतीय चिकित्सा सेवा की स्थापना हुई। भारतीय तथा ब्रिटिश टुकड़ियों के विस्तार के साथ एक नया कैंडर बना – दि इण्डियन मेडिकल डिपार्टमेंट – ब्रिटिश कैंडर। इंडियन मेडिकल सर्विसेस के पदाधिकारी तटीय क्षेत्रों तथा दि इंडियन मेडिकल डिपार्टमेंट – ब्रिटिश कैंडर के अधिकारी जहाजों में नियुक्त होते थे। द्वितीय विश्वयुद्ध के पश्चात परिस्थितियाँ बदली, थल सेना ने चिकित्सा अधिकारियों की संख्या में कमी होने के कारण जहाजों में अधिकारियों को भेजने में अक्षमता जताई। फलस्वरूप आई. एम. एस कैंडर के इमर्जेंसी कमीशन ऑफसरों को जहाजों पर भेजा गया। सन् 1943 ई. से डॉक्टरों को नौसेना में कमीशन मिलने लगा और 'रॉयल इंडियन नेवी मेडिकल ब्रांच की स्थापना हुई।' स्वतंत्रता प्राप्ति के पश्चात् स्वास्थ्य संबंधी सेवाओं का

दिया गया, जो नौसेना का प्रथम अस्पताल बना और भारतीय नौसेना अस्पताल पोत 'अश्विनी' कहलाया। नौसेना के विस्तार के साथ विस्तृत चिकित्सा सुविधाओं की आवश्यकता हुई। परिणाम स्वरूप कई नए अस्पताल बने। सम्प्रति नौसेना के विभिन्न क्षेत्रों में 9 अस्पताल है।

आठ सौ पच्चीस बेड वाले प्राचीनतम् एवं विशालतम भारतीय नौसेना अस्पताल पोत अश्विनी में चिकित्सा संबंधी आधुनिकतम् सुविधाएँ उपलब्ध है।

यहाँ कई विषयों में स्नातकोत्तर शिक्षा प्रदान की जाती है और यह एम.यू.एच.एस ( महाराष्ट्र युनिवर्सिटी हेल्थ सर्विसेस) से सम्बद्ध है।

आई.एन.एम. (इंस्टीट्यूट ऑफ नेवल मेडिसिन) में अण्डर वाटर मेडिसिन, मरीन मेडिसिन तथा एयरो स्पेस मेडिसिन से संबध रिसर्च कार्य होता है।

कॉलेज ऑफ नर्सिंग तथा स्कूल ऑफ मेडिकल एसिस्टेंटस (सोमा) में नर्सों और पैरामेडिकल स्टाफ को शिक्षा दी जाती है। सामान्य बीमारियों के इलाज हेतु विशाखापटनम में भारतीय नौसेना अस्पताल पोत कल्याणी है। कोच्ची स्थित भारतीय नौसेना अस्पताल पोत "संजीवनी" में बुनियादी सुविधाओं के अतिरिक्त स्पाइरल सी.टी स्कैन है।

पोर्टब्लेयर स्थित भारतीय नौसेना अस्पताल पोत धन्वन्तरि के नाम से जाना जाता है।



गोवा में स्थित जीवन्ती, लोनावला में स्थित कस्तूरी, चिल्का में स्थित निवारिणी और कारवार में स्थित पंतजली। नौसेना के चार अन्य अस्पताल हैं। नवीनतम अस्पताल “नवजीवनी” नेवल एकेडमी एजीमला में स्थित है। नौसेना चिकित्सा सेवा समाज कल्याण हेतु स्वास्थ्य शिविरों का आयोजन करती है जिसका उद्देश्य असैनिक जनमानस की सेवा और नौसेना के विषय जानकारी जन-जन तक पहुँचाना है। भारतीय नौसेना के चिकित्सक (डॉक्टर) समय-समय पर यू. एन शांति मिशन का हिस्सा बनते रहे हैं। अमेरिकी नौसेना के साथ भारतीय नौसेना के चिकित्सक भी सूनामी पीड़ित क्षेत्रों में गए। भुज (गुजरात 2001) में नौसेना की टीम ने भूकंप पीड़ितों की सराहनीय सेवा की।

तटीय क्षेत्रों में स्थित नौसैनिक प्रतिष्ठानों में सिक बे द्वारा स्वास्थ्य सेवाएँ प्रदान की जाती हैं। इसके अतिरिक्त मेडिकल एकजामिनेशन (M.I.) रूम हैं। जहाजों में भी डॉक्टर मेडिकल एसिसस्टेंस के साथ जाते हैं। बड़े जहाजों में सर्जिकल टीम होती है।

वर्तमान में भारतीय नौसेना में तटीय क्षेत्रों में बारह दंत चिकित्सा केंद्र हैं। मुंबई स्थित नेवल इंस्टीट्यूट ऑफ डेन्टल साइंस सारे केंद्रों के कार्यभार को देखता है।

नौसेना के चिकित्सक तथा पैरामेडिकल स्टाफ इण्डियन कोस्ट गार्ड (भारतीय तट रक्षक) के नाविकों के इलाज हेतु कोस्ट गार्ड में भी पोस्ट किए जाते हैं।

इतनी वृहत स्वास्थ्य सेवा के सुचारु रूप से चलाने हेतु दिल्ली स्थित पर्सनल ब्रांच के अंतर्गत एक स्वास्थ्य विभाग है जहाँ डायरेक्टर जनरल हेल्थ सर्विसेस (नेवी) और उनकी पूरी टीम स्वास्थ्य सेवा के उन्नति और विकास के लिए सतत कार्यशील रहती है।

सहयोग – मधुमाला रोहतगी  
साभार – कॉफी टेबल बुक

# ये जरूरी तो नहीं

जयश्री प्रसाद

जिंदगी कई मौके देती है  
हर बार ऐसा हो, ये जरूरी तो नहीं।  
कल-आज-कल  
आते रहे हैं, जाते रहे हैं  
पर हर बार ऐसा ही हो ये जरूरी तो नहीं।।

आज की जिंदगी की घुड़दौड़ से थके  
आंखों में, आसूँ भी नहीं, काजल भी नहीं,  
गर्दिशों की मार, बोलियों की बेड़िया जकड़े,  
रिश्तों की गर्माहट को तलाशते  
इंतजार के वही-वही पल हो, ये जरूरी तो नहीं।।

वो जिन्हें वक्त ने सर पर बिठाया  
किसी के अरमानों की आवाज।  
उनकी ताजपोशी में किन्हीं की दुआओं का असर हो  
ये अहसास हो उन्हें, ये जरूरी तो नहीं।।

बीते बनकर वर्ष, बीते बीतते हमारे 'कल'  
सड़कों को नापते फाइलों की गिनती में ये 'आज'  
घड़ी के सरकते कांटे, दायित्व का वो 'कल'  
हासिल कर ले मंजिल, ये जरूरी तो नहीं।

रेतीलें राह की तरह है ये जिंदगी  
कोई आंधी उड़ा दे या लहर मिटा दे  
पांव के निशान जो दिखते हैं।

वक्त आज आपका है, कल भी होगा, ये जरूरी तो नहीं।  
चलते-चलते शाम हो गई, रही वही मंजिल की दूरी  
मन को किसने बांधा, मुट्ठी में रेत रुक जाए  
ये जरूरी तो नहीं।।



# A MATTER OF HONOUR

DEEPA BHAT NAIR



In January 2013, I was part of the Naval War College group that visited Singapore. One evening, over cocktails at the Defence Attaché's home, we were informed about a military history tour that had been organised for the husbands. Spouses were also invited to attend. Military history doesn't ordinarily excite me yet it was difficult to pass up an opportunity to be guided by the

Director of Changi Museum. Add to that the attraction of a walking history tour and I was sold!

The day began with a lecture at the embassy by the Director. He told us the story of Singapore's defence against the Japanese invasion in World War II. We sat around an oval table as military history and strategy came alive for us. Listening to his account, I could smell the fire, hear the boom of the gunpowder, and feel the desperation of the men fighting a losing battle.

The tale was about Percival of Great Britain who led the allied forces in the defence of Singapore against the Imperial Japanese forces led by Yamashita. Percival was strong in his reading of military books yet lacked the experience of the foot soldier and Yamashita felt threatened by the presence of

the head of the imperial guards in one of his flanks. British strategy failed on several levels: land, water and air. I will carry images of the Japanese moving swiftly through the jungles when they were expected to come through the water; of the Japanese appropriating all the bicycles they could lay their hands on while walking through the land. This got them moving faster than anticipated, adding an element of surprise. I will remember the British armada that couldn't reach Singapore in time as the fleet was stretched elsewhere in the war. And the Japanese air power that gave them the edge Singapore lacked. Most significant, for me, was the role of our men, the unsung Indian heroes who fought the Battle for Singapore as part of the Allied Forces. I didn't know

that 50 per cent of the 4,500 graves at the Kranji War Memorial in Singapore belonged to Indians from various regiments—now, I will never forget.

As we traced our path through all the places where the battle was fought, what will remain etched in my memory is the poignancy of the War Memorial: rows and rows of symmetrically lined graves, a stark reminder of the men who gave their today for our tomorrow. Among these were those of the Indians lying on foreign soil. Singapore has

painstakingly identified as many of the Indians they could and their names are etched on the walls, organised according to their regiments.

We were honoured to have the opportunity to salute our brave martyrs, which we did in the age-old manner. The leader of our contingent placed a wreath

of poppies at the memorial and we observed a minute's silence along with the playing of the bugle. It was a sombre reminder that freedom is not free. It was also a reminder of the importance of saluting the past.

Indeed, it was tradition and respect that prompted a foreign nation to honour the Indians who died on their soil, fighting a battle that really was never theirs. In an era where traditions are so easily cast by the wayside, experiences like this one drive home their importance. The forces are perhaps the last bastions where time-old traditions still survive. They must continue to be nurtured and carried forward.

Note: The Kranji War Memorial is maintained by the Commonwealth Graves Commission. This is an intergovernmental organisation of six independent member nations: the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India and South Africa. It has the mandate to mark, record and maintain the places of commemoration of the commonwealth of military forces

killed during the two World Wars. The mandate is to commemorate all war dead equally and individually. To this effect, the war dead are commemorated by name either on a headstone, an identified site of burial or a memorial. The war dead are commemorated in a uniform and equal fashion irrespective of military rank, race or creed.

The red field poppy is the internationally recognised symbol of remembrance. Flanders, in France, saw some of the fiercest battles and was reduced to rubble during World War I. What were once farms, homes, buildings were reduced to a sea of mud—a grave for the dead. Only one thing survived, the poppy flower, which bloomed over the graves with the coming of the warm weather: a symbol of survival and hope. Poppy Day/Remembrance Day is celebrated on the eleventh of November in all Commonwealth countries (since World War I) in memory of the war dead.



# ‘Andaman’s Dr. Kotnis’, I Salute Thee...

SHILPA KAPOOR

*In nothing do men more nearly approach the gods than in giving health to men*

*- Marcus Tullius Cicero*

Coming from a wife, it may sound preposterous but my admiration for my ‘Doctor Husband’ went several notches higher when I chanced upon an article written by Mr. Vijay Simha (now a renowned columnist) on Sameer Kapoor (a spelling error that I choose to ignore as the contents make my heart swell with pride) and the relentless work carried out by him during the disaster caused by the Tsunami in Port Blair, 2004. His article titled ‘Andaman’s Dr. Kotnis’ on [tehelka.com](http://tehelka.com), dated 22 January 2005 made me sit up as I saw a known face in it.....

Mr. Simha wrote: “At times the

mind shuts down the thinking process. It switches to reflex mode, relying purely on instinct. In a disaster situation, it’s a great defence system. The one with quick reflexes survives. As the human wave of tsunami victims landed at the Port Blair navy airport, Sameer Kapoor, 37, found

the justification for his existence in that backwater town.”

“.....In the first 48 hours, the cases were of fresh wounds. The cases of infections began after 48 hours. People had been in water for two days. Everyone now had severe infections. Even tiny wounds, small lacerations, which should



have normally healed, had got so infected that they could become life threatening. Because of the remoteness of the islands, help was not available for days. He handled 400 cases in five days. His job was to ensure that none of the hospitals were overloaded.”

“Speed was the key. Kapoor assigned cards to each patient, sizing him up within seconds at times. A black card for the dead, green for delayed surgery, and so on. Each one told a story at a glance. It worked.”

“.....Then there was a 10-year-old non-tribal with a deep gash on his thigh. “We had to suture him up. He had lost his parents. He had no relatives. I gave the local anaesthetic but the pain wouldn’t go. He kept crying. I told one of my assistants to simply hug him. The child didn’t know the man holding him. But he hugged him back. The moment he hugged him back, the pain was gone. While they were hugging, I sutured him up. It was not physical pain that was making him cry,” says Kapoor. Evidently, it’s not just medicine. It’s not just doctors who have to do it. “Society has to do it too. We need something like Alcoholics Anonymous here to deal with the psychological trauma. There should be groups for psychotherapy and counselling after a mass disaster, which we don’t have in India,” Kapoor says. This article sent chills to my spine as it reminded me of the wrath of Tsunami on Dec 26th 2004, a black day in the history of Port Blair. I had seen its impact on television but the then PMO at INS Utkrosh, Surgeon Lt. Cdr Samir Kapoor braved it. He saved as many lives possible, working day & night despite all the odds and kept the



morale of his team high including his own. He had told me about his experience but this article gave me an unbiased view on the stupendous contribution made by him; of the grit and commitment of my ‘Better Half’.

My profession dictates me to be vocal but somehow I have always been at a loss for words to convey my feelings to him about his

dedication at work. I am glad that through Veerangana I am getting a chance to relay my sentiments. Medicine indeed is a noble calling that captures your heart. It had captured my husband’s heart some 28 years ago. And today, I proudly declare that together they have mine!

Surgeon Captain Samir Kapoor, I salute thee!



# Family Values



SLT SURYAKANT RAMOLA

**H**ome is the root of all education, all of us would agree that family values are most important and one carries them throughout one's life. Families with defined values are able to stand strong on their views despite other people's efforts to break through with opposing beliefs. Having strong well defined family values helps solidify the foundation for a strong, tight knit family. Working together as a family can actually make difficult tasks seem easier and fun. Followings are the outcomes of good family values.

**Influencing Decision Making.** Decision making is something which all of us encounter in our day to day life. Family values influence the decisions of people both within the family structure and outside. A strong family values and support helps a person to make the right decision in life.

**Guidance for Raising Children.** Parenting is a challenge and with worldly influences, it can be downright terrifying. Knowing what you believe in as a parent and what you want for your children will help you raise them to be responsible and conscientious adults.

**Protection from Outside Influences.** Peer pressure can have a considerable effect on adolescents and adults alike. When people try to get others to do things that are not morally correct, they try to penetrate the family values set in place. That means, if someone has a strong sense of what is right and wrong because of the values they were raised with, they are less likely to become victims of deviant influences.

**Family Meaning.** What does family mean to you? When people think about the definition of family, they usually say something about feeling connected because they share the same views of the world. While some family members may differ on views of some topics, most family members keep the larger, most influential, beliefs intact.

**Helping Guide People in Relationships.** People usually relate to others who share the same values as them because they are more compatible with one another. However, to find compatibility you need to know what you believe in so you know what to look for when looking for a mate or friend. Families with strong values are able to identify these values in others quickly, which then produces a new generation with similar beliefs.

**Family Values Make You Who You Are.** When you describe yourself, do you ever tell people what you believe in? Do you talk about your personality traits and what influences the decisions you make? It's likely that you do in one way or another and this stems from all the values instilled in you by your family.

There will be a sea change in our society if one starts to prioritise things in one's walk of life. Family is the root and I believe that this is the most important thing that we all need to keep as first priority. Inculcating good values is a process and it is connected to the emotional development of a child. Deep issues are not taught through a manual or a book, but through living with those values.

# JADE

RAMAA MULAY

**W**riting is not my cup of tea actually but since this is an opportunity to practically test my skills with pen and paper, I took a chance. Moreover I wanted to write about my tryst with a needle and thread. The sudden transformation from a free bird to a house wife and subsequent motherhood left me in a completely confused state. It was a war of thoughts and emotions when my little one was born.

In every girl's life there is one turn which causes congestion of thoughts and confusion in mind. I felt it was time to take stock of my life and decide a few things about myself:

What I was?

What am I?

What next?

What I was?

What am I?

What next?

Such kind of questions make you think and then you start discovering a NEW YOU. Some questions you have to ask yourself, while some have their answers on a platter. I gave an attempt to this self discovery and in the process I got to know a lot about myself.

Management science talks about SWOT theory, which means: Strength - Weakness -



Opportunity – Trend.

Analyzing these questions is a technique. Based on this finding you get a clearer picture of what you can do in life. SWOT analysis helped me discover my talents and boosted my creativity. One of my visits to the local market changed my destiny. I spotted a lady selling beautiful diyas, as Diwali was around the corner.

I purchased a couple of them and couldn't wait to give them a bright colourful look. Once painted, I arranged them in a basket and Voila! My hampers were ready to go. Some 1500 baskets were ready and that Diwali, they got sold like hot cakes! Appreciation boosted my enthusiasm to begin

something new and JADE took birth. JADE is my own designer label of indo-western wear. Initially there were hiccups and it was a challenge for me to establish myself in a completely new market and different environment. Then came MOTHERHOOD and juggling my business and baby was tiring at times.

Nothing comes easy but with passion, determination coupled with hard work, things can work out.

I know this is just a beginning and if there are no situations to test your inner strength then there is no fun being popular and successful.

I am enjoying my third year as an entrepreneur and my dreams are still flying high. I don't want to stop, in fact I want to just fly higher. My daughter who is four inspires me every time to work harder and grow higher. I love it when she tells me her wish to become a fashion designer like me.

I am very sure her desire will change with growing age and passing time, but her being proud of me is such a satisfying feeling and an award in itself.

NOW that I have discovered a NEW me, I'm so contented and happy and whenever I look back at my journey, I feel complete.

# My Experiment with Fitness



ALPANA AGARWAL

As a young girl, fitness and exercise were never a part of my life. I did play basketball in schooldays, only because it let me skip my Maths class (which I hated). But I was slim and trim and keen to remain so even after



marriage, having witnessed my cousins ballooning up within few months of their marriage! With this promise to myself I, began my married life at NDA Pune. It was here that I was initiated into daily walks by my husband. Being generally free in the evenings, we would go for long walks along the quiet and peaceful outskirts of the Academy. The days he was unable to accompany me because of his official commitments, he would encourage me to go on my own. I, being slightly introvert, started enjoying these lonely and quiet walks. Slowly, I fell in love with my walks.

Over the years, we shifted several stations. Each new station gave

me an opportunity to continue with my evening walks. Later on, as kids were born and I gained lot of weight, aerobics and other exercises got integrated into my fitness regime. Two years back we shifted to Mumbai. Here came the turning moment of my life when flipping through the pages of the "Health and Nutrition" magazine, I read about the famous nonagenarian Sh. Fauja Singh who still enjoys jogging and participates in marathons. I just couldn't believe it. It was like, if he can run why can't I? I was inspired to the very core of my being, and from the next day itself I started jogging. The racing tracks of Kohli stadium became my Mecca. I



started with 4 rounds of the 400m track at a time, gradually working my way up to 10 rounds. Slowly my stamina grew and I graduated to 12 -13 rounds. The time spent jogging in the tracks was the best part of the day. It rejuvenated me as I could feel the accumulated stress drain out of the body along with sweat. The natural glow after a good work out could beat even the gold facial. A feeling of pure bliss would settle upon my whole being. My husband's hectic sailing schedule allowed me to follow my jogging routine uninterrupted. When he was back in harbour I still managed to sneak in time for my appointment with the tracks even if that meant a tired and harried hubby waiting at the locked house door (whenever he forgot to carry along his pair of house keys). I would take my own sweet time to return home, but still be greeted by my smiling better-half. After about a year of regular jogging , my husband informed me about a 'spirit run' of 10 km. being organized by "DNA I can ..." at Mumbai, motivating me to register myself. Till then it had never occurred to me to run a marathon, but at his behest I decided to participate and test my stamina and endurance. He advised me to prepare for the marathon and gave me tips on the correct body posture while jogging. On the D day he accompanied me to the venue and cheered me through the run. He also ran some distance along with me though it was only for women. Towards the end he urged me to pick up speed and putting in whatever strength was left, I completed the 10 km. run in 67 minutes. It was

a memorable event! After the run he guided me in doing some stretching exercises which are important after a long run.

In May 2013 we shifted to Mhow (a small, quaint town in the heartland of India). I had expected a jogging track here also. Alas! A big disappointment awaited me. With no dedicated track for jogging nearby, I was compelled to use the tiled pavement by the roadside as I felt suffocated in the gym. Unlike Mumbai, Mhow being a small town, many heads of passers-by would turn back for a second glance. Undeterred and encouraged by my husband I continued jogging and soon got

another opportunity to run a mini marathon of 11 km. This was organised by IIM Indore and was to be held on 2nd of October 2013. For the event, I further improved upon the mistakes I made while jogging, all thanks to hubby dear and also worked upon my stamina. On the day of the event, he accompanied me, missing his weekly round of Golf (a big sacrifice.., really!). Though I had registered his name also he chose not to run, but joined me after a distance of 4 km. The track, and by that I mean the road was in bad shape courtesy the heavy and prolonged rains. There were potholes and many ups and



downs. On the way he urged me to pick up speed on down slopes. Despite the tough track I managed to continue jogging and finished in 75 minutes. It was a moment of sheer joy and my feelings cannot be put into words when I realized that I was the winner in my own age group! The euphoria and elation that rushed through me was incredible!

Some years back, I wouldn't have even dreamt of being a long-distance runner but for my husband's support and guidance. Now I look forward to half marathons and maybe someday even a full marathon. Amen...!

# THE SIGNIFICANCE OF 'GOOD LISTENING'

NITA JOSHI

It will not be wrong to say that among the most basic of all human needs is the need to understand others and be understood by others. The best way to understand people is to interact with them, and more importantly, listen to them. It is very important to understand and learn the art of listening.

In today's world, everyone wants to speak and project himself, talk loud about his achievements, and ..... teach others. The number of listeners is reducing with the time. Are we heading for a situation when

listeners will become extinct? What is even more disturbing is that very few of us are concerned about our inability to be attentive listeners.

The ear is akin to radar that picks up frequencies created by any kind of sound and sends them to the brain. This is hearing. Hearing is an effect (of some sound or noise), while listening is an effort. Hearing is a natural biological function, while listening is a choice on our part. Many of us have only heard and never really listened in our lives. Listening is an effort to receive all that comes to the ear in the form of speech or sound and understand it, as if the person has spoken it himself. A good listener tries to analyse and understand what is said, and why it is said. In the end, he may disagree sharply, but because he disagrees, he must know what exactly he disagrees with. It can only happen if he listens attentively. Listening is quite an evolved and sensitive process within human consciousness.

When a knowledgeable man speaks, only a wise man has the ears, heart and wisdom to listen. The wisdom he possesses is not because he is wise, but because he possesses the ability to listen. Out of



the 5 senses, listening uses the least amount of energy. Perhaps that's why sound (alarm) is used to wake up from sleep.

A person just doesn't have to listen to sounds outside him. He can listen to his own voice. Try speaking your name, and it sounds like the crescendo of a concert. Try listening to your thoughts, they sound even louder and clearer because they are even closer to the brain. Try listening to the feelings of pain, relief, desire, joy, surprise etc. Each of these has a distinct sound associated with it. We

can even go to the extent of saying that everything in this world is sound or, has sound or, makes sound. All one needs is a set of ears that can catch, convey and comprehend these sound waves.

The one quality that will make a person genuine listener is patience. There is no barter for patience. The second equally important aspect is the intention to get the message right, as exact as possible. Therefore, what one needs is a positive body language to make the speaker feel confident, and make him feel that he is making sense. This will enable better rapport during conversation, and will encourage the speaker to convey his ideas freely, comfortably and in necessary details. As a result, there is no doubt that the eventual beneficiary will be the ever attentive listener. Here are a few thumb rules to being a good listener: -

- (a) Always listen attentively to the speaker, instead of planning what to say or, ask in return.
- (b) Interrupt only when the speaker takes a break or, is unavoidable.
- (c) Remember, your ears will never get you in trouble.



# Ushered in NWWA

VANDANA DUTT

**W**hen a young girl marries a Naval officer, particularly if she does not come from a service background, she may find herself “all at sea” to begin with. And despite the “Welcome Young Lady” and OJT by loving husbands, the newly-wed can never know what exactly it is till she finally discovers the NWWA world on her own. “One can do a lot of activity depending on one’s aptitude and inclination”, was something told to me long back on a sultry afternoon of October 2005 as I was being introduced to the community.

I can never forget the “coming home” after marriage to a not-so settling two-room bachelor’s pad at the Naval Officer’s Mess, Chennai. On the second day into my new life, itself, I was told that there would be a NWWA ‘Coffee Morning’ for the ladies of the Flotilla a week later. It sounded so enticing and fancy – so in sync

as a part of the dream world I had entered by marrying a Fauji.

“You never get a second opportunity to make a first impression”. And I had no intention of leaving any scope for improvement on my first outing as a NWWA lady. I took my time getting ready in a saree that I thought did absolute justice to the occasion (I still see the pictures and feel I had got ready to get married again!). Being the wife of a Commanding Officer, I was fortunate to get some royal treatment as I settled down in the car which had been sent for the occasion. I headed to the NWWA complex to witness what the ladies had been preparing for the last two months.

Upon reaching there I suddenly felt I had entered a ‘mela’. With ladies everywhere - some singing with their eyes closed trying to wake up their favourite God, and others having an argument on how far out they should be standing on

the stage in order to be noticed by everybody. Everyone said, “Hello”, probably wondering what part of the planet I came from. Clueless, I greeted everyone warmly. My heart beat returned to normal after I met my husband’s course-mate’s wife, the only other person I knew in a room of strangers. Being a veteran compared to me, she enlightened me about the activities in progress within minutes. And after that came my first task for the event. I was asked to conduct a game for the ladies attending the function. Further instructions were given based on the last year’s event and how we were required to make it a little different this time.

On the promise that we would meet again within a day or two for discussing further details, I took leave and headed home. My anxiety had been replaced with a feeling of belongingness and a little pride at having become a member of the NWWA fraternity.

# Working towards A noble cause

NAMITA KOTWAL



It has always been my passion to work for some noble cause. Whenever an opportunity knocks at the door to spread some cheer to the under-privileged, I have always grabbed it in right earnest. It is my firm belief that to win the cause we all believe in, to spread true happiness and goodwill in the community we live in, we need to set an example - not just delivering speeches;

gaining respect of the world - not just make empty promises.

Coincidentally, INS Kattabomman is an ideal place to pursue such goals. South Tamil Nadu abounds with ancient and magnificent temples on one hand and multitudinous social organizations. Fortunately my

husband also shares my belief that noble deeds and serving the needy is the path to happiness – rather than splurging on religious institutions, and my choosing the former was an absolute no-brainer. The surrounding areas provide a plethora of opportunities to do a wealth of good and gain tremendous goodwill and satisfaction.

The nearest, at 5 km from the base, is the Mercy Home for

mentally challenged women. There are about 85 women from teenagers to mid-thirties. It is extremely touching to see the dedication with which the nurses and experienced sisters take good care of the inmates during their limited life expectancy. NWWA members have been regularly visiting the place and most of the service personnel of Kattabomman have been willing contributors with cash and kind during each visit. The shopkeepers especially have been most forthcoming, donating items of daily use. The in living sailors too have enthusiastically donated a day's ration on occasions such as Diwali. The NWWA trips have always been a grand success with ladies returning in a pensive mood and heavy hearts, and lots of satisfaction to boot!

Another 'place of interest' at Nanguneri, 14 km away is the Old Age home. A visit here too is extremely worthwhile

and always cherished by one and all. It is particularly interesting to note that many families from the base visit the Mercy Home and Old Age Home with hefty donations in kind on special occasions like birthdays and anniversaries. The Kendriya Vidyalaya, Vijayanarayanam and Naval KG School have also taken the children on conducted tours of the Old Age Home, bringing much cheer to the elderly. Meeting the senior citizens is always an immensely pleasurable experience. It is indeed amazing that even though most of our visitors are unfamiliar with Tamil, the connection is always immediate and the gratitude and joy on the face of the senior citizens – priceless!

Another prominent institution engaged in welfare and social service in the area is the Amar Seva Sangam, located about 90 km from the base. But being close to the famous Courtallim waterfalls and Tenkasi temple, the visit marks the culmination of a fruitful day – excitement and blessings of multiple kinds. The physically challenged residents of Amar Seva Sangam are cared for in very professionally managed and neat surroundings. It is immensely inspiring to see the tremendous potential harnessed and a mind boggling array of articles created notwithstanding the physical handicaps. The



enthusiasm of the children there is truly infectious leaving a deep impression on the visitors there. After a recent picnic to Courtallim followed by a visit to the Amar Seva Sangam, the living officers and sailors had no hesitation in admitting that the latter part of the visit was much more rewarding!

I set the ball rolling by first lending a hand to the women's orphanage with a gift hamper of basic needs. My heart specially goes out for the mentally challenged abandoned girls. "Save Girl Child, Save the World" is truly the need of the hour. Those little ones are in great

need of a personal touch and time dedicated solely to them. Institutions engaged in welfare often rely on word of mouth, and spreading the word and bringing people forward to work together for an honorable cause is a great deed in itself. Many people have closeted themselves and ought to experience the feeling of being accepted for who they are, and overcome their fears of rejection. I hope to spare more time in the noble cause, enriching the society, while earning immense pleasure and satisfaction. I believe such deeds enhance one's inner beauty within. The scope is endless!

# The Navy 'MEN'TOR

PADMAJA PARULKAR KESNUR

A shy girl meets a suave charmer of a man with a gift of gab. His opening gambit: "there are no strangers here only friends yet to be discovered". Admittedly, not an original quote, more likely a calculated pick-up line, but the girl warms up, nevertheless. After years of turbulent romance with the Clark Gable-ian character, the couple settle into matrimony. The male protagonist, as you may have guessed, is a "naval officer".



The first "posting" happens to be literally, a honeymoon phase; they land in NDA, the cradle of military leadership. The now Divisional Officer takes her to show a cadet's cabin, which many moons ago, embraced him. On the study desk framed is a poem: Rudyard Kipling's 'IF'. Though a person of literary propensity, she has not been acquainted with 'IF', until then, if not with Rudyard Kipling. It blows her mind.

Since then such gems or pearls of wisdom - call what you may - have been dripping from the knight's mouth with regularity and alacrity to suit every situation.

While there is no doubt that the men-in-uniform, collectively, deserve accolades for their never-say-die attitude and gung-ho spirit, this piece is a tribute to my husband who is a living embodiment of the virtues that he has 'preached' subtly (to me and his men) over the years.

In an age, when social networking is not just a fad,

but a way of life, his life demonstrates what it is all about, in real-time. When my father-in-law was in the hospital - in the ICU for a long haul - the outpourings from his uniform-kindred and school-types was overwhelming. He did not tweet or 'What's App' for garnering support; it was plain and simple "word

of mouth" chain that worked. The number of friends and well-wishers he has logged over the years - from school to ship - would beat the Facebook limit hollow.

Like many of them, he comes from the boondocks. The small-town folk from his home-town couldn't care less that he is an officer in the Navy. For them, he is the boy from the bylane and they treat him likewise. I have seen him chat and guffaw with them in the local lingo and at such times, I have to tell myself that this is the same man who holds forth at seminars and conferences in polished English.

**IF you can talk with crowds and keep your  
virtue,  
Or walk with Kings - nor lose the common  
touch...**

He has always supported me in my vocation, whether I was a full-time professional or now that I am a work-from-home freelancer. When I used to get bogged down with workplace politics and games colleagues played, he would advise: "Take

your work seriously, not yourself”, adding in full measure: “tension lena ki nahi, dene ki cheez hai”! Filmi, dramatic, smart-alecky – whatever, his advice would sneak on me at opportune times and I would find it working.

**IF you can keep your head  
when all about you  
Are losing theirs and blaming  
it on you,  
If you can trust yourself when  
all men doubt you,  
But make allowance for their  
doubting too...**

When chips are down, when frustration sets in because I am unable to juggle thousand tasks at home and “at work” he unfurls his patent gem: ‘Learn to strategize, don’t get bogged down in tactics’. When petty things unsettle, he urges me to see the “Big Picture” and to not get “knotted in details”. When one reaches a dead-end, I am reminded brutally to trudge on by: “So what? Then what”! And when I fret over a forthcoming local badminton tournament, he sends me off with the military wisdom: “Hope for the best, prepare for the worst.” It may seem that he is mouthing simple truisms, but the fact is that I have seen him live it out and it helps me effect course correction in time.

In my profession, deadlines are sacrosanct, and I adhere to them stringently, but in day-to-day living I do get a little careless regarding timelines. But the taskmaster is ever ready with his word wit. “There is something called, Good Idea, Cut-off Time.” Now I have learnt to work amidst chaos, with urgency, and without excuses to complete tasks at hand on the home front, too.

One of his pet themes which he tries to drill into my psyche is that of social self-knowledge. To him, it means getting to the core of understanding the ethos



and faith practiced in the Armed Forces; making sense of Navy and fauj in relation to the society that we are in, at the same time, emphasizing its distinctive and unique nature. “SSK,” he says, “is about understanding Navy in the scheme of the narrative of the larger societal framework”. With this he urges me not to lose focus of one’s actions and place them in the context of larger benefit of the people.

And oh yes, he sleeps like a log without grog. I have caught the contagion not letting anything come between me and my slumber.

It is one thing to read a poem and appreciate it, yet another to lead it. But that is what the hubby has graduated to, from his Cadet’s days to his ‘Commanding’ days. I was a decent human being before, but after I met my ‘mentor’ (and ‘tormentor’) I have become a responsible social being.

# THE AWAKENING

SLT ANINDITA KALITA



The women who crossed the lakshman rekha to venture out in the world have long been vulnerable, be it the maid servant who does so out of necessity, the middle class working woman or the urban memsaahib who exercises her upper class privileges. Unfortunately, exploitation of all classes of women has been rampant since long but most of the times have been brushed away under the carpet due to fear and social stigma attached to such crimes. And we have long chosen to shrug away the high price of this transgression, especially of rape cases. The poor women simply didn't matter, and the richer ones were dismissed as either reckless or immoral. The focus of all such misdemeanours would always shift from the criminal to the

victim - what 'she' was wearing, why 'she' was at a pub or out working late at night.

The whole world is aware of the shameful act and heinous crime of brutal rape that occurred in the streets of the capital on 16 Dec 12. This time 'she' was an ordinary girl, a normal girl with dreams and aspirations. She had a dream to become a doctor and make her parents proud. The sheer brutality of the

crime jolted the conscience of entire nation.

She died, giving birth to a revolution. A protest which was powerful since it was not restricted to a particular group of people or identity. The angry protest rallies were spearheaded by both 'men and women' irrespective of caste, creed, class or religion. The massive protests in Delhi which continued despite the suppressive measures by the administrative authorities, and similar protest rallies all over the country marked the beginning of the battle against administrative apathy and stricter legal recourse. The protests intensified not only in India

but all over the world through social networking sites, blogs, news, etc. "We are ashamed. A nation must respect its mothers, sisters and daughters. If it can't, the country is not civilised. This is a fundamental principle on which every civilisation is based," declared the President, Shri Pranab Mukherjee.

The government was forced to initiate action and Verma committee was set up to lay the framework to ensure timely justice to the victims. The need to have stricter laws was felt as this is not something that had happened for the first time nor will it be the last of its kind. But yes, the reaction from the public was the turning point which compelled the government to review the existing system. Even after this incident in Delhi, similar cases were reported from different parts of the country which tell us about the still existing





shamelessness among people.

Women in India step out of their homes everyday for going to their schools, colleges, workplace, market, etc. Keeping women at home and depriving them of equal opportunities which can help their own development as well as of the society is not what the educated and modern families desire for. But such incidents instil fear for their women and daughters as families worry about the safety of their wives, sisters and daughters going out on 'mean' streets of the so called democratic nation.

It is actually very painful to know that we are residing in a country where a girl is not safe even in her mother's womb. The alarming rate at which crimes against women are increasing, coupled with the dismal conviction rates of accused narrate the woeful state of women in India. It proves that all the reservations and concessions are useless unless women enjoy the right to live without fear of being abused.

It is time for strict actions and effective implementation of laws against all offences such as stalking, eve teasing etc. Such initial crackdowns shall help in reducing the crime rate in the long run. Secondly, in cases where the crime is established, the punishment needs to be swift and exemplary so that it acts as a deterrent for others. It is ironic that sometimes hard punishment to the criminal who violated the fundamental rights of the victim is seen a violation of those same human rights.

Let our awakened spirits not be dampened by procrastinating assurances. We have to rally around to bring a change in attitude where a man thinks twice before he commits an offence, where a woman is not afraid to voice her opinion and where birth of a girl child is also celebrated. We need a society that will help women step out of their homes without carrying chilli powder with them, a society which respects women and where women can move freely and are not denied the 'right to freedom'

## The Invisible Pillar Of Strength



*S.LT CHAITAN CHAUHAN*

**No ordinary woman  
Can take challenges head on,  
Enduring all the pain  
Manage to move on.  
She has to multitask  
Running around for chores,  
Taking care of home and health  
Donning multi-roles.**

**Willing to be on the move  
Five times in ten years,  
Turning buildings into homes  
Living for a lifetime it appears.  
Let me not forget  
Putting an unusual big heart  
That swells in pride and devotion  
And bears pain of staying apart.**

**Like a true patriot  
Stands by her husbands' side  
She wears no uniform  
Still bonded to naval life.  
She wears no medals  
No glory conferred  
But she is a hero  
In the truest sense of the word....**

# The Art of Conversation at Social Gatherings

NITINDER DUTT

Attending social events, official parties, dinner nights and command receptions began early for me, initially as a child in the Indian Army, accompanying my parents to social events, and subsequently, when I married into the Navy. It fascinated me immensely to observe that some of the ladies livened up the occasion with their poise and conversational charm, while others, though very attractive, simply sat in a corner talking to, perhaps, one or two others, about their maid, son's bronchitis, leaky sink and so on. I made it a point to get to one of the 'Life of the Party' and find out what goes to make a person an important part of the socializing routine. Let me share some of the pointers I got from her.

**Prepare for the Event.** Take the time to dress up – Pamper yourself at the parlour and be well groomed. Use natural looking make up, do not overdo it. Make sure that you feel beautiful, dignified and confident.

Meet and greet everyone present at the gathering, officers and ladies alike. Be polite and friendly. Take the opportunity to introduce yourself, if you do not know



someone.

**Be Interesting.** It's a very simple thing to achieve. Watch news on TV, read the newspapers, keep abreast of current events. You have to think beyond your maid and MES problems.

**Be Confident.** Remember opinions are neither wrong nor

right. When discussing any topic, be confident about your thoughts. State facts only when you know them to be true. Avoid any spur of the moment insight without much background on the topic.

**Keep that Smile on your Face and in your Voice.** Be positive in your attitude and thoughts. Any

negativity in your mind will reflect in your demeanour.

**What to avoid during a formal conversation?**

Be aware of your **Speaking Voice**. A loud voice may give an impression of arrogance and an overbearing personality. On the other hand speaking too softly may indicate lack of confidence and social skills. In both cases, you may end up irritating a lot of guests. Always modulate your tone with what you are saying. Only a lullaby is sung in monotone to induce sleep.

Be aware of your **Body Language**. Your hand movements must be limited to your own space. To over stretch, reach over, slap, clap, playfully punch or high five someone in a formal party is a no-no. The only allowable physical contact is a very firm handshake when required.

Be Cautious of the **Topic you Open**. You could talk on any topic ranging from politics to business, sports and entertainment. However, discussing lives of other

people such as common friends, particularly course mates, should be avoided. Talking of religion and racial issues is a taboo in all social gatherings.

**Be present** in the Moment. Put that fancy phone and other gadgets away or in silent mode. If you need to take an important call, leave the premises. It is rude to take calls while the other person you are talking to is still beside you.

**Be a Good Conversationalist**. Develop an ability to not only speak well but also to listen when spoken to. Allow other people their share of opinion. Interrupting when someone is speaking is disrespectful. For some people it may mean you are being argumentative and hostile.

**Be Aware of the Person you are Speaking To**. Call all officers with their appropriate rank and surname "Lt Cdr Bakshi" or "Capt Sharma". Ideally call all senior officer's wives also as 'Mrs so and so' unless she has insisted on being addressed by her first name. The tone of speech should

be respectful and dignified at all times.

**When Eating with a Formal Group**. Observe basic table manners. If unsure, follow the seniors and others on the table. Never speak with food in your mouth. If the other guest is also eating and is in the middle of chewing his food, let him eat quietly first and then engage him in conversation when he is done.

**Maintaining Eye Contact is Crucial**. Avoiding eye contact may indicate your lack of interest with the person and that could be insulting. However don't overdo it to the point of staring at a person, as this is also rude.

**Avoid Interrogating Mode of Conversation**. Especially if this is the first time you have been introduced to a person. If you are unknowingly going overboard, check for indication in their body language.

**Avoid Unsolicited Advice**, unless they are confiding in you or sharing something with you in confidence. The best solution that you can offer is a simple nod and an acknowledgement of what they shared.

**Lastly**, if it's a farewell or a welcome, don't forget to wish the Guests goodbye appropriately. Use each opportunity to build new acquaintances and find confidence to reach out to senior officers and ladies. Build bridges with your conversation skills – not barricades.

Practice-Practice-Practice 'Practice makes perfect'.

Being the person behind a successful husband is a daunting task- you know!

